Melanie Swiatloch

The Construction of Identity in Northern Ireland

Hybrid States, Nationalism, and Images of Violence in Contemporary Northern Irish Novels

*And the battle's just begun
There's many lost but tell me who has won
The trench is dug within our hearts
And mothers, children, brothers,
 sisters torn apart*

"Sunday Bloody Sunday" by U2 (1983)

1. Introduction

Thirty-eight years after what became known as the Bloody Sunday Great Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron made a formal apology for the killings of fourteen demonstrators in Derry¹. His apology was grounded on the results of the Saville

¹ Nationalists rather refer to the city as Derry while unionists prefer to call it Londonderry. Throughout this paper the shorter form Derry is used, which is not supposed to take a political stand, however. See also note 36 in this paper (p. 254).

report. This report was meant to clarify the exact circumstances of the events on 30 January 1972 that lead to the deaths of fourteen innocents as the examination unfolded. Still this declaration of guilt does not mark the end of years of bloodshed. "The absence of conflict at one point in time should not imply that this is a permanent state of affairs," A.M. Gallagher warned as well (9). On Saturday, 14 August 2010, according to national and international news a bomb exploded in a residential area in Lurgan, Northern Ireland, injuring three children. It went off during a Protestant parade. Another bomb in the same district luckily failed to detonate. Although officially settled – the Provisional IRA was disbanded in 2006, British military presence was ended and a power-sharing government has been established in 2007 (Keating-Miller 58) – these incidents show that the Northern Ireland conflict, also referred to as 'the Troubles', has not come to a final, peaceful resolution yet. Although by far less severe than in the hottest phases of the 1970s and 1980s, remnants of the old conflict are still up to date.

Many contemporary Northern Irish authors have been dealing with major and minor effects the conflict has brought. Thousands of people saw their family and friends die in bomb attacks planted by paramilitary groups, experienced tensions between Catholics and Protestants and saw how prejudice and group belonging reorganised whole neighbourhoods. These sides of the Troubles are focused on in manifold ways, thereby showing different possible identities. In addition, attitudes have changed during the course of the time. While authors of the 1920s and 1930s put a stronger emphasis on nationalist aspects, authors of the 1980s and 1990s try to give a larger picture of society and highlight the miseries of the conflict itself, and not so much the struggle for independence. Eve Patten ascribes this change to the emergence of a new generation.

In recent years, however, fiction from Northern Ireland has begun to change dramatically. This is a manifestation, firstly, of the emergence of a new generation of writers who have come of age since the beginning of the Troubles and whose reconstructions of childhood experience effectively undercut the moral baggage and creative paralysis of their predecessors. Secondly, it marks the overdue exploitation of literary strategies such as perspectivism, ambiguity and displacement which, though categorically post-modern, may also be perceived as attributes of a sustained constitutional and psychological identity crisis germane to any representations of a contemporary Northern Irish self-image (Patten 129-130).

These new strategies necessary for the depiction of a Northern Irish identity she talks of – perspectivism, ambiguity and displacement – are also made use of by the authors talked about in this paper: Robert McLiam Wilson (*Eureka Street*), Deirdre Madden (*One by One in the Darkness*), and Lucy Caldwell (*Where They Were Missed*). Very different characters such as Protestant profit seekers, Catholic radicals or people without a certain standpoint are given a voice here. The resulting multiper-

spectivity and ambiguous identities allow the authors to create possible images of the “New Irish” the Catholic Jake Jackson from *Eureka Street* is dreaming of:

In my early years, I had often hoped that the future would be different. That from out of the dark mists of Ireland’s past and present a new breed would arise. The New Irish. When all the old creeds and permutations in people would be contradicted. We would see the Loyalist Catholic. The liberal Protestant. The honest politician. The intelligent poet. But, as I sat and listened to my workmates, I decided I wasn’t going to hold my hand in my arse waiting for any Utopia (McLiam Wilson 164).

As intoxicating and tempting Jake’s vision may sound, its ironic undertone suggests that there is still a long way to go to achieve it.

In order to discuss what exactly has changed in Northern Irish identity in recent years it becomes necessary to throw a glance into the past and thus on post-colonial aspects as well as the loss of the native language. Also contemporary aspects such as living in a both divided and violent city as Belfast must be taken into account. Important questions will be how society is depicted in the novels and what changes concerning identity issues have taken place. In how far does a new intelligentsia play a decisive factor for contemporary Northern Irish society? How do Protestants and Catholics interact and how do they form an identity in contrast or in unison with each other? What kind of images of the New Irish do the authors propose? Is the current peace a final peace? This paper thus tries to show how Northern Irish identity is made up, by what it has been influenced as well as how the characters in the novels are depicted in contrast to stereotypical assumptions of the Northern Irish resident that is often linked to IRA² or UVF³ propaganda.

2. Language Matters in Northern Ireland

The investigation of language in relationship to identity is a wide field that would exceed the scope of this paper. In the following only a few aspects of language and ethnic consciousness are therefore discussed. The loss of the Irish language or rather the absence of it will be foregrounded as only very few native speakers of Irish can be found in Northern Ireland today. Still, Irish has a special meaning to those who are capable of speaking or understanding it. The inspection of language

² The Irish Republican Army (IRA) was established in 1919 as a descendant from the Irish Volunteers that had been created in 1913 and had been involved in the Easter Rising in 1916. Its goal was the achievement of an independent Ireland. Although this was also pursued by the Irish nationalist party Sinn Féin the IRA acted independently from them (Britannica 386).

³ The Ulster Volunteer Force was founded in 1966 in opposition to the IRA. Its name was taken from a Protestant loyal organisation which at the beginning of the twentieth century had successfully resisted Home Rule (Britannica 117).

will not be undertaken in a linguistic way but is rather used as a means to show correlations between language differences and possible means for identity.

2.1. A Note on the Irish Language: Developments From the Past Until Today

When it comes to identity issues language plays an important role, particularly when the native language – as in the case of the Irish – has largely been taken away from a people. While the government of the Republic of Ireland nowadays officially promotes the Irish language in several ways (school, radio, television), the North is lacking any official support. But even in the South this was not always the case. Official support and the recognition of the Irish language as the official language of the Gaeltacht⁴ only started shortly after the foundation of the Irish Free State⁵.

The invasion of Ireland began quite early in the twelfth century when Henry II with the permission of Pope Adrian IV marched into the country due to religious reasons⁶ (Hickey 30). Dublin, which is the anglicised form of Baile Átha Cliath, became a popular place to settle for the English. Following the Charter of Dublin in 1172, “English has existed continuously in Dublin” as Raymond Hickey, professor of linguistics, points out, since Dublin had a promising position on the east coast (31). Still, the Irish language resisted further invasions during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Only another century later, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, did the English extend their place of residence over the whole of Ireland. With the so-called plantations, a well-planned settlement strategy, the English occupation reached its climax⁷. While Irish, for example, was still the language of the court when at least one Irish person was involved, this changed completely from the seventeenth century onwards when Irish was “banned from public life” (Hickey 33ff). During the eighteenth century the Penal Laws⁸ completed the exclusion of the Catholic Irish from the political as well as the social

⁴ The Gaeltacht or An Ghaeltacht is a region where Irish is the dominating language. The term here refers to Irish-speaking regions in Ireland (Britannica 1001).

⁵ The Irish Free State was founded in 1922 under the Anglo-Irish Treaty signed 6 December, 1921 by David Lloyd George (GB), Arthur Griffith, and Michael Collins (IE). It came to an end in 1937 when Éamon de Valera introduced proposals for a new constitution. The Irish Free State from then on was termed Éire. It was succeeded by the Republic of Ireland in 1949 (Britannica 1015ff).

⁶ The argument was that the church in Ireland “had fallen into a state of disarray” (Hickey 30).

⁷ The first known plantations took place in the counties Offaly and Laois during 1549 – 1557 (Hickey 35).

⁸ The Penal Laws were a series of laws that were aiming at the restriction of Catholic religion. They imposed civil disabilities of a severe degree on Catholics in the 16th and 17th centuries. Punishments for living out the Catholic faith included imprisonment, fines but also death for those priests practicing their ministry in Great Britain or Ireland. Other laws included, for example, the ban from voting, holding public offices, owning land or teaching (Britannica 254).

sphere. As a general education was denied to the Irish, only hedge schools⁹ allowed some of the native population a small account of instruction (*ibid.* 41).

Two influential factors increased the further decline of the Irish language: In 1831 National Schools helped to diminish the rate of illiteracy, but as tuition was held in English as well a radical shift in language opened the floodgates. Furthermore, the nineteenth century was marked by the Great Famine (1845-8) which resulted in about one million victims. Many of those who did not die emigrated to North America or elsewhere (*ibid.* 46). According to Raymond Hickey the nineteenth century thus had to face the loss of about two million native speakers of Irish, which made up about a quarter of the total Irish population (47). The remaining part of the inhabitants was now exposed to the English language more strongly than ever before. He stresses the fact that Irish “has receded greatly over the past 150 years and continues to do so” (*ibid.* 22). Hence, Hickey speaks of an ambivalent feeling the Irish have towards the English language today. Although most Irish people continue to speak English as their native language they face this fact with certain reluctance as Irish is considered being a carrier of native culture (Hickey 22). English, by contrast, is the language of the former occupier. To give an example, between 1801 and 1811 45 per cent of the population were Irish speakers, between 1831 and 1841 the number decreased to only 28 per cent of Irish speakers (Mac Póilin 1996, 138). Hickey has also pointed out: “To accord English equal status with Irish in the consciousness of the people would be somehow to openly acknowledge the language of the former colonisers” (22). In Northern Ireland the relation to language looks a bit different, however.

In the North nowadays Irish is not accepted as an official language at all, although it had been the native language of a majority of Ulster’s¹⁰ inhabitants before the seventeenth century (Hickey 94). The Good Friday Agreement¹¹ ensures the “tolerance of linguistic diversity” (Chríost 45) including the Irish language but no official promotion is taking place. Due to the immigration of English and Scottish settlers to that area the Irish language became almost extinct as the Irish were relocated to areas where no immigrants lodged, thus disconnecting them from their former lives (*ibid.* 94). All of Ireland, but especially the North, had to suffer from the Tudor invasion during the sixteenth century. Following the Nine Years’ War¹² (1594-1603) in which the English defeated Irish and Spanish resistance

⁹ As Catholics were forbidden to teach, hedge schools were the only possibility for Catholics to get at least some education. As the name implies hedge schools were mainly situated in rural areas where “migrant teachers offered tuition to individuals or small groups” (Hickey 41).

¹⁰ The province of Ulster consists actually of nine counties: Antrim, Down, Armagh, Derry, Tyrone and Fermanagh, all of which make up Northern Ireland, plus Donegal, Monaghan and Cavan that lie in the South (Hickey 85).

¹¹ The Good Friday Agreement was signed on 10 April 1998. It launched a new system of power-sharing in the context of a devolved Northern Ireland Assembly (Mitchell xi).

¹² Before the Nine Years’ War the O’Neill clan was the leading force in the province of Ulster. As resistance against English rule had formed in this area, the Spanish agreed to support the Irish

quite a number of Gaelic leaders left Ireland in 1607, which became known as the Flight of the Earls. After their leave their lands were obtained by James I and the plantation of Ulster was decided in 1609. Other than in the case of the South, however, the North was settled by Scots and Englishmen from the north of England. Hickey thus argues that “due to the Scottish and English background of these immigrants the division of Ireland came to be as much linguistic as political and confessional” (Hickey 87). Nevertheless some areas remained in which Irish was still spoken into the early twentieth century¹³.

In the region of Belfast there has been a strong coming back of the Irish language recently. In 1969 eleven West Belfast families established their own Gael-tacht Community. Having learned Irish themselves as a second language their children should be brought up similar to native Irish speakers. Thus, Irish should become the language of home, neighbourhood and school. Therefore these families founded their own Bunscoil Ghaelach, an Irish-medium Primary School (Maguire 72ff). The main reason for this undertaking was that they wanted to “give their children something of value which they had missed” (ibid. 74). Undoubtedly, also many people in the North still count the Irish language to their cultural background. The phenomenon of a native Irish speaking community is one that remains connected mainly to the South, though.

2.2. Constructing a Community – Northern Ireland: One Nation, Two National Identities

By taking a closer look on Northern Ireland we find a society that is deeply divided on various grounds, which this paper will investigate. Among other things this is reflected in the many political parties that stand for diverse and opposing opinions and beliefs like the two best known Sinn Féin¹⁴ and the Ulster Unionist Party¹⁵, the latter one supporting the union with Great Britain while Sinn Féin still promotes a united Ireland. Generally speaking one will find two larger religious communities – Catholics and Protestants – that have been living together in the same place for almost four hundred years and that have been struggling with each

rebellion in 1601 by sending an army of over 3000. In the battle of Kinsale (1601) both armies were defeated (Hickey 87).

¹³ (1) West Ulster in Co. Fermanagh, (2) South-east Ulster in north Co. Louth, (3) Mid Ulster in north Co. Tyrone, (4) North-east Ulster on Rathlin Island (Hickey 94).

¹⁴ Sinn Féin (Irish for “We Ourselves”) is a nationalist party and the political wing of the IRA. The two are frequently referred to as “the republican movement”. Its aim has always been the end of the union with Great Britain and instead an Irish Republic containing all thirty-two counties (Mitchel xii).

¹⁵ The Ulster Unionist Party was the major unionist party in Northern Ireland up until 2003 before it was outrun by the Democratic Unionist Party (now Northern Ireland’s largest Unionist party, founded by Ian Paisley and currently led by Peter Robinson). It governed the land from 1921 to 1972 (“Northern Ireland Political Parties”, Whyte).

other for almost as long, resulting in suffering and losses on both sides. The twentieth century, especially the times of the recent Troubles that began in the late 1960s and lasted well into the 1990s, put the Northern Irish people to the test. Only the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 has offered the possibility of a lasting peace process. But why have these two communities had such problems living peacefully together, and why does it seem to be impossible for them to fuse into one nation? Certainly religion has played an important aspect here but this is clearly not the main reason for division. What has changed over the years that made peace possible, and is it really going to be a final peace?

When talking about a community or a nation it should at first be made clear what such a construct is, what it can contain and what it is built of. Benedict Anderson offers some key reasons for the development of group belonging and feeling in his influential work *Imagined Communities*. His first definition of a nation in general is the following:

It is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion (Anderson 5-6).

In the case of Northern Ireland this principle of the nation does not seem to work properly, though. Communion can be understood both in a religious way or in a more general way in the sense of a collective. But neither do most of the Northern Irish inhabitants share a common feeling of community nor a feeling of shared faiths. It appears to be not only one coherent nation but rather two nations encompassed by a larger one that is called Northern Ireland. This assumption is backed by Anderson's argument that the imagined community is formed of a "horizontal comradeship" and fraternal feelings (7) with people willing to die for their beliefs and for their fellow citizens. During the course of history it could be seen that people in Northern Ireland were indeed willing to die for their nation (and some of them still are) only that the nation was not Northern Ireland but recollections of the Republic of Ireland or Great Britain respectively, depending on which side of the divided community one stood. On the level of each individual religious community, however – that is the Catholic community and the Protestant community – Anderson's theory can be applied. The same applies for radical political groups like the Irish Republican Army or the Ulster Volunteer Force, who time and again proved that they were ready to die for their own interpretation of a greater cause, although one also has to take into account that their primary goal was actually harming members of the other group instead of becoming martyrs themselves. Cathal McCall, who is engaged with nationalism and identity in Europe, describes the nation as a "politically self-aware ethnic community" (19),

which supports the assumption that Northern Ireland indeed consists of two nations, one ethnically Irish the other ethnically English/Scottish.

In 1880 the French philosopher Ernest Renan offered the following description of a community in his essay "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?":

The nation, even as the individual, is the end product of a long period of work, sacrifice and devotion. The worship of ancestors is understandably justifiable, since our ancestors have made us what we are [...] To have common glories in the past, a common will in the present; to have accomplished great things together, to wish to do so again, that is the essential condition for being a nation (Renan 17).

Renan's point of view of the nation was thus much simpler than Anderson's. For him the nation consisted of a "soul, a spiritual principle" (ibid. 17). The only two terms that were essential for this assumption were the past and the present, namely what a people had shared together and that they were also inclined to continue to do so. This concept might have been valid at some point in the past but it does not seem to be the only adequate source for the present day as most nations indeed remember their history but do not solely live on it anymore. Still, some of these aspects are important to understand why people share a common sense of belonging. Max Weber then in 1948 supposed the idea that nations were a concept that meant to "exact from certain groups of men a specific sentiment of solidarity in the face of other groups" (Weber 21-22) In this sense Weber rather talks about a value system that forms a nation.

Today we speak of nations and nation states as a matter of course. But according to Anderson, national feelings arose much earlier and can be traced back to the eighteenth century; to a time when ideas of Enlightenment and rationalist secularism spread throughout Europe. Religion lost part of its importance; values and morals changed. Before the term nationalism came up, however, in Anderson's opinion the two dominating powers that made up a sense of belonging together were the religious community and the dynastic realm. Christendom for instance united people by a sacred language and a written script (Anderson 11ff).

Latin was the language of the church in the European world, thus it was the only language taught in medieval times and also the only language that books were published in. In the sixteenth century, however, this gradually changed and Latin began to lose its ubiquity. On the one hand Great Britain was reaching out for new territories. The exploration of the non-European world led to a new geographical but also cultural knowledge. On the other hand publishing in the vernacular languages instead of Latin had become popular by the seventeenth century (Anderson 16ff). As Anderson notes, "the fall of Latin exemplified a larger process in which the sacred communities integrated by old sacred languages were gradually fragmented, pluralized, and territorialized" (18). In a word, the international community held up by Latin lost its base. Instead, and as a result of that "a

focus on individual identity and its place within the wider community came under scrutiny” as McCall has observed (29).

Subsequently, print-capitalism opened up new ways for the imagined community. What followed were smaller communities that from then on were united by superior forms of spoken languages. Anderson describes three paradigms that “laid the basis for national consciousness” (44). First of all print-languages formed an intermediate level between the spoken vernaculars and Church Latin.

Speakers of the huge variety of Frenches, Englishes, or Spanishes, who might find it difficult or even impossible to understand one another in conversation, became capable of comprehending one another via print and paper. In the process, they gradually became aware of the hundreds of thousands, even millions, of people in their particular language-field, and at the same time that only those hundreds of thousands, or millions, so belonged. These fellow-readers, to whom they were connected through print, formed, in their secular, particular, visible invisibility, the embryo of the nationally imagined community (Anderson 44).

What Anderson is essentially saying here is that print-media tied people together in a new way. While many people could not understand each other properly due to different vernaculars they now could due to a shared language in printed form.

Secondly, Anderson argues that print-capitalism distinctly fixed languages and thirdly, that print-capitalism helped to produce “languages-of-power” (44). With the latter he refers to vernacular languages that were closer to the print-language than others. Speakers of these forms of languages were thus in advantage while others lost their prestige. This “new form of imagined community”, in Anderson’s terms, “set the stage for the modern nation” (46).

In the case of Ireland – both North and South – one can see that Anderson’s concept is easily applicable. On the one hand Irish ceased to exist due to the reasons already explained and English became the superior language on the island both in everyday speech and writing (and the only language taught in schools). This clearly shows how one language was superseded by another one and is evidence for the “languages-of-power” theory. On the other hand on a different level Irish served as a marker for cultural belonging that united those who wanted to set themselves apart from the British. Print-media here again served as a means to reinstall the forgotten language. Hence, with the foundation of the Gaelic League in 1893, Gaelic Irish regained its importance in print-media as well as concerning identity issues. Several bilingual newspapers were published by them. With the help of these newspapers and most notably the *Nation* journalists “promoted the aim of an independent, rural, Gaelic Ireland, free from the colonial rule of an alien, industrial, English neighbor.” Other newspapers like the *Connaught Telegraph* or the *Kerry Sentinel* delivered information about a national identity to the smaller rural communities (McCall 30). In the latter half of the twentieth century televi-

sion became a further factor to spread messages strengthening the Catholic community during the Civil Rights Marches in Northern Ireland (ibid. 30/31). These first approaches to re-establish an Irish identity show how print-media (and later other forms of media) can strengthen a smaller community both via messages partly written in Irish but also to make nationalist approaches public. Thus, print-media not only supports languages-of-power but also language communities that want to express their common belonging. As language in general and languages used in print-media form a central part of Anderson's theory the next chapter will deal with the significance that language has played in Ireland.

Identity and identity construction in relation to culture are one of the major topics of this paper which makes a short definition necessary as well. Chris Barker describes a difference between the two terms in that culture is a form of process whereas cultural identity refers to ethnicity, class, race and so forth (Barker 382). Stuart Hall furthermore argues that there are at least two ways in which cultural identity may be described. On the one hand it can be seen as "one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self', hiding inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves', which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common" (Hall 1999, 393). Cultural identities thus "reflect the common historical experiences" (ibid. 393). On the other hand, according to Hall, difference also plays an important role for the creation of identity (ibid. 394). Besides, identities are never fixed entities but constantly undergo changes and are "always in progress" (Hall 1998, 2). This twofold cultural imprint is also stressed by Homi K. Bhabha in the terms of "baffling likeness" and "banal divergence" that constitute the cultural hybrid (Bhabha 1998, 54) which is discussed further in chapter 3.3.2.

Máiréad Nic Craith in addition stresses the fact that identity is always multi-layered and not two-dimensional as often depicted in the case of Northern Ireland. In this sense she refers to Michael Billig's term "pastiche personality" which assumes that identity adapts to different contexts (Nic Craith 2003, 5), as for example Jake in *Eureka Street* who belongs to the Catholic community but not to the Irish-speaking or republican community, or Saoirse in *Where They Were Missed* who belongs to the Catholic and Irish-speaking community but is not fully accepted as such as she in the eyes of her classmates in the South belongs to the Northern Irish community. As identities are progress-like this means for Northern Ireland that "identities are being reshaped" and "new significant others emerge" (ibid. 6). At the same time Nic Craith points out that there are not simply two communities, either. Instead, the two larger groups of Protestants and Catholics consist of many "competing factions and interest-groups." Many people are even members of a number of communities. Thus the two larger groups are divided into the nationalist community, the Irish-speaking community, the Catholic community, et cetera (ibid. 8). Conflict in Northern Ireland, in her view, results in the fact that "groups [...] essentialize cultures, exaggerate differences and usually construct them where they do not exist" (ibid. 10). Although Nic Craith is right when talk-

ing about the many different communities there are existing and the perception of pastiche personalities, this paper mainly refers to the two largest groups of Catholics and Protestants for reasons of simplicity and to make things graspable. Nevertheless, sub-groups such as nationalists or Irish speakers are considered as well as they appear throughout the examined novels.

2.3. On National Consciousness

“The language spoken by somebody and his or her identity as a speaker of this language are inseparable: This is surely a piece of knowledge as old as human speech itself. Language acts are acts of identity” (Tabouret-Keller 315), asserts Andrée Tabouret-Keller. This statement surely seems to make sense, especially if one thinks of oneself and the languages one speaks. Most people have one mother tongue and are able to speak one or more second languages. Usually the language acquired during childhood is the language with which a person identifies the most. Furthermore, this is also commonly the same language relatives, friends, acquaintances and neighbours speak. Language thus connects a person to the people around him/herself and therefore creates a certain feeling of community. If one remembers the families who tried to reinstall an Irish language community in Belfast one also sees how important even a once lost language can become for one’s cultural background and identity.

Tabouret-Keller’s argument continues as follows: “The link between language and identity is often so strong that a single feature of language use suffices to identify someone’s membership in a given group” (317). This can both happen in positive and in negative ways. Born in Belfast Saoirse Pentland, the narrator in Lucy Caldwell’s *Where They Were Missed*, is living in the Republic of Ireland where she is learning Irish at school. Although she is receiving very good marks and is one of the best Irish speakers in class she time and again has to experience that she is actually an outsider because everybody knows she is from the North. Talking about a new girl in class she says:

It doesn’t seem to matter that I’ve lived here for nearly ten years; it doesn’t seem to matter that I’m almost always top of the class in Irish, or that I go to Mass just like the rest of them; none of it matters, because when it comes down to it, even after a couple of months – a matter of weeks, really – Clodagh Mulcahy is less of an outsider than I’ll ever be (Caldwell 116).

No matter how hard Saoirse tries, in the south of Ireland she will always be perceived as a member of another community although she has Irish roots as well. Nevertheless her aunt and uncle seem to be especially proud of her good marks in Irish. This is stressed when Saoirse tells her uncle she came second in an Irish test she took: “You did? He beams. That’s my girl, ey” (ibid. 90). Other school subjects do not seem as important as the Irish lessons. Saoirse is in a conflict here.

Although she feels Irish she does not belong to her classmates and friends in the way other Irish girls do. Being the daughter of a Protestant father from the North and a Catholic mother from the southern Gaeltacht, Saoirse's background does not allow her to be fully integrated in neither the group of Irish people nor the community of Protestant Northern Irish people. When she drives back to the North in order to visit her father Saoirse stops at a newsagent's in a Protestant area to ask for directions. She suddenly realises her accent's Southern Irish touch and is carefully observed by two women in the shop. "I am glad to hurry on. I am a Greyabbey Pentland, I want to say; I belong here, too; but like Derry, this isn't a familiar place, either" (Caldwell 224).

Belonging to two different communities Saoirse at the same time does not belong to either of the two, so Tabouret-Keller's claim is reversed in this case. Membership seems to be only valid for people coming from one group, not for people of mixed descent as this feature rather turns the individual into an outsider who is observed with mixed feelings than into an insider who is welcomed by both communities.

That the Irish language is an "indicator of cultural identity" is also stressed by linguist Diarmait MacGiolla Chríost (45). Still the majority of the population believes "that the Irish language is an integral part of the ideology of Irish Republicanism and Nationalist separatism" (ibid. 46). In Robert McLiam Wilson's *Eureka Street* this conviction is used to mark off nationalists from non-nationalist inhabitants of Belfast. The only characters speaking the native language here are people promoting their Irish character. Aoirghe Jenkins, for instance, strongly believes that Northern Ireland should be reunited with the Republic (McLiam Wilson 98). She also sympathises with the Just Us, a group of nationalists who sometimes uses violence to make its goals plain. When there is a demonstration against the IRA planting bombs on the Belfast to Dublin line it is the Just Us who turn the peaceful event into a violent scenario with "peaceful heads [...] being kicked" (ibid. 195). When Jake Jackson, one of the main characters and part-time narrator of the book, meets Aoirghe for the first time he at first cannot understand her name and even thinks she is coughing when introducing herself, which leads to a tense atmosphere between them (ibid. 92). For Aoirghe her English surname "Jenkins" is a bit of a problem. Jake, however, finds it hilarious: "I passionately wanted not to laugh – but Jenkins. Aoirghe Jenkins. It must have broken her republican heart that she wasn't called something Irish like Ghoarghthgbk or Na Goomhnhnle. I laughed. Like a drain" (ibid. 292). In this scene the difference between Jake and Aoirghe is underlined once more. For Aoirghe her English surname is a burden that stands against everything she is fighting for. Yet, it makes up a part of her that she cannot deny. Jake in contrast can only think of strange sounding Irish surnames that are impossible to pronounce, thus mocking Aoirghe's longing for a true Irish heritage.

A young waitress who chats up Jake in a bar whispers the words “*Tiocfaidh ar La*” in his ear, which is ironically said to sound like Chuckie’s name, Chuckie Lurgan. As Jake explains, it is a nationalist rallying cry and means “Our day will come” (ibid. 150). Because naming in Northern Ireland very often bears the mark of the British occupier this example turns the table: Protestant Chuckie’s name suddenly resembles more the Irish than the British, an additional hint that both Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland unite parts of both Ireland and Great Britain. Another time the waitress greets the guys with “*Slán*” and continues to talk in Irish to Jake. Although everybody at the table is of Catholic origin nobody understands the “nationalist waitress” (ibid. 295) and “freedom-fighting waitress” as Jake calls her (ibid. 296).

These scenes already hint at the ambiguous characters Patten is talking about (see introduction). By giving Aoirghe an English surname and making Chuckie’s name sound like an Irish rallying cry McLiam Wilson stresses the fact that Northern Ireland does not consist of a black-and-white society but that multiculturalism and the merging of identities has been there for ages. It is the same with Saoirse Pentland whose name is a blending of her mother Deirdre O’Conor’s Irish heritage and her father Colin Pentland’s English/Scottish origin. As these approaches easily lead to theories of hybridity they are going to be further investigated in chapter three.

Conflict in Northern Ireland is rooted deeply in society in manifold ways. While language on the one hand can serve as a marker for a positive communal consciousness it on the other hand can also lead to misunderstandings and hostilities towards another group. For Protestants there can develop a strange situation when fellow Northern Irish citizens are able to speak another language that sounds as foreign to them as for example Japanese. As English is still the first language of most of the Northern Irish people the conflict here results in an imagined language conflict, to use Anderson’s term. Aodán Mac Póilín argues that conflict arises by ways of definition:

Unlike other societies, linguistic conflict here does not involve two communities speaking different languages. Instead, it reflects a conflict between two mainly English-speaking political blocks which define themselves in relation to their aspirational or emblematic linguistic identity, ultimately traceable to their sense of origin (Mac Póilín 1999, 109).

Referring back to Anderson the Catholic and the Protestant community are imagined language communities because each group defines itself with the help of certain aspects – in this case the aspect of language – and thus conceives the community as an “horizontal comradeship” (Anderson 7) as mentioned earlier. It is important to notice, however, that the position that language takes is an aspect that results from the past (a quick reminder: Irish has lost its importance as a community language rapidly since the 18th and early 19th centuries [Mac Póilín

1999, 113]). As Mac Póilin has stated correctly, Irish has become a matter of identity for many Northern Irish Catholics as Ulster-Scots has become for a couple of Protestants. Irish especially has a strong connotation to Catholic nationalism in the North. Ulster-Scots thus became the Protestant answer to a non-Irish but unionist cultural identity (Mac Póilin 1999, 109). A survey undertaken by Eddie Kerr on behalf of Naíscoil na Rinne in Derry in 1994 gives an interesting insight to what Protestants think of the usage of the Irish language:

A nineteen-year old youth thought that all Irish-speakers were ‘Taigs’ (Catholics), that the Irish language was ‘Taig-talk’, and that everybody who spoke it was in the IRA. A 51-year old unemployed shipyard worker said: I mean it’s a Catholic thing and to me it says it’s theirs and nothing to do with us. It’s a political statement made by those who speak it (Mac Póilin 1999, 109).

Mac Póilin notes that the interviewed persons categorically made no distinction between Catholicism and nationalism. The statements rather reveal a strong generalisation.

Interestingly, *Eureka Street* takes a similar point of view as all Irish speaking characters in the book have an affiliation towards nationalist ideas. The proposal here only works in one way, however. While everybody speaking Irish is of Catholic origin, not everybody being Catholic automatically is interested in the Irish language. Jake and his friends, although being Catholic, are neither able to speak Irish, nor do they insist on a united Ireland. Aoirge Jenkins, Shague Ghinthoss, an anti-English Catholic poet from Tyrone who is nevertheless loved by the English (McLiam Wilson 173), and the Irish speaking waitress in contrast refer to the worldview as presented by the interviewees above as they combine Catholicism and nationalism alike and indeed try to make a political statement by using Irish.

Yet, in *Eureka Street* the language conflicts arise not only between Protestants and Catholics but also amongst Catholics themselves. For instance, Jake’s observations of the Irish language and of Irishness generally have an underlying sense of irony. One night he and his friends accidentally take part in an Irish poetry reading: “An Evening of Irish Poetry Tonight 8 p.m. [a sign in the bar] said. Oh, fuck, I replied” (McLiam Wilson 172). The poems are all about the natural beauties of the country but Jake notices “that these were all nationalist hedges, republican berries, unProtestant flowers and extremely Irish spades” (ibid. 175). Not everybody present is able to understand the Irish texts, however, and they are translated into English (a hint that Irish is not really the main language of all Catholics). Finally, Jake expects boos and catcalls for the sentimental tone but the audience loves the poems. “Weren’t there any Protestants here?” (ibid. 176), he wonders. Eve Patten argues that the underlying and “pervasive” irony in *Eureka Street* thus offers the characters a “distance from which to survey and destabilize the configurations of home” (Patten 130). One could say that Jake has evolved

from the communal Northern Irish world and is able to see the old conflict from a different perspective.

The language aspect raised here shows a connection between the usage of Irish and the nationalist topics raised within the poetry. It also proves Anderson's argument that communities are united by the same language. Those in *Eureka Street* who share an Irish identity and (unlike Jake) want to express it, feel they belong together when listening to Irish poetry. Although many people are not able to understand it the printed aspect of this old cultural marker – namely the Gaelic language – confirms this particular Irish community in their identity. Nevertheless, it also demonstrates Anderson's point that certain vernacular languages in the past became superior to others, in this case English.

It is important to note, however, that Irish generally is more of a symbol to artificially uphold an Irish identity. In everyday life English is the tool to communicate for most people. "Any influence from Irish almost certainly derives from historical, rather than contemporary, contact between the two languages," observes Alison Henry (7). When speaking English, all Belfastians use the same dialect and it cannot be told to which ethnic community the speaker belongs. "Although Belfast is known to be in many ways a divided society, with often little contact between the Protestant and Catholic communities, Belfast English is not distinguished, either phonologically or grammatically, along religious lines" (ibid. 8). If any difference occurs at all it is between classes (working and middle-class) or generations (older and younger speakers) (ibid. 8). So, even if there is hardly anything those two communities share, they are united by a common dialect of English, one that is different from the English spoken in Britain or elsewhere. At the same time this form of dialect is considered showing "a lack of education", and in working life standard English is to be preferred (ibid. 8). When Saoirse is in the south of Ireland, shortly after having left the North, the cleaning lady of the school asks her where she is from due to her "funny accent" (Caldwell 138). The feature of the dialect's bad reputation is also expressed by Chuckie although he uses the same dialect as everybody else: "Chuckie was ashamed of the way his fellow citizens spoke. The accents of his city appalled him [...] He longed for elocutionary elegance" (McLiam Wilson 36ff). On another level this could also mean that Chuckie does not agree with the situation in Belfast. Although people try to make opposing political stands it all amounts to the same 'language', the language of sectarianism. Chuckie in contrast like Jake expects something better to come, still he himself at the beginning is not much different from everybody else.

Considering Anderson's community theory and definitions of identity it thus can be seen that Northern Ireland indeed incorporates two 'nations'. Although the whole population belongs to the English-speaking community some people – mostly Catholics – have also referred back to traditional Irish community facets such as the Irish language in order to define an identity. Obviously, identity is not

only arranged through language. Further aspects will be considered in chapter three.

3. Irish Identity and Stereotyping

“Taigs! Filthy stinking Ta-igs!”
Where They Were Missed, Lucy Caldwell
 (2006, 22)

Like many colonised peoples the Catholics in Northern Ireland have come into a diasporic situation (although in 2001 Catholics made up 40 per cent of Northern Irish population and are losing their minority status (Mitchell 2006, 22)). This situation surely differs from that of African slaves brought to North and South America and it differs much from the Jewish history of living outside the Holy Land, but in the case of the Irish it is possible to speak of diaspora as well, as they were indeed not taken forcefully away from their homeland but their homeland was occupied, altered and gradually transferred into a country with a generally British lifestyle. Consequently, the Irish had to adapt to a different mode of living. However, the question remains whether Northern Ireland can be included in the field of British colonialism. There are several aspects that speak for this assumption, which will be discussed in the following chapters.

3.1. The Colonial Discourse – “England’s Oldest Colony”

“It’s like a war.”
One by One in the Darkness, Deirde Madden
 (1996, 95)

“More than three-quarters of the people living in the world today have had their lives shaped by the experience of colonialism” state Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin in their joint work *The Empire Writes Back* (1). This is also valid for Ireland. Since the beginning of its early conquest in 1171 Ireland has been time and again subject to British intrusions. As one of the first colonies Ireland thus stands at the beginning of a long era of British imperialism and could theoretically be grouped together with for instance India, the Caribbean, Japan, Australia and parts of Africa, to name just a few. Simultaneously, critics for a long time had to face the problem whether to include Irish literature in the series of postcolonial writing at all, since the Irish as “functionaries” of the British had also been engaged in colonial affairs overseas (Döring 97). Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin for example do not include Ireland in their list of postcolonial literatures though they acknowledge it is worth examining Ireland in these terms (Ashcroft 24). That it

should not be left out completely of the postcolonial context is one aspect this paper aims at showing in reference to contemporary Northern Irish fiction.

Alongside Malta, Gibraltar and Minorca, Ireland takes a special position as it is one of the few European places of British colonisation and thus was excluded from the prevailing Eurocentrism described by Edward Said (221). While the great European imperial powers put on the role of observers that “studied, classified and verified” (ibid. 221/222) other peoples Ireland belonged to that very group studied itself. The system “subordinated them by banishing their identities, except as a lower order of being, from the culture and indeed the very idea of white Christian Europe” (ibid. 221/222). In the eyes of the British colonisers Ireland never fitted into this “white Christian Europe”.

British writers such as Edmund Spenser have repeatedly put the Irish on a lower level. In his essay *A View of the Present State of Ireland* Spenser describes the Irish as descendants of the Scythians¹⁶ and that they were once every year turned into wolves: “Also the Scythians sayd, that they were once every yere turned into wolves, and soe it is wrighten of the Irish” (R. Morris 634). Tobias Döring also points to Charles Kingsley who, while on a journey through Ireland, portrayed the Irish in a letter to his wife as “white chimpanzees”, clearly perturbed by the fact that the Irish did not look any different from their British occupiers (Döring 98). The comparison to animals thus subordinated the Irish to their British occupiers and reminds of the treatment of American natives or Indians as savages. “It is important to note how Ireland has been specifically positioned over many centuries as an Other against which a British state formulated itself” (127), Sabina Sharkey notices. This state of otherness prevailed well into the twentieth century and still has not vanished completely. Many Northern Irish Protestants still feel unfamiliar with their Catholic fellow citizens (and the Irish living in the Republic) although they have been living next to each other for centuries. Asked in an interview about their notions towards the Irish a Protestant woman from County Down answered: “I don’t feel anything in common with my Irish counterparts – they feel like strangers to me” (Mitchell 2006, 65).

Said argues that one way of opposition for a colonised people lies in developing a nationalism that unites the people by a common history, religion and language against the occupying power. A problem occurring here is the fact that resistance was led by the better educated classes who in turn were educated or “produced” by the oppressor (Said 223). Said also mentions two political moments that can enable the way to resistance: The first point is the realisation of Western or European imperialism. Out of this new gained consciousness the oppressed are now able to claim the end of imperial power. The second moment then occurred after World War II when “conventional nationalism was revealed to be both insufficient and crucial.” Out of this a stronger urge for liberation arose that even

¹⁶ Scythians: An ancient nomadic people of Iranian descent living in central Asia and later southern Russia in the 8th and 7th centuries BC (Britannica 576).

included the use of military revolt (ibid. 224) as it can also be seen in the case of Northern Ireland during the Troubles. Concerning the whole of Ireland one can take the Irish Renaissance, which came into being around 1890, as the moment when the Irish realised the importance of their long subjugated culture and that it was time to stand up against British rule and change the current state of affairs. Said describes how a colonised people have to rediscover their own identity:

For the native, the history of colonial servitude is inaugurated by loss of the locality to the outsider; its geographical identity must thereafter be searched for and somehow restored. Because of the presence of the colonizing outsider, the land is recoverable at first only through the imagination (Said 225).

Hence, before the south of Ireland gained its independence in 1921-2 the Irish had to reinvent their culture by invoking the Gaelic language and the old myths in order to mark themselves off from the British as these traditions had been connected to their country for centuries. Its revival is what is expressed by Said with the term *imagination*. To stick to the old language and myths again united the Irishmen in a new form, Anderson's *imagined community* (see chapter 2.2). For the excluded brothers in the North the struggle for an independent self continued, however.

Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin illustrate several stages of literary production in the postcolonial development. As a first stage they mention colonial writings during the imperial period. These writings were done by an "elite whose primary identification is with the colonizing power" (Ashcroft 5), like travellers or settlers. It is important to notice here that these writings should not be mistaken for cultural writings by natives of the invaded country. As a second important stage they refer to the emergence of literary works by the natives themselves. "The producers signify by the very fact of writing in the language of the dominant culture that they have temporarily or permanently entered a specific and privileged class endowed with the language" (ibid. 5). However, these works were not fully developed yet, due to the censorship of colonial control. Only the people in charge decided what was to be published and what not (ibid. 6). In the case of Ireland this development is somewhat more difficult to locate than in other colonial territories as the process of colonisation began so early and the Irish language and customs were gradually superseded by British ones. Yet, as Döring has observed, in Ireland these stages took place, too. He mentions Oscar Wilde as a prominent example who by taking on the air of a British gentleman showed that British attitudes were not superior at all but accessible to theoretically everyone:

[...] By taking on the idiom and guises of the English aristocracy, like in a cultural masquerade, and by making them his chosen medium of mimicry and self-invention, Wilde can be seen to undermine their status of superiority and rob them of exclusive claims (Döring 99).

In dressing and writing Wilde was as English as the English themselves, if not even more so.

When it comes to Northern Ireland, however, one cannot simply talk about the postcolonial as the North still belongs to the realm of the United Kingdom. The process of independence, whether territorially or in terms of self-consciousness, has not been completed, yet, and it is uncertain if it ever will be. Regarding literature both Catholic and Protestant writers have largely dealt with problems that are neither particularly Irish or British, but with Northern Irish topics. Central here is not always the fight for Irish independence or continuing British rule but the results of that: conflict, personal loss and grief. The novels dealt with in this paper, *Eureka Street*, *Where They Were Missed*, and *One by One in the Darkness*, do not take stands for either a Protestant or a Catholic side but deal with the sorrows those concerned have to face.

3.2. Hints of Nationalism in a Changing Society

"She sings one last song, the song that Emer-of-the-Yellow-Hair sings to Cúchulainn whom she loves and whose heart she knows is leaving her. Mammy sings it softly, like a lullaby, and her green eyes are big and dark and shining."

Where They Were Missed, Lucy Caldwell
(2006, 19)

"Two cultures, two identities, inhabiting the same spot but travelling in their hearts towards different destinations" (Longley and Kiberd vii): This quotation by Mary McAleese nicely sums up what many (but not all) people living in Northern Ireland have experienced at one point in history. The two cultures she speaks of furthermore have a different concept of belonging. While for example Catholics in Northern Ireland put a strong emphasis on communality, Protestants rather believe in the individual citizen, as has been observed by Nic Craith (2004, 111).

Nationalism in Ireland as well as in Northern Ireland has a long tradition and becomes easier to understand when reconsidering Said's argument that nationalism is a form of resistance, delimitation and, in a sense, liberation from the colonial power. As the Northern Irish Protestants were representing relics of that subjugation the divide became almost insurmountable. Between 1900 and the 1916 Easter Rising the Irish Parliamentary Party was the leading political party of the time. Its goal was a united Ireland. Shortly after, Sinn Féin emerged in 1912 for two reasons, unionist resistance towards a Home Rule¹⁷ Ireland and the Irish

¹⁷ Home rule means the achievement of self-government by a dependent political unit of a central government. In Irish history Home Rule became a movement to secure Irish independence from Great Britain within the British Empire (Britannica 23).

Parliamentary Party's readiness to accept the exclusion of the six northern counties out of a united Ireland. During the Anglo-Irish War of 1919-22 the IRA was founded. Despite their seemingly dominant presence during the conflicts – especially in the news abroad – the IRA was never supported either by the majority of the Northern Irish population or by the majority of nationalists, although it was connected to its political wing Sinn Féin.

The stagnating political process in Northern Ireland was reactivated in 1967 when Catholic protestors of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) paraded the streets with their slogan "British rights for British subjects." The rest of the world was shocked when it saw the use of police batons on a peaceful demonstrating crowd, which led the British government to pass a reform package. In 1970 the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) was founded by Civil Rights Movement supporting MPs. The SDLP now stood for a moderate nationalist approach to politics. With the fail of the Sunningdale Agreement¹⁸, increasing IRA and loyalist violence during the 1980s and the objection of unionists to accept their Irish fellow citizens, Sinn Féin reemerged as a serious political force in 1982¹⁹. Six years later the SDLP repeated their attempts for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Its party leader John Hume together with Sinn Féin's top man Gerry Adams entered talks that led to the Downing Street declaration²⁰ of 1993 and the paramilitary ceasefires of 1994, and that finally resulted in the Good Friday agreement (Mallon and Phoenix 4ff). Similar movements and political parties developed equally on the Protestant unionist side.

This short historical outline of Irish nationalism shows most clearly the fact that almost everything connected to Northern Irish identity has political roots. "Nationalism [...] must be regarded as a core factor in any interpretation of the Northern Ireland conflict", Patrick Mitchel contends (17). Although I agree with Mitchel it is at the same time quite hard to find a coherent approach towards the

¹⁸ In 1973 an assembly formed by UUP, SDLP, and moderate Alliance Party members agreed on a devolved government for Northern Ireland with a power-sharing executive. For the first time since 1925 parties of Britain, southern Ireland and Northern Ireland met at Sunningdale, Great Britain to agree on a Council of Ireland in which ministers from both Irish governments should be present. In addition both members from the Irish Dáil and the Northern Irish Assembly should form a consultative assembly. Loyalist opposition in form of the anti-Sunningdale United Ulster Unionist Council (UUUP) that was formed by three main loyalist parties, followed by a general strike by the loyalist Ulster Worker's Council caused the downfall of the agreement in 1974 (Mulholland 94ff).

¹⁹ Sinn Féin gained 10 per cent of the vote in the 1982 Northern Ireland Assembly elections (Mallon and Phoenix 8).

²⁰ On 15 December 1993 both the British and the Irish government signed the Downing Street Declaration which promised "to foster agreement and reconciliation, leading to a new political framework [...] within Northern Ireland, for the whole island, and between these islands." How to convince most Protestants of this proposal was not mentioned, though. A first Downing Street Declaration had been issued by Britain's Prime Minister Harold Wilson in 1969, which stated "that only Northern Ireland could determine for itself whether the union with Britain be ended" (Mulholland 92, 132).

term nationalism. Besides Anderson's theory of print-capitalism, sharing the same myths and culture, living in the same area or territory, knowing about the same symbols and rituals or speaking the same language are just some characteristics that unite people of one nation and separate them from another (ibid. 48). These key factors are also mentioned by Nic Craith who summarises that "the national community portrays itself as a distinct people with a unique history, language, religion and homeland" which "demands the loyalty of its people in the form of ethnic loyalty" (Nic Craith 2003, 37). Frederick Boal and David Livingstone, too, regard ethnicity as a source for nationalism and conclude that "the process of ethnic elaboration became part of the process of nation building" (Boal, Livingstone 163ff).

It is the nature of the human being to want to belong to something or to some group. The group implies security, acceptance, perhaps respect. Being completely on one's own can cause severe problems for the concerned individual. But the levels of belonging vary. This can begin with what family one belongs to, what friends one chooses, what school one goes to, what sports team one prefers, what country or even what continent one comes from. "The formation of national identity is one component of the search for personal identity and an essential function of nationalism is to interpret and make sense of the modern world" Mitchel argues (49).

The search for belonging goes much deeper, however. Finding an identity does not only mean finding a certain group one likes and that accepts one in return but to share a deeper meaning of a common culture. While Anderson speaks of the imagined community of the nation, Mitchel adds that the whole world is an imagined construct "consisting of a host of independent nation states in which each nation seeks recognition and acceptance" (51). He also alludes to a point made by Montserrat Guibernau when he says that belonging to a nation makes a person feel being part of something that "transcends their own existence" and that the advancement of the nation was normally seen as something important and special (ibid.51). Northern Ireland had always been in the dilemma that its inhabitants, caught between the opposing powers of Catholic Nationalism and Protestant Unionism, have never acted in concert:

Unionists view themselves as part of the UK whereas nationalists see themselves in the context of a thirty-two county Ireland. Liberal unionists imagine themselves as members of the Great British State whereas nationalists think in terms of the Irish cultural nation. Not only do unionists and nationalists think in terms of different geographical territories, there are different senses of nation-state for each. Unionists primarily think in terms of an imagined political community, whereas nationalists have a stronger sense of cultural nationhood (Nic Craith 2004, 115/116).

Nic Craith here argues that unionists conceive themselves to belong to the realm of Great Britain because they share the same ideas of politics and the same world view. Nationalists on the contrary rely much stronger on Irish cultural elements, which is also another form of imagined community, if an imagined cultural community. So politics and culture basically clash in conflict.

As already mentioned above, Mitchel names five aspects that are significant for forming a nation and thus nationalism. They are the worlds of nations, myths, culture, territory and symbols/rituals (Mitchel 50ff). Within Northern Irish society many of these aspects are received differently and are of different origins as well. Beginning with the world of nations the nation thus normally represents the will of the people who ideally all share a collective identity. It thus receives its legitimacy and can also represent the will of the people internationally, continues Mitchel to explain (ibid. 51). But what happens if a nation is not able to represent a consistent will because its people are not unified in their beliefs and do not share a common culture? In this respect Northern Ireland has failed for a long time as both Catholic and Protestant needs were neglected by the governing parties. By contrast, myth – as for instance in *Where They Were Missed* – links a nation to its imagined past and opens new ways for the future. Like the West Belfast families that thought it important to give their children back what they felt was missing (the Irish language), Saoirse's mother tells her children the tales of the legendary hero Cúchulainn because she thinks it is "important that the stories are told" (Caldwell 14). Although Deirdre Pentland is not a typical nationalist it here can be seen that she strongly clings to aspects of cultural nationhood as described by Nic Craith.

Two of the most obvious Protestant and Catholic myths in Northern Irish history are those of William of Orange and Cúchulainn. "Orange culture is central to the ideology of loyalism and marching is a particularly significant emblem of their sense of belonging to the region" (Nic Craith 2003, 38). Both the myth of Cúchulainn and the historical figure of William of Orange demonstrate Nic Craith's assertion that unionists identify with Great Britain and nationalists with their cultural background, as William of Orange stands for a political change in the history of Britain while Cúchulainn is a legendary Irish cultural hero. Nevertheless they have also something in common: The function of these historical myths and the commemoration of bygone days is to equip people with a "meaning beyond individual existence" (Mitchel 53). By celebrating the Orange Parades each and every year as by telling the stories of Cúchulainn and other Celtic heroes, people uphold a common past. It still remains imagined in the sense Anderson uses the term as it is a past nobody alive today has experienced in reality. In that sense I would argue that the cultural nationhood Nic Craith mentions also belongs to the realm of the imagined community (which has already been assumed in this paper but this is the positive proof). Culture remains an abstract notion by which thousands of people that have never seen each other feel united. It is just the image of a past that is

passed onwards. Culture then connects the individual to present values and patterns. Home, schools and churches communicate the necessary elements of cultural values and thus “culture has the capacity to form identity; it mediates the way people relate to themselves, others and to the world” (ibid. 54). A strong sense of loyalty to that cultural identity is the result. If nation and state are not congruent people are likely to set up cultural markers for their identity. Sources can be among others religion, language, music or folk traditions. The stress will be put on uniqueness and distinctiveness (ibid. 54). If people start overdoing this, the cultural clash will become too deep, however, and deep-rooted aversion as in the case between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland may be the result.

One of the stories Saoirse is told even reminds of the torn apart state of Ireland: Cúchulainn who is in love with Emer comes under the spell of Fand and is “going to betray Emer, and throw away everything that he has, for a love which isn’t love, for a love which is like a sickness, a mist that descends and chokes reason” (Caldwell 16). Emer here is presented as Ireland that loses part of itself to Fand, which resembles Great Britain. The union between Fand and Cúchulainn only causes an ill condition like the union of Irish and British elements in Northern Ireland.

Mystic and historic figures also used to prove of significance for nationalist wall murals. For this reason, Cúchulainn and Celtic warriors were frequently depicted in Belfast such as King Nuada depicted in figure 1.

Figure 1: King Nuada, mythological warrior of the Tuatha de Danaan, Springhill Avenue, Belfast 1987 (Rolston 57).

“Heroes and myths of bygone ages are used to provide a coherent and satisfying story of origins and history that act to unite group identity in the present” Mitchel stresses (52). For Saoirse’s mother Deirdre the stories of Cúchulainn provide her with a sense of her Irish background while living among Protestants who contrast

sharply in their way of celebrating William of Orange. As “unionists have relatively few myths” (McCall 23) the Williamite reorganisation of Ireland and for instance the Siege of Derry 1689 are central themes for them. For unionists the marching season thus represents the revolt against Catholic intrusions on hegemonic rights – “compromise would be to surrender” McCall explains (ibid. 23). In *Where They Were Missed* the Orange culture and Celtic myths clash time and again. For the older generation as Saoirse’s mother, myth makes up a vital part of their cultural kinship. Manus Dennehy, a farmer living nearby Saoirse’s aunt and uncle, is also a great story teller. Saoirse loves him for that and because “he knows all the stories of Donegal, and he knows all about the Síde” (Caldwell 121). He tells stories of Roan Inish (Seal Island), a small island outside of Gweebarra Bay and a selchie, a seal-girl, and knows a great deal about Tir-nan-Og, the otherworld in which Saoirse assumes her sister Daisy to be (ibid. 123ff). These stories always have a special meaning to the story-teller or the listener. Manus, for instance, connects the selchie to his dead mother who drowned in the sea when he was still a child (ibid. 127), Saoirse on the other hand wants to bring back Daisy from the “castle in the sky” in Tir-nan-Og where she believes Daisy to be residing after her death (ibid. 126). Generally, these myths also represent a connection to the countryside and the old traditions.

This leads directly to the aspect of territory which is often accompanied with strong emotional reactions. In times of war, for example, people are even willing to sacrifice their own lives for the nation. The reason for this is a strong bonding of the individual to the land and the existing beliefs (Mitchel 55ff). In Northern Ireland this is again a difficult case as the supposed enemy is living within the same territory. While republicans want to reunite the North with the South and thus incorporate the territory into the rest of Ireland, unionists rather want to maintain the boundaries of 1922 and stay in connection with the British motherland. Anderson’s imagined community by contrast focuses mainly on the aspect of language and therefore fits modern times better. The days of the nation are not over, yet, as nations are still needed to provide people with political stability and personal security but nationality has lost its climax. Other people can thus also be “invited into the language community” (Anderson 145). In *One by One in the Darkness*, for instance, territory or the place of home, makes up an essential part of the sisters’ lives. The novel begins at their home in the country and it also ends there. Inbetween many references to nature are made. Cate remembers places such as the Glens of Antrim or the Giant’s Causeway they often visited during childhood (Madden 82). Even when grown up Cate enjoys driving without aim through the countryside. “Swatragh and Draperstown; Magherafelt and Toome; Plumbridge and Castledawson: her family couldn’t understand her interest in these places” (ibid. 82). All these places, no matter how beautiful they are, always show the other side of Northern Ireland, too. People have marked these places to demon-

strate their presence and Cate sees “footpaths [...] painted red, white and blue”, “Republican graffiti” and “INLA²¹ rule” letterings (ibid. 82ff).

Finally, symbols and rituals serve individuals both as aggressive markers and as uniting factors for each community. As has already been said, typical symbols and rituals in the Northern Ireland context are wall murals, flags and religion (Mitchel 57). Protestant and Catholic housing areas were thus clearly separated from each other. The practice of rituals “reminds participants of their common belief system” and at the same time “renews the link between past and present” (ibid. 58). Both Catholic and Protestant nationalism/unionism thereby exclude each other. In Helen’s memory the Orange Parades were always a faraway event and certainly not meant for any Catholics to participate in:

And yet for all this they knew that their lives, so complete in themselves, were off centre in relation to the society beyond those fields and houses. They recognised this most acutely every July, when they were often taken to the Antrim coast for the day, and as they went through Ballymena and Broughshane, they would see all the Union Jacks flying at the houses, and the red, white and blue bunting across the streets. They thought that the Orange arches which spanned the roads in the towns were ugly, and creepy, too, with their strange symbols: a ladder, a set square and compass, a five-pointed star. They knew that they weren’t supposed to be able to understand what these things meant; and they knew, too, without having to be told that the motto painted on the arches: ‘Welcome here, Brethren!’ didn’t include the Quinn family [...] They never, in all their childhood, actually saw an Orange march taking place, for their parents always made a point of staying at home on that day, complaining bitterly that you were made a prisoner in your own home whether you liked it or not (Madden 75).

One of the major problems of humanity has long since been the stubbornness of people. Conflicts cannot be solved if one cannot compromise. An example here is Aoighe from *Eureka Street* who fights for a united Ireland during most of the novel. After a violent escalation caused by the Just Us, a republican group, she argues with Jake advocating the nationalist side and calling Jake a fascist because he attacked one of her friends in the confusion:

I stopped. ‘I’m a fascist?! What were you all there for? You’re the people with all the ordnance. You were looking for trouble’. She snorted scornfully. ‘Those middle-class shitheads wanted to have their pathetic little protest. We just thought we should have one as well.’ ‘All they were doing was asking for peace.’ She snorted again. ‘Don’t you want peace?’ I asked. ‘Not

²¹ INLA: Irish National Liberation Party, a republican paramilitary group founded by the Irish Republican Socialist Party, which was a Marxist and militarist splinter group of the IRA (Aughey 162).

on their terms', she replied. 'On what terms, then?' 'On our own terms.' I laughed. 'That's a constructive position. Your folks must really dote on you.' 'We'll win in the end.' I opened the Wreck door. 'Change the record, please' (McLiam Wilson 200).

The contrasting views of Jake and Aoirghe mirror what society thinks about the state of Northern Ireland, some being more radical, others less radical in their attitude. Also a decisive point is made: Aoirghe only wants to accept peace if all nationalist requests are fulfilled. It is exactly this stubbornness that is representative for the problematic peace process. Jake is already one step further ahead because he realises that Aoirghe's gridlocked nationalism is going to lead nowhere.

In *One by One in the Darkness* nationalism leads to something but this is only death. Charlie Quinn and his brothers Brian and Peter stand for different political opinions. While Charlie and Peter are very moderate in their views, Brian embraces nationalist initiatives and also asks his brothers to come to the Civil Rights Marches (Madden 64). Charlie does not want to go at first but his mother convinces him: "When you think of what people have to put up with in this country, well, we have to make a start somewhere in telling them that we've had enough of that" (ibid. 65). In the end Charlie does not go because "one of the cattle fell sick" (ibid. 65). This shows where his priorities are. He joins Brian at another march in Derry, however, the one that ended in rioting. Later he says angrily: "There was no sense in what happened today" (ibid. 71). Brian on the other hand becomes more and more drawn to nationalist ideas, especially after it has been decided that British troops are to be sent to Northern Ireland. His argument is that it "would have been better if our own had been able to look after us [...] Dublin has let us down badly" (ibid. 95ff). Charlie even fears Brian has joined the IRA, which he denies (ibid. 101). However, Brian becomes a member of Sinn Féin and even distributes the *Republican News*, a newspaper published by them (ibid. 163). Although it is not Brian's fault that Charlie is executed by unionists he blames himself because he knows it should have been him instead (ibid. 142). The second generation of Helen, Cate and Sally does only show minimised traits of nationalism, if any. Sally is a member of the SDLP but more out of convention than out of conviction. She joined because she was asked by the headmaster of the school she teaches and thought it embarrassing to refuse (ibid. 141). Nevertheless she says: "I do support their principles, with a few reservations; but they're as good as you're going to get. And I know that there are lots of people who support Sinn Féin in a similar vein" (ibid. 141). Hence, nationalism seems to have changed in some way. While earlier generations were more supportive of nationalist goals younger people like Sally seem to have become uncertain if all of the purposes are justifiable. Aoirghe, of course, is a good example for the contrary but even Aoirghe will change in the end.

Another character that even exceeds the realms of nationalism and is more of a racist in general is Jake's colleague Ronnie Clay who "had been suffering from

chronic insomnia for some years” and “attributed it to the Anglo-Irish Agreement and the creeping suspicion that this country would soon be in the hands of the filthy Roman Catholic Church” (McLiam Wilson 280). Apart from his strong dislike of Catholics he also hates black people and dreams of various possibilities of “ridding the planet of all its dark-skinned humans” (ibid. 280). Ironically he has to work with both a Catholic, Jake, and an Indian, Rajinder, and cannot do anything about it. Furthermore, he is fantasising about a “hybrid dog, a vicious super-dog, which ate only black people” (ibid. 281): Without noticing it, Ronnie acknowledges that a hybrid being is capable of doing far better things than a non-hybrid. What he is actually dreaming of – a pure world of only white Protestant people – in his vision only becomes possible by using the opposite, a being that is not pure in that sense because it unites different qualities.

3.3. The Colonised Body: Postcolonialism and Postmodernism

3.3.1. *The Literary Postcolonial Moment*

“I know Cúchulainn, I said. – But can you speak Gaelic?”

Where They Were Missed, Lucy Caldwell
(2006, 139)

With respect to literature, the late nineteenth century saw a counter-movement against British policies in the form of the Irish Renaissance, also termed the Celtic Revival, which is generally dated from 1890 to 1920. The Home Rule movement, led by Charles Stewart Parnell, as well as the Land League were just two developments on the political and social level. Disillusioned by Parnell’s failure after his affair with married Katharine O’Shea and his inevitable fall, and because an independent Ireland seemed to be out of reach, people were in need of an Irish identity more than ever. In order to realise this, the Irish Literary Movement, the Irish Dramatic Movement and the already mentioned Gaelic League came into being. The latter movement opted for a revival of the Irish (Gaelic) language with the aim to use it both in everyday speech and writing (Imhof 61ff). It also provided the literary movement with the material necessary for inventing a typical Irish character, such as Celtic mythology and the revaluation of simple country life. One of the major spokesmen for the Irish Literary Movement was William Butler Yeats who ensured that these Irish folk tales and works by Irish writers became accessible to the public, both nationally and internationally (Kosok 146). The key characteristic for this literature is the blending of traditional Celtic topics with contemporary Irish problems as for instance shown in Yeats’s poem *The Wanderings of Oisín* (1889), in which the Irish hero Oisín stands in dialogue with St. Patrick.

Here Ireland's pagan past and the existing Catholic morals and values meet in a central conflict. Another important feature is the coming back to aspects of traditional Gaelic poetry like rhyme scheme, stanza and metre. In contrast to supporters of the Gaelic Revival authors of the Irish Literary Movement did not choose Irish as their form of writing (many writers were just not able to speak or write it) but Hiberno-English²², a specific variant of English as spoken by the rural population, and adapted it to their artistic means (ibid. 148ff). At the same time, we find militant republican writers like Patrick Pearse²³ whose radical approach was soon questioned by Yeats and later Frank O'Connor and Sean O'Faolain. Their first-hand experiences – O'Connor, having witnessed both the Anglo-Irish War and the Civil War, and O'Faolain, having been involved in the IRA himself, allowed these writers to take a critical look on Troubles policies (Kennedy-Andrews 2006, 239).

The Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921-2 changed quite a lot: What the Irish Renaissance had aimed at was now at least partially achieved – political independence. Still, the solution was not satisfying for everyone. The separation of Northern Ireland induced what still eighty-nine years later is clearly visible: a deeply divided population. In Troubles fiction the focus was now put on the North, and many Republican writers of the eighties (unlike James Joyce, John Millington Synge or Lady Gregory) “wrote from positions of defense”, showing the human side of IRA killers (Keating-Miller 63). At the same time also English writers engaged in the theme of Northern Irish conflict, mostly in the form of the thriller. In contrast to the novels from the North, the IRA man here, however, was “simplified and diabolised” (Kennedy-Andrews 2006, 241). As Elmer Kennedy-Andrews has noted, “these novelists tended to reproduce the cultural and political views of the British establishment, thereby reinforcing the hegemonic British discourse regarding Northern Ireland” (ibid. 241).

Patten describes two trends that took place in Northern Irish fiction. One is the convention to use realism, the other the “expansion to documentary”, which according to her are the “result [...] of the desire for legitimate or authentic representation distinguishable from the mass of pulp sensationalism” (Patten 131). *Eureka Street*, *One by One in the Darkness* and *Where They Were Missed*, written in 1996, 1996 and 2006, feature this documentary style as well. Both McLiam Wilson and Deirdre Madden were born in the 1960s (1964 and 1960 to be precise), Lucy Caldwell in 1981, and all belong to the group of postmodern writers Patten men-

²² The origins of Hiberno-English lie in the sixteenth century when the English settled Ireland. Like all languages of colonial situations also Hiberno-English shows traces of the then dominant language, Elizabethan English. Furthermore, the English spoken in Ireland adopted many Gaelic language patterns (vocabulary, loan structures of syntax). Nevertheless, the Hiberno-English used by Irish poets should not be confused with the actual Irish vernacular (Kosok 149).

²³ Patrick Pearse was one of the leaders of the 1916 Easter Rising. He advocated “a myth of blood sacrifice and mystical notions of Gaelic Ireland” (Kennedy-Andrews 2006, 239).

tions (see my introduction). What all three novels have in common is a very personal narrative style that creates the impression of an eye-witness report of the Troubles. In the terms of Gérard Genette and Franz K. Stanzel *Where They Were Missed* features an autodiegetic first-person narrator, Saoirse Pentland. The first eleven chapters deal with her childhood in a Protestant area of Belfast while the following eleven chapters deal with her growing up in the Republic of Ireland. The last three chapters are again set in the North when Saoirse for the first time in ten years returns to her place of birth. *One by One in the Darkness* tells the story of the three sisters Helen, Cate, Sally and their mother Emily. The fourteen chapters are told by a heterodiegetic figural narrator with varying internal focalization. The chapters are thus shown through the eyes of the four women and give impressions of various stages of the past and the present, that is, from the 1960s onwards to 1994, just before the start of the IRA ceasefires. *Eureka Street* presents both a homodiegetic first-person narrator in the form of Jake Jackson and a heterodiegetic figural narrator who relates the Chuckie Lurgan chapters. Of the nineteen chapters sixteen are evenly distributed among Jake and Chuckie, whereas chapters ten, eleven and twelve mark an exception as they deal with the city of Belfast, a bomb explosion and the perception of its aftermath by different characters.

One of the reasons that make the re-evaluation of identity necessary is the colonial/postcolonial aspect of both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. According to Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin a central theme of postcolonial literature is the topic of place and displacement: "It is here that the special postcolonial crisis of identity comes into being; the concern with the development or recovery of an effective identifying relationship between self and place" (Ashcroft 8ff). As this paper only deals with Ireland and chiefly the North of it, dislocation in the sense of some Irish migrating to faraway places like the United States of America will not be discussed.

Out of the four major models of postcolonial literatures they mention (1. national or regional models, 2. race-based models, 3. comparative models, 4. hybridity and syncreticity models; see Ashcroft 15) the national and the hybridity/syncreticity model are of special interest for Northern Ireland. While the USA is considered as the first postcolonial society that created its own national literature, other countries such as India, Nigeria or Australia followed this example and started dealing with their own histories (Ashcroft 17). "The study of national traditions is the first and most vital stage of the process of rejecting the claims of the centre to exclusivity", Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin argue and they refer to the Nigerian writer Wole Soyinka who saw in this the beginning "process of self-apprehension" (ibid. 17). Whereas the earlier famous Irish writers such as Oliver Goldsmith, William Butler Yeats, James Joyce or Samuel Beckett wrote in the European and foremost in the British tradition, younger Northern Irish writers like Glenn Patterson, Deirdre Madden, Robert McLiam Wilson or Seamus Deane

are nowadays paying attention to Northern Irish themes in which mostly the conflict between Protestants and Catholics and also the impact of belonging to one of these communities is dealt with, concerning themselves with Northern Ireland's tradition of the Troubles in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Critics were also eager to know whether a complete decolonisation of culture was possible. This question, however, is as controversial as discussions in post-colonial studies and elsewhere have always been. Hence, some critics have argued the age of colonisation was only a passing event that could be ignored once independence was achieved. Objecting to this others have argued that it was impossible to overcome this stage once colonisation had taken place in the past (*ibid.* 30). When looking at Northern Ireland it is indeed hard to imagine that colonisation can be left entirely behind when the dimension of the division between Catholics and Protestants in some parts of the country, especially in Belfast, is still clearly visible.

In some countries, like in India, the trend goes to primarily writing in the native languages again (*ibid.* 30). Although there are nowadays some authors writing in Irish like Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill it is almost unthinkable that no books are produced in English anymore as English is still the dominating language. Ireland's colonial past cannot be forgotten and a pre-colonial Ireland not reconstructed. Therefore in my opinion syncretists' views are to be preferred who argue that peoples with a colonial past will always remain "cross-cultural hybrids" (*ibid.* 30). The influence of the colonising power will always linger in the background, not only culturally but also literally.

In literature language is an influential tool for transporting certain data from the author to the reader. As language is also considered as a "medium of power" (Ashcroft 38), it is of greatest importance for the colonised entity to find a way through this medium to step out of coercion. Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin in this respect speak of the "abrogation and appropriation" (*ibid.* 38) of language. With abrogation they mean the "refusal of the categories of the imperial culture, its aesthetic, its illusory standard of normative or 'correct' usage, and its assumption of a traditional and fixed meaning 'inscribed' in the words" and with appropriation "the process by which the language is taken and made to 'bear the burden' of one's own cultural experience" (*ibid.* 38). This set of abrogation and appropriation is not new to Irish literature but still in use.

The Irish twentieth century was marked by conflict with a first climax in the 1916 Easter Rising, the following Anglo-Irish War, the Civil War and the final outbreak of the ongoing conflict in Northern Ireland. Michael Storey has argued that early writers of Troubles fiction²⁴, such as Daniel Corkery, Frank O'Connor and Sean O'Faolain, used to write in a postcolonial tradition (Storey 63). Aspects of place and displacement and the creation of a specific Irish cultural identity

²⁴ Storey defines stories of the Troubles as a kind of fiction that deals with any conflict that occurred in Ireland during the twentieth century (Storey 63).

played an important role with them and were treated with utter great care. Although all the mentioned authors were familiar with the Irish language they chose to write in English and did not put a special emphasis on Catholicism or the Irish language as crucial Irish elements (ibid. 65). These early writers instead chose “to appropriate English and reconstitute it as Anglo-Irish, a process that postcolonial critics argue is effective in establishing a national identity by distancing the postcolonial text from the imperial culture” (ibid. 66). As tools to achieve this goal Storey mentions cultural allusions, allegory, native glossed or unglossed words and the syntactic blending of native and colonial language into what became known as Anglo-Irish. Thus lots of Gaelic names and words as well as lyrics from Irish songs and references to Irish myths found their way into these writings (ibid. 66ff).

Moreover, O'Connor's, O'Faolain's and O'Flaherty's writings were much influenced by their Catholic nationalist backgrounds and their commitment to the revolution and thus a political attitude can be found in their texts. Later writers such as Fiona Barr or Anne Devlin lack this political judgment (Storey 71). In addition Storey stresses a change in the setting of the novels. “Another difference between the early stories and the later ones is the shift in setting, from the South, where most of the Troubles of 1916-23 took place, to the North, where most of the violence since the 1960s has occurred”, that is a change from the regions of Munster to the city of Belfast (ibid. 71).

To come back to language it can be said that Ireland is in an inbetween state of a monoglossic and a diglossic society. Whereas the South can be described as a diglossic society with English as well as Irish as official languages, the North – although there are still some native speakers of Irish as stated before – is rather a monoglossic culture since official bilingualism does not exist. Still, writers from the North incorporate the Irish language in their works in order to illustrate group affiliations or heritage. In order to separate and break free from the colonising power, or “the centre” as Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin call it, a reconstruction of the language, in this case English, has to take place (ibid. 38).

One way of marking difference in the text and thus using both abrogation and appropriation is the employment of untranslated words, something Lucy Caldwell in *Where They Were Missed* makes use of. She often includes Irish words in the text like “Sláinte²⁵”, “céadsearc²⁶” or the untranslated title of an Irish saga “Táin Bó Cúailnge²⁷” (Caldwell 19, 35, 44). As stated by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin this is done to demonstrate difference (Ashcroft 53) and cultural Otherness (ibid. 64).

²⁵ Meaning “cheers”.

²⁶ “First love” or a “beloved one”.

²⁷ Meaning “The Cattle Raid of Cooley”, a legendary tale in which Cúchulainn also appears. It tells the story of Maeve and Ailill, the queen and king of Connacht, who try to catch the Brown Bull (Cooley) in the land of the Ulaid (Ulstermen) in County Louth. The Ulstermen and their king Conchobar fall under a harmful spell, though. Only Cúchulainn remains to fight Maeve's and Ailill's attempts (Gribben 279).

Caldwell, being herself from the North of Ireland, delimits the Catholic identity of Saoirse, Daisy and their mother from that of their Protestant neighbours and of course also from the girls' Protestant father who does not like his wife to tell the children Irish stories by incorporating these Irish words. It is important that no translation is given: a sense of familiarity or distance is created, dependent on the fact if the reader is an Irish speaker or not. At the same time these words not only function as delimiters. They also demonstrate the part of Saoirse that comes from a Catholic Irish background and thus stress a communal belonging. The usage of Anglo-Irish vernacular also finds a way into the text as for example in the form of "Yer ma's a Taig²⁸" or "What are youse havin'?" (Caldwell 68, 79). As already brought up earlier certain regions like Belfast have easily recognisable dialects. By using the vernacular forms of language the sense of place and belonging is thus strengthened and readers from the same or nearby regions can identify with the characters.

As an important feature of postcolonial writing, Storey also mentions the usage of allegory. Most crucial here is the image of Ireland being a woman who needs the help of a young rebel in order to save her lands lost to foreign invaders, a story that has also been taken up by William Butler Yeats in *Cathleen ni Houlibhan* (1902). In several of Daniel Corkery's stories the main character falls in love with a young woman who stands in some relation to the nationalist movement. The rebel is held back from his beloved, however, a union will only be possible if the Irish nation is created (Storey 68). This theme is also repeated in McLiam Wilson's *Eureka Street* where Jake is attracted to the radical Aoirghe. She believes in everything that stands for a truly Irish culture and is even ready to accept violence as a means to achieve Northern Irish independence from Great Britain. The allegory works a bit different here as Jake and Aoirghe are united in the end. An Irish nation is not established but Aoirghe's eyes are opened when she finally recognises that violence cannot bring peace but only sacrifices innocent victims like the young Roche. It is not an Irish state that is built but rather the acceptance of the Northern Irish state. In the end there is peace as well in the form of the ceasefires of 1994.

To come back to the authors Storey chose as an example it can be seen that they were not completely positive about nationalism, either. Frank O'Connor, Sean O'Faolain and Liam O'Flaherty were dedicated to the negative effects of violence as well and questioned the use of it. Storey thus describes the central theme of their stories²⁹ as stories of disillusionment that feature a "deep disappointment in the nationalist movement" and points out "the theme of betrayal" (Storey 69). Storey in reference to that stresses a very important fact: "There is a

²⁸ An offensive term to describe a Catholic Irish person.

²⁹ The stories referred to are: O'Faolain's "The Patriot", "The Small Lady", "The Death of Stevey Long", O'Connor's "Guests of the Nation", "Jo", "Alec", "Jumbo's Wife", O'Flaherty's "The Mountain Tavern", "Civil War", "The Sniper" (Storey 69).

terrible irony evoked by the theme of betrayal. Cultural and political identity, the very means by which the nation-state is to be established, becomes the greatest liability for the members of the state" (ibid. 70). As an example he gives O'Flaherty's "The Sniper", which I would like to mention here, too, as it shows an interesting parallel to Deirde Madden's *One by One in the Darkness*. "The Sniper" tells the story of a republican sniper who finally kills his strongest rival who in turn is a Free State sniper. What he then discovers is quite disturbing as he has actually killed his own brother (ibid. 70). *One by One in the Darkness* retells the story of the destruction of family bonds due to taking political stands as already shown in chapter 3.2. While father Charlie is quite reasonable and against violence, his brother Brian sympathises with the IRA and is also a member of Sinn Féin. One day Charlie sits in his brother's kitchen waiting for him when a Protestant commando attacks the house and kills him mistakenly. The family is traumatized after that and Brian has to live with the guilt that he should have died instead of his brother. These two examples show well that history seems to be repeating itself continuously. What happened during the civil war in Ireland occurred again roughly eighty years later in Northern Ireland.

Besides these many similarities writers of the latter half of the twentieth century work with many distinctive methods as well. In contrast to those writers who were born and worked before the recurring Troubles of the 1960s-1990s, a younger generation of writers has been trying to reconfigure "accepted notions of what constitutes the individual and his world" (Kennedy-Andrews 2003, 92). Similarly to Patten, Kennedy-Andrews names dislocation, fragmentation and reconfigurations of the postmodern era as decisive attributes of the younger writers' works (Patten called attention to ambiguity, displacement, and perspectivism) and thus groups authors such as McLiam Wilson and Madden in the realm of postmodern humanism, "a world in which diverse cultures and symbols are flowing together in curious ways" (ibid. 92).

Multiperspectivity is an inherent characteristic of *Eureka Street* and *One by One in the Darkness*. The equal division of story-telling between Protestant Chuckie Lurgan and Catholic Jake Jackson in *Eureka Street* already hints at the fact that there is always more than one point of view. Furthermore, it seems to make sense to give a voice to both Protestant and Catholic residents. Chuckie and Jake do not remain the only characters who the reader is given insight to, however. Republican and unionist views are also presented through Aoirge Jenkins and Ronnie Clay whose racism and hate against everything that is not white and Protestant has been already mentioned in chapter 3.2 (see p. 218). *One by One in the Darkness* gives a comparable amount of different perspectives. Besides the three sisters and their mother Emily who tell the story through flashbacks and present events other (political) views are shown through Charlie Quinn and his brothers or for example the two nuns Sister Philomena and Sister Benedict who are teaching at Helen's school. In *Where They Were Missed* the reader finds only one narrator in the form of

Saoirse. Nevertheless, different perspectives are presented by her parents Deirdre and Colin as well as through other minor characters like Johnny Mahon or Manus Dennehy.

Fragmentation and ambiguity in the novels are both used stylistically as well as within the stories. Kennedy-Andrews has noted that *One by One in the Darkness* can best be called a trauma narrative. It is “the struggle of the four women to recompose themselves after the Troubles have invaded the vulnerable space of family and ordinary life” (Kennedy-Andrews 2003, 152-153). The death of husband and father Charlie thereby marks a crucial event which is marked by repression. Only in the end does the reader learn what really happened to him and is Helen able to confront herself with his violent death (ibid. 153). Prior to this, the reader only learns bits and pieces about the incident. Kennedy-Andrews also points to the theory that only through talking about a cruel event the concerned person can learn to deal with the results. The process of remembering, of reconstructing the past experience takes time and “does not produce a rational, linear narrative” (ibid. 153). Thus, Cate, Helen, Sally and Emily remember various stages of the past in mixed order – happy childhood days as well as disturbing events linked to the Troubles like the intrusion into their home by the British armed forces. Other signs of repression include dreams and nightmares, which make up a “prominent element of the text” (ibid. 154). Almost everyone in the novel refers to a dream sooner or later. Emily, for example, dreams both about the threat to her family in the form of a raft heading for a waterfall and of her husband’s murder (Madden 124/125). Cate’s dreams are less threatening but equally concerned with repressed fears. One is about her baby and the father “denouncing her loudly” for her decision; another one shows her baby in an “adult posture” and a skeptical look on its face (ibid. 89/90). Her whole family is a somewhat doubtful about the baby at first, especially her mother. So, Cate’s uncertainty about her decision is mirrored in her dreams. Nevertheless she knows she did the right thing. In a world in which families and homes can easily be destroyed having children to Cate means having “something real” (ibid. 93).

In *One by One in the Darkness* as well as in *Eureka Street* and *Where They Were Missed*, fragmentation seems to be the result of a huge bomb exploding directly into lives of the characters. Like pieces of shrapnel the family is blown apart after Charlie’s death. In *Eureka Street* the physical and real bomb is dedicated a whole chapter, which brings the characters’ inner fragmentation to the surface. The most obvious sign for fragmentation again becomes visible in family relations, though. After “the cops and the social workers had nabbed [him]” Jake grew up with his foster-folks Matt and Mamie (McLiam Wilson 103). Chuckie equally grew up in a fragmented family as his father left his mother and ended as an alcoholic “in a docker’s bar that never closed” (ibid. 29). Like the sisters in *One by One in the Darkness* the two of them are always feeling that something is missing. Love (also in the form of empathy as elaborated on in chapter 3.3.2.) and again children ap-

pear as the only solutions to their uncertain lives. "Chuckie wanted to be lost in someone. Chuckie wanted a girl who would make life burn in his heart like a heavy meal. Chuckie wanted to discover the secret of true love" (ibid. 45). He soon finds his true love in Max. When he learns about her pregnancy everything changes for him: "The child made it all right in some complete way he barely understood" (ibid. 278). Jake by contrast has to endure some pain before he in the end gets together with Aoirghe. In the beginning the reader learns that Jake was left by his long-term girlfriend Sarah. Later Jake finds out she had an abortion without him even knowing about the baby, something that deeply hurts him (ibid. 74). Always searching for love Jake sometimes finds companionship in his cat. The cat could be interpreted as a wish for security, love or even a child.

Lucy Caldwell's heroine Saoirse is affected by a fragmented family, too. Like in *One by One in the Darkness* this fragmentation is clearly caused by the conflict in Northern Ireland. Her mother Deirdre cannot deal with the violent state of affairs that is unfolding itself outside their home. Because her husband Colin is working for the RUC³⁰ she slowly begins to project the cause of all problems happening in the country on him. Normally their "mammy never swears", says Saoirse (Caldwell 6) but because Colin comes late for Daisy's birthday Deirdre's mood is changing: "Blame your father [...] Blame this bloody country" (ibid. 6). This marks the beginning of the catastrophe that is awaiting Saoirse's family. The quarrels between Colin and Deirdre get worse as when talking about the death of one of Deirdre's friends who was killed by Protestants. Colin mentions that the brother of the offender and the former's wife were killed by a bomb planted underneath their car. Deirdre thinks he tries to justify the deed, which he denies (ibid. 40ff). Still, discussions as this one continue driving a wedge between them and lead to their separation. Deirdre little by little becomes an alcoholic, then Daisy dies in a bomb explosion. Finally, Deirdre leaves Saoirse with her sister Bernadette in the south of Ireland because she just cannot cope with the situation. In her anger and grief about Daisy's death she even blames Saoirse for not watching over her sister. Even ten years after the accident her mother's words still ring in Saoirse's head: "What have you done? How could you? Get away from me, go on, get away, I can't bear to touch you [...] What have you done?" (ibid. 72/191).

In contrast to earlier Troubles writing the "conflict between innocence and involvement" or "innocence and complicity" (Patten 132) can be named as another factor that became important for the generation of writers who grew up during the 1970s and 1980s. Innocence and complicity are also relevant for the discussed novels. The innocence of the two children is again expressed by Saoirse Pentland and her sister Daisy in part one of *Where They Were Missed*. Still unable to under-

³⁰ The Royal Ulster Constabulary used to be the state police force in Northern Ireland. It was established in 1922. Together with the British army and the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) the RUC was responsible to keep peace in Northern Ireland during the Troubles. It was renamed the Police Service of Northern Ireland in 2001 (Britannica 220).

stand the outbreak of violence in its full extend six-year-old Saoirse and four-year-old Daisy perceive what happens in a rather naïve way. They cannot understand, for example, why they are forbidden to wave at the British Army when all the other children in their street are doing so (Caldwell 4ff). Their mother in contrast, although she has her reasons, becomes an accomplice in the segregated society by forbidding her children to behave as the other children: “How many times have I told you youse’re not to be waving and being all friendly to the British Army vans” (ibid. 4). She also gives a hint as to why she reacts so strongly: “They’ve no business to be installing themselves in this street” (ibid. 5).

The question of innocence and complicity is also significant in the case of Helen. As a solicitor specialised in terrorist cases she first and foremost intends to help innocently accused Catholics. Nevertheless, not in all cases can Helen be sure if the accused really has done nothing wrong. The Oliver Maguire case thus makes it quite hard for Helen (Madden 171ff): By defending someone she knows has killed for sectarian reasons she will always be reminded of the murder of her father. In turn there must be someone out there defending his murderers. It truly is a difficult situation. This leads to the assumption that everybody could easily become an accomplice in the dirty policies of the Troubles even though having the opposite in mind, namely doing good.

3.3.2. *Cultural Hybridization and the New Irish*

*“Ye shall never be free until the woman from the south
be united to the man from the north.”*

Where They Were Missed, Lucy Caldwell (2006,
186)

Homi Bhabha has set new standards in the fields of postcolonial identity. Terms like ‘hybridity’, ‘third space’ and ‘mimicry’ are strongly connected to his theories. In the introduction to his essay collection *The Location of Culture* Bhabha introduces the reader to one of the central issues of his notions of culture:

It is the trope of our times to locate the question of culture in the realm of the beyond [...] The ‘beyond’ is neither a new horizon, nor a leaving behind of the past [...]. Beginnings and endings may be the sustaining myths of the middle years; but in the fin de siècle, we find ourselves in the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion. For there is a sense of disorientation, a disturbance of direction, in the ‘beyond’: an exploratory, restless movement caught so well in the French rendition of the words *au-delà* – here and there, on all sides, fort / da, hither and thither, back and forth (Bhabha 1994, 1).

What is already hinted at here is that a new field has opened up that has not existed in this sense before. It is not a “new horizon”, however, as it is connected with what was already there in the past. The “beyond” directly leads to what Bhabha calls hybridity; an identity that lies in the inbetween. In line with post-colonialism it describes a new or different state of the once colonised and his or her materialisation in a mixture of pre- and postcolonial self. Bhabha stresses the fact that it is necessary to “think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of cultural differences” (ibid. 1ff). In this way new forms of identity are made available. To make his theory more vivid Bhabha evokes the image of a liminal stairwell, which is situated inbetween identities and serves as a connection by allowing passage and movement. At the same time it symbolises the differences between fixed identities and in consequence brings about the generation of cultural hybridity (ibid. 4).

For Bhabha hybridity is “a difference ‘within’” or “a subject that inhabits the rim of an ‘in-between’ reality” (ibid. 13). The cultural hybrid is therefore a complex building that both resembles and differs from the colonising agent. The hybrid resembles an effigy of the subjugator but not quite, for “what is disavowed is not repressed but repeated as something different – a mutation, a hybrid” (ibid. 111). By creating hybrid characters the colonisers allow themselves to maintain their “identity of authority” through discriminatory acts (ibid. 112). Bhabha also calls this “strategic disavowal” (ibid. 112). Lawrence Grossberg shares this opinion of the third space, that is, the cultural hybrid living in an inbetween place. Apart from that he also refers to the image of liminality. Here the colonised is moved from an inbetween place directly to the border itself (Grossberg 91ff). The hybrid thus is neither coloniser nor precolonial subject any longer.

Antony Easthope sees in Bhabha’s descriptions a relation to the theories of Jacques Derrida: “Bhabha’s hybridity is essentially Derridean difference applied to colonialist texts – the presence of a dominant meaning in a dominant culture can be called into question by referring to the hybridity or difference from which it emerges” (Easthope 343). All things considered Easthope argues mainly against Bhabha’s as well as Derrida’s theory. The terms hybridity and difference in his view are too vague and can be applied anywhere and anytime. The term hybridity leads him to ask the legitimate question whether the two joined identities were formerly pure in themselves (ibid. 342). The borders of where hybridity can be applied blur in Easthope’s understanding and he asks himself if he, the child of an English father and an Irish mother, will also count as a hybrid. “Who or what is not hybrid?” he asks (ibid. 342).

Easthope calls Bhabha’s desire to put fixed identities aside in order to “entertain difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy” (Bhabha 1994, 4) a “wishful thinking” (Easthope 346). In his point of view “speaking subjects must have a coherent identity”, everything else would lead to instability (ibid. 346). But

a counter-question could be: Why does everything have to be defined in strict orders? Is one not able to speak without perfectly knowing what or who one is? It will not be implied here that the world would work without any rules. Rules and definitions are certainly helpful to provide stability and security. Nevertheless, Bhabha's considerations of a difference without hierarchy would not remain utopian if people could accept difference more easily. The point I would like to make here is that through the act of speaking an identity can be created. The "coherent identity" Easthope demands can become concrete through speech acts even though the hybrid is not yet fully aware of it. A good example here would be Saoirse Pentland. In the second half of the novel she is sixteen years old – a teenager on its climax – and begins to question her own identity. Above all she is interested in the disappearance of her mother. She is asking a lot of questions and demands to be told the truth by her aunt and uncle. The story of initiation thus serves the novel in a double way as it supports Saoirse's longing for finding an identity: On the one hand she needs to know about certain things that happened in the past in order to come to terms with her current situation – that is, why her mother left her and where she has gone to – on the other hand all the discoveries she makes are connected to the context of Northern Irish history and help her to make up her mind about her Irish identities (I use the plural here because Saoirse is the daughter of two opposing Northern Irish strands). Saoirse does not yet have a coherent identity as demanded by Easthope. Still, she does not remain silent. Although her aunt Bernadette wants to protect her from the truth Saoirse insists on her right to know everything:

Nobody's ever straight with me [...] There's all of this scheming, and secrets; there's all of these secrets, and going behind people's backs, and pretending, and not telling the real reasons for things, and I'm sick of it. It's not fair [...] I'm not a little girl any more. And because it's to do with me, all right, it's to do with me and I have a right to know (Caldwell 111).

Saoirse's case therefore runs directly counter to Easthope's argumentation. While he claims "a coherent, speaking subject cannot live in the gaps between identities" (Easthope 347) I would contend that just that – the inbetween identity – leads a person to question him- or herself, thus the very questioning leads to a speaking subject and this in turn to an awareness of one's identity.

For this reason, Bhabha's reflections on hybridity are especially suitable for the Northern Irish crisis of identity. In order to find answers to the question about what has changed in Northern Ireland one can also take a closer look on the protagonists Madden and McLiam Wilson create. All of them share aspects of the 'New Irish' who is a little more cosmopolitan, a little more educated and a little more non-Irish than the characters of Frank O'Connor and other twentieth-century authors were a couple of years ago. To show up the differences it is help-

ful to look on the overall attitude of Northern Irish inhabitants towards their identities.

In their 1991 paper Neil Waddell and Ed Cairns examine which ethno-political identities people in Northern Ireland chose. They compared their findings with those of two other research studies carried out by Richard Rose in 1968 and by Edward Moxon-Browne in 1978 respectively. The task for the participants was to choose the identity which they felt they most belonged to. Among the answers to choose from were terms like "British", "Irish", "Ulster", "Anglo-Irish", "sometimes British / sometimes Irish" and "other" (Waddell and Cairns 206). In the decade between 1968 and 1978 significant changes took place. Whereas many Protestants embraced Irishness in 1968 (20 per cent), in 1978 only eight per cent felt themselves to be "Irish". The "Ulster" identity lost also in popularity. Instead the "British" identity was chosen by 67 per cent. Waddell and Cairns attributed these changes to the conflict that had begun in 1969. "For Protestants, seeing the union with Britain threatened by Republican violence, the need was probably felt to make a clear uncompromising statement of national allegiance to Britain. Any other identity [...] would fail to do this" (ibid. 206). Among Catholics the preference for an Irish identity remained relatively stable (70 per cent), however.

Waddell and Cairns felt that something was missing and included the identity "Northern Irish" in their own research questionnaire, so that people now could choose between the following identities: "British", "Irish", "Ulster" and "Northern Irish". Participants were 475 sixth form students of whom 60 per cent were Protestant, 40 per cent Catholic, 37 per cent male and 63 per cent female (ibid. 207). Protestants' answers were distributed among the "British", "Northern Irish" and "Ulster" identities, whereas Catholics mainly chose "Irish" and "Northern Irish" identities of which "Irish" was favoured. Among Catholics the "British" identity received a zero position, the "Ulster" identity was also disliked (ibid. 209ff). Waddell and Cairns concluded that Ulster by Catholics is assumed as something British or Protestant (ibid. 210):

There may be several reasons for this Catholic dislike of the Ulster label. Before partition, Ulster was always the term used to describe that area of "loyal" Ireland that was largely inhabited by Protestants. After partition, the name stuck even though it was now geographically incorrect – the old Ulster consisted of nine counties, the new Northern Ireland has only six – and subsequently the term seems to have become synonymous with Loyalism (210).

They further assumed that an "Ulster" identity would not distinguish Catholics from Protestants sufficiently as in a conflict situation such as the Troubles "opposing groups seek to develop and maintain psychological group distinctiveness" (ibid. 211).

Despite these quite clear arrangements of rather British or rather Irish identities not every person that considers himself/herself Irish prefers the reunion with Ireland. According to Mulholland 41 per cent of Catholics were against it and six per cent said they would abstain from voting in 1972. In 2001, however, 59 per cent of Catholics were in favour of a reunion. By comparison only two per cent of Protestants would prefer that option (Mulholland 147). Concerning politics on both Protestant and Catholic sides almost 90 per cent vote for unionist or nationalist parties respectively (ibid. 148).

Waddell's and Cairn's surveys cover the period between 1968 until the end of the 1980s and early 1990s. Caldwell, Madden and McLiam Wilson continue analysing the development of Northern Irish identities, however, in the sense that clear statements concerning community belonging as shown in Waddell's and Cairn's surveys are no longer that easy to make. People are subject to transformation and community structures are beginning to adjust gradually. Thereby, each author puts a different emphasis of change of identity on the characters. Jake, for instance, calls himself a "reformed character" (McLiam Wilson 193), which indicates a conversion he has undergone. Having experienced a bad childhood with "povertystuff" and "Irishstuff" (ibid. 103) which Jake does not explain any further, his foster-parents Matt and Mamie have turned him into a "human being" (ibid. 105). He used to be involved in fighting but has given it up (ibid. 86). Instead, Jake has become quite a sympathetic character who not only cares for his cat (although he often expresses his dislike for it) but also for the twelve year old Roche. He believes in "Rousseau and the Social Contract, the natural right and the social right" instead of people going out and getting what they want (ibid. 181). Danine Farquharson talks about an "ethical drive that underlies the story" of *Eureka Street*; namely that "empathy can stop violence" (Farquharson 66). This idea leads her to Immanuel Kant's categorical imperative and that "empathy is a way of identifying with as many fellow humans as possible in order to participate in a common moral sense" (ibid. 72). Jake thus undoubtedly has found a way out of the sectarian stubbornness that accompanied the Troubles. With his best friend Chuckie being a Protestant he is on the right way of becoming the "New Irish" (McLiam Wilson 164) he imagines (see quotation in the introduction). In terms of identity as described by Waddell and Cairns he still thinks of himself as being Irish although not as openly as Aoighe does (ibid. 98). Asked by her "Don't you consider yourself Irish?" he simply answers, "Sweetheart, I don't consider myself at all" (ibid. 98). But a few lines below he says "being Irish" (ibid. 98). This again indicates an inbetween state of identity. On the one hand Jake is aware of his Irish roots but on the other hand he is not willing to live solely with this identity. For him times of radical nationalism and fanatic unionism are over. This becomes also clear in the poetry reading he attends (which has been already mentioned earlier in a different context). Again Jake is highly cynic about the happenings. Although being Irish himself he cannot hear anymore about a romanticised Ireland. His

ironic summary of a poem entitled 'Poem to a British Soldier About to Die' is the following:

The poem told the young British soldier (about to die) why he was about to die, why it was his fault, how it had been his fault for eight hundred years and would probably be his fault for another eight hundred, why the man who was going to shoot him was a fine Irishman who loved his children and never beat his wife and believed firmly in democracy and freedom for all, regardless of race or creed, and why such beliefs gave him no option but to murder the young British soldier (about to die) (ibid. 175).

Jake's depiction of the poem expresses a wish for his fellow Northern Irishmen, no matter if Catholic or Protestant, to overcome history and start into a new future that leaves the old behind. History has to stop repeating itself. The reason for all the wrong in the world according to Jake is politics, which he basically sees as an "antibiotic, i.e., an agent capable of killing or injuring living organisms" (ibid. 96). People think him to be a Protestant because he openly criticises the reading, and so he gets thrown out. Another example for Jake's new Irishness might be the fact that he does not report an RUC officer who attacks him violently because he knows the man's real motives: Jake has had an affair with his fiancée Mary. Aoirghe in contrast tries to persuade him to report the incident as in her eyes "assaults by the RUC" are "always political" (ibid. 97ff). Only Jake's ability to feel empathy breaks the cycle of sectarian hatred here. His urge for a clean front shield is symbolic for Jake's ability to see beyond certain things Aoirghe and others do not see at first. Although his car is a mess he undertakes a remarkable effort to keep the windows clean: "It was a hugely shitty vehicle but it had incredibly clean windows. Rusty bodywork covered in three-year-old filth but the windows gleamed. I cleaned them every day so that I could see my city when I drove" (ibid. 16).

Eureka Street, which according to Elke D'hoker is "reminiscent of the all-inclusive Victorian novel" due to the many different characters and their stories (31), uses the model of hybridity to show new possible forms of living together that seem almost impossible at first. As the characters differ in their intentions and perceptions of the world this pluralism is used to "reflect some of the novel's important moral and political concerns" (ibid. 31). Both Chuckie and Jake are presented as hybrid characters who live in the inbetween of Protestant Britishness and Catholic Irishness. What sets them off from other rather traditional thinking characters such as Ronnie, Crab or Aoirghe is their ability to think outside the box (in different ways however). As has been noted by D'hoker Jake incorporates both sets of Protestant and Catholic stereotypes and by displaying them becomes able to transcend them in order to form an individual identity (D'hoker 32). Chuckie by contrast leaves his one-sided identity behind by cheating on both Protestant and Catholic people alike. Jake even calls him a "pan-cultural exploiter" (McLiam Wilson 307) and calls his greed "ecumenical" (ibid. 168). He does this by utilising

clichés (D’hoker 32). He receives a grant of eight hundred thousand pounds from the Industrial Resources Board for invented and non-existent projects. “Chuckie had simply made it up as he went along” (McLiam Wilson 118) such as persuading the Ulster Development Board to give him money for a business that “would bring the Catholic nationalist sports of Gaelic football and hurling to Protestants, and the English Protestant pursuits of rugby and cricket to Catholics” for “these sports were sharply divided and a significant emblem of the apartheid in Northern Ireland” (ibid. 153). It is quite amusing that Chuckie, though initially driven by greed, suddenly overcomes his own pretensions by making a good point. In an interview with the republican Jimmy Eve he highlights capitalism and globalisation and puts them over sectarian issues, which leaves the politician rather speechless: “What America understands is what I understand – making a dollar, cutting a deal. There are no nationalities, only rich and poor. Who gives a shit about nationhood if there’s no jobs and no money? Bread before flags, that’s what I say” (ibid. 331). He even calls to do business “the real peace” (ibid. 331).

In the end of *Eureka Street* various relationships have developed:

The antipolitical Jake and Republican Aoirghe, the Muslim Rajinder and the Jew Rachel, the Englishman Luke Findlater and his Catholic working-class waitress, the socialist Slat and Wincey, his right-wing middle-aged Protestant fiancée, the Protestant lesbian housewives Peggy and Caroline (D’hoker 33).

D’hoker sees in these relationships a “reconciliation of opposites or a marriage of different perspectives” (ibid. 33). She concludes that they “represent the impossible New Irish Jake has dreamt of” (ibid. 33). Thus this working pluralism also suggests that the New Irish has already become reality.

Hybridity in *One by One in the Darkness* is most strongly articulated in Cate. Although each of the sisters has chosen her very own way of life after their father Charlie’s death it is only Cate who leaves the country. As Jerry White has argued Madden shows how hybridity can be successful in a postcolonial Northern Ireland thus challenging Declan Kiberd’s denial of a working hybrid (White 459). At this point he refers to the posh Cate who has moved to London to work as a journalist for a fashion magazine. “Even as Cate leaves her marginal community for the metropolitan/imperial center of London [...] she retains central parts of her marginal identity and manages to update them and make them relevant to her condition” (ibid. 459). This is done by Cate’s still existing religiosity. Although Helen suspects her sister of having left her faith behind she learns that Cate still is a “regular churchgoer” and even has a “religious picture hanging in her appartement” (Madden 22). White calls this “the ability to form a new life without completely depending on the old existence or completely leaving it behind” (White 459). She also changed her name from Kate to Cate because “it was too Irish, [...] too country” (Madden 4). Her family is very hurt by this but her change of name also

designates her inbetween state. Cate likes the London life and would not miss it; still she clings to certain family traditions as well as the Catholic faith.

Caldwell's solution for the "New Irish" lies in Saoirse's heritage. With her mother a Catholic from the South and her father a Protestant RUC officer she unites Northern Ireland's problematic past. Her name is also of significance as it means "freedom" (Caldwell 211). Both her name and her family tradition thus evoke the assumption that only a reconciliation between Catholic and Protestant beliefs and the mutual acceptance of both can lead to freedom and peace. Saoirse stands for all that Northern Ireland consists of: the conflict between her parents when she was still a child – a conflict between Catholic and Protestant, between Civil Rights marcher and RUC man – the pain of lost relatives and friends. This becomes also evident in her half Irish, half Scottish/English name, Saoirse Pentland. She combines two identities in one and in the end accepts her lot: "All my life here I've wanted so badly to be the same. But now, I'm kind of proud to be an Ulster Pentland as well as an O'Connor from the Gaeltacht" (Caldwell 214). As she unites these two characteristics in one personality she is not afraid to go to the North, either. Asked if she was not scared to go there she just says: "I can't be scared [...] I'm half from there. I can't be scared" (Caldwell 215).

Further studies of contemporary Northern Irish literature also include how theories of multiculturalism and citizenship are incorporated in the new developments. While citizenship for a long time had been seen standing in context of nationality this has changed recently. "New conceptions and practices of citizenship point to something considerably more differentiated and multifaceted than nationality," explains Gerard Delanty (183). Thus globalisation has been a decisive factor for widening the political community into a more cosmopolitan community in which "the nation-state is no longer the primary reference for loyalties, identities and democracy" (Delanty 184). Delanty here stresses a pluralised nation that is welcoming "new imaginaries about belonging, community and identity" (ibid. 184). He mentions several fields that have been studied among others by Lurry, Stevenson, Parekh, and Touraine, in which it becomes clear how modernisations have exceeded the nation-state. Civic and social rights, for instance, are regulated by the place of residence and not by birth. Nationality here is not decisive for one's exertion of rights. Secondly, progress in technology (communication, natural sciences, and military) dispense the individual from the state because they are addressing the population itself, not the state. Furthermore, cultural rights are gaining importance over individual rights. Instead of equality as a primary aim the upholding of group differences is now a decisive factor of citizenship (as the cultural diversity programme well shows). Finally, the separation of public and private life is outdated (ibid. 186ff). Thus "citizenship is increasingly about the right to express one's identity, as in for example gay marriages [or] rights for disabled people" (ibid. 188). Deirde Madden and Robert McLiam Wilson also feature homosexual love relationships in their novels. Helen's best friend David is gay and

has a brief relationship with Steven. Chuckie's mother Peggy after years of deep friendship finally recognises her love for her neighbour Caroline who in turn leaves her husband and moves in with Peggy. While for Helen and David's friends his homosexuality is quite a normal thing Peggy's new life as a lesbian causes an uproar in *Eureka Street*:

Peggy Lurgan was now a lesbian living with Caroline Causton. This was spectacular news. People had called press conferences. Peggy and Caroline were the most Protestant and the most working-class women I had ever met. Such women did not normally end up munching blissfully at each other, or so everyone had believed (McLiam Wilson 341).

After this news also Chuckie's and Jake's friend Deasely comes out as a gay (ibid. 342). As these ways of life do not stand in the traditional, or old-fashioned, life-style Caroline, Peggy, Deasely and David also represent types of the New Irish. Although they do not unite Protestant and Catholic ingredients in themselves they nevertheless leave nationalism behind and dedicate themselves to their own lives in the form of citizenship. Thus, they express their identities like Jake, Chuckie, Cate and Saoirse in other ways that do not aim at upholding the Northern Ireland conflict.

3.4. The Other in the North: Stereotypes and Discrimination

"When someone sets out for no good reason to try to humiliate you or make you feel ill at ease in a social setting, you're often so taken aback that you don't know how to respond; and it's hard to be able to put them down without sinking to their level."

One by One in the Darkness, Deirdre Madden (1996, 167)

Human beings have always been fascinated by things that are different from what they know. Even today people book expensive flights to travel to up to this point unseen countries and unfamiliar cultures. Tourism has thus become the modern way of 'invading' foreign countries in order to experience a different world. Few people will have the chance of actually living in another country in the way the native inhabitants do; as a result, travelling in most cases has a certain voyeuristic touch. Of course, travelling is not to be equated with occupying a foreign nation by force, making its people subaltern and taking over the sole government of the country. Despite this fact the point of wanting to see the unknown remains a common feature. While the example should not be taken too seriously I would nevertheless like to point out that the fascination with the unfamiliar, the mysterious, the 'Other' is an underlying character trait of the human soul. Homi Bhabha

describes the latter term as something “which is at once an object of desire and derision, an articulation of difference contained within the fantasy of origin and identity” (Bhabha 1994, 67). To come back to the comparison with tourism one can see that “desire and derision” can be found there, too. How often do people take a trip abroad to still their desire to see breathtaking features of nature, colourful birds and strange animals, different people and unique customs just to come home and feel vaguely disappointed by some aspects that are just so different from the well-known that one would never want to live like that. Derision might be a bit too harsh a word in this case, but I think the point becomes clear. The unknown is ever so often accompanied by mistrust and disapproval.

Colonialism was partly justified by this so-called Other. “The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction” argues Bhabha (1994, 70). Only the deconstruction of the colonised into uncivilised and uncultivated savages justifies the occupation of their land. Yet, the other is not completely unknown. The aim of imperialist invaders was to mould the unfinished subject into a less perfect imitation. The product was something which was “at once an ‘Other’ and yet entirely knowable and visible (ibid. 70ff). In this context Bhabha also speaks of a concept of “fixity” which he explains to be a sign of cultural, historical and racial difference. In connection with postcolonialism “it connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy and daemonic repetition” (ibid. 66). The stereotype then, according to Bhabha, serves as a means of strategy. “It is a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always ‘in place’, already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated” (ibid. 66). Nevertheless the stereotype remains to be an untrue depiction of what is real, thereby denying difference (ibid. 75). For Bhabha the stereotype is also closely linked to fetishism. “The recognition of sexual difference [...] is disavowed by the fixation on an object that masks that difference and restores an original presence” (ibid. 74). Fetishism thus is a balancing act between similarity and the fear of difference, to put it simple. Bhabha’s key words here are metaphor, the masking act, and metonymy, the lack of sameness. The fetish itself masks its difference in order to achieve a pure origin. Bhabha is referring to Fanon when he argues that this disavowal of difference can lead to severe consequences of “grotesque mimicry”, which in turn threatens to destroy the colonised subject (ibid. 75). To complete the picture Bhabha is talking about the Imaginary:

The imaginary is the transformation that takes place in the subject at the formative mirror phase, when it assumes a discrete image which allows it to postulate a series of equivalences, samenesses, identities, between the objects of the surrounding world. However, this positioning is itself problematic, for the subject finds or recognizes itself through an image which is simultaneously alienating and hence potentially confrontational. This is the

basis of the close relation between the two forms of identification complicit with the Imaginary – narcissism and aggressivity. It is precisely these two forms of identification that constitute the dominant strategy of colonial power exercised in relation to the stereotype which, as a form of multiple and contradictory belief, gives knowledge of difference and simultaneously disavows or masks it. Like the mirror phase ‘the fullness’ of the stereotype – its image as identity – is always threatened by ‘lack’ (ibid. 77).

Bhabha connects these four elements to what he calls the four-term strategy. Thus the metaphoric aspect combines with the narcissistic object-choice as does the metonymic outline of lack with the aggressive part of the Imaginary (ibid. 77). Optically, the colour of skin constitutes the most significant feature of racial difference and discrimination (ibid. 78ff). This goes even so far that skin becomes the “natural identity” (ibid. 80) of the stereotype. In case of the Irish the colour of skin does not serve as a marker of difference for there is no visible difference. The Irish subject thus is able to mask itself even better.

In *Eureka Street* the depiction of Northern Irish stereotypes and the Other is best transmitted through the perception of non-Northern Irish people such as US citizens or the foreign press. Bhabha’s theory of the Other thus can be best seen when taking a closer look on Chuckie’s business associate Luke Findlater, an Englishman. He represents the typical young urban high-flyer who comes from London to Northern Ireland. His first visit to Derry during a business trip changes everything for him as soon as he sets foot on the “crooked Irish pavement” (McLiam Wilson 349). While taking a look round the town he only meets “overweight”, “unhealthy” and all in all “ugly” men drinking on the street (ibid. 349ff). Dressed well in a tweed suit with “handsome hair and kissable face” (ibid. 349) he in contrast sees himself as “Helen of Troy or Rudolph Valentino”; “stupidly handsome [and] arrestably beautiful amongst these troglodytic Hibernian half-men” (ibid. 350). Only the women seem to be acceptable to him although they are different in Northern Ireland from where he comes from with “more make-up” and “their hair [...] stiff with unguents and sprays” (ibid. 350).

Luke’s perceptions of the Northern Irish people thus resemble Bhabha’s theory of the Other and simultaneously the subjugation of the Irish by the British. By degrading the men to uncivilised and uncultivated savages Luke gains the right to “invade” the country and to seduce the women. His almost godlike appearance in his view gives him the right to do that. The men he sees are a less perfect imitation of him as are the women of the familiar English women. Their use of make-up here at the same time highlights the masking of the colonised subject. The narcissism and aggressiveness that are closely related to the imaginary described by Bhabha are expressed in Luke’s abuse of the women. “After a week there had been Saoirse, Siobhan and Deirdre. By a fortnight, Sinead and Aofie had added their contributions, the third saw the advent of Orla, Una and Roisin” (ibid. 350). Aggressiveness is conveyed in Luke’s ferocity to date women, narcissism in the

way he behaves and it is constantly fuelled by the women's behaviour towards Luke: "But the best thing they gave him was their version of him. For them, he was something special, something unique. He knew that, to them, it must have seemed really great to be him" (ibid. 352). Like the earlier colonisers Luke is spreading his territory and dates women all over the country in "Belfast, Derry, Lurgan, Antrim, Ballymena, Enniskillen, Portadown" (ibid. 352) and he briefly nourishes the idea of "going to South Africa to scour the townships and see how he fared amongst the surprised and grateful black girls" (ibid. 351). Hence, Luke embodies all the traits of a colonial power.

The stereotype itself as described by John Morris is in essence the "judgment of other people by placing them in groups which relate predetermined behaviour to physical, racial, class, or other, types" and uses methods of "prejudice, anticipation and systematization of human behaviour" (Morris 1). This kind of stereotyping is experienced by Chuckie during a trip to the United States. On his way through New York together with the private eye Dave Bannon Chuckie gets in trouble with some New York hoodlums who want to rob them. Bannon uses Chuckie's origin to scare the boys away by telling them Chuckie would be a member of the IRA. Of course, they do not believe them: "'He don't sound Irish to me.' 'He's a Brit or Scotch or something'" (McLiam Wilson 263). When Chuckie starts imitating the Reverend Dr Ian Paisley with set phrases such as "No Pope here", "Home Rule is Rome Rule³¹" and "Ulshter will fight", however, the boys are suddenly convinced of Chuckie's ruthlessness (ibid. 263). With the words "Power to the people, man. Down with the King and everything" (ibid. 263) they run off. This passage is as full of stereotypes as it is with irony as all of the events are actually mixed up. The boys obviously do not know much about Northern Ireland and the ongoing conflict. They cannot distinguish a Northern Irish accent from a Scottish or British one (on top there is no single British accent). Only the mentioning of the IRA and Chuckie's usage of the Paisleyian assertions make them believe them. Finally, they do not realise that Chuckie's statement of "Home Rule is Rome Rule" completely contradicts any IRA philosophy but rather supports the unionist counter-movement. In an underlying tone of irony that almost never wears off in *Eureka Street* the narrator hints at the blended realities shown in this passage. What the New York boys have in mind is one of the Northern Irish stereotypes that indicate that every Irish Catholic citizen belongs to a radical group fighting against the British monarch and who at the same time stops at nothing. They judge Chuckie by placing him into a group that could be called 'Irish = IRA = dangerous'. By doing this they assume Chuckie to be a violent political activist. "The strength of stereotypes lies in [the] combination of validity and distortion" stresses Morris (ibid. 6). Although people do exist in Northern Ireland that might fit the boys' assumption only a minority actually comes into consideration.

³¹ The term was first used by unionists during the introduction of the first Home Rule Bill in 1886 (Mulholland 14ff).

Chuckie certainly contradicts this stereotype but in this case instead of being discriminated against, this saves him a lot of trouble.

Helen's colleague at work in *One by One in the Darkness*, Owen, has experienced discrimination as well but in a less 'positive' way than Chuckie. While going out with a group of people who are at the same Law Society as Owen the others start harassing him. Apparently knowing that he is a Catholic they let slip remarks that begin to upset Owen. Although having had a little drink he knows it is not only the alcohol to blame for their behaviour: "What they did was deliberate. I could see them looking at me from time to time, they would say things that were getting close to the bone, and then look to see how I was taking it. And then suddenly, I felt afraid, really afraid; and they could see it" (Madden 166). One of the stories they tell is about a college in the nineteen fifties and a teacher who was in the B Specials³². At that time Catholics were admitted to the college for the first time. One night the teacher came to the storyteller dressed up in his full uniform and said "Do you know what this means? [...] It means I'll have to teach them by day and shoot them by night" (ibid. 166ff). Everybody thinks it hilarious except Owen. He feels afraid, angry and even ashamed that people in 1994 can still do this to him. It could be argued in this example that the masking described by Bhabha works the other way round. In this case it is Owen's colleagues who behave 'normally' during the day and wearing the disguise of tolerance at work. Only in their time off after work "the masks [start] to slip" as Owen calls it (ibid. 166). In the security of 'their' Protestant group they feel free to express what they really think.

3.5. Changes in Education

"Work hard, girls, because you have more to give society than you can perhaps realise. We need our Catholic doctors and nurses and university lecturers; our Catholic lawyers and civil servants."

One by One in the Darkness, Deirdre Madden (1996, 60)

The question remains what role a new intelligentsia might have played in the Northern Irish conflict. Education in Ireland was strongly marked by the attempt of the British to anglicise the country as stated in chapter 2; see for example the introduction of National Schools in 1831 that largely ignored the existence of the Irish language and taught entirely in English. In Anderson's terms this was supposed to strengthen the imagined British community by means of the English language as the only language available. Nic Craith has stated that "the emphasis

³² A paramilitary police force that had been entirely Protestant. They were disbanded in 1970 (Mulholland 58).

on English was designated to establish homogeneity and commonality within the British Empire and to lessen 'regional' differences" (Nic Craith 2003, 98). In 1870 the Education Act promoted "a homogenous English print community and sounded a death knell for all British Celtic regions" (ibid. 98). Thus, for example Welsh and Scottish Gaelic were deleted from the curriculum of Welsh and Scottish schools (ibid. 98). The intention was to establish a "print community in the language of the colonizer" (ibid. 100).

While some scholars have argued that national education merely offered the chance to learn English and did not force the Irish to abandon their native language, Nic Craith points out that "the desire for education" of the Irish was underestimated (ibid. 100). She also calls attention to the colonial pressure and the wish to assimilate to the superior power. "The 'native' perceives his own cultural style as inferior and abandons traditional cultural forms and language endeavours to appropriate the whole way of life of his oppressor" (ibid. 102), she argues. Besides, it was necessary to speak, read and write English if one wanted to partake in the economic world (ibid. 101). So, both the introduction of English in schools and the colonial presence put the further decline of Irish into effect. At the same time education should enable children to rise above their parents' social status and equip them with the knowledge necessary to partake in British life. However, the contrary happened; all they learned was about their Irish inferiority (ibid. 102).

Although *Eureka Street* and also *Where They Were Missed* illustrate education as important properties in this chapter I would like to focus on *One by One in the Darkness* as there are many good examples of educational change. Jake and his friends all have benefited from a rather good education. Jake has studied politics, Slat is a lawyer, Donal works for the Government and Septic Ted is selling insurance (McLiam Wilson 139ff). Aoirghe has studied history (ibid. 94), Saoirse is doing good at school.

As one can see the development and importance of education in general has taken a significant position in Northern Ireland like in the rest of Europe. In Madden's *One by One in the Darkness* the change in the educational system in the second half of the twentieth century and the perception of value of education is illustrated well by means of the two generations that appear in the novel. Cate's, Sally's and Helen's parents, Emily and Charlie Quinn, grew up in an age that highlighted the meaning of education at every moment. The reason for this lies in the history of Northern Ireland as already stated above. In her remembrances of by-gone days of the 1950s Emily recounts Northern Irish politics: "At that time 'politics' meant Stormont, meant a Protestant government for a Protestant people, so if you happened to be a Catholic, the message was clear" (Madden 115). Indeed, unionist fears of a "Catholic infiltration" (Mulholland 45) was accompanied by the attempt to keep politics in unionist hands. As Mulholland has remarked, "throughout the Stormont era there was consistent and largely successful pressure from the unionist grassroots to keep Catholics out of senior public employment

positions” (ibid. 45). Consequently, education became for many Catholics the only way to be somebody in a biased society.

Education was the only hope, it was like a rope that you struggled to cling to, in the hope of pulling yourself up to a position less disadvantaged than the one in which you started out. Keep your head down, look to your own, and don’t expect too much in any case: nobody ever said those words explicitly to her, but then nobody needed to, because the world around her wordlessly insisted on this every single day of her life (Madden 115).

What Emily feels in this passage goes as far back as to the introduction of national schools in the nineteenth century. Although the main focus does not lie on the acquirement of English anymore, education is still seen as the only option to transcend the as inferior perceived Irishness.

As a young teacher Emily encounters children whose future is still unclear. Many of them have unemployed fathers and Emily even thinks it a blessing they do not have high aspirations because this would only leave them frustrated (Madden 119). In a time of economic hardships and an unemployment rate five per cent higher than in Great Britain (Mulholland 42) Emily’s pupils dream of driving horses for the local brewery or working in the linen mills as their mothers do (Madden 119). These fields of traditional Northern Irish economy – agriculture, textiles and engineering (Mulholland 42) – in addition represent the traditional Irish country life as celebrated by the Irish Literary Movement. That most of the parents are unemployed and look to an uncertain future also symbolises the slowly vanishing traditional Irish life. By contrast Emily stands for a Catholic woman who enjoys a rather independent work life (at least until her marriage) and who will pass this new way of life on to her children.

Yet, Emily’s life is not as independent as that of her daughters is going to be. Because she wants to marry Charlie she is supposed to quit her job as “it wasn’t seen as right for women to go on working when they were married” (Madden 121). At that time a married woman should not take jobs from unmarried women or from men who needed to support their families as expressed in a newspaper article Emily reads (ibid.122). Whereas she had to choose between a family and her job, Emily’s daughters Sally, Helen and Cate are no longer forced to decide on one option. Still, the importance of education is very strong in Emily’s mind and she is constantly worrying that Cate in her teenage years might get pregnant. In an argument she says: “What if you get into trouble and have a baby, what then? That’ll be your life ruined; and all your education lost” (ibid. 109).

In terms of images of the New Irish Emily stands somewhere inbetween. Her daughters, however, are able to lead new and different lives. All three of them are educated well and rather successful in their jobs, Sally as a teacher like her mother, Helen a lawyer specialising in terrorist cases, and Cate working as a journalist for a fashion magazine. All three of them are still unmarried, and Cate is even having a

baby. One could argue that Cate's future life as a single mother does not represent something typically Irish or new-Irish because it at first glance appears to be a phenomenon of the modern age. Nevertheless, I would like to place this in the Northern Irish context and take it as an argument for the depiction of the New Irish: Cate did not get pregnant by accident or ends up being a single mother because her boyfriend left her. Instead, having a baby on her own for Cate is a deliberate decision. She does not even want any help or support from the father. The child is just for her without any obligations. In contrast to the fears of her mother her education is not lost because she is pregnant and single. Cate still leads a very religious life, but she breaks with the rules of the Catholic Church in favour of the baby. Still, she does not give up her Catholic Irish identity because she sticks to the religious traditions she grew up with. By being a successful London journalist she has transcended the stereotype of the uneducated, rural Irish peasant. Simultaneously, the baby stands for a better future, a third generation, hopefully growing up in a time without the continuation of the Troubles.

It is also important to note that the Civil Rights Marches were attended by great numbers of students. Charlie took part in one of the marches and can say only good things about them:

I can tell you that I thought them admirable people. They're not involved in this for themselves. They're concerned about the people in this country who haven't had their chances, and who aren't going to be helped in any way unless somebody makes a stand and gets things moving, unless the people who do have something begin to speak out for those who have nothing (Madden 79).

Although the Civil Rights Marches resulted in violence its initial goals were peaceful and nonpolitical. It simply drew on the aims of the civil rights movement developed by blacks in America and demanded rights for the Catholic people in Northern Ireland (Mulholland 50). So, as Charlie says here, the educated tried to embark on a new way to improve the situation of Catholics. Charlie's daughter Helen develops similar ideas of helping people by means of education, not by means of violence.

Helen is the first in their family to go to university. When she discusses her career plans with principal Sister Benedict who signs the students' university application forms, this aspect of education is shown. Helen decides to study law because "our educated Catholics have a role to play in this society. We need our Catholic teachers and doctors and nurses and lawyers", as she explains (Madden 158). Her intentions are not only to do something important to her but also to help others. Having seen and experienced the unfair treatment of Catholics in Northern Ireland she wants to make a difference and help those wrongly accused. Sister Benedict in contrast sees this as a waste of time and tries to convince her do something else: "I don't want to see you throwing your life away, staying in this – this horri-

ble place.” For Helen her future is clear though. “Helen flinched at this last phrase, as if she’d been struck in the face. ‘I like it here,’ she said. ‘This is where I’m from. This is my home’” (Madden 159). For Helen education means to enable her to work actively on the ill conditions in her home country. The same is preached by Sister Philomena who “was always bringing politics into education” (ibid.155). As she grew up in Derry she knows a great deal about life as a Catholic in Northern Ireland. She therefore advises her students to step out of a passive role of suffering and do something against it: “This is your society, and don’t forget it. You have as much right to be in it as anyone else, and I want you all to get out there and claim the place that’s waiting for you, the place you deserve” (ibid. 154). Claiming a place in society only works if one knows its rules. Education again is a key factor for Catholics to participate equally in Northern Irish society and alter their situation. Nic Craith has pointed to the fact that “education [...] rationalized difference” and “legitimated the relationship between the dominant and the dominated” (Nic Craith 2003, 103). By deciding to study law Helen can break this legitimisation. On the one hand she increasingly becomes aware of her own rights, on the other hand she can use her knowledge to help other ‘dominated’ Catholics. Talking with her friend David about the beginnings of the Troubles she asks: “What do you think is the biggest difference between now and then?” David replies: “We are. The educated Catholic middle class” (Madden 60).

4. Conflict in Northern Ireland – The Land of Many Oranges and Greens

*“There are two norths,
One is defined, ruled,
agreed.
The other lies bidden,
troubles the compass,
is not drawn in the maps.”
Donnelly, “North” (87)*

Concerning colonialism Fanon remarks: “The colonial world is a world divided into compartments. [...] The colonial world is a world cut in two. The dividing line, the frontiers are shown by barracks and police stations” (Fanon 31ff). A similar scene could be found in Northern Ireland during the times of the Troubles well after the age of colonialism. The conflict that had simmered for centuries among the population finally escalated in 1969. In this context Joseph Ruane and Jennifer Todd highlight three socio-cultural dimensions of conflict: “religion (Catholicism vs. various strands of Protestantism), ethnicity (originally Gaelic-Irish, Old English, New English, Scottish) and colonialism (native vs. settler)” (10). All of these are parameters of the outbreak of violence but they are also part of a

higher criterion: the formation of groups. While colonialism and ethnicity have already been discussed, religion remains as a parameter of conflict to be examined which will be done in chapter 4.3. At first, however, other aspects of conflict, like group dynamics and places of hostility will be looked at.

It has already been argued that in order to form an identity individuals very often look out for what they are not. The same principle applies to group identity within the studies of Social Identity Theory (SIT) as A.M. Gallagher notes (8). People always try to achieve a positive social identity which can be achieved either by comparison to so-called ingroup members or between the group and a so-called outgroup. Conflict is not mandatory, for example, when the outgroup is not recognised as being dangerous by the ingroup. Conflict can also be avoided as long as one group dominates the other group, which occurs when “the context is seen as legitimate or alternatives to the status quo are not seen as possible” (ibid. 8). By contrast change becomes possible “when a group excluded from power comes to see its inferior status as illegitimate” (ibid. 9).

Furthermore, Gallagher names several group strategies in dealing with such situations: assimilationist strategies, reformist strategies, radical attempts or the prevention of social change (ibid. 10), which political parties in Northern Ireland made use of one time or another. Whilst the SDLP followed a reformist strategy by endeavouring to legitimise aspects of Irishness, Sinn Féin opted for the radical alteration and abolishment of British authority (ibid. 9). Another point observed by Gallagher is the “over-simplification” (ibid. 13) of group members when talking about the other group in each case. “For the moment it is enough to know that ‘they’ are wrong, and are likely to remain wrong for the foreseeable future” (ibid. 13). This indicates that group dynamics are much harder to overcome than those of individuals. The protagonists in all three novels *Eureka Street*, *One by One in the Darkness*, and *Where They Were Missed* do not participate in the classical Northern Irish radical groups (Republicanism vs. Loyalism, Nationalism vs. Unionism) and thus have it easier to make up their own minds because they are not subject to psychological pressure and influences carried out by individual social groups. Most of the time the novels’ protagonists even abhor the actions of those groups that use violence to make their standpoints clear. Saoirse’s aunt for example complains about what she is seeing on TV: “It’s a few fanatics [...] A few fanatics terrorizing the country and giving Irish folk everywhere a bad reputation,” to what Saoirse replies: “That’s what my father says [...] But he says it about Ulster and the Protestants” (Caldwell 94). This already indicates that people of both religious communities do not perforce believe in what paramilitary groups in their name try to achieve.

By contrast, the depiction of those clinging to traditional nationalist versus unionist or Catholic versus Protestant views always takes place in relation to groups. Accordingly, Owen in *One by One in the Darkness* (as described in chapter 3.4) has to confront a whole bunch of colleagues who only feel safe to harass him as a

Catholic because they are in a group of similar thinking individuals. In *Eureka Street* Aoirghe is also backed up by a group in form of the Just Us (although she has the guts to say what she thinks when she is on her own, too). Ronnie knows he can run down other people like Catholics and people with a migration background because he is supported by his Protestant colleagues. Jake and Rajinder can hardly speak up to him because they are simply outnumbered by them. The Irish poetry reading Jake and his friends attend is also of relevance because here the aim is to identify as a group that shares the same myths in contrast to the Protestant residents of Northern Ireland. All these examples illustrate ingroup members comparing themselves as a group to an outgroup as described by Gallagher.

In *Where They Were Missed* both scenarios are shown. While living in Belfast Saoirse and Daisy are bullied by the other children in their street because Saoirse and Daisy are the only ones with a Catholic background. After having moved to the south of Ireland one could assume that Saoirse would now belong to the ingroup of Catholics living there. Instead, she feels as an outsider again. As already stated the difference of Jake, Chuckie, Saoirse and Cate lies in the fact that they do not join either nationalist or unionist groups and thus do not take a clear stand. This detail allows them to think beyond their own cultural horizon and paves the way for Jake's vision of the New Irish.

4.1. Areas of Conflict

"Cities are simple things. They are conglomerations of people. Cities are complex things. They are the geographical and emotional distillations of whole nations."
Eureka Street, Robert McLiam Wilson
 (1996, 215)

Segregation in Northern Ireland is largely an urban conflict that arose already in the nineteenth century. Concerning the twentieth century Boal and Livingstone on the basis of data illustrating the percentage distribution of Protestants and Catholics in Belfast show that in 1911 59 per cent of the citizens were living in almost completely segregated areas with an increase in numbers to 67 per cent in 1969 and 77 per cent in 1972. By contrast to general models of urban social relationships between interethnic groups the numbers do not show an expected decline; the source seems evidently to be the harsh outbreak of intensified unrest during the time of the Civil Rights Marches and afterwards (164ff).

One of the Belfast areas best known for conflict is the zone between the Protestant Shankill area to the north and the Catholic Falls area to the south (both are situated in West Belfast). Dispute and tension in this part of town – where two

working-class districts clash – have been ongoing for more than one hundred years (ibid. 165).

Figure 2: A – Distribution of Protestant, Roman Catholic and “Mixed” Residential Areas in West Belfast, 1976 (Boal and Livingstone 166). B – Subunits of the Belfast Urban Area (Doherty and Poole 524).

During the hottest phase of the Troubles (1969-81) the boundary line lay along Cupar Street (ibid. 171) and became the official Peace Line when the British Army intervened in September 1969 (ibid. 174). Boal and Livingstone term this area “microcosm of national division” (ibid. 175). It is also in West Belfast that young Roche in *Eureka Street* is living. When Jake drives him home one day it becomes clear that the segregated districts still bear some significance in the nineties: “I turned right down Sandy Row and headed for Beechmount. I should have known. Upper Falls gamin, he was typical” (McLiam Wilson 203). That Jake having grown up in West Belfast himself knows where Beechmount is situated, is also telling for Roche: “I knew you were a Taig” (ibid. 203). Jake realises that hardly anything has changed. The walls are still covered with murals that show the good sides of Catholics, the bad sides of Protestants and what is more, “large numbers of British soldiers [...] maimed and killed” (ibid. 205). As the figure on the right shows, the numbers of segregation in West Belfast in 1991 (A) were still almost the same as they had been twenty years earlier. South Belfast in contrast was a relatively mixed area. Although Derry (B) is not of the main concern here it is nevertheless quite interesting to see that Derry in 1991 was also an almost completely segregated town. Derry bears meaning because it was here that the first violent out-breaks of civil unrest took place in 1969 in the famous bogside situated in the southern part of the Catholic West (and through which Saoirse is driving at the end of *Where They Were Missed*).

A

B

Figure 3: A – Religious distribution in Belfast in 1991. B – Religious distribution in Derry in 1991 (Irelandstory.com).

Jake has managed to escape his rough past, however, and now lives in South Belfast in fictive Poetry Street. His chosen area of living is again evidence for Jake's new Irishness. It reflects Jake's attitude towards an integrated society and his re-

sentment of nationalist or unionist ideas (otherwise he might as well have chosen to live in a Catholic area). Helen in *One by One in the Darkness* equally chose to live in a mixed area. Like Jake she is living in South Belfast just off the Ormeau Road (Madden 44). Jake's friend Chuckie is living in Eureka Street, another fictive street in the novel (there is a Eureka Drive in Belfast, however); "Eureka" meaning "I have found [it]" (Duden 552). The street's name that is at the same time the title of the book thereby is representative for the development of a number of characters in the novel. Both Chuckie and Jake find love, Chuckie on top finds a way to earn money. Aoirghe finds a way to leave her nationalist views behind and look into the future with "clear eyes" (McLiam Wilson 396). Chuckie's mother Peggy and his friend Deasely find new ways of living by outing themselves as homosexuals. Finally, they all have found a way to live in a city like Belfast without despairing by the city's agony.

4.2. The City Mirroring Northern Irish Society

"In this city, the natives live in a broken world – broken but beautiful."

Eureka Street, Robert McLiam Wilson
(1996, 215)

Depictions of the city and urban life have always been of great importance to authors such as James Joyce, John Dos Passos, Virginia Woolf or Paul Auster³³. Worthy to remember is Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway's walk through London while preparing for a party that same evening. The reader accompanies her through Westminster, hearing the strikes of Big Ben and crosses with her Victoria Street (Woolf 6). "I love walking in London", Mrs. Dalloway says, "Really, it's better than walking in the country" (ibid. 8). While Joyce's Dublin is converted into a scene that resembles the journeys of Odysseus, Auster's New York illustrates the city's anonymity and John Dos Passos gives a convincing picture of urban life in New York before the Great Depression. The city thus invokes different associations, whether pictures of consumerism, anonymous masses or a declaration of love. While *One by One in the Darkness* and *Where They Were Missed* engage with the city mainly as a contrast to the countryside and depict Belfast as a place predominantly associated with fear, hatred and violence, *Eureka Street* grants the city a more detailed report and even dedicates a whole chapter to it. For Wim Tigges Belfast is thus the true protagonist of the novel (187). In consequence he compares the portrayal of Belfast to that of Joyce's Dublin: "The physique of the city is vitalized in *Eureka Street* by the mention of street names, for instance when fol-

³³ James Joyce, *Ulysses* (published 1922). John Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer* (published 1925). Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (published 1925). Paul Auster, *The New York Trilogy* (published 1987 in one volume).

lowing in some detail the trajectories of car drives or long walks made by its major characters, somewhat in the manner of James Joyce's *Ulysses*" (Tigges 186). Indeed, the reader of *Eureka Street* learns about many of the streets of Belfast. Already on the second page Jake and the waitress Mary walk past Hope Street, on the next page they pass Lisburn Road and the reader finds out that Jake is living in Poetry Street (McLiam Wilson 2ff). Not all of the streets mentioned really exist. However, those that are invented like Hope Street, Poetry Street, Democracy Street or Constitution Street (ibid. 2, 3, 24, 25) opt for a positive feeling and thus stand in contrast to the otherwise rather upsetting depictions of the city.

Frederik Tygstrup, places emphasis on the observation that the nation-state and the novel stood in close relationship in the nineteenth century; a construction that continued well into the twentieth century. The protagonists of those novels thus live mainly in national capitals, which according to Tygstrup serve as "metaphorical images" and symbolise the "head of the national organism" (Tygstrup 225). The city in the twentieth century novel on the other hand no longer serves as a representative of the whole nation but more like an "integral universe" (ibid. 225), an area that acts rather autonomous from the nation. Accordingly the city in the twentieth-century novel has lost the requirement of being a specific or real city (ibid. 225). Many authors use the image of the city as an exemplary model for any city in the world. Sometimes cities are invented to stress the universality of their illustration even more. This new mode of writing, caused by World War I, resulted in the feeling that not only single nations were concerned by it but the entire world. Modernist writers therefore chose the city as setting in order to find "a place in time" rather than a local one (ibid. 227). The scene of demolition in almost all of Europe and other places and the feeling of forsakenness furthermore caused them to lose the "inherited image of the city embedded in a national and urban environment" (ibid. 227). According to Tygstrup national literature thus morphed into world literature. "The literary world map no longer consists of nation states, each characterized by a certain relationship between city and country, centre and periphery, but of a system of metropolizes" (ibid. 226). He continues by arguing that these metropolises form a closer connection among each other than each metropolis and its national context do.

Interestingly, the novels by Caldwell, Madden and McLiam Wilson appear to stand in the older nation-state tradition or at least in an inbetween state of the two methods. The depiction of the city – mainly Belfast but also Derry – serves to give a specific picture of the Troubles in Northern Ireland between 1969 and 1994. It does not describe the everyday problems of any people in any city anywhere in the world, but focuses particularly on the life of people who were affected by the occurrence of violence and sectarianism in a concrete period of time. City and national context are closely linked here, and the correlation of country and city also plays an important role.

According to Joachim von der Thüsen three linguistic operations are of significance for portraying the city. They are necessary for “image-making” and are the symbolic, the metaphoric and the metonymic (1). He describes it in the following way: “Image-making of the city is concerned with the assignment of meaning to an otherwise meaningless medley of heterogeneous phenomena” (ibid.1). The city thus receives a certain value because its citizens or visitors connect particular remembrances, associations or general knowledge with single parts of the city. On the symbolic level Van der Thüsen describes the city as an icon that is actually larger than the city itself. A more general truth results from this assumption. This “truth” can either be an ultimate truth or a more neutral one; that is the city can be elevated to an ideal or it can be represented in a rather unbiased way. The city can also be associated with a specified culture or phase of civilization. While in the nineteenth century London was one of the central cities in literature, the twentieth century is rather linked to New York (ibid. 2).

Metaphorically the city is presented in terms of a definite construct, which is normally not associated with urbanity. As examples Van der Thüsen mentions images of a body, monster, ocean or jungle (ibid. 2). These metaphoric connections can be regarded in positive, negative or neutral ways depending on what a person – traveller or reader – might associate with the city and how he or she perceives it.

“On the metonymic level of image-making, a totally different procedure emerges. Here, the image of a city is made up of the customs, structures and buildings which are specific to that particular city” (ibid. 3). Most people link certain objects that are particular for a city with it. Prominent examples might be London and the Houses of Parliament, especially Big Ben, or San Francisco and the Golden Gate Bridge. In case of Belfast the Stormont where the government is situated and the river Lagan are noteworthy.

In the case of Belfast as depicted in the novels it can be seen that all three of these image-making tools apply. Symbolically Belfast is strongly associated with the violent outbreaks of a Protestant and Catholic paramilitary war. In the eyes of many foreign nations Belfast became the decisive scene of the Troubles in the second half of the twentieth century. On the metonymic level Belfast’s customs, traditions and buildings stand in correlation with Protestant and Catholic murals that can be found all over the city as well as the acronyms of various organisations such as the UVF or the IRA as depicted in *Eureka Street* in the form of the mysterious acronym “OTG” (McLiam Wilson 22). Names like the Shankill Road or the Shankill Butchers³⁴ also became synonymous for Belfast during the Troubles. Van der Thüsen describes this phenomenon as “markers of the city” (ibid. 3). Citizens experience the cityscape by typical buildings and preconceived images about neighbourhoods. In Belfast for example each citizen knows which areas are rather

³⁴ A Protestant gang using butcher’s knives in order to kill Catholics during the 1970s (Mulholland 89).

Protestant areas and which are rather Catholic ones. Tigges goes one step further: "The streets, and squares, statues and public buildings in a city are a constant reminder of the past, to those that have to live in the present, and to survive into the future" (179). For those who lived to see the outbreaks of violence in Belfast the city will most certainly never lose its touch of sadness, especially for those who lost friends and relatives during this time.

Where They Were Missed introduces Belfast right on the first page and closes with Saoirse entering the city on the last page. It thus embeds Saoirse's story that for the most part plays in the Irish countryside both giving a picture of the heyday of the Troubles and later a return to Saoirse's roots. Using Van der Thüsen's concept of metaphor one observes that Belfast is depicted as a place of torment: "Belfast is hot. Belfast is never hot. But Belfast is hot this summer. [...] It's hot as hell" (Caldwell 3). The comparison to hell suggests a double meaning. On the one hand it really is a hot summer and everybody suffers from the hot weather, on the other hand it marks the ongoing outbreaks of violence as it is 1977 and the conflict is at its height. Belfast indeed becomes a place of hell for the whole family. Not only will the marriage between Saoirse's parents Deirdre and Colin break up but also her younger sister Daisy will die in a bomb explosion.

Another metaphor for Belfast is the image of a jungle that is full of threatening danger. Certain areas must not be left in order to be safe, which creates the image of the territories of wild animals that will fight for it, always ready to kill or die for it as well. Civilisation seems to have left Belfast. Saoirse, Daisy and their mother, for instance, are not allowed to visit friends in a Catholic area as their father fears for their lives. "Daddy says that for the foreseeable future, while there's cars being burned and milk bottles being thrown, Mammy is not to take us across town to visit the Antoney-oney-os and their ice-cream parlour" (Caldwell 31). Saoirse's mother nevertheless takes them to the Antonini's, an Italian family. In order to get to the Catholic Falls area they have to take a bus that is surrounded by metal mesh, "just in case anyone throws a stone" (ibid. 32). The image of the cage that is supposed to protect civilisation from a wild animal here works the other way round. Civilisation in the form of harmless citizens is this time pent up while the wilderness rages outside. Both, the cage and the hot summer, point to anomalies that will turn into an enduring state.

In *Eureka Street* another metaphorical dimension enters the stage. The novel begins with "All stories are love stories" (McLiam Wilson 1) and it ends with "She smiles and she looks at me with clear eyes" (ibid. 396). As Jake is so gripped with love Belfast, too, becomes a room for love although it "has lost its heart" itself (ibid. 215). Like in *One by One in the Darkness* the loss of the traditional economy is mourned (see chapter 3.5): "A shipbuilding, rope-making, linen-weaving town. It builds no ships, makes no rope and weaves no linen. Those trades died. A city can't survive without something to do with itself" (ibid. 215). This could be interpreted as a request for Belfast's citizens to give the city its heart back by concen-

trating on more important things than fighting like, for example, love or empathy. The city itself is depicted as being alive, rising and falling like music or like breathing (ibid. 212) but it is also compared to a novel telling the histories of thousands of people, “present tense, past tense or future” (ibid. 215).

Symbolically, Belfast is connected to rather sad images. Bunches of flowers remind the reader of the ‘Troubles’ victims and stand for the lives lost in the war (ibid. 213). Similar symbolic images can be found in *Where They Were Missed*. At the beginning of Saoirse’s story it is marching season³⁵ and the Orangemen are parading in her street (Caldwell 3). The Pentland’s obviously live in a Protestant area but never participate in the festivities because Saoirse’s mother as a Catholic from Ireland cannot stand the segregated activities. Furthermore, helicopters are another crucial image of the unhinged city. “The hot air is cracking with the sound of helicopters rack-a-tack-a-tack-a-tacking through it. Daddy says the helicopters have special cameras to see into houses so that the Army can watch what people are doing” (ibid. 4), Saoirse informs the reader, the onomatopoeia not only imitating the sound of the helicopter but also promising a threat in terms of the resemblance to the word ‘attack’. Helicopters and other instruments of the British Army thus are a symbol for the omnipresent threat both of British intrusions as well as dangerous projects of paramilitary groups. Jake’s view of the city in *Eureka Street* also features the sight of helicopters and army personnel many times (McLiam Wilson 160).

On the metonymic level wall murals and flags showing Protestant or Catholic emblems can be found all over Belfast. Derry, too, another central part of the Troubles, bears signs of the separated country. In Saoirse’s street they are the only Catholic inhabitants if we ignore her Protestant father. Neighbours have started painting their houses and installing flags on their premises. As Saoirse and her family do not participate in these actions their neighbours soon begin avoiding them.

I can see down the street as far as Wee Man’s house. His house has a flag and a Red Hand of Ulster. The gate of his house is painted red, white and blue to match the red, white and blue kerbs and the red, white and blue bunting that’s strung up between the lampposts. [...] We were the only ones not allowed to do the painting, and that’s when Jennifer across the road started swinging on our gate and shouting that our eyes were too close together (Caldwell 73).

³⁵ Marching season is a series of parades that celebrate the Protestant Dutch William of Orange. The “Twelfth of July” commemorates William’s victory over Catholic King James II in 1689 in the so-called Glorious Revolution (Mulholland 3ff).

Later in the novel when Saoirse and her mother leave Belfast to stay with Saoirse's aunt and uncle in the South she notices further wall murals in Stroke City³⁶, a witty name for Derry. Under the paintings she reads the words "FREE DERRY", "BRITISH OUT" and "INLA" (ibid. 78).

Ten years later Saoirse decides to go back to Northern Ireland to visit her father for the first time. Still the problematic situation between Catholics and Protestants has not cooled down. She has to pass Derry in order to get to Belfast. Saoirse's uncle Brendan advises her not to go directly through Derry as he is aware of the lurking dangers. "Don't drive through, was the last thing he said. [...] You don't want to be lost in the Waterside (or was it Bogside³⁷, did he say?) with Southern number plates" (ibid. 219). But Saoirse is curious to see the city where her mother marched and where her parents fell in love. The picture of the city is still a disturbing one even nineteen years after the first eruptions of violence. Saoirse sees an Army Observatory Tower, barbed wire, metal grilles and CCTV cameras (ibid. 220). She describes the city and its people as dull and grey; the only marks of colour are red, blue and yellow splashes of paint on the road but even these bear the signs of fighting: "The marks of paint bombs, they must be, I realize with a shock, but what it looks like is as if giant-sized little children have gone mad finger-painting" (ibid. 220). A bit further Saoirse sees Republican insignia such as Tricolour flags and "murals of dancing girls and balaclava'd men brandishing guns" (ibid. 220) and on the edge of the city the famous sign "You are Now entering Free Derry" (ibid. 221). Arriving in Belfast she notes almost the same signs, strings of bunting from the July parades hanging between lampposts, purple-and-orange UDA flags, and again the Red Hand of Ulster (ibid. 224). Both Derry and Belfast thus reflect the lives of its citizens, mostly being characterised by the sectarian strifes.

These images are repeated in *Eureka Street*. Almost all of them very often amount to the same thing, the markings of the two communities. On the walls it says "IRA, INLA, UVF, UFF, OTG" and "like a diary" (McLiam Wilson 212). The sentence "qui a terre a guerre" (ibid. 212) is mentioned, too, which roughly means "he who has land is at war". All these graffiti symbolise the conflict between nationalists and unionists. This is also shown by the "green, white, gold, red and blue" flags, also called "the two three-coloured emblems of difference" (ibid. 213). The distinctive feature of the acronym OTG is that it bears no actual meaning. It only has meaning in the sense that it is there. Throughout the city people

³⁶ The naming of Derry/Londonderry has been problematic among the two communities. During the Troubles unionists rather referred to the city as Londonderry while nationalists used to call it Derry. Due to the written form Derry/Londonderry (Derry-stroke-Londonderry) the radio presenter Gerry Anderson invented the term Stroke City (Kerrigan 60).

³⁷ Bogside: Catholic area in Derry where the British army was installed. In 1972 26,000 soldiers were sent there including tanks, bulldozers, Saracens, and helicopters known as Operation Motorman. Up to then it was the biggest military operation since Suez (Mulholland 86). Saoirse apparently is not aware of the significance of this area because she is too young to remember.

are aware of all the acronyms standing for unionist and nationalist groups but when the OTG graffiti start appearing nobody knows what group is hiding behind it. The letterings itself mean war, not only in their messages but also because it is a war between the people painting them on the walls and “a civic-minded person” (ibid. 22) who paints it over again. In the end one of Jake’s friends, Donal, comes up with the theory that OTG stands for nothing: “I think it’s entirely random. It could be any three letters of the alphabet. It doesn’t really matter what they are. This is the city of the three-letter initial written on walls. I think someone’s satirizing us” (ibid. 356). Apparently, the person responsible for the OTG’s just wants to indicate the senselessness and insanity of the three-letter war and the Northern Irish conflict in general, and this quite successfully.

The marching season becomes also visible in *One by One in the Darkness*. When London-based Cate Quinn returns home to visit her family she cannot but notice the Protestant messages on the outskirts of Antrim. Union Jacks and Ulster flags announce the twelfth of July although it is only mid June and red, white and blue coloured buntings are decorating the streets (Madden 6). Although two of the three sisters have chosen to live in the city – Helen in Belfast and Cate in London – all three of them consider the countryside as their true home. The city and the country thus stand in clear contrast to each other, the one depicting the familiar native land, the other one a place of estrangement and crisis. Helen for example has not furnished her house in Belfast as she feels “no particular attachment” to it (ibid. 24). Her home in the city serves more as a necessity, she never feels belonging to Belfast at all. “She’d needed a roof over her head, there was no more to it than that. [...] She’d bought furniture and curtains in the same frame of mind in which most people bought pints of milk and loaves of bread: she needed them” (ibid. 24). Nevertheless her home in Belfast functions as a safety mode for Helen. Her father being killed by Protestants in her uncle Brian’s house she has lost her feeling of security and now welcomes “the sterility of the place in Belfast” where no bitter memories accompany her (ibid. 44). “It was, psychically, a blank” (ibid. 44).

Belfast itself is depicted as a two-faced city. A friend of Helen’s, David, is expecting a visit from his London boyfriend Steve. Being afraid that he will be disappointed by the city David takes Steve only to the nice places that let Belfast appear less harmful than it really is. So he shows him the Belfast Lough, the Mourne and a nice pub in town (ibid. 56ff). On his second visit Steve gets to know the real Belfast, however. “This time, when David collected him at the airport, he didn’t drive into Belfast by the motorway, but went over the Divis mountain, through Turf Lodge and then down the Falls Road, pointing out the heavily fortified barracks” (ibid. 57). Steve even meets an army foot patrol, sees the Republican murals in the lower Falls and the Loyalist murals in the Shankill area. “The ‘Peace Line’, an ugly structure of corrugated iron and barbed wire, which separated the two communities, apparently shocked Steve more than anything else

he saw” (ibid. 58). Their trip is crowned by an army helicopter that watches over the city. This is contrasted by the opening of the first chapter which states the sisters’ true feeling about home:

Home was a huge sky; it was flat fields of poor land fringed with hawthorn and alder. It was birds in flight; it was columns of midges like smoke in a summer dusk. It was grey water; it was a mad wind; it was a solid stone house where the silence was uncanny (ibid. 1).

That Belfast is not only a place of evil has been noted by Laura Pelaschiar, too. She has observed that Belfast in the 1970s and the 1980s was “initially portrayed as a home to alienation, confusion and violence” (Pelaschiar 117). She has realised a change in the 1990s, however:

In the nineteen nineties Belfast has gradually become a new, fertile urban location, no longer a place from which escape is necessary, but rather a laboratory for opportunities, a post-modern place depicted as the only space where it is possible to build and articulate a (post)national conscience, the only location for any possible encyclopaedic, multivoiced and multi-ethnic development of Northern society (ibid. 117).

A first indication that the North might not only be a place of melancholy is shown in *Where They Were Missed*, too. Before entering the city Saoirse realises an unexpected beauty of the Strangford Lough area around it:

It’s pretty, really pretty. When you think of the North you don’t think of it as being pretty; you tend to think only of bombs and things like barbed wire and concrete barriers in the rain, but here by the edge of the Lough is one of the prettiest places I’ve seen (ibid. 223).

This postmodern pulsation is felt by Tigges, too, who describes McLiam Wilson’s *Eureka Street* as “demotic” and with a breath of “postmodern flair” (Tigges 180). That Belfast is no longer a place from which one wants to escape is also illustrated by Jake and his friends. Except for Chuckie everyone has been away for some time. Slat Sloane spent some years in Manchester. Donal Deasely was in Bayeux, Bremen and Barcelona. Septic Ted experienced living in Scotland. Finally, Jake was in America for several years before he went to London. Nevertheless, everybody has returned to the old home: “They’d gone away, they’d come back. It used to be that Northern Ireland’s diaspora was permanent, poor denuded Ireland. But everyone had started coming back. Everyone was returning” (McLiam Wilson 141).

What all five of them experience is a certain attraction to Northern Ireland although they all have seen the evils produced there. This sensation is also described by Pelaschiar who argues that Belfast resembles a cage or a labyrinth, that is, a place one wants to escape from but cannot do so. At the same time the city has a

captivating atmosphere and an “irresistible ‘fatal attraction’”, as Pelaschiar calls it, and she concludes that “the writers from the North seem to show symptoms both of topophobia and of topophilia”, a love-hate relationship to Northern Ireland (122). That all of Jake’s friends have returned to the city confirms the magnetism of it. Even strangers are somehow spellbound by it as in case of Steve. Luckily the return or visit to Belfast is for none of the characters actually fatal. They all seem to be drawn by the innate pain the city conveys, though. Chuckie’s girlfriend Max, for instance, has lost her father in Belfast. As a negotiator who “persuaded people in foreign countries not to kill each other” (McLiam Wilson 120) he was killed by Protestant and Catholic paramilitaries after being only twenty minutes in Belfast. A new interesting statement enters the novel: “The IRA and the UVF both claimed responsibility. An American newscaster told the camera that [Max’s] father had been executed because he was too good at his job. The Irish didn’t want him persuading them away from their war. The Irish liked their war” (ibid. 122).

As the city is every now and then depicted in quite positive pictures – whereas the countryside is always connected to happy remembrances – one can assume that the city is not bad by itself. It is made a bad place by the people living there. Once sectarian issues have been solved Belfast, or even Derry, also has the potential to become a likeable place again. First signs thereof are already there. The positive feelings Jake and Saoirse sometimes have when looking at Belfast are again signs of ‘New Irish’ beginnings. At times it even seems as if the city wanted to tell its citizens that the times of war were over and that it was time for a change. “In Belfast, in all cities, it is always present tense and all the streets are Poetry Streets” (McLiam Wilson 217), it is said in *Eureka Street*. Indeed, the city waits for its people to make something out of it. This can turn into a disturbing poem in modernist style but also into a love poem.

4.3. A Sectarian Society – The Significance of Religion

*“For there they stood, Pope and Chuckie, arms
still outstretched towards one another, a whiskey
bottle in the Pope’s hand, a glass in Chuckie’s.”
Eureka Street, Robert McLiam Wilson
(1996, 35)*

This quotation taken from *Eureka Street* deals with Protestant Chuckie Lurgan – whose clan “had historically loved fame” (McLiam Wilson 26) – who is depicted in a painting together with the Pope. Originally a photo taken of a crowd of people surrounding the Pope during one of his visits to Belfast, a friend of Chuckie’s, Dex, “an alcoholic one-time commercial artist” (ibid. 32), has redesigned the picture to show only what is important to Chuckie: him and a famous person. That

of all people the Pope, “the evil Kommandant of all the Romish hordes” (ibid. 29) becomes an object of Chuckie’s desire does not matter to him.

All his life Chuckie had been capable of shouting ‘Fuck the Pope’, with the hardest and most Protestant of his friends. But when he heard that the man in question, the new Polish Pope, was coming to Ireland, he was in a quandary. Sure, the guy was a Taig, a Fenian, the logical extension of all that was Catholic in the world. But no one could deny that he was famous (ibid. 29).

Because Chuckie loves fame more than his religion he is able to overcome one of the problems that is still very strong in Northern Ireland: to stick always to one’s own crowd. The picture seems to say ‘Let’s have a drink and be friends’, Catholic and Protestant forget their old dispute; an idea that works in *Eureka Street* but that is not yet the rule in Northern Ireland.

The conflict in Northern Ireland is not only a religious one but as Duncan Morrow points out “the specific conditions” are that “political and religious movements in Northern Ireland resulted in ingrained communal divisions, where the lines of religious rivalry ran almost parallel to political divisions” (Aughey and Morrow 190). Claire Mitchell, too, stresses the social and political significance of the church in Northern Ireland and that conflict “has not been, is not and never will be a holy war” (Mitchell 2006, 1). Reasons for this intertwining of social, political and religious factors is that the Catholic Church itself – having to endure the same misery during the Penal Laws period (see chapter 1.1) in the eighteenth century as the Catholic population – became sort of an advocate for the people against British authorities. Social and economic issues were thus always foregrounded, not theological ones. At the same time the church became a presence in managing schools, social institutions and economic initiatives (ibid. 192).

Unlike the Catholic Church, the Protestant Church has never been unified in Northern Ireland. Morrow stresses that in this case “institutional unity [...] is provided by political and cultural groups such as the unionist parties and the Orange Order and not by the churches” (ibid. 193). The religious part remains a strong “boundary marker” (Mitchell 2006, 60), however. Instead of belonging to one single church Protestants are divided up into Presbyterians, Anglicans, Methodists and other separate denominations (ibid. 191), which for Jake is another reason to make fun of the churches in Northern Ireland:

I walked up the Lisburn Road and passed the Anabaptist Church – or double-duckers as we called them – the South Belfast Gospel Hall, the Windsor Tabernacle, the Elim Pentecostal, the Methodist Mission, the Presbyterian Presbytery, and the Unitarian Church of Protestant Mnemonists or something like that. [...] I tried not to look like a Catholic (McLiam Wilson 170).

The satiric element is created here by various methods. While the Anabaptist Church sounds like an ordinary church at first the reader learns what Jake and his

friends think of it by the nickname they use. 'Double-duckers' could stress the church's intensified religiosity, while at the same time it could also mean a sexual allusion. Although using religious terms in their names, other churches like the Windsor Tabernacle sound more like pubs or places of amusement instead of piety. Finally the alliterations in Methodist Mission and Presbyterian Presbytery and the latter's repetition of root (*figura etymologica*) seem to ridicule the church's authority.

However, the church in general plays a crucial role in Northern Irish society. Morrow claims that only pubs do have a similar central role in social life (consequently the peculiar church names mentioned by Jake). Thus, the church among others offers space for women's groups, charities, sports clubs and young people. During times of high unemployment rates – as in the 1970s – the church even provided for job training and employment schemes (ibid. 195).

Duncan calls attention to the fact that "in communities which regard one another with suspicion or hostility, in which the fact of being a Protestant or being a Catholic may be grounds for apprehension or fear, the avoidance of such situations of fear [...] is a matter of common sense" (ibid. 196). These situations are also familiar to Jake in *Eureka Street*. In a bar he frequently attends he encounters one night a "big Protestant bouncer" with UVF tattoos. Jake is afraid of talking to him because he might say "something too Catholic" (McLiam Wilson 2). The next time he goes there the bouncer on duty wears Republican tattoos and Jake is "scared of not seeming Catholic enough" (ibid. 18). This shows how important the religious background for some people is. Of course, this is a merely superficial perception. Ronnie, a Protestant colleague of Jake's, likes him as long as he believes him to be a Methodist (ibid. 162).

Both Morrow and Mitchell have recognised a change in religious behaviour. In the 1991 census, for example, the number of those not stating a religion and of those claiming no religion rose while the numbers of Protestant believers fell (Presbyterians: from 31 per cent to 21 per cent, Church of Ireland: from 27 per cent to 18 per cent) (Aughey and Morrow 191). In 1991 thus 38 per cent stated to be Roman Catholics and 51 per cent belonged to one of the Protestant churches while 11 per cent stated no religion (ibid. 1991). In 2001 the number of Catholics counted 40 per cent; that of Protestants had sunk to 46 per cent. The number of population having no religion or not stating it now counted 14 per cent (Mitchell 2006, 22).

Although there is a trend of decline concerning the importance of religion it is very small and "religious belonging remains strong amongst the young" as Mitchell points out (ibid. 23). In a 2003 survey 15-17 year olds were asked several questions about their religious identity. When asked the importance of their religion 70 per cent of Catholics and 59 per cent of Protestants agreed. The question "Do you see yourself as part of a religious community?" was answered by 91 per cent of Catholics and by 88 per cent of Protestants in the affirmative, though

(ibid. 23). Mitchell concludes that for young people their religious identity is as important to them as to their parents, but she also assumes that they deal with it in different ways (ibid. 23).

An example for the onset of change when dealing with religion can be seen in *One by One in the Darkness*. All three of the sisters – Cate, Helen, and Sally – used to go to church regularly during childhood. While growing up they choose different ways of dealing with their religion, however. Sally's faith continues to run in "a straight and unfractured line" "like much else in her life" (Madden 22/23). To Cate her Catholic faith is of no less importance although Helen assumed she would quit going to church once having moved to London (ibid. 22). Cate's faith is less straightforward than Sally's, though. It is more of a "ramshackle thing, a mixture of hope, dread, superstition and doubt" (ibid. 22). Only Helen stopped going to church after she started university, which is not that easy to deal with for her family. In one of her father's notebooks she finds a reference that he hoped for two things: "That there would be peace in Northern Ireland, and that Helen would return to the Church" (ibid. 23). While faith is more of a personal thing for the sisters, their parents and relatives by contrast perceive it in a more universal way and regard it both as important and almost mandatory for every Catholic to stay connected to the church.

It has been mentioned already that religion serves as a boundary marker. One of the most persistent ways in maintaining it begins quite early in childhood, namely during school. In 2003 the majority of pupils still attended segregated schools: Protestant and Catholic. Although there do exist integrated schools (47 in 2003) with Lagan College being the first one that opened in 1981, only four per cent of the total school age population attended these schools in 2003 (Mitchell 2006, 60). Both Protestant and Catholic schools still did little to teach their pupils about the other community. Thus "knowledge of the other community's religion is weak, and [...] many religious and historical myths fill in gaps of knowledge about the 'other side'" (ibid. 61). Due to this practice prejudice is almost inevitable. It is furthermore quite problematic as school children can get a false impression of religion. Mitchell refers to B. Lambkin who found out that pupils believed the conflict to be the result of religious differences. Without contact to children of other religions this division could even be perceived as being a natural separation (ibid. 61).

Difference and the Other become again important for religion as well, for "identity is intrinsically relational" as Mitchell points out (ibid. 64). One's own religious identity is largely defined by what one is not. This happens by looking at others. "People arrive at self-awareness by observing difference – whether this is football tops, school uniforms, cultural traditions such as going to watch Orange Order marches nor not going", Mitchell contends (ibid. 64). In *Where They Were Missed* Saoirse's identity is largely formed by her family's difference towards others, too. When it is marching season everybody living in their street goes cheering

on the marchers, that is, everyone except Saoirse and Daisy who have to stay in the garden (Caldwell 3); and they do not go to church, “not even at Christmas, when everybody else goes” (ibid. 51). For Saoirse’s father the church is just “Magicking Nonsense” and for her mother going to church is more dangerous than staying away from it as she has advised her daughters to say “We don’t go to church” in case anybody should ask (ibid. 51). Only when the Pentlands’ marriage breaks up does Deirdre return to her faith. The church appears to be like a prison to Saoirse and Daisy, however, mainly because of the black bars across the windows (ibid. 52). What serves as a protection against attacks from radical activists here at the same time becomes a metaphor for the religious situation in Northern Ireland: Religion becomes a prison itself as it is quite hard for anybody to flee from its stigmatising effects. Even if one is not an active Christian one will always be considered being a Catholic or a Protestant in the North. Religion thus becomes an “ethnic marker” and justifies delimitation (Mitchell 2005, 8).

In 2000 and 2001 interviews with 35 people were taken by Mitchell, among them with a young woman called Niamh who claimed to be a non-practicing Catholic. Although she did not go to church and did not believe in anything told by it she would have her children christened. Furthermore, it was important to her that her children went to a Catholic school, learned Irish and played Gaelic sports. “Thus the import of Catholicism for Niamh is that it is not Protestantism”, Mitchell claims (ibid. 8). For her religion itself does not play a major role but the cultural difference it implies. Another interviewee, Joe, recounted how he was beaten up for being Catholic and had problems finding a job (ibid. 9). These examples show the importance to identify oneself in Northern Irish society and to mark oneself off the ‘enemy’ and it also illustrates the prison again from which one cannot escape; according to the motto once a Catholic, always a Catholic.

Nic Craith has observed that although it seems to result from difference conflict between groups very often actually has much in common. The groups involved artificially create distinction by making use of the same sources and applying analogous tactics. “Where communities are remarkably alike, it is similarities, rather than differences that generate conflict as great creativity is required to construct cultural boundaries when the cultural other is very alike” (Nic Craith 2003, 1). Jake poignantly summarises this problematic socio-religious situation in Northern Ireland:

The tragedy was that Northern Ireland (Scottish) Protestants thought themselves like the British. Northern Ireland (Irish) Catholics thought themselves like Eireans (proper Irish). The comedy was that any once-strong difference had long melted away and they resembled no one now as much as they resembled each other. The world saw this and mostly wondered, but round these parts folk were blind (McLiam Wilson 163).

It is different with Jake and Chuckie, though. While the outside world sees them as Catholic and Protestant they see each other as friends. This is where a new aspect sets in. Because Jake and Chuckie have different value systems they indeed can be real friends. They do not lose themselves in reasons why they should dislike the respective other. Both Jake and Chuckie at some point indeed accepted the fact that they are not any different from the rest of Belfast society or Northern Ireland in general (here one should also remember that they are all speaking the same thick dialect). They try to make the best out of it, however. The key to mutual understanding thereby is moderateness and to remain with both feet on the ground. Jake's colleague Rajinder, for instance, can be together with the Jew Rachel because he is a Sunni Muslim. "We're very moderate" he adds (McLiam Wilson 345). If these two religions, that in the eyes of the western world follow quite strict rules, can find together then one could also expect Northern Irish Protestants and Catholics to find a way to communicate. That people like Chuckie and Jake, Helen or Saoirse find ways not to be touched by the stigmatising effects of sectarian insanity gives hope for the future, though.

4.4. Signs of Violence

*"He grabbed my collar, called me a Prod fucker
and took his swing."
Eureka Street, Robert McLiam Wilson
(1996, 196)*

Violence, most notably in the form of 'terrorism', has been one of the major parts of life for Northern Irish citizens. But then the term terrorism is sometimes situated in a grey area. David Miller remarks that terrorism means the "systematic use of murder or other physical violence for political ends" and it is "indiscriminate or mostly targets civilians or both" (Miller 4). Nevertheless the term is always used to describe the actions of the enemy, never for the actions of allies or oneself (ibid. 4). Miller demonstrates the problem with the help of the following example. If the killings of civilians were taken as the decisive factor for terrorism then the IRA could not be termed as terrorist group since only a minority (37 per cent) of its victims were civilians between 1969 and 1989, whereas the army and the RUC in Northern Ireland could be called terrorists as a majority killed by them (54 per cent) were civilians. In addition, both parties would say they did not kill civilians deliberately (ibid. 4). Thus, Miller concludes terrorism is rather a term used for non-state or non-Western state induced acts of violence (ibid. 5). Otherwise many other acts such as the killings on Bloody Sunday in Derry 1972 undoubtedly would have to be called an act of terror as well (ibid. 6ff). The whole subjugation of Ireland by the British would lose ground then.

According to numbers of 2001 statistics, thus more than 3,600 people have died in the Northern Ireland conflict. Nearly 90 per cent thereof were killed by paramilitary activists. The IRA alone killed more than 1,800 people up to 1998. Another 231 were killed by republican factions. Loyalist activists killed 990 people, most of them Catholic civilians (708 to be exact). In contrast the IRA 'only' killed 133 Protestant civilians. Other victims included British Army soldiers, members of the RUC and of the Ulster Defence Regiment (later the Royal Irish Regiment). British government forces killed a total of 363 people. In Belfast alone over 1,500 people fell victim to the war. Another 40,000 were injured during the violent conflict (Mulholland 76).

The depiction of violence has changed over the years in Troubles writing, most notably if considering novels from the 1920s and 1930s and from the 1980s and 1990s.

In the early stories violence is usually in the background and always palatable. It is there as a necessary concomitant of the struggle for nationhood. In contemporary stories, the violence is brutal, random, senseless, pervasive, and most often resented front and center. It often happens to innocent civilians. The victims are both Catholic and Protestant, from the South and the North, and usually with no active allegiance to either nationalism or Unionism (Storey 73).

Hence, the writers mentioned earlier like O'Faolain and O'Connor in their novels made use of violence in order to show a nationalist standpoint whereas nowadays violence is presented in a barbaric and anarchic way (ibid. 75). Both *One by One in the Darkness* and *Where They Were Missed* make violence look ugly and certainly neither functional nor effective. In both novels the narrators lose a close person who dies innocently and randomly in an act of violence. Thereby, the authors are not afraid to depict things as they are. The scenes are frankly cruel. Because none of the daughters was there when their father Brian was murdered by terrorists Cate, Helen and Sally can only imagine the scene.

Then Helen's father saw them himself as they came into the kitchen, two men in parkas with the hoods pulled up, Halloween masks on their faces. He saw the guns, too, and he knew what they were going to do to him. The sound of a chair scraping back on the tiles, 'Ah no, Christ Jesus no,' and then they shot him at point-blank range, blowing half his head away (Madden 181).

The Halloween masks add a special harshness to the scene as they are worn by loyalists who abuse the originally Celtic tradition. Mother Emily is haunted by a dream in which she faces Charlie's murderer in the kitchen. On the floor her husband lies covered by a check table cloth "two feet sticking out at one end", the other end of it being "dark and wet". The whole place is filled with a "stench of

blood and excrement” (ibid. 125). Cate is also haunted by her father’s death in the sense that her childhood remembrances of her uncle’s kitchen are overshadowed by the images of her father lying dead on the floor where they had cracked nuts as children. But the refurnished kitchen is no solution either as the refurnishing has destroyed her childhood memories. “She had always thought of her childhood not principally in terms of time, but as a place to which she could always return. Now that was over” (ibid. 143). Instead the place has become “desecrated” to her (ibid. 143).

In *Where They Were Missed* the death of Daisy is represented in a reduced amount of clearly given images. Nevertheless, the portrayal is not less cruel in the impressions it evokes. By only hinting at the possible outcome of a car explosion in front of the Pentlands’ house Caldwell at the same time manages to create a concrete picture. The reader is almost forced to envision what has happened to Daisy: “A car horn blasts suddenly and it goes on and on the noise of it tearing through the air and on top of the car horn a shrieking noise a bang then: there is nothing” (Caldwell 66). Saoirse and her mother run out of the house, Deirdre calling: “Jesus Christ, Saoirse, where’s your sister?” (ibid. 66). The words “blast”, “tearing”, “shrieking” and “nothing” induce violent images of Daisy being hit by the exploding bomb and the remains of her motionless body. She is not dead instantly but dies several days later in hospital. Again the reader learns about her death only by the emotions of Daisy’s family. When Saoirse’s father Colin comes to pick her up from a hospital room, where a nurse has been looking after her, the reader knows the outcome from his only standing in the door and staring (ibid. 71).

Eureka Street, by contrast, generally uses quite ironical language to describe violent acts, as for instance when Jake sits on the Peace Train to Belfast: “Here I was riding a Peace Train from Belfast to Dublin to protest against the IRA planting bombs on the Belfast to Dublin line. [...] But we didn’t get to Dublin. There was a bomb on the Belfast to Dublin line. Boom boom” (McLiam Wilson 187). Here, too, a whole chapter deals with lost lives (chapter eleven). The method chosen evokes huge sympathies in the reader. In this scene the ironic mode is not applied, however, and it thus serves as an exception to the rest of the novel. Consequently, the chapter gains a special importance. It begins with Rosemary Daye who is looking forward to a date. More than four pages are used to introduce her to the reader during her coffee break strolling through the city. The reader accompanies her shopping at the Royal Avenue in Belfast’s city centre, follows her into her favourite shop and learns about her peculiarities and how she met her latest sweetheart (McLiam Wilson 218ff). But then the scenery suddenly changes. Rosemary steps into a sandwich shop, flirts with a young man holding the door open for her and “stops existing” (ibid. 222): An exploding bomb takes her life and that of several other people who are also introduced only briefly. The descrip-

tion of her death is very detailed and matter-of-fact and breaks with the airy atmosphere created before.

The largest part of one of the glass display cases blasted in her direction. Though fragmented before it reached her, the pieces of shrapnel and glass were still large enough to kill her instantly. Her left arm was torn off by sheeted glass and most of her head and face destroyed by the twisted mass of a metal tray. The rim of the display case, which was in three large sections, sliced through or embedded in her recently praised hips and some heavy glass jars impacted on her chest and stomach, pulverizing her major organs. Indeed, one substantial chunk of glass whipped through her midriff, taking her inner stuff half-way through the large hole in her back (ibid. 222).

Martin O'Hare, Kevin McCafferty, Natalie Crawford, her sister Liz and their mother Margaret plus further twelve people die in the bomb attack, and many more are injured severely (ibid. 225). A number of times the narrator stresses that they all had stories (ibid. 223, 224, 231). By giving the victims' names and short introductions into their lives McLiam Wilson manages to create an understanding in the reader that those people who died during the Troubles were really quite normal people with quite normal lives and that none of them deserved to die.

This disturbing scene is contrasted with Jake's statement from the beginning of the novel in which he emphasises the routine of bomb explosions in the city: "As Belfast bombs go, it went. [...] It was dull stuff. Nobody really noticed. What had happened to us here? Since when had detonations in the neighbourhood barely raised a grumble" (McLiam Wilson 15)? Farquharson rightly points out that the things Jake is talking about are "made more important than Jake seems to suggest; as McLiam Wilson shows, we are meant to be horrified" (ibid. 72). This is achieved by Jake's "sarcastic, critical and cynical" language (ibid. 71). Indeed Jake cares a lot what is happening around him, especially when Roche, a twelve-year-old kid he has met in the streets, is injured in a riot. Jake loses control screaming at the reporters around and saying mean things to Aoirghe who has always been a supporter of nationalist views (McLiam Wilson 363ff).

As the figures mentioned at the beginning of this chapter undoubtedly show, most deaths were caused by paramilitary groups, the republican IRA and the loyalist UDA and UVF being the most prominent ones. Among scholars the question has been raised how to deal with these paramilitary groups. Are they politically legitimate or merely criminals (Aughey and Morrow 159)? Alain Bairner emphasises the fact that these paramilitary groups in the 25 years of conflict "had the weaponry, the organization and the will to continue their violent activities for an unlimited period of time." He continues by noting that at first few people believed the ceasefires called in 1994 to last very long (ibid. 159). Jake for example is one of those people who eyes the ceasefires skeptically when his friend Slat tells him

about them: "My initial deep surprise faded. 'They've had plenty of ceasefires before.'" The Troubles had only been the most recent outbreak of violence. Violence itself has been an element of Irish political life for much longer. Jake's doubts are definitely justified. Why should the ceasefires of 1994 have been the ultimate end?

It is interesting to take a short look on the motives of paramilitary groups at this point. Both republican and loyalist paramilitaries saw themselves not as criminals but as defenders of their political aims. Hence, republican violence in their view was legitimised by the constitution of the Irish Republic and that of loyalists by the British government (*ibid.* 161). Republicans also referred to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the African National Congress (ANC) in order to support their arguments for a legitimate fight for freedom and a united Ireland (*ibid.* 162). Supporters of a united Ireland faced protectors of the union. The British government in contrast considered all paramilitary factions as being terrorist groups and proscribed their existence (*ibid.* 160). To fund paramilitary actions, however, it was unavoidable to engage in criminal activities such as armed robberies or racketeering (*ibid.* 161).

Both Caldwell and Madden refer to members of paramilitary groups in their novels. The point of perception is a critical one, though. At the age of 16 Saoirse is dating Johnny Mahon whose "uncles from Derry are in the Maze prison³⁸ up North doing short sentences for possession of firearms and suspected paramilitary involvement" (Caldwell 93). For that reason her aunt Bernadette does not want to get Saoirse involved with him (which she as a teenager of course does nevertheless). However, Johnny uses her only as an alibi for his illegal paramilitary activities when he asks her to lie about them having been to the cinema (*ibid.* 97). He and three of his companions finally get arrested for having stored weapons and ammonium nitrate in a nearby barn and for being suspected in paramilitary involvement with the "Provos"³⁹ (*ibid.* 159ff).

³⁸ Maze prison, officially named Her Majesty's Prison, and referred to as Long Kesh or just "the Kesh" by both loyalists and republicans, was located near Belfast outside the city of Lisburn. Opened in 1971 with the introduction of internment, it became a symbol for the division of Northern Ireland during the Troubles. Since 1976 the most dreaded paramilitary activists were housed here in the so-called H blocks until the endorsement of the Good Friday Agreement. Around 430 prisoners were released early on license then. In 1980/81 the famous hunger strikes were carried out in Maze prison. Finally, "in September 2000 the last four prisoners were transferred and the prison closed" (Gillespie 158-159).

³⁹ Provisional Irish Republican Army: A faction that developed out of the split with the IRA in 1969. Whereas the official wing eschewed violence after 1972, the Provisionals believed that violence was the only way to achieve their goals. The IRA's tradition of physical force can be traced back to Wolfe Tone's revolutionary movement of 1798 and to the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) of 1858. While the IRB acted secretly, the Irish Volunteers, a Nationalist paramilitary body, were established in 1912 to support openly the cause of Irish Home Rule. When the IRB took control over the Irish Volunteers, the IRA was formed, which proclaimed

In *One by One in the Darkness* the brother of an old friend of Helen's, Tony Larkin, dies planting a bomb near Magherafelt at the age of 19 (Madden 103). Although he dies himself as the initiator and no innocents are concerned his death leaves an awkward feeling among neighbours and friends: "A strange atmosphere hung over everyone and everything at the time of Tony's death, a hushed and grieved air, and there was a distance between people, as though no matter how much they talked, they remained deeply isolated from each other" (Madden 104), a clear sign of the confusion and disturbance the war – no matter in which way – caused for families and friends. At Tony's funeral several paramilitaries are present which leaves mixed feelings among the rest of the funeral attendants. Father Black for example who speaks the sermon forbids Tony's companions to put a beret, black gloves and the tricolour flag on top of the coffin; typical insignia of an IRA funeral ritual (ibid. 104). Six men and women all dressed in black with black berets, and dark glasses bid their deceased comrade a last farewell: "[They] produced guns, and when someone gave orders in Irish, they raised their arms and fired a volley of shots over the open grave. Many of the mourners applauded loudly; some of the men even whistled and cheered" (ibid. 105). While Helen's uncle Brian is among the applauders who "clapped hardest of all" (ibid. 105) their father remains silent. Like many others Charlie cannot make sense of the IRA methods and advises his daughters to remember what they have just witnessed: "Never forget what you saw today; and never let anybody try to tell you that it was anything other than a life wasted, and lives destroyed" (ibid. 105). In the present story of the novel Helen has to defend Oliver Maguire, a young man who is suspected of having murdered a taxi driver. Although Helen chose her job deliberately this time she begins to have doubts about her clients. This time she suddenly knows Oliver really did kill the man. Images of the deed pass vividly right in front of her eyes (ibid. 173). For the first time she sees the insanity of the sectarian killings she as a solicitor has to deal with and begins to remember her father's unnecessary death.

In all three examples a deep insight into the minds of the IRA men is not given but they are not depicted as evil monsters, either. The focus is rather set on the families of the delinquents and the consequences they have to deal with. Not every family was standing in the republican tradition, thus relatives were normally as shocked by the facts as the world outside. Mrs. Larkin is said to look "as if she were locked into some terrible dream, from which she didn't have the energy to struggle to awaken" (ibid. 104). Mrs. Maguire refuses to believe her son to be a murderer at first, too. "Oliver couldn't have done what they're accusing him of. I know, because I'm his mother" (ibid. 175), but secretly Helen knows Mrs. Larkin knows the truth as well. In the end she admits: "It's all like a dream, so it is [...]. All like a terrible dream" (ibid. 176). Helen is also familiar with the feelings those

an Irish provisional government in 1916. From this action the PIRA took its name (Aughey 161ff).

families have when leaving the court after the verdict: "They hid their faces in shame" (ibid. 174). These passages confirm that the majority of Northern Ireland's people were not interested in killing each other but were equally victims of their relatives and the whole country's situation. The guilt of their sons and daughters, brothers and sisters hit them as hard as the delinquents themselves. Questions of complicity must have tortured them. The comparison to a terrible dream of which one tries to awaken in vain thus becomes an adequate image.

4.5. The Role of the Media

"I switched on my Wreck-radio, caught the words 'two suspect devices', and switched it off again. I drove on, musicless. As I turned up Bedford Street, I decided to sing to myself."

Eureka Street, Robert McLiam Wilson
(1996, 201)

Until recently, violent attacks within Northern Ireland not only threatened people in the streets but also accompanied them in the daily news. A good example here is Jake who cannot listen to the radio anymore as it is always the same news he hears (see also citation above). He is so fed up with hearing bad news all the time and conditioned to switch off the radio as soon as the news are on that he misses the only good news the radio broadcasts in the whole novel: the declaration of the ceasefires (McLiam Wilson 306). Saoirse's father Colin in *Where They Were Missed* shows a similar reaction to the news: "Daddy buys the *Belfast Telegraph* as well but he doesn't read it, he only looks at the front page and then he shakes his head and folds it all up so you can't see the photos on the front" (Caldwell 24). Violence surrounds these people everywhere they go, so their reaction is trying to ignore violence reported in the media. Unfortunately, they do not manage to do so as they encounter it outside their homes each single day.

Some of the characters' grief is yet harder to bear due to the media. Helen is full of anger at the media as she experienced the journalists' hunger for sensationalism herself. Although her father died innocently in an attack that actually was supposed to kill her uncle, the media treats the case without any decency:

Worst of all had been the British tabloids, where the death was reported coldly and without sympathy, much being made of Brian's Sinn Féin membership, and the murder having taken place in his house. The inference was that he had only got what was coming to him (Madden 47).

Helen's friend David also lost his father in an act of violence. As in Helen's case the newspapers do not make much of a distinction between two men killed in a car, one being in the IRA, the other one just being in the wrong place at the

wrong time. Instead they both are depicted as terrorists who “got what they deserved” (ibid. 49). The novel thus suggests that violence strikes the relatives of innocent victims, which most of them were, in a double way. On the one hand they have to deal with the loss of a beloved person, on the other hand they feel the pain that the whole world believes yet another terrorist died because he deserved it.

This form of disrespect for the dead is also taken up in *Where They Were Missed*. Shortly after the husband of Saoirse’s mother’s friend has died the BBC besiege the house of the family filming them. “It’s a disgrace, so it is, coming to juke at us like we’re animals in a zoo, they’ve no respect, so they haven’t, no respect at all”, a relative of the deceased criticises the journalists (Caldwell 38).

The media without doubt have a wide range of influence on people watching, reading, or listening to the news. A true, neutral and objective report is even for the most professional journalist a hard task. News coverage thus almost always bears the mark of the author. In the examples shown above the media even seems to lose its representative mode. The accounts of what has happened receive a touch of propaganda in order to fuel people’s aversion towards the other community or the British government respectively. People who died guiltless suddenly become connected to terrorism.

That the media took their share in worsening the conflict is also stated by Alain Bairner. He stresses two schools of thought that treat the influence of the media in the conflict. One of them deals with the importance of propaganda made by the British government; the other one with the assistance of propaganda made by paramilitary activists and their supporters. Nevertheless, both have contributed to the persistence of the Northern Irish political crisis (Aughey and Morrow 173). In addition foreign news coverage is supposed to have added little to the crisis. “Instead, it is suggested that the local media in Northern Ireland have played a significant part in supporting the rival perspectives around which the politics of division have been centred” (ibid. 173). The expected neutrality of journalists and broadcasters has also lapsed as the observance of media actors has shown that they themselves very often were politically involved. Several factors such as the “economic context of media production, indirect censorship through intimidation and the threat of legal sanctions, direct censorship and, finally, self-censorship” are named by Bairner as reasons for non-detached news reports (ibid. 174ff). The British government thus partly made use of the press in their fight against terrorism. The “banning, censorship and delays in showing of over 100 television programmes about Northern Ireland between 1969 and 1993” have been the result of this policy (ibid. 175).

5. Conclusion and Outlook

“It’s not our business to turn Orange and Green into a sludgy brown”, remarked one of the founding members of the cultural diversity programme⁴⁰ in Northern Ireland (Crozier 38). Instead of mixing the cultural backgrounds of Catholics and Protestants the cultural diversity programme’s aim in the first place was to join both parties in dialogue so that they could learn about the ‘Other’ but never “to overrule or eliminate difference” (ibid. 38). That a mutual understanding without giving up one’s own identity is possible is also shown in the novels discussed. Although the protagonists have not participated and do not participate in any of the cultural diversity programmes they nevertheless develop, or already have developed, a certain degree of openness towards their fellow countrymen. By looking at different aspects that are important for Northern Irish identity, such as the Irish language, the postcolonial background, and the effects of war, it can be seen how characters are affected by both their past and present situations and how a new way in contemporary literature has been pursued. Models like Anderson’s imagined community as well as more traditional models of the nation and Bhabha’s theory of hybridity help to understand the building of communities as well as why some people become able to abandon old ways of thinking.

Hence, it becomes understandable why nationalism still is important to a great number of people as colonial aspects have been affecting the country. Characters like Aoirghe or Brian use this to make up great parts of their identities. Other characters like Johnny Mahon or Tony Larkin are proof of how far people were willing to go and even engaged in paramilitary activities. This is contrasted by the vision of Jake’s ‘New Irish’ who can look very different as depicted by the three novels but who also leaves the old quarrels behind and turns to a brighter and more promising future. This model of the ‘New Irish’ can primarily be applied to Jake himself but also to Chuckie and their close circle of friends. Even Aoirghe at the end of the novel seems to have changed from the stereotypical nationalist to a more moderate type who is able to follow Jake on the path of new Irishness. Beyond the novel *Eureka Street* that has introduced the term of the ‘New Irish’, characters of this type can be found in both *One by One in the Darkness* and *Where They Were Missed*. Cate embodies the ‘New Irish’ because she both clings to her Catholic faith but also manages to lead her life free from restrictions. Saoirse inherits

⁴⁰ As there had been no government initiatives to abolish the divisions between the Catholic and the Protestant community the Cultural Traditions Group was founded in 1988, which later was changed to the Cultural Diversity Group. The immediate aim of the group was to bring children of segregated schools together and give them the opportunity to meet members of the other community. Several programmes for shared projects were thus initiated. Also the “wider community” in the form of the family was not left out. Later various other courses to encourage mutual understanding were introduced like television and radio programmes, which promoted CDs and films. Also history societies, resident groups and women’s and youth organizations were created (Crozier 36ff).

both sides of the Troubles and therefore also has to deal with both facets of these personalities. She cannot take stands because she actually functions as a link between Catholic and Protestant fronts. Thus, Saoirse is the ultimate Northern Irish who represents in one person what the country consists of. She becomes the personified mosaic of Northern Ireland that does not blend orange and green into brown but that shines in both colours.

Education, for example, seems to be an important factor for change. All of the protagonists in *Eureka Street*, *One by One in the Darkness*, and *Were They Were Missed* are rather intelligent and educated people or in the case of Saoirse are on their way of becoming so. Education is no guarantee for tolerance and cultural openness but it is indicated that it certainly has helped in making Catholic and Protestant inhabitants equal in their social status. The aspect of education therefore would be a point for further investigation. It might be of interest at this point to pay attention to changes in numbers of graduates obtaining a university degree or a higher training. It also would be worthwhile to examine the role of education in paramilitary groups and to find out whether people in the IRA, UVF and other groupings were of mixed educational backgrounds or if a tendency to higher or lower school-leaving certificates can be observed.

In addition to this economic aspects are worthy to examine as well. During the 1970s and 1980s Northern Ireland was affected by high unemployment rates and thus it should be looked at the correlations between unemployment and the readiness to join paramilitary groups, if there are any. As it turned out, up until now peace has been rather permanent. Yet, one must not forget that time and again splinter groups are trying to destabilise the peace by planting bombs and planning other violent attacks as in the Lurgan occurrence. Although these appear to be in the minority the danger of a new escalation always poses a possible threat to the people. If there were indeed correlations between job loss and the arising of propensity to violence new financial crises in the future could destabilise the balance or even revive the bygone status.

It remains yet to be seen whether the images of the 'New Irish' will become manifest in society and gradually eliminate stereotypes of unionist and nationalist activists or whether it will remain on the fringes of society. Concerning literature it is also fascinating to see what will come after the 'New Irish'. Falling back to stereotypical descriptions of IRA killers and UVF butchers is certainly not a desirable goal once these new hybrid images were opened up by contemporary novelists.

6. Appendix

Summary of Discussed Texts

Robert McLiam Wilson, Eureka Street (1996)

Eureka Street tells the stories of the Catholic Jake Jackson and one of his best friends, the Protestant Chuckie Lurgan. The setting is Belfast around the time of the ceasefires of 1994. Left by his English girlfriend Sarah who has had an abortion Jake is constantly looking for love. In the beginning he is having a short affair with the waitress Mary who is the fiancée of the RUC officer Paul. Paul finds out about Jake and one night appears at his door beating him up. Jake refrains from reporting Paul, however, because he understands Paul's motivation being merely out of jealousy. Although having studied politics in London Jake works for a re-possession company together with the two Protestants Hally and Crab. He does not like the task and his brutal workmates, quits and starts working on a construction site. Meanwhile Chuckie falls in love with the American Max who he has met in a bar. Max came to Northern Ireland because her father was shot there. Working as a diplomat he was denied the chance to bring peace to the North and was killed almost instantly as soon as he had set foot on Northern Irish ground. During a double date with Max and Chuckie, Jake gets to know Max's friend Aoirghe, a radical defender of Irishness, and a dispute breaks out between them because Jake is bored with this "bullshit" as he calls it. It comes to various quarreling encounters between Jake and Aoirghe during the course of the novel. Being fed up with having no money Chuckie decides to set up a business himself. By constantly cheating on people in the most artistic manners he achieves his goal and becomes immensely rich. Seeking help from a financial adviser he meets Luke Findlater who, overwhelmed by Chuckie's skill to persuade people to give him money, wants to work for him assisting him expanding his business. Later also Jake joins Chuckie's business. The novel contains manifold strands of plot. The reader thus also learns about Chuckie's mother Peggy, her encounter with a bomb explosion in the city centre and her love relationship with her neighbour and old friend Caroline. Furthermore, Jake meets the twelve-year-old Roche, a kid from the West Belfast. Because he avoids school and comes from a home that reminds Jake of his own past he feels kind of responsible for Roche although he is crept over with fear that people might think him to be a paedophile. Throughout the novel people keep seeing the letters OTG being sprayed across Belfast wondering what it might mean. During a business trip to America the OTG signs become even handy for Chuckie. He gets invited to a TV show in which also Jimmy Eve, a man showing some similarities to the Irish republican politician Gerry Adams, is supposed to talk. In another following TV show Chuckie loses himself in his talking and even

acknowledges plans of setting up his own non-sectarian political party, which he would like to call OTG. In the end everybody has found love, mostly in the opposite of his or her own world view.

Deirde Madden, One by One in the Darkness (1996)

One by One in the Darkness like *Eureka Street* is set in 1994 shortly before the IRA ceasefire. It deals with the lives of the sisters Helen, Cate and Sally Quinn and their mother Emily who lost their beloved father and husband Charlie Quinn in a sectarian murder. The story begins with Cate visiting her family in the Northern Irish countryside. Cate herself is living in London working for a fashion magazine. Actually her name is spelled with a 'K', Kate, but she has changed it to Cate because this seems to sound less Irish in her eyes. The reason for her visit is that she is having a baby, which comes as a shock for her mother. Cate keeps it a secret that she decided to have the baby on purpose although being unmarried and with no prospect to marry the father in the future. Sally is working as a teacher for the local primary school, the same school the three sisters went to themselves. She is the only one who has almost continuously stayed near their home and who was there to help their mother through her bereavement. Helen by contrast works as a solicitor who is specialised in terrorist cases defending IRA men. Although she chose this career to help those unjustly accused, one of her current cases somehow unnerves her. She has to defend Oliver Maguire, a young man in his twenties, who is accused of having murdered a taxi driver. Worst of all she believes he really did it. All three of the sisters are living single lives. The present story is undercut with remembrances of the sisters and their mother's past. Gradually the reader learns about the girls' childhood in the 1960s and 1970s and about their relatives, especially their uncle Brian and uncle Peter. Although the sisters were still too young to fully understand the dimension of the outbreak of the Troubles they remember discussions about politics and the civil rights marches. While Brian was often defending some of the IRA tactics Charlie and Peter always were against violence in any form and strongly condemned the sectarian killings on both sides. On top Peter did not believe in any of the religious principles, neither Catholic nor Protestant. The readers also learn how the British Army invaded their neighbourhood and their homes and made them feel like strangers in their own country. During the course of the novel the exact circumstances of their father's death is also revealed. While waiting for his brother Brian in the latter's kitchen two masked men stormed the house and shot him mistaking Charlie for Brian. In the end Emily slowly begins to accept the baby and they all look forward to a better future for "nothing can ever be so bad again" as what has happened in the past to them.

Lucy Caldwell, Where They Were Missed (2006)

Where They Were Missed is told in two parts by Saoirse Pentland. The first part is set in the 1970s during the first heavy unloading of the Troubles in Belfast. Saoirse is six by then, her sister Daisy is only four. Their mother Deirdre, originally an O'Connor, is from the Gaeltacht in the South of Ireland. Their father by contrast is a Protestant Northerner working for the RUC. Told through the eyes of a child the readers learn how the girls' mother despairs more and more of the conflict arising around them as well as their father's role in the game. Having a Catholic mother Saoirse and Daisy are treated as outsiders in their Protestant neighbourhood. One day Daisy gets hit by an exploding bomb in their street. She succumbs to her injuries in the hospital. This breaks Deirdre completely and she decides to bring Saoirse to her sister Bernadette and her husband Brendan in the South. The second part is set ten years later during the 1980s. Saoirse is 16 by then, soon turning 17 and living in Gweebarra Sands with her aunt and uncle. Although her aunt strongly disapproves of it Saoirse dates Johnny Mahon who later turns out being involved in terrorist activities. Aunt Bernadette is always concerned that Saoirse might end up an alcoholic as her mother did. Saoirse does not know where her mother is currently situated and she begins to ask question about her disappearance. Meanwhile her father has moved on from the past and is awaiting a baby. He is still living in the North and visits Saoirse from time to time. He tells Saoirse how he met her mother in 1968 in Derry during the Civil Rights Marches. This fuels Saoirse's appetite to learn more about the past and she searches the local newspaper archives for material. She is rewarded with a picture showing her mother in 1967 at one of the marches. When she asks her father for more information he also tells her about her Protestant background. Saoirse's great-grandpa was an Orangeman in the 36th Ulster Division and was killed on the Somme. He will not tell her more about her mother's whereabouts, however. Aunt Bernadette finally tells her her mother's story and arranges a meeting. Deirdre lives in La Re-traite, a place run by nuns where she has found peace. She talks to Saoirse but it becomes clear she is still having problems dealing with the past and she cannot really open up towards Saoirse. In the end Saoirse decides to travel up north to visit her father and her little baby sister. She makes a detour, however, to see the places of their parents' and her own past driving through Derry and visiting places of her childhood.

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