

Local and National Belonging in a Globalised World:

The case of contemporary Ireland

Shortened version of the title: ‘Local and National Belonging in a Globalised World’.

Introduction

The cultural consequences of increased globalisation, particularly in terms of local attachment, would appear to be enormous. Time and space are no longer bound by place (Hannerz, 1996). Ever increasing numbers of people think and operate globally, across multiple time-zones and spaces. People are living more mobile lives that are disembedded from the local and the national (Elliot and Urry, 2010, Giddens, 1990). For Giddens (1991: 146), the trend seems inexorable: the more the local becomes penetrated by global flows, the more people move around the world, the more family and community will become ‘disembedded’. One obvious consequence of globalisation and increased mobility would seem to be less identification with and attachment to the local and the national. Place becomes more like a perch than a cage. Beck (2000: 57) claims that traditional forms of community beyond the family were beginning to disappear and that globalisation may lead to the destruction of local communities. Consequently, sociologists should move their focus of attention away from the local and the national to the global (Albrow, 1997, Beck, 2000, Castells, 1996, Giddens, 2000, Held et al., 1999).

This view of globalisation suggests that as the world becomes one place, people do not have the same sense of identity, bonding and belonging with place – with the localities in which they are living or grew up, or with their national society.

People who see and understand themselves as belonging to a local place which is linked to belonging to a national society are more likely to be elderly, less educated, living in rural areas or small towns, and less open to the global flow of people, media messages, technology, goods and services. Furthermore, people who are attached to the local, are deemed to be likely to have a closed, protectionist view of local culture and be less likely to have a cosmopolitan disposition that is open to non-locals and the outside world generally (Olofsson and Öhman, 2007, Pichler, 2009, Roudemetof, 2005).

Roudometof (2005) argues that local attachment (localism) lessens both openness to others (cosmopolitanism) and a willingness to travel or engage in transnational social fields and spaces (transnationalism). However, he suggests, rather than conceptualising locals and cosmopolitans as opposites, it is better to see cosmopolitanism and local attachment operating along a continuum which identifies the extent of attachment to (a) local area, (b) state or country, (c) local culture and, finally, (c) economic, cultural and institutional protectionism (2005: 125-27). Other studies suggest that the link between attachment to locality and cosmopolitanism is not straightforward. In an analysis of International Social Survey Project (ISSP) data using Roudometof's continuum, Olofsson and Öhman (2007) found that between 1995 and 2003, while there was no increase in attachment to locality among Swedes, there was an increase in protectionism and a decrease in openness. On the other hand, using European Values Survey (EVS) data, Pichler (2009: 721) found evidence to support Roudometof's theory: 60 per cent of those who identified locality as their first geographical group of belonging had a non-cosmopolitan orientation.

But for others the local and the global is more complex. Globalisation is not a standard, uni-directional process. It always involves an adaptation to local conditions.

People may move around the world, they may be open to change and other people, but they may still identify strongly with and remain attached to the place in which they grew up (Appadurai, 1996, Flusty, 2004, Hannerz, 1996). Furthermore, people who move into a new area ('blow-ins') often develop a strong attachment, an 'elective belonging', to the place into which they have moved (Savage et al., 2005: 29). Indeed evidence from research in Britain and Ireland suggests that identification with place has not declined (Savage et al., 2005, Furlong and Cartmel, 1997, O' Connor, 2008). Increased attachment to the local, the particular, the different, can then, be an equal and opposite reaction to increased globalisation and sameness (Inglis, 2008, Flusty, 2004, Robertson, 1992, Tilley, 2006). It may well be, then, that local attachment and identity not only become adapted to globalisation, but compliment and sustain each other (Holton, 2009: 102-104, Inglis, 2008: 239-43, Robertson, 1992, Robertson, 1995).

As part of the analysis of the relation between the local and the global, we focus on Ireland and investigate if identity with the local and the national has declined with increased globalisation. The issues which need to be addressed in relation to Ireland seem, therefore, quite simple. How significant is place in Irish people's knowledge and understanding of themselves and how they describe themselves to others? Does place still play a significant role in creating and maintaining an ongoing sense of self in an increasingly liquid world (Bauman, 2000)? Using data from we examine if local and national identity has declined among Irish people over the last and if this decline is higher among those more likely to be cosmopolitans, the young, the well-educated and those living in cities. However, while quantitative data are very good in tracing overall trends in identity, they do not capture the nuances and complexities in identification with place. Using the findings of a qualitative study on

identity, we reveal the complex relations between national identity, identity with place of residence and identity with the place in which people were reared.

Renewed Interest in Place

The heyday of community and neighbourhood research seems to have been during the 1950s and 1960s (Crow, 2002). The spread of industrialisation, suburbanisation, bureaucratisation was seen as part of the development of ‘mass society’ which would inevitably lead to the eclipse of community life (Stein, 1960). Many community studies focused on the decline of rural and urban communities due to increased migration. There was an emphasis on studying relations between the established members of the community and outsiders or blow-ins (Strathern, 1981, Edwards, 2000, Crow and Allan, 1994). Elias and Scotson (1994) found that increased functional interdependence meant that individuals in local communities were less dependent on local social networks. Rex and Moore (1967) emphasised how racial differences led to the notion of community meaning different things to different people and that just because people lived in the same locality, they did not necessarily constitute a community.

This difference between locals and blow-ins has been taken up by Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst (2005) in their study of four suburban areas of Manchester. They found that blow-ins from other parts of Manchester and the surrounding region were more likely to feel that they belonged to the suburban area than those who were brought up in the particular area (2005: 47). They argued that while the level of attachment that emerges from feelings of belonging varies, it revolves around a shared familiarity and disposition – something similar to how Bourdieu conceives of habitus.

However, the sense of belonging had more to do with a commitment to the area than having been brought up in it and having any claims to historical roots. Long-standing residents were not deemed to have any more rights than any other group who lived in the suburb and, in some areas, it gave them less (2005: 44). They use Simmel's phrase of 'come today, stay tomorrow' to describe how in increasingly mobile world the local is not pitted against the global, but rather there are new cosmopolitan forms of 'elective belonging'. Residential areas 'become sites for new kinds of solidarities among people who chose to live in particular places, and whose deep concern about where they live is unlikely to be overlain with extraneous concerns arising from knowledge of others who have historically lived in the place' (2005: 53). Increasingly, they argue, individuals see places 'as sites for performing identities' and home as related to the 'reflexive processes in which they can satisfactorily account to themselves how they come to live where they do' (2005: 29). Savage *et al.* (2005), argue that these feelings of belonging and solidarity give rise to new ethics and forms of collective action.

But, as with other social identities, identification with place is a form of social categorisation (Jenkins, 2004: 79-93). Following Durkheim (1976), we can say that identity with place involves interactive processes of social labelling and identification. People classify themselves and others as belonging to different counties, countries, cities, towns and villages. Initial interaction between strangers is often a process of cognitive mapping, giving and receiving clues that enable participants to gather information which helps them categorise the stranger and make her less strange. Signs are looked for and interpreted (skin colour, accent, modes of expression), questions are asked, to gather as much information as possible. Place becomes another form of

social identity, another block that individuals use to construct an image and understanding of the other.

But, as well as being a social label and cultural indicator, as Savage *et al.* (2005) argue, place is also often about a sense of bonding and belonging. It is about feeling at home with others, that they are similar, that there are shared understandings, dispositions and ways of being in the world – what Bourdieu referred to as habitus (1990). This sense of belonging, of being at home, is obviously strongly associated with family and community. It is perhaps mostly associated with small groups that revolve around regular face-to-face interactions. The question then is whether in a more highly mobile, urbanised and globalised world, in which geographical mobility has increased, there is the same level or sense of belonging to the local and the national. To help answer these questions we focus on Ireland.

Identity and Place in Ireland

For a long time, place and belonging in Ireland were associated with studies of relatively enclosed, homogeneous, rural communities. In such a world, people were seen and saw themselves as belonging to extended families from particular parishes and smaller divisions called ‘townlands’ (Arensberg and Kimball, 1968, Peace, 2001). Not only does this lead to fine distinctions, but also a dynamic between, on the one hand, personal identification with a place and, on the other, being labelled as from a certain place (Jenkins, 2004: 72-6). What was often deemed to be essential about them (by themselves and others) – what made them different – was the family and village from which they came. There were regular reminders in everyday life that this identification was central to an understanding of who they were.

Ireland is a relatively small country. One of the most common communication probes – after asking people their name – is to ask them where they are from. Place is seen as a major social indicator, of culture, class, nationality, urbanity and so forth. It is part of the multiplicity of signs that enable individuals to socially and culturally classify each other. It establishes similarities and differences and the strength of the bonds and boundaries that could unite or divide them. Among people born in Ireland, particularly outside Dublin, the initial classification is often in terms of county. Once this is established, strangers may be asked the parish or townland to which they belong. Finally, depending on the knowledge of the questioner, information may be sought about family relations, neighbours and friends.

The salience of place varies between two imaginations. At one extreme, place conjures up small intimate geographical communities – typically villages – into which people were born and reared and to which they feel they belong and are part of, even though they no longer live there. This imagination has been fostered by recent memoirs such as McGahern's (2005) *The Signifier*. At the other more detached extreme, place is seen in terms of people gathered together in a particular location, territory and space which creates particular forms of social dependence and interaction (Tovey, 1985). This form of imagination is linked to a conceptualisation of modernisation and urbanisation involving a decline of traditional communities characterised by regular intimate, emotional interactions and attachments and a move towards relations of cooperation that are practical but wider, shallower, less intimate and less emotional.

How did this sense of place change during the Celtic Tiger? More importantly perhaps, to what extent do people see themselves as belonging to a place, how do they interpret and make sense of this belonging? Is Beck (1992) correct in claiming that traditional forms of community are beginning to disappear? Have towns

and suburbs in Ireland become imagined communities (Anderson, 1991)? Or have they become places with which people identify and to which they have a sense of belonging? In this context, what do people mean when they say they are from a particular area village, town, city or county? What is the sense and level of identity, belonging and attachment? Is there a strong sense of identification, bonding and belonging?

There has been some important research on place and sense of belonging in Ireland, particularly the New Urban Living study of four Dublin suburbs conducted by Corcoran and her colleagues (Corcoran, 2002, Corcoran, 2005, Corcoran et al., 2003, Corcoran et al., 2007, Corcoran et al., 2010). They found that while residents in these suburban neighbourhoods did not form a community. They were too involved in other social networks based on family, work and other interests. They were ‘very unlikely to share an identity created solely through their interactions in the place where they live (Corcoran et al., 2010: 270).’ Such community cohesion only emerged in exceptional circumstances in response to particular issues or concerns. Nevertheless, residents felt positive about where they lived. The personal networks of social support were predominantly local and were mobilised among families in everyday social life. There was evidence of ‘embeddedness’, ‘connectedness’ and strong affiliations to the suburban area which related to deeply embedded structures of feeling that were linked to a collective belief in the distinctive local character of the suburb, in residents taking pride in its history and heritage, and maintaining an image of it being an idyllic place to live {Corcoran, 2010 #691: 87--99}.

Building on the work of Corcoran *et al* and Savage *et al*, we examine if, with increased globalisation over the past twenty-five years, identity with place and nation has declined? Has the level of identity with place and nation declined in comparison

with other identities such as family, occupation, religion and class? Is identity with place and nation stronger among those living in rural areas or small towns, the elderly, and those less well-off and educated? what does it mean to be in a space, place, location, area or community?

Importance of Local and National Identity

MOST OF THIS CAN PROBABLY BE DELETED BUT SOME IF IT MAY GO INTO A FOOTNOTE AND/OR BE INCLUDED IN A CONCLUSION.

In order to compare identity with place among globalised countries, we are faced with the mammoth task of finding firstly, an accepted understanding of the concept of globalisation and secondly, a measurement of that concept which allows us to differentiate countries as more or less globalised. It is no surprise then that few studies exist in this area. Economists offer some useful explorations (for example, Andersen and Herbertsson, 2003) but there has yet to be a recognised measure across disciplines. Until such time as a more suitable globalisation index is developed either in or for the social sciences, this study makes use of a measurement provided by A.T. Kearney/FOREIGN POLICY which is largely developed for business sectors but which ranks globalisation on indices of economic, personal, technological and political criteria.¹ According to this index, Ireland was ranked as the most globalised country in 2001 and 2002, and (next to Singapore) Ireland ranked as the second most globalised in 2003 (Kearney and FOREIGN POLICY, 2003, 2004, 2005).

The most recent iteration of the International Social Survey Project (ISSP) that collected data on the topic of national identity was gathered in 2003. In this survey, respondents were asked to report how close they felt to their town or city, their county and their country.² We compared responses from Ireland with those of Switzerland

(consistently ranked in the top 5 most globalised countries), and with those of Venezuela and the Philippines (consistently ranked as two of the least globalised societies).³ In all four countries, a very large part of the respondents identified and bonded with town-city, county and country (See Table 1). What is immediately apparent is that there is little evidence to suggest that being more globalised has a dramatic affect on how close people feel to their town, city or country. Post-hoc analysis found no significant differences between the most globalised and the least globalised countries.⁴ Respondents from Venezuela and the Philippines were just as likely to feel close to the local and national as were respondents from Ireland. However, the findings for Ireland were revealing. On the one hand, Ireland differed significantly from Switzerland on all three items. This may be related to the Swiss having been globalised far longer. Indeed, for the Swiss, the higher level of identity with the national rather than the local was significantly different. On the other hand, there was no difference between Ireland and Venezuela on two of the items. Overall, these findings suggest that identification with place is not related to levels of globalisation. They correspond with Norris's (2002) findings that cosmopolitanism, or levels of global identification, are more related to age, that is higher among the younger generation than among more economically developed societies. Norris (2002: 292) also found that local and regional identity was higher among European Catholics than any other type of culture. This could help explain the significant differences between Ireland and Switzerland in Table 1.

TABLE 1 (SEE ATTACHED) TO BE INSERTED HERE

But how does identification with place compare with other forms of identity? Respondents in the ISSP study were given a number of pre-selected identities – including family or marital status, nationality, gender, religion, and part of the country

in which they lived – and asked to rank them in terms of importance. In all four countries examined, respondents were most likely to identify with their family or their marital status (See Table 2). This suggests that one's immediate family and whether or not one is single, married, widowed and so forth, is the main form of understanding and describing who one is. However, after this, there is a wide variation in the next closest form of identity. In Ireland, the next most important identity was nationality, whereas for the Swiss nationality only ranked 7th and for the Venezuelan and Pilipinos it ranked 4th. Indeed, the comparative ranking of identities in this table does not confirm the hypothesis that the more globalised a society the greater the level of identification with the national. In the Philippines, only 26 per cent ranked nationality within their three most important identities: this compares with almost 50 per cent for the Irish. It may well be that the higher level of identification with nation among the Irish is linked to its size, its post-colonial history, the conflict in Northern Ireland, and its geographical proximity to Britain.

Similarly, when it came to identification with the part of the country in which people lived, the level of identification in Ireland (33 per cent) was double that in the Philippines (16 per cent). The variation in local identity between the Philippines and Venezuela (43 per cent) would suggest that, rather than globalisation, there are local cultural factors which make the local more important than the national. However, these findings do not diminish the fact that in Ireland, Switzerland and Venezuela, identification with locality is as much if not more important than religion, gender, age ethnicity and social or political identification. Indeed, given the traditionally close alliance between being Irish and being Catholic (the population census in 2002 showed that 85 per cent of the population in the Republic of Ireland identified themselves as Roman Catholic) it is noteworthy that locality was equally important as

religion. This is in stark contrast to the Philippines where again over 80 per cent of the population are Catholic, and where identification with religion (50 per cent) is three times higher than it is for locality.

This analysis, then, shows that identification with place, both national and local, is a strong form of identity in the countries examined. In other words, even though the world has become more globalised, there is still a strong identity with local place and nation. Identification with place ranks above many other social identities. Secondly, when we compare identification with local place and nation in relation to other social identities there is no evidence to suggest that identification with place is significantly lower in more globalised societies.

TABLE 2 (SEE ATTACHED) TO BE INSERTED HERE

While the results from ISSP tell us much about the relative importance of identity with local place and nation, they do not give a thick description of what place and nation mean to people. We do not get an understanding of how they conceptualise and talk about place, and the way in which they see and understand place, how it integrates into their general disposition or habitus.

Attachment and Belonging in Contemporary Ireland

We can gain further insights into the issues raised from our empirical analysis by examining findings from an in-depth qualitative study of *Contemporary Irish Identities* (CII) undertaken during 2003 – 2005.⁵ This study examines the impacts of global, regional, institutional and everyday life influences on how people construct and act upon their identities in contemporary Ireland. It employs both an open-ended and semi-structured interview schedule to explore the way Irish people see and

understand themselves. The initial interview questions were general and open-ended, trying to discover the identity categories that people used to describe themselves. Once these were identified respondents were asked specifically about aspects of their social and personal identities, including religion. One of the advantages of an open-ended, qualitative approach to social research is that it can bring to the surface issues and processes that were not identified at the outset as being significant. Respondents were simply asked at the beginning of the interview to 'Tell me about yourself', there were numerous references to the place in which they were reared and in which they now lived. These were often combined with a strong identification with being Irish. Twenty-eight interviews were conducted in Firtown and 56 in Oldford. Firtown is a large sprawling suburb of Dublin that developed in the 1970s; Oldford is a large town 30 miles from the city which, in recent years, has experienced significant population growth and become a major satellite town of Dublin with a large number of commuters. The responses of the participants revealed the complex way in which people think about place, the fine differences they make about local places, the strong level of attachment to the place in which people grew up, and how these identities are interwoven with a sense of Ireland being home.

Local Attachment

Both Firtown and Oldford have undergone rapid expansion over the last twenty years. Both have seen a dramatic increase in population and new housing. And yet both have a sizeable population of people who were born and reared in the area. There is, among the established residents, a strong sense of attachment and belonging.

When Joan, an elderly life-long resident, was asked if she considered herself a Oldford person, she responded effusively: ‘Oh definitely’. Her sense of identity and belonging was very strong. She said she was: ‘Very proud, I love it ... a lovely town and I mean (at) my age you know all the people. You walk over High Street and you’re meeting all your own age group, you know. And we grew up together and as I say we reared our families together and we all know each other’ (Oldford 33).

But the sense of local attachment was equally strong among young residents of the Dublin suburb Firtown. Sheila has been living in Firtown most of her life.

I was brought up (here). We're living in Firtown, the last twenty-five years, since I was four. I love Firtown. I'd never move outside Firtown. Over the years the changes that happened in Firtown is absolutely huge like construction wise ... When we first moved up here there was absolutely nothing. There was an awful lot of poverty ... nobody had money but everybody was in the same boat like you know (Firtown 24).

Elective Belonging

But what about blow-ins? Is there any evidence to support Savage *et al* and Corcoran *et al*'s findings that blow-ins often have as much, if not more, identity with their area of residence which stems from a mutual interest in people coming together and making a go of community life.

Sarah has been living in Oldford for the past ten years. Her sense of belonging comes from going to Mass and her children attending the local school.

I'm a long time here now. I kind of blended in with it and gotten used to it so. And like anyone that'd ask my 'where you're from' the first word out of your mouth's going to be 'well I'm from Oldford (Oldford 30).

Derek is a Protestant, originally from Northern Ireland, who worked in Zambia and South Africa, and moved to Oldford in 1971. He insisted that both he and his wife saw themselves as Oldford people.

We are Oldford people, I mean this is home to us now, this is where the children grew up and as Pat says, we've been too long away from the North. ... It's very nice and we have excellent neighbours and we have no reason to move away. And the fact that we're and have been Protestants in which is largely as you know a Roman Catholic country hasn't mattered at all in fact I think if the truth were told it has been an advantage rather than a disadvantage (Oldford 51).

The same sense of elective belonging is evident in Firtown. Joanne is about 50 years old and originally from Limerick. She has been living in Firtown since 1969.

One of my immediate next door neighbours is from Oldford ... There's Welsh people there. There's Dublin people. There's one woman her family is from Fermanagh. So there's quite a gathering, a mix on the road you know. Yes, I suppose I would say, people ask me where am I from, I'd say Firtown and they'd say to me 'but you don't have a Dublin accent so where are you

originally from' you know so. But ... I'd always say like there's such a mix of accents in Firtown ... I would consider Firtown my home now (Firtown 3)

Michelle echoes this sense of elective belonging and draws a distinction between the sense of belonging and attachment in her native village and in Firtown.

Where I come from down in the country, it was a small village, and possibly because I grew up there too, it was a fairly close-knit community. Now that was good and bad. You know, in ways it was great that you kind of knew everybody and everybody knew you but it was also bad in the sense that people could be very nosy. I find in Firtown, with the place I'm living, people will rally around if you're in trouble. They will come to your assistance like I'd go to their assistance. I still don't think it has developed an actual character of its own. There is nothing there that makes Firtown unique to Firtown (Firtown 5).

Deep Rooted Belonging

Elective belonging has to be put within the context of a long-term attachment to place of upbringing. Attachment to place of upbringing can often be stronger to place of residence. This sense of belonging can be to a village, town, county or city. It arises primarily for those who have migrated. The question then is how strong is the sense of belonging of the area in which one was born and reared. Does it transcend elective belonging?

Jack has been living in Oldford for 19 years. He talked about how he was still treated as outsider. He mentioned how he would often go down at the end of the evening to the local shop in his area and people would be gathered around talking and while he feels included in the banter, he is still seen as a 'runner-in' (a newcomer). He feels that Firtown people seem to stick together and while 'runners-in' are accepted they are not seen as 100 per cent part of the community. The unintended consequence of this may be a stronger identification with the county in which people grew up.

No, because to be honest my roots are in Clare and I have often thought that ... I would have no problem when my children are able for to look after themselves, going back to Clare. Not to where I was born which was on the west coast (mentions a seaside town) but more east Clare. I am not a (Oldford person) as you would term it (Oldford 25).

I was born in Cork and I ... figured enough about myself at this stage that I'm part of that. I've a lot of the characteristics that Cork people have. We talk a lot; we're very probably opinionated (Oldford 49).

On the other hand, a respondent from the same county in which Oldford is located, saw himself as belonging not so much to Oldford or the county, but to the little village in which he was reared.

I suppose I was reared in Ballybow which would be the village out there, I don't actually consider – isn't that strange, that's a very good question – I

don't actually consider myself Oldford person. I would still I suppose I would be from Ballybow. I've lived in Oldford most of my adult life... (Oldford 50).

National Belonging

As well as place of living and upbringing, there is also a sense of place and belonging that comes from being Irish. At different times and in different contexts, people will identify with being from Ireland. Most of the respondents, either voluntarily or when prompted, declared that they were Irish and, often, that they were proud of it. Much of this relates to generations of their family being from Ireland. 'My whole family is and their family and family for generations you know are all from, we're all Irish so (Firtown 17). Others related it to political identity (independence) and national cultural identity (language, literature, sport, music, dancing, humour) and, more generally, a sense of difference from other nationalities. But sometimes this sense of belonging while very strong, was also vague.

Oh, in England, Ireland was my home Ireland was part of me, part of my husband as well, you know what I mean so you always consider yourself as Irish (Firtown 21).

Well it's my identity, it's in my psyche, it's everything that I am. So it's being Irish. Em, yes, I like being Irish (Oldford 48).

I love Ireland, I have to tell you I am dyed in the wool Irish and I absolutely love it and I love everything about Ireland, I love even the fact that we are so insincere at times, and the way we're sentimental but we would walk across you if we needed to you know, all these things. ... (Oldford 19)

What we have found, then, is a melange of identities and senses of belonging. Deep rooted belonging is mixed with elective belonging and both come together with a general sense of belonging to Ireland. For some, identification with where they were brought up is stronger than where they are living now. But again this varies. Some have a sense of belonging to a particular county rather than to a particular area within it and others have a general sense of belonging to Ireland rather than any particular area. Obviously what is crucial to understanding identity with place is which forms of identification are stronger for some people and when, where and why these identifications are manifested and how they are performed.

Although it would require a completely different study to explore the complicated nature of place identity manifestations and performances, we can, by looking at how one person talks about sense of place, build up a picture of the complexity of the problem.

Mary had been living in Firtown for fifteen years. When asked if she would consider herself a Dubliner, she immediately declared herself as having a deep rooted belonging to County Wexford. 'No. I'd consider myself a Wexford person because that's where I was born and reared like.' But then she mentions the particular town, Blackwater, in which she grew up. So for her place identity is with the County generally and, in particular, with Blackwater. However, although she sees herself as

being from Blackwater she would not go back there. 'I wouldn't live back in Blackwater again. No, I wouldn't. I'm happy where I am.'

So although Mary has developed a sense of belonging to Firtown, she identifies herself as Wexford woman and, particularly a Blackwater person. She seems to have a strong, almost essential, sense of being from Blackwater, as if it was a form of indelible mark that was left on her. It forms a boundary between her and other people. Mary made a distinction between people from Blackwater and other towns in County Wexford.

When I was growing up now, there was a difference between Blackwater' and Moretown people. Moretown is 4 miles away.... There was a hatred there from Blackwater to Moretown ... there was a huge difference in people you know and then in Ballybay which was maybe about 15 miles away ... there's a huge difference. They were very country (Firtown 23).

Having made such fine distinctions, Mary then went on to make further distinctions between people from Blackwater and Kildore. The Blackwater people turned off the Kildore people 'because the fellas were coming in and taking the 'Blackwater women. So there was rivalry there as well' (Firtown 23). What we learn from Mary is that sense of belonging is variable and relational. Some people are rooted to their area of residence, others are rooted to their county of origin, and others to the particular town and village in which they were reared.

Conclusions

Understanding identity is a tricky business. People can seem rooted to certain forms of identity and yet, at the same time, flit between them like a bee visiting different plants. Identities are perhaps best understood as a cultural tool-kit that people use to construct an image and understanding of themselves. This exploratory study has tried to shine a light on the way people living in contemporary Ireland identify with place. What we have revealed is a complex web. Results from the ISSP reveal a strong identification with place. The results from the study of Contemporary Irish Identities suggests that there is definite evidence of elective belonging, identification with place may vary between established and outsiders (blow-ins). To complicate matters further, many people also have a strong sense of identity not just with the village and county in which they grew up, but with Ireland as a whole. This was evident in the significant correlation found between local and national identity in the ISSP data, and it also emerged within the in-depth interviews. Place identity may, then, be best understood as a form of interlocking, overlapping forms of bonding and belonging. It is quite clear that despite globalisation and the world increasingly becoming one place, identity with local place is still very strong in Ireland. Our findings clearly suggest that globalisation does not diminish attachment to the local and national. What is not clear of course is how this identity with place relates with other identities and how it is declared and performed in different contexts.

What is also not clear is whether the level of identification with place and the level of emotional attachment were higher in more traditional communities which were more bounded and interdependent. Certainly, the increased flow of people around the world through migration, work and travel, combined with the increasing ease to maintain social bonds through information technology, has enabled people to stay connected with groups and places with whom they feel they belong (Appadurai,

1996). In an increasingly mobile, fluid, cosmopolitan, globalised world it may be anathema for people to see and identify themselves being from a particular place, as if it somehow represented their true self, beyond the identities of place that they have picked up over the years. Prior to our analysis, it would perhaps seem logical to assume that globalisation leads to less attachment to place. However, the results from the ISSP analysis and the Contemporary Irish Identities study suggest otherwise. It may be that increased globalisation has had the unintended consequence of binding people to the particular place in which they reside or grew up.

Implications for Practice

There are many different approaches to describing and analysing identity. The task is to capture something which is deep and intensely meaningful to someone and yet, at the same time, to put it into a broader, comparative perspective. We have argued that when it comes to understanding the significance of place – local, national or global – it is important to capture the logic identity with place has for people, how they refer to the local and the national. However, it is also important to try to discover, at a broader, comparative level, if identity with the local and national declines with globalisation and, how identity with place ranks in terms of other social identities. We therefore adopted a multimethod approach (triangulation) in our research design, by employing qualitative and quantitative methods in a complimentary way in order to examine the concept of identification with place. Results from both methods reach similar conclusions as each of these studies indicate that in a highly globalised country such as Ireland, attachment to place remains strong. They suggest that there is a complex web of issues relating to identification with place which may be best

understood as a system of interlocking and overlapping forms of bonding and belonging.

We suggest the kind of multimethod approach used in this study can reveal hidden difficulties and complexities in investigating the significance of identity with place. We also hope that it can reveal some of the factors, for both quantitative and qualitative approaches that need to be taken into account when studying this area. We would encourage, then, a greater, more adventurous, complimentary use of both quantitative and qualitative data when it comes to understanding and analysing a complex concept such as belonging in a globalised world.

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Notes

¹ The latest (2007) A.T. Kearney/ FOREIGN POLICY Globalisation index 'quantifies economic integration by combining data on trade and foreign direct investment. Technological connectedness is gauged by counting Internet users, Internet hosts, and secure servers. Political engagement is assessed by taking stock of the number of selected international organizations and the number of selected international treaties that each country signs, as well as each country's financial and personnel contributions to U.N. peacekeeping missions and levels of governmental transfers. Personal contact is charted by looking at a country's international travel and tourism, international telephone traffic and cross-border transfers, including remittances.' (See, Kearney, A. T. and F. Policy (2010) Globalization Index 2007 Methodology. [Online] available:

<http://www.atkearney.com/index.php/Publications/globalization-index-data-2007.html> 10th Feb, 2010.

² Data from the ISSP 2003 sample were weighted to control for differences between countries, in age ($p=.000$) and gender ($p=.012$), as they were found to significantly correlate with the variables included in our analysis ($n=4452.940$).

³ The samples of countries selected for analysis were based not only on their consistent levels of globalisation but also on the availability of corresponding data in the ISSP Survey, 2003.

⁴ Multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) were carried out to test whether countries differ in their mean scores on how close people feel to their town or city, their county and their country. By applying a MANOVA we control for the interrelatedness of these three dependent variables. Results showed that countries differ significantly in terms of their mean identification with closeness to town/city $F(3,4715)=30.311$, $p=.000$; closeness to county $F(3,4715)=29.421$, $p=.000$; and finally closeness to country $F(3,4715)=36.187$, $p=.000$. In order to test whether differences between any two countries are statistically significant, post hoc analyses were conducted (Tukey's HSD). These showed that mean scores for closeness to town/city differed significantly between Ireland and Switzerland ($p=.000$), and between Ireland and Venezuela ($p=.000$). However, differences between Ireland and the Philippines were found not to be statistically significant ($p=.493$). Means for closeness to county differed significantly between Ireland and Switzerland ($p=.000$), and between Ireland and the Philippines ($p=.000$). However, differences between Ireland and Venezuela were found not to be statistically significant ($p=.999$). Finally, the means for closeness to country differed significantly

between Ireland and Switzerland ($p=.000$), and between Ireland and the Philippines ($p=.000$). Again, differences between Ireland and Venezuela were found not to be statistically significant ($p=.997$).

⁵ The findings reported here come from an in-depth qualitative study of *Contemporary Irish Identities* (CII) undertaken during 2003–5 by John Coakley, Alice Feldman, Tom Inglis and Jennifer Todd at University College Dublin. The CII study was within the Identity, Diversity and Citizenship Programme at the Geary Institute in University College Dublin and funded by the Irish Higher Education Authority under PRTL13 (see, www.ucd.ie/geary). The interviews were conducted by Dr Theresa O’Keeffe. Inglis, T. (2007) 'Catholic Identity in Contemporary Ireland: Belief and Belonging to Tradition'. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 22(2): 205-220. provides a more detailed description of the methodology.