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The Northern Ireland Conflict Feasibility of 21st Century Reunification

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THE NORTHERN IRELAND CONFLICT: FEASIBILITY OF 21st CENTURY
REUNIFICATION

by

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ABSTRACT

The State of Northern Ireland has been home to a significant amount of violence between a minority of Catholic Irish nationalists and a majority of Protestant British unionists. As a result, violence has plagued the region, with the loss of over three thousand five hundred lives during the course of three decades, colloquially known as "the troubles." In 1998, the Belfast or "Good Friday" Agreement was signed by officials from The United Kingdom and The Republic of Ireland to ensure a diplomatic means of cooperation amongst the various political parties of Northern Ireland, and disarmament of paramilitary groups. However, the desire for nationalists to unify the island and to seek total independence from the United Kingdom still endures. In spite of a significant decrease in violence, dissident republicans continue to target the Police Service of Northern Ireland, with the intent to disrupt the peace process; the people of Northern Ireland are still polarized regarding their political and national standings, which decrease the chances of Irish reunification in the near future.

The intent of this thesis is to explore the feasibility of Irish reunification in the 21st century, and its reasons why a united Ireland will not be obtained. By examining the global policy towards terrorism after September 11th 2001, the recent net-immigration to Ireland preceded by the "Celtic Tiger" period in The Republic of Ireland's economic boon, and the complexities of the perceived identities in Northern Ireland, the unlikelihood of reunifying Ireland under one government, independent from the United Kingdom will be reiterated.

DEDICATION

For my family, who always encourage me to strive for excellence

For my roommates, who kept me sane during this project

And for my teachers, who have inspired me to never stop learning

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INTRODUCTION

The history of political turmoil in Ireland is that of a long, tumultuous timeline which stretches over 800 years, and over this course, political identities have been influenced by this pervasive history of strife. The way people in the 21st century often perceive the sectarian violence that has taken place on the Emerald Isle has been influenced by this volatile past, and unfortunately, the psychology of many in the Irish Diaspora has been sympathetic to the justification of violence over such a small territory. My thesis discusses whether Irish Reunification is plausible. There are multiple factors that contribute to this analysis, but my main areas of focus deal with considering the political, immigration, and cultural identity influences. There have been several decades of "the troubles" in Ireland, in which over 3,000 lives have been lost, and many forever altered as a result of sectarian violence. However, recently there has a been a dramatic shift in the way the world perceives calculated acts of murder on innocent people, since the September 11th 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, resulting in a strengthened vigilance against terrorism. A closer look at this paradigm shift presents a link to the decrease in support of the IRA from Irish-Americans, and this post-9/11 outlook is playing a major role in the course of Irish current events. A very important aspect of this central thesis that should not be overlooked is the ever present realization that Ireland has seen an influx of immigrants from Europe, as well as in Africa, and this new wave of Irish may not harbor the same hostilities that Catholics and Protestants have historically dealt with on the island. The fact that immigrant populations in Ireland do not hold the same prejudices significantly dilutes the issue, which is a positive side-

effect. The identity of citizens living in the Northern Ireland state coincides with immigration. It is an important facet of the research to understand how the people identify themselves, and how they see themselves in relation to the Republic of Ireland, as well as in relation to the United Kingdom.

The hypothesis is that due to the previous points stated, the possibility of Irish reunification in the near future is unlikely. Recent highlights, such as the Good Friday Agreement, have caused a decline in armed conflict in Northern Ireland, which was marked by a ceasefire, and it has appeared to be successful. The level of violence has substantially decreased since then, and new areas of interest, such as immigration, and identity are becoming more of a focal point, which brings a call to self-analysis amongst those living in Northern Ireland. Three independent variables that will analyze the hypothesis are first, the international political attitude toward terrorism after September 11th, 2001. Americans were traumatized after the United States was attacked in such a shocking way. This was a major turning point for Americans, and it was a catalyst that made US citizens reflect on the amount of support they were contributing to a terrorist organization. The way Americans treated immigrants was vastly different as a result of the 9/11 attacks. The U.S. government became highly vigilant on immigration – including Irish immigrants. The second independent variable will focus on ethnic immigration to Ireland. The new generation of immigrants is having an impact on the homogeneity of the Emerald Isle, and the polarization between Catholics and Protestants is being reduced. The third independent variable will center on the way people in Northern Ireland identify themselves, as well as the subsequent generations living in the 6 counties to the north. "Northern Irish" identification is starting to take root amongst this burgeoning group. If a majority of the population in Northern

Ireland Identify as British, chances for reunification are greatly decreased. These independent variables correlate to the dependant variable, which is that, although violence will have quelled, so will the desire to reunite the island.

The variables that are presented are utilized with a conscious understanding that there will always be exceptions to the rule, and that no two cases are the same. However, for all intents and purposes the relationship between the independent variables coincides with one another rather consistently. For example, when focusing on the ethnic identity of the populous, the majority of Protestants in Northern Ireland has historically claimed a British identity; hence the reasons not to reunify the island. This presents a different identity then that of most Catholics who identify as Irish. Identities are further added by an increase of ethnic immigration to the island. This adds another component to the conflict, which further dilutes the strife. Ireland, once a poor country, used to be a nation known for its emigration. Look no further than to the global celebration of St. Patrick's Day. However, as Ireland began to prosper, it experienced an influx of net immigration, and as the Republic becomes more heterogeneous, the strength of reunification support is weakened. The Good Friday Agreement precipitated a strong decrease in the amount of violence in the region, and after 9/11 diplomacy has replaced terrorism as the popular form of negotiation. The overall amount of violence decreased, and immigration from those who have no affiliation to the politics in Northern Ireland increased. Today, new political and economic queries are emerging.

The relationship between my independent variables and my dependent variable is that of cause and effect. For example, three of my independent variables are believed to be linked to a

decrease in violence and an increase of peace on the Emerald Isle, as well as an increase in

tolerance amongst Catholics and Protestants and acceptance of a Northern Irish state. In spite of

the fact that reunification of Ireland may not be the outcome, at least people will be able to

harmoniously live in quarters that were once considered immensely hostile grounds in the north.

The cause and effect relationship of the independent variables is clearly related to the level of

integration in Northern Ireland, and as a result it appears that the relationship between the

independent variables is that as power sharing, immigration, and integration increases on the

island, the chance for a United Ireland decreases. These three links provide sufficient evidence to

support the claim that incremental steps have been taken, and it will result in a significantly less

volatile future for Ireland. It is an egregious notion to accept the violence and hate that is

perpetuated throughout generations in order for a nationalistic goal to be achieved; this is

problematic at best. In many cases a minority group of extremists tend to stand out from the

majority of independence seekers in Northern Ireland, which can lead to a gross

misrepresentation of that group. The reason why this topic is so significant is the mere fact that

too much bloodshed has occurred over the decades on the island of Ireland. In a global village it

is only morally sound to stop this perpetuation of intolerance, because the value for peace is

beneficial for all parties involved. Reunification may be seen as a long term goal, but not at the

expense of innocent lives.

For 800 years Ireland has been a source of conflict, and in spite of the 20th century having

a major impact on the political structure of the island, there is still an unresolved issue over

Northern Ireland's future ties to the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. With this

political turmoil, a strong wave of segregation has insidiously resulted between Catholics and

Protestants. This is being inherited by subsequent generations, and as a result the hardship in Northern Ireland could theoretically be perpetuated substantially longer than it should. This cannot be a healthy world of reality for those living in such a conflicted region. This research has the propensity to bring attention to issues that inquiring minds wish to confront. The significance of this topic is that it comprises two ethnic groups of people, which on the surface seem similar, yet have fundamental worldview differences in a few highly emotional and political topics. Many are studying the conflict with the intent to find a possible solution. It is difficult to conceptualize what it must be like to live daily life in an intimate proximity in a population so bitterly divided. This is a reality in many parts of the world, and this case in point is not anatomically different. This is a key component to why this topic has such theoretical importance. The following chapters will shed light on a multitude of factors that suggest the non-reunification of Ireland, as well as raise questions about the future for a more integrated Northern Ireland. Incremental steps seem to be the standard path of lasting progress, and in the case of Northern Ireland, time is something the people are all too familiar with.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES: POST 9/11 OUTLOOK

The present situation in Ireland is that of diplomatic relations, and it has come a long way since the early conflicts, which span hundreds of years between Ireland and Great Britain. The fact of the matter is that we are seeing an unprecedented level of peace between the two states, but if one was to take an analytical approach to understanding the present conflict, a fundamental grasping of the matter at hand would be lacking. The reason for this is that one must have some knowledge of Irish history to be marginally cognizant of the present day conflict, or progress. Before one can begin to look at the current international political attitude towards terrorism, I would like to present a brief overview of Irish history, starting from King Henry II, up to the Ulster Plantation and its monumental impact on Irish history. A series of negative events, from Oliver Cromwell to the Great Famine set the stage for what was about to come. Ireland endured British subjugation until the Easter Rising, which marked the nationalist revolution throughout the 20th century, as well as the Partition of Ireland in 1921. This will bring us into the Good Friday agreement of 1998, and into the current state of political affairs. But these are all attributes which lead up to my independent variable of the global village's intolerance of terrorism, which is linked to my dependent variable: Irish peace, with no reunification.

Pertaining to the vast history of the Northern Ireland conflict; it behooves one to expound in detail, in order to give a stronger context to the reader who may be unfamiliar with the current status of the Northern Ireland Dispute. And in that case, I will start at around the 12th century, when Ireland would receive a visit from England's King Henry II, which began a long and often volatile history between the states. Henry II wanted to expand his kingdom into Ireland, and one

justification which lasted for centuries was by Gerald of Wales' xenophobic account of an

uncivilized, semi-nomadic class of people that needed to be brought into the English way of land

cultivation. "'It is indeed a most filthy race, a race sunk in vice, a race more ignorant than all

other nations of the first principles of the faith.' Cambrensis' disdain was grounded in the

confrontation between centralised, agricultural-commercial and feudal England and

decentralised, semi-nomadic and tribal Ireland" (McVeigh, Rolston 10). According to McVeigh

and Rolston, Gerald of Wales believed it was only necessary to conquer Ireland due to the love

of freedom and lack of work ethic in which the Irish possess. The fact that the island had the

potential to be toiled – yet was not up to the standard of the British agrarian system justified the

conquest of Henry II. "Cambrensis' account remained the standard text consulted by English

administrators and militarists for the next 500 years… when English writers came to justify the

next major thrust in the colonisation of Ireland, it was to Cambrensis that they turned. 'In what

manner Ireland is to be completely conquered': establishing the Plantation" (Mcveigh, Rolston

11). From its inception, the narrative was that the Irish were "barbarous" and that it was in their

benefit to be anglicanized at the very least. The following of King Henry II led to more

inhabitants to the Emerald Isle, and by the end of the fourteenth century, the "Statute of

Kilkenny" had been ordered in an attempt to thwart the Irish cultural influence over the newly

implanted English settlers. The statute stopped the use of the Gaelic language, and as Crowley

asserts: "Henry VIII's *Act for English Order, Habit, and Language* (1537)…sought…to extirpate

Irish…because… linguistic difference…created political and national division :"(Crowley). This

was a very important piece of legislation, because as Crowley notes, language was a strong force

in galvanizing any opposition to the status quo. With this cultural tool eliminated, the stripping

of other cultural aspects native to the Irish would be less of a challenge. Britain would remain in a constant state of strife with the neighboring island for some time, but anti-English sentiment was strengthened when James Ist' Ulster Plantation of 1607 confiscated much of Ulster. "The value of the colonial project was clear for James 1: And now that all Ulster, or the most part, has fallen into His Majesty's power, he intends to order it so as it may redound to his honour and profit. … Rising generations be trayned up to useful industrie, and civilitie, learning, religion and loyalties" (McVeigh, Rolston). It is no surprise that the Irish revolted in the 1641 Uprising after centuries of British occupation, only to feel the bitter taste of reciprocity when Oliver Cromwell annihilated the native Irish with impunity by 1652. By the end of the 17th century, three-fourths of Ireland was controlled by the crown (Nee138). Catholics were suppressed by the English Government's decree of the Penal Codes, which eliminated their' right to vote and participate in politics. "They had no liberties – by law Irish Catholics could not own property, practice religion, or become literate by law" (Nee 138). This landmark event still has its legacy in the Northern Ireland border, where divisions in Ulster can be clearly distinguished between Catholics and Protestants. The majority Protestant population claims loyalty to the United Kingdom, as of this writing, and this is making Irish reunification look more like a long-term goal for a nationalist minority.

Up to the 19th century, the crown had allocating to Scottish farmers Irish land, called "planting" in order to slowly make a permanent anchor into the Ulster province of Ireland, but the native Irish population was apprehensive to letting the British occupation be that of an effortless one. Up until "The Flight of the Earls" the Scottish had a very difficult time remaining in control of any allocated land which had been given to them by the Crown, because of the

tenacity of dispossessed Irish Catholics, and their defense over the land. However, when all

efforts from the British seemed futile, an historic tragedy turned out to be a monumental benefit

for Great Britain. During the 1840s a massive potato famine swept the Emerald Isle, resulting in

the death of a million lives within five years. "The Republic of Ireland is best known as a

country of substantial immigration, where the population shrank from about 4.4 million in 1861

to 2.8 million in 1961, before rising to 4.2 million in 2006" (Shandy, Power 123). Shandy's and

Power's assessment of emigration by the Irish is highly attributable to the massive waves of an

evicted and starved Irish populous during the famine years. The failed potato crop ignited an

agricultural ripple-affect, which left the island in peril. "No United Nations came to the aid of the

Irish; in fact, English absentee landlords continued to export Irish grain to England for profit.

They evicted families that could no longer pay rent and tore down their houses so they couldn't

be reoccupied" (Nee 139). England exporting Irish livestock during the famine made a lasting

impression on Ireland and Irish-America. This action was sure to be recalled in future Irish

revolutions and border conflicts up until the turn of the twenty-first century. The crown even

allocated vacant land to Scottish Presbyterians. A great deal of rationalization was made on

sectarian pretenses, and on referring to why the south did not recover from the potato famine as

well as the north did, "Robert Dolling, concluded…the Northerners are a hardworking,

industrious people, and the blessing of God is upon their labours. If the people of the South had

been as industrious as those in the North, they would not be in the condition they are in"

(McVeigh, Rolston 17). By now, Scottish settlers began to visibly outnumber the Irish natives in

Ulster, and the new wave of Irish immigrants in America would not quickly forget the strife back

home. "It was a small group of Irish who had managed to escape the famine that put together the

first recorded shipment of arms to Irish freedom fighters. Erin's Hope, a wooden vessel loaded with weapons and thirty-eight volunteers, set sail in April 1867 from New York (Nee 139)." As Ireland was left severely weakened by the tragic circumstances, any strategic goals of nationalist revolution would have to be withheld until a later point in time.

The twentieth century set the stage for massive political upheaval, and England was taking Irish land, governance and culture. With the exceptions of Connacht and a few other rural locations in Donegal, the Gaelic language was all but extinct. However, one particular event that had a monumental impact on Irish history was the Easter Rising of 1916. In subsequent years, a highly controversial deal was made, known as the Partition of Ireland, which gave Republican sovereignty to Connacht, Munster, Leinster, and three counties in Ulster. London kept the remaining 6 Ulster counties, primarily because it was economically advantageous. Shipping ports were located in Belfast, which had a bounty of industry - yet two important events must be noted: the Easter Rising resulted in the Republican sovereignty over twenty-six counties. Secondly, this resulted in the IRA gaining support from Americans, who supplied money and arms. For many northern Republicans, the 6 counties in the north were of great concern. "Private Irish-American organizations such as NORAID (Irish Northern Aid) raised money for the republican cause. Other Irish- American organizations and individuals backed democratic reform and a fair system of government for the North. (Cox, 2000, 249-262)" (Shmitt 18).Programs like NORAID contributed with a less-than-peaceful means of diplomacy. According to County Galway born Patrick Nee, a former U.S. Marine who served in the Vietnam War, as well as a 1980s NORAID fundraiser out of Boston, "it never took me long to provide…if you wanted to operate in Southie it was in your best interest to support the Irish cause…Money poured into

NORAID like water from a facet every time…more facts [were brought] to our attention" (142-143). American aid was vital for the IRA to sustain an armed campaign. The British were suspecting foreign support for the IRA, and as a result, "[B]etween July 1972 and December 1973, the British army recovered 1,329 weapons of various kinds, including 665 rifles, 62 machine guns, 449 handguns, 169 shotguns, 10 rocket launchers, and 14 mortars in Ireland and Europe from suspected IRA soldiers" (143). This is an excellent example of how large America's role in supporting the Catholics in Northern Ireland was. Since the 1960s, enormous sums of money have left American soil to contribute to the Nationalist groups in the Northern counties. "In terms of comparison, one could easily equate the financial support of Irish-Americans for the IRA to that given the Taliban by the Saudis and Pakistan's ISI" (Johnson, English 17). Much of the northeastern region of the United States was being visited by several suspected IRA men, and many IRA members were applying for green cards in an effort to fundraise. With little effort, many were being cleared for residence, and black market crime syndicates were wiring donations to the fundraisers in the United States. In a present context, "The Taliban… have managed to maintain strong…gun-running…closely linked to …the Irish case" (Johnson, English 17). Weapons shipments were being shipped in coffins from Irish-Americans who wanted to be buried back in Ireland. The northeast and mid-Atlantic regions were home to many Irish-Americans and gunrunners would load coffins heading for an Irish burial with automatic weapons (Nee). The logic behind this was that customs agents were not about to wake the dead by looking for M16s under their cadavers. However, it must be noted that legitimate work was done on behalf of the troubles, by congressmen in United States. For example, "The 'four horsemen,' (Speaker of the House Thomas P. O'Neill, Senators Ted

Kennedy and Patrick Moynihan along with governor Hugh Cary of New York) were an especially effective team in arguing for the rights of the Catholic minority of Northern Ireland from the standpoint of a constitutional and nonviolent perspective. (Finnegan, 2002, 100-102)" (Schmitt 17-18). The significance of this reality was that a bounty of illegal activity was being coordinated and operated despite national security issues. The idea of this after September 11th would be unfathomable. The IRA and its political wing, Sinn Fein has only galvanized the United Kingdom and the United States to work tirelessly in thwarting terrorism. Three men were convicted in "Florida in 2000 of illegally exporting arms…to the IRA…Furthermore, the IRA has continued its pattern of vigilante justice, although in 2002 the number of such cases appears to have declined (Irish Times, July 18, 2002)" (Schmitt 24). Clearly, The 9/11 aftermath resulted in a drop off in support from Americans to Northern Ireland.

Since the turn of the 21st century, American national security has taken a step of disproportional levels compared to any other time in U.S. history. To heighten the level on intelligence on the migration patterns of suspected terrorists, and with the past 8 years having been known for the implementation of the terror color code, American citizens have been living in a heightened state of vigilance; a life in which immigration appears to be a reminder of Osama Bin Laden. After 9/11 President George W. Bush called on nation-states for their cooperation with U.S. foreign policy. "British support for US policy has been consistently strong since September 11th…The extent of British support is indicated in a variety of ways, most notably in its backing of President George W. Bush's attempt in 2002 to build support for the US attack on Iraq and its subsequent participation in the invasion of Iraq" (Shmitt 18). The Patriot Act was implemented in an effort to capture suspected terrorists, as well to thwart any potential

terrorist attack on American soil. Any person who was suspected of being a terrorist or even

having some sort of affiliation with a terror cell could be sent to a detention center in

Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, without the writ of habeas corpus. However, this polarized the country,

and many American citizens claimed that it was a violation of human rights – yet many

Americans were not only in favor of it, they felt more comfortable with the notion that justice

was being delivered to suspected terrorists.

> The view of many Irish people living in New York was that immigrant
>
> communities were being looked upon with new eyes by the US government in the
>
> aftermath of 9/11. There was a widespread belief among those interviewed that
>
> new legislation was being enforced rigorously by post-9/11 agencies such as the
>
> Department of Homeland Security, and that existing immigration law was being
>
> applied to the latter, in an attempt to get rid of illegal immigrants and dissuade
>
> others from entering the country (Cochrane 353).

This rounding up of suspected Middle-Eastern terrorists had a familiarity to the detaining of

suspected IRA members in Northern Ireland, and many cries of injustice were heard throughout

the globe, but most Americans did not see the relation. Americans were angered and they felt

violated by the horrific acts carried out on 9/11, but above all else - they were traumatized. In the

wake of 2001, the months after the attack on the United States turned into years - and not

uncommon - after an emotionally stirring tragedy - a calm wave of introspection wipes over

everyone. This time, the reflection was over the hypocrisy of arming the IRA with weapons,

which would have the potential to kill and injure innocent lives in relation to supporting Islamic

fundamentalists. "September 11 th so profoundly altered the international political environment

for the IRA that a bombing attack anywhere in Northern Ireland, on the island of Britain or elsewhere would produce far more hostility than sympathy from most quarters, including the American government and Irish-American community" (Schmitt 16). Irish-Americans were caught in a conflict with their own hypocrisy. After 9/11 the means of carrying out "the revolution back home" did not seem as righteous as it had previously. Civilized people do not kill innocent lives, for political ambitions. The attacks on American soil put into perspective the positive aspects of diplomacy, as well as putting into perspective what the value of self-determination is really worth. "Bombing and other forms of terrorism are now seen in a far less legitimate light, both among Irish-American supporters of the republican movement as well as among leaders and citizens throughout the democratic world" (Schmitt 32-33). Like Mahatma Gandhi, like Martin Luther King Jr., like the Catholic Civil Rights activists in Northern Ireland, civil rights has been obtained through non-violent measures in the past; This event caused a schism in the relationship with Americans sympathetic to the Nationalists in Northern Ireland and organizations willing to use means of brutality to justify their actions.

The post September eleventh attitude towards terrorism has adopted a zero-tolerance policy. Since 2002 the United States has been stationing troops in Afghanistan to fight a Global War on Terror, and this new narrative has ostensibly created a wave-affect pertaining to the perspectives of subsequent generations. Overall, there is a visible paradigm shift in the way Americans are treating the Northern Ireland conflict, as well as the way the nationalists in Northern Ireland are treating it. In retrospect, there are many ways in which the IRA's means of operation paralleled the Taliban's. For example, the IRA "involved both the backing of some US sympathizers and the help offered by sympathetic regimes (most significantly, that of Libya's

Colonel Gaddafi)" (Johnson, English 15). Due to the recent international political climate, the latter's name might ring a bell. This type of support is far from good publicity an organization like the IRA is clamoring for. Besides, the wiring of unaccounted money is immensely suspicious. It is evident that the political climate of Northern Ireland has substantially eased up the tension compared to the 1990s, and one strong contributor to this would be how the world changed the day after 9/11. In spite of this more diplomatic means of negation, there is still hostility in the region. The chance of reunification coming out of a decade where international security has been at a high, and where a war on terror is being fought seems to be pretty slim.

Since the Good Friday agreement in 1998, there has been a ceasefire throughout the Ulster province, and over the past ten years, the level of sectarian violence has significantly decreased. Perhaps this can be attributed to the cliché saying: "out of sight out of mind", but it does seem as though, the lack of visible violence taking place in the six northern counties has helped a generation to grow up with each other more civilized then the previous generations did. The ceasefire has more or less been successful at quelling the extreme levels of violence that were once witnessed almost daily throughout the late 1960s, '70s, '80s, and '90s, and those who were once focused on a more militant means of revolution have instead focused on a more diplomatic means towards the goal of reunification of Ireland. Whether or not this can be obtained is still on the minds of many, but with the focus being steered away from the bloodshed and loss of life, more time can be focused on peaceful living between Protestant Loyalists and Catholic Nationalists. If armed groups of terrorist cells were perpetuating an obscene cycle of violence on a warlike level, the allocation of provincial governance would be out of the question, and all legislation would be dealt with by London. The IRA has had to

"refrain from returning to full- scale military action and strengthening the hand of the British government in supporting democratic forces within Northern Ireland" (Schmitt 33). However, since the Protestant majority and Catholic minority are starting to amicably go about life in close proximity, more leeway is being given for the state to operate as it wishes. Irish Reunification attempts would be thwarted if the Belfast Treaty was violated by further armed insurgencies, and terrorist organizations are now facing the potential of the FBI investigating there every move, if they seek assistance from the Americans. The dynamic between the United States and Northern Ireland has dramatically seen a change as a result of new millennium treaties, new generations of tolerant people, and especially the global response to the 9/11 attacks.

NET IMMIGRATION CHANGING THE FACE OF IRELAND

Ireland has been known for its monumental history, throughout the millennia for a multitude of factors, and written history has proven to give researchers and historians alike, a greater sense of understanding, pertaining to who the Irish really are. In essence, the face of Ireland has been known for centuries, and in fact, this very well-known attribute was used as a justification for many who argued in favor of a united Ireland, independent of subjugation from the United Kingdom. The main focus of this chapter is to reiterate the understanding that Ireland has been widely accepted as having a unique culture, as well as a being home to a distinct Hibernian populous – until recently, that is. In wake of the European Union's expansion, during the turn of the twenty-first century a massive influx of net immigration has been tracked to the emerald Isle. This will inevitably have an impact on the quest for Irish reunification. Subsequent generations on the island are being exposed to more cultural, religious, and ethnic diversity than any other period in Irish history, and with a secularized generation, tolerance for diversity should provide peace on the island, especially between Catholic nationalists and Protestant unionists, respectively.

Throughout most of the history of balkanization features such as economics, political agenda, cultural factors have been strong catalysts which exacerbate the fueled support for self-determination. Civil conflicts have largely been about the allocation of land as well as independence to groups of people who identify themselves as unique or different from the status quo; the Irish case is not that different. When one is called to look at the facts, the individual will see the plight of the majority of Catholic nationalists as feeling culturally and ethnically different

than most of the Protestant Loyalists do. However, when one takes a moment to reflect upon the immigrant population that compliments the Irish populous, one would find that "At approximately 420,000 persons, resident non-nationals currently compromise 10.6 per cent of the total Irish population (central statistics office Ireland 2007a), a fifth of whom are citizens of Asian (e.g., the Philipines) and African (e.g., Nigeria) states" (Messina 6). This is an interesting statistic, because it is challenges the notion of what the Irish historically seemed to identify as, i.e. with Celtic origins. With this influx of immigration, the conflict in Northern Ireland is starting to make room for a variety of cultures who do not historically share the grievances that the nationalists and loyalists have.

Ireland has a strong cultural heritage. With this in mind, the island established itself in a way, which was culturally and customarily different to the English monarch, to the point that the English Crown tried to prohibit the Irish cultural influence on the English settlers. Granted, different groups of occupying people have come and gone, the Irish inhabitants of the 21st century do not generally associate themselves as being of Anglo origin. For years, this distinction was a strong selling point for the desire to Unite Ireland against the United Kingdom; however with the population of Ireland at approximately 4 million in the Republic and with emerging waves of immigrants at its doorstep, the ethnic and cultural make up of the island is changing.

> Irish society indeed has been affected by mass immigration to a degree that is
> virtually unprecedented in Western Europe. Its effects extend well beyond
> increasing the physical diversity of Irish society to challenging the state's
> promotion of the mono-cultural principle upon which Irish national identity has

been historically constructed…migrants to Ireland have settled widely and, thus, their cultures have been liberally diffused…even relatively small towns (i.e. between 7,000 and 9,500 residents) in Ireland now have sizeable non-white populations. Indeed, Gort, in the western county of Galway, is home to the largest Brazilian community in the country; more than a third of its population of 3,500 migrated from Brazil. Longford, with fewer than 8,600 and Athy with approximately 8,000 permanent residents each have a higher non-white population (7.6 per cent and 6.5 per cent respectively) than any of Ireland's major cities including Greater Dublin (6.1 per cent) (Messina 14).

With this change occurring, one could possibly witness the change of perspective toward the violence in Northern Ireland that has been in much of the political forefront since the late 1960s. Since 1998, there has been heavy emphasis placed on the dialogue between the Catholics and Protestants.. However, it is quintessential for the need to expound on the recent wave of Immigration from Africa, which has made such a profound impact on Irish politics, that legislation has been enacted in Ireland which affects the citizenship clause of Irish-born babies from African mothers, which have come from at least 12 countries (Shandy, Power).

With such a monumental form of legislation being enacted, it would seem evident that Irish citizens are threatened with the concept of mass waves of immigration for a number of reasons. Since the global economic collapse, issues pertaining to health service and state welfare are being revisited. However, upon further analysis, most African mothers have stated that the people are one of the greatest features of living in Ireland, and that for the most part their

experience with Irish people have been positive (Shandy, Power). Whether or not the question is over the duration of time these newly migrated African families plan to live in Ireland, what must be emphasized is that this is relatively groundbreaking for Ireland, because it demands the recognition that the Island is facing the product of globalization – a new feature for a once impoverished state, that was once primarily focused on gaining full sovereignty from the United Kingdom.

Until the highly publicized financial collapse of the Irish economy, in which the European Union has had to intervene in the Irish economy, the Republic had emerged as a "Celtic Tiger," and a one-time poor country began to make a name for itself as a recognized member on the global stage (Lacy). Pertaining to the economic feats that Ireland achieved since the 1990s,

> Fintan O'Toole insists that the 'Republic of Ireland is the most globalised country on earth.' Trade and finance pass fluently in and out of the territorial boundaries of Ireland. As of 1993, Ireland received 25 percent of all new US investment into Europe, employing 94,000 people in 2002.[11][12] This inward investment since the early 1990s, along with EU contributions over the last two decades, has resulted in Ireland's economy flourishing, making it one of the strongest economies in the world.'(Lacey 1).

This rise in economic status in such a relatively short period of time began to attract job seekers from Africa, who wanted the chance to contribute to the Irish economy, with the majority of these African immigrants being highly educated. This relatively fledgling minority rapidly

multiplied into a visible ethnic group in major cities, such as Dublin. What started to take affect was that African women would come to Ireland, and they would give birth to their children on Irish soil, ostensibly making the babies Irish citizens. "In 2004, Dublin was hailed as 'the safest European city for a woman to have a baby' based on an extremely low maternal mortality rate. One of the obstetricians at the hospital…suggested that women might access information about this particular hospital before leaving Africa and arriving in Ireland" (Shandy, Power 11). Many perceived this as exploiting the system, and in 2004 a referendum made unprecedented changes to the allocation of citizenship. Needless to say, legitimate questions of social welfare, integration into the greater society, and the status of African asylum seekers became a focal point of political discussion. The unfortunate side effect of this scenario is that, Ireland, which has been historically known for its emigration, had a less than flattering image after a lack of hospitality of some toward these immigrants to the island. However, the Irish cannot say that this influx of immigration was unwarranted. "Since 1996…Immigrants were courted by Irish companies and the government to fill job shortages. Consequentially, there have been unprecedented levels of immigration in Ireland and likewise an unprecedented mixture of cultures and religions" (Lacey 296). What is certain is that one could correlate the past ten years of relative peace with the attentions of Ireland's population focused on immigration. A time of self-analysis and introspection seems to have taken place amongst the Irish which correlates to the lack of fighting between nationalists and loyalists. Historically, Ireland has been faced with warring tribes and a lack of unity within the island, and relatively speaking this influx of African immigrants is not a new phenomenon, but with the face of Ireland changing, perhaps the subsequent generations in Ireland will see "the troubles" with a different perspective.

Regardless, the wave of immigration does not stop with the African continent. Other groups are emerging as prominent ethnic minorities, which have shifted the focus of reunification towards multicultural dialogues for Ireland's future.

A steadily emerging movement in Ireland is the Gulen Movement, which is comprised of Turkish Irish Educational and Cultural Society (TIECS) members. Much of the attributed spread of Islamic awareness in the region is brought to the Island in part by the Gulen movement, where a transnational goal of integration is at the forefront of their social agenda (Lacey). "Islam is now the fastest growing religion in Ireland, with over 31,000 adherents, and has become part of the national conversation vis-à-vis Irish identity" (Lacey). Not only is this an entirely external ethnic group to Ireland, but with this growing movement a new religion is being imported that is foreign to Ireland, north and south respectively. If the Gulen movement continues to see success in its role of integration, throughout the island, the overall Irish paradigm will continue to embrace a tolerant view toward diversity, in the north and south of Ireland One major point that must be mentioned is the fact that none of these immigrant groups have expressed ambitions to politically govern, or occupy the island. As comical that statement may seem, this is a realization which could promote understanding especially among those who have bared the brunt of colonialism's impunity. With a greater marginalization of the border conflict that has plagued the Northern Ireland for decades, this new wave of immigration is giving a new focus, as well as cultural diversity to an otherwise isolated region of western Europe. Looking at this phenomenon with a positive perspective, it can ultimately serve as a catalyst for peace and understanding. If the Majority of the Irish populous can embrace diversity, there is no reason why they could not put aside historical grievances and put an end to the violence, whether loyalist, or nationalist.

What does the research suggest about this new wave of immigration into Ireland during the past 15 to 20 years? Ireland seems to reflect a standard trajectory of an immigration-receiving state, in spite of the four decade lag, behind other first world states Messina). This is relative to the context to west Europe, and as a result, the follow-up question is of how the Irish Case can reveal the western European migration politics. This discussion further reiterates the fact that in a globalized world the border conflict is giving way to different issues, such as economics and immigration of Eastern European nation-states in search for work. In the 1990s economists were saying Ireland had arrived, and with the various aspects of the economic landscape, it is to be expected that European counterparts are going to take full advantage of their European Union passports by seeking employment, even if that means in the Republic of Ireland. This could lead to immigrant children being placed in Irish schools, thus cultural diversity will beginning its interaction, hopefully for the betterment of all parties involved. Even more telling is the assertion that marginal cultures are generally pro-immigrant**.** When Catholics were asked their feelings on immigrant settlers of a "different race, '66 per cent were in favour of the settlement of immigrants of a different race or ethnic group, the equivalent figures among Protestants were notably lower at just…35 per cent respectively'" (Hayes, Dowds 10). Up to now, this chapter has placed emphasis on Ireland being a receiving state by means of immigration – yet as a member of the EU, Ireland is obligated to allow access for job seekers. "Estimates…illustrate that EEA nationals represent the majority of inward migration to Ireland. Poles (63,090), Lithuanians (24,808) and Latvians (13,999) are among the largest recent immigrant groups in Ireland" (Lacey). This marginalizes the border conflict by placing more attention to EU integration. This participation within the European Union is ostensibly helping to embrace diversity, whilst

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simultaneously coexisting peacefully. Once again, the fight for reunification is being weakened

by the fight to strengthen the Irish economy, even if that means recruiting job seekers from a

different region.

The integration into the European Union has significantly contributed to a considerable

level of change with Irish governmental legislation, pertaining to the border conflict. Prior to the

rise of unions and economic agreements, state borders were ostensibly concrete outlines where

sovereignty was exercised through the use of force. However, galvanization that is produced as a

byproduct of globalization tends to make these, once impenetrable borders, more or less arbitrary

outlines in which they are "bridges to the fulfillment of interests" (Hayward). With the fast-

paced attributes that capitalism brings, states that are part of economic institutions or unions,

such as the European Union, utilize multinational corporations or GATTs to further enterprise.

While this could be seen by some as an incredibly egregious operation, optimists see this as the

opportunity for member citizens to benefit financially, as well as culturally benefitting host-

states. Messina notes "the Irish are the most inclined to view the presence of minorities as

enriching the cultural life of the nation…Unlike many Europeans after 11 September 2001, fully

two-thirds of Irish non-Muslims evince tolerance of Muslims" (Messina 9). This is not even

mentioning self-determination. The question that is bound to emerge is about what the benefit is

to seek reunification, if other EU members can freely move to and from the host state for

economic advancement. As time progresses it seems inevitable that subsequent generations will

be asking the same question. If there is security, multi-cultural integration, and economic good

standing the issue with Irish reunification does not seem to be dire.

The progress that has been made since the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 has seen a successful cease fire, as well as a considerable end to the physical escalation of violence. But the agreement has not been the only contributing factor in light of the peace process. Since the Republic of Ireland's economic rise of the 1990s, the island has attracted a net wave of immigration, which has been tracked by analysts, and the state has been compared to a "normal" immigrant-receiving state (Messina). The connotations that are brought about by this emerging evidence suggests that Ireland's participation in the European Union, for better or worse, has transformed its national boundary to that of a low-lying hurdle for economic benefactors to jump on their journey towards employment opportunities. With the rise in immigration, the Irish population is experiencing cultural diversity, and the least path of resistance is to extend tolerance towards their EU counterparts, as well as the African Diaspora. The Gulen Movement, which integrates the Turkish cultural attributes to the Island, has staying power, along with Islam. In spite of everything, the fact remains that recent attention to immigration has been averting Irish minds off the six counties to the north, and substituting it with a more diverse cultural perspective; this phenomenon requires an introspective look as to what it means to be Irish, and whether reunification is an urging issue. The question that one should ask is whether it is more beneficial to live in a safe multicultural environment, or a volatile polarized environment. With Ireland pursuing its economic best interest, the politics of reunification seems to be diminishing.

THE NORTHERN IRISH IDENTITY IN REVIEW

Northern Ireland is comprised of two primary ethnic demographics, and it has been witnessed on a global scale the insidious nature, in which two conflicting groups of people have the capacity to elicit pain and suffering. The Irish Catholics who live in Northern Ireland are, in fact, a minority in the historically tumultuous region, since the Ulster province began to witness a shift in population prominence since the 18th century; ostensibly when Scottish settlers began to settle much of the land, which was being allocated to them by the royal monarchy. It has been centuries since the settlement of the Protestants began, and in spite of the perceived tolerance among those who inhabit the province, the prejudice is still pervasive amongst the population living in early twenty-first century Northern Ireland. However, a surprising shift is unfolding amongst the Ulster population, which may signal pragmatism in the dialogue between Catholics and Protestants. Within the realm of international relations the concept of nationalism has its place, and in order to prevent any negative connotations it is imperative that any misnomers are eradicated. Nationalism can be a pragmatic strategy for galvanizing several ethnic groups for the sake of unifying one-another for the development of a state, and what we have seen in the Northern Irish case is a lack of galvanization amongst the two primary groups. Instead there are two prominent national identities: Irish and British. Ever since the partition there has been contention between the two groups, and never a sense of unity. Rather, the six counties to the north have apparently been a region in perpetual limbo, trying to find where it ultimately wants to align itself. Majority of the Catholics in the North are strongly nationalist, and the Protestant

majority have loyalty to the Union for a variety of reasons. This has been the case historically, but recently there have been surveys reflecting a growing acceptance of a Northern Irish identity within the Ulster province, and this could have an effect on the future of the region. Perhaps this could mean peace for years to come. These major areas of focus are imperative to mastering the often allusive concept of identity in the North. This independent variable is pivotal to the discussion of Irish reunification, where the concept of identity is linked to the border conflict.

A deeper look into the Catholic population can dispel any misconceptions that have been stirring amongst the debate over Northern Ireland, and it can also help gain a greater conceptualization of the minority consensus. Most of the Republic of Ireland is comprised of a Catholic majority, and even though growing numbers of the Republic's citizens are becoming secularized, the Irish Republic is still a predominantly Catholic state. With the exception of recent immigration, the Republic of Ireland is comprised of an Irish population who traces their roots back to the island, before the British monarchy began the Ulster settlement. In the context of Northern Ireland, this "Catholic" demographic essentially translates to "ethnically" Irish. The religion of those living on the island can generally demarcate one's political standing pertaining to the border conflict. In the Republic of Ireland, any census will suggest a strong Catholic majority of the state. This can be traced all the way back to the fifth century when Christian missionaries began to convert the island, and due to the centuries-long isolation of outside influence, the island had cultivated into a particularly strong Catholic society, in which the Irish "Golden Era" can be credited with the erection of several Catholic monasteries, with the purpose of recording the gospel, and preserving the early history of the church. As of this writing, the Republic of Ireland still stands as one of the more predominant states in Europe, which

experiences a greater religiosity amongst the state's citizens, compared to the rest of the EU

member states; the Republic has a strong sense of identity. However, pertaining to the border

conflict, it can be asserted that "the conflict is not essentially religious, framing it initially in

Marxist (Bew et al., 1973) and colonial (MacDonald, 1986) terms, and later with concepts such

as ethnicity and nationalism…the most prevalent interpretation of conflict was … primarily

ethno-national in nature" (Claire 3). This is an important feature which is linked to the

population of Northern Ireland.

What makes the situation in Northern Ireland an area of interest is that the majority of

men and women who are surveyed would consider their Irish identity as geographical at best. In

other words, they feel politically and culturally British. For instance, "When Nigel Dodds MP

and MLA was asked why he was a unionist he replied: Why I would say that I'm a unionist is

that I fundamentally believe in the link with the rest of Great Britain, I mean that's my country...

it's my heritage, it's my identity" (Southern). And when asked to elaborate on what he considers

himself to identify with, his response seemed to be that which resonates amongst much of the

populous living in Ulster:

> I define myself as an Ulsterman and a British citizen. I don't go in for this stuff
>
> about I'm Irish and British . . . I'm not Irish, I'm an Ulsterman and I'm British.
>
> And the fact that I live on the island of Ireland is not relevant in terms of my
>
> political identity. . . . There are Northern Ireland people, these are British citizens
>
> in Ireland and there are Irish citizens in Ireland—Irish Gaelic identity, Ulster-
>
> Scots identity and that's the way I see it (Southern 1).

This statement is very indicative of the way the United Kingdom has treated "the troubles" in Northern Ireland over the decades. The British government is willing to accept a unified Ireland on the condition that majority of the Ulster people vote for this to be. As this telling statement represents, the majority of "Ulstermen" living in Northern Ireland swear allegiance to the U.K. and they do not feel an historical attachment to the Gaelic Irish who share the Island. Their Unionism accounts for several factors, which make reunification difficult.

The loyalist concept has been the source of much intrigue revolving around the border conflict, and there is a school of thought that is content with the notion of three major contributing factors for those who want to remain part of the union. As previously stated, many unionists attribute their allegiance to the United Kingdom on an ethnic level. Primarily due to the Ulster plantation which brought in Scottish settlers, who were of the Presbyterian denomination. Needless to say, the decedents of those settlers are quick to keep up the tradition of being loyal to the Union out of their cultural pride. However, another type of Unionism is being explained. "Like its cultural counterpart, liberal unionism defines itself against the 'Other' of the Republic of Ireland. But rather than dismissing the Irish state on primarily religious and cultural grounds, liberal unionists believe that it is limited in its capacity to deliver the liberty and pluralism that they think are inherent in the UK state" (White 121). An example cited by White is the state's health service and education system, which attracts liberal unionists to the U.K. as opposed to Reunifying with the Republic's government services. This is an understandable asset to remain separate from the Republic. Another form of unionism that a segment of the Protestant populous of Northern Ireland subscribes to is Economic Unionism.

Given that a united Ireland probably would need to be financially beneficial to

both parts of the island (polls in the Irish, Republic consistently have shown that

support for a united Ireland is conditional on it not adding substantially to the

level of taxation in the twenty-six counties), much like the reunification of

Germany there would likely be a transfer of funds from the richer to the poorer

half. The greater the disequilibrium between the two parts, the more financially

(and politically) painful this would be (White 122).

Economically speaking, this seems to be a logical argument, because regardless of the time

period, the economic parity is hard to be achieved to the point where unification will not burden

the tax payers of the north or south, respectively (White). These three main pillars of the loyalty

to the United Kingdom go a long way in telling the complexity of the factions that take place in

the north. In essence, it is in fact more than just a religious or ethnic divide. When taxpayers'

money is affected, people become more vocal – a major obstacle for Irish reunification. This is

also indicative of the identity survey results.

An interesting feature of Northern Ireland, which is analogous to many states in the

process of self-determination, is that unlike the rest of the United Kingdom the population of

Northern Ireland has been rather polarized pertaining to how the population identifies

themselves. The problem with this statistic is that with such a hotly contested national

identification, volatility has a greater potential of erupting, and this has been the result for

decades. Starting with a look at the Catholic population of Northern Ireland, surveys suggest that

more than half identify as Irish, not British. What the data reflects for the ethno-national

connection of people living in Northern Ireland, "around two-thirds of Protestants chose a British

identity, compared to 61 per cent of Catholics who endorse an Irish label. In contrast, almost no Protestant claimed an Irish identity and just 1-in-10 Catholics chose a British one" (Hayes, Mcallister 5).With the discussion of reunification of the island, the fact that more than half of Catholics refer to their identity as Irish, the overwhelming percentage of British identifiers holds as the sizable majority. As far as the Protestant surveys are concerned, over 60% of Protestants in Northern Ireland identify as British. This can be attributed to the Ulster immigrants during the plantation.

> There are extremely high correlations between religious (Catholic), national (Irish) and political (nationalist) identifications…However, despite high levels of religiosity amongst Catholics, religious identity is generally seen as simply marking out ethnic boundaries, whilst religion perse has little effect on political identity or attitudes (McAllister, 1982; McGarry and O'Leary, 1995; Coulter, 1997; Clayton, 1998) (Claire 5).

This is important for the reader to not misconstrue the conflict as a "Holy War" as perceived by many. Regardless, what can be suggested from the data is that most of Northern Ireland's population remains loyal to the Union, ostensibly because they *are* the majority. This independent variable is highly indicative of the hypothesis, which suggests that Irish reunification will not be seen in the near future. However, this omits the concept of a Northern Irish identity.

For decades, there has been a highly politicized occurrence of discord between the ethnic tension which has plagued subsequent generations, living in the region of the north, and what is

considerably disheartening is the perpetuation of prejudice between the two living in such

confined quarters. This is not a scenario of intolerance fueled by fear of the unknown. This

assumption would be more comprehensible, but those who are in conflict are on a first name

basis, with one another. Those who feel the toxins of such invasive hatred interact with one

another every day, through colleagues at work, or even through neighborhood dissent. However,

as time progresses, new opportunities have the ability to emerge from within the societal

framework. These new opportunities can result in new political beliefs, subcultures,

technological advancements which increase productivity and boost convenience for everyday

life, as well as a new national identification. The subsequent generation of adults and young

adults in the north seem to be reaching onto the emergence of a nationalism which has not been

rooted in Northern Ireland, since the partition. What surveys are now suggesting is a

phenomenon that is new to the region; more and more people, Catholics and Protestants alike,

are gaining an acceptance of "Northern Irish" nationalism. In spite of the recent findings, the

consensus is not split down the middle; among the youth, this was there finding:

> A different pattern emerges among young adults. Although young Catholics are
>
> committed to their traditional national allegiances _ 79 per cent chose an Irish
>
> identity, even more than adult Catholics _ this is not the case among young
>
> Protestants. Among this group, less than half chose a British identity. This
>
> suggests that national identity is not clearly differentiated along religious lines, at
>
> least for young Protestants. In fact, even more so than their adult counterparts, a
>
> significant minority have abandoned their traditional allegiances in favour of a
>
> Northern Irish label. This is not the case, however, among young Catholics, where

a much smaller proportion (18 per cent) favoured a Northern Irish identity"

(Hayes, Mcallister).

The repercussions that may unfold in the coming years could result in less emphasis placed on ethnic identity, and more emphasis placed among integration between the people within Northern Ireland, who feel no loyalty to the crown, or a sense of political affiliation to the Republic. Studies have been reflecting the patterns of Northern Irish nationalism on the rise, which could also be attributed to the increasing dialogue between Catholics and Protestants in the Ulster province. As stated previously, nationalism has its merits, especially in the arena of nation-building. What the experience can be attributed to is integration. For example, "While 76 per cent of Protestant adults who claimed a Northern Irish identity indicated that they would prefer to send their children to a religiously mixed school, the British or other identity were just 64 and 59 per cent, respectively" (Hayes, Mcallester). This is particularly the case with integrationist Protestants; the perspective with Catholics is not as open. With faction among the populous, a state is doomed, but when the population of a region can be effectively galvanized, violence is dramatically decreased, and issues pertaining to the economic well-being of the state are able to be focused on. "Although this increasing adoption of a Northern Irish label represents a major shift in identity patterns, particularly among young Protestants, its long-term impact should not be over-estimated" (Hayes, Mccallister 6). However, this growing national identity is still emerging, but if it continues to gain acceptance, dissident republicans may start to wane, and the peace process could reveal a positive outcome.

What this chapter has primarily focused on is not only the historical aspects of the conflicting ethnic perspectives on identity, but also the relation the Northern counties have to the Republic of Ireland, as well as to the United Kingdom. British Protestants in the Ulster province had, by the twentieth century comprised the majority of the six northern counties. Naturally, the surveys reflecting British loyalty are amongst Protestants. This explains the identity of most of Northern Ireland's population being British. However, the youth of Ireland find themselves in a position unlike the northerners of the past; they do not necessarily feel such a strong alignment with either side. They have, in a sense, developed their own culture, which is unique to Northern Ireland. What they feel is a mainly Northern Irish Identity. With this generation planting the metaphorical seed of change, the border conflict may cease to be perpetuated, with peace between Catholics and Protestants being solidified by way of a shared national identity. This is an excellent example of how nationalism has its rightful place in international relations. Overall, with the galvanization of Catholics and Protestants claiming one identity unique to Great Britain and Ireland, the desire to reunify Ireland might be attenuated. If both parties are united, it seems counter intuitive to align with another state for the sake of erasing a border. This is an excellent advancement towards peace in the North.

THE FUTURE POLITICS OF THE EMERALD ISLE

Over the course of this writing, a lot of research and exploration has gone into the "troubles" in Ireland, which has spanned the course of several decades, along with an immensely long and tumultuous history between the Irish and the English. As of now, what have been covered are three major components which are likely to be the cause of Ireland's future, concerning reunification of the island. A coinciding variable of this case study is the future of potential amicability between two cultures sharing a confined region. The independent variables in my study have been the concerted political attitudes toward terrorism after the events in New York City and Washington D.C., on September 11th 2001, the recent wave of net immigration to the island since the 1990s, and equally as important, the perceived identity of those living in Northern Ireland. These three independent variables are inextricably linked to the determinants toward a reunified Ireland, and an ongoing peace process in the northern Ulster counties. What the world has witnessed since the Good Friday agreement in 1998 has been a significantly less violent 10+ years, and in spite of the economic collapse of 2008, the unprecedented level of good will towards the Catholic Nationalists and the Protestant Loyalists must not go unmentioned. The Republic of Ireland, which was synonymously known as the Celtic Tiger of the 1990s received an influx of return Irish Americans to the island in economically fair weather. The level of tolerance among new immigrants from eastern Europe and Africa have been a constant reminder of the change in ethnicity, which makes the fight between the two prime players of this political conflict seem lessened. However, further analysis must consistently be reviewed, in order to obtain a thorough digestion of the past, present, and future of Northern Ireland.

What seems to be taking place on the island, as of this writing, is an unfathomable level of peaceful political participation between nationalist and loyalist parties in the Ulster counties, and as the research has suggested, the September 11th terrorist attacks had an irreversible effect on the global paradigm which views terrorism as a heinous act, which must not be negotiated with. The overall distain for such violent acts on soft-targets has infuriated the likes of the American Department of Defense, as well as British Parliament. What was once acceptable amongst Irish nationalists and sympathetic Irish-Americans, the perspective that the Irish Republican Army is doing a service to nationalists has shifted to a painful memory, which still feels far too recent for many one-time supporters of the "revolution" back in Ireland. The once wildly successful grass-roots NORAID campaign in Massachusetts and New York has been officially condemned by the United States, The Republic of Ireland, and the United Kingdom respectively. Ever since the IRA had disbanded their arms campaign, Sinn Fein has acted as the political figure, and the party has gained success in Northern Ireland since the turn of the century. Due to the fact that the bulk of the violence has substantially ceded, and the marginal assassination attempts and "anniversary car-bombings" being carried out by dissident Republicans, any attempts to garner widespread support has not been granted the satisfaction to these groups.

Another topic of this study was the recent phenomenon of net-immigration to the island of Ireland, north and south, respectively. What made this such an important independent variable in the cause-and-effect link of Irish Reunification and eventual sustaining peace was primarily for two reasons. First, the fact that the island, which was infamous for emigration, had ironically been receiving waves of immigrants from Irish-Americans that wanted a piece of the "Irish

dream", which was sweeping the 1990s and early 2000s. The wave of immigration did not stop at the Irish Diaspora; it extended its emerald reach into eastern EU states, such as Poland, the Czech Republic; states that were hindered by the former Soviet Union. Ireland was a member of the European Union since the 1970s made it susceptible to immigration. An African Diaspora began to emerge from African mothers, who would give birth to African-Irish babies. Furthermore, uproar caused the Republic to amend its clause extending birthright citizenship for anyone. With such an influx of different cultures being represented on the Emerald Isle, the original polarization of Irish nationalists, and Unionist Ulster Scotts was being diluted by a multitude of ethnicities, which had very little connection to border conflict. Secondly, the historical strife which spanned centuries was being marginalized by various cultural influences, such as TIECS, importing Islamic awareness into the island that brought interest to international phenomena. What the immigration ostensibly transcended into was a level of cooling between the two main ethnic groups particularly in the North, and the diversification created by economic factors, ultimately sidetracked the perceived urgency of Irish Reunification.

Finally, the independent variable which supported my thesis was the perceived identity of the unionists living in Northern Ireland. In essence, unionists identified themselves as culturally, politically, or economically in accordance with the United Kingdom. In any case, the fact that a majority of the Ulster population expressed a loyal sentiment to the U.K. weakens the support for Irish reunification, because the minority has a Gaelic Irish identity. However, there is an emerging acceptance of Northern Irish nationalism, amongst the adults and young adults in Ulster. With this in mind, it may have an unparalleled effect on the peace process, for the betterment of those living in Northern Ireland. As far as the future of Irish reunification is

concerned, a new level of flux takes precedence. What the literature suggests is that the generation which has grown up in a relatively non-violent period has not acquired as strong a feeling of distinct Britishness, and to a lesser extent the same can be said about the subsequent Catholic generation. This means that a loosening of ethnic and historic anchors have enabled a more integrated nationality to begin to flourish in Northern Ireland, which is long overdue. As unity within the six counties goes up the amount of reunification supporters goes down. The following table reflects these issues.

<div align="center">Correlation Table</div>

Table 1: Top shaded row reflects the independent variables. Far left column reflects the areas affected.

I.V. / Area Affected	Post 9/11 Outlook	Net Immigration	Northern Irish Identity
Peace and Integration	Decreases support for violence. Supports Diplomacy	Dilutes the conflict between two ethnic communities	Younger pop. Mixing via Northern Irish nationalism
Reunification	Lessons the immediacy	EU membership makes borders more accessible	Identity shifting away from "Irish" or "British"

The discussion of Irish reunification is important, because it is a region that has been home to unwarranted losses of life throughout the years. The yearning for a solution or for an end goal has been collectively shared by the British, Irish, and American governments, as well as by the locals who are personally affected by the hardships. The relationship between Ireland and

Great Britain can be traced back to the twelfth century, and unfortunately it has been a tumultuous one. However, with this point being expounded upon, the events that have taken place up to this writing, seems to project a future which may not see an Ireland under the auspices of one government any time soon. With due credit being given to the global paradigm towards suspected terrorist organizations and the feeling that diplomacy has no room for it, along with the current economic trends, which correlate with immigration, and not to forget the new form of Northern Irish identity taking root, amongst subsequent generations, the soil for the six Ulster counties to merge with the Republic may not yet be fertile enough. With that in mind, despite this estimation, the positive trend seems to suggest that the pinnacle of violence is in the past, and a hopeful future, a future with cooperation between two historically factious groups seems to hold steady. With several contributing factors culminating into the past ten to twelve years, the level of progress is faster than initially expected. In spite of this, Northern Ireland is still being subjected by violent acts, and as recently as April 2nd 2011, Constable Ronan Kerr was killed when a bomb exploded underneath his car. It was a warning to Catholics not to join the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), which is trying to increase the level of Catholic officers on the force. This terrorist act was condemned by all parties, and it has not succeeded in disrupting the integration process in Northern Ireland. In any case, the trajectory for Northern Ireland remains to be that of a member of the U.K., and any type of move away from that is unlikely for the 21st century.

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