



“There’s no place quite like Munich... on St. Paddy’s Day”¹

Reassessing the Condition of the Migrant. The Case of Irish Migrants in Munich.

(Working Paper)

¹ This is a line from the song ‘St. Patrick’s Day in Munich’ recorded by the Paul Daly Band and composed by Paul Daly.

Abstract:

Utilising the yo-yo fieldwork approach consisting of life story interviews and participant observation in a group of places, this research project is dedicated to Irish migration to Munich. It intends to reveal new patterns of sociocultural practices within this migrant community. According to Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004), transnational migration processes in current societies can be studied through the transnational social field perspective. Given that Irish migrants in Munich have created an Irish-German association that interlinks various sub-groups of the community, this paper describes the genesis and evolution of the transnational social field of this migrant community. Over the last twenty years or so, the Irish community has managed to establish numerous social agents that enable the conservation and reinvention of their cultural practices. The most influential player in the transnational social field is the Irish-German association itself, which is *inter alia* in charge of organising of the local St. Patrick's Day parade as well as various Irish music and literature events. Another significant player within the field is the Munich Irish Network which connects Irish people living in Ireland or other countries to the local community in Munich by means of a website. The transnational social field of Irish migrants connects them back to Ireland. The social networks of Irish migrants in Munich include friends and families in Ireland, German people, and persons of other English-speaking migrant groups in Munich. As a result of the data analysis, based on 20 interviews and a myriad of field notes, a working hypothesis can be suggested: The formation of the Irish community in Munich can be interpreted as a shift in the composition of social fields in the German society that opens up places allowing the emergence of transnational ways of belonging. The case of the Munich Irish delivers further empirical evidence of an increase in ethnic diversity in current urban landscapes. It also uncovers strategies of migrants enhancing the flow of people, ideas, and cultural symbols in a globalised city space (Castell 2002).

Introduction

In his novel *This Other Eden* (1953) Louis Lynch D'Alton depicts the experience of emigration as 'a bid of freedom' (Welsh 1996: 132). With the downturn of the Irish economy bringing to an end the era of the Celtic Tiger, numerous Irish people are contemplating emigrating. In contrast to the romanticised representation of the Irish novelist, various sociological or anthropological studies emphasised the exploiting nature of modern labour migration (e.g. Castell 2000: 89). While studying present-day Irish migration to Munich, I wish to reassess the conditions of migration and community formation in an urban context in times of economic and cultural globalisation. The 'frequent and multi-directional flows of people, ideas, and cultural symbols' can be regarded as crucial hallmarks of recent effects of globalisation on everyday life (Castell 2002: 1143). These social dynamics can be significantly studied in urban landscapes. This paper is the first attempt at presenting working results of the case study on Irish migrants in Munich. It explores how sociocultural identities are constructed within the Irish community² in the urban setting of Munich while relying on the transnational social field perspective (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004). In current anthropological debates, a shift from national to transnational perspectives has been observed (Nic Craith 2008: 4).

According to a recent Human Development Report published by the UNESCO in 2009, the number of people emigrating to countries in which they were not born increased on a global scale from circa 77.1 million to circa 213.9 million between 1960 and 2010. The continuing mobility of people in the post-Cold War era has been accompanied by an emergence of mostly interdisciplinary research programmes studying the phenomenon of migration. A helpful characterisation of Migration Studies has been given by the anthropologist Stephen Vertovec. He describes this set of disciplines as an interdisciplinary subject area that can transcend the traditional classifications of the humanities or social sciences. The field of Migration Studies consists of four main disciplines, which are politics, sociology, geography, and anthropology (Vertovec 2001: 576). This research project contributes to the interdisciplinary subject area from an anthropological viewpoint while providing an ethnographic study of Irish migration to the city of Munich in times of shifting urban landscapes. Ethnographies of migration promise to deliver further insights into the everyday life of migrants and their personal experiences. The main aim of this paper is to reveal patterns of sociocultural practices in the transnational social field of Irish migrants in Munich in order to develop a deeper understanding of the social dynamics inherent in transnationalisation processes. As a working hypothesis, it is argued

² I distinguish between the Irish community and the Irish migrant group in Munich. An overall migrant group is the statically measured totality of migrants moving from area A to area B. A migrant community is a more or less developed sub-group of this population that sustains social networks *inter alia* with migrants from the same sending area. Since there is an inner diversity of sociocultural identities within the ensemble of Irish migrants in Munich, as per Kockel (1993), it is vital to stress that the Irish community is not the totality of Irish migrants coming to Munich. It is instead an influential sub-group within that migrant group. One of its features is the maintenance of transnational social networks to various places in both mainland Ireland and sites of the Irish diaspora. According to a local paper, the number of Irish migrants living in the city of Munich can be estimated at 500 persons (Zimmermann 2010: 10).

that the formation of the Irish community in Munich can be interpreted as a shift in the composition of social fields in the German society introducing places that enable the emergence of transnational ways of belonging. This paper is divided into three main sections. In the first one, I commence by presenting the set of methods employed in the case study. Secondly, I am going to spell out the conceptual framework that is the transnational social field perspective. Finally, the case of Irish migrants in Munich will be represented and its findings will be discussed.

Materials and Methods

This section will address the set of methods of the investigation and how they complement each other in order to uncover the patterns of sociocultural practices occurring in the transnational field of Irish migrants in Munich. In previous studies on Irish migrants in Germany, such as Stummann (1987), Kockel (1993; 2002), and O'Carol (2001; 2004), the technique of fieldwork has previously been employed as a prime method. Since the conversation on fieldwork has changed over the last decade, it is vital to include the input of scholars who call for new ways of conducting fieldwork in the wake of the after writing culture debate. The fieldwork practice of this research project builds on methodological insights borrowed from the studies on Irish dancing by Helena Wulff. In the past twenty years or so, the significant and rapid progression of information technology has restructured both information flows and everyday life on a global scale. The transition to the digital age has also had far-reaching consequences for the behaviour of migrants. Due to these changes anthropological research necessitates 'a new set of methods' (Wulff 2002: 117). Wulff's contribution to the shifted reality of everyday life, yo-yo fieldwork, can be interpreted as a network-centred approach to evaluating recent cultural phenomena, i.e. dancing. In this research project, I seek to translate this approach into Migration Studies by conducting yo-yo fieldwork that merges life story interviews and participant observation in a set of places bound together by social networks.

The life story interview is a method that enables us to document the lived experience of migrants. According to Wengraf (2001), the life story interview can be classified as a slightly structured interview. Divided into three sessions, its first session aims to initiate a free-associative flow of memories of experiences in the spontaneous order in which they come to mind. Each interview in my project started off with a single question aimed at inducing narrative (Wengraf 2001: 111). Depending on research aims, Wengraf proposes a couple of variations on the initial question. In my research project I refer to the completely open, whole life story version:

'I want you to tell me your life story,

all the events and experiences which were important for you, up to now.

Start wherever you like.

Please take the time you need.

I'll listen first, I won't interrupt,

I'll just take some notes for after you've finished telling me about your experiences'

(Wengraf 2001: 121).

Session two is, however, dedicated to follow-up questions respecting the wording of the interviewee. Only in the third part of the interview can topic-driven questions be raised. The major limitation of the actor-centred method is given by its strong dependency on the social relationship that has been established between interviewee and interviewer.

Participant observation in multi-local, ethnographic fields implies a new conceptualisation of these fields. Wulff's conceptual reshaping of the field, which the ethnographer constructs and investigates, departs from Ulf Hannerz' terminology. He grasps an ethnographic field as multi-local entity which contains a coherent structure. In other words, it is '*one* field that in itself consists of a network of localities' (Hannerz 2001: 11, quoted from Wulff 2002: 118). An ethnographic field is, in that sense, rather a series of temporary places than a village or an urban neighbourhood. My own fieldwork takes into account two points of Wulff's theoretical discussion underpinning the new fieldwork method (Wulff 2002: 117). The first point concerns the need for mobile forms of fieldwork as a result of the shifted spatiality of contemporary cultural phenomena. On a small scale, my fieldwork is mobile inasmuch as it does not conduct participant observation within a single site that has clear spatial boundaries such as a village. Despite the degree of the mobility of my fieldwork not being very extensive (I move mostly within the city of Munich and in its suburbs), participant observation is carried out in temporary places. Unlike physically connected spatial entities, i.e. a group of streets in a specific quarter, the ethnographic field within which the Irish migrants interact, is constituted by social networks stretching across a social space that includes Munich city, its suburbs, and the Greater Munich area. In addition, social ties of some Irish migrants extend beyond national borders; mostly they are linked to the Republic of Ireland. The performances of Irish culture in Munich and its surrounding social networks have reached a degree of spatial extension that transcends former localisations of culture traditionally studied by stationary ways of doing fieldwork. Ideally, the impact of transnational relations is studied by multi-sited research. Nonetheless, the transnational aspects of lives can also be examined in a single setting (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004: 1012).

The second point of Wulff's theoretical discussion concerns the timeframe of the fieldwork. Instead of staying uninterruptedly at one single site, my fieldwork is split into several phases. Similar to the movements of a yo-yo, the fieldworker too moves back and forth. The coming and going of the fieldworker also breaks with the traditional divide of data collection and analysis. Field trips can be used to test interim findings. The sample group, that is every person who becomes involved in the social networks of the Irish community, was, for instance, determined in that way after the pilot study.

The strategy of inquiry, the merging of participant observation with life story interviews, is based on the insight that participant observation can enhance the evidence derived from the interviews. The combination of the two methods has been tailored in that way since fieldwork

allows opportunities for deeper, longer-lasting relationships to emerge, as well as allowing for interactions and observations in a greater variety of situations (Crewe and Maruna 2006: 113).

The thematic field analysis is the main means of interpreting the life story interviews (Wengraf 2001: 275). The working hypothesis being exposed in this paper is based on the analysis of four kinds of data. The two main columns of the material are transcripts of the life story interviews and field notes. Furthermore, newspapers and websites were read.

From Field of Cultural Production to Transnational Social Fields: Outline of a Transnational Social Field Perspective

In order to set my conceptual framework in the context of recent evolutions of sociological and anthropological thought, I wish to propose a reading of the concept *social field* that originates from the conceptualisations of the late work of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (particularly 1993; 1996). *Social field* is one of the principal categories in his late work. The interdependent triad is complemented by the terms *capital* and *habitus*. Even though he employed the notion *social field* for the very first time in his article *Champ intellectuel et projet créateur* in 1966 (see Boschetti 2006: 140), various commentators suggest that the notion blossomed most significantly in his outstanding analysis of the literary field in the early Third Republic. In short, Bourdieu had been working towards a sociology that was aiming at understanding social phenomena or social events against the background of the social space in which these occur (Bourdieu 2005: 148). In Bourdieu's terminology, *social space* is merely another expression of *social field*. Most simply, *social field* can be grasped as a social arena within which struggles over various types of capital take place (Bourdieu 1993: 73). In total, he distinguishes between four types of capital: economic capital, such as stocks and property; social capital that is the set of valued social relationships; cultural capital, being mainly knowledge of cultural goods, and symbolic capital, meaning prestige. The acquisition of one or more types of capital legitimises the social position of a social actor in a specific field. *Habitus* is the third

category of the interdependent triad. Basically, *habitus* can be defined as a property of social agents, such as individuals, groups, or institutions. It comprises ‘a structured and structuring structure’ (Bourdieu 1994d: 170). This structure has further been characterised as a system of dispositions generating perceptions, appreciations and practices (Bourdieu 1990c: 53). The notion of disposition

...expresses first the result of an organising action, with a meaning close to that of words such as structure; it also designates a *way of being, a habitual state* (especially of the body) and, in particular, a *predisposition, tendency propensity or inclination* (Bourdieu 1977b: 214).

Moreover, *social fields* are, by definition, structured systems of social positions existing between societal forces (ibid: 85). Each field has its own logic and can, to a certain degree, sustain its autonomy. Internally, power relations between the social positions structure a field and regulate access to goods and resources. Externally, a social field is interrelated to other social fields, e.g. a field of education or a political field.

In Migration Studies, a number of scholars seek to extend the Bourdieusian perspective insofar as they identify new kinds of social fields crossing national borders (e.g. Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004). In light of the study of migration, the usage of the classic Bourdieusian field terminology promises us to be particularly fruitful since it enables us to analyse the life stories of migrants as trajectories in the social space of the receiving society. Moreover, this perspective provides avenues to study the interaction between the migrant group and the receiving society as a relationship between the field of power and the migrant group. However, insufficient attention has been paid to the introduction of the social field perspective into migration studies and to the consequences current migration has for social theory and one of its major concepts that is society. In various studies, ethnographic data relating to migrant groups remains disconnected from the migration policies of the receiving society or, if taken into account, only the individual level, i. e. the single biography, is related to the regulations of the state (e.g. Chamberlayne et al. 2000). The Bourdieusian perspective, however, can not only clarify the relationship between migrant community and receiving society in terms of interacting *social fields*, but can exhibit how the social dynamics of transnational migration processes transcend sociological conceptualisations that equate society and nation state. In doing so, this perspective analyses the relationship between the transnational social field established by migrants and the political field. Stating a new trend in migration studies, Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) argue that a number of migrants and their descendants remain influenced by their continuing ties to the sending country to a large degree and engage in social networks stretching across national borders. Moreover, they call for a reformulation of the concept of society including social institutions such as citizenship, family, or nation-state (ibid: 1003). According to Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004), Bourdieu understands society as an intersection of various social fields within a structure of politics (ibid: 1008). Their way of combining Bourdieu’s field theory with the tradition of social network analysis that emerged in the Manchester School of Anthropology can be regarded as a major theoretical achievement. The two authors draw on Bourdieu’s conceptualisation of the social field exposed above. They go beyond

Bourdieu's classic terminology insofar as they point towards an unfinished project of Bourdieu's work since he has never considered social fields that transcend state boundaries. The anthropologists of the Manchester School brought to light the fact that migrant networks can stretch between two areas that are not part of the same state territory. The democratisation of air traffic and the increase in digital communication opportunities over the last decades has enabled migrants to construct transnational social fields through direct and indirect social relationships across borders far more easily than in earlier times. Transnational social fields can be regarded as new kinds of social fields. Levitt and Glick Schiller thus redefine the concept as a

set of multiple interlocking networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices, and resources are unequally exchanged, organized, and transformed (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004: 1009).

They further differentiate between ways of being and ways of belonging (ibid: 1010). Ways of being refer to the social relationships and practices of individuals. In other words, ways of being are a result of the position-taking of social actors. In contrast, ways of belonging refer to specific practices that 'signal or enact an identity which demonstrates a conscious connection to a particular group' (ibid: 1010). A way of belonging can be stated when social action and awareness of the kind of identity that the action signifies occur simultaneously. Individuals engaging in social relations and practices that cross borders as a regular feature of everyday life can be regarded as individuals living a transnational way of being (ibid: 1011).

The Case of Irish Migrants in Munich

In this section I am going to describe the transnational social field of Irish migrants in Munich in order to retrace its transformation over the past forty years or so. This analysis of *social fields* is an exercise in relational thinking in the lines of Pierre Bourdieu. It is divided into three main stages. Firstly, I am going to characterise the field of power, that is the political field, and describe its relationship to the specific field of the migrant community. Secondly, based on an analysis of the data collected, the major social agents of the transnational social field of Irish migrants in Munich will be identified and its sociocultural practices will be described. In the final stage, I propose a working typology of social positions taken by Irish migrants.

German Migration Policy and the Genesis of the Irish-German Association

It is assumed that the Irish migrant group interacts with a political field. The set of political institutions that makes up this political field is quite complex. Decision-making processes at

European, national and local levels can affect the everyday life of migrants in EU countries. At European level, the right of free movement for EU-citizens is enshrined in the Treaty of Maastricht. Furthermore, the national parliament in Germany passed migration acts aimed at regulating the behaviour of migrants. At the local level, the policy of the city of Munich can also have consequences for the social life of migrants. In 2005, a new migration act was passed by the national parliament in Germany. Even though the German state refuses to adopt a points-based migration system, labour migration from non-European countries has been restricted to highly qualified labourers, students and entrepreneurs capable of creating at least 10 jobs (Helmreich 2010). This act is only the last in a number of interventions by the German state and exemplifies how migration acts aim at determining the behaviour and strategies of migrants. In addition, further integration measures were recently launched that also have an impact on everyday life of migrants. Under the terms of these new regulations, attendance at language classes is now compulsory for most migrants (Kloß 2009). Irish migrants from the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland are not restricted in their freedom of movement as both the UK and the Republic of Ireland are member states of the EU since 1973. They benefit fully from the right of free movement guaranteed for EU citizens in accordance with the Treaty of Maastricht. (The restrictions existing in Germany and Austria for migrants from the eight Central and Eastern European countries that joined the EU in 2004 expire in May 2011.)

The relationship of the field of power to the transnational social field of Irish migrants can be ascertained, for instance, by looking at the regulations for the foundation of a migrant association. The social rules for setting up such an association follow a pattern that also occurs in relation to other migrant groups. To a certain extent, the associations benefit from financial assistance provided by the German state while being committed to supporting cultural exchange with the majority group. The German state thus encourages intercultural exchange with the majority population while providing funding for the creation and activities of migrant organisations. According to Hunger (2002), the policy of the German state has increasingly supported proactivism on the part of migrant associations during the last few decades. The foundation of the Irish-German association in Bavaria (**Deutsch-Irischer Freundeskreis, Bayern**) in 1984 is an example of the interaction between the field of power and the transnational field and is interpreted here as the genesis of the transnational social field of Irish migrants in Munich. The current president and founder of this association describes the initial momentum:

I had been here from some time. DIF will be 25 years old next year. We're celebrating the 25th anniversary next year. And I was here in Munich and there wasn't any real organisation for Irish people in Munich. I didn't design or had the idea that DIF was specifically for... DIF is der Deutsch-Irischer Freundeskreis e.V. It's a registered charity. Though I decided that... The initial idea was to give the Irish people here an opportunity to integrate with Germans. And to give the Germans an opportunity to meet the Irish. The idea was culture sharing. Sharing of cultures, maybe sharing of languages. Culture included everything. That was the initial idea for DIF. I founded that. That's how it started. Out of that grew the Irish folk club in Munich which you have probably seen the website for. Out of that grew the Greensleeves, which is an Irish folk group. Out of that grew the Green Farm

festival. Out of that grew the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Out of that grew Bloomsday. Out of that grew the Munich Céilí Band. Out of that grew Scot Free which is a Scottish Céilí Band. All those things are offshoots, directly or indirectly, of DIF.

(interview B, start 8:20; recorded 2010).

The establishment of a local association for Irish migrants promoting cultural exchange and dialogue with Bavarians and Germans nationals from other provinces who have settled in Munich can be understood as a first shift in the relationship between the political field and the migrant community. A crucial node of the social networks of the Irish migrants in Munich came to existence with the foundation of the association.

Evolution of the Transnational Field of Irish Migrants in Munich and its Significant Players

The transnational social field that Irish migrants have established in Munich has a 25-year social history. To the best of my knowledge and in accordance with the data already collected to date, one of the first waves of Irish migrants in the aftermath of World War II arrived in Munich in the early 1970s. Following an advertisement in the Irish Times prior to the Olympic Summer Games in 1972, a small group of Irish migrants came to Munich in order to work during the Games as hostesses. Some of them decided to stay, even though conditions were difficult. Numerous interviewees voiced discontent remembering their first years in Munich and felt exploited in the gastronomy sector. In addition, as older members of the community recalled, they needed to apply for visas and work permits and had to collect their 'documents' in Dublin city. In the following years, the Irish people who lived in Munich met up in restaurants or pubs as some interviewees reported. At that time, there was no social organisation structuring the assembling of Irish migrants. From the early days onwards, the Irish community maintained close relationships to other English-speaking communities and even now social networks of the Munich Irish also include various people from other English-speaking countries as well as German locals.

Throughout the last decades, various major players evolved in the transnational social field. The establishing of the Irish-German association enabled the social and cultural activities of Irish migrants to be coordinated within an organisation. It can be regarded as the principal social agent in the transnational social field. It is the central node of various social networks of Irish migrants in Munich and the originator of ways of belonging within the Irish community. Various social practices emerged under the umbrella of the association. Over the last ten years or so, the internal social structure of the organisation was enhanced and various committees were established.

These social positions are crucial in the transnational social field as they have a strong influence on the social construction of Irish identities in the city of Munich by providing a set of sociocultural practices allowing transnational ways of belonging. These ways of belonging emerge when social actions are performed that include a consciousness of the identity related to that action. To be more concrete, some sociocultural practices occur at numerous sites of the Irish diaspora; always to a different degree and always in a slightly modified form reacting to local circumstances. In what follows, the main patterns of these practices related to the ‘Irish thing’ are spelled out.

Some of the members of the Irish community engage in performances of Irish music in the Irish Folk Club. The local Munich Céilí Band has many members that are also members of the Irish-German association. The band organises musical events in the Irish Folk Club on a monthly basis. Irish music is a common feature of numerous events in the transnational social field as is Irish dance. Three Irish dancing schools are based in Munich. Tir na nOg, the largest Irish Dancing school in Munich, is affiliated with “Coimisiun le Rince Gaelacha” which is the Commission of Irish Dancing, the largest governing body of Irish dancing worldwide. Dancers of the group perform regularly on St. Patrick’s Day and during other social events run by the Irish-German association. Moreover, some groups of the school perform at international competitions. There is also an annual event called Bloomsday that is dedicated to Irish plays. In 2010, a play on Dublin in the 1950s was performed. Attendance at the play is important for some members of the Irish community as it brings back their own experiences with Ireland. The local English Speaking Catholic Mission also appears in the transnational social field. A further crucial social agent in the transnational social field is the Munich Irish Network. This social agent provides help and information for new-arrivals and connects them to the Irish community. The website can be regarded as a crucial node of the social networks of the Irish community since it is a portal describing the local places in which Irish migrants assemble in Munich to those in mainland Ireland and other sites frequented by the Irish diaspora. New-arrivals can receive assistance from established community members with regards to finding accommodation, health care, and a broad range of other issues. Generally, the usage of various internet-based channels of communication is relatively high. Most websites are linked to Facebook and are therefore easily detectable for Irish people living in Ireland.

The most important social event for Irish people in Munich is the celebration of St. Patrick’s Day, the national holyday of Ireland. Many of the smaller sub-groups of the community participate and the local Irish sports teams, the Hurling and the Gaelic football squads, take part in the parade. The St. Patrick’s Day Parade in Munich is the largest of its kind in Germany; and indeed in continental Europe according to the organising committee. The first St. Patrick’s Day Parade took place in Munich in 1996. The hectic atmosphere and uncertainty of this initial event is well captured in the Parade Magazine of 2005:

Sometime in 1995 Mike Spillane, an agreeous and lovable character, thought about having a Parade in Munich to underline the presence and popularity of the Irish community in Munich, not to mention Germany. He broached the idea to Paul Daly, Alison Moffat and myself. We said “what the heck” and under the auspices of Deutsch-Irischer Freundeskreis Bayern e.V. we started the wheels of motion to turn, albeit creakingly. None of us had any idea of how to put on such an event – daunting logistics, getting permission from the authorities, drumming up sponsorship to finance the parade, explaining to the uninitiated and oft times disinterested the significance of St. Patrick for Irish people worldwide and European Christianity in particular. As is often the case everything revolved around deadlines and March 12th. 1996 was ours. We formed an organising committee which gave birth to months of arguing, reconciliation, despair, euphoria, cajoling, sleepless nights, while at the same time we had to attend to our daily routine of jobs and families (McLynn 2005: 5).

Since 1996 between 3’000 and 15’000 people attended the parade each year, mostly depending on weather conditions. The parade is a multicultural event organised by the Irish in Munich. In 2005, the most successful year, more than 25’000 spectators came to see the 37 participating groups which made the event well-known throughout Bavaria and also Germany. At the last St. Patrick’s Day Parade, which took place in March 2011, 36 different groups participated in the marching along a main thoroughfare in Munich. To name just a few, the three Irish dancing schools, the Munich GAA, the Munich Irish Rovers, a football club, the Polish-German folklore association, the English-German Association, the Munich Scottish Association took part in the parade. As in numerous other sites of the Irish diaspora, St. Patrick’s Day plays a major role for the identity formation of the Irish community. In interviews or on the stage throughout the after parade party, Irish migrants celebrate Ireland’s Patron Saint and express their pride in being Irish.

The social composition of the Irish migrant group

Occupational Field	Arts and Culture	Gastronomy	IT Industry	English Language Services	Other Fields
Irish-born migrants					
Total Number	5	3	6	5	4
Percentages	22.0%	13.0%	26.0%	22.0%	17.0%

Table 1: Distribution of contemporary Irish migrants in the city of Munich in occupational fields

The life story interviews also include demographic information on the Irish migrants. One useful piece of information is the actual occupation of the various interviewees. As the table above shows, Irish migrants mainly found work in one of the three fields: gastronomy, the IT industry, or language teaching either at companies or at schools. Moreover, most Irish migrant in Munich are employed in the fields 'Art and Culture' and 'IT industry'. These figures based on data comprising 20 interviews and field notes are working results and should therefore be interpreted cautiously.

Discussion:

The transnational social field perspective brought to light how local identities are constructed in recent urban landscapes in Munich. After the first phase of Irish migration to Munich ending in the 1980s, a willingness emerged to create an association promoting Irish culture. Step by step, the German-Irish association was able to extend its influence and bring together the various local sub-groups of Irish migrants in Munich. The case study exhibits the evolution of the transnational social field and how the significant players could take their social positions. The description above aimed at elaborating on the reasons for the rapid transformation of the transnational social field while looking specifically at its genesis and the position-taking of its social agents. Following an initial interaction with the political field, the Irish community established a set of sociocultural practices that they associate with Irish culture. This creative re-intervention of Ireland opens up a sphere within the city space of Munich that allows a transnational way of being. The set of sociocultural practices enhances the conservation of cultural identities that emerged prior to emigration.

The dense social networks of Irish migrants can be understood in terms of social fields while analysing in depth the current changes of urban everyday life and local identities. The social networks of most Irish people interviewed in Munich comprise social ties to members of other English-speaking communities and to German people. The fact that various Irish migrants engage in social relationships that cross borders confirms their transnational way of being. The city space is a stage on which transnational identities are constructed and provides a set of facilities and temporary places. Transnational social fields comprise these places in which sociocultural practices are performed that cite the culture the emigrant brought to the receiving society.

The case of Irish migrants in Munich can, in part, be explained by the push-and-pull factors of the economies of Ireland and other countries to which Irish migrate (Massey et al. 1998). This may concern the duration of migration waves and quantity of Irish migrants but the blossoming of Irish culture and its re-intervention in Munich seems to be related to cultural rather than purely economic motivations. As in other sites of the Irish diaspora, various members of the Irish community possess a

high amount of cultural capital that enables them to perform Irish folklore in and around Munich. This includes the art of storytelling, folk and modern music, and Irish dancing. With lots of enthusiasm for their cultural heritage they managed to establish a set of places in which Irish culture can be performed and allow transnational ways of belonging.

Since numerous members of the Irish migrant group can be regarded as integrated immigrants having internalised the dominant social rules through a German-speaking working place and conserve their original culture, this research project delivers confirmation for Levitt's and Glick Schiller's thesis on transnational ways of being. They argue that in recent times a high degree of integration and enduring social transnational ties are not binary opposites (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004: 1003). The first working results also raise questions regarding the degree of commodification of Irish cultural goods or services. Various interviews contain clear evidence of a conscious usage of sociocultural practices enacting an identity publicly signalling an awareness of a connection to the Irish group or even ethnic pride. Nonetheless in certain events the cultural goods and services are also promoted and consumed as commodities. Needless to say, that not all members of the Irish migrant group commit themselves to these sociocultural practices. As Kockel (1993) proposed, the Irish migrant group is composed of several sub-groups that have differing attitudes towards the local Bavarian culture and their Irish heritage and consequently different identities. This composition of the Irish migrant group appeared during the different field phases even 20 years later. The findings that here are exposed with regard to a group that can be named "the Irish community" should be interpreted with caution since it is only one (identity-) influential subgroup within the Irish migrant group. Nonetheless, the Irish community is the ground on which the formation of local identities occurs that semantically include the culture of origin and a local city of the destination country.

A further observation concerns the set of social networks existing in the Irish community. The social agents can be interpreted as nodes that bind the community together and provide newcomers with the opportunity to easily get in touch with Irish people in Munich. The transnational properties of the field are specifically the social networks stretching across borders. Evidence for that type of transnational social relations was provided in the interviews. Examples for the efficient functioning of these social ties are the numerous artists that come from Ireland to cultural events such as musicians, actors, and novelists or the engagement of the Irish ambassador in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Munich. Moreover, the Munich Irish network facilitates the information flow between the Irish community in Munich and local sites in Ireland and generates transnational linkages that cross borders.

Conclusion:

Assuming that a transnational social field can be primarily defined by the density and strength of the social networks of which it consists as well as by the number and intensity of social relationships stretching across borders, the case study on Irish migrants in Munich exhibited the social dynamics of recent transformation processes occurring in urban contexts. Analysing migration processes in terms of the emergence of new kinds of social fields gives us the opportunity to inform social theory by new evolutions taking place in small and large cities. This perspective also provides avenues to study and understand the restructuring and multi-culturalisation of city spaces in a globalising world. This study could reveal the formation of transnational ways of being and how identity is constructed in the case of the Munich Irish. The foundation of an Irish-German association, the major player in the transnational social field, led to St. Patrick's Day Parade being established as a key event. It is crucial for the identity formation of various Irish migrants in Munich since it reminds them of their origins. Moreover, the Munich Irish Network has restructured the information flows between the site in Munich and other sites of the diaspora while providing internet-based channels of communication.

Utilising life story interviews and participant observation throughout yo-yo fieldwork, evidence for the complexity of community formation under conditions of globalisation has been collected. The story of the formation of the Irish community and of the evolution of the transnational social field provides us with insights into the social dynamics of recent multicultural urban landscapes. Following the data collection and initial steps of data analysis, a working hypothesis can be suggested. It is argued that the formation of the Irish community in Munich can be interpreted as a shift in the composition of social fields in the German state that introduces places which enable the emergence of transnational ways of belonging. The transformation of the transnational social field from a less organised migrant group whose members were scattered all over Munich to a culturally vibrant and influential migrant community testifies how new kinds of (micro) social fields in which transnational ways of being bloom take shape under the conditions of the globalisation. The democratisation of air traffic between the two countries that makes travel available to various social classes and due to the progression of communication technologies coupled with their increased usage, has led to new patterns of transnational ties. Follow-up studies could examine further sites of the Irish diaspora in continental Europe and provide further data on everyday life, social positioning, and engagement in cultural folklore for comparative reflections. A focus on social networks could probably bring further linkages between the different sites to light. Thus, the claim for more mobile fieldwork could be met in the study of Irish diaspora as well.

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