

Irishness Retold

The Representation of Irishness for Children in *Great Irish Legends for Children*

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Abstract			
<p>The purpose of this thesis is to study the ways in which Irishness is represented in literature written for children through the case of Yvonne Carroll's <i>Great Irish Legends for Children</i>. In order to do so, the concept of Irishness is defined for the purposes of this study, after which the analysis aims to find out how these defined elements of Irishness are represented in the research material.</p> <p>The theoretical framework of this thesis consists of the concepts of adaptation, cultural image, cultivation of culture, identity (including national identity), nation, (re)inventing nation and tradition, as well as cultural stereotype and perceived Irishness. As the research material consists of a selection of adapted legends from Irish mythology, adaptation is also a central term in the theoretical framework and a part of the analysis. Furthermore, according to the presented theoretical framework, the concept of Irishness is assessed for the analysis. Finally, the final sub-chapter in the theoretical framework is dedicated to children's literature, including a discussion of some of its generic features as well as nation and history in Irish children's literature.</p> <p>In the analysis, adaptation is first defined in order to be able to discuss its extent, nature and function. Following that, the research material is analysed with reference to the theoretical framework, beginning with how cultural image is represented in the research material, as well as how and why the research material can be regarded as a cultural endeavour and which sort of cultivational agendas it contains. Then, the representations of different identity categorisations are analysed, with specific attention to national identity. The concept of nation is also addressed, as well as the issues of (re)inventing nation, nationality and tradition, after which stereotypical and perceived Irishness is discussed.</p> <p>The conclusions of this study are, regarding adaptation, that the legends in the research material are generic transpositions (as opposed to transposing much on other levels) which function to keep the 'original' legends alive while concurrently making them more relevant to new audiences. Regarding Irishness, the conclusions are that in the research material the cultural image is cultivated via salvage in a way that emphasises the territorial and ethnic categories of identity. The Western conception of nation is represented through historical territory, and the ethnic conception of nation through customs, traditions and myths. National identity is seen to be inseparable from identity and nations in the analysis, hence these analyses are merged. However, one aspect of national identity is absent from the legends: that of the equal rights and obligations for all members of the nation. Moreover, the Irishness in the research material is represented in such a way that Self is to be protected from Others, which also extends to aspects of ethnic homogeneity. According to the ethno-symbolist approach, the nationness represented in the research material is (re)invented and governed by a colonial epistemic understanding of the nation-building elites. This emphasises the role of myth and tradition, and the research material is a part of the invented tradition keeping them intact. The role of family is present in the research material both in the legends themselves, and the act of reading of them in a presumable family context creates a practical continuum to many of the abstract ideas of Irishness that the contents of the volume studied represent.</p>			
Keywords Irishness, Yvonne Carroll, <i>Great Irish Legends for Children</i> , national identity, nationality, identity, literature, children's literature, mythology, legends			

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<p>Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoitus on selvittää, kuinka irlantilaisuutta esitetään lapsille suunnatussa kirjallisuudessa, tässä tapauksessa Yvonne Carrollin teoksessa <i>Great Irish Legends for Children</i>. Tätä tarkoitusta varten tässä tutkimuksessa määritetään irlantilaisuus, jonka pohjalta määritelmän mukaisia irlantilaisuuden osatekijöitä analysoidaan suhteessa tutkimusmateriaaliin.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen teoreettinen viitekehys koostuu adaptaation, kulttuurisen kuvan ja sen vaalimisen, identiteetin ja kansallisidentiteetin, kansakunnan ja niiden uudelleenkeksimisen sekä kulttuuristereotypian ja mielletyn irlantilaisuuden käsitteistä. Koska tutkimusaineisto on valikoima adaptoituja legendoja irlantilaisesta mytologiasta, myös adaptaatio on keskeinen osa tämän tutkimuksen teoriaa ja analyysia. Irlantilaisuuden käsite koostetaan tämän teoreettisen kehyksen pohjalta tutkimuksen analyysin lähtökohdaksi. Teoreettisen viitekehysten lopuksi käsitellään lastenkirjallisuutta. Ensinnä esitellään lastenkirjallisuuden yleisiä tunnuspiirteitä, minkä jälkeen käsitellään historiaa ja kansakuntaa irlantilaisessa lastenkirjallisuudessa.</p> <p>Analyysissä tutkitaan aluksi adaptaatiota, sen laajuutta, luonnetta ja funktiota, minkä jälkeen tutkimusmateriaalia analysoidaan muun teoreettisen viitekehysten valossa. Ensiksi tutkitaan, kuinka kulttuurista kuvaa esitetään tutkimusmateriaalissa, kuinka ja miksi tutkimusmateriaalin voidaan sanoa olevan kulttuurinen teko sekä minkälaisista kulttuurista vaalimista se sisältää. Tämän jälkeen analyysissä selvitetään, kuinka identiteetikategoriat, erityisesti kansallisidentiteetti, sekä kansakunta ja sen uudelleenkeksiminen ovat edustettuina tutkimusmateriaalissa. Lopuksi analysoidaan kulttuuristereotypiaa ja mielletyn irlantilaisuuden näkökulmia suhteessa tutkimusmateriaalin sisältöön.</p> <p>Adaptaation osalta tutkimuksen johtopäätökset ovat, että tutkimusmateriaalin adaptaatiot ovat genretranspositioita (enemmän kuin muita transpositioita), joiden funktio on yhtäältä säilyttää 'alkuperäiset' legendat olemassa ja toisaalta tehdä niistä samalla ajankohtaisempia uudelle yleisölle. Irlantilaisuuden osalta johtopäätökset ovat, että tutkimusmateriaalissa edustettuna olevaa kulttuurikuvaa vaalitaan pelastamisen tai talteen ottamisen keinoin (<i>salvage</i>) sellaisella tavalla, joka painottaa alueellisen ja etnisen identiteetikategorian merkitystä. Länsimainen kansakuntakäsitys on edustettuna tutkimusmateriaalissa historiallisen revierin osatekijässä, ja etninen kansakuntakäsitys tavoissa, perinteissä ja myyteissä. Kansallisidentiteettiä ei voida erottaa identiteettiin ja kansakuntaan liittyvästä analyysistä, joten ne on yhdistetty. Tutkimusmateriaalissa ei kuitenkaan ole edustettuna lainkaan se kansallisidentiteetin osatekijä, jonka mukaan kaikilla kansakunnan jäsenillä tulee olla yhtäläiset oikeudet ja velvoitteet. Lisäksi irlantilaisuus on edustettuna teoksessa sellaisella tavalla, joka painottaa Itsen suojaamista Toiselta, mikä ulottuu myös etnistä yhtenäisyyttä koskeviin tekijöihin. Tutkimusmateriaalissa edustettuna oleva kansakunta tai kansallisuus on (uudelleen)keksitty etnosymbolistisen lähestymistavan mukaan, minkä on tehnyt kansakuntaa rakentava valiojoukko kolonialistiseen ajatteluun liittyvien episteemisten ymmärrysten ohjaamana. Näissä episteemisissä ymmärryksissä painottuu myyttien ja perinteiden rooli. Tutkimusmateriaali on osa keksittyä perinnettä, joka tähtää pitämään kyseiset myytit ja perinteet koskemattomina. Perheen ja suvun rooli on tutkimusmateriaalissa esillä niin sisällön osalta kuin myös siten, että teosta itsessään konkretian tasolla luetaan perhe- ja sukukontekstissa. Tämä tuo osaltaan käytännön jatkumon niille abstrakteille irlantilaisuuden ideoille, jotka ovat materiaalissa edustettuina.</p>			
Avainsanat Irlantilaisuus, Yvonne Carroll, <i>Great Irish Legends for Children</i> , kansallisidentiteetti, kansallisuus, identiteetti, kirjallisuus, lastenkirjallisuus, mytologia, legendat			

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1. Introduction and Background

1.1. Aims and Structure

This thesis studies the ways in which Irishness is represented in literature written for children through the case of Yvonne Carroll's *Great Irish Legends for Children*. To be more specific, this thesis studies the role of Irish cultural image, (national) identity, nation and stereotype in relation to how they are portrayed for children in the research material, consisting of folktale adaptations for children. The thesis will examine how these aspects build upon the notion of 'Irishness', which, in this thesis, consists of the said components. On that basis, the aim is also to find out what kind of elements of Irishness are included in the adaptations written for children and, in turn, what is left out. In other words, the research question is: How is Irishness, per the definition provided in this study, represented in the folktale adaptations in Yvonne Carroll's *Great Irish Legends for Children*, and which elements of Irishness are present or absent in the representations for children.

The study is structured in the following way: firstly, in order to understand its essence, the research material is introduced to the necessary extent, as well as the relevant cycles of Celtic mythology and their characteristics. Secondly, the theoretical framework of this study is introduced, beginning with the theory of adaptation, which belongs under the umbrella concept of intertextuality, and which is presented in order to understand the particular characteristics of the research material. Following intertextuality, the concepts of cultural image and cultivation of culture are addressed. Then, the concepts of identity and national identity are introduced. In doing so, different categorisations of identity are presented, moving on towards the aspects of nation and national identity and how they are built. These are then brought together to address the aforementioned issues in closer relation to Ireland, as well as the notion of Irishness and

how it is construed for the purposes of this study. Finally, in order to bring the theory closer to the actual research material, the genre of children's literature is addressed, including some of its key features, as well as such issues as how nation and national identity have previously been studied in the context of the genre.

Having introduced the theoretical framework of the study in Chapter Two, the focus shifts on to the analysis in Chapter Three, where the research material is studied in light of the presented theoretical framework and according to the aims of the study stated in the first paragraph. Finally, the results of the study are presented in the conclusion, aiming to provide a sufficiently justified answer to the research question that was presented in the beginning.

1.2. Research Material

Yvonne Carroll's *Great Irish Legends for Children* includes six folk tales, legends more precisely, which have been adapted for children. The first spread of the title uses phrasing suggesting that the legends are "retold by ... Carroll" (Carroll 3), which may be considered somewhat misleading, since it gives the impression that Carroll has *told* the stories with someone else having *written* them. Be as it may, what is essential is the fact that the stories are adaptations of (well-known) Irish folktales.

The stories in *Great Irish Legends for Children* are rather short, with clear emphasis on illustration, which indicates that they are targeted for a rather young child audience who have either just learnt to read or to whom their parents have read the stories, supporting the act of storytelling by showing the illustrations. "Irish mythology can be categorized into four main cycles: the Mythological Cycle ... the Ulster Cycle ... the Fenian Cycle ... and the Cycle of the Kings" (Ní Bhroin 9). With that, the stories focus on the heroic tradition of Celtic mythology, especially the Ulster cycle, featuring Cuchulainn as either the protagonist or another character, and the Fionn cycle (also called the Finn cycle or the Fenian cycle), with

Fionn Mac Cumhail (also called Finn Mc Cool in many English representations) as the central protagonist in most tales. Since the stories concentrate on these two cycles of the Irish heroic tradition, they are introduced in the following, as it is worth being aware of some their features.

1.3. The Heroic Tradition, Fionn Mac Cumhail and Cuchulainn

As stated above, the legends in *Great Irish Legends for Children* are drawn from the heroic tradition of Celtic Mythology. This becomes clear by a brief glance at the stories, their protagonists and characters, who are versions of Cuchulainn and Fionn Mac Cumhail in each story. Thus, the central features of the heroic tradition and the cycles concerning the two legendary heroes are explained in the following.

1.3.1. The Ulster Cycle and Cuchulainn

Proinsias Mac Cana states in *Celtic Mythology* that there are many heroes in Irish literature overall, but there is only one distinct period that is described as the Heroic Age (Mac Cana 94). He mentions that the recurring themes of the literature and mythology of this tradition are “heroic action, tribal warfare and individual prowess” (Mac Cana 94). He also states that the Heroic Age and heroic tradition have primarily to do with the people of Ulaidh, the one-time dominant people of Ulster, Ireland, after whom the province is named, and that the Heroic Age and the heroic tradition portray “an aristocratic warrior-society with a La Tène culture” (94) which remained somewhat unbroken until the formation of Christianity, as Ireland was secluded from the influence of the Roman Empire (Mac Cana 94). Mac Cana goes on to explain that during this Ulster cycle of heroic tradition in Celtic mythology, Ulaidh was ruled by Conchobar Mac Nessa, who was in the centre of a culture of heroes, and that evidently the most renowned of these heroes was Cù Chulainn, son of the god Lugh and Deichtine, the daughter – or sister – of King Conchobhar (94, 101). Regarding the birth of Cuchulainn, “it was also believed that King Conchobhar himself begot him upon Deichtine. He was thus distinguished

by a combination of two features which frequently mark the birth of the hero: incest and procreation by a god” (Mac Cana 101). This thesis uses the spelling ‘Cù Chulainn’, as it is used in the research material.

In *Celtic Mythology* it is introduced that Cuchulainn plays an essential role in the principal saga of the Ulster cycle, which tells of a great conflict between the people of Ulaidh – also called the Ulstermen – and the Connachtmen, which dealt with the possession of the sacred or divine bull of Cuailnge. In this reciprocal pursue the Ulstermen were cursed into illness, and while they were weak, Cuchulainn defended Ulster single-handedly until the others regained their strength. (Mac Cana 94). Mac Cana adds that in this, Cuchulainn’s actions reflected unambiguously the already mentioned focal characteristics of the heroic tradition, that is, heroic action and individual prowess, and finally summarises the principal saga so that the Connachtmen managed to captivate the brown bull of Cuailnge, during which it engaged in a duel with the white-horned bull Finnbhennach, wherein the brown bull of Cuailnge slayed the white-horned one before falling into its own demise from fatigue (94).

Moreover, to avoid too detailed a description of the different endeavours, adventures and tales concerning Cuchulainn, it suffices to summarise about him that “in the company of mortal heroes Cù Chulainn has no peer, and the part assigned to him ... reflects ... his role throughout the cycle: he is the invincible hero to whom fate ordains a ... life with lasting glory [, and in the end] the heroic quality of [his] life is matched by the manner of his death” (Mac Cana 101, 102).

1.3.2. The Fionn Cycle and Fionn Mac Cumhail

The Fionn cycle is the second relevant cycle of the heroic tradition in Celtic mythology rewritten in the research material of this study. Like the Ulster cycle, it includes heroic Ulster tales, but is “conditioned by a different temper of thought” (Mac Cana 104). According to Mac

Cana, the tales in the Fionn cycle have been acknowledged in the manuscript tradition and existed in parallel with tales of the Christian period, and, in fact, the most renowned tale of the Fionn cycle depicts the son of Fionn and his companions existing on the Christian period and banding together with St. Patrick on his various adventures (104). Therefore, alongside the main notion of heroism, one of the essential characteristics of the Fionn cycle is the fact that the tales in it are from a later period than in the Ulster cycle. In connection, another one is that “the stories of the Fian are more akin to the mythological tales than are those of the Ulster cycle [and] whereas the latter has preserved the heroic ... tradition of the Celts, the Fionn cycle belongs rather to that romantic-mythological tradition” (Mac Cana 107).

As can be interpreted on the basis of the name of the cycle itself, and as Mac Cana presents, the central protagonists in this cycle are Fionn Mac Cumhail and the union of his followers known as the Fian, individual members of which are called “féinnidh” (104). What comes to the original meaning of the term ‘fian’, it has originally referred to any crew of proficient and brave warriors, such as Fionn Mac Cumhail and the Fian, but the term has changed to refer to these particular characters (Mac Cana 104). In addition to being brave warriors, the Fian are characterised as living apart from the rest of the society with their own hierarchy and doctrines, while they are regarded by the rest of the society as valid and vital for it in defending Ireland from enemies coming from outside (Mac Cana 104). In addressing the character of Fionn himself, Mac Cana explains that Fionn has been argued to be a divine character himself, a deity of some sort, but if not that, he is depicted to have possessed supernatural abilities such as clairvoyance and extraordinary knowledge received from otherworldly, supernatural or divine sources (107).

2. Theory

The purpose of this chapter is to present the theoretical framework that is used as the basis for the analysis of this study. Firstly, the theory of literary adaptation is presented in order to support and demonstrate the fact that the research material consists of adaptations and that it is accurate to treat it as adapted literature. Then, the theory of identity is presented: first the concept and its definitions, then the national aspects of identity. This is followed by addressing the concept of nation and its relations to national identity, including how and why nations are invented and re-invented. Then, notions of cultural image are presented, after which the discussion proceeds to Irishness, including discussion of the historical development of Irishness and how it is perceived nowadays. The issues addressed at this point form the basis for how Irishness is understood in this particular study, and this definition is also applied in the analysis. Finally, to bring the theory closer to the practical research material, the study of children's literature is addressed briefly, including its generic features and earlier studies regarding it.

2.1. Adaptation

As the legends in *Great Irish Legends for Children* are adaptations of Irish legends from a more original source (be it an adaptation of a tale from oral tradition into text, or an adaptation of an earlier written representation of a legend into another written adaptation), the concept of adaptation is to be examined. Adaptation is one of the key concepts in the theoretical framework of this thesis and is important in understanding the features of the research material. Hence, this sub-chapter aims to introduce the concept of adaptation and reflect on that with reference to the research material.

Firstly, when it comes to the basic nature of adaptation, Julie Sanders has stated that “the process ... of adaptation [... is] in many respects a sub-section of the over-arching practice of

intertextuality” (17). Deborah Cartmell and Imelda Wheelan have divided adaptation into three different types: transposition, commentary and analogue (Sanders 24). Commentaries are “adaptations that comment on the politics of the source text [and require] the audience’s awareness of an explicit relationship to a source text” (Sanders 21-22), whereas, as Sanders writes, an analogue does not necessary require knowledge of the source text, although it usually enriches the experience (22-23). According to Sanders, transposition may occur not only in the sense of transferring a text from one genre to another by aesthetic convention, but also on a cultural, geographical and temporal sense (20). As will be discussed in the analysis, the adaptations in *Great Irish Legends for Children* are transpositions, yet they only manifest a certain type of transposition in their adaptation, which is a generic shift from one genre to another, as adaptation is “frequently a specific process involving the transition from one genre to another” (Sanders 19).

Moreover, “the interleaving of different texts and textual traditions, which is manifest in the intertextual impulse, has also been linked to the post-colonial notion of ‘hybridity’” (Sanders 17). In this text, Homi Bhabha suggests that ideas are “repeated, relocated and translated in the name of tradition” (Bhabha 207), but, as Sanders resumes, “this process of relocation can stimulate new utterances and creativity” (Sanders 17). To expand upon the idea of new utterances, “adaptation studies mobilize a wide vocabulary of active terms: version, variation, interpretation, continuation, transformation, imitation, pastiche, parody, forgery, travesty, transposition, revaluation, revision, rewriting [and] echo” (Sanders 18). Some of the terms seem to have certain connotations related to the relevance of the original text and the intended impressions of the adaptations. Noteworthy in this regard is that “adaptation can also constitute a simple ... attempt to make texts ‘relevant’ or easily comprehensible to new audiences and readership via the process of proximation and updating” (Sanders 19).

Expanding on the role of the ‘original’ or source text in the process of adaptation, John Ellis argues that “adaptation into another medium becomes a means of prolonging the pleasure of the original presentation, and repeating the production of a memory” (Ellis qtd in Sanders 24). According to Sanders, Ellis’s view on adaptation is that adaptations utilise a sort of common memory invoked by the original text and attempt to replace it with memories and imagery from the new text (24, 25). Sanders takes a different view here, as she supports more the role of the source text, claiming that instead of an attempt to replace the meaning and memory of it, it is the source text in itself and its endurance which is in the centre of adaptation, and provides the premise for the whole process of adaptation in general, and that the importance of the source text provides the prerequisites for perceiving the similarities that adaptation tries to create (Sanders 25). Less concerned with either the role of the source text or the role of the adapted new text as the guiding factor in the intended functioning of an adaptation, Gérard Genette argues, regarding the nature and characteristics of adaptation, that it has to do with “readings which are invested not in proving a text’s closure to alternatives, but in celebrating its ongoing interaction with other texts and artistic productions” (Ellis qtd in Sanders 18).

This sub-chapter has presented some general conceptions of adaptation which, as will be presented in the analysis section of this study, are applicable to *Great Irish Legends for Children*. This is to say, as the study will show, that the texts in the research material are verifiably adaptations by nature. Next, the discussion goes on to present in more detail the theoretical framework used to analyse the adaptations of the research material in relation to what they convey, why and how, to the implied child reader.

2.2. Cultural Image and Cultivation of Culture

The purpose of this chapter is to present the concept of cultural image, as well as to explain how culture or endeavours that are generally regarded as cultural are cultivated, as this, too, constitutes Irishness as understood in this study. More precisely, the aim is to explain which elements are present in the general understanding of the term ‘culture’, and what it means when we speak of its cultivation. Like the previous sub-chapter, this is part of the groundwork in illustrating the notion of Irishness to be later in the study, of which culture, or cultural image and its cultivation, is a part.

Joep Leerssen discusses nationalism, cultural nationalism and “cultivation of culture” in his essay called “Nationalism and the Cultivation of Culture”. This chapter takes an interest in the description of culture and its components and the cultivation of culture that Leerssen discusses. He suggests the following:

This *cultivation of culture* underpins ... nationalists’ scholarly, creative and political-propagandist concern with language, with folktales, history, myths and legends, proverbs, ancient tribal/legal antiquity, mythology, antique heirlooms etc. All of these undergo ... a crucial transformation. They are lifted from their context of origin [...], recontextualised and instrumentalised for modern needs and values [... and] are invested with a fresh national symbolism and status. (Leerssen 568; emphasis original)

Leerssen does not attempt to specify culture per se, as “it would be quixotic to try to and impose a definition of the notoriously protean concept [and] most ... have a commonsense ... understanding of the term” (569), but instead, he discusses “manifestations of what is commonly considered a cultural endeavour [based on which] to attempt some pragmatic systemisation” (569). He offers four different categories in the first line of systemisation, which

certainly overlap each other: language; literature and learning, including novels, theatre and verse, antiquarianism, cultural criticism and history-writing; material culture, which includes sculpture, monuments and symbols such as flags, for instance; and immaterial culture, consisting of folkdances, music, other pastimes and sports, as well as manners and customs (Leerssen 569).

Leerssen argues that the cultivation of culture (or actually the aforementioned manifestations of cultural endeavours), has to do with cultural-nationalist actors and their attempts on instrumentalising the national culture (570). These cultivational attempts, in turn, he divides into three: “salvage, fresh productivity and propagandist proclamation” (Leerssen 570). The first, salvage, “is content with mere inventorisation (of language, discourse, artefacts or practices, as per the four fields listed above) [,] celebrate[s] specimens of ancient tradition [... and reaches] out to a receding antiquity from a modernising vantage point” (Leerssen 570). The second, fresh productivity, involves “contemporary initiatives ... inspired by historicist inventories and remembrances” (Leerssen 570). This, in practice, can mean attempts to advance the prestige of a vernacular language, for instance, by increasing the amount of patriotic written prose, or promoting musical arts that draw inspiration from folk music (Leerssen 570). In propagandist proclamation, according to Leerssen, “[the national culture is] drawn upon to suffuse the public sphere with a sense of collective national identity” (571): teaching a vernacular language, national history and -literature in schools, practising historicist architecture and giving dedicatory place-names would be cases in point (Leerssen 571).

Although this sub-chapter provides a rather concise description of cultural manifestations and their cultivation, it suffices for the purpose of this thesis. Leerssen’s take on the matter provides a valid basis to build on in discussing Irishness in the following sub-chapter, and ultimately the research material further on.

2.3. Identity and National Identity

The purpose of this sub-chapter is to present the next concepts of the theoretical framework, those of identity and national identity, which, for a part, constitute Irishness in this thesis. This sub-chapter is constructed in the following way: firstly, largely based on the ideas of Anthony D. Smith, different categories of identity are presented in order to lay a foundation for the concept of national identity. After that, some aspects of nation are presented with reference to the idea of inventing and re-inventing the nation to pursue a specific kind of national identity.

2.3.1. Categories of Identity

Anthony D. Smith uses Oedipus as an example when talking about the different identities of a person: he argues that the matter of identity can be divided into collective and individual identities, and that Oedipus' individual identity – which can be seen as transposable to anyone's individual identity – consists of different social roles that he carries out in his existence, which are, for instance, those of father, husband and king (3). This can be interpreted to claim that identity consists of different roles. As an extension to this idea, Smith notes that “the self is composed of multiple identities and roles [and that] each of the identities is based on social classifications that may be modified or even abolished” (4). Smith lists a number of these roles, categories or classifications, including those related to gender, territory, socio-economic elements, class, ethnicity and gender (4). The following section will address the different roles that define and categorise identity, as they, quite literally, are included in national identity and ultimately Irishness as understood in this study.

According to Smith, the category of gender can be regarded as the most apparent of the aforementioned categories of identity, and although perhaps not undisputable, categorisations according to gender are rather universal and prevalent, largely lying in the source of and laying the basis for further classifications of identity roles. (4). As Smith writes,

Gender identity, which spans the globe, is inevitably more attenuated and taken for granted than other kinds of collective identity in the modern world [and although] we are in many subtle as well as overt ways defined by our gender [...] the very universality and all-encompassing nature of gender differentiation makes it a less cohesive and potent base for collective identification. (Smith 4)

Moreover, although the gender category of identity is common and thus lays the ground for other kinds of categorisation, it is rather fragmented and must rely on more cohesive categorisations (Smith 4).

The second category, that of space or territory, is, in accordance to Smith's ideas, as widespread as that of gender, but partly because territories and regions are difficult to define geographically, and partly because they are often splintered into localities and settlements, the process of forming such a unity which would carry a common value is hindered (4). Moreover, the unity that is found in territories likely originates from ideology and economy that do not have anything to do with regionality or territory per se (Smith 4). So, it would seem that no more than the category of gender are the categories of space or territory enough to act as building blocks of (national) identity as a whole. As will become evident later in the study, the territorial category of identity plays a noteworthy part in the assessment of Irishness via linking to national identity.

Thirdly, there is the socio-economic category of social class. Smith states that "whether we define 'class', with Marx, as a relationship to the means of production or, with Weber, as an aggregate of those with identical life-chances in the market, there are clear limits to any attempt to use class as a basis for a sense of identity and community" (5). He explains this by stating that it is partly because classes are often regionally diffused apart, in a similar manner as gender, and are probable to divide further according to income, for instance, which is a

matter that can change, drastically even, over time (Smith 5). Furthermore, Smith proceeds to argue that the formation of a 'class' requires a conflict social relationship with another, which acts to emphasise class differences and thus create a unified class identity, but inevitably some part of the population is left out of this class identity (5-6).

Finally, there are the religious and ethnic categories. What differentiates religious identity from social class identity is the difference in from what kind of human need and action they arise; while production and exchange are the driving forces of social class, communication and socialisation are those for religious identity (Smith 6). When looking at the category of ethnicity, according to Smith, "for the greater part of human history the twin circles of religious and ethnic identity have been very close, if not identical [and] it is easy to 'slide' from one ... to another, and ... overlap is frequent" (7). However, the difference that ought to be acknowledged is that "religious community may, after all, divide an ethno-linguistic population [and] for a long time religious cleavages prevented the emergence of a strong and enduring ethnic consciousness" (Smith 7-8).

The categories of identity presented above contribute to the notion of Irishness as understood in this study and to the formation of a particular collective identity, national identity. This will be discussed in the following subchapter.

2.3.2. National Identity

Before discussing the role of nation as part of national identity further, the notion of nation needs to be addressed before approaching the whole issue of national identity. Thus, the Western conception and the non-Western, or the 'ethnic', conception of nation are introduced to begin with. When it comes to the "standard, Western model of the nation [, its] components [are] historic territory, legal-political community, legal-political equality of members and common civic culture" (Smith 11). These components are described below.

Smith argues that the component of historical territory remains the essential aspect in the Western conception (9). According to his view, a nation must have a clearly distinctive territorial area on which to exist, and in this view only the area or territory in which the 'historic people' of its members has lived for several generations in reciprocal efficiency with the land suffices; a land that has become a vessel for historic memories which, much like the importance of its places, cities and nature, can only fully be comprehended by the members of that nation (Smith 9). The notion of a legal-political community refers, according to Smith, to the existence of a set of commonly agreed laws and regulations, as well as an institution carrying them out in the form of a nation, and the notion of legal-political equality refers to the existence of "reciprocal rights and obligations between members and the correlative exclusion of outsiders from those rights and obligations [and to the idea that] in principle, all members of the nation are legally equal" (Smith 10). Lastly, the term 'common civic culture' refers to the idea that "nations must have a measure of common culture and a civic ideology, a set of common understandings and aspirations, sentiments and ideas, that bind the population together in their homeland" (Smith 11).

The non-Western model of the nation, henceforth referred to as the ethnic model in this thesis, deviates from the Western rather significantly. This is because

its emphasis [is] on a community of birth and native culture [,and] a nation [...is] first and foremost a community of common descent [which means that] in this conception, the nation can trace its roots to an imputed common ancestry and that therefore its members are brothers and sisters, or at least cousins, differentiated by family ties from outsiders. (Smith 11-12)

Thus, a member of a nation perceived according to the ethnic model cannot choose to which nation to belong, whereas such an opportunity exists in the Western model (Smith 11).

Moreover, “genealogy and presumed descent ties, popular mobilization, vernacular languages, customs and traditions: these are the elements of an alternative, ethnic conception of the nation” (Smith 12). Another essential issue regarding the ethnic model of nation as understood in this study, and because Ireland is by Smith seen as one such nation, is that

by creating a widespread awareness of the myths, history and linguistic traditions of the community [the lexicographers, philologists and folklorists] succeeded in substantiating and crystallizing the idea of an ethnic nation in the minds of most members [of nations perceived in the Western model], even when, as in Ireland and Norway, the ancient languages declined. (Smith 12)

Keeping the abovementioned conceptions of the nation in mind is a step towards defining national identity. According to Smith, despite the Western and ethnic conception opposing each other in many ways, there are shared assumptions of what constitutes as a nation (Smith 14). With that, he writes,

the existence of these common assumptions allows us to list the fundamental features of national identity as follows:

- an historic territory, or homeland
- common myths and historical memories
- a common, mass public culture
- common legal rights and duties for all members
- a common economy with territorial mobility for members. (Smith 14)

Moreover, “the nation ... draws on elements of other kinds of collective identity [... and] national identity can be combined with these other types of identity [... and so] is multi-dimensional; it can never be reduced to single element” (Smith 14). As Smith proceeds to suggest, the nation and national identity share many connected and overlapping features

(ethnic, cultural, territorial, economic and legal-political) and tie together communities that share history, myths and traditions, but, despite coinciding in this manner, a noteworthy aspect of both is that they stand separate from the state and its public institutions and bureaucracy (14-15).

Furthermore, Markus Kornprobst offers a further description of national identity with particular reference to Ireland in his essay called “Episteme, Nation-builders and National Identity: The Re-construction of Irishness”:

First, national identity is identification. It is an ongoing, never-ending process. Second, national identity is a non-essentialist category. It is a historically and socially contingent construct. Third, national identity is relational. Part of what gives meaning to a nation is the relationship between itself (Self) and other nations (Other). Fourth, national identities are constructed through telling stories about Self and the relationship between Self and Other. (Kornprobst 409)

Smith makes another distinction regarding national identity and its functions regarding communities: into external and internal categories (15). According to him, the external functions are territorial, which are to provide a historic land and “moral geography” (Smith 16) for a community; economic, which are over the territorial resources and their mobility; and political, which are to provide a set of legislative statutes that work on the foundation of defined values of the community that reflect the ancient practises (16). The internal functions, in turn, work on a more personal level for an individual in a community, and they can be divided into three: firstly, national identity functions internally to form social groups of individuals that identify in a shared culture; and secondly, it functions to form social bonds between members of a society via symbols that remind of their shared legacy and values and strengthen the sense of belonging for individuals (Smith 16-17). Thirdly, “a sense of national identity provides a

powerful means of defining and locating individual selves in the world, through the prism of the collective personality and its distinctive culture” (Smith 17).

Having addressed the issues of identity along with its collective form of national identity, the chapter moves on to aspects of nation, which, as already the name suggests, is an essential concept in its formation. This will be discussed next to build the concept of Irishness central to this study.

2.4. Nation Underlying National Identity

The concepts of ‘identity’ and ‘nation’ are both central to this study, and as already the name suggests, both are needed in order address national identity. The aim of this subchapter is to expand on the role of nation in national identity or in constructing national identity, as well as present different schools of thought regarding inventing and re-inventing nations.

Friedrich Meinecke’s division of the concept of nation presents a view that is applicable in this study. According to Smith, Meinecke has divided the concept of nation into “*kulturnation*” and “*staatsnation*”: the former of the two, *kulturnation*, refers to a passive cultural community and the latter, *staatsnation*, to an active political nation (Smith 8). This division, too, provides one premise for the interpretation of national identity in this study, as strong focus of the analysis is on the cultural aspects of nation, that is, *kulturnation*, while *staatsnation* along with its political and ideological aspects, such as nationalism per se, is not so in a focal point. However, the division is not totally unambiguous, as “what we mean by ‘national’ identity involves some sense of political community, however tenuous” (Smith 9).

Markus Kornprobst presents another idea concerning the role of nation as the underlying element in the construction of national identity. He argues that “structural factors ... do not determine the origins and the evolution of a nations [but instead] agency plays an important role [and] most accounts emphasise the role of elites [so that] in a material and/or ideational

context, elites invent and re-invent nations” (Kornprobst 403). In his essay, Kornprobst discusses “what makes elites seek to invent a particular nationness [and] why and how nations are built and evolve the way they do” (403, 405). He suggests that there are three main ways of thinking regarding the subject: “modernism, ethno-symbolism and social constructivism” (Kornprobst 405). They all have a different view on the matter and are presented below.

According to Kornprobst, modernism, which is the first of the three prominent schools of thought mentioned above, considers the nation having emerged due to socio-economic and technological change (Kornprobst 405). He adds, however, that there is dissent among the modernist view, too: some emphasise the role of ideas, such as religions and the emergence of (new) philosophical views, over economic change, and others vice versa. (Kornprobst 405). The ethno-symbolist approach, according to Kornprobst, does not reject the modernist approach, but emphasises the role of *ethnie*, that is, “an ideational category consisting of shared myths, memories and symbols” (Kornprobst 405), in nation-building. As for social constructivism, Kornprobst states that

three postulates underpin this quite heterogeneous school of thought: first, there is not one type of nationness, but a considerable variety [;] second, nationness is a socially constructed discourse [where] language ... constructs social reality [and] national identity is an aspect of this reality [; and] third, national identity varies across time and across different segments of the population [and] there is no one monolithic discourse (Kornprobst 405).

Furthermore, to Kornprobst the universal factor across the different schools of thought regarding nationalism (or forming of nations and national identity) is the importance of elites, but he problematises each three prevalent schools of thought by arguing that they fail to provide a sufficient answer as to their motivations (Kornprobst 406-408). Instead, he argues that

“epistemic understandings of the world delineate which kinds of national identity are conceivable for, and plausible to, nation-building elites” (403). What he means by the notion of ‘episteme’ is “a set of fundamental and taken-for-granted beliefs about what constitutes the world and about how the world works” (404). In other words, Konrprobst explains the elites’ motives in inventing and re-inventing nations and a certain kind of nationness with epistemes. As this idea presents a usable starting point for the definition of Irishness in this thesis, these epistemes and their role in the formation of the Irish national identity are presented in a later sub-chapter.

2.5. Reinventing Nation and Inventing Tradition

This chapter presents the role of epistemes in creating plausible national identities or identity narratives that have affected the formation of the Irish national identity along the lines of Markus Konrprobst’s ideas, as well as addressed the issue of reinventing tradition. As already introduced in the sub-chapter covering the notion of national identity, Markus Kornprobst argues that epistemes are the primary guiding factor in the construction of national identity that is comprehensible for the elites who, according to the prevalent idea to which Kornprobst, too, subscribed in his essay, invent and re-invent nations (403, 404). In his essay, Kornprobst discusses these epistemes in relation to the Irish national identity, which can be argued to be a vital component of Irishness. It is noteworthy, though, that it is a matter of “the hypothesised role of epistemes in processes of national identity formation” (Kornprobst 410) that Kornprobst suggests. However, they provide a valid way of defining Irishness in this study.

First, to expand shortly on the notion of the episteme, Kornprobst paraphrases Foucault’s idea by paralleling the term with ‘world-view’: “[it is] an ideational force that makes us interpret the world in a certain way, often without an active interpretation process [and] a particular interpretation of the world seems so evident to use that we do not even reflect upon

it[,] other interpretations [being] beyond the limits of our imagination” (Kornprobst 408, 409). According to Kornprobst’s idea, an episteme is a sort of pre-existing or axiomatic set of fundamental normative beliefs that conduct social actors in constructing the world; often functioning on a subconscious level, it is something that is shared by a certain group of social actors (people) and direct the way that said actors perceive how world does or is supposed to work (409) Kornprobst connects the episteme to national identity in that “the episteme delineates which identity narrative is plausible and which is not [,] circumscribe[s] the construction of national identity [and] makes certain identity formations conceivable for and intelligible to nation-builders” (Kornprobst 409).

Regarding the evolution and re-inventing of the Irish nation, Kornprobst suggests that, according to the colonial episteme, national identity was governed by the following epistemic beliefs, “and Ireland is no exception in this regard” (Kornprobst 410). Firstly, it was believed that nations are ancient, which was regarded as an undisputed fact by the nation-builders in the first half of the 20th century (Kornprobst 410). Moreover, it was believed that ethnic homogeneity needed to be cultivated and defended, and nation needed to have clearly outlined borders establish Self from Others. In addition, the nation-builders of the time also believed that Ireland had to aspire for differentiation in relation to Britain, the former coloniser of Ireland, which also lead into efforts of recovering the Gaelic language (Kornprobst 410-411). These epistemic beliefs, as Garratt suggests,

confined the imaginative space of the re-inventors of the Irish nation to an ancient and homogenous nation that was radically different from Britain [and] their ‘true’ Ireland [was found] in myths of the past, and in the rural and Gaelic-speaking west of Ireland [,with] a key aspect of this self-definition [being] the rejection of modernity, the desire to return to the mythical Gaelic roots of the Irish nation, and the celebration of the simple rural life. (Garratt qtd in Kornprobst 411)

Moreover, around the time of the 1937 constitution, Irishness was governed by the Celtic and Catholic image, which were considered to construct the authentic Self, and this manifested in an exclusive sort of Irishness: the aspiration was to implement separation from other nations by rejecting international organisations, for instance, and those disputing the vision could not be counted among the authentic Self (Kornprobst 412). As Kornprobst explains, alternative epistememes existed, though side-lined until the beginning of the 1930s, including, among others, revisionism which emphasised value-free history telling and scientific research (413). The idea of Europe brought epistemic belief of plurality of nations and international collaboration and integration (Kornprobst 413). This brought contest in “imaginable plausible national identities” (Kornprobst 415).

Furthermore, the issues addressed above in relation to inventing the nation are somewhat closely related to the topic of inventing tradition. Hobsbawm and Ranger state that

'Invented tradition' is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past. (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1)

However, a curiosity related to invented traditions is that this continuity with historic past is, according to Hobsbawm and Ranger, rather artificial, and, in fact, and the issue is more related to the need in the modern world to hold on to at least some practices and keep them untouched (2). Inventing traditions is thus “essentially a process of formalization and ritualization, characterized by reference to the past, if only by imposing repetition” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 4).

This chapter has described some aspects of what has been considered Irishness over time as well as what sort of ideas and epistemic understandings have directed the development of the notion of Irishness. Being aware of these issues, as well as of the invention of tradition, is essential in defining Irishness in this study. As the echoes of the past are still present, perhaps it is apt to state that, in this study, not a certain part of the abovementioned epistemes, ideas or invented tradition constitute Irishness, but the history of the development of the Irish nation and tradition does, for a part.

2.6. Stereotypical and Perceived Irishness

This sub-chapter proceeds to pursue the idea of Irishness via its stereotypes and by addressing how Irishness is perceived by people who consider themselves to be Irish or are likely to be considered Irish by others. This is done in accordance with the ideas presented in Yaqoub BouAynaya's study regarding perceived Irishness.

BouAynaya quotes White when mentioning that the Irish identity can be construed as “the accumulated legacy of previous generations and how they are interpreted today” (White qtd in BouAynaya 37) However, according to BouAynaya, “‘Irish’ identity [also] seems to be persistently reconstructed and reinvented” (38). BouAynaya mentions that according to Marshall, at a stereotypical level, Irishness is based on traits of being ‘white’, heterosexual, Irish-speaking, Irish-born, settled and Catholic (BouAynaya 41). Following that, the transcribed and analysed group discussions of BouAynaya's study reveal some central attributes of Irishness perceived by participants who consider themselves, or are likely to be considered by others, Irish. The attributes discussed in this study are those of family, clan, language, community and sports, which are explained below.

The role of family is highlighted regarding identity formation, and it “is seen as a mechanism where more nuanced cultural aspects of everyday life are taught and learnt naturally

[which] seems suggestive of an order of importance in relation to identifying with Irishness; the continuation of family, maintaining traditional cultural habits” (BouAynaya 118, 119). Included in this, supposedly, is language, which “in the view of the participants, is [too] a key attribute of a distinctive Irishness” (BouAynaya 127). Moreover, family is characterised also as the link between “individual and Irish collective [and] having family lineage in Ireland ... is considered to be a primary differentiating factor between being Irish and being an Irish citizen” (BouAynaya 124). Closely related to this, is the attribute of the clan, which is seen as an important part of the Irish identity or Irishness. Although faced with some ironic joking by some of the participants in the group discussions of BouAynaya’s study, especially the distinctive family names as part of the Irish ethnicity associate a person with a recognisable Irish family and are thought to illustrate succession from and Irish clan (BouAynaya 132, 135).

Moreover, when the more general or “superficial” associations of Irishness are put aside, including language, music, family and religion, for instance, it seems that community remains one elementary aspect of it, and ‘contributing to the community’ was defined as one major way of becoming ‘Irish’ in addition to having family and heritage in Ireland (BouAynaya 150, 151). The communal attribute of Irish identity presents itself not only on the level of one collective sense of community, but on the level of more discrete communities, as well, which intend to stand separate from the collective: a case in point would be the variation of the interpretation of the Irish identity between loyalists and unionists, as BouAynaya points out (154). The communal aspect is evidenced further in an extract of conversation in BouAynaya’s study, in which a participant named Ciara states:

I think if you are Irish, if you adopt the kind of (cough), the kind of traditions of Ireland and the behaviour, like we saw, participation, being willing to talk and share 137 with other people and, kind a fully participate in Irish society, I think that, that

makes you Irish, irrespective of where you originally come from... (BouAynaya 136-137)

In relation to community and participation, “sport and its institutions are portrayed in a very positive light” (BouAynaya 140), and although partly dismissed by some participants of the study as merely “stereotypical considerations [such as] dance, music, Catholicism, language, Guinness and the consumption of alcohol as a prerequisite more generally [... the] notion of sport and participation [... is] a key component and almost prerequisite of Irishness” (BouAynaya 142, 143). This favourable attitude towards sports and its institutions in Ireland, as BouAynaya argues, might have to do with a resemblance to inter-clan unification, however being exclusive to those who participate in the mentioned activity in some way, it is positioned differently than the aforementioned attributes of family, clan and community (140). Even so, it is evident that “sports seems to have a ritualistic connotation [and] acts as a form of ritual ... that preserves cultural transference of what is seen as uniquely and traditionally Irish and it maintains bonds at the parochial and communal level” (BouAynaya 150), and is therefore a noteworthy component of Irishness.

As seen above, some consider that Irishness can be acquired through participation, regardless of heritage or origin. However, BouAynaya’s study also reveals that an Irish bloodline, too, is emphasised by some as a prerequisite to being Irish, as opposed to being an Irish citizen (192). This, according to his study, presents a dilemma concerning hybrid identities (BouAynaya 192) which is attempted to overcome by accepting temporal exposure to Irish cultural norms as a justification to becoming Irish (or Irish citizen) (200).

Despite this, there seems to be, in accordance to BouAynaya, a racial aspect (or the lack thereof) to, or attitude towards, Irishness, as well, wherein a person with an appearance different from what is regarded ‘the Irish ethnicity’ by people including in it (skin colour, for

instance), although possessing Irish citizenship and self-subscribing to the Irish cultural norms and the requirement of active participation in the community, is not recognised as Irish by those who do have Irish heritage, making Irishness exclusive to some extent and a concept that requires some external approval (BouAynaya 223). Moreover, the so-called postmodern Irishness that has emerged in Ireland has brought the contrasting ideals of the traditional and the global into question (BouAynaya 44). Irishness in its modern way of interpretation relies not only on idiosyncratic cultural and religious traditions, but also on racial similarities to such extent that “historically the ambiguity of ‘Irish’ identity lies within the ambiguity of a racial theory, developed on notions of racial superiority/inferiority” (BouAynaya 42), and this same modern Irishness was built on “emphasis on Celtic racial distinctiveness through the revival of Irish language, the development of a national literary movement and the codification of national sports” (BouAynaya 43).

2.7. Irishness in This Study

In this sub-chapter the purpose is to summarise the necessary elements of the theoretical framework presented thus far to form as concise a description as possible of what is meant by Irishness in this study, and so to declare what precisely will be analysed in relation to *Great Irish Legends for Children* in the discussion part. By the end of this sub-chapter, a description of Irishness will have been formed by selecting appropriate elements from the already presented theories and studies to form a unity that is Irishness as understood in this study.

Firstly, Irishness in this study is identity. It is the territorial or spatial category of identity which provides territorial or regional unity for people belonging to it, either found in the region itself or shared ideologies within it (Smith 4). It is the religious and ethnic categories of identity, driven by the human needs of communication and socialisation and providing an enduring ethnic consciousness (Smith 6-8).

Secondly, Irishness in this study is the nation underlying national identity it. It has the following components of the Western conception of the nation described by Smith: the historical territory, the legal-political component, and the component of common civic culture (Smith 9-11). It is an ethnic conception of the nation in that it, in part, fulfils the elements of “genealogy and presumed descent ties ... vernacular languages, customs and traditions” (Smith 12).

Thirdly, Irishness as understood in this study is a national identity with its fundamental features as listed by Smith, which are, to repeat: “historic territory or homeland, common myths and historical memories, a common, mass public culture, common legal rights and duties for all members, a common economy with territorial mobility for members” (Smith 14). It stands separate from the state, as does the nation (Smith 14-15). Irishness in this study has gravity on the internal functions of national identity listed by Smith and is close to Meinecke’s notion of *kulturnation*.

Moreover, Irishness as understood in this study is a form of nationness that has been invented and re-invented by elites as guided by epistemic ideas: along the lines of colonial episteme, revisionist episteme and the notion of Europe from an exclusive national identity to a more inclusive one. It is also the idea of invented tradition to keep certain values alive by means of repetition. Irishness in this study is also the nature, elements and stereotypes of Irishness as described by BouAynaya, and the perceptions of central attributes of Irishness made by people identifying as Irish in his study. These include, to recapitulate, the role of family in preserving cultural customs including language among all and connecting an individual to the community; the clan in highlighting the role of ancestry; community and participation in related obligations on one hand and in cultural activities held in high esteem, such as sports, on the other; and the role of ethnicity which seems to be exclusive to some extent without certain traits, requiring approval from those with them.

Furthermore, Irishness in this study also includes the manifestations of cultural endeavours such as language, folktales, history, myths and legends, proverbs, ancient tribal antiquity, mythology and antique heroism. It is their cultivation by lifting them from their original context and “investing them with new national symbolism and status” (Leerssen 568) by salvage, fresh productivity and propagandist proclamation.

Irishness has now been assessed for the purposes of this study. When referred to Irishness in the analysis, it is the components above and this assessment in general to which the reference is being made.

2.8. Children’s Literature

To return the theoretical framework from abstraction closer to the research material of this thesis, a brief presentation of the study of children’s literature is provided in this chapter. First, some general knowledge about the study of children’s literature is introduced, followed by introduction of some elements from previous children’s literature research concerning similar themes as in this thesis. As mentioned, this sub-chapter is a brief introduction to the theme, as children’s literature per se is not in the focal point in the analysis of this thesis, but still relevant since the research material belongs to the genre.

2.8.1. Generic Features of Children’s Literature

Firstly, according to M.O. Grenby, children’s literature in a broad way of interpretation is nowadays many-fold, including text in many forms and genres, advertisements, computer games et cetera, and texts produced for children have existed as early as Roman times (2). Historical periods such as the Middle Ages and the Renaissance have been rich in creating reading which children have consumed, but it is debated whether literature from those times can be considered children’s literature as they probably were not created explicitly for children, which, according to rather wide consensus, would have to be the case for the text to be

unambiguously referred to as children's literature. In connection, the texts must be produced for children in their childhood that is recognisable in present day in order to be regarded children's literature per se (Grenby 2-3). Moreover, the chapters that Grenby presents in the content page of his *Children's Literature* are "fable, poetry, moral tales and problem novels, the school story, the family story, fantasy, the adventure story [as well as] illustration and the picturebooks" (Grenby v). It is reasonable to regard these as the current major genres of children's literature, since Grenby states in the introduction of the book that "each of the main chapters examines one of the major genres of children's literature" (1). According to him, "these genres have existed since children's literature was first established as a separate part of print culture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and sometimes even before that" (Grenby 1). To keep this sub-chapter as focused as possible, not all of the mentioned genres are explained, but only the relevant genres – fable, fantasy, the adventure story and the picture book.

A fable is, by nature, "a short, fictional tale which has a specific moral or behavioural lesson to teach. This lesson is often explained at the end of the tale in an epigram or 'moral'" (Grenby 10). The majority of fables present animals as main protagonists, and although "there had always been a substantial crossover between the fable and the animal story" (Grenby 17), animals in fables represent humans or human behaviour, which differentiates them from animal stories, in which animals are typically enchanted and intermingle with human (17). Moreover, "like fairy tales, fables probably had their origins in an oral folk tale tradition" (Grenby 10). They were not originally directed solely for child audiences but have since become to be recognised mainly as meant for younglings, although fables aspiring towards a wider range of audience are still being written (Grenby 10). Finally, Grenby suggests that the moral lesson in fables is typically in order to "teach ... about the difference between surface and substance,

appearance and reality” (Grenby 25), and there is reasonable consensus in that fables are the first and earliest form of children’s literature (Grenby 11).

What comes to defining fantasy, Grenby states the following:

Fantasy is an extensive, amorphous and ambiguous genre, resistant to attempts at quick definition. It can incorporate the serious and the comic, the scary and the whimsical, the moral and the anarchic. It can be ‘high’ – taking place in alternative worlds – or ‘low’ – set in the world we know. Or it can combine the two. Besides texts set in other worlds, fantasy includes stories of magic, ghosts, talking animals and superhuman heroes, of time travel, hallucinations and dreams. It overlaps with other major genres, notably the fairy tale and the adventure story (Grenby 144)

However, in spite of escaping a univocal definition, fantasy is, according to Grenby, essential in understanding children’s literature, with many regarding it “the very core of children’s literature” (Grenby 144) and the initiator of the proper existence of children’s literature as it harnessed the entirely free imagination in order to entertain children (Grenby 144). In relation to fantasy, it appears to be a misconception that fantasy and realism exclude each other, or “that to increase the level of fantasy is to diminish the level of reality (or vice versa)” (Grenby 146), as literature cannot be measured unambiguously in a way that representation of reality would purely be on one side of the scale and fantasy on the other, and numerous works in (children’s) fantasy literature exemplify the fact that the normal and the supernatural mix in them by occurring simultaneously and in varied measures with no official precept guiding their relationship (Grenby 146, 150).

The adventure story is, in accordance to Grenby’s guide, another genre whose elements differentiate it from other children’s literature and are difficult to indicate unambiguously, and it is debatable if the adventure story is a distinct genre of its own in the first place (170, 172).

He explains that “the boundaries of the children’s adventure story are very blurred” (Grenby 171) in many ways, since many adventure stories were not originally targeted for child audiences, and in many instances the line between fiction and reality vacillates in adventure stories, and even the one between adventure stories and history books as classical myths, for instance, can well be included as adventure stories, and the number of texts that can be seen as solely adventure are scarce (Grenby 171-172). There are two key aspects of the adventure story that Grenby distinguishes: ”adventure stories provide a fantasy of empowerment for children, describing a heroism that their real-life powerlessness makes appealing [and] many ... adventure stories depict a conflict between children’s yearning for consequentiality and their residual desire for protection and supervision” (194).

Finally, the genre of illustrations and the picture book offer a range of extent to which pictures are utilised in the text: some illustrations govern the work, whereas others act to merely relish the textual presentation that is the main part (Grenby 199). Plain and simple, texts in this genre can be characterised as “children’s books with graphic content” (Grenby 199), but due to the variance in how and how much illustrations are used, Grenby offers an internal division that can be made within the genre (Grenby 199). This is into “the illustrated book, the ornamented book, the toy book, the picture book, pop-up books and colouring books [...] graphic novels, hidden-object books[...], books with embedded video content [...] and augmented reality books” (Grenby 199, 200). Of the sub-genres mentioned above, the research material of this thesis is closest to the illustrated book, the ornamented book and the picture book.

Without going into too much depth regarding the history of development of illustrated texts, it may suffice to mention that “there are substantial differences between the ways pictures and words work [:] words are generally ‘invisible’, so to speak [... but pictures] are designed not only to be noticeable, but to be memorable [... and they] also affect the way in which readers

(and writers) relate to their books” (Grenby 200). Moreover, “pictorial content is not ‘easier’ for readers than letterpress, and [does not] inhibit intellectual responses to a book [...and] the images [often become] the subject of ... discussion that can take readers outside and away from the text [... encouraging] more reflection that arises from text alone” (Grenby 201). Finally, elements generally held in high regard in illustrations are, for instance, a sense of movement or mobility in the illustrations; allowance of interaction (physical or intellectual) by the illustration; that the illustrations complement the text and vice versa; and aspiration away from harmony between the illustrations and the text in order to create intended pleasure from the discord (Grenby 224).

Moreover, Michael Cadden understands the study of children’s literature as “delineated by textuality (genres like poetry, short fiction, the novel), subtextuality (travel literature, monsters, and other themes), or contextuality (the literature of a place or a people—the demographics of race, gender, ethnicity, nation)” (Cadden xiv). According to him, the role of the implied reader is also prominent in (the study of) children’s literature, as “[it] is the reader alone for whom the genre is defined – a reader almost certainly not present either in children’s literature classes or in the ranks of those authors on the syllabus and certainly not among the scholars” (xiv). This can be considered a notably different setting than in others forms and genres of literature.

2.8.2. History, Identity and Nation in Irish Children’s Literature

This final subchapter presents briefly some previous research regarding similar subjects as in this thesis. According to Valerie Coghlan et al., literature aimed especially for young audiences is a rather new phenomenon in Irish literary culture and has emerged during the last thirty-five years or so (Coghlan et al. 1). Coghlan et al. suggests that, today, three most notable metadiscourses functioning within the limits of children’s literature have been pointed out to

be those concerning the nation, childhood and family (Coghlan et al. 3). In relation to them, Coghlan et al. summarises the following:

Following the erasure of many of the tensions that existed for years after political independence and the advent of peace in Northern Ireland in the late twentieth century, writers of fiction have increasingly engaged with the 'sensitive' issues of Irish history in presenting the past to a new, young generation. While contemporary Irish writing for children may be spirited, any assertion of national identity in individual works is inclined to be tentative. This may be due to the relative newness of an independent Irish state that is less than a hundred years old, and the fact that part of the island is under British rule. (Coghlan et al. 3)

When it comes to telling or retelling Irish history to children via children's literature, Ciara Ní Bhroin pays attention to the mythological aspects and mythologizing Ireland in children's literature. In that, she states that

Irish myths and legends were first published for children during the Cultural Revival of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as manifestations of national distinctiveness [and these] romantic retellings in the English language of Ireland's ancient myths and legends ... inculcated national pride by awakening Ireland's youth to the richness of their literary heritage and, significantly, to the heroism of their noble ancestors. (Ní Bhroin 7)

According to her, however, in time and due to the international market, a more commercialised Celticism has come into existence, being now very different from the spiritual and mystical that it had been before, and this meant, among other things, the emergence of very prominently illustrated myth and legend collections aimed for children (Ní Bhroin 8). This brought many challenges regarding the presentation of a war and bloodshed-glorifying pagan era of the

original tales, for instance, along with their immodest sexual content, not to mention problems related to translation, seeing that the final products were translated from Old Irish into English, and from oral form into written form before that (Ní Bhroin 8-9). More recently, according to Ní Bhroin, many authors have moved away from the retelling of the myths in the traditional way and sought inspiration for contemporary fantasy fiction from the Irish mythology, especially such myths that were not in the limelight in the traditional retellings (24).

Susan Cahill, in turn, discusses children's literature in relation to nation and national identity, and explains that children's literature and their authors were comparably to 'adult literature' ready to comment on the development of the Irish nation, and much of children's historical fiction of the period or set in the period when the notion of Irishness was discussed and disputed deal with "social questions and issues of identity ... developing awareness of the social and political conditions of the world in which they live, a consciousness linked to their maturation in to adulthood" (Cahill 41-42).

Having discussed these characteristics of children's literature relevant for *Great Irish Legends for Children*, the necessary parts of the theoretical framework have been addressed. The following chapter is the analysis section of this thesis, where the research question is discussed in relation to the presented theory.

3. Analysis

This chapter analyses the research material according to the presented theoretical framework and the research question presented in the beginning of the study. First, the legends in the research material are analysed with attention to adaptation in order to illustrate that they are, in fact, adaptations and to specify what makes them adaptations in relation to the theory presented in the appointed sub-chapter above. After that, the analysis moves on to the more abstract and ideological content of the research material, focusing on which elements of Irishness (as understood in this study) are visible or in emphasis in the adapted legends. This latter part of the analysis is divided into sections that correspond largely to the already introduced elements of Irishness.

3.1. Adaptation in *Great Irish Legends for Children*

In relation to the nature of the adaptations in *Great Irish Legends for Children*, in the theoretical framework of this study the concept of transposition was introduced, which, according to Sanders, can occur in the shifting of the text from one genre to another on an aesthetic level, but can also mean a shift on a cultural, geographical or temporal sense (Sanders 20). In this sense, the adaptations in *Great Irish Legends for Children* are transpositions, yet they do not manifest a temporal transposition, as the intention rather seems to be the opposite, that is, to deliver the sense of time and temporality of the original. Neither do they transpose anything culturally, as the research material could well be described as to have been written ‘from Irish to the Irish’. This is to say that although the adaptations in the research material can certainly be enjoyed by anyone, there is no shift away from the original cultural field, and it is reasonable to assume that the adaptations carry different, perhaps stronger, meanings for readers within the cultural field of the original text than for those outside it. To reiterate, because the cultural field of the adaptation is the same as it is in the source texts, no cultural shift transpires. They

do not seem to transpose in a temporal sense, either, at least on the level of story or plot, as the setting in the stories are similar to the original texts with no intention to modernise them. What the adaptations demonstrate, however, is a generic shift from one genre to another, which will be addressed next.

As stated in the theoretical framework, adaptation is “frequently a specific process involving the transition from one genre to another” (Sanders 19). The adapted legends in *Great Irish Legends for Children* are a case in point, be it that they were originally told by oral heritage or that they were rewritten as prose fiction and then transferred into children’s literature. Most apparently here, the transition from one genre to another would then be from oral inheritance into text. However, to continue this idea, especially in the case where the source text is a legend rewritten as prose fiction, it might be open for debate to which extent the end product (adaptation) can still be included in the original genre, and whether it fits the characteristics of adaptation in this case. In other words, it may be noteworthy to ponder upon whether an Irish legend, represented as prose fiction and adapted into a children’s book is, albeit being adapted, still prose fiction on one hand and a written representation of the same legend on the other. In a sense this may be the case, and here the generic shift required from an adaptation does not occur, or there is rather a shift in style than in genre. However, in spite of the source text and the adaptation being partially the same by nature and genre, children’s literature is – as became evident in the antecedent chapter discussing children’s literature – as a genre so distinctive and separate from other forms of literature that it is reasonable to state that the end product is generically *also* something else than the ‘original’ was. Therefore, generic transferring does transpire between prose fiction and children’s literature in the research material, making it justified to treat the legends in it as adaptations that have undergone the process that Sanders describes, as it clearly shares so many apparent qualities with other children’s books, which is not the case with the source texts.

When it comes to the terminology regarding adaptation and especially “the fresh utterances and creativity” (Sanders 17) that are an effect of it, while arguably all of the terms mentioned by Sanders (18) could be used to describe the texts in *Great Irish Legends for Children*, probably ‘version,’ ‘variation,’ ‘transformation,’ and ‘rewriting’ would be the most apt, as in these terms the connotation suggests less an effort to create a wholly new tale but indicates more the preservation of the original text, with modifications mainly in style. This can be argued to be visible in *Great Irish Legends for Children*, as the basic content of the adapted legends are similar to the source text to such an extent that there is little question about the source text, provided that the reader is familiar with it. This kind of aspiration towards preserving the original, while making it somehow new, can also be linked to the idea that “adaptation can also constitute a simple ... attempt to make texts ‘relevant’ or easily comprehensible to new audiences and readership via the process of proximation and updating” (Sanders 19). This idea, too, is present in the *Great Irish Legends for Children*, as that is, quite literally, what the text does: it takes old legends and makes them relevant and more easily comprehensible for children by using the abovementioned means. Thus, on one hand the adaptations in *Great Irish Legends for Children* can be said to manifest Bhabha’s view of hybridity where ideas are recycled in order to uphold tradition (Bhabha 207). On the other hand, the adaptations follow Sanders’s view on the issue, because while ideas are repeated (and translated) in the name of tradition to such extent that they are essentially the same story, they concurrently form a new text or even a whole new genre: a children’s book.

When observed in relation to the two alternative views on adaptation presented in the theoretical framework, that of Ellis’s on one hand – diminishing somewhat more the significance of the original text in the desired function of the adaptation (Sanders 24, 25)–and that of Sanders’s – emphasising it more (25) –on the other, the adaptations in *Great Irish Legends for Children* come closer to Sanders’s view. The title *Great Irish Legends for Children*

already implies that the stories included in it are pre-existing legends, and that the aim is to pass them on to children. However, the importance of the source text in order to notice the similarities between it and the adaptation, which is a crucial point in Sanders's view (Sanders 25), is probably not the case in the case of the research material per se. Its premise seems to be that the new audience of the adaptation –the children – may hear or read the legends for the first time with no frame of reference to the 'original' version of the particular legend. With reference to this, Ellis' argument about repeating the memory or essence of the original text in order to prolong the pleasure of it appears to be applicable in the case of the research material.

If examined through Gérard Genette's emphasis on the importance of interaction between texts and artistic productions (Sanders 18), Irish mythological legends can be regarded as both: texts and forms of artistic production taking the form of written prose fiction. This is also the case with the legends in *Great Irish Legends for Children*. Accordingly, the texts in it indeed manifest Genette's notion: the "other texts and artistic productions" are the more original versions of the legends, and the "ongoing interaction" with them is then the representation of an already told or written legend. Through altering, it has been made more suitable for children, as certain unsuitable parts have been omitted, and elements and factors that are more closely associated with children's literature have been added or are emphasised. To exemplify, the illustrations in the research material are a clear case in point, as the legends in *Great Irish Legends for Children* are illustrated in a way that resembles many contemporary children's picture books. Exemplifying omission, according to Daragh Smyth, in one of the more original versions of *Táin Bó Cuailnge*, a character named Bricriu is appointed as umpire in the battle of the bulls, eventually getting trampled and killed in it (28). This whole event and the character are omitted from *Great Irish Legends for Children*. In fact, in the research material the clash between the brown and white bull is not described as a battle at all, and only a short mention of it is made in passing: "When Ailill's bull, Finnbhennach, heard the brown bull bellowing, it

charged. But the brown bull impaled Finnbhennach on its horns and the white bull was killed instantly” (Carroll 20). This indicates that not only are parts omitted, but different events in the legends are given emphasis in the adaptations vis-à-vis the more original versions.

To summarise, the texts in *Great Irish Legends for Children* are adaptations, and in that, they are transpositions or transposing adaptations. However, they are not transposed in a cultural or geographical sense, as the cultural and geographical framework is arguably the same in the source texts and the adaptations. They are not transposed in the temporal sense, either, as the setting of the story and plot is also similar to the original texts than it is in the adaptations. However, they are transposed on a generic level, since the original medium is either oral or written (prose) text not explicitly aimed for children, and the adaptations are children’s literature by genre. The adaptations function in multiple ways and motivations regarding keeping alive the original legends on one hand and creating new utterances and fresh pleasure for new audiences on the other.

3.2. Irishness in *Great Irish Legends for Children*

This section analyses the actual research question of how Irishness is represented for children through the adaptations in *Great Irish Legends for Children*. The section proceeds to locate and analyse in the research material elements of Irishness addressed in the theoretical framework. The elements are analysed separately where meaningful, but closely related elements are analysed in conjunction with each other, and some of the elements are not likely to be separated from each other at all.

3.2.1. Cultural Image and Cultivation in *Great Irish Legends for Children*

The analysis of Irishness begins with the concept of cultural image and the cultivation of culture. *Great Irish Legends for Children* in itself as a product can be considered “[a manifestation] of what is commonly regarded a cultural endeavour” (Leerssen 569). As such it

can as be located in at least two of Leerssen's categories: that of language and that of literature and learning. While the latter category concerning literature is more self-explanatory since children's literature is evidently a form of literature, the former category can be discussed critically to find out to which extent the research material written in the English language acts as an endeavour of Irish culture in the category of language. However, there are Irish names in non-anglicised or non-translated form included in the book, such as *Binn Éadair*, *Oisín* and *Tír na n-Óg*. Thus, it can be argued that the text is also a cultural endeavour in the category of Irish language. Moreover, since the intended target audience of the book has been suggested to be children who are not previously familiar with the legends in question, *Great Irish Legends for Children* can also be regarded as a medium for learning, justifying its place as an Irish cultural endeavour in the category of (literature and) learning. Another element demonstrating both of the categories above is that there is a pronunciation guide for the Irish names at the end of the book, illustrating clearly the role of the Irish language and its learning.

Moreover, although it is difficult to ascertain the aims or intentions of the author in having written such a book as *Great Irish Legends for Children*, it is tempting to see it in Leerssen's framework regarding the cultivation of culture, that is, as a cultural-nationalist attempt to instrumentalise the national culture (Leerssen 570), and in order to analyse the book according to his three divisions of cultivational attempts, they are regarded here as such. To repeat what was suggested in the theoretical framework, culture can, according to Leerssen, be cultivated in means of salvage, fresh productivity and propagandist proclamation (Leerssen 570). In this context, *Great Irish Legends for Children* can be seen as a form of salvage in that it, with its actual content that is the legends on one hand, and the textual parts in the Irish language on the other, carries out, to some extent, the "inventorisation ... of language [and] discourse [as well as] celebrate[s] specimens of ancient tradition [reaching out] to a receding antiquity from a modernising vantage point" (Leerssen 570). In other words, the research

material salvages the ancient traditions, in this case a selection of mythological legends and the act of retelling them to the next generation, and recontextualises them into a more contemporary form that is children's literature, which is presumably easily approached by this next generation. However, the whole book of *Great Irish Legends for Children* can also be seen in the framework that Ní Bhroin discusses: it is a product of commercialised Celticism that came into existence along with the internationalised market, bringing about heavily illustrated myth collections aplenty (8), much like the research material in itself.

Furthermore, the recontextualised form of the legends comes close to the cultivation of culture via fresh productivity, but as the legends in it are not adapted into wholly different stories, but merely into a form more suitable for children, it would be misleading to claim that they are unambiguously expressions of fresh productivity. This is despite the fact that Leerssen describes one practical manifestation of fresh productivity to be advancing the prestige of a vernacular language (Leerssen 570), which the parts in the Irish language included in *Great Irish Legends for Children* can be argued to be, because the Irish language is more in a supporting role, not an end in itself. Thus, it might be apposite to claim that the adapted legends in the research material have shades of cultivation of culture in the form of fresh productivity, but do not fully qualify as such.

Rather similarly, *Great Irish Legends for Children* is probably not decidedly cultivation of culture by propagandist proclamation, either, although there are some indications towards it. Leerssen has suggested some of the cases illustrating propagandist proclamation to be, for instance, teaching a vernacular language, as well as national history and literature in schools (Leerssen 571). As mentioned above, the research material can be argued to function as a medium for some type of learning, in this instance that of the Irish vernacular language and some version of Irish (national) history, but the book is not (explicitly at any rate) a compendium meant for teaching purposes to be included in the official curriculum. Hence,

Great Irish Legends for Children can be said to have subtleties of cultivation of culture in means of propagandist proclamation, but does not fully qualify as such, either.

Issues addressed thus far in this sub-chapter can be utilised in deciphering how this specific component of Irishness as understood in this study, the cultural image, is represented to children in the research material. It would seem that, in this regard, the book's function is to expose the implied readers (children) to some of the common legends of the cultural heritage of Ireland. The legends are recontextualised to the form of children's literature, which is presumably more easily approached by children than the original texts. In the introduction of *Great Irish Legends for Children* the legends are explicitly mentioned to be part of Irish history (Carroll 3), which arguably could be ambiguous for a young child reader in that whether it refers to the events taking place in the legends or only to the existence of the stories. Be it a conscious choice or not to create this ambiguity, the legends nevertheless construct an image of a rather fantastic cultural past filled with heroes, heroic adventures, giants, otherworldly deities et cetera, which is considered to be an image of Irishness that is worthy of salvaging and to be passed on to children.

To summarise this sub-chapter, *Great Irish Legends for Children* as a unity is a cultural endeavour in categories of language, literature and learning. Whether it is the initial agenda of the author or only an effect that has come as a result, the cultivation attempts as defined by Leerssen are present in *Great Irish Legends for Children*, which makes it justified to refer to the book as a cultural-nationalist deed. Most of all the book represents the cultivation of culture in the form of salvage, with forms of fresh productivity and propagandist proclamation as side lines. It depicts the Irish culture, or a version of Irish cultural history, for children as rather fantastic, and is arguably a part of a commercialised Celticism aroused by globalisation.

3.2.2. Categories of Identity in *Great Irish Legends for Children*

Proceeding with the analysis, before addressing aspects of nation and national identity, identity in general along with its categories that were previously declared to be elements of Irishness are examined in this section in relation to the research material. This refers to the identity categories of territory and space, as well as the religious and ethnic categories. The identity category of territory seems to have importance in the representation of Irishness in *Great Irish Legends for Children*. This is because, at its most apparent, the first reference to territorial space is made as early as in the title of the book. While the reference in the title is informative for readers who do not share or include themselves into the territorial identity related to Ireland, stating plainly with what the book is concerned, it likely carries very different connotations for readers who share such territorial identity, making the book for those readers more about ‘our land’, ‘our history’ and ‘our culture’. In this sense, the title of the book already represents the territorial identity and its feature of territorial unity for people belonging in said territory (Smith 4). While the territorial category of identity here likely refers partly to the concrete geographical location, state borders and *staatsnation* of Ireland, it is even more likely that the territorial identity has more to do with a mental or intellectual territory or space, as, according to Smith, territorial unity is often believed to originate from ideologies rather than regionality per se (4).

In the territorial category of identity that *Great Irish Legends for Children* represents, conveys or supports, both the element of geographical territory of Ireland and the mental or intellectual territory seem to interrelate with each other. This is exemplified in the legends, which, as already evident in the previous paragraph, take explicitly place in real counties and provinces in Ireland, such as Cooley, Connacht and Ulster in “The Brown Bull of Cooley,” County Antrim in “The Giant from Scotland,” Ulster in “Eisirt” and Howth (*Binn Éadair*) in “The Beggarman.” However, the geographical places are not emphasised as such: they are

merely mentioned as part of the setting for the legends, often only in one sentence of the first paragraph. This may imply that the actual geographical places do matter in that the legends happen in those places of Ireland (and specifically there, not anywhere else), but only act as a vessel or build the ground for the actual story that represents an ideological territorial identity, that is, the cultural history and mythology of Ireland, for instance.

In this sense, it can be argued that this dialogue between the physical and mental aspects of the Irish territorial identity is a way of representing Irish national landscapes on one hand, and the imagined (and romanticised) way of life on the other. Since “the land has long been central to articulations of Irish nationality [and] many scholars have noted the close connection between Irish national identity and the land in Irish literature” (Wright ix–x), it can be argued that the physical aspect of the territorial identity in *Great Irish Legends for Children* is connected to the national landscapes and the mental aspect of the territorial identity to the imagined ways of life. To illustrate, the whole story of “The Giant from Scotland” centres around the formation of the iconic landscape of Giant’s Causeway in County Antrim, which literally occurs in the text:

From that day, Fionn worked hard. He had decided to build a path across the sea to Scotland. It was a rather unusual causeway made up of hundreds of thousands of black rocks, all of different sized and different heights. Some rocks had eight and others more than ten sides. (Carroll 24)

This exemplifies the depiction of national landscapes as part of the physical-regional aspect of the Irish territorial identity. The mental aspect of the territorial identity in the imagined way of life is visible throughout the book. An example of this can be seen in “The Brown Bull of Cooley” in which some place names are explicitly mentioned and essential to the story, and where the image of the way of life is depicted as one where the kingdom is ruled by the queen

who has druids as her advisors, messengers to send for inquiries and soldiers to battle the enemy (Carroll 12-16). The same legend depicts the way of life also as such that different regions (or counties) are in a sort of rivalry, as “when Maeve’s army arrived there was only Cú Chulainn and the boys of the Red Branch to defend Ulster” (Carroll 16).

It seems, then, that the territorial identity category is prominent in *Great Irish Legends for Children*. Moreover, since “an historic territory, or homeland” (Smith 14) is evidently one of “the fundamental features of national identity” (14), the representations of territorial identity in the research material are closely related to it, as will be further examined at a later stage.

When analysed according to the religious and ethnic categories of identity, the texts in *Great Irish Legends for Children* probably do not intend to reinforce a religious identity, on a doctrinal level at least, as there are no mentions of Christianity or Catholicism (or any religion, for that matter, ancient or contemporary). On a somewhat related note, however, there are references to the mythological afterworld of Tír na n-Óg in “The Beggarman” and “Oisín,” in both of which it is described as rather ordinary, as if it were a part of everyday life or a place that could be visited, or from where it is possible to visit the everyday world. For instance, in “Oisín,” it is mentioned that “when he grew up he visited his mother in Tír na n-Óg” (Carroll 63), and in “The Beggarman” the prince of Tír na n-Óg is described to become human once a year, enjoying his time with them and eventually returning to his own people (Carroll 52). This, together with the fact that the foreword of the book describes the legends as part of Irish history which might be arbitrary to child readers, make it possible to argue that the texts do represent or convey a religious identity of a sort. However, this arguably is not the case, as it is mythology rather than religion(s) that is emphasized in *Great Irish Legends for Children*. Thus, perhaps it is more accurate to treat these references as a depiction of ancient religions and beliefs, or most likely of mythical history.

On these grounds, although the religious and ethnic categories of identity are oftentimes intertwined (Smith 7), it is more reasonable to interpret that the legends in *Great Irish Legends for Children* build more on the ethnic category of identity rather than the religious category. The ethnic category, too, is governed by same or similar driving forces as religious identity (Smith 6) but religious cleavages have divided ethnic identities rather than united them (Smith 7-8). With that in mind, as has been shown in the above sections in this study, the research material seems to function rather to unite a group of implied readers into a common culture or ethnicity than divide them, which confirms that the emphasis is thus more on the ethnic category of identity.

To summarise, of the categories of identity that are understood as part of Irishness in this study, the territorial category is visible in the actual geographical territory of Ireland in the stories of *Great Irish Legends for Children*, as well as in an ideological territorial identity which, by being one of its main components, contributes to another collective identity: the national identity. The territorial category of identity is represented through the depiction of national landscapes and imagined ways of (ancient Irish) life. Moreover, of the ethnic and religious categories, both of which can be argued to be visible and also intertwine with each other to some extent, the ethnic category of identity is more present in the research material. As there are no explicit or unambiguous references to religions in the legends of the research material, and since the function of the book has been suggested to be to unite people with shared identity traits, the ethnic category of identity is more clearly represented in the legends.

3.2.3. Nation in *Great Irish Legends for Children*

As to the construction of national identity, the role and representation of nation in the research material will be examined in this subchapter. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, Irishness consists partly of the components of the Western conception of nation and partly of the ethnic conception of nation. In relation to the Western conception, the components of

historical territory, the legal-political component and the component of common civic culture (Smith 9-11) are addressed here.

To begin with the component of historical territory, referring to the view that a prerequisite for a nation is a clearly distinctive area where its 'historic people' have lived for generations in symbiosis with the land that is the matrix of cultural or historic memories which can fully be comprehended only by the members of that land (Smith 9), it would seem that this particular component is most explicitly represented in *Great Irish Legends for Children*. As already evident, the territory of Ireland is the milieu of the legends throughout the book, invoking national landscapes and ways of life. In addition, it is stated in the introduction of the book that "[the legends] have been told for hundreds of years and are part of Irish history" (Carroll 3). This statement alone renders the contents of the book historic memories of that historical territory.

One way to analyse this issue is to examine the prominent characters of the stories as part of this national history that the book passes on via the component of the historical territory. Although not necessarily historically accurate, the mythical characters and especially the stories around them are, as mentioned above, part of history. To name an example, in "Oisín," both Fionn and his son Oisín are central protagonists and the legend can be seen as an origin story for Oisín. This is because after delayed by battle, Fionn searches for his loved one, Sadhb, and the following is mentioned:

Fionn spent the next seven years searching for Sadhb, but with no success. One evening ... there, under a tree, was a little boy of about seven years old. ... Fionn looked into the boy's face and recognised the eyes of his beautiful wife ... and knew that this was his son. ... Oisín became a great warrior and a famous poet. When he grew up he visited his mother in Tír na n-Óg. (Carroll 60, 63)

One way of interpretation is to regard these characters (and others alike) as ‘the historic people’ of Ireland. Being fictional, however, it is perhaps more justified to see them as part of the mythical history that, according to Smith, has a special role to the people belonging to the historical territory of Ireland (9).

However, it is more challenging to give reasons to why those historic memories of the historical territory of Ireland could not be fully comprehended by others besides the members of it. One argument for it is the importance of family in identity formation evidenced in the theoretical framework: the family has an essential role in teaching and learning nuanced cultural habits (BouAynaya 118-119). With this in mind, if the presumption is that the people who are not members of the historic land of Ireland neither have family in it, it could be argued that they are deprived of any exposure to and learning of the subtleties and nuances of the cultural habits associated with the historical territory of Ireland at an early age. Correspondingly, those who are members of the historical territory of Ireland also have family links there and so become aware of the cultural nuances at an early age, being exclusively able to fully comprehend them, according to Smith’s description of the Western conception of nation (9). Hence, the component of historical territory in the Western conception of nation is visible in *The Great Irish Legends for Children*.

What supports this argument is that in most of the legends in the research material none of the characters or places are introduced practically at all, at least not thoroughly, but are instead presented in a way that presumes them to be already somewhat familiar to the implied child reader, arguably also presuming that much of the necessary knowledge of cultural nuances (mythology and legends in this instance) has already been passed on to and internalised to some extent by the reader. To exemplify, in “The Brown Bull of Cooley” the only information given of Maeve and Ailill is that they “ruled Connacht” (Carroll 12), as if the rest of the setting and background knowledge were axiomatic. Similarly, in the same legend the

army of Ulster is described to be under the influence of “the sea witch” (Carroll 16) and “there was only Cú Chulainn and the boys of the Red Branch to defend Ulster” (16-17), so it seems as though it were self-evident which witch is in question and who Cú Chulainn and the Red Branch actually are. Following a comparable pattern in “The Giant from Scotland,” only the place of residence is stated explicitly of Fionn and his wife Una (Carroll 22), and it is only given to understand in short passing that Fionn is, in fact, a giant as well in this legend (22), with every other detail remaining implicit. Moreover, in “Eisirt” and “The King with Donkey’s Ears,” the king is only referred to as “the king,” leaving unsaid to which particular king the reference is made. This pattern is repeated in almost all six legends, supporting the argument made in the paragraph above and manifesting the exclusive and inherited cultural knowledge included in the component of historical territory in the Western conception of nation.

When it comes to the legal-political component of the Western conception of nation in *Great Irish Legends for Children*, not much is to be said. This component refers to the existence of a series of commonly agreed laws and regulations along with an institution implementing them (Smith 10). The only laws present in any form in the legends seem to be related to the fact that the provinces of Ireland were led by a king, which likely represents the true state of affairs as they were in the past, and ridiculing the king was punishable by death as in “The king with Donkey’s Ears,” likely also true in yesteryear. Thus, it might be argued that the legal-political component of nation is present in order to convey a conception of how the country functioned legal-politically in ancient times. However, the legal-political component has no other apparent relevance in the stories and seems to function in Carroll’s book merely as the setting in the legends and add elements of fantasy to the story while positioning the book more clearly in the field of children’s literature.

Furthermore, in relation to the component of common civic culture, which has to do with the idea that “nations must have a measure of common culture and a civic ideology, a set of

common understandings and aspirations, sentiments and ideas, that bind the population together in their homeland” (Smith 11), it exists in the legends, being that of a population ruled by the king. There seems to be a common understanding of and aspiration towards the fact that there are different social roles and obligations for different people, such as a ruling for a king in “The Brown Bull of Cooley” and “Eisirt,” for instance; defending the kingdom for the warriors including Cú Chulainn and the Red Branch in “The Brown Bull of Cooley” as well as Fionn and the Fianna in “The Giant from Scotland,” “The Beggarman” and “Oisín,” This, as in the case of the legal-political component, functions to add stereotypical fantasy elements to the legends, and can be argued to tell the reader how affairs were in the past, or at least to create a conception of it, be it true or false.

Moreover, regarding the ethnic conception of nation in *Great Irish Legends for Children*, the elements of which are “genealogy and presumed descent ties, popular mobilization, vernacular languages, customs and traditions” (Smith 12), vernacular languages as well as customs and traditions are most notably present. As mentioned in the section covering the aspects of cultural image and cultural cultivation, the presence of the Gaelic language is evident in the names of characters and places, here also representing the ethnic model of nation. With reference to customs and traditions, the contents of the legends do not reflect them unambiguously. It could be argued that, on a micro-level, the legends do pass on knowledge of traditional sociocultural traditions of a kingdom in the past. For instance, in “The Brown Bull of Cooley,” Queen Maeve and Ailill “[rule] Connacht [and have time to] boast to each other about their riches and possessions (Carroll 12), while messengers are obliged to ask around and Cú Chulainn and the Red Branch are responsible for the defending of Ulster (14, 17). However, as this sort of depictions of sociocultural habits are presented in a way that is strongly connected to the field of children’s literature, fantasy and fable, it is likely that readers interpret them more as such than as a portrayal of actual historical past. Thus, it appears more reasonable to

construe that the element of customs and traditions takes place on a macro-level, that is, the whole book of *Great Irish Legends for Children* is a representation of customs and traditions which is to pass on the vast repertoire mythological tales and legends inside the nation. This, in fact, is along the lines of the creation of “a widespread awareness of the myths, history and linguistic traditions of the community” (Smith 12) that serves to clarify the conception of an ethnic nation for the majority of its members (12).

To sum up, when approaching the collective identity, here the national identity, the nation as a part of Irishness is visible in *Great Irish Legends for Children* in various ways. The Western conception of nation is represented in a way that emphasises its component of historical territory, paying less attention to the legal-political component and the component of common civic culture. This accords with the fact that the component of historical territory is the crucial aspect of the Western conception of nation (Smith 9). In addition, the non-Western, that is, the ethnic, conception of nation is present in the research material in that its elements of vernacular language as well as customs and traditions are noticeable: the former is shown in the use of the Gaelic language to an extent in the book, and the latter in the sense that the book in itself serves to create an awareness of myth and history as per the lines of ethnic nation.

3.2.4. National Identity in *Great Irish Legends for Children*

First and foremost, when it comes to the analysis of national identity in the research material, it must be remembered what was stated in the theoretical framework: “the nation ... draws on elements of other kinds of collective identity [... and] national identity can be combined with these other types of identity [... and so] is multi-dimensional; it can never be reduced to single element” (Smith 14). Thus, the analyses of nation and identity presented above cannot be separated from the analysis of national identity, being its components. Added to the fact that, as Smith suggests, the nation and national identity share connected and overlapping features, uniting communities sharing history, myths and traditions, this indicates that everything

addressed thus far is also concerned with national identity. To demonstrate this, a reasonable approach is to refer to the fundamental features of national identity provided by Smith and begin to list how the already presented analyses are applicable to and overlap the analysis of national identity in *Great Irish Legends for Children*. To repeat once again, “the fundamental features of national identity [... are] an historic territory, or homeland ... common myths and historical memories ... a common, mass public culture ... common legal rights and duties for all members [... and] a common economy with territorial mobility for members” (Smith 14).

On this basis, the feature of historic territory of national identity overlaps with, or consists of, the territorial category of identity and the component of historical territory in the Western conception of nation. The feature of common myths and historical memories, in turn, overlaps with the ethnic conception of nation which, as evidenced, has to do with preserving vernacular languages and cultural customs such as retelling of myths. Since it was previously evidenced that a thorough understanding of the myths and historical memories require a common historic territory, this overlaps also with the feature of common myths and historical memories, which intertwines with the feature of historic territory or homeland. These, then, are intertwined with the ethnic conception of nation, the territorial category of identity and the component of historical territory of a Western nation. The feature of a common, mass public culture of national identity, in turn, overlaps with the component of common civic culture demonstrated to be visible in the research material in the king’s governance and the social roles of the characters.

All this is certainly in accordance with Smith’s view concerning overlapping elements between the nation and national identity which cannot be reduced to any isolated element (Smith 14) and demonstrates that everything that has been mentioned about Irishness, albeit analysed separately, also has to do with national identity. It is noteworthy, however, that two features of national identity are less present in *Great Irish Legends for Children*. The first one

concerns “common legal rights and duties for all members [of the nation]” (Smith 14). Especially if it is ‘equal’ that is meant by the term ‘common’, this is not the case in the legends in the research material. This is because it was evidenced that the legal rights and duties deviate from one another in the legends, as was argued in relation to the king, the warriors and the peasants. The second and less frequently present feature is that of “a common economy with territorial mobility for members” (Smith 14), and in particular, the part concerning economy, of which there is not a single mention or implication in *Great Irish Legends for Children*. The feature of territorial mobility seems to be portrayed on some level, as in “The Brown Bull of Cooley” Maeve sends messengers from Connacht to Cooley, and in “Eisirt” the king’s poet travels to another kingdom in pursuit to prove the existence of giants. Although not explicitly given to understand that the territorial mobility is similar for all members, it exemplifies to some extent how it is present in the research material. When observed in the light of economic mobility, the whole of it is absent: all characters in *Great Irish Legends for Children* seem to be bound to their economic and demographic roles with no access to change via promotions or such. In fact, the setting resembles largely a medieval feudal society.

Furthermore, in relation to the characteristics of national identity offered by Kornprobst, especially the relationship between Self and Other is strongly represented in *Great Irish Legends for Children*. As Kornprobst argues, the relationship between a nation (that is, the Self) and other nations (being the Other) gives, in part, meaning for a nation, and the telling of stories concerning Self in relation to Other has an important part in the construction of national identity (Kornprobst 409). The relationship between Self and Other are described to be rather hostile in the research material, and mostly addressed in such a light that Self must be defended from possible invasions by Other. This is the case in “The Giant from Scotland,” in which the notorious giant Angus is arriving to duel Fionn for the title of the “tallest, strongest and most fearsome giant” (Carroll 22), Fionn being a representative of Self and Angus of Other. In “The

Beggarman” a warrior comes ashore to challenge the Fianna to a running contest for “the gold, horses and chariots of Eire” (Carroll 45). There is no explicit description of who the warrior is or from where he comes, but the illustrated ship in which he has arrived is long in form, and in “Oisín,” a later chapter in the book, the Norsemen are described as arriving *again* in longships (Carroll 54). This could indicate that also in “The Beggarman” the challenger is a Norseman. In any case, the warrior with his challenge can be interpreted as representative of the Other, and Fianna with their answer to it in order to protect the riches of *Eire* represent the Self. Furthermore, as already addressed, in “Oisín” the Norsemen appear, and it is articulately mentioned that “it was the duty of the Fianna to protect the country from any invaders” (Carroll 56). Here the arrangement regarding Self and Other is evident.

On the basis of what has been mentioned, an assessment can be formed as to Smith’s functions of national identity in the research material. As already stated earlier, the functions of national identity can, according to Smith, be divided into external and internal functions, where the external functions divide into territorial, economic and political components and the internal functions operate on a more personal level to form social groups sharing a culture; to form social bonds between members of society reinforcing the sensation of belonging via symbols reminding of a shared legacy, and to enable self-locating and self-definition with a “collective personality and its distinctive culture” (Smith 15, 16). It seems that the external functions of national identity depicted in the research material are more visible on the level of story, setting and plot – this can be called the ‘micro-level’ – and the internal functions are something that the whole research material invokes for the reader – the ‘macro-level’. To clarify, the external territorial function of national identity which provides a historic land and “moral geography” for a community (Smith 16) (Ireland in this instance) is in the research material illustrated and told legends of, similar to the economic and political functions (which are, evidently, less in emphasis), which are arguably merely components of the setting of the

stories. Opposing this, the entire *Great Irish Legends for Children* can be said to evoke internal functions of national identity for the reader or the intended readership. This is because, as previously argued, the book carries different meanings and values for readers belonging to the particular cultural field than for those not belonging to it, and one type of internal functioning of national identity is form groups that identify with a shared culture (Smith 17). What is more, if not to go as far as to claim that the research material itself is a symbol that reminds the reader of a shared legacy of a community, its mythological content surely can be regarded as such a symbol, illustrating Smith's internal level of forming social bonds between members of such community (17).

To summarise, national identity cannot, or need not, be separated from other collective identities, which renders obsolete any attempt at examining it in isolation: the components are so closely related to what was examined above. Hence, the components of national identity are linked to the previous analysis, thus forming a joint analysis. However, a noteworthy finding is that the component of national identity related to common legal rights and duties for all members of a community is absent. Instead, members of the community have different legal rights and duties in the legends of the research material. In other words, the implied reader (a child) is, in a way, given an impression of a nation where unequal rights and obligations between its members are normative (as in the recurring setting of 'king-valiant-servant peasant'). Moreover, Konrprobst's idea of Self and Other in relation to national identity is clearly evident in the legends of the research material, with the clearest result being the notion that Self is something to be protected from Other. Finally, regarding the functions of national identity, the external functions of national identity take place arguably on the 'micro-level' of the research material, whereas the internal functions are an ongoing experience that is conveyed in the reading process.

3.2.5. Reinvented Nationness and Tradition in *Great Irish Legends for Children*

This sub-chapter aims to address how national identity is portrayed in *Great Irish Legends for Children* in relation to Kornprobst's idea of epistemes as guiding the reinvention of nationness, as well as to touch upon the topic of reinvented tradition. The purpose is to observe which approach of nation building discussed by Kornprobst is visible in the research material, as well as how the legends reflect on the underlying epistemes guiding it.

Of the three major ways of thinking defined by Kornprobst regarding what makes elites seek a particular kind of nationness – modernism, ethno-symbolism and social constructivism (Kornprobst 403, 405) – perhaps the most relevant and fitting for this study is ethno-symbolism. This is because it emphasises *ethnie*: “an ideational category consisting of shared myths, memories and symbols” (Kornprobst 405), which practically the whole research material is by nature. Although ethno-symbolism does not reject all modernists ideas (Kornprobst 405), it could be argued that the retelling of myths in *Great Irish Legends for Children*, in an attempt to keep the ancient heritage alive, has very little to do with the ideas of the modernist approach of nation emerging from socio-economic and technological change, as Kornprobst describes it (405). Moreover, another argument for the relevance of ethno-symbolism over the other two approaches is that social constructivism accepts variance in nationness and rejects a coherent or consistent nationness (Kornprobst 405) – something which the legends in the research material can also be said to reject by conveying a unifying sense of Irishness and national identity, as evidenced previously.

On these grounds, it can be argued that the form of nationness that *Great Irish Legends for Children* represents most of all (or alone) is ethno-symbolism, with strong emphasis on the shared myths and memories of a people as the driving force in nation building. It can be further analysed, then, what kind of epistemes or epistemic understandings, that is, “[sets] of fundamental and taken-for-granted beliefs about what constitutes the world and how the world

works” (Kornprobst 404), are conceivable in *Great Irish Legends for Children*. It seems that there is evidence to be found in the research material of the features of the colonial episteme as well as “Irishness [being] governed by the Celtic ... image [that is] the authentic Self” (Kornprobst 412). The beliefs included in the colonial episteme are, again, that nations are ancient, that ethnic homogeneity was to be preserved with clear outlines between Self and Others (in the case of Ireland it was believed that to do so the Gaelic language had to be recovered), and that a ‘true Ireland’ lay in the myths of the past and rejection of modernity, with strong emphasis on the mythical Gaelic roots and simple rural life (Kornprobst 410, 411).

The epistemic understanding of the ancient character of the Irish nation can be said to be to some extent implicit in *Great Irish Legends for Children* in the general milieu of the stories. The style of the legends is similar to many fables and fairy tales which gives the impression of the stories taking place a long time ago. In addition, the narration is in past tense, and, as mentioned previously, the preface states that the legends are part of Irish history (Carroll 3). This leaves the impression of the legends being ‘ancient’, but none of the legends explicitly states any sort of actual time frame for the events. The idea of ethnic homogeneity is present, although not emphatically, since all characters are white by skin colour, and there is a clear distinction between Self and Other in the legends where Ireland is being defended from ‘outsiders’, such as in “The Giant from Scotland,” “The Beggarman” and “Oisín.” As is also evident, the Gaelic language has some role to play in the research material, which can be linked to the resurrection of it as part of nation-building according to the colonial episteme. In fact, one way to look at the issue is that the depiction of a nation that has been (re)invented according to the colonial episteme in *Great Irish Legends for Children* invokes a further impression of a post-colonial Ireland, where these abovementioned attributes that were suppressed by the Anglo-colonisers are emphasised as ‘the core’ of the Irish identity. In any case, these are the so-called ‘micro-level’ observations, whereas the entire *Great Irish Legends for Children* can

be seen as a vessel for the myths of the past, representing the ‘true Ireland’ that the colonial episteme understands.

As shown here, these elements are present in the legends themselves, or the ‘micro-level,’ to use that phrasing again. Another issue is to ponder upon is whether the whole *Great Irish Legends for Children* represents these values in contemporary times, and whether the book conveys intentionally these values for children today, or merely builds a romantic history of how the affairs have been. Be as it may, *Great Irish Legends for Children* can, on the basis of the arguments above, be seen to include ideas of a nationness reinvented according to the ethno-symbolist approach or governed by the colonial episteme.

Furthermore, when it comes to the issue of reinvented tradition, *Great Irish Legends for Children* can be seen as “repetition [which seeks] to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1). In this case, it repeats legends that convey a particular image of Irishness and the Irish national identity. On the micro-level, as in what is repeated in the legends themselves, it is perhaps the introduction of some central characters and events from Irish mythology as part of the tradition which support the national identity and the collective mythological past. On the macro-level that the collection of rewritten mythology for children as a whole can be seen to represent, it can be regarded as an act of “[holding] on to at least some practices [that is, the mythological past] and keep them untouched” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 4). It would seem like that *Great Irish Legends for Children* keeps the mythological past untouched by altering it, in a way, via adaptation.

3.2.6. Stereotypical and Perceived Irishness in *Great Irish Legends for Children*

This sub-chapter takes a look at the stereotypical features of Irishness and the characteristics perceived as essential regarding the notion of Irishness by people identifying themselves (or being likely identified by others) as Irish according to BouAynaya’s study, and how these can

be seen in *Great Irish Legends for Children*. These include, as familiar by now, the importance of family in relation to preserving cultural customs on one hand and connecting an individual to the community; the clan in emphasising ancestry, community and participation in the obligations and cultural activities connected to it, and ethnicity to a certain extent (BouAynaya 118-143).

Beginning with the trait of family and its role in inheriting cultural habits, the legend in which it is most prominently visible in *Great Irish Legends for Children* is “Oisín.” Oisín is the son of Fionn and Sadhb, and a clear case in point of this family-related trait in question is the part where Fionn tells Oisín that “you will stay with me and when you are old enough you will join the Fianna” (Carroll 63). Oddly enough, this can be seen as implying that the burden or privilege of joining Fianna is something to be inherited, which is contradictory to what Proinsias Mac Cana states in his *Celtic Mythology*: “membership of the Fian was highly exclusive, but not hereditary” (Mac Cana 104). Perhaps, then, it ought to be interpreted that the inclusion into Fianna per se is not what Oisín inherits, but other cultural habits and traditions related to it, or perhaps the role of the (semi)divine hero that Fionn occupied in the Fianna, or his mythological or supernatural abilities that he is often said to have, according to Mac Cana (Mac Cana 107).

Moreover, when examined in a similar manner on a ‘macro-level’ as in the sub-chapter above, that is, on a level that moves away from the literal contents of the legends, the whole of *Great Irish Legends for Children* can be seen as a literary work emphasising the passing on of cultural traditions by being aimed to be read by a parent to a child. This, in turn, could be linked to the features of cultural cultivation addressed in the beginning of the analysis, as it can be said to “celebrate specimens of ancient tradition ... from a modernising vantage point” (Leerssen 570).

When it comes to the importance of clan as emphasising ancestry as part of stereotypical or perceived Irishness, what was stated of Oisín above can well be seen as applicable in this regard, too. If the Fianna are seen as a clan, its importance is demonstrated likewise in the anticipation of Oisín becoming part of it. However, this would also mean that a person does not become part of a clan until a certain age, and it could be interpreted so that Fianna is not a clan in itself but a group of warriors consisting of members of a clan. Still, Oisín becoming part of it has gravity in this particular legend.

On the other hand, it seems that *Great Irish Legends for Children* omits literal references to clans or names of clans. Only such things as the first names of the characters and the regions ruled by characters are explicitly stated, with phrasings such as “queen Maeve and her husband, Ailill, ruled Connacht” (Carroll 12) in “The Brown Bull of Cooley” and “king Fergus of Ulster” (38) in “Eisirt.” The only exceptions to this are the sole references to a name that is presumably a clan name: “Daire Mac Fiachra in Cooley” (Carroll 12) in “The Brown Bull of Cooley” and “Caoilte Mac Rónáin” (45) in “The Beggarman.” According to this, it could be concluded that the clan names do not bear much gravity in the stories, or alternatively are regarded as an axiomatic part of Irish history, since the majority of the references to clans or clan names are left absent or implicit, only becoming clear for those who have the required background knowledge of which clans were prestigious in these particular points of time in history.

The aspect of community and participation is visible in several instances in the research material, although in relation to it the issue is to be interpreted in context and perhaps somewhat more loosely than in BouAynaya’s study. This means that, for instance, “being willing to ... fully participate in Irish society” (BouAynaya 136-137) means different things in the contemporary world than it does in the legends clearly set in the past. Be as it may, in “The King with Donkeys’ Ears” the protagonist is a barber – immediately signalling his position in the community and that he practices a profession – who is summoned by the king. He answers

the call although aware of the fact that none of his predecessors had returned alive from the mission, which, in turn, indicates that he is aware of his position in the community. However, in the case of this legend, the barber participates in his duty reluctantly, whereas in BouAynaya's study the communal aspect of Irishness includes a willingness to participate (123-137). In any case, in this particular legend the implication (and incentive) to participate in the community is present.

The communal order along with its hierarchies is actually present almost throughout the book: in "The Brown Bull of Cooley" the Red Branch and Cú Chulainn defend Ulster, fulfilling their communal duties (presumably willingly, as there is no mention otherwise). In "Eisirt" the post of the king's poet is occupied by himself, making him participate in the community. A similar sort of occupational participation in the community occurs in Oisín, as well, when Fionn and the Fianna defend the country from invaders, with Fianna present as protagonists also in "The Beggarman." These instances demonstrate that some sort of communal aspect and that of participation of Irishness described in BouAynaya's study is also present in *Great Irish Legends for Children*.

However, the communal aspect and participation in its contemporary form as addressed in BouAynaya's study is less or not at all visible in the research material. The "stereotypical considerations [such as] dance, music, Catholicism, language, Guinness and the consumption of alcohol" (BouAynaya 142) are absent and no mention of participation in such activities is made, with the exception of language, which is present as was evidenced earlier in this study. However, the communal activity of sport and participation in it, which was held in high esteem by the participants in BouAynaya's study (140) can be argued to be visible in "The Beggarman." In it, participation in the act of sports in the form of a race (a running competition in particular) is present, as the warrior coming ashore states that "I offer a challenge. Choose your swiftest runner to race against me" (Carroll 45), with the prize being "the gold, horses and

chariots of Eire” (45). This remains the sole reference to any kind of sport in *Great Irish Legends for Children*. In addition, the activity referred to as sports here can well be interpreted as an act of defending the land (or its valuables) from outsiders, since the warrior offering the challenge is described as coming from the sea by boat that illustrated as similar to a stereotypical long and narrow Viking boat. Nevertheless, the communal aspect of sport described as an essential part of Irishness in BouAynaya’s study is present to some extent.

Moreover, addressing briefly the racial aspect of Irishness presented in BouAynaya’s study, which, according to him, gravitates towards the more modern way of interpretation of Irishness (BouAynaya 42) and concerns the notion of ethnicity playing a prominent role in becoming recognised as Irish even if the component of communal participation is achieved (BouAynaya 223), there is no explicit mention in the book of ethnicity or its alleged importance. However, what can be seen is a sort of exclusive Irishness regarding ethnicity evident in the fact that every single human character in the book is illustrated as Caucasian by skin colour. This, added to the observation that there is a strong sense of defending the land from outsiders in multiple legends, and that the relevance of clan and heritage is present, appears to create an image (or illusion) of Irishness that excludes others except the ethnic group rooted in Ireland.

Ultimately, perhaps one of the central notions of Irishness visible in *Great Irish Legends for Children* is “the accumulated legacy of previous generations and how they are interpreted today” (White qtd in BouAynaya 37). As *Great Irish Legends for Children* presents mythology the tales and legends along with their different versions have been in existence for a long period of time, being passed on to new generations in oral and written form. The whole of the research material can be said to be part of this process, that is, it keeps alive the legacy that has been transmitted from one generation to another. What is noteworthy, though, is that *Great Irish Legends for Children* does not necessarily reflect on how the legacy (the legends of mythology)

is interpreted today in general, but a certain way of interpretation is deliberately built for it in the context of children's literature. However, in accordance with everything that has been stated thus far, in spite of generating artificially a 'child-friendly' context for the legends, the book includes notions of Irishness that are intended to be passed on to child audiences by the author, if not the entire culture.

To conclude, the stereotypical attributes of Irishness and the features of Irishness that are perceived by (arguably) Irish people in BouAynaya's study can be located in *Great Irish Legends for Children*. As evidenced, family and heritage are present in several legends emphasising the role of ancestry on the micro-level, but also on the macro-level, as in the passing on of cultural traditions orally via the research material itself. Moreover, participation in a community is emphasised more than the importance of a clan (as most mentions of clan names are absent). Mostly absent are also many stereotypical conceptions of contemporary Irishness, with the exception of sportsmanship or competitions. No mention of ethnic or racial aspects of Irishness is made in the research material, but something concerning them can be interpreted as implicit on the basis of the illustrations and the mentality in some legends where outsiders are to be kept at bay. All in all, *Great Irish Legends for Children* can be said to be an adapted version of the cultural inheritance of Irishness from generations ago.

4. Conclusion

In this chapter this thesis reaches its conclusion. The purpose of this part is to provide an answer to the research question presented in the beginning of the study by summarising and discussing the findings of the analysis. To recapitulate, this thesis has studied the ways in which Irishness is represented for children through the case of Yvonne Carroll's *Great Irish Legends for Children*, consisting of folktale adaptations of a selection of Irish legends. Firstly, the nature of adaptation in the research material was analysed, after which the issue of Irishness was addressed in detail. In this study, Irishness was defined as including aspects of cultural image and cultivation of culture, identity and national identity, nation and reinventing the nation, tradition, as well as stereotypical and perceived Irishness. The following paragraphs will summarise the analysis whilst constructing an answer to the research question.

In relation to adaptation, *Great Irish Legends for Children* transposes adaptations which do not transpose culturally, geographically or culturally. They are transposed solely on generic level, as they are adapted explicitly into children's literature, which the original medium cannot (unambiguously whatsoever) argued to be. As for the functions of the adaptations, the conclusion is that they function to preserve the original (if such phrasing can be used regarding oral tradition) legend, but concurrently function to create new utterances for new audiences.

Moreover, *Great Irish Legends for Children* is a cultural endeavour in categories of language, literature and learning. Complying with Leerssen's idea of cultural cultivation as a cultural-nationalist attempt to instrumentalise national culture (570), the research material was regarded as such and can be seen to fit in the description of salvage, that is, "inventorisation of language and discourse [by celebrating] ancient tradition ... from a modernising vantage point" (Leerssen 570), while other forms of cultivation receive less emphasis.

Regarding the categories of identity, the territorial category of identity is represented in *Great Irish Legends for Children* as the concrete milieu of the adapted legends, but also as an ideological territorial level that builds towards the national identity. Moreover, the ethnic category of identity that oftentimes intertwines with the religious category (Smith 7) is represented in the research material in that it can be seen to depict the ancient myths of Tír na n-Óg, for instance, as part of Irish history.

The nation as part of Irishness is mostly presented in a way that follows Smith's Western conception of nation and its component of historical territory. This is intertwined with the territorial category of identity, supported by such arguments that the importance of family in perceived Irishness may explain why the historic memories of the historical territory of Ireland are differently (or uniquely) understood in comparison with those with no family ties in the historical territory of Ireland. Smith's non-Western conception of nation is represented in references to the Gaelic language as well as other customs, which in itself functions to increase awareness of myth and history along the lines of ethnic nation.

Furthermore, the analysis regarding the components of national identity was linked to the analyses of identity and nation. However, a distinguishable finding regarding the representation of national identity in *Great Irish Legends for Children* is that the component of equal legal rights and duties for all members of a nation is represented as not being the case. Children are thus told of a national identity in which it is normative to have different rights and obligations between members of the nation. In addition, the legends illustrate a rather strong sense of need for the Self to be protected from Others.

In conjunction, the nationness that is depicted in *Great Irish Legends for Children* can be argued to be one that has been invented along the lines of ethno-symbolism, emphasising Kornprobst's *ethnie*, that is, "shared myths, memories and symbols" (405), and can be argued

to be conducted by the colonial episteme which emphasises the separation of Self from Others. In relation to inventing tradition, *Great Irish Legends for Children* is repetition that emphasises specific values, in this instance the particular kind of identity and nationness. As a product, it is an act of clinging on to the mythological past and keeping it intact.

As for the stereotypical and perceived Irishness addressed in BouAynaya's study, the importance of family and ancestry are represented at the story level, but also as a 'side effect' of the book: the act of reading of the stories out loud to a child can be argued to be an act of keeping cultural traditions alive and passing them on. The Legends in *Great Irish Legends for Children* emphasise communal roles and participation in community accordingly, although clan (names) are omitted from the framework of importance of heritage. *Great Irish Legends for Children* also illustrates (namely in the actual illustrations) an ethnically homogenous Irishness with no mention towards approving other ethnicities as Irish, with a stronger attitude towards defending Ireland from foreigners.

This is the way in which Irishness is represented for children in Yvonne Carroll's *Great Irish Legends for Children*. In order to arrive at a somewhat concise and univocal summary, it can be stated that the adapted legends of the research material are transpositions that function to keep the 'original' alive, all the while making it more relevant to new audiences. The Irish cultural image is salvaged to new audiences in a way that emphasises territorial and ethnic categories of identity and represents the component of historical territory in the Western conception of nation and the role of customs, traditions and myth along the lines of the non-Western (or the ethnic) conception of nation. This applies to the representation of the Irish national identity in the research material to an extent, even though all the central components mentioned by Smith are not present in the representation of national identity: for example, that of equal rights for members of the nation is absent. Moreover, the legends convey an attitude towards protecting Self from Other, which also extends to the ethnic aspects conveyed by the

illustrations. The legends depict a nation (re)invented according to the ethno-symbolist approach, which emphasises the ancient myths and traditions and strives to keep them intact via inventing tradition. Although the aspect of the clan per se does not seem to be central, of the traits of Irishness which Irish people themselves regard as important according to BouAynaya's study, the role of family and heritage is emphasised in the legends themselves. Presumably, the whole product of *Great Irish Legends for Children* is consumed in a medium and atmosphere that is related to family and heritage, which shows how it functions as a practical and concrete continuum of the values that the book represents in abstraction.

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