

ANNEX 1 SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME

STRAND 1 : IRISH DIASPORA ECONOMY, MIGRATION, INTEGRATION

Originally, the term “diaspora” was related to the notions of exile, uprooting and dispersion. Before the 1970s, it was primarily associated with the Jewish experience of exile and migration. But it was also used in connection with the dispersal of Greek, Armenian and Chinese communities to many parts of the globe. One should nonetheless note the ambiguity of the term which can describe this phenomenon, i.e. dispersal, and/or a people living outside of their original homeland (e.g. the Armenian diaspora) or a part of a scattered population e.g. the Chinese diaspora in New York¹.

From the 1970s onwards, this term became more widely adopted by scholars in social sciences leading to a growing research field in diaspora studies. While a relatively narrow judeo-centered definition of diaspora prevailed for a long time, a “competing” post-modern vision of diaspora has recently emerged. Paul Gilroy² and Stuart Hall³, who have worked on the Black diaspora, have put forward a vision of diaspora that gives less importance to the uprooting from the homeland but focuses instead on the sense of a common experience and culture. In the same vein, James Clifford contends that: “A shared, ongoing history of displacement, suffering, adaptation, or resistance may be as important as the projection of a specific origin.”⁴

One cannot but recognize that the term ‘diaspora’ has proliferated since the start of the 1990s which has led Brubaker, amongst others, to deplore ‘*a dispersion of the meanings of the term in semantic, conceptual and disciplinary space*’⁵, and to take stock of the hybridisation of the meaning of ‘diaspora’ in new global conditions⁶. Fearing that the dilution of the meaning of diaspora may lead to the loss of its heuristic value, some scholars have been working on the theorization of the concept, a task fraught with difficulties which has thus far proved quite divisive.⁷

Throughout the 1990s, with the intensification in globalisation and a technology and communications revolution, the interest of policy-makers in diaspora also began to grow in an exponential manner resulting in increasing state-led diaspora engagement. Indeed, diasporas can be extremely useful allies for the homeland both in political and economic terms. Their

1 Chantal Bordes-Benayoun, “La diaspora ou l’ethnique en mouvement”, *Revue européenne des migrations internationales*, vol. 28, n° 1, 2012, <https://journals.openedition.org/remi/5700>

2 Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic, Modernity and Double Consciousness*, London and New York, Verso, 1993.

3 Stuart Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora”, in Patrick Williams and Laura Christmas (eds), *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory. A Reader*, London, Harvester-Wheatsheaf, 1990, p. 392-40.

4 James Clifford, « Diasporas », *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 9, n° 3, p. 306.

5 Rogers Brubaker, “The ‘diaspora’ diaspora”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 28, no.1, January 2005, p. 1.

6 *Ibid*, p.2.

7 See Stéphane Dufoix’s chapter on diaspora studies, Stéphane Dufoix, *La Dispersion*, Paris, Éditions Amsterdam 2011, p. 389-446.

elites can, for example, defend the homeland's interests when necessary by influencing the host country decision-makers. They can also help foster economic links in a number of ways.

Indeed, in this era of globalisation with increasing connectivity and commerce, new geographies have emerged. This is leading to the remaking of the relationship between state, markets and the citizen⁸. Apart from their links with diaspora elites, States are also tapping into and engaging with their diasporas at large, this global 'soft power', in the interest of economic development in the home country.

In Ireland, the term 'Irish diaspora' began to enter popular discourse during the presidency of Mary Robinson. In the aftermath of the ceasefires of the paramilitary organisations in Northern Ireland, in her ground-breaking speech, '*Cherishing the Irish diaspora*', she applied the term to describe people with roots on the island of Ireland living abroad. Breda Gray points out that in this speech Mary Robinson suggests that, "an important way of cherishing the diaspora would be to make the homeland a 'place of peace' based on the assumption that an opening up of the diversity of Irishness represented one path towards achieving this goal"⁹. In redefining the 'Irish diaspora', she hoped to open up numerous possibilities of rethinking, remaking and reimagining Ireland's relationship towards the former:

The men and women of our diaspora represent not simply a series of departures and losses. They remain, even while absent, a precious reflection of our own growth and change, a precious reminder of the many strands of identity which compose our story. They have come [...] from Derry and Dublin and Cork and Belfast. They know the names of our townlands and villages. They remember our landscape or they have heard of it. They look to us anxiously to include them in our sense of ourselves and not to forget their contribution while we make our own [...] [...] I know this Oireachtas will agree with me that the truest way of cherishing our diaspora is to offer them, at all times, the reality of this island as a place of peace where the many diverse traditions [...] are bound together in tolerance and understanding.¹⁰

During the recession, the Irish government, through its Global Irish Economic Forum, began to consider this worldwide resource as a sort of 'economic saviour'.¹¹ However, the Minister of State for the Diaspora and International Development, Ciaran Cannon, now believes the language around diaspora needs to change. Instead of using the term 'resource', which suggests something to be constantly drawn upon, he prefers to talk about a community,

⁸ Professor Liam Kennedy, "Why diaspora now?", <https://vimeo.com/274525509> (consulted 24th July 2008)/

⁹ Breda Gray, "The Irish Diaspora: Globalised Belonging(s)", *Irish Journal of Sociology*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2002, p. 125.

¹⁰ Mary Robinson, "Cherishing the Irish Diaspora", Houses of Oireachtas, 2 Feb 1995.

¹¹ Ciara Kenny, "The Irish Diaspora is not a Resource. It's a Community", *Irish Times*, 14/7/18.

a ‘global Irish nation’¹², where reciprocity (the Emigrant Support Programme for example) would exist between the state and the diaspora¹³ and that the diversity of this diaspora would be taken into account.

The diversity of the Irish migrant experience depends on the individual themselves, when they left Ireland, the context in which they left and the issues faced within their host country. For second and subsequent generations, the challenges are different. From generation to generation, a sense of Irishness may weaken.

This is where grassroots organisations have their role to play in reaching out to groups and individuals who identify as having an Irish connection but who may not be involved in Irish organisations. This could be achieved through cultural associations and individuals who would disseminate Irishness in the host country promoting a positive image of Ireland through events and projects and transmitting Irish culture abroad. This human capital, active in a *diaspora space*¹⁴, could lead to the building of transnational bridges and collaboration within the host country and between home and host country.¹⁵

The relationship between Ireland and Irish America is an exemplar. Indeed in the mid-nineteen sixties, the Irish authorities realized the importance of rekindling the waning relationship with its diaspora in the US. The creation of the Irish Foundation was indeed designed to reignite the sense of identity of those of Irish descent living in America. Since that time onwards, Dublin has also endeavoured to develop strong links with Irish-American business elites. Some of them have undeniably proved extremely helpful both in the economic field and during the peace process. However, faced with the emergence of a multipolar world, Dublin has now, it seems, realized the importance of reinforcing its links with the diaspora no longer just with America but on a global scale. This raises a number questions and challenges which need to be addressed.

Diaspora or transnational community?

The theoretical framework around the concept of ‘diaspora’ will be examined and how this term came to be applied to the Irish emigrant experience. Secondly, the relevance of the term today in the Irish context will be considered. Indeed, nowadays, spending several years abroad is increasingly seen by Irish skilled workers as a way to enhance their professional profile and a lot less as an absolute economic necessity¹⁶. A lot of them actually end up coming back to Ireland: “The key issue is that the nature of the Irish emigrant has changed fundamentally at the beginning of the 21st century from the type of people who left Ireland in the 1850s and the 1950s. To use the term *emigrant* to describe such people is itself problematic. Many of the Irish who live and work abroad would not define themselves as

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Emigrant Support Programme for example or franchising Irish emigrants who live abroad allowing Irish people to maintain links with Ireland and have a voice in the shaping of the future of the homeland.

¹⁴ Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora : Contesting Identities*, London, Routledge, , 1996.

¹⁵ Professor Liam Kennedy, “Why diaspora now?”, <https://vimeo.com/274525509> , (consulted 24th July 2008).

¹⁶ Fearghal Cochrane, *The End of Irish-America: Globalization and the Irish Diaspora*, Dublin, Irish Academic Press, 2010, pp. 22-3; 35-6.

emigrants in the traditional sense, others would have a clearly defined notion that they are temporarily resident and a determination to return to Ireland in the medium term.”¹⁷

Should we thus talk about brain circulation and not brain drain? For Cochrane, the new wave of emigration which resulted from the financial crisis of 2007-8 is unlikely to change this underlying pattern.¹⁸ Furthermore, new communication technologies allow those who emigrate to keep in close contact with their relatives in Ireland. As a result, they feel less the urge to congregate when abroad¹⁹. To what extent do communities of Irish ancestry and Irish immigrants still meet some of the characteristics of a diaspora? Can they still be expected to “give something back” to the homeland in the way some of their predecessors did?

Is and how the notion of diaspora being instrumentalised by emigrant groups themselves and governments (through diaspora strategies for example) to promote business and cultural links and perhaps contributing to the easier integration of a migrant group in its host country.

¹⁷ Fearghal Cochrane, “Mediating the Diaspora Space: Charting the Changing Nature of Irish-America in an Age of Globalisation”, Project on Global Migration and Transnational Politics, George Mason University, Working paper no. 2, 2008, p. 5.

¹⁸ Fearghal Cochrane, *The End of Irish-America: Globalization and the Irish Diaspora*, *op. cit.*, p.183.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

Irish in France: a case-study

Can the strategy used to strengthen the links with Irish America be replicated elsewhere? Taking Irish emigration to France as a case-study, the experience of an Irish emigrant group who lives 'in diaspora' will be studied.

Who are the Irish in France? The Irish diaspora on the European mainland remains one of the most under-researched areas of Irish diaspora studies in the contemporary period. One notable exception was research carried out by Piaras Mac Einri on the Irish in Paris in the late 1980s, beginning of the 1990s. France has not been one of the principle destinations of mass Irish emigration compared to the US, Great Britain and Australia so little is known on the profile of these migrants.

Key areas need to be studied: France as a destination country - experiences and challenges; diaspora and its meaning for these migrants; engagement with the Irish government; engagement with French people; links with 'home'.

Who are the key actors and organisations? Business initiatives between Ireland and France; how are the Irish diaspora business networks organized in France? Who are their members? To what extent do they contribute to the development of economic links between the two countries? the role of the IDA in promoting trade and cooperation; relations between multinationals in Ireland and France during the Celtic Tiger and now; the effects of Brexit on trade between both countries - new opportunities, new markets?

Culture and "soft power", how is it used to promote Irishness abroad? Institutions, organisations and events in France for the dissemination of Irish culture and an Irish identity (*Centre Culturel Irlandais*, the Irish Embassy, Irish Literature Exchange, Irish in France Association, St. Patrick's Day parade).

Sport: the importance of the GAA in France.

Literature: the importance of literature in the promotion of Irish culture in France (translations, editors, blogs and so on).

Music: the place and influence of Irish music in France..

Language: the practice of Irish in France.

Tourism: how is the Irish state and the tourist sector in Ireland promoting Ireland and an Irish identity in France?

Education: how is Ireland's culture, geography, history, literature and economy represented in school books in France? What image is being projected?

Religion : how did/does the Irish community in France contribute to the evolution of religious attitudes in dechristianized France? Is it possible to say that religion or spirituality paradoxically contributed to integration?

STRAND 2: HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY: WHICH IRISH MODELS?

Diachronic and synchronic perspectives on the discourse, representations and practices/realities linked to human rights in Ireland and on how they fit into history and the international fora (Council of Europe, European Court of Human Rights, European Union, United Nations Organization).

These perspectives can be presented, without exception, in relation to the different types of rights of the various populations, at various levels and within multiple areas and jurisdictions from local to global, and by taking into account all forms of discourse, expression and practices (social, political, artistic and media expressions, practices and discourse):

Individual rights and the concept of collective rights; fundamental individual rights and construction of groups and of collective rights as concerns in political discourse and in the media (fundamental rights and freedoms, socio-economic rights, cultural and linguistic rights...).

Democratic rights and models: advantages, limitations and problems arising from the democratic Northern Irish model since 1998; new ways of working and deliberative democracy: the example of the Citizens' Assembly in the Republic of Ireland; democratic questions or threats.

Construction of citizenship by various means (political and institutional community, society and social and cultural organisations, education, arts, media of all sorts) and role and place of human rights in the different methods of the construction of citizenship.

Rights and discriminations based on gender, sexual orientation, age, nationality, origins, skin colour, religion, disabilities, socio-economic status (access to health care, education, etc. social issues through rights: the UN and socio-economic rights, International Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989), the question of human rights and intersectionality.

Human rights and places of deprivation of liberty: prisons, direct provision, religious institutions. What implications? Convergence, divergence? National and international dimension of activism or action.

Human rights and populations made invisible: women (abortion, symphysiotomy, violence against women, genital mutilation); children (children's rights); migrants

Human rights and the environment: what role, what places, what methods?

Local, national and international **solidarities** and political and social initiatives.

Human rights defence and the peace process in Northern Ireland: Transitional/restorative justice; Human Rights Act of 1998: models, influences, limitations; role of NGOs, victims' associations, social groups and movements; role of the police; European and international models and influences (role of the European Court of Human Rights and of European bodies in the peace process; European funding and urban regeneration, etc.); construction of a post-conflict discourse ("rebranding"), inclusive recollection, identity- and citizen-based constructions.

Analysis of the role of the arts in the perspective of human rights: theoretical responses (what theoretical turning points? e.g. ecocriticism, effects of the crises) and new practices; artistic expressions and representations linked to the question of rights and freedoms: pioneering or reactive arts; socially engaged art; art as a therapy; art and politics, human rights and performance.

Human rights in the history of moral philosophy and in the history of, ethical, humanist and post-humanist **ideas** within an Irish perspective: what ethical, religious,

humanist or post-humanist interrogations? What responsibilities and what ability to respond – in the sense of “response-ability”: what can arts and culture do?