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“Truth should never get in the way of a good story”

(Fergus Hogan):

The Portrayal of the Irish Conman and Conwoman in
Claire Kilroy’s

The Devil I Know (2012)

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Abstract

The conman and conwoman described as “[...] a person who performs confidence tricks to get money from people in a dishonest way [...]” (Longman Dictionary of Language and Culture 2005: 290) often appears as one amongst numerous stereotypes in novels about and for the Irish. In recent years the figure of the Irish conman or conwoman has become more and more prominent in film and literature. Especially in Claire Kilroy’s novel *The Devil I Know*, various types of conmen and a conwoman deserve the readers’ special attention.

One aim of this thesis is to discuss reasons for and the origin of stereotypes and define them. Furthermore, Irish stereotypes will be investigated to explore where and when stereotypical character traits such as a ‘blarney talking Irish’, a ‘treacherous Irish’ or even an Irish conman or conwoman evolved. One focus of this thesis is to clarify in how far the Irish mythology and the colonial British-Irish relationship and its historical context shaped these stereotypical descriptions of the Irish people.

In order to facilitate the identification of Irish conmen and conwomen in Claire Kilroy’s novel, part of this thesis will be to shed light on the historical portrayal of the Irish in British media and theatre and to analyse caricatures published in *Punch* Magazine. These cartoons were published during the Victorian period of the British Commonwealth and are concerned with the political relationship between the British and the Irish. Content analysis will be used in order to analyse the caricatures and infer valuable information about the stereotype of the Irish conman or conwoman, employing a post-colonialist approach.

Moreover, it will be pointed out why these stereotypes can be detected in various characters in the novel and in how far those differ regarding various stereotypically portrayed characters throughout Irish history, namely the Anglo-Irish conman, the Hiberno-Irish conman and conwoman and the Viking Irish conman.

Finally, the satirical note which permeates in Claire Kilroy’s writing will be discussed. The latter can be discerned when commonly used stereotypes about the Irish are portrayed. Even though the author is Irish, one could suggest that by this novel she is mocking her own people as the stereotypical other. The final part of this thesis is the analysis of these descriptions and

the question in what way the novel could be seen to employ a satirical representation or auto-image of the Irish.

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1. Introduction

Stereotypes exist in different shapes, intensities and as a result of specific intentions; however, they are present in every culture. Especially in the context of power struggles and dominance of one culture over another, stereotypes seem to be a prevalent feature of social contexts and a marker for these specific struggles (Maass 1991). Most importantly, stereotypes arise interlinked with fights about power and superiority in colonialism and postcolonialism.

Various stereotypes, therefore, mark specific cultures and create contrasts to other cultural groups. These stereotypes range from positive and friendly, to negative, condescending and even racist varieties. The Irish people proved to be victim of the negative variant of stereotyping mainly during the Victorian period and during the Commonwealth. Amongst a number of negative stereotypes the Irish were described as dishonest and treacherous, tricking other people for their personal gain. The main aim of this thesis is to shed light on the question of how a stereotype of a dishonest conman or conwoman originated and formed over the course of Anglo-Irish history, and how conmen or conwomen are portrayed in Claire Kilroy's recent novel *The Devil I Know* (2012).

Initially, a brief introduction to the postcolonial approach chosen and its key concepts are given. Hereby the main concepts of mimicry, hybridity, authenticity and identity as well as 'the third space' (Bhabha 1994) are discussed before the methodology of context analysis is explained.

Secondly, the reason for stereotyping, the origins of stereotypes and their development are described. Key concepts from the social sciences such as 'the ingroup' or 'the outgroup' (Maass et al. 1991) are clarified and different types of stereotype formation are discussed.

The following chapter is concerned with the stereotypical perception of Irish people by the British colonial power. An overview of the print media which shaped the common British idea about the Irish from the late Middle Ages until the Victorian period is discussed. Furthermore, two caricatures published in *Punch* magazine during the 1880s are analysed. Additionally, the stock character of the stage Irishman and the characteristics of Irish female

and male parts in British drama, from Shakespeare until the Victorian period, are discussed to gain information about specific stereotypes. The information derived from the caricature analysis and about the Irish stock characters is then used for and applied in the analysis of Claire Kilroy's novel.

The latter is followed by a description of the evolution of trickster figures and conmen and conwomen in Irish mythology and folklore. The 'leprechaun', the 'Pooka' and 'the druid/druidess' are elaborated on in more detail. Some of these mythological creatures have not only developed in Irish mythology, but also in West-African tales, where the trickster figure can disguise its true identity and change its shape into the one of another character. Irish people were referred to as 'the White Negro' (Douglas 2010) during the Victorian period of Commonwealth Britain and were considered to be a sub-human species arrested in evolutionary development. Due to this, they were often compared to apes such as gorillas (Douglas 2010). Africans were similarly portrayed during the Commonwealth and both cultures, West-African and Irish, incorporate similar figures in their folktales.

As one can not only encounter stereotypes from the Victorian period but also some which were propagated mainly in America's first comic strips after the first emigration waves in the 20th century, a short chapter is devoted to the changing perception of the Irish, from violent, alcoholic brutes, to comic, likable creatures. A link between the Irish and the Afro-American culture is established once more.

In the main part of the analysis, the plot of Claire Kilroy's novel *The Devil I Know* is introduced shortly, before the characters of the Anglo-Irish, the Hiberno-Irish, the Viking-Irish conman, the conwoman and Monsieur Deauville and Larney are elaborated on. On the basis of the theory given in the first part of the thesis, these characters are analysed focussing on their possible origin in mythology and the stereotypical portrayal in British and American theatres, caricatures and comic strips. While the first four of them could mainly be analysed by the help of historical events and various views on those inferred from the caricature analysis, the last two characters will be discussed by relating them to examples taken from Celtic mythology and Irish folklore.

The aim of the final chapter is to comment on the novel's classification within the genre of social satire, before a final overall conclusion of the thesis will be drawn.

2. Methodology: Postcolonial Approach and Context Analysis

Two main strands of theoretical sources were used as the underlying guidelines for this study. In order to analyse the use of stereotypes of Irish people in British media, insights from postcolonial theory will be used, while a context analysis is employed to interpret stereotypical images of Irishmen in selected cartoons from *Punch* magazine.

2.1. Postcolonial Approach

Especially, due to Great Britain's politics of Commonwealth, postcolonial aspects play a vital role throughout the countries which belonged to the former British Empire. Also Ireland is significant in this context and therefore postcolonial theory shall be considered in some detail.

Postcolonial theory, according to McClintock, does not only contain aspects of the post colonial stage of a nation, but rather all aspects which have happened from the very beginning of colonising a territory, which she terms a pre-colonial stage, to a colonial stage until a post-colonial level is achieved (1992).

Colonisation is defined by McClintock as the involvement of

[...] direct territorial appropriation of another geo-political entity, combined with forthright exploitation of its resources and labor, and systematic interference in the capacity of the appropriated culture (itself not a homogenous entity) to organize its dispensations of power (McClintock 1992:88).

The term colonisation can be subdivided into two diverse categories: internal colonisation and imperial colonisation. While internal colonisation describes a situation where one individual group in a society or nation is colonised by another one, imperial colonisation involves the colonisation of large territories and the domination of one nation over another one, as was the case in the Victorian period of the British Commonwealth (McClintock 1992).

According to McClintock the relationship between Great Britain and Ireland could be described as imperial colonisation; however, one has to bear in mind that Ireland might

constitute a specific and unique colony, as Ireland had not been new territory to Great Britain. Steven Ellis stated “Ireland was not an unknown island 3, 000 miles out in the Atlantic, waiting to be discovered and colonised.” (qtd. in Murphy 2008:155). Gaelic chieftains were acknowledged by the British crown and, unlike native Americans, were awarded feudal titles and rebellious ones were brought to England for their trials and executions. So “[d]espite the gripes of some, official government policy in London and Dublin remained the assimilation and civilisation of the Gaels.” (Morill qtd. in Murphy 2008:155). Additionally, Ireland’s only period as an independent and united country or island was from 1603 until 1922, which was a time under British rule (Murphy 2008). As a result of this Ireland should be awarded a special role in the debate about British imperialism, as the Irish people, according to Murphy, were never entirely considered a ‘colonial other’ (Murphy 2008).

The colonial status of Ireland indeed seems to be subject of heated debate. While Desmond Fennell says that “British rule of Ireland (or part of it) was – regardless of exonerating factors – morally wrong, and that the Irish resistance to it was – regardless of blemishes – morally right.” (qtd. in Murphy 2008:154), Seamus Deane states that “[...]ultimately there may have been no such thing as colonialism. It is, according to many historians, one of the phantoms created by nationalism, which is itself phantasmal enough” (qtd. in Murphy 2008:154), and Quinn and Canny comment on this aspect stating that “[...] the English pursued a common set of objectives and policies in Ireland and the New World and they manifested a common set of attitudes to native Americans and Gaelic Irish alike.” (qtd. in Murphy 2008:155).

In the following, the aspects of authenticity, mimicry and hybridity according to postcolonial theory shall be subjects of this thesis, in order to shed light on certain character traits or behavioural patterns of the protagonists in *The Devil I Know*.

2.1.1. 'What Is My Nation?' - Authenticity and Mimicry in a Colonised People

According to the theories of Adorno, authenticity can be described as the search for a people's true origins. Golomb refines authenticity as a united state of the inner core of the self and its outer manifestations (Graham 1999).

One could argue that authenticity also plays a vital role in the struggle to become an independent nation, as it is rooted in particular cultural tradition providing the soil of a people's nationalism. Authenticity is needed to represent the imagined community of a separate nation (Graham 2010). Moreover, Graham states that "[...] Kierkegaard adds another meaning to authenticity, 'namely, the return to the genuine origins of ourselves, our feelings and our beliefs' [as] 'the self is something that should be created and formed, not something possessing an intrinsic essence to be further developed.'" (2010: 63).

Furthermore, Graham states that the Irish people's authenticity and their striving for being acknowledged as an authentic people had its roots in nationalism leading to revolution and their wish to rule their own country (1999). He continues

If authenticity is a tool for the justification of colonialism then, like (and as part of) the nation, it must be turned to face the colonizer. The history of nineteenth-century Irish cultural nationalism can be seen as such a process of reclamation, restaking the grounds for Irishness, 'proving' Irish authenticities (Graham 1999: 16).

As the assimilation process of the Irish to the British due to colonialism signifies a 'denial of national validity', maintenance of being different or embracing of the feeling of being the other is neglected and power of identity shifts in favour of the colonial power. Therefore, the only strategy left is the one of radical nationalism and the open celebration of difference of otherness, which aims at the construction of the inferiority of the colonial power (Smyth 1999).

However, in the process of colonisation, members of the colonised countries adapt to oppression in certain ways. First, they tend to show ambition in assimilating to the colonising force, as one feels the desire to become equal and not to be seen as the inferior entity anymore. This assimilation can reach the point of a total blending-in process and

disappearance in the colonising culture (Smyth in Graham 1999). This assimilation could be seen as a slightly ironic compromise (Bhabha 1984).

Lim states that colonial strategy could even include deliberately set actions and attempts to fascinate the colonised individuals who in return try to mirror the identity and image of the coloniser. This process of mimicry, Bhabha states, is one of the most effective and well hidden strategies employed by colonial powers. He claims that mimicry is “[...] the sign of a double-articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation, and discipline [...]” (Bhabha 1984). The latter strategy forms the other, appropriates it to the needs of the colonial power and thus makes this power visible (Bhabha 1984). On the other hand, however,

[a]ccordingly, mimicry is a double rupture between origin and copy. As such, mimicry is an attempt to at once stabilize and destabilize colonial authority. For one thing, mimicry stabilizes colonial authority in that the colonized is altered from the intractable, inestimable other into the compliant, measurable other. For another, the colonized, by means of mimicry, a partial repetition of colonial presence, destabilizes colonial authority, thus decentring its centrality. The result is that the colonizer is inescapably anxious with the grotesque image as mirrored by the colonized (Lim 2011: 121ff.).

So the colonised partially assimilate to the coloniser and, therefore, influence the identity of the colonising power (Lim 2011) and that is where Bhabha discerns the ambivalence in mimicry processes, as there is a thin line between mimicry and mockery “[...] where the reforming, civilizing mission is threatened by the displacing gaze of its disciplinary double [...]” (Bhabha 1984:127). This will prove helpful for the considerations in chapter 8, where the issue of satire is addressed with regards to *The Devil I Know*.

Even though mimicry might prove a vital strategy to cope with colonial powers, it does not enable representation but rather repetition of an image or a role model. Therefore, authenticity of the colonised cannot be upheld in mimicry. Additionally, individuals subjected to colonisation, who attempt at imitation of individuals belonging to the colonial power might be exposed as ‘inappropriate colonial subjects’ as they are ‘almost the same but not white’ and in the case of *The Devil I Know* there is a “[...] difference between being English and being Anglicized [...]”. Thus, the circle continues and the observer becomes yet again the observed (Bhabha 1984:130).

2.1.2. Hybridity, Identity and the 'Third Space'

If mimicry is somehow deemed unfit a strategy under colonial rule, the notion of hybridity may apply.

Hybridity is often seen as the handing over of the desire for one's origin, a blending of two distinct cultures into one third and new, even though this third culture somehow "[...] retains a sense of difference and tension between two cultures, but without assuming hierarchy." (Bolatagici 2004:6). Hybridity, according to Bhabha, could be described as the reevaluation of colonial identity by the colonised. Discriminatory identity could be transferred and changed as the individuals strive for total disposal of all evidence of discrimination and domination. On the one hand, this transferring process then unsettles the image of colonial power, but on the other hand, also reinstalls and subverts "[...] the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power." (1994: 159 ff.).

Since the arrival of the tourist industry in Ireland this dominant gaze plays a vital role for gaining profit from visiting tourists. The dominant gaze seems to be subverted by the Irish back onto the tourists, who are predominantly British, to create an illusion of an "[...] elusive sense of pastness [which] is central to the tourist's search for that which is 'other' to her/his own experience [...]." (Barton 2010: 414). This is achieved directly through hinting for instance at the function of the *seanachái*, a Celtic story teller, or indirectly, through using castle ruins in the tourist sector (Barton 2010).

One main question arises when considering the notion of hybridity. It can only be discussed when starting with the idea, that homogenous cultures meet and in between hybrid culture or hybrid identities are formed. The latter theory could become more problematic, when one introduces the idea, that a culture in itself is heterogeneous. Hereby, even more than in Bhabha's original idea of hybridisation, those hybrids can no longer assume one's identity, but merely transform their identities according to situations from one standpoint to another. An identity only exists as 'something else besides'. Spivak therefore argues that "[...] the subaltern becomes truly situational." (Spivak qtd. in Kirkland 1999:219).

W.E.B. Du Bois explains that in a domineering racist culture it is barely possible for a member of a minority group to create and establish a 'positive or true sense of self' as a dominant culture only mirrors a stereotypical, racist picture back to the onlooker. He terms

this notion the 'double-consciousness' where one gets the impression of constantly monitoring oneself through the eyes of others, "[...] of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity." (qtd. in Soper 2005: 261ff.).

While, in any case, hybridity describes the cultural phenomenon of intermingling unique entities to establish and create a third and completely inseparable and indistinguishable new category, "[...] where origin and home are indeterminate." (Bolatagici 2004:4), identity is a notion underlying the question of mimicry and hybridity.

According to the *Oxford Dictionary* identity is defined as "[...] the fact of being who or what a person or thing is [...]" and "[...] the characteristics determining this [...]" (Oxford Dictionary 2005).

Colonial identity furthermore, according to Bhabha is "[...] ambivalent and hybrid [in so far as] it blurs the boundary between colonizer and colonized, therefore undermining colonial power and discourse." (Lim 2011:113). Moreover, this ambivalence creates a social order, a hierarchy, where some individuals perceive themselves as being superior to others (Lim 2011). In addition to that, Lim claims that colonisers rely on the oppressed and colonised individuals, so as to form their identity, as both identities, the ones of the colonised and the colonisers are formed in opposition and so in relation to each other (Lim 2011). As Edward Said put it

All cultures spin out a dialectic of self and other, the subject 'I' who is native, authentic, at home, and the object 'it' or 'you', who is foreign, perhaps threatening, different out there. From this dialectic comes the series of heroes and monsters, founding fathers and barbarians, prized masterpieces and despised opponents that express a culture from its deepest sense of national self-identity to its refined patriotism, and finally to its coarse jingoism, xenophobia, and exclusivist bias (Said 1999:40).

Thus, It could be claimed that "[...] the construction of self and the construction of other are mutually influencing each other [...]" (Lim 2011: 119), even though colonial mechanisms operate to fulfil the agenda of centralisation of the colonising power and marginalisation of the colonised power (Lim 2011).

Identity, in the context of colonialism, forms due to the process of hybridity formation where a third space, becomes the place for negotiation and translation and “[...] resistance against colonial dominance in a way that the colonized enters the dominant discourse.” (Bhabha qtd. in Lim 2011:122). Homi Bhabha termed the ‘third space’ a place where other elements encounter and interact as well as transform each other, so as to create a new idea of oneself and identity (Bolatagici 2004). Also Edward Said claims that within the process of colonialism no individual is solely one thing as the imperial power consolidates the mixture of cultures and identities (Lim 2011).

2.1.3. Biological vs. Social Race

In order to discuss certain stereotypes used in the chosen caricatures in chapter 4, it seems to be vital to clarify the concept of race and the difference between biological definitions and social definitions of the term in the following.

The *Oxford Dictionary* explains the term ‘race’ as a group, type, sort, kind or class (Oxford Dictionary 2005). The common definition, according to Graves, is a mixture between a social and a biological component. A biological definition contains the factor of evolving races as groups of individuals who share a great number of genetical marks and as individuals who are able to reproduce with each other as well as with individuals of other races of the same species to form hybrids.

Socially constructed definitions of race are based on “[...] arbitrarily utilize[d] aspects of morphology and culture [...]” (Graves 2009). Social races “[...] do not align with our biological understanding of human variation [...]” (Graves 2009). These social components include culture, customs and languages (Graves 2009). Bolatagici claims that races could be understood to form due to political and social fights over power. The idea of the belonging to an individual race is not upheld in situations exempt from these power struggles. The sole underlying reason for division into races is the one of representing oneself or a group of individuals (2004).

2.2. Context Analysis

Context analysis will be used to analyse and explain two chosen examples of British caricatures of Irishmen from the Victorian period, in order to comment on the historically dated value of stereotypes.

Klaus Krippendorff claims that context analysis is vital for sociological communication research as it examines specific data in its exact context and with regard to the meanings specific groups or cultures have attached to them. The latter is deemed important as specific content “[...] reveal[s] some properties of their distant producers or carriers, and they have cognitive consequences for their senders, their receivers, and the institutions in which their exchange is embedded.” (1989:403).

Thus, context analysis enables the analyst to gain information about issues such as what certain messages are communicated to the receiver, who the sender of this message is, which channel is used to transport the message and which effects the various messages have on who (Krippendorf 1989).

Moreover, different trends, patterns and individual developments can be revealed by making use of context analysis, which is important when considering attitudes the sender would like to transport to the receiver via these messages. The scholar claims that through context analysis it became apparent to the general public in how far and how “[...] mass media may create particular beliefs or reinforce existing prejudices.” (Krippendorf 1989: 404).

Therefore, this approach could be considered suitable for the purpose of this thesis, as one could claim that it might have been the sole purpose of the caricatures analysed to ridicule the Irish in front of the British people and to reinforce, if not introduce, prejudices against the Irish population.

In order to facilitate the research of the origin of stereotypes the analysis targets three features, namely text, characters and location depicted in the caricatures discussed in chapter 4.

3. Stereotyping and Group Perception

The “[...] normal and the abnormal, the developed and the undeveloped, the vanguard and the led, the liberated and the salvable [...] we inherit social belief systems and this becomes the stuff of who we are – in short, we take in the social profoundly.” (Treacher 2006:374).

Stereotypes are an important concept in the interaction of members of certain cultures with each other but can certainly also play an important role in the relationships of individuals of one and the same cultural background. What is the definition of a stereotype? Where do clichés and stereotypes come from? What function do stereotypes fulfil in or between various social groups? The next chapter will consider these questions and provide some answers.

3.1. What is a Stereotype?

In order to analyse a literary text in search for certain stereotypes one needs to clarify the definitions of these concepts.

In the *Longman Dictionary of Language and Culture* a stereotype is explained as “[...] someone or something that represents [...] a fixed set of ideas about what a particular type of person or thing is like, which is (wrongly) believed to be true in all cases [...]” (Longman 2005: 1365). Also the *Oxford Dictionary* claims a stereotype to be either a “[...] widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing [...]” or “[...] a person or thing that conforms to a stereotypical image [...]” (Oxford Dictionary 2005). While both dictionaries define the meaning of these terms, it is also stated in *Longman* that the word stereotype is often used in a derogatory sense, so as to insult somebody else or portray oneself superior to another individual or group (Longman 2005).

3.2. Origins and Functions of Stereotypes

Scholars, such as Yeung and Kashima, claim that the introduction of stereotypes is generally a matter of social communications and used to maintain the harmony in relationships with individuals of the same group (2012).

Anne Maass and Mark Schaller introduce the common view of psychologists that stereotypes are underlying a motivational and a cognitive basis (1991).

3.2.1. Stereotype Formation: The Motivational Approach

The motivational approach incorporates social identity theory as well as self-categorisation theory. The first includes the categorisation of individuals into meaningless groups which are decided upon by trivial criteria. As a result of this group formation aspects such as ingroup favouritism and outgroup derogation can be detected (Tajfel et al. 1971).

Tajfel et al. came forward with the hypothesis that in order to enhance one's own self-esteem as well as the self-esteem individuals feel in a group, one needs to feel superior to other members or groups in a created social category (1971).

According to Maass and Schaller people commonly try to achieve and uphold a positive identity and they feel the need for superiority of the ingroup over the outgroup. "Thus, the key prediction of social identity theory is that intergroup discrimination derives from the desire to achieve and maintain a positive identity." (Maass and Schaller 1991: 190).

Moreover, Berndsen et al. state that "[...] group stereotypes are based on behaviours for which the within-group differences are small rather than large [...]" and that the process of stereotyping occurs more frequently the higher the limitation in variability within these groups (1997).

Self-categorisation theory states that "[...] people tend to form self-categorizations at different levels of abstraction, ranging from the most abstract, superordinate conception of the self as human being over the intermediate level of ingroup – outgroup categorizations to the subordinate level of personal self-categorizations as a unique individual." (Maass et al. 1991:191). The goal hereby seems to be the sustenance of a state of positive self-evaluation. As a consequence, whichever comparative level applies in a situation, individuals attempt a positive distinctiveness "[...] either between self and other ingroup members [...] or between ingroup and outgroup [...]" (Maass et al. 1991:191).

Furthermore, studies suggest that it is not the group with low self-esteem to discriminate against another so as to boost their positive self-evaluation but it seems to be high self-

esteem groups which are more prone to discriminate against other groups (Maass et al. 1991).

However, there is suggestive evidence that momentary threats to social identity (for example due to prior comparison with a higher status outgroup) increase the positive differentiation of the ingroup from a second, lower status outgroup (Spears & Manstead (1989), Wagner, Lampen & Syllwasschy (1986) in Maass et al. 1991:192).

Moreover, research proposes that intergroup biases and stereotypes might have their origin in collective, as opposed to individual, esteem needs and that “[...] there is little doubt that categorization of people into even the most trivial groups tends to produce ingroup-favouring biases in allocation of resources, evaluation, and causal attributions.” (Maass et al. 1991:192).

3.2.2. Stereotype Formation - The Cognitive Approach

Tajfel and Wilkes observed that just a categorisation of individuals, according to a certain physical or social aspect, caused the individuals’ perception to change. While members of the same group deemed similarities they had with other group members much stronger, they also claimed to experience considerably greater differences to outgroup individuals. Therefore, it could be claimed that “[i]ntracategory similarity and intercategory differences are exaggerated even when group assignment is arbitrary or meaningless (Maass et. al 1991:193).

In addition it has been shown that humans’ expectations as well as facts and actual data are crucial to our perception of relationships. So therefore, it

[...] seems reasonable to assume that expectations involving differences between the groups [...] also include the expectation that members belonging to a particular group will display similar behaviors, because the very term “group” suggests that individuals who belong to it share behaviours, outlooks, or attitudes, at least to some degree (Berndsen et al. 1997: 904 ff.).

The latter becomes especially important when specific individuals of a group, i.e. the outgroup show unfavourable behaviour surrounded by members of the ingroup. This

behaviour will certainly be noticed more easily when depicted by outgroup individuals than by ingroup members. As a result, these actions, especially when they might not be considered to be within the agreed on social norms, will be most likely associated with the outgroup and will function as a distinctive marker between members of both groups. So“[...] even when minority and majority groups display an equal ration of desirable to undesirable behaviours, people will tend to overassociate the minority group with infrequently occurring undesirable behaviour.” (Maass et al. 1991:193). Moreover, these illusory correlations are more likely to “[...] be more accessible during memory retrieval than will occurrences involving common events.” and as a consequence people are prone to overestimate the frequency of such events (Maass et al. 1991:194).

As soon as a stereotype is formed in a persons’ mind, either through the latter illusory correlation formation or socialisation and upbringing, this stereotype is activated once in the presence of a member of the stereotyped group. The idea of a stereotype consequently alters information processing and memory processing as it could lead either to specific interpretation, i.e. the biased interpretation of a situation based on the stereotype, selective processing, or the processing of only that share of the information which is congruent with the stereotype. Even if a person wanted to overcome this stereotype, researchers claim that it is hardly possible to turn off the information completely (Maass et al. 1991:194).

As soon as a cultural stereotype is set in the mind of an individual, various cognitive mechanisms play a vital role for the process of stagnation of these beliefs and their resistance to alteration. When individuals are given the option in the formation of cultural stereotypes they show the tendency of preference of expectancy rather than disconfirming information. So generally people maintain certain stereotypes and tend to interpret a situation according to a certain stereotype rather than seeking an explanation for a specific stereotypical behaviour elsewhere (Maass et al. 1991).

Thus, according to research, these evaluative reinterpretations can be the reason for and facilitate the production and reinforcement of, something like perceived similarity of members of a certain group (Berndsen et al. 1997).

These theories may provide possible explanations for negative or derogatorily used stereotypes one group of people or even a people, in this case the British, applied in order to refer to another group of individuals or a people, namely the Irish.

4. Perceptions of the Irish by the British

Ireland's history gives numerous examples and justifications on why the Irish perception of the Irish and the British perception of the Irish are fundamentally different from each other.

Bronwen gives an attempt to summarise the British perception of the Irish and stereotypes into two main strands, the first one including stupidity, poor language skills and lack of intelligence, and the second one, focussing on violence and mindlessness often in connection to alcohol (Bronwen 1999).

How, when and where these stereotypes could have evolved and in what way they differ according to race, perceived identity and country of origin, will be the topics of the next chapters.

4.1. The Historical Context and Irish Identity – The British Perception of Irish Identity between the 17th and 20th Century

Even though the Irish as a nation were the ones to be colonised by the British, and, as Fanon states, the coloniser and the colonised are male in representation (McClintock 1992), it is vital for this thesis to differentiate between the British perception of the Irish male and Irish female individuals, which varies tremendously in specific contexts. It could be stipulated that the following will be an account of the predominately male perception summarised in literature. It has to be stated that in many scholarly articles, the authors do not distinguish between male and female stereotyping. As probably a majority of works mention the term Irish, rather than Irish men and women, one could either conclude that men and women are

equally referred to as one unified people, or that it was indeed mainly men who were subjected to stereotyping of specific sorts. With regard to this, Bronwen claims that

‘Paddies’ and ‘Micks’ subsume both genders, but are overtly male in stereotype. Irish men carry the weight of ridicule and contempt, both for their aggressive masculinity and their feminized weakness. Irish women are limited to a symbolic role and rendered invisible as real bodies, allowing their material needs to be ignored (Bronwen 1999: 85ff.).

4.1.1. The Perception of the Male Irish

Even as early as the 12th century Giraldus Cambrensis reported the Irish as wild and barbarous in his letters to Henry II (Appel 1971).

In the 17th century the British perception of the Irish could be claimed to be of a racist quality. Arrowsmith gives an account on the British view of the Irish at the time of seventeenth century England, where religious fanaticism and cultural paranoia were the main influence on the portrayal of the Irish people. The latter were seen as ‘the other’ in comparison to British society and depicted as being a possible “[...] threat to an entire civilisation [which] justifies the exercise of power and enables the consolidation of hegemony.” (Arrowsmith 2006: 163).

Also Graham explains that from the point of view of the British the reason to colonise the Irish would be the perceived inauthenticity of the Irish culture. This lack of authenticity could be understood as legitimisation for the colonial project. As in the eyes of the coloniser the colonised would fail to establish their understanding of humanity and a valuable society, it could be seen as legitimate to colonise and force the Irish into being ruled by a colonial power (Graham 1999).

Moreover, Smyth introduces the colonial powers’ distrust as an important factor for legitimising decisions concerning colonial policy when he mentions: “They are not the same as us, therefore our domination is justified.” (1999:36).

Other strategies to explain and rectify political decisions were introduced accordingly. The Irish people were described as brutal sinners who lived like beasts and talked with an outlandish accent. So as to shape and define Elizabethan ‘Englishness’, native Celtic people

were seen as politically and religiously inferior, uneducated savages, who could be classified as morally lax with practices of wild sexuality. Also British writers, such as Edmund Spenser depicted the Irish as 'a turbulent, semi-nomadic, treacherous, idle, dirty and belligerent lot'. (Arrowsmith 2006:163 ff.).

According to Arrowsmith the portrayal of Irish otherness functioned "[...] as a barometer of British anxiety at significant social and political moments." (2006: 164). In these debates the question of one's local heritage and one's biological origin in terms of ethnical roots were of a central importance.

Especially the United Kingdom between the 17th and the 20th century showed considerable controversy over the terms 'ethnicity' and 'race'. MacLaughlin explains that there seemed to be an 'exclusiveness' of race and the term served mainly to keep people on the margins of society, while 'ethnicity' could be used as an inclusive term in order to integrate specific people in a society (1999). He continues to state that exactly this understanding was used by the British Crown so as to legitimise the exclusion and colonisation of countries and ethnic minorities specifically within the British Commonwealth. In order to justify an inferior standpoint of the colonised in the 19th century, the term 'race' was moreover used "[...] in political discourse, however, race was also used to categorize people, both according to their phenotypical characteristics and according to their cultural attributes." (MacLaughlin 1999: 51).

In the 18th century the name 'Paddy', as a synonym for Irish people, replaced the formerly common 'Teague'.

Paddy as a humorous, emotionally unstable, ignorant, dirty, superstitious, childish, half-civilized, violent and vengeful yet, at, times, fun-loving and amusing type was 'an invention of the early Victorian imagination'. [...] There is a Gillray cartoon, 'Paddy on Horseback', dating from 1779, which seems to represent [the word's] earliest recorded usage [...] (Appel 1971:372).

Predominately in the Victorian era 'brutalisation' and depiction as the 'Celtic gorilla', through the works of George Cruikshank (Appel 1971), took place, exactly at a time when nationalism had succeeded in constructing positive pictures of Irishness and lift the image of the cultural landscape of Irish rural Roman Catholic lifestyles. This brutalisation and perceived otherness in moral matters functioned as the fuse for racism against the Irish

people in the Victorian nation-state and enabled the Crown to legitimise political decisions, which were seldom taken in favour of the colonies (MacLaughlin 1999).

Another reaction of the British to nationalism and rebellion was to be found in the academic discourse, of the natural sciences, where the focus was laid on physiognomy and phrenology. In 1852 J.W. Redfield published *Comparative Physiognomy*, which dealt with the Irish gift for speech and compared it to the barking of dogs. Moreover, in the Darwinian age, semianisation of the Irish in Great Britain took place, as the gorillas were newly explored and therefore, resemblances between the physical traits of gorillas and the Irish were commonly used in science, literature and in newspapers (MacLaughlin 1999).

Additionally, Robert Knox had published his *Races of Men* in 1850 and expanded it until the 1860s. This book was concerned with the analysis of European races and tried to establish a line of separation between the “[...] Saxons of England from the Celts of France and Ireland, on the one hand, and the “diverse races” of Germany, on the other.” (Boltwood 2001:384). Goldwin Smith soon followed with *Irish History* and *Irish Character* and explained the relationships between the English and the Irish. Both authors, according to Boltwood, placed their claims on the grounds of common prejudices against the Irish interlinked to the alleged inferiority of the Celtic people, when they referred to a moral and physically distinguished Anglo-Saxon in comparison to the common Irish. Especially Smith constructed a derogatory picture of the Irish, when - referring to Darwin’s evolution theory - he explained that the Irish were a race arrested in development and, therefore, they could be described as immature and imbalanced. Moreover, Smith states that “[...] rhetoric is a peculiar gift both of the French and the Irish mind...the mark not of genius, but of want of sense and self-control [...]” (qtd. in Boltwood 2001: 385). The latter argument will prove vital for the analysis of the Irish conmen and conwoman in *The Devil I Know* as it seems that this image of the Irish is not just an Irish perception of the Irish but rather one which was constructed from both outside and inside Irish society.

During the mid to the end of the 19th century many Irish people emigrated to Great Britain to look for work and in the bigger cities, such as Liverpool, Manchester and London, Irish ghettos were formed, where living conditions of the Irish population were some of the poorest at that time. They were explained by referring to the people’s proneness to

drunkenness, wish for fighting and their dishonesty. Henry Mayhew and John Binney published a report on crime in English prisons in 1862 and stated that the Irish children grew up there without any occupation, sense of property and likelihood to steal (MacLaughlin 1999). Above all, the hybrid Irish were pictured as the most dangerous and most traitorous people (MacLaughlin 1999). The latter could be explained with the help of Lim's theory about mimicry and hybridisation, where he claims that imitation of the colonisers' behaviour by the colonised results in destabilisation of colonial authority (Lim 2011). Once the Irish had emigrated to bigger cities of Great Britain to find work, one referred to them as a 'mutant people' who created new types and categories of Irishness building "[...] a landscape of the mind that was then inhabited by the Irish emigrant." (MacLaughlin: 1999:60). Newness emerged and was formed due to hybridisation as the Irish people defined themselves predominantly along the lines of otherness and their understanding of having a mediating position between the old Irishness and the new Britishness (MacLaughlin 1999).

As the hybrid Irish were prone to have been under the greatest influence of the coloniser living in Great Britain, they would have used and adopted British modes of behaviour. Therefore, the hybrid Irish partly assimilated to the British culture, which was perceived as a threat in British society as well as amongst the Gaelic Irish communities.

4.1.2. The Portrayal of Irish Women

As far as Irish women are concerned, there are very few stereotypes created by the British. Interestingly, Irish women are often depicted to be quite the opposite to often 'brutalised' Irish men, because, according to Bronwen, Irish men stood in the public light more than women, as the latter often stayed at home to raise the children and take care of the private sphere, while the men went to work (1999). Therefore, women were often described as being sensitive, in need for protection, appreciating arts, tidiness and order and asking for male dominance and control over them. Additionally, scholars have drawn parallels between patriarchal and colonising power, which can be said to play with male desire and show the similarities between dominance in sexual and political realms (Bronwen 1999). The latter can be seen as the reason for the fact that "[m]asculine images were of uncontrolled subhumans incapable of self-government. Feminine images were of weakness requiring protection." (Bronwen 1999:80). Further details on this can be found in the next sections,

where stereotypes of Irish women in caricatures, published in British newspapers, will be analysed.

4.3. Irish Stereotypes in British Literature and the British Press

The need for displaying the superiority of one's own nation over a different one might be seen as the main reason for the derogatory portrayal of the Irish people by the British, media in the Victorian period between the 18th and 19th century. In the mid 19th century a slow but unmistakable change in the depiction of the Irish took place. An Irish drunk and seemingly harmless Irish peasant was often transformed "[...] into a dangerous ape-man or simianized agitator." (Potter 2006).

Racial hibernophobia was justified by the British on the basis of physical characteristics of the Irish people and explained by the use of contemporary theories of physiognomy and phrenology. Due to the rise of Darwinism the Irish people were portrayed like atavistic humans, fighting for their existence just as living fossils. Moreover, their skulls were claimed to be similar to the ones of apes rather than the ones of Homo sapiens. By anti-Semites the Irish were compared to the Jewish race and in some publications referred to as the 'Irish Negro' (Douglas 2010). The term 'race' was in this context used in a non-biological sense, to justify that one group of people was superior to another and, therefore, on a higher rank in the racial hierarchy.

The Irish people were written about in scientific books of the time as well as in newspapers, as the quote from *The Morning Post* from 29th May 1916 shows: "The Irish race is, when undiluted with Anglo-Saxon blood, a weak, ignorant, lazy, emotional race, quite incapable of loyalty even to its own chiefs or leaders, and it has been so for centuries [...]" (qtd. in Douglas 2002:42). Counter arguments, in which the Anglo-Saxons and the Irish were declared equally valuable or physiologically evolved, were seldom seen or heard in public opinion (Douglas 2002).

According to Potter many cartoons of the 19th century were “[...] particularly revealing, as humour provided an alibi that allowed the artist to express prejudices in their baldest forms.” (Potter 2006).

Common to British reactions to events in Ireland from the Rising to the Land War was an emphasis on the Irish as ignorant, savage, uncivilised, superstitious, priest-ridden, lazy and land-hungry. At the same time however, British press commentators also often insisted on the essential loyalty of the mass of the Irish people. To resolve this contradiction, British writers looked for troublemakers, who could be blamed for leading a gullible people astray: rabble-rousers infected with French revolutionary ideology, drifting Irish-American Civil War veterans stirring up Fenianism and careerist Parnellites were all in turn blamed for fanning the flame of sedition (Potter 2006).

Gerry Smyth goes as far as to say that press articles in magazines or newspapers grew more and more partisan only to become openly polemical in their final years of mocking the Irish (qtd. in Graham 1999).

Peter Gray deems the *Punch Magazine* very significant in terms of featuring historically the public perception of historical events. He states that this magazine was in part responsible for shaping and expressing the British public opinion on the Irish. “Punch had a history of broad sympathy for the plight of Ireland, mixed with a mocking hostility towards Daniel O’Connell and the Repeal movement [...]” before portraying Ireland as *Cinderella* in 1846 and moving on to the question of Irish poverty in consecutive years (Gray 1993).

First published in 1841 as a satirical magazine, cofounded by an Irishman, *Punch* gave a tremendously varied representation, which could be termed anti-Irish, as much as anti-medical students, anti-politicians or anti-income tax, according to Foster (1993). This magazine can be said to have started off on rather pro-Irish terms, expressing sympathy for specific political matters (Foster 1993). Gray states that *Punch* was predominantly read in London, especially by British middle to upper class, but also by politicians and several cabinet ministers (1993).

Its tenor shifted when an extreme nationalist-movement called the Young Ireland Movement was formed in the early 1880s. As the Young Ireland Movement became openly anglophobic, “[...] first and most famous anti-Irish cartoons [such as] ‘Young Ireland in Business for Himself’[...]” (Foster 1993:176) was published, soon followed by other ones,

which were openly racist against the Irish and their politics, even before the Darwinian revolution (Foster 1993). Additionally, a big influx of the Irish immigrants to British cities was met by criticism and racism throughout the British population and *Punch* amongst many other print media. By 1850 the magazine's views on the Irish matter and its people had very much reached its all time low (Foster 1993).

In the wake of the financial crisis of autumn 1847, British industry and commerce underwent a period of depression: middle-class radicals responded by crusading against taxation and landlord privileges. Every loan to the ungrateful Irish, however small, was denounced as an additional burden on England's respectable poor (Gray 1993).

One first event to change the public opinion of Irish as semianised brutes to rather comically harmless creatures was the Queen's visit to Ireland, by which Hibernia was pictured as poor but welcoming and, therefore, hospitable, which caused a positive transformation of the formerly threatening 'Paddy'. The transformation of 'Paddy' into 'Sir Patrick Raleigh' is shown in the caricature 'Landing of Queen Victoria in Ireland' from August 1849 (Gray 1993). Many *Punch* cartoons on this occasion showed different types of Irish people, which, however, did not differ significantly from caricatures featuring English people (Foster 1993).

Foster considers the British attitude towards the Irish, portrayed in *Punch* during the Victorian period, as colonial. Albeit anti-Irish, "[...] the whole process may relate more to resentment against Irish resentment of the Union." (Foster 1993:192).

Eagleton claims that the prevailing British opinion of the Irish today, is an amalgamation of affection, hostility, condescension, combined with uneasiness and distrust. He states that even now "[The British] tend to find the Irish quaint, feckless, aggressive and unruly, and can never quite decide whether they find this enormously enjoyable or downright distasteful." (Eagleton 1999: 17).

To clarify the image of the Irish people as reflected in the British Press from about 1800 to 1900 an image analysis, as Homi Bhabha terms it, will be provided in the following section. In order to work on this analysis, two cartoons considered representative have been chosen. These caricatures serve the aim of this thesis and may provide the basis for its final conclusions.

4.4. Image Analysis

The first cartoon was published in *Punch Magazine* in 1886 and is titled 'The Fenian-Pest'; the second one, 'Dr.M'Jekyll and Mr. O'Hyde', was released in 1888, likewise in *Punch* magazine.

The caricatures chosen have very little text, only headline and captions or subheadings.

The important component of the cartoon is inevitably the figures and their detailed portrayal including their outer appearance, grimaces, gestures and sometimes interaction with other characters.

A third main component of the analysis is the setting and background in which the figures are placed.

4.4.1. Ireland between 1886 and 1888: The Historical and Political Background to the Caricatures

In 1886 the National League played an important role in Ireland's political landscape. According to the *Oxford Companion to Irish History* the National League was a political, nationalist group founded in 1882 as a replacement for the Land League. The latter had fought for Catholic privileges and rights when oppression under British rule included paying higher rents for patches of land, no right to vote, lower paid jobs, bad access to schooling and many more points of discrimination. The members of the National League were spread across local communities and also provided parliamentary candidates, like Charles Stewart Parnell who continued Daniel O'Connell's struggle for home rule and the end of inequality between Anglo-Irish and Irish owners of agrarian space and unequal land distribution (Connolly 2007). Even though the number of its members at first was small, "[f]ollowing the franchise reforms of 1884-5, [...] the number of local branches expanded threefold to reach 1,200 [members] by 1886." (Connolly 2007:401).

Charles Stewart Parnell himself was a Protestant, who was notoriously known for his obstruction tactics in parliament. As a chairman of the Irish parliament he pursued Irish home rule. In 1882 letters of his were published in *The Times* in which Parnell expressed

regret for the fact that he could not feel compassion for the Phoenix Park Murders in May, 1882. In this event, the Chief Secretary of Ireland Lord Frederick Cavendish and the Irish Undersecretary Thomas Henry Burke, known to be a Catholic but regarded as a traitor by many Nationalists, had been murdered in Phoenix Park. Soon after the publication of Parnell's letters, he was suspected of supporting terrorism. Even though Parnell openly denounced the letters in parliament, his link to terrorist groups was upheld in public opinion (Connolly 2007). Consequently, the Special Commission found out that the main evidence, a letter allegedly written by Parnell himself, was a forgery done by an Irishman (Foster 1993).

In 1886 The National League launched a campaign for constitutional resistance against British rule, namely the first Home Rule Bill. This bill was intended to ensure home rule and, therefore, in part independence from Great Britain through the establishment of a national assembly in Dublin, consisting of two chambers, which had the responsibility for Irish domestic affairs, "[...] while Westminster retained control of such areas as imperial and foreign affairs, armed forces, currency, security, and major taxation." (Connolly 2007:258). The British Prime Minister supported this bill, which however failed to pass in parliament. After that violence broke out, mainly on the streets in Belfast in the North of Ireland, where Catholics fought against Protestants leading to a number of casualties (Connolly 2007).

In addition to the aftermath of the first failed Home Rule Bill and the work of drafting a second, 1886 also marks the date for 'The Plan of Campaign', which was the Nationalist response to absent Anglo-Irish landlords, agricultural depression and the ongoing evictions violating the Land Act of 1881. This plan was initiated by William O'Brien and other Parnellites, such as Timothy Healy, Timothy Harrington, the secretary of the National League, and John Dillon. The plan proposed that

[...] where a landlord refused rent reductions tenants would offer rents they considered to be fair. On these being refused the sums involved would go into an 'estate fund' for the support of tenants who could then expect to be evicted, with further financial support coming, as needed, from the National League (Connolly 2007:468).

Even though this plan had already been drafted and introduced in 1886, it was only implemented in 1891 (Connolly 2007).

Meanwhile Parnell, who was not involved in the Plan of Campaign, was accused of having ties with terrorist organisations and a special commission had started to enquire and investigate against him until 1890, after the publication of his letters in *The Times* in 1887.

4.4.2. The Cartoon 'The Fenian-Pest'



THE FENIAN-PEST.

HIBERNIA. "O MY DEAR SISTER, WHAT *ARE* WE TO DO WITH THESE TROUBLESOME PEOPLE?"

BRITANNIA. "TRY ISOLATION FIRST, MY DEAR, AND THEN——"

Picture 1: 'The Fenian-Pest', published in 1886 in *Punch Magazine*

4.4.2.1. Text in 'The Fenian-Pest'

The term 'Fenian' refers to members of the secret oath-bound 'Irish Republican Brotherhood', opposed to British colonial rule in Ireland and dedicated to fight foreign rule with armed forces, predominantly during the "[...] Fenian era between 1867 and 1870 [...]" (de Nie 2004:144 ff.). The Fenian Brotherhood, which lent the name to its members, posed a twin-organisation to the 'Irish Republican Brotherhood' and aimed at a unified Ireland under Irish rule. Therefore the Irish Republican Brotherhood was often assisted by its American counterpart by the provision of weapons, money and veterans of the American Civil War in order to plan rebellions or free interned rebels (de Nie 2004).

The cartoon 'The Fenian-Pest' uses the word 'rebellion' right under Britannia's foot and explains the situation with the help of the following short dialogue printed below the picture:

HIBERNIA. "O MY DEAR SISTER, WHAT ARE WE TO DO WITH THESE TROUBLESOME PEOPLE?"

BRITANNIA. "TRY ISOLATION FIRST MY DEAR AND THEN -----"

Hibernia asks her sister Britannia for advice, as she seems to be unable to manage the people inhabiting her country. She refers to them as 'troublesome', which might imply the citizens' tendency to unorthodox behaviour and proneness to violence. Britannia tells Hibernia to isolate the troublemakers. The reader can only make assumptions on the kind of advice Britannia would like to finish her sentence with. Possibly, the sentence was left unfinished by the artist on purpose in order to engage with the readers' ideas. They could complete the dialogue with their own opinions of what the consequences for troublemakers at the time are supposed to be and what consequences, especially Irish troublemakers should be facing.

4.4.2.2. Characters in 'The Fenian-Pest'

This cartoon seems especially important to this thesis as it is one, in which a female Irish person occurs, which is rather rare in the history of Irish caricatures. Bronwen states that

the only Celtic Irish person who was positively connoted was the figure of Hibernia, also known as Erin, a popular trope or personification of Ireland (1999).

Hibernia is wearing a dress consisting of a top and bottom part of cloth bound by a single strand of cord. Her dress' sleeves are sown together by a loose thread and she is wearing strap sandals tied across her ankle. Her head is crowned with a wreath of flowers, and her waist-long, curled hair is bound at the back of her head. She is looking over her shoulder, so the onlooker cannot see the expression on her face. Hibernia's body is slightly twisted, but upright. Her right leg touches a paper with parts of her foot with the line 'rebellion' written on it. She is of petite physique in comparison to Britannia. She clings to Britannia, clutching her sister's arm.

Britannia faces the right side on the picture. The expression on her face is grim and rather stern. She fiercely gazes at an ape-like Irishman. She is wearing an imperial dress in Roman style with a rather broad tie in front of her waist and net or metal scales on the top around her collar. Her neck is broad. Her metal helmet is topped by feathers. Her hair is short and well cropped. Both of her hands are clenched to fists and compared to Hibernia, her extremities seem to be bigger and more muscular.

Hibernia and Britannia foreground the caricature. To their right, one can see many male Irish men forming a mob-like crowd, wearing a peculiar top hats and rifles. One of them can be described in closer detail. He is wearing striped trousers rolled up to his ankles, socks and leather shoes and a waistcoat. On his rather big head he is wearing a peculiar top hat which is decorated by a strange feather or a foxtail. His ape-like mouth is open partly covered by a beard on the upper lip and in his hands he has a rifle and knives concealed in part under the waistcoat. His expression is stern, hostile and aggressive, looking directly at Britannia.

4.4.2.3 Features of the Setting and Background in 'The Fenian-Pest'

The people in the caricature interact in open space. The background suggests grass, bushes and possibly clouds of smoke.

4.4.3. The Cartoon 'Dr.M'Jekyll and Mr. O'Hyde'



DR. M'JEKYLL AND MR. O'HYDE.

Picture 2: 'Dr.M'Jekyll and Mr. O'Hyde' published in 1888 in *Punch Magazine*

4.4.3.1. Text in 'Dr.M'Jekyll and Mr. O'Hyde'

In this caricature a single term appears on a bound bill, a document, or newspaper held by one of the figures, which reads 'National League'. There is no dialogue or explanatory caption added. Only the title of the cartoon is printed underneath it in capital letters.

The title of this caricature is an obvious intertextual reference to Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, first published in 1886, two years prior to the publication date of the caricature. The narrating character of Stevenson's novel is Gabriel John Utterson, a lawyer, and Dr. Jekyll's friend. When Utterson witnesses a man, named Edward Hyde, trampling a girl in the street, he advises him to pay money as compensation to the girl's family. Hyde leads him to his friend's, Dr. Jekyll's, house to fetch the money. Dr. Jekyll has been absent for the last three months and Gabriel Utterson is concerned about his absent friend's health as well as about the fact that prior to his vanishing, Dr. Jekyll has made Edward Hyde the sole beneficiary in his last will and testament. Crimes multiply and Utterson's suspicion grows. He is determined to investigate the cause of Dr. Jekyll's vanishing, when he notices a peculiar similarity in Dr. Jekyll's and Mr. Hyde's handwriting, only to learn in the end that Dr. Jekyll's alter ego is Mr. Hyde (Stevenson 1886).

The second component relevant for the analysis of this cartoon is the Celtic names. The characters depicted are called 'Dr. M'Jekyll' and 'Mr. O'Hyde', which is a reference to the Gaelic tradition of family names, in which 'M' refers to 'son of', and 'O', meaning 'male descendant of' (Ó Siadhail 2004). These prefixes, therefore, are used by the artist of this cartoon to tie a link between the split persona of an allegedly righteous Dr. Jekyll with his dangerous alter ego Mr. Hyde and the Irish people, and a potentially dangerous alter ego Irish people might have according to the cartoon.

4.4.3.2. Characters in 'Dr.M'Jekyll and Mr. O'Hyde'

There are two characters in the caricature. In the middle of the picture one can see a man in a fully buttoned waistcoat, shirt, leather shoes and trousers. His head appears to be half bald and his sideburns are prominent and reach to his lower cheeks. His eyes are closed, his posture is upright and his left hand is touching his breast, while he has a formal document in his right hand. The document is tied with a band and it is entitled 'National League'.

The second male person in the cartoon apparently shares one foot with the formally dressed figure. It is crouched underneath the first person and seemingly is wearing trousers and a shirt to cover its rather muscular body. One foot touches the ground while the other one is kneeling on the ground. The left hand touches the ground as the other one is placed on the right knee with a knife in this hand. Thick hair is covering the upper part of the figure's forehead and his eyes are covered by a blindfold. His mouth is rather broad and his face is distorted cutting a grotesque grimace.

4.4.3. Features of the Setting and Background in 'Dr.M'Jekyll and Mr. O'Hyde'

The setting of this cartoon is elusive as there are no clear indications of where the scene takes place. The artist used very dark contours and the figure behind the man in the waistcoat cannot be clearly distinguished from the dark colours of the background. The man standing in the middle of the picture does not hide in the shadow, but is clearly visible to the onlooker.

4.4.3. Semantic Analysis of the Cartoons

'The Fenian-Pest' is apparently intended to send a clear message to the audience: Britannia, featuring as a figure of authority and power, has come to Ireland to help her sister Hibernia, who feels threatened and in need of protection and a strong shoulder to lean on. Also de Nie mentions various cartoons published in the British media during the time of the Land War between 1879 and 1882, which feature 'Erin', the helpless maiden in need for help from Great Britain (de Nie 2004).

In 'The Fenian-Pest' an overburdened Hibernia asks her sister for support and advice on what both of them should do about the Irish rebellion, hinting at political decisions and conflicts at the time. Britannia suggests separating the wirepullers and heads of the rebellion from the other members and followers in order to bring an end to it. From her determined demeanour and stern appearance the spectator may infer that Britannia does not have peaceful means for ending the violence in mind but considers violent measures.

Hibernia's need for protection and help from Britannia can be inferred from her clutching Britannia's arm, as if appealing to her to help. Britannia's big and strong physique, which is emphasised by her imperial style of dress, as opposed to the plain dress and timid posture of slender Hibernia, who does not even dare to look at her supposed enemies, creates a clear contrast between victimised Hibernia and victorious Britannia. Britannia's pose suggests that she is determined to protect and support Hibernia, and willing to offer assistance and advice. It becomes clear that Hibernia is not capable of coping with the conflict in her country on her own, and that she needs her sister to step in for her.

The very stern gesture of Britannia, who put her foot on the word 'rebellion', suggests that she is determined to crush the rebel movement, whereas Hibernia only manages to touch the word 'rebellion' with her forefoot.

Similar to cartoons analysed by de Nie, Hibernia seems to be overwhelmed, incapable of making decisions of her own, and to be more naive in contrast to her sister who is crowned by a metal war-like helmet rather than a wreath of flowers.

The opponents featuring in this picture are obviously radical Irish Nationalist rebels and revolutionaries, heavily armed, with typical Irish stockings, trousers and waistcoats. They have ape-like features of Irish people stereotypically depicted in cartoons at the time. Their extremities are longish and quite dominant and their mouths rather grotesquely distorted in a very round face. The spectator will be reminded of ape-like features. Additionally, an upper-lip beard is a typical feature in stereotypical portrayals of the Irish people. Their facial expressions resemble the ones of aggressive animals having their mouths open as if in the act of shouting at something or somebody.

The Irishman's grimace suggests beastly behaviour and aggressive readiness to fight for Hibernia's independence and preparation against foreign rule. Due to the stern, fierce and even agitated look of the central figure of the rebels, the spectator could get the impression that the fighters know who their real enemy is: namely Britannia.

The scene seems to be set in the countryside of Ireland with its typical grassy hills, heavy clouds and shrubs around the fields. Natural surroundings, such as the suggested grass and bushes, might emphasise the struggle over Hibernia, the country of Ireland. Moreover, clouds

of smoke emphasise the gravity of Hibernia's situation and her helplessness in the face of a brutal war that the Irish natives are willing to enter in order to fight for their country.

The second cartoon entitled 'Dr. M'Jekyll and Mr. O'Hyde' refers to the Gothic novel of Robert Louis Stevenson, *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. In this novel Dr. Jekyll is the main character, who, however, transforms into the destructive and evil figure of Mr. Hyde by night. Mr. Hyde commits despicable crimes and even murder. Even though one has to admit that the figure in the cartoon does not resemble Charles Stewart Parnell in his appearance, Parnell seems to be represented by it. He was a politician, one of the founders of the National League and considered to be the main force behind the political and constitutional rebellion against Great Britain. He was a very eloquent and popular politician among the Irish even though he was a Protestant and not a Catholic.

Given the scandal of the Phoenix Park murders and Parnell's possible involvement in terrorist activities and, allegedly also in these crimes in the famous Dublin Park area, the caricature refers to those events and the 'double nature' of the culprit murderer. The main upright male person seems to stand for Charles Stewart Parnell, featuring as the eloquent statesman and politician, solemnly holding the founding document of the National League while touching his breast, with the other one, as if touching his heart. The latter gesture suggests that this man, Dr. M'Jekyll, would like to show that he was ready to fight for Ireland, with his heart, and his beliefs, as a statesman and politician.

The statesman, however, also has a dark and hidden second nature - Mr. O'Hyde to his character. This alter ego is a creature who could have been involved in dark and criminal matters, even murders. The artist of the cartoon might have wanted to hint at Parnell's double-nature, notably his dark side and his remorselessness in his acts in order to reach his goals and get what he wants. This determined pursue of his goals would be undertaken even at the expense of killing people opposed to his ideology, without thinking twice about it. A similar caricature, 'The Irish Frankenstein', published in Punch magazine in May 1882, was analysed by de Nie. According to the latter Charles Stewart Parnell has lost control over his before created monster that "[...] stalks the land, pistol and dripping dagger in his hand [...]" (de Nie 2004:249).

Both of these caricatures operate with Irish stereotypes which are still used today. Claire Kilroy's main female character has traits that resemble the image of Hibernia from *The Fenian- Pest*, whereas one of the male characters might hint at the aggressive, uneducated Irishman, prone to drinking and fighting. The main character could be somehow compared to the two-faced persona, as depicted in 'Dr. M'Jekyll and Mr. O'Hyde', as one could claim that even until the very end of the novel it is up to the reader to assess the protagonist's split personality. However, one may assume a remorseless Mr. O'Hyde to be hidden in several of the male characters in Claire Kilroy's novel, which will be discussed in more detail in chapter 7 of this thesis.

4.5. The Stage Irishman – The Irish Stock Character in British Theatres

"The stage Irishman [was] a stereotype invented for the entertainment of English audiences, a likeable but usually absurd character making a fool of himself for the benefit of others [...]" (Graves 1981:29).

According to Bartley the stage Irishman developed in three steps between the years of 1587 to 1659, 1660 to 1759 and 1760 to 1800 (1942). All of these stages were influenced by socio-political changes in the British Empire.

The earliest Irishman of all is 'Mac Morris' in Shakespeare's *Henry V*, the member of a group of nationals whose conversations' only purpose is to prove that the Irish people "[...] stood firmly behind the King's efforts to conquer France." (Scott 1942:315). The character's suggested traits are "[...] bravery, profanity, and impetuosity." (Scott 1942:315). Mac Morris' task is the voicing of a national opinion rather than the representation of a realistic person (Scott 1942).

In *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, published in 1587, Thomas Hughes introduces "[...] an Irishman 'with long black shagged hair down to his shoulders ... a dart in his hand'" (Bartley 1942:440). At the time darts were considered to be a prominent accessory and weapon of Irish people. This character spoke dialect and fulfilled a comic function. Employing the Elizabethan convention this Irish character was presented as 'the wild Irishman' (Scott

1942:315), as Irish characters were staged as the symbols of barbarism, rebellion and violence, however without any individual character trait (Scott 1942).

During this period speaking or non-speaking Irish characters appeared, that were of five different types, corresponding to the existing classes of Irishmen at the time. Those types on stage were “[...] captains, tradesmen, footmen, beggars, and ‘wild Irish’ or kerns.” (Bartley 1942:440). Whereas the tradesmen were characters to earn their living in London and were therefore somewhat assimilated to the English culture, Irish footmen were portrayed as foreigners only speaking broken English. According to Scott, this type of Irishman often employed an unrealistic Irish accent to achieve a ludicrous effect (Scott 1942:316). In *The Irish Masque* (1613) the Irish footman tried to deceive his master, which posed a new development to the role of the Irish in a play, as before that the stage Irishmen were not important to the plot, but only “[...] the vehicle for comedy or satire [...]” (Scott 1942: 317). In *The History of Sir John Oldcastle* a despicable Irish character, ‘Mac Shane of Ulster’, exchanges his rags with a wealthy Englishman to disguise himself. He commits various crimes, is to be hanged shortly afterwards as a punishment, but asks the English gentleman to give him back his clothes, as a result of which the English gentleman is hanged for the crimes committed by the Irishman (Bartley 1942).

Some of the beggars on stage were assimilated to the English and others were not, but it was the Irish kern characters, which were perceived as the enemy. They were “[...] unfamiliar, foreign, strange in speech and in appearance, savage, barbarous, to be hated and feared.” (Bartley 1942:440).

Many of those Irish stage characters during the years of 1587 to 1659 were described as having long uncombed hair, owning a dart, drinking ‘usquebaugh’, i.e. whiskey, living in bogs, swearing, calling on God or the Saints, and using Gaelic words in broken English. Frequently Gaelic expressions were used and the pronunciation of English words was changed for Gaelic pronunciation on purpose, to make the actors sound more Irish (Bartley 1942). Fruit sellers appearing in Dekker’s play *Old Fortunatus* succeed in selling their goods by the use of their wits and ‘the gift of the gab’. Some of the other characters are lured into buying the fruit “[...] and as a result of their credulity are horrified to find horns sprouting out on their heads.” (Lawrence 1912:351). Many stage Irishmen were given typical qualities, such as “[...] loyalty, poverty, willingness to serve, a mild profanity, and a considerable

capacity to make mistakes.” (Scott 1942:318). Irish characters using verbal tricks and making absurd and comical mistakes, termed ‘Irish bulls’, increased the comic effects of the stage Irishmen (Scott 1942).

“[T]his stage Irishman was a not inaccurate or unfair representation of the Irish as the English knew them, limited indeed, and picturesquely or humorously exaggerated, but fundamentally realistic.” (Bartley 1942:442).

During the second period between 1660 and 1759 mainly two Irish character types appeared: the Irish servant and the military officer.

The Irish stock character on British stages was the result of the combination of isolated character traits and traits of actual persons, as is the case in the Irish character ‘Teague’ in *Howard’s Committee* from 1662. The play shows a comic Irish servant that was based on a real servant at the time. This prototypical character of a footman gained more and more popularity in plays from 1662 until 1751. Bartley states that a stock character can not only be understood as the representation of a specific type, but it is a character that provokes or evokes responses and implies certain attitudes. Typically, this is a character that has lost any touch with reality and is, therefore, a ‘walking cliché’ (Bartley 1942:438).

According to Scott, the Irish soldier, however, was mainly a character that the Elizabethan and Caroline theatre audience could feel superior to and look down upon (1942):

In this period the stage Irishman is changing. He ceases to wear ‘trowses’ and to carry a dart. He is no longer a costermonger or chimneysweep. Farting does not specially offend him. It has been forgotten that Saint Patrick banished the snakes. In addition to bonny clabber he now eats potatoes, not shamrocks, which are no longer mentioned; but he still drinks usquebaugh, swears by Christ and Saint Patrick, howls and uses expressions from his native tongue. His country is still boggy, and he is called a bogtrotter; his plough is attached to his horse’s tail. He is often a Catholic, and is well known for his readiness to give false evidence. He is likely to blunder in speech and action, and he makes bulls. Often he is a fortune hunter. For the first time he carries a ‘shillela’, he wears brogues, and talks with one. He is inclined to be amorous (Bartley 1942:443).

The third stage in the evolution of the stage Irishman can be placed between 1760 and 1800, when the Irish actors John Moody and John Johnstone experienced their peaks of popularity.

Many theatre characters were especially written for and interpreted by them in a way that had never been seen before (Bartley 1942).

The stage Irishman was now typically a naval or military officer of lower rank, a servant, or a sailor or soldier. Some stage Irishmen were also knights, peasants, priests or haymakers and few of them chairmen, clerks or doctors (Bartley 1942):

Whatever he be, he is inclined to blunder, and bulls pour from his lips; while differences of education or class are often unreflected in his speech. He is no longer noted as a false witness, nor remarkable for fortune hunting. Although ploughing by the tail was actually being practised, it is only casually referred to; but there are references to bogs and bogtrotters. His bonny clabber is now called butter-milk. He still loves usquebaugh, but often calls it whiskey. His brogue is continually mentioned, but it is his speech, not his footwear. His Gaelic expressions, now mostly exclamations, are relatively less frequent, and markedly less exotic than before. He swears and mentions Saint Patrick often, but he howls less. He is quarrelsome and amorous. Potatoes are his staple diet, shamrock his emblem, and a shillela is often in his hand. He now begins to be associated with pigs (Bartley 1942:445).

Boltwood claims that as early as the 19th century, drama and literature made use of specific types and characters such as the Celtic peasantry and, contrasted to it, the posh Irishman of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy (2001). The Celt was depicted as “[...] prodigally irresponsible, sentimental and quick witted [...]” often combined with the stereotypical Irish drunkenness, an aversion to regular work and the habit of talking in the Irish brogue. Characters enacting the Irish Ascendancy, by contrast, were depicted as descendants of English colonists, who were keen on presenting their superior Englishness through intermarriage in aristocratic families (Boltwood 2001: 388 ff.).

Many of the characteristics of Irishmen on British stages from Shakespearean drama onwards are reflections and a result of the political and social events during these times. Some of those stereotypical characterisations might not just be mere representations of Irish people, but could have influenced the British public opinion and may have become the source of prominent stereotypes about the Irish for many years to come.

5. Stereotyping the Irish in America: Caricatures, Cartoons, Comics and American Theatre

As the Irish and people of Irish descent were often termed 'the White Negro' during the 18th and 19th century in the United Kingdom (Douglas 2010), these images must have adhered to their reputation whenever they emigrated from Ireland to America. Therefore, it seems helpful to briefly consider the Irish reputation in America as well.

5.1. Stereotypical Irish Characters in American Caricatures, Cartoons and Comics

In the United States between 1870 and 1920 the depiction of the Irish changed considerably. At the beginning of the 20th century Afro-American, Native American as well as Irish citizens of the United States were often portrayed in a derogatory manner. However, especially the Irish characters of comic strips changed and turned into figures embodying comic and socially critical characters by the mid 20th century (Soper 2005). The portrayal of the Irish person underwent an evolution from the "[...] physiognomic depiction of the Irish inferior, animalistic, racial type [...], the laughable ethnic fool, [...] the clever or wise fool who satirizes the dominant culture from the margins [...] and the heroic subversive trickster." (Soper 2005:258). Soper analyses this change by referring to the three comic strip artists Frederick Burr Opper, Richard Outcault and George McManus.

In the 1890s *Puck*, founded in the 1870s by the Austrian Joseph Keppler, became popular in New York as a satirist journal of 'mirth and fun'. Soon after *Puck's* first successes, *Judge* and other magazines appeared in a similar format. Coloured images in newspapers and magazines in colour were new to the audience, which might have been an additional factor in gaining more and more popularity. *Puck* was definitely not a magazine renowned for its subtle humour, but contained explicit and offensive jokes (Appel 1971).

Favourite subjects of the cartoons published in *Puck* were Jewish pawnbrokers, Afro-American servants, thieves, Irish politicians, nationalists, working class domestic servants and labourers. "The majority of its Irish types were ignorant but harmless drudges, given to

drink and emotional excesses, loving a fight, and not above a lie or a bit of minor thievery.” (Appel 1971:367).

It is interesting to note that in *Puck* a typical Irish male character was hardly ever portrayed together with a typical female Irish figure. All in all, three types of Irish male characters were popular in *Puck*: the Hibernian male, smoking a pipe in an ape-like mouth, being dirty and always ready for physical violence, hostile towards Great Britain and prepared to support rebels and rioting compatriots in their home country. The favourite amusements of this sort of ‘Oirish people,’ were the St. Patrick’s Day parade or the wakes, which seemingly always ended in heavy consumption of alcohol. A second category was the one of “[...] the riotous Irishman and the dangerous, reckless Irish agitator or Fenian fanatic.” (Appel 1971:367). The third type featuring in the cartoons was the good hearted, thrifty, but trusting Irish labourer (Appel 1971).

While the male Irish were pictured according to different stereotypical categories, females were often depicted in terms of the good-hearted, good-natured, but unintelligent and naive servant girls, positively seen as the ‘Queens of the Kitchen’, moreover always Catholic and strongly supporting Irish Home Rule (Appel 1971).

It is worth mentioning that Appel finds a “[...] striking analogy between stereotyped American reactions to Irish and Negroes [...]” (1971:368). He states, that in Professor L.P. Curtis, Jr.’s study about anti-Irish prejudice in nineteenth-century England, known as *Anglo-Saxons and Celts*, “[...] stereotyped beliefs widely held by whites about Negroes in the last thirty years were in the nineteenth century applied to Celts at home and in the United States.” (Appel 1971:369). Among those many stereotypes referred to were inferior mentality, primitive morality, emotional instability, laziness, religious fanaticism, fondness for gambling, closeness to anthropoid ancestors, proneness to crimes of violence, susceptibility to bribery, high birth rate, superstition, ignorance and musicality, all of them also used in cartoons published in *Puck* at the time (Appel 1971). By 1887 this stereotypical picture of Irish people had changed, however, when *Puck* admitted that

[...] ‘we used to laugh at the Irishman who came to America to pick up the gold in the streets’, but that by comparison with ‘inferior’ Bohemian and Russian immigrants of the later 1880s, the ‘energetic’ Irishman was to be preferred. When he ‘awoke from his dream’, he went to work, and he never became an anarchist who fleeced honest workingmen (qtd. in Appel 1971:371).

The cartoons of *Punch Magazine* and contemporary theories of physiognomy influenced the representation of the Irish in caricature, comics and cartoons in Great Britain and America. Vicious, outspokenly racist comics were not asked for, instead Irish characters depicted as fool, or everyman, became popular. Gradually the newspaper industry started to cater for a middle-class audience, which is one of the reasons why the cartoons in those papers focussed on everyman characters and refrained from racism in caricatures (Soper 2005). Many comics did not concentrate on elaborate characterisation but rather on the simplification of character traits, which then allowed the reader to sympathise, as the characters used were

[...] distilled representations of an open-ended everyperson – a half-complete mask which invited identification and dialectical completion from an emotionally invested reader. This move to iconic representation was both a result of comic strips being a less racist medium in terms of creators and audiences, and also a necessary and natural aesthetic shift for an art form that featured multiple renderings of the same character in panel and after panel and strip after strip, and which invited the readers to become attached to sympathetic protagonists (Soper 2005:274).

Outcault, the artist of *The Yellow Kid*, was of German-American descent and fascinated with street life in New York in 1894. He concentrated on immigrant child characters and mocked some of their misfortune in life as well as their lack of education. In 1895 his comic strip *The Yellow Kid* was released in the *New York World*. The Irish kid in his most famous cartoons is beady-eyed, hairless and wears sleeping gowns. Typical Irish appearance such as an atavistic head, a distaste for work as well as a tendency to be involved in mischief are highlighted in the cartoons. *The Yellow Kid* is depicted as uneducated, using “[...] a messy colloquial street language [...]” (Soper 2005:277), but also as being cunning and street-smart. Therefore, the Irish immigrant child was often seen as a trickster, who turns situations with a possibly poor outcome for himself to his advantage and who succeeds in doing so by the use of his subversive ingenuity.

Opper started to work on his character *Happy Hooligan* in 1901. The comic strip was first released as supplement of the *New York Journal* and published between 1900 and 1932.

As newspaper formats gradually forced the drawers of comics and cartoons to use different and more simplified style, “[t]he combination of these aesthetic shifts and the need to please ethnic and working-class readers resulted in Oppen creating a radically less exaggerated caricature of Irishness [...]” (Soper 2005:278). His main character *Happy* still shows Irish stereotypical features in his outward appearance. He has a large upper lip and endorsing simian looks, however his character qualities are chosen in a way that he could be described as an everyman and a “[...] down-and-out tramp first, an Irishman second” (Soper 2005: 278), living his life like a rootless vagabond, inclined to his personal freedom. This character could be interpreted as one who mocks the Anglo-American elite and questions their motives through the help of a carnivalesque appearance and the negation of class distinctions through his foolish nature, as he stumbles through comical episodes unwillingly and unwittingly. Oppen’s *Happy* marked a very important shift in the dominant comic tradition through the change of the violent and ruthless Irish into a comical fool. From then on Irishness has often been used as a comic device according to Soper (2005).

McManus began to work on the cartoon *Bringing up Father* in 1913, which was released as a single comic until 2000. The main character *Jiggs* is the father of an Irish working-class family living in America, unexpectedly coming to wealth and struggling with the Anglo-American elite. He is appalled by upper class pretensions and eager to return to his authentic Irish roots. His mocking and debunking the new social surroundings becomes especially apparent when he leaves aristocratic or elitist gatherings in order to flee into the local Irish pubs. His outer-appearance yet again features a stereotypical Irish chin-beard, a dominant upper lip and a pipe. Moreover, *Jiggs* is described as a true Irish trickster, who subverts Anglo-American dominant culture by power of wit. Through this character the Irish heritage was finally romanticised and “[...] heroic cultural qualities such as spontaneity, loyalty, love of family, [and] joy in sensual pleasures [...]” were put to the foreground (Soper 2005).

The stereotype of the ‘Irish trickster’ as described above has a great affinity to various Irish conmen in Claire Kilroy’s novel.

5.2. The Stage–Irishman in America

During the 19th century, waves of immigrants from different European countries arrived in America. Processes of inclusion and integration of diverse nationalities were reflected in the playwrights' works and sometimes resulted in the stereotypical portrayal of various people on the stages of theatres. The quality of those stereotypes could be understood to reflect the specific relationships between groups of people. Especially, between 1820 and 1860 stereotypical characterisation of immigrants in America took place. "English, French, Dutch, and German [are] made to suffer the stings of the American wit. ... The Irish, of late, has become very popular." (Grund qtd. in Knobel 1981: 45). The stage Irishman was a stock character that was described by James L. Smith as "[a] set of walking cliches [sic] who invite snap moral judgements the moment they appear." (qtd. in Knobel 1981:51).

The first stage Irishman who appeared on America's stages was brought from England to America and, therefore, this character was a representation of specifically English stereotypes and prejudices about the Irish immigrants (Knobel 1981). In 1767 a musical comedy, *The Disappointment, or The Force of Credulity*, was brought to American stages and included the first Irish character. In consecutive years the actors impersonated Irish characters with a 'disturbing presence' and a liking for "[...] Irish airs, jogs, reels and brogue [...]" (Wittke 1952:214). According to Knobel it was common for American producers to steal English scripts, sometimes rewrite parts of them or rename them and bring them to American stages, as protective copyright legislation was only introduced in the late 1850s (Knobel 1981).

Predominantly during the 1830s the Irish people were subjected to stereotypical portrayal on America's stages. The stage Irishman became a very popular figure in melodrama, which asked for a benevolent comic figure among a suffering hero and a persecuting villain. The Irish character was needed to add humour and crude jokes to the plays.

Knobel argues that it was the function the stage Irishman fulfilled in American melodrama, which was important, rather than his origin. Ethnicity of the stage Irishman could even be considered irrelevant to American drama (Knobel 1981). Knobel claims that specific characters could be seen as ethnic caricatures and, therefore as symbols, which "[...] emphasise a limited number of features of its subjects. Since they treat ethnic character

with such selectivity, caricatures of very different social groups often appear much the same.” (Knobel 1981:52). So, also Afro-American characters could have fulfilled the role of stage Irishmen as the providers of comic relief. Often actors even switched their main focus, impersonating a variety of different ethnic groups and so they had played Afro-Americans in minstrel shows before the Irish stock characters became popular on the stages (Wittke 1952).

The stage Irishmen were typically linked with a set of positive and negative character traits. Among the positive attributes were a tendency to witticism, the use of ‘Irish blarney’, eloquence, generosity, merriness, honesty and courage, while the negative sides included a tendency to strikes and brawls, stupidity, cheating, thieving, ferocious violence and a proneness to gaming (Knobel 1981).

The stage Irishman’s appearance was described by Maurice Bourgeois:

His hair is of a fiery red: he is rosy-cheeked, massive, and whiskey-loving. His face is one of simian bestiality with an expression of diabolical archness written all over it. He wears a tall felt hat (billycock or wideawake), with a cutty-clay pipe stuck in front, an open shirt collar, a three caped coat, knee breeches, worsted stockings, and cockaded brogue shoes. (qtd. in Knobel 1981: 61).

In many of the plays the Irish played the most ludicrous parts, bringing misfortune to heroine and hero, but in the end they always managed to untangle unfortunate matters by performing their part including stuttering, blundering and misunderstanding events (Knobel 1981). Often ‘Irish bulls’, statements which were considered absurd or ludicrous, were part of the Irish characters’ texts and slowly became very popular with American theatre audiences (Wittke 1952). Commonly, the characters played by Irish actors, were of lower social classes, being “[...] peasants, servants, and drunken idlers [...]” (Knobel 1981:60), they were referred to by ethnically distinctive male or female names, such as ‘Paddy’, ‘Pat’, ‘O’, ‘Mac’, ‘Teague’ or ‘Molly’, ‘Bridget’ and ‘Peggy’(Knobel 1981:60) and dressed in torn and dirty clothes (Wittke 1952).

Between 1820 and 1860 the depiction of the stage Irishmen underwent modification and change, which could be explained by a turn in American perception of the Irish immigrants. In 1844 “[...] Anglo-Americans were still digesting the interethnic hostility unleashed at Philadelphia [...]” (Knobel 1981:67), and therefore the Irish were perceived as a nationalistic

and violent people. The perception of the Irish in the 1850s shifted and also the representative characters were described according to their intrinsic rather than their extrinsic characteristics. Also in America the Saxons and the Celts were differentiated according to the teachings of physiognomy and phrenology and also the appearance of the stage Irishman changed into a simian figure. In 1866, for example, *The Hills of Erin, or Ireland's Last Struggle* was taken to the theatres and the crew staged "[...] much marching, many flags [...] and [...] the dying hero kissing the green flag and sighing for Ireland with his last breath." (Wittke 1952:220). In *The Harp Without a Crown, or Mountcashel's Fair Daughter* the defeat of the Battle of the Boyne and the struggle of Irishmen for liberty and faith were the main events in the play.

By the 1900s the Irishmen in the plays were less realistic and as the Irish characters had become "[...] Americanized [...], with Americanization Irish caricatures had become less popular." (Wittke 1952:221). The characters were seen working on scaffolds, throwing bricks, applying mortar and heaving coal, which was accompanied by rough humour, songs and crossfire conversation (Wittke 1952).

American audiences saw these inaccurate stage immigrant characters and heard these dialects so long that many accepted them as completely authentic, although character traits, overplayed for comic effect, obviously emphasize idiosyncrasies and deviations from the general folk pattern (Wittke: 1952:232).

6. Irish Stereotypes from the Perspective of the Irish People

According to Maass et al. the ingroup as well as the outgroup accept specific categories as trademarks for a specific group (1991). These categories could be the starting point or the origin of a stereotype about a specific group of people. Therefore, it is also the responsibility of the ingroup to introduce new stereotypes about their own group. While Irish folklore and mythology play an important role in the context of stereotyping, also historical events are said to have an effect on the formation of stereotypical characterisations of later generations. In the following chapter it shall be explored how and why the Irish themselves like to refer to each other and live with each other acknowledging various stereotypes.

6.1. Irish Folklore, Similarities to African History and its Stereotypes

Many Irish stereotypes could be claimed to have their origin in Irish folklore where tricksters and conmen and conwomen go about their daily habits without the expression of remorse and most certainly without knowing the feeling of guilt or responsibility for their actions. Especially the Irish tradition of fairy lore offers a great many possibilities for stereotypes to develop.

Moreover, a close affinity to Afro-American heritage and history can be found when analysing the origin of the trickster figure in the West-African and, therefore, also in Afro-American culture. There seem to be striking parallels between Irish and West-African folklore. Those should be discussed briefly as special links between the two distinct cultures can be found, when especially in the 19th century images of the Irish become more and more ape-like in representation and Irish people are termed ‘the White Negros’ (Douglas 2010). Also comics in America, mainly during the 20th century, used these newly detected links to emphasise xenophobic content, which has already been discussed in the last chapter in further detail.

Furthermore, Terry Eagleton comments on various aspects in *The Truth about the Irish* and it is vital for the purpose of this thesis to include his description of some of them from the perspective of a representative of the Irish people. Even though Eagleton was raised in Manchester, he was influenced heavily by his parents, both of Irish origin. As his mother’s family had strong ties to the Republican movement, he was educated according to Catholic Irish heritage and he often remarked that to be Catholic meant someone was not really English (O’Connor & Daffy 2008). As a consequence, his opinion is of great importance for an objective depiction of stereotypes about the Irish in this thesis.

6.1.1. The Irish 'Gift of the Gab': Telling a Story, Blarney and Debunkery

McClinton-Temple mentions the talent of the Irish for storytelling as a benign, however common stereotype often used in Anglo-Irish literature (2013). Oscar Wilde commented on the Irish as "The greatest talkers since the ancient Greeks." (Eagleton 1999:26).

Given the Irish tradition of storytelling one explanation for Irish blarney is that words cost nothing in times of hunger, poverty and oppression and stories were often used to escape the harsh reality of everyday life as "[d]eprived of wealth, the Irish were forced to live by their wits." (Eagleton 1999:28). In connection to this aspect of storytelling the 'seanachaí' or storyteller, as well as the 'bard' and the 'fili' play a vital role. These three figures will be discussed in the following.

Eagleton states that Irish literature is heavily influenced by Ireland's oral tradition of storytelling and folklore. Additionally, riddles, puns, word plays and fantasy play a vital role in the latter. Indeed from the 8th century on, during the reign of the High Kings over Ireland certain professions connected to telling stories were of vital importance. Three of them could be distinguished from each other (Thomas).

The 'seanachaí' was a travelling collector of stories which seemed important to society. He was the only one who could tell a "[...] dangerous story in the form of a curse in response to a poor welcome [...]" (Hogan). He worked at the courts of medieval Ireland and Wales where he would entertain the king through tales and songs in return for payment (Hogan). Those story tellers also explained characteristics of the gods to the people who would not have understood allusions otherwise (Thomas).

The bard was paid to sing stories which drew on topics such as cowardice, cruelty, temperance, right and wrong, and also about love, courage and charity. These tales had the function of entertaining the audience but also of teaching their audience and telling them which choices might have had value over others in society (MacLeod 2008). The bard would be allowed to stay and eat supper with the family as well as sleep in their premises in return for musical entertainment (Thomas).

Contrasting the ‘bard’, the ‘fili’ was a poet who solely sang stories he had heard from other artists but which were not written by himself (Thomas).

Many of these various types of story tellers were said to possess the ‘Gift of the Gab’. The myth of the ‘Gift of the Gab’ describes an ability and gift of eloquence which is given to certain people who have kissed the Blarney Stone. There are various ideas of how this stone has received the power to give eloquence to its kissers:

On the Blarney Castle’s webpage three different stories are told about the origin of the myth of the Blarney Stone. The first one explains that the stone would be Jacob’s Pillow and arrived in Ireland when the prophet Jeremiah brought it to the castle, where it was deemed “[...] the Lia Fail or ‘Fatal Stone’, used as an oracular throne of Irish kings – a kind of Harry Potter-like ‘sorting hat’ for kings. It was also said to be the deathbed pillow of St. Columba on the island of Iona.” (blarneycastle.ie 2015).

Another legend explains that the stone was then brought to Scotland and served there as a stone to prophecy the next heirs to the Scottish throne, as the Stone of Destiny. “When Cormac MacCarthy, King of Munster, sent five thousand men to support Robert the Bruce in his defeat of the English at Bannockburn in 1314, a portion of the historic Stone was given by the Scots in gratitude – and returned to Ireland.” (blarneycastle.ie 2015).

A third legend explains the origins of the stone claiming it was taken to Ireland after the Crusades “[...] the ‘Stone of Ezel’ behind which David hid on Jonathan’s advice when he fled from his enemy, Saul. A few claim it was the stone that gushed water when struck by Moses.” (blarneycastle.ie 2015).

Whatever its true origins, this stone is part of Blarney Castle in County Cork, in the South of the Republic of Ireland, which also gives the act of talking ‘blarney’ its name. It is a term commonly used in connection with the ‘Gift of the Gab’ as it means “[...] talk which aims to charm, flatter, or persuade (often considered typical of Irish people) [...]”, according to the *Oxford Dictionary* (2015).

Even though this characteristic of eloquence appears to be heavily rooted in the Irish culture, some of the Irish population “[...] see blarney and bluster as part of their chronic inability to face up to the truth about themselves.” (Eagleton 1999:53).

Others, however, relate the act of talking blarney to the Irish fondness for pulling the leg of their British oppressors and masters as the term 'blarney' could also refer to a story from the sixteenth century about the Earl of Blarney. He, when it was demanded of him to declare his loyalty to the English Queen Elizabeth I, delivered his speech in a manner that nobody after having heard it could say whether he was submitting to her powers or rebelling against her supremacy (Eagleton 1999).

Debunkery is defined as the reduction of "[...] *the inflated reputation of (someone) [...]*" (Oxford Dictionary 2015).

Terry Eagleton comments on debunkery, when he describes the Irish as "[...] superlative mockers, not least of themselves." (1999:53). He states that they do not like pretentiousness neither in their fellow citizens nor in themselves, so they use the tool of satire to comment on possible self-display and solemn rhetoric since they tend to be very ironic about themselves (Eagleton 1999).

A sense of satire and debunkery will play a vital role in the last chapter, which will elaborate on it in greater detail.

6.1.2. The Irish Trickster Figure

Metempsychosis or historical ricorso, i.e. the belief in reincarnation and transmigration of souls and their travel through time and place, is not just a Joycean principle for structuring some of his works. A trickster is also a mythical figure, who is vital in the contexts of "[...] chaos, liminality, and moral ambivalence, as a figure who trades, deals, and exchanges between supernatural forces and the realm of the mundane." (Keohane 2005: 259). Often wealth and property is unevenly distributed among members of certain societies and, therefore, prosperity is commonly "[...] accompanied by spiritual wretchedness and moral decay." (Keohane 2005: 272). As a result of the latter, the trickster's gifts should be considered of tremendously dubious nature (Keohane 2005).

According to Shufelt, an archetypal trickster is a person who challenges authoritarian roles and change traditions to the extreme of subversion (2005). Hyde considers a trickster to be a

cultural mediator, who exhibits “[...] a great plasticity of behaviour and is, therefore, a consummate survivor in a shifting world” (1998: 43).

Tricksters are boundary crossers who often turn out to be thieves. A trickster in mythology is referred to by Hyde as “[...] one who steals from the gods the good things that humans need if they are to survive in the world [...]” (1998:6).

6.1.2.1. The Leprechaun

Keohane states that the myth of the leprechaun as a typical Irish representation of the trickster figure has its roots in various cultures, such as pre-Christian and Christian societies, Norse and Anglo - Norman as well as Nativist and Anglo - Irish and Irish-American (2005). Therefore leprechaun - similar figures appear in folktales of Iceland, Cornwall and were adopted also by Tolkien in *The Lord of the Rings* and Rowling in *Harry Potter* (Keohane 2005). Leprechaun characters do not only appear in European and Anglo- American contexts, but also in African tales, where especially the Wolof people “[...] believe in beings peculiarly similar to the leprechaun.” (Winberry 1976:63).

Traditionally, Irish tales include the leprechaun as a solitary elf-like creature who mends shoes, is sometimes wise, with a beard and its bodily height varies between an inch and a half and roughly two feet (Winberry 1976). Moreover, he is said to be cunning and wear clothes dating to the eighteenth century, most noticeably a green or red coat with big pockets and shiny buttons, and a long waistcoat:

He wears knee breeches and white stockings, and his tiny shoes boast large, bright silver buckles. A three-cornered hat, on which he may spin like a top, usually completes his attire, but he may instead wear a red or green night-cap. Finally, a long, leather apron, like a cobbler's, covers his front. Stuffed into a big pocket of his coat is the leprechaun's magic purse, the *spre na skillenagh* (shilling fortune). In this little leather purse there is always a shilling, which no matter how often expended is miraculously replaced (Winberry 1976: 63-64).

Additionally, the little creature may have set beside him a jug of beer or/ and his pipe (Winberry 1976).

Leprechauns are said to know about the locations of secret hidden treasures and can only be held by an unbroken stare, which the leprechaun tries to break through a trick or a riddle (Winberry 1976).

The Leprechaun, like most Trickster figures, specializes in making deals and conducting exchanges between realms. His access to powers of the supernatural realm enables him to influence events in the mundane, just as the trickster politician, as broker to his clients, specializes in deals and exchanges between centers of power, circles of influence, and local theatres of action (Keohane 2005: 266).

Keohane claims that the main feature, the leprechauns' tricks rely on, is the one of distraction. The tricked individuals' attentions are diverted through devilish, theatrical moves and the use of blarney and, therefore, "[...] we miss the bigger con – that our household is being emptied behind our backs; that crops are being pillaged and livestock rustled by thieving fairies and other malevolent entities." (Keohane 2005: 270).

The latter argument will prove of vital importance for the analysis of *The Devil I Know*, as it will be argued that, both the leprechaun in the character of Larney, and 'the Pooka' are represented metaphorically in Claire Kilroy's novel.

6.1.2.2. The Pooka

The Púca, according to Keohane, could be understood as a variant of a leprechaun. In Irish folklore it is described as a cloven-hoofed, predominantly male creature that is brought into connection with "[...] horned, goat-shanked satyrs, wild men from the mountains whose Dionysian energies the Greeks recognized as a godly quality in all humanity – Pan." (Keohane 2005:266).

It is commonly referred to by various spellings of the word as Púca by Keohane (2005), or An Púca in Gaelic, and Pooka or Phooka in the anglicised version (Breatnach 1993). Middle and Modern English predominantly use the term 'Puck' (Breatnach 1993).

The Pooka is especially important in a small town in County Kerry, where a male mountain goat 'King Puck' is elected annually as a carnival tradition (Keohane 2005).

The Pooka, many people account, can change its shape at pure will and could only be recognised by its chain around its neck. Often the Pooka would take people for longer distances riding on its back (Breatnach 1993).

Not just in real, but also in fictional worlds Pookas, in the shape of satyrs, play vital roles for plotlines linked to trickery and exchanges. Goethe's Mephistopheles resembles a hoofed gentleman whose wish it is to make a deal with the main protagonist Faust, while in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Puck is a "[...] mischievous sprite who plays both a disruptive and assimilative role." (Keohane: 2005: 266).

Breatnach accounts various stories from folklore tradition with one of them referring to the Pooka as a creature that

[...] could take any shape he wanted. He could make a dog or a horse or a cow of himself. It used to be said that it was a harvest-time the Pooka was most often seen, running among the hay – cocks, gambolling and sporting by himself (Seámus Ó Duilearga, *Seán Ó Conaill's Book* (Dublin 1981) qtd. in Breatnach 1993: 105).

In other stories, according to Breatnach, the creature's function is described as one with a double nature. While it appears to be the guardian angel of humans in one tale and under specific circumstances, it unveils as an evil mischievous spirit in other contexts (Breatnach 1993).

It is often seen as being an animal which possesses the power of speech and "[...] usually visualised as a man, a guardian of castles and Big Houses." (Breatnach 1993: 108). Especially one narration seems to be quite important for the analysis of *The Devil I Know*, as there is a story of the Pooka surrounding Howth Castle. Furthermore, only the main character Tristram St. Lawrence is able to talk to the Pooka-like Monsieur Deauville:

Blackjack or puck is supposed to be a little black dwarf. He guards the castle and lives in it. Only the Howth Family ever saw him. If anyone else sees him, they die and never live to tell the tale. He goes about the castle and the grounds and makes queer noises to frighten people away. People say that the owners made up this story about Puck to frighten them away from the Castle (MS no. S – 792, p.105. in Breatnach 1993: 108).

According to the previously mentioned facts, also in Claire Kilroy's *The Devil I Know* the Pooka could be said to be of considerable importance for the unfolding of the story. The mysterious character of Monsieur Deauville, impersonating the devil, who is associated with the sound 'tocka tocka' throughout the plot, could be claimed to function as a Pooka-like diabolical figure.

While he seems to be Tristram St. Lawrence's guardian angel at first having the role as the sponsor in the Alcoholics Anonymous movement, preventing him from drinking alcohol at the beginning of the book, he appears to be a mischievous creature at the end, which could somehow be seen as the figure responsible for Tristram's tremendous financial loss on the real estate market.

Furthermore, the devil appears in various shapes and forms, outside in the moors as a demonic black creature with wild red eyes. Also Tristram's pony, which they find at Tristram's mother's estate, could be interpreted as a hooved pony shaped Pooka with a chain around its neck. The latter will be subject to further discussion in the analysis in chapter seven.

6.1.3. The Celtic Druids and the Túatha Dé Danann

Before Christianity spread in Ireland through missionaries, each king was accompanied by druids, who helped him in the making of important decisions, in the strategic aspects of war or with matters of magical protection of the kingdom or the king himself. Druids could be described as a highly organised class working as professional magicians in the heathen times. They had their own teachings with regards to the end of the world or life after death, as well as natural catastrophes, such as flooding or fire (Carey 1996). Moreover druids, as professional magicians, were capable of using chants and higher powers (Bonser 1926).

They were seen as the mediators between the Celtic people and the 'Túatha Dé Danann', also known as gods or fairies, inhabiting green howes and mounts all across Ireland. "The druids [...] were the intermediaries with the fairies and with the invisible world in general for good or evil; and they could protect people from the malice of evil-disposed spirits of every kind; which explains much of their influence with people." (Bonser 1926:274).

Scholars claim that stress was often laid on the druids' malignant facet and their malevolent spells, as it was believed that a druid could "[...] summon demons to help him [...]" (Bonser 1926:280). One spell for example involved the throwing of straw in a person's face so that he or she became a lunatic (Bonser 1926). However, druids were also known for their protective qualities. Allegedly the 'druidical hedge', magical mist, was often present during the practice of magic by a druid. It was often produced to hide the druid and his friends or allies from the enemy. Druids could allegedly visit different lands during their sleep without physically moving their body from the room to interpret omens and foresee the future and they could put charms on individuals to make them invisible. Undoubtedly, druids possessed the powers of poetry, prophecy and healing (Bonser 1926).

Proof that druids operated in Ireland as late as the seventh and the eighth centuries can be found in laws and penitentials dating back to these times. Early canons known also as the *Synodus episcoporum* describe the role of the druids as a parareligious one. According to these documents druids served as the guarantors of oaths or the creators of doctrines, for example about "[...] metempsychosis in the mid- seventh century [...]" (Carey 1996:44).

Commonly, the king was converted to Christianity first and then the people would follow their monarch. Sometimes even druids were converted to the Christian faith, which gradually and peacefully supplanted druid belief (Bonser 1926). Carey suggests that in the wake of Christianisation in Ireland, stories or prophecies told to the people by druids were used for the purposes of missionaries. The "[...] teachings of the Irish druids included an eschatology featuring prophecies of a devastating fire to come and that the story of Patrick offering the Irish a gentler fate, if they accepted his message played in this very belief [...]" (Carey 1996:49). Scholars see a link between the druids' schools and the location of Christian monasteries in later centuries. "Bertrand suggests that some at least of the schools and monasteries of Ireland were direct successors of druidical schools and colleges." (qtd. in Bonser 1926:272ff.).

In Christian belief "[...] the Devil and demons are said to be the supernatural representatives of evil; sin is another word for evil human deeds and thoughts." (Borsje 2008:122). Over the centuries the face of evil changed however and soon after the beginning of Christianisation Saint Patrick was presented as good, whereas the druids of Ireland were represented as evil

in early Christian literature. Druids were believed to invoke demons that were, however, always defeated by divine powers (Borsje 2008).

Druidism was not restricted to male persons, but also druidesses practiced their art and were just as accepted as male druids were before Christianisation began (Bonser 1926). Once Catholic belief entered written documents, druidesses were nearly always pictured as evil seductresses, who lured their male prey on a wrong track and so ruined and poisoned their lives “[...] on earth and [their] soul after death” (Borsje 2008:140).

The people’s belief in the Túatha Dé Dannan was used by Christian missionaries and linked with the fallen angels in Christian belief. As they were invisible to the human eye, they became the representation of evil spirits in hell, situated below the human world, while the druids were understood as the interpreters between humans and spirits possessed by demons (Borsje 2008).

6.1.4. The Afro-American Trickster

Traditionally, the trickster figure also appears in African literature and it is “[...] linked to powerless groups who long to transcend an oppressive social order [...]” (Schramm et al. 2000: 19). Especially during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s this trickster persona was linked to the traditional African genres in literature, arts and music and posed the roots of their creative survival strategies. Hereby the main aim of non-conformity was reached through subversion of traditional ideas (Schramm et al. 2000).

Schramm et al. claim that this trickster figure has its origins in the West African culture, which through immigration to America, mainly due to slavery, found its way into Afro-American culture. In West-African countries such as in Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Togo the trickster persona resembles an animal that can disguise its original shape and turn into other animal figures. Thus, the trickster persona “[...] in Afro-American culture evolved through the slave narrative, which describes this archetype as a free spirit whose behaviour is complex and contradictory. This figure is often shown pursuing wisdom, cunning, or power and attempting to redefine the social border [...]” (Schramm 2000: 20).

As the Afro-American trickster persona was shaped as a consequence of the slave narrative one could claim, that also the Irish trickster formed as a result of British oppression and thus as a method of how to meliorate the endurance of the British yoke, as has been emphasised by Terry Eagleton. Especially in the post immigration America of the 20th century the Irish image changed from the one of being a simian like beast into a cunning trickster as was discussed in chapter five.

7. Claire Kilroy's *The Devil I Know*

Claire Kilroy's novel was published in 2012, and deals with a fictional Tribunal of Inquiry set in 2016 in Ireland, which is concerned with the examination of the main culprit allegedly involved in the real estate speculation of 2008, culminating in the great financial crash.

Diane Negra claims that Ireland can be depicted as an example of a rise of capitalism especially throughout the years of 2000 to 2005 as "[...] the new millennium witnessed a releasing of older notions of exotic and quaint Irishness in favour of 'business chic' Ireland." (2010: 836 ff.). The new, Celtic Tiger Ireland was a success story of "[...] business, productivity, pro-business government, and doubling of its work force from 1990 to 2005." (Negra 2010: 840). Ireland lowered corporate taxes and became open and multicultural. A postmodern Irishness using the image of a hard-edged international coolness seemed to have been established for the new millennium, as stereotypes such as red hair, shamrocks and green lush landscapes were no longer used in public depiction (Negra 2010).

Eagleton introduces the thought that Ireland leapt from a pre-industrial stage to a post-industrial situation without having ever undergone an industrial period. He furthermore raises the question "What happens when you become postmodern without ever having been fully modern in the first place?" (qtd. in O'Connor 2008:5).

Possible examples of results arising out of this leap from a pre- to a post-industrial state in Ireland and what happens to its various inhabitants can be found in Claire Kilroy's novel.

7.1. The Plot

Globalization has been accompanied by convulsions in Ireland's political culture. A succession of Tribunals of Inquiry have been investigating the practices of corrupt businessmen – politicians and public servants during the formative period of Ireland's "economic miracle", when Ireland was transformed from moribund stasis and underdevelopment into the so – called "Celtic Tiger", the highest growth economy in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (Keohane 2005: 258).

In her novel *The Devil I Know*, Claire Kilroy tells the story of an Anglo-Irish descendant of the earldom of Howth, Tristram St Lawrence. He tells his story in medias res to a tribunal of investigators as the disastrous outcome of the financial speculation of his company during the Celtic Tiger period has become a matter of public enquiry. He and the people surrounding him are questioned in a court hearing eight years after the actual events have taken place.

Tristram Saint Lawrence, after a long time of absence, and presumed dead by family and friends, returns to Ireland for business reasons. He works as a translator for numerous languages and seems to be very well educated. Coincidentally, he meets his former primary school colleague and drug dealer, who is now a building contractor, Hiberno – Irish Desmond Hickey. The latter has become a property developer and is on his way to a business meeting. Consequently, Tristram joins Desmond to his gathering with contractors and as a result Tristram becomes more or less unwillingly involved in Ireland's real estate speculations and is appointed the manager of Castle Holdings, a newly founded company. A mysterious Monsieur Deauville, who is Tristram's peculiar sponsor in the Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, proves to be the main character to pull the strings in the speculation business. Various business acquaintances, corrupt politicians and a character referred to as 'the Viking' have their hands in the business or enjoy to be bribed for rezoning land or rerouting public transport. It becomes clear that definitely everybody who is part of these undertakings is contributing their share for anticipated prospective wealth. Also Edel, Desmond Hickey's wife, is drawn to the men in her life for monetary reasons and expected property. Tristram St. Lawrence and Desmond Hickey appear to be in successful business relations before they suffer speculation losses and consequently face bankruptcy. Somehow many of Tristram's tricks seem to be connected to an old servant of Tristram's family, a

quirky figure named Larney, who has been deemed dead just like Tristram, as well as this mysterious persona Monsieur Deauville, who cannot be contacted anymore after all the money has vanished into thin air. Tristram's mental state grows worse after a relapse, his father's death, the end of his affair with Edel Hickey and the vanishing of his only confidant Monsieur Deauville. He realises that he has entered a pact with the devil, who will soon be back to collect the dues Tristram owes to him.

7.2. Conmen and Conwomen in *The Devil I Know*

Ireland is legend for Saints, Scholars and Sinners who walk the land as Priests, Poets and Politicians. The best of these have been blessed with the gift of the gab; the ability to speak out to both sides of the mouth at the same time; to please all by committing to none (Hogan).

In the following, specific types of conmen and conwomen will be discussed. The protagonists will be subject to analysis and characterisation and certain character traits will be linked with the results of the analysis of Irish caricature in the previous chapter. It is important to note that the novel is written from the point of view of the main character Tristram St Lawrence. Therefore, all other the characters as well as situations are described from the protagonist's perspective and, hence, that representation is subjective.

7.2.1. The Anglo - Irish Conman

The author seems to have been inspired by James Joyce as the novel begins with a quote from the famous *Finnegans Wake*. In this passage a certain Tristram has come back from America to Howth Castle (Kilroy 2012: -1). This Tristram is introduced by Kilroy as the protagonist of her novel. Most fittingly, Tristram is also the name of a town in the computer game *Diablo*.

Mid-thirty, to forty-year-old Tristram Amory St Lawrence is the main character and focaliser in Claire Kilroy's novel. Thus, all events described in the story are experienced, described and explained from his point of view. Just like a seanachai or bard in old times, Tristram gives an

account of the story to the readers and offers his thoughts on the events, often also questioning morals, reason and human values. The following is one example of him judging the events and attempting to find an explanation for the listeners:

What precisely it goes to show – what precisely the whole sorry mess goes to show – I cannot yet say, none of us can yet say, other than that it demonstrates the power of two interrelated and potentially disastrous variables regarding the impossibility of certitude on the one hand and the infinite pliability of the human imagination on the other. One can never truly know where one stands, and yet one can be adamant about that position (Kilroy 2012:344).

The people listening to him are the participants at the court-hearing in Dublin.

The reader is informed that Tristram is of Anglo-Irish descent. He is the 13th Earl of Howth and the successor of his father who owns the Castle of Howth, which is a peninsula north of Dublin. Most likely the family's wealth incorporates numerous other possessions in the surroundings of the castle. Tristram attended school in Ireland, but one does not find out about his later education. He always wears a suit, as it is his sober uniform after he has quit drinking, and the reader learns, that Tristram was a secretive child, who was not popular, his nickname behind his back being 'castler' (Kilroy 2012:289) and 'death' (Kilroy 2012:288). As a grown-up he is a very pale, tall and lanky persona. The latter aspects could be deemed a stereotypical feature in contrast to the stereotypical Hiberno-Irish, who will be dealt with in the next section.

Tristram's family seems to consist only of his mother and father and two locals working at the castle. Mrs. Reid is the loyal and devoted elderly housemaid. She is also referred to as Tristram's 'sanctuary'. Larney works in the castle grounds and lives in the gate house. When Tristram's mother died, he was out of the country and he was not informed about her death in time, so he could neither attend wake nor funeral. Given the fact that Tristram is an only child, it could be argued that yet again his family is the stereotypical other contrasted with a typical Irish family, which mostly consists of mother and father and often many more than one or two children. Even though there is a reference, that Tristram's father and mother tried to have more children, they did not succeed. The aristocratic Anglo-Irish family appears to have tried to fit into the Irish surrounding and be Irish.

Tristram is asked to give a statement in front of a committee about recent incidents. This is when the reader could form a first impression of Tristram's idea about himself. He is asked to state his name for the record and he replies:

Don't be coy Fergus. You've known me since I was yay high. I beg your pardon? Oh. It's like that, is it? I see. Very well. As you wish. This is going to take longer than expected but then, you lot are running on a pricey meter. Two and a half grand a day, I hear. Well, Fergus – I mean Justice O'Reilly – my name, for the record, is Tristram St Lawrence, the thirteenth Earl of Howth, Binn Eadair, hill of sweetness. I was – I am – the only son your old pal, the twelfth Earl of Howth, managed to sire, and not from lack of trying. People have been saying a lot of bad things about me in the press. I am here to say a few more. What brought me back to Ireland? Good question. An act of God, or maybe the other fella. That was back in 2006. [...] As you are probably aware, I am by profession an interpreter. I was engaged in that capacity by large international institutions such as the IMP, the EU and the ECB. The Troika. I do all the major European languages." (Kilroy 2012:5).

From this passage the reader can infer numerous character traits of Tristram at the time of his interrogation in 2016.

As he refers to the judge by his first name 'Fergus' and then refers to the relationship of his father to the judge using the expression 'old pal', it can be assumed that Judge O'Reilly and the 12th Earl of Howth were friends, or at least in some kind of business relation with each other, and that Tristram is on first name basis with the judge outside of the courtroom. The latter raises the question whether Tristram has so much influence as Earl of Howth so as to achieve that a friend of his is the person to reach a verdict, possibly in his favour, when generally a judge in a trial of high public interest should step down due to prejudice.

Furthermore, given the rather derogatory comment on his father's private life, Tristram seems to have a strained relationship with him. The latter is portrayed as a tall, fair haired man with a military posture, being disappointed in his son. He only loves to smoke and breed setters. In the course of the novel one can find out that Tristram has indeed a very distanced and cool relationship to his father, as Tristram refers to him as a 'bastard' (Kilroy 2012:31), who is prone to shoot him in the castle should he mistake him for an intruder. The 12th Earl of Howth dies at the point in time when Tristram loses all his money. Sadly for Tristram, he inherits the castle automatically before he has paid off all the debt he is in, so his inheritance, and therefore the castle, is confiscated. Tristram must have had a very close

relationship to his mother as he wishes to see her after his death and longs for her comfort in times of need. The reader becomes aware that Tristram is very deeply affected when he is told about her passing and the funeral albeit only sometime after her demise.

Tristram is an interpreter by profession. He claims to be able to use 'all the major European languages' in high end organisations such as the IMP or the EU. This indicates that he is highly intelligent, successful in his profession and knows how to play around with words, as he is described tremendously capable of using poignant language. This could work in his favour, should he try to persuade or distract other people by the use of language. He is thus endowed with 'the gift of the gab', which is a major characteristic of an Irish conman. Hogan comments on 'the gift of the gab' as a very two sided character trait and even terms it 'the craft of double speak'. He explains that it is, on the one hand, a gift which is highly admired but at the same time it is also frowned upon in contemporary Ireland, as it has not only brought peace but also helped corruption in high office positions. Thus he claims "[...] truth and lies go hand in hand in Ireland where "public lies" are shared openly and where there is nothing more dangerous than a "half truth"." (Hogan).

The story Tristram tells to the tribunal starts when Tristram, returning home after a longer absence from Ireland, meets an old school mate near the airport. The school friend, Desmond Hickey, is surprised to find Tristram alive, as rumour has it that Tristram has died in a plane crash years before. The reader is left in the dark if Tristram has really died, if it has been a doppelganger of Tristram who perished, or if this is just a metaphor for Tristram's stay in a clinic to be cured of his addiction to alcohol. Tristram has evidently overcome his older alcoholic self, which, according to him, has died in a plane crash, and has embraced his new sober identity. It becomes apparent that Tristram was at one instant found comatose in a hotel room in Brussels after taking tablets and drinking the contents of the mini bar. He was pronounced dead in the hospital, but woke up again. The latter aspects could be the reason why he embraces the establishment of a new identity through his position as the director of Castle Holdings announcing that in earlier stages of his life he was a different person, 'another Tristram St Lawrence'.

He is appointed the status of a business manager by Monsieur Deauville. Whenever he is in doubt about a decision he consults his sponsor Deauville. At the court hearing he claims that by accepting money brought to him by an unknown motorcyclist he accepted the position as

director. He continues to explain that he did not do anything illegal as “Castle Holdings was a shell company. It bought nothing, sold nothing, manufactured nothing, did nothing, and yet, as your piece of paper states there, it returned a profit of €66 million that first year.” (Kilroy 2012:72). He then states that he would have deemed nobody more fitting for the job awarded to him by Monsieur Deauville, as he has always had a strange gift for various undertakings, so people often considered him ‘uncanny’ (Kilroy 2012:6). This perception of a person being uncanny might also refer to the fact that Tristram is an excellent talker, using the craft of double speak and of talking blarney in order to turn events to his advantage. Even though he has made a lot of profit with his company he does not take the blame for its bankruptcy as he says that the company ‘did nothing’, so he cannot be responsible. Interestingly, Tristram’s company has made a profit of €66 million Euro, which could be a symbolic at who might be responsible for this ‘uncanny’ gift, as the number 66 is symbolically connoted with the devil.

The reader gets the impression that Tristram is not entirely sure about his true identity. If anything he could be described as insecure in his authenticity as an Irish person in some situations, for instance in the following situation: “‘Almost there,’ he reassured me in case I hadn’t been born in Howth. In case my father’s father’s father’s etc., hadn’t been born in Howth. Who did he think I was? Some blow-in?” (Kilroy 2012:16). Furthermore, Hickey tells Tristram that he has never liked him in school because he was the only child to always tell on the other children, who called him ‘castler’, as he was not one of them, but the son of the Earl. The concern with his identity and the true knowledge about his heritage and origin occupy Tristram’s mind, as not least because of his heritage he is marked as an outsider. He is upset as a result of Hickey’s offensive remarks.

Moreover, the issue of Tristram’s potential psychosis is addressed in the novel. When he sees him again after years Hickey tells Tristram that he has always defended him when other people were talking about his mental state and his character: “Mental psychopathic things. Dodgy satanic shit. Ah, not at all, I’d say: you have him all wrong. Bit up his own hole, I grant you that, but he wouldn’t hurt a fly. And as for his lovely manners! His dead mummy would’ve been proud.” (Kilroy 2012:58). This example could also be understood to show a connection between Tristram and Celtic druids, who are reported to have been able to summon satanic spirits.

Returning to the initial quote taken from page five of *The Devil I Know*, Tristram seems to have an interest in money, as he has not just been in the speculation business himself, which has landed him in front of a jury, but also knows how much money the judges are paid per day for their work on the jury. Negra points out that during the turn of the millennium a culture of financialisation arises in Ireland where “[...] finance, the management of money’s ebbs and flows, is not simply in the service of accessible wealth, but presents itself as a merger of business and life cycles, as a means for the acquisition of self [...]” (Negra 2010:842). It might be claimed that real estate speculation proves to be Tristram’s way to create an identity he seems to be content with, after having left his old alcoholic interpreter-identity behind, in the plane crash. When Tristram and Hickey have lost all their money in the end, Hickey gets drunk in his car, shutting Tristram in, and Tristram announces that in the past he was not his real self, implying that at this time he is, and he knows exactly what kind of consequences his actions will have.

Boltwood states that Irish drama in the 19th century included stereotypical descriptions of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy. Their perception ranged from firm in their judgment and perseverant to “[...] the ability to suppress even sexual arousal beneath a placid exterior.” (Boltwood 2001:392). One could see Tristram’s character being in line with this description as, in comparison to other characters, he stands out seemingly being drawn to etiquette, always using his second name introducing himself and not talking at all or even being secretive about the quality of his affair with Edel.

The main protagonist never carries cash, as he says he is barely interacting in what goes on in his surroundings, implying that Monsieur Deauville is the character to fulfil all his wishes and organise his life. Whenever Tristram is in danger of relapsing it is Monsieur Deauville who immediately calls Tristram on the phone and organises for him to be brought to an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting in the vicinity.

Mrs. Reid, the elderly maternal maid, is the only person who seems to care about him as she is the one to have filed a ‘missing person report’ and is very relieved when gardaí find him in ‘the priest hole’ towards the end of the novel. When relationships with girls are concerned, he admits to have used the pony Prince in his grandmother’s house to lure girls near him, as they were all enthused with the animal, but once the girls showed no interest in ponies anymore outgrowing the age of 14, the animal was forgotten and neglected by Tristram. The

reader does not get to know anything about Tristram's love-life until, Edel Hickey appears. He is erotically attracted to her and has an affair with her, but is seriously concerned that Desmond Hickey might find out about his betrayal:

Oh Lord God, I realised, he knows. He knows that I am in love with his wife, and that his wife is in love with me. How could he not know? The birds were singing about it in the trees. The sun was shining about it in the sky. Yes, we had been seeing each other all summer, Edel and I [...] (Kilroy 2012:267).

He becomes paranoid and suspects Larney, the man servant, of having told Hickey, but when he realises that Hickey has no idea about the affair, having won the upper hand again, he starts to mock him. He receives a text message on his mobile phone and when Hickey urges him to read it, Tristram announces "No, I'll open it later." "Why is it your man again?" "No, it's your wife." He laughed at that, he thought it was a joke." (Kilroy 2012:284). Tristram therefore could be characterised as a rather mean person, who even though he inflicts harm on his surrounding characters, gains pleasure in outwitting them. Yet again, this arrogance contrasted to Hickey's dim-wittedness makes the difference between stereotypical Irish and British characters as becomes also manifest in the caricatures of the Victorian period.

However, both characters, the stereotypical Irishman and the Anglo-Irishman, have something in common - also in Tristram's eyes: at the grill party at Hickey's house Tristram comments on Hickey with "You're a common thief." (Kilroy 2012:212), implying that Tristram considers himself a conman as well, but still one who is far more sophisticated and more skilful than Hickey is. In any case Tristram is able to outsmart his fellow conman by having an affair with the other one's wife. As he is still insecure about Hickey's abilities and to be on the safe side, Tristram lets Hickey know that all objects in the castle are merely replicas and copies, as he is afraid Hickey might contemplate stealing them.

Moreover Desmond Hickey considers Tristram to have 'lovely manners' (Kilroy 2012:58) and to be a posh English speaker, which might be a reason why Tristram is able to trick Desmond Hickey. The builder might not expect to be the victim of a conman that he considers to be a posh and well educated Anglo-Irish and is therefore not attentive enough. Also Tristram is aware of the fact that people refer to his talent of talking as 'uncanny' and so one could conclude that Tristram is fully aware of his ability to divert his business partners' attention by the help of 'the gift of the gab' and his Anglo-Irish origin using this to his advantage.

Furthermore, Tristram finds an article about Hickey in the newspaper and is taken aback by the fact that the journalist writes about a mastermind who stands behind Hickey, is shy and a tremendously influential persona in the international business and banking sector. Automatically, Tristram assumes that Hickey has a puppet master of his own, just like he has in M. Deauville. It does not cross his mind, however, that the journalist could be referring to Tristram, who is pulling the strings and uses Hickey for his purposes, even though Tristram seems to be aware that he is the smarter one of the two.

Once all the money they had is lost, Hickey succeeds in leading Tristram to the bottle again. This incident ends in a binge drinking event, in which Tristram forgets his manners and relapses into his former self as an alcoholic where he smoked, used bad language and swore a lot.

He loses his nerves for good once he is left by Edel and contemplates to throw himself over a cliff. After he has returned to the castle he meets Larney who presents his last riddle to Tristram. When Larney exposes his feet, which look like the devil's hooves and then reveals to Tristram that Monsieur Deauville is in fact the devil, Tristram realises that he has been in a pact with the devil. In order to escape evil, he hides in the dungeons of Howth Castle in a 'priest's cell' nurturing his paranoia before he is found with his hair having turned white by the gardaí three days later. This is when the story he tells to the tribunal ends. After having given his statement he decides to see the castle once more, as he believes that he might not return to Howth for many years to come. When he arrives in Howth he finds the apartments at the Claremont site already showing the flaws in their construction. The hotel is empty and only the show case flats seem to be lived in. When he reaches the castle he notices his exhaustion as "Sir Tristram has passencore rearrived." (Kilroy 2012:355) He explains "I hadn't laid eyes on the place since my childhood, about a thousand years before, and although it had been dragging my weary carcass around ever since, I did not think I could find the strength to drag it much further." (Kilroy 2012:355). Tristram is surprised that he finds the gates wide open rather than locked with a big chain. The plants in the garden grow exuberantly and the windows and doors are boarded up. Tristram enters the castle through a broken board, only to find its rooms emptied and vandalised. He walks from room to room, feeling like a ghost when he meets a homeless person in one of the rooms. This man tells Tristram that, it has been the castle's last owner who is responsible for the state the

castle is in, as he “[...] was a bit funny.” (Kilroy 2012:358) and “He died recently.” (Kilroy 2012:358). Tristram is taken aback and asks the man when, the 13th Earl of Howth died. The homeless person replies that Tristram could not bear to see the castle after the court hearing as he felt responsible and guilty that it is no longer a possession of the family. The man tells him that the owner of the castle, Tristram, went straight to an airport hotel where he took an overdose of sleeping pills and drank the contents of the hotel room’s mini bar. When Tristram realises the significance of this message the man clarifies: ““He had notions, the young master. Thought he could make millions overnight. They all thought they could make millions overnight. But that’s the problem with setting yourself up as a little god. You invite the other fella in.”” (Kilroy 2012:359). Promptly, Tristram understands that the devil has now arrived for him to pay his dues. He is led towards the exit of the castle and arrives at the top of a crooked stile. Although he is reluctant to go, the devil leads him further and Tristram’s back buckles and turns into one with a crooked spine.

It could be concluded that “Sir Tristram has passencore rearrived.” (Kilroy 2012:355) and that the author may have suggested a cyclical pattern in Tristram’s life. Tristram explains that his other self died in a plane crash and that M. Deauville saved him after he overdosed in a hotel from drinking again. Moreover, when Tristram comes back to the castle eight years after he has gambled away his inheritance, he feels exhausted and compares himself to a ghost. He meets the homeless man who tells Tristram that the owner of the castle overdoses in a hotel room after he has given his statement in front of the commission. He comes back to the castle, there he finds out that he is already dead and is in fact the ghost in the castle everybody talks about, just before the devil returns to take him to hell. The reader might interpret this in terms of a curse of a revenant forced to return from hell to life and back to hell again for centuries. Tristram seems to be confronted with problems that he appears to have created himself and decides to commit suicide, or die, to escape the hopelessness of his situation, only to arrive back from hell, to create a new problem he has to face.

Furthermore this cyclical pattern could be linked to the Celtic druids, who were believed to be able to summon evil forces and mediate between human beings and creatures in hell, changing their bodies in a dream state and preaching and acting according to the teachings of metempsychosis (Carey 1996). One could argue that Tristram is aware of his powers as he

comments “M. Deauville spoke only to me. To me and through me. I am an interpreter, a perfect conduit. An instrument of others M. Deauville issued the instructions and I carried them out.” (Kilroy 2012:93).

One can find possible reference to the druidical dream state and the Túatha Dé Dannan or demonic creatures in an underworld when Tristram gives an account of the noise at the construction site, which is responsible for his sleeplessness:

I had extravagant nightmares about subterranean activity – caverns being excavated beneath the castle. The expansion of Hell was under way in these dreams. The demons were at work, or at play, and it was happening directly beneath my sleeping body, or my sleepless body, more often than not, because once work commenced on the Claremont site I was unable to sustain unconsciousness for more than a few hours at a stretch. [...] Everybody sees different things when looking into an abyss. I see more than most. [...] There was a rake of them down there. Miniature men grubbing about in the dirt like the creatures exposed when you lifted a rock (Kilroy 2012:159ff.).

The cyclical pattern pattern could also be explained on the basis of Catholic teachings, i.e. the idea of sinners who have to relive their sins over and over again in hell. The aspect of sin is one which Tristram refers to more than once when telling his story to the court.

Furthermore the intertextual reference to Jamey Joyce’s practice of arranging his narratives cyclically becomes apparent, as Tristram’s soul could be said to reincarnate or transmigrate, like the one of a druid and create chaos in any of his new selves. According to Keohane, undoubtedly, Tristram is the archetypical trickster, who shows this ‘great plasticity of behaviour’, as the reader can never decide if his intentions are diabolical and according to an overall plan, or if they are indeed destructive, i.e. the ones of an unfortunate and mentally ill character. Tristram is, thus the ‘consummate survivor in a shifting world’ (Keohane 2005). Additionally, as Hyde puts it, tricksters are ‘boundary crossers’ (Hyde 1998), and Tristram manages to cross even the boundaries between life and death and rises to create more chaos by deceiving other human beings.

Finally, one could see a parallel between the caricature of *Dr. M’Jekyll and Mr. O’Hyde* as Tristram’s public self is the one of an Anglo-Irish gentleman with a liking for etiquette and manners, whereas his alter ego is responsible for chaos, maybe also even for his father’s and mother’s deaths and also for the misfortune of many other characters. Additionally Tristram

mentions that the key to being an interpreter is to rid oneself of one's own character and to allow the language, people's ideas and arguments pass through oneself without questioning the information. This might suggest that Tristram's mental health and stable mind begins to decline when he starts to question all his abortive actions, which were successful before, and not looked at from a moral perspective. Just like Charles Stewart Parnell, Tristram is Irish, and a Protestant who seems to help Irish society and its reconstruction, but unlike Parnell, he does this solely for his own benefit, his wealth, his power and status, which is why he has to go to hell.

7.2.2. The Hiberno – Irish Conman

The character of Desmond Hickey can be analysed on the basis of the information gathered from the caricature analysis, but he could also be seen as a contemporary version of an 'Irish kern' (Bartley 1942), a type of stage Irishman, who appeared in British theatres between 1600 and 1800.

The character with a typical Irish name, Desmond Hickey, appears to have many parallels to Irish stock characters. Various stereotypically Irish characteristics appeared in British theatres between the 17th and 19th century. Irish stock characters showed a proneness to drinking whiskey and gambling, they swore, called on Christ or the Saints, were known to be unintelligent and therefore made mistakes, called 'Irish bulls' (Scott 1942), and liked bogs (Bartley 1942). They were amorous, predominantly Catholic, known to be fortune hunters and often had long hair (Bartley 1942). Irish stock characters in America often worked as builders or bricklayers at the beginning of the 19th century (Wittke 1952).

Corresponding to these character traits, Desmond Hickey could be claimed to be a representative of an Irish kern. He is not very smart, he mistakes, for example, a 'landmark building' for a 'landscape building' (Kilroy 2012:140), which could be considered an 'Irish bull', and it is suggested that the Irish school system failed him. Moreover, Hickey has a great self-esteem and is convinced of his abilities, but he is, however, hardly aware of his mistakes and shortcomings. He seems to be very intolerant towards minorities in Irish society. He thinks that Tristram is homosexual, referring to him as a 'puff' (Kilroy 2012:45), only accepting gay couples in his apartments for their money and he makes quite clear that

he does not want 'lezzers'(Kilroy 2012:120) to move into his newly developed apartment complex at the Claremont site.

Other stereotypical Irish features appearing in Irish stage men as well as in Hickey's character are the obsessive search for prosperity and wealth and the weakness for gambling and betting. Desmond Hickey is aware of these weaknesses: "But you can't help hoping, can you? That's what happens when you rear a nation to chase after leprechauns and crocks a gold. Then the lotto came in and we all chased after that instead so it was curtains for metal detectors." (Kilroy 2012: 141). Corresponding to Negra, Desmond Hickey could be seen as a profit-minded 'New Irish' person:

The promotion of Ireland as a site for luxury shopping and business tourism is in keeping with the general contours of a national re-branding that interprets and values material and social space in new ways. The New Irishness is more austere, more profit-minded, and more efficient than pre-Celtic Tiger models of selfhood. It centralizes makeover strategies in which both self and landscape are to be relentlessly improved upon and developed for profit maximization and efficiency (Negra 2010: 848 ff.).

Hickey is determined to make money and to rise socially above his unemployed father. The important role of quickly achieved wealth becomes apparent when he finds a patch of land he used to walk on with a metal detector and cannot find any valuables, but realises its value on the real estate market: "I knew there was treasure buried around here somewhere. I could smell it, so I could. An now I've found it. It was right under me nose all the time. Land. Or what happens to land when a man like me changes it into *property*. I've transformed a heap a muck into gold (Kilroy 2012:142).

Other stereotypical character traits linked to the Irish kern is his deep Catholic belief and his inclination toward superstition. Hickey's first car dashboard is decorated with a St. Christopher, who is the Patron Saint of travellers and, therefore, car drivers. He also tells Tristram that he believes in Christian teaching – the existence of God and the Devil, as well as of Heaven and Hell - and he claims that he has seen the devil more than once in his life and even feels his presence sometimes. His Catholic faith becomes apparent when he blesses himself at every church or cross they pass in the car. Moreover, Hickey knows much about ancient Irish mythology and even believes in the leprechaun, who is the guardian of the pot of gold.

Moreover, Tristram is shocked when he learns that Hickey has fathered nine children in his first marriage. The Irish are stereotypically known to have a 'big family', which might not be easy to handle, and therefore this feature amongst many others marks Hickey as a stereotypical Irish character. Also Hickey's offspring is portrayed as having no manners, when giving a respectable Anglo-Irish gentleman a rough time at a party as Hickey's son bites Tristram after poking at a lobster with a pencil.

Similar to Irish stock characters Hickey is small but stout, ill-tempered and prone to use bad language. He is fond of drinking alcohol and could be described as a habitual drinker with a preference for whiskey. These stereotypical character traits appeared in Irish theatre characters as well as in the British press already during the 19th century.

Moreover, the Irish were claimed to be uneducated and to have a tendency to use crude language. Hickey very much lives up to this stereotype. Referring to a business enterprise his rival, termed 'the Viking' (7.2.3.), is allegedly about to plan in the surroundings, Hickey proves his affinity to simple and crude language when he exclaims: "'The Viking. I fucken knew it. [...] The fucker got there first, didn't he? That bollocks is buying up Howth. Right.'" (Kilroy 2012:54). Additionally, Hiberno-English expressions are used by Desmond Hickey quite frequently, such as the use of 'youse' for second person plural, the addition of 'so' at the end of sentences, the use for 'me' instead of 'my', words like 'effing', and most notably the use of emphasis by repetition, for example: "There will be a queue at the gate, so there will." (Kilroy 2012:182).

Another parallel to many Irish stock characters, is that of being 'amorous' (Bartley 1942), as women seem to play a vital role in his life boosting his self-esteem. The reader becomes aware that Hickey is not happy in his second marriage to Edel, because he betrays her with a prostitute and still has romantic feelings for his first wife: "'I'd put nothing past that woman. Biggest mistake a me life, leaving me first wife for her. Poor Bernie. Heart a gold.'" (Kilroy 2012:315), however Tristram cannot understand why Edel Hickey, being vulnerable and graceful, is married to Desmond Hickey. Soper explains the character *Happy* in American comic strips and comments on his relationship to women:

Happy was often allowed to dance with, and in this case kiss, idealized, racially "superior" female types. Of course he could do no more than make this fleeting

contact, and comedy was still derived from the ridiculous idea of him as a legitimate mate for these women [...] (Soper 2005: 286).

Similarly to *Happy*, Desmond Hickey is seen by Tristram as a complete mismatch to Edel, who is intellectually superior to Desmond.

The Hickeys' house is situated on a hill surrounded by heather and gorse. Moreover Desmond Hickey is a construction worker who is surrounded by mud and dirt. The latter could be considered to be another parallel to the stage Irishman who was portrayed to like living in the surroundings of bogs, which is why Irish characters in theatres were often referred to as 'bogtrotters' (Bartley 1942:443). Tristram, as opposed to Hickey, suggests that Hickey is physically well adapted to the muck he has to work in at construction sites. This feature seems to go hand in hand with the stereotypical portrayal of the Hiberno-Irish as uncivilised, being used to dirty environments and even preferring filthy surroundings to clean ones.

Corresponding to the British press during the Victorian period, Tristram characterises Hickey's status as either behind or above him on the evolutionary ladder, but in any case being a hybrid and "[...] something that wore its pelt on the inside, because they were a new breed [...]" (Kilroy 2012: 188). This example depicts the English fear of the other, especially of the hybrid, who is in some respects well adapted to its environments, but in others still does not fit into higher surrounding habitat. Hickey is feared by Tristram for his simple-mindedness, as Tristram comments on his business partner: "He was a very simple man. That's what made him so dangerous." (Kilroy 2012: 119). Additionally, Hickey's possible danger is implied in the reference to the wolf in a sheep's pelt that can never be placed and estimated the way he seems to be. Hickey could be 'the hybrid', who inverts the colonial gaze back onto Tristram, as it is the Anglo-Irish who somehow does not find his rightful place in Irish society.

Walter Alison Phillips suggests an explanation for the Irish people's allegedly retarded culture. He claims that the "[...] Celtic race is, by virtue of its inherent qualities, incapable of developing unaided a high type of civilisation." (Phillips 1923:3-4). The latter comment could explain the stereotypical portrayal of Desmond Hickey, as he shows many more character traits which seem to be stereotypically Irish in the light of the 19th century British press and

especially in the light of the *Punch* cartoons. Relating to the latter, it can be argued that Tristram refers to Hickey as a creature who has stopped to evolve and is therefore retarded in his development and is therefore considered an ape-like creature, rather than a civilised human being.

The variety of the 'violent Irish' appears in Hickey, after he and Tristram have lost all their money and they both go on a drinking binge. After Hickey has kicked Tristram in the ribs, they pay a visit to the Viking. "Hickey yanked the door open and tore in there like a terrier. He reefed all 200 pounds of the Viking out of his seat by the scruff. [...] Hickey flung him across the dusty laneway as if he weighed no more than an old coat.", but there is not enough proof to charge him with assault. (Kilroy 2012:303).

In the following it will be argued why the character of Desmond Hickey could be considered a variant of an Irish conman.

When Tristram coincidentally meets Hickey at the airport the latter seems to be very much interested in Tristram's company. Tristram appears to be surprised, as he remembers Hickey ridiculing him in school, whereas Hickey now claims to be his 'old pal' (Kilroy 2012:14). Even though Tristram tries to avoid more contact with Hickey, the builder persuades Tristram to accompany him to a bar and Tristram remarks that "Hickey never paid my misgivings the slightest heed" and remembers that in school Hickey "[...] belted confessions out of [...]" Tristram (Kilroy 212:18ff). Once they have entered the pub, Hickey tries to persuade Tristram to drink alcohol, but Tristram refuses and leaves.

On the next day Hickey brings Tristram to 'Hilltop', a house Tristram has inherited from his mother. The builder already has the door keys to the house, even though he does not even know that Tristram is the true owner of it. As Hickey believes that the house belongs to Tristram's father, he pretends have plans to restore the castle and tells Tristram that he would repair it for a lower price, if Tristram were willing to persuade his father to sell 'Hilltop'. After Tristram has told Hickey that he is the owner of the property, but he is not going to sell it to Hickey, the latter tries to make Tristram feel guilty when he reminds him that he has "[...] always stood up for [...]" Tristram in front of other people (Kilroy 2012: 58).

Tristram believes Hickey to have no conscience, which could also be inferred when the builder tells Tristram about his new project for residential and commercial use. Hickey

would like to build “[...] penthouses but mostly shoeboxes [...]” (Kilroy 2012:95), for the new inhabitants of the area. Additionally, he has planned to include an unnecessary hotel in the building process, as he would like to profit from ‘tax write-offs’ (Kilroy 2012:95), the Irish state offers for the construction of buildings like hotels or hospitals. When Tristram asks him about the zoning of the construction site, Hickey tells him that it is not a problem to rezone this land to a high residential zone, as he “[...] knows the very man.” (Kilroy 2012:96).

Hickey finds out that Castle Holdings is not a bank, as he was told by Tristram, but a commercial lending company and the treasury-management arm of a transnational corporation and that Tristram is “[...] routing money through the Irish State to avail a [sic] the low corporation tax.[...] Personally, I hate the Tax Man. An enemy a [sic] his is a friend a mine.” (Kilroy 2012:98). With this Hickey admits that he does not have any scruples to commit tax evasions and one could assume that he has committed fiscal fraud before.

Consequently, Tristram talks to Monsieur Deauville about Desmond Hickey’s plans and tells his consultant that

This is the purest form of speculation. [...] He’s talking about purchasing land which hasn’t the zoning for the use to which he intends putting it. If he doesn’t get a high rise zoning – and frankly he hasn’t a hope in an area of outstanding natural beauty like this – well, the land is worth a fraction of the ten million he proposes to borrow to pay for it. You won’t get your money back (Kilroy 2012:100 ff.).

In order to be able to enhance business Hickey and Tristram meet Hickey’s ‘very man’, a certain minister called Ray Lawless, to bribe him. This meeting has been arranged by Hickey, who is described as rather comfortable in a situation like this, while Tristram describes his feelings as not having the stomach for it. When Hickey receives a letter confirming, that the land has been rezoned, he exclaims gleefully and without any remorse “You get what you pay for!” (Kilroy 212:117). In addition to this, the reader understands that Hickey and Tristram’s relationship has a dodgy twist to it, as Hickey used to be Tristram’s dealer, presumably for cocaine, when Hickey announces that Tristram was the only customer to be given the high quality drugs, whereas other addicts were presented lower quality produce.

Right before Hickey and Tristram enter business with each other they meet and so as not to be seen, stay in the car and let the windows steam up in the rain. Tristram holds Hickey

accountable for this trick as he says in hindsight that this occurred “[...] more often than not, though the point of this particular charade escaped me. No one could see us through the fogged-up glass.” (Kilroy 2012:53). It is now subject to interpretation if the reader, due to Tristram’s account, deems Hickey the initial puller of strings, or if Tristram, the druid, is in fact the cleverer part and responsible for the con.

Before Hickey can start his work at the Claremont site he has Tristram arrange a meeting for him with ‘the Golden Circle’ (Kilroy 2012:137). The members of the latter are judges, attorneys, politicians and other influential members of the upper classes, who Hickey would like to ask for funding of his project. At this event Hickey wears a suit and introduces Tristram as ‘the brains’ (Kilroy 2012:138) in front of his conversation partners. Tristram is flattered by the charming Desmond Hickey and recalls in hindsight that “The men laughed at that and Hickey laughed loudest of all. I lowered my head in admission. Yes, it’s true. The brains are stored in this respectable, me. I provide them so that Hickey doesn’t have to. Only it wasn’t true. I wasn’t the brains. I was just stupid enough to think I was.” (Kilroy 2012:139). Furthermore Tristram is unsure whether the model of the buildings supposed to be created at the Claremont site is still the same when Hickey presents it to the Golden Circle:

Hickey’s architectural model [...] looked bigger. Had he glued on extra crystals? The skyscraper hotel closely resembled the building we had assembled in, which in turn resembled the building next to it, and the building next to it again, and so on throughout the docklands and across to the opposite bank of the Liffey. Those dollar-green towers were a contagion that had ripped through Dublin (Kilroy 2012:139).

One could assume that once Hickey and Tristram coincidentally meet at the airport, Hickey makes the plan to involve Tristram in his business plans, as according to Hickey it is Tristram who has business connections to ‘the Golden Circle’ as well as money or the access to construction sites, as it is the case with ‘Hilltop’. Hickey could be seen as an excellent manipulator, who knows how to behave and what to say to various people in order to get what he wants. He leads Tristram to believe that he is the actual puller of strings and tricks even ‘the Golden Circle’ by using bigger architectural models and flattering their taste by creating a similar model to the office building they are meeting in.

The biggest con Hickey is involved in seems to be the launch day of the apartments at the Claremont site. Hickey has grown his hair longer for this occasion, which could be seen as a

parallel to the long-haired Irish stage men in British theatres from 1600 onwards. Tristram states that “Long hair was required now that he was moving in different circles, or intending to. It signalled that he was a mover and shaker.” (Kilroy 2012:182). At first Hickey is made aware by his supervising engineer that the pipes buried under a dirt road would not withstand the weight of heavy machinery driving on these dirt roads during the finishing of the construction site. Hickey does not take his engineer seriously and is more concerned with the fact that his prospective clients might have to walk in the dirt with their Gucci high heels. Additionally he reminds the engineer that since the Building Control Act of 1990, everybody could self-certify their own construction sites and so the engineer could “[...] state that the work complies with the building regulations to ‘a substantial extent’.” (Kilroy 2012:184). Moreover it is only the show apartments which have been finished and therefore Hickey intends to sell most of the flats off-plan. In order to sell ‘gracious living’ (Kilroy 2012:189), a lifestyle and not just apartments, he has the architectural model on display “[...] like the Book of Kells [...]” (Kilroy 2012:185), has sold some of the units before the official sales date to create artificial competition and withdraws some of the flats from the market again to raise the prices, only to watch the people’s reaction to that from a nearby café.

After he has seen this ‘elaborate scam’ (Kilroy 2012:186) work well, he announces to host a barbecue with Tristram, members of ‘the Golden Circle’, his lawyer and the Viking as his guests.

When Hickey realises that Tristram is not entirely honest with him, he becomes very distrustful and wary especially in a situation when he finds Tristram talking to M. Deauville in German, as he cannot understand what they are talking about. “You better not be hiding something is all I’m saying.” (Kilroy 2012:165). Additionally, he tries to make Tristram feel dependent when he asks him “You’re his little skivvy, aren’t you? [...] You do everything that Nobody tells you to, don’t you?” (Kilroy 2012:167).

This however only shows Hickey’s inferiority when it comes to his calculating character in comparison to Tristram, who at the same time is having an affair with Hickey’s wife. Hickey does not even realise the betrayal, probably because he is too bona fide and trustful, or too much immersed in the thought of making money. He also reveals his loyalty to Tristram when he says “I wouldn’t have knicked the chandelier had I known it belonged to you.” (Kilroy 2012:45). Additionally, Tristram comments on his frustrated reactions as a result of

Hickey's trustworthiness: "That was the maddening thing about D. Hickey: he always managed to cheat you of your anger" (Kilroy 2012:50).

Desmond Hickey seems to be the most sincere of all the trickster characters in the novel, because he is open minded and honest to Tristram about his plans, even though he appears to manipulate Tristram to a certain degree. He could be described as one of the "[...] get-rich-quick guys of a middle [rather lower] class which has no tradition behind it. [He] lives in a kind of perpetual postmodern oblivion." (O'Connor 2008:58). Hickey could be said to be a rather amateurish conman, who is, however aware of what he can achieve using his charm and 'gift of the gab', not entirely sure about how to deceive others, e.g. when he tells Tristram about his business ideas. "'I have something to show you,' he muttered out of the side of his mouth. That was Hickey's idea of discretion: act as suspiciously as possible. 'A business proposition,' he added when I didn't bite." (Kilroy 2012:24). Although Tristram cannot be taken in by Hickey, explaining that "[he] can smell money" (Kilroy 2012:93) and that he doubts if Hickey even has a conscience, in the end the reader is not quite convinced that Hickey is more reckless than Tristram is.

All these aspects portray Hickey as a money-obsessed character who is willing to commit crimes to gain profit. Therefore he could be described as ruthless or reckless and as the representation of one of those Irish types who are ignorant, violent, alcoholic and uneducated but at the same time somehow clownish and emotionally unstable. He does not back away from a fight and tells lies or commits minor thieveries, but does not succeed with bigger cons. In some incidents he behaves like an ordinary human being who, to a certain extent, looks out for Tristram providing him with Mars bars and tea when he feels ill, while in other situations he does transform into a savage and dangerous creature.

7.2.3. 'The Viking' – A Variety of the Irish Conman

Dominic Dowdall, nicknamed 'the Viking', is described by Tristram as

Tall, fair-haired, blue-eyed, buff and in rude – no, obnoxious – good health. An invader on this island if ever I saw one. Not an indigenous short-arse like Hickey or a gaunt Anglo-Norman like me, but a Viking right down to his marrow. We

came upon him on Harbour Road [...] You couldn't miss him. Everything about his bearing announced itself. I am here his strut proclaimed as he strode up and down the frontage of a new giant green wine bottle of a bar, patrolling his strip while taking a call. A black Range Rover Sport with twenty-inch alloys was parked in his loading bay. He eyed it every time he passed. Or maybe he was eying his reflection in it. His face was tanned and his collar-length hair was tossed back in a salty tangle, as if he'd just come ashore after scudding the waves of his speedboat or longboat or yacht. He was rigged out in deck shoes and no socks. Wide-legged trousers in an off-white fabric, like linen only finer, as if fashioned from the fabric of sails. Whatever it took to advertise his nautical status was nailed to his mast (Kilroy 2012:56).

The Viking is portrayed on the traditional notions of the Vikings or Norsemen, raiding Ireland from the 8th century to about 1200. Some of the Viking invaders settled in Ireland, however, and became "[...] farmers, traders, colonists and urban developers." (Connolly 2007:609). Viking attacks were hit-and-run events, carried out with longboats. It was mainly sites around monasteries and densely populated settlements that were targeted. (Connolly 2007).

The Viking in the novel is rather arrogant and well-off, driving a Range Rover Sport. He appears to be self-centered and promiscuous. Tristram gives an account of Dominic Dowdall and his family arriving at the 'launch day' (Kilroy 2012: 197) of the Claremont site. Dowdall arrives with his wife, who is nicknamed "[...] his brown queen [...]" (Kilroy 2012:197) and three blond children with strange names, who behave rather naughtily and run all over the place breaking branches off trees, resembling Viking raiders of the Middle Ages: "He pitched up on launch day to sniff around, sensing that juicy spoils were to be had. That's what Vikings do. They raid juicy spoils." (Kilroy 2012: 197).

Moreover Tristram and Hickey compare him to animals, when they refer to the arrogant Dowdall as 'a cock' (Kilroy 2012: 57) and the way and movements with which he strolls around at 'launch day' as "[...] cocking a hind leg to squirt his scent on [a building]." (Kilroy 2012:198), which evokes the image of a dog. His head is described as 'great' and 'bullish' (Kilroy 2012:198). One could infer from this that this type of Irish person seems to be rather crude in his behaviour, showing instincts and behavioural patterns like don-domesticated animals.

In common belief, Vikings promoted violence (Connelly 2007) which is reflected in the text when Tristram and Hickey talk about Dowdall assaulting his former girlfriend in breaking her jaw. He has earned his money by owning a bar that is also a brothel, as well as by dealing with drugs. He has a mistress, the Russian waitress Svetlana, and he uses her to display his power, as he tells her what to do, in front of Tristram and Hickey and keeps her under strict control and orders. This behaviour seems to impress Hickey, who, according to Tristram “[...] would have liked instructing a woman like that to serve his friends.” (Kilroy 2012:199).

Dowdall ‘summons’ (Kilroy 2012:199) Tristram and Hickey to his bar for a business meeting. They have to wait for him to arrive and are served drinks by the waitress Svetlana, while Hickey remarks “I could burst that X.” (Kilroy 2012:200). It could be argued that Hickey feels threatened by the Viking, who also works in the development business, but as opposed to Hickey, is described to be good-looking, tall, influential and popular with beautiful women.

Once the Viking arrives at their table Hickey reveals his interest in Svetlana and the Viking seizes his chance of creating a bond between Hickey and himself, showing Hickey that with money and the right allies one could fulfil many desires:

‘This immigration business. It’s not all bad news.’ ‘Svetlana? Yes. The Russian girls are beautiful. Doesn’t translate into the men though.’ [...] The men nodded thoughtfully, two men of the world. ‘The Russian men don’t find Irish women attractive,’ the Viking added, ‘but the Russian women find Irish men extremely attractive. Did you know that?’ ‘Get away,’ said Hickey. ‘You’re bullshitting me.’ ‘I am not. They find rich Irish men practically irresistible, in fact.’ (Kilroy 2012:200 ff.).

Dowdall treats Tristram and Hickey to many drinks, but what the intoxicated Hickey does not realise is that the Viking tricks him and sends back his own barely touched pints. Tristram, however, refuses to drink alcohol given his alcoholic past. After Dowdall provides Hickey with cocaine and they have found a common target to mock in Tristram, Hickey is sent to another room with Svetlana. After Hickey is out of earshot the Viking asks for a word with Tristram and says “Let’s get down to business.” (Kilroy 2012:203), implying that he is rather interested in doing business with Tristram than with Hickey. This seems to be a calculating move, as Dowdall appears to be aware that Tristram does not consider Hickey an adequate business partner, and so the Viking pretends that he also has objections against Hickey. Dowdall, completely sober and quite to Tristram’s surprise and horror, informs him that he

knows M. Deauville, and that he has come to an agreement with him and that they have 'formed a consortium'(Kilroy 2012:204), so the Viking will be the one to manage the hotel at the Claremont site. The reader might suspect a connection between Tristram and the Viking as both appear to have entered a pact with 'the devil', even though the reader does not get to know more about Dominic Dowdall's exact agreement with Monsieur Deauville.

As Dowdall has succeeded in giving Hickey the impression that both of them have equal interests, that there is no need for a struggle over superiority, and now that they have entered business with each other, Hickey invites the Viking to his barbeque. The Viking greets Tristram in a sloppy manner: "How's tricks, Tristram?" (Kilroy 2012:212), which of course is a legitimate question amongst friends or business partners, but it might also suggest a reference to Tristram's cons. In addition one could assume that the Viking knows about Tristram's fate and the plans he has in store for himself and Desmond Hickey. Moreover one could also claim that the Viking refers to his own tricks he has in store for his new business partners, Hickey and Tristram.

Once Hickey and Tristram have bought land outside of Dublin, after they have attended a conference with 'the Golden Circle', where the Viking seems to have been present as well, and want to bribe the minister for rerouting the new Metro line to their land, they find out that Dowdall has had his own interests at heart all along. "'The Viking's after getting to Ray. [...] He wants the Metro North diverted to service his land. [...] An [sic] he gazumped us on diverting the Metro this morning. It's going to terminate in his farm, not ours. [...]"(Kilroy 2012:268 ff.). Tristram accompanies Hickey to go and talk to the Viking, who is not to be found in his bar. Tristram and Hickey decide to wait for him in the car and when they realise that they have waited in vain Tristram remarks that "[t]he Viking was out there sniggering at us. We hated him. And he hated us." (Kilroy 2012:285). From this remark one could infer that Tristram is already aware of the Viking's connection to the devil, or Monsieur Deauville, to some extent, as he refers to Dowdall just like one would describe a paranormal presence looming over somebody.

Dominic Dowdall certainly is a variant of an Irish conman, who employs his animal like instincts to detect the weaknesses of his opponents and to use these weaknesses against them to achieve personal victory or success. He seems to be very quick in realising which behaviour his counterparts believe to be threatening, amicable or adequate in a specific

situation and he immediately responds according to the plan he has in mind. While he tries to assure Hickey that he poses no threat to him and can help him to fulfil his needs and desires, he lets Tristram know that he is of his opinion as far as Hickey's character and ability to do business are concerned. Through this he succeeds in diverting his business partners' attention so they do not realize that Dowdall is still only interested in his own projects and does not hesitate to betray their alliance or even friendship for his personal gain.

7.2.4. The Conwoman Edel Hickey

As could be seen in the analysis of the cartoon *The Fenian-Pest*, the stereotypical portrayal of the Irish woman is the one of Erin who is in need for protection. Boltwood claims that specific literature in the 19th century focussed on the characterisation of British encounters with the Irish people. Boucicault's *Old Heads and Young Hearts* included "[...] English encounters with racial alterity focus[sing] on the threat of miscegenation posed by female characters who hide their racial difference beneath a theatrical "white-face," which irretrievably seduces English or Anglo-American characters before they learn of the women's racial compositions." (Boltwood 2001: 386). Commonly, these women's complexions are described as 'fair'. They are often considered beautiful, but still embody racial others who bury "[...] their race between the visual whiteness [...]" (Boltwood 2001:390). Moreover, female Irish characters in plays generally struggle to rid themselves of the Irish accents and try to behave in an aristocratic way (Boltwood 2001).

Boltwood's characterisation of the Irish women in 19th century theatre shows many parallels to the characterisation of Edel Hickey, Desmond Hickey's wife. Tristram falls in love with her soon after they have met for the first time and he describes one of their encounters, when she wears a white halterneck sundress and her blond hair falls over her delicate shoulders. It could be claimed that this description matches the one given by Boltwood, who also points out the fair complexions and the colour white as being erotically appealing and seductive to male English. Edel is generally portrayed as an unspectacular person with a tendency to dress in white or cream colours. Even though Tristram is Anglo-Irish, it is stressed more than once that he is not truly a member of Irish society as he is perceived more English than Irish. Thus, Tristram, the Anglo-Irish aristocrat, becomes the victim of seduction by an Irish woman: "I found her there, or she found me. Edel. Hickey's wife. [...] She reached up and

plucked a leaf from my hair before initiating the kiss that initiated everything [...]" (Kilroy 2012:243 ff.).

Edel Hickey is one of the most reckless and double-faced characters in the novel. She is not at all what the German meaning of her forename suggests her to be, i.e. 'noble' or 'classy', but she manages to conceal her real self until the end. Tristram perceives her as a delicate, beautiful woman. Thus, she does not match her husband at all, who is the stereotypical crude and masculine Hiberno-Irish. She pretends to be in need for protection when she admits "I get frightened here on my own at night. It's so isolated." (Kilroy 2012:218). It seems like she is performing an act of mimicry, trying to be a person Tristram would be interested in, displaying her otherness and fragility in comparison to her husband, so as to make Tristram fall for her. The latter could lead to the conclusion that she does not have any interest in her husband, but is in fact very much interested in his money. When Tristram enters her life, however, she realises that Tristram, the 13th Earl of Howth, can offer her more than her husband Desmond ever is able to.

At Hickey's party Tristram finds out that Hickey has stolen the chandelier of his grandmother's house:

Edel raised her head and looked at the chandelier as if considering it for the first time. 'Yes it's an antique, I believe.' 'It certainly is. It's a valuable family heirloom, in fact.' Another door swung open into the atrium and Hickey bulldozed in, catching me staring at his wife, and his wife staring at my property strung from his ceiling (Kilroy 2012:212).

This episode reflects the relationship the characters have with each other. While Desmond Hickey is focused on Tristram and their business relations, Tristram has only eyes for Edel Hickey, while the woman is actually solely interested in the chandelier, synonymously standing for wealth and material possessions.

Tristram is very much in love with her and explains that the birds would only be singing for their love. He does not believe that Edel could ever deceive him. Even when Hickey tells him that it is in fact Edel's pony which has been neglected near Hilltop, he cannot believe it and thinks "Edel would never neglect a defenceless animal like that." (Kilroy 2012:315).

After being informed of his bankruptcy Tristram goes to the Hickey residence to see Edel. He spots her Mercedes, which seems too small and misplaced in contrast to Hickey's bulldozers in the driveway, and when he peeks through the windows, finds her inside the house, wearing glasses sitting at the kitchen bar on a high stool working a calculator. He is surprised by the thought of her doing calculations and has never seen glasses on her before and although he doubts that the calculator is Desmond Hickey's, in his opinion it would be more likely than Edel juggling numbers on a regular basis. He sends Edel a text message and watches her while she picks up her mobile phone, reads the text message and puts the phone back on the kitchen counter, resuming her work. In a second message Tristram asks her to meet her at the front door, where she then tells him in "[...] the dirty clothes, the unshaven chin, the blood shot eyes, [with] the fumes of stale booze [...]" (Kilroy 2012:329) that their affair is over and that she is now trying to salvage any possessions she can with her husband. In the end it becomes apparent, however, that Edel has saved possessions from her husband rather than with him. Tristram, still head over heels in love with her, offers and asks her to leave her husband and come with him. She turns down his offer. Only then does Tristram realise that the woman has outwitted and tricked both him, and her husband:

'Tristram,' she said again, 'I realise that this isn't the best time for you to hear this, in light of your father's sudden passing, but they're going to come after your assets now, and some assets can't be hidden. Some assets can't be stashed. JCBs and diggers and all that junk parked on the driveway can be made to disappear, as can sums of money, but assets like a castle, assets like your grounds? There's no way of sheltering them. It's unlikely they'll remain yours for much longer, I'm afraid. All I can suggest is that you go down and strip the place of valuables while you still have a chance.' [...] Let's be fair about this: we all partied. But now the party's over. Go, home Tristram.' She closed the door in my face. The last thing I saw was the chandelier that Hickey had stolen from Hilltop. But why would Hickey want my chandelier? A chandelier was just a big light bulb to a man like him. It was her. She had spotted it. It had caught her eye, so she had instructed him to take it down. *Strip the place of valuables while you still have a chance.* [...] A woman as hard as her, a woman as brittle as her, a woman made of glass. I could see that now. I could see right through her now. Transparent as glass (Kilroy 2012:330).

This incident reveals Edel's true self as a reckless, cold hearted, greedy and calculating person. Tristram realises that she has managed to trick him, appearing like a fragile woman in need for protection in a failed marriage with a character like Desmond Hickey. One could

argue that her character hints at an ancient druidess who plays her part in ruining Tristram's and Desmond's life, and seduces men for her personal gain. In the end, after Hickey has signed over the house in the moors to her, she throws her husband out of it and he has to take on the job of a taxi driver to make a living. Therefore, one could state that Desmond Hickey has also been put under a magical spell by her in order to fulfil her dreams of a wealthy lifestyle. Tristram concludes that it is the people who have been oppressed or treated like children who are the most dangerous, as they are masters of their emotional impulses, and therefore, their actions are unpredictable. He states this opinion on Edel after his realisation about her character, while he is also, probably unknowingly, referring to himself.

7.2.5. Monsieur Deauville – The Pooka

Monsieur Deauville is a rather elusive, mysterious character who never appears in person. He is described as a good listener and the one to save Tristram from himself. He appears to be a character who is there for Tristram whenever he is in need. The reader finds out that Deauville is a wealthy man, well educated, speaking many languages and is thought to be of francophone descent, either French or Belgian; although Tristram believes him to be Belgian, as Brussels is where he encountered him first. The reader is told that nobody, not even Tristram, has ever met or seen M. Deauville in person. He communicates by phone only.

Deauville is Tristram's rather commanding and determined advisor. Tristram tells the committee about his alcohol problem and how he has managed to become sober again before Tristram resurfaces in Ireland. After a drinking binge in a hotel room and a stay in hospital, where he is mistakenly declared dead, his death certificate pending, he is yet again looking for another bar to get intoxicated in, when his mobile phone rings and the screen displays an unknown caller on it. Tristram is vexed as he believes that the battery has already run out but he picks up the phone and Monsieur Deauville is on the other end of the line and says "My name is Monsieur Deauville [...] I realise that you are dying for a drink, and I am ringing to inform you that if you pursue this course of action you most certainly *will* die for it." (Kilroy 2012:85). After that Tristram explains to the jury what kind of relationship he

has with Monsieur Deauville and that during the release from the asylum and withdrawal his friend stayed with him on the phone in a hotel room all the time:

We were holed up in that hotel room together for days on end like lovers, talking the long hours away.[...] M. Deauville rang at the moments when I felt weak, and there were no moments when I felt strong. He had to check in with me day and night. I could not be left to my own devices for long. When I felt I couldn't cope a second longer and had reached for the hotel phone to dial room service to order up a drink, on cue, my mobile would ring. It was as if he could read my mind. It takes one to know one, I suppose (Kilroy 2012:85 ff.).

Tristram tells Monsieur Deauville that he believes him to be a saint, which is the only situation Tristram recalls his sponsor laughing.

It could be claimed that Tristram is in fact rather dependent on M. Deauville, who mysteriously turns up in his life, using empathy and devotion during the stages of Tristram's withdrawal and so turns into the person Tristram trusts the most. It is stated that Tristram imagines M. Deauville to be another Lawrence, and as a result of Deauville's French accent, a 'Laurent' (Kilroy 2012:89), saying "[h]e was my own personal Saint Lawrence, my Higher Power." (Kilroy 2012: 89), the reader might finally get the idea that Tristram St Lawrence has conjured up an alter ego of himself which is Monsieur Deauville.

Tristram emphasises Deauville's being in charge, when they have conversations on the phone as it is Monsieur Deauville who works the control panel, formulating decisions, pulling the strings between characters and their business deals, which are always and accompanied by the strange sound 'tocka tocka'. In addition to that, the reader is informed that it is Monsieur Deauville who is responsible for bringing Tristram and Hickey together to establish business relations.

Concerning Monsieur Deauville's identity, the reader can make only assumptions. It probably is M. Deauville's mysterious presence that Hickey and Tristram encounter, when they take a walk in the moors to look at a prospective developing site:

Then we heard a whimper. It was coming from a mound of gorse. Hickey picked up a rock and we approached. It was woody old gorse, left to grow unchecked for so long that you could walk between the trunks propping up its prickly canopy. The closer we got, the higher the mound loomed, and then we saw the glowing eyes. And the glowing eyes saw us. They had been watching us all along. Neither of us said a word, just about-turned and legged it straight back

to the truck. When we were both in, Hickey hit the central locking button and the accelerator pedal. He didn't stop to shut the rusty gates when we finally found our way out. 'But what if it escapes?' I said and immediately regretted voicing the question, because in referring to it I had confirmed that there was an It. [...] 'Do you believe in God?' he asked me some miles down the road. Night had fallen by then. Real dark, country dark. 'No'. 'Do you believe in the Devil? [...] Or would he be one of them mad fuckers from Kerry? You know where they hold the Puck Fair? The Puck is another word for the Devil, isn't it? Isn't that right, Tristram? Isn't Puck another name for the Devil? [...] I'd say he'd be English. Like you.' 'I'm not English, Dessie.' 'You know what I mean. I'd say he'd talk posh like you. [...] He didn't look human. I'd say he was English. A posh English toff.' (Kilroy 2012: 251 ff.).

'The Pooka' or 'Puck' in Irish fairylore is said to be able to change his appearance at will, and therefore he has become known as a mysterious creature allegedly inhabiting the moors. One of the situations where the Pooka could be present in another shape is the one when Tristram encounters Larney and his dog in front of the castle. The Jack Russell named Todd blocks Tristram's path, seemingly possessed by a different and more powerful specimen. Just like the African trickster, the Irish Pooka and the devil can change shape.

Finally, Tristram explains his experience of being hurled away or carried by a creature, being only a 'passenger' (Kilroy 2012:335), when he figures out that he has made a pact with the devil. This notion is also used in folklore narrations of the Pooka. The creature is said to be able to take people on its back to carry them. Similarly, Monsieur Deauville, and Larney jump around Tristram just like a flea performing a 'goatish dance' (Kilroy 2012:336), appearing and disappearing at will, which is another typical feature of a Pooka's behaviour as described in Irish mythology.

After Tristram has seen the Pooka or devil in its real shape, dancing in front of him, and told the tribunal about his sins, he attempts to commit suicide in a hotel room as he cannot face the consequences of his real estate speculations. Tristram's family line is extinguished with his death. This account of Tristram dying without him realising, as discussed in 7.2.1., could be connected with the Pooka that is believed to be a resident in Howth Castle, protecting its realms. The novel might also refer to the legend reported by Breatnach, that it is believed that once a person has witnessed the Pooka protecting Howth castle, he or she will die (1993).

7.2.6. Larney - The Leprechaun

Larney is the man servant of the castle who is encountered in the castle grounds. He is always seen close to the gate of the castle and is never met by Tristram inside the building. Tristram describes his appearance as “[...] a crooked man who walked a crooked mile [...]” (Kilroy 2012:28) and expresses his amazement at Larney’s age, as he had already appeared old to him when Tristram was a boy “[...] and a young man when father was a boy, having served our family since he himself was a boy.” (Kilroy 2012:28). Furthermore, Larney appears to have a crooked shape and to be small in stature, which might remind the reader of a leprechaun. The leprechaun could again be linked to the figure guarding Howth castle, as the text states that the Pooka there has the shape of a small man or possibly even a leprechaun. Moreover, the character of Larney in the novel is associated with Monsieur Deauville, or the Pooka in disguise, as for example Larney has red glowing, diabolical eyes, whenever he confronts Tristram with a riddle (Kilroy 2012:336).

As elaborated on in chapter 6, leprechauns address their masters in riddles so as to divert their attention from bigger cons. Also Larney uses riddles to divert Tristram’s attention. Especially towards the end of the book when all is lost for Tristram, he gives a typical account of a potential leprechaun haunting Howth castle’s grounds:

‘The one who makes it, sells it, The one who buys it, never uses it, The one that uses it never knows that he’s using it. What is it?’ ‘I don’t know, Larney. What?’ But instead of revealing the answer, he went back to the beginning and recited the riddle again in full. [...] I still didn’t know the answer. ‘A coffin!’, he said. ‘Another coffin. Excellent.’ I sidestepped him, but he planted himself in my path a second time because suddenly he had grown uncharacteristically nimble. Uncharacteristically nimble and uncharacteristically bold. ‘There is a coffin,’ he began. ‘The mother of the person in the coffin –’ ‘That’s quite enough, Larney. Let me pass.’ [...] He sighed as if I were trying his patience and began again. ‘There is a coffin. The mother of the person in the coffin is the sister-in-law of your father’s aunt. Who is the corpse in the coffin?’ [...] He reached out and placed his index finger on my sternum to stay me, to literally stay me, for I could not move. That crooked finger arrested my progress. [...] His fingertip had started to burn. [...] Once contact was broken, I crumpled into a coughing heap, clutching my ribs although my sternum hurt more. [...] He branded me. The Devil’s finger print (Kilroy 2012:319).

After this encounter Tristram is led into the castle by Mrs. Reid and told that his father has died. He tells her that he wants to throw out Larney, but she reminds Tristram of the fact that Larney had passed away already years ago.

When Tristram begins his business enterprise as the director of Castle Holdings an envelope is delivered to him by a mute motorcyclist dressed entirely in black. Tristram sees his own reflection in the motorcycle helmet's visor and notices that it "[...] only returned [his] reflection in miniature, a crooked and contorted man." (Kilroy 2012:71). The stature of the black motorcyclist is described as rather tall, while the visor only shows a crooked man. The reader might interpret this as Tristram seeing his own reflection in the visor, which is contorted suggesting that also Tristram is about to lose his true identity.

Many Irish stories revolve around the meeting between a human and a leprechaun. The novel entails such an event when Tristram arrives at the castle after the collapse of his business:

'Show yourself,' I commanded him, but he did not. [...] After an extraordinarily fraught pause, the leaves rustled and a twig snapped. Larney emerged slowly, wrists and elbows first, for his arms were raised to shield his head. 'Come here, Larney. I'm not going to hurt you.' He inched forward in the undulating, weaving manner of a snake and came to a halt a few feet shy of me, his body crouched and adverted from mine like a blackthorn growing on a cliff. Tears, snot and spittle were trickling down his face, and his eyes rolled from side to side in his head, looking up and down the avenue in search of an escape (Kilroy 2012:206 ff).

Tristram refers to Larney as a 'goblin' (Kilroy 2012:246), when he notices that he has spied on him and Edel meeting in the moors. Just like leprechauns, Larney is surrounded by nature whenever he appears in the story. He is never seen inside the castle but only in the castle grounds or the moors adjacent to the castle gardens, hidden beneath the shrubbery or behind bushes.

In one sequence Tristram wants Larney to answer a question and seizes him by the collar of his shirt, noting the creature's little weight, when shaking his body. Larney tries to avoid Tristram's stare, a reaction which seems to be quite typical of leprechauns in mythology when caught.

After Tristram and Hickey have drunk a lot of alcohol realising they have lost all their money, Tristram returns to the castle and meets the goblin at the castle gates, Larney realises that “[t]he young master didn’t come home last night.” (Kilroy 2012:318). Tristram decides to praise him for his attention and describes Larney’s reaction as follows: “He squirmed with pleasure [...] all he needed was to be thrown the odd word of praise. He was just a big child, like the rest of us. He straightened into his sentry’s stance. Remarkable. I had presumed his twisted spine was a birth deformity.” (Kilroy 2012: 318). Due to this statement one could assume that after Tristram has lost all his money and business enterprise, as well as his most intimate friend M. Deauville, Larney appears to be taller than he really is to Tristram. Also it might be claimed that according to the typical character traits of a leprechaun, Larney is amused about Tristram’s financial ruin. In any case, Larney’s habit of addressing Tristram as his master is still evidence of his acknowledgement of rank or position in the castle.

When Tristram returns to the castle, after Edel has ended their relationship, Larney waits for him ‘in the rhododendrons’ (Kilroy 2012:333) to confront Tristram with further riddles. He notes that Tristram is “[...] not playing with the rough boys anymore [...]” (Kilroy 2012:333), before he analyses him to have no spine. One last question is posed to Tristram by Larney, in the voice of Monsieur Deauville: “Who is Monsieur Deauville?” (Kilroy 2012:333). Tristram is surprised that Larney knows of his friend and asks him why he knows Tristram’s advisor. Larney only replies that “[e]very soul in Christendom knows that name. I’ll make you a deal: answer the riddle and I’ll let you go free.” (Kilroy 2012:334). Tristram believes Monsieur Deauville to be his sponsor. Larney laughs at that reply and informs Tristram that this is the wrong answer. He tells Tristram that a wrong answer has a catch to it and Tristram suddenly realises a change in Larney’s feet, which have miraculously turned into hooves, making the sound ‘tocka, tocka’ (Kilroy 2012:360), which is audible only to Tristram in several instances throughout the story, whenever he is confronted with illegal transactions, the voice of Monsieur Deauville, or with Larney. Larney breaks into a dance and gives Tristram a clue to the final riddle: “Deh not doh, deh not doh, deh not doh.” (Kilroy 2012:334). Finally, Tristram realises that the devil has been his sponsor and advisor who has come back for him to pay his dues. Tristram tries to flee, but notices that Larney manages to keep up with his speed. Tristram realises that he is carried by the devil, being only a ‘passenger’ (Kilroy 2012:335) and does not even have to speak his answers out loud, as the devil can read his mind. He is

led to a crooked stile and changes his own shape into the one of Larney, his back becoming crooked, on his way to hell (Kilroy 2012:360).

7.2.7. Concluding Thoughts on the Characters

Due to the account on a goblin-like little man, referred to as the Pooka in Howth castle, a connection between the leprechaun and the Pooka has already been established. While a real story taken from folklore revolves around the two mythological creatures, Claire Kilroy portrays two of her characters, who are connected in the same way. Larney could be identified as a leprechaun, whereas Monsieur Deauville can be identified as a goatish 'Puck', the Pooka or the devil. Which role does the main character Tristram fulfil in the events in the novel, however?

Tristram undoubtedly has been in an unstable mental condition for most of his life. Being in school he is perceived an outsider who tells on other children and is therefore avoided or punished by them. At the age of fourteen he starts to drink and develops an alcohol and drug problem. Due to the nature of his profession he travels a lot, but has a very bad relationship to his father and is not even told about the death of his mother, who he seems to have been close to. He survives two attempts at committing suicide by the help of his alter ego Monsieur Deauville. The latter, just like Tristram, speaks many languages, is very intelligent and talks in a posh manner. He is the voice in Tristram's head to guide him and tell him to stay sober and avoid old acquaintances connected to drug and alcohol abuse. This alter ego, however, uses Tristram's body or usurps it in order to fulfil Tristram's inner desires, namely his need for appreciation of his achievements, success with regard to women and a higher status in society, as even though he is part of a wealthy Anglo-Irish family, he has never been accepted as a rightful member of Irish society. After Monsieur Deauville has appeared in Tristram's life he seems to be able to fulfil all his secret desires, but he finally has to pay for his deeds. If he had figured out sooner that he has entered a pact with the devil, he could have changed the course of events.

One could argue that Tristram's character is somehow based on a Celtic druid, who is able to interact with fairy creatures like the Pooka or the leprechaun. Moreover druids were understood as mediators between the human beings and the Túatha De Dannan in the

underworld. They were said to be able to understand and evoke demons (Borsje 2008), which could be seen as being hinted at by Kilroy, as Tristram conjures up the mysterious character of Monsieur Deauville.

Tristram recalls “[...] the fogged- up glass [...]” of the car windows during conversations he has had with Desmond Hickey about their business (Kilroy 2012:53). Druids were believed to be able to conjure up this mist in order to protect themselves and their allies against possible enemies. Tristram believes Hickey to be responsible for this mist; however, it could be interpreted to be a magical mist created by Tristram, the druid. In addition Tristram refers to Monsieur Deauville as ‘Monsieur du Veil’ (Kilroy 2012:89), which might be another link to druidical mist during conversations between Tristram and his consultant.

Moreover, demons evoked by druids were believed to be defeated by divine power and Christian belief. After Tristram and Hickey have encountered a black figure in the moors and Hickey has announced that he believes in a devil with an English accent, Tristram is brought to the castle. When he steps out of the car he notices “The window [gliding] up again, sealing Hickey in with his cargo, and no St Christopher to protect him.” (Kilroy 2012: 257). This could be a hint towards Tristram’s realisation of himself being a person to be able to summon the devil. As Christian belief is said to be a protection against evil spirits evoked by druids and Hickey does not have the figure of St Christopher on his car’s dashboard, it could be argued that Tristram knows Hickey to be doomed.

In a general statement Tristram concludes that

One must hollow oneself out. One must make of oneself the perfect conduit. This is a trick I have mastered. [...] Hickey thought I was concealing something from him and generally I was, just as generally as he was concealing something from me (Kilroy 2012:6).

Therefore it could be claimed that after Tristram has experienced the story, he tells to the court, he is aware of his position as a mediating character between the human and the mythical creatures.

Even though Tristram never meets Monsieur Deauville in person and only communicates with him on phone, the devil in disguise appears to Tristram also in the person of Larney the leprechaun. He is the character to send clues to Tristram in form of riddles that the Anglo-

Irish does not manage to understand, although he feels that something sinister starts to possess him.

When Tristram gives an account of a spider on a gossamer thread abseiling towards his desk and comments: “[...] I wished it wasn’t there, but it was there, and I lived with it, along with a number of other monstrosities that made their home in mine.” (Kilroy 2012:265), it could be claimed that Tristram is fully aware of his split personality.

Moreover, it is often heard that animals’ instincts never betray a situation. Tristram’s father’s setters crouch before Tristram in submission, without having seen him before, as if recognising their real master, a diabolical creature and inherently more powerful than themselves. This is why they are silent and stay as if they were made to stay in front of their master.

The novel does not just open discussion on whether Tristram and Monsieur Deauville are the same person. As the Pooka and the leprechaun could be understood as one and the same creature changing shapes, Tristram could be seen as having a second alter ego, namely the one of Larney the leprechaun. A number of clues can be found in order to back up this hypothesis.

Tristram recalls an incident during his childhood when he surprises Larney in the woods surrounding the castle and realises that the character is not crooked and does not have any limp in his walk, but is tall and looks just like a normal villager. When Larney notices Tristram he retreats into his typical posture and shields his head afraid of a beating he might receive. Accordingly, after Tristram’s loss of sobriety and money and his lost desire to keeping up appearances, he meets Larney at the castle gates and Tristram realises that Larney is in fact not the crooked man, but rather very tall and upright. This fact could lead to the revelation that Larney is in fact Tristram, who is also described as tall. The third instance in which this connection might be revealed to the reader is the one which has already been described previously. A motorcyclist offers Tristram an envelope of money and Tristram notes a contorted and crooked persona in the visor of the man dressed in black leather. This could be a clue towards Tristram’s alter ego as a crooked little leprechaun.

Another scene shows the connection between the three of Tristram’s egos. After Tristram has commanded the leprechaun to show himself, Larney appears. When Larney is then

asked by Tristram whether giving him a fright was his idea of a joke, he admits that a man made him do it. Tristram reacts by reaching out for Larney's collar, seizing him. "Answer me, Larney: what did the man look like?" Larney braced in anticipation of a blow. 'He looked like you.' I released his collar and he slunk back into the shrubbery." (Kilroy 2012:206).

According to Irish mythology where the trickster often redefines social boundaries, one could say that Larney as man servant of Tristram reverts power structures from the seemingly more inferior creature, who is dependent on his master's wishes, to the superior diabolical Pooka, who is the actual puller of strings. Tristram's alter ego disguises itself using different shapes and forms such as a leprechaun-like servant, an eloquent and intelligent Monsieur Deauville or the human addict Tristram St Lawrence. In any case it is Tristram, the druid, as Monsieur Deauville's proxy, who has signed all the contracts in the real estate business. It could be concluded that the devil can only work in Tristram, through Monsieur Deauville, while his conscience tries to protect him and send him clues about what is going on with him in the shape of Larney the leprechaun.

8. *The Devil I Know* – A Social Satire

The main aim of this chapter is to demonstrate that the genre of satire, the use of mocking and debunking, is also manifest in *The Devil I Know*, and how Claire Kilroy applies the features of satire. In the following, specific aspects which are deemed illustrative examples of features of satire are taken from the novel.

A satire is defined as "[...] the use of humour, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues [...]" (Oxford Dictionary 2005). It may be claimed that the novel qualifies for the genre of satire, first and foremost as the plot revolves around a big scandal in the construction and property business, as well as in politics and the real estate market where bribery for rezoning and rerouting of traffic, financial speculation and debt were involved. In addition to the latter, there are a variety of other aspects which classify the novel as a social satire.

In an interview Terry Eagleton comments on satire, debunking and mocking as facets of the Irish humour and states that numerous Irish writers just like Wilde, Beckett or Yeats use Nietzsche's idea of tragic joy, which for example shows a "[...] proud aristocrat, disdainful, dancing contemptuously in the face of death." (qtd. in O'Connor 2008: 59). This notion can be said to apply to the main character Tristram, who is an Anglo-Irish descendant of the Earl of Howth, on the verge of losing his mental health and his life. Eagleton then goes on to explain: "[...] Parnell at the same time was doing something very similar. In a poor society, laughter is one of the few things that are free. Laughter at least is cheap, and it can be a moment of emancipation like Wilde's use of wit. It can be a momentary transcendence of a harsh reality." (O'Connor 2008: 59).

Here, a parallel between Tristram and his alter egos, and Charles Stewart Parnell with his alter ego in the *Punch* caricature, can be drawn again.

Eagleton further argues that Ireland, due to its historical events, has undergone harsh periods, but has certainly managed to preserve a "[...] marvellous tradition of humour [...]" (Eagleton in O'Connor 2008: 68). Also McClinton-Temple comments on the gift of storytelling and Irish imagination and explains it as an attempt to compensate for emotional loss from the 17th century onwards (2013). It is interesting that Kilroy has chosen her main character to act as a storyteller, who gives evidence to a court of law of his wrongdoings in the wake of his own losses, the ones of his sanity, his wealth, his reputation, his relationships and love and finally the one of his life.

Additionally, there are numerous satirical elements in the protagonist's account of his moral weaknesses and of the vices of all the characters in the book revealing several of them as conmen and conwomen, who show very little if any remorse for what they are responsible for. Hickey is a criminal not shying away from drug dealing and tricking honest clients into buying faultily constructed and small apartments at exorbitant prices. Edel Hickey betrays her husband and deprives Tristram of money by cunning and the Viking somehow controls and exploits the women around him and gains profit from them. In doing business with politicians who need to be bribed in order to rezone certain areas for construction, Tristram introduces himself by his official name, Saint Lawrence, which is misunderstood by the foolish politician responding "And I'm Pope Ulick." (Kilroy 2012:141). Hereby, the link to the

Roman Catholic Church becomes apparent as the novel satirises the core moral standards of Catholicism deliberately engaging in an act of 'deadly sin' – avarice.

The phenomenon of 'The Celtic Tiger' is mocked when Tristram and Hickey try to find the farmland they have bought the day after the meeting with 'the Golden Circle' and seeing the neglected field, Tristram remarks "The Celtic Tiger didn't bother venturing this far north." and Hickey responds "We are the Celtic Tiger. [...] We're here now." (Kilroy 2012:248). The reader could have already concluded that Tristram and Hickey have made a mistake by speculating with loan notes and debt, even though Hickey still believes that he is part of the powerful 'Golden Circle'.

Especially in the context of imperialism and colonialism black or satirical humour is a vital element for the oppressed other. Eagleton states

In a colonial situation the question of identity becomes a kind of daily burden. It's the rulers who have the luxury of not fretting about who they are. What Wilde does, magnificently I think, is turn all that into a kind of comedy. To turn a lack of identity – which has potentially tragic implications both for him and for his society – into a more positive kind of ethic (O'Connor 2008:61).

Soper argues that an image adhered to the Irish by either British or Americans notably in caricatures, can also be turned into an advantage to the inferiors. "Rather than a marker of foundational identity, the image could become a mask to be worn lightly, ambivalently, or ironically." (Soper 2005: 261ff.). Eagleton claims that especially Oscar Wilde as one of the most famous Irish authors was never 'self-identical', as he calls it. Wilde's irony lay in the fact that his identity was only artistic in various situations and formed due to the lack of self-identity (O'Connor 2008). A double-voice would arise. This double-voice could signify one message to one group, while it would mean a completely different thing to another. Therefore, negative qualities given to inferiors by the dominant culture could be transformed through trickery "[...] into subversive strengths, turning them back on the abusers." (Soper 2005: 262).

In the novel the focus of the dominant culture is subverted and in that the Anglo-Irish Tristram is in fact portrayed as the victim of ridicule in the Irish society. When Hickey refers to Tristram's heritage saying "This isn't Elizabethan England, or wherever you're from. This is *Ireland*." (Kilroy 2012:167), one can see that the Hiberno-Irish, even after centuries still

perceives an Irish aristocrat of Anglo-Norman descent as an outsider, and a representative of the colonial other, who is not entirely part of Irish society. This aspect has been pointed out by social and cultural studies, like that of Douglas, who claims that

[...] the English colonists in Ireland and their descendants might have styled themselves Irish 'because they had made their homes on Irish soil, but they retained the racial characteristics of Englishmen, which were intensified, as frequently happens, by contact with an alien race.' (Douglas 2010: 44).

Similarly also Tristram shows specific character traits which can be perceived as stereotypically English and are enhanced by the direct comparison with the traits of the Hiberno-Irish. Tristram constantly compares his own identity to the Irish ingroup, while he perceives himself to be on the margin of society and the member of an alien outgroup which is opposed to Hickey's identity as a typical Hiberno-Irish. This aspect is yet again a marker for satire, as aspects of Irish culture are depicted by using humour and typical Irish character traits, some Hiberno-Irish, and some Anglo-Irish, are exaggerated drastically.

Moreover, colonialism is reverted, when the Golden Circle wants to shift the world axis to put Dublin in the central ranks of world economy, "[...] invading London not with armies but with hard currency. [...]" (Kilroy 2012:233 ff.), annexing the British capital city and buying the isle of Great Britain in Dubai's World. Furthermore, the transactions of the Irish bankers and brokers in the world's real estate market are compared to gambling and playing the games of *Risk* or *Poker*, where the wire pullers are convinced that they have nothing to lose, as if they were participants in a board game.

Colonialism is further ridiculed when the imperial power is finally portrayed as the driving force behind risky development businesses in Ireland during the Celtic Tiger period:

A map of Leinster appeared on the screen, hatched areas indicating the zones in which development was under way. These areas corresponded to the standing army of cranes stationed across the horizon like pennants bearing regimental colours declaring which territory belonged to whom. We were more than ever a colonised nation (Kilroy 2012:232).

Historical aspects of the Irish Celtic culture and the tradition of storytelling are mocked as it is ironical that Tristram as *seanachai* gives an account about morality and sin to a court of law, by which he will be punished for his deeds.

Furthermore, a detailed description of a stereotypical Irish workman is an example of ironical portrayal of one's own people, which is contrasted to the stereotypical and satirical portrayal of Eastern Europeans:

The man returned to his work. *Tap tap* with his hammer, *whir whir* with his drill as if I weren't there, an exemplar of the implacability of the Eastern European that confounds the Irish psyche to such a degree. Instead of embarking on long-drawn-out descriptions of the task at hand, followed by a rundown of potential pitfalls to unnerve the customer, concluding with a few horror stories to illustrate that the competition are cowboys and the cost of labour is not as extortionate as it may at first have seemed, all the while aligning for a cup of tea as any self-respecting Irish workman might, this man simply got on with it (Kilroy 2012:69 ff.).

These are only a few examples discussed amongst many examples of satire in the novel.

9. Conclusion

Concluding this thesis, it can be stated that the social satire *The Devil I Know* uses various stereotypical aspects about the Irish people. The stereotypes present in the novel were introduced either by the Irish themselves or by the British. Those stereotypes originating from Irish culture are rooted in Irish mythology and fairy lore characters. Other stereotypes which started to develop as early as the 16th century can be stated to have been circulated by the British authorities in order to legitimise colonial politics, mainly during the Victorian period.

Another aspect which might be responsible for the evolution of various derogatory stereotypes of the British about the Irish is the one of immigration politics and living conditions of the Irish in Britain during the 19th century. From various sources dating back to these times it can be gathered that the Irish immigrant was feared due to various reasons and that one reaction of members of the British population towards influx of Irish immigrants was the introduction of an Irish outgroup in order to differentiate a British ingroup from it and decide on a true British identity.

These socio-political aspects can be considered to be the underlying basis for caricatures published in a variety of different magazines, such as the *Punch Magazine*, or theatre productions which featured specific Irish stock characters. These caricatures and plays can be held accountable for the long lasting nature of some of the stereotypes about the Irish. Numerous different media was developed in America during the immigration waves of the 19th and 20th century and so they can be considered to be the driving force behind the proliferation and adaptation of stereotypes about the Irish in the New World.

The stereotype that is the focus of this thesis is that of the Irish conman and conwoman. It can be said to have developed on the basis of two main sources: The first type of conman can be traced back to Celtic mythology and fairy lore, whereas the other one has developed from the historical background of the British Commonwealth and the media popular during that period.

The character of Tristram St Lawrence can be claimed to be a conman who has his roots in both fairy lore and socio-political aspects of colonialisation. Tristram is considered to be a member of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy and is therefore portrayed as the stereotypical other as he is perceived rather British than Irish. Therefore many characters might not see a potential danger in him, as he is described well educated and has good manners. It can be claimed, however, that he is also an Irish conman as he uses his powers as a druidical character to conjure up the devil and by the help of the latter trick his business partners and lead them into their financial ruin. Also he uses 'the gift of the gab' and the ability to 'talk blarney' in order to distract his victims from cons, which are about to unfold. Moreover he is portrayed as the knight in shining armour to save the fragile female heroine Edel, who can be related to the allegorical figure of Erin featuring in the caricatures, who is saved from the grasp of Hiberno-Irish beasts, even though the Anglo-Irish himself harbours an alter ego, a 'M. Mac'Hyde' behind the facade of a reputable Protestant noble man.

Desmond Hickey, the Hiberno-Irish, clearly has traits of a conman but he definitely turns out to be the sore loser of the business enterprise in the end. He has not only lost all the money, but is humiliated, left by his wife and, consequently, has to earn a living as a taxi driver. Hickey uses his charm and 'gift of the gab' in order to distract his victims and business

partners. He is, however, inferior in his talents as a conman to Tristram and, therefore, Hickey has no serious chance to gain profit from this business relationship. Hickey is not a stereotypical trickster, but rather a criminal, an unlucky conman, 'a common thief'(Kilroy 2012:212) as Tristram calls him, who has stereotypical Irish characteristics as regards his appearance, his use of language, his temper, his Catholic faith and his drinking habits. Even though he tries to protect himself by appealing to St. Christopher, he forgets to attach the figure of the Saint to the new car's dashboard and is therefore, apparently, unprotected against the cunning of Tristram and his diabolical alter ego.

Dominic Dowdall, nicknamed 'the Viking', is a character who shows parallels to early Viking raiders coming to the island between 800 and 1200. He manages to appeal to his victims by the help of his animal-like instincts, as he seems to be very sensitive of other people's opinions and desires. He succeeds in tricking Tristram and Hickey by pretending to understand their needs and demonstrating that he is able to fulfil their wishes. Consequently Tristram and Hickey are lulled into security and only notice that the Viking has tricked them when it is already too late for them to counteract.

The only conwoman appearing in the novel is Edel Hickey. She behaves like a druidess who seduces Irish males in order to increase her personal possessions and influence. She is married to Desmond Hickey, which Tristram considers a mismatched relationship. Edel succeeds in tricking Tristram through her appearance and demeanour, leading Tristram to believe that she is a fragile woman in need for protection whereas Desmond Hickey is described by Tristram as a violent, hairy and ape-like person. In the end Tristram realises, however that Edel Hickey seduces the men in her life in order to increase her wealth and might even be the woman behind Desmond Hickey's desire for possessions. Edel Hickey, is also a damsel in distress, and can be linked to caricatures from *Punch Magazine*, in which Ireland, featuring as the woman 'Erin', asks Britannia for protection, as her inhabitants have changed into violent beasts prone to drinking and fighting.

Two characters appearing in the novel can be linked to creatures rooted in Celtic mythology: Larney and Monsieur Deauville.

Larney, the man servant of Tristram's family, is described to be a crooked little man who is mainly encountered in the moors or the grounds adjacent to the castle. Tristram refers to

this character as a goblin and in fact Larney can be claimed to have parallels to the mythological creature of a leprechaun. This character poses riddles to Tristram that seem to work as clues to Tristram's fate. These clues, however, also divert Tristram's attention and so he misses the biggest con of all; the one of him being in a pact with the devil.

Monsieur Deauville, Tristram's mysterious advisor who never appears in person, can be considered to be based on the Pooka. This creature originates in Celtic folklore and is often encountered in the shape of a male creature, with goatish hooves and a chain around his neck. Monsieur Deauville first helps the alcoholic protagonist to stay sober, but then takes him on an unwilling ride on its back towards the crooked stile to hell. The Pooka is said to be able to change its shape at will and, therefore, jumps back and forth between the human Tristram, the leprechaun Larney and various other beings, such as Larney's Jack Russel. Here an affinity to trickster personas from West-African fairy lore can be seen, as the trickster can shift from one bodily shell to the next to overcome boundaries and cause pain and chaos for other characters.

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Zusammenfassung

Irische TrickbetrügerInnen tauchen häufig als eines der unzähligen Stereotype in Büchern und Filmen auf. TrickbetrügerInnen könnten als Personen die ihre Mitmenschen hinter Licht führen beschrieben werden. Dieser Betrug dient dem Zweck um auf eine unehrliche Art und Weise Geld von den Opfern zu bekommen (Longman Dictionary of Language and Culture 2005: 290). In den letzten Jahren wurde die Figur des/r Trickbetrügers/Trickbetrügerin in Film und Literatur immer häufiger. Speziell in Claire Kilroy's Roman *The Devil I Know* (2012), erscheinen sehr unterschiedliche Typen von TrickbetrügerInnen.

Ein Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es die Gründe für und die Herkunft von Stereotypen zu definieren. Des Weiteren sollen irische Stereotype analysiert werden, um herauszufinden wo und wann sich stereotype Charakterzüge und Figuren wie die trügerischen IrInnen, die eloquenten IrInnen oder die irischen TrickbetrügerInnen entwickelten. Ein Fokus dieser Arbeit soll darauf liegen, in wie weit durch die irische Mythologie und die koloniale Beziehung zwischen Großbritannien und Irland und deren geschichtlichen Hintergründen jene stereotypen Beschreibungen der IrInnen beeinflusst wurden.

Um die Identifizierung von irischen TrickbetrügerInnen in Kilroy's Roman zu erleichtern, soll die historische Darstellung des irischen Volkes in britischen Medien und Theaterstücken erläutert werden. Zusätzlich werden Karikaturen, welche im *Punch* Magazine veröffentlicht wurden, zur Analyse herangezogen. Diese Karikaturen behandeln die politischen Beziehungen zwischen Irland und Großbritannien während der Viktorianischen Regierungsperiode. Die Methode der Inhaltsanalyse wird zur Erläuterung der Karikaturen verwendet, um Informationen über stereotype Darstellungen von irischen BetrügerInnen zu erhalten.

Darüber hinaus soll aufgezeigt werden warum gewisse und besondere Stereotypen in verschiedenen Charakteren des Romans erscheinen und in wie weit sich diese, auf verschiedenste stereotyp dargestellte Figuren aus der irischen Geschichte und deren dazu passenden Karikaturen, oder auf Charaktere aus der irischen Mythologie, zurückführen lassen. Hierbei werden der anglo-irische Trickbetrücker, der/ie hiberno-irische Trickbetrüger/in und der nordisch-irische Betrüger, „der Wikinger“, analysiert.

Schlussendlich, soll die satirische Note, welche in Kilroys Roman zu entdecken ist, zum Thema gemacht werden. Diese ist vor allem wenn gängige Stereotype über das irische Volk beschrieben werden spürbar. Obwohl die Autorin selbst Irin ist, ließe sich behaupten, dass ihr Roman ihr eigenes Volk in einem ironischen Licht, und damit als „das stereotype Andere“, darstellt. Der letzte Teil der Arbeit widmet sich der Analyse dieser satirischen Elemente und der Frage in welcher Art und Weise der Roman als satirische Darstellung oder als Eigenbildnis der IrInnen zu verstehen sein könnte

Curriculum vitae

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