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A complex history turned into a tale of reconciliation: A critical discourse analysis of Irish newspaper coverage of the Queen's visit to the Republic of Ireland

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A complex history turned into a tale of reconciliation: A critical discourse analysis of Irish newspaper coverage of the Queen's visit to the Republic of Ireland

Ciara Spencer

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is built on the theoretical impetus to critically challenge discursive articulations of 'reconciliation', which define the boundaries between the 'inside' and 'outside', contributing to forms of social exclusion. It challenges literature that assumes that journalists hold a responsibility to pacify conflicts which hold pejorative understandings of the nature of conflict.

Guided by the overall research question: 'How are the identities between 'inside' and 'outside' of reconciliation articulated and negotiated, in the Irish newspaper coverage of the Queen's visit to Ireland?', this paper will use Hall's theory of articulation, as introduced in the theoretical chapter, to critically examine the ways in which reconciliation is articulated within Irish mainstream newspaper coverage, questioning how journalists perform boundary work, between those deemed within the collective 'we' in comparison to the 'dissident 'Other''.

Using a Critical Discourse Analysis on three mainstream newspapers from the Republic of Ireland will facilitate an in-depth textual analysis, and it will be revealed how various Irish newspapers selectively portray a complex history of antagonism and conflict within a simplified tale of reconciliation. This analysis will reveal how those who are deemed outside of this tale, the 'dissident republicans', are deemed the irrational, unreasonable and criminal 'Other', in comparison to its rational counterpart.

However, crucial to a theory of articulation, is recognition of how articulations are never absent from contradictions and contestation, revealing the contingency of representations, which although they may seem real, stable, and even common-sense, are in fact not. It will be revealed how the *Irish Times* potentially provides an alternative platform which facilitates agonism and difference, and challenges exclusionary articulations of a collective 'we', as found in 'Other' mainstream newspapers.

INTRODUCTION

I now invite you, distinguished guests, to stand and join me in a toast:
‘To the health and happiness of Her Majesty and His Royal Highness;
To the well-being and prosperity of the people of Britain;
To the cause of peace and reconciliation on this island;
And to continued friendship and kinship between the peoples of Ireland and Britain.’
Go raibh maith agaibh (President Mary McAleese, 18th May, 2011).

While significant literature theorising on the role of the media and journalism in peace and reconciliation has focused on its responsibility to neutralise conflict, there is a need to challenge the discursive articulation of reconciliation in the media. This dissertation is normatively inspired by Chantal Mouffe’s (2000, 2013) agonistic approach to reconciliation, which asserts that the hope for a wholly reconciled and harmonious society must be deserted. Crucially, in the name of reason and rationality, a politics of reconciliation is inherently exclusionary, as through the articulation of a rational and reasonable ‘we’ included within reconciliation, this inevitably relies on those who are deemed outside, as irrational and unreasonable. A theory of articulation (Slack, 1996), as theorised by Hall, will be used to examine how a tale of reconciliation negotiates relations between those deemed ‘inside’ and those who are excluded. Taking an interest in the discursive articulation of reconciliation during the Queen’s visit to Ireland, and how this affects the identities involved within this articulation, this section will briefly state the historical context of reconciliation in Ireland.

The Queen’s visit to the Republic of Ireland in May 2011 has turned a complicated and turbulent history into a tale of reconciliation. This complex past, which is recognised by many as traumatic, can be epitomized by a number of key ‘traumas’, namely; sixteenth century plantations, the 1641 Rebellion, colonisation by Britain, the devastation of the Famine (1845-1852), World War 1 (1914-1918), the War of Independence (1919-1921) and the Civil War (1922-3), as have the Troubles since 1969 (Dawson, 1999). Intimately linked to this experience of trauma, has been a story of British colonisation, oppression and neglect towards Ireland, for example, in British negligence towards mass starvation and disease, leading to the death of over one million Irish during the Famine.

Progressing through the Troubles and leading to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement (GFA) and the apparent culmination of the Troubles, there has been a progressive trend in the Irish Republic for an appeal to move forwards, reconciling past differences, once being ‘binary opposites’ to becoming ‘unique neighbours’ (Hickman, 2000: 51). This has been

characteristic of a context of economic prosperity, in Ireland being named as the ‘Celtic Tiger’ economy in 1995, and while once “Othered’ by many British political and media commentators, Ireland and Britain have now seemingly re-articulated their relationship as one between ‘two modern countries’ in a ‘post-empire malaise’ (Hickman, 2000: 51).

Coupled with these changes, and a thaw in conflict, a narrative of moving on from the past emerged within the 1990s. This can be seen as present in the Downing Street Declaration, which was signed in December 1993 by the British Prime Minister, John Major, and the Irish Taoiseach, Albert Reynolds, which was assumed to have initiated the peace process. The Declaration stated:

The most urgent and important issue facing the people of Ireland, North and South, and the British and Irish governments together, is to remove the causes of conflict, to overcome the legacy of history and to heal the divisions which have resulted, recognising that the absence of a lasting and satisfactory settlement of relationships between the peoples of both islands has contributed to continuing tragedy and suffering (cited in O’Brien, 1993: 424).

However, it is thought that this political ‘reconciliation’ was promoted by the governments of Ireland and Britain to stabilize mutual interests in capital and security, despite their turbulent past relationship (Dawson, 1999: 183). In addition, within British and Irish institutional and political narratives of reconciliation, it has been thought by some that they have displayed what could be named as an ‘institutional amnesia’, ‘Otherwise known as ‘state-organized forgetting’ concerning the causes and implications of conflict (Goodall, 1994: 58-9 cited in Dawson, 1999: 183). This so-called amnesia was originally associated with a British reluctance to confront past colonial atrocities, while more recently for the Irish Republic it was a backlash against militant Republicanism, during the Troubles.

This leads us to the case considered within this paper, Queen Elizabeth’s four-day state visit to the Republic of Ireland from 17th- 20th May, 2011. This was seen by many political and media commentators as a significant moment in Anglo-Irish relations, being the first visit by the Queen as a British Sovereign to the Irish Republic. The visit consisted of a number of engagements whereby Queen Elizabeth visited places of historical significance.¹ Additionally, a number of political speeches, including the Queen’s speech at a state dinner in Dublin

¹ This included visiting memorials in remembrance of those who fought in the British Army, while also visiting the Garden of Remembrance, where she laid a wreath honouring the Irish who died fighting for independence against British rule. Queen Elizabeth also visited Croke Park, which was the site

Castle, followed by President Mary McAleese's speech, were televised, with a strong theme of reconciliation expressed.

Despite this strong theme of reconciliation, portrayed as a 'historic event' by newspapers in Ireland (Dekavalla & Rafter, 2014), it is important to note that there is still resistance, both North and South of Ireland, to the monarchy and British rule in the six counties of Northern Ireland. Individuals who have dissented from the Peace Process and reconciliation have been homogenised through the categorisation of the term 'dissident republicans', as noted by Crowley (2011). This was a term mobilised in the lexicon of Irish and British political and media discourse to refer to Irish Republicans who dissented from the Good Friday Agreement (GFA), who were once associated with Sinn Fein and the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and who had seemingly revealed their dissidence against Britain in the war. However, today it has now become a term used to describe a number of groups, including paramilitaries such as the Real IRA, political organisations such as socialist group Eirigi, and also independent writers and thinkers such as Anthony McIntyre (Crowley, 2011: 7). In addition, it includes both those peaceful and those violent. Relevant to this dissertation is how the media may mobilise this term within the articulation of reconciliation, as it is believed that the term itself was coined by a journalist during the Troubles (Crowley, 2011).

As Mouffe argues 'you can... have forms of pacification that merely cover-up conflict' (Carpentier & Cammaerts, 2007: 973). It is the aim of this paper, by using a theory of articulation, to uncover what is masked and who is marginalised through the constant play of boundary work between those considered inside and outside of reconciliation. This will involve looking at how individuals and groups who have dissented from the Peace Process and reconciliation have been homogenised through the categorisation of the term 'dissident republicans', questioning how the media works to reaffirm a 'minority's status' as the 'Other' (Couldry, 2000).

THEORETICAL CHAPTER

This theoretical chapter will begin by outlining the relevant literature, to critically analyse the discursive articulation of reconciliation, and the role the media should play. From this, the conceptual framework will synthesise the concepts that will be used which will guide a critical

where fourteen civilians were killed at a Gaelic football match by British forces in 1920, known by many as Bloody Sunday.

discourse analysis. Finally, the third section will set out the research objectives for this dissertation.

Literature review

Politics of reconciliation and the role of the media

Theoretical literature in the field of peace and reconciliation, and the role the media ought to play within such a process, is nuanced, contested and internally contentious. While this section touches upon this diverse debate, it does so with relevance to the normative role the media should play, challenging the underlying philosophical assumptions about the need for ‘conflict-resolution’ and reconciliation, as inspired by Mouffe (2000, 2013).

Reconciliation as a concept has gained momentum since the 1990s, following reconciliatory efforts in South Africa. It has been taken up, subsequently, as a concept with a compelling normative appeal (Lederach, 1997). In its practical application the concept is extensively used in relation to peace-building, with a common understanding of reconciliation as defined by Bar-Tal, who writes within the context of a more general and psychological understanding and states:

Reconciliation in the psychological framework refers to a societal-cultural process that encompasses the majority of society members, who form new beliefs about the former adversaries, about their own society, and about the relationship between the conflicting groups (Bar-Tal, 2000: 356).

The role of journalism in peace-building and reconciliation has been theorised with optimism and pessimism, with Galtung (2002) and Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) arguing that socially responsible news may influence policy and public opinion away from conflict towards ‘conflict transformation’, while Wolfsfeld (2004) has taken a more sceptical approach arguing that the conflict often takes precedence in the reporting than peace. In relation to Northern Ireland, scholars have looked at how reconciliation was constructed within the media, encouraging popular public support in favour of the Belfast Agreement, paving the way towards the Peace Process (Wolfsfeld, 2008; McLaughlin & Baker 2010). Specifically, McLaughlin and Baker produced an analysis, based upon the premise that the media provoked a ‘propaganda of peace’ within Northern Ireland, that was mobilized towards the Good Friday Agreement, by promising future peace and economic dividends (2010:13), while Wolfsfeld has argued that there was evidence of responsible news media coverage in Northern Ireland during the Peace Process, avoiding the previous sensationalism of violence

towards terror and the IRA (2004:177-9).

In addition, specifically in relation to the Republic of Ireland and the Queen's visit, Dekavalla and Rafter (2014) have focused on how the Queen's visit was constructed as a media event, and represented as a conquest, which in effect was contributing to peace, within both British and Irish newspapers. The method deployed was a quantitative content analysis to study how the media portrayed this event as a conquest and how it contributed to reconciliation efforts, gradually moving towards peace and 'consensus' (Dekavalla & Rafter, 2014:15).

However, philosophically, there is a normative idea underpinning this literature in promoting ideas of conflict-resolution and reconciliation, assuming that there is a 'problem' to be fixed, coupled with a pejorative understanding of the nature of conflict (Lederach 1997; Bar-Siman-Tov, 2004 cited in Little, 2012: 209). According to such thinking, conflict is deemed pathological, and societies are not inherently contaminated by conflict and disagreement but rather, conflict can become defused. By engaging in this liberal democratic thought it is held that through various institutional and functional mechanisms, conflict and antagonism are contained and neutralised (Little, 2012: 209). This may take the form of encouraging civil society mechanisms, via the establishment of public sphere(s), to engage in critical reflection, deliberation and dialogue, further contributing towards the neutralisation of conflict. In relation to the media, as inspired by Habermas' discourse theory of democracy, Wolfsfeld states that the reporters' role in peace and reconciliation is 'to provide as much information as possible about the roots of the problem and to encourage a *rational public debate* concerning the various options for ending it' (2004:5, emphasis added) and Kavalla and Rafter's assertions of reaching reconciliation towards *consensus*, as argued in the case of the Queen's visit (2014:15).

Nonetheless, critical approaches take issue with such approaches that work towards 'a perfectly reconciled society', due to practical inapplicability and normative undesirability (Mouffe, 2013: xi). Instead they highlight the discursive construction and representation of reconciliation; questioning the implications of these manifested power relations, looking at whom it works to exclude.

Chantal Mouffe (2000, 2013) provides an agonistic approach based upon her proposal of radical democracy, which provides a strong critique of liberal approaches. This is also a useful critique to those who argue that the role of the media should be based on such premises. Mouffe argues that 'liberal utopia' of deliberative democratic accounts assume that through notions of consensus and 'reconciliation', political passions can be eradicated, towards rational and critical engagement and deliberation (Mouffe, 2000: 30; Mouffe, 1999). This, she argues, misses the crucial predominance of 'the political' and its dimensions of

power and antagonism (Mouffe, 2000: 31). Democratic politics, Mouffe insists, must ‘come from this anti-essentialist perspective in understanding and accepting that the relation between social agents is one from which power is ineradicable’ (Mouffe, 2000: 21). In this sense, Mouffe asserts that to base a model of democracy on an ideal of unconstrained deliberation, between free and equal people, towards consensus is politically unfeasible, as it dismisses power relations. Crucial to the relevance of this dissertation, and its interest in the exclusionary, discursive articulation of reconciliation, is how these orthodox approaches exclude ‘Other’s, in the name of ‘reason’ and rational consensus, and thus the frontiers between legitimacy and illegitimacy seem independent from power relations, which works to eliminate adversaries, while appearing neutral (Mouffe, 2000: 31). In this sense, it must be recognised how forms of collective identification are constituted through difference, and through acts of power, so that any collective condition of a ‘we’ requires a ‘they’ (Mouffe, 2013: 5). Consequently, those who are considered ‘unreasonable’ and ‘irrational’ for not engaging within reconciliation and consensus are marginalized from within this dominant order of a reconciled society. This may have a silencing effect in political communication and reconciliation, as also feared by Young (1996). As a result, attempts at rational consensus, through performing ‘discursive exclusion’, deny the predominance of social antagonisms and disagreement within political and social relations (Howarth, 2006: 105). Ultimately ‘the search for a consensus without exclusion and the hope for a perfectly reconciled and harmonious society have to be abandoned’ (Mouffe, 2013: xi).

In an interview with Carpentier and Cammaerts, Mouffe (2007: 267) demonstrates how the field of culture and the media create and reproduce hegemonic articulations and hold considerable power in creating common sense, as relevant to the discursive construction of reconciliation. Mouffe asserts that the media’s role should be that of a gate-opener, as conceptualised by Manca (1989: 171 cited in Carpentier and Cammaerts, 2007: 969), urging journalists to represent a plurality of citizens’ experiences and points of view; supporting voices of all people. Mouffe regards this as a media facilitating agonistic public spaces (Carpentier & Cammaerts, 2007: 974). Such public spaces are not focused on ultimate reconciliation but focused on enabling the expression of dissensus. In this sense, the only type of consensus possible would be coupled with dissent, and will always be ‘conflictual consensus’ (Mouffe, 2013: 8). Normatively informed by Mouffe’s interview with Carpentier and Cammaerts, this dissertation aims to address a lacuna in the literature, whereby there is a need to challenge the discursive articulation of reconciliation in the media, and its underlying philosophical assumptions of the pathological nature of conflict, using an empirical case such as in the Irish Republic, which lacks critical intervention. This will ask fundamental questions of whom reconciliation works to exclude, through the constant play at

boundary work. As Mouffe argues ‘you can... have forms of pacification that merely cover-up’ conflict (Carpentier & Cammaerts, 2007: 973) and therefore, a theory of articulation, as introduced in the following section, will be mobilized to uncover what is masked under this articulation.

A theory of articulation

Theoretical insights on a theory of articulation can be attributed initially to Laclau and Mouffe, also co-existing with a wider-poststructuralist turn in the field of media and communication research (Corner, 1998). Such research can be typified in its most sophisticated and developed theorization by Stuart Hall, who similarly draws on concepts such as discourse, articulation, ideology, hegemony, identity and representation, with reference to Laclau and his post-Marxist theories (Hall, 1986a, 1986b; Morley & Chen, 1996). These concepts will be introduced and conceptually considered in the following two chapters, as relevant to the theory of articulation.

Articulation, while being a broad concept, can be strategically defined, borrowing Hall’s definition as:

...the unity formed by the combination or articulation, is always, necessarily, a ‘complex structure’: a structure in which things are related, as much through their differences as through their similarities. This requires that the mechanisms which connect dissimilar features must be shown - since no ‘necessary correspondence’ or expressive homology can be assumed as given. It also means- since the combination is a structure (an articulated combination) and not a random association, that there will be structured relations between its parts, i.e. relations of dominance and subordination (Hall, 1980d: 325 cited in Slack, 1996: 115).

The role of the discursive is crucial in this process of articulation, as Hall posits that what matters in this formulation are ‘the particular ways in which these [ideological] elements are organized together within the logic of different discourses’ (Hall, 1980c: 174 cited in Slack 1996: 120). However, what is crucial, is that these unified articulations, however stable they may seem, are not determined, absolute or essential but are an articulation under certain historical circumstances (Hall, 1986a: 53).

The origins of the concept, as initially developed by Laclau in *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory* (1977), and then adapted by Hall, has built on a number of Marxist thinkers, namely; Althusser, Gramsci and of course Marx himself (while departing in a number of additional ways, as well). From Althusser, the conception of a *complex totality* structured in dominance was developed, which looked at the relationship between various levels that

become ‘articulated’ in a complex and contradictory process (Slack, 1996: 117). One of these levels, crucially, is the ideological element, whereby these relations reflect a process of articulation and re-articulation (Hall, 1985). In this perspective, Althusser (1971: 144-145) argued that rather than reflecting the natural social order, newspapers and media texts work to normalize certain practices, presenting its own system of meanings as natural, which are often taken as real, so accordingly they are ideological. Underneath this, Althusser (1971: 146) assumes that the ‘ruling class’ is active behind ideological state apparatus, such as with newspapers and the wider media, reproducing a ruling ideology, despite its struggles and contradictions. While a noteworthy contribution, Hall resists from reducing everything to class, looking at multiple forms of power relations of domination (Slack, 1996: 121).

Gramsci’s notion of hegemony was very influential within the theory of articulation. In *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (2001), Laclau and Mouffe theorise how hegemony is always constituted by articulation, as a result of various different and linked discursive elements, which ‘is at a given moment accepted as the “natural order”, jointly with the common sense that accompanies it, is the result of sedimented hegemonic practices’, becoming rigid and fixed (Mouffe, 2013:2). This happens in a hegemonic process whereby social groups actively ‘consent’ to subordinate status, and then the articulation becomes accepted as a natural order, or accepted as common-sense (Slack, 1996: 117). The dominant group holding resources naturalises its own practices through the control of articulation, and the struggle over meaning is the struggle of articulation, with the media playing a crucial role in this articulatory process.

What is significant for Hall’s contribution to the theorisation of articulation is the explanation of how articulation can be re-articulated and contested, which can work to challenge dominant ideology (1996b). In this sense, Hall’s arguments have developed since Marx, who in *The German Ideology*, pointed to a society pre-constituted and determined by the material forces of power and history. As Trimbur (1993) demonstrates, post-Marxist thinking has criticised this over-deterministic thinking of the material world, and therefore places emphasis on the discursive in the articulation processes. In this sense, Hall demonstrates, how due to the complex relations between the discursive relations, they are never complete, with no necessary correspondence, and thus can be challenged.

However, where Hall departs from Laclau’s theorisation of articulation is that he ‘reins in discourse’ while insisting that although no practice exists outside of discourse, he does not reduce everything else to it (Slack, 1996: 122). For Hall, it was Laclau’s theorisation that offered a way out of Marxist structuralism and reductionism, through thinking of cultural forms in a non-unitary way (Hall, 1986a: 56). Nonetheless, Hall fears that Laclau

overemphasises the discursive as a total reality, losing reference to material conditions, albeit in their determinate discursive form. This is important as it acknowledges how a range of social forces, are complexly articulated in structures of domination, rather than assuming that there is nothing but ideology in its discursive form (Slack, 1996: 122).

As relevant to news journalism, the focus of this paper, the theory of articulation is strategically driven to understand the all-pervasive presence of the political and of power relations. Hall argues that journalists are not immune from ideology, and distinguishes between the formal and the ideological level of news value, whereby the latter level belongs to moral-political discourse present in society (Hall, 1973:180). He asserts that there is a 'double articulation' that 'binds the inner discourse of the newspaper to the ideological universe of the society'; appreciating the crucial role of journalists in articulatory processes (Hall, 1973: 180). As relevant to a critical analysis of media texts, coupled with a theory of articulation, there is awareness that media texts do not merely 'mirror reality', as Fairclough argues, but rather, constitute reality in ways that are dependent on the context in which they are articulated (Fairclough, 1995: 103-4).

As noted by Yin (2005), closely related to Hall's theory of articulation is his theorisation of 'selective presentation', as the primary power of media text (Hall, 1980). This is a process whereby particular discursive elements are allowed to appear, while others are not. Such selection-representation processes define the potential interpretations of a media text and how it is read (Corner, 1983 cited in Yin, 2005: 160). As such, how an event is articulated and represented to its readers constitutes particular and preferred meanings for the audience by highlighting some meanings while excluding others (Carragee, 1990 cited in Yin, 2005: 160). As relevant to the news and journalism in regard to remembering or forgetting past atrocities when re-counting reconciliation, Stanley Cohen writes; 'the media draw the clearest line: the events disappear from "current" news. Wars end with an official peace; famines are declared to be over' (2001: 117). In this case, what is denied presence in the media, as what is declared present within the media, is also part of a conscious or unconscious ideological, articulatory process.

To summarise, articulation relates to the various contradictory elements, which come together within a particular context to produce meaning in the world. Understanding the ways in which these discourses are articulated and understanding their ideological impetus facilitates an understanding of power relationships within society. Taking the idea of identity into account is fundamental to articulation; this leads us to the following section.

Identity as a strategic tool

Intimately related to the theory of articulation is how the process of articulation negotiates subject positions and collective identities leading to 'inside', 'outside' relations. Three main conceptual insights will be drawn, namely; how identities are always fluid in their discursive formation, how identities are constituted through symbolic boundaries of difference and in relation to the 'Other', and finally, how identities within the boundaries are often negotiated through 'a chain of equivalence', in order to reinstate sameness in their common rejection to the 'Other'.

As widely accepted, identities are relational and never fully constituted but rather they are shaped through discursive practices, and although they may seem relatively fixed, they are in fact contingent. In this theorisation, Hall quite persuasively demonstrates the complex process of identification, which he argues is through 'a process of articulation, a suturing, an over-determination...but never a proper fit, a totality' (Hall & Du Gay, 1996: 3). Concurring with Hall, Laclau and Mouffe (2001: 111) assert that identity construction relies on articulatory practices, being a process of contingent and partial fixation of discursive elements, which have no necessary constitution.

Despite the weaknesses of using identity as a conceptual tool, due to its relatively unstable nature, it is important to use it as 'a strategic and positional one' (Hall and Du Gay, 1996: 3), in order to address issues of subordination, albeit real or imagined. It is fundamental in addressing such issues to understand how collective identities are constructed through difference and in relation to the 'Other', as theorised by Hall (1997). It is through marking out and classifying these differences that social orders are produced, with power struggles and domination transcending social relations. As Douglas writes, 'it is only by exaggerating the difference between within and without, above and below, male and female, for and against, that semblance of order is created' (1966: 4).

As relevant to the media, one can note how its principle role, as articulated by Silverstone, is its constant play at 'boundary work' in this production and reproduction of sameness and difference (Silverstone, 2007:19). Building on Silverstone and Hall's work on the production of difference and the relation to the 'Other', Orgad defines two important concepts highlighting the marking of these symbolic boundaries within the media, namely; binary oppositions and stereotypes (Orgad, 2012: 30). Binary oppositions refer to how the meaning of a word is defined by its opposite (Orgad, 2012: 30). For example, we know what innocence means because of what it is not, criminal. The media often holds the power to represent these dialogical positions. These classifications decipher who is an 'outsider' in a social system, excluding those from mainstream society, as produced in relation to the 'insider' (Woodward,

1997: 33).

Related to this, is the concept of stereotypes, which highlights the ways in which characteristics and traits are simplified so that they are ‘easily grasped and widely recognised’, contributing to the symbolic construction and reproduction of the ‘Other’ (Orgad, 2012: 30). These oppositions are neither neutral nor essential, but rather, they are inscribed in power relations, contributing to the (re)production of marginalisation and subordination.

As related to forms of exclusion, one can note how this relation to the ‘Other’, as present in the media, constructs reality in appearing factual and credible, and thus may work to reaffirm a minority’s status as the ‘Other’ (Couldry, 2000: 4). This will be relevant to the Irish case, as forms of political and social exclusion, in identifying how articulations of ‘reconciliation’ can reproduce ‘a stabilization of power that always entails some form of exclusion’ as suggested by Mouffe (2000: 104). Ultimately, there is no possibility of complete inclusion within any articulation, always depending on an outside (Carpentier & Cammaerts, 2007: 96).

However, in Georgiou’s critique of Barth and his tendency to overemphasise the stability of boundaries, Georgiou argues that Barth fails to appreciate the significance of what happens within the boundaries, and the flexibility of these boundaries (Georgiou, 2001: 42). In this sense, this paper will question how an articulation can negotiate the identities within those that are being reconciled, as in this case Ireland and Britain, being at the same time reliant on the outside of its articulation, the dissident ‘Other’.

This will draw on Laclau and Mouffe, who conceptually highlight how social identities are internally constituted, using the terminology of ‘logic of equivalence’ and ‘logic of difference’. In their account they acknowledge how boundaries can dissolve between social groups into a chain of equivalences through sameness and ‘simplification’, and re-assert antagonistic frontiers in opposition to the threatening ‘Other’ (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 130). Simply put, they become ‘equivalent in their common rejection of the excluded identity’ (Laclau, 2005: 70). The identities are thus produced through political struggles, and these social antagonisms attempt to destabilise the ‘Other’ identity, while also needing that very ‘Other’ as a constitutive outside in order to articulate their own identity (Carpentier & Cammaerts, 2007: 965).

Conceptual Framework

This research project is built on the theoretical impetus to critically challenge discursive articulations that define boundaries between the ‘inside’ and ‘outside’, producing forms of

social exclusion. It understands the theory of articulation and the conceptual awareness of articulation and identity and difference, as crucial to examining these formations, as relevant to the (re)production of boundary work between sameness and difference, as presented through the media.

Crucially, a text can define, articulate and produce meaning, which can be taken as factual or neutral within the discursive struggle towards hegemonic meaning. Critically analysing these discursive struggles, using a Critical Discourse Analysis (as introduced within the section which follows) necessitates conceptual awareness of binary oppositions and stereotypes, as defined by Orgad, in order to understand how boundaries between ‘us’ and ‘them’ are articulated (2012: 30). Additionally, conceptual awareness of Laclau and Mouffe’s ‘logic of equivalence’ and a ‘logic of difference’ is crucial in appreciating how antagonisms are simplified within the boundaries of the ‘we’ and the ‘dissident Other’ (2001: 130).

A critical variety of approaches which challenge discursive constructions of peace and reconciliation were outlined within the theoretical chapter. Informed by an agonistic approach as outlined by Mouffe, a theory of articulation will inform this research strategy, in examining the power relations manifested in a discursive articulation of reconciliation, defining who is inside and who is outside. Crucial to understanding processes of articulation will require conceptual awareness of ‘selective presentation’. Selective presentation will facilitate an examination of what is made present within the text but also, crucially, what is absent and denied in the text.

As demonstrated, Laclau and Mouffe’s approach to discursive articulations has been rightfully criticised by Hall for reducing everything to discourse (Slack, 1996: 122). With this in mind, I will approach the question using CDA, which acknowledges institutional and material influences such as ownership and editorial procedures, as relevant to the particular newspaper. Additionally, this research will draw on Hall’s reformulation of a theory of articulation which identifies the need to look how articulatory processes are never fully complete but are contradictory and open to challenge and contestation.

In the attempt to decipher how an ideological discourse represents the Queen’s visit (to the Republic of Ireland) as reconciliation, this study holds a normative ideal towards a more inclusive media, whereby political articulations such as ‘reconciliation’ are open to challenge and contestation, to accommodate difference and agonism.

Research Objectives

Research Question:

1) How are the identities between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ of reconciliation articulated and negotiated in the Irish newspaper coverage of the Queen’s visit to Ireland?

In order to answer this question, the following questions will be addressed:

a) How is the majority ‘we’ represented in binary against the minority ‘Other’?

b) Do the journalists simplify antagonisms within the boundaries, to construct a unified ‘we’ against a unified ‘Other’?

c) Do the authors’ articulate reconciliation in terms of reasonableness and rationality, in deeming the outside unreasonable and irrational?

d) In what ways are the articulations between inside and outside challenged, if at all?

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Methodology

This study is examining the articulation of reconciliation within Irish newspapers, using a critical approach to discern how this articulation is represented. This poses fundamental questions as a researcher to ascertain how the text is understood as a cultural practice and how it is ‘read’ by its audience, requiring a textual analysis to analyze latent meanings, implicit patterns and omissions in the text. Given the assumption that language use is a social practice which is historically situated, and is at the same time socially shaped and socially constitutive of social identities, relationships and representations, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA, hereafter) is necessary to investigate the newspapers and its signifying power to represent (Phillips, 2006). To this end, CDA will facilitate an awareness of the ways in which articulatory process and identity formations are not unitary or stable, but rather, a product of a particular historical time.

Despite various approaches to study media texts using CDA, for example Teun van Dijk (e.g. 1988), Norman Fairclough (e.g. 2003) and Ruth Wodak (e.g. Wodak et al., 1999), they all unite in their epistemological commitment to critique and are therefore ‘problem-driven’ (Fairclough, 1995). Uniquely important and relevant is CDA’s concern with illuminating patterns of domination within social groups and social identities, which may be excluded, and marginalized through various discursive strategies (Phillips, 2006: 288).

Laclau and Mouffe's poststructuralist Discourse Theory (DT, hereafter) would also be a useful methodology in dialectic with the theory of articulation, with its commitment to revealing how social imaginaries are constituted through discourse, never being permanently fixed. However, for Laclau and Mouffe, there is no objective and material reality (or base), but rather everything is a discursive and a political process (Laclau, 1990:33). Instead, CDA distinguishes between discursive and non-discursive practices, acknowledging both economic materialism and discursive practices, as relevant to Hall's theory of articulation. In this sense Chouliaraki and Fairclough argue that discourse theory 'is unable to explain which social forces have greater capacity to effect articulatory changes and why' (1999: 125), for example in explaining how various material factors implicate issues of newspaper ownership, which journalists have the ability to speak while 'Other's do not, and how their political-economic allegiances influence their stance.

Limitations

Although it may be argued that a computer-assisted, quantitative content analysis may reduce bias in revealing unanticipated findings within the texts (Fürsich, 2009: 241), this paper is particularly interested in examining historical context, inter-discursive patterns, and absences within the text, in order to reveal power relations embedded within the text, necessitating a critical and in-depth textual analysis (Fürsich, 2009: 241). For further research this study could be enriched with a combined methodology with its quantitative counterpart, which would facilitate an analysis which addresses the other's weaknesses (Creswell, 1994:22). However, for the purpose and scope of this paper, which necessitates a close, in-depth textual analysis, a mixed methodology would not be feasible in the given limitations of the word count.

Nevertheless, one must recognise that CDA has met with considerable criticism, for asserting that it is too ideologically committed (Tywhitt- Drake, 1999 cited in Carvalho, 2008: 162) or for allowing a biased interpretation of meaning, rather than being objective and impartial (Stubbs, 1997 cited in Carvalho, 2008:162). However, for Fairclough, the 'main way of justifying an interpretation is through text analysis, by showing that your interpretation is compatible with the features of the text' (Fairclough, 1992: 232). In addition, in remaining reflexive of particular biases, despite having both Irish and English parentage, the writer has no direct historical exposure to past conflict or trauma, and worked to remain diligent to not misinterpret or exaggerate consistencies embedded in the texts. It is therefore necessary to state that the analysis of these texts presented are not claiming representation of the newspapers, or of Irish journalism, but rather revealing patterns in media discourse and how

they participate in the symbolic work of division, with the purpose of shedding light on this topic for further research.

Sampling

CDA will be utilized on a total of nine articles, three from each newspaper selected. The newspapers selected were chosen on the basis that *The Irish Times* and the *Irish Independent* are the two most widely read daily newspapers in Ireland, with the *Irish Independent* having the highest daily circulation. The *Sunday Independent* is the most read Sunday newspaper with different editors to those from the *Irish Independent*, albeit some of the same journalists. Within the pilot study conducted, the need to select a smaller portion of articles than initially anticipated was clarified due to the depth of analysis this CDA framework necessitated.

Purposive sampling, as opposed to random sampling, has been the methodological tool operationalized, selecting texts in light of research objectives. This was with the intent not to yield generalizable results, since they are too unique and context-dependent, but as put by Chouliaraki in the *Spectatorship of Suffering* ‘the example bears the power of particular knowledge that always articulates with theoretical insight’ (2006: 9). The following criteria were established for the purpose of theoretical insight: 1) the texts were contributing to the articulation of reconciliation, and 2) addressing inside/outside relations between those within reconciliation, in difference to the ‘dissident ‘Other’’. The amount of data was then reduced through using key words as relevant to the criteria established which was conducted with the assistance of two newspaper archive databases. This included Irish News Archives and Nexis UK, which enabled access to the three selected newspapers.

Van Dijk notes how meanings may be implicit within a text framed through local discursive strategies of argumentation, and therefore reconciliation may not be articulated explicitly in the terms ‘reconciliation’, requiring a more in-depth sampling strategy rather than simply searching ‘reconciliation’ (Van Dijk, 1998: 31). The first term used was ‘Queen’s visit’ followed by terms used either separately or together in order to retrieve a representative result: ‘reconciliation’, ‘peace’, ‘dissident’ and ‘republican’. The former two terms were used in order to retrieve results of how reconciliation was articulated and the later two terms were used to retrieve articles that displayed how the ‘outgroup’ of those who have dissented from reconciliation efforts were represented.

Framework of analysis

As CDA is a theory-driven method of analysis, and requires a trans-disciplinary methodology, it is important that the research strategy works dialectically with theoretical insights of the theory of articulation and identity formation.

This study will principally draw on Fairclough's framework of analysis as developed in several instrumental books contributing to CDA, including *Discourse and Social Change* (1992), *Discourse in late modernity*, as written with Chouliaraki (1999), and also most relevant for this study *Media Discourse* (1995), whereby he sets out a decisive framework for the analysis of the media and news. He proposes a three-dimensional framework, covering micro and macro analysis. Namely, this three-dimensional analysis of communicative events is as follows: 1) analysis of text and its linguistic features, 2) analysis of discursive practice and processes of production, consumption of the text including its intertextuality and interdiscursivity, and finally, 3) as related to social practice and how the communicative event relates to the 'production, reproduction, or transformation of relations of domination' (Fairclough, 1992: 87).

However, Fairclough articulates the necessity of placing emphasis within your own framework (1995: 62). As such, while maintaining a close analysis of the text at all times, the second-level of analysis that deciphers discursive practices, will enable an appreciation of how text production, within this research project, is an outcome of numerous professional and institutional processes (Fairclough, 1995). As inspired by Van Dijk's (2009) cognitive framework, an appreciation of cognitive frames in relation to the journalists and their institutional environments (i.e. newspaper employment) will be important in deciphering political affiliations of the newspapers, and historical context as related to issues to reconciliation (such as pro/anti-partition, pro/anti-British, pro/anti-republican, etc.).

Mechanisms of intertextual analysis will support this analysis, and according to Isaksson intertextuality is relevant to a theory of articulation in emphasizing the crucial premise that prior discursive practices, and these newspaper texts, will build on prior discursive patterns (Isaksson, 2011 cited in Rear and Jones, 2013). Intertextual analysis, as taken up by Fairclough, shows 'how a text responds to, accentuates, and reworks past texts, and in doing so helps to make history and contributes to wider processes of change' (Fairclough 1992: 102).

Despite philosophical differences with DT (as previously outlined), this study will draw on conceptual tools as presented in DT in light of the research question and its object of enquiry, precisely looking at the articulatory processes of reconciliation and what is included and what

is outside. As Fairclough and Chouliaraki argue in *Discourses in Late Modernity* (1999:124), concepts Laclau and Mouffe theorised such as ‘equivalence/difference’, as outlined in the theoretical chapter in relation to articulatory processes, are valuable in the analysis of discourse. This will support an analysis of articulation at a more discursive level.

Newspapers and political affiliations

Relevant to the sample and the contextual media landscape of Ireland, is the political affiliation of the newspapers. While this paper is not claiming to generalize, it is widely assumed and accepted that the *Irish Times* holds a liberal agenda and prides itself upon, as stated by Conor Brady, the editor of The Irish Times for 16 years (1986-2002), ‘We are a liberal newspaper and don't pretend to be anything else’ (Conor Brady, quoted in Corcoran, 2004: 37). In addition, its ownership is a complex charitable trust and not directly answerable to shareholders, which has been described as being similar to the Guardian in the UK (McMenamin et al, 2013: 6). The Independent News and Media group is the dominant actor in the Irish media landscape, being the largest newspaper group, which includes the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent*, and the *Sunday World*. With the *Irish Independent* qualified as more centre-right to the *Irish Times* (Brandenburg, 2006: 300).

In terms of political affiliation, Brandenburg (2006) produced a qualitative and quantitative study of campaign coverage in the 2002 General Election and demonstrated how Sinn Fein (a Republican and anti-partition party, with a left-wing political agenda and the fourth largest political party in the Irish Republic), was the party marginalised most in mainstream newspaper coverage. In addition, although the *Irish Independent* in general was considered to produce most balanced coverage on political parties, Sinn Fein was a critical exception, receiving predominately negative attention, in comparison to the others. It is understood that the Independent group have evaluated Sinn Fein largely on its nationalist agenda (Brandenburg, 2006: 311).

ANALYSIS AND INTERPETATION

Articulation of a unified ‘we’

In order to appreciate how ‘ingroup’ and ‘outgroup’ relations are established within reconciliation, it is important to firstly look within the boundaries. In relation to a common, unified ‘we’, a chain of equivalence, as conceptualised by Laclau and Mouffe (2001), is constructed through the representation of ‘sameness’ and the simplification of historical

differences and antagonisms between Ireland and Britain. This dissolves the boundaries between these social groups, to then exert new antagonistic frontiers. This is achieved through selective presentation, whereby various discursive elements are made present, while others are excluded, encouraging certain preferred readings (Carragee, 1990). In this sense one can see how there may be a denial of certain collective memories in order to conceal the troubled past.

In an article published by the *Irish Independent*, written by Enda Kenny, a number of word choices reinforce a narrative of reconciling differences through the theme of friendship and reconciliation. Contextually, Kenny was (and remains) leader of the Irish Fine Gael party (historically pro-partition), and was elected Taoiseach of Ireland in March 2011. This would imply the *Irish Independent's* support for Kenny and Fine Gael, while also one can assume it was in Kenny's political interest to represent the visit as a significant milestone in diplomatic relations, as an accomplishment under his leadership. In this article, he uses words such as: 'closeness', 'partnerships', 'mutual respect', 'friendship' (Appendix 1, Article 3). As exemplified in the opening sentence he states that the Queen's visit:

...will be significant in that it will mark the *excellent relationship* that has developed between our two sovereign states, based on *mutual respect*, on *partnership* and on *friendship* (Appendix 1, Article 3, emphasis added).

Through a narrative of 'friendship', 'closeness' and 'reconciliation', there is a simplification of difference through a chain of equivalence, whereby Irish and British historical antagonisms appear to be removed, for example their colonial relationship is left absent. Drawing on Halliday, Fairclough states the need to look at modality within a textual analysis and how local cohesion relates to ideological motivations, in a discursive struggle to construct reality (Halliday, 1985 cited in Fairclough, 1995: 131). For example, Kenny writes 'It *reflects* the closeness of our ties to each other' and 'Royal visit *will be* seen as symbol of reconciliation'. Through categorical word choices such as 'proves', 'reflects' and also in the use of modal verbs 'will be', these texts position the reader to accept the preferred reading that this is true, as if it were common-sense.

When Kenny does historicise the Queen's visit, it is brief and selective, as revealed in these two extracts (Appendix 1, Article 3):

The Northern peace process has brought Ireland and Britain closer together, not only because it has gone a long way to removing a serious issue between our countries but also because the peace process itself was necessarily a joint British-Irish project, driven jointly by successive governments in London and Dublin.

The visit symbolizes the end of centuries of division and divisiveness.

In the first extract, Kenny uses what Fairclough (1995) has termed ‘intertextuality’, defined as a blended articulation, building on previous historical texts in order to legitimise a certain worldview. Kenny has selectively drawn on historical memories of peace and the culmination of conflict when speaking of the ‘peace process’, as opposed to collective memories of colonialism and violence. In addition, he articulates the ‘end’ of division and speaks of having gone a long way to ‘removing a serious issue’. Vaughan-Williams (2008: 42) argues how narratives of ‘beginnings’ and ‘endings’ in relation to Northern Irish discourses on reconciliation, work to control and marginalise communities who are antagonistic, ultimately delegitimising those who feel conflict has not finished, and peace has not yet begun.

Similarly, in an additional *Irish Independent* article written by Tom Brady, intertextuality is used when referring to the historical context of the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 in stating they have now reached ‘the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement’ (Appendix 1, Article 1). This again implies an ending in writing ‘full implementation’. However, as demonstrated by Wilford and Wilson, there have been more shootings, beatings and injuries (although not deaths) linked with paramilitary conflict in the period from 1998 - Easter 2003 (post-GFA) as compared to the same five-year period between 1993 and 1998 (Wilford and Wilson, 2003: 8 cited in Vaughan-Williams, 2008:38). This challenges Brady and Kenny’s remarks, which aim to overcome the legacy of history, through closure and reconciliation, which again reveals what has been left absent.

A simplification of antagonisms is also discursively articulated in another article published by the *Irish Independent*, as these extracts exemplify:

The partnership and that friendship do not prevail only at the level of politics, administration or commerce, but to *every aspect* of the two islands’ life (Appendix 1, Article 2, emphasis added).

We speak the same language. We watch the same television programmes. We read the same authors. We share much of a long history (Appendix 1, Article 2).

Coupled with this emphatic tone to reproduce sameness through the repetition of ‘we’, at the expense of recognising difference, the author only briefly acknowledges the past when she writes about the ‘old, unhappy, far-off things and battles long ago’ (Appendix 1, Article 2). Her lexical choices emphasise that it was ‘old’ and ‘long ago’, which certainly constructs them as isolated from history, something Herman and Chomsky have argued is a mechanism used within news reporting to construct degrees of presence so that historical context may appear

absent or simplified in order to evoke a preferred reading (Herman & Chomsky, 1988 cited in Fairclough, 1995: 106).

This is also a theme apparent in an article published in *The Irish Times* written by Stephen Bates, headed: 'Queen's visit demolished age-old *myths*' (Appendix 1, Article 8, emphasis added). The choice of word 'myths' implies that these are stories of the past, suggesting them to be false, which renders those who ascribe to these collective memories as illegitimate. Throughout this article Bates continues to use metaphorical language to represent the death of the past, which is reminiscent of what Cohen (2001) terms a 'state of denial' when news has the power to deny past atrocities, drawing lines between what is remembered and forgotten. For example, Bates writes 'her visit seems to have *killed* some suppositions on both sides' and 'the last symbol of the old British ascendancy, which actually *withered and died* many years ago'(Appendix 1, Article 8, emphasis added). This reflects an abandonment of Irish nationalist popular memory of historical tragedy and suffering. Additionally, Bates uses a vivid metaphor to reinforce the assumption that the past should be forgotten, when he writes;

will the naysayers finally realise... this is a country that ceded independence to much larger countries across the world, usually without bloodshed - and 100 hundred years ago legislated to give home rule to Ireland too - but I suppose we should not hold our breaths that the old scab will no longer be picked (Appendix 1, Article 8).

According to Fairclough (1995: 71), metaphorical language is an interdiscursive technique used in news media to draw on popular memory, claiming to share memory and culture. Irish readers may relate to this metaphor, visually viewing the past as healed over, which as a social practice works to suppress the past. This is constructed in binary against the forward-looking, visionary 'we' in writing the 'the royal visit offered a *vision* of what a more mature relationship with Ireland could bring' and in saying the visit provided 'a *vision* of what our joint futures might become' (Appendix 1, Article 8, emphasis added).

This juxtaposition between those left in the past in comparison to the visionary 'we' is also exemplified in an article published by the *Sunday Independent*, written by Ruth Dudley Edward who quotes Queen Elizabeth as remarking on 'the importance of forbearance and conciliation. Of being able to *bow to the past* but not be bound by it' (Appendix 1, Article 6, emphasis added) which is immediately juxtaposed against her following sentence which writes: 'A lesson our political necrophiliacs could usefully learn' (Appendix 1, Article 6). The coined term 'political necrophiliacs', is a vivid and hyperbolic metaphor, which denotes making love to the dead, implying a disturbing obsession with the past. This may also have an

ideological effect on the reader, in associating republicans with necrophiliacs. This similarly contributes to a denial of the past, in the attempt to reinforce a collective ‘we’.

When noting what is absent within these texts, one must contextually acknowledge how within the same month on May 17th, 2011, only days preceding the Queen’s visit, bereaved families of the Dublin and Monaghan bombings (1974) wrote an open letter to the Queen to mark its 37th anniversary. These bombings had resulted in 34 deaths. Within this open letter, families of victims requested that the monarch urge David Cameron to open secret files that had previously been withheld during an inquiry. It was believed that the atrocities were carried out by loyalist paramilitaries potentially with British state collusion. The complete absence of this from all the articles published by both the *Irish Independent* and *Sunday Independent* reinforces how there is a simplification of antagonisms and differences, in order to reinforce the unified ‘we’. This reflects what Dawson has termed ‘institutional amnesia’ as extended to ‘cultural amnesia’ in the media, whereby there is organized forgetting, leaving absent memories of the conflict (1999: 183). Revealing this exclusion from the texts highlights the patterns of domination, whereby those who have not forgotten this past, for example bereaved families, are marginalised.

Not only is there denial of the past, but there is also a re-articulation of collective memory in order to encourage a particular preferred reading. In this account Ruth Dudley Edwards, a well-established Irish journalist for the *Sunday Independent* writes,

We’re not the Most Oppressed People Ever (MOPE). Actually, we’re among the Least Oppressed People Ever (LOPE). As colonial masters go, the British were benign (Appendix 1, Article 6).

She goes on to recall events such as the atrocities at Croke Park, where fourteen Irish nationals were shot and killed at a football match. This followed a series of shootings the previous day where fourteen members of the British Forces were left dead. In her account, Dudley Edward writes how the Queen was simply being courteous when visiting Croke Park as ‘she will have been fully aware that the murders there were a response to brutal assassinations, that some of those who fired were Irish’ and she then writes how this is ‘a perfectly decent alternative narrative’ while articulating this within the narrative of the need for ‘conciliation’. Despite this being a highly controversial and contested account, after a number of enquiries which contradict each ‘Other’. In this case, we can acknowledge how collective memories of the past are negotiated, which thereby renegotiates the identities involved in the Irish-British colonial relationship, also achieved through coining the sarcastic acronym ‘LOPE’, which may resonate with a reader. In this sense we can see how discourse is a social practice, which is historically situated, and is negotiating the past to shape identities

in the present. However, this is ideological as it is denying colonial oppression and marginalising those who were victimised, and the families, in atrocities such as Croke Park.

Majority vs. minority

In the articulation of reconciliation and the negotiation of ‘ingroup’/ ‘outgroup’ relations, one theme became apparent: being a mechanism of representing a majority ‘we’, in binary against the minority ‘Other’. This involves looking at how the newspapers reproduce sameness through ‘boundary work’ against what is considered different (Silverstone, 2007:19). This narrative of a majority ‘we’ is reinforced by the use of quantifiers to encourage the reader to believe that there is little left outside. For instance, it is written that ‘*most* have overcome that history’ (Appendix 1, Article 2, emphasis added), while Hanafin writes “For *most* of us, the twin visits are a good thing” (Appendix 1, Article 4, emphasis added) when referring to the Queen and Obama visiting Dublin. In addition, Tom Brady writing for the *Irish Independent*, summarised Fine Gael leader Enda Kenny in saying ‘he looked forward to this historic visit, which would be warmly welcomed by the *vast majority* of Irish people’ (Appendix 1, Article 1, emphasis added). The use of quantifiers such as ‘vast majority’ constructs an assumption that the united majority are part of the reconciliation effort, while delegitimising the insignificant minority, deemed outside. Intertextually, we can note how these quotes are all from the *Irish Independent* and *Sunday Independent*, showing how a consistent narrative of a majority ‘we’ is being constructed throughout these newspapers.

Additionally, in articulating a majority ‘we’, the articles often draw on the voices of different politicians, something Fairclough (1995: 150) has termed ‘interdiscursivity’ which would imply that the newspapers are favouring an objective tone, drawing on multiple voices to claim legitimacy. Despite appearances of ‘balance’ within news, the representation of these voices contributes to the construction of protagonist and antagonist relations, through subtle framing (Fairclough, 1995: 82). For instance, Tom Brady references the four most popular political parties in the Irish Republic, firstly paraphrasing Taoieasch Cowen who says they had ‘overcome the difficulties that existed in the past century’ followed by Kenny, leader of Fine Gael, writing how it would be ‘warmly welcomed by the vast majority’ and also Labour leader Eamon Gilmore, and Fianna Fail leader Michael Martin in saying this was another step in the journey of reconciliation’. After referencing these politicians respectively, he concludes by paraphrasing Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams:

However, Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams said the visit was premature and would cause offence to many Irish citizens, particularly victims of British rule and those legacy issues here and in the North (Appendix 1, Article 1, emphasis added).

This sentence placed at the end of the article, accompanied by the opening sentence, which writes ‘The announcement was warmly welcomed by all of the political parties last night, *except* Sinn Fein’ (Appendix 1, Article 1, emphasis added) works in the symbolic process of boundary work, through classification and division. The two conjunctions ‘however’ and ‘except’ are ideological functions which work to represent Sinn Fein as outside of the normal, as the political minority, the ‘Other’. In this case, local cohesion sentence structure can contribute to textual processes of ideological interpolation (Althusser 1971), whereby the audience are placed within an ideological common-sense, to assume that Sinn Fein is the outsider. This is inherently ideological, as the *Irish Independent* is implicitly supporting the ruling ideology of mainstream politics, supporting more centre-right wing politics, at the expense of the left, which is consistent with Brandenburg’s observation of the *Irish Independent* equally representing Irish Republic mainstream political parties, with Sinn Fein an exception (2006).

The ‘dissident Other’

In comparison to the construction of the majority, unified ‘we’, whereby antagonisms have been simplified into a chain of equivalences, we can note how the ‘Other’ has been essentialised, highlighting their difference. Within four of the articles sampled, the term ‘dissident republican’ has been used to categorize all individuals and groups who have dissented from the Good Friday Agreement (Appendix A, Article 1, 4, 5, 7). This term generalizes all groups under the category of ‘dissident republicans’, through a simplification of fundamental differences. For example, Eirigi is a socialist political group, which uses peaceful means, while the Real IRA, a paramilitary group, is violent in their approach. Despite these differences ‘dissident republican’ is now a term, which derives connotations of violence, as noted by Crowley (2011), who has looked at the trajectory of the meaning develop. Terms such as ‘political necrophiliacs’, ‘picketing ideologues’ and ‘fringe republicans’ have also been used to categorise all of those who are against the Queen’s visit, within additional articles sampled. These intertextually reinforce and exclude the ‘Other’ through derogatory word choices, which derive connotations of abnormality and deviance.

An example of such categorisation can be found in an article written for the *Sunday Independent*, where Cusack writes about the rioting of ‘dissident republicans’ during the visit, but only distinguishes the groups half way through the article. He writes ‘the mini-riots that took place... ‘Involved members of the three dissident groups: Republican Sinn Fein, Eirigi and the 32 County Sovereignty Movement’ (Appendix 1, Article 5). However, he does not differentiate between the groups reflective of their political views, but stereotypes these

groups through a simplification of characteristics, by defining them by their ‘gouger’ and ‘druggie’ elements. This stereotypical language works to essentialise their social condition, whilst removing any political, historical and social context to explain political or social motivations.

Coupled with this, Cusack reinforces the essentialised ‘Other’ through binary constructions, between good and bad, innocent and criminal. Hall argues that through the construction of the ‘majority we’, those seen as different are frequently exposed to binary forms of representation (Hall, 1997: 229). Embedded within the text is the repetition of the term ‘dissident republicans’ and the use of word choices associated with criminal behaviour such as in the repetition of ‘thugs’, ‘druggie’, and ‘terror group’ which is constructed in binary against the ‘30 innocent passengers’ (Appendix 1, Article 5). Meanwhile the text also continuously juxtaposes the criminal ‘Other’ against the Gardai who are granted control ‘to protect the Queen’. Through the use of active sentence structures such as ‘gardai made more than 40 arrests’ and “Gardai thwarted ‘pathetic’ plots by thugs”, this reinforces a dichotomy of good versus bad, and innocent versus criminal, whereby the good and innocent are represented as in control, legitimising the ‘ingroup’ at the expense of the ‘outgroup’.

In an additional article published by the *Sunday Independent*, the author references Eirigi as a ‘fringe-republican’ group and describes one of the leaders, Louise Minihan, as being:

convicted of assault and criminal damage earlier this year after spraying red paint on former health minister Mary Harney. Minihan is a former Sinn Fein member (Appendix 1, Article 4).

Accompanied by the term ‘fringe’ which implies what is left over, what is outside, the use of selective presentation, in representing Eirigi leadership with only one individual, works to associate leadership with behaviour such as ‘criminal damage’ and ‘assault’. Furthermore, the following sentence then refers to her as being a former Sinn Fein member which, although a factual statement, is selectively presented to encourage the reader to deduce a particular idea about Sinn Fein also being criminal, which is politically ideological, marginalising Sinn Fein as a legitimate anti-partition political party.

Additionally, in two of the four articles that used the term ‘dissident republican’, the writers also reference ‘terror groups’, creating an association with terrorism, whereas in an alternative context they could be named ‘freedom fighters’. This demonstrates how no necessary ‘expressive homology can be assumed as given’, but these are structured relations of domination, relevant to a particular socio-political context (Hall, 1980d: 325 cited in Slack, 1996: 115).

Rational vs. irrational

When analysing the articles, another mechanism used to exert symbolic boundaries between 'ingroup' and 'outgroup', is through the construction of the irrational 'Other'. Drawing on Pickering (2001: 71) we can note how by defining the 'Other' as irrational, this works to redefine and reinforce the subject, articulated within the 'we', as its rational and reasonable counterpart. This has resonance with Mouffe's critique of reconciliation, in demonstrating how within the articulation of a reconciled 'we' this relies on what is excluded as irrational and unreasonable (Mouffe, 2013: xi).

Dudley writes in the *Sunday Independent* of the 'lack of perspective' of those who speak of the 'wrongs done us by our colonisers', implying ignorance and lack of rationale, which is juxtaposed against those who do recognise the 'importance of forbearance and conciliation' representing their interpretation as factual (Appendix 1, Article 6). Additionally, Hanafin, when speaking about an individual who holds an opinion against the Queen's visit, he asks the reader 'What's his *rationale* for putting up the banner?' when referring to an anti-monarchy banner outside the pub he owns (Appendix 1, Article 4). Hanafin also describes the same man as being 'inconsistent' in noting 'It's safe to say there are more inconsistencies in pub owner John Stokes's arguments than there are holes in a colander' when testifying that he transmits 'more British telly programmes than ITV would in a year'. These 'inconsistencies' imply a lack of rationale.

These binaries are further reinforced through the discursive association of republicanism with child-like behaviour, deriving connotations of irrationality, or infantile behaviour. Hanafin writes 'Republican Sinn Fein and *new kids* on the block Eirigi are engaged in a toe-to-toe struggle' while making a comparison of their political protest's to child-like games in writing 'Eirigi and RSF have been tick-tacking with their plans for protests' and 'with such a deluge of figureheads, the decision to protest could come down to a game of rock, paper, scissors...' (Appendix 1, Article 4, emphasis added). Drawing on Pickering (2001: 71) we can note how by defining the 'Other' (in this case as irrational and child-like), this works to reinforce the subject, articulated within the 'we', as rational. Additionally, Hanafin writes:

While most citizens see the Queen's visit as a symbol of reconciliation and Obama's as a glimmer of hope, this isn't a view shared by the Dail's left-wing version of Statler and Waldorf—Joe Higgins and Richard Boyd Barrett (Appendix 1, Article 4).

Joe Higgins and Richard Boyd Barrett are members of the Irish Socialist Party and the People Before Profit Alliance, respectively, and were both elected into the Dail in 2011. While simultaneously constructing an association with left-wing politics and protesting 'dissident

republicans' (following a narrative claiming to represent those in protest), he is also comparing these politicians with Statler and Waldorf, two puppet characters from the Muppets, known for their stereotypical characteristics of being disagreeable. This works to derive connotations of unreasonableness and also works to delegitimise their positions against reconciliation and the Queen's visit, constructing them as the unreasonable 'Other'.

Points of contention

Crucial to an analysis inspired by a theory of articulation, is recognising how articulatory processes are 'inherently ambiguous, incomplete and contingent systems of meaning' (Howarth, 2000: 4). In this case it is important to acknowledge points of contestation in order to demonstrate that no articulatory processes become closed or stable. When analysing the articles, it became apparent that *The Irish Times* represented alternative positions (Appendix 1, Article 7).

One of the articles sampled, published in *The Irish Times* was written by Gerry Adams, the leader of Sinn Fein. The decision of *The Irish Times* to grant a voice to Gerry Adams, displays signs of this political voice being favoured as legitimate, and as he speaks from an agonistic viewpoint, this implies there is greater support by this newspaper to provide an agonistic public space, as espoused by Mouffe (Carpentier & Cammaerts, 2007: 974). In contrast, the *Irish Independent* and *Sunday Independent* have not published an article by Gerry Adams or any another' politician from Sinn Fein.

This article represents a counter-narrative, where word choices are associated with historical conflict and past oppression, as opposed to peace, for example, through the repetition of words such as: 'victims' and 'conflict', and in intertextually referring to the 'Dublin and Monaghan bombings' as being 'unresolved' (Appendix 1, Article 7). In comparison, as demonstrated previously, this was an event that was denied visibility in articles published by the Independent Group. Intertextually, Adams draws on quotes from political speeches televised at the visit to construct an alternative reality. In referencing President Mary McAleese, he quotes her as saying 'inevitably where there are colonisers and the colonised, the past is a repository of sources of bitter division...' and in saying 'this may still be a work in progress' (Appendix 1, Article 7). Adams is bringing greater legitimacy to his viewpoint of reconciliation as being accepted as a 'page in the book - not the end', which is in stark contrast to the articles published by the *Irish Independent* where Kenny wrote of how it was the 'end of divisions' and Brady wrote of the 'full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement'(Appendix 1, Article 3).

Similarly, in an additional article published by *The Irish Times* on the 8th April, preceding the Queen's visit, Deaglan de Breadun contemplates different positions and recognises antagonisms, while this is absent from the rest of the sample in a narrative which constructs a unified, 'majority we'. For example, he writes:

should any unionists feel *discommoded* by the wreath-laying ceremony at the Garden of Remembrance, supporters of the visit can point to the fact that their Queen will also be commemorating Irish soldiers of a different allegiance at the Irish National War Memorial Gardens in Islandbridge (Appendix 1, Article 9, emphasis added).

In addition, he does not deny the past as a 'myth', or reduce antagonistic relations between Ireland and Britain between the collective 'we' but writes of the past colonial relationship as having 'endured a frequently tormented 800-year relationship' (Appendix 1, Article 9). This demonstrates how the articulation of boundaries between ingroup and outgroup, are never fully stable or immune from contestation.

Adams also negotiates the 'Other', as he writes 'Like all *democrats* we seek an end to partition and the reunification of our people and our island' (Appendix 1, Article 9, emphasis added). In this sentence the choice of the word 'democrats' challenges terms previously used, such as: 'dissident republicans', 'picketing ideologues', 'political necrophiliacs', and shows how naming has an ideological effect, in negotiating what is deemed normal and deviant. In addition, the repetition of 'our people' and 'our island' again challenges the articulation of a 'we' framed against the dissident republicans, as he is drawing on popular collective memory as an imagined community amongst Irish people, as opposed to between the Irish and British inside of reconciliation.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation's objective was to critically analyse the discursive articulation of reconciliation within mainstream Irish newspaper coverage of the Queen's visit, questioning what is deemed 'inside' and what is deemed 'outside' of this process. This subsequently involved advancing on debates, which focus on the role the media should play in peace and reconciliation. Rather than assuming that conflict is pathological and antagonisms may be pacified through a rationally-engaged media, this paper has been normatively inspired by Mouffe's agonistic approach to reconciliation, in assuming that power and conflict cannot be eradicated (Mouffe, 2000: 30; Mouffe, 1999). Coupled with a theory of articulation and a conceptual interest in identity formation in relation to the 'Other', this paper has adopted a critical stance to examine the discursive strategies used to reproduce exclusionary boundaries

between the 'ingroup' and the 'outgroup', within an articulation of reconciliation. This chapter will summarise the findings, implications and what this entails for further research within the field of media and communications.

Through a CDA of mainstream newspaper coverage in Ireland, it was discovered how internal antagonisms between Ireland and Britain were left absent in order to reassert boundaries against the 'Other'. This was achieved through a chain of equivalence, whereby historical turbulence and conflict between Britain and Ireland, such as colonisation, the Famine, the War of Independence and the Troubles were often rendered absent from the texts.

The analysis revealed how the term 'dissident republicans' was mobilised most predominately in articles sampled by the *Irish Independent* and the *Sunday Independent*, and only once by *The Irish Times*. The use of this term is ideological, and we can see how this works as a double-articulation (as conceptualised by Hall, 1973) in the way that although 'dissident republicans' is a term often taken-for-granted, as used in political spheres, there are hidden power structures. The term 'dissident' has connotations of rebellion and violence, even though the group or individual who has dissented from the Peace Process may in fact be peaceful in their means. This works to sustain political and social exclusion. In addition, this was a term coined in the news media, demonstrating the crucial role journalists play in the articulatory process (Crowley, 2011). As Mouffe argues, the reconciled collective 'we' relies upon what is deemed outside of the rational 'reconciled' community, relying on the 'Other' (2013: 5). Such mechanisms in reproducing the irrational 'Other' included associating republicans to child-like, infantile behaviour, displaying characteristics of irrationality and inconsistency.

However, with a theoretical impetus to use a theory of articulation in order to demonstrate how articulations, although in their oppressive formation may seem stable, are never fully sutured, or immune from, challenge, this paper looked at points of contention, where 'Other' voices present challenges to this articulatory process. In this sense, this thesis aimed to shed light on how *The Irish Times*, known for its liberal agenda, as compared to the *Irish Independent* and *Sunday Independent*, facilitated a platform for difference and adversarial voices, as in the case of Sinn Fein's Gerry Adams. Further research would benefit from doing a more in-depth analysis, questioning whether *The Irish Times* does provide a platform similar to what Mouffe describes as 'agonistic public spaces'(Carpentier & Cammaerts, 2007: 974). This would involve using a quantitative content analysis to examine whether a plurality of voices and opinions were made visible.

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1. APPENDICES

Appendix A- Research Sample

Article 1:

Irish Independent

5th March, 2011

What a difference a century makes as Queen to pay visit

BYLINE: Tom Brady Security Editor

SECTION: NEWS

Watershed in relations warmly welcomed by most

QUEEN Elizabeth is to make an official visit here in the summer, the first by a British monarch since the foundation of the State.

The announcement was warmly welcomed by all of the political parties last night, except Sinn Fein, which said such a visit was premature.

Already, dissident republican groups are planning street demonstrations and senior garda anti-terrorist officers have started drafting contingency plans for the queen's security.

The announcement by President Mary McAleese ended months of speculation and was described as a watershed in Irish-British relations.

The queen's grandfather, King George V, was the last serving monarch to visit the country 100 years ago when Ireland was part of the UK. He spent six days in Dublin in 1911.

The visit by the queen, who will be accompanied by Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, is not expected to be as long and will probably last for a couple of days near the end of May, according to informed sources last night. It is expected to include one trip outside Dublin.

It is likely that garda leave will be cancelled for a large portion of the force during her stay here.

The visit will result in the biggest VIP protection operation for more than two decades.

Officers are particularly concerned that the visit could be used by terror groups to stage an attack.

Another' announcement is due to be made shortly to clarify the details of the visit. Mrs McAleese said last night that these would be announced jointly by Aras an Uachtarain and Buckingham Palace.

Taoiseach Brian Cowen said it was very important that Ireland and Britain developed relationships in the 21st Century, having overcome the difficulties that existed in the past century.

He said the visit had been spoken about in the context of the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement and the need for exchange visits between the heads of state of neighbouring countries.

Diaspora

Mr Cowen added: "She will be a welcome guest and we will ensure that there's a very fruitful exchange when she comes.

"We need to put the relationship between Britain and Ireland on a new footing to explore what we have in common.

"There's a very strong Irish diaspora in Britain and it's important that we develop relations," he added.

Fine Gael leader Enda Kenny said he looked forward to this historic visit, which would be warmly welcomed by the vast majority of Irish people.

And Labour leader Eamon Gilmore described it as a "maturing" step in the relationship between the two countries.

"It was inevitable that she would come and visit Ireland," Mr Gilmore said at a meeting of European socialists in Athens.

"She's the head of a neighbouring state and I think this is a big and important step." Fianna Fail leader Micheal Martin believed the visit would act as another step in the journey of reconciliation.

"It is an endorsement of the peace strategy, pursued by Irish and British governments over a number of decades and will be a catalyst for further enhancements in north/south and east/west co-operation to the economic, social and cultural benefit of all.

However, Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams said the visit was premature and would cause offence to many Irish citizens, particularly victims of British rule and those with legacy issues here and in the North.

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