BRIAN MOORE'S

THE LUCK OF GINGER COFFEY:

AN EXPERIENCE OF

IMMIGRATION FROM IRELAND

TO CANADA IN THE FIFTIES

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Brian Moore's The Luck of Ginger Coffey: An Experience of Immigration from Ireland to Canada in the Fifties

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ABSTRACT

This work analyzes the novel The Luck of Ginger Coffey by the Irish-Canadian writer Brian Moore in order to investigate some aspects of the main characters' experience of immigration from Ireland to Canada in the fifties. The theoretical boundaries between the concepts of immigration and diaspora are discussed, with emphasis on the Irish experience. As some of the elements appointed by theoreticians as belonging to diasporas may also be regarded as occurring in immigration, the boundaries between them are questioned in this thesis. The immigrant settling in a foreign country can face prejudice and marginalization. I analyze how the main character Ginger Coffey is perceived as Other by people from different ethnicities. The othering process may be strengthened by the use of stereotyped images. The question of stereotyping and how a system of representation contributes to this process are also addressed. Furthermore, I discuss the Coffeys' adjustment to the Montreal of the fifties and the influence of the post-war social environment on immigrants' gender roles.

RESUMO

Esta dissertação analisa o romance The Luck of Ginger Coffey do escritor irlandês-canadense Brian Moore, com o objetivo de investigar alguns aspectos da experiência de imigração dos personagens principais, da Irlanda para o Canadá, nos anos cinqüenta. As fronteiras teóricas entre os conceitos de imigração e diáspora são discutidas, com ênfase na experiência irlandesa. Como alguns dos elementos apontados por teóricos como pertencentes às diásporas podem ser também atribuídos a casos de imigração, os limites entre eles são questionados nesta dissertação. O imigrante que se estabelece num país estrangeiro pode enfrentar preconceito e discriminação. Eu analiso como o personagem principal Ginger Coffey é visto como Outro por pessoas de diferentes etnias. A visão do imigrante como outro pode ser reforçado pelo uso de imagens estereotipadas; assim, a questão do estereótipo e como um sistema de representação contribui para este processo são também abordados. Além disso, eu analiso a adaptação dos Coffey na Montreal dos anos cinqüenta e a influência do ambiente social do pós-guerra nos papéis de gênero dos imigrantes.

INTRODUCTION

Since the late forties an increasing number of fictional narratives approaching the cultural diversity in Canada has been produced (Richmond ix), thus creating a reading public interested in this issue. Marion Richmond affirms in her Preface to Other Solitudes: Canadian Multicultural Fictions that "literature dealing with the immigrant experience, racism, and ethnic diversity in this country has gained an audience" (ix). In this master's thesis I analyze a novel that reflects the cultural diversity in Canada, as it is about an Irish family's experience of immigration to Montreal in the fifties, recreated by Brian Moore in The Luck of Ginger Coffey. Since Moore is relatively unknown in Brazil, I start by presenting his life and work.

Brian Moore, the fourth son among nine children, was born in Belfast in 1921. He was raised in a Catholic family and, consequently, attended a Catholic school, St Malachy's College, where "the rote-learning and regimentation, the practice of knocking knowledge into boys' heads by whacking them on the palms of their hands, the endless intoning of prayers and precepts" did not appeal to young Brian Moore (Craig 58)[1]. His writing abilities were praised and, in order to make some "extra pocket-money" (65), he would write compositions for his schoolmates, following their different styles. Mathematics, however, was always his great problem and it prevented him from getting his Senior Certificate. As a result, he was not able to follow the Moores' tradition of success in the Belfast academic world, which was a cause of discontentment

[1] The parenthetical references for this chapter are from Patricia Craig`s Brian Moore, unless indicated otherwise.

to his father, James B. Moore, “the great exam passer” in the words of the biographer Patricia Craig (28).

At the age of nineteen, “marked as Failed” (73) by St Malachy’s, Brian Moore devised a new perspective with the unfolding of the Second World War. Since Ireland did not join the war, two alternatives were left: either becoming a British soldier or joining the civil defense. Moore chose the latter, enlisting in an Air Raid Precautions unit – ARP – based at the Mater Hospital, Belfast. During two years he performed all kinds of work, including “placing the dead in coffins” (81). In 1942 he volunteered for the British Ministry of War Transport, first going to North Africa and, later, Italy and France. Brian Moore would never live in Belfast again.

When the war was over, Moore went to London, where he was refused a job because of his nationality: the shipping firm Jardine Mathesons “had so many bad experiences in the past with Irish troublemakers who allied themselves with the underdog … that the whole nation was [then] blacklisted” (94). The perspectives for Brian Moore were not very good. With the help of a friend, he got a job at UNRRA – United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, being placed in Poland in 1964, where he met Margaret Swanson. Ultimately, she became the reason why Moore moved to Canada, after the UNRRA mission in Poland was accomplished.

Every different place Moore lived in became a kind of laboratory where he could observe people, different behavior patterns, landscapes, name of streets, squares and parks. The future writer would nurture his imagination with all types of cultures and miss nothing. He left Poland and visited his family in Belfast before heading to London, where he decided to go to the New World in pursuit of his love. His experiences were his main baggage when he arrived in Canada. Being despairingly rejected by Miss Swanson, Moore accepted a job as an accounting clerk in “a

construction camp in the furthest reaches of Ontario" (105). After six months, Moore decided that the bush camp was not fit for him. He left Northern Ontario and stopped in Montreal, where he would live for eleven years.

I point out some details of Brian Moore's life because his writings reflect pretty much some of his experiences. In Montreal, Moore became a proofreader and later a reporter in the Montreal Gazette, where he had the chance of practicing his writing – despite the editor's "red pencil" (108). Moore remarked that "it was a good training in that way" (109). Canada gave him the chance of writing and he did not miss the opportunity. Besides working for the Gazette, he wrote stories to magazines like Weekend and Northern Review, and also some pulp fiction, published by Harlequin Books (110-114). His social life also increased in Montreal; among his friends, named by Patricia Craig as the "Creative Montrealers", were the reporter and writer William Weintraub, the short-story writer Mavis Gallant, the painter Dorothy Ruddick, the writers Mordecai Richler, Hugh MacLenan, Frank Scott, and Brian Moore's wife, writer and journalist Jacqueline Moore.

In 1952 he resigned from the Gazette to solely dedicate to his writings. As part of the Guggenheim Fellowship awarded "for creative writing in fiction" (153), Moore moved with his family, now enlarged with his son Michael, to the United States, settling in the city of New York in 1959. He left Canada for good. He would be forever grateful to the country, and especially to Montreal, where "he'd reversed the verdict of miserable Belfast (marked as 'Failed')" (155), holding his Canadian citizenship until his last days. In the United States Brian Moore lived most of the time in Malibu with his second wife, Jean. In 1973, Brian Moore accepted a position at the University of California at Los Angeles to conduct a weekly seminar; it started as a temporary course until he became a Regent's Professor, teaching until 1990. He also gave many lectures

and participated in conferences in the United States and Canada, and occasionally in Ireland. Brian Moore died on January 10, 1999, a victim of pulmonary fibrosis.

The writing of Brian Moore has never been constrained to literary trends. According to Patricia Craig, he never wanted to be identified with a definite genre or literary school (163). Sometimes, however, he is classified as a realist writer (Dodsworth 482). In his fictional work, the themes vary as well as his style. As Robert Fulford remarks in the title of an article, Moore was "a writer who never failed to surprise his readers" (1). In every work, he changes the subject developed in the previous one, and makes new experiments in his writing. Hallvard Dahlie[2] points out that Moore "has been variously classified as a Realist, a Naturalist, an Existentialist, a comic writer, an exile writer, a Catholic writer, and a anti-Catholic writer" (14). This changing of style and attitude would be a motive for contradictory criticism, as explained by Patricia Craig: "it seemed a bit ironic, though, that he should be blamed for being too 'fantastical' in *Fergus*, and too 'documentary' in his next work" (209). I believe, as Fulford, that the variety in theme and genre in Moore's works constitutes a pleasant surprise.

Brian Moore's categorization considering his national affiliation is another bone of contention, for he was born in Northern Ireland, held a Canadian passport and lived in the United States most of his life. Christopher Murray says that "in spite of his Canadian and Californian history … [Moore] remains an Irish writer" (8). Arnold Davidson, however, when discussing Canadian fiction of the late twentieth century includes Brian Moore in the category of "immigrant and ethnic novelists" (574). Jo O'Donoghue explores this confusion affirming that

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[2] Dahlie was born in Norway in 1925 and emigrated to Canada four years later; he taught at the University of Calgary for twenty-three years and wrote critical works on Brian Moore, Alice Munro and Frederick Grove.

he "has sometimes been identified as a Canadian novelist", although "he seems to have remained identifiably Irish and he is regarded by many critics as Ireland's finest living novelist" (xii-xiii). There is a funny episode in Moore's life, concerning his national status. Craig reports that he was in a Dublin bookstore and asked for any book by the Irish writer, Brian Moore. The salesman said that unfortunately there was none, but they had a couple of novels by the Canadian writer "of the same name" (2). In fact, Craig and Dahlie state that Brian Moore considered himself a Canadian writer, because it was in Canada that he felt free to begin writing (Craig 3; Dahlie 14). When Salman Rushdie claims in Imaginary Homelands that "the imagination works best when it is most free" (20), I believe there is a resonance with Moore's affirmation. Indeed, Canada embraced Moore's works and gave him recognition and assurance to continue surprising his readers.

Brian Moore started his career by writing short stories and thrillers under the pseudonyms of Bernard Mara and Michael Bryan. After resigning from the Gazette, Moore dedicated himself to writing his first serious novel, Judith Hearne (later reprinted as The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne). It turned into an instant success[3] when released by Deutsch in 1955, after twelve rejections by American editors. It tells the story of a spinster who drinks heavily while she tries to understand if God has abandoned her. The bigotry of the Belfast society explains much of Miss Hearne's reactions. The novel won the "Beta Sigma Phi award for the best first novel by a Canadian author published in 1955" (Craig 140) and the 1955 Authors' Club Prize in London. It was released as film in 1987. The Feast of Lupercal, his second novel, was published in 1957 and it was "generally pretty well received" (148). Belfast is the setting of Diarmuid Devine's struggle

[3] Moore would still write other thrillers under the names Bernard Mara and Michael Bryan in order to support his family, but after The Luck of Ginger Coffey it was not necessary anymore.

against what Hallvard Dahlie calls his "sexual inadequacy" (13). A teacher at a Catholic school, he is attracted to a schoolfellow's niece, who is Protestant. His Catholic orientation works against the fulfillment of his desires. Graham Greene considered it "one of the best second novels – always a more difficult feat" (qtd. in Craig 139). Both Judith and Lupercal are usually known as Moore's Belfast novels, since they draw upon that society and its idiosyncrasies.

Brian Moore began drafting his third novel in 1958. The Luck of Ginger Coffey was not an easy task for him, requiring a lot of work in writing and rewriting. The process became particularly difficult when it came to the ending of the novel. Although working hard on it, Moore "never believed that he'd got [the ending] right" (157). In 1960 it was published in the United States and in England, obtaining positive reviews. One year later, the novel received the Governor General of Canada Award for Fiction and its author a Senior Arts Fellowship from the Canada Council. Besides being sold to a television corporation, it was filmed in 1964 with Irvin Kershner as director (167).

There is a correspondence between some facts in Brian Moore's life and Ginger Coffey's. The author failed his Senior Certificate Examination, which made him a sort of anomaly in his family. After all, he was the "son of the school doctor and President of the Old Boys' Association, [and] the younger brother of a diligent worker", Seamus Moore, who also became a doctor (58). In the narrative, Ginger Coffey fails his BA and this configures as one of the "misleading facts of [his] life" (Ginger 7). It annoys him especially when written down in block letters in a job's form.

Furthermore, both author and character disagree with De Valera's policy of maintaining Ireland neutral in the war. Moore chooses the civil defense, reaching the rank of a Civilian

Officer (8). His situation, according to Patricia Craig's description, is critical: "As happened with others in a similar position, he soon became conscious that his experiences abroad, on the fringes of the war, had temporarily unfitted him for a sobersided [sic] civilian existence" (94). Ginger wants to "move to the British side … to see some action" (Ginger 29), but he stays in the Irish Army as Assistant to Press Officer. He considers his time in the Army "wasted years" (17).

The experiences of both author and fictional character in Montreal approximate them the most; yet, at a certain point, they take them irrevocably apart. Both arrive in the city with the goal of becoming reporters; both work as proofreaders in a newspaper, the "lowliest position the world of journalism could offer" (Craig 106; see also Ginger 52 for the same idea). After four months, Moore gets the position of reporter at the Gazette; Ginger, however, does not manage to break the chains of his "galley slave" job (Ginger 63). Their path leads them to different directions from that moment on.

Brian Moore wrote another sixteen novels and one documentary piece in the following years. An Answer from Limbo (1962) is his fourth novel, and it is about a selfish Irish writer trying to finish his first novel in New York, having to deal with his wife's infidelity and the presence of his strict Catholic mother who comes from Ireland to work as an unpaid caretaker for his children. The next novel, The Emperor of Ice Cream (1965), draws on his ARP experiences in Belfast. In the same year he started working with Alfred Hitchcock on the screenplay of Torn Curtain (192). Three years later his next novel about a "woman in the grip of a fluctuating sense of identity" (199), I Am Mary Dunne, was published in the United States. Fergus was launched in 1970, the story of a writer who waits for a response from a Hollywood producer about a screenplay; while he waits, people from his past, "some dead, some rejuvenated", pass before his eyes (202). In 1971, accepting Jack McClelland's suggestion, Moore wrote a documentary novel,

The Revolution Script, based on actual events surrounding the kidnapping of the British Trade Commissioner in Montreal (205). In the following year Catholics, a novel about "a community of monks on an almost inaccessible island off the coast of Ireland" (209), came out. This work won the W. H. Smith Award and was adapted into film in 1973, under the direction of Jack Gold; it also won a Peabody Award.

The Great Victorian Collection, a story mixing fantastic and realistic elements about a collection owned by a Canadian professor of history, was published in 1975. It was awarded the James Tait Black Memorial Prize (United Kingdom) and the Governor General's Award (Canada) (225). With his next work, The Doctor's Wife (1976), Brian Moore appeared in the Booker Prize shortlist; the novel is about a case of adultery and its consequences. The Mangan Inheritance, published in 1979, is about a fictional character – Jamie Mangan – trying to discover if he is the descendent of the nineteenth-century poet James Clarence Mangan (233). In 1981 The Temptation of Eileen Hughes was published, receiving good reviews (236); briefly, it tells the story of a businessman interested in Eileen Hughes, his employee. According to Patricia Craig, "it was adapted successfully for television" (234). Moore wrote a script in 1982 for Simone de Beauvoir's Le sang des autres, being released as The Blood of Others in 1984. His next novel, Cold Heaven (1983) deals with belief – actually, disbelief. Marie Davenport has a vision of Our Lady of Monterey but does not attend the saint's wish. Her husband is involved in an accident and Marie wonders if it is her fault, while her husband's body disappears. The Black Robe (1986), about missionaries in the seventeenth-century northwest of Quebec, received the Heinemann Award of the Royal Society of Literature (241). Its film adaptation was released in 1991. In 1987 The Colour of Blood was published, and it won the Hughes Prize in Dublin. The narrative is about "the last four days in the life of a cardinal-turned-fugitive in Eastern Europe"

(246). Lies of Silence (1990) deals with an act of terrorism in Belfast. In 1993 No Other Life was published, receiving very good reviews. It is a story about a poor boy who becomes a priest and, later, a revolutionary leader (251). The Statement, published in 1996, deals with "the complicity of Church and State in France in the protection and concealment of a Nazi war criminal" (255). Moore's last novel is The Magician's Wife (1997), about "an illusionist entrusted with a political mission and his increasingly disabused wife" (257). He left an unfinished novel based on Rimbaud (262).

As demonstrated above, Brian Moore was creative and prolific, publishing a new book roughly every three years. He received a number of tributes in his life. He got honorary degrees from the Assumption College, Mass. in 1981; from Queen's University, Belfast, as Doctor of Literature in 1987; and also from the National University of Ireland in 1991. Three years later Moore received the Robert Kirsch Award, which was granted by the Los Angeles Times. Furthermore, the Creative Writer's Network established in 1996 the "Brian Moore Short Story Awards", still running to this day in Northern Ireland.

Some critical work has been done on Brian Moore's writings. Jo O'Donoghue, in Brian Moore: A Critical Study (1991), discusses Moore's works in different sections, addressing the Belfast novels; the "Novels of Exile and Escape"; the question of belief; and morals, focusing on Moore's hostility to Catholicism. Her analysis of The Luck of Ginger Coffey is restricted to a brief discussion about the main character, who distances himself from religion and family only to recognize his inner self as responsible for his own life. She claims that Ginger makes no moral choices and therefore the novel lacks dramatic interest (71).

Robert Sullivan approaches Brian Moore's fiction in A Matter of Faith: The Fiction of Brian Moore (1996), grouping them according to broad subjects. He discusses the fictional works involving Belfast; novels dealing with "construction and processes of subjectivity" (xv); faith; and representation. His analysis of The Luck of Ginger Coffey focuses on the transformation the main character suffers and how he gradually leaves his world of narcissistic fantasy to acknowledge life on a real basis, in a kind of positive epiphany (42-47). Sullivan compares Ginger Coffey with characters created by James Joyce and the techniques used to develop them, especially Gabriel Conroy, from "The Dead", as they share the experience of epiphany; Ulysses's Leopold Bloom, portrayed through the utilization of stream of consciousness; and, finally, Mr. Kenan ("Grace"), which is also a narrative of "fall and redemption" (45). He emphasizes the development verified in Ginger in comparison with the Belfast novels as to "the acceptance of a reality principle" (45), stating that in the end Ginger takes responsibility for the events in his life. Sullivan finishes his analysis by going back to the question of identity and the search for the self, discussing how Coffey advances from a narcissistic point of view to a more open one (46).

Hallvard Dahlie, author of the first critical study on Moore (Craig 202), discusses his work up to The Mangan Inheritance, focusing on the writing and the fictional processes. Regarding The Luck of Ginger Coffey, he affirms that Moore explores the comic hero, who undergoes experiences and finally "learns the truth about himself in time to accommodate himself to his world" (72). There is a progression from the mistaken idea of himself to "self-recognition" (74). Ginger is isolated in this process, removed from his family, turned into an anonymous person. The progression consists in leaving anonymity and taking responsibility for his own actions. Dahlie also draws a comparison between Ginger and Joyce's Gabriel Conroy

("The Dead"), in relation to epiphany (like Sullivan mentioned above) and changing, and also between Ginger and Leopold Bloom, in relation to the "disregard for the realities of their dilemmas" (77). Dahlie finishes his analysis reflecting upon Moore's writing style, viewed as both realistic and comic, and how it stands in relation to the following novels.

When it comes to the analysis of The Luck of Ginger Coffey, the above mentioned critics usually limit themselves mostly to the main character's self-image. They do not expand the discussion considering other elements present in the narrative. Thus I understand that this novel is undervalued although it received an important award, provided its author with a Fellowship, and was made into a film four years after its release. The richness of themes raised by the narrative, such as the condition of the immigrant in a new land, his/her perspectives, the perception of different ethnic groups, the cultural context, and other subjects, claim for a new reading and a more profound discussion.

In this master thesis I will analyze how the theoretical boundaries between the concepts of immigration and diaspora cannot be sharply drawn. I discuss the criteria by which some authors delimit the concept of diaspora, and how they can be applied to the experience of immigration. I draw on the concepts established by Chaliand and Rageau, John Durham Peters, James Clifford, and Braziel and Mannur, among others. I also mention the Jewish experience, citing Moacyr Scliar and Jean Delumeau. In all the extension of this work I use Wsevolod Isajiw's ideas on the cultural diversity in Canada, which contributed a lot to my analysis. In relation to the Irish experience, I use contributions by Patrick O'Sullivan, Andy Bielenberg, and Kerby Miller.

In Chapter 2, I discuss the view of the immigrant as the Other and how the main character is seen according to this concept by other characters; I rely mainly on the ideas of Stuart Hall concerning representation, but concepts by Jacques Lacan, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak also present important insights.

The question of the stereotype is approached in the following chapter, with the discussion of ideas by Isajiw and Stuart Hall. I present a historical background for the Irish stereotype, using images spread by magazines in the late nineteenth century. The issue of whiteness is also discussed in relation to the stereotyping process.

In Chapter 4, I study the influence of a new social and cultural environment on the roles of the characters as father, mother, and daughter. In order to do so, I provide a brief view of the social atmosphere after the Second World War in Europe and Canada. I also rely on essays by Jonathan Dollimore, Angela Hattery, Sandra Almeida, and James Clifford.

My work consists mainly of analyses of the fictional narrative. All chapters present discussions about the characters, their attitudes, responses, and actions. I believe that the discussion of fictional works about Irish immigration to Canada can add new perspectives to Irish as well as Canadian Studies.

CHAPTER 1

THE COFFEYS' EXPERIENCE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF DIASPORA AND IMMIGRATION

It made him homesick to think of those pubs, so he must not think[4].

Ginger Coffey

Home is here, we're far better off here[5].

Veronica Coffey

The Luck of Ginger Coffey is a narrative about the immigration[6] of an Irish family to Montreal, Canada, ten years after the Second World War ended. Ginger Coffey, the main character, wants to improve his economic condition in the New World. He is certain that Canada is the place where he will find "fame and fortune" (14). Like him, hundreds of foreigners entered North America after the war, most of them heading to the United States. Considering the Coffeys' dislocation from Ireland to Canada historically, I read Brian Moore's novel as an account of the Irish diaspora, without disregarding the perspective that the story is about an immigration experience that is unique and localized in time and place. In order to do so, I will

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[4]Brian Moore, The Luck of Ginger Coffey (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1988) 10.

[5] Moore, Ginger 242.

[6] Immigration meaning "(instance of) moving of people from one country to come to live in another country permanently" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 620).

discuss in this chapter some definitions of diaspora and immigration, how their limits are blurred, and how some processes of both movements sometimes overlap. I will also present some aspects of the Irish Diaspora, and how the Coffeys' experience reflects their historical background.

i. Diaspora and Immigration: a theoretical discussion.

Many authors discuss concepts of diaspora; they sometimes establish criteria trying to somehow delimit its field. However, it is very hard to find a consensus among them, or clear distinctions between these concepts. The term diaspora derives from the Greek *diasperien*: *dia* – meaning across, through, throughout – and *–sperien* – meaning dissemination of seeds or sperm (Braziel and Mannur 1, Peters 23, Vertotec 101). Its use is closely related to the dispersion of the Jews from Palestine, and this fact justifies why some authors have difficulties in dissociating the term diaspora from the Jewish experience. Chaliand and Rageau, in The Penguin Atlas of the Diasporas, claim that this term is problematic to designate other peoples' condition. They do not consider, for example, the descendants of British people in the colonies as resulting from a diasporic displacement (xiii). Nevertheless, besides the Jewish experience, they present in their Atlas other diasporas, such as the Armenian, Gypsy, African, Chinese, Indian, Irish, Greek, Lebanese, Palestinian, Vietnamese and Korean diasporas. In the Introduction, Chaliand and Rageau justify the label saying they "have not sought to make a sharp distinction between 'authentic' diasporas and those whose status may be disputed" (xix). This classification seems to me quite arbitrary, since they question openly if there is actually a Black or an Irish diaspora and yet they use the label diaspora to characterize all the groups they analyze. Moreover, calling the Jewish diaspora authentic gives the idea that other groups' experiences are imperfect copies of an

original, unattainable and fixed paradigm. By doing so, it seems to me that they homogenize all non-Jewish diasporas.

Other views of diaspora recognize the Jewish experience, but they also give room to other types of diasporic experiences. Although Alan Anderson recovers the etymological root of the term connecting it with the scattering of the Jews, he states that recently it "has come to refer to the dispersion of any ethnic collectivity, not just Jews" (04). In his words, this is "a more extended, encompassing view of diasporas" (05). Discussing the fluidity of the concepts of mobility, such as exile, nomadism and diaspora, John Durham Perters considers the Jewish case a paradigm concerning the last term. He works, however, with a more extended idea of diaspora, stating that it suggests "displacement from a center" (20), along with some categories discussed later in this work. James Clifford also thinks it is difficult to define "a traveling term" (244) and argues that the view of the Jewish diaspora as a model can exclude the diasporic experiences of other groups which are as valid as the Jewish dispersion. His point of view runs in the opposite direction from that presented by Chaliand and Rageau.

Jana Evans Braziel and Anita Mannur discuss the theorization of diaspora, which they consider as "an important category of critical analysis in the social sciences, literature, and the humanities" (3). They point out the ambiguity of the term: the etymological sense of dissemination of seeds (containing a positive status) and the (historically negative) dislocation of people "from their homelands through migration, immigration, or exile as a consequence of colonial expansion" (4). Braziel and Mannur do not focus only on the period of colonial expansion as they also analyze contemporary forms of diaspora. What interests me most in their writings is the idea that the processes of migration and immigration occur within the diasporic space.

Avtar Brah's contribution to this discussion is unparalleled:

> Diasporas, in the sense of distinctive historical experiences, are often composite formations made up of many journeys to different parts of the globe, each with its own history, its own particularities. Each such diaspora is an interweaving of multiple traveling; a text of many distinctive and, perhaps, even disparate narratives. This is true, among others, of the African, Chinese, Irish, Jewish, Palestinian and South Asian diasporas. (183)

Brah argues that each diasporic movement has its internal relations of power and that they should be studied in their particularities; however, other experiences should not be disregarded.

In my point of view, the Jewish historical background in which the term diaspora has come into use should be acknowledged, but it cannot prevent a broader understanding of the current advent of collective dispersion as diasporas. It does not mean that any journey may be viewed as a diasporic movement, because, as Braziel and Mannur state, "some forms of travel are tourism" (3). Avtar Brah also points out that "diasporas are clearly not the same as casual travel" (182). I understand as diaspora the historically inscribed mobility of a people, voluntarily or involuntarily dispersed, who create a new idea of home in the host country, maintaining the idea of a homeland as an imagined community[7].

Some scholars present a few criteria to try to define diaspora. I will now move forward to discuss the complex task of categorizing diasporas. Chaliand and Rageau, primarily, establish four categories to define diaspora. The criteria are:

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[7] The concept of imagined community is borrowed from Benedict Anderson (1991), who argues that the nation is an imagined political community.

1. It is a "collective forced dispersion of a religious and/or ethnic group, precipitated by a disaster, often of a political nature" (xiv);

2. it involves a collective memory (xv);

3. it is characterized by "the will to survive as a minority by transmitting a heritage" (xvi);

4. only time can qualify a specific type of mobility as a diaspora (xvii).

When analyzing these criteria, which only the Jewish experience seems to incorporate, Chaliand and Rageau question other eleven experiences recorded historically. As examples, they interrogate if the Black people enslaved in the New World could be considered diasporic, once they did not constitute one homogeneous group and the groups of slaves were formed by individuals from different tribes. Another instance they question is the Irish diaspora: is it really a diasporic experience or cases of migration? The problem of such categorization is that it is very difficult to reach Chaliand and Rageau's ideal model of diaspora, the Jewish dispersal. Their history is unique, but similar experiences have occurred since then and have to be taken into consideration. Their suggestion of calling these other groups semi-diasporas indicates an inferiorization of the category, as if the non-Jewish experiences did not account for legitimacy. I believe that the association with the dispersion of the Jews encountered in the definition of the term cannot be erased; however, this very concept has developed through time with other experiences of diasporic mobility.

As I mentioned above (see page 21), John Durham Peters also offers some criteria, approximating some features of diaspora to the idea of exile. He states that "diaspora can be elective or imposed", and it involves a sense of collectivity and a network among people with the same origin (20). Nevertheless, he recognizes that "nothing is more dispersed in intellectual life

today than the concept of diaspora" (18). Peters alludes constantly to the Jewish experience, and, although he mentions Chaliand and Rageau's work (23), he does not make a critique of how these authors use the concept of diaspora or how they qualify it. In my point of view, Peters' essay sounds like Chaliand and Rageau's Atlas in regard to the analyses of the Jewish dispersal, but they follow different paths when Peters acknowledges the influences of different group's experiences, and accepts a more extended definition of diaspora.

Peters' concept is not beyond criticism, though. He states that diaspora suggests "displacement from a center" (20). By doing so, he qualifies the notion of a center as a state of "staying put", a definite place. If what he calls center is related to the idea of home, the place of origin becomes more relevant. The idea of a center as home does not allow the diasporic subject to build a new idea of home elsewhere. The place of origin of diasporic peoples becomes more relevant than the place of arrival, inspiring feelings of nostalgia much debated in this field of study (Morley 1999). Although Peters presents a broader concept of diaspora than Chaliand and Rageau, his idea of a center is questionable.

The concepts of home in a diasporic space are also discussed by Avtar Brah and Bronwen Walter. Avtar Brah starts her approach to the idea of home from the dictionary's definition of diaspora, as "dispersion from", or as "a 'home' from where the dispersion occurs" (181). In the conceptualization of the term she recovers the presence of a center, but she questions if the twentieth-century diasporas carry the same connotation. She argues that the arrival in a new place and the process of settling down are as important to diasporic peoples as the circumstances of leaving (182). I believe that the notion of home may change during the process.

Bronwen Walter considers diaspora as a "third space" (8), in which there is a combination and negotiation of the places of origin, of travel and of settlement. From this point of view, the idea of home has to be reconfigured in this new signification. The concept of home is thus enlarged, encompassing at least two places: the place of origin and that of settlement. Brah answers the question: "Where is home?" (192), by saying that it is both "a mythic place of desire in the diasporic imagination" and "the lived experience of a locality" (192). In the diasporic experience, it is possible to live both concepts of home. One is linked to the past, to the place now involved with the mythical vest of timelessness, where memories maintain an idea of nation – or city, or neighborhood – alive. It involves a recreation of lived experiences, because now the subject is distant from what he/she recognizes as home, a private space.

The other concept of home is linked to the present diasporic space, made by the combination of that first idea of home as origin and the experiences lived in the host country, city or neighborhood. Diaspora does not retain the idea of a feasible return to a homeland as a sine qua non. As an alternative, the return may belong to the imaginary realm of homeland, maintained by a latent desire. As Peters argues, "some communities in diaspora may agitate for return, but the normative force that return is desirable or even possible is not a necessary part of diaspora today" (20). I think that the decision not to return does not make a group less diasporic. If their members assimilate the local culture and retain the idea of a homeland on the level of the imaginary, it does not disqualify them as a diasporic group. James Clifford, however, disagrees. He claims that diasporic peoples do not assimilate, whereas immigrants may do so (250). In my point of view, this is an open area in the discussion of diasporas.

Establishing a sharp difference between diaspora and immigration is a difficult task, mainly because dislocation occurs within both movements and there are characteristics present in

both processes, such as the question of home and the issue of assimilation. According to Clifford, diaspora involves "dwelling, maintaining communities, having collective homes away from home" (251); immigration, on the other hand, usually surrenders to "assimilationist national ideologies" (250), as within a certain period of time immigrants will assimilate the host culture. I believe, however, that diasporic peoples may also assimilate the local culture; yet they maintain the belief of belonging to a diaspora. The narratives of Isaac Bashevis Singer, for instance, show many Jewish characters living the American way-of-life and also celebrating the Shabbat. Moreover, in the Middle Ages, the Jewish people supported the Arab invasion of the Iberian Peninsula and later they participated in both Christian and Muslim armies (Scliar 60). In the sixteenth century, the Jewish Venetian community was very diverse; it was compounded by the Spanish Penentine, the Levantine people (who were subjected to Turkey), and the Jews from Germany. The latter could lend money and speak Italian (Johnson 247). Jean Delumeau also gives evidence of how the Jewish people were inserted in the Spanish and the Polish community, for instance, before the sixteenth century pogroms (280-82). In my understanding, these examples show how the Jewish people were incorporated to the local culture, participating even in the armies; and yet their diasporic heritage is not denied. It is very naïve to think that the Jewish people did not have a certain degree of assimilation in their diasporic history. I believe, as Bielenberg, that "the process of integration is no longer seen as a one-way path in which the migrant becomes a member of an unchanged host society through the suppression of his/her own cultural values" (2). I mean assimilation here not as a full integration to the host society, but as Wsevolod Isajiw uses the term inculturation, which "refers to internalizing some or all patterns of behaviour typical of a group or society" (170). I emphasize the term "some" because it makes

all the difference, for it acknowledges the elements retained by the ethnic group. In Isajiw's words:

> The process of cultural incorporation is not a unilinear, zero-sum phenomenon in which, to the extent that one inculturates, to that extent one loses one's ethnic background. Rather, the process involves both taking over the mainstream patterns and retaining some ethnic patterns. (171)

This "taking over the mainstream patterns" is not contradictory to a diasporic pattern. In immigration, the process may be more emphatic. Nevertheless, assimilation may occur in both movements.

As for the concept of immigration, it does not present many problematic nuances. Immigrant communities in the United States are considered by James Clifford as "temporary, a site where the canonical three generations struggled through a hard transition to ethnic American status" (255). His concept of immigration implies a deep involvement in the host country by the immigrant, who is absorbed by the mainstream culture. As I have argued, this assimilation may also occur in diasporic communities. Alan B. Anderson, on the other hand, considers immigrants "by far the most prevalent . . . type of diaspora minority" (12). Immigrants can recognize both the country of origin and that of arrival as their own: the former as the "original historical country of emigration" and the latter as the "mother-country." I his opinion, they may want to return to their country of origin or not (17).

Many conditions occurring in immigration may contain elements that also characterize diasporas. In my understanding, there are overlapping areas and the borders between one field

and another cannot be sharply defined. Thus, the terms immigration and diaspora are interconnected in the same field, and they are not exclusive.

Another term is frequently used as a basic idea for dislocation or mobility: migration. When discussing the concepts of exile, diaspora and nomadism, Peters uses the expression "migrant workers" to indicate people "characterized by their mobility" (18). James Clifford also mentions "migrant populations" and "labor migration" when talking about the interconnection between homeland and host society within diasporic peoples (247). Although these authors, along with Chaliand and Rageau (xiv-xv), do not define precisely the term migration, they use it to indicate a state of dislocation or mobility, when referring to diaspora. In the present work, I use the term migration to refer to the process of moving from one country to another.

ii. Studies on the Irish experience of migration

Migration has been present for centuries in the history of Ireland. There has been an increasing interest in Irish migration studies since the last decades of the twentieth century. I would like to give special emphasis to three sources: Kerby Miller's Emigrants and Exiles, (1985), Patrick O'Sullivan's Patterns of Migration[8] (1992), and Andy Bielenberg's The Irish Diaspora (2000).

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[8] Patterns of Migration is the first volume of the Series edited by Patrick O'Sullivan: The Irish World Wide – History, Heritage, Identity. The other volumes are: The Irish in the New Communities, The Creative Migrant, Irish Women and Irish Migration, Religion and Identity, and The Meaning of the Famine.

Kerby Miller presents a relevant study in Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America. It provides a different perspective from O'Sullivan's and Bielenberg's, offering a great contribution to the studies of Irish migration to North America. The book is divided into two parts: "The Making of the Emigrants' Ireland", in which he demonstrates how a culture of exile was created; and "The Patterns of Irish Emigration, 1607-1921", most of which is related to the Great Famine. Miller is guided by three questions:

> First, how did the Irish emigrants look on emigration from Ireland? Second, what determined their attitudes? And, third, to what extent did these attitudes shape their actual experiences of emigration and life in North America – coloring, easing, or constraining their objective situations? (3)

His analyses stress the exceptionalism of the Irish experience, a position criticized by Donald H. Akenson and Andy Bielenberg (Éinrí 9). In Miller's opinion, the Irish experience of migration cannot be seen as natural, but as exceptional, because most movements of emigration[9] were provoked by external reasons, such as the English misrule and the Famine, and not by a simple desire to know new countries and to settle elsewhere. He also thinks that the American experience can be regarded mostly as "alienating and sometimes dysfunctional" (4), and any other flow of emigration from Ireland should be prevented at any time. He explores the idea of exile prevailing in the private correspondence of common Irish immigrants, as well as in the agenda of nationalist groups, which tend to blame repressive England for the emigrants' misfortune. Miller considers that the Irish self-image as a victimized exile may have had a

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[9] Emigration meaning the instance of leaving "one's own country to go and live in another." (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 393)

negative impact on the adjustment of the Irish in North America. He recognizes, however, that it did not prevent the achievement of a better material life. This image persisted, moreover, in the construction of an Irish identity in the New World and in the features of Irish nationalism in America (8). He demonstrates in his work a very peculiar view on the Irish diaspora in North America.

Patrick O'Sullivan believes that "a culture of migration was created within Ireland" (1:1). He explores his view in the Collection The Irish World Wide, in which he proposes to show the state of the art on Irish Migration Studies. The first volume Patterns of Migration presents analyses written by different authors. The issues vary from the wandering poor Irish migrants in the sixteenth century to the illegal Irish in New York in the second half of the twentieth century. Migration from Ireland to different places like North America, Australia and Argentina are also discussed. O'Sullivan believes that "the interdisciplinary approach can bring genuine rewards and insights, and a more rounded understanding" (xiii) of the subject. As a consequence, the view on Irish migration involves different destinations, themes and covers "a wide chronology" (xv). It is my belief that his methodology is similar to that used by Avtar Brah, when she states that each diaspora has "its own history" (183). The collection also approaches the cultural production of the migrants, the Irish women migration, religion and the Famine. It was conceived as a source of research, as a start for further contributions; and it has turned out to be an important work of reference to those who are interested in Irish Migration Studies.

In The Irish Diaspora Andy Bielenberg assembles many names around four main themes: "Great Britain", "The Americas", "The Empire" and "General Studies". The work presents a comparative approach and reveals the complexity of the subject. Migration from Ireland to different parts of Britain is discussed in Part One, from the early nineteenth century to the end of

the twentieth century. Part Two focuses on Irish migration to North and South America, addressing, along with dislocation, other issues such as identity, kinship in the communities and settlement. The experience of Irish emigration to countries formerly belonging to the British Empire – India, South Africa and New Zealand – is discussed in Part Three. "General Studies" is the last part and, as the title indicates, it approaches general issues, such as statistical surveys, a "comparative European perspective" (11), and the contrast between outward and return migration. The Irish Diaspora does not present a homogeneous view of Irish migration, bearing different positions and perspectives on the subject. The large number of contributors – seventeen – from different fields of study is reflected on the issues approached. Bielenberg's work stands as an important source for those who seek a broader perspective on Irish migration studies.

iii. The Luck of Ginger Coffey and the experience of migration after the Second World War

In Brian Moore's novel, the Coffeys sail to Montreal in 1955, and I believe that their decision to go to the New World can be historically inserted within the Irish migration after the Second World War. The dislocation to Canada performed by Ginger Coffey and his family is inscribed in the history of the Irish Diaspora and, moreover, in the movement of European mass emigration after 1945. Enda Delaney argues that "mass migration was a phenomenon which affected most European states in the postwar period either as sending or receiving societies" (331). In Europe, there was a heavy flow of migration from Italy to richer countries such as France and Switzerland soon after the war, for instance. Delaney remarks that in Ireland alone over 500,000 people migrated in the period between 1945 and 1981 (332). Besides the search for

a better life in another country, emigration can also be seen as a reaction to the Irish economic stagnation during and after the war (Halpin 89; Ardagh 310). Although the main destination in North America was the United States, Canada was also an option due to the language and the absence of a restriction policy of immigration at that time, at least for European immigrants[10]. Wsevolod Isajiw explains that "with the post-war economic boom, Canada aligned its immigration policies to economic needs and admitted large numbers of immigrants of the greatest ethnic diversity ever". Nevertheless, British immigrants were given preference (83).

The economic feature mentioned by Isajiw can be found in the needs of the main character, Ginger, who wants to succeed in Canada. His profile can be located historically. Irish migration in the fifties was characterized by "less educated and less skilled" migrants (Halpin 106). Despite his lack of an educational degree, Ginger gets two jobs, thus indicating the Canadian need of labor workers and the protagonist's capability for self-adjustment.

Other features of the post-war migration are present in the narrative. According to Graham Davis, since the end of the Napoleonic wars,

> the chief characteristic of Irish migration to Britain and overseas was a positive movement of people in search of better economic opportunities that transcended the negative warnings of ministers of religion, ignored the condemnation of political leaders and broke free from the emotional ties of birthplace and family. (33)

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[10] A restriction policy of immigration was applied to Asian immigrants after the Second World War (Isajiw 83).

Some passages in the narrative reflect Davis' affirmation, such as the admonitions of Father Cogley, who condemns school boys' thought of emigration by directing his speech to Ginger (17). The reader can also perceive a feeling of relief in the protagonist when Ginger realizes he is distant from the bosses appointed by Veronica's relatives (13). These conditions promote in the main character a positive feeling of a fresh start.

Finally, the epigraphs to this chapter show different feelings in relation to a concept of home in the novel. The first one – "It made him homesick to think of those pubs, so he must not think" (10) – expresses Ginger's homesickness in relation to Ireland and its pubs. However, this feeling is not pessimistic in relation to his future. He misses his country of origin but tries to focus on his present. He never regrets his departure and learns through his daughter that his wife does not want to go back either.

The second epigraph – "Home is here, we're far better off here" (242) – coming by the end of the narrative, shows Veronica's certainty that she made the right decision to make Canada her home. While she seems a little unsure of staying in the beginning, in the end she proves her will to stay. Her attitude is strengthened, in my opinion, by her new role in the family, as I will discuss in the last chapter.

Avtar Brah states that "diasporic journeys are essentially about settling down, about putting roots 'elsewhere'" (182). I believe that the Coffeys' immigration to Montreal makes it necessary for them to conceive a new concept of home to help them cope with their new reality.

In order to feel at home, a certain level of acceptance by the new community is needed. The experience of immigration, however, may bring for the newcomer the unpleasant condition of the Other. In the next chapter, I will discuss how the main character is seen as the Other

through a typical and, furthermore, a stereotyped image of the Irish, differently from his wife and daughter, although they share the same experience as a migrating group.

CHAPTER 2

GINGER COFFEY AS THE OTHER

Not a Canadian, are you?[11]

H. E. Kahn

To acknowledge the existence of another human being is at the same time to admit the self and the differences between the self and the other person, to whom one perceives and compares the similarities and differences in appearance, gestures, responses, and attitudes. The process of consciously internalizing the presence of the other occurs simultaneously with self-analysis. The marks of difference are what constitute the limits between oneself and the other. I believe that the Other[12] is an image constructed by those that name him/her as such. This representation involves a relation of power and is based on any aspect considered inferior: geographic place of origin, social class, race or behavior, among others. Difference is the underlying mark present in the process of othering and marginalization is the result of this process.

Naming the Other involves a complex process and a discussion in terms of power relations. In a situation where two forces are present, the most powerful will dominate and name

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[11] Moore, Ginger 26.

[12] I choose to capitalize the word Other to distinguish it from the common noun or adjective.

the Other as such. In post-colonial thought, the dominant force can be identified with the imperial power, the Eurocentric thought or the metropolitan centers. All these forces act in an oppressive way, naming the marginalized the Other. By doing so, they restrain the limits of influence of their opponents, control them and define their identity. Jacques Lacan, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Stuart Hall are important theorists who have different views on this issue and the development of their concepts is important for our understanding of Ginger Coffey as the Other.

The French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan studied the formation of the subject's identity. As a child, before the acquisition of language, the subject recognizes its own image in a mirror. Lacan suggests that the mirror stage should be understood "as an identification" ("The Mirror Stage" 1286), in which the subject assumes an image. What the child sees is another person who resembles itself. Here, the subject stands in the Imaginary dimension, in which it establishes a relation between the self and its image. This subject is called <u>other</u> by Lacan. In contrast, the French psychoanalyst calls <u>Other</u> (capitalized) the subject that has entered the Symbolic dimension, in which articulation and mastery of language are present. The Other is "the very locus evoked by the recourse to speech in any relation in which the Other intervenes" ("The Signification of the Phallus" 1306). Basically, this Other is constituted by the place it occupies and the relation it establishes with the interlocutor in discourse. The subject leaves the realm of the Mother and masters language, acquiring what Lacan calls the Name of the Father, which means the subject articulates itself within culture. Because "the Symbolic order is constitutive for the subject" (Selden, Widdowson and Brooker 166), to govern its own life the subject must enter the Symbolic dimension, mastering language. In post-colonial theory those marginalized by the imperial discourse can be identified with Lacan's other; and the imperial forces would be the

Other (capitalized). Theorists often stress that the "construction of the dominant imperial *Other* occurs in the same process by which the colonial *others* come into being" (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 171). In all, the presence of the Other plays a major role in the process of the constitution of the subject.

In The Location of Culture, Homi Bhabha discusses the Western thought from the perspective of Post-Colonialism, and contextualizes the question of the Other using the concept of ambivalence to explain the construction of the post-colonial subject in discourse. According to Bhabha, the process of othering is orchestrated by the Western thought, which establishes the Western culture as the only one provided with authenticity and, by doing so, reassures itself of its dominance over other cultures (31). Because the subject wants to be equal to the dominant ruler and at the same time rejects the situation that makes him feel subjugated, the colonized Other tries to mimic the colonizer, creating ambivalence. Besides, the colonizer is affected by the culture of the colonized. These processes generate hybridity, a space where culture can be articulated (38). Bhabha provides a contextualized concept of the Other: it emerges in a Post-Colonial setting and is a result of the marginalization produced by the Western thought. He also raises an important issue for my analysis: the question of difference. In his words: "The construction of the colonial subject in discourse, and the exercise of colonial power through discourse, demands an articulation of forms of difference – racial and sexual" (67). It is through this articulation that power is exercised and that the process of othering is reinforced, because the marks of difference in a defined structure of values are labeled under the sign of marginalization.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak adds another dimension to the discussion of the Other. She uses Derrida's theory of deconstruction to investigate if this Other, whom she calls the subaltern, can really speak by him/herself. She uses Ranajit Guha's definition of people "that can be only

an identity-in-differential" (79), which means the subaltern classes are composed by "the demographic difference between the total Indian population" (79) and the Indian elite. The identity of the subaltern relies on its difference. Spivak argues that even when the subaltern speaks, it happens as a concession of the dominant power and, if it is so, this speech has no legitimacy. She also questions the roles of intellectuals when they claim to be representing the oppressed. For Spivak, intellectuals are unable to do so, because they will always speak from the place of the dominant force. She also claims that "the colonized subaltern *subject* is irretrievably heterogeneous" (79); therefore, there is no essentialism in her treatment of the Other, who cannot be homogenized. If Bhabha places the Other in the post-colonial context, Spivak determines his/her place more resolutely: he/she is the subaltern and can hardly leave this position.

Stuart Hall moves forward in the discussion of the Other, focusing on identity and representation. He relies on the Caribbean experience and his notion of otherness refers to the black individual. I will discuss his theory more extensively, since I appropriate his concepts in order to discuss Brian Moore's narrative. For Hall, identity is not fixed as a product, a fact accomplished in itself, but it is a process which occurs within representation ("Cultural Identity and Diaspora" 392). In his opinion, the practices of representation performed by the metropolitan centers have constituted marginalized peoples as Other. He continues:

> Not only … were we constructed as different and other within the categories of knowledge of the West by those regimes. They had the power to make us see and experience *ourselves* as 'Other'. (394)

This process occurs through consent. The self-knowledge of the subject as Other is constructed and the idea of inferiority is internalized. In other words, the dominant forces convey the idea of

the self-image as the Other in the subject in such a way that the subject accepts it as a *fait accompli*. As a result, this subject is placed in the margins through discourse.

One interesting issue raised by Hall is the idea of national culture as unified. Different sets of practices are unified through the cultural power exercised by the dominant strata in a given society. This unification is presented as the standard culture of that society. Hall questions this unification arguing that nations are hybrid, because they are not formed by one ethnic group alone and, consequently, what is taken as English culture, for example, cannot be regarded as standard practices in all Great Britain (Identidade Cultural na Pós-Modernidade 62). National cultures possess within themselves many different traits and practices reflecting different ethnic groups constituting a nation. Then, the marks of difference that make each culture unique are manipulated in the process of othering by the most powerful ethnic group, mainly in the case of immigration, in which the national culture of the immigrant is the first element to be identified through the question: "Where are you from?" The set of practices recognized as standard in that given society allows a judgment of values. In the process of exercising power, the hegemonic culture imposes itself on other cultural groups, which are then marginalized and become the Other. The set of practices of the marginalized culture is, then, considered inferior. The position of power held by a certain group, however, is not a permanent condition, since one group may be more powerful in relation to another but not in relation to a third one. In Canada, for instance, the relation among different ethnic groups and the cultural power they exercise are more complicated, and I will address this subject later in this chapter.

In the Introduction to Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices Stuart Hall affirms that people from the same culture tend to analyze concepts, images and ideas, and to establish parameters in similar ways (4). When an alien element appears, they tend to

judge it by its difference. According to Hall, "difference signifies. It 'speaks'" (230); thus, it is based on the marks of difference that otherness is forged.

Hall describes four theoretical accounts of difference and also writes a critique of each account. First, he discusses Saussure's idea of difference, which he views as essential to meaning because it is through the contraposition of binary elements that meaning is created. Hall uses Jacques Derrida's argument to question this view. Derrida points out that there will always be an element in the grid of binary oppositions that carries more power than the other – the relation is not equal between terms. Hence, the system is arbitrary. The second account is provided by Mikhail Bakhtin, to whom meaning is constructed based on difference, through a dialogical perspective. Hall concludes: "The 'Other', in short, is essential to meaning" (236). The problem is, according to this view, that meaning is always in the power of the Other. There must be an opositional Other to make meaning happen. The third approach, proposed by Mary Douglas, states that difference is essential to meaning, because it is constructed through binary opposition within a classificatory system. This process leads, however, to a stigmatization of things that cannot be inserted in limited categories, things that fluctuate over the strict boundaries of culture. Different approaches in psychoanalysis relating to how the subject forms its own identification as an 'I' and how the presence of the Other in this process is a demanding one form the fourth account. According to this approach, the Other represents difference. The problem is to accept how something that defines the subject lies outside it. Drawing his conclusion, Hall emphasizes that difference and otherness are interrelated and function together. He also stresses the ambivalent character of difference: it can be positive, contributing, for example, to the formation of a culture, and it can be negative, forging negative meanings of the Other.

Jacques Lacan, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Spivak and Stuart Hall present different views on the Other. Lacan centers on the perception of the Other in the construction of subjectivity. Bhabha focuses on the way the Western thought creates the marginalized Other. Spivak discusses the condition of the subaltern and Hall works with the question of identity and representation. However, all these views rely on the notion that the marks of difference are made real through discourse. For Lacan, the Other (*le grand Autre*) masters language and gains control over the other. For Bhabha, difference is the cause of marginalization by the Western world. For Spivak, difference marks subalternity. For Hall, the signs of difference result in a type of discourse that will be incorporated by the marginalized. I intend to focus on these aspects of difference in order to explore the condition of the Other created in Brian Moore's narrative.

Before going further, I will establish a difference between alterity and otherness. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin explain that the first term "is derived from the Latin *alteritas*, meaning 'the state of being other or different; diversity, otherness'" (11); however, they state that the "term was adopted by philosophers as an alternative to 'otherness' to register a change in the Western perceptions of the relationship between consciousness and the world" (11). In my opinion, alterity is a term that indicates diversity; one individual being different, diverse, apart from the other. Otherness is a concept involving a political treatment of alterity, in which power is the measure to name the Other as such; it involves not only positioning, but also marginalization. Otherness can also provoke a stereotyped representation of the Other; it is a process led by the most powerful element in the relation between different peoples. In otherness, difference carries a negative meaning resulting in the treatment of the subject as inferior.

The condition of otherness may be particularly felt in relation to immigrants. They usually arrive in groups in a strange country, looking for better conditions of life, suffering some

kind of deprivation – economic or emotional. In the process of adapting themselves to the new place, the marks of difference – appearance, behavior, language – are brought to the fore and cause all types of reaction. Immigrants want to be incorporated into the new society and finding work is usually a priority. In Brian Moore's novel, Ginger Coffey also wants to find a job. In this process, he faces otherness. In the narrative, Ginger occupies the place of the Other, when he is marginalized by other characters, namely Canadian-born persons or some characters that assume the position of Canadians.

Mr. J. Donnelly, an Irish-Canadian, is the clerk at the Unemployment Insurance Commission who receives Ginger's form and tells him "a couple of introductory jokes about the Ould Sod" (8). Despite the suggestion of identification between them in the beginning, through the jokes, Donnelly masters the discourse of the Establishment and identifies with the hegemonic power. Analyzing Ginger's degree of education, the clerk suggests teaching as a profession: "We're very short of teachers here in Canada" (8). He speaks from the position of the dominant discourse indicating "we" – Canadians. His identification occurs within the dominant group, although he is also an immigrant. Donnelly has arrived previously in Canada and he is already established in Canadian society – his job position demonstrates it. Apparently, he has constructed his self-image as Canadian, applying the identity incorporation that Isajiw mentions, which is "the process of the development of one's own new identity within a new society" (176). This process occurs at different levels: self-conception, emotional connectedness, commitment, trust and solidarity (176-79). Donnelly sees himself as Canadian, but Ginger Coffey, a newly arrived, is not able to bear that identification yet. Thus, Donnelly establishes the boundaries between Ginger and himself: he speaks from the place of the ruling force and treats Ginger as the Other through his discourse. The presence of Ginger as both Irish and unemployed reinforces the

position of Donnelly, Canadian-identified, settled in the Western economic system. Ginger thinks that Donnelly treats him with "no hint of condescension in his tone" (7). Nevertheless, the clerk offers Ginger job opportunities for which he has no proper skills. Confirming his attitude, Donnelly wishes: "Good luck … The luck of the Irish, eh, Mr. Coffey?" (10). The self-image of the clerk as Canadian separates him from Ginger, although both are Irish. There is no sign of identification between them inspired by their place of origin, but the jokes.

Another situation in which the hostility to immigrants produces the condition of the Other appears when Ginger's landlady, Madame Athanase Hector Beaulieu, expresses her disappointment:

> 'My husband warn me,' she said (sic). 'He told me: Bernadette, he said, these people come from the other side, they have no references, you don't know who they are. And I told my husband, don't worry, I said, they're nice people, you don't have to worry. But, look what happened. You never told me you weren't keeping the place on. You should have told me. (101)

She gives the Coffeys an opportunity, but they fail in her point of view, as her husband had predicted. The use of words like "these people" in this context points to a pejorative distinction that contributes to the othering process. The fear of the unknown is revealed in Mr. Beaulieu's words and he states a distance between them and the Coffeys. It is through the landlord's discourse that Ginger is signified as Other. Paradoxically, Madame Beaulieu and her husband could also bear the label "people from the other side", since they are French-Canadians and, at some point, they – or their ancestors – had to cross the Atlantic to come to the New World. Once again, positionality defines the discourse about the Other.

The very question “where are you from” and its derivatives open the way to the othering process. Ginger Coffey has two opportunities to get a job. First, he goes to the company Canada Nickel, where he is received by Georges Paul-Emile Beauchemin, Public Relations Director. Beauchemin soon asks: “You-re – ah – you’re Irish, eh?” (23). Immediately, the topic of discussion is St. Patrick’s Day Parade: “Lots of Irish out here, you know” (24). As I have mentioned, as soon as the national culture is identified by Ginger’s place of origin, he is judged by that. After checking if Ginger had not been sent “by someone from upstairs” (24), Beauchemin decides that he is a “nobody” among so many Irish in Montreal and denies him the job.

Another example appears in the following interview, in which the presumed Jew H. E. Kahn analyzes Ginger’s curriculum. He asks: “Not essential, mind you, but I see you’re not a local man. Not a Canadian, are you?” (26). By stating this question, Kahn establishes Ginger’s position in relation to himself. Knowing that Ginger is Irish, Kahn makes a brief comment about a deal he made in Shannon Airport when he was “coming back from Paris” (27) – Ireland was just a quick stop and a minor subject. After that, Kahn crushes Ginger’s form: “Balled, the form accurately described a parabola over Ginger’s left shoulder, holed into a secretary’s wastepaper basket” (27). This attitude shows Kahn’s disregard for Ginger as a potential candidate for the job. By extension, it can be argued that it is also a disregard for Ginger as Irish. The job announcement asks for an “aggressive publicity man for professional fund-raising group, province-wide cancer research campaign” (20) – it seems that it would not demand highly specific skills from anyone. Kahn dismisses Ginger apparently for no reason.

In my opinion, the examples above show that both Canadians Beauchemin and Kahn did not consider Ginger eligible for the job in their company because they held him in the condition

of the Other, marginalized by the place of origin – Ireland. The question of stereotypes, which appears veiled in the examples above, also plays a distinctive role in the process of otherness and this issue will be properly addressed in the next chapter.

I believe that the marks of difference mentioned can be identified as the binary opposition: Canada – Ireland. I want to draw attention to the sense of nationness evoked here, considering this binary opposition. How is Canadianess or Irishness portrayed in the narrative by different subjects? Canadianess is expressed through the Canadian characters' superior opinions and attitudes. Canadians should not be considered a homogeneous group, though. The narrative presents French- and English-speaking Canadian characters. Moreover, the setting is Montreal/Quebec, a French island in an English Canada that holds the hegemonic power. This hegemony has its roots in Canada's historical background. According to Isajiw, the constant flux of British peoples to Canada

> established a strong orientation towards Britain in the political, moral and social life of Canadian society. The elite regarded British institutions as the standard in the development of Canadian institutions. This included not only the political institutions, such as the parliamentary system and the criminal law, but also an intellectual orientation towards English culture. (43)

Hegemony, however, does not entail a peaceful agreement of all parts involved. Robert Bothwell explains that relations between the two majority groups in Canada – English- and French-Canadians – began in violence in the eighteenth century and disagreements have been observed since then (6-22). The belligerent relation between English and French Canadians interferes in the way both groups see each other. Since English Canada is the dominant force, Quebec may be

viewed as Other by the British descendent community. On the other hand, English-speaking groups may be positioned as Other by French-speaking Canadians, mainly if the group is perceived as a minority in Quebec – like the Coffeys in our analysis. It presently occurs in the narrative, when the French Canadian Beaulieus and Beauchemin marginalize Ginger Coffey; they act as the rulers of power in that locality and place the Coffeys as Other.

On the other hand, Canadianess is portrayed in a different manner by English-Canadian Gerald Grosvenor. He is part of the elite, "a political cartoonist on a big magazine called *Canada's Own*" (28), who talks about people in the Canadian government with such intimacy, "as if he was related to all of them" (46). For Grosvenor, Canadianess is a refined mixed result of the British Royalty and the American modernity and, in his opinion, "Canadians combine the best facets of British reticence with a touch of good old American down-to-earthness" (46). Grosvenor conveys the idea that he is the sum of all good things Canada has to offer. He is a very successful man, who can count on his public relations skills. Standing between England and America, Canadianess here, portrayed by Grosvenor, may be perceived as a mixture of the British heritage and the proximity to modern America.

The proofreaders, Ginger's workmates at the *Tribune*, view Canadianess differently. They are a heterogeneous group formed by Canadians and immigrants. Their image of Canada is close enough to that of Ginger Coffey: a land of opportunities. Canada is seen as a symbol of modernity and sovereignty ruled by Mammon: "Money is the Canadian way to immortality" (70) – says Fox, the leader of the group. He continues: "This is Canada's century, they tell us. Not America's, mind you. Not even Russia's. The twentieth century belongs to Canada" (70). This image combines with the one revealed by Robert Bothwell, Canada being a "bustling, go-ahead country … . that emerged after the Second World War" (79). Canadianess, here, is expressed

through their way of improving their economic lives. Their vision, however, is realistic. They know they occupy the lowest position in the newspaper as non-unionized proofreaders. “Scab labor, that’s what we are” (71), says Fox. Nevertheless, it does not prevent them to think of Canada as a land of opportunities.

Irishness, in its turn, is conveyed in the narrative only through the main character, Ginger Coffey, who is described as the typical Irishman: red hair (his nickname Ginger is inspired by the color of his hair), big moustache, and a will to succeed in the New World. Ginger’s Irishness is also revealed by the way he dresses. He is proud of the way he looks and values the moments he acquired his clothes: “Sheep-skin-lined it was, his pride and joy; thirty guineas it had cost him at Aquascutum” (4). Ireland is shown through the twisted lenses of Ginger’s frustrations, as a country that does not deserve his talents and that expels all those who want to conquer other worlds, forgetting Mother Éire. Irishness appears strongly in the language used by the narrator to signify Ginger as Irish – a topic that will be discussed later in this chapter. The binary opposition Canada-Ireland is mostly shown through the attitudes Canadian characters have in relation to Ginger. As discussed above, Canadian characters treat Ginger differently because he is Irish, making up what I call othering process. An image of inferiority is created and, identified as Irish, Ginger is positioned in the margins of social relations.

As I have already mentioned, the mechanisms of naming the Other as such may be based on various aspects such as geographic place of origin, social class, and race, among others. The marks of difference will enable the subject who occupies a more powerful position to lead this process, charging those named Other with marginalization. Religion can also constitute a means of naming the Other. It seems to me that Ginger suffers the consequences of being a Catholic since his childhood. Having studied at a Catholic school, many times he would listen to Father

Cogley's admonitions about the boy who "wants to go out into the great wide world and find adventures. He's different, you see" (17). Ginger Coffey knew that the missionary was talking directly to him, since half an hour before he had confessed. Here, the hegemonic power of the Church in Ireland names Ginger the Other because he cannot adapt to his country: "Ireland isn't good enough for him, it's got to be England or America or Rio-dee-Janeero (sic) or some place like that" (17), says Father Cogley. The restless boy is compared to Lucifer, because, like the fallen angel, he cannot cope with his "God-given limitations" (18). In my point of view, the Catholic Church places Ginger in the position of the Other, because he cannot fit the categories established by the Church: "Maybe he was one of those people who get the best of neither world, one of those people the Lord had no time for, neither fish nor fowl, great sinner nor saint?" (21). He is marginalized because he chooses a path outside the Church. In this case, Ginger does not accept the way the Catholic Church wants to rule his life and he breaks with it, by immigrating to the New World. Ginger Coffey had been raised by a religious family, his father being a deceased Dominican Tertiary, and his brother a missionary priest in Africa. His family, therefore, has a history of dedication to the Church. Ginger, however, does not want to pursue this path and moves to Canada, where he is not forced to attend masses and follow the religion. In this sense, he escapes the constraints imposed by the Church, since he moves away from the power of the Catholic system. His distance from the Church, although physically performed in Canada when he confronts the tabernacle in anger and leaves the Basilica, does not seem to occur psychologically. Throughout the narrative, Ginger faces situations in which the Church – or its specter – has a bearing on his life. In a particular passage, the narrator describes a crucifix in the court where Ginger is about to be tried: "Coffey looked desperately at the crucifix over the

judge's bench. The Christ figure lent an ear: waiting" (226). Christ seems to be overhearing the procedures as well as waiting for Ginger's confession, as if witnessing his failure.

Despite Ginger Coffey's rejection of religion, I notice an ambiguity in his further relation to the Church. Although he rejects the rites and his past as a student of a religious school, Ginger frequently thinks about the beliefs professed by the Church. As an example, he uses the sacrament of marriage as an argument to try to save his relationship with Veronica. Ginger presents the ambivalent attitude of pushing the Church away from his life and at the same time relying on its dogmas for the purpose of saving his marriage. On the one hand, Ginger tries to escape from religious constraints; on the other, he cannot escape the Catholic dogmas.

As mentioned above, the othering process is also marked by Ginger's language. Most of the narrative is constructed in free indirect speech, in which the narrator is positioned closer to a character and, most of the time, to Ginger, expressing his thoughts. This strategy approximates the narrator to the main character's consciousness and at the same time highlights Ginger's Irishness, emphasized, for instance, by his language, which is different from that of the other characters and, remarkably, even from the other Irish characters. He uses expressions such as "Flute" (4; 14; 20; 28; and 220); "Suffering J!" (27; 36; 39; 60; 63; 67; 80; 125; 174; 186; 213; and 225); "By J!" (5; 6; and 13); "Steady the Buffs" (47); "Shanks' mare" (10; 11). Considering the Irish characters, this device is used only in relation to Ginger Coffey. His wife Veronica and his daughter Paulie do not present any variation or use of expressions characterizing them in a different way. One might expect to find in their language traces of Irishness – maybe marks of the Irish accent – since they all have been in the new country about the same time, especially Veronica, who supposedly did not have much contact with Canadians so as to lose her accent, since she gets a job after six months in Montreal. Instead, there is nothing in the narrative that

identifies the female characters as Irish, besides the fact that they have come from Ireland to Canada. Mr. J. Donnelly, the clerk at the Unemployment Commission, is identified by the narrator as Irish-Canadian and, bad jokes about the "Ould Sod" (8) aside, there is nothing that marks his origin. On the contrary, he seems to have assimilated the new culture and language quite well. Another character has undergone the same path: the Irishness of the proofreader William O'Brien Davis – old Billy for the workmates – is revealed only in the end of the narrative, when Ginger discovers his tattoo "Erin Go Bragh" – Ireland Forever. He is surprised to notice that Davis could hardly be recognized as Irish:

> ERIN GO BRAGH. But was it really ERIN FOREVER? What trace of Erin was left on William O'Brien Davis save that harp and shamrock, that motto, faded as the old reminder that BILL LOVES MIN? Would Ginger Coffey also end his days in some room, old and used, his voice nasal and reedy, all accent gone? (207)

For Ginger, losing accent also means to forget the traces of his origin. He is recognized as Irish through his language and, although he claims for himself the status of New Canadian, he does not want to lose his Irishness. Irishness, as portrayed, resulted from the narrator's use of language as he reveals Ginger's voice to the reader. Otherness is conveyed, however, by the characters that judge Ginger by his place of origin denoted through his language.

Another character whose language sends the reader in the direction of his country of origin is Mr. MacGregor, the Managing Editor of the *Tribune*. His voice is described by the narrator as "a Low Church Scottish rumble" (48) and his presence is felt throughout the building. His language is registered graphically, in the text: "Dorrothy" (48) – Dorothy; "wurrk" (49, 50, 52, 209) – work; "whyssky" (50) – whiskey; "Disna' matter" (51) – it does not matter; "deef"

(51) – deaf; "Lorrd" (51) – Lord; "wurrth" (52) – worth; "Bleddy" (52) – bloody; "gurrls" (63) – girls. Unlike Ginger Coffey, whose expressions are revealed only to the reader, MacGregor expresses himself publicly with a heavy Scottish accent, usually adding sarcastic tones. The marks of difference in language denoted here could also lead to a process of otherness, but since MacGregor occupies a position of power in the narrative, this process is veiled and conducted in surreptitious comments made by the proofreaders at the *Tribune*. They never call MacGregor by his name: " 'Hitler's his name. Because he's –' And then came a slow, enjoyed recital – noun, adjective, verb – of fourteen well-rehearsed obscenities" (65). Actually, the proofreaders regard the Scottish Editor as their boss first, and then – if at all – as Scottish. The narrative does not present any comments made by the proofreaders about MacGregor's ethnicity. Nevertheless, as Fredrik Barth argues, "regarded as status, ethnic identity is superordinate to most other statuses, and defines the permissible constellations of statuses, or social personalities, which an individual with that identity may assume" (302). The status of ethnic identity is predominant, according to this view, in disregard of other statuses, like gender or social class. Similarly, Abner Cohen argues that

> the earning of livelihood, the struggle for a larger share of income from the economic system, including the struggle for housing, for higher education, and for other benefits, and similar issues constitute an important variable significantly related to ethnicity. (375)

If the proofreaders' relation to MacGregor is not explicitly marked by ethnicity, the same cannot be said in relation to Ginger. The way MacGregor points out Ginger's ethnicity is so expressive that it seems like a burden to be Irish. His critique bears the tone of a stereotyped discourse, which will be discussed later.

The ethnic groups involved in the narrative are the English- (Gerry Grosvenor) and French-speaking (the Beaulieus, Beauchemin, Judge Monceau) Canadians, the Irish (the Coffeys, Donnelly, Billy Davis) and the Scottish (MacGregor). Other characters are not regarded ethnically. Ethnicity opens the question of otherness to another perspective, mainly considering the setting of the narrative, Canada, whose population is composed of diverse ethnic groups.

The concept of ethnic group varies. Some theoreticians take into consideration the interaction among different ethnic groups and others emphasize the relations within each group. Fredrik Barth discusses the definition in anthropological terms and argues that one basic concept determines ethnicity as a group of people that share one common culture; he affirms that the boundaries between different groups persist, "despite a flow of personnel across them" (294); moreover, "cultural differences can persist despite inter-ethnic contact and interdependence" (295). According to his point of view, an ethnic group does not exist in isolation but exercises its identification in the interaction with other groups. Abner Cohen's definition also stresses the social element:

> An ethnic group can be operationally defined as a collectivity of people who (a) share some patterns of normative behaviour and (b) form a part of a larger population, interacting with people from other collectivities within the framework of a social system. (370)

According to this view, an ethnic group does not exist *per se*, but within a social context. Both points of view take into consideration the culture or behavior shared by a group and the social interaction among different groups.

Stephen Cornell and Douglas Hartmann draw the historical development of the definition of ethnicity, privileging the account made by the sociologist Max Weber. The authors follow Richard Schermerhorn's definition of ethnic group, as

> a collectivity within a larger society having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared historical past, and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements defined as the epitome of their peoplehood. (19)

This definition includes social interaction within the group, a kinship between its members (through religion, place of origin, or created symbol) and self-consciousness. It is more complex and it adds the perspective of something else – an icon – that brings the group together and stands for their unity. This concept lacks, however, the interaction considered by Barth and Cohen as essential to the construction of the group's identity in relation to others.

Thomas Eriksen also bases his definition on social relations: "By definition, ethnic groups remain more or less discrete, but they are aware of – and in contact with – members of other ethnic groups" (9). He also explains that by switching from the term tribes to ethnic groups the boundaries between groups are made relative because everyone belongs to a certain ethnic group; then, the concept becomes dynamic. In Moore's narrative, this mechanism can be observed in the awareness of different characters of his/her own ethnic group and another's. The characters perceive the group they belong to and also are aware of other groups. One has to notice, however, that the English-speaking Canadian characters are not defined by their ethnicity, that is, they are not described as belonging to an ethnic group. It should be asked: does Brian Moore perceive these characters ethnically? This discussion resembles Werner Sollors' text

"Beyond Ethnicity"[13], precisely in the section entitled "Are Yankees Ethnic?" (24). Sollors departs from Warner and Lunt's concept of ethnic group that excludes Native Americans or Yankees from the term "ethnic". By analyzing the etymological roots of "ethnicity" Sollors argues that "the English language has retained the pagan memory of 'ethnic', often secularized in the sense of ethnic as other, as nonstandard, or, in America, as not fully American" (25). In this sense, calling another person ethnic means they are not American. It seems to me that, likewise, Brian Moore does not regard the English-speaking characters as marked by ethnicity, considering it as standard, contrastively pointing out the other characters' ethnic groups.

The issue becomes even more complicated when the narrative setting is considered. Montreal is part of Quebec, where the majority of the population is French-Canadian. However, Quebec is inserted in the hegemonic English Canada. The French in Canada stand in a subordinate position in relation to the people of British descent, historically considering the conquests (Isajiw 120). In Brian Morre's narrative, I believe that the author considers the English-speaking Canada as the standard pattern; therefore, he does not indicate the English-speaking Canadian characters' ethnicity.

Wsevolod Isajiw offers a very insightful view in his book Understanding Diversity: Ethnicity and Race in the Canadian Context. His definition of ethnic group refers to

> an involuntary, community-type group of persons who share the same distinct culture or who are descendants of those who have shared a distinct culture and who identify with their ancestors, or their culture or group. (19)

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[13] This is the first chapter of Sollors' book by the same name: Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and Descent in American Culture. 1986.

Isajiw's concept can be adequately applied in my work, considering the presence of different ethnic groups in the novel. Although in the narrative there are no actions performed by a specific ethnic group, because the characters act on an individual basis, the identification made by the narrator points to the importance of the interaction of these characters taking ethnicity into consideration. I decided to identify the ethnic groups the characters belong to primarily by their place of origin, as indicated by the narrator. The literary work is not based exclusively on the differences resulting from ethnicity, but the characters' interactions reveal some conflicts aroused in the boundaries of each ethnic group. I believe that it is on the level of the subject that ethnicity happens; not in the sense of an individualistic basis but in the interaction of a subject with another, because in the relationship between two people the similarities and differences appear and ethnicity becomes evident. When Ginger Coffey is considered and treated as Other because he is Irish, ethnicity becomes relevant in the present discussion.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, some scholars thought that ethnicity would vanish, giving place to other forms of identification more connected to industrialization, as a result of modernization (Eriksen 2; Cornell and Hartmann 4). But it did not happen. In the end of the sixties, the terms ethnicity and ethnic groups became current in social anthropological studies and researches in the field continued growing until our century. Some terms have been incorporated in the discussion, such as nationalism, mainly in the eighties and nineties (Eriksen 1). The terms ethnicity and nationalism are sometimes confounded, since their boundaries are not clear-cut and their limits overlap. In the narrative, when Brian Moore defines a character as Irish or Irish-Canadian, Scottish or French-speaking Canadian, I believe that he states the character's ethnicity, and not his/her link to a nation. The characters inform their discourse with imagined cultural symbols belonging to that ethnic group. For example: when MacGregor implies that

Ginger failed selling whisky because it was produced in Ireland, the qualities of the drink count less than the fact that the Scottish produce a better whisky than the Irish. Historically the Scottish people have a tradition of producing whisky, namely Scotch. I think that, in ethnic terms, to be Irish or to be Scottish implies much more than just belonging to Ireland or Scotland; it implies standing for values and symbols considered important to the ethnic group. Frequently this practice defines the boundaries between one ethnic group and another, rejecting the impulse towards hybridity.

The presence of a minority ethnic group within a culturally diverse environment, however, may promote a movement of its members in the direction of hybridity. Nikos Papastergiadis discusses the development of the concept of hybridity and its shift in definition, from a mark of "contamination, failure, or regression" (257) to a distinction of inclusivity. He presents Octavio Paz's and Gilberto Freyre's accounts of the Mexican and Brazilian hybrids, respectively, and how these authors relate the birth of the national subject with an act of hybridity. He also acknowledges the work of Max Raphael, who studied Picasso focusing on his art as an incorporation of foreign elements into the European rationalization of form. According to Raphael's view, there is a duality present in Picasso's work that allows him to participate in a Western world of form with the non-Western elements of his art. The hybrids are the ones included in two different worlds and it is in the sense of the "potential for inclusivity" (258) that I view Ginger Coffey's moving towards hybridity. He wants for himself a new status that defines him as New Canadian. He wants to invest himself with a new identity. New Canadians, according to Birbalsingh, is how "freshly arrived immigrants are optimistically called" (160). Besides this connotation, for Ginger to be a New Canadian means to be accepted in the economic structures of the New World. He tries to cross the borders of otherness to be accepted as a New

Canadian. He wants to feel integrated to the Canadian society, but he has his own ideas about it. His expectations are similar to Billy Davis', his Irish workmate, who wants to see "the streets that were paved with gold" (205). The proofreaders reinforce this idea of Canada as the land of opportunity: "And did you know there's a book tells you who they [ten big financiers] are and how they made it? You'll want to read that book, being a New Canadian" (71). The idea is that to be a New Canadian it is also to pursue a dream of fame and fortune, to maintain the myth that Canada bears a chance of a better life for all those who are willing to cross the Atlantic, and to learn how to succeed in this new country. To invest oneself with a new identity is also to experience ambivalence. Barth argues:

> Particularly where people change their identity, this creates ambiguity since ethnic membership is at once a question of source of origin as well as of current identity. (314)

The label of New Canadian suits Ginger Coffey very well, because it retains the idea of immigration. He does not have to deny his Irish roots, and he can participate legitimately in this New World. The hybrid Ginger is able to participate in both worlds – the old one, through his recollections, and the new one. By trying to become a New Canadian, could Ginger be considered to be performing a "boundary transcendence" according to Eriksen? The anthropologist argues that "ethnic boundaries are not necessarily territorial boundaries, but social ones" (39), so that it is possible for people to cross ethnic boundaries. He exemplifies with Fredrik Barth's and Gunnar Haaland's accounts on Pathan-Baluch and Fur-Baggara groups, respectively, mentioning economics as the defining reason for the crossing of boundaries. Ginger Coffey has an economic need to fulfill in Canada; however, he does not make any attempt to become fully Canadian – even because this is impossible – but a New Canadian, which is an

identification that holds the hyphenated condition of the immigrant Irish-Canadian. Therefore, I do not consider this process as boundary transcendence, but a movement towards hybridity and a hyphenated identity.

This movement may be observed in the way Ginger gets rid of personal articles and old attitudes along the narrative. Hallvard Dahlie, a critic who wrote a book on Brian Moore's literary works up to The Temptations of Eileen Hughes, argues that this behavior is due to Ginger's search for the self:

> This parting is, however, attended by a significant gesture: he gives Michel[14] the Alpine buttons and brush from his hat, an act which constitutes Ginger's first step in divesting himself of the external manifestations of his assumed poses; it indicates, too, that he is moving away from the world of make-believe and toys that had held him and Michel together and had seriously blinded Ginger to the nature of adult reality. (74)

It can be argued that this movement contributes to the development of Ginger's direction towards hybridity. The search for the self also turns out to be a reconfiguration of the self in Canadian terms. In the end, Ginger is more conscious of what the New World can offer him and how his capabilities can match the new place. Moreover, it is interesting to note the artificial character of the Irishness of the hat, which is Tyrolean and has Alpine buttons and brush. The hat and its sings seem to have been imported and the release of these items may be accounted for a movement towards his inner self. However, for Arnold Davidson, "Canada could not possibly live up to Ginger's Irish dreams" (574). The wish of being a New Canadian for Ginger rests upon

[14] Michel is the landlady's son, with whom Ginger plays sometimes.

the promised job as a reporter, a position he ultimately does not achieve. Nevertheless, this fact does not prevent him from regaining the hope of establishing himself in the New World, in the end of the narrative.

Ginger Coffey is judged negatively for most of the narrative by his place of origin; however, Judge Amédée Monceau considers Ginger's condition as an immigrant and his duty to his family to soften the verdict:

> …However, in this case, sentence will be suspended, in view of the fact that you have no previous conviction and are an immigrant with a wife and child to support. I am dealing with you leniently, Coffey, because I am sorry for your family. To be alone in a new country, with their breadwinner in jail, seems to me a fate which your wife and child do not deserve. (233)

Although the judge makes some jokes when Ginger describes what he had drunk – "Is that an Irish recipe?" (229), he is not treated more, or less, strictly because he is Irish. The judge takes into consideration his condition as immigrant and as responsible for his family not to hold him in jail. In the end of this passage, the detective-sergeant remarks: "Luck of the Irish, it must be, eh, Irishman?" (234). After this episode, Ginger Coffey reunites with his family.

In conclusion, the marks of difference between Ginger Coffey and the characters who name him the Other constitute the background for the othering process. This process is mediated by relations of power, in which Ginger's appearance, place of origin, and ethnicity are taken into consideration as inferior traits, which leads to a marginalization of the main character. He is considered as Other by Mr. Donnelly, who sees himself as Canadian; by the Beaulieus, who are not likely to trust another overseas immigrant; by the potential employers Beauchemin and Kahn,

who measure Ireland by the St. Patrick's Day Parade or the Shannon Airport; by the Catholic Church, which cannot accept his individualistic enterprises outside the religious jurisdiction. He is also considered as Other by his use of Irish English. Paradoxically, it is his very alterity and the fact that he has family duties that grant him a chance of freedom.

The othering process is not important *per se*, but by the dynamics it produces in relation to Ginger Coffey's self. As I mentioned at the beginning, to acknowledge the Other is at the same time to question the self. Ginger Coffey is considered Other by the characters mentioned above and it provokes in him an awareness of the unstable position he holds in relation to himself. His route is in the direction of being a New Canadian, but he can hardly discard his Irishness – and he does not consciously want to do so. Robert Sullivan, analyzing five fictions by Moore, calls attention to the writer's concern with "identity and the stabilization of self, through either memory or an interrogation of the past" (39). He affirms:

> It is as if the social formation that these Irish-Americans now inhabit – Montreal, New York, southern California – is so expansive and liberal that it will not sustain, or determine, a secure sense of self. (39)

Sullivan includes The Luck of Ginger Coffey in this idea; however, I believe that in the end of the narrative Ginger Coffey is more sure of himself, which does not guarantee immunity in future situations.

The othering process does not occur homogeneously and it can be felt also through the stereotyped images found in the narrative, which is the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

THE IRISH STEREOTYPE

Irish Ape, you'll fail![15]

Gerald Grosvenor

Stereotypes are an important component in the othering process. The use of stereotypes in the representation of the Other reinforces a position of inferiority marked by essentialism. The subject is reduced to a trait considered natural, hence, his/her position is limited by a category that is exterior to the subject and at the same time cannot be changed. Discrimination based on stereotypes is regarded as a form of prejudice, which can usually be historically recovered.

Representation is a fundamental feature underlying the process of stereotyping. According to Stuart Hall, representation is the process by which meaning and language are linked; through the practices of representation meaning is produced and conveyed into society through language (Representation 15-16). It is not a simple process, though. We use images or words (table, for example) in the place of (or to represent) concepts (a flat piece of wood with four legs); however, concepts can be real or abstract and the complexity of representation grows. Understanding is possible because people from the same culture tend to work with the same set of concepts and the same operating systems of representation in which meaning is produced. Hall explains that it is possible to interpret the world because of the "set of concepts or mental

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[15] Moore, Ginger 191.

representations which we carry around in our heads" (17) – our conceptual map. These concepts are organized in different systems, which we can operate by establishing similarities and differences between the concepts (17-18). Hall exemplifies it by constructing a parallel between birds and planes: both fly, but one is a product of Nature and the other is man-made. Language, in the form of signs (meaningful words, sounds, images), is the medium to communicate our concepts to other people. The conceptual map is a product of learning: in Hall's words, children "learn the system and conventions of representation, the codes of their language and culture, which equip them with cultural 'know-how' enabling them to function as culturally competent subjects" (22). Basically, reading or interpreting the world is a product of the internalized system of representation. Thus, if the conceptual map is learned, it is subject to a defined cultural perspective. Moreover, the set of differences between concepts is fixed by a code, shared by a specific culture. Therefore, meaning is learned; it is produced.

This notion is crucial for the understanding of representation: when reading[16] the world the inference is grounded on a particular way, based on learned concepts. For instance, there is not a universal meaning for an image, which will be read according to the conceptual map the subject has learned. The constructionist approach draws on an important issue: meaning is constructed by the use of concepts and signs that differ between one another. In short, meaning is the result of difference. The concepts *per se* are not relevant, but the differences between them are. For instance, in the system of traffic lights, the colors – red and green – signify in the extent that their difference entails a meaning: stop and go. Once again, difference "speaks" (Representation 230).

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[16] Reading is used here in a broad sense: one can read words, images, and sounds.

Before discussing stereotyping, there is another distinction to be considered, as it is necessary to understand the difference between type and stereotype. According to Richard Dyer, quoted by Stuart Hall, "a type is any simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognized characterization in which a few traits are foregrounded and change or 'development' is kept to a minimum" (Representation 257). We can make sense of the world by resorting to the types present in the classification systems in our minds. That is why we can identify a Mercedes or a Volkswagen as cars. In other words, a type can be easily recognized and is part of a classificatory system one uses to read the world. Information is accumulated and distributed into the different orders we classify it – thus, a Mercedes B200 Turbo can be distinguished from a Volkswagen Fox Plus, although both stand in the greater category cars. Through this process, we can recognize types.

Moore's novel presents the Irish type through Ginger Coffey's appearance: he has red hair, commonly found in Irish people. His nickname Ginger is related to it, as he explains: "Ginger. Had it since I was a boy. Red hair, you see" (24). He also has "a fine mustache" (6) that he is always smoothing. Through small hints along the narrative the reader creates an image of the Irish type that is Ginger, such as the use of certain expressions, available to the reader only through the narrator. Expanding the description, the narrator informs the reader that Ginger sees himself as a "Dublin squire" (6), and the tone changes to a good-humored depiction of the character. His characterization is seen by Keith Fraser as a sign of his cartoonish figure:

> It is even claimable, I think, that Coffey himself is a caricature in the obvious way that his characteristics are exaggerated, reiterated, and frequently farcical (Ginger's apostrophic sighs, his squirey togs, his handlebar mustache, his clichés, his red-flag fisticuffs, his garter-strap lust…). (247)

I believe that Fraser's point of view enlarges the reader's comprehension of the main character, reframing Richard Dyer's concept of type in the space of the narrative.

It does not mean, however, that all Irish are portrayed in this manner along the narrative. Other Irish characters – Veronica, Paulie and Billy Davis –, on the contrary, are not marked as Irish types. Why is it so? The case of Billy Davis is explained in the final chapters, when Ginger discovers that Davis came from Ireland many years before him. He has lost his accent and has assimilated – or has been assimilated by – the new country. Regarding Veronica and Paulie, the absence of a single Irish trait puzzles the reader. It can be even considered that Paulie, as a teenager, immersed in the Canadian social environment provided by the school, has lost eventual traits of her ethnic group. Veronica, however, does not present an Irish typification. In the early chapters, she does not interact with the outside world, not even with the landlady, with the exception of Gerry Grosvenor, who visits her, takes her out and gets her a job. Surprisingly, she seems to have lost all her accent in six months despite her social isolation. Later, she adapts herself with no difficulty to the job and apparently faces no discrimination concerning ethnic traits in her new life. Nobody asks her if she is Irish, whereas Ginger Coffey is questioned frequently. There is no recognition of evident Irish traits in Veronica.

The situation explained above raises two possibilities. First, the narrative is predominantly male and the potential ethnic difficulties or traits of the female characters are not the narrator's main interest; therefore, they are disregarded. Second, there is a flaw in the narrative caused by the non-acknowledgement of the Irish traits of these female characters. The only mention to Veronica as Irish is made by Ginger, when he thinks of her as his "Dark Rosaleen" (62), in a reference to the same title poem by James Clarence Mangan (1803-1849), who personifies Ireland as his muse, Rosaleen, in one of the possible readings of the poem

(Oxford Book 772). The Irish characteristics of Paulie and Veronica are absent from the narrative. In my opinion, the explanation for such an absence is a combination of the supremacy of a male narrative voice and the lack of attention to this important feature, causing a flaw in the narrative. I do not mean that women in a general sense are undervalued in the narrative. However, the construction of the female characters in relation to an Irish typification could have received more complex and richer elements, since the question of Irishness is largely present regarding Ginger Coffey. The representation of the Irish female characters is undervalued in relation to the main character, the only one to carry an Irish identification in his appearance and in the way he expresses himself with people in Montreal.

I move a bit forward considering now the constitutive elements of the process of stereotyping.

The concept of representation is paramount for our understanding of how stereotypes are created. Each culture has its own system of representation; in the encounter of two different cultures, the systems may collide, and new meanings may be created. In order to understand the process of stereotyping, Stuart Hall considers it as a signifying practice in which the representation of difference is marked. In this process, the subject is reduced to an essential form, and this form is seen as a natural state (Representation 258). Information gathered about a certain type is reduced to a trait and the mark of difference is fixed. The process also leads to a demarcation of boundaries, from which it is hard to escape. Hence, stereotyping works also as "maintenance of social and symbolic order" (258), separating normalcy/us from abnormalcy/them. Abnormalcy usually constitutes the image of the individual considered the Other. Another important feature of stereotyping explained by Stuart Hall is that it "tends to occur where there are gross inequalities of power" (258). The less powerful group suffers

domination and, as a consequence, subjugation through the process of stereotyping. The "inequality of power" may refer to economic as well as cultural power, in which stereotypical representations work at large in the "exercise of symbolic violence" (259), as a defined image or trope is assigned to a subject and fixed.

Wsevolod Isajiw, discussing stereotypes in the Canadian context presents the following definition:

> Stereotypes are the cognitive components of prejudice-image-labels that we assign to a group of people that show what we believe the group is like and how we think persons in that group will behave. (144)

Basically, stereotypes are constructions based on judgments, with the privilege of the judge's point of view. It is also a label designated to a group and its members and it is maintained through time. According to Isajiw, "people from ethnic groups at the bottom of the stratification ladder are often seen by those in higher ethnic statuses as inferior" (145); they are usually labeled as stupid, lazy, dirty, and other negative adjectives. Groups in higher ethnic statuses, on the contrary, are labeled as intelligent, hard working, organized, and so on. It can be said, in accordance to Hall's ideas, that structures of power influence stereotypical designations. Stereotypes can be manifested overtly, as a result of clear prejudice, or in a way that is not always conscious to the offender, such as jokes or satire. Anyway, when stereotypes are used along with a rational justification, they are transformed into ideological prejudice or racism (Isajiw 149).

While Stuart Hall discusses the internal mechanisms of a system of representation involving stereotypes, Wsevolod Isajiw approaches stereotyping in its social perspectives,

contextualizing it in Canada. Both points of view can help us analyze the process of stereotyping in Brian Moore's The Luck of Ginger Coffey.

The main character has been considered differently by some critics: he is seen as a comic hero by Dahlie (72); as a "type of Micawberish[17] *émigré* Irishman" by Craig (157); as a protagonist in search of a "secure sense of self" by Sullivan (47); and as a "victim of his refusal of responsibility" by O'Donoghue (70). Analyses portraying Ginger Coffey as a victim of a stereotyped view or practicing prejudice based on stereotypes are not frequent.

To begin with, besides the references relating Ginger to St. Patrick's Day (23), his colleagues at his job call him "Paddy" (69) or "Paddy boy" (70). Name-calling can be considered a practice of stereotyping, many times as a treatment of condescension (Isajiw 145). The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary registers the word Paddy signifying "Irish person", remarking previously "(infml offensive)" – informal offensive (889). In the narrative, Ginger Coffey does not react directly to the use of such designation. This fact, however, does not diminish the meaning of the images evoked by the word Paddy, which transforms its bearer into a type of boy, incapable of taking serious responsibilities. In a strange way, this idea seems to fit Ginger perfectly, as he dreams constantly of his "world of toys" (89). The representation of the main character as Paddy reinforces a sense of insecurity created in the reader by Ginger's actions: he spends the money for a possible return to Ireland, he lies to Veronica, and he wants a job beyond his skills. The reader might also see him as a Paddy boy, unable to take greater responsibilities; like a child, he is not reliable. The image created also points to the direction of inferiority. The act of marking the subject with a label reduces him to an object and delimits his sphere of action.

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[17] Wilkins Micawber is a character from Charles Dickens' novel David Copperfield, released in 1849.

By perceiving the main character as a Paddy boy, the proofreaders view Ginger as being part of the "scab labor" (71), and consequently they laugh when Ginger mentions the promise made by MacGregor to make him a reporter. At the same time, the word Paddy can be related to St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. By extension, this treatment can also mean a disrespect for the Irish culture.

The character Gerry Grosvenor, on the other hand, raises two different ideas of the Irish people in a single paragraph, both stereotypes:

> He said until he had met the Coffeys he had considered Irish people bigoted, untrustworthy and conventional. Although he had some very good Irish friends, he said. But he had been relieved to find that the Coffeys were not nationalists or religious. Although he admired people who believed in something; didn't they? Of course, none of *his* Catholic friends ever went to church, he said. Which was a relief to him. Yes, the Irish were wonderful people, imaginative, romantic and creative. Wonderful people. (46)

In the beginning, a negative image of the Irish people is conveyed. In accordance to Isajiw's definition of stereotypes, Grosvenor perceives the Irish people as one group – he assumes that each person from this group will behave according to a pattern: "bigoted, untrustworthy and conventional". In the end of the paragraph, he reveals another image of the same group: "imaginative, romantic and creative." Despite the positive stereotype, Grosvenor's point of view is framed by what he thinks the group should be or how it should behave. It is not an opinion based on experience, but it seems that Grosvenor has standard images of the Irish and uses them according to the moment. His conceptual map of the Irish people presents two codes: a negative

one (before the Coffeys) and a positive one (after the Coffeys). When he mentions his "very good Irish friends" he is turning them into an exception within the negative view he possesses about the Irish. Nevertheless, his true beliefs in relation to Ginger Coffey are overtly exposed later in the narrative.

Grosvenor felt relieved because the Coffeys were not "nationalists or religious" and this fact can be related to an argument made by Donald Harman Akenson about the historiography of the Irish in the United States. He claims that there is a general view which Irish migrants, bearing "the culture of Roman Catholicism", were "not fully able to cope with modernizing America" (127). Grosvenor's assessment of the Coffeys' behavior expresses the feeling of religion as an impediment for development in the new world. The Coffeys can be religious – as long as they keep it discreetly. The label "Catholic" is sufficient.

The strongest image relating Ginger Coffey to a stereotyped representation of the Irishman is created by Gerry Grosvenor. He wants to marry Ginger's wife, and therefore he depends on Veronica's divorce. Ginger Coffey, however, is trying hard to maintain his marriage and Grosvenor reacts promptly:

> "You don't scare me," Grosvenor said drunkenly. "You big Irish ape. You and Veronica are finished, do you hear? She loves *me*. She's coming back to *me*. Know what I'm going to do? I'm going to beat the piss out of you, Buster." (189)

And later he reaffirms: "She's coming to me. Irish Ape, you'll fail! She's mine, do you hear me? Mine!" (191). In these two examples there is a system of representation involved. Ginger Coffey is invested with the image of an ape – an Irish ape – and, by doing that, Gerry Grosvenor reproduces the historical stereotype of the Irish as being naturally inferior. Calling the main

character an ape means to render him a place in the wild field of nature, opposed to the world of culture. The binary opposition nature/culture is present in the image. Nature cannot change whereas culture is the result of human agency. By being a simian, Ginger is incapable of learning the ethics of the human world; therefore, he cannot act accordingly. He is constrained by the image to an irrational and primitive field; he is not capable of succeeding or assimilating culture. In short, he is reduced to instincts.

The idea of inferiority can be traced in the history of England and Ireland. Henry II was recognized as Lord of Ireland in the twelfth century and since then, until the twentieth century, England played a dominant role in the island. The first groups of colonizers assimilated the Gaelic life and intermarriages frequently occurred. In the sixteenth century things changed. Henry VIII broke with the Catholic Church in order to marry Anne Boleyn; moreover, instead of bearing the title as the Lord of Ireland like his predecessors, he became the King of Ireland. The consequences for the Irish population were devastating. The king confiscated lands from the Catholics in order to give to Scottish and English Protestants. Disempowered, the "native Irish were depicted as savage heathens" (McLaughlin 180). The economic and social situation of the Irish population became very difficult in the following centuries. Eugene McLaughlin states: "An English agricultural reformer, Arthur Young, compared the position of the peasantry in the late eighteenth century to that of slavery" (180). In the nineteenth century the Great Famine caused a catastrophic number of deaths by disease or starvation. Mass emigration was the response for a large number of Irish people. However, they were seen as troublemakers and as taking jobs from the native population in England or North America. The hostility was present in the way they were represented in magazines, such as Punch, Puck or Harper's Weekly, through anti-Irish jokes, as explained by Carmel McCaffrey: "Irish stereotypes were common in the

British press throughout the nineteenth century. Punch magazine frequently ran cartoons of the Irish as apelike, simian creatures below the level of human beings" (173) (see Figure 1).

Fig. 1. Illustration from Punch, May 1882; rpt. in Carmel McCaffrey, In Search of Ireland's Heroes (Chicago: Ivan R Dee, 2006) 174.

Examples of this type of representation can also be observed in figure 2, in which the white British steps on the Land League – a group formed to defend land rights in Ireland – and protects Hibernia, represented by a white girl with straight hair, from the simian-like rebel. According to Bronwen Walter, "British represented Ireland as Erin, a young, beautiful but weak woman who needed 'marriage' to her strong masculinised neighbour for control and protection" (19). The

unprotected young girl is portrayed in a defenseless position, safeguarded by England from the threats of the anarchic Irishman.

Fig. 2. Two Forces, illustration by John Tenniel, from Punch, 29 October 1881; rpt. in Richard Dyer, White (London and New York: Routledge, 1997) 54.

In figure 3, John Bull and Uncle Sam seem to be decisive about how to prevent the disorderly Irish ape's agitation. Walter notes that "anti-Irish British attitudes were transferred to the United States with the 'Anglo-Saxon' charter group and reproduced in identical cartoons of simianised

bodies" (26). The following figure, published in the American magazine Puck, portrays this sort of image.

Fig. 3. The Simian Irish Celt, illustration by James A. Wales, from Puck 3 November 1880; rpt. in Richard Dyer, White (London and New York: Routledge, 1997) 56.

The group of images conveyed in Britain and the United States helped create the stereotype discussed here. In the words of McLaughlin:

> It is in this context of Irishphobia that the racist caricature of the drunken, violent, ignorant Paddy was established. Their supposed "wildness" and "unpredictability" meant that writers questioned whether they could ever be assimilated into civilized society. (182)

In conclusion, the representation of the Irish as being inferior can be traced back to the sixteenth century, but it is fully explored three centuries later. The power of the image is so strong that it pervaded literature, as exemplified in Moore's narrative.

The Irish were not the only group to receive this sort of treatment. As a major part of Hall's study on racial imagery demonstrates, the Black individual was turned into an icon of primitivism, recorded in the images spread in the end of the nineteenth century by the British Empire (Representation 239). This was part of a strategy to consolidate England as a ruling force, in different areas such as politics, economy and culture. The Irish arrive in North America in a position of subalternity, exemplified literarily in the narrative "The Fire" by Susana Moodie, in which an Irish girl who "had never seen a stove" works as a servant; and confirmed by historian Kerby Miller, who argues that "post-Famine emigrants came largely from more-impoverished backgrounds, and consequently possessed fewer skills and less capital" (351). Thus, they were treated as inferior human beings.

Ginger Coffey also holds a subaltern position in Montreal: he does not have a degree; he works as a proofreader and as a "regular member of the shit brigade" (115), as a workmate at the diaper's company puts it. Gerry Grosvenor insults Ginger and behind his arguments lies the economic aspect as well. In his economic supremacy, Grosvenor argues that he can give

Veronica a better life (91). By doing so, he takes over the place of the English and American counterparts from the nineteenth century, relegating Ginger to a position of inferiority.

Another feature of the image recalled by Grosvenor regards what Stuart Hall names "racializing the Other" (Representation 239), which is how representational practices are used to stress ethnic difference. The image produced by the expression "Irish ape" presents a racial mark. Observing the magazine cartoons (see fig. 1, 2, and 3), it is clear how the Irish are depicted as darker than the English or American characters in the scene. Richard Dyer states in his study of the white racial imagery that since white people "function as human norm", other people are perceived as raced (1). Although Ginger is white, his Irishness speaks for itself placing him in a different position from that occupied by people in the dominant role. Ginger Coffey's Irishness makes him look less white. Dyer argues that "white people are systematically privileged in Western society" (9), but "some white people are whiter than others" (51). He includes in these "others" the Irish, the Latin, and the Jews. Chaliand and Rageau confirm this idea, stating that "the Irish were the most looked down on of the whites between 1845 and 1885" (160). Dyer presents a plate by Harper's Weekly (mid-nineteenth century) called "Irish Iberian, Anglo-Teutonic, Negro", in which the text begins like this: "The Iberian are believed to have been originally an African race, who thousands of years ago spread themselves through Spain over Western Europe" (53). It demonstrates how a link between the Irish and Africans could be explained (see figure 4). Developing the idea of the racialized Other, Hall adds: "Identified with Nature, they [the Africans] symbolized 'the primitive' in contrast with 'the civilized world'" (293). Along the same lines, this argument can be applied to the representation of the Irish in the nineteenth century.

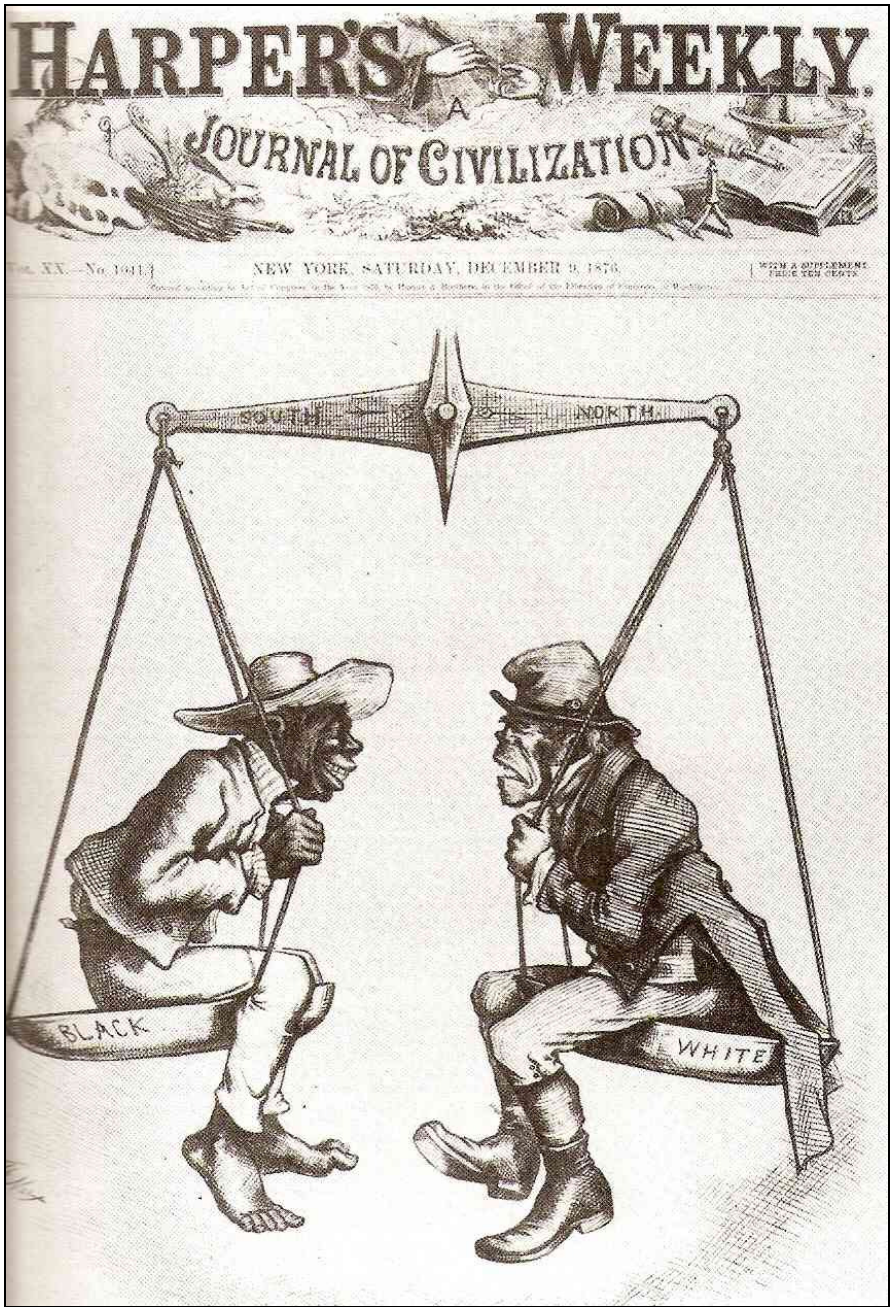

Fig. 4. The Ignorant Vote: Honors Are Easy, illustration by Thomas Nast, from Harper's Weekly 9 December 1876; rpt. in Richard Dyer, White (London and New York: Routledge, 1997) 55.

In the image above, the Black and the Irish have practically the same weight, and they are indicated as bearers of the title "ignorant" voters. The black skin as a sign of primitiveness can be related to the image of the Irish simian. Like the Africans, Ginger is depicted as primitive. In

the passage discussed, the opposition Grosvenor / Coffey is reinforced by the use of the stereotyped representation.

The analysis done so far raises another question: does the narrator contribute to the construction of the main character as stereotyped?

The image of the aggressive Irish can be applied to Ginger Coffey in more than one situation: the first time Grosvenor talks to him about his love for Veronica, Ginger hits him unmercifully:

> But Coffey hit him, his fist thudding against Grosvenor's cheek. … He stood, holding his face with both hands as Coffey hit him again, first on the side of the head, then, with all his strength, in the body. … Immediately, Coffey finished him with a blow in the mouth, then stood back, his knuckles skinned on Grosvenor's teeth. (91)

On a second occasion, Ginger beats the Canadian cartoonist in the cafeteria of the *Tribune* (190). Not to mention that he slaps his daughter's face during a quarrel (177). Besides these violent scenes, Ginger is portrayed as drunk in some passages. The first night he goes to work in the newspaper, before the shift, his colleagues force him to drink three glasses of draught beer, one right after the other, until he feels sick, as a kind of passage rite. Fox concludes: "Booze is not your problem, right?" (69). The second time he drinks heavily brings him serious consequences. He is arrested on the charge of indecent exposure, after urinating in front of the Royal Family Hotel (221). Sullivan comments on Ginger's relation to drinking, comparing him to Judith Hearne, the main character of Moore's first book: "Like Judy Hearne, he succumbs to the drink that 'warms and cheers'" (46). It is not easy, however, to demonstrate that Ginger is the result of

a stereotyped construction. The elements of the Irish stereotype, such as fighting and drinking, appear in very definite situations in the narrative. Ginger Coffey is not like Judith Hearne, who cannot refuse a glass of sherry (Lonely Passion 146) or wanders alone surreptitiously at night looking for a bottle of whisky in Belfast (Lonely Passion 151). He lives on the edge of stereotyping – he does not surrender completely to it and at the same time presents characteristics that make the reader think of Irish stereotypes.

Although the character stands in this unstable position, the narrator is positive in portraying the Scottish MacGregor in a stereotyped manner, through Ginger's point of view, as the following extract shows: "For the love of J, how was he going to tell this sulphur-breathing Scottish Beelzebub that he was an experienced sub-editor?" (49). Ginger Coffey, taken as a signifier for Ireland, sees himself in an inferior position in relation to MacGregor, a signifier for Scotland. Allied to England in the past, Scotland held a political place in opposition to Ireland. The dichotomy Ireland/Scotland is recalled through the binary opposition Coffey/MacGregor, which reflects other contrastive combinations as well: hero/bad guy; poor/upper class; "galley slave"/Managing Editor. The historical alliance between Scotland and England is reproduced in the new country between MacGregor and Gerry Grosvenor (Scotland and Canada). Both manage to keep Ginger in the proof room, preventing him from ascending to a reporter job, as Keith Fraser suggests by claiming that "Gerry … might have had a word with the managing editor about [Ginger] galley slave's deportment" (248). The influence of Grosvenor on MacGregor's decision reflects the subaltern position of the Scottish as a minority group in Canada and at the same time the superior position in relation to the Irish. The historical alliance of Scotland and England is transferred to Canadian soil and incorporated by both Grosvenor and MacGregor; the dichotomies between Scotland and Ireland are reflected on the behavior of MacGregor and

Coffey. My argument is justified by the "Historical Legacy Theory of Prejudice" explained by Isajiw:

> [The theory focuses] on particular historical events, usually those of political conflict, in which one group has caused injury or injustice to another group. However, it is not the events themselves that are seen as evoking prejudice among members of one group against another group, since these events have happened in the often remote past. What is important here is the memory of these events and the legacy these events have left for the members of a group. (160)

This legacy can be sensed in the way one group feels responsible for another or it can be expressed through feelings of mistrust between the groups involved. It seems that this last case is applicable to the narrative. The Scottish editor does not welcome Ginger's Irishness and makes comparisons: "If you'd been a Scot, …You'd have come in here wi' references in your hand" (sic); and completes: "there isn't an Irishman born that I'd trust to pull the wuul o'er *my* eyes!" (sic) (51). The fact that Ginger is caught lying to him in the interview does not help either. There is a feeling of tension between these two characters along the narrative, aggravated by Ginger's position of subalternity in relation to MacGregor, his boss. The feeling of mistrust between these characters echoes the historical conflicts between Ireland and Scotland, transformed into a kind of legacy.

The way that language is graphically marked in MacGregor's words, as mentioned in the previous section, indicates the narrator's construction of a stereotyped Scottish character. Since the narrator mentions MacGregor's origin, there was no need to register how he speaks: "I have

fifty *gurrls wurrking* in the mailroom, one floor down, *Dinna* interfere with them, d'you hear?"[18] (63). The narrative reflects, in my point of view, a stereotyped image of the character as depicted by the narrator.

Although the narrative's central theme does not rest upon the representation of the Irish as stereotyped, some characters are portrayed as such by the narrator. Moreover, stereotyping underlies some relations and moments in the plot. The use of the term Paddy by the proofreaders, the way Gerry Grosvenor perceives the Irish people, his insults to Ginger Coffey and how MacGregor is depicted indicate that the narrator assumes a political position in the narrative. His point of view, conveyed mainly through Ginger, reveals the Irish stereotype, based on an image of inferiority; the Irish individual is reduced to few simple, "natural" traits that establish the subject in a prejudiced position. The studies by Hall and Isajiw confirm the importance of studying the overt and the disguised forms of prejudice that appear in stereotyped representations of the Other. Although the basic forms of these types of representation are rooted in the far away past, the reproduction of such images are recurrent.

In the clash of two different subjects holding opposing objectives, the difference between cultures is raised through the icon of a stereotyped image. The Irish stereotype is marked by Ginger's opposition to Grosvenor, which I view as an image of the dichotomy country of origin/host country. The values held by the Coffeys in Ireland suffer revision in the new land, reflecting on the roles of father, mother and daughter, not to mention husband and wife. In the next chapter, I will discuss how the intersection and conflicts caused by the encounter of two different cultures – Ireland and Canada – added to the new social environment that the Coffeys

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[18] Emphasis added.

meet in Montreal in the fifties produce a revision of gender roles concerning Ginger Coffey, Veronica and Paulie.

CHAPTER 4

THE COFFEYS IN THE FIFTIES

If we're really going to stay I'm going to get a job as well.[19]

Veronica Coffey

After talking about how the representation of the immigrant through a stereotypical frame helps create his/her image as the Other, I will discuss how the roles of husband, wife and daughter are affected by a new social environment provided by the host country.

The end of the Second World War provoked some changes in the social structure and values of the countries in the New World that participated in the battles in Europe. Men fought during the war and women took their position in the factories and related services (Hattery 15). Only in the United States, between 1940 and 1945, "female employment rose by 6½ million as women were encouraged to take jobs outside the home" (Armstrong, Glyn and Harrison 7). In the words of Joy Hakim, "Rosie the Riveter became the war's can-do symbol, and women took over many jobs usually done by men" (154). When men returned from the battlefield, working women had achieved a certain level of autonomy and freedom in relation to these men and demanded their own rights. The feminist movement, which started in the beginning of the twentieth century and was supported by the Women's Rights and Women's Suffrage movements, strengthened women's search for their own space in society. In big companies, more

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[19] Moore, Ginger 43.

job opportunities appeared, increasing female participation in the labor market (Lane 2380). The process of women liberation, however, brought consequences to the family structure. The number of divorces increased in Europe according to Luxenburg (214), as well as in North America according to Dollimore (60). Family configuration began to change toward a different pattern, unlike the conservative tradition based on the patriarchal system.

Although the fifties can be considered as a time of changing values, mainly contrasting to the two previous decades, it does not present the rebellious configuration of the sixties. It was a time of transition. On the one hand there is the feminist movement encouraged by names such as Simone de Beauvoir, with the release of the book The Second Sex in 1949; on the other hand, there is a whole movement conducted by the media, mainly in the United States, to convey the idea that the perfect role for women is to stay at home and raise kids – to be a housewife and mother.

The fifties are characterized by these two opposing features of the same society, which can be verified in an oral history project called The Family in the Fifties: Hope, Fear, and Rock'n Roll, conducted by Linda Wood, the Library Media Specialist at South Kingstown High School in Wakefield, R.I., and her colleague Judi Scott, an English teacher. Students interviewed people from South Kingstown community about the fifties – their experiences, their feelings about that era, and how their roles contrasted to the previous generation. One interviewed woman declared she was a "typical fifties mother. [She] washed on Monday and ironed on Tuesday". Wood reports that "she raised seven children, and described her family as a 'poorer version of Leave It to Beaver'" (38). Leave It to Beaver and Father Knows Best were some of the television shows that reinforced the image of the housewife. This particular interview reveals a model of social structure, a housewife taking care of her family, but it was not the only pattern present at that

time. The study also demonstrates that not all women conformed to this role. This antagonism reflects what Dollimore calls "a controversy within the parameters of conservatism and liberalism" (62). The fifties is a time when the family is at the center of discussion, and issues like prostitution, homosexuality, and gender roles (more properly women's roles as mothers and as paid workers) are being debated in society, especially in relation to the law. The decade bore the "seeds for sweeping social change" (Wood 37), later developed by the social movements in the sixties. These seeds fostered not only the release of the contraceptive pill by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) in the beginning of the sixties (Brener 212), but also what has become known as the Second Wave Feminist Movement[20].

The relation between women and work changed after 1945. According to Eric Hobsbawm, by the end of the nineteenth century there were some types of work strongly related to the woman's image: telephone operator, saleslady, office worker. At that time, women did not represent the main income of the family. Hobsbawm points the Second World War as one of the probable causes for women to become the head of the family and rule their own finances by keeping a job (304-05). Angela Hattery, author of Women, Work, and Family: Balancing and Weaving, states along the lines:

> Women's labor force participation increased during the Great Depression as well as during World War II. . . . During World War II, while men were off at war and factories relied on women's labor, women's rate of employment reached its highest level during the first half of the 20th century. (15)

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[20] The Second Wave Feminist Movement can be seen as "a product of .... the liberationist movements of the mid-to-late 1960s" and it focuses on "the politics of reproduction, to women's 'experience', to sexual 'difference' and to 'sexuality'" (Selden, Widdowson and Brokker 127-28).

Hattery stresses, however, that after the war the rate achieved its lowest level, with men coming home and reclaiming their jobs. Nevertheless, both Hattery and Hobsbawn agree that having a job was not an option but a demand to most poor women in the world (Hobsbawn 311) and to "those whose husbands were unemployed or underemployed" (Hattery 16). Even though men regained their status as workers, women had occupied a space in society they were not ready to give up.

The internal structure of the family suffers consequences with the advent of the working woman. Not only does the nature of female activities change, but also the roles performed by women and the conventional expectations represented by such roles (Hobsbawm 304-06). Having a job means autonomy and freedom; moreover, it demands a reflection on the woman's role in the family and in society. Child care and the woman's autonomy in relation to their husbands are issues that demand negotiation. The roles and responsibilities are revised. Sandra Almeida, author of the article "Gênero, Identidade, Diferença", claims that the social roles performed by men and women are a result of cultural, therefore discursive, constructions. Social roles are not defined by gender difference, they are assigned culturally, and they can change through time (90-91). The Second World War is the primary cause of these social changes and the redefinition of roles is one of its consequences.

In addition to the social frame presented above in relation to women in the fifties, the aspects concerning migration and the social roles in the family are considered in the present work. James Clifford, addressing the issue of diaspora and gender bias, discusses how the male perspective can prevail on the accounts of diasporic experiences. He states that "diasporic experiences are always gendered" (258). I believe that migration experiences can also be gendered. Clifford explains that the male perspective predominates when the experience is

"viewed in terms of displacement rather than placement, traveling rather than dwelling, and disarticulation rather than rearticulation" (285). Experiences are constructed through discourse and if the male discourse conducts the experiences of a certain group, there will be no space for other politics. Hence, the male perspective prevails.

Although Clifford briefly addresses the female voice in diasporic experiences in his article "Diaspora", he raises a very relevant question: "Do diaspora experiences reinforce or loosen gender subordination?" (259) There is not a definitive answer to this question, since the experiences vary in terms of time, group, and country of origin as well as host country. Either way, Clifford recognizes that women struggle in a complex field, living "ambiguous pasts, and futures" (259) and trying to articulate their survival.

Similarly while discussing the feminine subject in fiction in a social-cultural context of displacement, Almeida poses questions considering transcultural contexts: "Are patriarchal structures renewed or questioned? How are gender relations renegotiated in this new space?" ("Transcultural Fictions" 167). In her analysis of three narratives by contemporary women writers – Dionne Brand, Ana Miranda, and Michelle Cliff – Almeida concludes that the female characters live the diasporic space as "a locus of struggle, agency and strength" (173), confirming Clifford. I understand that there is a possibility of renegotiation of identity and roles in a diasporic or transcultural space, however difficult it may be for women "in mediating discrepant worlds" (Clifford 259). The experience can render a male or female perspective depending on the subject producing the discourse. It does not mean that a woman will always produce a female perspective; she can reproduce the male discourse if she reads the experience of mobility through a male's point of view.

The Coffey's immigration from Ireland to Canada in the fifties is experienced differently by each member of the family. Ginger Coffey is a gambler, who has bet "all on one horse, a horse colored Canada, which now by hook or crook would carry him to fame and fortune" (11). He is incurably optimistic, someone who would always look "for the good in the bad" (241). His moving to Canada means a chance, first of all, to leave Ireland. He wants to be his own boss (14) and sees an opportunity when his father dies and leaves him some money. He dreams of adventures and chooses the New World for a fresh start, "over Veronica's protests" (13). His wife and daughter have no choice but to accompany him.

The moving however did not mean only a change of landscape. It produced a dislocation in terms of the roles each member of the family performed in the country of origin as well as an adjustment to the new social environment of the fifties. Ginger Coffey is the head of the family, and his duty is to support them: "he supposed [his aim in life] was to be his own master, to provide for Vera[21] and Paulie . . . to make something of himself" (21). He is aware he is the breadwinner of the house and, since money is running out, he needs a job. His duty as husband and father, however, is mixed with his exaggerated feeling that everything will be all right. Veronica and Paulie acknowledge Ginger's role as the family's supporter. During the Second World War, he "wanted to see some action but [Veronica] said his duty was with his family" (29). Paulie's expectations are translated by Ginger's thought: "Daddies are supposed to get jobs" (73). His role is steady from beginning to end. On trial, the judge reinforces such idea of being "alone in a new country, with their breadwinner in jail, seems to [him] a fate which

[21] Vera is how Ginger addresses his wife Veronica.

[Ginger's] wife and child do not deserve" (233). These passages indicate that the one responsible for supporting the family is the male, the head of the group.

Veronica's role is defined, *a priori*, as a housewife and mother, characterized by the passages showing her in the kitchen and dealing with Paulie (3; 43; 81; 142; 200; and 243). She is subordinated to Ginger not only financially, but also sexually. Against her will, she makes use of a contraceptive imposed by Ginger, who "looked at her, and, obedient, she went to the bathroom" (44). Her decision to get a job appears in a moment of crisis when she finds out that Ginger has been lying to her, as he has spent the money for the return ticket, and also that Gerry Grosvenor has shown some interest in her. Her action can be seen as a departure from her previous life. During the first months after her arrival in the New World, she does not change her housewife status. Her life in Canada is an extension of what she had lived in Ireland. Ginger, on the other hand, does not acknowledge her outside the housewife paradigm: "What did Vera know about money anyway? An only child, brought up by a doting mother, pretty, with plenty of beaux, until she met and married him" (35). Veronica decides to get a job primarily based on the fact that her husband cannot fulfill his duty. Moreover, her action indicates she may have a hidden agenda involving Grosvenor, since she looks for a job and decides to move out, because she does not want to live with Ginger anymore. Ginger's reaction to Veronica's attitude reveals he is not prepared for her new role within his own family and society. When she mentions the possibility of working, he thinks that there is "no need for her to get a job either . . . this was old stuff, [Veronica's] wanting a job, wanting to slave away in some shop. Ah, for God's sake! But [Ginger] held his whist: let her dream, the woman" (43). Ginger treats his wife in a condescending way, as if she were a child. Veronica's adjustment to her new role in Canada is a problem for her husband. His attitude cannot be considered simply as selfish or male oriented. It

is more complex. According to Walter, the "1937 Constitution defined women's roles even more restrictively by placing the family at the heart of the national project" (17). Ginger's reaction is also a result of an inherited Irish national guideline in the constitution of the society's basic unit, the family. It is understandable that he has some difficulties in accepting Veronica's new demands. When she gets a job as a saleslady, he demonstrates resentment: "Let her try to be the breadwinner, she'd find it wasn't so easy" (104). Veronica succeeds in her new job and accomplishes goals more likely to be part of male's role, such as buying new things for Paulie and occupying the space that once belonged to Ginger. He resents once more, but Veronica replies that she "[likes] doing things with [her] own money . . ., after all these years it's such a marvelous feeling to be solvent" (155). I believe that Veronica's behavior reflects not only the social environment of the fifties, in which some women would search for a job as an assurance of their own financial ruling, but also the struggle for an individual space in a new cultural context. Ireland represents the past, to which Veronica does not want to go back, unless it is necessary. She wants to stay in Canada and, even more, she wants to belong. In order to do so, getting a job is the first step. This process is explained by Isajiw:

> At the stage of their immigration to Canada, many ethnic groups would retain traditional family structures in which the role of women is highly dependent on that of men and involves little power in relation to men. With pressures and inducements to join the labour force, the change of this traditional family structure is often an early step in the process of assimilation. (39)

Veronica is very dependent on Ginger until the moment she breaks the pattern and decides to work. After getting a job, Veronica changes her looks, having her hair cut and wearing different clothing style, as mentioned by the narrator: "She had changed her hair style, and her dark hair,

now cut short, fitted her face like a helmet. She wore more make-up and a dress [Ginger] had never seen" (142). The new look reflects the reassurance of a different woman. She transforms herself into someone Ginger can barely recognize: "She was Vera and yet she was not" (143). Ginger has to deal with this change; meanwhile he desires this new woman. Nevertheless, he does not recognize his wife as an agent of her own life. She is just a prize for his desire, exemplified by his harassment, when she visits him (157).

The moment divorce is brought into discussion Ginger classifies Veronica as a prostitute stating how hard it is "to tell a child that her mother is some class of whore" (96). He dreams about her lasciviously (148-9; 154; and 164) and he judges her based on the images he creates in his dreams. Ginger seems to present a sexual anxiety in relation to Veronica, because he cannot control her anymore. When she leaves the house, she steps into a world Ginger knows nothing about. It makes him insecure and every time he meets her, he desires her because it is the only way he can reassure himself: by consuming her. In the end of the narrative, Veronica confesses she has never slept with Grosvenor. The image of the ideal (Christian) woman is restored. In my opinion, it is a very conservative ending. Veronica declares in the beginning that Grosvenor wants to marry her (159) and they have many opportunities to stay together. However, instead of sharing Grosvenor's intimacy in his large apartment, she chooses to live in a tiny room, which surprises both Ginger and the reader:

> Large? Modern? The room alarmed him. It was smaller than the cell he had briefly occupied at the Y.M.C.A. There was no closet, so her clothes were hung on hooks all around the walls. The bed was an unwieldy double, occupying two thirds of the floor space. (182)

On the other hand, the situation demonstrates that Veronica was not ready to take the consequences of the modernity she claims for herself. She gets a job in order to ensure her financial independence and to get rid of her husband's lies, but she is prepared to get a divorce only by maintaining another official marriage into perspective. In my point of view, the character presents bursts of independence while she maintains conservative attitudes and actions. This behavior is stressed in the end of the narrative, when Veronica goes back to her family, even though there is no perspective that Ginger will ever change his pattern of thinking and acting.

Veronica's role as a mother is questioned by Ginger when he discovers Grosvenor's interest in her. Ginger wonders "who the blazes was selfish – he or a woman who would go out of the house and leave her little girl all alone?" (67). Still, this position resonates the Catholic church's orientation, which, according to Walter, fixed the Virgin Mary's image as a role model: "Her assigned qualities, which were promoted as ideals for all Irish women, including duty to family, self-sacrifice, submerged sexuality and the elevation of a caring function above all others" (18). Ginger questions Veronica's behavior as a mother, criticizing her actions. At the same time, he has a sense that "no matter what, as his mother used to say, a child has only one mother. And Paulie, tall and fourteen, was still her mother's child" (95). Here, the duty of taking care of a child is assigned solely to its mother. Ginger pictures Paulie constantly as a child, although he sees signs in her room that she is not: guitar players' pictures, bobby pins, head combs, and a copy of the novel Little Women (29). He calls her by a nickname, Apple, and her friends make fun of it. He feels Paulie is growing up: she now wears lipstick, powder, nail polish, and he does not know how to react. Veronica's perception of Paulie is different from Ginger's. She is more conscious of her daughter's puberty, and she alerts her husband that Paulie is "not a child anymore" (144). The complicity between mother and daughter irritates Ginger,

who is always thinking about their "womany wee things" (35) or their "womany voices" (156). Many times he differentiates the female from the male world, in a misogynistic attitude. He constantly curses the "bloody females" (28; 39). Since he cannot understand the female universe, he attaches himself to his traditional values. His concept of family is one of them: "Veronica, we're a family, you and me and Paulie. That's why we have to stick together, no matter what" (123). It demonstrates that he sees the institution of family as something determined and static that exists *per se*. If people are brought together to constitute a family they should remain together. According to Bronwen Walter, this image comes from the Catholic Church, centering the Virgin Mary as a model: "Through exhortations to model themselves on the self-sacrificing, undemanding example of Mary, mothers are therefore given the greatest responsibility for the welfare, spiritual as well as material, of their children" (200). In short, Ginger asks Veronica to stay for the sake of their family.

As a part of it, Paulie, the only daughter, shows a smooth adjustment in Canada, as already mentioned in the previous chapter. Her involvement with boys – "little thugs" for Ginger (177) – indicates she is in the transition from childhood to adolescence. She represents another instance of Ginger's need of maturity, since he has to learn how to deal with her needs and expectations. He regrets he is no longer the "big bear" (29), but he does not know his position in relation to Paulie in her teenage behavior. Sometimes, she is transformed into an object of dispute between the couple and becomes the only chain of communication between Ginger and Veronica. Although playing a minor part in the narrative, her presence is an index of the assimilation to the local culture. Moreover, she completes the family's configuration, a major theme underlying the narrative. The most important passage involving her, in my point of view,

is the moment Ginger tells Paulie about the divorce and she replies that "Catholics aren't allowed to get a divorce" (160).

Paulie's reaction centers the question of her parents' beliefs. Although it has not the same role as in The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne (1955) and The Feast of Lupercal (1957), the theme of religion appears in the background of The Luck of Ginger Coffey. Ginger enters the Basilica to keep himself warm and ends up confronting God as he faces the tabernacle. The scene contains a reference to a similar posture of Judith Hearne, who needs to know what lies behind the tabernacle door, if God Himself or just "wafers of bread" (Lonely Passion 210). Ginger's concern is with practical issues. What does God want from him? He thinks it over and gets angry when reaching his own conclusion:

> I came in here to maybe say a prayer and I'll be the first to admit I had a hell of a nerve on me, seeing the way I've ignored you these long years. But now I cannot pray, because to pray to you, if you're punishing me, would be downright cowardly. If it's cowards you want in heaven, then good luck to you. You're welcome. (22)

Ginger rejects God, whom he associates with the Catholic Church. As he steps away from the church, he enjoys a freedom he did not possess before in Ireland. It is not enough avoiding masses, though. The Catholic Church and its dogmas are present in many instances of Ginger and Veronica's lives.

First of all, still in Ireland, Ginger forces Veronica to practice birth control. The Church interferes through the priest, who "threatened to refuse Veronica the sacraments" (30). Ginger does not pay much attention, but Veronica suffers, she even "cried when Father Delaney said

that unless [they] stopped practicing birth control he'd refuse [them] the sacraments" (125). In Ireland, the Catholic Church dictated behavior and defined social rules, as it can be seen in the priest's reaction to Ginger's decision. Since 1951, Catholic couples could use rhythm as a contraceptive (Westoff and Westoff 174), but it seems to me that the Irish Catholic Church was more conservative and under less pressure than Pope Pius XII. Nevertheless, the Coffeys continued avoiding pregnancy. Psychologically, it had antagonistic effects on both Ginger and Veronica. He wanted a boy, but he had no economic conditions for this new enterprise. As for Veronica, she felt she was young and could have another child, but Ginger had never talked to her again about it. In relation to religion, it seems that this fact helped to create a distance between the Coffeys and the Church. The secular social environment that the Coffeys encounter in Canada is added to the weakness of the Christian world. According to Sinfield, the Church had become decentered in society's affairs; the industrial world and the Welfare State had substituted for the parish functions (89). Therefore, "surveys showed that, the more people were implicated in the modern economy, the less likely they were to be religious" completes Sinfield (90). Although Ginger and Veronica are not a part of the Catholic Church anymore, it does not mean it becomes easier to deal with questions raised by religion. They defy the Catholic rules by using contraceptives, but they do not discuss the drawbacks of that action to them as a couple. They suffer, in isolation; there is no easy answer.

Secondly, divorce produces a recurrent image in Ginger's mind of the vows exchanged in Saint Patrick's in Dalkey: for better, for worse, for richer for poorer… (121; 124; 133; 169; 239; and 243). Trying to save his marriage, he reminds Veronica of such vows. He wants to impose on her a fidelity to a Catholic sacrament, but she stands no hypocrisy:

> Don't you preach religion at me, Ginger Coffey, you that haven't darkened a church door since you came out here. Don't you talk about Catholics. What's wrong with you is that you never *were* a Catholic; you were too selfish to give God or anyone else the time of day. (125)

Veronica is pushed away from the religious routine and abandons her belief in the dogmas, which gives her courage to ask for a divorce. Not only the void created by the absence of a Christian religion, but also the cultural context of the fifties reinforces her decision. The freedom she has in Canada, differently from the repressive patriarchal society in Ireland, creates an affirmative behavior towards her goal. Jonathan Dollimore, writing about "The Challenge of Sexuality" in the middle of the twentieth century, states:

> Divorce increased and in the process lost some of its stigma. Correspondingly, the Christian ideal of the permanence of the marriage bond was displaced, as was, to some extent, the authoritarian and patriarchal conception of family structure. More and more women were entering paid work. (60)

After the Second World War, personal freedom and sexual liberation were at the core of social discussion. Veronica, wishing a new life, takes advantage of the social environment she lives in, making a decision that would be unthinkable in the Ireland of the fifties. The Catholic Church interfered strongly in Irish life, holding a "special position" granted by the Article 44 in the Constitution. According to Carmel McCaffrey, this article was removed in the early seventies, but divorce would be allowed only two decades later (262), whereas divorce has been constitutionally a federal responsibility since 1867 in Canada. Although there was not a code for the Dominion until 1968, the provinces had their own legislation and some allowed judicial

divorces as early as 1758, such as Nova Scotia (Abernathy and Arcus 410). Nevertheless, it was not easy for a wife to petition for divorce in the fifties, only because she wanted it. Gerry Grosvenor suggests Ginger is caught in a fake scene of adultery in order to facilitate the process claiming that "if Veronica's the guilty party, the divorce will be far from a rubber-stamp affair [due to] our Canadian divorce laws" (164). The explanation is that in order to get a divorce in Quebec, they would need a private Act of the Federal Parliament. Still according to Abernathy and Arcus, "there was no need to establish specific grounds for parliamentary divorce" (411), but I believe that a recorded scene of adultery would make the process faster, as Grosvenor wished.

The detachment from the Catholic Church, it seems to me, is reinforced by the Coffeys' immigration to America. It also represents an immersion into a secular world, in which Ginger has to face his own acts and take his own responsibility for them, not relying on an outer force. Nevertheless, he does not quite comprehend Veronica's reasons. To him, divorce is just a matter of money: "If he had enough money Veronica wouldn't be leaving him" (97). His perspective is different from Veronica's: she wants love. She complains about Ginger's selfishness all the time and both the job and the divorce put into perspective the freedom she cherishes for herself. She gives up divorce, however, when she recognizes in Grosvenor an unknown selfishness. Between Ginger and Grosvenor, she chooses the former. Eventually, she stays with her family and maintains her job.

The change of roles in post-war world is a condition that affects the characters and forces them to rethink their family structure. Because they come from a Catholic patriarchal society and move to a more liberal one, this change is emphasized in the novel. Veronica returns home in the end, but her condition is different from the beginning, because she imposes the alternative of working as a saleslady. She may not have a "life of her own" (184), but the job represents a step

forward in the direction of more freedom from her husband's financial dependency and a way of beginning a new life in Canada. The family's reunion in the end is a positive outcome, and completely justifiable. However, it seems to me that its future lacks solid ground, because it is based on the possibility of Ginger's regaining his job at Tiny One, the diaper company, now as a "glorified secretary" (242), a function he had always despised. The new reality the Coffeys face in the end, although positive, may not endure.

FINAL REMARKS

Fictional works can constitute a rich source of themes and discussions. Brian Moore's The Luck of Ginger Coffey gave me the opportunity to research many subjects, enlarging my point of view on them.

As I tried to demonstrate, the boundaries between the concepts of diaspora and immigration are subject to revision, since some processes such as assimilation or the concept of home occur in both movements. Should the experience of the Coffeys be viewed as an instance of the Irish diaspora? In my opinion, the answer is positive. The Irish experience, composed of millions of cases of emigration, constitutes a diaspora. The increasing number of publications in Irish migration studies shows that there is a lot to discuss.

One of the processes involving the settlement of the immigrant is the acceptance by the new social environment. The outsider can be received and treated as the Other, suffering prejudice by the hegemonic ethnic group as well as by different minority ethnic groups. Ginger Coffey shows in every way that he is Irish, mainly through his appearance and the way he speaks, and for that he is considered the Other by people belonging to different ethnic groups.

The othering process is reinforced by the use of stereotypes, and I tried to explore the moments that such images are evoked in the narrative. Stereotypes are constructed by judgments and they provoke as a result prejudice and marginalization. Ginger Coffey is the victim of a stereotyped image created sometimes by one of the characters and sometimes by the narrator himself. Another character, the Scottish MacGregor, is portrayed in the same way, and the

narrator provides another binary opposition: Ireland versus Scotland. I concluded that a stereotyped image can be used as the main medium to express difference between two countries.

The Coffeys' adjustment to the Montreal of the fifties shows the change of mentality after the war, from a more conservative to a more open one, occurring in most countries in Europe and the New World. The changes in the roles of husband and wife, the pressure of women for jobs, and the question of divorce are signs of this changing process. The issue of gender subordination in diasporic experiences as well as the religious conflicts resulting from the contrasting values and beliefs from the host country and the country of origin cannot be taken for granted. In conclusion, a renegotiation among the members of the family is essential to the survival of the Coffeys.

Expanding this idea, negotiation seems to be the key to a positive social environment involving different ethnic groups. Brian Moore's fiction is important, among other reasons, because the main character is inserted in an environment in which the cultural diversity abounds: Coffey's landlady is Quebecois, his boss is Scottish, his workmates are from different regions, his friend (in the beginning) is English-Canadian. The experience narrated in this literary work predates the Bill C-93, "An Act for the Preservation and Enhancement of Multiculturalism in Canada", which became a law in 1988 and ever since has been the official recognition of the cultural and racial diversity in Canada (Hutcheon 369). There is no doubt that the issues I approached here did not exist in this full form in 1960, when The Luck of Ginger Coffey was released. Nevertheless, Moore's narrative presents the aspects of a social organization, including Irish, Scottish, Jewish, English and French groups and individuals interacting with each other in the same space – the city of Montreal. Therefore, I consider that this work anticipates discussions brought at least one decade later to the official debates about Canadian multiculturalism. One

theme for future research could be how the Irish-Canadian narratives are integrated – or not – in the discussion of the Canadian mosaic.

There is another issue that requires further research: it is the question of the Irish exile's image. It seems to me that there is a myth around the figure of the Irish exile, who is regarded frequently as unhappy and forever a victim of English misrule. Despite evidences shown in over 5,000 emigrants' letters and memoirs collected and scrutinized by Kerby Miller (4) and the literary production of poems and songs with the exile leitmotiv, I believe that this image has turned into a myth. The reality of the Irish emigration contrasts with the image of the miserable exile. Andy Bielenberg shows that in the seventeenth century the Irish in the Caribbean administered trading networks and plantations; in the West Indies they became part of the "colonial gentry"; in North America, in the following century, the Irish contributed a lot to the commercial expansion specially in trading; in India, they played a significant role as soldiers, engineers, policemen and lawyers (216-23). In the twentieth century, the Irish in the United States elected a President, and their presence in the police force can be attested by their number in Hollywood films. Moreover, only in the last decade of the twentieth century a significant number of Irish-born emigrants returned to Ireland (Courtney 288). The feelings of nostalgia and homesickness cannot be denied; however, a myth around the image of the Irish exile has been built and I believe that this issue demands additional research.

This master thesis also represents an opportunity to discuss an Irish-Canadian author. Since the first settlements the Irish played a fundamental role in Canada. In fact, by the time of the Dominion Day in 1867, they were considered the largest of the British groups (Morton 9). Nevertheless, there is until today an absence of Irish-Canadian authors in Canadian Literature, mainly writers who address immigration issues. Brian Moore's early writing is set in his city of

birth, Belfast. From the third novel on, he uses many settings and themes. His plots are not localized in a single place or developed on the same theme. He cannot be constrained solely to the category of immigrant writer either. His writing wanders in many fields, such as belief, politics, ethics, identity, and many other. He is not even secluded in his writing activity. In 1991, he worked as an executive producer in a film based on his novel Black Robe, directed by Bruce Beresford (IMDb). He also wrote some screenplays: Torn Curtain (1966) directed by Alfred Hitchcock, The Luck of Ginger Coffey (1964), Catholics (1973), the script for The Blood of Others (1984) directed by Claude Chabrol, the documentary The Lonely Passion of Brian Moore (1986) produced by the National Film Board of Canada, and the screenplay for Giorno Prima, II in collaboration (1987). He was open to different types of writing and other types of media, such as cinema and television. Brian Moore had a very busy social life, participating in the cultural milieu in the United States, Canada, Paris, and even Ireland, where he was acknowledged by the literary circle including the Nobel prizewinner-to-be Seamus Heaney, who included Moore's novels in his literature courses (Craig 214) and paid him a visit in Malibu in 1971. I believe that Moore's cosmopolitanism in his writing and his life granted him the status of international writer.

This work does not represent a final word on The Luck of Ginger Coffey or its author. There is still a long line of topics that deserve the critics' attention, such as the way the literary narrative of The Luck of Ginger Coffey interacts with the reading made by Irvin Kershner, who filmed Ginger in 1964; Moore's role as screenwriter and the intermedial relations produced by his filmed novels; if and how his fictional works embody the idea of multiculturalism in Canada. Moore's writing is complex and demands new efforts. Yet, this is my contribution.

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