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## Spaces of (in-)security

An ethnographic case study of the discourse of crime and the spatialization of (in-)security in a commuter municipality of post-financial crisis Ireland

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## 1. Chapter: Introduction

Since the second half of 2015 the discourse on criminal activities, especially property crime, and insecurity in Ireland's communities has gained immense nationwide attention in the Irish media and among civil lobbying groups, politicians and members of parliament. Before it, property crime was an issue at the margins of nationwide attention and discussed as an issue for local politics and the residents in the affected communities as well as in internal police strategy.

This new attention developed in the cause of events including a series of property crimes connected with excessive violence and at the time of the general elections, which took place in February 2016. In the beginning, it was emphasized as a 'crisis' of rural communities, while later on, it was more and more referred to as a nationwide crisis, in which a rural-urban division became more and more blurred.

In this discourse, the rural community as an constructed imagination of law-abidance, peacefulness and security has been represented as endangered by a 'wave of crime' (Georg Harkin 2016) coming from urban areas, especially Dublin city. Later on, it was shown that urban areas themselves are described as victims of high criminal activities. The government and the legislators were blamed by lobbying groups, parties of the opposition and in several media comments to have missed to enforce the law and to carry out the adequate sentencing against repeating theft, burglary and robbery. At the same time, the government has been criticized by these involved parties to cut the number of police forces and shut down more than a hundred police stations throughout Ireland. On the other hand, these cut backs are argued to be necessary due to the austerity measures in the course of the financial crisis and the following economic recession between 2007 and 2014. As a consequence, *An Garda Síochána*<sup>1</sup> is undergoing a reorganization of its forces that will make for more reactive than community based policing. Contrary to this image of a 'wave' or a crisis of crime appear the latest developments in the crime statistics. On a national level, the per capita crime rates in property crime (burglary, theft and robbery) in this period were in fact stagnating or in parts even decreasing.

In the context of the observed broader discourse, I undertook an ethnographic study of the perception of security and insecurity in the municipality of Ballinateis, County Meath, situated in the commuter belt of Dublin city. While I first focused my attention on (in-) security in relation to criminality, it became clear to me that there are more concealed socio-

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<sup>1</sup> Name of the Irish police force; Irish for „Guardians of Peace“.

economic reasons that cause a perception of (in-)security, which interplay with the factor of criminality. Ballinateis experienced rapid growth especially at the beginning of the Celtic Tiger period and therefore underwent profound changes in infrastructure and the socio-economic situation of its inhabitants. At a later stage, the recession of Ireland also had an impact on Ballinateis' residents and their everyday life experiences of (in-)security in the municipality. The residents' understanding of security and insecurity thereby is closely connected to the production and construction of Ballinateis on its spatial dimension. Therefore, I paid special attention to the understanding of space and daily practices of middle-class residents in Ballinateis, which is shaped by local and nationwide discourses of (property) crime and (in-)security in post-financial crisis Ireland.

Summarizing the above mentioned, I see the commuter municipality Ballinateis as a case example of how the national socio-economic changes of the last decades affected the local level. In the following, I will show how Ballinateis and its residents are affected by nationwide discourse of property crime. Further, I will elaborate how this discourse is translated into the local context and combined with local narratives about crime(-control) and (in-)security. Especially, I will focus on the interplay between (in-)security and space, because the illusive concept of security becomes concrete by looking at the social production and construction of space in the municipality.

In other words: How do the nationwide discourse of property crime affect local perceptions of (in)security in Ballinateis? What impact does the changes in policing practices have on the Ballinateis' population by looking at neo-liberal implications? Where do spaces of (in-)security exist in Ballinateis and how are they produced and constructed?

To answer these questions, my argumentation is structured as follows: This first chapter will give an overview of the socio-economic changes that formed Irish society in the recent history of the country with a special focus on crime, followed by a preliminary description of the main site of my research: Ballinateis. Following this, I will review the current state of academic approaches towards security and space.

In the following chapter two, I will elaborate on the methodological implications of my research, in which I show in detail the different applied methods to gain primary and secondary data. Further, I give insights into how the gathered data has been analyzed and make critical remarks on the methodology.

Chapter three gives an overview on the nationwide discourse on property crime and draws attention to the underlying negotiation about states of security and insecurity in Irish society. Thereby, the analysis of this discourse focuses on different levels: an analysis of the media

content of Irish newspapers and campaigns by politicians and civil lobbying groups in the course of the general elections 2016, the evaluation of statistical data as well as the legal situation and law changes in regard to property crime in the Republic of Ireland.

The primary data gathered during my fieldwork in Ballinateis are elaborated in chapter four and five. In chapter four, I focus on different features of Ballinateis as one spatial entity that is characterized by growing insecurity. Furthermore, the municipality consists of a variety of smaller areas that are perceived as loci of criminal activity and insecurity. While chapter five looks at the strategies and practices of research partners in Ballinateis to construct as well as produce spaces that establish security.

### **1.1.Ireland – the Celtic Tiger, the crash and its aftermath**

The Republic of Ireland has undergone tremendous socio-economic transformations in the past four decades. Despite the global economic boom in the post-World War II era of the 1950s and 1960s, the economy of the recently independent country could not profit from these developments and Ireland remained to be one of the poorest countries in Europe. Additionally, the economy was hit by the global oil crisis in the 1970s, which caused new turmoil into Irish society, leading to mass emigration in the 1980s (Coen and Maguire 2012:9; Bartley and Kitchin 2007a).

This peripheral status of Ireland as a political and economic entity changed rapidly within the so-called Celtic Tiger era in the 1990s and the 2000s, transforming Ireland ‘in the space of a single generation, [...] from being the poor man of Europe to one of the richest countries in the world’ (Microsoft Ireland 2004:2; ed. by M.I.). The Republic of Ireland became a showcase for European integration and a role model for other new European Union (EU) member states (The Economist 2004). Therefore, the Celtic Tiger era has been analyzed from countless scientific perspectives (Coulter 2003; Foster 2008; Allen 2009; O’Toole 2009; Kirby 2010), which all share the idea that the Celtic Tiger can be divided into two phases: In the first phase between 1995 and 2001, foreign direct investment played a major role in boosting the economy. After that from 2001 until 2007, the economic boom was driven by the property market loaded with high level of construction, a lending policy guaranteeing cheap credits and inferential revenues from the property market. (Coen and Maguire 2012)

Despite these two factors, Bartley and Kitchin (2007b) name further and more differentiated reasons for the rapid socio-economic developments: 1) the closer cooperation of the government and social partners (employers, trade union and farmer organizations); 2) A new planning regime that allowed designated areas to recover by ‘tax exemption and public-private

partnerships as a mechanism to encourage and drive development' (ibid.:5); 3) Ireland's membership in the EU and the *Maastricht Agreement* opened new markets for Irish products; 4) The peace process in the conflict with Northern Ireland during the 1990s culminating in the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, which helped to normalize relations between the two Irish states and ensured political stability. 5) Progressing secularization and the turning away from a conservative catholic to a more liberal society were factors to encourage economic growth, for example by giving women more opportunities to engage in the labor market or by attracting professional immigrants to Ireland (ibid.:4-14).

The strong economy led to growth rates with an average of around 7.5%, sometimes surpassing 10% growth at the end of the 1990s. This strong economy affected the labor market in a way that unemployment,

'for long a deep structural problem of Irish economy, was virtually eliminated [...] (while the country was) used for over 150 years to seeing generations and generations of young emigrating.' (Kirby 2010:2; ed. by M.I.)

At that time, the country became attractive for Irish return migrants and new immigrants from all over the world. This circumstance as well as high birth rates had an impact on the population, which began to increase constantly: from approximately 3.4 million people at the beginning of the 1980s to approximately 4.6 million in 2011 (Central Statistic Office n.d.). As a consequence, the population of existing urban areas increased, but also the rural hinterlands of these urban centers experienced rapid urbanization. While the area around Dublin and the southeast had a high increase in population, the rural parts (here especially the north-west) registered a population decrease (McCafferty 2007; Murphy and McGuirk 2013). At the same time, the income of the Irish population grew constantly to a sevenfold increase from \$6.600 per capita to \$46.750 per capita in the years between 1980 and 2007 (OECD 2015).

However, the Celtic Tiger did not just have positive effects on Irish society. Not everybody could profit from newly created jobs or the generally increased wealth. Instead, the growth in wealth and property led to an increase in crime rates. It can be seen that since the 1970s criminality rates started increasing. Especially, two types of crime are here important: 1) Property crime has risen since the 1970s, for example in the case of car thefts which is linked to the increasing numbers of car owners (Conway 2014; Young, O'Donnell, and Clare 2001); 2) New drugs were introduced to Ireland on a high scale, because people now had the money to afford them. Therefore, the offences committed by criminal gangs affiliated with drugs or

guns increased in the boom years of the 2000s by 65% from 2004 to a peak of 23.404 offences in 2008 (Lally 2014).

The year 2008 can be seen as a profound turning point in these socio-economic processes when the Celtic Tiger boom came to a sudden end. The global economic downturn that started as a financial mortgage crisis in the USA in early 2007 and shortly after in the UK, hit the Irish mortgage and financial sector in early 2008 (Chari and Bernhagen 2011:474).

‘In Ireland, banks went from a Celtic Tiger ‘roar’ to a stray cat ‘meow’ within a short period starting in 2008. The collapse represented the iconic story of a country having gone boom to bust once again.’ (Ibid.:475)

In order to prevent the bankruptcy of three major Irish banks via financial aid (*Bank of Ireland, Allied Irish Bank*) and nationalization (*Anglo Irish Bank*), the Irish state had to raise €80 billion in the autumn of 2008. As a consequence, the government decided to cut 20% of the public service pays, freeze promotions in public services and cut back funds for the education and health sector (ibid.). At the end of 2010 the situation came to a head when the *Irish Central Bank* announced that *Allied Irish Bank* and the *Anglo Irish Bank* were in need of an additional €37 billion. Further cuts in social welfare and pensions were resolved in December 2010, while at the same time Ireland was granted the rescue package of the *International Monetary Fund* (IMF) and EU allowing it to loan the amount of €85 billion (ibid.:476). Beside the collapse of Irish banks as one key element that put the Celtic Tiger to a halt, O’Connell (2013) says that four other intersecting elements can be named: 1) The burst of the Irish property bubble as a consequence of massive property inflation (see also Coen and Maguire 2012); 2) The recession of the Irish economy leading to GNP drop of almost 10% in 2009; 3) Unemployment rate increased from less than 5% at the beginning of the crisis in 2008 to 14.3% in 2011, while at the same time emigration increased and immigration declined; 4) the fiscal authorities of the state came under pressure not only because of the bailout of the banks, but also because the government favored massive expenditures over revenue in their day-to-day activities. (Ibid.:338–342)

As a consequence of these developments, the Irish government had to introduce a comprehensive austerity program in consultation with the Troika (EU, the *European Central Bank* (ECB), and the IMF), which had a total adjustment of €30 billion composed of €19 billion in expenditure cuts and €11 billion in tax increase. (Bergin et al. 2011)

‘The measures implemented from late 2008 have entailed a combination of major changes in the tax and welfare systems and cuts in the number and pay of public servants.’ (O’Connell 2013a:343)

The public service is an important economic factor in the Irish economy and state finances. Approximately 25% of all employees work in the public sector. At the beginning of the crisis in 2008, 427.300 people were employed by the Irish state, which had an expenditure of €68,7 billion or 44.4% of the Irish GNP. Until 2011, the Irish state reduced the number of public employees by 35.000 to 392.300 (ibid.:337). Already in 1994 the Irish government tried to reform the public sector with a *Strategic Management Initiative* (SMI) and in 1996 the *Department of the Taoiseach* released the reform agenda *Delivering Better Government* (Co-ordination group of Secretaries 1996; see also Murray 2001), which should restructure especially the civil service and should enable ‘a vision of a high performance, open and flexible organization with a mission and culture of quality service to government and to the public’ (O’Connell 2013:344). But a 2008 OECD review on the status of the public service in Ireland shows that the situation has not changed in the last decade since the SMI. The review outlines:

‘While it has created structures and systems to enable horizontal co-ordination, the Public Service remains segmented overall, leading to sub-optimal coherence in policy development, implementation and service delivery.’ (OECD 2008:12)

The public sector was still characterized by inefficiency, without lasting strategies and poor competence at senior level. The economic crisis that started in the same year gave the government no other option than to reform the public sector urgently. As a key stone for the needed changes, the *Public Services Agreement 2010-2014* (commonly known as *the Croke Park Agreement*) between the government and the *Irish Congress of Trade Unions* (ICTU) was elaborated in June 2010. On the one hand, this agreement gave the possibility of structural changes to make the public sector more efficient and guaranteed constant pay levels until 2014. On the other hand, the ICTU approved by signing the agreement to precedent payment cuts, substantial reduction of employees in public service, cost savings in the budgets of the different branches of the public sector as well as promotion opportunities based on performances (O’Connell 2013). As a result,

‘[...] (t)he numbers employed in the public sector, broadly defined, fell by about 5 per cent between 2009 and 2011, having grown by almost 30 per cent over the previous decade. Average earnings in the public sector fell by almost 5 per cent in 2010 and by another 1.2 per cent in 2011.’ (Ibid.:366; ed. by M.I.)

Garret FitzGerald, the Taoiseach (Prime Minister) at that time, writes in an article:

‘The idea that when the boom ended our public and social services could be maintained with such a minuscule level of income tax payments was patently absurd, although clearly many people fell for it [...].’ (FitzGerald 2008 ed. by M.I.)

When looking at the public sector it can be said that two aspects have brought major changes to it. First, the Celtic Tiger triggered changes in the demographic landscape of Ireland, its economic and societal structures and therefore set new expectations and demands what the public sector has to offer for – what O’Brien-Olinger calls – the ‘New Ireland’ (O’Brien-Olinger 2015a:6). Thereafter, the socio-economic crisis that started as a financial crisis forced the Irish government not only to restructure the rapid grown public sector but to implement major cuts in its expenditures.

All branches of the public sector had to deal with the changing situation and with the political demand to transform their structures and agendas. Most of the time, academic publications and policy reports that deal with the developments in the public sector during the Celtic Tiger, the crisis and its aftermath focused especially on the health or education branch (see OECD 2008; O’Connell 2013). One branch that has attracted limited interest to the academic world during that period – except for a few authors (O’Brien-Olinger 2015a; Vaughan 2015; Conway 2014) – was the policing sector. For *An Garda Síochána* the Celtic Tiger period shows a dichotomist development revealing positive as well as negative aspects. On the one hand the peace process in Northern Ireland ended the so called *Troubles*, which described the confessional conflict in Northern Ireland, that also affected the Republic of Ireland (see also Maurer 2016). This tense situation for the police force at the border to Northern Ireland started to ease in the 1990s after two decades (Conway 2014:98–136; see also Mulcahy 2006). Increasing budgets made it possible to modernize parts of *An Garda Síochána*’s technological infrastructure to EU standards (Conway 2014:162–164) and a higher policing-budget lead to significant increases in the number of Garda<sup>2</sup>. Despite the number of Gardaí increasing from 6.500 to nearly 11.500 at the beginning of the Troubles between 1969 and 1985, economic

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<sup>2</sup> Garda, pl. Gardaí, is the common Irish term for police officers in the Republic of Ireland.

recession in the 1980s demanded a staff reduction between 1985 and 1995 to approximately 10.000 Garda officers. With the economic upswing of the Celtic Tiger, the government was able to raise the number of Garda officers to more than 14.600 members in 2009 (ibid.:165). In contrast, the recession and the initiated austerity measures demanded that *An Garda Síochána* enforce a recruitment stop until September 2014, which resulted in a reduction of 2.000 Garda members (Lally 2016a; Irish Examiner 2016). At the same time, payment did not improve significantly over the decades. Payment complaints already date back to the times of the *Troubles*, when Garda officers complained about disproportional salary improvements in light of the hazardous situation. These complaints continued during the Celtic Tiger when government did not align the salaries with the economic situation. This dispute peaked in a quasi-strike called the “blue flu” – ‘the 1998 pay protest when 5,000 members of the force called in sick to work in a single day’ (MacConnell 2016). Conway (Conway 2014:160f) says that low payments were a great factor for a low morality in the force and summarizes:

‘So as Ireland faced the twenty-first century policing was facing an unusual position: the country looked set for peace and prosperity, the force had evaded crisis on numerous occasions, public and political confidence was high and while Gardaí bemoaned their pay and most likely resented the new managerialism and reform prospects, accountability was limited.’ (Ibid.:185)

As already mentioned before, parallel to the developments in the Irish police force, the criminal landscape in Ireland has changed drastically since the 1970s and especially in the last two decades. From the first *Annual Report of An Garda Síochána* in 1947 to the mid-1960s the crime figures of indictable offences reached around 15.000 offences per annum, after that, crime rates increased steadily. By 1970 crime rates had doubled to 30.000 and ‘by the early 1980s, the level of crime had reached unprecedented heights, and a peak of 102,400 indictable offences’ (Central Statistic Office 2000:60) in 1983 and again in 1995 (Central Statistic Office 2000; Young, O’Donnell, and Clare 2001; Conway 2014). Still, Conway argues that the crime level in the Republic of Ireland was low compared to other European countries, exemplifying that the per capita crime rate was only a quarter of England or Wales (Conway 2014:184). Major causes for the increased crime levels are identified as the following: the growing wealth and property in the general Irish population especially during the Celtic Tiger period, increasing private ownership of cars since the 1970s (Bartley and Kitchin 2007a) (Bartley and Kitchin 2007b), increases in public offences related to alcohol consumption (Institute of Criminology 2003) and the introduction of new illegal drugs to Ireland in the 1980s (Connolly 2006). Looking at crime statistics in the post-Celtic Tiger period, it can be seen that in the last

decade the increase in crime numbers slowed down and stayed (with yearly minor fluctuations) on a constant level (see chapter 3.4).

But at the same time, O'Connell (1999) and Rabbitte (2012) argue that awareness of criminality in Irish society increased since the 1980s. This resulted in a distortion between actual crime statistics and the perception of crime in the public leading to an increased fear of crime in the society. During my research period, insecurity in regard to policing and crime prevention became again a widely discussed issue. Especially, the issue of rural criminality was highly discussed in the Irish public in the course of the general elections of February 2016 (see chapter 3). The perception was that rural areas of Ireland have been neglected in regard of tackling crime and community policing and therefore have become a major target of criminal gangs from urban areas.

What has been outlined here shows that the Republic of Ireland has undertaken changes that started slowly with the integration into the European project (first into the *European Economic Community* (EEC), later on into the EU) in the 1970s and 1980s, but transformed rapidly in its socio-economic dimensions in the following 20 years. This period saw a time of economic and political prosperity between the 1990s and 2000s as well as a socio-economic shock with the 'death of the Celtic Tiger' (Coen and Maguire 2012) in 2008. A shock from which Irish society in economical, societal and political dimensions is slowly recovering (Halligan 2014). These changes also affected and were affected by aspects of (in-)security. The public service sector of policing had to cope with the changing political and economic situation, affecting especially the prestigious part of community policing (see chapter 4.2). This reduction in community policing has met an increased crime rate in the last decades and a growing public attention to the issue of crime(-control).

## **1.2. Ballinateis – a commuter municipality between security and insecurity**

'Back then, the old town was still a village. So too were its nearest neighbours. Indeed, nearby places [...] still had a semblance of village life. The big metropolis of Dublin had yet to spread its tentacles and choke the living daylights out of them. But that day was not too far away either.'

The above statement is given by Séan - one of my research partners – who published a book of short stories<sup>3</sup> to remember and document his ‘observations, experiences and happenings’ in his home village. In this statement Séan describes his birthplace around the 1960s. To maintain the safety and anonymity of my research partners, this municipality will be referred to in this thesis as Ballinateis. Ballinateis has not only been home to Séan for many years of his life, but has also been my field of research where I was able to conduct ethnographic research living only one kilometer away from the town center for nearly 9 months between 2015 and 2016.

To clarify my terminology from the beginning, I consider Ballinateis as a municipality. In this way, I refer to the administrative category (Oireachtas 2014) that includes the geographical area of Ballinateis town and its nearby hinterlands, because the fieldwork took place in the whole area of the municipality. I will show in the course of the thesis that different research partners apply different terms to describe the space(s) that is called Ballinateis. For example, research partners referred to it as a town, while others describe the town area as a ‘village’ that has a village center surrounded by housing estates, instead of speaking for example of an inner and outer town or a town center and its outskirts. Through the following chapters it will become clearer and more explicit why different notions to describe a spaces are also connected to aspects of (in-)security.

Ballinateis is situated in County Meath at the intersection of two regional roads, which pervade the town from north to south and from west to east. The crossroads of the two roads marks the town center together with the market square and a little bit further the church park where the church is situated. Market square, church park and the first fifty meters in each direction of the roads are framed by one- and two-story high terraced houses of which some date back to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Pubs, cafes and restaurants, hair dressers, a butcher and a fruit and vegetable shop, pharmacies, hardware and liquor stores and many other local businesses are located in the small spaces on the ground floors of these buildings.

A map analysis by the Meath County Council shows that Ballinateis consisted of 111 buildings in 1840. Until the 1960s Ballinateis did not extend much across these borders with growth in population and housing construction on a low scale. Several farms employed most of the people in the village, but there were already a smaller number of people commuting to Dublin for work. When focusing on these aspects, you could imagine a village like the descriptions of the village Lough in Arensberg’s classic anthropological study *The Irish Countryman* (1937a).

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<sup>3</sup>Due to reasons of anonymity, this publication is not listed in the references of this thesis.

But you don't have to go far to see that Ballinateis is not an idyllic, isolated village. Contrasting this scenery of small houses with their local businesses, is for example the modern patrol station with its big sign of an international oil company located right at the crossroads vis-à-vis the market square. It is a striking characteristic of this rural Irish idyll that reminds you that Ballinateis is not a cosmos in itself but connected to a greater world. And suddenly you will see that the barber shop is a Turkish one, and the restaurant next to the pub serves Indian meals. At the same time, you see that Ballinateis does not only consist of old houses and local shops in the village center. If you go a little bit further down the roads, you get to the entrance of big housing estates with countless semi-detached residential houses that surround the old part of the village nearly completely. A bigger supermarket led by an international company, modern primary and secondary school buildings, a community center, an industrial park, a spa hotel and a newly constructed train station are also part of Ballinateis. During rush hour times at working days, you will see the crossroads blocked by cars, in which people either want to get to their working places in Dublin in the morning or get home in the afternoon.

As research partners told me, Ballinateis was one of the first villages in the greater Dublin area that was affected by the economic boom of the early Celtic Tiger years. In 1971 Ballinateis had a total population of less than 900 inhabitants which saw an increase of more than 66% until 1981 to nearly 1500 inhabitants. In the following 30 years, the population of Ballinateis expanded rapidly and reached the 7000 mark in 2011, which is an increase by 466% (Census - CSO - Central Statistics Office 2016).

First and foremost, the tremendous growth in population can be explained through a high influx of working migrants from within Ireland coming from the western parts of the country and international migrants, especially from other countries of the EU. When you go to a pub in Ballinateis in the evening, you hear people at the tables talking not only English, but Spanish, Polish or German. Ballinateis is an attractive place to settle, because major international companies like Intel or IBM started to locate their European headquarters mostly at the outskirts of Dublin in the beginning 1990s. At the same time, the newly built highway system made it possible to reach Dublin city center and the other outskirt areas from Ballinateis within a half-hour ride.

When the Celtic Tiger collapsed, nearly all greater private and state projects under construction were already completed in Ballinateis. Therefore, most houses were already sold or rented out and public buildings in use. You do not find what Coen and Maguire describe as 'ghost estates' (2012:7) in Ballinateis like in other parts of greater Dublin, but this

circumstance does not mean that Ballinateis was not affected by the recession. Unemployment rates rose nation-wide as well as in Meath County and Ballinateis (Finegan 2009). Plans for new expansion of dwelling areas and a needed school building were put on ice for the moment by the County Council. Public services had to be reduced due to the financial cuts. One very prominent aspect that connects the cut backs in the public sector is the reduction of Garda station opening hours in the municipality. This reduction happened in the course of the already mentioned nation-wide reformation of policing. Reduced opening hours and the lack of Garda officers patrolling the streets lead to a feeling of unease and insecurity in the local population. Other developments but also narratives about criminal activities in the municipality intensified this feeling. As a consequence, inhabitants began to connote both public and private spaces with insecurity (see chapter 4.2). Contrasting these circumstances, research partners started to apply other strategies apart from state policing to deal with this increased unease to establish a general sense of security. Chapters 4 and 5 will show in detail how (in-)security is produced and constructed by people living and working in Ballinateis.

### **1.3. State of the Art - Two loose genealogies of security and space**

In an ethnographic research, it is always hard to determine the exact point of time, which can be identified as the beginning of the research. Since the end of my bachelor, my academic interests have circulated around a range of topics, which I like to locate in the anthropological subfield of an *Anthropology of Security* (Goldstein 2010; Maguire, Foris, and Zurawski 2014a). Security is a broad concept that can be found in various ethnographic contexts (Masco 2010). As Goldstein (2010) elaborates, is it possible for anthropology to engage in numerous locations around the world and through different perspectives with issues of security. Therefore, he pleads for a ‘critical security anthropology, one that recognizes the centrality of security discourses and practices to the global and local contexts’ (ibid.:489). The research in Ballinateis gave me insights into the conceptions, strategies and practices of how my research partners deal with crime(-control) and thereby (in-)security on a daily basis.

Further, the spatial dimension plays a major role of how people relate to each other and how they situate themselves in the world. I want to elaborate how (in-)security is spatially situated in my research partners’ social environment.

Security and space are the two leitmotifs on which this thesis is based. Therefore, I will try to summarize and elaborate here on the main theories and concepts that are important to explain the meanings of security and space in this subchapter. Connected to security and space are a wide variety of further topics that I came across during my research and will be dealt with

later on in this thesis. To mention here: Fear of crime, the experienced loss of connection to local authorities combined with neo-liberal processes of a withdrawing state, the construction of spaces of insecurity, the adaptation of nation-wide narratives of insecurity translated into a local context or social alienation through an expanding urbanization versus strategies of establishing social cohesion.

Security as well as space have been theorized by anthropologists and other social scientists in various research settings and with different foci around the world. To comment on all of them would exceed the scope of this thesis. Therefore, I want to give here two loosely organized genealogies of security and space. I use the term genealogy in a Foucauldian sense in the way that I pose an assemblage of ideas rather than a history of ideas. As Foucault puts it, a

‘[...] (g)enealogy is gray, meticulous, and patiently documentary. It operates on a field of entangled and confused parchments, on documents that have been scratched over and recopied many times.’ (Foucault 1977:139; ed. by M.I.)

Therefore, a genealogy is not a perfectly coherent listing of ideas, but it shows how ideas are connected, intertwine or stand in juxtaposition. Here, its objective is to provide insights into the ongoing intellectual debates and theories on security and space in academia varying from human geography, architecture, criminology, philosophy, social theory and anthropology.

First I want to focus on the conception of security and, by an *argumentum e contrario*, the conception of insecurity. Security has become a key concept to explain today’s political and social processes of transformation. Not only is it used in more familiar areas like armament and militarization to protect societies against foreign aggressors or terrorism, but security – as a dominating concept – is present in discourses on asylum and migration, food security, climate change, public order or in the surveillance technologies (Purtschert, Meyer, and Winter 2008). Political philosophers starting with Aristotle (1963), Montesquieu (see Robin 2004), Hobbes (1985), Weber (1946) or Marx (1967) (1967) connected security with theories of state, in which justice, fear and the protection of citizens have been the main motivation of the state’s *raison d’être* (Goldstein 2010; Goldstein 2012a; Eriksen 2010). Nowadays, different academic disciplines and their sub-disciplines deal with security as a leading concept of analysis as well as an object of research. International relations and political science, criminology, law, sociology of policing and more and more anthropology are disciplines worth to mention here. All of them have different foci, methodologies and levels of analysis.

International relations studies see security on an international level that functions first and foremost via military strategies in a system of collectives (most often a system of (nation) states). Most prominently, security studies as a sub-discipline of international relations began to articulate theories about security in the Anglo-American world after the Second World War (Williams 2008). ‘Survival’ of a collective in a global geopolitical setting is the main characteristic feature of security studies that still dominates the discourse after the Cold War and is nowadays shifting towards the understanding of global terrorism and global crime (Dalgaard-Nielsen and Hamilton 2006; Kirshner 2013; Bigo 2016).

On the contrary, criminology focuses on security as an object of internal state affairs and on the individual level. Policing and the effects of crime on the individual are in the center of criminological research, thereby criminology puts the main stress on the determination of risk, crime prediction and future-oriented strategies of prevention (Bigo and Bonelli 2015; Bigo 2016).

Looking at anthropology, security has been part of anthropological research since its early beginnings. In various areas of the discipline, security has been present, but for long it has been seen as a naturalized force that drives the cultural expressions of human kind in an integral and backdrop way. Applying Bourdieu, Maguire et al. (2014b) say the relation between security and anthropology was characterized as ‘a *doxa* and deeply political relation to the world’ (ibid.:6). In early research, conducted at the beginning 20<sup>th</sup> century, on witchcraft, kinship, gifting obligations or totemism aspects of safety, assurance and security were fundamental in anthropological theories (see Crawford 1863; Roth 1887; Tufton 1894; Tylor 1899; Warner 1930). Galton, who described himself as an anthropologist, prepared in his theories of eugenics the ground for modern biometric security (Galton 1892; Maguire 2009). On a personal level, early anthropologists like Malinowski or Fortune reported in their field diaries about their own personal (in-)securities in the field (see Eriksen 2010). Later on, the two British schools of social anthropology – Malinowski’s functionalism as well as Radcliffe-Brown’s competing structural-functionalism – applied in different ways the Hobbesian idea of a coercive authority that brings security to the society of individuals (Maguire, Foris, and Zurawski 2014b). Anthropologists’ involvement in colonial administration to ensure the continuity of European imperialism (Asad 1973), the support of military operations during the two World Wars (Boas 1919; Benedict 1989; Price 2000) and the Vietnam War (Donoghue 1963) as well as the Cold War period (Price 2008) connected anthropological knowledge primarily with aspects of state security in a geopolitical setting. (Gusterson 2007; Maguire, Foris, and Zurawski 2014b)

Starting in the 1980s, anthropology applied a critical view on security drawing from critical international relations studies and newly formed up security studies by taking into account and emphasizing ethical questions of anthropological engagements into applied studies of state security as well as a broader perspective on security. Still, Goldstein criticizes that ‘(w)hile other disciplines have dedicated journals, programs of study, and entire schools of thought to the security “problem”, anthropology has largely refrained from joining the conversation’ (Goldstein 2010:488; ed. by M.I.).

The 9/11 attacks in the USA are often seen as a turning point not only in global societal and political discourses on security, but also for the importance of security as a major focus of anthropological scholars (Schwell 2014). A growing corpus of ethnographical research, theoretical volumes, scholar networks and congresses are dedicated to the elaboration of security in multiple ways and on different levels of societal life.

More and more anthropologists plead that the discipline has to offer new views on the topic. Maguire et al. (2014b) start at the very beginning of their volume *The Anthropology of Security* with the claim: ‘Security demands anthropological attention’ (ibid.:1). Looking at security from alternative perspectives and going beyond official understandings and definitions, anthropology shall elaborate a critical view on security (ibid.). Eriksen (2010) notices that anthropology’s eclectic methodology of systematic and unsystematic research approaches is suitable to grasp a multifaceted concept like security that can take into account – as Goldstein calls it - both ‘local and global realities’(Goldstein 2010:487). Therefore, anthropology can emphasize different features that other disciplines, which are more familiar in security debates, cannot provide.

But what can be understood under security in an anthropological sense? The *Anthropology of Security Network* of the *European Association of Social Anthropologists* (EASA) writes about security:

‘Security is a powerful yet elusive concept. For generations of political thinkers, security has been understood as the supreme concept: the most vital of interests, the precondition for liberty, and the foundation stone of government, society and civilization itself.’ (European Association of Social Anthropologists 2016)

Security as a broad concept that reaches into every part of human life has become a prominent reading for anthropologists. This ‘fashionable yet elusive, elastic yet operational’ (Maguire, Foris, and Zurawski 2014b:1) conception makes it possible to, on the one hand, apply security

in a great variety of fieldwork cases, but fails to clearly define security. Maguire et al. comment:

‘The temptation, of course, is to rush to define security using false empiricism, as if security grows naturally [...]. Instead, the contributions in this volume track the expansion of security in the contemporary moment, critically evaluating its culturally sensitive forms and articulations, and eliciting the experiences it produces.’ (Ibid.:2; ed. by M.I.)

This wide and vague conception of security that sees the understanding of security embedded in the contemporary, bases on Foucault’s conception of security. His thinking is prominent in current anthropological approaches to security – as well as security studies, critical international relation studies and surveillance studies – and therefore I will give a smaller excursion to Foucault’s thinking of security.

While in early works, Foucault’s focus lied on disciplinary and sovereign forms of power, in which security played a more implicit and ulterior role (Foucault 1988; Foucault 1995; Foucault 2008). When later on he expanded his typology of power and introduced a new form of power which he calls ‘bio-power’ (Foucault 1978), security became an explicit feature of this new power-type. Bio-power has the typical qualities of other Foucauldian types of power, but its focus has a special object: the population. Through flanking technologies, ‘the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations (as a demographic object marks) [...] the beginning of an era of “Bio-power”’ (Rabinow 1984:262; ed. by M.I.). Here, security becomes a crucial point, because – contrasting disciplinary practices and sovereign laws – security is characterized by directing and channeling the population to an aspiring future condition.

‘In other words, the law prohibits and discipline prescribes, and the essential function of security, without prohibiting or prescribing, but possibly making use of some instruments of prescription and prohibition, is to respond to a reality in such a way that this response cancels out the reality to which it responds – nullifies it, or limits, checks, or regulates it.’ (Foucault 2007:47)

For Foucault, security for the population is the goal of bio-politics. Thereby, bio-politics functions thorough an apparatus (fr.: *dispositif*) of security. The relation between the concept of security and apparatus is hereby crucial, because in a Foucauldian sense they are

interconnected and characterize each other as a socio-technological instrument for bio-politics. In the interview *The Confession of the Flesh* (1980) Foucault is asked directly about the apparatus and his methodological function. His answer is a definition that is quoted most often when referring to his concept of apparatus. Foucault explains:

‘What I’m trying to pick out with this term is, firstly, a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions – in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements.’ (Foucault 1980:194)

Because of the variety of the apparatuses’ elements, it is hard to grasp what a concrete apparatus could look like. In the lecture series *Security, Territory, Population* (2007) Foucault exemplifies the particular apparatus that he calls the ‘apparatus of security’ (ibid.:11). Here, he elaborates how different elements, like school, the police, military, the architectural forms, economic regimentations and state rules construct an urban space of security for the city population against a number of security problems (criminality, demographic change, etc.) in Europe at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (ibid.:12–23). This also indicates the second characteristic of apparatuses, which implies its ‘nature of connection that can exist between these heterogeneous elements’ (Foucault 1980:194). In this sense, Foucault speaks of the police as an institutional example of security apparatuses (see Foucault 2007:343–354). For Foucault, the police is a permanent *coup d’Etat*, but at the same time an exemplification of the *raison d’Etat* and finally, one mode of his new schema of ‘governmentality’ (Foucault 2007:339–340; see also Johnson 2014). Governmentality is defined by Foucault as an institutional, discursive and strategic condition for the use of governmental (bio-)power in the modern (western) bureaucratic state. It is characterized by its predominance to sovereign and disciplinary power and by its historical dimension (Foucault 1994a:207). In the nowadays neo-liberal age, governmentality has to be understood as the politico-economic variation of bio-politics. It applies specific security apparatuses as instruments to manage the population. It does so by securing the existence of the population as a whole and providing a limited freedom and self-responsibility to each individual in particular.

Anthropologists adopted the idea of apparatuses of security and apply the concept in their ethnographies (Goldstein 2012a; Feldman 2012; Feldman 2014a; Schwell 2014; Maguire

2014). Governmentality/bio-power in connection with apparatuses of security are vital concepts to understand anthropologists' fields of research. To give some examples: Goldstein (2012a) sees governmentality and security as counterparts to explain the inhabitants' situation of the Bolivian city of Cochabamba; In Feldman's research on the European migration and border system, the apparatus of migration that is an apparatus to establish security for the EU, is central to his analysis (Feldman 2012; Feldman 2014b); Or Schwell's (2014) research on the Viennese special police forces uses Bigo's adaptation of governmentality as an 'governmentality of unease' (Bigo 2002; in Schwell 2014:100) to explain transformations in Austrian police strategies after the 2007 Schengen enlargement.

But anthropologists not simply adapted to Foucault's concepts of governmentality and security apparatuses, they gave manifold critiques and variations of these concepts. Lemons' (2008) ethnography on social security and religion in postcolonial India shows that governmentality in a neoliberal state is not dominant over religion in the mediation of social security. While O'Brien-Olinger (2015a) criticizes that the usage of governmentality in academia often 'addresses the macro-theoretical level, there is no reason why it should not also apply to micro-instantiations of power' (ibid.:62) and applies governmentality in his ethnography on the practices of Irish police officers.

The balanced relation between macro- and micro-level is crucial for the concept of governmentality and its security apparatuses. Governmentality guarantees the security of liberal freedoms in which the state is the warrantor of the population. Population has to be understood here in a dual sense: 1) as a whole mass and 2) as a totality of individuals that are in need of protection. As ethnographic research is foremost the interaction with individuals, the effect of security apparatuses and governmentality can be grasped via this interaction.

In a same direction points the conception of "human security", expanding security to multiple aspects of human life and combining macro- and micro-level. The human security approach introduced by the *UN Development Programme* expanded the limited view on security from a single national-military dimension towards dimensions of environment, energy, food, health and economic-political situation (United Nations Development Programme 1994). Eriksen (2010) adapted the concept of human security as a concept that 'enables anthropologists to update and rephrase some of the classic problems of the subject' (ibid.:1). Ethnographic research establishes a humanization and contextualization of studying human security, because it bases on experienced realities on a local level to explain societal security issues from the inhabitants' perspective.

The so-called *Copenhagen School* developed another approach to security that focuses on the performativity and social construction of security by state institutions or authorized persons via speech-acts (Buzan, Waever, and Wilde 1998). In a process of securitization – how Buzan et al. call it – topics are turned through speech-acts into topics of security in which a ‘state of exception’ (Agamben 2005) or a *coup d’Etat* (Foucault 2007) suspends the normal political rules. Differing from the applied human security approach that seeks to identify essential threats and solve them, securitization analyses the construction of security issues (Floyd 2007).

Through the theories and concepts of security that I mentioned above, it becomes clear that an essentializing definition of security would be a misleading enterprise, which is not helpful to the aims of this thesis. Goldstein (2010) provides an adequate description of security that includes all aspects relevant for the following analysis. He says that security can be explored in

‘[...] the multiple ways in which security is configured and deployed – not only by states and authorised speakers but by communities, groups, and individuals [...] (A) perspective on security as made and understood by actors and groups outside of the state and its official institutions helps to broaden our perspective on what security means, how it is produced, what it includes, and what it excludes in the ordinary and exceptional struggles of daily life. It brings to light the manifold ways in which global discourses are adopted, manipulated, transformed, and deployed in quotidian interactions and events, revealing the full range of security as lived social experience in a variety of contexts.’ (Ibid.:492–493; ed. by M.I.)

In this sense, I see security as a construct that is formed in manifold ways, depending on the discourses and practices it is applied in. Further, security can function from macro- to micro-levels of social interaction and refers to narratives of a temporal dimension that draws from past events to the present and gives interpretations of an expected future. In doing so, security is in an interplay of being defined by specific discourses and practices, while at the same time shaping these discourses and practices.

By this means, I refer to a broad understanding of security, which on the other hand might open up the critique of a too diffuse and vague understanding of security. To counter this critique, I argue that security is not limited to the understanding of inter-state geopolitical militarism like in classical security studies. As Gusterson shows in his book *People of the Bomb* (2004), geopolitical militarism is not only a question of security for the inter-state political relations, but affects the everyday life of people. In his derivation of Appadurai

scape-theory, Gusterson develops the concept of ‘security scapes’ that show the perception of security of US-citizens during the nuclear militarism of the *Cold War* period. It shows that specific security issues can imply far-reaching and unobvious effects on all levels of social interaction. Therefore, a broad understanding of security can function as a point of reference to reorganize different social theories for the understanding of security in everyday life. Additionally, I shortly want to elaborate on the term of ‘policing’ as it is strongly connected to the concept of security in my argumentation. By following Maurer, I define policing as:

‘A spectrum of activities, which intent to enforce rights and especially rules on a local level if necessary by using force. Actors legitimize themselves or are legitimized by speaking of security. The level of formalization, legitimacy and hierarchy of an organization applying policing varies.’ (Maurer 2016:20; trans. by M.I.)

Deriving from this definition, policing can include the actions of state as well as non-state actors and correlates with the wide-ranging understanding of security.

Beside (in-)security, another variable plays an important role in this thesis: the conception of space as a relational factor in conjunction with (in-)security. Conceptualizing space has been a task for academia that runs through different disciplines of science and the humanities, but even goes beyond to non-academic fields like architecture, urban design or urban and regional planning (Lagopoulos 2011; Low 2017a). Therefore, dealing with space can include a genealogy of thoughts through diverse fields of interest. Here, I want to focus on three aspects of this genealogy, which will be extended through the course of this thesis by other approaches. First, I will elaborate on theoretical approach in French philosophy and urban studies or – what Low calls – ‘French social theory genealogy’ (Low 2017b:18). After that, I look at theories in human geography and in the end discuss anthropological approaches to space.

In the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century France, several theorists gave thoughts to the understanding of space as a dimension of social life. The work of Lefebvre pioneers a Marxist viewpoint on the issue of space. In Lefebvre’s understanding, space as a social phenomenon has to be seen as a social product, that ‘is never empty: it always embodies a meaning’ (Lefebvre 1991:154). In capitalist societies, space is characterized along with capital, money and commodity as a reality that enables political actors to enforce power. In this critique on capitalist usage of space, Lefebvre remarks three aspects of social space: 1) the spatial practices, in which space is produced and reproduced through these practices; 2) the conceived space or representation

of space, which is manifested for example in maps or planning conceptions; 3) space as a form of representation, in which space becomes the locus of lived practices of the practitioners. Through this threefold perspective on space, the human body plays a central role, not only as an object in space, but as a subject that embodies space-producing practices. (Lefebvre 1991; see also Merrifield 2002; Lagopoulos 2011)

In a similar direction points Bourdieu's conception of social space, when he elaborates on his research of the households of the Kabyle (Bourdieu 1973). Bourdieu is also interested in how socio-spatial order is embodied in the daily practices of the households' inhabitants. Thereby, he focuses on the spatialization of everyday behavior. Contrary to Lefebvre, space is not related to the production of a material space, but social space is in Bourdieu's sense described as 'the system of relations' (Bourdieu 1989:16). More detailed he says that space is

'a (multi-dimensional) space constructed on the basis of principles of differentiation or distribution constituted by the set of properties active in the social universe under consideration, that is, able to confer force or power on their possessor in that universe.' (Bourdieu 1991:229)

By this means, social space describes the relation of individuals' positions to one another, while these position base on the multi-dimensional capital which everybody owns. Further, the capital is relational (contextual) to the other individuals and their capital.

Foucault as well elaborates on the notion of space. His approach to space is a historical one that takes into account the human body in relation to spatial arrangements and architecture. The prisoner in the cell of the prison (Foucault 1995) or the mad man in the asylum (Foucault 1988) are examples of how the relationship of power and space disciplines the human body in an architecture that represents a political technology for governmental interest. (see also Low 2017a)

In an early essay, Foucault introduced a spatial dimension of what he calls 'heterotopias' (Foucault 1984). Deriving from the opposition of reality and utopias as non-existing places, he says in the context of these heterotopias:

'There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places – places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society – which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are always outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in

reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I Shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias.’ (Ibid.:47)

This juxtaposition describes the heterotopia as a space, in which the hegemonic conditions of power are unclear. Heterotopias are not just material space but consist of ensembles of discursive elements; they subvert the concept of utopias as well as existing places by creating counter-sites that are connected to real places, but suspend at the same time the daily functions of living space. Although Foucault did not elaborate further on this idea, the idea of heterotopias found many commentators, that developed further theories on it (see Soja 2003; Soja 2007).

De Certeau (1988) approaches space from another perspective than Foucault. Not starting from the network of architectural designs and the different historically grown technologies of power in which humans are (bodily) embedded. De Certeau wants to direct attention to ‘particularly the case of procedures that do not enjoy the precondition, associated with all those studied by Foucault’ (ibid.:163) and shows how people create and recreate space through their ‘way of operating’ (ibid.:232) in everyday life situations. Thereby, he argues that power is embedded in space through territory and boundaries and that people are divided into a dominating and a subordinated group. The former uses ‘strategies’ by classification, delineation and division of space to dominate, while the latter uses ‘tactics’ in form of mobility and detachment from the rationalized spaces of power to contest this domination (ibid.:126-138).

Human geography draws in different ways on the French theoretical approaches to space by expanding, reformulating or criticizing the mentioned theories. In the 1980s, Marxist human geographers like Soja (1989), Gregory (1989) or Harvey (1989) emphasized the importance of space as a crucial dimension to analyze social conditions. Soja argues that history and time have been privileged over space and pleads – from a Marxist point of view by following Lefebvre – that historical materialism needs to be spatialized and therefore turned into geographical materialism (Soja 1989). In a similar direction points Gregory’s argumentation by saying that a spatial rather than a historical view on social theory makes it possible to critique modern social theory in a postmodern fashion (Gregory 1989). Harvey’s work strongly focuses on the interconnection between capitalism and space, in which he argues that space is annihilated through time by the accumulation processes of capitalism (Harvey 1989). He wants to show

‘how the theory of accumulation relates to an understanding of spatial structure and how the

particular form of locational analysis which Marx creates provides the missing link between the theory of accumulation and the theory of imperialism.’ (Harvey 2001:237)

More radical postmodern human geographers like Dear (1991) criticize Soja and Harvey for remaining in a tradition of modern thinking and academic practices. For Dear, they lack a critical self-reflection and apply single-handed perspectives instead of focusing on difference, discontinuities and plurality. Pointing into the semiotic-symbolic direction of Geertz, Cosgrove (1987) applies a different approach to the quality of landscape and sees the need for a hermeneutic methodology to understand space. (Lagopoulos 2011; Low 2017a)

In anthropology, space was already important to early ethnographers, who wrote about the built environment as a benchmark for culture, such as Morgan’s ethnography on the *Houses and House Life of the American Aborigines* (1881), or Durkheim’s (1965) and Mauss’ (Mauss and Beachaut 1979) approaches to the built environment as necessity of social life (see also Low and Lawrence 1990; Lagopoulos 2011). Lagopoulos (2011) writes:

‘From the very origins of the discipline, anthropological accounts include descriptions of the forms of buildings and settlements, descriptions that due to the viewpoint of anthropology were oriented towards the relation between built space and society.’ (Ibid.:145)

First examples of US American anthropology theorizing space can be seen by Spier (1933) and Kroeber (1939) in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Their ethnographic material points to the use and meaning of arrangements on a spatial level and lead to the development of the culture area theory<sup>4</sup>.

From a structural-semiotic point of view, Levi-Strauss (1966; 2008) approaches the construction of space into places. Following a semiotic line of argumentation, Lévi-Strauss studies social organization from the manifestations of social and mental phenomena (Lévi-Strauss 2008). Thereby, he argues that ‘space is a society of named places’ (Lévi-Strauss 1966:168).

In recent debates, post-structural and postmodern criticism of ethnographic representations of places and spaces sees it as most problematic that ethnographers locate the descriptions of their research participants or ‘natives’ into taken for granted settings of their field. Appadurai (1988) criticizes that

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<sup>4</sup> see also *Kulturkreis* theory in the German-Austrian anthropology (see Frobenius 1898; Gräbner 1903)

‘the problem of space in anthropology [...] is the problem of place, that is, the problem of the culturally defined locations to which ethnographies refer. Such named locations, which often come to be identified with the groups that inhabit them, constitute the landscape of anthropology, in which the privileged locus is the often unnamed location of the ethnographer.’ (Ibid.:16; ed. by M.I.)

Appadurai pleads here for a self-reflected ethnography that is aware of its construction of space through the ethnographic inquiry.

From a post-modern perspective, Augé (1995) formulates his theory of non-places as a necessity to describe a new emerging form of space in our ‘supermodern’ time (ibid.:29). For Augé, supermodernity is the overabundance of events and space, which are a result of significantly enhanced transportation and (tele-)communication. The bases of supermodernity are the non-places, like highways, airports, shopping centers, hotel chains, even refugee camps (ibid.:34). The non-places serve the ‘accelerated circulation of passengers and goods’ (ibid.) and are characterized by their interchangeability and ahistorical quality all over the world. At the same time,

‘(p)lace and non-place are rather like opposed polarities: the first is never completely erased, the second never totally completed. [...] But non-places are the real measure of our time.’ (Ibid.:79; ed. by M.I.)

Augé argues that non-places are never non-existing places. He also denies the existence of a completely real place.

A most favorable combination of approaches to space is given by Low (2017a) in which she combines Marxist, post-structural and post-modern approaches of production and construction of spaces as well as embodied space, language/discourse analysis, translocal spaces and emotion/affect. In her early works, she argues that there are two complementary perspectives on space, which she divides into 1) the social production of space and 2) the construction of space. The former describes the material as well as the symbolic drafting of space in social, political, economic, ideological or technological ways. The latter points to the experiences of space through phenomenological and symbolic factors while at the same time exposing the way in which space is intertwined with control, social interaction, conflicts of meanings, values and the use of space (Low 1995; 1996; 2017a). In her latest publication *Spatializing Culture* (Low 2017a), Low discusses further approaches to elaborate social spaces, in which space is examined ‘through theories of embodiment, discourse, translocality and affect’

(ibid.:4). By doing so, Low provides a versatile methodological toolkit ‘to integrate the materiality and meaning of actions and practices at local, translocal and global scales’ (ibid.:2).

## 2. Chapter: Methodology

‘To know things you have to grow into them, and let them grow into you, so that they become a part of who you are.’ (Ingold 2013:1)

This sentence is at the beginning of Ingold’s book *Making*. By following this somehow Decardian advice of his research partners, Ingold starts a meditation about the way an ethnographer has to work in the field of research. He goes on to say about the ethnographer’s responsibility: ‘Our task, in the situation such as that in which I found myself, is one of learning to learn’ (ibid.). Beside this state of self-awareness in an ethnographic setting, ‘many ethnographers are committed to documenting the lives and times of their host communities. This work of documentation is known as *ethnography*’ (ibid.:2).

In my view, ethnography – as anthropologies methodological tool kit – opens up the opportunity to grasp the illusive conception of security that I outline in chapter 1.3. If the comprehension of security is not established, how is it possible to categorize specific statements as embedded in security conceptions? What is the spatial dimension of security? How can security be described if it is not something visible in the field as a thing in itself? As an ethnographer, I see it as my challenge to uncover the various narrative containers of security. Thereby, ethnography functions as a tool kit for the hermeneutic investigation of the understanding(s) of security. As Maguire et al. put it:

‘The growing critical anthropology of security will also need to attend to disciplinary research practices, including the localities and ethical considerations they engage with and often call into being.’ (Maguire, Foris, and Zurawski 2014b:17)

By applying a variety of data collection methods in my research, I follow Eriksen’s idea of an ‘eclectic methodology’ (Eriksen 2010:2). For Eriksen, this means that

‘we (ethnographers) relate to media, statistics and history writing; we collect life stories and sit in at public meetings and rituals; and we do our best, within the bounds of ethical guidelines and common decency, to peek over our informants’ shoulders to see what they are up to when they

think nobody is watching. Unlike many other scientists, anthropologists impose rigour on their material largely during analysis, not during data collection.’ (Ibid.; ed. by M.I.)

The methodological structure of my research is based in large parts on a qualitative approach of ethnographic fieldwork while quantitative approaches are partly applied to set the context, in which the qualitative research is embedded. For this fieldwork, the following primary fieldwork methods have been applied: 1) participant observation in Ballinateis village and at public community meetings in County Meath and the Dublin-area; 2) formal narrative and semi-structured interviews as well as informal interviews with the research partners; and 3) photographic documentation.

Further, the research contains secondary research methods utilizing the analysis of scholarly literature, documents of research partners (books, photographs and videos), local archives (Ballinateis’ library) and online-archives (Central Statistics Office and various newspaper archives), various websites, mass media such as Irish online newspapers, radio podcasts and news channels as well as social media platforms.

As I will show in more detail in chapter 2.1, my ethnographic research in Ireland implied a multiplicity of methods to elaborate and answer a specific research question. Yet, I want to point out that in ethnography, participant observation is the core method for many anthropologists, because it characterizes and separates ethnography in comparison towards other methodologies. Following LJorgensen (1989), the method of participant observation has been conceptualized in different ways in the past, which he divides broadly in two distinct categories: positivistic and humanistic. The positivistic understanding of participant observation includes for LJorgensen the insight that ‘to formulate concepts for measurement, as well as generalizations and hypotheses that with further testing may be used to construct explanatory theories’ (ibid.:7). On the other hand, humanistic approaches describe participant observation beyond scientific exactness of measurement. In this way, participant observation is a unique way to ‘adapted to the character of human existence’ (ibid.). This argumentation wants to show that science is not detached from human experience and therefore, ‘(a)ll forms of scientific inquiry inevitably involve a wide variety of nonrational, extrascientific factors, and depend on artful judgments, decisions, and skills (ibid.:9; ed. by M.I.).

Aside from participant observation as a main feature, more variables outline the intentions of an ethnography. Malinowski (2012) summarizes this into three avenues: 1) the organization of a group elaborated through ‘concrete, statistical documentation’ (ibid.:79) , 2) the ‘imponderabilities of actual life’ (ibid.) gathered by minacious observations; and 3) a ‘corpus

inscriptionum’ (ibid.) archived through a collection of statements, narratives and items of the researched group.

Not only are methods important for an ethnography, ethnographic fieldwork also implies a certain locality:

‘The single most significant factor determining whether a piece of research will be accepted as (the magical word) “anthropological” is the extent to which it depends on experience “in the field”’. (Gupta and Ferguson 1997a:1)

In this regard, ethnography is a key methodology helping to understand wider societal processes by taking into account the specific case of a spatial local context. Fassin (2013) argues that ‘ethnography is particularly relevant in the understudied regions of society’ meaning that it ‘illuminates the unknown’ while it ‘interrogates the obvious’ (ibid.:642). Through an intense relationship with research partners and the focus on the details in everyday life – expressions, comments, habits, etc. – ethnography can explore new topics relevant for academia as well as for humanistic causes.

From a temporal point of view, I orientate the structure of my research towards the ideas of – what is known as – ‘grounded theory’. Developed in qualitative approaches of sociology, Glaser and Strauss (1967) introduced the concept of grounded theory to the social sciences in the 1960s. The aim of grounded theory is the collection of numerous sets of data and their continuous analysis to develop a consistent theoretical approach. Charmaz (2001) notes that at the beginning

‘you start with individual cases, incidents, or experiences and develop progressively more abstract conceptual categories to synthesize, to explain and to understand your data and to identify patterned relationships within it.’ (Ibid.:245)

In this context of grounded theory, I see my fieldwork divided into an orientation phase – without a fixed conceptual framework but a rough idea of the thematic direction my research is following – and a phase of more concrete and specific research tasks developed from the analysis of the data I collected in my orientation phase. It is a hermeneutic process of collecting first and foremost empirical data followed by theoretical analysis and classification to undertake more selected data collections. This more inductive approach has proven to be beneficial for me, because I had never been to Ireland before and my limited knowledge of the field has based exclusively on secondary literature at the beginning.

In the following, I will outline the primary and secondary fieldwork methods applied during my ethnography in Ireland (chapter 2.1 and 2.2) as well as the applied form of data analysis and give a critical reflection of the research (chapter 2.3).

## **2.1.Primary fieldwork methods**

This chapter will outline the ethnographic methods I used to collect primary data during the fieldwork. Primary data are new sets of information, which are directly gathered in the field, in comparison to secondary data that describes already existing information.

### **2.1.1. Participant observation**

Participant observation was to a great extent part of my research. Here, I distinguish two phases of participant observations: In the beginning, the participant observation was focused on specific events. I conducted participant observation at selected community meetings in County Meath, political rallies in Dublin-area that dealt with crime (-control) as well as sessions of the Meath district court. The subsequent participant observation is based on my long-term engagements with research partners in the Ballinateis municipality.

#### *Community meetings:*

By attending two public community meetings that took place during the orientation phase of my research, I focused mostly on the observational part combined with occasional informal conversations with participants of the meeting. The meetings took place in the conference rooms of major hotels in two different towns (Slane and Trim) in County Meath. Both meetings were held in November 2015 and lasted between two and two and a half hours. During the community meetings, I took field notes and at one meeting, the organizer gave me permission to record the statements of the contributors on tape. It was important for me to take part in these meetings, because they gave me a good insight firstly into the backgrounds and concerns of the people that are or feel affected by crime and the fear of crime. Secondly, it enabled me to expand my knowledge about the narratives and imaginations that are repetitively applied in the discourse on criminality. The fact that during the rest of my research, no further public meetings took place in the nearby area hindered me to undertake further participant observation in this direction.

### *Political rally:*

To get a better idea of the wider discourse on crime (-control) and the more specific argumentations concerning the topic of closed Garda stations, I attended a political rally in the Dublin-area Stepside. The rally took place at the end of January before the general elections and had the clear political demand to reopen the local Garda station. The speeches of the speakers were audio-recorded and field notes were taken.

### *Court sessions:*

During the orientation phase of my research, I attended two court sessions at the district court in Trim, which is responsible for the crime cases in the Ballinateis area. These participations gave me insights into the legal procedures of crime courts. Because of ethical considerations, I was not approved by *Maynooth University* to investigate the perspective of perpetrators of crime. In addition to this fact, the focus of my research developed into another direction and concentrates not primarily on the juridical procedures. Therefore, I decided not to investigate further court sessions.

### *Participant observation in Ballinateis:*

The majority of the participant observation I carried out in Ballinateis municipality from October 2015 until May 2016. Beneficial was the circumstance that during this period I lived only two kilometers from the Ballinateis' center, in the hinterlands of the municipality. This gave me the opportunity to shift my daily routines to the field for an extended period of time. The daily activities at my residence as well as the interaction with my landlord and my neighbors gave me insights into how aspects of security are incorporated in their daily routines. The core period of participant observation from January until May is the time in which I tried to actively participate – as DeWalt and DeWalt (2011) say – ‘in a wide range of daily, routine, and extraordinary activities with people’ (ibid.:5), who live or work in Ballinateis. Aside from daily activities that can be seen as – what Geertz vividly describes – a form of ‘deep hanging out’ (Geertz 2000:107) (shopping, visiting cafés and pubs, going for walks, etc.) to get in contact with inhabitants, I actively tried to engage in specific activities in the municipality, which provided access to potential research partners. Regular activities, like taking part in a local photography club, studying in the local library or attending local events, gave me opportunities to talk to inhabitants of Ballinateis and carry out informal observations (of their daily routine). I tried to write down all important information immediately on a scratchpad (see Wolfinger 2002). Throughout the period of participant observations, I tried to

keep a field diary on a regular basis. The structure of the field diary I transmit from DeWalt and DeWalt (2011) and Newbury (2001): it consisted of two parts, in which 1) I formulated my newest findings at the end of the day, as well as 2) a daily log to comprehend my activities during the research.

### **2.1.2. Interviews**

Beside participant observation with its informal conversation, the other major primary method for data collection consisted of formal semi-structured interviews with a number of different research partners. The spectrum of different interview techniques includes a great variety in ethnographic research. Roughly, the interviews conducted during my fieldwork can be distinguished into two categories:

#### *Survey interviews in Ballinateis:*

To gain insight into the personal perception and imaginations of (in-)security of people living and/or working in Ballinateis, I designed a survey with a corpus of open-ended questions (see appendix: example of survey), which I modified in the course of the research depending on my current state of knowledge about the topic. When I spontaneously held conversations with research partners in local shops, public institutions like the local library or in the streets, I would conduct the survey with them. The people were unknown to me before and the only criteria to engage with them was their presence in Ballinateis. Throughout an interview I occasionally interposed further questions between the survey's regular queries, depending on the responses I received from my counterpart. The conversation was recorded by taking written notes. During the entire length of the research, I undertook eighteen interviews of this kind (see appendix – list of survey participants).

#### *Selected interview partners:*

I arranged interviews with selected research partners providing me with deeper insights into the perception of (in-)security in Ballinateis. My selection of interviewees and survey topics depended on two factors: 1) The person's function in the field, as this could potentially provide important insight into a specific aspect in my research; 2) The availability of the interviewee. I handled these interviews as expert interviews in the way Bogner et al. see them:

‘Expert interviews are carried out to generate area specific and object-theoretical statements, not

to generate an analysis of the basic rules of social practice or universal constitutive structures.’  
(Bogner, Littig, and Menz 2005:91 transl. by M.I.)

The interviews were formalized semi-structured interviews lasting approximately between one and one and a half hours. In two cases, there was a follow-up semi-structured interview, which took place a few days or weeks afterwards and which I used to clarify any remaining questions. All research partners agreed to an audio-recording of the interview. During the research, I interviewed nine selected interview partners. In two cases, the interviews were group discussions with two research partners at the same time.

### **2.1.3. Photo documentation**

During the fieldwork, I documented certain situations and locations and assemblages visually via photography. By doing so, I followed Lederbogen’s understanding of photography as a research tool of data documentation that can widen the perception with its level of detail (Lederbogen 2003). The photographs were taken as a personal visual diary to better recollect the field situation. I use some of the photographs in this thesis to clarify specific argumentation, however an extensive photo analysis has not been undertaken in this research.

## **2.2.Secondary fieldwork methods**

Secondary research methods have been used to collect and analyze already existing data. I apply this data as my main source to understand the nationwide discourse on (in-)security and crime(-control) in chapter 3. Further, secondary data provides important background information in the field, which are necessary to lead conversations with research partners into certain directions and to evaluate their statements. Following Altheide (1987), the content that I gained through media analysis and archival research, in which I focused on legislative texts, political agendas and statistical data, ‘is used to document and understand the communication of meaning (given by my the research partners), as well as to verify theoretical relationships’ (ibid.:68; ed. by M.I.). Further, I was inspired in my analysis of secondary data by the methodological approach of the *Policy World: Anthropology and Analysis of the Contemporary Power* by Shore et al. (Shore, Wright, and Però 2011). Sharing the ideas of an ‘interpretive policy analysis’ (Shore and Wright 2011:4) of political science, anthropology shares ‘an aim to deconstruct policy in order to reveal patterns and processes in the organization of power and governance in society’ (ibid.).

### *Media analysis*

For approximately five months, I followed different media formats to get a better idea of the discourse about the perception and the dealing with (in-)security in the broader nationwide as well as the local context of Ballinateis. On the one side, the observation refers to mass media formats including intensive observation of two nationwide newspapers and one local newspaper and the occasional consideration of other nationwide newspapers, radio and television news podcasts. Furthermore, I observed the social media platform *Facebook*, in which I focused on political and civic initiatives demanding a better security situation in Ireland from the political elite. In doing so, I orientated my media analysis on the approaches of Shoemaker and Reese (1996), Newbold et al. (2002) and Macnamara (2005), which will be elaborated more detailed in chapter 3.1.

### *Archival research*

Also in anthropology, a great part of research consists of ‘fieldwork in the archives’ (Brettell 1998). Beside the (online) archival research in the university libraries of Vienna and Maynooth, I used the archives of the *Irish Central Statistics Office*, the *Parliament of Ireland* and the *Irish Newspaper Archive* and internet search in general. I obtained statistical data and legislative texts on criminality rates, socio-economic statistics, political agendas of the different Irish parties as well as general information about Ballinateis. Further, I conducted research in the local Ballinateis library in order to get a better historical understanding of my fieldwork area. The library features a small pool of local publications on the municipality.

## **2.3. Data analysis and critical review**

From an analytical point of view, different methods were applied in this research, which I consider as an advantage to give the analysis a broader and deeper perspective. This results in more substantial knowledge to be gained from the research and a better development of theory on the subject. In qualitative research, the general problem of validity often proves to be subject of controversial discussion. The focus on a selective corpus of activities, research partners or events has to be sufficient to generate knowledge, that can be abstracted and generalized (see Maurer 2016). During the research, I constantly analyzed and interpreted the gathered data to narrow my research question. The interview transcriptions, protocols, notes and media material were encoded into sets and subsets of data by the coding tool ATLAS.ti. Later on, I combined these sets of data with the current theories of the social sciences to elaborate the present thesis.

It has to be critically remarked that – as I mentioned before – I see the study as a grounded theory approach and therefore as an inductive approach, mainly led by the information I received from my research partners and the broader discourse. However, I acknowledge that a pure inductive approach is not possible and I approached this research with a certain amount of theoretical knowledge and previous experience about the elaborated topics of security. Further, this approach led to a wide spectrum of data and thereby a multitude of possible topics was given in the orientation phase. Afterwards, I experienced difficulty in narrowing this variety down to a more focus-oriented research. This difficulty continued throughout the entire phase of data acquisition.

To the best of my knowledge, every ethnographer experiences difficulties during her/his fieldwork. By no means is this research an exception. The reluctance of potential research partners to share information that could have been significant for the research, the loss of data material, as well as administrative difficulties with the bureaucracy of university or the financing of the research temporarily encumbered the progress of research.

From an ethical point of view, the topic of (in-)security and crime(-control) makes it necessary for me to carefully consider my position in the field. All relationships are shaped by power dynamics and therefore, the relationships between myself and research partners and possibly between research partners themselves are always relationships of power. Since research in this area requires interaction with traumatized victims of crime as well as perpetrators of crime, it was my most important premise to guarantee to the best of abilities, the physical, social and psychological well-being of all those who are involved in or affected by this, including myself. I did not push any kind of engagement with victims and perpetrators of crime, due to a lack of experience with the contact with these groups. Keeping the names and places that could lead to the identification of individual research partners anonymous, was of utmost importance.

### **3. Chapter: Discourse analysis: Property crime in Ireland - a discourse of (in-)security**

‘The concept of security saturates contemporary politics, policy and media. It circulates globally in images of threats and conflicts, chaos and order. In its name, governments expend precious public resources on surveillance, identification, futuristic technologies, weapons and wars.’  
(Maguire, Foris, and Zurawski 2014b:1)

From this statement by Maguire et al. (ibid.), it becomes clear that security is a very broad conception that plays an important role on a national and even global level. At the same time, these different discourses on security have an effect on many aspects of people's everyday life. Anthropology has the possibility – following Eriksen (2010) – through ethnographic research to show the interplay between the national and global discourses and the research partners in the local field. In the often 'local' and limited spaces, where ethnographic research takes places, ethnographers can trace larger issues that go beyond these localities. As shown above, Goldstein (2010) identifies that security is expressed through practice as well as discourse. This chapter will focus on a broader analysis of discourses of (in-)security in connection with crime(-control) in the Republic of Ireland, while the following chapters four and five focus on everyday practices of residents of Ballinateis and their relation to these discourses.

The observation of the public discourse about (in-)security due to increasing criminality in rural areas in Ireland was the first access point for this research. This lead me to a closer ethnographic enquiry in Ballinateis as a case study of how discourses of (in-)security are adapted and adjusted in a local context. Media reports, citizen initiatives, and political discussions about rural areas as the target of an increasing property criminality (especially burglary and theft crimes), which sometimes has a connection to physical violence (armed robberies), are present in the Irish public since 2007 (Deeney 2013; Rowley 2013; Forde 2015). In the preliminary stage of the general elections, which took place in February 2016, the discourse about increasing insecurity due to criminality shifted in the sense that urban areas were equally problematized as target of criminals and that crime is not only a rural but also an urban problem (Lally 2016a).

At this point, it is important to clarify how I conceptualize the term discourse and how discourses can be analyzed. A detailed elaboration of the concept of discourse and discourse analysis would go far beyond the scope of this thesis, but an indication seems vital for the overall understanding at this point:

Foucault and his understanding of discourse is the starting point, as he is a central figure in the development of discourse analysis as an academic methodology (Ruoff 2013:108). It is not possible to give a clear definition of Foucault's own understanding of the term 'discourse' as it varies through his oeuvre<sup>5</sup>. Foucault merges the term from Bachelard's and Canguilhem's

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<sup>5</sup>In the early works of *Madness and Society* (Foucault 1988) and *The Birth of the Clinic* (Foucault 1994b), Foucault discusses discursive as well as non-discursive practices. Especially in *The Order of Things* (Foucault 1994c) and *The Archeology of Knowledge*, (Foucault 1972) discourse has a central position for Foucault. While

school of thought (see Gutting 1995; Ruoff 2013). In this tradition, discourse describes first of all, a connection between language and thought, in which signs (language) enable the formation of sentences (thoughts). A sentence is a 'series of signs (that) will become a statement on condition that it possesses [...] a specific relation that concerns itself – and not its cause, or its elements (the signs)' (Foucault 1972:100; ed. by M.I.). Thus, the statement is a 'regularity of practice' that generates a 'system of formation' which on the other hand serves as rules for a 'particular discursive practice' (ibid.:74). In a Foucauldian sense, the statement is the significant element for the discourse. A crucial characteristic of the statement is its embeddedness in the empirical materiality (Kerchner and Schneider 2006:9). It differs at this point from Derrida's linguistic de-constructivism, in which the permanent inherent relativism – the *différance* - of statements creates an impossibility of an empirical materiality (Derrida 1997; see also Lüdemann 2011).

Summarizing Foucault's concept, this empirical materiality of statements gives discourses three characteristics: Discourses 1) have a historical dimension, 2) are the bases for knowledge in the rules of a discursive practice, and therefore 3) are embedded in relations of power. The analysis of discourses has as its final goal to show the discourse as materialized language. Here, Foucault states:

‘One shows how the different texts with which one is dealing refer to one another, organize themselves into a single figure, converge with institutions and practices, and carry meanings that may be common to a whole period.’ (Foucault 1972:134)

Critical discourse analysis is a more recent development in qualitative social science that combines Foucauldian discourse analysis with Marxist theory and emphasizes the inequality in power relations in specific discursive practices. According to Van Dijk:

Critical discourse analysis is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose and ultimately to resist social inequality.’ (Van Dijk 2001:1)

Here, a clear activist stand is taken, in which academia shall help to uncover and eliminate

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in later works starting with *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault 1995) Foucault started to focus on the concept of *dispositive* instead of the discourse.

social inequality.

In this sense, I identify my approach in this chapter as a discourse analysis that elaborates on a variety of materialized texts including media coverage, official statistics, lobbying and policy practices in the course of the general elections as well as state policies. These textual materiality is based on a historical dimension and its involvement within relationships of power. My analysis focuses on these dimensions of history and power and shows how these texts are embedded in a network, which I see as the discourse.

Thereby, the analysis focuses on a specific discourse of (in-)security in relation to criminality in the Republic of Ireland and shall give insight into the broader context, in which the ethnographic data collection in Ballinateis is embedded. It functions as a referential point to interpret the gathered ethnographic data. At the same time, I tried to give a comprehensive perspective on the discourse of (in-)security and criminality in Ireland. Although, I am aware that the discourse analysis is limited not including all text material available to this topic and only taking into account a certain temporary period.

### **3.1. Media content analysis of Irish newspapers**

Media play an important role in the production of texts and thereby in the formation of a discourse. A content analysis on the presentation of crime(-control) in the Irish media is a necessary step to better understand the scope of a discourse on (in-)security. It also gives insight to how residents of Ballinateis perceive their local environment in regards to security. Through my conversations with people living and working in Ballinateis, it became clear that they do not only received information about their living environment via face-to-face interaction, but also extensively utilize mass and social media as a source of information. In some cases, research partners only became aware of crimes taken place in Ballinateis, because they read about it in the newspapers or on social media platforms (see e.g. interview 6). At the same time, media reports on crime provide people with background information and embed incidents into a broader narrative about crime in the local and nationwide context.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the expansion of communication content, especially of movies, brought the attention of social science to this new field (Macnamara 2005). Weber emphasized the importance of media content analysis in his long-term study of press coverage of social and political issues and the public reception. For him, it is a tool to monitor the “cultural temperature” of a society (see Neuman 1989). At first, media content analysis was associated as part of a quantitative methodology. Many definitions show the quantitative and also positivistic understanding of media content analysis (Berelson 1952; Berger 1991;

Neuendorf 2002). For example, Berelson (1952) described it as a ‘research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication’(ibid.:18).

More recently, starting in the late 1990s, the idea that media content analysis has to follow a quantitative approach to generate objective truths has been criticized. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) argue that even an immense collection of data will not guarantee a ‘complete picture of meaning and contextual codes, since texts may contain many other forms of emphasis besides sheer repetition’ (ibid.:32). Further, Newbold et al. (2002) see the problem in the unquestioned equation of quantitative indicators and social impact/meaning. Although a media text appears on a high quantitative scale, it does not necessarily lead to a greater social impact. They consider it a risk that decisions are made relying solely on statistical media content analysis (see Newbold, Boyd-Barrett, and Van Den Bulck 2002:80).

Instead of a quantitative approach, ideas of a qualitative approach to media content analysis have been discussed. Macnamara (2005) defines a qualitative content analysis as an examination that focuses on the ratio

‘between the text and its likely audience meaning, recognizing that media texts are *polysemic* [...] (while it) relies heavily on researcher “readings” and interpretation of media texts. This intensive and time-consuming focus is one of the reasons that much qualitative content analysis has involved small samples of media content and been criticized by some researchers as unscientific and unreliable.’ (Ibid.:5, ed. by M.I.)

As Macnamara argues, a clear distinction between a quantitative and a qualitative approach to content analysis is not made by the majority of academics. Instead, Newbold et al. (2002) emphasize the possible complementarity of quantitative and qualitative approaches. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) go even further in arguing that it is necessary to combine both approaches to understand the social impact of media text.

In the context of ethnographic research, Altheide (1987) even speaks of an ‘ethnographic content analysis’, which focuses mainly on a qualitative approach to media that is highly reflexive. It takes into account not only the content gathered through media analysis, but combines it with other forms of data – like data gathered through participant observation. As Altheide says:

‘Ethnographic content analysis (ECA) consists of reflexive movement between concept development, sampling, data collection, data coding, data analysis, and interpretation. The aim

is to be systematic and analytic, but not rigid. Although categories and “variables” initially guide the study, others are allowed and expected to emerge throughout the study. Thus, ECA is embedded in constant discovery and constant comparison of relevant situations, settings, styles, images, meanings and nuances.’ (Ibid.:68; ed. by M.I.)

For my research, I followed various types of media with different levels of intensity: 1) online articles of two major national newspapers (*Irish Times* and *Irish Independent*) as well as the regional newspaper *Meath Chronicle* have been cited regularly during the research. Further online-newspapers have been viewed occasionally, like *The Journal* – another national newspaper – and the two newspapers *Agriland* and *Farmers Journal* that focus on issues of agricultural, rural Ireland. Furthermore, I occasionally viewed radio and television news on the internet when reports on a specific case regarding the issue of crime were podcasted.

Beside these informational sources of mass media (newspapers, radio, television), social media plays an important role in forming the discourse on crime in Ireland. Therefore, I followed social media *Facebook*-sites and –groups, which I find important for the research: The *Meath Crime Prevention* site; the sites of the initiatives *Save Our Local Community* and *Stop the Closure of Stepside Garda Station*; the sites of local politicians of South Meath; as well as a *Facebook*-group where local residents of Ballinateis connect.

The issues of crime(-control) are intensively discussed in the media. For the “traditional” mass media, O’Connell (O’Connell and Whelan 1996; Michael O’Connell 1999; 2002) shows the portrayal of crime in the Irish media and notes that certain criminal events have been disproportionally covered since the 1990s. For the 1990s, McCullagh (1996) identifies an overemphasis on media attention towards crime, which can be traced back to specific violent crime cases during that time, and argues that ‘media coverage gives a higher level of coverage to crime than it warrants’ (ibid.:10). Starting at that time, mass media developed new formats and subjects, where they exclusively report on issues related to crime(-control). A report of the Irish *National Crime Council* analysis this strong focus on crime:

‘Indeed, the Irish public did not appear to be especially concerned *about* crime and crime control until a series of events in the mid 1990’s. In the mid 1990’s, a series of murders, combined with the lifting of the economic recession and public unease about an increase in drug use and the criminal activities associated with the supply and demand of drugs, triggered widespread concern about lawlessness. During this time, the media coverage of crime became more widespread and intense, providing more colourful descriptions of criminal behaviour. This led some to suggest that the media’s portrayal of crime encouraged a fear of crime by

contributing to an impression that crime had risen significantly.’ (National Crime Council 2009:29)

What the *National Crime Council* describes, is the interdependence of media in a particular socio-political situation. Media has an impact on the societal discourse on crime and vice versa. It has the power of evoking fear of crime and insecurity in the population (see chapter 4.4).

Again, media coverage of criminal activity caught new public attention after two incidences in October 2015. This time the focus lay on property crime in connection with violence. First, a 62-year-old man died of a heart attack when he was confronted with the burglars in his house in County Limerick. Soon after, a serious violent attack against a woman in her 90s committed by robbers took place in County Wicklow (McGee 2015).

In my media content analysis, I specially focused on the period between November 2015 and February 2016, which are the months before the general election took place in the Republic of Ireland. During the analysis, 99 articles (35 *Irish Independent*; 27 *Irish Times*; 16 *Meath Chronicle*; 21 of other newspapers) that all report on the problematization of criminality in local communities have been closely analyzed. First of all, I want to elaborate now on the media coverage of crime of the two newspapers *Irish Independent* and *Irish Times*. Then, I focus on the local newspaper *Meath Chronicle*, radio broadcast and *Facebook*-sites.

The *Irish Independent* is the daily newspaper with the highest print run in Ireland. In the online version of the newspaper, there are two news sections that deal with reports on ‘Court’ as well as reports on ‘Crime’. Since 2013, the newspaper started an ongoing reportage, with journalist Paul Williams as the leading figure, about rural (property) crime. Summarizing, it can be seen that this coverage combines statistical information and policy developments with personal stories of victims of crime that are highly emotionalized (Independent.ie 2013). At the basis of the reportage lies the argument that the central government neglected the security demands of the Irish population with its austerity program, especially in rural Ireland. With this long-term reportage, the newspaper followed an agenda, which connects the arguments of rising crime numbers and falling Garda activity with personal stories of people, to draw a negative, even scandalous image of the current situation in Ireland.

An examples of the reportage is the story of a 70-year-old woman who suffers a heart attack after her house was broken into. Here, the similarity to the October 2015 incident in County Limerick can be seen. In the case of the 70-year-old woman, she explains that the local police force and the community cannot solve the problem of crime without the support of the

government. She says:

‘I can’t blame the guards because they have been good, but there’s not enough of them. [...] Everybody is angry and there is a great community, the guys around here said they will come with their shotguns to protect me... but you can’t do that. I don’t see a solution to this. The thieves are just doing what they like.’ (Williams 2016)

In other articles of the *Irish Independent* reportage, people are interviewed that are not victims of crime, but fear crime in their direct environment. An example is the story about Clare McCormack who is a journalist of the *Irish Independent* telling about her personal unease with crime. She experiences this fear in her home and neighborhood and therefore took up certain practices to tackle this fear: ‘I can’t sleep soundly until I know the house alarm is set, my Rottweiler is on patrol and my bedroom door is locked. This is a new routine’ (McCormack 2015).

As I will show more detailed in chapter 4.4, Garda representatives argue that media reports most often pick personal stories. These stories show more extreme cases connected with very distorting experiences that often left the victims in a distraught mental state or even suffered physically, while the majority of property crime cases are in fact less dramatic. At the same time, these personal story reports are usually covered by the authors with information about the latest governmental policies or crime statistics. Therefore, the current situation of crime in Ireland and governmental prevention policies are directly linked to these individual negative cases. Even positive developments in crime statistics do not eradicate the negative view on the current situation. For example, McCormack says in her article: ‘Although burglaries in the Lake County are at the lowest rate in more than a decade - my fear of rural crime still persists, and I know I’m not the only one’ (ibid.). The influence of fear and unease as a major factor is elaborated more closely later on (see chapter 4.4). The articles of the *Irish Independent* show a clear opinion about the situation of crime(-control) in Ireland depicting it in a negative state and reporting first and foremost on people that see it as a ‘crime crisis’ (O’Connor 2015), ‘crime wave’ (Greg Harkin 2016) and the government measures as ‘a joke’ and ‘cynical stunt’ (Williams 2015).

The *Irish Times* with the second highest circulation among Irish daily newspapers, takes a more liberal stand. It can be seen that the spectrum of opinions concerning property crime is more diverse in the newspaper’s articles. The newspaper has one section on its website displaying articles that specifically deal with ‘Crime & Law’. A minor number of articles are similar to the argumentations that can be found in the *Irish Independent* showing an outright

negative crime situation in Ireland, demanding tougher sentences against criminals and blaming governmental policies. Thus, the majority of articles take into account different perspectives and reflect for example on the ‘overhype’ (Lally 2015b) of crime in the public, new forms of criminal activities, the relativity of increasing crime only in rural areas in comparison to urban areas (Lally 2016b) or the problematic use of guns as self-defense (Lally 2015a). Therefore, the *Irish Times* provides a more pluralistic and critical representation on the issue, in which negative voices that reflect the unease in Irish public perception of crime stand beside articles that try to relativize these perspectives, highlight positive developments and provide background information. Detailed personal stories of victims of crime are not reported in this newspaper.

Beside these two major newspapers, other media show great interest in the discourse on crime as well. The local newspaper *Meath Chronicle* does not have a special section for crime and crime-control reports neither in the print version nor on its website. In both print and online version, articles concerning criminal events fall in the categories of ‘News’ or ‘Farming’ (in cases of crimes against farmers) and are listed alongside articles dealing with completely other topics. On one page of the print version readers come across an article that deals with the reduced number of Gardaí causing an increasing fear among the local population, while next to it articles report on new qualifications of *McDonald’s* staff members or the opening of a new school building (see appendix: graphic 1). This goes to show that while crime does not receive any special treatment in regards to media coverage, it still remains an integral part of everyday life and is therefore treated as a deviation from normality and needs to be reported on. As to the content, the articles that are concerned with crime cover most often specific criminal offences, court cases or the opinions of the local population about specific criminal offences. Rarely, the articles place the specific criminal act into the context of the wider discourse, crime statistics or policy-makings. Neither do analysis of the current socio-political landscape concerning crime(-control) appear in the newspaper.

My research partners in Ballinateis explained to me that they use different media to inform themselves of events happening in the region. Reading the newspapers or their online-versions is one way for them to stay informed. Alternatively, they rely on television news from the national public service broadcaster *Raidió Teilís Éireann* (RTÉ) and news from social media as their source of information. While the RTÉ news – comparable with the reportage of the *Irish Times* – offer a balance between background information about the general crime situation in the country and specific criminal cases, social media platforms provide a vast spectrum of texts and textual narratives on the subject.

In contrast to the mass media of newspapers and television reports, social media puts people of Ballinateis into the situation that

‘[...] (r)ather than simply being targeted by mediated messages, they can see themselves as protagonists of mediated narratives who actively integrate themselves into a complex media ecosystem.’ (Stefanone, Lackaff, and Rosen 2010:509; ed. by M.I.)

Two *Facebook*-pages are important for the research in Ballinateis. First of all, the *Meath Crime Prevention* page that is run by the *County Meath Division of An Garda Síochána* serves ‘to communicate with members of the public (with the goal to) achieve the highest attainable level of Personal Protection, Community Commitment and State Security’ (An Garda Síochána 2011; ed. by M.I.). On the page, the *Crime Prevention Officer* of the Meath division posts about stolen property, missing persons, current criminal activity in the region and general *An Garda Síochána* safety advice. As a consequence, it is not only informing the followers of the page about these topics but successfully encouraging them to participate and assist *An Garda Síochána* by sharing the post and commenting on them to give further information to specific crime cases.

The other *Facebook*-page is designated as a local ‘Notice Board’ for Ballinateis and classified as a page for a group/community. Therefore, all participants are allowed to post on the page. The notice board is not limited to informing the followers about crime and crime prevention, but it is also a platform on which all aspects of everyday life in Ballinateis can be posted, shared or commented. Nevertheless, a number of contributions in the group concern criminal activity in Ballinateis and the wider area. Often, articles from mass media websites about a local crime are shared on the page, which generate the starting point for further discussions among the users. While ‘social media content is widely accessible, up-to-date, and available in electronic format’ (Lai and To 2015:138), the involvement in social media has proven to be another vital part to get information about the local crime situation, apart from keeping track of the mass media coverage on crime. It shows that the people want to exchange views about the current local security situation.

### **3.1.General Elections: Lobbying groups and community initiatives**

*Save Our Local Community* (SOLC) is an initiative that started to become active in October 2015 in County Tipperary and soon after became active in County Meath as well. Their foundation was incentivized by a series of burglaries in 2015 in the town of Thurles, Co.

Tipperary. It is worth noting that the initiative describes itself as ‘non-political’ and their goal is that ‘people who are affected by crime will get the support they need to get their voice heard’ (Save Our Local Community 2016). In doing so, the initiative became an active political player (contradicting its self-description) that undertakes lobbying work for their cause, focusing on political election candidates, government members (up to the minister of justice) and high officials of *An Garda Síochána*. During the research, the initiative held two public meetings, in which ‘people [...] discuss the escalating crime levels in our community and possible solutions to this’ (see appendix: graphic 2).

Paul Williams, who lead the *Irish Independent* reportage on victims of crime (see chapter 3.1), supports the initiative and chaired both of the public meetings. Both meetings were divided into three parts: First, the organizers and invited experts give information about the initiatives aim and the current situation on crime in Ireland. After that, Paul Williams asked the attendees, who answered by show of hands, various questions concerning property crime, for example: Who has been a victim of crime? Who knows a victim of crime in their close personal environment? At last, the attendees can raise their own concerns about crime. Although, the initiative describes itself as organization that includes people from ‘multiple [...] backgrounds’ (ibid.; ed. by M.I.), the meeting consists of white men and women who are in their 40’s and older. Further, the meeting is an event from middle-class people for middle-class people. I draw this conclusion from my observations that all the speakers referred to themselves as property owners or even farm or business owners. The places of the public meetings itself were big conference rooms of luxurious hotels and people were dressed in elegant clothes, which stress the middle-class character of the initiative. As a prominent self-describing element, a number of speakers referred to themselves as ‘hard-working’ and ‘law-obeying citizens’ (Recording 1; 00:00:30).

The statements and speeches at the meeting created a narratives of a strict societal dichotomous division between the good ‘law obeying’ citizen and the evil criminals who threaten the whole Irish population. Criminal offenders are rendered as the unreformable root of the problem and the government is considered incapable of finding a solution to the issue. Instead the Irish government worsen the problem by imposing austerity measures on the public sector.

The meetings gained nation-wide attention in the media (Geoghegan 2015; O’Regan 2015) and the initiative’s leaders were able to meet with Minister of Justice FitzGerald to discuss their concerns and demands for more security (victimsofcrime.ie 2015). Beside these public meetings, SOLC runs a website, *Facebook*-page and *Twitter*-account on which they inform

about latest developments of crime(-control) in Ireland. Although very active at the beginning, the initiative stopped organizing meetings and minimized their activities on its web presence after the general elections.

Apart from SOLC, other initiatives around Ireland focus on local issues of crime(-control), but do not aim to be a nation-wide movement. For the Ballinateis area, I was not able to identify a local initiative. Instead, I followed a local initiative called ‘Reopen Stepside Garda Station’ (Reopen Stepside Garda Station 2017). Stepside is part of the Dublin-area, in which the local Garda station was shut down as a result of the cut backs of public funding in 2013. As a result, the local population started to organize rallies against this closure and demanded the re-opening of the station. Although, the initiative only focuses on this local Garda station and the rallies attracted first and foremost the local population, the initiative received nation-wide media attention and is an example of how local inhabitants take action in Ireland in order to maintain certain state services in the area. Various politicians of the constituency declared their sympathy with the initiative in the run-up of the general elections of 2016 and promised to re-open the Garda station if elected. This shows that crime and security have been one of the major issues for the political campaigns of the 2016 general elections, which I will elaborate more closely in the following subchapter.

### **3.2.General Elections: Political campaigns**

In February 2016, the general elections for the Dáil – the Irish Parliament – took place. Several politicians across the country approached the issue of criminality in local communities and gave proposals on how to tackle this issue in their electoral campaigns.

In the election manifestos of the four biggest parties in the Republic of Ireland, in which *Fine Gael* and *Labour* represent the governmental parties and *Fianna Fáil* and *Sinn Féin* the biggest political opposition, crime prevention and crime control have been made a subject of discussion. From the manifestos it can be said that all parties promise to increase budget and manpower of *An Garda Síochána* as well as a reformation of the police structures. Although the promised amount of funding and the increase in Garda numbers differs substantially between the manifestos, the following five topics occur in all of them: 1) the increase in Garda numbers to at least 14.000 up to 15.000 officers; 2) placing civilian personnel into *An Garda Síochána* office work to ‘put Garda back on the street protecting communities’ (Fianna Fáil 2016:73); 3) The funding of advanced training and modern equipment to tackle crime (especially modernize vehicles); 4) enhanced promotion of community policing; and 5) the modernization and (re-)opening of Garda stations. Especially the last point varies highly

among the parties. While *Fine Gael* ‘committed funding to refurbish or develop 32 (Garda stations) nationwide’ (Fine Gael 2016:85; ed. by M.I.), the oppositional parties promise either to assess if all 139 stations should be re-opened (Fianna Fáil 2016:73) or to re-open them immediately (Sinn Féin 2016:46). Further, important issues in relation to *An Garda Síochána*, that have been raised by a single or various parties, were the strengthening of victim support measures, a stronger support of community policing strategies integrating the local population, improving the complaints office of *An Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission* and establishing new units specialized in the prevention of property crime.

In regard to the Irish legal system, different approaches were promoted by the parties focusing on various aspects of system. Crucial demands of the parties that are important for the research can be identified as follows: an improved efficiency of the Irish courts to enforce the existing legislation, expanding the competence of the *Special Criminal Court*, toughening sentences against repeat offenders and drug offences, closing the loopholes for cross-border crime and promoting more rights for victims of crime (Fianna Fáil 2016:70–76; Fine Gael 2016:83–88; Sinn Féin 2016:46f; Labour 2016:77f). Especially the oppositional and central-right party *Fianna Fáil* attracts attention by emphasizing in their manifesto extensive support and reestablishment of *An Garda Síochána* as well as a tough legal system on crime in Ireland (Fianna Fáil 2016).

Looking at local politicians, who are active in the Ballinateis municipality, I want to cite two members of the political opposition, whose election campaign I followed during the research. Thomas Byrne from the republican party *Fianna Fáil* has his constituency in East Meath, which includes Ballinateis. In his political agenda ‘tackling crime’ is a major issue. He demands the re-opening of Garda stations closed by the *Fine Gael* and *Labour* government and therefore, the reestablishment of the former Garda districts to guarantee better policing. Further, he ‘is committed to increase the Garda numbers to 14,000 nationally’ (see appendix: graphic 3) and strengthen *Neighborhood Watch* programs. In regard to legislative changes, he (and his party) proposes a mandatory jail time of three years for convicted burglars and seven years for repeat offenders (three offences). Local media report on Byrne that he supports local initiatives involved in local communities to reduce criminality in the area (Casey 2015).

Another politician from the East Meath constituency is Sharon Keogan. Keogan ran in the 2016 general elections as an independent candidate and is a member of the Meath County Council. Similar to the public meetings of SOLC, she organized a meeting entitled ‘Crime in Rural Communities – What can we do?’ (Spearman 2015) in the town of Slane, County Meath. At the meeting she announced:

‘We need them (the Gardaí) on the ground, we need them on the beat. And if [...] criminals don’t see the Garda on the beat that gives them a room to maneuver. So in my opinion the government could have (done) a little bit more in relation to providing more money towards Garda influent.’ (Recording 2 00:12:01-00:12:27; ed. by M.I.)

At this event, Keogan makes it clear that she is against the budget cuts of *An Garda Síochána* and promotes a better Garda-community relation to combat crime. Keogan emphasize in the meeting that she is the founder of the Duleek and the district’s *Community Alert* system (see more in chapter 5.1.1) established in 2011, which is now one of the biggest systems in the County. In an *Meath Chronicle* article on her, she is described with great expertise on crime fighting:

‘Her knowledge of the needs of the community in battling crime leaves her well-placed to understand how the shortage of Garda resources through lack of funding and closure of Garda stations has impacted in this area.’ (meathchronicle.ie 2016)

Contrary to Thomas Byrne, Keogan has not listed concrete steps to reduce criminality in her election program for the general elections 2016.

Both politicians stress their cooperation with and the importance of local communities for the improvement of crime control. They take up the narrative that the relationship between the communities and the local Gardaí crumbles because of the governmental austerity program and that local communities are left helpless against increasing criminal activities. In doing so, they describe a triangular relationship between politicians, the local communities and the local Gardaí. By electing them, they promise to make up the failure of the current administration and *An Garda Síochána* management and pledge to reestablish order and security by restoring the Garda – community relation back to its functioning state.

The results of the general election 2016 show that the governing parties *Fine Gael* and *Labour* had a strong decline in their results compared to last election. *Fine Gael* lost 10.6% and *Labour* even 12.8%, while the Fianna Fáil, that pursues a policy of strong intervening criminal activity, gained the highest increase of all parties by 6.9% (RTE.ie 2016a). Looking at the results of the local politicians Byrne and Keogan, it is important to point out that, despite of a strong emphasis on a rigorous approach against criminal activity on both sides, the difference in election results is striking. While Byrne gained a direct mandate (10.818 votes) for the Dáil in the first counting, Keogan did not get elected with only 1.709 votes on

her side (RTE.ie 2016b). This leads to the suggestion that the tangibility of Thomas Byrne's agenda in his election program, specifically what concrete measures will be taken to combat crime as well as his membership in an established party, played an important role in gaining voters' trust. Further, it shows that the issue of crime(-control) has been an important issue in the election campaigns and the media. Commonly, the general elections have been dominated by the issue of austerity measures and economic policy-making, in which the aspect of the public sector and therefore the police force plays an important part. However, I also want to acknowledge that the complexity of a general election and the success of a candidate cannot be reduced to her\_his emphasize on one issue. Other factors like the political stance on crime unrelated issues, belonging to a well-established party or the charisma of the candidates are important for the 'electoral behaviour' (Melnikova 2013; Arzheimer, Evans, and Lewis-Beck 2017) of people. However, the significance of the issue of crime(-control) and more generally speaking, the issue of (in-)security in Irish communities was emphasized by the election campaigns of parties and individual politicians.

### **3.3. Demographics: Crime statistics versus population growth**

The socio-political actors, who are concerned with the situation of criminality and security in Ireland, often base their argumentation on statistical data in order to objectify their concerns. Therefore, I see it as crucial to discuss the quantitative data that is negotiated in the discourse on crime and security in Ireland. In the following, I want to give two examples, in which quantifiable data is applied in an argumentation.

During my attendance at a public rally of the initiative *Reopen Stepside Garda Station* (see chapter 3.2), in which the organizers openly criticized the former and current government for the closure of their local Garda Station alongside with 138 other Garda stations in 2013, I could observe the strategic use of statistical data. The rally took place at a park located in the center of the city district Stepside. Different activists and local politicians held speeches on the load of a truck, which was provisionally functioning as a stage, while the audience crowded around the truck. The local politicians were invited to talk about their program for the upcoming general elections, particularly about their stance on whether the local Garda station should be re-opened or stay closed. The slogan of the event was 'No Stepside Station, No Vote', which indicated that the local population would only support those election candidates that promote the re-establishment of the local Garda station. (see also Fetherstonhaugh 2016; Rabbitte 2016; Wade 2016)

After the candidates' speeches, the host of the event shared his personal opinion on the

particular issue to the crowd. This statement reflects the negative attitude of the rally organizers towards the current political administration and its decisions in regard to security in the community:

‘So, I just do my own roundup. And just see, these are the facts, ok? In 2013 the reasons given for closures of stations was to pre-up Gardaí for patrol duty, more visibility, backup by new high-tech mobile vehicles and [...] introducing smart policing. 2012 74 Gardaí were in [...] (other nearby Garda stations). In 2013 there were 126 relocations from [...] (the local Garda station). In 2015 there are now 86 Gardaí. That’s a reduction in the last two years of 14% of the police in this area. Oh, what are the results of that. And these are the facts, they can’t be disputed. Fewer Gardaí, less visibility, no sign of high-tech mobile units, loss of local knowledge and intelligence, there is a dramatic increase in burglaries, we know that.’ (Recording 3; 00:41:10 – 00:42:20; ed. by M.I.)

Despite the many rich insights this comment bears into the perception of (in-)security of the local population, I want to point to the speaker’s specific use of quantifiable data that shows his attempt to bring facts and objectivity into the issue. The phrase ‘these are the facts’ declares that what follows is the unquestionable reality. The factuality of the varying numbers of Garda officers in duty during the last three years is directly associated to personal experience like ‘less visibility’ or ‘no sign of high-tech mobile units’.

Another example that illustrates the argumentative importance of statistical data, is a statement that Meath County Councilor Shanon Keogan gave at the public meeting ‘Crime in Rural Communities – What can we do?’ (see also chapter 3.3). There, she names the burglary and theft crimes statistics of 2012, 2013 and the current year 2015, however without giving more details for which area the numbers count. She says:

Just to give you some figures in relation to the crime in the last number of years: in 2012 and these are just Theft and Burglary related crimes. In 2012 we had 6.900; 2013 6.700; 2014 7.000, 2015 in the first two quarters 3.255. So, and that is just from the first two quarters.’ (Recording 2; 00:11:05-00:11:20)

Further on, she uses these numbers to argue that the austerity program of the current administration is responsible for the rise in the property crime numbers and that financial support for *An Garda Síochána* has to be increased to lower these numbers.

The usage of statistical data about criminality in Ireland functions as a major argument in the discourse of (in-)security. This argument is the basis to demand an expansion of the state

security apparatus by re-opening closed Garda stations, reinforcing Garda operational units or tightening criminal law. Further, arguing that crime numbers are on the rise strengthens the narrative of a current state of (criminal) crisis in Ireland. At the same time, personal stories about crime are combined with statistical data similar to the media reports of the Irish Independent, which gives these stories a certain factuality that is not questioned by the audience. On the contrary, the listing of statistics at public events is adopted by the audience and used in their own arguments.

What I have illustrated here are two examples that fit into the *Copenhagen School's* approach of 'securitization' (Wæver 1995; 2004). They include all three aspects that McDonald (2008) identifies as characteristics of securitization: 1) the '*form*' that includes a speech act performed by a 'dominant actor, usually political leaders' (ibid.:564); 2) The '*context*' (ibid.) that characterizes the speech act as an intervention to the present threat. In these examples, the speech acts are part of the current general election campaigns and try to intervene in the policy of the current Irish administration; And 3) the '*nature* of the act is defined solely in terms of the designation of threats to security' (ibid.). The threat of high criminality and reduced Garda officers are declared to be facts and to seek change in this situation is – to quote the moderator of the Stepside rally – 'common sense' (Recording 3; 00:43:00).

In my opinion, what is missing in this analysis is the elaboration and critical reflection of a fourth variable: the content. What information is used to give the basis for the speech act? Because statistical data plays a key role in those speech acts of security and shape the discourse on crime(-control) in Ireland, it is necessary to take a closer look at them in regard to this research. Therefore, I analyzed the official statistical data of criminal offences published by the Irish *Central Statistics Office*. The official records are released from the first quarter of 2003 until the last quarter of 2015 and are accessible for everybody through the website of the *Central Statistics Office*. I specially focused on the data about property criminality, which is divided into burglary, theft and robbery crime.

Generally speaking, when looking at the total numbers of burglary, theft and robbery crimes stay approximately stable in the Republic of Ireland during the examined period. Theft and burglary crimes have a yearly fluctuation with higher rates in the first and fourth quarter and less in the second and third quarter (Central Statistics Office 2016). This circumstance is explained by *An Garda Síochána* as a result of the long hours of darkness during the winter months, in which it is easier for perpetrators to act unobserved (garda.ie 2016). Apart from these fluctuations throughout the year, table 1 shows a yearly summary in total numbers of burglaries, thefts and robberies between 2003 and 2015. This statistic is also notable because

it includes property crime data of Ireland during the Celtic Tiger and the following economic crisis. As a result, the following conclusion can be drawn:

In relation to burglaries, the numbers stayed relatively stable in the whole period from 2003 until 2015 with an average of approximately 26.000 burglaries per year. With a total low in 2007 with 23.603 and a total peak in 2012 with 28.133 burglaries. Theft crimes had an average number of approximately 73.300 between 2003 and 2006, that, in comparison to the same period, saw an increase of 4,3% to an average of 76.476 per year between 2007 and 2010, which also marked the first years of the global economic crisis. In the period of 2011 to 2014 theft crime increased slightly again by 1,1% to an average of 77.452 per year with a total peak of 78.737 theft crimes in 2013. Robberies decreased in the period from 2003 with 2.915 robberies to 2007 with 2.171 robberies, but then increased again in the following four years' period, peaking in 2010 with 3.196 robberies. Since then, robberies are again constantly decreasing with 2.647 robberies in 2014. In 2015, the year before the general election, in which politicians and lobbying groups started to include crime-control as an issue of campaigning, all three crime categories fell in comparison to the previous year. (see appendix: table 1)

These statistics show that the numbers of burglary, theft and robbery, which are the types of crimes that community initiatives, politicians and journalists are concerned with, have not increased in a significant way in Ireland when looking at a long-term development. Of course, certain types of crime show in particular year-to-year comparisons a high increase (in the years between 2009 and 2010 robberies show a nearly 23% increase), but an overwhelming 'wave of crime' cannot be registered.

What is more, the population development has to be taken into account when referring to the total numbers of criminal offences in Ireland. Although, the influence of population size and crime are a long discussed topic in criminology (Haggerty 2001), Chamlin and Cochran (2004) argue that 'while population size has no appreciable effect on violent and property crime rates, it is by far and away the single best predictor of violent and property crime counts' (ibid.:199). Since the beginning of the 1960s, the Irish population is constantly growing (Central Statistic Office 2017) and solely in the years between 2003 and 2015 it shows an increase by 16% from approximately 3.98mio. to 4.63mio. inhabitants. As a result, the growing population and the nearly unchanged total criminal numbers lead in the end to a decrease of the per capita crime rate in Ireland in the recent 12 years. This means, that for example in 2003 approximately 6.5 burglaries, 18.5 theft crimes and 0.7 robberies occur for every one thousand inhabitants, while in 2015 it is approximately 5.7 burglaries, 16.4 theft

crimes and 0.6 robberies.

This discussion illustrates the instrumentalization of crime statistics for political agendas to strengthen argumentation for expanding crime control and tougher law sentences. Political campaigns and media reports point to these nationwide crime statistics naming first and foremost the total numbers of criminality while leaving out the long term developments. However, it needs to be taken into account that particular local cases, which could not be elaborated here, show significant increases in their crime numbers. At the same time, I want to point out that dark figures have not been part of the discussion about crime in Ireland, but play an important role in relativizing statistical data (Gutierrez and Kirk 2015).

### **3.4. Jurisdiction and law changes against property crime**

As I show in chapter 3.3, political campaigners promised reformations of the legislation in the general election to discourage criminals and counteract criminal offences in Ireland more effectively. The fact that tougher legislation against crime is introduced in the course of a general election is not a new phenomenon in the recent past of Ireland. In 1996, crime became a major focus of the Irish public and in the run-up of the 1996 general election after the murders of a Garda officer and a well-known crime journalist. The administration at the time reacted quickly with the introduction of not less than five new legislations in the same year: *The Criminals Justice (Drug Trafficking) Bill 1996*, the *Criminal Justice (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 1996*, the *Criminal Assets Bureau Bill 1996*, the *Proceeds of Crime Bill 1996* and the *Courts Bill 1996*. (see O'Brien-Olinger 2015b:20)

As the research's focus lies primarily on property crime (theft, burglary and robbery) in connection with (in-)security, I focus here on the new legislation introduced to combat this type of crime. Thereby, it has to be said that I refer to property crime as a form of economic damage or a criminal act carried out first and foremost against property. It is crucial to note however, that people can also be victimized in the course of a property crime as they are always affected and sometimes even harmed in cases of property criminality.

Now, what is the jurisdiction that currently affect property crime in Ireland? In 2001, the Irish government introduced the *Criminal Justice (Theft and Fraud Offences) Act 2001*, which was at the time of the research the point of reference for the governmental authorities and courts in regard to dealing with property crime (theft, burglary and robbery) (Oireachtas Library & Research Service 2015). One important mark to this legislation is the fact that it does not make a distinction between domestic and commercial burglaries, which were relevant for some court decisions (O'Malley 2006).

In this context, it is notable that citizen's dwellings stand under special protection by the Irish Constitution Article 40.5. Here, it is seen as a fundamental right, that '[...] (t)he dwelling of every citizen is inviolable and shall not be forcibly entered save in accordance with law' (Constitution of Ireland 1937:160; ed. by M.I.). Because of this article, cases of violent acts against trespassers and people entering homes unlawfully have been discussed in regard to the applied force of the owners against the perpetrators being considered 'proportionate'. The central question circles around the distinction between self-protection or protection of one's own property and an unlawful violent act committed by the owner of the property. Known as the *Castle Doctrine*, the householder is allowed 'to stand their ground and use force to defend their home against intruders' (Oireachtas Library & Research Service 2015:9). This law in connection with the article 40.5 is in opposition to article 40.3.1. of the Irish Constitution, which says: 'The State guarantees [...] to defend and vindicate the personal rights of the citizen' (Constitution of Ireland 1937:154; ed. by M.I.). This also includes the rights of offenders. To solve the ambiguity of these constitutional articles, various reports and papers were published. Additionally, judgments in specific cases were enforced that lead to numerous changes in this area of the law. Lastly, the *Criminal Law (Defense and the Dwelling) Act 2011* was enacted putting householders into a stronger position to use force as a self-defense reaction (Oireachtas Library & Research Service 2015:10).

In the run-up of the general elections 2016 and because of the great media attention on property crime, the Irish government saw themselves under pressure to reform older legislations like the *Bail Act 1997* as well as the before-mentioned *Theft and Fraud Offences Act 2001*. As a consequence, the Minister of Justice Frances Fitzgerald introduced a general scheme, which runs under the *Criminal Justice (Burglary of Dwellings) Bill 2015*. (Ibid.)

#### **4. Chapter: Making spaces of (in-)security in Ballinateis**

Narratives and collective scripts of security develop in a dialectic relation to space, because perceptions of security are central for the genesis of spatial structuring and practices. Every form of policing, which I define as the enforcement of rights and order on a local level (see chapter 1.3.), influences space and vice versa. Therefore, the analysis of space can help understand narratives of security and see in which way security as a fluid and sometimes contradictory conception can function. (Maurer 2016)

During my first interviews in Ballinateis, research partners told me first and foremost about specific cases of crime. Most prominently was for example the case of a scam at the local bank ATM in the village center. Also car and property thefts in different housing estates or an

armed robbery in one of the local pharmacies were mentioned. What can be seen is the fact that specific crime cases were related to specific places in the town. At first, I was confused that people said later on in the interviews that the places that they were afraid of were not the places where actual crimes take place. It was not the pharmacy, the ATM or their own house in the housing estate they see as an insecure place, although they told me that the stories about criminal incidents at these places make them more cautious. More likely, research partners stated to feel more afraid of becoming a victim of crime by going into the local park or the hinterlands of Ballinateis at night time. At the same time, they could rarely connect a concrete past criminal act to the places they deemed unsafe and associated with a certain level of fear. This raises the question of why certain places that generally appear to be safe, are connected with a feeling of insecurity and a fear of crime?

In some cases, even in places where actual crimes have taken place, research partners deny that they experience a feeling of insecurity. During an interview with a woman, who worked in a local sports shop in the village center, she explained to me that she experienced a fundamental deterioration of the security situation in Ballinateis. Despite the worsening situation, the shop has been a safe place for her and she was not worried to work there. Although a few minutes later, she mentioned that the shop had been targeted by burglars several times in the past years (Survey Participant 10).

It is shown here that spaces, where actual crimes took place, are not the primary aspect of concern for people. Instead, the problem is directed to other spaces that are mentioned in common narratives about spaces and insecurity. Merry (2010) elaborates on this topic:

‘Places which seem dangerous are not those where crimes occur most often, but those which are unfamiliar or are favorite hangouts of tough-looking youths. Nor are places thought to be safe free from crime [...] Notions of safe and dangerous places do not simply reflect crime rates, but take into account ideas about territory, ethnic hostilities and conflicts, the presence of hostile strangers, familiarity, the availability of allies, and the design of spaces.’ (Ibid.:122; ed. by M.I.)

This chapter elaborates how insecurity is experienced, conceptualized and negotiated by people living and working in Ballinateis. As I will show, there are different factors that lead to an unease and a feeling of insecurity in the local population that are often connected to the spatial level. In the following, I will show in more detail how the processes of urbanization, the absence of Garda in the everyday streetscape and the development of new places, like the motorway or the local park, lead to an intensified feeling of insecurity among Ballinateis’ population.

#### **4.1. Urbanization and the question of community belonging**

Monsignor Smith is the priest of the catholic parish in Ballinateis, which is by far the biggest religious community in Ballinateis. Because of his function as a priest in the community, he is in contact with the inhabitants of the municipality on a regular basis. At the same time, he explained to me in an interview that it is necessary for the church's community planning to know about Ballinateis in terms of its urban developments. Therefore, speaking to Monsignor Smith gave me far-reaching insights into the local development of Ballinateis. The interview revealed to me the youngest history of the municipality, its transformation, which began in the 1970s until Celtic Tiger era, and its newest developments during the economic recession until the present day. In a summarizing statement, Monsignor Smith described the village developments as follows:

‘Let’s say [...] (Ballinateis is) a commuter community. Largely. So, the vast majority of people here work in Dublin. So, they are traveling back and forth to work. It’s a mixed community working-class, middle-class. Probably more balanced towards middle-class than working-class. It has transformed over the years. Originally it was farming community. It was largely rural village. Only though it’s only 10-11 miles from the center of Dublin. That transformation started to take place in the 1970s. And – you know – moved progressively since then.’ (Interview 5; 00:00:58 – 00:01:20; ed. by M.I.)

After describing the stagnation of housing construction during the recession after the Celtic Tiger era, he continued:

‘But that (the stagnation of construction) will change in that the new railway station and the road infrastructure has changed. And the county development plan allows now to go up what’s called a level two town. So it will. The population [...] is allowed to rise to probably somewhere around 20.000. That’s planed.’ (Interview 5; 00:02:00 – 00:02:30; ed. by M.I.)

Monsignor Smith shows in this short statement a number of topics that are important for this research: Ballinateis as a rapid transforming space, that was characterized until the 1970s as a small rural farming community and expanded through urbanization and infrastructural expansion to a middle-class commuter town. When we look at the population development, Ballinateis has experienced tremendous demographic changes since the 1970s. As publications about the municipality show, the population increased by 290% in a 20 years’ period from 2.392 in 1991 to 6.959 in 2011. In the same period, the expansion of the national road network to high-speed motorways took place in Ireland. One of these high-speed

motorways crosses the Ballinateis' municipality. This motorway and the opening of a local train station improved transportation possibilities and made it possible to reach Dublin City Center in approximately 30min. as well as other bigger towns in County Meath. 71% of Ballinateis' working force commutes to other areas. At the same time however – as I was told by research partners – Ballinateis turned into a destination for commuters, who do not reside in the municipality, but come here for work. Further, new infrastructural features like a public park, a small industrial estate and a college were built in Ballinateis in the last 20 years.

Following Brenner (2013; 2015), these developments show a classical view of 'geographies of urbanization, which have long been understood with reference to the densely concentrated populations and built environments of cities' (Brenner 2013:87). This means that the scale of population and the existence of specific architecture characterize an urban space. The Irish census also emphasizes the importance of population size and built environment as main features to define urban spaces (Shipman Martin 2000). Concluding from these perspectives, Ballinateis would be characterized as a former village that showed rapid urbanization processes and is nowadays a growing commuter town and a dwelling place for people working in Dublin. Therefore, Ballinateis has developed from a rural into an urban space.

Objecting this clear argumentation, the subjective perspectives of my research partners show disparity in how they perceive Ballinateis. Residents, who grew up or have been living in Ballinateis for more than 25 years, referred to it nowadays as a town, while people that moved into the newly built estates characterize it as a village. For me, it seems necessary to delve deeper into the characterization of space either as a town or a village, because either one is connected to a different perception of (in-)security.

The former group of long-term residents showed a negative perception of the developments in the town in regard to safety. According to their subjective perceptions, the security situation had become much worse compared to the past. A common statement made by my research partners was, that the influx of people from other parts of Ireland or foreign countries increased a sense of anonymity in the village as well as a loss of 'community spirit' (Interview 4; 00:09:10). As my research partner Séan explained to me about his perception of the development of Ballinateis:

'Where are you from that is huge. [...]. Not in a silly way. It is just in the genes. In the blood. you know. [...] But I have seen terrible changes. I wouldn't say terrible. It the wrong word. Huge or vast. Every year it gets even more. Particularly in one. Traffic and bus. You know. It gets more cosmo. Like city-outer now. Huge.' (Interview 3; 00:16:26 – 00:17:00; ed. by M.I.)

This sense of lost belonging to a supposedly stable community is triggered by processes of urbanization. For Brow, ‘the sense of belonging together typically combines both affective and cognitive components, both a feeling of solidarity and an understanding of shared identity’ (Brow 1990:1). In Séan’s case, belonging to a community is even determined by a biological implication of sharing it in the ‘genes’ or ‘blood’. Urbanization has been elaborated in a long academic tradition traversing different disciplines. German sociologists Simmel (1903) and Toënnies (1912) or French sociologist Durkheim (1933) were already concerned about the impact of urbanization on community life during the industrial revolution at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The mental detachment from other people, self-centeredness and intensified indirect communication between people are the main aspects they identified in a progressing urbanization of society. Wirth’s essay *Urbanism as a Way of Life* (1938) picks up these ideas and says that urban spaces give the individual an opportunity to live its freedom, while it heightens its awareness of isolation. Gans (2007) explains about Wirth’s thinking:

‘As he (Wirth) saw it, number, density, and heterogeneity created a social structure in which primary-group relationships were inevitably replaced by secondary contacts that were impersonal, segmental, superficial, transitory, and often predatory in nature. As a result, the city dweller became anonymous, isolated, secular, relativistic, rational, and sophisticated.’ (Ibid.:626; ed. by M.I.)

As ethnographies show, conceptions of community play an important role in the perception of security (see also Goldstein 2012b; Katsaura 2015; Zinecker 2015; Maurer 2016). Losing the idea of belonging to a functioning local community establishes a certain subjective feeling of insecurity.

When Séan explained that Ballinateis has become ‘comso’ and ‘huge’ (Interview 3; 00:16:50) in spatial terms, he meant that in his experience Ballinateis as a cohesive community is not existing anymore and has been superseded by a plurality of new individuals and groups unfamiliar to him. This circumstance affects his subjective perception of security.

In contrast, research partners, who have moved to Ballinateis during its expansion in the course of the Celtic Tiger, emphasized that Ballinateis appeared to them as a village. To show an example:

Gerard and Claire are a young couple in their early thirties, who live in the neighboring house where I stayed during the research. Three years ago they, decided to move to Ballinateis with their three-year-old son. During my stay, I developed a close relationship with the young

family, which allowed me to gain insights into their perception and their impression about the security situation in Ballinateis. One evening we were sitting in their living room and I interviewed both of them about the reasons why they decided to move to the Ballinateis municipality and their perception of it:

Claire: 'Well we had to move out. We had no choice. But we like the area. It's a nice area. It is quiet. Like villagy feel. People are friendly. Community based. It's lovely kind of.'

Gerard: 'Transport links as well.'

Claire: 'Yeah. Good location for motorway. Train. Everything.'

Gerard: 'For Work.' (Interview 4; 01:10:00 – 01:25:05)

Claire expressed in this statement that Ballinateis is attractive for her, because it created for her a 'villagy feel'. Contrary to the perception that the sense of community is disappearing, she connected her impression of a rural setting to aspects of friendliness and a functioning community. At the same time, they explained that Ballinateis possessed features of an urban built space like the motorway connection or the railway that for them add to its attraction. Therefore, it is difficult for the two to categorize Ballinateis into categories of a village or town:

Claire: 'Village. In my view I would say it is a village.'

Gerard: 'Well. I would say it is a town.'

Claire: 'Oh. Probably, it is visually a town. But for me it is like a village. Maynooth. I consider a town. A small town. It just that bit bigger. I don't know. Officially. I am sure. [...] (It) is a town. I don't know. It's [...] (Ballinateis) town.'

Gerard: 'Does it not depend on population?'

Claire: 'Yeah. It's population. It probably is. But to me it is like a village.' (Interview 4; 00:12:50 – 00:13:11; ed. by M.I.)

In Claire's comments, it becomes clear that official categories for town or a village not necessarily match with personal experience of the place.

Another research partner of mine is Anna, who I met in the local photography club that we both took part in. Anna has been living in Ballinateis for ten years. She moved from Germany to Ireland during the Celtic Tiger and is now working for an IT company in the outskirts of Dublin. Having lived in Dublin city first, she moved to Ballinateis, because in her perception, it has preserved a village character as well and she associates it predominantly with positive

features. She said:

‘Well. I think it is very nice. [...] (Ballinateís) has still a bit of this village atmosphere. In the middle, the village center is still very rural. Although, a lot has changed in the meantime. So all around the whole newly built housing estates, and it became bigger. But still it is very nice. It has a small village center. And here it has a very good community spirit. It has a lot of associations. A lot of things. A lot of people do something together. There are often village fetes. [...] I think there is a good community spirit in the village.’ (Interview 6; 00:01:10 – 00:01:50; ed. by M.I.)

What is expressed by Anna here, are two aspects that characterize Ballinateís as rural: 1) The center of Ballinateís preserved its village-like appearance and rural character; and 2) the experience of a ‘good community spirit’ that is facilitated by established associations. Anna’s and Claire’s views correlate in these two aspects associating the village center with ideas of rurality and the image of a functioning community. Further, both of them experience a general safety in the village, because of the well-functioning and familiar community in Ballinateís.

These statements make it necessary not only to understand urbanization of spaces through the scaling of population size and the built environment, but to include further factors. In Gerard’s and Claire’s discussion, the two show that they are aware that – from an official governmental perspective – the decisive factor that categorizes a spatial area as a town is the population size. Beside this administrative categorization of space that differentiates towns from rural areas, their negotiation how to classify Ballinateís bases on a phenomenological perception of the environment. This means that the inhabitants’ relation towards a place also is constructed through emotional patterns and subjective perception.

The urban geographer Harvey gives a useful definition of place that combines the individual with institutional constructions of places:

‘Places are constructed and experienced as material ecological artifacts and intricate networks of social relations. They are the focus of the imaginary, of beliefs, longings, and desires [...] they are an intense focus of discursive activity filled with symbolic and representational meanings, and they are a distinctive product of institutionalized social and political-economic power.’ (Harvey 1996:314; ed. by M.I.)

As Harvey argues, there is more to spaces and places than their materiality. The materiality of a place is always connected to the social dimension of groups and individuals, who interact within and with the place’s materiality. In the same direction points Brenner’s critique of

analyzing the transformation of urban spaces only in terms of population numbers and built space:

‘Concepts of scale, I argue, should not be conflated with those of space, place, territory, or networks. Concomitantly, the churning, polymorphic geographies of urban restructuring and migration processes cannot be conceptualized exclusively in scalar terms.’ (Brenner 2015:24)

The scaling of spaces and its categorization into urban and rural space only give limited information about the multiple qualities of a place, especially in regard to security. Rather, the local population’s experiences of and interaction with space need attention, because – as I show above – they give information about the dealing with (in-)security on an everyday basis. Therefore, the focus lies on the social dimension of space. The social production of space as a ‘social development of the built environment’ (Low 2017b:36) as well as the social construction of space that implies the abstraction of social categories (like class, gender, race, etc.) are here the important two perspectives.

‘[...] (S)patial forms’, as Castell says, ‘will be produced by human action, as are all other objects’ (Castells 1983:312; ed by M.I.). As Low (2017b) shows, the social production of space can be identified on different levels: historically, politico-economic, in terms of social resistance or in terms of social control and governmentality. Decisions to open for example new railway stations or to give planning permissions for new housing estates in Ballinateis are never solely decisions of governmental authorities, but are negotiated between multiple actors like state administrations, politicians, local residents, courts or private companies. Further, on the aspect of social construction of spaces, Low argues:

‘The social construction of space and place includes the transformations and contestations that occur through peoples’ social interactions, memories, feelings, imaginings and daily use – or lack thereof – that are made into places, scenes and actions that convey particular meanings.’ (Low 2017b:68)

It follows, as anthropologists and other social scientists show, that places are not explicit entities with an inherent character. A place does not just exist and therefore it is not simply either rural or urban. The attributes of a place are constructed in social relations and consequently part of power relations. (Feld and Basso 1996; Gupta and Ferguson 1997b; Olwig and Hastrup 1997; Low 2000)

As a consequence, special attention has to be given to the relation between emotions and

space. ‘Emotion and affect are key elements in the creation, interpretation and experience of space and a constitutive component of place-making’ (Low 2017b:146). Here, Low argues that the social construction of affect and emotions intertwine with the construction as well as the production of space and place. In this way, it is the research partners’ everyday experience that implies their individual / personal level of emotions and affects (Hochschild 1979).

Similar to the analysis of conceptions of space, conceptions of (in-)security also imply an affective level (especially the conception of fear of crime; see also chapter 4.4). Therefore, ‘research on security that is focused upon the everyday must come to terms with, and work through the implications of, the manifest centrality of emotions to security processes’ (Crawford and Hutchinson 2016:1196).

Concluding from this, emotionality functions as a nexus between space and (in-)security. Further, in case of Ballinateis, the triangular relationship of space, security and emotions bases on the inhabitants’ imaginations of the rural village as opposed to the urbanized town. How can this oppositional relation of rural versus urban space can be explained? Is it possible to distinguish clearly between a rural and an urban space, as Lefebvre ones pictorially put it in his book *Introduction to Modernity*: ‘Fixed and artificial, electric lighting makes the city and its monuments, roads and streets stand out sharply against the natural environment: countryside, sky, space.’ (Lefebvre 1995:180f)

In social science, there exists a growing literature corpus that questions the wide-spread dichotomy between rural and urban. More and more authors have undermined this dichotomous approach in the last decades by taking into account new scientific findings about the processes in neo-liberal societies and global capitalism. I will not go deeply into this far-reaching discussion. However, the presented data show that the spatial classification of rural – urban plays a role among my research partners in Ballinateis.

Cloke says that the concept of rurality is still very present in ‘popular imagination and everyday practice’ (Cloke 2006:18) and that is characterized as an ‘imaginative space’ connected with ‘cultural meaning’ and a ‘material object of lifestyle’ (ibid.). At the same time, contrasting the conception of urbanity, Cloke points out that it is very hard for social science to define adequately the concept of rurality, ‘(w)hile cities are usually understood in their own terms, and certainly without any detectable nervousness about defining or justifying that understanding’ (ibid.; ed. by M.I.). The challenge of understanding rurality for Cloke lies in two intertwined tracks, which are 1) the multitude of theoretical perspectives elaborating on very different images of rurality, and 2) the ‘(sometimes rapidly) changing conditions of rural life’ (ibid.). By this, he points to urbanization processes blurring the urban-rural boundaries,

globalization of the rural through the media and to demographic and economic changes in the rural (ibid.:19).

Applying Lefebvre's concept of urbanism, we see that the clear dichotomy between city and countryside is a historical one that ended in capitalist modernity. For Lefebvre, the distinction between city and county is 'one of the most fundamental divisions of labor' (Elden 2004:129) alongside biological (age, sex) or technological divisions (skill, tools). Therefore, this division of city and countryside includes a social production of space, but to understand this constructed division it is crucial for Lefebvre to take a historical perspective (Lefebvre 2000). His assumption is that the city and the countryside were in juxtaposition until the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, which changed with the industrialization, technologization and the development of capitalism. During these changes, the countryside was rendered subordinate to the city despite at the same time being its supplier, while 'the city supplants the countryside in respect of productive work' (Elden 2004:130). This process lead to a modern form of everyday life that is determined by urbanism, 'that is, the ideology of town planning' (ibid.). Here, notion of the 'urban fabric' as a Lefebvrian term comes into play, which is crucial to understand the relationality of the rural and the city in regards to urbanization. From his Marxist perspective, Lefebvre argues that '[...] (t)he urban fabric proliferates, extends itself, corrodes the residues of agrarian life' (Lefebvre 2003:10 ed. by M.I.). Elden says that

'generally it (the urban fabric) means that "urban society and life penetrate the countryside". [...] As Lefebvre notes, at the time of Marx only England had capitalist agriculture, but today agricultural production has become an aspect of industrial production, that is capitalist.' (Elden 2004:131; ed.by M.I. Lefebvre 2003:10f)

As I have already shown above and will make clearer in the following, Ballinateis is widely affected by global late-capitalism and politico-economic processes that involve neoliberal strategies of population management. The former rural village of Ballinateis is interpenetrated by processes of urbanization. Still, imaginations and narratives that characterize Ballinateis as rural village are present among my research partners. which affect the local population's perception of (in-)security. In the following, I want to make a short excursion and analyze the connection between security and the image of the Irish rural community.

### **Irishness and the Irish rural community**

The "rural Irish village", which is a common image among my research partners, includes the connotations of a place of a vivid and functioning community that consequently evokes a

feeling of safety and security. The construction of space as a rural community implies the construction of security. This construction is strongly connected with the patterns of Irish nationalism, which is why I will shortly elaborate on the interplay between Irish nationalism and the rural community.

As Verse shows in her publication *Undoing Irishness* (2012), the emergence of an Irish identity has to be seen as an interplay between the British colonial and the Irish nationalist movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The construction of a great narrative that defines what it means to be Irish begins in the ‘*Gaelic Revival*’ (ibid.:127) of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the *Gaelic Revival*, Irish intellectuals – like in other European countries at that time – started to search for a primal Irishness. According to Verse (2012) and Kee (2000), the intellectual elite found their archetype of Irishness in the rural areas of western Ireland. As Verse says:

‘The Gaelic Revival provides until today the functioning symbolic connection of Irishness and the Irish west coast, which is not only wild and untamed, but is also the archetypical landscape for the Irish nation: at all times home to the Celts.’ (Verse 2012:128)

In opposing the negative and racist attributes of an inferior and backward agricultural society that has been projected on Ireland and its population during British colonialism, the *Gaelic Revival* created a self-description of Irish identity alongside these external attributes, converting them into positive images. Irishness was constructed as indivisible with the Irish-language<sup>6</sup>. Speaking the Irish language had been stressed as an essential part of Irish identity and a homogeneous Irish community as promoted through the school system (Coolahan 1981). The Irish language was and is still common in rural parts of western Ireland, which made it the locus of the construction of an independent Irish culture and identity and explains why many state officials (above all Garda officers) were recruited from this part of the country to serve all over Ireland (see chapter 4.2). These processes created an archetypical image of rural Ireland as the cradle for Irish community.

Here, the relation of community cohesion and security comes into play. This connection between community – as a form of collective identity or solidarity – and security is elaborated by social scientists (Neumann 2010). As

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<sup>6</sup>The Irish language is promoted by the *Gaelic League* organization since its founding in 1893: ‘Conradh na Gaeilge (Gaelic League) is at the forefront of campaigns to protect and promote the Irish language whilst securing and strengthening the rights of the Irish-language and Gaeltacht community.’ (Conradh na Gaeilge 2013)

‘A person recognises oneself through the adaptation to the concept of “we” as a primary form of an understanding where one belongs. In this phase a person accepts norms, believes and experiences of his/her group as a “proper place of living”, because in a collective security one escapes from loneliness and from a threat of the unknown world he/she is unable to cope with [...]’ (Golubović 2011:28; ed. by M.I.)

The conception of a national Irish community that derives from a rural West-Irish image also connoted with the idea of solidarity and therefore security.

Anthropology has also contributed to the construction of this rural image of national identity since the beginning of ethnographic research in Ireland. The first ethnographic publications by Arensberg and Kimball (Arensberg 1937b; Arensberg and Kimball 1968) conducted a community-based ethnography in a rural and peripheral area of County Clare on the west coast of Ireland between 1932 and 1934. Their work *The Irish Countryman* (Arensberg 1937b) and *Family and Community in Ireland* (Arensberg and Kimball 1968) set the standards for anthropological and sociological research in Ireland until the 1980s. As Wilson and Donnan (2006) comment: ‘[...] (T)he community-based model utilized by Arensberg and Kimball became the template for rural ethnographic research in Ireland, in which kinship and social structure were examined’ (ibid.:7; ed. by M.I.).

Although, Arensberg and Kimball included in their work the effects of modernization and urbanization on rural life, Gibbon (1973) criticizes that their research portrays an unchanging and traditional Ireland and of communities in stasis, ignoring the urban centers and industrialization. Further, Wilson (2013) argues in his ethnographic study on County Meath, that Arensberg and Kimball projected their Clare-specific study on the whole of Ireland using ‘Irish’ instead of ‘Clare’ and thereby causing generalizations.

Transferring these findings on my research data, it becomes clearer why people, who see Ballinateéis as a rural village, experience a higher level of security.

#### **4.2.Missing Garda ‘on the beat’**

Most dominating not only at the community meetings and in the media discussion (see chapter 3), but also in the everyday life perception of the inhabitants of Ballinateéis, is the lack of visible Garda presence in local communities. The descriptions of my research partners follow argumentations of the wider public and media discourse. In this discourse, the narrative is applied that in an unspecified past, officers of *An Garda Síochána* were a well-

integrated part of local communities. However nowadays Garda officers are absent from the streetscapes of villages and towns, just as in Ballinateis. This experienced loss finds its expression in two common narratives that range through my inquiries: 1) The closure or reduced opening hours of local Garda stations; and 2) the absence of Garda officers on patrolling duty by foot and interacting with the local population.

In this subchapter, I will show how the police station and its officers represent significant features of security and community cohesion in Ireland and especially in Ballinateis. Further, I will elaborate on how the lack of these features affect social everyday life and shape the perception of space in relation to insecurity in Ballinateis.

### **Transforming local policing in Ballinateis**

The importance of the local Garda officers for Ballinateis' inhabitants becomes clear through stories, in which the citizens recount how they were able to connect to the local officers.

With my research partner Séan, I had a longer conversation about the situation of state policing in Ballinateis. Starting point was a story that Séan had written in his previously mentioned (chapter 1.2) short story book. It is the memory about an incident with a former local Garda officer of Ballinateis. The story tells of the introduction of breathalyzers for alcohol controls into the traffic policing strategy of *An Garda Síochána*. In this story, Séan writes:

‘Things were different back then. You could have a right few pints and still pass whatever (the breathalyzer) was supposed to show you, or so we assumed. [...] All too complicated for us simple folk. So we drank and drove to our hearts content.

And anyway, even if you did not pass whatever you were supposed to pass, sure there were plenty of people to get you off the hook. We all knew the local Gardaí, and sure they would never do anything that to us, would they? And if it was a stranger in blue, then we all knew somebody who knew somebody, who knew the Garda in question. Failing that, there was always the local T.D. or somebody high up like that. No worries... now, where's me pint?’<sup>7</sup>

In this statement, Séan describes the relationship between the local population and the Gardaí, in which it is more important to uphold a good personal relationship with individuals than to enforce general law. People are not punished by the officer, who is the formal representative of state law, because the informal personal connection outweighs the formal error. Here, it is

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<sup>7</sup> <sup>7</sup>Due to reasons of anonymity, this publication is not listed in the references of this thesis.

more important to sustain a positive community relation instead of law-enforcement.

At a meeting with Séan in a local pub, our conversation turned to the story of the breathalyzers. Here, Séan made it clear:

'If you know there are three incidences in that book with the guards. Say the first time the guards didn't bother it and you would know the guard. Because things were so smuggly. And you would know another guard who would tell the guard not to prosecute [...] because the guards literally knew everybody in the town. And you knew them. And they lived here. So. They wouldn't argue.' (Interview 3; 00:05:50–00:06:12; ed. by M.I.)

As Séan told me, the story about the breathalyzer took place in the 1980s. At that time, the local guard was an integral part of the community life and as part of the community, 'they were guards, but they were also friends' (Interview 3; 00:13:40–00:13:42). The story shows that the Gardaí had to be aware of the informal social control that did not necessarily match state law. Regarding power relations, it means that the local community had greater influence on the practices of local policing. If a police officer prosecuted a person for a crime that was not considered as an offence by the community, the guard would have to fear consequences in his/her personal life and a negative impact on the Garda – community relation. In a Bourdieusian sense, by following state law the Garda's action would object the local 'doxa' (Bourdieu 1977), which is the decisive point of reference for the relation between Garda and community.

At the same time, Séan describes how the deep involvement of Garda officers in the community influenced their policing strategies differently in the past than nowadays. Instead of enforcing official legal prosecution against members of the community, the Gardaí dealt informally with committed crimes:

'There was always this [...] trust and the local guard do right. And you know if things were serious. If there was a way out of. If there was a way of solving a problem, the last thing we wanted to do was maybe go to court. [...] It was: "I tell your father. I tell your mother." And that type of thing when we were kids. And everyone knew and the guards lived right within the community. And there was no. There was good things and bad things. But now it is a difficult world now.' (Interview 3: 00:07:30–00:09:10)

Séan's last comment is important, because it indicates that there is a temporal caesura in the policing practices in Ballinateis. He remembers policing practices in the past that differ from current ones. During our conversation, he repeatedly referred to this shift by giving statements

like: ‘But again all that changed as the world changed’ (Interview 3; 00:07:50-00:07:51). The changes in the policing practice that Séan described to me were part of a bigger process of urbanization (see chapter 4.1), in which for him many aspects of life in Ballinateis began to change. He named different developments that are responsible for this greater change: the construction of the extended housing estates around the village center, new people moving into the village, more private cars on the streets, the arrival of drugs. These dynamics also had an impact on the policing practices of the local Garda:

‘So if you were the other time maybe breathalyzed you could get it sorted out. And then a few years down. No. The courts became. There were more cars. There were more people getting killed. And then they took away the power of the local guard too. That didn’t do any favors. Because he knew the people. And that was basically it. So there was a huge emphasize on local.’ (Interview 3: 00:06:12 – 00:06:40)

Explaining Séan’s statement through a Foucauldian reading, the following is to say: The influx and accumulation of capital in the beginning economic upswing lead to a higher traffic volume caused by the increase in car owners. The rising mortality rate, which was due to the inconsequent law-enforcement of the local Garda, was corrected in a governmental act to secure the population. The central state enforced that the policing practices of the local Gardaí are more in line with legal procedures and law enforcement (Oireachtas 2006:4), instead of solving problems in an informal way and through personal relations. In a Foucauldian sense, it was a bio-political calculus that enacts a security apparatus (fr.: *dispositif*), in which the breathalyzer is a specific technology to ensure the safety of the population. In Séan’s narration, the local guard is encouraged to use this technology and perform sovereign power in order to minimize traffic deaths and – in a wider perspective – secure the population. At the same time, this enforcement of sovereign power causes a widening gap between the guard and the local community.

### **Closed Garda stations and the missing Garda on the street**

Bringing the local Gardaí in line with state regulations had the effect that the Gardaí prioritized law enforcement over community relations. This is not the only development that lead to the perception of a reserved police force among the Ballinateis’ inhabitants.

‘There is a lot of problems here nowadays. That wouldn’t have been in my time. And the support of the local guard was huge. And there is an emphasize in that. In trying to get back to

that, you know. Where instead of closing Garda stations, [...] they are trying to get them to open that. There is a presence. You know. In other words, that the guard is walking up and down the street. He can be approached.’ (Interview 3; 08:10-08:40; ed. by M.I.)

Again, it is Séan who summarizes in this statement the concern I came across in many of my interviews with other research partners. From the standardized interviews I carried out with people in shops or on the street of Ballinateis, 13 out of 19 (approx. 68%) complained about the lack of Garda presence in the town. The raised concerns about the Garda presence can be classified in two categories: 1) The reduced opening times of the local Garda station and 2) the lack of patrolling duty by foot of Garda officers. Out of the thirteen concerned research partners, nine (approx. 69%) see a problem in the reduced opening hours of the station, while seven (approx. 53%) said that the town lacks guards that patrol the streets. Five research partners (approx. 38%) are concerned about both aspects.

In regard to the reduction of opening hours of the local Garda station, some research partners are aware that it is a part-time station, but said that they do not know when it is open. The opening hours are not displayed on the webpage of *An Garda Síochána*. From time to time, I observed that people ask in local social media groups, if anybody can tell them about the current opening hours. Three interviewees were even under the impression that the local station is closed. One female survey participant told me: ‘Crime rates are high in (Ballinateis) because the guards are never around. The closest Garda Station is in (a town 20 kilometers from Ballinateis)’ (Survey Participant 15). She is not aware that there is an active Garda station in the municipality. Generally, information about the accessibility of the police force are minimal, not existing or incorrect among the research partners.

At the same time, the location of the Garda station does not help to solve this lack of information. The station is located in a side street and at the end of a long driveway, away from all busy streets. Therefore, the building is out of sight for the majority of the local population and it is improbable that people will pass by often.

When the Garda station closes, a full-time opened Garda station, which is located 20 kilometers away, takes over the duties of Ballinateis’ Garda station. Research partners complain that the distance to this Garda station leads to a long response time of the Garda in case of an emergency. In addition, the Garda station is a facility that provides services beside crime prevention and law enforcement that are crucial in the citizens’ daily life, like for example issuing Garda Vetting services (certificates of good conduct) for job applications, passports or police certifications for travel visa. Therefore, these services are subject to limited availability and it becomes more complicated for people to make use of these vital

services.

In a group interview with Alison and Marie, who are members of *Victim Assistance*, a local voluntary group that supports victims of crime, Alison expressed how Garda stations are an essential element of precaution to counteract criminality:

I: 'What would you suggest that should be improved?'

Alison: 'I think the local Garda stations being open up again. [...] Definitely. Definitely. An awful lot of them have been closed down and [...] these crowds of burglaries know that. They know they are down. And they know they can get away.' (Interview 2; 00:39:40 – 00:40:03; ed. by M.I.)

Consequently, research partners told me that they feel unsafe and left alone, because they do not know if it is possible to reach the Garda at the local station when they are needed. In their perception, there is no contact person of the police force, who can be approached directly in an everyday situation. The narrative of the closed Garda station and its negative impact on security is part of a nationwide discourse led by politicians, citizens' initiatives and the media (see chapter 3.2). In Ballinateis, people adopted this narrative and apply it on the local situation.

It can be seen that the Garda station is an infrastructural facility of the built space that provides services for the local community. The part-time opening hours of the Garda station create a sense of unease and possibly even fear because people do not know who to turn to for help if a crime actually occurs. A full-time Garda station is considered a precautionary means to minimize criminal activities and acting as a deterrent for potential perpetrators in the area. This helps citizens reduce their fear of crime in the town (see also chapter 4.4).

Regarding research partners' perception of Garda presence in Ballinateis, a second issue is mentioned that concerns the practice of patrolling in the municipality. My research partners most often referred to this practice as the 'Garda on the beat' (see e.g. Interview 2; 00:40:45). It is an image of Garda officers visibly patrolling the streets of the municipality on foot. 'The guards wouldn't walk around the place anymore' (Interview 3; 00:07:50) was a common expression in the conversations I had with research partners.

The emphasis on the aspect of walking in the streets is important here. People of Ballinateis are aware that Garda squad cars are driving on the main streets and occasionally through the side streets of the housing estates, but this is not sufficient to provide an adequate sense of security in the municipality. In the interview, Marie – another member of *Victim Assistants* –

assumes that Gardaí are overburdened with their tasks:

‘Maybe they have too much area to cover. But you never see them walk on the beat like they used to, you know. You might now see them in Dublin occasionally at O’Connell Street. But in the country towns never. You won’t. Very very rare these days.’ (Interview 2; 00:41:40 – 00:41:58)

To understand the statements of my research partners about the image of the Garda ‘on the beat’, I want to offer the approach that the Garda ‘on the beat’ shows analogies to Benjamin’s conception of the flaneur, despite also contradicting it to a certain degree. For Benjamin, the flaneur is the archetype of an independent individual that wanders the streets of the metropolis without specific goals and temporal pressure exploring and inspecting his environment (Benjamin 1997; Hessel 2011). Thereby, Benjamin says that ‘(n)o matter what trail the flaneur may follow, every one of them will lead him to a crime’ (Benjamin 1997:41; ed. by M.I.). This statement can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, the flaneur is the perpetrator of criminal acts wherever he occurs. On the other hand,

‘it provides us with a portrait of the flaneur, the solitary urban stroller, as detective, tracking down the transgressions committed in the metropolis and imposing a species of social control over that lawless formation known as the crowd.’ (McDonough 2002:101)

Following the interpretation provided by Benjamin and McDonough, the flaneur and the Garda ‘on the beat’ share distinctive characteristics. Both can be seen as an idealized image and an archetype of security in the case of the Gardaí. By patrolling the streets, the Garda imposes a form of social control and prevents anti-social behavior and criminal acts from taking place similar to the flaneur. Further, the Garda’s patrol organizes the patrolled space by its appearance in this very same space. Patrolling the community is a form of movement through physical space that is similar to the strolling of the flaneur and by doing so, the Garda becomes aware of his/her direct environment. On the contrary, the Garda ‘on the beat’ is connected to the rural idea of the small community village, while the flaneur is located in the streets of the city. Further, the strolling of the flaneur through the streets is characterized by its aimlessness, which is caused by his high level of individuality. In contrast, the patrolling of the Garda ‘on the beat’ has the professional purpose of securing the village, which is directed by state orders. As for the people in Ballinateéis, the Garda ‘on the beat’ is an imagined entity that symbolizes familiarity and security and therefore is important for local community

cohesion.

### **History of community policing in *An Garda Síochána***

To better understand why the Garda station as an infrastructural feature of the built space and the image of the Garda ‘on the beat’ patrolling the streets are deeply connected to the perception of (in-)security in Ballinateis, I will elaborate a historical perspective on the institution of *An Garda Síochána*. As the development of the institution shows, *An Garda Síochána* has become implemented in many aspects of Irish society. Therefore, this historical overview focuses on the police – community relations.

Conway gives in her work *Policing Twentieth Century Ireland* (2014) a detailed historical perspective on *An Garda Síochána*, which I widely rely on. She argues that Ireland has a long history of community law enforcement. Before the introduction of English law at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and even before the British rule in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Ireland was amenable to the *Brehon Law*: It is a system, in which judges (so-called brehons) investigated crimes and imposed punishment (ibid.:12). The local community was the vital element of this system. ‘Enforcement by the community was central in the *Brehon system*’, with Boyle describing “collective involvement” as “the lynchpin of social organization” (Boyle 1972:188; in Conway 2014:11).

Under British rule, the English law system was first introduced in the Dublin area and then widened on the whole country in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. At the same time, the British government introduced paid watchmen on a day and night policing scheme employing 350 to 400 men in 1778 (Palmer 1988:97). With the *Dublin Police Act of 1786* and the establishment of the *Royal Irish Constabulary* (RIC) in 1836, policing became more and more organized under the British colonial government. The RIC’s main task were riot and disorder control as well as crime prevention and investigation. It had a 14.000 men strong force in the 1880s, of whom most were Irish Catholics. (Conway 2014:11–15)

Despite the suppression of rallies and riots against the British colonial government, the relations between Irish communities and the RIC were to a great extent positive. This changed during the *Easter Rising of 1916* and especially in its aftermath, when the subsequent executions of the rising leaders took place. Further, the *Defense of the Realm Act of 1914* was used to ‘conduct searches, arrests and disrupt nationalist activities on a scale that had very negative effects for community relations’ (Conway 2014:18; see also Lowe 2002). Conway gives a vivid description of the situation:

‘People moved if a member of the RIC sat on their pew at mass. Undertakers refused to handle

policemen's bodies. Girls who dated policemen had their hair cut off. It was a total social boycott.' (Conway 2014:19)

In the following *Irish War of Independence* and its aftermath (1919-1922), 570 RIC policemen died, 18 went missing and further 700 were injured (ibid.). After the Irish independence and during the following civil war, the new police force *An Garda Síochána* was founded in the time between 1921 – 1922, which is Gaelic for 'the guardians of peace' (An Garda Síochána 2016a). This new police force brought with it a new style of policing, which 'moved from policing by coercion and force to policing by consent and cooperation, and from a focus on social control to one of upholding liberties' (Conway 2014:25). Manning describes this new police force as a 'hybrid' (2012:351) between centralized, national-security oriented French form of policing on the one hand; and on the other hand, the British model of domestic organizations in constabularies with local political and economic obligations.

After the difficult years of forming a new Irish nation-state in the 1920s and 1930s, the next three decades *An Garda Síochána* would see a period of growing stability in the whole Republic of Ireland with crime rates on a low level compared to other European countries. Conway says that *World War II* and its consequences had a unifying effect on post-civil war struggles and even suggests that the 1950s and 1960s can be described as 'a policeman's paradise' (Conway 2014:66). O'Brien-Olinger (2015a) states about this period in Irish police history:

'The stability and character of post-Independence Ireland proved to be a rich and fertile ground for an institution such as An Garda Síochána to take root and become deeply embedded in daily cultural life.' (Ibid.:8)

During this stable policing period, the Garda officers spent a major part of their duty hours (40%) on non-crime-related civic duties and other departmental administrative tasks, which embedded the Garda even more into everyday community life. (Ibid.)

The 1960s saw a change in the policing situation of Ireland in terms of increasing crime numbers. Even as governments were still attached to the image of the peaceful Ireland of the last decades, they ignored complaints of the police force about outdated administrative structures (Conway 2014:97; O'Brien-Olinger 2015a:13). With the beginning of the *Troubles* in Northern Ireland in the 1970s, new security threats spread rapidly to the Republic of Ireland.

The *Troubles* brought a shock to *An Garda Síochána* exposing 'how unprepared the force was

to deal with anything beyond the peaceful policing experiences of the preceding years' (Conway 2014:136). Mulcahy (2005) shows that prior to the outbreak of the Northern Ireland conflict there were no murders of Garda, but since 1970 there were 14 officers killed in the line of duty. At the same time, '(e)normous amounts of resources were absorbed by the conflict, and it was directly implicated in fundamental changes in security policies generally' (ibid.:13; ed. by M.I.). The reaction to this changing environment for the Gardaí was a more aggressive and 'heavy-handed' style of policing, especially in the so-called *Special Branch* of the force, an intelligence-gathering branch dealing with terrorism or subversive crime (Conway 2014:138–142). Reports about torture and questionable interrogation methods had a negative impact on the Garda-community relations, which in the 1980s were not only 'described as "poor" or "stained" but as openly hostile' (O'Brien-Olinger 2015:15). As a consequence, *An Garda Síochána* reacted with the establishment of the *Garda Síochána Complaints Board*, which was an independent yet powerless monitoring board.

From the beginning 1980s until the end of the 1990s, the Garda-community relations stayed on a low level compared to the previous 'paradisiac' four decades. Instead, the public image of the police force was damaged by further scandals between 1980 and 2000 (ibid.:15-21). An additional burden for this relation was the growing influence of drugs (especially heroin) on members of 'vulnerable and marginalized communities' (ibid.: p.16) and a growing vigilance in communities against drug dealers. Mulcahy says that 'this volatile mixture of drug-related crime, marginalization, and vigilante activity had an immensely negative impact on police-community relations' (Mulcahy 2006:12).

As I mentioned before (see chapter 3), the end of the 1990s saw two major shifts that affected Irish policing. First, in the general election of 1998 crime became a major issue throughout the political landscape, in which politicians promised 'more Guards, more prisons, less tolerance' (O'Brien-Olinger 2015a:20). The following coalition of *Fianna Fáil* and *Progressive Democrats* implemented a wide range of measures to target crime and disorder introducing an extensive prison-building program, raising the number of Garda, and adding to the new legislations of 1996 (ibid.). Secondly, the vast economic changes in the Celtic Tiger period had a broad impact on social life and brought new challenges for *An Garda Síochána*. The most dominant narrative in the Irish public nowadays is, that for centuries Ireland has been a country characterized by emigration and Irish-ethnic unity while neglecting that Ireland has a long history of immigration from prehistoric times up until the 1980s (O'Brien-Olinger 2015a; Maguire 2004). New economic opportunities in the late 1990s until the mid 2000s, which lead to a new wave of high immigration from different parts of the world,

especially from eastern European countries (Central Statistics Office 2017; Maguire and Murphy 2014), created the awareness that the Republic of Ireland is a multi-ethnic nation. ‘Irish society’ says O’Brien-Olinger ‘is now made up of nationalities ranging from Afghani to Zimbabwean’(O’Brien-Olinger 2015a:31). This ‘New Ireland’ brings with it the objections of racist police practice and a police force practice that fails to reflect (also in demographic terms) the new developing multi-ethnic society to the present day (ibid.).

Caused by the financial crisis and economic recession after the Celtic Tiger era, the budget of *An Garda Síochána* suffered from high cutbacks. Consequently, the government ordered the before-mentioned closure of Garda Stations, reduction of opening hour of Garda stations and a restructuring of policing from community to reactive policing.

These developments prompted the Irish population and the institution of *An Garda Síochána* to progressively distance themselves from each other. However, the statements of my research partners indicate that there is still the desire to have a local police officer in place, because it is a guarantor for community relations, which is strongly connected to a feeling of security. The reestablishment of the police force’s image of the 1920 to the 1960s is desired both in a nationwide discourse and by (especially elderly) research partners in Ballinateis. Referring to Reiner (2000; 2010), O’Brien-Olinger says that Gardaí still incorporate the symbolism of ‘avatars of order’ and ‘national totems’ (O’Brien-Olinger 2015a:37). I want to go deeper into the narrative of the community guard that is deeply rooted in the idea of an essentialized national awareness of Irishness and the representation of independence, peace and solidarity that derive from the rural and thereby “true” parts of Ireland.

### **The Gardaí as marker of community and national identity**

‘You now have a police force of your own, who are not out to force law and order down your throats with a gun like their predecessors, but to cooperate with you in the protection of life and property.’ (O’Duffy in Conway 2014:25)

After the victory in the war of independence, the new Irish republic was eager to establish a police force that would reflect its ideological position to the public. The leading figure in this process was Eoin O’Duffy, a former republican army general in the war (McGarry 2005). ‘Through his stable leadership’, Conway says, ‘a philosophy of policing developed as a performance of Irish nationalist values and ideals.’ (Conway 2014:26)

In this dialectic process of policing and national identity, O’Duffy contributed to the creation of an image of rural Western Ireland as the archetype for the new nation (see also chapter 4.1).

Gaelic-speaking men from the western parts of Ireland – especially from County Claire – were brought to Dublin and trained in the newly established force.

‘Describing “the son of the peasant” as “the backbone of the force”, O’Duffy encouraged recruitment from rural areas “where the standards of health, physical excellence and morals are the highest”’. (An Garda Síochána 1929; in McGarry 2005:135)

Despite this ideal image of a recruit as an ‘upstanding, rural, Gael with a sound national record’ (McGarry 2005:135), O’Duffy admitted later that many of the recruited men did not comply with this image and a greater number of Garda had to be recruited out of the former RIC as well.

At the same time, Garda officers were encouraged to be part of the local *Gaelic Athletic Associations*’ (GAA) sports activities and *An Garda Síochána* established numerous local GAA clubs on their own. The GAA clubs – founded in late 19<sup>th</sup> century – became ‘one of the great cultural revivalist organisations’ (Moran 2010), whose task was (beside the physical training) ‘to revive and nurture traditional, indigenous sports and pastimes [...] (because until then) all that was Irish was being steadily eroded by emigration, intense poverty and outside influences’ (GAA.ie 2016 ed. by M.I.)

The strong connection of *An Garda Síochána* with the GAA had two major effects: On the one hand, the GAA clubs of *An Garda Síochána* were well trained and competed in international tournaments against Scotland and France. These events strengthened the reputation of *An Garda Síochána* as representatives of a confident Irish nation in an international context. Secondly, McCausland argues that ‘in many Roman Catholic and nationalist communities, especially rural communities, the GAA club is an important centre for community activity’ (McCausland 2015). Therefore, the membership in local GAA clubs opened up the opportunity for *An Garda Síochána* as an institution and the Gardaí as its local representatives to engage with a great number of local people in daily activities.

Further, in the early stages of *An Garda Síochána*, the Garda officer is stylized as a person that has to give extensive sacrifices to the community, which he\_she serves.

‘The Garda is the soldier of peace. His war against the criminal never comes to an end. He can never be a ‘quitter’; he has to win or fail, to defeat or be defeated.’ (An Garda Síochána 1929; in McGarry 2005:133)

This idea of a Garda’s attitude reflects the Renanian idea of the nation, which Renan describes

as ,a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future' (Renan 1996:53). Gardaí are described as the part of the community who are willing to sacrifice themselves for the safety of the nation against criminality. As O'Brien-Olinger (2015) shows, the force is heavily legitimized since its establishment in the 1920s by the wider public resting on the symbolic representation of an 'old Ireland'(ibid.:262). This old Ireland describes O'Brien-Olinger as a moral authority that is based on 'the racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious homogeneity of the Irish public and its police officers' (ibid.:262).

The demand of the people in Ballinateis for the reinstitution the Garda on the beat, patrolling the local streets and to have a full-time opened Garda station can be described as their demand for the establishment of solidarity and therefore security. This solidarity is characterized by picturing themselves and the Gardaí as part of an 'imagined community' (Anderson 2006) that is based on the historical narrative of (national) unity.

### **Community policing versus reactive policing**

As mentioned before, *An Garda Síochána* changed its policing strategy in the recent past. In a broader context, processes of neoliberalization, which were reinforced during the financial crisis and the recession of 2007 to 2014, lead to the emphasis on a reactive policing strategy and the reduction of direct, proactive community policing by the Irish police force.

Reactive policing is a form of fast and cost-effective response to already occurred crime vis-à-vis the cost-intensive prevention of crime in a proactive policing approach. As Berg comments on this relation:

'In the face of austerity cuts and budget streamlining in many police agencies, a debate over proactive and reactive policing has been raging for nearly two decades. Essentially the problem rests on police organizations' inability to afford the luxury of measuring patrol time by the quantity of time logged by patrolling officers while reacting to calls for police.' (Berg 1999:92)

This shift in policing strategy can be seen in the Republic of Ireland as well. A significant indicator of this development seems to be the reduction of the Garda stations after the Celtic Tiger collapse, while in the same period of time *An Garda Síochána* introduced a new fleet of 370 high powered patrol cars (McNamee 2015). Direct presence of the Gardaí has been reduced, while the new car fleet enables the force to response to crime faster than before. This circumstance leads to complaints of research partners in Ballinateis that the Gardaí only drive in their cars through the municipality, which makes it impossible to get into contact with them

on a daily basis.

On the contrary, instead of long-term engagement of Garda officers in the community, a wider inclusion of the local population into security-measures as the ‘eyes and ears’ (Heverin 2015) of the Gardaí is promoted. As I will show more detailed in chapter 5, cost-efficient reactive policing and crime-fighting goes hand in hand with a new form of community engagement: However, this new form of community policing is not based on Gardaí’s daily presence in the streets, but relies on the engagement at specific events and new forms of communication with the local population. Again, Berg describes this new form as following:

‘It is inaccurate to suggest that the solve role of the police officer is crime-busting. In fact, crime reduction often results from a heightened awareness of safety and security needs in one’s home, place of business, and community. [...] This approach has required police departments to build closer relationships with their communities and to enhance the communities’ self-defense efforts.’ (Berg 1999:93; ed. by M.I.)

What can be seen here, is a neoliberal strategy that functions on two levels: 1) a community policing strategy that involves the population as an actor to be responsible for its own security; 2) a cost-saving reactive policing strategy that only requires manpower after a criminal incident.

### **4.3.Places of Crime – Spaces of Insecurity**

As I have shown so far, processes of urbanization in Ballinateis and the reduction of Garda presence create experiences of insecurity among the local population. They are characterized by a loss of community solidarity and a feeling of being exposed to crime. While in both cases insecurity is created by the loss of a quality in the local environment, I want to focus now on specific places in the Ballinateis municipality, which are labeled as hubs for criminality and anti-social behavior and therefore cause a feeling of insecurity. Repetitive narratives that occurred during my engagement with my research partners highlight two specific places: the nearby motorway and the local park. While the former is referred to as a gateway for criminals to take action in Ballinateis, the latter one is seen as a hotspot for anti-social behavior. At the same time, both places are connected with a specific archetype of criminal offenders. In the following, I will describe both places in more detail.

### **The motorway – a corridor of crime**

Ballinateis is considered to be well connected to the national and regional road infrastructure. A motorway touches on the edge of Ballinateis municipality and it is possible to enter the motorway over two slip roads from the village center. The motorway leads either to bigger towns in County Meath or to Dublin city center and to the southern or northern bound of the Dublin motorway ring, which enables people to reach every part of greater Dublin within approximately half an hour.

During my inquiries, I spoke to a number of people that in their perception identify the nearby motorway as an infrastructural feature that facilitates criminals to travel easily from Dublin city to Ballinateis by car and commit crimes. One of them was Aine, who works as a librarian in the local library. Aine is in her late 40s (Survey Participant 13). I was introduced to her by her colleague Jessica, who I got to know during my literature research in the local library (Survey Participant 12). After the interview with Jessica, she spontaneously asked Aine if she would also be interested to take part in my research. A bit skeptical at first, Aine agreed and we sat down in a quiet corner of the library. During the interview, she told me that she moved from Dublin to Ballinateis about 30 years ago and that one of the reasons to move there was her perception of Ballinateis as a safe place. It was a shock to her, that a few months after she moved there, a fatal shooting of a Garda by local people took place. She explained in detail the sequence of events and expressed that it was a terrible incident that shocked the whole community. Despite this brutal criminal act being a solitary exception, she experiences Ballinateis nowadays as a much more unsafe place, in which the whole security situation has become worse. She complained explicitly that ‘robberies’ in residences of elderly people living on their own, as well as break-ins in housing estates are threats to the community and her own personal life. Although Aine feels threatened by criminals in Ballinateis, she told me that she was lucky enough to never had a break-in in her own home, which she underlined with the gesture of knocking three times on the wooden table in front of her as a symbol for good luck. When I asked her about the reasons for the poor security situation in Ballinateis, her immediate answer was the motorway. Criminals would use the motorway to get into Ballinateis, commit a crime or a number of crimes in a row, be gone very quickly and disappear again in Dublin city. The motorway would have opened new possibilities for criminals and is therefore a threat for the local community.

In the group interview with Marie and Alison of *Victim Assistance*, they also elaborated on their perception of the catalyzing influences the motorway system has had on crime and how perpetrators use the motorway for their cause:

Alison: 'These perpetrators were coming down from Dublin and down from the cities. Just into their cars and away up the motorways. Never traced. Never found. Yeah. What can you do then?'

I: 'Would you say this is also the case in Meath?'

Alison: 'Oh yeah'

Marie: 'Oh yeah. All rural areas in Ireland had it at some stage. '

Alison: 'Yeah. They are coming out of the cities. I know a lot of it is local crime too. But majority of it is because they are coming down from Dublin.' (Interview 2; 00:36:50 – 00:37:28)

In these statements, the motorway as part of the built space is seen as an infrastructure that facilitates criminal activity. It creates a connection between Ballinateis and the Dublin area, from which the criminal outsiders enter the local community. The statements of my research partners reflect arguments that are applied in the nationwide discourse on increased criminality. As shown in chapter 3, lobbying groups as well as the media cite the issue of motorways as crime. In an article of the *Irish Independent* about the crime situation in County Wexford, it says:

,The data shows that “corridors of crime” match the main motorways and arterial roads around the country, with Wexford's improving motorway links making the county much more accessible and vulnerable to Dublin-based criminals.' (Tucker 2015)

Another article of the *Irish Independence* analyses the burglary rates in relation to their geographical location (see appendix: graphic 4). The article comes to the conclusion that districts along the motorway network have a higher burglary rate than the 'isolated communities' (Melia 2015).

Garda sergeant O'Connor, who is responsible for the crime prevention and community relations in County Meath, has a differentiated perspective on the issue. I first met the sergeant at a community meeting in County Meath where he gave a presentation about home security. I contacted him afterwards and we met again in his office for an interview a few weeks later. During the interview, the sergeant argued against the highlighting of motorways as a catalyst of criminality from metropolitan areas. He explained the following to me:

'No normal criminals are going to take the motorways. You know. Because they prefer to use backroads. Certainly some criminals will use the motorways, because it's quicker and they can travel further. [...] Not them all. Certainly, you have a few that will certainly use that, but the

old traditional type sneak burglar will like to travel through the backroads. Because he is an opportunist and he is looking for something that he can come upon [...] The one that are travelling and are more organized. They might more likely use the motorways, because they can travel for that. They have gone for a specific job.’ (Interview 1; 00:27:16 – 00:28:00; ed. by M.I.)

O’Connor argued that although the motorways brought a new dynamic in criminal strategies, other ‘traditional’ strategies are still predominant. He continues by saying that the criminals using the motorways need to have specific knowledge, which includes the expertise to target a specific place, driving training and the knowledge to avoid Garda check points on the motorways. Furthermore, communities that are located in the commuter belt of a greater city, O’Connor argued, do not need to be necessarily linked to a motorway, but other transportation links can facilitate perpetrators of crime. He said:

‘You see. Any county bordering a city will always be vulnerable, because it is easy accessible. You know. Meath, Kildare, Wicklow. Because it is so easy to come in and out through the various net. Because it was so close to them. You know. 20 minutes from Dublin will bring you to Navan in a car. [...] They do their crime there and then can get in the bus and back into town. Because there is a good [...] network of [...] buses or taxis or trains or whatever it has to be. Because it is easy.’ (Interview 1; 00:29:49 – 00:29:26; ed. by M.I.)

Despite this relativization by sergeant O’Connor, the government and *An Garda Síochána* have reacted to the discursive focus on high mobile criminality via the motorway network. In 2015, they introduced a number of new nationwide and regional operations like *Operation Thor* to tackle motorway gangs around Ireland (An Garda Síochána 2015). In policy papers like the *Modernisation and Renewal Programme 2016*, *An Garda Síochána* states:

‘We will increase our use of technology and introduce a Roads Policing Unit to help make our roads even safer and deny criminals the use of the road network.’ (An Garda Síochána 2016b:47)

In social science – especially in environmental criminology – the influence of road networks on crime rates has already been an issue for the last four decades (see Bevis and Nutter 1977). However, according to my research most of these studies focus on the inner city quality of street networks (Davies and Bishop 2013; Davies and Johnson 2015) and give concrete suggestions on optimizing the cities’ street networks in regard to crime decrease (Beavon,

Brantingham, and Brantingham 1994).

Contradicting the discourse on a wave of organized crime via the motorways, the ethnographic study of Cromwell et al. (1991) show as well as studies in environmental criminology, that most often burglars act opportunistic. Instead of planning burglaries in distant communities, they commit crimes in their local areas, where they are familiar with the environment. On the other hand, we find a growing corpus of literature on the issue of mobile organized crime that operates on a transnational level since the 1990s, but here the emphasis lies on a global level of criminality (Kirby and Penna 2010) like trafficking or drug trade. To my knowledge, the issue of criminals from urban locations who use national motorway networks to target distant rural areas, are not majorly discussed in social science.

As for the people in Ballinateis, it can be assumed that there is a discrepancy between the perceived and actual origin of criminals. According to academic literature and the statements of sergeant O'Connor, the majority of burglars are permanently located in and around Ballinateis and take advantage of arising opportunities. Therefore, it can be assumed that criminals live within Ballinateis or pass through it in their everyday life. By declaring that criminal offenders come from Dublin city via the motorway, research partners in Ballinateis situate the source of criminality outside their own community. Thereby, they establish a process of othering in which the problem is projected on an imagined group of criminals that lives in the city and threatens the Ballinateis community. The motorway connects the external criminal hazards with the Ballinateis' community. In this way, the motorway and the criminal threat also functions as a mobilizing factor that creates social cohesion amongst Ballinateis inhabitants.

### **The local park of Ballinateis**

One of the sights I often visited in Ballinateis was the local park. It is a central spot in the municipality located next to the village center. It is accessible from an eastern and a western entrance. Except for a playground, a small skating park and a parking space, which are all located on one side of the park, the park consists of a huge open green space, which is framed by two walking paths. People go there to walk their dogs or let their children play at the playground. Teenagers use the skate park to skate and meet with others of their peer-group.

Parks are a significant feature of an urban landscape that are implemented by urban planning to provide 'social and psychological services [...] for the quality of life and wellbeing of urban residents' (Maruthaveerana and van den Bosch 2014:1). Therefore, parks are characterized as a part of the built space and are meant to have a positive influence on the

local population.

Contrary to these positive aspirations on the quality of life stand the negative opinions of Ballinateis residents in regard to their own local park. Several of my research partners considered the local park a space that evoked fear of crime in them. In Ballinateis, either the park is a space that inhabitants avoid in their daily life or it is seen as a hub for anti-social behavior that spreads throughout the municipality. Exemplary is the interview with Claire and Gerard where we talked about their personal attitude towards the local park.

Claire: 'There is anti-social behavior and stuff. You know. Like kids throwing eggs at houses or at cars. In the estate. Or sometimes in the kids' playground. Sometimes at Halloween.'

I: 'In the park?'

Claire: 'Yeah. You know the little park where the playground is for the children. Sometimes at Halloween. You know.'

Gerard: 'Well. It is not just Halloween. It just.'

Claire: 'No.'

Gerard: 'But in the evening there is always older kids hanging around.'

Claire: 'Yeah. But Halloween is bangers. You know they letting off fireworks. Which are illegal. In the playground. Which is not very safe. [...] Generally, like anti-social behavior. Like in the playground and the park. So when people went for a walk kind of in the evening time. It's a bit intimidating. Cause there could be maybe a gang of maybe six boys. Who are maybe like 15 or 16. [...] Just shouting stuff at them. And that is a bit intimidating. I've never. Like I never had any problems.' (Interview 4; 00:14:15 – 00:15:08; ed. by M.I.)

In this interview-extract, it becomes clear that vandalism and anti-social behavior committed by local groups of teenagers are present in the fears of Ballinateis residents and the park is the place where the teenagers are most likely to gather. Other interview partners confirmed this perception. In the conversation with Anna about her view of the park, she confirms Gerard's and Claire's view on the teenagers:

I: 'A lot of people told me that the park is somehow [...] where they would be cautious.'

Anna: 'Yes. I think the problem is primarily. It's probably the teenager. They drink.' (Interview 6; 00:25:53-00:26:50; trans. and ed. by M.I.)

Although none of my research partners mentioned that they had a personal negative experience in the local park, all associated the park with a lack of security. Three aspects about the local park are important here: 1) The park is an outstanding locus for threats to the

personal well-being, but also for the social community life in general; 2) Anti-social behavior is a dominant activity associated with the park and creates insecurity; 3) Groups of teenagers are seen as the cause for this security problem.

As Mayer (2011) shows in her dissertation on park teenagers in Vienna, anti-social behavior committed by teenagers in local parks is part of a complex social system, in which the park is an arena in the teenagers' inner and outer group struggle in a process of coming of age. At the same time, their actions affect other groups of park users and triggers a sense of suspiciousness towards the teenagers.

Despite frequently visiting the park at different times of the day during my fieldwork, I did not come across the teenager group in question and therefore was not able to encounter them in person. My assumption is that they did not gather there as a consequence of the cold and rainy time of the year, during which the fieldwork took place.

At a later point of the interview with Claire and Gerard, they continue to talk about the park in Ballinateis and reveal further aspects:

Claire: 'I wouldn't go into the park at night. The park behind the playground. I wouldn't walk around any park at night by myself. To be honest.'

Gerard: 'I think the only risk there are kids. And ok maybe. I understand why you might feel uneasy. But I wouldn't. Like.'

Claire: 'Yeah yeah. No. I wouldn't. But that would be any park. Anywhere. It wouldn't be specifically [...] (Ballinateis). First by myself and it would be late at night. You know. I probably go the long way.'

I: 'But why is the park so dangerous?'

Gerard: 'Well. I think it is just the dark.'

Claire: 'It is just cause it is not very well lighted. I think. At night time. No. As I said I haven't been there at night time but I don't think it is particularly well light. Like there are bits where you can't really see. There could be people and you can't really actually see them. It's quite overgrown and stuff.'

Gerard: 'There is not too many people around.'

Claire: 'No it is pretty quiet. Like I mean there is nothing in the front of the park. To the front of the park there is nothing. To the back. Ok, there is a housing estate. But in between there is nothing. So just be a bit courteous.' (Interview 4; 00:54:45-00:56:04; ed. by M.I.)

Based on the hesitancy of Claire and Gerard in this interview-excerpt, it can be seen that it is difficult for them to clearly name the aspects that make the park a place of insecurity. Not only is the park in Ballinateis associated with teenagers' vandalism, misdeeds and anti-social

behavior, but more features of or in connection with this park (and parks in general) create a feeling of unease. To clarify this diffuse feeling of insecurity towards parks, I want to elaborate on the thematic academic literature.

The connection between insecurity, the fear of crime and urban green spaces is part of a whole body of studies from different disciplines like environmental psychology, human geography, urban studies, leisure science and tourism, landscape architecture as well as anthropology. In these studies different foci are applied that deal with aesthetic experiences (Chiesura 2004), human health and well-being (Bowler et al. 2010), cohesion and interaction on a social base (Peters and Buijs 2010; Mayer 2011) or educational features of understanding natural processes (Kahn 1999). They show that (in-)security and the fear of crime are in manifold ways an integral part of the social production and construction of urban green spaces. In a long-term interdisciplinary review of different studies about urban green spaces, Maruthaveerana and Van den Bosch (2014) elaborate the studies' findings on the aspect of 'fear of crime' in urban green spaces. They identify five attributes of fear of crime in urban greens that can be found in the review of 48 different studies: 1) Personal attributes of the research partners (gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, educational level, prior crime experience, prior information about crime, knowledge about your neighbors, etc.) that cause a fear of crime in urban green spaces; 2) Social attributes how the urban green is experienced as a social space (familiarity, alone/with others, social cohesion, social incivilities, too many male visitors, etc.); 3) Physical attributes of the condition of the urban green; 4) The time of the day/season; And 5) the reputation or image of the area.

When looking at Ballinateis' park and how it is experienced, it matches with a number of these categories. First, in regard to the personal attributes of research partners, the park is a gendered space. In gendered spaces, Low says, 'patterns of everyday behaviors, symbolic representations and spatial allocations' (Low 2017b:79) function to construct the social-category of gender and 'how particular locales are invested with gendered meanings or are sites where gender-differentiated practices occur' (ibid.). As Claire explained in the interview-excerpt above, she would not go into the park at night, while at the same time she accepts that it is possible for Gerard as a man to go there and not fear to be victimized. In the interview with Anna, she gets even more explicit about the park as a gendered space:

'I wouldn't probably go through the park in the evening. But this, you wouldn't do that as a woman anywhere. I think this is different for a woman than a man. [...] After ten or eleven, I wouldn't go around somewhere where no other people are around. (Interview 6; 00:24:19-00:24:46; trans. and ed. by M.I.)

Projecting these comments further on Maruthaveerana and Van den Boschs' scheme, the fourth attribute is implied as well. The space-time dimension is important here, in which the park is experienced as dangerous and avoidable especially during the evening and night times. Parallels to these findings can be found in Skår's study on the behavior and opinions of residents towards their neighboring forest in a Norwegian town (Skår 2010). Here, Skår shows that especially women express fear of entering the forest at nighttime, which indicates that gender and the daytime are linked.

In terms of the second attribute of the park as a place for social cohesion, the park was only mentioned in regard to the meetings of the vandalizing teenager groups. Other park users were only described as individuals using the park for a walk with their dog or in rare cases, parents playing with their children on the playground. During the fieldwork, the park was not used as a place for official events.

The physical space of the park also shows signs of vandalism and neglect. Waste lies in the green and in the bushes at the margins of the park. Graffiti is sprayed on the walls and trees (see appendix: photo 1), while some of the tree trunks are carbonized, because something was burned there or there where attempts to set them on fire (see appendix: photo 2). Physical disorder of a space, like graffiti or polluted green, is connected to the experience of fear, because this circumstance is perceived as a warning sign for criminal threats (Lewis and Maxfield 1980; Tulloch 2000).

The social attributes mentioned-before give the park the reputation of being a place where it is more likely to experience insecurity and a fear of crime than in other parts of Ballinateis.

#### **4.4.Fear of Crime**

Research partners in Ballinateis most often talked about their feeling of insecurity, which is closely related to their fear of becoming a victim of crime. At this point, it seems important for me to elaborate more on the correlation between these two concepts.

Since crime is not limited to the people who become a victim of crime, it 'may extend beyond the population of victims to impinge on more general aspects of public well-being' (Smith 1986:109) (Smith 1986:109) and therefore has to be elaborated in regard to its 'impact on the quality of social life in residential communities' (ibid.). But what does it mean to fear crime?

'Fear may be defined as a pain or disturbance due to a mental picture of some destructive or painful evil in the future' (Aristotle 2008:100). Already Aristotle and other ancient Greek philosophers dealt with the effects of fear on human life (Welzel and Tindale 2012). For

Aristotle, fear is created by a person in his/her foresight of a harmful future. In other words, Aristotle says that fear is ‘making us feel that the terrible thing itself is close at hand’ (Aristotle 2008:100). Fear is defined here as a subjective and intrinsic negative emotion created towards the expectation of an undesirable present or future event. However, anthropology and other social sciences show that emotions have a social dimension that goes beyond the individual level. Already at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Durkheim and Mauss emphasizes the social dimension of emotions by examining their effect on the development of scientific classifications based on reason (Durkheim and Mauss 1903; Weyher 2012). More recent studies show how emotions are part of socio-cultural practices and discourses. Lutz et al. (1990) develop a Foucauldian influenced theory of a ‘politics of emotions’, in which emotions are created in speech acts that reveal their dimensions of power. Combining Marxist and psychoanalytical approaches, Ahmed (2004) speaks of an ‘affective economy’ that distributes emotions, while binding single subjects together in an emotional system. Related to this approach is Scheper-Hughes (1992) idea of the ‘political economy of affects’. Specifically on the issue of fear, Linke et al. (2009) published a volume titled *Cultures of Fear*, which serves as a conceptual framework for analyzing discourses and the language of fear on a global scale. It is shown that ‘cultures of fear’ (Linke and Smith 2009) and different states of terror are utilized to become effective tools of government.

Beside, these anthropological approaches to emotions and fear, criminology has for long elaborated on the issue of fear of crime in specific (see Farrall, Bannister, and Gilchrist 2000; Hale 1996). A common definition is given by Ferraro (1995), who describes fear of crime as ‘an emotional response or dread or anxiety to crime or symbols that a person associates with crime’ (ibid.:8). This definition focuses on the subjective level of an individual’s experiences of and knowledge about crime and its interpretation of symbols representing crime. Smith (1986) expands fear of crime furthermore and explains that fear of crime can both be experienced as a localized, concrete problem and at the same time as a general threat of crime. Yet, he emphasizes that fear is a variation in a continuum of anxiety that ranges widely and seldom fear of crime is related to a specific event or individual experience. This shows that fear of crime is often a larger problem than the crime itself (see Bannister and Fyfe 2001).

As seen in the interviews with Anna and Claire (in chapter 4.3), they do not go into the park at night time, because of their fear of crime. This indicates that people often change their habits in order to minimize the risk of becoming victimized (Miethe 1995). As Hale (1996) summarizes in his literature review on fear of crime, the wide impact of fear of crime effects the generally quality of life beyond the actual crime. The fear of crime does so in a way that it

restricts movement, harms social trust and inter-group relations, motivates the purchase of costly private precautions, urges the move from deprived areas and promotes the exercise of social control. Over the past decades, fear of crime has become – despite its attention from the media, politicians and the general public (see chapter 3) – a concern of significance for policy-makers and policing organizations (Lee 2007).

The Irish state and *An Garda Síochána* have recognized that crime is strongly connected to fear and that fear has a wide social impact on insecurity in Irish society. Therefore, the reduction of the fear of crime is a declared goal of an *An Garda Síochána*. On the website of the police organization, it says:

‘Community policing occurs where Gardaí and members of the community and statutory and voluntary agencies work together to [...] reduce the fear of crime [...] (and) improve the overall quality of life.’ (An Garda Síochána 2016c; ed. by M.I.)

Interesting is in this statement that community policing is important for *An Garda Síochána* to reduce fear of crime, while research partners complained about lack of community relation with the Gardaí (see chapter 4.2).

In 2009, the *National Crime Council* released a report that was primarily focusing on the impact of fear of crime on life quality in Irish communities (National Crime Council 2009). The analysis based on a review of the data collection by *An Garda Síochána* in their annual *Garda Public Attitudes Survey* between 2002 and 2007, which consist of quantitative methodological approaches (ibid.:33). This means that the report bases on data that was collected before the financial crisis and the economic recession. Unfortunately, there was no further report released, which was also due to the fact that the *National Crime Council* was shut down in 2008. Therefore, the report can only give an impression about the impact of fear of crime on the general public in a pre-recession situation. At the same time, the report admits the importance of qualitative approaches to take into account the variations of fear of crime in specific local contexts:

‘(F)ear of crime is a subjective and dynamic phenomenon, successful strategies [...] (that) will vary from place to place depending on the demographic profile of the community, the amount of crime and victimisation in the community and local perceptions of local crime and policing. As such, [...] specific proposals to reduce fear of crime will need to be developed in partnership with local communities so as to accurately reflect their specific concerns and experiences.’ (Ibid.:x; ed. by M.I.)

From this perspective, my research undertaken in Ballinateis can be seen as a qualitative case study, which fits into the demand of analyzing the perception of fear of crime in and with the local population.

The report's findings about the fear of crime in Ireland can be summarized as follows: 1) For 36% of the interviewees fear of crime has an impact on their everyday life, of which 21.5% are concerned about crime and worried about being victimized, while 15% see fear of crime 'significantly, moderately or greatly reduce [...] their quality of life' (ibid.:vi; ed. by M.I.); 2) The perception of crime in the Irish public does not correlate with the official crime statistics, but 'are instead associated with age, sex and newspaper readership' (ibid.:29); 3) Gender roles and age roles are most the predominant factors that influence the level of fear of crime. The group that is most at risk of victimization are males aged between 25 – 44. At the same time, this group is the least concerned to become a victim of crime (ibid.:26), which is explained by gender roles that 'males may not report their fears due to concerns about appearing „unmanly“ by expressing „weakness“ and/or „vulnerability“' (ibid.:72). This circumstance indicates on the other hand that the fear of crime is a precautionary impact not to become an actual victim of crime. Instead, women and elderly people express most concerns about an increased fear of crime (ibid.:12), with females, aged 65 or above, as the group most affected by fear of crime. 4) A high level of satisfaction with *An Garda Síochána* and its local policing correlates with a low level of fear of crime and vice versa; and 5) individuals, who have been a victim of crime in the past, are more affected by fear of crime than non-victims. These findings lead the report to the conclusion that four main factors have to be taken into account to tackle fear of crime efficiently: 'individual's socio-demographic profile, perceptions of local crime, satisfaction with An Garda Síochána and prior history of victimisation' (ibid.:73).

This analysis of the annual *Garda Public Attitudes Surveys* is an attempt to elaborate strategies to tackle the fear of crime in the population on the organizational level of *An Garda Síochána*. My research partner sergeant O'Connor is the responsible person in County Meath to translate the gathered data about the level of the fear of crime into direct actions that aim at overcoming this fear. During our interview, I ask him about the specific tasks he carries out in his work. He states about it:

'You explain people, look at: There is a certain amount of crime happen right across the county. But, this is what it actually is. It's not 20 crimes where people are coming in and pouring hot water over someone's head. That might have happened ones in a number of years.' (Interview 1; 00:02:20-00:12:25)

He continues by saying:

‘So you then kind of explain through processes as to how or why some things happen. To try and reduce that [...] fear that they may have. So we do quite a bit of that. But certainly at every meeting we do that. And you know. So you don’t want people being scared out of their life either. You know. You can’t have that. So by me going to a meeting with our community guard. We try’n explain them. This is what’s happen and then they ask us any questions they want. You would hopefully put their minds at ease. Not everybody, but we can give them suggestions as [...] how they can improve their security.’ (Interview 1; 00:13:45 – 00:14:30; ed. by M.I.)

What sergeant O’Connor explains here, is the task for him and *An Garda Síochána* to deconstruct common threats and images of perpetrators constantly threatening people’s lives. At the same time, it is his duty to strengthen the citizens' confidence in the provided security and to convey measures that they can follow to effectively minimize the possibility of becoming a crime victim.

It can be summarized that the fear of crime is a present factum in a wider national discourse. The Irish administration and *An Garda Síochána* pursue the plan to direct this discourse away from a dominating fear of crime towards a general sense of safety. To a certain degree, they want to achieve this by strengthening police work and the law that is supposed to minimize criminality. But above all that, they aim to put the citizens' minds regarding crime at ease in order to restore a higher level of life quality. As Bigo says, ‘the question of security as “fear of crime” [...] (is) therefore centrally a national question of law and order, implying criminal justice and policing’ (Bigo 2016:1069; ed. by M.I.). At the same time, O’Connor says at the end of his statement that he shows people how to improve their own security. In this way, fear of crime is also utilized by the police force to shift the population from a fearful state of mind to a state in which they actively participate in the improvement of safety in their town.

In other words, the population as an object of fear is supposed to become an acting subject. The population is animated to self-reliantly take precautions against crime, while *An Garda Síochána* functions mainly as a manager or advisor. In this paradoxical situation, the state tries to minimize the fear of crime among its population, while also making use of this state of insecurity to mobilize people to take measures for their own safety. Therefore, the fear of crime enables the state in governmental acts to apply measures that try to integrate the population as entrepreneurs in their own protection. Chapter 5 will show in more detail, how the ambition longing to establish secure spaces has become a governmental agenda in Ballinateéis.

## 5. Making spaces of security

As chapter four describes the spatial dimensions that create a perception of unease and insecurity among research partners in Ballinateis, this chapter focuses on the strategies and practices that are applied by different actors (including my research partners) to create spaces of safety and security. In my research, I identify that research partners try to establish security in the public as well as in the private space of their everyday life in Ballinateis. This chapter will discuss the importance of public and semi-public spaces that have the function to encourage both social cohesion and people's strategies to establish security in their private environment.

### 5.1. Ballinateis Community

The idea of community is a contested notion. I show in previous chapters that it is connected to the conceptions of security as well as space. Up to here, I elaborated that a loss of community is experienced by a variety of research partners in Ballinateis. This circumstance can be explained as a consequence of urbanization processes and reorganization of police-community relations.

Contrary to these developments that reduce community solidarity and at the same time increase insecurity among residents, I came across different strategies of Ballinateis' inhabitants to establish social cohesion and a sense of belonging. Some of these strategies are explicitly dedicated to increase security in relation to crime-prevention, like the state-promoted *Neighborhood Watch* and *Community Alert* schemes. Others try to strengthen communal cohesion in general and therefore help to counteract the fear of crime in Ballinateis.

#### 5.1.1. Community Alert and Community Watch

Strategies that are explicitly dedicated to strengthen social cohesion and consequently achieve a higher level of security are implemented in the *National Model of Community Policing* (An Garda Síochána 2009) and the *Community Crime Prevention Programmes* (An Garda Síochána n.d.) of *An Garda Síochána*. As I show in chapter 4.2, the local Gardaí 'on the beat' represent a form of community policing and engagement with the community that is disappearing through the restructuring of *An Garda Síochána* to fulfill new requirements of a changing Irish society. Since the mid 1980s, the Irish police force started to introduce new ways of community policing including different schemes to counteract crime and the fear of

crime. The first two schemes that were introduced in 1985, are also the most common schemes in Ireland: *Neighborhood Watch* and *Community Alert* (ibid.:2). While both schemes follow the two principles of ‘opportunity reduction – a means to prevent crime [...] (and encouragement of) social cohesion - people who know each other are more likely to act and support each other’ (ibid.; ed. by M.I.), there is a difference in the methodology of the two schemes that bases on a rural – urban division. *Neighborhood Watch* is described as ‘a partnership programme involving *urban* communities establishing a crime prevention programme in conjunction with their local Gardaí’ (ibid.), while the *Community Alert* scheme ‘operates primarily in *rural* areas, in response to the particular challenges of that environment’ (ibid.). The operational implementation differs as follows: 1) *Neighborhood Watch* communities include residents of a certain urban area willing to take part in the scheme; the area is marked by street signs as a *Neighborhood Watch* community (see appendix: graphic 5); the members of the community meet with the local Gardaí to get informed about security precautions, which they can implement, and to form a network on a personal and face-to-face level, in which warnings about criminal threats can be spread. 2) *Community Alert* functions are geared towards connecting the residents in rural areas, who live wide apart on more isolated properties. Information about criminal activities can nowadays be shared via a text message list by members of the community, therefore people refer to it occasionally as ‘text alert’ (Interview 2; 00:49:27 – 00:49:52 Marie & Alison) instead of *Community Alert*. Important to mention here is the development that since the beginning of the recession, the number of *Neighborhood Watch* areas has increased by 30% up to 2.300 until 2012. Bohan argues about this development:

‘The increase seems somewhat paradoxical: it comes at a time when crime is continuing to drop year-on-year across the country, and changing lifestyles mean that people in urban areas are less likely to know their neighbours than they were twenty years ago. [...] The scheme doesn’t replace policing but a large part of Neighbourhood Watch is about stopping smaller, preventable crimes by encouraging people to take actions themselves.’ (Bohan 2012; ed. by M.I.)

Both schemes are present in the Ballinateis area. While I could identify four different *Neighborhood Watch* areas in the housing estates of the municipality and two further ones adjoining Ballinateis, various *Community Alert* areas can be found in its hinterlands. Unfortunately, none of my research partners living in Ballinateis mentioned in our conversations to be part of one of these schemes.

However, County Councilor Shanon Keogan, who organized the community meeting in Slane, is active in her local *Community Alert* in Duleek. In her speech at the community meeting, she gives a personal opinion about the benefit of Text Alert and combines it with a personal story:

‘I know there was one lady that was 88 years of age and her daughter. In the middle of the night about half past one. Two guys came in. Ransacked the house and basically held this old lady up against the wall. Now. They didn’t even ring the guard. What was the point in that at half two in the morning? Nobody is going to come this evening. Now, that’s terrible. That’s terrible. We. You know as a society we should feel bad that that old woman [...] wouldn’t pick up the phone and think that somebody would be on the phone on the other end. To give her reassurances somebody is going to be there to help. [...] But isn’t it sad that we cannot get help to those people, when they most need it. [...] This is what the Text Alert Programme does. And it certainly unites communities. Police and community closer together. And we all work together with the Gardaí to try and help them in the fight against crime.’ (Recording 2; 00:13:35 – 00:14:31; ed. by M.I.)

In the comment of Shanon Keogan, we find the narrative that the *Community Alert* scheme helps people that are affected by crime to better deal with it by having a community to rely on. At the same time, the scheme helps to provide a better police – community relation and encourages people to assist the Gardaí with the fight against crime.

Sergeant O’Connor, who was present at the community meeting as well, promoted the *Community Alert* scheme at the meeting and revealed another aspect it:

‘The Text Alert [...] has made people more aware of that (private security measures). So they look after their home security first of all. Whenever they can make the place. Make it difficult for them (the criminals). [...] Progressing from that to keep an eye after their neighbors.’ (Recording 2; 00:21:25 – 00:22:00; ed. by M.I.)

Here, O’Connor shows that the overriding task of the *Community Alert* scheme is to offer a communication platform that the members use to inform each other about how they can secure their property independently. Only then in a second step, the scheme is supposed to create social cohesion in the form of a reciprocal supervision of property.

I show in chapter 4.2, that the Irish police force promotes their internal organizational changes towards a reactive policing strategy. But this does not mean that community policing strategies are simply abandoned or the state reduces its influence in this sector. In a

Foucauldian sense, police has as its object the population as a whole. Therefore, ‘what police has to govern, its fundamental object, is all the forms of, let’s say, men’s coexistence with each other’ (Michel Foucault 1926-1984 2007:326). This means that instead of focusing only on disciplining criminals, the whole population is integrated in the establishment of its security. Therefore, it is not simply an abolishment of community policing strategies. Instead, community policing undergoes a neoliberal turn, which started in the 1980s and reinforce once more during the recession. This neoliberalization of community policing has led to a shift away from a costly and “classical” on-the-ground community policing strategy towards a punctual and strategic engagements with local residents. This engagement is supposed to promote the subjectivity and self-responsibility of local residents to take measures to retain security. By doing so, *Neighborhood Watch* and *Community Alert* schemes produce areas in the municipality that are explicitly signposted as part of this security measure and thereby also spatially organize communities of security.

### 5.1.2. Infrastructures of Community

‘You always try to get more integration of the community. Cause that’s good for community. Not to have isolation. I wouldn’t like to see. [...] In terms of, you know, poor, rich, middle-class. That there is a good overall integration. That is something you would like to see continue into the future particularly as new development grows. [...] The danger is that if it grows and because effectively (Ballinateis) almost (is) part of the city of Dublin. That it losses its identity. And you lose that community spirit.’ (Interview 5; 00:29:40 – 00:31:00; ed. by M.I.)

Monsignor Smith, priest of the catholic parish, gave this statement, when I asked him what he thinks is necessary to improve security in Ballinateis in the future. He wishes not to have isolated people in the municipality, but to have a continued support for measures to improve social cohesion, so that everybody living in Ballinateis feels as an integral part of a community. For him, there is already a good community spirit, but the inhabitants will have to work for it to subsist. Monsignor Smith explained to me how community cohesion can be generated:

‘There is a good community spirit here. There are lots of organizations. In terms of the GAA. The soccer club. Tennis club. Running athletics club. There is an active retirement association. There is active involvement in the parish. So there is a good community spirit.’ (Interview 5; 00:07:52 – 00:09:05)

As I elaborated in chapter 4, the notion of a good community spirit is seen as a vital condition for security and that processes of urbanization and a restructuring of state services led to a perceived loss of cohesive identity. Contrary to the statements of other research partners, Monsignor Smith argues that a good community spirit already exists and that certain sport and civil organizations play a key role in its formation in Ballinateis.

In an interview with Julia, who works at the local flower shop in Ballinateis, she confirms Monsignor Smith's statements on the local community situation. Julia is in her 30s and does not live in Ballinateis, but commutes every day from a nearby municipality. Although she told me that she personally does not know Ballinateis very well, a lot of local people come in her shop and talk to her about the current issues. From her perspective, the community in Ballinateis is very strong and this circumstance helps prevent crime. Especially sport organizations help prevent anti-social behavior in the community, because they offer local teenagers free time activities. (Survey Participant 9)

By summarizing all my data, a number of institutions can be identified that are mentioned by my research partners, which promote community cohesion among local residents in Ballinateis. I categorize them as following: 1) the already mentioned sport clubs, 2) the community center with its civic associations, 3) the catholic parish with its church, 4) the primary and secondary schooling facilities.

To understand the connection of these four institutional categories, I identify them as infrastructures that facilitate social cohesion. Thereby, I follow Larkin, who defines infrastructures as follows:

‘Infrastructures are built networks that facilitate the flow of goods, people, or ideas and allow for their exchange over space. As physical forms they shape the nature of a network, the speed and direction of its movement, its temporalities, and its vulnerability to breakdown.’ (Larkin 2013:328)

Infrastructures as part of the built space lay the foundation for interaction between different actors and are at the same time part of these interactions. This concept is developed from the Latourian actor-network-theory, in which the infrastructures are not just materiality, but can offer insights into ‘practices of government, religion, or sociality’ (ibid.). Combining it with a Foucauldian approach of governmentality, Larkin argues that these technological projects of infrastructure are part of political rationalities. A study of road construction in Peru by Harvey and Knox (2015) serves as a fitting example. This anthropological study reveals how policy-

decisions shape the infrastructural road network in Peru and thereby influence the Peruvian population.

In the same sense, sport facilities, community centers, schools and churches are local infrastructures that are part of the built space. Therefore, they provide the bases of social cohesion for the local population, which is seen as a guaranty for security.

In Ballinateis, there are two sport facilities in place. Two GAA playgrounds are located in the southern part of the municipality, while playgrounds for other team sports are located next to the community center and the school buildings in the village center. Sport facilities provide a place for people to gather and join in a common activity. The ability of sport activities to establish social cohesion has been well elaborated by anthropologists (Blanchard and Cheska 1985; Sands 1999). Especially the GAA plays a dominant role in the sport sector of Ireland in general and in Ballinateis in particular. In Irish history, sport has been used as a national identity marker, which can be seen in the example of the GAA (chapter 4). As Wilson and Donnan (2006) note by referring to Sudgen and Bairner (1993): ‘Gaelic sport was never just a game, but came to be regarded by all sides as “a reservoir of Irish identity”’ (Wilson and Donnan 2006:37).

The community center is another infrastructural feature of the municipality, where a variety of events and free time activities take place and civil and leisure associations find a place to gather. For example, I was an active member of the local photo club that meets every week in a seminar room of the community center. The community center provided the room for a low rental fee. On its website, those responsible for the community center say: ‘The answer lies in the Centre’s key role in the community, the huge support it gets from the community and the professional approach it takes to every aspect of its operation’<sup>8</sup>. What is interesting, is the fact that the community center is not a facility that was initialized and funded by the government. As Séan explained to me, the construction of the community center was initialized by a local resident’s initiative and mainly financed through private funds (Interview 3; 00:46:30-00:48:30). The expansion of the sport facilities outside the center was then co-financed by the government, under the condition that the neighboring schools could use the sport facilities as well. Otherwise, there would have been separate and smaller sport facilities for both the schools and the community center.

The third infrastructure that was mentioned by research partners to be important for community cohesion is the catholic parish. Although there has been a decrease in the percentage of members of the catholic church, the institution has still a significant influence

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<sup>8</sup> Due to reasons of anonymity, this publication is not listed in the references of this thesis.

on many aspects of the everyday life in Ireland. As Monsignor Smith explains for the situation in Ballinateis:

‘You would have a more divers religious population out than you had [...] when it was the old rural community. It was almost 95% catholic. Nowadays, there is probably 15% non-Catholic. Maybe higher [...] maybe 20. Certainly 80% catholic. At least nominally.’ (Interview 5; 00:13:30 – 00:13:55; ed. by M.I.)

Catholicism is still a significant identity marker not only in regard to the number of followers in Ballinateis. Additionally, the church, as part of the built environment, establishes a platform for social cohesion during the regular Masses. Further, the catholic church as an institution is involved in a variety of social services that go beyond its religious services. Schools, civic and charity associations are run directly by or are closely associated with the catholic church. ‘So sometimes’ Monsignor Smith says, ‘I suppose community and religious things are intertwined a bit, because there is – in terms of the church – always a social outreach’ (Interview 5; 00:15:10 – 00:15:20).

Finally, Ballinateis’ schools are an infrastructure that creates spaces of social cohesion for the local residents. There are three primary and one second level schools in the Ballinateis’ municipality, all of which are run by different patrons. The primary schools are managed by the Roman Catholic Church, the interdenominational and Irish-promoting *Gaelscoileanna* organization (Gaelscoileanna – Irish Medium Education 2017) and the protestant *Church of Ireland*. This circumstance also reflects the situation in Ireland that 96% of primary schools are run by Christian organizations (Devine 2011). Whereas the second level school is managed by the *Louth and Meath Education and Training Board* (louthmeath.etb.ie 2017), which is a non-state organization but closely related to state institutions. What is important here is that on the one hand, schools as an infrastructural feature are an exclusively produced space for the youth not only to gain knowledge but to build up social networks among their peer group (Hummrich 2011) and to be cared for (Bollig 2015). On the other hand, research partners explained that through their children’s involvement in school the parents get in contact with each other as well.

For example, Julia from the flower shop says that schools are a vital part in the foundation of a community. In contrast to Ballinateis, she always mentions a nearby village where they used to have a flower shop as well. According to her, people in that village do not have a real sense of community because it rapidly grew in size during the time of Celtic Tiger, but at the same

time it lost its communal bonds. She identifies schools as the reason why it is different in Ballinateis. (Survey Participant 9)

As for Gerard and Claire, who moved to Ballinateis a few years ago, they expect to be more involved in the community as soon as their little boy is old enough to go to primary school, which shows that they also see the schools as a community-supporting factor. Further, they say:

Claire: ‘(Ballinateis) has a good sense of community. Which I think is important. People seem to be very helpful and want to help other people.’

Gerard: ‘Really local.’

Claire: ‘Really good local kind of spirit. But yeah. There is a lot of facilities and groups that. There is good schools. [...] It has good facilities.

Gerard: ‘You know soccer club, GAA club, athletics club. It has three primary schools.

Claire: ‘A secondary school, sports club, community center.’

Gerard: ‘It has infrastructure.’ (Interview 4 00:06:05 – 00:06:50; ed. by M.I.)

Again it becomes clear that infrastructures and community are closely related. As Larkin says, ‘infrastructures are matter that enable the movement of other matter. Their peculiar ontology lies in the facts that they are things and also the relation between things’ (Larkin 2013:329). The sport facilities, the community center, the church building and the schools are part of the material space, but at the same time they enable the relation between individuals and therefore generate social cohesion and a feeling of security. It became clear by elaborating these four examples, that a number of private actors are involved in establishing and maintain certain infrastructures. The sport clubs and community center heavily rely on the self-responsibility and self-organization of the local residents. The Roman Catholic Church and its volunteers are providing religious and civil services and the schools are run by non-state (often Christian) organizations. This does not mean that the state does not provide infrastructures that function as platforms to manage community ties. Legislations, building permits, state funding and the provision of teachers are necessary parts of maintaining state-run infrastructures. However, crucial tasks are often also distributed among other parties.

### **5.1.3. Virtual spatiality of social cohesion**

Forms of social cohesion are not only given in the material space. There do exist virtual spaces on the internet that inhabitants of Ballinateis use to collaborate among themselves in

matters of security. These virtual spaces are provided by both private and public actors. As I shortly mentioned in chapter 3.1, especially *Facebook* is used for this cause.

For Ballinateis, I identified two *Facebook*-pages that are relevant to mention: 1) the *Meath Crime Prevention* page and 2) the *Ballinateis Notice Board*<sup>9</sup>.

The *Meath Crime Prevention* page is run by the County Meath branch of *An Garda Síochána* and administrated by my research partner sergeant O'Connor and his colleagues. Posts can only be made by the them. Other users are only allowed to read, share and comment on the issues posted on the page, but not to post a new issue. Approximately 23.300 users follow the page's activities (last access: 28.05.2017). The page's main functions can be divided into informing users about 1) precautions they can take against crime, 2) current criminal activities in county Meath; 3) asking for information about current criminal activities; and 4) informing about owners' recovered stolen property.

An exemplifying case would be a series of burglaries around 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016. In this case, a number of burglaries occurred in an area and a suspect running away from one of the robbed houses was spotted in a silver Golf Volkswagen. People in the area were asked to report anything that struck them as suspicious to the local Garda station. This post was shared to other pages 192 times and in the comments, users made remarks about the current whereabouts of the car in question, alarmed other users or showed their resentment about the burglar. (See appendix: graphic 6)

The other page, which is important for residents in the area, is called the *Ballinateis Notice Board*. This digital notice board is a group-page. If you are an accepted member of the group, you are allowed to post issues on the page as well as read, share or comment on another post. Comparable to material notice boards that can be found e.g. in the Ballinateis' community center, this notice board is a space where a variety of issues can be shared and discussed. Beside posts about local events, sale and service offers or housing market requests, users post security issues that include but are not limited to property crime. They inform each other about current criminal activity or anti-social behavior in the area, share newspaper articles about crime statistics and promote new security devices. Even security companies advertise their services and products on the page.

According to Flexon and Guerette (2009), the use of electronic media has been part of crime-prevention programs since the 1970s. Mass media started to be used to inform about anti-social behavior, drug use, drunk-driving or crime prevention measures. *Facebook*, which is a new platform for potential crime like cyber-bullying, can also be used to facilitate crime

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<sup>9</sup> Name changed due to reasons of confidentiality, also this source is not listed in the references of this thesis..

investigations and has become more important for criminology studies (Milivojevic 2011) as well as anthropology (Sinanan and Miller 2017). Most notable here is Hattingh's case study on the *Facebook*-communication of *Community Policing Forums* (CPF) in South Africa, which are comparable to the *Neighborhood Watch* schemes in Ireland (Hattingh 2015). She elaborates on the utilization of *Facebook* by these groups as a platform of crime prevention and community cohesion. Her findings show that *Facebook* is used to share

‘information relating to the building of a cohesive community [...] (and) information related to the creating of awareness of crime in the area. It was further shown that community members share information between different communities such as private security firms, other CPFs, and other communities dedicated to the fight against crime.’ (Ibid.; ed. by M.I.)

These findings mirror my data from Ballinateis. In Ballinateis, both *Facebook*-pages are used to share information among the members about crime and crime prevention in various ways. By sharing posts to other *Facebook*-members or –pages and commenting and discussing the posts, the members reinforce community ties and therefore social cohesion in the municipality. This circumstance shows that the production of virtual spaces in social media can be used to form social cohesion. Further, these virtual spaces serve as a platform to counteract criminality, prevent victimization and reduce the fear of crime. In this way, social media functions as another pattern of neo-liberal self-responsibility. The local population is given a platform to get and exchange information in order to take independently measures against criminal activities.

## **5.2. Security measures in the private space**

During the time I spend at my landlord's house in Ballinateis, I had to be aware of a number of security measures which Henry, my landlord, has installed at his house. This circumstance gave me the possibility to observe which measures he takes to protect his property. Not only for him, but for most of my research partners, the protection of their property is most often connected to the introduction of security technology into their daily life. Alarm systems, closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera surveillance, electronic gates, automatic spotlights or sensors at doormats are the latest technologies. But I did not only count electronic devices that are specifically produced for house security to private security techniques. Keeping a dog, lighting the house during the night or internalizing a routine to lock each door and window

every time when leaving the house, I detected as commonly-used techniques to establish a higher level of security to thwart any potential crime against their property and themselves.

Coming back to the case of my landlord's house, I want to summarize the smaller and bigger precautions that Henry has taken to secure his house. The most dominant fact was that my landlord had an alarm system installed when he acquired the house two years before I moved in. He explained to me that it is an alarm system which was configured specifically for this house by the security company. It makes it possible not only to secure the whole house, while nobody is inside, but to have certain rooms and doors at the ground floor secured, while you are still in the house sleeping or working in the upper floors. Every time the alarm is triggered, the security company calls to check if everything is alright by asking you for a personal password. If nobody answers the phone or is not able to provide a valid password, they would inform the nearest Garda station to send a squad car immediately. At the same time, a CCTV camera in the room where the sensor was triggered will be activated to provide video footage of the intruder. Apart from the alarm system, every evening Henry would lock the doors and close the shutters at the windows. If I stayed out late, I was instructed to set the alarm and lock the doors and windows. Most often, one of the lights in the hallway is lit during the night to show that someone is in the house. Further, a spotlight with motion sensors lights the courtyard if someone would approach the entrance area of the house. In the tool shed that is located opposite to the house on the other side of a courtyard, a radio is playing day and night. My landlord explained to me that he was told to keep it running all the time. The sound of the radio would unsettle potential intruders. Behind the tool shed is another small courtyard which my landlord leases to a dog breeder. As Henry told me, he did not only lease this area to get rent out of it, but also as a security precaution. The barking of the dogs would keep unwanted people away from the property. Additionally, to these dogs, my landlord keeps a dog himself at his house that would be able to alarm him if there was an intruder in the house. In a way, he also saw me as an aspect to secure his property. I was instructed to ask any suspicious person walking around the property to leave and report to Henry about it. At the same time, Henry was not part of an official *Community Alert* or *Neighborhood Watch* scheme, but he and the people in the surrounding houses have a private agreement to look after each other's property, if they know the other one has gone away.

In this description of the situation at my residency, a variety of physical security technologies can be identified. Handbooks of applied approaches to physical security technology like Fennelly's *Effective Physical Security* (Fennelly 2017) show that a wide spectrum of security measures, from door locks to CCTV surveillance and on-response forces, can be found in

private property security. However, in this volume, Gigliotti and Jason (2017) argue that ‘(n)o system [...] can be made completely secure. Any system conceived can be defeated’ (ibid.:67; ed. by M.I.). This assessment corresponds with the statements of research partners, which explained to me that burglars can break into houses, irrelevant how high the security level is. For example, Alison says:

‘They can bypass those dogs. They can give them a chop on the head and knock them out. They can do everything. Electronic gates. They can ram those. Come across those with a ram. But the burglar alarms. They just cut wires.’ (Interview 2; 00:26:40 – 00:27:00)

Gigliotti and Jason explain that to guarantee a high level of security, a system of different physical security technologies is required. Security technologies is categorized by them into minimum, low-level, medium, high-level and maximum level of security (Gigliotti and Jason 2017:68). Following this categorization, the property of my landlord is secured by technologies that include aspects of minimum level security (simple locks and simple physical barriers), low-level (high-security locks, basic-security physical barriers, simple security lighting) and medium level (advanced remote alarm system, guard dog).

In many conversations with my research partners, private physical security technologies were an issue of discussion. Most often, alarm systems and CCTV were discussed in this context and it became clear that those are not only a guarantee for security but also cause a negative impact on research partners, like 1) the limitations of those technologies, 2) a normalization of security standards in everyday life and 3) their negative effect on the quality of life.

First, Anna explained to me in our conversation, why alarm systems only have a limited potential as security measures:

‘Honestly. If I would be a burglar and the alarm systems go off every now and then and nobody cares, I would wait until one of those things would start. And when nobody turns it off after ten minutes, obviously nobody is at home. And nobody cares about it. This is the perfect house to break in. I mean. The sense of those stupid alarm systems escapes me. Nobody looks after them.’ (Interview 6; 00:38:30 – 00:39:03; trans. by M.I.)

Like various other research partners, Anna complains that alarm systems are triggered frequently and the causes for this are most often not intruders, but can be lead back to accidental activation. The frequency of accidentally triggered alarm systems made residents and even Gardaí officers often ignore the alarm (see also Lally 2007). Therefore, the effect of

alarm systems to call attention is minimized and people only see a limited effect of alarm systems in regard to security.

Despite this limitation, alarm systems becoming standard equipment in everyone's household has put pressure on the Ballinateis' residents who are yet to acquire one. In other words, it is the normalization of a security technology that urges the individual to achieve this standard of security. Jules, a staff member of a local clothing shop, who I encountered during my research, explained to me that a house is more likely to be burgled when there is no alarm system installed and all the houses next to it would have an alarm system. The level of house security is therefore also relational, depending on the security measures of nearby houses: Having a house with a low level of physical security standards in comparison to the surrounding houses makes your house an easier target for criminals. By deviating from the norm of security, a higher vulnerability to crime and victimization is expected.

Lastly, physical security technologies have a negative effect on people's quality of life. For example, alarm systems that frequently trigger a false alarm not only condition people to ignore them, but also cause frequent disruptive noise. Despite, Ireland already sharpened the law on noise pollution of alarm systems by adjusting it to European standards (citizensinformation.ie 2016). A second aspect of physical security technologies is the negative influence they can have on the communal ties. During the community meeting in Tipperary, Paul Williams asked a man, who was burgled three times, about the physical security technologies he installed and how these affect his life.

Williams: 'What have you done to prevent these very productive citizens from coming back?'

Man: 'Well, we have security gates up at the road, which are closed all time and we have security cameras as well.'

Williams: 'And does it affect you as well, as the people were saying before? Does it affect you neighborly?'

Man: 'Yes, it does. Cause it feels like you are in a prison. Ones you go in, you close the gates behind you and you are looking out at steel bars. As one of my neighbors mentioned to me. When I close the outside gates. He says they are always closed. And he rang me this morning and says: "I can't get ya". And you know. Often they called in. Neighbors would call in for a chat or just passing up the road. That doesn't seem to happen anymore.' (Recording 1; 00:52:15 - 00:52:59)

Considering the content of this discussion, it becomes clear that implementing more and more physical security technologies into a residency has a negative effect on the perception of

community cohesion. Physical security technologies hinder the people to meet and interact with each other.

In summary, it can be stated that security measures in private space play a significant role for my research partners in Ballinateis. As Wright et al. (2015) show, little research has been done on the effects of security measures that focuses on the private space, while the majority of research focuses on public and semi-public spaces. However, various theoretical considerations are possible to explain the situation in Ballinateis:

It becomes clear that the discourse on security in private spaces creates the idea of the “home” as a space that needs to be secured against possible intruders. By installing physical security technologies and incorporating practices to enhance security, the private space can be compared to what Newman calls a ‘defensible space’ (Newman 1996). For Newman, the concept of defensible space ‘enable(s) residents to take control of their neighborhoods, to reduce crime, and to stimulate private reinvestment’ (ibid.:9; ed. by M.I.). Further:

‘Defensible Space relies on self-help rather than on government intervention, and so it is not vulnerable to government’s withdrawal of support. It depends on resident involvement to reduce crime and remove the presence of criminals.’ (Ibid.)

While the neoliberal re-organization of the city’s public spaces has been widely discussed in social science (Coleman and Sim 2000; Norris 2012), the concept of defensible space mirrors a neoliberal concept, in which residents rely on their own capacities to counteract crime in private space. It considers the home a self-contained space in which the residents have a shared interest in protection from outsiders. I agree with the point that the neoliberal state with its multiple layers of governments subjectifies people to care for their own security. People in Ireland invest significant financial capital and time to secure their property (O’Connor 2016) and state actors like *An Garda Síochána* but also the Irish private security industry (phonewatch.ie 2017) or insurance companies (O’Donnell 2013) encourage people to take precautions for themselves.

At the same time, Newman’s suggestion that a collective interest of protection, which is created by the multitude of security measures, has to be questioned, because – as I show in this chapter – security technologies can have a negative impact on social cohesion and the quality of life of local residents. Not everybody is in favor of the measures taken in the name of security. Wright et al. (2015) show that people might even feel less safe when having a CCTV operating in their private homes. Further, the psychological effects of the noise of

alarm systems are elaborated by Breznitz (1984), who raises the reliability of warning systems to question by drawing attention/pointing to the frequency of false alarms.

## **6. Conclusion**

Concluding from the elaborated research data in the preceding chapters, I can say that (in-)security and space shape each other in a reciprocal way in the Ballinateis' municipality. People construct space in regard to their understanding of (in-)security, just as spaces are produced by taking into account aspects of (in-)security. On the other hand, (in-)security depends on the way spaces are shaped in their materiality and socially utilization by state actors, discourses, architecture, laws, policies, civil initiatives or the communities and individuals occupying these spaces. In this way, space can be an integral part of Foucauldian apparatuses of security, because apparatuses of security link this multitude of heterogeneous elements together.

In my case study of the Irish municipality of Ballinateis, I elaborate a variety of these elements that show the interplay between (in-)security and space by focusing on a specific apparatuses of security. This apparatus has at its target the safety of the Irish population regarding property crime.

In the above chapters, I analyze the nationwide discursive practices in the Republic of Ireland that negotiate the population's level of (in-)security in relation to criminality. In the run-up to the general elections 2016, property crime has become a major issue of news reports, political parties, civil lobbying groups as well as government's policy. In the discourse, the current situation is often presented as a crisis – or as Agamben would call it: 'state of exception' (Agamben 1998:14; see also Schmitt 1985) – in which the current style of government is described as insufficient and has to be changed in order to regain security. Certain narratives that are part of the nationwide discourse of property crime are adapted to the local situations by residents of Ballinateis, like the reduction of Garda stations or the influence of the motorway network on criminals' mobility. Thereby, they are put into the local context and intertwine with other local narratives of insecurity, like the experienced loss of social cohesion amongst the Ballinateis' population because of rapid urbanization, the withdrawal of Garda presence in the streets or the park as a locus of anti-social behavior.

Apart from that, I identify certain strategies and practices that are applied by different actors to create safety and security in the municipality. Research partners try to establish security in the public as well as in the private space of their everyday life in Ballinateis. On the one hand, new forms of social cohesion are generated against the fear of crime and as a precaution

against criminal activity. On the other hand, research partners install physical security technologies and incorporate practices in their daily life in order to establish security in their private environment. As we can see, security is a contested notion. It is not possible to simply classify Ballinateis as either secure or insecure.

As I also elaborate before, all these issues of (in-)security have a spatial dimension. By applying Foucault, it is possible to say that space is the basic feature on which (in-)security can function. In relation to his concept of apparatuses of security, Foucault elaborates on a second concept, which he calls ‘spaces of security’ (Foucault 2007:11). He explains, spaces of security are part of the ‘general features of these apparatuses (*dispositifs*) of security’ (ibid.) and characterizes spaces of security as following:

‘The specific space of security refers then to a series of possible events; it refers to the temporal and the uncertain, which have to be inserted within a given space. The space in which a series of uncertain elements unfold is [...] roughly what one can call the milieu.’ (Ibid.: 20; ed. by M.I.)

By elaborating on the Lamarckian idea of the milieu, Foucault continues:

‘The apparatuses of security work, fabricate, organize, and plan a milieu even before the notion was formed and isolated. The milieu, then, will be that in which circulation is carried out. The milieu is a set of natural givens – rivers, marshes, hills, and a set of artificial givens – an agglomeration of individuals, houses, etcetera. The milieu is a certain number of combined, overall effects bearing on all who live in it.’ (Ibid.: 21)

Using a different terminology, Foucault abstractly describes in his own notions of milieu and apparatuses of security the concepts of social production and construction of spaces (see Low 2017a) but with the specific focus on security.

Further, the concept of apparatuses of security brings in another Foucauldian concept: the concept of governmentality. Governmentality is the dominant form of governance in nowadays neo-liberalism. In its politico-economic understanding, the main goal is to secure the existence of the population as a whole. To do so, governmentality has to manage the balance between restriction and freedom of each particular individual. It does so, because governmentality – as neo-liberal politico-economy – relies on maintaining the limited freedom and self-responsibility of individuals in order to achieve its utilitarian goal of securing the whole of the population. By allowing a certain level of self-responsibility, the population as an agglomeration of individuals will then participates in its own protection. As

Grioux captures it vividly: ‘(a) free society is not an un-policed society. A free society is a self-policed society’ (Giroux 2006; in Hyatt 2014:106; ed. by M.I.). Hyatt (2014) even considers further that there is a current shift from neo-liberal freedom towards a post-neo-liberal state of surveillance and policing:

‘As have others, I suggest that we are living in a moment where the liberatory rhetoric associated with neoliberal policy, with its celebration of such values as free markets, consumer choice and ‘freedom’, appears to be in retreat, giving way to a darker vision of society harnessed to the valorization of policing as the primary mechanism for governance.’ (Ibid.: 106

In the case of Ballinateis, I was able to show this self-responsibility of the local population in protecting itself against criminality, for example the development of further *Neighborhood Watch* and *Community Alert* Schemes instead of community Gardaí, the installation of advanced physical security technologies or the establishment new forms of community cohesion to counteract the fear of crime. All these elements are part of a specific apparatus of security that tries to counteract criminality in whole of Ireland and in Ballinateis in particular. During the recession, neo-liberalism advanced by directing more and more policing task away from the central state and to the various elements of the apparatus.

## **Appendix**

### **List of Abbreviations**

CCTV – Closed-Circuit Television  
CPF – Community Policing Forums  
ECA – Ethnographic Content Analysis  
EASA – European Association of Social Anthropologists  
ECB – European Central Bank  
ECC – European Economic Community  
EU – European Union  
GAA – Gaelic Athletic Associations  
GNP – Gross National Product  
IBM – International Business Machines Corporation  
IMF – International Monetary Found  
OECD – Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development  
RTÉ – Raidió Teilís Éireann  
RIC – Royal Irish Constabulary  
SOLC – Save Our Local Community  
UN – United Nations

### **List of interviews**

- Interview 1 – Transcript of interview with Garda Officer O'Connor
- Interview 2 – Transcript of interview with Victim Assistant members Alison and Marie
- Interview 3 – Transcript of interview with Séan
- Interview 4 – Transcript of interview with Claire and Gerard
- Interview 5 – Transcript of Interview with Monsignor Smith
- Interview 6 – Transcript of interview with Anna

### **List of audio recordings**

- Recording 1 – Transcript of community meeting in Thurles, County Tipperary, 08/10/2015
- Recording 2 – Transcript of community Meeting in Slane, County Meath, 04/11/2015
- Recording 3 – Transcript of political rally in Stepside, Dublin City, 24/01/2016

### **List of survey participants**

- Survey Participant 1 – Owner of hardware store, male, 08/02/2016
- Survey Participant 2 – Waitress at café, female, 11/02/2016
- Survey Participant 3 - Owner of tool hire store, male, 11/02/2016
- Survey Participant 4 – Staff of car part store, male, 11/02/2016
- Survey Participant 5 – Owner of hardware store, male, 11/02/2016

- Survey Participant 6 – Staff of liquor store, male, 16/02/2016
- Survey Participant 7 – Staff of clothes shop, female, 16/02/2016
- Survey Participant 8 – Pedestrian at market square, female, 16/02/2016
- Survey Participant 9 – Staff of flower shop, female, 18/02/2016
- Survey Participant 10 – Staff of sports shop, female, 07/03/2016
- Survey Participant 11 – Manager of pharmacy, female, 07/03/2016
- Survey Participant 12 – Staff of local library, female, 09/03/2016
- Survey Participant 13 – Staff of local library, female, 09/03/2016
- Survey Participant 14 – Staff of local library, female, 09/03/2016
- Survey Participant 15 – Staff of pharmacy, female, 09/03/2016
- Survey Participant 16 – Owner of vegetable shop, female, 13/03/2016
- Survey Participant 17 – Pedestrian at local park, male, 13/03/2016
- Survey Participant 18 – Pedestrian at Church park, female, 13/03/2016

**Table 1: Criminal Records of Burglary, Theft and Robbery 2003 - 2015**

|          | 2003  | 2004  | 2005  | 2006  | 2007  | 2008  | 2009  | 2010  | 2011  | 2012  | 2013  | 2014  | 2015  |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Burglary | 25756 | 24913 | 26381 | 24788 | 23603 | 24682 | 26910 | 25420 | 27695 | 28133 | 26218 | 27635 | 26261 |
| Theft    | 73435 | 72201 | 73076 | 74494 | 75187 | 76861 | 77031 | 76826 | 76974 | 76402 | 78737 | 77697 | 75864 |
| Robbery  | 2915  | 2717  | 2424  | 2486  | 2171  | 2299  | 2491  | 3196  | 2931  | 2817  | 2806  | 2647  | 2577  |

Source: Central Statistic Office; <http://www.cso.ie>

## Example of survey:



**Maynooth University**  
National University  
of Ireland Maynooth

National University of Ireland Maynooth  
Department of Anthropology

&

University Vienna

Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology

Course of Studies: MA CREOLE – Cultural Differences and Transnational Processes

Researcher: Manuel Insberg

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Survey for the Study on:

### **Crime and Security in Rural Ireland An Anthropological Perspective on South County Meath**

Thank you very much, that you decided to take part in this survey!

In the following you will find open posed question that I ask you to answer. The survey will take depending on your answers between **10 - 20min**. The participation in this survey is made **anonymously**.

Attached to the survey you find a **consent form about the use of data**, which I request you to read carefully and sign it if you agree to the terms.

Age: ☐ >18; ☐ 18-25; ☐ 25-35; ☐ 35-45; ☐ 45-55; ☐ 55-65; ☐ 65-75; ☐ 75<

Sex: ☐ female; ☐ male

Do you live in Dunboyne? ☐ Yes; ☐ No      If yes, for how long? \_\_\_\_\_

1. Can you name the three biggest issues in regard to safety and security in Dunboyne that are most important for you? Have they changed in the last years?

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2. Are there specific areas in Dunboyne that you would not consider as safe/secure?

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3. Would you say your house is a safe place? What do you do to keep it safe?

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4. Why/why not is crime a major problem in Dunboyne and the surrounding area?  
And if so, what kind of crimes are problematic?

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5. Can you describe the relationship between the community and the local Gardaí  
nowadays in comparison to the relationship ten years ago?

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6. Do you think that new security technologies like alarm systems prevent crimes to  
take place? Why / Why not?

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7. Do you think that state initiatives like Text Alert, Neighborhood Watch prevent  
crimes to take place? Why / Why not?

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8. How do you normally react when you hear that an alarm system goes off nearby?  
Would you say you react appropriate?

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9. Who do you think are the people that commit crimes? What are their reasons?

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10. What would be your suggestions for preventing criminality in your areas?

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11. May I contact you for a follow-up meeting/interview?

Yes ☐  
No ☐

If yes, how can I contact you?

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel.: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

NEWS

# GP jumps to defence of TD

**HOSTILITY** Hospital campaign not a Sinn Féin front and draws support from all parties: Dr Hanley

FOLLOWING recent attacks on Deputy Peadar Tóibín and the Save Navan Hospital campaign (SNH), local doctor and PRO of the campaign, Ruairi Hanley, has stepped in to defend Deputy Tóibín, saying the TD had gone out of his way to make the SNH campaign as inclusive as possible.

He said Deputy Tóibín has endured criticism from people hostile to his party who apparently think the entire SNH

campaign is a Sinn Féin front. "This is absurd, unfair and unjustified," said Dr Hanley.

The GP said he wasn't specifically responding to any individual, but to criticism generally that the TD has endured.

"Peadar Tóibín has gone out of his way to make the SNH campaign as inclusive as possible. The campaign draws support from members of all political parties and none.

This was seen at multiple rallies where all political parties participated, along with thousands of people from across County Meath," he said.

However, Cllr Wayne Forde this week said he was infuriated by the negativity of a very small minority of people, including Sinn Féin, when it comes to Our Lady's.

"I'm furious a small minority, including Sinn Féin, are still not happy that our 24/7 ED

is safe. If it was Sinn Féin that saved our excellent hospital, they would be shouting from the rooftops, but it begs the question how genuine some people are when they say they support the SNHC," the independent councillor said.

Cllr Forde said comments by Health Minister Leo Varadkar at the recent opening of the new ED at the hospital that the downgrading of Navan Hospital was a complete non-runner was very positive and exciting news.

"Minister Varadkar said it will be years before the 24/7 ED at Our Lady's in Navan

will be considered for downgrading. What are people expecting? It's not every day a minister comes to Navan with exciting news for the people living in Navan," he said.

Dr Hanley said he believed that were it not for Deputy Tóibín and his inclusive political approach, there is no doubt that Navan would have been downgraded long ago.

"Indeed, this has happened to every other small hospital in the State. Our hospital is the last one standing and the credit for that rests with the people of Meath, regardless of their politics, who have taken

the streets in their thousands to stop the HSE from destroying Our Lady's," added Dr Hanley.

He said Deputy Tóibín has been a most effective hospital campaign leader and said he hopes he will continue to lead the campaign long into the future.

"He is 100 per cent correct to express caution with respect to this latest announcement. Other hospitals received similar assurances in the past and were subsequently downgraded - anyone who doubts this should talk to the people of Roscommon," he added.



Author Roddy Doyle opens the new Educate Together School with the help of Navan Mayor Cllr Joe Reilly, watched by principal Eva Boyle and local councillors.

## Pupils celebrate no more moves as school is officially opened

BESTSELLING author Roddy Doyle was guest of honour at Navan Educate Together National School (ETNS) last Friday morning, 6th November, when he cut the ribbon to officially open the new school building.

A "friend of the school", Doyle was on hand 10 years ago to perform the official opening when Navan ETNS moved into the former SIPTU offices on the Dan Shaw Road and he came back again last Friday to open their fourth - and final - home on the Commons Road.

The state-of-the-art school sits on five acres and, at capacity, can accommodate 480 pupils. There are currently 190 pupils in the school and principal Eva Boyle explained that already the school is growing rapidly and, since moving into

year, they had taken on two new teachers.

There were great celebrations at the school as pupils, staff and parents gathered for the opening ceremony and all members of the original start-up committee formed in 2000 attended - they are still very much part of the school community.

On Friday morning, Roddy Doyle was interviewed by the children before cutting the ribbon to open the school. He then read to the children from his children's book 'The Giggler Treatment' before revealing the school plaque. Refreshments were provided afterwards by the parents' association.

Ms Boyle said the children are "over the moon" to be in their new school, saying the "possibilities are endless". "The children are so excited to

be among nature. We are on a five-acre site and there was a hedgehog in the yard, squirrels in the trees and we even saw some bunnies," she said.

Navan Educate Together National School originally opened its doors in 2002 in the Order Of Malta hall at Academy Street with two classes and 30 pupils. The school spent a year there before moving to Rock Lodge, a private house at Flower Hill where the school stayed for two years before moving in 2005 to the former SIPTU office on the Dan Shaw Road.

The school grew quickly to fill the building and later four additional prefabs. In 2013, the Navan ETNS was approved for a new school and, in April of this year, staff and pupils moved into their new purpose-built school on the Commons Road.

## Reduced Garda numbers in Kells area 'leaves locals feeling isolated'

COMMUNITIES in the Kells area have been left more vulnerable to criminals and feeling more isolated by the reduced visibility of gardai on the ground, according to Senator Thomas Byrne.

Figures show the number of gardai in the Kells district is down by almost 20 per cent from 2010 compared with this year. "Under Fine Gael and Labour, the number of gardai available in the district is down from 61 to 49," he said.

"By any measure, this is a serious decrease and has a

real and substantial impact on visibility of the gardai on the ground. Nationally, burglaries are up eight per cent, but anecdotally, communities in Meath feel that figure would be higher locally.

"The number of burglaries and related offences reported in Kells in 2013 was 55; this increased to 76 in 2014 and 22 burglary offences were recorded in the first six months of this year in Kells," said the FF senator.

"This is a major problem and is leaving many communities living in fear. I have met

many people in recent weeks and months and the fear of crime is fast becoming a real issue as well.

"Gardai based in Kells are doing extraordinary work in very difficult circumstances and they need more support and resources from the Government."

While he said there was a real sense that law and order had not been a priority for this government, he welcomed the new Garda initiative being rolled out to tackle the wave of burglaries impacting local communities.

## McDonald's staff in Meath gain new qualifications

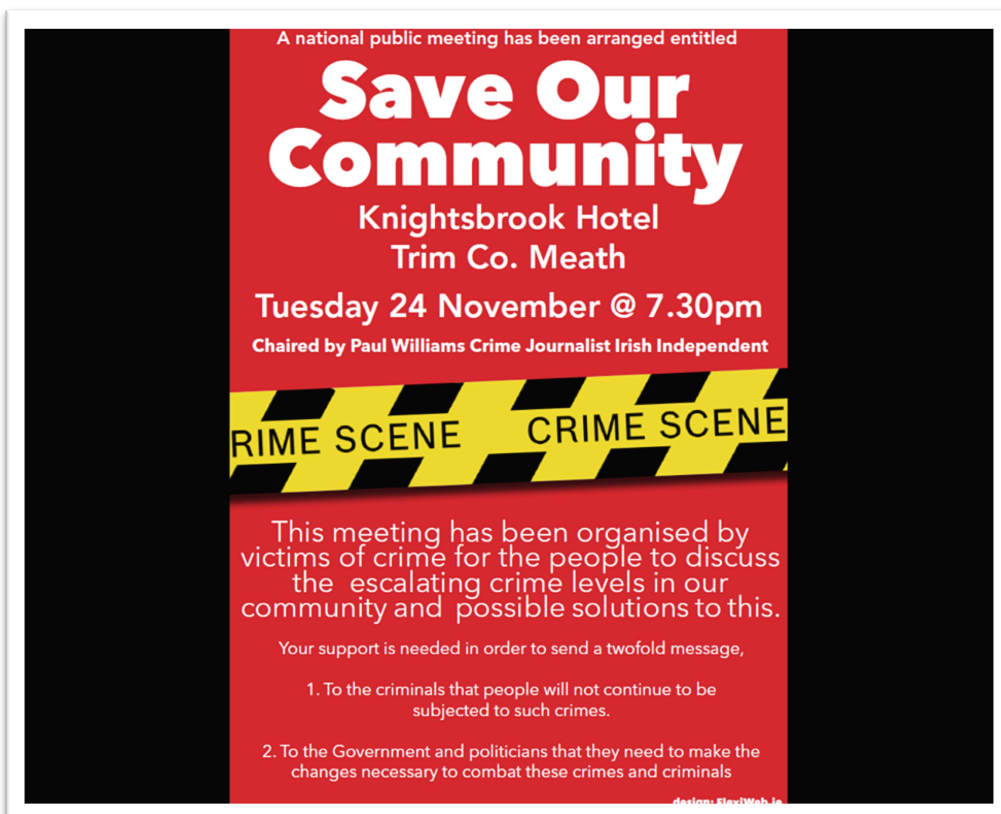
ELEVEN employees from McDonald's restaurants in Meath were awarded City and Guilds qualifications recently.

The Meath employees were among over 260 McDonald's staff members to receive qualifications at the ceremony which took place at the Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin.

Some 49 McDonald's restaurants from across Ireland saw employees receive City and Guilds qualifications in hospitality services and customer care, which were completed as part of workplace training. The Meath employees who received their qualifications were from the Ashbourne and Navan premises.



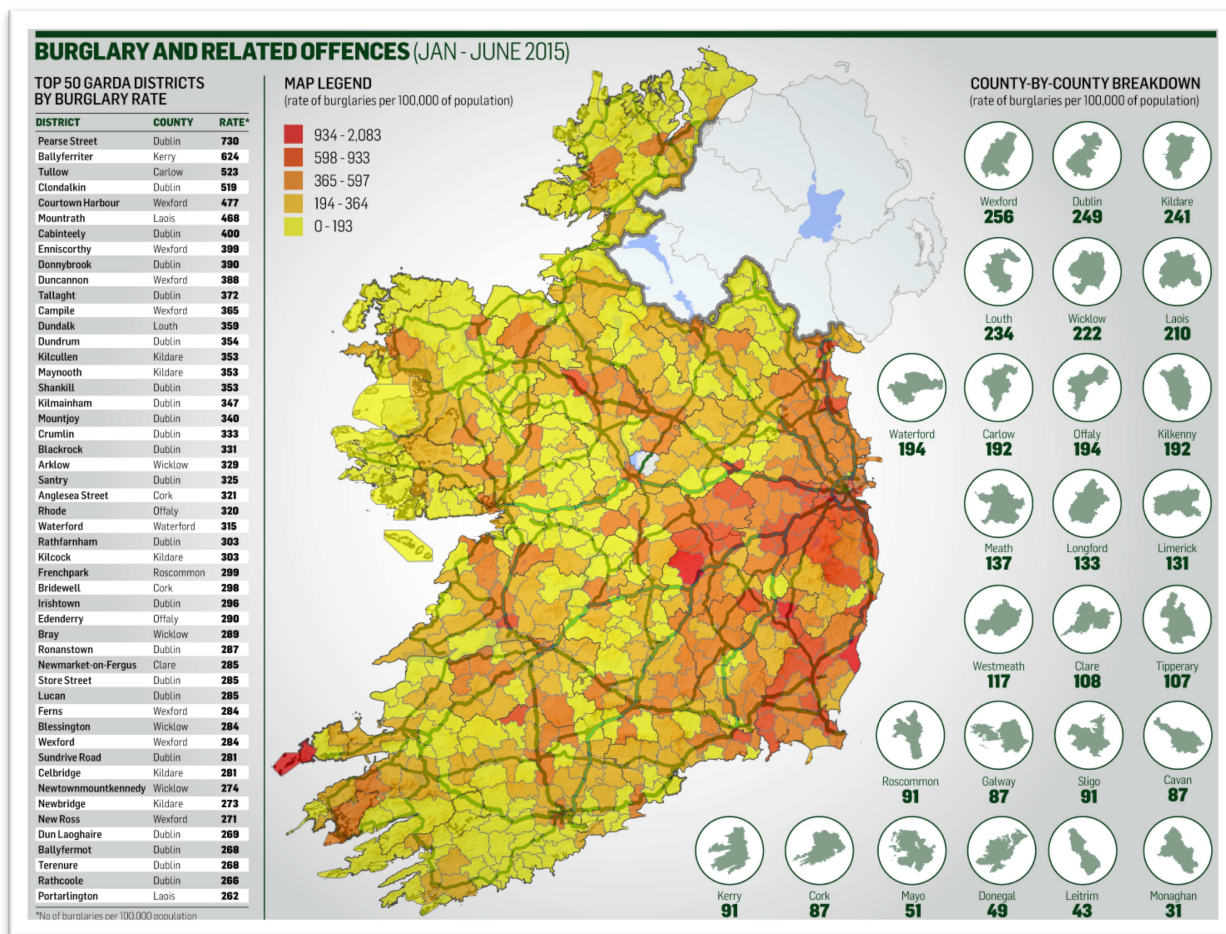
Pictured are the Navan McDonald's employees (from left): Daniel Harrington, Dumitru Cusnir, Vytautas Perminas, Margarita Kovolova, Ignas Leskauskas, Ida Krzyzanowska and Dylan O'Connor, together with Alison Hodgson, HR director, McDonald's Ireland; Adrian Crean, MD, McDonald's Ireland; and Adrian O'Connor, Cllr E. Boyle.



Graphic 2: in Save Our Local Community 2016



Graphic 3: Foulde of Thomas Byrne's electroal agenda, found during participant observation



Graphic 4: in Melia 2015



Graphic 5: Official sign of a Neighbourhood Watch area (Bohan 2012)



Graphic 6: Post on the Meath Crime Prevention Facebook-page

Photographic:



Photo 1: Graffiti at outer wall of Ballinateis park (M. Insberg)



Photo 2: Burned tree in Ballinateis park (M. Insberg)

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## Abstract

### *Deutsch*

Im Jahr 2015 entwickelte sich in der Republik Irland ein Diskurs über die (Un-)Sicherheitslage im Land, der sich auf Kriminalität (speziell Eigentumsdelikten) im ruralen Raum bezog und sich auf unterschiedlichsten Ebenen der Irischen Gesellschaft auswirkte. Medien, Politiker\_innen, Bürgervereinigungen, die irische Regierung, die Polizeibehörde (*An Garda Síochána*) und nicht zuletzt Individuen aus der Bevölkerung wirkten in diesem Diskurs mit, der großen Einfluss auf die Wahlen im Frühjahr 2016 hatte. Meldungen in den Medien über wachsende Kriminalität, schwindende Polizeipräsenz, handlungsunfähige Gerichte, eine inkompetente Regierung und schwindender Zusammenhalt in der Bevölkerung waren die Motive, die ein wachsendes Gefühl der Unsicherheit in der irischen Bevölkerung innerhalb dieses Diskurses suggerierten. Dies alles geschieht vor dem Hintergrund, dass Irland weitreichende sozioökonomischen Umbrüche durch den Wirtschaftsboom des „Celtic Tiger“ der 1990er und 2000er und die wirtschaftliche Rezession nach der Finanzkrise 2007 erlebte, was einen starken Einfluss auf den staatlichen Sicherheitsagenden hatte. Um zu untersuchen, wie sich dieser Diskurs auf das Sicherheitsempfinden im Alltagsleben der Menschen in Irland auswirkt, führte ich im Zeitraum zwischen Oktober 2015 und Mai 2016 eine ethnographische Feldforschung in der Gemeinde Ballinateis, im Einzugsbereich des Großraums Dublin, durch. Dabei lag der Fokus auf der Verbindung zwischen der Konzeptionierung von (Un-)Sicherheit und Räumlichkeit. In der Annahme, dass Sicherheitspraktiken und –strategien des alltäglichen Lebens Ausdruck finden in der Produktion und Konstruktion von Räumlichkeit, weshalb die Analyse von Räumen Rückschlüsse auf die Konzeptionierung von (Un-)Sicherheit geben kann.

### *English*

A discourse of (in-)security developed in the Republic of Ireland in 2015. It focused on criminality (especially property crimes) in rural areas and affected the Irish society on various levels. Media, politicians, civic organizations, the Irish Government, the Irish police force (*An Garda Síochána*) as well as individuals of the Irish population were actors in the discourse of (in-)security that had a great impact especially on the general elections in early 2016. Numerous motives caused a growing perception of insecurity among the Irish population: media reports about a rising criminality, lack of police presence, incapable courts, a weak government and fading solidarity in the communities. These dynamics have to be seen in the course of the far-reaching socio-economic changes in Ireland, which were caused by the economic boom of the Celtic Tiger in the 1990s and 2000s and the following recession after the financial crisis of 2007. These changes had an impact on the formation of policies of security. To examine how these socioeconomic dynamics and the recent nationwide discourse have an impact on the everyday life of people in Ireland, I carried out an ethnographic case study between October 2015 and May 2016 in the municipality of Ballinateis, which is located in the commuter belt of Dublin city. I paid special attention to the connection between the conceptions of (in-)security and space, because I argue that practices and strategies of security in everyday life have an impact on the production and construction of space. Therefore, the analysis of space provides a basis for conceptualizing forms of (in-)security.