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**HISTORY AS FICTION IN
READING IN THE DARK, BY SEAMUS DEANE**

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**History as Fiction in *Reading in the Dark*,
by Seamus Deane**

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For my daughter Natasha.

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A minha filha Natasha Wolwacz Heinz que sempre acreditou no meu sucesso.

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Hands Across the Divide



<http://www.goireland.com/derry/derry-hands-across-the-divide-attraction-monuments-id14648.htm>

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Toleration is a function of diversity. The more heterogeneous the composition of a population, the greater the necessity for interaction. The greater the level of interaction, the better the environment for toleration.

P. O'Malley, *Uncivil Wars: Ireland Today*

RESUMO

Esta dissertação de mestrado propõe-se a apresentar um estudo sobre a obra ficcional de Seamus Deane *Reading in the Dark* à luz das recentes idéias sobre a redefinição do conceito de identidade norte-irlandesa. No pano de fundo deste romance autobiográfico, identificamos a presença de episódios históricos envolvendo o choque entre unionistas pró-britânicos e Nacionalistas irlandeses, que levou ao conflito conhecido como “The Troubles”. Esses episódios, e suas conseqüências, são apresentados através da perspectiva de um protagonista autodiegético, que relata três décadas, de 1940 a 1960. Enquanto o personagem cresce, sua percepção obviamente vai-se alterando. O efeito final da minha leitura do romance – que foi escrito na década de 1990 – é a abertura de uma nova perspectiva, relacionada com a necessidade de redefinir questões da nacionalidade irlandesa. *Reading in the Dark* é um romance sobre contradições entre duas culturas que não conseguem – mas necessitam – co-existir, vistas através da perspectiva de um adolescente inteligente e bem intencionado. Este texto literário oferece uma formulação sobre os novos avanços a em relação às questões de identidade e tolerância, as quais podem ser abordadas de três formas: o conflito pode ser analisado internamente, através da oposição entre as comunidades Católicas e Protestantes, ou externamente, considerando os interesses da ilha da Irlanda, em oposição aos oitocentos anos de dominação inglesa. A terceira solução propõe uma redefinição de todos os conceitos implicados. Como conseqüência dessa crise, o romance denuncia e redefine os sistemas políticos usados como instrumentos de dominação e de manutenção e validação do choque entre as duas ideologias existentes que levaram ao sectarismo no território da Irlanda do Norte. A discussão levada a cabo nesta dissertação está baseada nos presentes debates sobre estudos culturais, especialmente como propostos por Terry Eagleton e por outros membros do “Field Day Theatre Company”, que analisam as questões relativas à identidade. Esses intelectuais escolheram reavaliar as narrativas dominantes sobre a Irlanda, incluindo a formação dos mitos que motivou o acirramento dessa hostilidade contra a parte oposta. Esta dissertação está estruturada em três capítulos principais. Dois deles contextualizam o plano de fundo da narrativa e da agenda política crítica do “Field Day Theatre Company”. O capítulo de análise é centrado em treze cenas fortes selecionadas do romance, as quais são comentadas a partir de considerações tecidas nos limites dos capítulos anteriores. No final do trabalho, eu espero validar a importância do romance autobiográfico de Seamus Deane *Reading in the Dark* no processo de reexame dos discursos que levaram à falta de comunicação entre duas comunidades que vivem em um mesmo território.

Palavras-chave: Seamus Deane; Irlanda do Norte; unionistas; nacionalistas; sectarismo Field Day Theatre Company; redefinição do conceito de identidade norte-irlandesa; ideologia; tolerância.

ABSTRACT

This thesis consists of a study of Seamus Deane's *Reading in the Dark* in the light of recent ideas regarding the redefinition of the concept of Northern Irish identity. In the background of this auto-biographical novel we identify the presence of historical episodes involving the clash between British Unionists and Irish Nationalists, which led to the conflicts known as "The Troubles." These episodes, and their consequences, are presented through the filter of an autodiegetic protagonist/narrator, through a time-span of three decades, from the 1940s to the 1960s. As the character grows, perception is obviously altered. The final effect of my reading of this novel – which was written in the 1990's – is the opening a new perspective, related to the need of redefining issues of national identity. *Reading in the Dark* is a novel about the contradictions between two cultures which cannot – but must – co-exist, as seen through the eyes of one growing perceptive, well-meaning intelligent young man. This literary text offers a statement about a new advance towards the issues of identity and toleration, which can be approached in three ways: the conflict can be analyzed internally, through the opposition between the Catholic and the Protestant parts of the community; or externally, considering the interests of the island of Ireland, as opposed to eight-hundred years of English domination. The third solution proposes a redefinition of all concepts implied. As a consequence of this crisis, the novel simultaneously denounces and redefines the political systems used as instruments of domination, and the maintenance and validation of the clash between the two existing ideologies that led to sectarianism within the northern territory. The discussion held in this thesis is based on the present state of the debate regarding Cultural Studies, especially as proposed by Terry Eagleton and by other members of the Field Day Theatre Company, who analyze the questions concerning identity. These intellectuals choose to reevaluate the dominant narratives about Ireland, including the formation and the use made of myths that have heightened the sense of hostility against the opposite part. This thesis is structured in three main chapters. Two of them contextualize the background of the narrative and present the critical-political agenda of the Field Day Theatre Company. The chapter of analysis centers on thirteen strong scenes selected from the novel, which are woven within the framing previous chapters. At the end of the work, I hope to validate my belief in the social function of literature, by stressing the importance of Seamus Deane's *Reading in the Dark* in this process of re-examination of old discourses that led to the failure of communication between the two communities living in the same territory.

Keywords: Seamus Deane; Northern Ireland; unionists; nationalists; sectarianism; Field Day Theatre Company; redefinition of the concept of Northern Irish identity; ideology; toleration

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1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to present my views on *Reading in the Dark*, a novel written in 1984 by the Northern Irish writer, university professor and literary critic Seamus Deane. Among the numberless other critical possibilities of appreciation of this work, I concentrate on the connections involving Literature and History. The author of *Reading in the Dark* belongs to one people whose rich tradition of storytelling has served as therapy and solace for a nation trying to heal centuries of domination and defeat. Consequently, this grief has been internalized by Irishmen and Irishwomen and has become the product of incredible imagination for generations of Irish writers whose works are imbued with myths and supernatural stories. Hence, Seamus Deane is one of these gifted storytellers. Living in a conflicted society in the second half of the twentieth century, Deane has chosen a way to exorcise these ghosts, by reshaping the history of his time and place into fiction. By transforming history into fiction, Deane creates his own narrative of the facts. History as fiction enables one's individual truth. But this individual trajectory also represents the trajectory of the Irish people, whose long lost identity made them embrace some so-called ancient Celtic myths (national myths) to restore their sense of identity, learn the inviability of alternative, and, finally reach multiple simultaneous truths. Seamus Deane's reading of history, and writing of fiction as history, makes him an authoritative writer who helps keep history alive. As George Santayana wrote in his book *Life of Reason or the Phases of Human Progress*, "those who cannot remember the past are doomed to repeat it" (SANTAYANA, 1955, p. 284).

Seamus Deane was educated at Queen's University, in Belfast, and later earned his doctorate at Cambridge University. He is one of the academic world's leading Joyceans, having recently edited the annotated Penguin edition of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Deane taught literature for many years at University College, in Dublin, but nowadays he teaches at the University of Notre Dame, in Indiana, in the United States. He is the author of many books of literature and criticism including *A Short History of Irish Literature* (1994), *Strange Country: Modernity and Nationhood in Irish Writing since 1770* (1998), poetry, and numerous essays. Deane is also a member of The Field Day Company and editor of *Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing* (1991). He is the general editor of the Field Day Pamphlets, and the Director of Field Day Company, currently released. He is also a member of The Royal Irish Academy. His novel which is the corpus of this thesis, *Reading in the Dark* (1996), won

the Irish Times International Fiction Prize, The Irish Literature Prize in 1997, and the Guardian Prize for Fiction in 1996. *Reading in the Dark* was also a Booker Prize finalist in 1996 and the New York Times Notable Book in 1997.

I have been interested in Irish literature and history since I was a teenager. I remember paying special attention to Irish films, so I have been watching them for more than twenty years now. I have also been reading about Irish history and literature for a long time, and I always thought that one day I would be studying Irish literature more deeply and precisely. I read Seamus Deane's *Reading in the Dark* for the first time in the summer of 1998, when I became deeply involved with his work. I talked to some people about Deane's book, but nobody seemed to know anything about it or about the author. It came to my mind that it would be fascinating to write a master's thesis about Seamus Deane's work. I started searching about History and Literature of Ireland more profoundly and then I discovered that many attention-grabbing cultural movements were taking place there. Here in Brazil, however, we were still clinging to the traditional studies concerning Jonathan Swift, William Butler Yeats, James Joyce, George Bernard Shaw, and Samuel Beckett. There were very few works about contemporary writers, like Seamus Deane. Based on these facts I decided to search further about the circumstances that caused the person Seamus Deane to become the author Seamus Deane. I learned that the person was born into a Roman Catholic nationalist family in Derry, Northern Ireland in 1940.

Reading in the Dark is set in Derry – or Londonderry, as it is called by the British Protestants – from the 1940's to the 60's. The narrator/protagonist tells about his childhood and adolescence in the Bogside, the Catholic part of the city, and the novel has the English domination of Northern Ireland as its background. The unnamed autodiegetic narrator/protagonist, raised in a working-class family, tells about the everyday life of his childhood, the political issues concerning the English violence, and fantastic stories about his family and the members of his community, enveloped in Irish legends and mysticism. Throughout the novel, the boy senses the presence of an untold mystery, and tries to put together the fragments of what is told and what is hidden about his family's story, in an attempt to reveal the secret. Intriguingly, the secret is linked to events in Northern Ireland's history. This novel-in-stories is about both the boy's coming of age and the developing events that lead to the period known as "the Troubles"¹ in Northern Ireland; from the Easter Ring in

¹"The Troubles"- the period of communal violence involving paramilitary organizations in Northern Ireland from the late 1960s to the late 1990s, ending with the signature of an agreement between the British and the Irish Governments and endorsed by most Northern Ireland political parties which aimed at developing a peace process, called the Good Friday Agreement.

the early 1916² (annex A) to the "Battle of the Bogside"³ (annex B), major confrontations of this conflict. Although the setting surrounds the narrator with violence, chaos, and sectarian division, Derry serves as a place for the protagonist to grow, both physically and mentally. Throughout the novel the author, through the narrator's voice, implies that Unionists and Nationalists are so deeply involved in hating one another that it would be necessary to abandon their identities in order to stop this dispute. The history of the protagonist's family can be also read as the history of the Northern Ireland with its oppressive policy which stimulates sectarianism, forbids the human subjects to act on their own accords, keep secrets, creates biased myths, and stimulates phantasms. This traumatic experience becomes a deep wound for generations of people who will eventually free themselves from these contradictions and from mechanisms of domination by finding their individual identity.

The thread to be pursued in the analysis of the novel relates to the issue of identity. Perhaps the major reason why this kind of literature interests me so much is the fact that I come from a family of post second war immigrants who arrived in a completely strange country and had to rethink their own identity, to understand a strange country, and, at the same time, heal from their own experience in order to be able to build up a new and successful life. In order to be able to succeed, however, it has been necessary to tell about their experiences. So, since I was a child, my family has had the habit of sitting at the dinning table after Sunday's lunch to talk about the Russian Revolution, their escape from the country during the Second World War, their peregrination all over Europe, and their arrival in Brazil. More interestingly, my father, who was a child when he left Russia, tells their story through the point of view of a child and an adolescent growing up surrounded by uncertainties and feeling the strangeness of the new culture. So, I realized that *Reading in the Dark* touches me because, even though it shows a different experience in terms of historical context, it is very similar to my father's experience in terms of feeling, and most of all, in terms of redefining and finding a new identity, but without ever forgetting what has happen, since forgetting one's history would lead to committing the same mistakes again.

² The Easter Rising was a rebellion set in Ireland in Easter Week, 1916. The Rising was an attempt of Irish republicans to win independence from Britain. It was one of the most significant uprisings in Ireland. The Rising lasted from Easter Monday April 24 to April 30, 1916. The Republicans seized key locations in Dublin and proclaimed an Irish Republic independent of Britain. The Rising was suppressed after six days of fighting, and its leaders were court-martialled and executed, but it succeeded in bringing republicanism back to the Irish politics.

³ The Battle of the Bogside was a riot in which residents of the Bogside and Derry Citizens Defense Association fought against the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). After a three-day riot, the British army was called to restore the order. This riot was the consequence of a number of Nationalist protest acts dating from 1968, among them, an organized march by Derry Housing Action Committee and Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association pleading changes in their housing policies. The marchers were batoned by the RUC.

To perform this analysis of *Reading in the Dark*, I have divided this thesis into three chapters. The first chapter is dedicated to the historical contextualization. I begin by making an outline of the Irish historical context from the beginning of the conflict to the 1960s, giving special emphasis to the period after partition, when the British Empire consolidated its power in Northern Ireland, as well as the 1940s and 50s, the historical period in which the narrative is set. This historical context is related to the literary movements and the treatment of national myths. The birth of the Irish Revisionism is also included in the first chapter. The emphasis on the historical outline is crucial to understand why Ireland has developed the ideology of hate present the twentieth century, and it is also important to establish a relationship between the Irish political and cultural History of Northern Ireland from the 1940s to the 1960s, as portrayed in Seamus Deane's *Reading in the Dark*. The novel questions both the policy of hatred and the appropriation of myths that have been used to feed the internal and external conflicts. In Ireland, the myth is a very important form of expression. So, I dedicate some space in chapter one to give an account of some important prose and poetry in which folklore is told and how this Irish mythology was retrieved and transformed, influencing Irish culture along Irish history.

Chapter two introduces The Field Day Company as the main source of critical support to the thesis. The Field Day is a literary and artistic movement engaged in performing a revisionist reading of Irish literary works. It has been developing an extensive production about Irish Literature and History. This movement was founded in 1980 by the Irish playwright Brian Friel⁴ and the theatre and movie actor Stephen Rea⁵. Later, The Field Day

⁴ Brian Friel (1929-) is one of Ireland's most noticeable playwrights. Friel has written plays, short stories; screenplays; film, TV and Radio adaptations of his plays.. Brian Friel's plays have been produced at prestigious places like the Abbey Theatre, London's West End and Broadway. Friel's *Translations* (1981) is one of his master pieces. The play was awarded the Ewart-Biggs Peace Prize. Besides co-founding Field Day, Friel is a member of Aosdána, the national treasure of Irish artists. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Literature by the National University of Ireland in 1983, and in 1987 was nominated to the Irish Senate. Friel's plays deal with identity, the notion of truth, and communication. Identity is formed through public and private memory. It is the collective memories of a determined community which distinguish it from others. Nevertheless, the memory of a community often conflicts with individual experience. For Friel, language is closely related with identity. The names of places are associated with both, communal and private history and memories.

⁵ Stephen Rea was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland in a Presbyterian but nationalist family. He attended Belfast High School and the Queen's University of Belfast, taking a degree in English. Stephen Rea studied acting at the Abbey Theatre School in Dublin. In the late 1970s, he acted in the Focus Company in Dublin with Gabriel Byrne. During Margaret Thatcher's government, a broadcasting ban on Sinn Féin was imposed Sinn Féin members could not be heard making statements expressing the views of Sinn Féin, so Rea was one of many actors to talk about problem. After appearing on the stage and in television and film for many years in Ireland and Britain, Rea came to international attention when he was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Actor for the film *The Crying Game*. He is a frequent collaborator with Irish film maker Neil Jordan. Rea also helped establish the Field Day Theatre Company in 1980 with Tom Paulin, Brian Friel, Seamus Heaney, and Seamus Deane. In recognition for his contribution to theatre and performing arts, Rea was given honorary degrees from both the Queen's University of Belfast and the University of Ulster in 2004. Rea was married to former Provisional Irish Republican Army member and hunger striker, Dolours Price.

Company started a publishing project by editing articles about Irish history, cinema, literature, geography, and politics, in association with Cork University Press and Notre Dame University Press. Their aim is to help current studies on history, postcolonial theory, political and social studies, critique of ideology, literature, and aesthetics. Seamus Deane is much committed to the project, which has the purposes of redefining the idea of Irish identity and analyzing Irish social and political life. The movement has greatly influenced contemporary Irish social and cultural behavior and, consequently, Irish Literature.

These authors are concerned with the Irish political crises in the twentieth century and have as their main objective to redefine the Irish sense of national culture, history and tradition. This movement aims at pointing out that the heritage of sectarianism and cultural stereotyping has done more harm than good to the communities of Northern Ireland. One of the greatest damages has been the loss of their sense of identity as one island, missing the sharing of a very rich culture and language. By being ignorant or alien to their own common past, these communities are trapped in the philosophies about two opposing governments, the British Unionists and the Irish Nationalists, which have become something of a dated issue if the new state of world economy and affairs is to be taken into consideration. Also, there is the sense of a great loss in the humane aspects of life on the island.

Other important contributors of the Field Day who work specifically with such issues are Luke Gibbons and Terence Brown. Luke Gibbons is a professor of Irish studies at the University of Notre Dame. He also teaches in the Irish Studies International Programme at the Newman House, Dublin, and is co-director of the Irish Seminar in Dublin. Gibbons is interested in film and literature, aesthetics, politics, cultural history, and post-colonialism. I will rely on Gibbons' impressions when discussing the role of Irish mythology, for he analyses the myths that were redefined during the process of colonization and decolonization and late colonization of Northern Ireland.

Terence Brown is a member of the *Academia European*, F.T.C.D, professor of Anglo-Irish literature, and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at Trinity College, Dublin. He is the author of *Ireland: A Social and Cultural History, 1922 to the Present* (1987). In this book, Terence Brown examines the continuities and changes in the Irish life throughout the twentieth century. He juxtaposes nationalism, religion and language revival. Brown also analyses the ideas, images, and symbols that provided the Irish people with part of their sense of national identity. His account will enhance my work.

In aspects related to historical research, I will borrow from the historian Timothy Patrick Coogan, a specialist in the social and political history of Ireland, its colonization by The British Empire, the process that led to the republic in Southern Ireland, the partition, and the late colonization of Northern Ireland. Coogan is also a broadcaster and a newspaper columnist. He served as editor of the Irish Press newspaper from 1968 to 1987.

The discussion about Ideology is based on the contribution of Terry Eagleton. This choice is due to Eagleton's great interest in Irish literature and culture. In his personal website, he declares, "My other chief specialty is the English-language literature and culture of Ireland, on which I have recently completed a trilogy of works."⁶ In 1968, when "The Troubles" triggered a revival of Marxist criticism in Britain, Marxism was in decline in the rest of the world. A group of theorists to which Eagleton belonged became engaged in reviewing the social and political conditions in different countries. Eagleton occupied himself in describing the relationship between Literature and Ideology⁷. In *Nationalism, Colonialism, and Literature*, he asserts that texts are influenced by ideology, for individuals respond to what they experience in life and these responses are embedded in ideology. Statements, assumptions, attitudes within a text are intrinsically ideological.

In the third chapter of the thesis I present my reading of Deane's novel through the examination of a number of selected scenes. After presenting the paraphraseable content of each scene, I connect it with the historical fact or the myth it makes reference to, and expose the exchanges between History and Fiction there contained. In this way, I think that the discussion contemplates the two ranges of action Seamus Deane is involved in: his role as an author, related to Fiction, and his role as a social thinker, related to History. In the case of *Reading in the Dark*, it is important to analyze the author's ideological situation and the contradictions which developed his thinking and the attempted solution for the contradictions denounced in his writings.

⁶

Terry

Eagleton's

homepage:

<http://www.arts.manchester.ac.uk/subjectareas/englishamericanstudies/academicstaff/terryeagleton/>. Access on 18.08.2007. The three books he mentions are *Scholars and Rebels in Nineteenth Century Ireland*, 1999; *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture*, 1996; and *The Truth about the Irish*, 2000.

⁷Terry Eagleton's concept of ideology is built upon the anti-Hegelian Marxism of Althusser. Althusser, in his essay *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes Toward an Investigation*, establishes the concept of ideology. Ideology is a representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence. Ideology is an inevitable agent of repression because it disguises our real relationship to the world. It is impossible not to be subjected by Ideology.

When a child has undergone a traumatic experience he may not externalize that straight away. This traumatic experience is kept hidden somewhere. When adult, this individual may feel that it is necessary to release the ghosts from the past in order to heal. As an adult, one is able to gain control to confront the past. One may feel it is necessary to come back to the past and reconstruct traumatic life events, interrogate an imagined community or a larger culture, and externalize this confrontation in writing. Writing is a form of liberating all the pain that was caused by those events which have struck this child. And this task is important because the person is able to exorcize the ghosts of the past, and go beyond frontiers of understanding to, finally, build oneself as an individual. This is what I believe is being done by Seamus Deane in *Reading in the Dark*, and by a number of other contemporary Irish writers too.

Deane was born into a Roman Catholic nationalist family in Derry, Northern Ireland, in 1940. He experienced the Second World War and the difficult years that followed it, when the countries all over Europe were trying to reestablish their poor economies and redefine their ideologies. More than that, Northern Ireland, as part of the British Empire, was internally divided by two opposing ideologies, Anglo-Irish Protestants and Irish Catholics, each of them absorbed within their own past and tradition, which generated a great deal of wrath. As an adult, Seamus Deane joined the Field Day Company and wrote *Reading in the Dark*, a novel that subverts the current ideology about Irish issues in its treatment of the story of a typical Catholic Northern Irish Family living in the Catholic Sect of Derry, surrounded by prejudice and a series of secrets that led to a crisis. The prejudice, secrets, and anger presented in this family reflect the microcosm of the Northern Irish. I believe that Seamus Deane's fiction dismantles this ideology of prejudice and discrimination of its time. This line of action goes along with the Revisionist line of Historical Studies.

Seamus Deane's novel *Reading in the Dark* is a significant example of the contemporary literature of Northern Ireland. In this novel with autobiographical traces we have a synthesis of the exorcising of ghosts by an individual who experienced a determined social and political context. More than that, the novel also examines the factors that turned Ireland into a sectarian society, alienating entire social classes within two antagonist ideologies. Deane's *Reading in the Dark* illustrates this process in a clear way. As the novel is shaped as a *memoir*, the personal, social and political aspects are presented simultaneously. In this sense, Seamus Deane is one among a number of contemporary Irish writers who feel the necessity of telling their experience as a historical human subject who went through a politics

of difference and the whole process of nationalism which led to alienation and sectarianism⁸. It seems that these authors feel it is necessary to show the world how their own experience helped to invalidate the collective anonymity which makes individuals accept an ideology imposed by the ghost of universal political identities, so as to undo alienation and endorse individuality. Thus, these authors feel the necessity to lay bare their own story which is, at the same time, the story of their time and place. The author who is part of a new generation of writers feels the necessity of a new discourse for a new idea of what the human subject is and what human communities are.

The thesis of my work is that *Reading in the Dark* is an excellent source for the analysis of the relation between the social and political history of its determined society, revealing the necessity the author has to redefine this history in order to propose an adaptation of the Irish society to a new international order where the globalized world no longer accepts the ideal of a pure race and a pure culture. My suggestion is that this novel carries a system of representation of the historical, political and social reality of Northern Ireland. The aim is to make an extrinsic criticism of the literary text in its relation to the historical period, by analyzing the political and social context and finding out to what extent the novel shows the contradictions in two cultures which cannot co-exist. I intend to comment on the significance of the literary text as a document in which the author's goals are to show the political and social reality of the forties, fifties and sixties, through an approach that only becomes possible in the nineties, so as to denounce both political systems as instruments of domination, maintenance and validation of the clash between the two existing ideologies that led to sectarianism within the northern territory. By discussing the relationship between the literary text and the cultural and political history of this period, I believe much will be revealed about the contemporary stage of the discussion about the redefinition of national identity in Northern Ireland.

⁸ George Bernard Shaw's (1856-1950) *Immaturity*, published in 1930 is an example of autobiography. In his preface, Shaw writes *Immaturity* is an autobiographical essay in which he chooses humorous elements to write about the pain of his growing in Dublin. Seán O'Casey (1880-1964) wrote six volumes of autobiography published between 1939 and 1954. A couple of years later, they were published collectively in New York under the title *Mirror in My House: The Autobiographies of Seán O'Casey*. They were also published in London as *Autobiographies* (1963). In *The Drums Under the Window* O'Casey uses irony and anger to describe the Easter Week. Reviewing O' Casey's work, George Orwell mistakably found it extremely anti-English. Robert Harbinson (1928 -) wrote *No Surrender: An Ulster Childhood* (1960). The author describes the protestant obsession, dread and hate with the Pope and Catholicism. What is announced in Harbinson's work becomes a reality thirty ears later.

2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT: HISTORY, MYTH AND LITERATURE

My original intention was to divide this chapter of contextualization into three sections, each referring to one of the items presented in the title above. However, in the case of Ireland, History, Mythology and Literature are connected in such an intertwined way that the attempt to treat one subject separately from the others would dangerously flatten the complexity of the issues. Therefore, this argumentative thesis will start by referring to some historical facts and to some myths that have generated narratives which shaped the concept of national identity that is presently being questioned by the leading Irish intellectuals, all grouped in the Field Day Movement, to which Seamus Deane belongs.

In order to understand what specific aspects are being questioned or addressed in the novel, it is necessary to go back to some historical antecedents which originate the myths that were gradually transformed into the constituent ingredients of Irish identity. This is the reason why I will briefly present, in this session, the conjoined display of History and Mythology landmarks that will lead us through the close reading of the episodes of the novel that are examined in Chapter Three.

Although Ireland joined Christianity in the 5th Century⁹, we can set the beginning of the political problem with England in the twelfth century, when the King of Leinster asked the Norman King Henry II to help him fight against the Vikings. Before that, Ireland was a land of monasteries with a strong Celtic culture. The Irish lived in tribes according to their family names. The kings were chosen by election where the strongest warrior was usually chosen to lead the tribe. Ireland was divided into five kingdoms: Ulster in the north, Munster in the southwest, Leinster in the southeast, Connaught in the west, and Tara as The High Kingdom of Ireland. These tribes were often at war in order to gain territorial advantage over one another. At the beginning of the ninth century, the Vikings arrived in Ireland and founded Dublin. The Irish united under a High King, Brian Boru, in order to fight against the Vikings. As they had not been successful in expelling the Vikings from their island, the King of Leinster asked the Normans to help them fight against the invaders at the beginning of the twelfth century. As a consequence, the Norman King Henry II, helped by the Roman Catholic Church, conquered Ireland. Henry II allowed some independence to the Irish lords. This partial independence lasted until 1205 when Henry's son, King John Plantagenet, took control of Ireland and created the Earldom of Ulster. This condition of unwanted subjugation

⁹ Unless otherwise specified, factual references presented in this chapter are informed through COOGAN (2002).

remained through centuries, and got worse when, in the sixteenth century, the English King Henry VIII broke with Rome, created the Church of England, and tried to bring Ireland to accept his religious Reformation. The Anglo-Irish nobility and gentry rebelled against the English King. As a result, the first signs of Irish nationalism and commitment to Catholicism began, under the English rule.

The ancient Gaelic civilization had a great number of myths and rituals that long preceded Christianity. The Irish lyric poetry was first transcribed in the ninth century, by the monastic scribes. At this time the lyrical impulse of the hermit monks, who were familiar with the natural world, produced poetry of longing for the missed native places. One of the most famous poem is the one attributed to St Colmicille, who Christianized Scotland and northern England and lamented the homelands of Gartan and ‘angel-haunted’ Derry, which he would never see again. Dean (1986, p. 15)¹⁰ writes that these poetries were dominated by historical and mythological themes, passages of praise for warriors and chieftains, genealogies and the lore of sacred places

The Irish poems and sagas, annals and genealogical accounts date from the twelfth century in written form. The art of writing came to the island in the fifth century, with Christianity. In the fifth and the sixth centuries Christianity incorporated the Gaelic pagan elements in writing. During these centuries the clerical scribes, with the help of the Gaelic bards (*filidh*) – whose function was “to preserve the traditional lore in relation to places families customs and laws” (idem, p. 11) – wrote down the origin stories of Irish history, orally told by the *filidh*¹¹. These scribes recorded the great sagas of the Ulster Cycle, centered on Cu Chulainn, the Fenian Cycle centered on Finn Mac Cumhail, and the Cycle of Kings, among others. According to Seamus Deane, these recordings of the Irish folktales “are the oldest European vernacular literature which uniquely blends the old pagan and the new Christian worlds” (ibidem, p. 11).

The Christian monk scribes re-constructed and reorganized the pre-Christian history of Ireland by adapting the earlier records into the politics of Christian narrative. This Christian adaptation retraced the Gaelic civilization in Ireland back to Adam. There are two important Irish legends which were recorded, and later, copied and transformed over and over again. One is the national epic of the great Ulster warrior, Cu Chulainn, who held up the army of Queen Maeve’s Connacht’s men with only one hand while the rest of the Ulstermen lay under

¹⁰ Seamus Deane is frequently quoted, in this chapter, for his contribution as a social and history thinker, rather than as the author of *Reading in the Dark*.

¹¹ *Filidh* were members of an elite class of poets in Ireland also known as druids and bards. This class system lasted until the Renaissance, when the Irish class system was dismantled.

a spell which made them inert. Cu Chulainn, the leading hero in the stories of the Ulster Cycle, is the son of a god (Lugh) and of a princess (Deichtire). His name means “the hound of Cullan”, after a ferocious dog he killed as a child. The myth of Cu Chulainn was rekindled in the early 20th Century by young artists of the Irish Literary Revival, such as Lady Gregory, William Butler Yeats¹² and Patrick Henry Pearse.¹³ Ian Anderson, a historian from the Ulster Defence Association, also used Cu Chulainn, but as a Scottish-Unionist hero.

Another great hero in Irish epic literature is Finn Mac Cumhaill. Finn Mac Cumhaill has been the central character in epic tales and poems throughout the times. According to Seamus Deane, Finn Mac Cumhaill appears in paper in the thirteenth century anonymous work *Agallamh na Seanórach* (Colloquy of the Ancient Men). Finn (or Fionn) Mac Cumhaill is the leader of the *Fianna*, the wandering band of warriors and hunters. The poems were expanded and developed in prose sequence containing the metrical insets. These insets in the *Agallamh* developed into the Ossianic¹⁴ lays, poems or ballads, in which Oisín, one of Finn’s men, is the interlocutory figure who brings the pagan Fionn and the Christian St Patrick together in a series of exchanges, which embody the different world views of the two cultures. According to Deane, these tales and poems “preserved both pagan and Christian elements as integral parts of itself” (ibidem, p.13). These tales were re-written and re-told in the later centuries. They also have been transformed and readapted according to the historical context.

These mythological heroes were transformed to fulfill specific and different purposes, through time. Fionn fitted the need for national heroes that spread during the Romantic Movement, and Cu Chulainn became the hero of the Irish Revival in the early twentieth century.¹⁵

¹² William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) is one of the most important names in the movement known as the *Irish Literary Revival*. A great part of his production evokes Irish legends and folklore, such as the books *Representative Irish Tales* (1891) and *Irish Fairy Tales* (1892). The stories about the legendary hero Finn MacCumhail, that form the Fenian Cycle of Irish Mythology, are addressed in *The Wanderings of Oisín* (1889), and the stories about Cu Chulainn, the hero of the Cycle of Ulster, can be retraced in *On Baile’s Strand* (1904).

¹³ The epic that presents the story of Cu Chulainn is the *Tain Bo Cuailnge*. Augusta, Lady Gregory (1852-1932) wrote *Cuchulainn of Muirthemne* (1902); Yeats (as mentioned above, in note 12) wrote *On Baile’s Strand*, as well as *The Green Helmet* (1910). But it was through the poetry of Patrick Pearse (1879-1916), leader and martyr of the Easter Rising of 1916, that the image of Cu Chulainn became inseparable from the notion of an armed resistance against England (cf. the poem *Mise Éire*, and others).

¹⁴ In the 18th Century, the Scottish poet James Macpherson published the book *Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands of Scotland*. The narrative voice in the introduction to the work claims to have found – and translated from Scots Gaelic into English – the *Ossian Cycle of Poems*, containing stories about the Irish hero Oisín, son of Finn Mac Cumhaill, as if the poems had actually been originally written by an ancient poet called Ossian. In fact, the word Ossian does not refer to a person, Ossian, but to the stories about Oisín. To this day there are still people who believe that the poems are very old, and in the existence of the poet Ossian, who is, according to Luke Gibbons (1991, p. 64) a fictional creation of James Macpherson.

¹⁵ One of the strongest symbols of the 1916 Easter Rising is the monument *Statue of the Dying Cuchulainn*, by Oliver Sheppard, displayed at the Dublin General Post Office.

From 1594 to 1607, through the reigns of the English monarchs Elizabeth I and James I, the Irish fought four wars until they were definitely defeated by the British; the re-conquest was completed. In 1607, the English authorities established an overt control over Ireland, which was officially defined as England's colony. The English authorities, from Dublin, extended a centralized form of justice to the entire island, and successfully disarmed the various lordships, both Irish and Old English. The best lands in Ulster were given to English and Scottish merchants, while the Irish were forced either to leave or to work for the new protestant settlers. Ulster was divided among twelve London guilds. Derry was renamed Londonderry by these guilds. Besides ruining the Irish society, this sort of colonialism marked the beginning of the fight between Protestants and Catholics.

The classical Irish literary production disappeared after the Elizabethan wars, and constant disputes were held between Protestants and Catholics through the periods of the Reformation, and Counter-reformation. In Ireland, the Catholic Church set a Catholic reaction, with the help of the Irish colloquial dialect. The new practices followed the bardic school of communicating in verse, so that they would be easier to be accepted and internalized by the large illiterate population. The Catholic Church adapted the continental devotional literature to the Irish context, and used that as religious propaganda. The Catholic ideology had its final victory in the seventeenth century due to consecutive crises which made the Gaelic bards join the Catholic cause. Nonetheless, the Elizabethan wars, the accession of James I, the Catholic rebellion of 1641, Cromwell's campaign and the Glorious Revolution of 1689 eventually suppressed to the Gaelic culture. Deane reports that "the repeated invasions [...] led to the repeated attempt in literature to fashion myths of recovery or cede the tragic recognition of culture's failure" (ibidem, p. 22).

In the eighteenth century, the national language had been already destroyed by political, military, economic, and educational factors. The British Empire imposed English as the national language to be taught at schools; the Irish Gaelic language was forbidden in the main towns, not only for political, but also for practical reasons, since the mass of people who moved from the countryside to the city would only find jobs if they spoke English. Although the Irish language was still spoken among the countryside dwellers, it was not kept from one generation to another due to the exodus to the urban areas or to other countries, which culminated in the Great Famine of the eighteenth century¹⁶ (annex C). By the end of the

¹⁶ There are two Famine episodes in the history of Ireland. The reference made here is to the first, the eighteenth century Irish Famine, which took place in 1740 and 1741, caused by a sequence of bad years for agriculture. One century later the world known Great Famine occurred. The impoverished population were feeding basically on potatoes, when a fungus destroyed the potato plantations. The second Great Famine lasted eight years, from 1845

eighteenth century, the Gaelic culture was dead. This destruction of the Gaelic order, paradoxically, enhanced the revival of oral tradition, since many poets were forced to live among the illiterate people, after the loss of their aristocratic privilege. So literature became again part of the oral tradition in Ireland.

In different moments of the history of Ireland, the role of resistance against the English has been led by different kinds of people. In the early stages of Norman domination resistance was held by the High Kings. In later times, by the most powerful landowners. From the 19th century onwards, the mission was carried out by young intellectuals. To them, language was a very important issue. Ancient Celtic myths were brought back, such as the Legend of the Fianna¹⁷. The new approach to the legend was tuned with the political agenda of the Romantic European Movement. Inspired by the French Revolution¹⁸ and by Ireland's colonial condition, Irish intellectuals and militants became engaged in responding to the crisis. As a consequence, two Celtic Revivals took place. The first began in the eighteenth century. The second began in the late nineteenth century. Both revivals produced literature which was filled with political significance and focused on three main issues: language, landscape and tradition. For those intellectuals, "the people, their land, and the language they spoke became repositories of tradition" (ibidem, p. 20).

It was in the nineteenth century that the Irish fight for political freedom became known as the fight between Catholics and Protestants, since there was an increasing number of Protestants who were protected by England against the Catholic Irish. In 1801, the Act of Union closed the Dublin parliament and created the legislative union of Great Britain and Ireland, under the name of United Kingdom, in order to increase the British control in the country. In 1829, the Catholics, who had been prohibited from taking part in politics, were allowed to become members of Parliament¹⁹. This increased the Irish national feeling. Yet, a number of crises in the nineteenth century, including the Great Famine of 1845, brought about

to 1852. One fourth of the population of Ireland was lost, dead people and emigrants included. It is to the second Famine that the famous painting by Van Gogh alludes. The first episode is usually referred to as The *Irish* Famine, and the second as The *Great* Famine.

¹⁷ As mentioned before, the Fianna were Irish warrior-hunters who served the High King of Ireland in the 3rd century AD. Their last great leader was Fionn Mac Cumhaill, who has featured in Irish literature since the eighth century. His image has often been used for nationalist purposes. One example is the popular notion that he is not dead, but sleeping in Fort Grianan, and is yet to awake and defend Ireland against the English. This is a recurrent notion in the mythic imaginary, and makes us think of King Arthur, Don Sebastian, and even of Christian religious representations, in which Christ's Second Coming is announced.

¹⁸ The French Revolution, also strongly influenced by the Romantic ideals, set the principle that the history of peoples was more important than the history of dynasties, political parties, or masters. The study of cultural homogeneity was replaced by the study of the tradition that was preserved by regional cultures in spite of foreign domination.

¹⁹ The religious-philosophical issue respecting the presence of a Catholic member in the Houses of Parliament revealed the doubt about whose interests that peer would represent, the King's or the Pope's.

a movement called “The Young Irelanders”, born in the rebellion of 1847. Their aim was to provide the revolutionary continuity to the 1798 raise. This movement provided the leaders who formed the Irish Republican Brotherhood, popularly called the Fenian movement, founded in 1858, from which the IRA later stemmed.

In 1850, Pope Pius IX named Cardinal Paul Cullen as Archbishop of Dublin and assigned him the task of reforming and transforming the Irish Church according to Rome’s designs. Cullen introduced a “devotional revolution”, showering the Irish men and women with novenas, pilgrimages, churches, hospitals, schools and social services. This influence not only enhanced the clash between the two kinds of colonial cultures, the British Empire and the Roman Empire, but also shaped the internal cleavage in Ireland, which lasted during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Catholicism met the needs of a nascent nationalism at a time when Irish language and the Gaelic culture were declining due to British imperialism, which furthered the Great Famine. The Catholic faith was suited to play the role of the nationalist awakening. It not only joined the nationalist cause, but became a symbol of national identity, since it was difficult to define *Irishness* in a more comprehensive term than the religious one. So, Catholicism and its practices were the mark of national distinctiveness. According to Terence Brown, from the Famine until the late twentieth century, the Catholic Church met the needs of nascent nationalism, became intimately linked with the national feeling, and a badge of national identity. (BROWN, 1987, p. 25)

In 1877, Michael Davitt, a former Fenian, began to organize tenants to campaign against the landlords by refusing to pay excessive rents and offering what they considered a reasonable rent. In 1879, Davitt formed the Land League²⁰ to negotiate the rights of the tenantry against the landlords. In 1880 Charles Parnell, a Protestant Irish Member of Parliament, became the leader of the Irish nationalist movement. Charles Stewart Parnell was against the English and demanded full rights for the Irish people. In London, Parnell guided a political battle in the House of Commons. This political battle led Davitt’s Land League, the Fenians and the Irish Parliamentary Party to pursue the Home Rule, a limited kind of self-government. Although most liberals supported Parnell’s Irish party, the Tories voted against self-government and the first Irish Home Rule did not succeed. In 1881 the British declared

²⁰ Irish peasant-rights organization, formed in 1879 by Michael Davitt and Charles Stewart Parnell to fight against tenant evictions. Through its skilful use of the boycott against anyone who took a farm from which another had been evicted, it forced Gladstone’s government to introduce a law in 1881 restricting rents and granting tenants security of tenure.

the Land League illegal and arrested Davitt, Parnell and other 1000 militants involved in the Land League and Home Rule process²¹.

As a consequence of the political situation, literature in the nineteenth century adopted the idea of regional landscape from early European Romanticism and transformed it into passion and loyalty to the Irish landscape and traditions by rewriting the old myths. According to Deane,

The very naming of the land in both literature and politics – Cathleen ni Houlihan, Eireann, Eire, Saorstat, Eireann, the republic, the Six counties, Ulster, Northern Ireland – is a symptom of that combination of political instability and regional loyalty which has defined modern Irish history. [...] This is particularly true when the fact of violence is taken into account. For all those names are associated with various forms of violence. It is a question of the impossibility of finding a name which is consonant of various notions of peace and stability. Further the regional loyalty is a subject to intensification in time of violence (DEANE, 1985, p.13).

Being influenced by the Land League and the political process, Irish literature of the nineteenth century adopted the idea of regional landscape from the early European Romanticism and transformed into passion and loyalty to the Irish landscape and traditions by rewriting the old myths. This second Celtic Revival was not only interested in talking about the uniqueness of the landscape and using Irish legends and myths in their literary productions, but also in denouncing the destruction caused by the Act of Union and the Protestant Ascendancy which led to the great famine and, consequently, to poverty, emigration, starvation, and death. In this way, the literature of the nineteenth century became deeply connected to politics and brought heavy consequences to Ireland, since it triggered the idea of racial difference and sectarianism. One instance can be found in the work of the English writer Matthew Arnold²², who used some of Edmund Burke's ideas in his texts. According to Arnold, the Protestant ascendancy was doing harm to the Irish Catholic majority. Deane comments, "Racial and religious distinctions are used by Arnold to explain the kind of racial and religious discrimination practiced by the British in Ireland" (idem, p.

²¹ The strategy used by the British government to diminish the political influence of Parnell consisted of spreading the news that Parnell had an adulterous connection with a married woman. This forced the Catholic Church to turn against Parnell. There is a clear reference to this episode in James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. In the first pages of the novel, the character Dante – a devout Catholic and a brave Irish woman – reveals to a very young Stephen Dedalus her admiration both for Davitt and Parnell. Later, in the same chapter, having to choose between God and Politics, she repudiates the memory of Parnell. The revolt against the fact that the Irish people betrayed their political leader is a recurrent theme in Joyce's work. Soon after the failure of this attempt at the Home Rule Parnell fell ill and died.

²² Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) was an English poet and cultural critic who was influenced by continental Celtic studies and the urgency of events in Ireland. He argued that the Celts are part of the Indo-European race, in contradistinction from the Semitic peoples, and not therefore possible to be assimilated like other colonies. Arnold's definition of the Celtic spirit was latterly said to be significant for a British hegemonic relation to Irish culture.

26). In this way, Arnold helped to develop the political sectarianism that was already felt in Ireland by writing about the differences between Catholics and Protestants, and by adding the cultural myth element to that.

The revival of the Gaelic language in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries would have been an important ambition if it had not become one of the means to the political implications. Although the Gaelic League in 1893 was founded by Protestant intellectuals who aimed at reviving the Gaelic culture and at fighting for de-anglicization, this movement ended up by reinforcing the alliance between the Gaelic civilization and Catholicism, and made Protestantism return to its alliance with the English civilization.

The second Irish Home Rule was introduced in 1893, and the last one in 1912-14. But, because of World War I, its implementation was postponed to the end of the war. In 1916, a republican movement called “the Easter Ring” burst out, through rebels in Dublin who did not want a Home Rule, but complete independence. The British put down the movement and executed the leaders. In 1918 republicans won elections in all areas (except in Ulster), created their own Parliament, The *Dail in Dublin*, and formed The Republic of Ireland. In 1919, led by Eamonn De Valera, the nationalist movement *Sinn Fein* (Ourselves Alone) set up a Dublin assembly, the *Dail Eireann*, which again proclaimed Irish independence. A guerrilla campaign by the Irish Republican Army, or IRA, against British forces began, with heavy casualties on both sides.

In 1920 the Government of Ireland Act provided for the establishment of two self-governing units, one (Northern Ireland now) composed of 6 of Ulster's 9 counties, the other composed of the 23 counties of Southern Ireland plus the other 3 counties of Ulster (which together form the Republic of Ireland now). In 1921, England agreed with the independence of Southern Ireland, but Ulster should remain part of the British Government. This was called *The Anglo-Irish Treaty*. In 1922 the Dublin parliament ratified the treaty, despite the opposition of De Valera and others. In 1937 a new constitution abolished the Irish Free State and proclaimed Eire (Gaelic for Ireland) as a sovereign, independent, democratic state. In 1949 Eire became the Republic of Ireland, and left the British Commonwealth.

The Free State set out a program to restore the Irish Language and the Celtic culture destroyed by British colonial power, in order to reconstitute a sense of national identity to the Irish people. The Republic of Ireland was not formed by a homogeneous society, but diverse segments which had to be accommodated. It was in the rural area that a homogeneous Irish society could be found. However, this rural society was marked by a profound continuity of the nineteenth century social and cultural conservatism, added to the devotional revolution of

the Catholic Church in the period following the Great Famine. The Irish Nationalists realized that it was necessary to stress Catholicism as a mark of national distinctiveness, due to the immediate lack of identity other than Catholic loyalty and devotion.

The Free State government was a conservative government, established among the Irish middle class who chose the language revival as a way to establish its legitimacy. This government was partially formed by members of the Gaelic League, founded in 1893. Consequently, these members had been affected by the revivalist ideology. The government set a program to teach the Irish language and culture to men and women of all ages. In fact, the first minister of Education was Eoin McNeill a professor of early Irish history at University College, in Dublin, and a Gaelic scholar who became known as a devoted worker for the Gaelic League. Eoin McNeill, made Irish compulsory at National Schools, and subjects like geography and history had also to be taught in Irish. Moreover, he established that the teachers had to prove that they mastered Irish Gaelic to be able to get their teaching certificates.

The literature that began to be produced in the late nineteenth century and in the first part of the twentieth century reaffirmed the heroic tradition of the Irish people and told mythological tales about their ancient heroes. Added to that, there was also the Catholic element of sacrificial chivalry. This literature managed to suggest a continuity of experience between the past and the present, and became a powerful weapon of the nationalist state. The tales of the mythological heroes like Cu Chulainn, the Fianna, and Cathleen ni Houlinhan²³, among others, suggested that these heroes would again fight for their land against England. Furthermore, the new Irish State was basically rural, so artists of the first half of the twentieth century, especially after the partition, popularized the notion of the virtuous countryman and rural virtue in their plays, poems, speeches and paintings. Writers produced literature that described the simplicity of the farmers and peasants as being essentially Irish.

They celebrated a version of Irish pastoral, where rural life was a condition of virtue inasmuch as it reminded an expression of an ancient civilization, uncontaminated by commercialism and progress. In so doing the helped confirm Irish society in a belief that rural life constituted an essential element of an unchanging Irish Identity. (BROWN, 1987, p. 66)

²³ Cathleen ni Houlinhan is a female allegory representing Ireland, in the same way that Britannia represents Britain. This image is the symbol of Irish Nationalism, and is often referred to as the "Poor Old Woman," whose brave sons died fighting for their land. The image is strongly associated with the I.R.A. and with the Troubles. In Modern literature, the reference can be found in Joyce's *Dubliners* ("A Mother") and *Ulysses* (Telemachia), in Pearse's *Mise Éire*, in Yeats and Lady Gregory's *Cathleen ni Houlinhan*, or in Sean O'Casey's *The Shadow of the Gunman*, for instance.

Literature of the first decades of the twentieth century romanticized the poor conditions of Irish rural life as an inheritance of the Gaelic past. In fact the rural life, especially in the west of the country, continued to hold characteristics of the traditional Irish civilization from before the Great Famine, which was one of the causes of the loss of the Irish language. Especially in the west of the country, storytellers (senachais) still told tales about old historical legends, ballads and songs were still sung, pre-Christian superstitions as fairies were still believed, as well as rites of the agricultural year, the calendar customs and magical cures were still practiced, festivals were still appreciated, folk drama, mummers, and local saint's days were still cherished. So, when writers portrayed aspects of the rural life, they proposed the continuity of the traditions, ignoring that these countrymen had kept these traditions alive, but, at the same time, had already been adapting themselves to modern social and economic aspects of the society, becoming involved with national organizations and political movements.

After the partition, the Unionists, supported by the British Government, consolidated the political and economical power in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland was part of the United Kingdom with all privileges and responsibilities involved. Thus, the Unionist party was a majority in the Northern Ireland Parliament. The Unionists main objective was to prevent Catholics from acquiring positions of respect within the Six Counties, so Catholics were not able to carry out any political position, and voting depended on their economic and social situation. As a consequence, they did not have any political representation. Discrimination was carried through religion. Although suffering discrimination, these people left the countryside to Belfast, Londonderry and other industrial centers where work was available in the textile and shipbuilding industries. The Unionist government divided the working class along religious lines in order to prevent the working class from organizing themselves in trading unions and divulging socialist ideas. The Unionist government made it clear that Catholics were living in a Protestant State and, therefore, had to accept their laws and policy. This fostered not only resentment and reaction, but also the I.R.A. violent activities, since the Irish Republican Army was against the partition. The Bandon incident of April 25, 1921²⁴ raised fear of response from the I.R.A. in the Protestant community of Northern Ireland. The Ulster Protestant Association (U.P.A.) and other murder gangs, set up by the British military, started a series of guerrillas not only against the I.R.A., but against Catholics in general. In response to the guerrillas, the Unionist Government set the Northern

²⁴ On April 25, in the Bandon District of County Cork, an IRA commander was shot to death as he called on a Protestant-owned house.

Special Act, which allowed death penalty, internment²⁵, flogging, and curfew in the Catholic areas. This policy ended by the end of 1924, but some measures, as the curfew, reappeared in Catholic areas in different moments of crisis, as for example, the years of 1968-9. Because of the treatment of the Protestant government, Catholic nationalists went to street to protest against the British rule. Conflicts between groups started to happen; the I.R.A. started a guerrilla against the government. Unionists formed paramilitary groups to fight the I.R.A. (annex D) and the Catholics, and British soldiers went to Northern Ireland to interfere. Violence took place and the civil war broke out in Northern Ireland. This conflict led to what became to be known as “the Troubles”. In 1966–1969, rioting and street fighting between Protestants and Catholics occurred in Londonderry, fomented by extremist nationalist Protestants, who feared the Catholics might attain a local majority, and by Catholics demonstrating for civil rights. The religious communities, Catholic and Protestant, became hostile armed camps. The goal of the I.R.A. was to eject the British and unify Northern Ireland with the Irish Republic to the south. Various Protestant terrorist organizations pursued the Unionist cause through violence (annex E).

In the years that preceded the partition, Londonderry was formed by a majority of Catholics, but the uneven electoral system privileged the Protestants (annex F). This fact led the Catholic population to a total disbelief of elections as a possibility of changing the system. The Catholic working class situation in Londonderry was characterized by poverty, unemployment and high birth index, as the Church was against birth control. There was plenty of cheap labor amongst children, who worked half time in the shirt factories and spent the other half time at school. The education of Catholics in Northern Ireland remained under the control of the Catholic clergy, therefore it was free either to adopt, or to adapt, the program and timetable of the Free State schools. The Catholic schools chose to teach both Irish language and Irish history, whereas Protestant schools taught English history. The structure of the educational system reinforced sectarianism. The Catholic education structure was molded by the Church in the nineteenth century and remained unchanged during the greater part of the twentieth century. Teachers were appointed and dismissed with sanction of the local bishop. Most secondary schools were controlled by religious orders. Higher education was controlled by Protestants. Both religions also interfered in the political parties. The Protestant Church had a direct interference in the political organizations and parties by having some members become MP (members of Parliament). The Catholic priest interference was indirect; they usually remained in the background, nominating and recommending

²⁵ Internment means the confiscation of education, jobs, financial resources, security and personal freedom.

candidates. The consequence of the religious interference in the educational, social and political life of the Northern States corroborated the sectarianism of the Six County politics throughout the twentieth century.

During most of the 20th century the division between the Catholic and Protestant communities was irresolvable. Protestants wanted to keep Northern Ireland linked to Britain. Catholics longed for unification. The IRA became a symbol of resistance to British rule, and the Protestant paramilitaries became symbols of resistance to the unification of the island. Meanwhile, consecutive governments were carrying out doubtful policies for the unification in over a long period, but did not have coherent action for unification in the short term. Padraig O'Malley comments,

Life in Northern Ireland became cheaper. Random deaths, mutilating injuries, the constancy of uncertainty, the destruction of property and the debilitation of public interest, the deterioration of economic and social fabric, the exacerbation of difference, the suppression of human rights, individual liberties, and due to the process in the name of the order and security, and in the legacy of a generation of children who from infancy – in Belfast child psychiatrist Morris Frazer's memorable phrase – "have lived with fear, have been through to hate and who now aspire to kill" (O'MALLEY, 1983, p. 02).

For centuries, there have been three interrelated problems in Northern Ireland. The first is the relation between Ireland and Britain, the second is the relation between Catholics and Protestants, and the third is the relation between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The first issue was enhanced 1921 with the Anglo-Irish Treaty which partitioned Ireland in two separate political entities and reinforced cultural and political separatism, which resulted in the development of parallel confessional states. Ireland was formed by three different cultures: one Gaelic Catholic, one Anglo-Protestant and one Scots-Presbyterian. They might have mingled and create a national identity, but, on the contrary, conflict was generated in Northern Ireland simply because they held different interests. Protestants feared the Catholic precept and its result in the Republic of Ireland, whereas Catholics wanted more political freedom in Northern Ireland, as well as some association with the Free State.

In the two Irelands, religion became the emblem of identity, and identity became the motive to support either the Unionists or the Nationalists. Besides, Protestants considered themselves as ethnically British, while nationalists considered themselves ethnically Irish. Basically, this conflict held in Northern Ireland for almost two thirds of the last century was a religious one in the eyes of the Protestants who want to secure their future by maintaining the union with Britain, and a political one in the eyes of the Catholics who believed they could

only secure their future if Ireland was united. Sadly, violence in Northern Ireland was within the Catholic and Protestant working-class areas of Belfast, Derry and some other Northern Irish towns.

Some historians, sociologists and political scientists have tried “to isolate a single factor as a primarily causative” (DEANE, 1985, p. 12). Some theorists emphasize the anthropological factor, others cultural, economic, religious, or political. In fact, elements of each have influenced and contributed to the clash in Northern Ireland in different times. Another way to present the same issue might be to say that one’s sense of nationality is related to the nation one is related to. The population of Northern Ireland is composed of people who have different notions as to what nation they relate. Nation may be defined as a cultural and social community whose members have the same ethnicity and have a common identity based on a culture, spoken language, usually share a specific territory, have a written literature, and are autonomous. This definition is sort of idealistic when we analyze different nations. There are nations disputing the same territory, nations whose people live in a historical diaspora²⁶, nations where different cultures coexist either pacifically or in dispute for the territory. The usage of the term Nation is not only ambiguous; it is also the subject of political disputes, which may be extremely violent. Such is the case with Ireland. The definition of the term Nation, in Northern Ireland, addresses a territory where variety ethnic groups, from different settlements, have formed one national culture. But, in a determined historical moment, it has suffered a major change due to political, religious and economic reasons that generated a strong dispute. That nation was slowly divided into two political entities within the same territory.²⁷ As far as things go concerning the historic development of Northern Ireland in the turn of the 20th to 21st centuries, we can think of one country whose population is divided so as to their national commitment: the Catholics see the island of Ireland as their nation, and the Protestants see the United Kingdom as such. Throughout the last century each half has fought as they could to make their beliefs prevail. The Protestants have used the power of the law (annex G); the Catholics have maintained an armed resistance

²⁶ The term *diaspora* was first defined as "the scattered". It was used by the Ancient Greeks to refer to citizens of a city-state who emigrated to colonize a conquered land. Later the word *diaspora* was used to refer to the population of Jews exiled from Judea in 586 BC by the Babylonians and from Jerusalem in AD 136, by the Roman Empire. Nowadays, the term *diaspora* means *displacement*; that is, the separation of a determined population from their national territory for various reasons. However, this population keeps some emotional attachment to their country of origin and, sometimes, still hopes of returning to their homeland someday.

²⁷ When I use the term *country*, I refer to Ireland as an island divided by two different governments, one which is autonomous and one which is part of the United Kingdom. The concept of *race* used in this thesis means race as a social and cultural construct. I have decided to adopt this concept because it is what best describes the dispute within the Northern Irish territory.

(annex H). And each has used their intellectual and literary power, and their national mythologies, to ratify their points

There are two reasons I present that justify my starting this thesis with a chapter of contextualization that may seem somewhat detached from the textual analysis I propose to undertake in Chapter Three. The first refers to the fact that this work is a Brazilian construct; it refers to the ways in which a Brazilian student addresses a number of issues. And, regardless of the worldwide range of availability granted to a thesis displayed on line nowadays, the majority of the readers to my work will probably consist of Brazilians as well. For one thing, most of the Universities in our country that deal with British history and culture address the subject with a predominant focus on England. The history of Wales and Scotland is presented in a satellite way, and the Ireland studied sporadically contemplates the period that preceded the Partition. So, the complexities involving life in Northern Ireland nowadays become very dim, especially when the first thing we Brazilians think of is the violence of the terrorist actions provoked by the I.R.A.

The second difficulty for the average Brazilian student of Ireland refers to the notion of what being a Catholic is. Being a Catholic in Ireland means one thing. Being a Catholic in Northern Ireland means a different thing. Being a Catholic in England is still another thing. And each of these perceptions is completely different from the idea of being a Catholic in Brazil. I believe that the more we know about one place and one culture, the more apt we are to enjoy their art. And the ultimate aim of this thesis is to propitiate to the Brazilian readers the means to grasp and enjoy some of the layers of meaning and aesthetic referents presented in *Reading in the Dark* that might possibly be overlooked by readers who were not informed about the history of Northern Ireland.

3 THE FIELD DAY COMPANY

3.1 THE REVISIONISM OF THE FIELD DAY

Irish Literature has always been marked by strong political views, and Seamus Deane's *Reading in the Dark* is no exception. In spite of the lyrical tone, which contrasts somewhat with the acid satire that we associate with Irish writers as Swift, Shaw or Beckett, Deane's novel represents the point of view of the Field Day, one of the most active intellectual groups that have been discussing the contemporary state of affairs in Ireland. The politics of the Field Day is not so much concerned with fighting the English back, but rather with healing the Irish from the negative effects that so many centuries of anger and hatred have caused to themselves. Thinkers of the Field Day carry a revisionist²⁸ investigation of the effects of the revival of Celtic myths, held especially in the last one and a half centuries. The Field Day is concerned with the possibility of demythologizing stereotypes which have been built up by historical narratives about English Dominance. The movement relies on Revisionism as a theory which is engaged in reevaluating the existent narratives about Ireland. These narratives have not only been told by the Irish, but also by the English. They refer basically to three different points of view: the Catholic-Irish, the Protestant-Irish and the English. The Field Day analyzes, discusses and makes critiques and observations about the Ulster Question and the political nationalism applied, not only in Northern Ireland, the site of the conflict, but also in the Republic of Ireland, as well as the cultural, social, and economic consequences it generated in the whole island.

Referring more specifically to Northern Ireland, the Anglo-Irish Agreement, signed on 15 November 1987, signaled the beginning of a new era in Northern Ireland. It aimed to end with an impasse that had been going on since 1916 and that was intensified during the troubles. This agreement gave the Irish Government an advisory role in Northern Ireland's government, but did not change the constitutional position of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom, since the only legal form for Northern Ireland to join the Republic is through elections. The treaty also set out conditions for the establishment of a devolved

²⁸ The term "Revisionism" is used here as signifying "any departure from Marxist doctrine, theory or practice, especially the tendency to favor reform above revolutionary change." (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/Revisionism?qsrc=2888>). Access on 09.03.2008.

consensus government in the region. The second step was the signature of the Good Friday Agreement²⁹, signed in Northern Ireland on 10 April 1998. In March 2007, parliamentary elections have been held in Northern Ireland so as to resolve its differences and resume power-sharing between the Democratic Unionist Party led by Reverend Ian Paisley and the Nationalist Sinn Fein led by Gerry Adams. Ian Paisley and Martin McGuinness, another Sinn Fein deputy, were sworn in as leader and deputy leader, respectively, of the Northern Ireland executive government. Power sharing put an end to direct rule from London. Thus, Northern Ireland has been facing a new reality from that point onwards.

Besides that, according to the Field Day, “the two Irelands” cannot be though within the frontiers of an Island anymore, since both nations are part of the group of European countries which signed the Single European Act (SEA) at Luxembourg on 17 February 1986³⁰. The Single European Act has also played an important influence to the end of the clash between Unionists and Nationalists in Northern Ireland for it is not only Northern Ireland but the whole Island, even though with two different governments, that is part of a new political and economic European system. So, both Irelands have had to work hard in order to surpass their internal crisis and think of themselves as part of the globalized world, interacting, influencing, and being influenced by a variety of cultures. This new reality has taken Northern Ireland to solve its differences and resume power-sharing. But, in fact, the “two Irelands” will have to carry a social, economic and political integration if they want to intervolve with other nations.

Revisionism is fundamental to my research because my analysis of *Reading in the Dark* will make use of this theory, since it also studies family history, and this novel – which has autobiographical elements – presents the story of its main character’s family. Besides that, Revisionism is intrinsically related to Cultural Studies, as both disciplines study societies’ cultural practices and their relation to power. Moreover, revisionism analyzes the social and political context in which the culture of a determined society is manifested, with the purpose of performing a critical evaluation, specially, when this evaluation is concerned with the existing ideological discourse.

²⁹ Also known as the Belfast Agreement, Held in 1998, aiming at developing a gradual process of peace between the British and Irish Governments, and supported by referendum by the political parties of Northern Ireland.

³⁰ The Single European Act (SEA) set the European Community an objective of establishing a *Single Market* by 31 December 1992, and codified European Political Cooperation, the predecessor of the European Union

3.2 THE HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF THE FIELD DAY

The Field Day is an important artistic and literary movement. Its intellectuals have a great influence in contemporary Ireland, Europe and the United States concerning cultural and political matters, and have been developing great literary studies in a number of universities, such as Trinity College, in Dublin, the University of Notre Dame, in the United States, and the University of Manchester, in England. In order to understand the kind of Revisionism of the Field Day Company, it is necessary to know the context in which this movement came to life as well as about the different movements held against the English colonial rule, which helped to form the ideology predominating in Ireland in the twentieth century, and which started to be reevaluated by the Field Day Company in the 1980s. Revisionist Studies concentrate on determined historical facts. Revisionists aim at reexamining, revising, reinterpreting, correcting, improving, and rewriting them, based on new and existent materials. Historical revisionism has become an important subject among colonial and post-colonial societies, as well as minority groups who have suffered the process of colonization and racial discrimination. In addition, revisionist history is often practiced by those who belong to minority groups, such as feminist historians, or ethnic historians. In this sense, Irish intellectuals could not be away from this subject, since Ireland has suffered under both, colonialism and racial discrimination for centuries.

Seamus Deane, the author of *Reading in the Dark*, is formally engaged in the Irish Revisionism of the Field Day Company, and one of the major contributors to this movement, along with English literary critic Terry Eagleton, who has performed an extensive work on ideology and the production of discourses. In recent years, Eagleton has dedicated himself to the study of the Irish experience. Some of his recent work comprises a trilogy on the relation between Irish literature and the political, cultural, and ideological manifestations there contained. Among other works and essays on Irish literature and criticism, I have previously mentioned the texts *The Truth about the Irish* and the essay *Nationalism: Irony and Commitment*, which integrates the collection of three Field Day Pamphlets written by Terry Eagleton, Fredric Jameson and Edward Said entitled *Nationalism, Colonialism and Literature*, 1990. The introduction of that volume is written by Seamus Deane.

When analyzing Northern Irish literary production of the twentieth century, we are able to identify recurrent themes among these literary texts, such as language, landscape and identity. These themes also seem to be the main concern of intellectuals of the Field Day

Company, this Theatrical and Literary movement engaged in the study of the Irish political crisis. Its members aim to redefine and articulate these issues to a critique of Irish social and political life. In general, these Irish writers provide an intellectual response to “the Troubles” in Northern Ireland. They are the new generation of the revisionist movement in Ireland because, even though *The Field Day* was officially found in the 1980s, the origins of the revisionist movement can be traced back to the 1930s and 1940s with the publication of the journal *Irish Historical Studies* (1938) and the foundation of *The Bell* periodical by O’Faoláin and other intellectuals in Dublin, in October, 1940.

The Bell periodical, criticized the orthodoxies of the national revival as opponent to modernization, by appealing to the ideal rural Ireland and the Gaelic tradition. In his first editorial, Sean O’Faoláin wrote: "Whoever you are, Gentile or Jew, Protestant or Catholic, priest or layman, big house or small house - the Bell is yours." (<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/weekend/2008/1122/1227276708521.html>)

According to these intellectuals, this radical nationalism had cut off Ireland from the rest of the modern world. O’Faoláin, (1991, p 569, vol. III) argues that the Gaelic cult could be linked with the doctrines of racial purity widespread in Nazi Germany. It was necessary for Ireland to leave the obsession with its own past behind and adapt to the new world by accepting diversity. For O’Faoláin, Ireland was a hybrid society instead of a cultural unity. In addition to that, he also believed that people should be bilingual – they should speak both Gaelic and English.

Although revisionism in the republic of Ireland had its roots in the 1930’s, this new form of criticism became popular in the 1970s when historians and critics started to review and demythologize works of intellectuals whose writings were considered nationalist. Revisionist critics also demonstrated that myth, violence and Catholicism were the coordinates of militant nationalism. The rebellions against the British rule of 1798, 1803, 1848, and even the protestant-affiliated Young Ireland movement in 1840 were construed as Catholic – and thus sectarian – nationalism. The task of the revisionist critics was to discontinue the dominant ideology of cultural nationalism and “introduce the discontinuity and diversity into the cultural order equivalent of an enclosed religious order, opening it up to the ways of the world in the late twentieth century” (GIBBONS, 1991, p. 566, vol. III). What propitiated the acceptance of these ideas was the policy of Seán Lemmass who had become Taoiseach ³¹ in 1959. He opened up the Irish economy to international investment and applied

³¹ *I.e.*, the Prime Minister of the Irish Republic.

for membership with the European community. Added to this, the second Vatican Council³² and other social changes helped the Irish society to question the internalized nationalism which reached its apogee in “the Age of de Valera”.³³

In spite of that, Revisionism had a downfall with the world economic crisis of the 1970s, that negatively influenced the modernization project in Ireland, and caused a series of internal crises in the 1980s, as for example the conflict in Northern Ireland, following the H-Block³⁴ struggle in 1981. These external and internal crises set nationalism back. Revisionists believed that there was an enduring Catholic nationalist tradition “immune to cross-cultural influences and social changes” (idem, p. 568).

It is at this point that, in the 1980’s, The Field Day Theatre Company was established in Londonderry, Northern Ireland by the playwright Brian Friel and the actor and director Stephen Rea. The Field Day Company proposes a discourse of unity aiming to deconstruct the national myth of sectarianism. Its purpose is to redefine the Irish national culture, history and tradition through plays, poetry, novels, since the Second Revival brought disastrous consequences by giving emphasis to the sectarian features and providing cultural myths about the uniqueness of Irish identity, which resulted in the social and political crisis of the twentieth century, named as “The Troubles”.

The initial aim of the Field Day Theatre Company was to create a cultural space available to a popular audience, which would perform a discourse of unity. But that soon turned into a project concerned with Irish literary and political culture. The writers Seamus Heaney, Seamus Deane, and Tom Paulin were invited to join the Company. They established, as their main purpose, to help solve the present crisis, or “The Troubles”. Thus, the Field Day became an artistic response to “The Troubles” by analyzing the established opinions, myths

³²The second Vatican Council led to greater openness within the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church was very strong in Ireland and prejudiced against the Protestant. The second Vatican Council sought common ground in dealings with Orthodox and Protestant Christians and with those who were not Christians as well as turned to areas such as marriage and family, cultural, social, and economic life, the political community, war and peace, and international relations.

³³ The age of de Valera is the period in which Éamon de Valera was the *taoiseach* in South Ireland followed by the period in which he was elected President of The Republic of Ireland. De Valera was the prime minister of South Ireland from 1932. In 1937, he declared Ireland a fully sovereign state. In 1948, he lost reelection because of negative public reaction to his party's long monopoly of power. In 1951, de Valera was reelected prime minister but the relative Irish economic prosperity of the 1940s declined in the 1950s. He lost the elections in 1954, but was replaced again in 1957. In 1959, de Valera resigned as prime minister and was elected Irish president. In 1973, de Valera resigned and retired from the Irish politics. He was the oldest Head of State in the world.

³⁴ Her Majesty's Prison Maze, known as The H Blocks, Long Kesh, or The Maze, was a prison used to house paramilitary prisoners during the Northern Ireland Troubles from mid-1971 to mid-2000. Its prisoners played an important role in the 1981 hunger strike. The prison was closed in 2000 and razing began on 30 October 2006.

and stereotypes which contributed to the political instability and sectarianism. In this way, the company blended arts with politics.

Brian Friel's play, *Translations* (1980), opened the Company project. The Company produced and toured a large number of plays. In 1983, the Field Day members decided to reach the academic community by publishing a series of pamphlets exploring the nature of the Irish crisis. The aim of this series was to publish collections of articles by people who contribute to debates on the writing of history, the critique of ideology, postcolonial theory, political and social issues, and literature in relation to Ireland. The first issue brings three pamphlets written by Tom Paulin, Seamus Heaney and Seamus Deane (1983): *Civilians and Barbarians* by Seamus Deane, *A New Look at the Language Question* by Tom Paulin; *An Open Letter* by Seamus Heaney. Since 1983 there have been several Field Day pamphlet publications, as well as works as *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing*, in three volumes (distributed in the UK by Faber & Faber, London; and in the USA and Canada by W. W. Norton, New York). Seamus Deane is the general editor.

In the 1990s, the Field Day Company published *Nationalism, Colonialism, and Literature*, a collection of three Field Day Pamphlets: *Nationalism, Irony and Commitment* by Terry Eagleton, *Modernism and Imperialism*, by Fredric Jameson, and *Yeats and Decolonization*, by Edward Said. In the introduction, Seamus Deane states that the Field Day enterprise believes the Irish colonial crisis has made a new discourse for a new relationship between the idea of human subject and the idea of human communities necessary. Irish writing should question how the individual subject must be thought "in relation to its community, its past history and its possible future" (DEANE, 1990, p.4). Deane avows that although the Field Day sees art as specific activity, the whole of culture is deeply inscribed in it and the interpretation of culture is a political idea that has played a crucial role in Irish experience. This way, according to Deane, "One of Field Day's particular aims has been to expose the history and function of that idea and characterize its disfiguring effects" (idem, p.7). Ireland has had British nationalism for two hundred years. That is why it has been necessary to engage again within the concept of nationalism, since it is the derivative of its British counterpart which, like in almost all nationalist movements, is provincial and actually or potentially racist. This nationalism produced stereotypes which are the cultural basis for the religious sectarianism between Protestants and Catholics, and which developed an ideology of dominance and subservience within the idiom of religious division. As a consequence, "much of Irish past has been destroyed, silenced and erased" (ibidem, p.9). Deane states that Ireland, as most colonized peoples, is left without a specific history and a specific language. Writers of

the early Irish revival movement tried to recover the lost Irish language in the English language. Their work helped legitimate the Irish English language until then, seen as an adjunct to English. But these works have been read as British literature. So, these Irish writers need to be reinterpreted and restored to the culture of their time and place. It is necessary “to repossess their revolutionary and authoritative force for the here and now of the present Ireland” (ibidem, p. 11).

To restore the Irish identity it is necessary to redefine the notions of national character, stereotyping of groups, classes and races in relation to the kind of artistic works that were produced. In order to do that, the Field Day aims at restoring Irish writers in the Irish context, because the Field Day believes that a society needs a legitimating system and, in seeking for it, always looks to the point of origin from which it can derive itself and its practices, even if this origin is a powerful cultural invention that depends on an anterior legitimating nature. In this way, the Field Day Company has blended art with politics, through plays, poetry, novels, and critical essays.

According to Seamus Deane (1985, p.11), Ireland has experienced a series of social and political failures for almost three centuries. Among them are the Whig Revolution settlement of 1688-90; the Irish Parliament of 1782-1800; the Act of Union, 1800-1922; the Home Rule; and the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1922. Adding to those political movements, there are the insurrectionary movements: the United Irishmen, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, the Citizens Army, and the Irish Republican Army, among others, which culminate with “The Troubles”. Moreover, the influence of Catholicism, the revival of the Irish language, and shaping of culture through education and Literature establish a national identity, but it also corroborates the sectarian division in the name of religion. Therefore, the idea of a stable society has not been established in the Irish experience. As a consequence, literature has not only become a blend of two diverse cultures or traditions (national and colonial), but has also been influenced by this crisis.

The formation of the Republic of Ireland, which culminated in the late colonial experience in Northern Ireland and its political social clash, also produced contrasting stereotypes which became the cultural basis for religious sectarianism – Protestantism versus Catholicism. The contemporary colonialism led to the creation of an ideal version of Irish history which lacked multiculturalism in Ireland up to the 1980s. Besides, the fusion of the Catholic Church elements with Gaelic ideology and Conservatism into an essentialist notion of Irishness, delayed the process of modernization and liberal pluralism, and led to a sectarian discourse which damaged and postponed the processes of modernization of the Republic of

Ireland and of decolonization in Northern Ireland. Sectarianism prevented the fostering of multiculturalism in Northern Ireland, since both communities within the territory ruled by the British Empire did not only manage to self-perpetuate throughout a number of social practices, but also created a legacy of inequality and conflict. Although both communities share a great deal of common culture, the religious aspect influences the differences, especially when it is related to social-economic and political interests and privileges.

According to Seamus Deane (1997, p. 181) there is a link between knowledge and power in all institutions. To legitimate power, knowledge has to be distorted. Nationalism has allied with myth in order to exert power. And, although myths are ontological, they need to be interpreted. Since myths are explained by groups like the clergy, clerisy, aristocrats and groups of adepts, these groups control the relation between institutions and interpretations. Deane affirms that nationalism owes to myth. In Ireland, there is the claim that the difference between the Irish and the British is founded in myths, as for example “the heroic alliances between the distant saga figures of the old Irish cycles and the socio-religious group, Protestants or Catholics, of the contemporary era” (DEANE, 1997, p. 183). In fact, these assertions are not historical, “they are products of grand narrative that proceed by a series of uniform strategies to describe the Irish experience as one of almost endless oppression, designedly pursued, justifiably resisted, now entering to its final stages” (idem, p.183). Deane also states that this mythological interpretation for a particular political or racial grouping is common in other colonial and imperial contexts. The revisionist study of Irish history is the new version of nationalist history – post colonial writing – which denies theory or grand-narratives, merges literary studies, and uses literature, because it is “untheorizable”. The study of literature “leads to micro-narratives, monographic studies, in which Ireland as object of study gives way to an analysis of regions, phases, issues” (ibidem, p. 191). Revisionism will allow the rewriting of a history of Ireland free from ideology. Terence Brown comments that “ideologies, ideas, symbols, literary, even lyric poems are social facts just as potato crops, tractors and new industries are, and they can be fully understood only within the material world in which they come to life” (BROWN, 1987, p. 9). During four decades after the republic there was a continuum of the social facts in Ireland which gave the Irish their sense of national identity. On the other hand, this continuity set the basis for the changes in the cultural and social history of Ireland in the last decades. By analyzing literary texts among other written works, it is possible to identify the ideological discourse as well as its contradictions and factual changes.

3.2.1 A Very Special Contributor

In a complex context like the context of Ireland nowadays, an agenda such as the Field Day's agenda seems a very delicate one, because of the long lasting amount of anger involving both the relations between Ireland and the United Kingdom, and the internal clash between the Catholic and Protestant portions of the population. In this sense, the fact that greatly respected intellectuals and public persons (such as Brian Friel, Stephen Rea, Terry Eagleton, Fredric Jameson, and Edward Said) are the ones who verbalize their plea makes all the difference. The contribution of Terry Eagleton is particularly relevant, in this case. Although some people might think it strange that an Englishman should represent the voice of the Irish plea, besides being a former Marxist and probably the greatest name in the area of Cultural Studies, Eagleton has always been a left wing Catholic. It was only natural that, in the 1990s, he contributed to the writing of the documents that introduced the aim of the Field Day Project. Eagleton identifies the radical contradictions which have developed in nationalist thinking, and observes that literary texts are a result of ideological discourse. As a former Marxist, to him all texts express attitudes towards and beliefs about certain sets of social and political realities, relations, values and powers. He studies the ways in which text works upon ideology to produce the effect of the real. In *Criticism and Ideology* (1976), Eagleton writes that literary and other cultural texts are ideological, since they reflect ideologies. And ideology shapes the individual's mental picture of lived experience. This way, texts reproduce the ideological point of view of the reality.

In *Nationalism, Irony and Commitment* (1990), Eagleton asserts that solo action and written and oral expressions do not have meaning outside the systems which generate them. These systems are historical and full of contradiction. All discourses are ideological, (in Marxist slang connected to the State apparatus), and exercise influence upon the human subject. Ideology persuades us to an imaginary conscience, and to Eagleton and to the thinkers of the Field Day, this imaginary conscience has been making life very difficult in Northern Ireland in the last century.

Terry Eagleton, quoting a character in Raymond Williams' novel *Second Generation*, (1964) says that "nationalism is like class". You need to experience it in order to give an end to it. If you deny it, you will be deceived by other classes or other nations. Being influenced

by Marxist theories³⁵, Terry Eagleton asserts that nationalism is a mode of alienation because it deprives one from their individuality and endorses the collective anonymity. So, to undo this alienation, you need to go through the whole process of nationality, in order to recover from it and even to end it, eventually. To recover from this feeling of nationalism you need to “play straight into the hands of the oppressor” (EAGLETON, 1990, p. 23). This is, in fact, a binary opposition that is possible to be deconstructed. So, it is necessary to search for the facts that led to a separation into two opposite ideas, in a more abstract form of identity, which means in this case the struggle between Catholics and Protestants. Since the word “Catholic”, in Roman Catholic Church, means *universal*, how can one define this in terms of *national* identity? Contrary to the universal idea of the Catholic Church, there comes the Protestant affirmation of a national difference; even though its doctrine aims at resuming the universal essence of Christianity, thus universal. But both contain elements from their antagonist doctrine. On the one hand the Catholic Church preaches about “*ecclesia semper reformada*” since it takes in consideration the different practices; on the other, Protestantism cannot exist without Catholicism, since it emerged from its counterpart. To be aware of the future, it is necessary to understand the present with its contradictions, its alienations and its inability to agree with itself. But political radicals do not see the desirable future either. The Socialist theory identified the contradictions within societies, which prevented them from developing, but did not go beyond by suggesting a desirable future without radicalisms.

In fact, the nationalist culture is too multiple and ambiguous in meaning to be either rejected or glorified. The metaphysics of nationalism expresses needs and desires of subjects, but these needs and desires are repressed; and, by being repressed, the subjects do not know what they really are and want. This happens because the repression that makes it necessary for subjects to state their thoughts freely also turns these needs and desires obscured by the metaphysics of nationalism, which elevates subject-object relation over a subject-subject relation, forgetting that this relation is a dialogical one. This dialogical relation only takes place when repression is withdrawn. A radical politics can set the course of action for this to happen, but cannot impose the future. So, in this sense, radical politics is formalistic.

British imperialism was not interested in the Irish ethnic peculiarity, but in their territory and labor power. The Irish were merely inhabitants of a neighboring territory. The

³⁵ Terry Eagleton belongs to the ‘New Left Marxism, which was fueled by the 1968 Troubles in Northern Ireland. This group of critics, whose important contributors are Raymond Williams and Fredric Jameson among others, were influenced by the anti-Hegelian of Louis Althusser and Pierre Macherey. These intellectuals considered individual actions as well as oral and written expressions do not have any signification outside the systems of meaning which generate them. But by being historical, variable and full of contradictions, these systems exercise influence in the human subject. Ideology persuades the individual to an imaginary conscience.

Irish were simply the other than British, and this is sufficient basis for them to be ruled over. The Irish were not oppressed for being Irish, but for being a colonial country. To use identity in the name of freedom is abstract. For the freedom in question, it is not the freedom to be Irish (or to belong to any other group), but the freedom to determine their identity as they may wish.

A politics of difference or specificity is in the cause of universal identity. But this universal identity must be left behind as soon as it is conquered, and consider the subject's particular difference, in other words, individualism. Maintaining nationalism as a universal truth is sterile. So, all colonized nations have to pass through this abstract idea of nationalism and somehow come out somewhere quite different from where it happens, in other words, by entering into that alienating logic to turn it against itself. The bourgeois ideology has never been able to adjust difference and identity, the particular and the universal. In the same way that it tries to make them even. How can this contradiction between the universal and the particular be resolved? Each individual must be autonomous. Mathew Arnold's unsophisticated concept of the Irish race was created to find a synthesis to its political conflict. This concept was built systematically to carry out the political antagonism, and aggravated sectarianism. By keeping this ideology, the Irish forget their role as a social class. So, in Ireland the left only dialectically mediates the oppositions and ends up surrounded by the aesthetics of the right. The individual is alienated when they do not know they are in fact alienated. This alienation develops inside oppressive conditions. Eagleton says,

The ideal revolutionary subject has broken with an imposed political identity into a kind of nameless, subversive negativity, yet has a sense of his or her own autonomous powers and capacities" that far outstrips the hazy indeterminate awareness of ourselves as agents that we derive from routine social life. (idem, p. 37).

As political subjects, we begin with determined needs and wishes which open us up to a broader social dimension. This social dimension is in fact the question about what general conditions would be necessary to fulfill our particular needs and desires.

3.2.2 Seamus Deane, the Author, and the Choice for an Autobiographical Novel

Literary texts do not reproduce the historical reality, but operate through ideology to create the effect of the real. They interest the literary critic who investigates the literary discourse and their ideological role in order to reveal the effects in their readers. In this way, very frequently things that are too confused, confusing, or complex to be identified in the world of real life become much clearer and meaningful when reproduced in the aesthetics of a work of art. Not to speak of the healing power of writing as a tool used in the area of Psychology. When you write chaos, you must impose an order into that. All things considered, it is natural that Seamus Deane's role as an engaged person and as an engaged author should end up writing a novel with strong autobiographical traces.

Deane is another example of Catholic left-wing thinker – this time an Irish one – who has come to terms with his condition and has been able to cope successfully with racial and cultural discrimination. After reaching a certain psychological moral, ideological, and temporal distance as concerns the history of his country, Deane writes a novel that has a protagonist narrator who tells about his experiences as a child growing in a Catholic neighborhood in Londonderry, Northern Ireland, in the forties and fifties. The narrator draws his own conclusions about the facts he experiences and comes up with a new significance to the political and social conflict. His experience and conclusions will lead to his enlightenment and the reaching of an expanded, more humane, intellectual condition.

Besides being a literary monument³⁶, *Reading in the Dark* can be also approached as a history document of the strong change in the perception of Ireland's circumstances, as presented by a group of intellectuals who are re-examining a number of national issues and proposing a new kind of trans-national approach that implies redefining their past and finding a new direction, by reviewing their own life experience. Autobiographies are very suitable to operate such a connection between the world of life and the world of fiction, between the territories of Social Studies and Literature. The author of a biography is able to reevaluate his life and the life of those who influenced the formation of his sense of identity. This is when he realizes it is necessary to go back to the past and analyze, through a more mature point of view, what the person has experienced and what has made him become the adult he became.

³⁶ The terms *document* and *monument* are used in this sentence in the sense borrowed from the discussion on the function of a work of art started by Walter Benjamin in the *Arcades Project*, and then pursued by Susan Sontag in *On the Pain of Others* and Michel Foucault in *Archaeology of Knowledge*.

Autobiographical novels belong in a literary genre which is firmly established nowadays. It relates to the status of individuality in the contemporary world. Due to changes in the social, political and economic order, individualism has become a major value in modern societies, contrary the holistic idea of former bourgeois democratic society. Here individualism means “an autonomous person who is essentially non-social, and who comes first in the modern ideology of man and society” (PARAENSE, 2000, p.126). As a consequence, individualism becomes a major feature of literature too, and authors more and more often adopt this individualistic point of view to work on their own experience, since their lives are inserted in a society, which is totally “fragmented, aimless, and divorced from conventional values” (PARAENSE, 2000, p.126.). Under these circumstances, the narrator is free to make decisions about his own will. But, by being autonomous, he is aware that his freedom is limited by his voluntary commitment to society.

In addition, the autobiographical novel is directly related to the culture of the inner, which manifests a particular need to relate the personal story with the story of his time and place. The author/narrator of an autobiographical novel goes back to the past and analyses his life in an attempt to tell his story, and organize his chaos, for many reasons. One of them is not to repeat the same mistakes in the future. He believes that his life-story may be an important legacy, that by telling his testimony, he enriches the culture of his civilization.

The author of an autobiography “gathers disperse elements of his personal life and organizes them.” (GUSDORF, 1991 p.14) He is able to do that because, after some time has passed, he manages to position himself before his story and reconstructs it in an unity of identity that is clearly coherent. He is able to do that, because he has a profound knowledge of events. By reconstructing his own life, the author of an autobiography is also able to resolve misunderstandings and complete the half-truths, in an attempt to justify his own perception. Therefore, the autobiographical novel is a literary genre that aims at self-knowledge, by reconstructing and decoding the author’s past life through a second reading of his experience, which is better understood because of the temporal distance. The mature person intends to establish a better relationship with the world he lives in, as a result of rationalization and aestheticization.

The literary function of an autobiographical novel is ultimately more important than the historical one, because it lasts longer. Consequently, “every autobiography is a piece of art, and at the same time, a means of learning; it shows us a character and his visible commitment from the outside, and from the inside, all his/her intimacy and individuality” (idem, 1991 p.16). According to Nietzsche (<http://records.viu.ca/~johnstoi/Nietzsche/>

beyondgoodandevil_tofc.htm), an autobiography is a “personal mythology” based on complete experience. In short, the author’s task is to retell his life in an effort to make sense of his own legend.

Autobiographies are not necessarily synonymous with autobiographical novels. An autobiographical novel is based on the author’s life, but has fictionality as its condition. For an autobiography to become fictional, names and places are usually changed, other people’s experiences are often incorporated, and the limits between the spheres of the author, protagonist and narrator become blurred. In the autobiographical novel, the autodiegetic narrator is often the protagonist who narrates a life that is parallel with the author’s former life experience. It is possible to recognize the presence of the author in the autobiographical novel. But this presence does not affect the condition of fictionality, because it is the narrator/protagonist, instead of the author, who tells the story. Hence, the protagonist mirrors the events of the author’s life in the plot. So, autobiographical novels may be considered the sister genre of autobiographies but the novelist is free to color his past history by embellishing the work. If we link the idea of “individual versus collective” to autobiographies and memoirs we realize that they are “concerned with the ‘the other’, the persons, events and or places, that have helped to give the self definition” (DEANE, 1991c, p. 380). Authors of autobiographies and memoirs examine their personal experience and reconsider historical events and circumstances in order to identify and explain their self enlightenment. In Ireland, there is a variety of ‘otherness’ easily stereotyped, as that is a nation split in two by partition, and which carries a diversity of political and religious oppressive institutions fighting against one another and, consequently, influencing individuals who end up incorporating their ideologies. Irish authors of memoirs and autobiographies are always going to present their individual analysis of the situation, or situations that led them to question their personal and national identity; therefore, they will eventually free themselves from rooted ideologies by finding other solutions.

It is frequent to find narratives about English domination, revolutionary movements, religious institutions, oppressive forces and paramilitary groups, among others. Deane comments in the following quotation, that “police and priests, soldiers ad assassins, invaders and natives, Gaels and Galls, revolutionaries and reactionaries, dominate in these worlds, where the only freedom from social and political pressures is in the writing about its elusiveness” (idem, p. 380). Writers choose different alternatives in their texts to confront the political and social situation. In *Reading in the Dark*, Deane chooses to analyze facts that relate to his relationship with his family and members of the community, in order to question

the existing ideology. Inasmuch as autobiographies and memoirs are in fact stories of group experiences written by individuals telling about their own experience within a group, Deane also refers to betrayal, myths, legends and haunted stories, so that he is able to portray the sectarian identity of the community. Telling someone's individual experience is, in a broader sense, telling the experience of a determine group, and, as a consequence, the reading of history is made necessary. Betrayals, myths, legends, are important elements of Irish history and necessary to be reviewed under this new light.

Another characteristic of Irish autobiographies and memoirs is the restoration of childhood and youth. Characters feel they do not belong in their community, so they often choose exile. The personal conflict with the other conveys the community's conflict, and evokes the way this community deals with the idea of the colonizer.

Writers who create autobiographical novels create, in this sense, aesthetic monuments that are also historical documents. They go back to past experience and reevaluate it, while depicting the lives of their protagonists, in an effort to organize what is not organizable, aiming at identifying contradictions, understanding the present situation and, perhaps, helping with future individual decisions as members of nations and classes. The result of such memoirs is, at one time, the creation of a work of art, an exercise on personal healing, the exorcism of emotional ghosts, and a re-telling and re-shaping of the History of one's country. The Field Day Movement believes that the whole island of Ireland is much in need of this sort of re-valuation. Seamus Deane is one outstanding name among the above mentioned thinkers and writers, and *Reading in the Dark* is a good example of a successful work which makes us think about how the contradictions of the universal and particular can be solved in favor of individual enlightenment – the enlightenment of an individual who is also part of a broader society.

4 READING IN THE DARK

Part of the Field Day Company as he is, Seamus Deane makes it clear in *Reading in the Dark* that he is engaged in proving that the human subject and the communities of Northern Ireland have been driven to accept the political situation, the heritage of sectarianism, and cultural stereotyping by force and by annihilation of their past. By being ignorant of or alien to their own culture and language, these communities are trapped in the philosophies of two opposing governments – the British and the Irish – which have been created by the conflicting ideals of Protestantism and individual freedom versus Catholicism and the uniqueness of its principles as a defender of chaste race against the degenerating modern world. In *Reading in the Dark*, the autodiegetic narrator scrutinizes the past history and the present situation to find some sense and meaning. It could be said that the narrator's personal history, added to the ambiguities and contradictions he observes, leads him to an internal search for a more meaningful life as an individual, and makes him understand the controversial life of his family and community, trapped in between two ideologies, and involved with a number of biased mythologies raised by the dispute of two opposing governments. Unlike his parents, who harbor secrets they cannot tell each other, the narrator is determined to unearth the story behind his family's unspoken anguish. These family secrets are inseparable from Northern Ireland's violent political history and from the national culture of storytelling in which ghosts and haunting tales are part of everyday life.

Throughout the novel, the narrator listens to people from his community telling these stories, and gradually learns to distinguish between fiction and fact. The boy tries to put together the fragments of what he has been told, in an attempt to reveal a secret related to the "silence" that permeates his relationship with his family. He realizes that finding the truth is no simple business, since these intimate, domestic events are totally related to the wider drama of politics, which led to the cleavage between mythic and historical events.

After a certain period of time, the narrator becomes an adult and realizes it is time to tell his life. He is ready to reveal his past story. He invites the reader to become familiar with the history of his family and country. So, he begins his journey back to Londonderry, in the 50s and 60s, and narrates his story through the eyes of a boy who is learning the harsh reality of his family and community by unveiling and revealing what he has learned. He tells it as a form of public confession since he feels it is time to break his silence. He establishes an intimacy with the reader, who learns about the moments of his past life which shaped his

political, social and psychological identity. This identity was built up through his relationship with the members of his family, his concept of home, and his interactions with other members of the society in which he lives.

Reading in the Dark, the title of Deane's novel, stands for more than a simple pleasure for reading, as the protagonist tells in the chapter with the same title. On the one hand it represents merely the pragmatic effort of the boy in reading a story underneath the blanket so that he will not bother his brother, who wants to sleep. On the other hand he is trying to read the keys to his family's haunting story. While his brother is drowsed by the whole political and religious bad decisions which caused chaos to his family and to many families in Northern Ireland, the protagonist is trying to read his family's ghost story, although he does not know where it will lead him. So the title *Reading in the Dark* can be related to a boy's pursuit of revealing the truth by following, word by word, line by line, the stories which were also written in the dark moments of his society.

4.1 STAIRS

"Stairs" is the first chapter of this novel. There the narrator shows us that his mother is suffering from a great psychological pain which he cannot understand, and she does not express what it is related to. Instead, she says "There's something between us. A shadow. Don't move." (DEANE, 1998, p.3). And when the boy offers to help her, she says she usually feels that way, but she neither wants him to feel what she feels nor to help her. "It's bad enough me felling it. I don't want you to as well." (idem 1998, p.3). This feeling always goes away; it is her nerves. This shadow is the secret that haunts the family. It implies his mother's omission to tell what she knows. She is the one who could release her husband from his burden if she were brave enough to reveal the secret. But she also knows that by doing that she would have to face her husband's disapproval and repugnance towards her since she has kept his freedom away from him during all those years. It is when the boy starts to reveal the cold reality of the family history. It is also when his relationship with his mother deteriorates due to the emotional burden she carries with her because of unresolved past. At the time the boy's insistence in knowing the truth irritates his mother "Child, she'd tell me, I think

sometimes you're possessed. Cant' you just let the past be the past? But it wasn't the past and she knew" (ibdem, 1998, p.43).

Moreover, the shadow is like a ghost which not only haunts his family, but the Catholic Irish families of the Bogside, and demonstrates how a historical narrative can be influenced by different forms of authority, since telling the truth is not an easy thing. The truth would question the paramilitary movements like the RUC³⁷ and the IRA, the Anglo-Irish policy, and both Protestant and Catholic Churches' influence and power. All of them take part in the secret and all of them have harmed different people to a certain extent. The shadow may also represent their failure to deal with their past history, resulting not only in an estrangement among its members, but also in the submissiveness of the family and, in a broader sense, of the Irish Catholic society of the Bogside in face of the clash between the two ideologies of the North. Furthermore, the silence is slowly killing members of his family. The boy expresses: "Silence everywhere. [...] I felt we lived in an empty space with a long cry from [my father] ramifying through it. At other times it appeared to be cunning and articulate as a labyrinth, closely designed, with someone sobbing at the heart of it. (ibdem., 1998, p.43)". And then, when everybody has gone, there will no longer be the troublesome true history, because the truth is forbidden and those who tell the truth are either considered mad or traitors.

4.2 CRAZY JOE

"Crazy Joe Johnson...rarely made sense to us, but we had been told not to make fun of him; something had happened when he was a young man and he had never been right since" (ibdem, 1998, p.81). Crazy Joe regularly spends some time in the local asylum, and when he leaves he wonders why everybody flees him. Not many people talk to him. The boy's mother is an exception. She seems to show some compassion towards him. Crazy Joe tells her he has kept her secrets and will not reveal them. "On my oath missis. The crown

³⁷ The Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), the police force in Northern Ireland, was founded on 1 June 1922 out of the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC), the Belfast Borough Police Force, and the Londonderry Borough Police in Northern Ireland. The RUC was not only very active but considered one of the most professional policing operations in the world from 1922 to 2001, when it became the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) by the Police Act 2000. At its peak, The RUC had about 8,500 officers and a reserve of 4,500 members. During the Troubles, over 300 members of the RUC were killed in paramilitary assassinations or attacks, mostly by the Provisional IRA. The RUC was continually accused by sections of the Nationalist community and human rights' groups of discrimination, and collusion with Loyalist paramilitaries.

Jewel is safe with me. No point in telling a secret, is there? What is a good secret if too many people know it?” (ibdem., 1998, p 224) This is when the boy realizes that Joe knows something, the bit that is missing in the puzzle. But, why is it that the fact that Joe knows that makes his mother express sympathy for him?

One day Crazy Joe is expelled from the library for disturbing the place. Joe tells “God’s only excuse is that he does not exist.” He also tells the boy

The valuable Library of Alexandria was pillaged or destroyed; and near twenty years afterwards, the appearance of the empty shelves excited the regret and indignation of every spectator whose mind was not totally darkened by religious prejudice. [...] That’s a good one, religious prejudice. He should have lived here, then he would have seen...” (ibdem, pp. 195-196).

Crazy Joe is the first one to question God’s existence. At least, Joe understands religious prejudice. He knows how much trouble this has caused to him and to the others. This may be one of the reasons why Joe is considered “insane”. Living in a society led by the Church, the ones who deny the existence of this *divine power* are disbelieved, silenced and turned into outcasts. Another reason is that he knows too much.

Joe tells the boy “Don’t spend your life as a pupil. [...] You are always running around like a dog, sniffing at the arse of every secret, a dirty habit. [...] Get it over and done with. Then grow up” (ibdem., 1998 p.197). Crazy Joe knows about something that has happened, but nobody will listen to him. Joe knows that the boy is searching for the truth. “You hear lots from me that is worth saying” (ibdem., 1998 p.197). Joe also knows that the boy is eager to listen to what he has to say. What Joe has to say would reveal the whole secret about the boy’s family. So, he goes on telling bits of strange stories about events and people who died or disappeared.

Sundays’ said Joe, ‘are terrible days. Everything terrible that I know happened on Sunday. Isn’t it strange? You’d know that yourself, with your family history. Fire on Saturday, execution on Sunday. Or was the fire on Friday? You’d not think I’d forget something like that now. Well, I remember that day. Never heard so many shots in my life. (ibdem, p 199)

Because he has broken up the order in the library, Joe knows he is going to be put away again, and once more he will be prevented from telling what he needs to tell. Telling it would be his self redemption. So, Joe reveals another bit of the story, and then says “I’m off and when I see you again you will be a lot older but I’ll be the same age as ever I was. [...] Eternal youth. The secret of the insane”. (ibdem: 1998 p.201).

4.3 READING IN THE DARK

In the chapter titled *Reading in the Dark*, the boy recalls the first novel he has read. His mother kept a novel called *The Shan Van Vocht*³⁸, which is set during the Great Rebellion of 1798³⁹. *The Shan Van Vocht* is the Irish name for “The Poor Old Woman”, a traditional nickname for Ireland. The novel is about the Great Rebellion of 1798. The first pages are about the characters’ points of view about the rebellion, as well as their fears. For the boy, Ann, the heroine of the novel, is an interesting character, saying interesting things to her beloved one, Robert. Robert is going to war and just talks about fighting and dying in the rebellion. The boy imagines telling her that if he were the hero in the story, he would say how beautiful she was and he would not go to war. He would stay with her and “whisper in her ear and let her know that now was forever and not some time in the future when shooting and hacking would be over” (ibidem, 1998 p.20). The emphasis of this passage lies in the opposing forces between the community and the individual. Duty and individual freedom meet within the boy and shape his own identity. He is not interested in the rebellion, or all guerillas the nationalists have been fighting. Why going to war if he has a beloved one talking about love, life and personal happiness? Then his brother, Liam represses him by turning the lights on and not letting him sleep. The boy turns the light off, goes to bed, and remains there, imagining how the plot would eventually end. In the dark, he creates different endings for the plot. He realizes there are infinite possibilities. As the story of *The Shan Van Vocht*, how would the story of his family reveal in the end? Were there many possibilities? Would the boy be able to achieve his personal fulfillment?

The novel the boy reads represents the typical sort of literature produced in the nineteenth century. It described the heroic traditions of the Irish people and their brave deeds. Besides, Catholicism brought into literature the idea of sacrificial chivalry, which resulted in what Brown calls “the fervent patriotic religiosity” (BROWN, 1987, p. 63). The male hero in

³⁸ Although there is a well known Irish magazine by that name, and the famous folkloric ballad, I could trace no novel called *The Shan Van Vocht*, so I believe that this book is either a fictional creation of Deane’s, or the reference is to a serialized novel published in chapters in the mentioned magazine.

³⁹ The Irish Great Rebellion of 1798 was an Irish uprising against the British domination led by The United Irishmen, a republican revolutionary group formed by Protestants, Catholics, Presbyterians and Methodists. Their initial aim was to force the British Government to put forward democratic reforms. Influenced by the ideas of the American and French Revolutions, they went to war against Britain, but were defeated. After the defeat, the British encourage the formation of the Orange Order, a secret Protestant organization, by inciting fear against the Catholic Defenders, a militant agrarian secret society originated in County Armagh in Ulster.

the novel has as his Irish duty to go to war, to die for his country. The boy, however, can not understand why someone has to die for a cause.

At school, the English teacher reads an essay written by a classmate, which tells the story of his mother setting the table for the evening meal. She lays the dairy products from the farm and a dish of potatoes, and they wait for the father, who is going to arrive home tired but happy, and they will say Grace at the table. The narrative is simple and describes the “Irish experience”. The teacher comments, “That’s writing. That’s just telling the truth.” Then the boy thinks, “I’d never thought such stuff was worth writing about. It is ordinary life – no rebellions or love affairs or dangerous fights across the hills at night.” (DEANE, 1998, p. 21) However, he concedes,

I kept remembering that mother and son waiting in the Dutch interior of the essay, with the jug of milk and the butter on the table, while behind them were those wispy, shawly figures from the rebellion, sibilant above the great fire and below the aching high wind. (idem, p. 21)

Here we can find some contradictions. The boy is longing for individual freedom. At the same time, there is still this idea of a simple society, proposed by the Free State and the Catholic Church in the first years of the Republic. The idea of rebellion and integration of Northern Ireland to the Republic was still carried out by some nationalist groups and members of the IRA. Most members of the government were not making an effort to actually integrate the two Irelands, for they needed to modernize the Republic, in order to make Eire recognized internationally by the power blocs.

The sacrificial chivalry style was popular during the Literary Revival of the nineteenth century but after the Republic, artistic productions popularized the idea of the modest countrymen and his family living in a simple rustic life which is full of dignity. Besides, in 1932, when Eamon De Valera was elected president of the Republic of Ireland, De Valera, gave special emphasis to the life of the family farms as an important economic and cultural aspect of the Irish nation. So, not only writers but also politicians shared a common view about rural tradition.

4.4 GRANDFATHER

The boy recalls stories of the dispute between Catholics and Protestants and their involvement in paramilitary armies like the IRA and RUC. Brother Regan, a member of the Christian Brothers from the primary school, refers to the story of a man who fought in what he called “The Troubles in Derry” in the decade of the 1910s. The man was suspected of having killed a policeman. He was tortured, but was eventually set free. Later on he told Brother Regan that he had actually killed the policeman, but that he would not go into confession, because he did not repent for what he had done. He saw it as a kind of justice. He said, “I killed Mahoon and I would kill him again if he came to the door. [...] He was a drunken policeman with a gun looking for a Catholic to kill” (ibidem, 1998, p. 23). The boy realizes that the man Brother Regan is talking about is the boy’s maternal grandfather, who had also sentenced his uncle Eddie to death. His grandfather was one of the reasons for his parents’ suffering. On the other hand, Uncle Eddie was considered an informer⁴⁰, so his grandfather’s act was justified, since gangsters and informers were not welcome in the movement.

The support of the IRA was another controversial issue. Although the environment seemed to be hostile to the IRA members, the resentment and bitterness due to the British policy of house search and internment, and the movement’s aims to drive the British out of Northern Ireland and unify the country justified their rights to keep acting, despite their violent actions. However, according to O’Malley the Irish were used to these hideous acts of violence long before the establishment of the two separate governing units, as he writes:

The tradition of violence dating back to the savage sectarian confrontations between secrete agrarian societies during the late eighteenth century hardened into the ideology of violence that continues to have, even to this day, widespread support in the tightly neat, beleaguered communities on both sides of the divide. Its imperatives legitimize the use of violence in certain situations – for Catholics, situations where the forces of law and order are seen as the forces of an alien oppressor. (O’Malley, 1983, p. 261)

In spite of that, the IRA was not well seen either by the Irish Government of the Republic of Ireland or by the British Government. The IRA was fighting to join the North to the South while the Irish Government of the south was involved in setting a program to

⁴⁰ An informer, in this case, refers to an Irishman who informs the British authorities about the actions and plans of the IRA. An *informer* to the British means a *traitor* to the IRA.

provide the Irish people a sense of national identity. For the Irish government the IRA was a subversive organization to be classified along with any international terrorist organization, falling to recall that this movement had its origins long before the partition and that it had fought together with the Free State members to set their independence. On the other hand, the British Government considered the IRA members ordinary criminals who deserved either to spend the rest of their lives in prison or to die.

4.5 THE PISTOL

The boy remembers the day his house was searched by the police because he had showed some friends a gun that had been given as a present to his father by a young “German sailor whose submarine had been brought in to the port after the end of the war” (DEANE, 1998, p.28). A young man of twenty known as a police informer saw the boy showing the gun to his friends. The boy, after showing the gun to his friends, and learning that the man was an informer, decided to bury the gun in a stone trench to avoid any problems. That night the police broke into his family’s house, slashed the wall papers, ripped the linoleum floor, removed the wooden boards and moved the furniture away, in an attempt to find the gun. Because they did not find the gun, they took his father, his brother and him to the police station where they were beaten so as to reveal where the gun had been hidden. The narrator remarks that he was too young and too stupid in showing the gun to his friends because his family was marked by having members in the IRA.

After the partition the British Government instituted internment. Internment meant imprisonment without a trial. It was commonly practiced in the Catholic Bogside. Catholics had their houses invaded in the early hours of the morning. Military and police armed men broke into people’s home. People were dragged from bed and taken to jail or internment camp. There was no charge or trial. Thousands of men and women were subjected to the brutality of internment for more than 50 years. The violence of the British army is narrated by the boy who reports what he heard and experienced. The feeling of resentment and anger resultant from the house search, violent attacks, detentions and internment had built a collective consciousness in the Catholic working class of the Bogside whose sons were either joining the IRA or helping the volunteers, even though the movement was condemned as a

subversive organization by the Free State government and the Catholic Church. The IRA, nevertheless, asserted that they would fight until the last British left Northern Ireland, and their acts were justified by the enemy's presence. The ideology of violence had long been part of the nation which had perpetuated violence for two centuries. The subversive actions were considered legitimate, since the government in Northern Ireland was seen as foreign oppressor by the IRA. On the other hand, Protestants also saw Catholicism as a threat, since the experience they had with the religion break between England and Rome, and all the religious crusades set in Ireland led into the current crisis. Besides, after the partition, most Protestants had to leave the Republic of Ireland. Unification meant emigration to Protestant Unionists. The idea of Ireland as one Nation was certainly a blur for, in the Republic, the term "nation" was almost only used by Catholics, leaving the Protestant minority aside. In other words, Catholicism and nationalism were imbricate. The fight would not have an end unless both religions accepted religious freedom in Ireland.

4.6 IN IRISH

In this chapter, the boy feels the need to address his parents about the silence and the secret (the shadow) that haunts their family. He does not have the courage to talk openly to them, so he writes them a letter in Irish Gaelic, telling what he knows about his family's betrayals and lies. He writes this letter carefully, including what is necessary to say and leaving the unnecessary details out. In the letter the boy says he needs to tell everything he knows, but he believes he should tell his mother what he knows first. He comments that his mother knows a little Irish, by translating parts of old poems and songs. Once she asked him if he knew a poem about a woman who regretted having forsaken the man she loved. The boy knows that his father does not speak any Irish.

He waits for the right moment and then reads the essay aloud to both his parents, pretending it is an essay on history for school. He says, "The truth was swollen inside me. [...] I read it aloud right in Irish to him. [...] My mother had listened carefully. I knew she knew what I was doing. My father tapped me on the shoulder and said he liked to hear the language spoken in the house" (idem, 1998, pp. 202-203). The boy says he has learned at school that writing means simply telling the truth. The truth has been haunting him, he needs to speak it out, but he cannot hurt his father. This is something he has to keep within him. Conversely, he

has to speak. So he chooses the “national” language to release his feelings, even though he knows what he says will not be understood by his father. At least, he has spoken it out. And he knows his mother understood what was said. Saying it does not make him feel better, it is too painful. But he has to say it, for his own sake. Later, the boy mentions that he wishes he could go to the Irish speaking districts “to learn the language he mutilated before his mother and father.” (ibidem, 1998, p. 221.)

In the two decades that followed De Valera’s election writers and politicians preached the importance of a native language. A number of measures were put into practice for the revival of Irish at National Schools by the Gaelic League in 1913. Gaelic Irish was made compulsory and should be intensely exposed. Scholar Osborn Bergin calls attention to what was happening in the Free State,

Today the people leave the problem to the Government, the Government leaves it to the Department of Education, the Department of Education to the teachers and the teachers to the school-children. Only the very young are unable to shift the burden to someone else’s shoulders, so perhaps they will learn to carry it, and save our faces. After all, infants, before the age of reason can do marvel things with language, so they may not notice the weight (BROWN, 1987, p. 43).

After two centuries of British domination, in spite of idealizing their cultural heritage, the Irish seem to have lost their native language. The Gaelic Irish had been swept out the country, except for some small places in the countryside could speak the language. People in larger towns did not know the language. Hence, the pathos of this scene is remarkable. The kid’s parents cannot help him since they do not master either their native language, or their history, or their lives anymore. Here we have to bear in mind, also, that in Northern Ireland Catholic children would go to Catholic schools. Catholic schools followed the Free State national curriculum, and this explains why the boy is studying that “dead language” which his parents cannot master.

4.7 THE OLD FORT

In the chapter titled “The Old Fort” the boy describes his need for a national identity through his excursions to Fort Grianan, in the countryside of County Donegal, across Lough Foyle (the Estuary of the River Foyle), which begins in Derry, and marks the border between

“The Free Territory” and Northern Ireland. Donegal is one of the three counties that became part of the Republic of Ireland through *The Anglo-Irish Treaty*, in 1922. Grianan of Aileach is a historical stone ring fort (annex I). The legend says it was built by the ancient gods. The fort is known as the Sun Palace, and is considered sacred. There are many stories, myths and legends about Grianan. One of these says that “the sleeping warriors lay waiting for the person who would make that one wish that would rouse them from their thousand year sleep to make a final war on the English [...]” (DEANE, 1998, p.56).

The boy is locked inside the walls of Fort Grianan by his friends. While sitting there, after reviewing the collection of myths he has been told in his community, it occurs to him that those myths are fictional creations. His individual experience brings him to a different perception. Rather than fantasizing about those myths, he scrutinizes the sounds and scents of the place and comes to recognition of nature. See the passage below, in which he enters the myth,

I could hear the breathing of the sleeping Fianna waiting for the trumpet that would bring him and his warriors to life again to fight the last battle which, as the prophecies of St. Columcille told us, would take place between Derry and Strabane, after which the one remaining English ship would sail out of Lough Foyle and away from Ireland Forever. If you concentrated even further, you would scent the herbal perfumes of the Druid spells and you would hear the women sighing in sexual pleasure-yes-esss-yes-esss (idem, p.57).

Suddenly, it occurs to him that the sound he is listening to is not the breath of the Fianna, but the sound of the wind from the sea. The scent of the Druid spell is the perfume of the wild plants. The sound of the women sighing in sexual pleasure is caused by the underground waters of the fort.⁴¹ The myths the boy refers to derive from the effort of the Irish Literary Revival movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, which aimed at restoring a sense of identity to Ireland.⁴² The heroes in the ancient cycle of Irish myths have been feeding, for political reasons, the romantic Irish nationalism inherited by the boy in our story for almost two centuries.

Writers of the Literary Revival believed that writing about legends and myths of the past would help Irishmen and Irishwomen learn about their race, that it would fight back the gradual process of cultural amnesia that was pestering the country. Interestingly, these

⁴¹ The sighs of women in sexual pleasure belongs in several Irish myths, and has been referred to in literature by the major Irish authors. The most famous reference is probably presented in the last section of *Ulysses*, by James Joyce, where we read the thoughts and feelings of Molly Bloom as she falls asleep. “Yes” is the last word in *Ulysses*, followed by no punctuation, plunging directly into a dream.

⁴² The Irish Literary Revival, or Celtic Revival has already been mentioned in Chapter One of this thesis (note 13). Among the great names in the movement we have William Butler Yeats, Lady Gregory and Lord Dunsany.

mythological characters – as the Fianna – were seen as “figures embodying the truly Irish spirit” (BROWN 1991, p. 519, v. II). Thus, in concordance with the nationalist government, these writings were used as political propaganda in favor of the nationalist state. The heritage of this movement has its positive and negative aspects. One of the negative outcomes was an enhancement of the conservative, sectarian, and reactionary aspects of that society which searched the essence of the Irish nationality in the past. Terence Brown refers to this as “literary nostalgias about race and religion” (idem, p. 520; v. II). Suddenly, the boy arrives to his sole conclusion about what is said and what actually happens when sitting inside the fort. In other words, he liberates himself from the imposed nationalistic cultural and social control.

The boy in our story seems to learn from his own experience, and through his senses. He is exposed to circumstances, is perceptive to them, and understands the complexity of the problems, but he will not come to one decision about his positions until he feels that the moment has arrived. He is also interested in the different kinds of reality that we are exposed to in life: the duty of the life as a citizen and the right to experience pleasure. These spheres clash in *The Shan Van Vocht*, the book he reads in the dark about the couple that separates because the man must go to war. The boy also understands that the words “reality” and “truth” can change as applied to two dimensions, the personal and the public. He becomes aware that he is exposed to two worlds, the world of daily life and the world of imagination. And he seems to be interested in the confrontations of the world of Life and the world of Literature: with the composition written by his colleague, about the mother who sets the table at home, the boy realizes that daily life can be taken into the world of literature. And now, sitting at the fort, as he smells, and touches, and listens to, and sees things – as he uses his senses in the fort – he realizes that myths can also leave the world of Literature and influence the world of daily life.

4.8 RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

The boy also considers the weight of the Catholic political and ideological influence in Northern Ireland. Sir Roy, the teacher of Religious Knowledge, after having asked some theological questions during a lecture, and concluded religion is different since it is beyond rationally, says, “I shall do the State some service and the Church even more.” Later, the narrator comments, “Only Sir Roy and the police had cars. Knights in shining armor. Papal

and anti-Papal.” (DEANE, 1998, p.187). The more controlled the community is, the more their history is forgotten, and the greater the power of the Church is. Therefore, the spiritual power of the Church serves as an instrument of domination. The Catholic Church represents the belief in a better life after death, and the acceptance of the present Catholic Irish situation. The Church preaches, ultimately, political and economic submission.

The constitution of the 1937 recognized the importance of the Catholic Church’s incorporating Catholic social teaching, prohibiting divorce and contraception, and censoring publications. The Catholic Church acquired a high position in that social context. They could interfere in public affairs, where questions of faith and morals were involved. The Church not only believed but made it clear that even though the Church should deal with religiosity and moral, and the state should deal with temporal matters, the interests of the two spheres ranged in the same direction. By controlling the educational system, they would be controlling the electorate, the political parties and the government. The Church was involved in every aspect of the Irish life. As Pdraig O’Malley comments: “the Church in the south stood aloof from and above the state” (O’MALLEY, 1983, p. 64). Since the Catholic Church was allowed to control the teaching of the Catholic communities in the north, it also, not only influenced but intervened in the political and social decisions of those communities. Moreover, the Church was the guardian of the Catholic values in the face of all kinds of imaginary dangers. In addition to that, after the war, when the communist ideas were spread all over Europe, the Church in Ireland became extremely conservative condemning egalitarianism whenever they had the opportunity to.

4.9 POLITICAL EDUCATION

In the chapter “Political Education”, in one of the classes of political education a priest in British army uniform makes a speech about the importance of preventing the communist ideas from influencing people in Northern Ireland.

Were you to view the Foyle Basin from Binevenagh, almost twelve hundred feet above the sea, with the bird-haunted mud flats of the River Roe at its foot, you would begin to appreciate both the beauty and the dramatic landscape and the seascape in which your city rests. This is a city that, even today, still commands the eastern approaches of the North Atlantic, that is still a vital port for the great NATO fleets that regularly put in here during those exercises that are part of the Western world’s preparations for the defeat of the international Communist threat. [...] And once more

you are called to take part in a battle that is just dramatic, although less visible: a struggle against a foe that is no less real for being visible. This is a battle for the hearts and minds of men; a battle of faithless against faith; a battle of subtle wiles against manly freedom; a battle of cold atheism against the genial warmth of Christian faith that has lit so many Irish hearts down the centuries. (DEANE, 1998, pp.205-6)

Northern Ireland was more industrialized and formed by working classes of both, Catholic and Protestant populations. These working class groups were more willing to be influenced by socialist ideas. The Church in Eire did not have to make accommodations with communist and socialist parties in the south because they did not have to face any opposing ideologies. The Free State was a fundamentally agrarian Catholic Gaelic nation and was marked by an unbroken continuity with the social patterns and attitudes of the latter half of the nineteenth century. In spite of the thousands of families living in overcrowded conditions, in slums, communist ideas did not have a great influence there, as they were not given the chance to develop a sense of class. The North was more open and exposed to Communist and Socialist ideas for having an industrial center. Communist and Socialist ideas were more likely to be widespread in the industrial working environment. Both Churches of North and South feared its influence on the Irish communities of the North. They conjoined efforts to prevent these ideologies from being received favorably, by advocating the Christian faith against the atheist content of Communism. In order to explain this “threat” the Anglo-Irish priest in the novel says that “the internal disputes are no more than family quarrels” and now these families, in other words Anglicans and Catholics should make an alliance against Communism. Adding to that, the Anglican priest in *Reading in the Dark* stresses the importance of being a society rooted in “tradition and continuity.” This profile was at the soul of the Irish, and God was “the goal” of their history. The following day, in the History class, the Catholic priest, answering students’ questions, makes a distinction about both Churches, saying that Reformation had no right in its side and was as bad as communism. But reformation was history, and at that moment they had to forget these differences because “that was a family quarrel within the Christian family and it would work itself out”, but Communism would still be a threat for the ones who believe in God (idem, p. 209). It was necessary to pay attention to international history at that moment instead of to their internal differences. In fact, this is a brilliant example of contradiction. Even though the two churches do not recognize each other, they make an alliance in order to fight against what is called the “external enemy”. Their discourse is based on the idea of a chivalric nation who fights for the Christian faith, freedom, tradition and continuity of the social patterns. The denial of

modernity was so deeply rooted in both states controlled by the Church and the bourgeois politicians, both fearing the working class organization. Both Churches had important political and social participation in the partitioned bourgeois States. If the working class seized the new communist ideas that were being emanated by the Bolshevik revolution and actually made a revolution in the country, both Churches would suffer great loss.

However, the division between Catholics and Protestants was a fact. Protestants grew to fear Catholics after the historical dispute of the land in Ulster⁴³, and faith that had been going on since the late seventeenth century. The protestant faith was being jeopardized by the Catholic Church for Catholicism considered their faith heresy. Besides, Protestants were afraid of being submerged and absorbed into a church whose political power controls and manipulate events, peoples and nations. The Catholic Church preached that there was only One, True, Holy and apostolic Church, and claimed a special authority to interpret and preach the word of God. The others were fallout heresy, as we can see in the Catholic Priest's discourse above. Protestants were afraid of being controlled by the Catholic Church not only because of the religious differences but also because they though their religion was part of their identity. So, we can conclude that their alliance was temporary and for a special reason, their anti-Communism plight. But in daily circumstances, Protestants attacked Catholicism and Communism, as well as Rome and Dublin. Catholicism attacked Protestantism and Communism, England and Ulster. Hence, the fear that communist ideas were inflicted in the Northern Ireland working class made both the Catholic and the Protestant Churches ally fight against their common enemy.

4.10 EDDIE

Uncle Eddie is the boy's father's younger brother. Eddie was a member of the IRA who disappeared in April 1922, during a fight between the IRA and the police in an old distillery in the Bogside in Derry. That took place when Ireland and Britain were negotiating the Anglo-Irish Treaty which would establish the Irish Free State under British dominion, and

⁴³ The Land dispute in Ulster is the whole period English involvement in Ireland which in the seventeenth century, was intensified with the "Plantation of Ulster" - systematic colonization of Donegal, Tyrone, Derry, Armagh, Cavan and Fermanagh by settlers from England and Scotland. Two major events contributed to the opening of the island to systematic colonization: the conquest of the whole Ireland by Oliver Cromwell and the defeat of King James at the Battle of the Boyne. The English domination was consolidated in Northern Ireland after the 1916 uprising and the opening of the first Northern Ireland Parliament in 1921.

without the six counties of Northern Ireland. There are different stories about Eddie's disappearance. Some say he has been seen in America, Australia or Canada, others say he was shot to death that day. His father has never talked about his brother, or about that night. Throughout the novel, the boy tries to put together the fragments of what he has been told, in an attempt to unveil the secret related to this "silence" that permeates his relationship with his family. He learns through his grandfather, and Crazy Joe, that Uncle Eddie was sentenced and executed as an informer during the confrontation, in spite of being innocent. After Eddie's death, the boy's mother told her father, the leading member of the IRA who had denounced Eddie, that her sister's husband, McIlhenny, was the informer, not Eddie. The boy's mother did that because she was jealous and wanted to separate the couple. But she recanted and ended up telling McIlhenny that he had been denounced, and that he needed to escape. In short, despite knowing that Eddie was innocent and that he was executed in McIlhenny's place, the boy's mother has never told her husband about his brother's innocence. In addition, when she realizes that her son is searching for the truth, she starts to avoid his presence.

My mother's father had my father's brother killed. She had known that now, since just before Grandfather died. My father didn't know it at all. My mother had gone out with McIlhenny, the traitor who had set Eddie up for execution. My father did not know that. And McIlhenny had dropped her and married Katie, her sister. Then he had been tipped off and fled to Chicago. Katie didn't know that. Nor did my father. My mother had always known that McIlhenny had fled, had known he was an informer. Her father must have told her that; what he hadn't told her not just before he died was the truth about what had happened to Eddie. She knew it all now. She knew I knew it too. And she wasn't going to tell any of it. Nor was I. But she didn't like me knowing it. And my father thought he had told me everything. I could tell him nothing, though I hated him not knowing. But only my mother could tell him. No one else. It was her way of loving him, not telling him? It was my way of loving them both, not telling either. But knowing what I did, separated me from them both (ibidem, p.193-94).

The boy's mother is not the only one who knows what McIlhenny did. The boy learns that Crazy Joe saw McIlhenny secretly getting out of the police car at four o'clock in the morning and that he was the traitor, the informer. Crazy Joe says he does not know who told the IRA McIlhenny was an informer, or he does not want to say. The boy suspects that that is the reason why Joe is considered crazy. Joe identified McIlhenny after the IRA had killed Eddie. Nobody should know the IRA committed such a mistake. They led the Catholic Bogside, they were powerful because they kept the ideology of hatred against the Anglo-Irish alive. If people started to distrust them, they would become enfeebled, and they needed the Irish Catholics to support their cause. The police helped McIlhenny to escape to America and the IRA never confessed their mistake.

The narrator finds out that several lies have been told and several secrets have been kept. They made his family and everybody in his community accept the stories as they were told, in order to create a false consciousness of the political dispute. He cannot tell how much his family, and especially his father, knows about it, or why the real story has never been revealed. He realizes that this search for truth is his own private search. In fact, his discoveries are part of his self-enlightenment. He also knows that revealing the truth is betraying not only his mother but his family's need to accept their reality as it is. Knowledge is often a bad thing, after all. It always tears people apart, for it makes people suspicious of people and events. When you know something, your life is in danger and your spirit may die. Not telling the truth, however, means accepting the dark history of a family as a microcosm of the dark history of a nation that is incapable of fighting for some clarification, and, as a consequence, forgets its past and gets involved in stories of hatred.

4.11 SERGEANT BURKE

Sergeant Burke has been stationed in the Bogside since the partition and the birth of Northern Ireland. He has participated in all public disturbances which have happened in that area. He has seen people being killed and being accused of treason. He has arrested people, beaten them up, and sent them to prison several times. One day, he visits the boy's mother while her husband is at work and tells her he is not there to bring any more problems. He has a lot of things on file but he wants to end to the dispute. He tells the boy's mother about

[...]a separation from all that grief, a walking away from it, a settling. Look at your father [...] dying with two deaths on his conscience and both of them the wrong man. Look at Katie and her shattered marriage, and her child left without a father and the father living a double life out there in exile. Look at Frank, your husband, living in silence, believing his family disgraced by an informer and unwilling to talk about what he had had to suffer all those years with his children around him asking questions and other people wondering about him- wondering why he had been let go that night the young fella found the gun. He had fixed that himself, Burke claimed, for he didn't want to see Frank take any more, and he knew he was not involved in anything. (Ibdem, p.213).

Then the mother answers that it is magnificent to say that all of this has to stop when there are people who have been the victims of the police and the political problems they have faced for decades.

Dirty politics. [...] What were they supposed to do? Say they were sorry they ever protested and go back to being unemployed, gerrymandered⁴⁴, beaten up by every policemen who took notion, gaoled⁴⁵ by magistrates and judges who were so vicious that was they that should be gaoled, and for life, for all the harm they did and all the lives they ruined? (Ibdem., p.213)

Their dialogue shows that the tradition of violence was internalized in Northern Ireland. The violence against the innocent, the resentment and grievance of the population after having their house searched, or after the internments, detentions, beatings, and public humiliation have built a collective unconscious in most of the working-class Catholic families that guaranteed the anger against the police or anything that meant to bring some order, for this order meant political control. The unlimited power of the police, and later, of the British Army, was used against the Catholic population, even though their aim was to protect this population against the attacks of unionist organizations. Their presence ended up by bringing an exacerbated feeling of displeasure and reinforced the actions of the IRA. Sergeant Burke was a representative of this structure brought up against the Catholic ghetto. But now Burke is there as an individual, trying to make peace. After all these years he realizes “politics destroyed people’s lives [...], he wanted to retire soon and he had had enough of it himself. Wanted to make peace with it, but it was hard for him too”(ibdem, p.215).

4.12 AFTER

The closing chapter is set in October 1968, at the beginning of “the Troubles”. The narrator refers that while the IRA was rioting against the British soldiers, a British soldier was killed on the front doorstep of their house. Some time later, the soldier’s father knocks on their door to ask about his son. When the man leaves, the boy’s father says that, even if from the “opposite” side, that man was a father too, who had lost his son in a war that was not theirs, but had been triggered by two political ideologies which aimed at alienating their society. Once more the narrator understands how empty that discourse of war can be for individuals, as you can see the following passage,

⁴⁴ To *gerrymander* means to divide a voting area so as to give a political party a majority in as many districts as possible, or to weaken the voting strength of an ethnic or racial group or urban population.

⁴⁵ To be in jail.

I opened the [door] to the man who hesitantly took off his hat and asked if he could speak to someone in the house about who had been killed here on Wednesday. Before I could say anything, he added hastily that he was not army intelligence or police. He was the soldier's father. I invited him in. He introduced himself to my parents, told them he was from Yorkshire, a miner, and that his son, George, had been shot, he was told, at our doorstep. He wondered if anyone had seen what had happened. There was a silence. My parents looked at him. He knew, the Yorkshireman said, he knew what people around here felt about the British soldiers. But this was his son. [...] Well my father told the Englishman, his son had died instantly. He had heard the thud, not the shot. He had opened the door. The boy was lying there, looking quite peacefully. But he was dead, definitely dead. 'So he didn't suffer, didn't speak?' The miner asked. No. They talked a little more, but there was not much to be said. The English shook hands all round, we told him we were sorry for his trouble, he nodded and left. 'Poor man', said my father. 'I feel for him. Even if his son was one of those. It's a strange world'. (Ibidem, pp. 244-45).

For me, this is one of the most moving passages in the book. It brings to the first plan what should count the most, all the suffering individuals, families and entire populations of different countries have had to undergo when they were used like puppets because of the interests of political or religious groups who have led them to believe they belonged in a determined nation, or race, even though they did not really understand what that meant, or were not really treated as if they belonged. Humanity is often called to fight for arbitrary ideologies. We live and we grow old believing, preaching and teaching pre-established ideas we have been led to believe, because someone we trust has said that they were right. And when individuals dare to say something against those ideas they are either regarded as a mad person, or as not belonging to that so-called national identity. Mankind has been following this pattern for thousands of years. Wars have been fought in the name of race, religion and politics. It seems that, until today, the major players of these unjust wars have not come to think that this fight is unfair to most individuals. What shocks the boy is the fact that, in the end, the Englishman is a father, just like his father. In the end, what is the definition of truth, if there is no room left for individual happiness, dignity and freedom from imposed ideologies? And this is where this boy comes to, in his attempt to learn and understand about the shadowed history of his family. Throughout the novel, he refers to the history of his family and country in order to tell about his struggle to liberate himself from generations of secrets, myths, betrayals, and sectarianism that have kept both communities of Northern Ireland subordinated to the conflicts between the British Empire and the Irish Nationalists. Sadly speaking, a struggle that was also imposed by the political and religious groups. According to Michiko Kakutani (1997), "the tragedy of the narrator's family, a family fractured and burned by love and betrayal, has become a metaphor for the tragedy of Northern

Ireland, a land whose troubles have been handed down from generation to generation, from father to daughter to son”.

The narrator in *Reading in the Dark*, unlike his parents, searches for his family history in an attempt to relive his own history, and consequently, the history and culture of his country. He was born in another context; he is part of the generation who wants to change the present situation. He knows that by finding the truth he will also recover their past as a nation and their fight against repression. This repression is not related to one specific politics or policy, but all of them, which have kept people believing in arbitrary ideals. While his parents have lost their hope, and have accepted the course of life as it is, the boy wants to free himself and those preconceived ideas and beliefs. But he also knows that by revealing the truth he will tear himself and his parents apart, even though his parents have already been separated by their silence.

4.13 MY FATHER

Then when he has finally reached his truth, our protagonist realizes he can do nothing but keep the secret, so as not to hurt his family, especially his father. Even so, he feels guilty about not telling his father about his uncle’s innocence.

Staying loyal to my mother made me disloyal to my father. In case I should ever be tempted to tell him all I knew, I stayed at arm’s length from him and saw him notice but could say nothing to explain. I went away to university in Belfast, glad to be free of the immediate pressures of living there, sorry to have so misled everything that had created a distance between my parents and myself that had become my only way of loving them. So I celebrated all anniversaries: of all deaths, all the betrayals – for both of them – in my head, year after year, until to my pleasure and surprise, they began to become confused and muddled, and I wondered at times if I had dreamed it all. (DEANE, 1998, p. 236)

The protagonist/narrator also says that “hauntings are, in the way, very specific, Everything has to be exact, even the vaguenesses” (idem, p.236). What he has learned about his family came in fragments, told by different people who did not realize what they were really telling him. And he does not really know if he remembers the stories he has listened to, because he has just been told. However, there is something the protagonist knows. He has “reconstructed his [father’s] life out of the remains of the stories about his father’s dead parents, his vanished older brother, his own unknowing and to

[him], [his] beloved silence” (ibidem, pp.237-238). What the boy does not know is how much his father knew or did not know.

After putting together the bits that were told by other people, and after allowing some temporal distance and internalization of the facts, the narrator is ready to tell his story. What was strange and difficult for the boy becomes important for the adult narrator, since he does not want his story to be forgotten. The narrator presents the origin of all secrets, distortions, and lies that led to the choices that his family and members of his community have made. This search leads the protagonist to self-understanding, individual freedom and a sense of identity. In the introduction of *Nationalism Irony and Commitment* in *Nationalism, Colonialism, and Literature* Seamus Deane (1990, p.12) asserts that “in the attempted discovery of its “true” identity, a community often begins to the demolition of false stereotypes within which it has been entrapped. This is an intricate process, since the stereotypes are successful, precisely because they have been interiorized”. Both the collective memories and the private experience form the identity of peoples. However, there is always a clash between the collective memory and the individual experience. Adding to that, there are different associative and emotional memories within individuals due to their own experience and emotions, allowing them different perceptions of reality. Thus, there is not one universal ideology of a determined community, or a universal truth, but different ideologies and truths that form different identities.

4.14 MY MOTHER

The protagonist’s mother has always felt guilty about what had happened to her sister, to her husband’s brother, and for her husband’s grief. At the same time she cannot tell all the truth because the truth is too hard to be told after all these years of bad decisions, misunderstandings and secrets that led to a disastrous situation. So, she has become frightened, depressed and introspective. At the same time she turns away from the boy and becomes hostile, because she knows the boy has found out about a great deal of the whole story. Not only is she hostile against the boy, she is also distant from everyone in the family. Sometimes she intercalates anger with panic. One day the boy gives her a flower, in order to show her his affection, and indicate to her that he will not say a word about what he knows.

Then the boy tells his readers that she starts to tear the petals off and then she says “if you want you can tell” [...] “If you don’t, that’s just as well” [...] “Get it over, get it done, Father, lover, husband, son” (DEANE, 1998, p. 227). These people’s stories are totally interwoven. The grandfather is from the IRA. So are Eddie and McIlhenny. But Eddie is pointed out as a traitor by McIlhenny, who is the real traitor and is helped by Burke, the Anglo Irish policeman, to flee to America. Eddie is executed. But Eddie is Frank’s, her husband’s brother. His mother has to protect the IRA and cover the IRA’s mistakes. They are the ones who “protect” the Irish Catholics. They are the ones who want Northern Ireland to be independent. And when Northern Ireland becomes independent there will not be internments, gaols, or unemployment anymore. The “real Irish” will be free from the British Empire. This is what she tells Burke. By not telling the truth, she is enforcing the myth that the IRA is protecting Northern Ireland against the invader. Casualties happen when people fight for a cause. Nevertheless, her husband’s family are the real victims in this battle. Lives have been destroyed in every way. The boy knows this is all too delicate. Telling the truth would destroy the last bonds in the family. On the other hand, he knows that the whole struggle against the British made his family incapable of living in peace. He also realizes that his mother is the only one who can really tell what really happened. So he says,

I imagined talking to her like this, rehearsing conversations I would never have ‘What you don’t know doesn’t hurt you,’ I would say. ‘What I don’t know you won’t tell that does hurt me. That’s happening here. If you loved me more or knew what’s happening here. If you loved me more or knew how much I loved you and him, then you would say everything. How can you not know? I’d do anything, *anything*, to help you if you’d let me’. But was that true, that she would tell everything if she loved me more? If she knew there was something more, but didn’t know what it was, wasn’t that worse for her, wasn’t that what would stop her saying anything more to me? Imagining something, like the way Eddie died, like who was there, like exactly what had happened, that was maybe worse than having just one set of facts, the one story that cancelled all the others, the one truth she could tell. But everyone who had been there was dead or in exile or silenced one way or another. And how did I know I had been told the truth? Shouldn’t I ask her? What did you know, Mother, when you married my father? What did he know? When did you tell each other? Why did you silence me over and over? (idem, pp. 216-17).

There are two things I would like to say, before closing this chapter. The first is that I am aware of the fact that the pitch of my argumentation went a bit too high here and there against the Catholic Church and against the use of Ideology made by the State. I also know that my defense of individual rights was a bit too heated. I am perfectly aware that there are many different sides to any questions, and that there are causes that deserve to be fought, and moments in which the interest of the group predominates over individual choice. But as I

proposed to offer my reading of the thirteen selected sections, I ended up deciding to allow myself to be carried away here and there, as a direct result of the effect the moving rhetoric of this novel operates on me. Seamus Deane is much more subtle than I am as he pleads his cause, though.

The second point I would like to stress derives from the fact that Deane, as a university professor of Irish Literature, is a well respected specialist in Joycean Studies. As *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is widely read by Brazilian academics, I would like to observe that part of the resemblance between the Boy in *Reading in the Dark* and Stephen Dedalus, in *A Portrait* comes from the influence exerted on Deane by Joyce. But mostly, in my opinion, they are similar because they are the product of two Irish artists who see things through the same prism. We have two novels shaped in the format of a life-story, with autobiographical characteristics, showing the story of the growth of two persons that are interested in the exchanges between life and Literature and that will grow up to become authors who tell about their stories so as to help things change. The two protagonists are aware of the many sides to all questions, and refuse to take part in any of them, until they find their own way to fight their personal battles. Fighting for their own rights of free choice and free expression, they are also fighting for the rights of their fellow citizens.

5 CONCLUSION

This argumentative thesis has been built around the idea of exorcizing ghosts. The ghosts in the family of the protagonist of *Reading in the Dark* and the ghosts of its author, raised in Northern Ireland in the shadow of “The Troubles”. In a way, these are, in one manner or another, a type of exorcism. Disempowering ancient ghosts leads one, inevitably, to the reshaping of one’s sense of identity. The focus of the change achieved here relies on the social and political History of Northern Ireland, more specifically considering the clash between British Unionists and Irish Nationalists that led to the present state of the discussion, as posed by the members of the cultural movement known as The Field Day Company.

Seamus Deane, as a member of the Field Day, transposes the revisionist point of view into his novel, where we can feel and analyze the cultural dimension of imperialism as well as the reflex to the colonized consciousness. Deane’s novel exposes history and the function of the universal ideal, characterizing its disfiguring effects by deconstructing the dominant narratives about Ireland. *Reading in the Dark* plays a role in the process of national demythologizing, uprooting fixed stereotypes that have been set throughout early and late colonial periods.

Seamus Deane’s *Reading in the Dark* questions the role of identity, by examining discourses that led to failure of communication and the clash between two communities living in the same territory. The myth that the British conquest, which took centuries, would be put to an end by the Gaelic Irish and that the Irish language and the true Gaelic culture would be reestablished after centuries of miscegenation was an appropriate excuse advocate the rights to restore what they considered to be the authentic Irish and led the fight against the British Empire. At the same time the ones who have fought for what they consider to be nationalism have forgotten what they have done in the name of religion and in the name of a nation. They have set Easter Ring 1916 as the birthday of this dispute but have forgotten that this dispute has been going for centuries. In fact this fight has been going on since the times of the dispute between different Gaelic tribes that from time to time had different interests. In order to defend their interests and gain what they wanted, these tribes made alliances with the Normans, the Scots and the Saxons. Furthermore, after the Easter ring they have set a series of myths that have redefined the past events to fit the idea that one needed to be a Catholic Gaelic and speak Irish to be the true Irish. The myth of Irishness has denied diversity, considered Catholicism the symbol and the political emblem of nationalism, caused heroic

battles against their antagonists. This myth has also validated the IRA actions since they have practiced guerrillas in the name of a nation. Deane also examines the individual subject self-experience in relation to his community, the present mythology and the memory of facts. He shows how important it is for individual subjects to examine and reconsider the facts, in order to come to an understanding and, consequently, find a coherent explanation, which will help liberate themselves from established ideologies.

In *Reading in the Dark*, the protagonist tells the readers how his experiences formed his identity. By organizing the fragments of the history of his family, he reaches a historical understanding of the society in which he lives. This historical intelligibility presupposes the understanding of his individuality as the unique experience of a person living in a collective society. His family's history, and the culture and history of his place, with their contradictory reality, are intrinsically related. The protagonist, returns to the past and clarifies the imperfections in order to understand his family, community and, consequently, himself. When the protagonist finally disempowers all the ghosts that have haunted his family and community, he also realizes he is in a crossroad. If he tells what he has learned he will reveal decades of secrets which made the myth of a Gaelic nation be reinforced time after time and produced a collective unconsciousness of anger and hate between Catholics and Protestants. At the same time, as an individual, he knows the old discourse does not help to solve the trouble and destroys people's lives, as it has happened to his family. This discourse of race and identity created tensions and violence in the ethnic relations. And these tensions were fully accepted by those who were involved with them. After combining the opposing assertions and reasoning them, the protagonist realizes such discourse was, in fact, creation of culture and of history. Thus, he does not only learn how to live with the imperfections of his society, but also decides to show his readers that his identity is a consequence of his own experiences. Moreover, he chooses to show how important it is for an individual to have coherent discourse in order to achieve self-understanding. Instead of accepting the imposed ideology, the protagonist reaches his own reasoning, his self-enlightenment and his freedom.

Seamus Deane is one outstanding name among a new generation of writers, and *Reading in the Dark* a good example of a successful work which makes us think about how these contradictions of the universal and particular can be solved in favor of an individual enlightenment – an individual who is also part of a broader society. *Reading in the Dark* may be one of the many autobiographies produced by Irish writers, but no less important. Seamus Deane is part of a group of writers who, by being born in a colonial country like Ireland, needs to search for a plausible explanation of their oppressing condition. He chooses to give

light of the facts through examination of self-experience and of people and events that led to the loss of identity and freedom. This search enables him to build self-enlightenment. But it is only possible through historical analysis of the institutions involved: family, religion and politics. His autobiographical work describes his experiences as a child of teenager living in world he feels he does not belong. Most importantly, Deane's *Reading in the Dark* not only shows how traumatic personal experiences are kept in the people's memory but also how this personal experience is intrinsically related to the social experience.

Moreover, by analyzing the intellectuals of the Field Day Company, we observe that their practices meet their aims since all of them propose a new kind of trans-national approach which will re-examine a number of national issues as an attempt to redefine the interpretation of Irish national culture, history and tradition in order to help solve the established crisis. For them, it is necessary to create a new discourse in order to resolve these ethnic and religious disputes and find a new direction; the Field Day Movement believes that the whole island of Ireland is much in need of this sort of re-valuation.

I hope to have succeeded in exploring such links in the comments made about the excerpts selected from the narrative, which have been contextualized and discussed in Chapter Three. Deane's novel is very much in tune with the purpose of The Field Day Company, which is namely to analyze and deconstruct the existent paradigms of colonialism, domination and nationalism. This group puts into discussion the political, social and cultural aspects that have been established in the long run, in order to break up with them and bring into life a new set of theories that deal with a new reality.

Every one writes from within their specific circumstances, and I am no exception to the rule. Therefore, as I close this discussion about *Reading in the Dark*, it is important to state that I am aware of the fact that I am a Brazilian researcher, and that many of my impressions and reactions to the text derive from this perspective. More than that, I am also aware of the fact that most of the future readers to this thesis will be my Brazilian colleagues. There are three things concerning this set of circumstances that have determined my choices, as a Brazilian researcher, in the shaping of the thesis. The first refers to religion, the second to nationality and the third to the Field Day Company.

Brazil is acknowledged as the largest Catholic country in the world. This means two things. The first is that Catholicism is the predominant religion here. Predominant religions tend to be lax. Most of the social rituals, such as baptisms, first communions or wedding ceremonies are practiced within it. As a result, predominant religions often become more of a social display than a reference to religiosity. Most of the people who sign in formularies and

questionnaires that they are Catholic are in fact agnostics or even atheists. In this sense, being a Catholic in Brazil is totally different from being a Catholic in the United Kingdom or in Ireland. In the U.K. Catholics belong to a minority. There is a strong bias against Catholics as a result from the religious partition provoked by Henry VIII when England broke with Rome, in the sixteenth Century. Catholics are looked down by Protestants in the U.K. In the island of Ireland we have yet a different situation. Ireland's acceptance of Christianity precedes the coming of the English in more than four centuries. As the Christian doctrine fitted the ancient Celtic myths and folk traditions, the Irish adopted Christian rites in a very enthusiastic way. So, being Catholic is a notion that means three different things in Brazil, in the United Kingdom and in Ireland. In Northern Ireland the expression acquires still a fourth meaning. The population of Northern Ireland is divided between the Catholic, poorer population, who wish to resume its original link with the rest of the Island, and the Anglo-Irish Protestants, who mostly descend from the soldiers who surveyed the administered the territory subjugated by the English. As a consequence, when we, Brazilians, read or listen about the clash between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland, we tend to think in terms of religion; but, in fact, the dissent is a political one, and refers to their sense of national identity rather than to their religious commitment.

Concerning the issue of nationality, we Brazilians seem to take it for granted that the words *country* and *nation* are synonyms, because we live in a place where the geographical and the cultural backgrounds are shared by all the inhabitants of our country. We also assume that people who are born in a country are meant to become citizens of that country, even if their parents are foreigners. This is the way things work in Brazil, but not in the British Islands. People born in Northern Ireland are Irish, and are British, only if their father is British. And, even so, they may have divergent notions about their own nationality. Catholics will predominantly refer to the island of Ireland as their nation, whereas Protestants will refer to the United Kingdom for that purpose.

The third question that may sound peculiar to a Brazilian student is the policy of toleration proposed by the Field Day Company. Brazil is a relatively poor country, full of inequalities and several dissimulated forms of prejudice. Still, in spite of all that, it is a multi-racial country, more or less used to dealing with multiple cultures and not used to what in this thesis I have been calling a "policy of hatred." Out of the many different peoples living in our country, only the Indians may probably understand the huge dimension of recognizing the need for toleration and for an atonement regarding an enemy settled in one's territory, when one does not have the power to repel it or destroy it. The line between accepting the facts one

cannot go against and surrendering may seem very thin at some points. It is also very difficult to separate what is racial and political from what is personal. In my opinion, *Reading in the Dark* presents all such issues in a very clear and competent way. Besides, globalization and economic changes have brought a new reality all over the world. Economically, the Republic Ireland is in a more favorable financial position in Europe than England. Brazil also makes part of this new reality, even if with its own characteristics. I consider the study of *Reading in the Dark* important also because, perhaps, learning about the Irish contemporary social, cultural and political process and its representation in the novel will help us as individuals who make part of a determined society, to rethink our reality in our good fortune, since Brazil is also an emergent postcolonial country which also was and has still been influenced by alienating ideological discourses. Besides, as a student of the Graduate Program at UFRGS, I have had the pleasure of introducing the works of Seamus Deane and the Field Day into my academic community.

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ANNEX A - EASTER 1916



http://www.wesleyjohnston.com/users/ireland/maps/towns/derry_religion.gif
Access on 23.04.2008

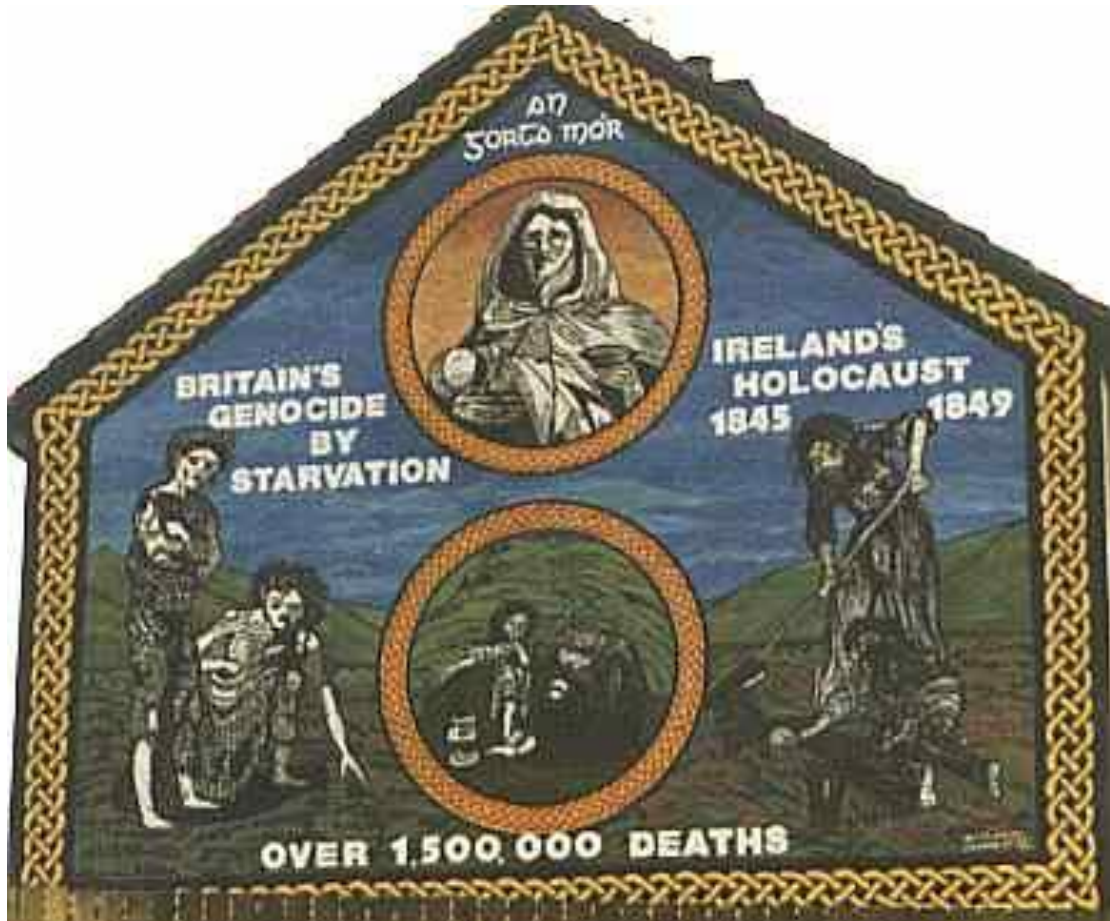
ANNEX B - THE PETROL BOMBER

Battle of the Bogside



http://images.google.com.br/imgres?imgurl=http://irelandsown.net/bogside.jpg&imgrefurl=http://irelandsown.net/murals.htm&usg=__t-JwNzl_TOLkIec0V4BIIK15sk4=&h=436&w=404&sz=42&hl=pt-BR&start=21&um=1&tbnid=LApH3ulgCh6JqM:&tbnh=126&tbnw=117&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dbogside%2Bpictures%26um%3D1%26hl%3Dpt-BR%26sa%3DX
Access on 23.04.2008

ANNEX C - THE GREAT FAMINE



www.chrisandmegan.com
Access on 23.04.2008

ANNEX D - IRA MURAL



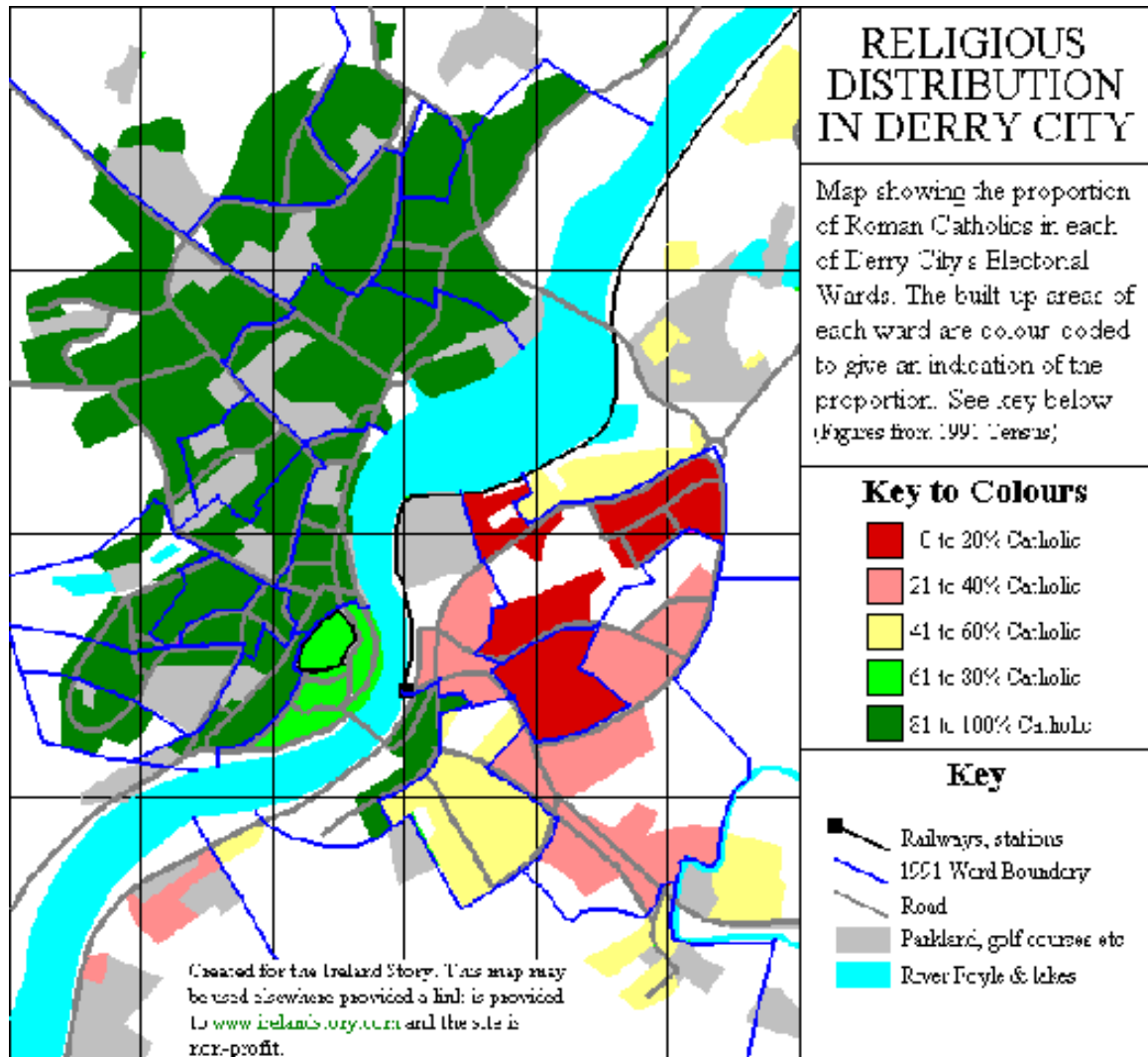
www.doglegs.net
Access on 23.04.2008

ANNEX E - UVF MURAL



<http://www.chrisandmegan.com/belfast/UVF2.jpg>
Access on 23.04.2008

ANNEX F - RELIGIOUS DISTRIBUTION IN LONDONDERRY



http://www.wesleyjohnston.com/users/ireland/maps/towns/derry_religion.gif

Access on 23.04.2008

ANNEX G - THE BRITISH ARMY WATCHOVER



[http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://mares.english.sbc.edu/images%2520folder/m
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6PtM:&tbnh=125&tbnw=136&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dderry%2Bcage%26gbv%3D2%26hl
%3Dpt-BR)

Access on 23.04.2008

ANNEX H - FREE DERRY

http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9d/Derry_Free_Derry.jpg
Access on 23.04.2008

ANNEX I - GRIANAN OF AILEACH

<http://www.stonepages.com/ireland/griananhi.html>

Access on 24.04.2008