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**Changing Cityscapes and the Process of  
Contemporary Gentrification: An examination of the  
transformation of Ringsend within the context of  
post-industrial growth in Dublin**

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for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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## Abstract<sup>1</sup>

The process of contemporary gentrification is a key feature of post-industrial growth and urban re-generation. A central concern of this research is to investigate the implications of the process of gentrification at the level of locality. This study approached this investigation by an examination of these processes within a particular inner city neighbourhood in Dublin called Ringsend. It is the understandings and experiences of contemporary processes that this research has aimed to capture.

The aim of this research was to examine the changes occurring in Ringsend at a particular point in time and in a particular context. Ringsend is an inner city working-class 'urban village' in Dublin, Ireland. The identity of Ringsend as 'place' is deeply entwined in its industrial development. However, since the 1970s Ringsend's industrial base has been constantly eroded. In recent years Ringsend has attracted considerable private investment as the area is undergoing a shift to a post-industrial landscape. The process of contemporary gentrification is extremely visible in the built environment. The aim of this study was to capture these shifts as they are occurring and as the landscape changes further the opportunity to explore this particular juncture may not arise again.

The central findings of this research indicate the importance of 'place' in recent transitions. However within these changes place is being re-imaged and re-structured. Further this research also highlights the importance of the specificity of locality in gaining a deeper insight into the process of contemporary 'gentrification'. Finally this thesis argues that the changes occurring in Ringsend are impacting on understandings of 'community' and community re-generation. A central theme within this study is that while the shift to a post-industrial society is advantageous for capital accumulation contemporary gentrified sites,

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increasingly surrounded by walls and gates, function as symbols of the uneven development of contemporary urban renewal.

This thesis is dedicated to my dad, Michael,  
and to my mum, Catherine,  
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# Introduction

At the end of the twentieth century urban areas are vastly different from the metropolises of a hundred years earlier. Although some cities are the command centres of the global economy or nests of technological innovation, others have lost economic function even when they still encompass large populations....gentrified neighbourhoods adjacent to low-income areas display the emblems of affluence.... increasingly set off by walls and gates, sharpen the distinction between the haves and the have-nots. More and more people live in metropolitan areas, but even the most economically successful of these regions manifest sharply uneven development, (Fainstein and Campbell, 1996:2).

The built environment, despite its solid appearance, is dynamic rather than static, (Ambrose, 1994:5-6).

This research is concerned with understanding the changes occurring within the contemporary cityscape. This research is also concerned with experience; how contemporary trends in urbanism, specifically gentrification, are experienced, understood and negotiated. 'The city' is a fascinating place of enquiry as it retains traces of urban pasts within the landscape itself. I refer to landscape as more than the material surfaces of places (Duncan and Duncan, 2001) but also to the meanings imputed by people to their cultural and physical surroundings (Bourdieu, 1990). It is these experiences and understandings that this research aims to capture. Landscapes are built but they are also the manifestation of multiple representations. The landscapes of cities are the result, and an expression, of economic, political, social and cultural processes within an historical setting. The urban landscape is also experienced by people and reflects these experiences. The ways in which we see, or read, the city depends on how our perceptions are shaped. The city is in a constant state of flux, of destruction and renewal. New developments occur on land that once held older developments and encapsulated different ways of life. There is also however, continuity as streetscapes and memories of the past still remain. These physical and mental manifestations of past urban landscapes impact on future development.

In order to both highlight what I am examining as well as to restrict my exploration to within the scope of this research it is necessary to point out that this thesis will focus on

Western, capitalist cities from older industrial cities to contemporary urban forms. This is not to suggest that these cities are identical just that they share similar features. As cities are shaped by a diverse set of processes they change continually as they reflect these interactions within their landscapes. However:

...we will deal with changes which involve phase shifts. What matters are changes in quality, in type, in the whole social character of the social systems within which people lead their lives. There have been plenty of discontinuities in the last two hundred years but the transformation of the human social world from one in which most people lived as subsistence farmers into one in which most people live as wage workers in towns and cities was the first and most important of them, (Byrne, 2001:2).

This thesis also deals in 'phase shifts'. As Byrne (2001) notes the first and most important of these phase shift, or structural transformations, was the process of industrialisation that began in Europe in the nineteenth century. At the beginning of the twenty-first century urban forms are vastly different from the cities of a hundred years earlier. There is a general consensus, within the social science literature, that cities, within the metropolitan core of capitalism, are in the process of structural transformation. As a result we are now witnessing the emergence of new 'types' of cities.

When speaking of new 'types' of cities I am referring to the fact that the '...older urban areas of industrial capitalism have been transformed in the last quarter of the twentieth century', (Byrne, 2001:12). Whether one refers to these types of cities as 'post-industrial', 'post-Fordist', or 'post-modern', what is clear is that a multitude of processes are interacting to produce new urban forms and all of these 'types' are evident within contemporary capitalist cities. Using the prefix of 'post' is a way of an explanation of contemporary circumstances, (Byrne, 2001). Understanding the implications of these changes is crucial to understanding the contemporary urban form.

Post-industrial growth has been accompanied, or preceded, by a process of de-industrialisation within core inner city areas. This led to the decline of these areas

evidenced by rising unemployment and the degradation of the built fabric within inner city communities.

Although reinvestment eventually followed earlier rounds of disinvestment in many urban cores, further transforming these areas, the occupational opportunities created were often unsuitable or inaccessible to the communities that were devastated by the earlier decline, (Drudy and Punch, 2000: 219).

The processes associated with the shift to a post-industrial society have important social and spatial implications. This research argues that post-industrial growth has led to urban re-generation and the contemporary gentrification of many inner city areas. Raban (1974) argued that the notion of the 'city' performed the role of a synecdoche. A synecdoche is a figure of speech in which a part of something is used to refer to or denote the whole thing. For Redfern (2003) Raban's use of 'city' as synecdoche refers to the fact that the city is understood as the entirety of social life. Redfern (2003) argues that gentrification is also a synecdoche and therefore its symbolic significance outweighs its quantitative significance.

Gentrifying neighbourhoods may be small in number and size, but the reason they attract such attention is that what goes on in them has resonances for us wherever we may live, and whatever our station in life, (Redfern, 2003: 2360).

For Redfern the importance of gentrification, and why it has acquired its synecdochal quality, is due to the fact that class plays a central role in the process. Gentrification is a physical, economic, social and cultural process that involves the movement of middle-class or higher income groups into previously working-class areas, (Hamnett, 1984). Contemporary urban change has seen an increase in urban renewal in general and in gentrification in particular. Inner city working-class areas are being totally re-structured. Within contemporary changes gentrification is no longer a process that can be defined as 'small in number and size'.

Understanding the processes associated with contemporary gentrification and the subsequent implications for inner city working-class communities are crucial to understanding the contemporary cityscape. Indeed this research argues that the process of

contemporary gentrification is an integral part of the re-generation of cities and it is through this process that one can examine the effects of economic re-structuring. It is also through the process of gentrification that one can also examine changing lifestyles associated with post-industrial growth. Gentrification may take different forms in different cities however, it is clear that the process is linked to identity:

Islington suddenly became fashionable (Raban, 1974, p.86) because its housing stock (gradually) became available for making fashion statements – that is, statements about personality, (Redfern, 2003: 2360).

For Redfern the areas that became gentrified had not changed what had changed was the gentrifiers ability to use the areas and buildings in order to make statements about themselves, (Redfern, 2003: 2360). However, this research disagrees with Redfern as within contemporary gentrification the landscape of the area does change. Post-industrial contemporary gentrification transforms the landscape through the construction of apartment and office complexes. Within inner city areas these are often built on sites that once held industry and represented a different way of life to the working-class communities that relied on industrial work.

Zukin (1991) sees landscapes of gentrification as both physical and mental representations. They are representations that organise desire and consumption in a post-productivist economy. For Zukin (1991) gentrification is associated with the expenditure of cultural capital by a college-educated generation engaged in reflexive consumption – the ‘post-modern petite bourgeoisie’, (McGuigan, 1996:101). According to Robins, ‘urban identification is now achieved through a differential relationship between ‘post-modern’ islands of urbanity and a surrounding ‘somewhere else’ inhabited by an alien underclass of ‘have nots’, (1993:324). For Marcuse the city is divided into quarters that are both walled in and walled out simultaneously. As a result of the hierarchical ordering of space these divisions are not equal, (1995:244). For Marcuse walls represent boundaries however, they are also an embodiment and a metaphor for the nature of social divisions, (Ibid.). The

divisions within gentrification can be viewed in relation to Marcuse's concept of 'walls'. However, urban life is complex with as many layers as there are walls. Boundaries can often be ambiguous or may shift according to peoples needs and wants at a particular time. According to Massey both identities and spatiality are constructed out of interaction, (1996:113). For Massey bounding space can be used to reinforce a difference or to preserve identities under threat therefore it is the relations that are crucial, (Ibid.). The city is a site of social interaction and of social tension and this is clearly evident within the gentrification process. The importance of 'place' within recent transitions and the implications of the restructuring of place on inner city working-class communities are also themes explored in this thesis.

It is within this international literature on changing cityscapes and gentrification that my research is located. This research examines some of the factors that shape the cityscape, the trends associated with, and the implications of the structural transition taking place in advanced capitalist cities. I argue that contemporary gentrification has become a distinctive feature of the shift to a post-industrial society. Indeed the process of gentrification can be used as a lens with which to examine these changes. This research aims to capture an insight into the gentrification process by examining its causes, manifestations and implications within a particular neighbourhood in Dublin called Ringsend. An examination of both Dublin's and Ringsend's changing landscapes highlights the fact that recent changes are located within the shift to a post-industrial society. Consequently this thesis will take a snap shot of transitions occurring at a global scale, at the level of a particular city and then at the level of place. The perspective moves from the global to the local for a deeper understanding of the changes occurring at the level of the neighbourhood. The aim of this thesis is to capture a particular moment in time and in a particular context. The changes occurring within Ringsend are occurring in many inner city areas around the globe. Understanding the changes in this particular neighbourhood will help throw light on

changes occurring at a global scale and will add to our sociological understanding of the contemporary cityscape.

Ringsend is an inner city working-class 'urban village' in Dublin, Ireland. Ringsend has traditionally been a working-class area. The main source of employment in the past was due to its close proximity to the docks and other local industries. However, as with other cities Dublin's industrial base has been constantly eroded. In recent years Ringsend has attracted considerable private investment as the area is undergoing a shift to a post-industrial landscape. Ringsend is an area undergoing gentrification; it is a place in motion. Ringsend has been packaged and sold as a place waiting to be 'discovered', as streets waiting to tell a 'new story'. The story being put forward is of a specific 'urban way of life' in an 'aesthetically pleasing environment'. However, Ringsend was not waiting to be discovered it was in fact a place that was deeply entwined in the Ringsender's sense of identity for generations. Ringsend was an area with a long-established working-class population. It was an area that had a connection to the surrounding landscapes of sea, rivers, canals, industries and local businesses. Social relations, identities and identifications with specific sites developed from these connections. This research aims to capture this sense of place and identity in order to highlight the implications of recent developments within the area. It captures an insight into how physical and mental manifestations of past urban landscapes impact on future development.

Ringsend as a place in motion offers a particular valid insight into the implications of contemporary shifts. The aim is to capture these shifts as they are occurring and as the landscape changes further the opportunity to explore this particular juncture may not arise again. This thesis examines some of the effects of these processes within Ringsend. It will explore how the concept of 'place' is contested within the area, how the process of gentrification is manifested within the area and how 'community' is understood, negotiated and impacted upon within these processes. This qualitative research is based on interviews

with both the 'Ringsenders' and the 'gentrifiers'. Quotes taken from interviews shall be classified as emanating from 'Ringsenders' or 'gentrifiers'. This is not to imply homogeneity of either group but rather to provide indicative soundings from the older and newer residents, broadly defined.

It is necessary to clarify the particular focus that this thesis takes. This thesis is not as such a thesis about social class however it does explore issues in relation to social class. I have chosen to allow the voices of respondents examine these issues as opposed to offering an in depth sociological bibliography in relation to the question of class. I also made a choice not to examine issues of community politics or to use local 'grey literature'. My aim was to allow the contemporary voices of Ringsenders speak from interviews rather than to explore the social and labour history of the area. History is not just about events or structures but also about how these are remembered in the imagination, (see Thompson, 1988). This thesis explores statistical evidence of economic change and changing demographics in Dublin City and Ringsend. An historical overview of Ringsend's development is also explored. The voices of the respondents in this research explore the implications and understandings of these changes and it is for this reason that these voices hold a central place in this research. Often contemporary changes are understood in terms of class and also in terms of memory, in particular memories of past landscapes within Ringsend, and it is these understandings that this thesis aims to capture.

In order to examine these issues this thesis is organised around the following chapters:

**Chapter One** aims to come to an understanding of the processes that shape the landscape of the city. This chapter examines the processes associated with industrialisation, modernity and Fordism to show how capitalist configurations and 'phase shifts' (Byrne, 2001) have spatial and social implications. This chapter highlights the importance of economic systems on the physical and social geography of the city. The contemporary cityscape is being shaped by a multitude of processes defined variously as post-industrial,

post-Fordist and post-modern. Ireland's recent growth is analysed within these shifts in order to highlight the fact that these processes are shaping Irish society. It is within the transitions associated with the 'posts' that contemporary Dublin, and Ringsend in particular, are located.

For some theorists post-industrial society has become equated with a more equal society. In contrast to this viewpoint this chapter argues that there is a growing body of evidence that points to a new and intensifying trend towards polarisation in the developed nations. The claim to greater equality and the end of 'class' society is unfounded. An analysis of Ringsend shows that class not only matters but also plays a crucial role in the lives of many of my respondents. An analysis of Ringsend also shows that the shift to a post-industrial society is not unproblematic.

The rise of 'flexible accumulation' (Harvey 1990), or post-Fordism, has also been accompanied by a variety of new consumption patterns. However, this chapter highlights that changing consumption patterns are conducive to flexible accumulation. These shifts have been accompanied by increased differentiation in income levels and the formation of a new, hierarchical model of consumption. In many regards post-Fordism, or as defined in this chapter 'flexible accumulation' is closely related to 'the condition of postmodernity', (Harvey, 1990).

For post-modernists our experiences are now rooted in the process of consumption rather than production. Within these processes representations of place are being re-structured. Within Ringsend this re-representation of place is very evident and is used to sell a desired image. What is interesting is that this remaking of place within the realm of consumption is advantageous to capital accumulation. It is argued that there is a close link between capital accumulation and 'the condition of post-modernity', (Harvey, 1990). According to post-modernists people no longer conform to traditional occupational structures rather they choose a lifestyle. However, this research argues that for many people certain elements of

their identity are constructed around fixed boundaries, such as place. In addition while post-modernists claim that class distinctions have dissolved the reality of people's situations often prove this to be incorrect. These distinctions are evident within Ringsend where 'class' is often used in order to distinguish one group from another. Indeed gentrification is a process defined in terms of class.

Although many theorists examine economic, social and cultural shifts separately, while admitting to an elective affinity between them, it is necessary to connect these directly. This chapter highlights the key points of intersection between post-industrial society, post-Fordism and the condition of post-modernity. This highlights the fact that contemporary capitalism is both a complex economic system and a social system. This chapter argues that in many respects many of the trends occurring are related to changes in the configuration of capitalism. The contemporary gentrification of Ringsend highlights this point.

Although there are many spatial implications involved in the shift to a post-industrial society this chapter highlights one major trend. This is the renewed importance of urban centres. This has led to intense urban renewal and to the gentrification of many inner city areas. I argue that Dublin's changing landscapes, and the contemporary gentrification of Ringsend, are located within the shift to a post-industrial society.

**Chapter Two** aims to provide an image of the contemporary cityscape and to examine the theoretical debates that surround the process of gentrification. While gentrification initially became a means of addressing the decline of many inner city areas this chapter argues it is now fully integrated into wider global urban restructuring. Gentrification was once closely allied to the acquisition and upgrading of existing housing stock within traditional working-class neighbourhoods. However, contemporary gentrification also involves purpose built construction. This includes the construction of office buildings and large-

scale apartment complexes, or 'gated communities'. It is a re-population of urban space that accommodates the needs of contemporary post-industrial cities.

Many of the earlier debates within gentrification coalesced around what have been defined as 'production-side arguments' and 'consumption-side arguments'. The production-side argument is most often associated with Smith (1986, 1987, 1996) who argues that the processes that make an area ripe for gentrification are related to the flows of capital investment and dis-investment. For Hamnett (1991; 1992) Smith focuses solely on a supply-side explanation for gentrification while ignoring the gentrifiers themselves and the reasons behind their decisions to gentrify. For those linked to the consumption-side argument it is necessary to examine the demand factors within the gentrification process. This chapter examines these arguments and highlights that gentrification is the result of both supply and demand factors. However, I argue that by renovating specific central locations and marketing them as attractive locals for young professionals one can create a preference for gentrified housing. This is especially clear in relation to the place marketing of Ringsend which will be examined in Chapters Four and Six. This chapter also argues that the state play a major role in contemporary gentrification through the designation of certain areas for tax incentives and subsidies, a factor that is also salient in the context of Ringsend.

Aside from debates relating to purely supply and demand explanations for gentrification this chapter also examines other factors for a more detailed understanding of the process. These included changing consumption patterns of the new-middle class; identity and social preservation (Brown-Saracino 2004). In light of conflicting theories and debates Lees (1990) argues for a need to move the gentrification debate forward by what she calls the new 'geography of gentrification'. Lees (2000) highlights the fact that we need to consider processes of gentrification in the context of urban policy. In Ireland urban regeneration policies can be linked to the gentrification of certain inner city areas.

This chapter also explores the implications for 'place' within the shift to a post-industrial society. For some theorists (Castells, 1989; Emberley, 1989) place has become less meaningful within contemporary processes. It is my argument that 'place' has not become meaningless and social life, for many, is still anchored within specific locales. Both 'space' and 'place' are playing a pivotal role in the shift to a post-industrial society and in the gentrification of specific inner city locations.

**Chapter Three** provides an account of my methods of research. The research question I choose to look at was 'what are the implications of post-industrial growth at the level of place, Ringsend, in Dublin?' This research argues that a main consequence of post-industrial growth has been the gentrification of the inner city. The process of gentrification in Ringsend offers a unique opportunity to examine some of these processes. For these reasons I choose Ringsend as my case study. This research is concerned with understanding how Ringsend is being re-structured within these processes. From this research question, three sub themes have emerged: What are the implications for place within these processes? How is the process of gentrification manifested in Ringsend and what are the implications of this process? What are the implications of these processes in terms of 'community'?

It is through a combination of research data and social theory that this thesis aims to explain and understand the changes occurring in the contemporary cityscape and in Ringsend in particular. This chapter highlight the fact that this research combines three elements:

- Theorising the processes of transition within the contemporary city
- Examining the manifestation of gentrification as a by-product of urban renewal
- Identifying the consequences and implications of this process at the level of place - Ringsend

This thesis is broadly concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced and produced by people. Therefore, I choose to adopt a qualitative approach to this study. A deeper understanding required an examination of how these processes are perceived by both the 'Ringsenders' and the 'gentrifiers'. These categories do not exemplify the total populations of Ringsend they do however, provide a framework through which to explore the implications of the shift to a post-industrial society and the subsequent gentrification of the area.

Qualitative research typically uses interviewing, participant observation, and document analysis to produce data. I used this triangulated approach to gathering data with interviewing being the primary source of data collection. I used this approach to develop an understanding of how Ringsend is being re-structured through post-industrial growth. This methodological approach also provides a visual interpretation of the changes occurring within Ringsend and the juxtaposition of industrial and post-industrial landscapes within the area. This chapter critically examines these approaches and clearly identifies my role in this research.

**Chapter Four** provides a detailed case study of Ringsend and examines how contemporary changes are manifested in the landscape of this particular locale. This chapter situates the contemporary renewal and gentrification of Ringsend within the transitions associated with the shift to a post-industrial society. In Chapter Two Dublin offers a particular case study of how these processes operate at the level of a particular city. Ringsend's changing landscape offers a particular case study of how global process impact on a particular locale and the implications of these changes at the level of locality or place.

The chapter highlights the fact that the identity of Ringsend as place and of the Ringsender's themselves is deeply rooted in its historical development. It explores Ringsend's development as a working-class urban village and shows how a strong

working-class identity developed around industrial development. Ringsend's development is marked by a series of industrial development and decline. However, from the 1970s Ringsend has undergone a process of de-industrialisation, which was devastating for this inner city community. The Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) show that between 1981 and 1996 the number of people at work declined from 1,686 to 1,481. Accompanying this decline was a degradation of the built fabric. The decline of Ringsend shows the devastating effects on some areas of the restructuring of the global economy.

This chapter also emphasises the fact that Ringsend is a place in motion. In recent years Ringsend has attracted considerable private investment due to its close proximity to the city centre, the designation of the area for tax incentive schemes in the Urban Renewal act of 1986 and its inclusion in the Dublin Docklands Development Authority (DDDA). The contemporary restructuring of the global economy and the transition to the 'posts' have seen this urban village not only restructured but also re-imaged and re-imagined in recent years. Its landscape is in the process of changing from one that was previously dominated by industry to one, which is now dominated by office complexes, apartment complexes and 'gated communities'. Contemporary changes are examined against the historical development of the area as it the contrasting landscapes that highlight the implications of the processes occurring.

The areas changing demographics also indicate that Ringsend is undergoing a process of intense gentrification. This chapter examines the 1986, the 1996 and the 2002 Small Area Population Statistics for the area. These statistics show that while the population of the area has risen in recent years Ringsend is being repopulated by the young, affluent workers of the service economy. This chapter highlights that the area has been re-imaged to attract, and accommodate, these groups. The area is being packaged and sold as an upmarket urban location. It is argued that these images are creating a new sense of place but this is ignoring the sense of place that previously existed and still exists within the area.

This chapter also provides visual examples of Ringsend's landscapes. These visual representations of Ringsend show the juxtaposition of the past industrial landscape and the present post-industrial landscape within the same place. The process of gentrification is visible within the landscape. These photographs give a sense of the enormous changes occurring, not only in Ringsend but also, in former industrial and dockland areas in cities and regions throughout advanced capitalist countries. It is the implications of these transitions that will be examined within my analysis chapters.

The following three analysis chapters are based on qualitative interviews with both the 'Ringsenders' and 'gentrifiers'. These chapters aim to explore the themes discussed in the first half of my thesis through the voices of those who are living their lives within these changes.

**Chapter Five** provides an overview of the sociological significance of place in Ringsend and its implications for contemporary urban processes. It has often been commented that we are experiencing a loss of place, or that place is becoming less relevant. Sociological understandings of place in recent transitions speak of the 'transcendence of place' (Coleman 1993), the 'placelessness of place' (Relph 1976) and cities 'without a place' (Sorkin 1992). This chapter addresses the question 'does place matter anymore?'

This chapter examines, and refutes the contention, that social meaning has evaporated from Ringsend as place. Place continues to matter and constitutes the basic element of the social life of many long-term residents of Ringsend. However, Ringsend as place does not hold the same significance for the newer population. For the gentrifiers their outlook centres on the complexes in which they live and towards the city centre where they work and socialise. However, even for these group's place has meaning.

This chapter argues that Ringsend as place has not been subsumed within a space of flows, (Castells, 1989; Emberley, 1989). In fact place has become an integral part of these processes as they compete for both capital and people. The implication that social meaning

has evaporated from place assumes that place is a static concept. Through an analysis of Ringsend this chapter identifies the fact that place is not a static concept but is constantly open to interpretation, contestation and change.

This chapter shows that although there may be some objective qualities of place – for example Ringsend has developed from an industrial to a post-industrial landscape – place is also composed of multiple layers of subjective meanings. In this era of advanced globalisation it has often been commented that we need a notion of ‘place’ as stable, secure and unique. However, from my fieldwork it is clear that the notion of place as a coherent world is contested. Place is being disrupted within contemporary processes and within gentrification, which is an integral part of these processes. This chapter highlights that previous understandings of place are being re-structured, challenged and re-conceptualised. **Chapter six** offers an insight into the gentrification process at work in Ringsend. Theories of gentrification provide a generalised picture of the processes occurring. An examination of the changes occurring within Ringsend indicates that it is necessary to examine the gentrification process in a way that addresses the specificity of locality. An analysis of Ringsend shows how capital both creates and destroys its own landscape, (Harvey, 1985). In Ringsend the former industrial landscape has been destroyed and in its place stands the post-industrial landscape of the apartment and office complex. Secondly, Ringsend is also experiencing the gentrification process associated with the re-valorisation of existing housing stock.

The apartment complexes are visible indicators that Ringsend is undergoing a shift to a post-industrial society. My research highlights that they offer accommodation to those professionals who work within the expanding service sector. However, this chapter explores the fact that these complexes have been built on sites once dominated by industry and not only represent a shift to a post-industrial society but also a shift in the social and spatial relationships that were embedded in Ringsend as place. For the Ringsenders these

complexes are perceived as 'out of place' while for the gentrifiers they are seen as representing a 'different place' or are removed from Ringsend as place.

Within the re-valourised terraced housing the emphasis on 'taste', 'distinction' and 'aesthetic' is clear. However, unlike the residents of the apartment complexes who consume a ready-made aesthetic the gentrifiers within the terraced housing are actively involved in the construction of 'difference'. The 'first wave' of gentrifiers within the terraced housing show more of an awareness and appreciation of Ringsend as place and of the community. More recent processes have seen the acquisition of housing stock because the area has become re-invented and is now seen as a 'trendy' location.

While many studies in relation to gentrification treat it as a unified process this chapter argues that the gentrification process within Ringsend is multi-faceted. There are indications of a 'first wave' of gentrification highlighted by the 'urban artist' or the 'urban pioneer' who moved into the terraced housing in the 1990s. A further wave of gentrification is also noticeable within Ringsend. I argue that these groups can be defined as 'moneyed gentrifiers' pursuing an urban lifestyle and 'investment gentrifiers'. A type of 'renter gentrification' is also discernible in Ringsend. Renters are moving into an already constructed aesthetic and therefore the term 'gentrification' or 'gentrifier' may not neatly apply to them. However, although the term gentrifier may not fit all the people who are renting within the area, many of them work within the high paid sectors of the economy. I argue that these 'well off' renters should be seen as part of the same process of gentrification. The apartments and houses within the area have been constructed and re-valourised in order to attract them. While it is argued that a cultural model plays a pivotal role in subsequent waves of gentrification this commodification of culture is not visible within Ringsend. A main selling point however is that the area is close to the cultural model that has developed within Dublin itself.

Through an examination of demand and supply explanations for gentrification this chapter reveals that it is a combination of the two, which has produced Ringsend's changing landscape. However, the shift to a post-industrial landscape has seen capital return to the inner city and much movement is in response to this relocation. This chapter also emphasises the point that the gentrification process in Ringsend is also part of a broader policy context, which aims to reverse the decline of inner-city areas.

In contrast to some post-industrial theorists and post-modern arguments this chapter argues that class distinctions still exist. Both groups are consciously aware of a class divide. In many instances distinctions were made in terms of occupation, lifestyle, consumption patterns and cultural capital. The process of gentrification is inherently class based. However, gentrification is not a homogenous process and not all gentrifiers share the same class position. They are however, viewed and view themselves as 'other' to the working-classes within Ringsend.

**Chapter Seven** examines how community is understood, negotiated and sustained within Ringsend. The shift to a post-industrial society has initiated a process of gentrification in Ringsend. This has impacted on the landscape of Ringsend and on the community that exists within the area. This chapter aims to come to an understanding of the implications of the changes occurring within Ringsend on the established community.

The term 'community' must be looked at contextually. This chapter examines the fact that for the Ringsenders community is constituted through the formation of social relations based on spatial association, (Byrne, 2001). It is argued that for the Ringsenders community is embedded in, sustains, and is sustained by place. However, the global restructuring of capitalism has implications that reach beyond the realm of economics. This restructuring impacts on the daily lives of individuals, groups and communities.

Park's (1967) assertion that communities do not exist within urban contexts is not borne out in the stories my respondents tell of the established community that exists within

Ringsend. Bauman (2001) argues that the feeling that the word community evokes is in fact an imagined community. In contrast to Bauman, my respondents speak of the community he describes as 'imagined' as a sociological reality. This chapter shows that community, for my respondents, is the familiarity that people have with their neighbours and people throughout the area. These social relations are due to understandings and negotiations that have developed over time. Community for the Ringsenders is also a rich source of 'social capital' and a source of identity and identification. 'Communities of memory' are also found at the level of place, or neighbourhood, and based on collective activities that occurred within place and which are both defined by place and also help to define place.

A major part of the restructuring of place in Ringsend is through the construction of apartment complexes that serve to provide accommodation for a young, educated workforce. This chapter highlights the fact that these groups have little attachment to Ringsend as place or to the community that exists within the area. One consequence of this is the emergence of different 'types' of communities that are less bounded than those of the past. The apartment complexes within Ringsend can be characterised as new representations of place and new forms of identification with place. They also represent differing forms of community. Although community, defined by spatial proximity and spatial association, is only present within the gated communities in Ringsend in terms of recognition other forms of social networks exist which are not necessarily embedded in Ringsend. The forms of networks and communities that exist within the apartment complexes differ to the everyday understanding and practice of community by the Ringsenders.

A major objective of the DDDA is to develop the docklands into a model of sustainable inner city regeneration. This includes the integration of the newer residents and the existing communities into a city quarter. This chapter argues that there are no links between the two

groups and both are physically, economically and socially separated from each other. Evidence suggests the sharing of social capital between the established community and social preservationists but the latter constitute only a small constituency within the gentrifying population.

Some of the gentrifiers that reside in the apartment complexes define themselves as a transient population. In addition the apartments are not designed to cater for children. These developments have led to the displacement of some of the younger population of Ringsenders who due to rising residential costs cannot afford to remain in the area. It is argued that this type of development does not induce continuity of community rather it has the opposite effect. The apartments are in effect removing the children. It is the children who ensure the survival of the community.

This chapter argues that attachment to place is the main requirement for involvement in community issues. The majority of gentrifiers show minimal attachment to Ringsend as place thus impacting on community continuity. For the Ringsenders the sustainability of their neighbourhood is dependent on the sustainability of the existing community. It is argued that they feel that this is something that is not adequately addressed within the urban regeneration strategy for the area.

In the concluding chapter I draw together the key themes that have animated the thesis and identify the complex ways in which gentrification in Ringsend has proceeded. While it is clear that global processes touch down in Ringsend much as they do elsewhere, it is also noteworthy that the local context continues to structure sense of place and feelings of belonging to community. Furthermore, these two factors – sense of place and feelings of belonging – act as important bulwarks against the forces of gentrification.

# Shaping the Cityscape

## (1.1) Introduction

This chapter aims to come to an understanding of the processes that shape the city and the contemporary cityscape. The landscapes of cities are the result, and an expression, of economic, political, social and cultural processes within an historical setting. A city's landscape is also the outcome of the particular '...niche or specific node that a city occupies within the overall network', (Fainstein, 1996:170). In other words all cities are linked into a global economic system and each city occupies a specific niche within this system. The reorganisation of the global economy affects all cities. Although cities have to be examined within the context of their particular histories there are certain processes that affected the spatial and social organisation of the cityscape and it is these general processes that will be focused on.

While the built environment is dynamic certain changes produce structural transformations. Successive phases of capitalist development have spatial, social and political implications. The process of industrialisation and Fordism are examples of this. Within advanced capitalist societies, in the last few decades, another shift is now occurring. As such many cities are again in the process of structural transformation. This is attributed to the recent rise in new information technologies, decline in manufacturing, increased flexibility and changing lifestyles amongst other processes. These processes are contributing to the emergence of new 'types' of cities. These new 'types' of cities have been referred to as post-industrial (Bell 1973, Kumar 1995), post-Fordist (Harvey 1990, Amin 1994) or post-modern (Baudrillard 1988, Rose 1991). This chapter argues that all of these processes are interrelated and linked to changes in the configuration of capitalism. Multitudes of processes interact to produce changing cityscapes and all of these 'types' are evident within contemporary urban forms. The 'contemporary city' differs, in many respects, from the urban landscapes associated with the industrial revolution or Fordism.

This chapter will examine some of the factors that shape the cityscape, the trends associated with, and the implications of the structural transition taking place in advanced capitalist cities. It is within the transitions associated with the 'posts' that both contemporary Dublin, and Ringsend, are located. In order to gain a fuller understanding of the processes referred to as post-Fordist, post-industrial and post-modern each will be examined separately. I will then present an overview of the key characteristics of the theoretical approaches, identifying the points of intersection between all three. It will become clear that contemporary capitalism is both a complex economic system and a social system. The contemporary gentrification of Ringsend highlights this point.

## **(1.2) Shaping the modern cityscape**

According to Hall while the city is in a constant state of flux many of these changes can be regarded as:

...largely cosmetic and the underlying processes of urbanisation and the overall structure of the city remain largely unaltered. However, at certain periods fundamentally different processes of urbanisation have emerged; the result has been that the rate of urban change has accelerated and new, distinctly different, urban forms have developed, (1998:1).

These 'different processes of urbanisation' are linked to particular configurations of capitalism and to what Byrne (2001) defines as 'phase shifts'. Capitalism has contained many configurations however the two main configurations, for the purpose of this thesis, are Fordism and 'flexible accumulation' (Harvey, 1990). However, there have also been two 'phase shifts' which have transformed the urban landscape and 'the whole character of the social systems within which people lead their lives', (Byrne, 2001:2). This is not to say that there have not been other discontinuities but that these 'phase shifts' are changes in both quality and type, (Byrne, 2001:2) The first of these 'phase shifts' was the industrial revolution and the subsequent increase in urbanisation. The second 'phase shift' is now occurring in the advanced capitalist world and it is referred to variously as 'post-industrial', 'post-modern' or 'post Fordist'.

These changes, configurations and 'phase shifts' are not mutually exclusive categories but are all inextricably linked. These changes are also integrated into wider social and cultural processes. Changing economic and social forms are 'mutually constitutive'. 'This means that each realm affects the other but they have room for independent manoeuvre – no one sphere is totally determined by the other', (Knox and Pinch, 2000:24). However '..there can be no doubt that economic systems have a crucial impact on city forms and their social geography', (Knox and Pinch, 200:24). This section will briefly examine some of the factors associated with the industrial revolution and Fordism in order to show how capitalist configurations and 'phase shifts' (Byrne, 2001) not only have economic impacts but also have spatial, social and political implications. This will also provide the necessary background for an analysis of the 'posts'.

#### **(1.2.1) The Industrial Revolution and urbanisation**

The processes associated with the development of the modern city began with the industrial revolution and the industrial city. 'Industrial cities', or cities that have been influenced by the industrial revolution, constitute a large part of the urban systems of the UK, Europe and the USA, (Hall, 1998:5). It is necessary to highlight here that Dublin was never what can be described as classically industrial. However, parts of Dublin, and in particular inner city dockland areas, were heavily industrialised and contemporary development has impacted on the communities that developed around these industrial areas. Although many cities are now in, what has been termed, a 'post-industrial' phase they still bear the marks of industrialisation and this has affected contemporary development. According to Hall not only was the size and rapidity of growth of these cities new but also the forces that shaped this growth, (1998:7). The basis of the industrial town was a new system of production that emerged with the rise of industrial capitalism – the factory.

### *The Spatial Form of the Industrial City*

A city's spatial form is related to, but not totally determined by, the ability of capitalists to outbid each other for land within the city centre. As such, in this period, it was the ability of industry to outbid other land uses within the centre of cities that was fundamental to the spatial form of the industrial city. Therefore, new factories, warehouses and the shops and offices that depended on them occupied the best and most accessible sites within the city centres, (Knox and Pinch, 2000:28). It was industry that could pay the high rental prices demanded for these sites. Around the centre appeared tracts of 'working-class' housing to house the factory workers and their families. Limited space, maximisation of profits and the fact that there were no regulatory measures on housing standards led to high-density living.

The factories and warehouses, that were beginning to dominate the landscape of the city centre, began to edge out the wealthy groups who had been living there. However, those who could afford to move were also keen to physically distance themselves from the landscape of the factories and the initial atrocious conditions of the working-class housing that surrounded them. Combined with this transport services were improving so the wealthy, or 'middle-classes', moved out into newly built suburbs. As such not only were they now socially distant from the working-classes but also geographically, or physically distant as well. 'Social status, newly ascribed in terms of money, became synonymous with rent paying ability, so that neighbourhoods were, in effect, created along status divisions', (Knox and Pinch, 2000:28).

### *From Industrialisation onwards:*

The urban form, or the city, was not only growing at a rapid pace aided by new technology, new modes of production, and newly introduced planning laws but it was also becoming more and more differentiated and segregated.

Changes in building technology made it possible for cities to grow upwards as well as outwards, and the cyclical growth of the capitalist economy, with successive improvements in urban transport systems, produced a sequence of growth phases which endowed the modern city with a series of patchy but distinctive suburban zones, (Knox and Pinch, 2000:28).

The urban landscape has changed, since industrialisation, at a rapid pace. Some of these trends have included increased suburbanisation for both the middle-classes and the working-classes, de-industrialisation (where manufacturing has moved out of the city centre, and in many cases to regions outside the core Western areas) and the development of 'edge cities'. One major trend for the purpose of this thesis is the fact that the shift to a post-industrial economy has been accompanied by increased urban renewal particularly within the inner city. It is within this process of re-structuring that this thesis locates the process of the contemporary gentrification of many city centres. Since the 1980s a debate has been occupying the social sciences on whether we are witnessing the emergence of new 'types' of cities. The processes associated with this will be examined in the following sections.

### **(1.2.2) Fordism**

There are many different positions and schools of thought within Fordism and social scientists writing within this area have not produced a neat, coherent body of work. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine all of these arguments or 'positions' in detail. For a more detailed analysis see Aglietta 1979, Jessop 1992, Harvey 1985, Lipietz 1986, Boyer 1990, Harvey 1990, Esser and Hirsch 1994, Amin 1994. Here I will present an overview of the central concerns of Fordism in order to show how capitalist configurations extend beyond the realm of economics and have social and spatial implications. It is necessary to highlight that Dublin has never been classically Fordist to the extent of the industrial belts in the US and parts of Europe however, Fordist production methods have become widespread across all industrial sectors.

One of the arguments within the Fordist debate stems from the 'Regulation school' of French sociologists and is referred to as the 'Regulation approach' (Aglietta 1979, Boyer 1990, Lipietz 1986).

The regulation approach was pioneered in France in the 1970s, and refined in the 1980s, by political economists attempting to explain the dynamics of long-term cycles of economic stability and change, (Amin, 1994:7)

The regulation approach recognises the tendency within capitalism for instability and crisis as identified by Marx. When faced with such crisis capitalism has the propensity to change and the '...ability to coalesce and stabilise around a set of institutions, rules and norms which serve to secure a relatively long period of economic growth', (Amin, 1994:7). For the 'Regulation School' the history of capitalist development is marked by successive 'modes of development'. Each 'mode of development' consists of a particular 'regime of accumulation' and 'mode of regulation'. The 'regime of accumulation' refers to a 'set of regularities at the level of the whole economy, enabling a more or less coherent process of capital accumulation', (Nielsen, 1991:22). Therefore it is a particular set of arrangements whereby the process of capital accumulation is facilitated. 'It implies some correspondence between the transformation of both the conditions of production and the conditions of reproduction of wage earners', (Harvey, 1990:121).

The 'mode of regulation' 'refers to the institutional ensemble (laws, agreements, etc.) and the complex of cultural habits and norms which secures capitalist reproduction as such. It consists of a set of 'formal or informal "rules" that codify the main social relationships, (Nielsen, 1991: 22).

It is the set of institutional arrangements that facilitates the process of capital accumulation.

It is the bringing together of:

...the behaviours of all kinds of individuals- capitalists, workers, state employees, financiers, and all manner of other political-economic agents – into some kind of configuration that will keep the regime of accumulation functioning, (Harvey, 1990:121).

Fordism was a specific 'regime of accumulation' which was facilitated by a specific 'mode of regulation'. For Harvey the symbolic initiation date of Fordism was 1914 when Ford

introduced his five-dollar, eight-hour day to workers who manned his recently installed car-assembly line, (1990:125). However, Fordism as a 'regime of accumulation' and a 'mode of regulation' was installed in capitalist economies during the inter-war years but became prevalent during the post-war boom. It spanned approximately 50 years from the 1920s -1970s and was at its peak during the post World War 2 reconstruction period until the late 1960s / early 1970s, (Harvey, 1990).

Fordism is characterised by the widespread mass production of standardised goods. It is based on the assembly-line production methods pioneered by Henry Ford whereby machinery was fixed purpose and designed to cater for long production runs. Ford's innovations were greatly influenced by Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management* (1911). Ford's innovations swept through the industrial sector and became known as the Fordist regime of accumulation – Fordism. It must be noted that not all workers will be involved in this production. Fordism did not eliminate all other forms of production techniques like craft workers. However, Fordist methods became the driving force of the economy, and in particular the US economy, especially from 1945 onwards.

Fordism is more than a production process or principles of Taylorism:

What was special about Ford (and what ultimately separates Fordism from Taylorism), was his vision, his explicit recognition that mass production meant mass consumption, a new system of the reproduction of labour power, a new politics of labour control and management, a new aesthetics and psychology, in short, a new kind of rationalized, modernist, and populist democratic society, (Harvey, 1990: 125-126).

Ford's 'five-dollar, eight-hour day' had a dual purpose. It was offered as an incentive to workers whose jobs had been de-skilled and it insured workers, and their families had both the income and the leisure time to 'consume' and absorb the volume of mass-produced goods. For Ford, it was also necessary to create a discerning consumer.

...in 1916, Ford sent...social workers into the homes of his...workforce to ensure that the 'new man' of mass production had the right kind of moral probity, family life, and capacity for prudent (i.e. non-alcoholic) and 'rational' consumption to live up to corporate needs and expectations..... Questions of sexuality, the family,

forms of moral concern, of consumerism, and of state action, were, in Gramsci's view, all bound up with the search to forge a particular kind of worker 'suited to the new type of work and production process', (Harvey, 1990:126).

For Gramsci (1971) Fordism had wide-ranging social implications, as it was more than a specific mode of production it was also a specific 'mode of living'. Fordism needed a specific 'type of individual' with a specific 'type of lifestyle', (Gramsci, 1971). This in essence was a nuclear family not only for reproduction of the workforce but also as a 'prudent' and 'rational' consumer unit that would absorb the quantity of mass-produced goods. For Gramsci (1971) the period of Fordism was also an attempt to regulate sexual and familial life. This is evident by the fact that in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s bitter struggles ensued as crackdowns against gay individuals, and the spaces they occupied, occurred. These laws also lead to struggles through which individuals redefine their own experiences and identities. Therefore although Fordism may have attempted to produce a specific 'type' of individual there will always be groups who will resist this and in doing so construct varying 'types' of identities.

Fordism also meant a commodification of culture. The 1950s and 1960s have been defined as the 'Western consumer boom'. This is not to imply economics determining cultural forms but in fact the two realms fed into each other to produce varying forms of consumerism. The post-war period saw a new demand for consumer products and also an increase in the commodities available. According to Chaney (1996) prior to the Second World War consumerism had been essentially a middle-class activity. However, post 1945 increases in living standards resulted in consumption becoming an accepted part of life for the working-classes as well, (Chaney, 1996). For example this period encompassed the rise of the 'youth market'. During this period of economic growth teenagers had more disposable funds and as such they had become a significant market attraction. Consumer items such as fashion clothes, records, make-up etc. were targeted directly at this group. However, coupled with this was a desire among this group towards distinctive forms of

collective identities. Consumerism had become a way both to express and construct identity. Therefore although Fordism did, as Gramsci notes, produce a particular 'mode of living' it must also be acknowledged that the rise in disposable income also allowed specific groups to express and construct a multitude of life-style choices. It is this combination that in effect produced various forms of lifestyles or modes of living.

After the 1920s and 1930s mass production dominated the leading industries however the 'mode of regulation' suitable to Fordism was only fully installed in capitalist societies after the Second World War. For a detailed discussion of Fordism and how the 'mode of social regulation' that facilitated Fordist growth was implemented across capitalist societies see Pugh and Hickson 1989; Walsh and Dear 1989; Harvey, 1990; Amin, 1994; Schirato and Webb, 2003. In brief 'Fordism is summarized as the age of 'intensive accumulation' with 'monopolistic regulation' of the economy', (Amin, 1994:9). It is represented by national corporations, the nation state as a unit of production and regulation, distinct classes based on manual and non-manual workers, standardised welfare provision, the standardisation of education, mass production of standardised goods based on 'rigid' technologies and mass consumption.

### **Spatial Implications of Fordism**

According to Harvey economic growth was also assured through State-sponsored reconstruction of war-torn economies, suburbanization particularly in the United States, and urban renewal, (1990:132). Fordism continued the basic drive of the Industrial Revolution. The period of Fordism produced, especially in the United States, a proliferation of suburban areas. This was connected to the 'specific mode of living' referred to by Gramsci. Suburbia was based around the concept of the nuclear family and the construction of these new residential areas coupled with the 'type of lifestyle' encouraged within these areas created the demand necessary to absorb large volumes of mass produced goods. Suburbanisation also allowed for the expansion and growth of the

city. For Lash and Urry (1987) Fordism is characterised by the geographical and spatial concentration of people and production in industrial towns and cities.

Production was located in advanced capitalist economies however there was a spatial division of labour within these areas. Advances in technology created a dual labour market of primary and secondary workers. Primary workers were skilled non-routine workers such as management, engineers, scientist's etc. These tend to concentrate in cities so therefore company headquarters and research built up in these core areas. Secondary workers perform unskilled routine work so this aspect of production, aided by advances in transport and telecommunications, could be located anywhere where there was space and a plentiful labour supply - at this stage this was usually in periphery areas of the home country. Therefore, the centre of 'the city' began a process of change from one that was dominated by industry and manufacturing to one where industry began to move out to other regions.

Fordism as a 'regime of accumulation' and a 'mode of regulation' formed the basis of the post-war boom, which lasted until the oil crisis of 1973. However Fordism has been achieving comparative declines in output in many advanced capitalist countries since the 1960s due to a combination of factors. One of these factors was market saturation. The oil crisis saw Fordism reach a crisis point highlighted by further declining productivity. Capitalism responded to this crisis by creating a system of 'global Fordism'. Production moved to cheap wage region of the world referred to as Newly Industrialising Countries (East Asia, South America and parts of Southern Europe) while central control, research and design remained in core urban areas of advanced industrial countries. This in effect created an international division of labour. Another response to the crisis has been termed 'post-Fordism' which has seen the dominance of a different 'regime of accumulation' and 'mode of regulation'. The implications of this will be examined in the following sections.

### **(1.2.3) Modernity**

In general historical terms, 'modernity' refers to the period since the Middle Ages and the Renaissance and is associated with the replacement of 'traditional' society by 'modern' social forms. The process of 'modernisation' can be viewed as the overall societal process, including industrialisation, by which previously agrarian societies developed. This section is not intended to be an examination of the factors associated with modernity. For a more detailed analysis of this see Berman, 1982; Habermas, 1983; Soja, 1989. This section will briefly examine the link between modernity and urban design.

According to Harvey the need to confront the problems of massive urbanization was one of the seed-beds in which the modernist movements flourished, (1990:25). Indeed much modernist thinking and practice was in response to the crisis of urban organisation, impoverishment and congestion. For Harvey there is a strong connection between the 'garden city' proposals of Ebenezer Howard (1898), Daniel Burnham's 'White City' (1893), Garnier's 'linear industrial city' (1903), among others, and the large-scale urban renewal efforts undertaken in the 1950s and 1960s in the spirit of high modernism, (1990:25-26). This specific strand of modernism, that which believes that rational planning can alleviate both the problems associated with urban growth and the unequalness of the capitalist system merely produced urban forms that displayed the power divisions evident within the system in the urban landscape itself. Building large scale housing projects to house the working-classes produced images of power while simultaneously alienating and segregating people who had no power to incorporate their own needs into these environments.

In Dublin, Ballymun, St. Michael's and Fatima Mansions are examples of these modernist flat complexes. It is interesting that these are all in the process of being demolished as it is assumed that the built environment itself is in some way responsible for the 'problems' associated with these areas. While there does seem to be a valid issue concerning unrestricted access and security within the flats this alone is not the cause of the 'problems'

experienced within these estates. These 'problems' include poverty, unemployment, violence, drug addiction and a high incidence of lone young unmarried mothers. To view the built environment as the source of all social ills ignores the structures of inequalities that are evident in contemporary Irish society. This is not to say that the built environment is not important in the lives of the residents but that its significance can be overstated. One needs to understand society in terms of differences in access to the means in order to improve standards of living. Within Ringsend both modern and post-modern complexes are juxtaposed with each other revealing not only differences in architectural style but also in lifestyle. Visual evidence of this is provided in Chapter Four.

The general processes, which shaped the modern city, are deeply connected to the industrial revolution and Fordism. The project of modernity also impacted on the urban landscape producing large-scale housing developments, which although housed many people also produced segregation. It is clear that phases of capitalist development not only have a crucial impact on the urban form but also have social and political implications. The contemporary city is changing and is being shaped by a different set of processes associated with the shift to a 'post' society. The implications of these shifts are crucial in understanding Ringsend's changing landscape. The following sections will explore these processes.

### **(1.3) Defining the 'posts'**

It is important to consider what exactly is being conveyed when using the prefix of 'post'. Although for some these emerging new trends represent a break with the past it is also argued that these are a modification of old trends. (see Byrne, 2001). I do not contend that the 'transition' occurring at present is a definite break with the past or a clear break between definite phases.

Reliance on sharp distinctions between phases has been criticised for falling prey, in its worst applications, to a logic of binary contrasts between, say, rigid or collective 'old times' and flexible or individualistic 'new times', (Amin, 1994:3).

There is no definite break between industrial/post-industrial, Fordism/post-Fordism and modern/post-modern as all aspects of these processes are evident within societies to differing degrees. However according to Amin:

It seems that capitalism is at a crossroads in its historical development signalling the emergence of forces – technological, market, social and institutional – that will be very different from those which dominated the economy after the Second World War’, (1994:1).

It is important to acknowledge that the transitions occurring are ‘uneven’. The transition from an industrial to a post-industrial world is occurring in advanced capitalist economies and also within the metropolitan core of these societies. In addition manufacturing employment, although declining, is still an important component of these economies. The urban world is to a large degree still an industrial world, (Byrne, 2001:23-24). The ‘posts’, as referred to within this chapter, are concerned with transitions that are occurring at present however, these are dynamic, uneven and their outcomes are not determined. The following sections aim to come to an understanding of these emerging forces and their implications for the cityscape.

#### **(1.4) Post-industrialism**

Daniel Bell (1973) is best known for advancing the theory of post-industrial society. For Bell the post-industrial society is a world in which information matters more than physical goods. Bell’s theory has been enlarged and debated by other social theorists. There are many strands and positions within the post-industrial debate and this section will only provide an overview. For Bell (1973) some of the characteristics of post-industrial society include:

- The move from a society in which the manufacture of physical goods was the dominant economic activity to one in which the production of services now dominates the economy.
- The dominance of a professional and technical class: The move from a society dominated by industry to one dominated by services would also include a growth in a

highly educated workforce of professionals that this service sector would require. For Bell the most senior of these service workers, the professional and technical class, become the ruling class of the new society.

- The importance of 'theoretical scientific knowledge': For Bell it was theoretical scientific knowledge, which would become the axial principle of the post-industrial society, (Rose, 1991:29). The reason that the professional and technical class becomes the ruling class of society is due to their control of knowledge, which is vital in this new information age. Knowledge thus becomes the main strategic resource and the source for growth.
- Information: Computer and data-transmission systems become the transforming agents of post-industrial society. (Bell, 1973).

But the basic idea of the post-industrial society was the movement to a service society and the rapid growth of professional and technical employment, (Kumar 1978:185-240).

...the transition from an industrial society, in which the basis of most people's livelihoods was waged work making material thing- to a postindustrial society in which most of us still work for wages but more and more of us are now making immaterial services and signs, (Byrne, 2001:02).

One of the characteristics associated with post-industrial society is an increase in jobs within the service sector. This has corresponded with a decline in manufacturing employment due to productivity gains, plant closure and the relocation of some of this employment to NIC's. Between '..1971 and 1991 London lost 70% of their total of manufacturing jobs while experiencing growth in jobs in financial services and health and educational employment', (Byrne, 2001:29). Within Ireland manufacturing employment has decreased from 237,146 in 1996 to 225,020 in 2002. (Source: Central Statistics Office, *Census of Population* 1996, vol. 7, table 1; Census 2002, vol. 6, table 1). Since the 1980s industrial share of total employment has steadily declined from 32 per cent in 1981 to 25 per cent in 2002. (Source: Central Statistics Office, Census 2002, *Principle Socio-Economic Results*, figure 2). In contrast employment in the service sectors stood at 37% of total employment in 1936, this had increased to 59% in 1992 and had further increased to

69% in 2002. (Source: Central Statistics Office, Census 2002, *Principle Socio-Economic Results*, figure 2). Similar growth in the service sector is to be found within the United States and in other advanced capitalist countries. One of the reasons for the growth in services is peoples desire to fulfil post-material needs:

As people become better off in absolute terms they can spend more of their income on services as opposed to, first, basics such as food and shelter, and second, manufactured goods, (Byrne, 2001:48).

The post-industrial society is also characterised by an increase in those employed in professional, administrative and managerial employment. As Kumar notes:

Over the century, the censuses do indeed record a striking rise in the number of professional, administrative and managerial employees. From constituting no more than 5-10 per cent of the work-force at the beginning of the century, they now in all western societies make up between 20-25 per cent of workers, (Kumar, 1995:25).

Within Ireland employment in these sectors is steadily increasing. Employment in the Professional, Technical and Health sectors increased from 183,899 in 1991 to 225,855 in 1996 and had further increased to 293,794 in 2002. (Source: Central Statistics Office, *Census of Population*, 1996, vol. 7, table 1; Census 2002, vol. 6, table 1). Managerial and technical workers have also increased from 579,867 in 1996 to 752,147 in 2002. (Source: Central Statistics Office, *Census of Population* 2002, vol. 6, table 17). The number of professional workers has increased from 118,888 in 1991 to 140,016 in 1996 and this has further increased to 176, 886 in 2002. (Source: Central Statistics Office, *Census of Population* 1996, vol. 7, Table 18; *Census of population* 2002, vol. 6, table 17). Clerical, Managing and Government workers have increased from 246,205 in 1996 to 318,565 in 2002; Sales and Commerce workers have increased from 195,666 in 1996 to 239,915 in 2002; (Source: Central Statistics Office, *Census of Population* 1996, vol. 7, table 1; *Census of Population* 2002, vol. 6, table 1). However, in addition there has also been a significant increase in employment within the sector of personal services. Personal service employment has increased from 85,911 in 1991 to 126,592 in 1996 to 151,312 in 2002.

(Source: Central Statistics Office, *Census of Population 1996*, vol. 7, Table 8; *Census of Population 2002*, vol. 6, table 8). This sector of employment is relatively low- paid in comparison to the 'knowledge' sector. This gives rise to a dual labour force. As Ireland is becoming post-industrial, it also is experiencing a widening gap between the high earners and the lower paid.

A post-industrial society relies on service industries, knowledge-production, and information technology to create wealth. This is in direct contrast to the majority of Western societies from the industrial revolution onwards whereby industrial manufacturing was the main source of wealth creation. As a result the education system, particularly Third Level institutions, has become an important component of the economy. Within Ireland the proportion of people in the labour force with a Third Level qualification increased from 25.4 per cent in 1996 to 32.1 per cent in 2002. (Source: Central Statistics Office, *Census 2002, Principle Socio-Economic Results*, table G).

The theories of post-industrial society were enlarged into the view of contemporary society as not just a post-industrial society but as 'the information society'. For Bell (1980) it is the convergence of the computer with telecommunications, which has resulted in the dawn of the information society. These combined have resulted in the fact that knowledge can be processed and communicated at the same time. The invention of the communications satellite has resulted in instant global communication. 'The combination of satellites, television, telephone, fibre optic cables, and microelectronic computers has meshed the world together into a unified knowledge grid', (Kumar, 1995:10). Information of all types can be retrieved instantly from the home or office from all parts of the globe at any time to suit individual needs and tastes. In this way information technology leads to a time/space compression that wasn't in existence prior to the advent of this technology. According to Naisbitt for the first time we are a truly global economy, because for the first time we have on the planet instantaneously shared information, (1984: 57).

These technological advances have, according to information society theorists, led to a situation where we now mass-produce information and as such the central variables of the information society are information and knowledge. Thus, the organisation of information flows becomes the predominant factor in the information society and as such 'knowledge' and 'information' workers become dominant. The growth of the information society is highlighted by a steady growth in employment in computer/software occupations and scientific and technical occupations. Within Ireland employment in Computer/Software occupations increased from 13,958 in 1991 to 19,598 in 1996 and had further increased to 37,770 in 2002. Employment in Scientific and Technical occupations increased from 25,083 in 1991 to 35,319 in 1996 and had further increased to 52,796 in 2002. (Source: Central Statistics Office, *Census of Population 1996*, vol. 7, table 8; *Census of Population 2002*, vol. 6, table 8).

Theoretical debates over the nature of this transition have been intensifying and much research has built on the concept of the post-industrial society. The nature of this transition has been defined by numerous terms, which have included 'information society', 'service economy', 'knowledge economy' and 'global knowledge economy'. For a full range of discussions see Castells, 1996; Giddens, 2000; Cooke, 2002; Rodrigues, 2002. Within all of these debates it is the growing role of innovation and knowledge that is emphasised. Alongside these discussions there has also been an attempt to define the implications of these transformations for spatial systems. It is argued that cities and city-regions are both crucial for national economic growth and also are becoming crucial nodes within the global economy. (Hall, 1984; Castells, 1989; Sassen, 1991; Soja, 1995; Simmie, 2001). According to Sokol (2004) the Dublin metropolitan region could be taken as a case in point. This region is both the engine for Irish economic growth and employment while also becoming increasingly connected with the global economy. Much of the growth within the Dublin region is based on what can be termed 'knowledge industries'.

It is knowledge itself that is the source of value in the post-industrial society. For post-industrial theorists like Bell 1973, 1980, Naisbitt 1984, Stonier 1983 and Masuda 1985 these changes are to be welcomed. In fact for some the post-industrial society has become equated with a more democratic, peaceful and equal society. The dissemination of information to all is seen as a means of making injustices more visible and thus eliminating their occurrence. Also it is envisioned that the computer will cancel out the need for many types of labour thus leaving people free to educate themselves and also free to pursue other activities. In fact the information society is seen as providing equal opportunity and access to knowledge and is thus for some seen as a classless society.

It is difficult to argue with the fact that information technology has had a huge impact on contemporary society and flows of information have connected people across the globe in many ways. Castells argues that we now live in an informational global economy – a 'Network Society' (1996). It is also difficult to argue with the fact that there has been an increase in 'knowledge' and 'information' workers in professional, technical and financial sectors. Also information technology has made it possible to forge global connections and to transmit global images, which impacts on culture in many ways. However, claims that the information society is one based on a 'global-village', equality and the elimination of class distinctions is rather more difficult to accept. In order to argue this point it is first necessary to examine '...the clearly capitalist character of much IT activity', (Kumar, 1995:31).

Multinational corporations are both the main developers and the main users of information technology. Multinational organisations operate on a global scale and as such need to utilise the most up to date information technology in order to co-ordinate all of their activities. In addition in this era of 'flexible accumulation' speed of delivery of information relating to market changes is of utmost importance. Global communications allow corporations to keep their 'fingers on the pulse' and in effect this gives them a competitive

edge in volatile markets. According to Byrne '....global companies operate through information nets which now might be considered to constitute the real structure of the enterprise', (Byrne, 2001:47).

This need for information technology has resulted in the fact that:

...a powerful new group of IT multinationals has risen to prominence. These then not only further the growth of IT by their own organizational needs but are active in generating and pressing new services on other giants. These others ....begin to move in on the act. A spiral develops whose main effect is the continuous creating of IT goods, services and workers (Webster and Robins 1986: 219-56; Douglas and Guback 1984:234-5; Traber 1986:3), (Kumar, 1995:29).

The continuous creation of IT goods and services requires an expansion of markets. As such the expansion of the office into the home is now becoming a regular feature within advanced capitalist societies. The distinction between the office and the home is becoming blurred, as is the boundary between work and leisure. It is multinational corporations who gain most by eliminating these distinctions. New technologies are being used to expand markets and increase profits. The main objective is capital accumulation. The information society is in effect a feature of advanced capitalism and not a 'new' society.

In contrast to the view that promotes a positive and unproblematic impression of the shift to a post-industrial society Drudy and Punch highlight the fact that there is a growing body of evidence that points to a new and intensifying trend towards polarisation in the developed nations, (2000: 220). It is clear that there is a dual economy evident within Irish society. This situation is reflected in the 2005 Human Development Report, published by the UN Development Programme on the 7<sup>th</sup> September. The report found that 15.2 per cent of the Irish population lived in poverty. Only Italy and the US had a higher poverty rate among the 18 industrialised countries surveyed. In general the report found that of the top 30 most developed countries in the world Ireland was placed fourth in terms of inequality. In Ireland the richest 10 per cent of the population had 9.7 times more wealth than the poorest 10 per cent, (Joe Humphreys, *The Irish Times*, September 8, 2005). Post-industrial

growth in Ireland has not produced a more equal society rather the trend is towards growing inequality and polarisation. As such the claim to greater equality and the end of 'class' society is unfounded. The widening gap between the relatively rich and poor highlighted by the dual labour force is evidence of this. In addition an analysis of Ringsend shows that class not only matters but also plays a crucial role in the lives of many of my respondents. An analysis of Ringsend also shows that the shift to a post-industrial society is not unproblematic as it impacts on place.

It is argued that these changes are beneficial because they lead to productivity growth and economic growth. However these views ignore some very important dimensions of the process. According to Massey (1995) there has been an increasing division between 'mental' and 'manual' labour which has led to the geographical restructuring of functions. For Drudy and Punch this is highlighted by the fact that 'higher end' functions (headquarters and R&D) are concentrated in core cities to benefit from sophisticated infrastructure or the availability of highly skilled labour. In contrast manufacture and assembly functions may be 'decentralised' from traditional industrial regions to take advantage of cheaper, unorganised labour reserves in the 'periphery' or less developed countries, (2000: 218). This has important consequences for regional inequality however it also has important consequences for previously industrial regions and inner city areas. Due to de-industrialisation many areas underwent a period of economic decline. Many inner city areas in particular have experienced periods of dis-investment resulting in rising unemployment figures and the dereliction of the built environment. Therefore this thesis argues that these changes are not universally beneficial.

It would seem that the Irish economy conforms to Bell's analysis of post-industrial society and theories of the 'information society'. Indeed according to Peillon Ireland has a '...fast-growing post-industrial economy', (2002:38). A post-industrial economy is characterised by:

..a predominance of services; a highly educated labour force; a reliance on the handling of information associated with a high level of 'theoretical' and scientific knowledge, (Peillon, 2002:47).

As examined there has been a steady growth in all of these sectors. Statistically it is clear that Ireland is indeed entering a post-industrial phase. However, Ireland's shift to a post-industrial economy differs to other core capitalist countries. Theories of post-industrial society examine the movement from an industrial to a post-industrial society however Ireland does not fall neatly into this pattern. Ireland seems to have skipped the heavily industrialised stage that characterised much of the development of other Western countries.

This is highlighted in the following quote:

Intel, Gateway, Hewlett Packard and Dell all have manufacturing plants in the country, which is now also the world's second largest software producer. Microsoft has its European headquarters in Sandymount in South Dublin, while home-grown companies such as Iona and Trintech are becoming known in the world market. ...the country seems to have leapt from being largely farming based and pre-industrial to knowledge-based and post-industrial in a very short space of time, (Moore, 1998: 3-4).

Ireland has not gradually moved from an industrial to a post-industrial society rather as Moore states the country seems to have 'leapt' into a post-industrial phase in a relatively short space of time. This has occurred with the 'type' of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) attracted to the country. Ireland's shift to a post-industrial economy is the culmination of a series of government policies that aimed to attract high-tech foreign investment, our young educated workforce and our position as an export platform to Europe. According to O'Hearn it was increasing international trade, rather than domestic trade, which enabled both Ireland's economic growth and post-industrial growth. (see O'Hearn, 2003). However, according to Ó Riain (2000) investment in electrical engineering and computer science third-level education, which was aimed at attracting foreign investment, produced a number of students who also joined Irish-owned software firms:

State policy to attract trans-nationals had the largely unintended consequence therefore of helping to create the technical professional labour force that would form the basis of indigenous software, (Ó Riain, 2000: 241).

According to Ó Riain the Irish-owned software sector is one of the leading emerging software sectors in the world, (2003: 238). Although Ireland's post-industrial economy is heavily dependent on foreign firms the policies put in place to attract these firms have also helped to develop an indigenous software sector, which also is responsible for Ireland's emerging post-industrial economy.

Contemporary Ireland is characterised by an expanding economic base and a favourable position in the global economy. (see Allen, 2000; Kirby, 2002). This is due to the type of open trade, high technology economy that has evolved in recent decades. Ireland's economic growth in the 1990s was the culmination of a series of governmental policies, which sought to integrate the Irish economy more fully into global capitalism. The term 'Celtic Tiger' is evidence of the economic success of these policies.

There are over 1,000 foreign owned companies employing 129,000 people based in Ireland and overall, foreign direct investment accounts for €72 billion in exports and it generates over €18 billion into the Irish economy every year. Nine of the top ten pharmaceutical companies in the world are based in Ireland and, in fact Ireland is the world's largest exporter of software. International consultants A.T. Kearney has termed Ireland the most globalised economy in the world, (Buckley, 2006: 3).

Ireland's economy is now tied into the economies of the advanced capitalist countries, in particular the United States, and as such is a part of the networks of flows that exist between these countries. How Ireland and 'Irishness' is constructed has also changed during this phase of economic success. Gone is the image constructed by de Valera of Ireland as an agrarian society and in its place Ireland, and particularly Dublin is being sold as a post-industrial, vibrant and cosmopolitan society.

### **(1.5) Post-Fordism**

There seems to be a consensus within the social science literature that since the 1970s there has been, and continues to be, a transition from one form of capitalist development to another. One of these transitions has been described as a move from Fordism to post-Fordism. Like Fordism there are many strands and positions within the post-Fordist debate.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore the breadth of these debates nor would this section be sufficient to do full justice to the range of literature produced within this field. For a more detailed analysis of these debates see Amin 1984 and for a fuller exploration of specific positions see Piore and Sable 1984, Lash and Urry 1987, Harvey and Scott 1988, Schoenberger 1988, Scott 1988, Sabel 1989, Harvey 1990, Boyer 1991, Jessop 1992. Here I will present an overview of the central concerns of post-Fordism, the challenge to mass production and the rise of flexible technologies and 'flexible accumulation', (Harvey, 1990).

In the late 1960s signs of problems within Fordism emerged as many of the mass production industries began to experience declines in output and employment.

More generally, the period from 1965 to 1973 was one in which the inability of Fordism and Keynesianism to contain the inherent contradictions of capitalism became more and more apparent, (Harvey, 1990: 142).

In brief the weaknesses of the Fordist system were exposed by a combination of the following factors: the 1970s economic crisis; increased unemployment; the rigidity of the unions and government policies on wage agreements; spiralling welfare state costs coupled with increasing competition from Newly Industrialising Countries; market saturation and an inability to cater for growing niche markets. For Callinicos (1989) the demise of Fordism, as the dominant mode of production, can also be contributed to the rise of the 'new' middle-class of white-collar workers who usually perform managerial and supervisory tasks and who wield considerable social power. This class '...distinguishes itself more by its spending than its saving', (Callinicos, 1989:163). According to Callinicos this class has created its own culture and the validity of this rests on its good taste or in effect its outward display of designer and limited edition goods. Crucially, the spending power of this class is not geared towards mass-produced goods, but rather toward specialist goods. Fordist production methods therefore, can no longer cater for their needs and as a result new forms of production methods evolve.

On the surface the difficulties of Fordism can, for Harvey, be best captured by one word 'rigidity', (1990:142). This is rigidity in all aspects- machinery, labour relations, state policies etc. 'The 1970s and 1980s have consequently been a troubled period of economic restructuring and social and political readjustment', (Harvey, 1990:145). This period saw the beginnings of a move to a 'new' regime of accumulation. Harvey describes this 'new' regime of accumulation as 'flexible accumulation'. According Johnson et al (1994) flexible accumulation:

...rests on a startling flexibility with respect to labour processes, labour markets, products and patterns of consumption...emergence of entirely new sectors of production, (1994:202).

Others describe this 'new' regime of accumulation as 'flexible specialization' and argue that both skilled craft production methods and flexible manufacturing technologies have co-existed since the nineteenth century and at certain times conditions are ripe for one to become dominant over the other. Since the 1970s the climate has been ripe for the rise of 'flexible specialization'. (see Piore and Sabel 1984, Sabel and Zeitlin 1985, Hirst and Zietlin 1989, 1991). This section will refer to post-Fordist production methods as 'flexible accumulation'.

While Fordism was in the midst of its crisis a number of regions were experiencing rapid growth. These regions included The Third Italy (Italy), Second Denmark (Jutland), Silicon Valley (United States) and Route 128 (United States). Sabel defines these areas as integrated units of production, (1989:18). The similarities shared by these regions are at the heart of 'flexible accumulation'. Growth has come about in many cases due to changes in production systems and organisation of firms. This new development mainly consists of:

..ensembles of flexible production such as (i) selected high technology industries, (ii) revitalised craft speciality production, and (iii) producer and financial services, (Wolch and Dear, 1989:21).

In all of these sectors it is flexible production methods which constitute a basic principle of organisation. This is in direct contrast to Fordism. Flexible production methods are also

present within Ireland. The investment in education and telecommunications in Ireland was originally aimed at attracting FDI by providing a flexible and suitably qualified workforce. This policy was successful and as examined a multitude of major players within the computer industry have chosen to locate in Ireland. In addition a positive and unexpected spin-off has been the emergence of a dynamic indigenous Irish Software Industry. It has been commented that Ireland has become an offshore Silicon Valley, (Ó Riain, 1997). These companies epitomise the regime of flexible accumulation - young, trendy, dynamic, flexible, mobile, informal and often see work as a hobby being referred to as 'Celtic Nerds'. The predominance of multi-national corporations within the Irish economy also epitomises the flexibility and mobility of capital flows.

The characteristics of flexible accumulation include flexible machines, flexible manufacturing systems, flexible workers, flexible organisational structures and a restructured welfare state, (for a detailed discussion see Harvey, 1990). The changes to a new mode of production have been made possible by the development of new technologies. New technologies have been used to sever the rigidities in production, organisation and consumption which have led to increased profits. The machinery used during Fordism was fixed purpose however with the advent of computer technology one machine can be used to manufacture small production runs of a variety of products. New technologies were also used to link production with marketing, design and inventory departments thereby providing greater flexibility to adjust to rapidly changing markets. Greater flexibility has also been provided by decentralisation and externalisation via subcontracting. This allows companies to cater for the increasing market segmentation and volatile markets that have developed over the last few decades. It must also be noted that market segmentation is conducive to flexible accumulation, as it is a means of increasing profits.

The conditions of survival have changed under this regime and corporations need to respond instantly to rapidly changing markets. A key factor, which enables this, is 'knowledge'. This knowledge takes many forms – knowledge of technology, of markets, of competition etc. For Harvey 'knowledge' has become a key commodity in the era of post-Fordism. It is clear that there is a link between the shift to a post-industrial society and a post-Fordist society. As markets have become more specialist and volatile than those under Fordism there is reliance on:

..skills, flexibility and networking between task-specialist units in order to produce changing volumes and combination of goods without incurring productivity losses, (Amin, 1994:20).

This is achieved by sub-contracting and 'Just-In-Time' delivery services as well as the fact that advanced technologies are playing an important role in integrating firms and in keeping firms 'up to date' with changing markets. Ireland's position as a 'regional economic gateway' (Friemann, *Irish Times*, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2003) means that it must be able to rapidly respond to volatile markets. Flexible organisational structures are also present in the Irish economy. In fact flexibility is what has brought about a growth in linkages and downstream employment. The emergence of 'Just-In-Time' delivery expectations has necessitated the location of sub-suppliers close to customers and firms to facilitate information flow and prompt delivery. As such there has been a large increase in sub-supply firms within Ireland. In fact this surge of competition among sub-supply firms led to a statement by AST in Limerick that they '..believe that the battle ground is now supply chain versus supply chain', (*Sunday Post*, 25<sup>th</sup> May 1997). This quote demonstrates the trend to externalisation and the close involvement between multinational corporations and sub-supplier.

Intel's location in Leixlip, Co Kildare can be seen as a spatial consequence of flexibilisation in that it is located away from the historic industrial areas on a green field site in an attractive physical environment. It is adjacent to a large urban area with a ready

supply of appropriately educated young people in both the primary and secondary groupings. The good infrastructure allows access to airports etc. The labour force is flexible and non-unionised. One of the reasons Intel chose to locate adjacent to a large urban area, and a university, was to avail of an adequate supply of appropriately skilled workers. Hewlett-Packard's subsequent decision to locate close to Intel to access the labour supply is an example of the reagglomeration of manufacturing industry.

For Harvey 'economies of scale' under Fordism have been replaced by 'economies of scope' under flexible accumulation – i.e. the ability to manufacture goods cheaply in small batches, (1990). However, this does not mean that mass manufacturing has come to an end in advanced capitalist economies as many goods are still mass-produced. Rather, we are talking about dominant methods of profit making. Although small businesses tend to be successful in a climate of volatile markets this has not eradicated the large corporations that existed under Fordism as sub-contracting is used to protect large corporations from market fluctuations. The rise of smaller firms and sub-contracting also opens up opportunities for both new small businesses and the revival of older forms of industrial organisation due to the rise of 'custom markets'. The changes in production noted above have not meant an end to corporate power:

Indeed, to the degree that information and the ability to make swift decisions in a highly uncertain, ephemeral, and competitive environment became crucial to profits, the well organized corporation has marked competitive advantages over small business, (Harvey, 1990:158).

At one end of the scale the small businesses and self-employed sector has grown but so also have the larger corporations. This is shown by the fact '...that flexible accumulation has been conducive to massive mergers and corporate diversification's', (Harvey, 1990:158). There has also been an increase in global corporate power and the development of a new international division of labour '...characterized by an internationalization of production which is driven by multinational concerns', (Esser and Hirsch, 1994:79). New

technologies allow for corporations to relocate production to various regions and countries on a flexible basis. Capital itself has become more flexible and can move freely in search for profit. Therefore global corporations seem to wield a lot of power. When these are all combined the global financial system is hard to grasp. Harvey explains this in terms of a 'dual movement':

..on the one hand towards the formation of financial conglomerates and brokers of extraordinary global power, and, on the other hand, a rapid proliferation and decentralization of financial activities and flows through the creation of entirely new financial instruments and markets, (1990:161).

The rise of flexible accumulation has also been accompanied by a variety of new consumption patterns. However, it must be noted that changing consumption patterns are conducive to flexible accumulation and have enabled corporations to escape the downturn in economics of the 1960s and 1970s. On the other hand markets can also be manipulated to support economic structures. For Harvey 'Just-In-Time' inventory systems have accelerated turnover time in production however:

..accelerating turnover time in production would have been useless unless the turnover time in consumption was also reduced. The half-life of a typical Fordist product was, for example, from five to seven years, but flexible accumulation has more than cut that in half in certain sectors (such as textile and clothing industries), while in others – such as the so-called 'thoughtware' industries (e.g. video games and computer software programmes) – the half-life is down to less than eighteen months, (1990:156).

Therefore flexible accumulation is associated with an accelerated turnover time in both relation to production and consumption. Flexible accumulation and consumption patterns are very closely related. Markets and fashions are changing rapidly and are encouraged to do so by the provision of enticements that creates more markets and hence profits. This increase in consumption is transforming cultures and allowing for greater freedom of lifestyle choice. However consumption patterns are related to income levels. As flexible accumulation has intensified the gap between high and relatively low-paid workers this has also provided a split-level economy.....

...with the masses of working poor huddled round their K-Mart's and Taiwanese imports at one end, while at the other there is a (relatively) vast market for luxury goods and services from travel and designer clothes, to posh restaurants, home computers and fancy sports cars, (Callinicos, 1989:164).

I argue that these divisions within society although obvious within consumption patterns and life style choices are also obvious in terms of the built environment itself, which will be examined in more detail in relation to contemporary gentrification. Alongside flexible accumulation, or perhaps as a result of this, we are witnessing what Esser and Hirsch define as an 'intensified division in society', (1994:80). For Esser and Hirsch this is characterised by '...increased differentiation in qualifications and income, and the formation of a new, hierarchical model of consumption', (1994:80). In many regards post-Fordism, or as defined here 'flexible accumulation' is closely related to 'the condition of postmodernity' (Harvey, 1990). Again Harvey is a valid point of reference:

The relatively stable aesthetic of Fordist modernism has given way to all the ferment, instability, and fleeting qualities of a postmodernist aesthetic that celebrates difference, ephemerality, spectacle, fashion, and the commodification of cultural forms, (1990:156).

Flexible accumulation is closely connected to the rise of a 'postmodernist aesthetic'. There is a link between the two with one complementing the other and this link can be utilised to produce economic growth.

### **(1.6) Post-modernity**

Like post-Fordism, and post-industrialism, there are many strands and positions within the post-modern debate. For a detailed analysis of post-modernity see Foucault, 1972; Lyotard, 1979; Baudelaire, 1981; Berman, 1982; Harvey, 1990; Kumar, 1995. This section will briefly explore aspects of post-modernity as they relate to this thesis and to the urban form. The position I take, as with the other two 'posts', is that post-modernity is not a definite break with the past. However, there are certain trends evident within contemporary advanced capitalist urban forms that are related to 'the condition of post-modernity' (Harvey 1990) and it is these trends, and their implications, that will be explored.

For post-modernists society is characterised by pluralism and diversity, however this fragmentation:

...is not ordered and integrated according to any discernible principle. There is not, or at least no longer, any controlling and directing force to give it shape or meaning, (Kumar, 1995: 102).

The collapsing of boundaries and the loss of any 'directing force' leads to a society in which there is no direction, only random movement and constant change. Post-modernists stress that contemporary society is characterised by unlimited differences and fragmentation, which has resulted in the loss of any central authority. The emphasis is on pluralism, individualism and fragmentation. This view recognises that there are many forms of oppression in society and many forms of resistance. There is a belief that one overriding master discourse cannot speak for all groups with a unified voice.

Within post-modern thought there is a concern for 'otherness' which is appealing, (Harvey, 1990:47). However, for post-modernists this plurality and fragmentation leads to a situation whereby '..we cannot aspire to any unified representation of the world..', (Harvey, 1990:52). Mass movements associated with class distinctions and based on 'collective identities' become dissolved into more 'pluralized and privatized forms of identity', (Kumar, 1995:122). New social movements emerge based on gender, locality, sexuality, race etc. No one group can claim advantage over the other, as there is no single universalising 'truth'. For post-modernists there is no 'working-class' or 'middle-class' as the boundaries between these different categories have collapsed. People 'come together' based on forms of identity. Post-modernism promotes a 'politics of difference' and an emphasis on choice.

Post-modernism emphasises 'difference' though in many respects the fact of inequality and social justice is ignored. Not everyone has an equal opportunity to choose from among the 'choices' on display. It is important to acknowledge 'difference' however this must be balanced by recognition of the continuing salience of issues of justice and equality. I would

argue that in many regards the oppression of the 'other' can be generalised in relation to their means of production and consumption – in relation to their class position. Although post-modernists claim that class distinctions have dissolved the reality of people's situations often prove this to be incorrect. In many instances, people live their lives structured by class distinctions and these differences have economic, political and social implications. These distinctions are evident within Ringsend where 'class' is often used in order to distinguish one group from another. This is not to imply that each class consists of a homogenous population, as there are differences both between and within each group. However, the gentrification process within Ringsend has seen the arrival of newcomers into the neighbourhood and people articulate the differences between these groups in terms of class. I argue that 'pluralized and privatized forms of identity' may define the 'gentrifiers' within Ringsend however, for the Ringsenders identity is understood in terms of class position. Indeed gentrification is a process defined in terms of class. This will be further explored in Chapter Two.

It is within the realm of 'culture' that post-modernism is most often embraced. For post-modernists our experiences are now rooted in the process of consumption rather than production. Sim explains this through an examination of the regions of the UK which were once dominated by heavy industry. For the majority of people in these working-class areas the basis of their social lives were characterised by their relationship to the means of production. For example, they were miners or shipbuilders, etc. and their identity was rooted in their occupation. However in the last few decades there has been a shift in this relationship. Many of the former industrial sites have been developed into housing complexes or shopping centres. This is in effect a move from an industrial landscape to a post-industrial landscape and this is very evident within Ringsend, which will be examined in Chapter Four.

There is a proliferation of heritage museums within these areas that present a nostalgic recreation of a past that no longer exists. People consume these second-hand images and experiences that once formed the basis of social life, (Sim, 1998:55). In fact the images have become more 'real' than the reality. The distinction between reality and image is blurred. The post-modern world is one of signs and images where everything has become mere representation. Indeed the world has become 'hyperreal', (Baudrillard, 1988). In other words life, experiences and realities become mere simulations and these signs only have consumption value. Within Ringsend this re-representation of place is very evident and is used to sell a desired image. The image being sold is of an upmarket urban landscape with no reference to the areas industrial past. What is interesting is that this remaking of place within the realm of consumption is advantageous to capital accumulation and as such there is an elective affinity between capital accumulation and 'the condition of post-modernity'.

According to post-modernists people no longer conform to traditional occupational structures. Rather they choose a lifestyle, (Sim, 1998: 55). Within post-modernism, the construction of identity through consumer goods then becomes a voluntary one and we identify with whatever style represents the way in which we wish to be seen. In this sense identity becomes performance, and as such is fluid, while power lies in the capacity to spend in order to find expression for a chosen lifestyle. The Fordist era of the mass production of standardised goods has been replaced by an emphasis on variety and endless choice. However, it is important to remember that many people are excluded from this process due to material constraints. In addition for many people certain elements of their identity are constructed around fixed boundaries, such as place. In this regard their identity and identification with specific places is not determined by the fluidity of consumption whims. Any impact on place will impact on identity. This will be further explored in my analysis chapters.

The most visible portrayal of post-modernism is within architecture. Post-modernist architecture is characterised by ‘..eclecticism and pluralism, that often playful and ironic jumbling and fusing of traditions, that many take as typical of post-modernism in general’, (Kumar, 1995:106). Post-modernist architecture mixes these styles together often with reference to different historical periods and a ‘play’ on the ‘traditional’. The focus is on appearance over substance. One example of this is the Faneuil Hall Marketplace in Boston. Within this is a plurality of designs coupled with ‘elite’ and ‘mass’ consumer outlets. ‘It is assumed not only that different people will want different things but that the same people will, at different times, want different things’, (Kumar, 1995:107). Another example is Las Vegas, a city made up entirely of signs and a pastiche of styles. For Soja (1989) Los Angeles is the epitome of the post-modern city. It is a fragmented and pastiche city, which resembles a theme park. For Soja Los Angeles deconstructs ‘..the urban into a confusing collage of signs which advertise what are often little more than imaginary communities and outlandish representations of urban locality’, (1989:245-6).

Indeed these processes are also evident within Ireland. Temple Bar is an eclectic mix of styles and designs. Within the area there is also an emphasis on the ‘traditional’ but this is often more imagined than real. (see Corcoran, 1998). This mix of styles and representations of urban locality is also evident within Ringsend. This will be examined further in Chapter Four. Within urban design, post-modernism signifies a break with large-scale rational and efficient urban plans and a move to more aesthetic aims. For Harvey ‘this has nothing necessarily to do with the development of space in connection with any overarching social objective rather it is the achievement of beauty as an objective in itself’, (1990:67). This distinction between modernist and post-modernist design is evident within the landscape of Ringsend where these contrasting styles are juxtaposed representing not only distinctions in the landscape but different phases of capitalist development and the associated social implications.

There are many elements of the condition of post-modernity (Harvey, 1990) that are evident within Irish society. According to Fagan Ireland, or Irishness, is also being re-invented by the 'global culture industry', (2003:114). Fagan gives examples of the 'musical dance show' Riverdance, the 'supergroup' U2 and 'the ubiquitous global 'Irish pub'' which she argues 'reflect....the 'postmodernism' typical of the cultural political economy of globalisation', (2003:114). For Mac Laughlin (1997) we are also witnessing the emergence of a 'new' middle-class and as well as an increasing percentage of power elite's. This 'new' middle class are defined by professional and academic qualifications as well as by the fact that their political and geographical outlook differs to that of the preceding generations. For Mac Laughlin these groups have disassociated themselves from narrow nationalism and embraced 'Europeanisation' and other global influences. They have also become more detached from their own country and more attached to a virtual Ireland than to any real country, (Mac Laughlin, 1997: 2-5). This attachment to the 'virtual' as opposed to the 'real' is a characteristic associated with the condition of post-modernity. In addition

New power elite's here are constantly inventing and re-inventing symbols for the country so as to literally market Ireland and Irishness around the world, (Mac Laughlin, 1997:6).

Mac Laughlin's examples of these new power elite's include Tony O'Reilly, Larry Goodman, Michael Smurfit and the Dunnes. According to Fintan O'Toole these elite's are symbols of power and privilege within a global network of power and privilege. O'Reilly in one of his advertising campaigns for Heinz reduced Ireland to a logo, a space with no history or contestation. For O'Toole he desires:

the arrival of the new placeless consumer, of a people belonging to a world where allegiances to brand names have replaced the more dangerous and visceral loyalties of history and geography, (1996 in Mac Laughlin, 1997:7).

This allegiance to brand names and symbols and a movement away from identification with place represents a transition to a condition of post-modernity or a post-modern

aesthetic. It is also an example of a shift to more privatised forms of identity formation and away from mass movements based on collective identities. While it might be argued that allegiances to place have disappeared to be replaced by more privatised forms of identification I would argue that this is not the case. One reaction to this move is a counter movement in the other direction towards a renewed importance of place and collective identity for those who may not fit, or may not want to fit, the desired image of the post-modern man/woman. In Ireland at present there are increased struggles within certain neighbourhoods like Ringsend over attachment to and ownership of 'place'. Indeed contemporary society has seen many instances of a re-emphasis on locality, which I would argue is a means to ensure the survival of particular places that are being impacted upon within these transitions.

The characteristics of the post-modernity are summed up by Jenks as:

The Post-Modern Age is a time of incessant choosing. It's an era when no orthodoxy can be adopted without self-consciousness and irony, because all traditions seem to have some validity. This is partly a consequence of what is called the information explosion, the advent of organised knowledge, world communications and cybernetics. It is not only the rich who become collectors, eclectic travellers in time with a superabundance of choice, but almost every urban dweller. Pluralism, the 'ism' of our time, is both the great problem and the great opportunity: where Everyman becomes a Cosmopolite and Everywoman a Liberated Individual, confusion and anxiety become ruling states of mind and ersatz a common form of mass-culture...(Jenks 1989: 7).

Within this definition some characteristics of both the post-Fordist and post-industrial society feature strongly.

Normally in the literature, the term 'post-Fordism' is associated with economic and institutional change, while the term 'post-modernism' is associated with change in the arena of consumption, aesthetics, culture and lifestyle, (Amin, 1994: 31).

However, it is clear that both are inseparable. Some characteristics of post-Fordism that also feature in post-modernism are fragmentation, decentralisation and the importance of place. The significance of computers and new communications technology that are highlighted in the post-industrial society thesis also feature in accounts of post-modernism.

Post-modernism can be viewed as the cultural expression of post-Fordism and post-industrialism. (see Jameson, 1989).

Lash and Urry (1987, 1994) stress that the development of postmodernist culture is independent of any change in society, as they believe that postmodernism is a cultural movement rather than a type of society. They do however admit to a link between post-modernism and post-Fordism although this affinity is not necessary. In contrast for Harvey (1990) the transition from Fordism to post-Fordism is *directly* connected to the emergence of post-modernist cultural forms. For Harvey the tendencies within capitalism towards over accumulation, first identified by Marx, are being overcome by the deployment of flexible organisational forms. New forms of technology have led to an acceleration of turnover time in production. In order to sell these excess consumer products there has been an increased marketing of services and a creation of lifestyle 'fads'.

Taken together these geographical and temporal solutions to accumulation problems have led to a new post-modern sensibility or consciousness in which the chief contents are those most ephemeral of products, referent-free images, which have now come to take precedence over narratives, (Crook et al, 1994:30).

Culture and economics are no longer separated. The commodification of culture is combined with the fact that culture has also '..colonized the economy', (Kumar, 1995:118). This is another trend, which is evident within contemporary Ireland. Within the contexts of the 'posts' culture is both a means of production and a means of consumption. In recent years there has been an intensification of the commodification of culture. Culture is being used to sell commodities and visa versa. Indeed culture itself is increasingly sold as a commodity. According to Peillon culture has become an object of economic government, (2002:50). The Irish government moulds a particular type of individual, of entrepreneur, through the allocation of grants to small businesses. For Carr (1998) the government determines who receives such grants by the imposition of a 'cultural technology' that assesses 'self-reliance, initiative, dynamism and so on' and this is in effect transforming

culture for economic purposes, (Peillon, 2002:50). This is also clear by the fact that 'culture' in the form of a re-invented 'Irishness' is being used to sell a desired image of both rural and urban Ireland. This commodification often ignores history and geography and in doing so places emphasis on referent-free images and signs which as Harvey (1990) stresses have now come to take precedence over narratives. This is clear in relation to the place-marketing of Ringsend, which will be examined in Chapters Four and Six.

Harvey (1990) combines the concepts of post-Fordism and post-modernism and also points out that there is never one fixed configuration. There is a constant swaying back and forth between 'Fordist modernity' and 'flexible postmodernity'. Indeed the distinctions between them disappear as they merely represent '...the flux of internal relations between capitalism as a whole', (Harvey, 1990:342). Post-modernism is, as Jameson states, 'the cultural logic of late capitalism', (1984).

### **(1.7) Amalgamating the 'posts': some general trends**

It is clear from the exploration of the 'posts' that there are economic, political, social, cultural and spatial implications. The recent rise in information technology, decline in manufacturing, increased flexibility, changing lifestyles, differentiation and consumption patterns are some of the key characteristics that are highlighted. In many respects it can be argued that many of the trends occurring are related to changes in the configuration of capitalism. This is not to state that economics is the determining factor in all of the transitions, but rather to acknowledge that many of the trends examined are advantageous for economic growth.

Agency, lifestyle choice and difference also feature strongly in all accounts. Although 'choice' is a characteristic of emerging trends it must also be noted that the level of 'choice' is greater for some groups than others. Individuals and groups are free to make choices however, they make these choices within specific situations and one cannot ignore the fact that for many 'choices' are often constrained. Decision-making occurs within a

complex matrix of other economic and social processes. These shifts have facilitated the emergence of a service class of highly paid workers often referred to as the 'new-middle classes'. These 'new-middle classes' of white-collar workers are young, innovative and highly skilled. According to Knox:

..cities are not only their workplaces but are the proscenia for their materialistic, cosmopolitan lifestyles, the crucibles of their narratives, myths and transnational sensibilities, (1996:243).

Post-industrial, or post-Fordist, capitalism is therefore both an economic and a cultural system. This combining of economics and culture is extremely evident especially within both post-Fordism and post-modernism. Changing consumption patterns have encouraged changes in production and visa versa. Both feed into each other in a variety of ways. It is also clear that there has been a growth in employment in the relatively lower-paid sections of the service sector. This has created a dual labour market and a widening gap between the high-paid and relatively low-paid sectors of society. This inequality is visible within the contemporary cityscape and, as will be examined in Chapter Four, is especially visible in relation to the contemporary 'gentrification' of Ringsend.

Capitalism is an economic system but it also has political, social and cultural implications. For the purpose of this thesis and also due to the fact that all of the 'posts' share similar features they will be amalgamated into one. Future references to the 'posts' will be referred to as 'post-industrial'. The 'transitions' occurring at present have important spatial implications. As with industrialisation and Fordism the combination of post-Fordism, post-industrialism and post-modernism have also produced a distinct urban landscape.

### **(1.8) Spatial implications of the 'posts'**

The spatial implications of contemporary processes are varied and often appear contradictory. This section will examine some of the general spatial trends, focusing in particular on those that impact on the urban landscape and in which contemporary gentrification is located.

Within the last few decades of the twentieth century, particularly in the last decade, there has been a transformation within metropolitan areas. This is especially visible in relation to the American metropolis where suburbs are developing into 'outer cities' and are becoming centres of economic power and activity. Suburbs are becoming urban entities on their own with landscapes of skyscrapers, office parks, and retail outlets. Some experts say that the outer city represents a transition to a wholly new urban form i.e. the Edge City, (Soja, 1989). These trends are now happening in many advanced capitalist cities. They are also evident in relation to Dublin within areas such as Blanchardstown and Tallaght where the process of ex-urbanisation is underway and gaining momentum.

Flexible manufacturing systems need to establish close contact between marketing, Research and Development and production thus favouring a relocation of production towards the large core metropolitan regions. Decentralisation has involved increasing dispersal among branch plants but externalisation via subcontracting has once again produced clustering within core areas or within close proximity to core areas. This is due to the fact that in some sectors sub-contractors need to locate close to volatile markets. The emergence of Just-In-Time delivery services has further enhanced this tendency as supply firms compete with each other on speed of delivery. This clustering effect is also evident within Ireland. Leixlip is one example while Limerick and Cork also have IT companies in close proximity to each other. According to Hazelkorn and Murphy while Silicon Valley has developed 'naturally' the Irish government, like other national and city governments, is seeking to recreate these regions of creativity and innovation, (2002:128). Hazelkorn and Murphy show how this clustering effect is actively been created through projects like 'Dublin's digital media district' and how such projects 'have become an important ingredient in 'city/regional (economic) (re) development strategy', (2002:128).

Flexible accumulation has seen the rise of new industrial regions. These regions include: The sunbelt of California in particular Silicon Valley, Third Italy whose production is

generally in high quality craft goods and Baden-Wurttemberg. 'Their economic success is based on....regional concentrated production networks based mainly on cooperation enhancing techniques', (Heidenreich, 1996:401). This spatial concentration has proved very successful and other businesses have built up around these regions both to service the needs of the industries, their workforce and growing populations which also increases their strength making them attractive locations.

For Sabel (1994) flexible specialisation encourages the revival of regional economies which are locally integrated and organised around their specialisation in particular products. However other theorists such as Amin and Malmberg (1994) suggest that the move is towards a globalisation of both production and corporate range of multinational corporations. This development of global geographies is considered to be the key driving force due to merger activity and new forms of vertical disintegration, (Amin, 1994:25). If these two claims are combined the situation is one in which there are global hierarchies and global networks which are underpinned by regional economies. However, this view contradicts other theorists such as Sassen (1991) and Castells (1989). For Sassen (1991) the emphasis is on the concentration of global power and influence within a few 'global cities'. For Castells (1989) the situation is one which is moving towards a 'network society' of global economic flows and few local fixtures. This has implications for place, which will be examined in the following chapter.

Although there are many spatial implications involved in the shift to a post-industrial society for the purpose of this thesis one major trend will be emphasised. This is the renewed importance of urban centres. Many corporations need to locate in urban centres of strategic core cities in order to facilitate the rapid flow of information and capital through a system of networked cities. This also enables them to keep up with volatile markets in today's post-Fordist climate in which the 'condition of post-modernity' is also clear. Also

this increases the need for white-collar workers within, or close to, urban centres. Callinicos (1989) has described these workers as the 'new middle-class'.

It is the high-tech industries, financial services and information and communication technologies that are being located in these cities. In order to attract global financial investment cities must create a 'good business climate' (Harvey, 1990), a well-educated labour force and strategic locations. Also cities need to facilitate the new-middle classes that this private investment requires. Therefore cities need to develop as attractive locations. This involves intense regeneration, re-imagining and a re-imagination of the city. The city must also provide suitable accommodation and this has been accounted for by an increase in apartment complexes, or 'gated communities' within the inner city resulting in the gentrification of many previously industrial areas. These processes are clearly evident within Dublin's changing cityscape, which will be examined in Chapter Two.

The contemporary cityscape differs in many respects to the landscapes, which developed during the industrial revolution or Fordism. The urban landscape is now moving from a production landscape of the industrial era to a consumer landscape of today's post-industrial society. This landscape is characterised by offices, apartments, shopping centres, leisure centres, restaurants, pubs etc. - the contemporary city is a city of consumer spaces and consumer power. The landscapes of cities and their architecture are displaying signs of post-modernism. Eclectic architectural styles are becoming more prominent. A key element of contemporary urban transitions is gentrification, which is altering the landscape of Ringsend, like many other inner city neighbourhoods, at a rapid pace. This chapter has examined the fact that Ireland is at present undergoing transitions that are indicative of a shift to a post-industrial economy. This has impacted on Dublin's cityscape and is clearly visible in relation to the gentrification process occurring within Ringsend. The following chapter will examine the contemporary cityscape and the process of gentrification.

### **(1.9) Conclusion**

This chapter aimed to come to an understanding of the processes that shape the cityscape. Harvey (1973, 1982, 1985, 1990) and Harvey and Scott (1988) developed Marx's analysis of capital accumulation by an examination of the role land itself plays in this accumulation. For Harvey land is itself a commodity and capital investment in land aids capital accumulation. Therefore there is a link between urban restructuring and economic restructuring. The economic restructuring of the capitalist system for example the 'phase shifts' and configurations associated with the reconfiguration of the modes of production affects the spatial structure of the urban form. For Harvey investment in the built environment occurs when there is a loss of profitability in manufacturing and production. Therefore for Harvey it is the underlying rules relating to the flows of capital, which determine the shape of modern towns and cities.

An examination of successive configurations and phase shifts of capitalism have shown that economic systems have a crucial impact on city forms and their social geography. During industrialisation the inner city became predominately the domain of the working-classes. Although many of these cities are now in, what has been termed a 'post-industrial' phase they still bear the marks of industrialisation. Chapter Two will examine the implications of this on contemporary development. For Gramsci (1971) Fordism was more than a specific mode of production it was also a specific 'mode of living'. The period of Fordism produced, especially in the United States, a proliferation of suburban areas. Suburbanisation created the demand necessary to absorb large volumes of mass produced goods and allowed for the expansion and growth of the city. For Lash and Urry (1987) Fordism is characterised by the geographical and spatial concentration of people and production in industrial towns and cities.

While economic processes are crucial they are not the only processes that determine the landscape of the city. As Gramsci (1971) noted Fordism produced a particular 'mode of living' however, the rise in disposable income also allowed for the construction of a

multitude of life-style choices. Also as Harvey (1990) notes the modernist movements flourished in response to the need to confront the problems of massive urbanisation which began with the industrial revolution. However, large-scale modernist housing projects produced many images of power and rendered many people both marginalised and alienated.

The contemporary city is being shaped by a different set of processes associated with the shift to a 'post' society. The implications of these shifts are crucial in understanding Ringsend's changing landscape. A post-industrial society relies on service industries, knowledge-production, and information technology to create wealth. Theories of post-industrial society were enlarged into the view of contemporary society as not just a post-industrial society but as 'the information society'. The organisation of information flows becomes the predominant factor in the information society and as such 'knowledge' and 'information' workers become dominant. Cities and city-regions are both crucial for national economic growth and also are becoming crucial nodes within the global economy. The Dublin metropolitan region is both the engine for Irish economic growth and employment while also becoming increasingly connected with the global economy.

For some the post-industrial society has become equated with a more equal society. In contrast to this viewpoint there is a growing body of evidence that points to a new and intensifying trend towards polarisation in the developed nations. An analysis of Ringsend shows that class not only matters but also plays a crucial role in the lives of many of my respondents. An analysis of Ringsend also shows that the shift to a post-industrial society is not unproblematic. It is argued that these changes are beneficial because they lead to productivity growth and economic growth. However, these shifts have important consequences for regional inequality and for previously industrial inner city areas. Due to de-industrialisation many areas underwent a period of economic decline. Many inner city areas, like Ringsend, have experienced periods of dis-investment resulting in rising

unemployment figures and the dereliction of the built environment. Therefore this thesis argues that these changes are not universally beneficial.

It would seem that the Irish economy conforms to Bell's analysis of post-industrial society and theories of the 'information society'. However, Ireland has not gradually moved from an industrial to a post-industrial society rather the country seems to have 'leapt' into a post-industrial phase in a relatively short space of time. This is due to the type of open trade, high technology economy that has evolved in recent decades. Ireland's economic growth in the 1990s was the culmination of a series of governmental policies, which sought to integrate the Irish economy more fully into global capitalism. How Ireland and 'Irishness' is constructed has also changed during this phase of economic success. Ireland, and particularly Dublin, is being sold as a post-industrial, vibrant and cosmopolitan society.

In the late 1960s signs of problems within Fordism emerged as many of the mass production industries began to experience declines in output and employment. The weaknesses of the Fordist system were exposed by a combination of factors however, for Callinicos (1989) the demise of Fordism, as the dominant mode of production, can also be contributed to the rise of the 'new' middle-class of white-collar workers. Crucially, the spending power of this class is not geared towards mass-produced goods, but rather toward specialist goods.

While Fordism was in the midst of its crisis a number of regions were experiencing rapid growth. In all of these sectors it is flexible production methods which constitute a basic principle of organisation. Flexible production methods are also present within Ireland. The predominance of multi-national corporations within the Irish economy also epitomises the flexibility and mobility of capital flows. The conditions of survival have changed under this regime and corporations need to respond instantly to rapidly changing markets. A key factor, which enables this, is 'knowledge'. For Harvey (1990) 'knowledge' has become a

key commodity in the era of post-Fordism. It is clear that there is a link between the shift to a post-industrial society and a post-Fordist society.

The rise of flexible accumulation has also been accompanied by a variety of new consumption patterns. On the other hand markets can also be manipulated to support economic structures. This increase in consumption is transforming cultures and allowing for greater freedom of lifestyle choice. However consumption patterns are related to income levels. As flexible accumulation has intensified the gap between high and relatively low-paid workers this has also provided a split-level economy. I argue that these divisions within society although obvious within consumption patterns and life style choices are also obvious in terms of the built environment itself, which will be examined in more detail in relation to contemporary gentrification.

Alongside flexible accumulation, or perhaps as a result of this, we are witnessing what Esser and Hirsch define as an 'intensified division in society', (1994:80). This is characterised by increased differentiation in income levels and the formation of a new, hierarchical model of consumption. In many regards post-Fordism, or as defined here 'flexible accumulation' is closely related to 'the condition of postmodernity', (Harvey, 1990).

Post-modernists stress that contemporary society is characterised by unlimited differences and fragmentation, which has resulted in the loss of any central authority. Although post-modernists claim that class distinctions have dissolved the reality of people's situations often prove this to be incorrect. These distinctions are evident within Ringsend where 'class' is often used in order to distinguish one group from another. Indeed gentrification is a process defined in terms of class. This will be further explored in Chapter Two.

For post-modernists our experiences are now rooted in the process of consumption rather than production. Many former industrial sites have been developed into housing complexes or shopping centres. This is in effect a move from an industrial landscape to a post-

industrial landscape and this is very evident within Ringsend, which will be examined in Chapter Four. People consume these second-hand images and experiences that once formed the basis of social life, (Sim, 1998). Within Ringsend this re-representation of place is very evident and is used to sell a desired image. What is interesting is that this remaking of place within the realm of consumption is advantageous to capital accumulation and as such there is an elective affinity between capital accumulation and 'the condition of post-modernity'.

According to post-modernists people no longer conform to traditional occupational structures rather they choose a lifestyle. However, for many people certain elements of their identity are constructed around fixed boundaries, such as place. Any impact on place will impact on identity. This will be further explored in my analysis chapters. The most visible portrayal of post-modernism is within architecture. Post-modernist architecture mixes styles together often with reference to different historical periods and a 'play' on the 'traditional'. This mix of styles and representations of urban locality is also evident within the landscape of Ringsend where contrasting styles are juxtaposed representing not only distinctions in the landscape but different phases of capitalist development and the associated social implications. This will be examined further in Chapter Four.

There are many elements of the condition of post-modernity (Harvey, 1990) that are evident within Irish society. It is argued that allegiance to brand names has replaced allegiances to locality. This shift represents a move towards more privatised forms of identity formation. However, this chapter has argued that within these shifts there is also a movement towards a renewed importance of place and collective identity. In Ireland at present there are increased struggles within certain neighbourhoods like Ringsend over attachment to and ownership of 'place'. I argue this is a means to ensure the survival of particular places that are being impacted upon within these transitions.

The processes associated with post-Fordist, post-industrial and post-modern were examined separately in this chapter. However, this chapter also presented an overview of the key characteristics of the theoretical approaches, identifying the points of intersection between all three. The recent rise in information technology, decline in manufacturing, increased flexibility, changing lifestyles, differentiation and consumption patterns are some of the key characteristics that are highlighted. In many respects it can be argued that many of the trends occurring are related to changes in the configuration of capitalism. This is not to state that economics is the determining factor in all of the transitions, but rather to acknowledge that many of the trends examined are advantageous for economic growth.

Agency, lifestyle choice and difference also feature strongly in all accounts. Although 'choice' is a characteristic of emerging trends it must also be noted that the level of 'choice' is greater for some groups than others. These shifts have facilitated the emergence of a service class of highly paid workers often referred to as the 'new-middle classes'. For these groups cities are both their workplaces and the stages for their lifestyle choices. Post-industrial, or post-Fordist, capitalism is therefore both an economic and a social system. This combining of economics and culture is extremely evident especially within both post-Fordism and post-modernism. Changing consumption patterns have encouraged changes in production and visa versa. Post-modernism can be viewed as the cultural expression of post-Fordism and post-industrialism. Contemporary capitalism is both a complex economic system and a social system. The contemporary gentrification of Ringsend highlights this point.

Although there are many spatial implications involved in the shift to a post-industrial society this chapter has highlighted one major trend, which is the renewed importance of urban centres. To attract investment and to facilitate the new-middle classes that this private investment requires cities need to develop as attractive locations. This involves intense regeneration, re-imagining and a re-imagination of the city. The city must also

provide suitable accommodation and this has been accounted for by an increase in apartment complexes, or 'gated communities' within the inner city resulting in the gentrification of many previously industrial areas. It is within this transformation that Dublin's changing landscape, and the contemporary gentrification of Ringsend, is located. The following chapter will examine the contemporary cityscape and the process of gentrification. This chapter has examined the fact that Ireland is at present undergoing transitions that are indicative of a shift to a post-industrial economy. These processes are clearly evident within Dublin's changing cityscape, which will also be examined in Chapter Two.

# **The Contemporary Cityscape: Gentrification, Place and Identity**

## **(2.1) Introduction**

Although the spatial implications of the shift to a post-industrial society are manifold, Chapter One highlighted one important trend, that of the renewed importance of urban centres. The shift to a post-industrial society has been accompanied by a change in the cityscape. The city has developed from a landscape dominated by the factory to one dominated by the office and apartment complex, cultural and consumption spaces. However, the cityscape does not alter in a vacuum. The lives of those inhabiting these spaces have also changed. The shift to a post-industrial cityscape was accompanied, or preceded, by a period of de-industrialisation within the inner city. This has implications for the working-class communities who inhabit these inner city neighbourhoods. The subsequent renewal of the inner city through post-industrial growth has led to the gentrification of many inner city areas. It is through an examination of the process of gentrification that one can gain a better understanding of the implications of these transitions for inner city working-class communities.

This chapter aims to provide an image of the contemporary cityscape and to examine the theoretical debates that surround the process of gentrification. This will provide the necessary background to explore the causes, manifestations and implications of the gentrification process in Ringsend and to examine how the experience of this particular locale can contribute to these debates. Both 'space' and 'place' are playing a key role within the restructuring of contemporary cities and within the gentrification of specific areas. This is resulting in new ways of constructing, understanding and experiencing place. Cities are not merely a stage on which social lives are played out. In fact the urban landscape can establish particular forms of social relationships and can highlight

difference. This chapter will also explore the implications for 'place' of the shift to a post-industrial society and the consequent gentrification of specific locales.

Although Chapter One examined the general processes at work in shaping the contemporary cityscape the form of any particular city is contingent on its history and social form and also on the position it holds within the world economy. General processes of change impact globally however, outcomes vary at the level of locality. These changes have specific implications for different cities. Chapter One examined to what degree the transition to a post-industrial society was evident within Ireland. This chapter will examine the implications of these structural transitions within Dublin's changing landscape. Dublin's changing landscape offers a particular case study of how global processes impact on a particular city. It is within Dublin's changing cityscape that Ringsend, a particular locale that is caught up in this restructuring, is located. Ringsend's changing landscape will be examined in Chapter Four.

## **(2.2) The contemporary cityscape**

Chapter One examined how changing economics and social processes are intertwined. The shift to an industrial economy promoted the massive expansion of cities and produced a distinct urban landscape. The inner city became predominately industrial and working-class. Industrial production provided steady incomes for the working-classes that lived in these industrial areas. The communities that developed were based around social relationships embedded within place. Ringsend provides a particular case study of how the development of community within the areas was linked to industrial development and also how community exists in the relationships that develop within place over time. This will be examined in Chapter Seven. The process of de-industrialisation led to the subsequent decline of the built fabric within these former industrial areas. However, this economic restructuring also had severe implications for those working-class communities whose livelihoods and identities were deeply intertwined with the industries that existed in these

areas. The shift to a post-industrial economy cannot be examined in a vacuum as these shifts occurred alongside the de-industrialisation and degradation of inner city areas. These issues will be examined in detail in relation to Dublin's changing landscape later in this chapter.

In today's post-industrial economy many corporations favour urban centres of core cities. Smith describes this as the spatial centralisation of capital – a product of financial corporations requiring 'spatial proximity' to 'reduce decision times', (1986:28). According to Esser and Hirsch in today's post-industrial climate a city's advantage is based less on its geographical situation and more on availability of a qualified workforce, services, research capacities and favourable political conditions, (1994:80). Cities compete in a global market whereby they have to attract and facilitate global finance capital and the necessary workforce. The majority of these white-collar workers in information technology and other high-tech service industries are young, innovative and highly skilled. Callinicos (1989) has described these workers as the 'new middle-class' – a class that distinguishes itself by its conspicuous consumption and post-modern sensibility. Therefore cities need to develop as attractive locations - politically, financially, socially and culturally. This involves intense regeneration, re-imagining and a re-imagination of the city.

According to McGuigan, since the 1980s in Western Europe and the USA much of the transformation of cities involves intense urban regeneration schemes, many of which have been led by 'flagship' cultural projects. For McGuigan this strategy was adopted as a means of reversing the economic consequences of declining heavy industry and manufacturing, (1996, 97). This strategy is a means of attracting financial investment however it also has other advantages. This regeneration creates a 'vibrancy' within cities that not only attracts the 'new-middle class' but also promotes tourism and consumerism. This in turn enhances a city's attractiveness. (see McGuigan, 1996). In addition governments often set up tax incentive schemes to encourage investment into specifically

designated areas. This defines what spaces are to be allocated for renewal. These spaces are often strategic locations within city centres and as such it is clear that government planning plays a major role within contemporary transformations.

The inner city has once again become an important factor within capital accumulation. However the contemporary post-industrial cityscape differs from the cityscape associated with industrialisation. Former industrial locations are now changing into sites in which services are delivered. It is the office and apartment complex that has come to dominate the contemporary cityscape. Dublin City offers a particular case study of these contemporary trends. For the new-middle class cities are their workplaces but they also offer stages for their chosen lifestyles. As examined in Chapter One these lifestyles are linked to post-industrial growth and they are being accommodated by urban regeneration. The case study of Dublin City shows that within post-industrial growth the city must also provide suitable accommodation for these groups. This has been accounted for through purpose-built apartment complexes, or 'gated communities', within and close to the city centre. This has resulted in the contemporary gentrification of many inner city areas, in Dublin and elsewhere. This process is altering the landscape of Ringsend, like many other places, at a rapid pace. Indeed I argue that the implications of contemporary shifts can be viewed through an examination of the process of gentrification.

### **(2.3) Gentrification**

Post-industrial growth coupled with the changing lifestyles associated with the 'condition of postmodernity' has seen the inner city and surrounding areas transformed from their blue-collar origins to accommodate middle-class access. This is in effect creating what Harvey (1990) terms a 'spatial mix' of working-class and middle-class housing within the same spatial areas. This is the initial stage of 'gentrification'. The term 'gentrification' was coined by the sociologist, Ruth Glass:

One by one, many of the working-class quarters of London have been invaded by the middle-classes- upper and lower. Shabby, modest mews and cottages... have been taken over when their leases have expired, and have become elegant, expensive residences. Larger Victorian houses, downgraded in an earlier or recent period- which were used as lodging houses or were otherwise in multiple occupation- have been upgraded once again...Once this process of 'gentrification' starts in a district it goes on rapidly until all or most of the original working-class occupiers are displaced and the whole social character of the district is changed, (Glass, 1964: xviii).

The process observed by Glass refers to upper middle-class households purchasing property in the traditional working-class East End of London. This differed from previous waves of middle-class migration and suburban residential choice. While there is little agreement in Sociology on how best to define gentrification most analysts concur that any definition must place some emphasis on the class dimensions of the process. The following quotes highlight the class connotations the word 'gentrification' suggests:

Gentrification is the process...by which poor and working-class neighbourhoods in the inner city are refurbished by an influx of private capital and middle-class homebuyers and renters, (Smith, 1996).

The rehabilitation of working-class and derelict housing and the consequent transformation of an area into a middle-class neighbourhood, (Smith and Williams, 1986:1).

Simultaneously a physical, economic, social and cultural phenomenon, gentrification commonly involves the invasion by middle-class or higher-income groups of previously working-class neighbourhoods or multi-occupied 'twilight areas' and the replacement or displacement of many of the original occupants, (Hamnett, 1984).

Gentrification is a process that alters the physical and social form of cities. According to Smith the process of gentrification has been well under way in many cities since the late 1950s and early 1960s, (Smith, 1996: 32). It became a means of addressing the decline of many inner cities and also a means to regenerate what were seen as decaying areas that were in prime strategic locations. Within many US cities gentrification was not only a middle-class activity but also an 'urban cleansing by the white middle-class' and as such had a class and race dimension, (Smith, 1996:32). This process is today highly visible in the landscape of many cities throughout the advanced capitalist world. Gentrification is

now fully integrated into wider global urban restructuring. The process of intense gentrification did not begin in Dublin until the 1990s and is linked to Ireland's economic success and to the intense urban regeneration of the inner city.

The class dimension of gentrification is closely allied to the process of acquisition and renewal of existing housing stock. However, contemporary gentrification differs to previous gentrification in that it also involves purpose built construction. For Smith this includes the proliferation of wine bars and boutiques as well as '...the construction of modern and postmodern office buildings employing thousands of professionals, all looking for a place to live', (1996:39). Much of this new accommodation has been accounted for by the construction of large-scale 'gated communities' or apartment complexes within or near the city centre most often in areas that were traditionally working-class. This is very visible in relation to Dublin's changing landscape. Both forms of gentrification are visible within Ringsend. For a discussion of gentrification in Ringsend see Chapter's Four and Six. Gentrification is no longer the outcome of sporadic changes in the market but it is now an integral part of a much wider restructuring process. For Smith it has become the 'class remake of the central urban landscape', (1996:39). Contemporary gentrification has become a major feature of the contemporary city. Contemporary gentrification involves a re-population of urban space which fits the image and needs of contemporary post-industrial cities. In doing so it both marginalises and segregates the inner city working-class populations who lives are embedded in these areas.

The following visual account of Bellevue Road, Wandsworth Common, South London captures some elements of the gentrification process:

Twenty years ago, it [Bellevue Road] was a quiet street lined with shops serving a long-established working class population....Many people knew each other on a first name basis....The entire area wasn't a space waiting to be 'discovered' – it was a place which hadn't changed for years, a home which had become entwined with each resident's identity for generations. A stroll along Bellevue Road and its surrounding streets today offer a taste of a process which has been happening all over London since the 1960s. Gone are the working classes and the establishments

that served them. Bellevue Road now has delicatessens, wine bars, picture galleries, 'alfresco' diners and three estate agents with window displays chanting 'location, location, location'. Terraces of Mid-Victorian cottages show no evidence of the uniformity which existed twenty years ago...Some have had their 'period features' restored, others painted bright pastel colours in a deliberate attempt to dispense with the distinctive grey or red bricks of a different era. Net curtains have been replaced with tailored drapes, parted during the day to exhibit the belongings and 'taste' of a very different class of resident.....All of these changes were brought about by gentrification, (Slater: 2002).

The East Village, in Lower Manhattan is another former working-class neighbourhood, which has been transformed, in recent decades. 'Urbanists tend to study this area as a crucible for gentrification (Abu-Lughod et al., 1994; Smith, 1996; Mele, 2000)', (Zukin, and Kosta, 2004: 102). This area is indicative of a different form of gentrification one that creates a specific type of consumption space. East Village has a '..concentration of art galleries, unusual shops, little bars and restaurants, and performance spaces', (Ibid.) It has developed as a haven for artists and according to Zukin and Kosta, 'Whether its denizens have been bearded, tie-dyed, tattooed, or pierced, the East Village remains resolutely hip', (2004: 101). The success of the area has led to rising rents and property values and it is often used as an example of how a 'cultural enclave' can act as a 'stimulus of gentrification' and attract the 'creative class' which can further economic development, (Zukin and Kosta, 2004: 102). Urban regeneration schemes have used this strategy to promote urban growth and revitalisation. Indeed Temple Bar, Dublin's cultural quarter, is one such example, (see Corcoran, 1998).

For Brown-Saracino gentrification is the movement of young, affluent professionals into the inner city in search of accommodation in close proximity to employment opportunities, (2004: 137). For Long the process began as baby-boomers sought affordable accommodation during a housing crisis brought on by the size of their generation, (1980: 66). At the same time changes in the US economy following World War II meant that corporations and individual professionals had greater flexibility in relation to location. This opened up the inner city and the small town to industry and an expanding service sector,

(Spain, 1993:15). Those with an interest in the economic revitalisation of the inner city, including governments, planners, developers etc., encouraged and facilitated this process.

‘Gentrification often results in neighbourhood revitalization, indicated by rising housing costs and infrastructure transformations geared towards gentrifiers’, (Brown-Saracino, 2004: 138). Indeed this is obvious in the case of Ringsend where the area has been physically transformed in recent years. These improvements often result in the physical displacement of working-class residents as well as social displacement. For Chernoff ‘social displacement is the replacement of one group by another, in some relatively bounded geographical area, in terms of prestige and power’, (1980: 204). Within the gentrification process the working-class of a particular area are displaced both physically and socially by the social and economic institutions of the gentrifiers. This is also obvious within Ringsend’s changing landscape where the office complex and gated community has replaced previous industry that existed within the area. According to Spain gentrifiers tend to be economically, educationally, racially and occupationally distinct from the original inhabitants of the neighbourhood to which they move, (1980: 28). (see Brown-Saracino, 2004). Within Ringsend economics, educational attainment and occupation are the factors that distinguish the gentrifiers from the ‘original inhabitants’. As such social displacement is a main element of the process occurring within the area. In the next section I will outline an account of the debates in relation to why gentrification occurs. This will provide the necessary background to examine the process occurring in Ringsend.

### **(2.3.1) Explaining gentrification**

Gentrification takes different forms in different cities and countries depending on their specific histories of development and government policies. How the process develops once it begins to occur within a specific place will also depend on local factors. However, although gentrification is individualised within specific cities certain generalisations can be

made on the conditions necessary for it to occur. It is these generalisations that I will focus on in this section. Ringsend offers a particular case study of these processes within Dublin. Many of the early debates within gentrification concentrated on the tensions between those who stressed the importance of economics and those who were more concerned with the consumption patterns of the gentrifiers in a post-industrial society. The 'production-side' argument is most often associated with the work of Neil Smith while the 'consumption-side' argument is primarily associated with the work of David Ley.

### **Production versus Consumption Arguments:**

#### **Production: A 'supply-side' argument for gentrification**

In a seminal paper, Smith (1979) argued that gentrification was the result of capital disinvestment and re-investment in the city centre. Gentrification was part of the process of circuits of capital flows. Smith argued that low ground rents in the periphery of urban areas in the 1950s and 1960s saw the movement of capital to '..develop suburban, industrial, residential, commercial and recreational activity', (1986:23). This in turn saw a 'devalorization' of capital in the inner city leading to a phase of neglect and decay which in turn led to the '..abandonment of inner city properties', (Smith, 1986:23). As capital moves from inner city areas property values decrease and the areas become downgraded often being redlined by financial institutions in the process. For Smith it is this depreciation which 'produces the objective economic conditions that make capital revaluation (gentrification) a rational market response', (1996:67).

For Smith the most important factor in this process is what he terms 'the rent gap'. 'The rent gap is the disparity between the potential ground rent level and the actual ground rent capitalized under the present land use', (Smith, 1996:67). The capitalized ground rent is the actual quantity of ground rent the landowner makes under the present use while the potential ground rent level is the amount that could be capitalised under a different or 'better' use. As neighbourhood decline increases the 'rent gap' widens. Gentrification

occurs when the rent gap is sufficient that developers can purchase the land and develop it for a suitable profit. This leads to further development and the neighbourhood begins 'a new cycle of use', (Smith, 1996:68). For Smith the rent-gap is '..the necessary centrepiece to any theory of gentrification', (1987:165). When the rent-gap is wide enough groups who purchase property cheaply for renovation realise the potential profits of inner city properties. These groups, developers, landlords and owner-occupiers, buy these properties for renovation and this closes the rent-gap as the rent level increases with this 'better use'. Therefore for Smith the 'devalorization' of capital within the inner city creates the conditions necessary for the 'revalorization' of this underdeveloped urban space.

The process of de-industrialisation in many cities can be viewed in line with Smith's rent-gap thesis. De-industrialisation coupled with increased suburbanisation left specific areas in the inner city ripe for development under the correct conditions. I argue that these conditions were created with the advent of post-industrialism. One spatial consequence of post-industrialism is the spatial centralisation of capital in urban centres. Coupled with this is an increase in the need for a white-collar workforce in professional and managerial jobs. These tend to follow capital and as such require relevant space within the city centre leading to the gentrification of previous working-class, inner city areas. Many of these areas were former industrial sites that had become downgraded due to the process of de-industrialisation. Therefore the processes that make an area ripe for gentrification are related to the flows of capital investment and dis-investment. This is clear in relation to Dublin's inner city where de-industrialisation was followed by a downgrading of the built fabric and rising unemployment. As Dublin has become post-industrial the inner city began a process of renewal which resulted in the gentrification of some inner city areas.

Smith's work is influential in explaining how the landscapes of cities are related to circuits of capital flows. Certain phases of capitalist development produce specific urban forms. The process of industrialisation produced the industrial city while the process of post-

industrialisation is producing the post-industrial landscape. This combined with the 'rent-gap thesis' shows how gentrification is also related to flows of capital particularly disinvestment and re-investment. However, Smith's thesis fails to address how government policies can entice capital into specific areas. This is clear in relation to urban renewal within Dublin City and will be addressed later in the chapter. Although beneficial Smith's explanation of the rent-gap as a sole explanation for gentrification has been criticised particularly by those writing from a consumer preference perspective:

**Consumption: A 'demand-side' argument for gentrification**

...although the gentrification process does involve capital flows, it also involves people, and this is the achilles heel of Smith's supply side thesis, (Hamnett, 1991: 180).

For Hamnett the rent-gap thesis cannot be used as the sole explanation for gentrification as it does not tell us anything about the gentrifiers themselves or the reasons behind their decision to gentrify. Munt (1987) also critiques Smith's economic bias on the grounds that it assumes that people are passive and merely respond to capital flows. The basis of these criticisms is that gentrification cannot take place without a pool of gentrifiers who desire to reside within the inner city. Smith's Marxist approach is seen to be economically deterministic as it ignores the fact that people have choice and preference in regard to their place of residence. Smith's rent-gap thesis is applicable to certain cities within the United States, for which it was written, and the United Kingdom that had been heavily industrialised and have experienced massive dis-investment. However according to Munt (1987) and Ley (1987) it is difficult to apply to cities with a less industrial past or which have not experienced intense dis-investment – Paris, Amsterdam, Stockholm. Dublin is experiencing intense gentrification in many parts of the city in areas that were not heavily industrialised and as such in these areas it is difficult to apply Smith's 'rent-gap' thesis. However, there are certain areas within Dublin, such as Ringsend, that were industrialised and have experienced the process of dis-investment and re-investment noted by Smith.

Many researchers focus on what has been termed 'consumption-side' arguments as a means of explaining the gentrification process in more depth.

Gentrification researchers linked to the 'consumption-side' arguments were those who viewed the characteristics of the gentrifiers to be of greater importance in the understanding of gentrification, (Slater, 2003).

It is argued that in the 1970s and 1980s baby-boomers' cultural attributes facilitated gentrification, in particular their inclination towards late marriage and childbearing, (Lipton, 1977: 146). These lifestyle choices contributed to the fact that the baby-boomers' housing needs differed to that of the previous gentrification as well as from the less affluent members of the same generation, (Long, 1980; Brown-Saracino, 2004). According to Brown-Saracino at the forefront of such cultural attributes was an ideology that supported gentrification, the "frontier and salvation" mentality, (2004: 138). The urban gentrifier saw themselves as both 'settling' and 'taming' the inner city.

Economic boosters and the popular press credited gentrifiers with "infus[ing] moribund communities with new health and an appreciation for cultural activities" (Spain, 1993, p. 158), and with spurring an "urban renaissance" (Zukin, 1987, p. 130), (Brown-Saracino, 2004: 138).

This 'frontier and salvation mentality' is not a factor within my respondents' decision to move into Ringsend. This mentality however, is visible in the place marketing of the area by both developers and government agencies. On the other hand those with an interest in the economic revitalisation of the inner city – government, businesses, cultural institutions etc. – also encouraged the return of the middle-classes to urban areas. This is clear in relation to Dublin's changing landscape where designated areas were created and tax incentives offered to encourage investment. However, it must also be noted that investment occurred within Dublin when the shift to a post-industrial economy guaranteed profitability.

Ley (1980) enlarges on Smith's argument in relation to the growth of 'white-collar' employment and of a professional and managerial group who move to the inner city as a

response to capital relocation. Ley (1980) identified a 'class in emergence' due to the shift to a post-industrial, service based economy. For Ley (1996), using examples from Canadian, Australian, and North American cities, the trend is towards an increase in inner city housing markets resulting in gentrification. He asserts that the resurgence of the middle-class in inner city areas, and therefore gentrification, is linked to the growth of professional and managerial employment in service industries as well as to favourable government policies. This explanation is however not the only cause of gentrification. Ley links this with the cultural politics of the new middle-class, which he argues is an anti-suburban, pro-urban preference for inner city housing.

This argument is similar to that of Thrift who identified the emergence of a 'service-class' which he argues has grown in strength due to '..boosted income, favourable access to educational opportunity and ...a common consumption-orientated lifestyle', (1987:222). For Thrift (1987) this 'service-class' prefers to live close to the city centre to reduce time spent travelling to work. According to Slater (2003) this group place considerable demand on the housing market for inner city property, and as Cybriwsky et al (1986) observed in Vancouver, if there is a lack of suitable property available new residential developments may be constructed on former industrial sites.

Smith argues that a popular notion within cultural explanations for gentrification is that young, usually professional, middle-class people have changed their lifestyle, (Smith, 1996:52). This change shows a trend towards fewer children and younger homebuyers and renters who prefer to live within urban centres. Others like Ley (1980) emphasise the consumption patterns of post-industrial cities. The inner city is seen as a consumer landscape and gentrification as a consequence of consumer sovereignty. Therefore, gentrification is seen as representing a new urban geography for a new social regime of consumption, (Smith, 1996:52). In this sense gentrification is viewed as an expression of post-modernity - a key aspect of the post-modernist urban form. The case study of

Ringsend, however shows that while consumer preference does have a role to play in the gentrification of the area the intense contemporary gentrification occurring at present is linked to Dublin's post-industrial growth.

### **(2.3.2) Combining supply and demand explanations**

Explanations that focus solely on consumer sovereignty ignore the importance of capital investment in shaping the urban landscape. In a case study of Battersea in London, Munt (1987) found that changing employment structures associated with the shift to a post-industrial economy was a major force behind the gentrification of the area. For Munt the increase in professional and managerial employment created an increase in demand for selected inner city areas thus making them ripe for gentrification. Indeed this is echoed by Hamnett who argues that any explanation for gentrification needs to '...begin with the processes responsible for the production and concentration of key fractions of the service class', (1991:186). These approaches emphasise the need to consider economic restructuring and its implications for the urban landscape as a factor in the production of a 'pool of gentrifiers'. However they differ to Smith's theory in that they also acknowledge the importance of the gentrifiers. They demonstrate the need to combine both economic and cultural explanations for a broader theory in understanding the rise of gentrification. For Mills (1988) gentrification is the result of the actions of both producers and consumers. This argument is also highlighted by Smith:

A broader theory of gentrification must take the role of the producers as well as the consumers into account, and when this is done it appears that the needs of production- in particular the need to earn profit- are a more decisive initiative behind gentrification than consumer preference, (Smith, 1996:57).

However, while Smith acknowledges the role of consumers, his argument ultimately focuses on the re-centralisation of capital as the main impetus for gentrification.

Gentrification is the result of both supply and demand factors. To examine gentrification in relation to consumption alone ignores the fact that many agents play a role in the

gentrification process. These include financial institutions, government agencies, builders and developers and consumers. I would also argue that the indigenous populations of these places are also central to the process and it is necessary to gain a better understanding of the implications for these groups. In addition by renovating specific central locations and marketing them as attractive locals for young professionals one can in effect create a demand and preference for gentrified housing. This is especially clear in relation to the place marketing of Ringsend which will be examined in Chapters Four and Five. The value of land varies according to the economic climate of the time. Gentrification is highly profitable in today's post-industrial climate. The state may also play a major role through the designation of certain areas for tax incentives and subsidies, a factor which is also salient in the context of Ringsend.

According to Redfern (2003) a number of authors have argued that there is a lack of progress in developing explanations for gentrification due to the focus on supply and demand factors and what is needed is an approach which goes beyond these divisions. (For example, Lees, 1994, 2000; Bondi, 1999; Slater, 2002). However according to Redfern '...framing the issues surrounding gentrification in terms of supply and demand remains a useful approach', (2003:2352). This does not mean that the focus should be on supply versus demand but on a combination of the two. Indeed the main theorists within the gentrification debate (Smith, Ley, Hamnett, Zukin) all contend that the way forward is through an integration of production and consumption arguments.

### **(2.3.3) Gentrification: class, consumption and identity**

Aside from debates relating to purely supply and demand explanations for gentrification other factors need to be taken into consideration for a more detailed understanding of the process. This section will examine these other factors in relation to class, consumption patterns and identity. Other factors are also salient however, it is these factors that are important for this thesis.

There has been a lot of research into changing consumption patterns of the new middle-class and how their preference for inner city living creates a demand for inner city housing stock that they can gentrify. (see Lees 1996). These arguments are based on the emergence of a new class of white-collar workers who wish to establish a distinct identity and the outward display of this rests on consumption patterns that display 'fashion' and 'taste'. 'Gentrification, so far as it is manifested in difference, manifests itself in differences in consumption or style', (Redfern, 2003: 2359). According to Jager, and based on research in Melbourne, the new middle-classes are 'buying into history' in inner city areas. This is a means of expressing their social distance from the classes below, and constructing an identity based on 'consumption as a form of investment, status symbol and means of self-expression', (1986:87).

It is this pursuit of difference and distinction that finds its expression in gentrification. This is expressed in both the renovation of old properties and in the construction of new properties with a fusion of styles. This can also be linked to changes in the wider economy and in particular to flexible accumulation, which as examined is linked to changing consumption patterns. These consumption patterns have a spatial element when inner city housing is considered as a commodity for the new middle-classes. Inner city living has been sold as a desirable 'way of life' and is desired as a means of distinction. This process creates areas of distinction. Ringsend is at present undergoing this transition to an area of distinction. It is interesting that in Ringsend this process is occurring in certain parts of the area creating differentiation within the same space.

'Class' is a central theme in studies of gentrification. As examined the process is described as a movement of the middle-class, or as they are defined in contemporary studies the 'new middle-class', into areas previously dominated by the working-class. However, whether the new middle-class can be totally defined as a 'class' in themselves is open to debate (see Redfern, 2003). I do not intend to examine if the gentrifiers are 'other' to non-gentrifying

members of the middle-classes. However, what is clear, and what is important for this thesis, is that gentrifiers are 'other' to the working-classes in the areas they gentrify. If gentrifiers were not 'other' to both the population in the areas they gentrify and to the population displaced by this process then there would be no conflict over gentrification, (Redfern, 2003: 2355).

Gentrification can be viewed as a means of achieving a particular identity. It is however, also a process that impacts on the preservation of identity of the population within the area undergoing gentrification. Gentrification also leads to resistance and conflict because the gentrifiers seek to turn a place into their own and by doing so excludes the inhabitants of that place, in particular those displaced, from '...the very world in which the displacee was at home, to which....they will never be able to return', (Redfern, 2003: 2361). Ultimately the process can be viewed as a struggle over the meaning of place. However, these struggles occur between unequal forces.

In many studies on gentrification it has been observed that women play a crucial role in the process. This is due to both their changing positions in the labour market and also as a response to structures of patriarchy. However, this thesis will not address the issue of gender in relation to the gentrification of Ringsend. This is not to suggest that this may not be an important element of the process however, the aim of this thesis is not to uncover 'who are the gentrifiers?' In addition considerations of gender in the gentrification process should not be distanced from considerations of class because class remains the central factor. For a detailed analysis of gender and gentrification see Rose, 1984; Munt, 1987; Thrift, 1987; Bondi, 1991; Warde, 1991; Butler and Hamnett 1994. Other work in relation to gentrification focuses on changing geographies of sexuality. Castells (1983) study in San Francisco revealed that gay identity developed and was strengthened in specific locales by a collective gentrification effort. This is also true in relation to specific areas in Dublin, which have become 'gay spaces'. However Castells study also showed that

although the gentrifiers were gay they were also middle-class. Therefore like gender, issues of sexuality in relation to gentrification cannot be distanced from class. It would seem that in all studies class remains a central factor.

#### **(2.3.4) Social preservation**

According to Brown-Saracino in contemporary urban and rural America there is a social process separate and distinct from gentrification, a process that she defines as social preservation, (2004:135).

Social preservation is the culturally motivated choice of certain people, who tend to be highly educated and residentially mobile, to live in the central city or small town in order to live in authentic social space, embodied by the sustained presence of old-timers, (Brown-Saracino, 2004:135).

The social preservationist although sharing a similar profile to the gentrifier differs in terms of motivation. The social preservationist moves into particular areas in search of 'authentic community' and actively seeks to preserve the neighbourhood. Authentic social space is defined by the respondents as that which is embodied by sustained presence of 'original' residents. According to Brown-Saracino the 'original' residents that embody the 'authentic' community are 'original' in the sense that they were there before the arrival of the social preservationists, (2004:154). For Brown-Saracino social preservationists engage in practices to prevent the displacement of old-timers in their area while also acknowledging the disruption caused by their movement into the area.

This concern for the sustained presence of old-timers is rooted in a combination of altruistic concern for those threatened by displacement and taste for an 'authentic' version of community predicated on the struggle of marginalized old-timers, (Brown-Saracino, 2004:135).

Both the social preservationist and the gentrifier share similar demographic attributes. 'Both tend to be highly educated with the cultural, social, or economic capital that lends itself to residential mobility', (Brown-Saracino, 2004: 138). In addition adherence to social preservation is fluid in that some who practice social preservation become gentrifiers and

visa versa. However there is an important distinction between the ideology of social preservation and that of gentrification:

...while gentrification is an investment in the social, economic, and cultural *future* of space, social preservation is an investment of economic, political, and cultural resources in the past and present attributes of a place, (Brown-Saracino, 2004: 136).

Zukin (1987) argues that gentrifiers avoid child-centred communities and seek social diversity while Brown-Saracino (2004) argues that social preservationists seek communities that are defined by both the presence of children and the homogeneity of the original residents. In addition Brown-Saracino (2004) found that unlike the typical gentrifier social preservationists seek to make acquaintances of original residents.

Brown-Saracino's research shows that social preservationists construct the social authenticity of the places in which they live through distinguishing between 'authentic and inauthentic' communities. The 'authentic community' is one in which there is a sustained presence of 'old-timers'. The 'original' residents are defined as 'old-timers' and distinguished by the length of their relationship to the place of residence. 'Therefore, old-timer status largely depends on family ties and legacy', (Brown-Saracino, 2004:142). For social preservationists community is equated with individuals bound together by shared religion, ethnicity, class etc. but most importantly by way of life. 'Specifically they equate the economic and social struggle of marginalized groups with strong social ties', (Brown-Saracino, 2004: 141). For Brown-Saracino social preservation is a set of practices that seek to preserve 'authentic community'. These practices include: resistance to gentrification through political and social practices such as the symbolic use of festivals, political protests, as well as a set of private practices rooted in their appreciation for the old-timers with whom they live. Within Ringsend I have discovered that alongside gentrification there also exists, to a small degree, practices associated with social preservation. Gentrification takes different forms both within and between areas. Within Ringsend there are varying

forms of gentrification and different 'types' of gentrifiers. This thesis will address the form the gentrification process takes within this neighbourhood.

### **(2.3.5) Post-recession gentrification**

During the 1990s worldwide recession led to the decline of many development projects particularly in the United States, Canada and Great Britain. This was epitomised by the decline of the London Docklands. The real estate industry was badly affected. In addition the new middle-classes faced redundancies (see Lees, 2000) leading to many commentators announcing a 'post-gentrification' era of de-gentrification. (see Bourne, 1993). For Smith the recession did not signal an end to gentrification. Rather it merely provided the conditions for further post-recession gentrification:

The decline in housing and land prices since 1989 has been accompanied by a disinvestment from older housing stock...and these are precisely the conditions which led to the availability of a comparatively cheap housing stock in central locations. Far from ending gentrification, the depression of the late 1980s and early 1990s may well enhance the possibility for reinvestment, (1996:229).

Talks of a post-gentrification era were not borne out rather it seems there was merely a lull in the process:

Since the early 1990s there has been increasing recognition of a new wave of 'post-recession gentrification'....Recent evidence points to the resurgence of gentrification, or some form of it, in the USA, the UK and beyond (Lees, 2000), (Lambert and Boddy, 2002: 2).

Since the mid 1990s other themes have emerged in the gentrification debate. Smith (1996) focuses on the link between gentrification and 'the revanchist city'. For Smith (1996) the gentrification of North American inner cities can be seen as an effort by the white middle-classes to re-take the city from those that they deem to be 'undesirables'. This is exemplified by the 'zero tolerance' policies of Mayor Giuliani, in the late 1990s, which cleared the streets of New York of 'undesirable' elements while at the same time prepared entire neighbourhoods for gentrification, (Smith and DeFilippis, 1999). This period saw an intensification of the privatisation of public space towards middle-class consumption.

Smith's argument explains the processes occurring in New York and highlights the inequality of these developments. This does not however, explain the gentrification process in cities where the widespread removal of 'undesirable' elements is not a factor in initiating gentrification. For Abu-Lughod (1994) the gentrification of the East Village in New York led to the destruction of community and the loss of place. The gentrification process in Ringsend is having a negative impact on community while also producing new understandings of place.

As a critical response to Smith's notion of the 'revanchist city' Caulfield (1994) put forward the idea of the city as 'emancipatory'. Caulfield (1989, 1994) explains gentrification in Toronto as a middle-class reaction to suburban life. For Caulfield (1989) the marginal middle-class resettle inner city neighbourhoods a deliberate attempt to resist the dominant ideals of suburbia and to construct new conditions for experience. The inner city attracts this marginal middle-class as it offers '..difference and freedom, privacy and fantasy....the city is 'the place of our meeting with the other''', (Caulfield, 1989:625). The gentrification process is seen as means of creating cultural diversity in the inner city and of creating a space for the marginalised middle-classes. Ley (1996) argues that the gentrification process in Canada is an anti-suburban, pro-urban preference by the new middle-class. This is also a factor within the gentrification process in Ringsend. For a detailed analysis see Chapter Six.

Lees (2000) argues for a need to move the gentrification debate forward by what she calls the new 'geography of gentrification'.

A key issue running through the discussion is the extent to which post-recession gentrification reflects continuity in terms of processes and outcomes operating in the 1980s and 1990s and how far these have changed. Are we still talking about 'gentrification' or how far do we need to redefine the term in order to capture contemporary processes of change, (Lambert and Boddy, 2002: 2).

Lees (2000) highlights the fact that we need to consider processes of gentrification in the context of urban policy. The Urban Task Force in the UK, the US Department of Housing

and Urban Development and the emergence of 'Smart Growth' in the US all link urban regeneration to the revival of core areas and these are policy discourses which resemble those of gentrification. In Ireland urban regeneration policies can also be linked to the gentrification of certain inner city areas, in Dublin and elsewhere. I argue that post-recession gentrification, in particular that which is linked to urban regeneration policies, takes a different form to previous gentrification. Contemporary gentrification is linked to the shift to a post-industrial economy and the renewed importance of urban centres. To attract professional workers to the inner city a city must provide suitable accommodation. In Dublin this accommodation has been provided through the construction of apartment complexes, or gated communities. In Ringsend the apartment complex has become a dominant feature within the landscape. Ringsend is experiencing the gentrification process associated with the acquisition and renewal of existing housing stock as well as that which is associated with newly built construction. Although both forms of gentrification differ I argue that they are part of the same process. Within Ringsend both are related to post-industrial growth.

### **(2.3.6) Gentrification: an overview and relevant questions**

Gentrification is a social and an economic activity. It is both a lifestyle choice and part of the larger re-centralisation of specific urban activities. An emphasis on culture and consumption patterns cannot stand alone as an explanation for gentrification but must be viewed alongside the economics of capitalism. Gentrification may be an aspect of the post-modern urban landscape but according to Smith it is an effort to recapture the city at a time when it is most beneficial, economically, socially and culturally to do so, (1996:xviii). One must not forget that cities are planned and ordered, however the major question must be who benefits most? If cities are being re-imagined or at least acquiring a new image then these images ignore the conflict of urban life. (see Robins, 1993). The city is being re-imagined for the middle-classes. These new middle-classes are 'products of education,

modern communications and mental labour', (Robins, 1993: 322). Their lifestyles reflect the differential and discriminating consumerism of post-Fordism, (Ibid.) This lifestyle of particularism is reflected in the landscape.

Although the landscape of gentrification may represent this post-Fordist/post-modern lifestyle it also results in displacement and renders peoples in a marginal position to these processes. In this sense it can best be understood in relation to the divisions it produces. For Zukin (1991) this spatial restructuring of economics and places to live is in effect 'creative destruction'. Creative destruction is a term introduced by Schumpeter in 1942 to describe his view of the process of industrial transformation that accompanies radical innovation. For Schumpeter within capitalism new innovations '...incessantly revolutionizes the economic structure from within, incessantly destroying the old one, incessantly creating a new one', (1975: 83). For Schumpeter (1975) this process of creative destruction is the essential fact about capitalism. Both Harvey (1989) and Smith (1991) have extended this view on creative destruction to suggest that capitalism both needs and profits from the constant reconstruction of cities. The landscape of the city must be constantly altered to meet the needs of capitalism. This concept of 'creative destruction' can be viewed within Ringsend's changing landscape. Ringsend has moved from an industrial to a post-industrial landscape. One landscape was destroyed before, or while, the other was created. Zukin sees these landscapes as both physical and mental representations, a theme that will be explored in the context of competing interpretations among the people of Ringsend.

I aim to provide an insight into the gentrification process by examining its causes, manifestations and implications within a particular neighbourhood in Dublin called Ringsend. In particular I am interested in the implications for the indigenous working-classes whose interests have often been side-lined in explorations of gentrification. Does the gentrification process in Ringsend shows similarities and differences in regard to the

theories highlighted in this chapter and how can Ringsend contribute to the gentrification debate? It is also necessary to examine Lees (2000) contention that urban policy in post-recession gentrification aids the process. Finally I want to address the question put forward by Lees as to whether the term 'gentrification' adequately captures contemporary processes of change. I argue that another way to 'move the gentrification debate forward' is through the examination of this process within particular areas. Gentrification is expressed differently depending on place. Central to any analysis must be, not the gentrifiers themselves but, the working-classes and their attachment to place as it is this which is being disrupted.

#### **(2.4) Consequences for 'place' and 'identity'**

As examined in Chapter One the spatial implications of a shift to a post-industrial society are extremely varied and often contradictory. Analysis of these implications showed indicators of global networks underpinned by regional economies. Further it is only certain regions and certain cities, which are benefiting from this process. The relationship between global forces and local opportunities is highly unequal. For Sassen (1991) the emphasis is on the concentration of global power and influence within a few 'global cities'. For Castells (1989) the situation is one that is moving towards a 'network society' of global economic flows and few local fixtures. These claims have specific implications for place. There have been contradictory impressions of the implications for place within the shift to a post-industrial society. Although there is no doubt that places have been impacted upon due to the varied spatial implications of these shifts there is little agreement on whether place still remains an important element of social life.

The fundamental fact is that social meaning evaporates from places, and therefore from society, and becomes diluted and diffused in the reconstructed logic of a space of flows whose profile, origin, and ultimate purposes are unknown, (Castells, 1989:349).

...the possibility of space being invested with human meaning, such that it could be interpreted as 'place', has evaporated, (Emberley, 1989:754)

As the above quotes from Castells and Emberley indicate it is perceived that within these processes that 'social meaning evaporates from places' and is subsumed within a space of flows between cities and areas across the globe. Advances in technology have reduced, to a large extent, the restrictions placed on human interaction by location and/or distance. Restrictions on the flow of goods, information and capital have also been eliminated. According to Gieryn it is argued that:

Social life now moves through nodes in one or another network, through points of power or convergence or translation but not anchored at any place necessarily, (Gieryn, 2000:463).

Therefore for some theorists place has become less meaningful within contemporary processes. Other theorists like Harvey (1990) and Massey (1994) argue for a renewed importance attached to 'place'. According to Massey, historically, spatial structures of production have each being associated with new sets of relations between activities in different places, new spatial patterns of social organisation, new dimensions of inequality and new relations of dominance and dependence, (Morley and Robins, 1995:73). Recent shifts in capitalist configurations are no exception and these trends are also evident within the contemporary processes associated with a shift to a post-industrial society. Capital may move through space freely however the majority of workers are mainly place bound. This is not to suggest that people do not have freedom of movement rather that capital is more mobile. In addition some people are anchored in place for whatever reason and for them place remains a significant feature in their lives. As capital is highly mobile geographic location plays a significant role in the attraction of foreign investment. This is especially clear in relation to Ireland where its position as a 'gateway' to Europe is a significant factor in its success at attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

I argue that place has not become less meaningful and that in fact place plays a significant role in recent transformations. This is particularly clear in relation to the transformation of

cities and the gentrification of specific inner city areas. Places are defined by their physical characteristics however they are also socially constructed. The transformation of urban landscapes is as much a physical process as it is a symbolic one. Material changes are often accompanied by changes in the image and identity of place. Therefore image production is of crucial importance in constructing perception of place. As cities are competing for highly mobile capital they need to sell themselves as desirable locations. Intense regeneration and place marketing attracts both investment and the white-collar workers required. The gentrification of many inner city areas highlights the role that place plays within these processes. For Byrne (2001) gentrification plays a crucial role in shaping post-industrial cities. Gentrification also emphasises the role that place plays in the construction of identity. For Ley (1980) it is the cultural politics of the new middle-class, which he argues is an anti-suburban, pro-urban preference for inner city housing that is the main factor in the gentrification process. This pursuit of difference and distinction finds its expression in gentrification. Inner city living has been sold as a desirable 'way of life' and desired as a means of distinction. As such place plays a pivotal role in contemporary processes. This is especially clear in relation to Ringsend which will be examined in Chapter Five.

Within Dublin Urban Renewal Schemes were used to encourage investment into specific inner city areas. As such these areas are undergoing a process of gentrification and this process has both been caused by, and aided, post-industrial growth. Place marketing has been used to sell a new sense of place within these areas that fits the needs and image of contemporary cities. Place marketing has also played a crucial role in the gentrification of Ringsend. Within these marketing campaigns it is not only place that is being packaged and sold but also a specific way of life. Ringsend is being sold as a neighbourhood which offers city living in an attractive setting that is both within the city and also detached from the quick tempo of city living. Within place marketing the lifestyles being sold are defined

by and define place. Ringsend's changing landscapes offer an insight into how place has become an important factor in contemporary transformations.

Although contemporary gentrification is deeply integrated into changing economics it is also an expression of changing consumption patterns and lifestyle choice. Urban restructuring is also the result of changing class structures and demographics brought on by changes in work practices and within the domestic sphere (flexible accumulation, post-industrialisation, rise in single person households, later marriages and fewer children). These changes are not just physical but social as well. 'Each society's "moral order" is reflected in its particular spatial order and in the language and imagery by which that spatial order is reproduced', (Mills, 1993: 151). Mills argues that the social is spatially constituted and that people make sense of their social identity in terms of their environment, (1993; 151). Chang and Huang (2005) argue that through the process of 'creative destruction' and 'destructive creation' waterfront development along the Singapore River has rendered certain activities, peoples and place memories invisible, to be replaced by other identities. Zukin (1991) applies the concept of 'creative destruction' to show how gentrified inner city areas are marketed and sold thus affecting attachment to, and sense of, place. These arguments show how place plays a pivotal role in contemporary gentrification and also how place remaking impacts on identity. Gentrification reflects the tensions between competing landscape and competing representations of place. Zukin (1991) argues that landscape has become the major cultural product of our time.

Strassoldo also argues for a renewed importance attached to locality within contemporary transitions:

Post-modern man/woman, just because he/she is so deeply embedded in global information flows, may feel the need to revive small enclaves of familiarity, intimacy, security, intelligibility, organic-sensory interaction in which to mirror him/herself....The possibility of being exposed, through modern communication technology, to a near infinity of places, persons, things, ideas, makes it all the more necessary to have a centre in which to cultivate one's self. This easy access of the whole world, with just a little time and money, now gives new meaning for a need

for a subjective centre- a home, a community, a locale-from which to move and to which to return and rest, (Strassoldo; 1992)

This emphasis on locality may be a way to find an 'anchor' in a post-modern world of flux. Indeed contemporary society has seen many instances of a '...re-discovery of territorial identities, local traditions, local histories – even where, as with nationalism, these are imagined or invented', (Kumar, 1995:123). In Chapter One it was noted that within post-modern architecture there is a play on the traditional and representations of urban locality. People consume these second-hand images and experiences that once formed the basis of social life, (Sim, 1998:55).

The built environment reflects what processes have the most influence in shaping the landscape. This is visible in the multitude of signs and images on display within the urban environment. Gentrification places many of these images side by side - the older working-class housing in close proximity to the gated residences of the 'new' middle classes. The juxtaposition of these images represents the shift from an industrial to a post-industrial landscape. These landscapes, the language used to describe them and the lifestyles of the people who inhabit them all reflect various influences embodied within the built environment. These landscapes and images can give expression to lifestyle choices but they can also sharpen sociospatial boundaries, (Morley and Robins, 1995).

According to Morley and Robins (1995), for collective identity to become cohesive it must be maintained through time and across space. Collective identity is formed within an 'us' against 'them' scenario over a prolonged period of time. Time/space compression problematises this notion while gentrification differentiates space itself, (1995:75).

According to Robins, urban identification is now achieved through a differential relationship between 'post-modern' islands of urbanity and a surrounding 'somewhere else' inhabited by an alien underclass of 'have nots', (1993:324). The landscapes of gentrification create sites for the construction and performance of new identities and new

discourses through which the struggle for place is enacted. The process raises important questions in regard to identity, identity formation and identification.

This thesis will examine how 'identity' is impacted on and acted out within this restructuring. An examination of gentrification also highlights how struggles for place exist within specific locales. It is clear that within the process of gentrification issues of identity and place are inextricably linked, a factor that will be examined in my analysis of Ringsend.

## **(2.5) Dublin's changing cityscape**

Ireland's recent transformations can be placed within the context of the transitions associated with a shift to a post-industrial economy. Within these shifts Dublin's landscape has changed at a dramatic pace. The restructuring of the global economy is particularly visible within the urban landscape. By an examination of changing cityscapes one can not only view economic and social changes but also the effects and implications of structural transformations. General processes of change impact globally however, outcomes vary at a local level. Dublin's changing landscape offers a particular case study of how global processes impact on a particular city. Dublin as Ireland's capital city is also the hub of its economic growth. Dublin's cityscape is continually changing and various stages of economic development are visible within its landscapes. However, in recent years Dublin's landscape has changed at a dramatic pace as it reflects, and is defined by, its position within the global network of accumulation. It is within these processes that the contemporary gentrification of Dublin's inner city, and Ringsend, is occurring. This section will explore the implications of economic restructuring on Dublin's landscape paying particular attention to the inner city where these shifts are especially visible and it is this area that is important for this thesis. According to Drudy and Punch the inner city provides a specific example of the uneven outcomes of global restructuring, (2000:219).

### **(2.5.1) Dublin's declining industrial landscape**

Within advanced capitalist countries the shift to a 'post' society has seen the city emerge as the driving force behind social and economic change. Dublin is no exception and as a European gateway and capital city contemporary Dublin is both the engine for Ireland's growth and a cosmopolitan city that caters to the tastes and needs of global finance and the new middle classes. However, to understand contemporary Dublin and the effects of recent transitions on the working-class community of Ringsend it is necessary to briefly explore Dublin's development. Before the 1980s the Dublin region was performing above the rest of the country in terms of employment in both industrial and service sectors. However, Dublin's industrial base, in particular its urban industrial base, has steadily declined. The post-war shift to export-oriented industrialisation via foreign investment led to the decline of some indigenous industrial sectors. In addition government policies aimed at tackling regional inequality created dispersal further affecting the urban economy. (see Breathnach 1982; Drudy and Punch 2000). The depression of the 1980s and the subsequent global restructuring examined in Chapter One meant that serious industrial decline was widespread throughout the country and particularly in the Dublin region. This had severe implications for urban working-class populations.

...unemployment in Dublin was as high as 18 per cent by the early 1990s, and between 1981 and 1991, net out-migration amounted to just over 74,000 people, (Punch, 2004:4).

As stated in Chapter One Dublin was never heavily industrialised to the degree of British and other European industrial regions and as such it cannot be defined as a classically industrial. However, the inner city was a location for some important manufacturing functions which included textiles, brewing, distilling, glass works, metal working, chemical plants, printing and shipbuilding, (Daly, 1985).

...in the docklands local employment depended on the port and docks, boat-building, coal yards, flour milling, bottle-making, sugar refining and chemical fertiliser manufacture, as well as a number of public and (laterally) semi-state facilities, including transport activities, the power station and gas works (DDDA 1997), (Punch, 2004: 7).

The inner city and dockland areas relied on the availability of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled manual labour. The working-class communities within the inner city also relied on this industrial base. Their way of life and identity was connected to the industries that had existed. However, as with other post-industrial cities Dublin's industrial base has been constantly eroded. According to Drudy and Punch, during the 1970s and 1980s, Dublin lost proportionately twice as many industrial jobs as the rest of the state – 22 percent compared to 11 percent, (2000: 227). Table 2.1 highlights the decline in Dublin City's (inner city and inner suburbs) industrial base:

	<b>1961</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1981*</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>1996**</b>
<b>Manufacturing</b>	65,591	66,432	44,836	30,148	26,642
<b>Mining/Quarry</b>	263	378	326	150	128
<b>Elec/Gas/Water</b>	3,726	4,321	3,138	1,906	1,690
<b>Building/Construction</b>	13,861	17,328	16,901	10,035	8,879
<b><u>Total Industry</u></b>	<b>86,364</b>	<b>88,450</b>	<b>64,901</b>	<b>42,239</b>	<b>39,339</b>
<b>Comm/Ins/Fin/Business</b>	45,624	45,975	44,223	39,176	44,377
<b>Transport/Commun.</b>	21,038	21,971	19,895	16,262	16,165
<b>Public Admin</b>	15,031	17,436	20,516	15,002	14,333
<b>Prof. Services</b>	21,009	26,712	32,633	33,809	39,574
<b>Personal/Other</b>	21,751	18,612	19,431	20,416	29,600
<b><u>Total Services</u></b>	<b>124,453</b>	<b>130,706</b>	<b>136,698</b>	<b>124,665</b>	<b>144,049</b>
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b>210,817</b>	<b>219,156</b>	<b>201,599</b>	<b>166,904</b>	<b>183,388</b>

\* The trend is indicative due to boundary changes after 1981

\*\* Comparative statistics are not available for 2002 due to category changes in the Census

Source: Census of Population 1961-1996

(Punch, 2004: 5)

These figures show that between 1961 and 1996 industrial employment in Dublin City declined by almost 55 percent. The restructuring of the economy was extremely hard on

inner city working-class communities like Ringsend. Dublin's main growth, in both population increase and employment gains, in the 1980s occurred on the periphery of the city as urban expansion pushed residential and commercial development outwards into the Dublin fringe. (for figures on suburban growth see Punch, 2004). In contrast alongside extreme industrial decline Dublin's inner city also suffered severe population loss. The population of Dublin City (inner city and inner suburbs) declined by 537,500 in 1961 to 478,400 in 1991 (it must also be noted that boundary changes occurred in 1981). (Source: Central Statistics Office, *Census of Population 1961-1991*). Population loss in the inner city was the most noticeable. In the 1930s the population of the inner city stood at 267,000, (Horner, 1999 in Drudy and Punch, 2000). This had declined to 159,500 in 1961 and further declined to 76,500 in 1991. (Source: Central Statistics Office, *Census of Population 1961-1991*). These trends show a pattern of urban dis-investment, de-centralisation and suburbanisation. The above figures also show increases in post-industrial employment in Dublin City which will be examined in the following section.

During the 1970s and 1980s inner city Dublin was extremely depressed. The degradation of the inner city was due to a number of factors which include: de-industrialisation, rationalisation, job losses due to technological innovations, plant closure due to foreign competition following Ireland's entry into the EEC, the depression of the 1980s and unfavourable government policies. (see MacLaran, 1999). These patterns of decline and dis-investment are indicative of economic restructuring and it is clear that global influences began to manifest themselves in Dublin's changing landscape. By the mid 1980s the inner city had become a symbol of urban decline and social deprivation. According to McDonald Dublin's inner city landscape was, by the 1980s, 'littered with derelict sites and dilapidated buildings', (2000: 10). The declining population was indicative of degradation and this was further compounded by rising unemployment. By the mid 1980s the inner city had an unemployment rate of over 35 per cent while levels of unemployment had risen to

over 80 per cent in some local authority housing complexes, (MacLaran, 1999). Working-class communities that had previously enjoyed secure industrial work were now faced with the loss of this employment and the reality that economic restructuring meant that this type of employment was unlikely to return to the inner city.

The government realised that positive intervention was necessary in order to attract investment into the city centre, (Drudy and Punch, 2000). This intervention came about through Urban Renewal Schemes. The response of the government in terms of Urban Renewal Schemes shows how Smith's 'rent gap thesis' is not sufficient on its own to indicate re-investment in Dublin's inner city. Investment was initially enticed into the inner city by government policies. However, government policies alone cannot account for re-investment within the inner city. Post-industrial growth also assured that re-investment would be profitable. It is a combination of favourable government policies and post-industrial growth that saw capital return to Dublin's inner city.

'Dublin's inner city was given designated area status for industrial purposes in 1982 in an attempt to arrest industrial decline, but its impact in terms of job creation was minimal', (Drudy and Punch, 2000: 230). In 1986 the government introduced the first Urban Renewal Act, which circumscribed a number of 'Designated Areas' for development in Dublin. The Designated Area Scheme was designed to encourage the private sector to invest in commercial and residential buildings in four designated areas in the heart of Dublin that had suffered de-industrialisation and dis-investment. The areas included in the scheme lay on both sides of the river Liffey in Dublin's inner city, an area north of the Liffey around Gardnier Street, a small development of Georgian houses in Henrietta Street and the Custom House Docks site, (Drudy and Punch, 2000: 231). One of the most important elements of the urban renewal schemes for Dublin's inner city and Ringsend was the establishment of the special renewal authority the Custom House Docks Development Authority (CHDDA) succeeded in 1997 by the Dublin Docklands Development Authority

(DDDA). As Ringsend is included in the CHDDA and the DDDA they will be examined in Chapter Four.

Further additions were made to the Designated Areas in 1988 and 1990 and a special scheme was introduced in 1991 in order to develop Temple Bar – an historic area in the city centre – as a cultural, artistic and tourist attraction. In 1994 further areas and individual streets were designated and a number of “Enterprise Areas” were established, (Drudy and Punch, 2000: 233).

It was estimated that over the ten-year period 1986-95 there was a *gross* gain in ‘direct’ and ‘indirect’ employment of about 24,700 jobs, (Drudy and Punch, 2000: 237). However, Drudy and Punch note that there was a significant ‘transfer’ effect during these years as many companies simply transferred from outside the area to avail of the incentives. These Schemes offered a whole range of tax incentives – capital allowances, rates remission and rent allowances – to encourage capital to relocate back in the inner city. (For details of these incentives see Drudy and Punch, 2000; MacLaran, 1993, 1999; KPMG, 1996). Other incentives included: low corporate tax, intense rezoning of land to suit the needs of corporations, an increased emphasis on private housing coupled with a decrease in the numbers of public housing being built. Under these tax incentive schemes many of the areas that have been designated for renewal are inner city locations. These areas are crucial to economic growth within the context of the ‘posts’ and as such it is clear that government planning is playing a major role within contemporary transformations.

### **(2.5.2) Contemporary Dublin**

By the end of the 1980s, much of central Dublin displayed all the symptoms of decline, including rising unemployment, widespread dereliction, educational disadvantage, crime, drug abuse, and a whole range of other social problems, (Drudy and Punch, 2000: 230).

However during the 1990s Dublin’s landscape has been re-invented and renewed. In August 1999, the *Observer* ran a piece describing Dublin as ‘the richest, happiest city in Europe’, (McDonald, 2000:12). Ireland, and specifically Dublin, experienced an unprecedented period of economic ‘boom’ during the late 1990s referred to as the ‘Celtic

Tiger'. The causes of this boom are complex however, some factors that are typically identified include geographic location, government incentives, low-tax regime, EU structural funds and a national social partnership model of negotiating wage agreements. During this boom the country experienced average annual GDP growth rates of almost 8 per cent however lower GNP rates were recorded due to profit repatriation by MNC's. (see Kirby 2002). While lower GNP rates have been recorded they have still grown quite dramatically:

....in 1995, Ireland was 10% below the European average, now we are 15% to 20% above the European average. This is a fantastic performance, in which Dublin has been a very key driver. Dublin accounts for a large proportion of the population in the country, as well as half the national output and two out of every five jobs in the country. So it must be remembered that Dublin is an enormously important driver for the whole economy and Ireland's whole positioning globally, (Quinn, 2006: 5).

As the above quote highlights Dublin is an important driver behind Ireland's global position. In 2005 Fortune Magazine ranked Dublin as the fifth most important city for business within Europe. Prime office rents in Dublin City are among the top ten highest in the world while Grafton Street is the sixth most expensive street in the world, (Martin, 1995). Within Ireland's changing economy Dublin has been transformed. According to McDonald, Dublin is one of the most transformed cities anywhere in the world. 'It has progressed from a city littered with derelict sites not ten years ago to become a major contender for the attraction of global financial investment', (2000, 10-13). The policies put in place by the government to attract high-tech firms coupled with Ireland's position as a 'gateway' to Europe contributed to Ireland's transition to a post-industrial economy. This combined with the Urban Renewal Schemes has also contributed to the attraction of foreign investment into Dublin. It is estimated that by 1998 £1.5billion had been invested by the private sector alone since the Urban Renewal Act in 1986 designated specific sites for tax incentives, (McDonald, The Irish Times, 27/02/1999). Indeed the divergence between GDP and GNP suggests that transnational capital has been one of the driving

forces behind Ireland's growing economy. The importance of FDI to the Irish economy was examined in Chapter One. Dublin as Ireland's global centre has been very successful at attracting foreign direct investment.

The success of Dublin's Urban Renewal Schemes can also be measured in the type of firms attracted here. These include leading software companies as well as leading financial institutions and leading banks such as Barclays, Chase Manhattan, Citicorp and Sumitomo, (McDonald, 2000: 13). The International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) opened in 1987 and located in the former docklands area is '..the gleaming, power-dresses symbol of the Celtic Tiger economy – so successful, indeed, that it generates £430 million-plus per annum for the Exchequer, even at a 10% corporation tax rate', (Ibid.). In 2004 this sector contributed €663 million in corporation tax to the exchequer while employment in this centre now stands in the region of 21,000, (Martin, 2005). The IFSC also stands as a symbol of the post-industrial society. It is a place, which has been transformed from a docklands area, concerned with the production and movement of goods, to a post-industrial place in which no goods are produced and the commodity in question is money itself. In addition according to Buckley (2006) the e-Bays, Amazons and Yahoos have all been coming to Dublin because of data centre availability and because of the reputation of Dublin as a place to live and do business. These companies are keen to be in a place that has a young population with the necessary skills.

Dublin's changing landscape is an example of the renewed importance of urban centres and the fact that cities must compete for the attraction of global finance. Those cities that can attract the leading MNC's in the post-industrial sectors of the economy will benefit the most. Foreign investment over recent years has become predominantly located in Dublin and Dublin has taken on a niche role in some global commodity chains in particular it has become a global site for some back office functions like financial services. (see Breathnach, 2000; 2002). Cities have had to make themselves desirable locations in order

to attract foreign investment. Dublin is no exception. The reason for Dublin's success is that it has attracted leading global companies. Along with attracting global financial investment it is also necessary to attract, and facilitate the young, qualified workforce that this private investment requires. As examined this workforce is composed of the 'new' middle-class and for this group cities are both their workplaces and the stages for their cosmopolitan lifestyles.

In order to attract the necessary young, qualified workforce and to create a vibrant climate Dublin began a process of re-imagining, re-invention and renewal. In many cases these workers desire to reside within the city centre in order to be close to their places of work as well as to specialised shops, restaurants etc. Dublin also had to cater to the tastes and post-modern sensibilities of these workers. Dublin has been not only been re-styled but re-invented as a cosmopolitan city that caters for every taste, fashion and niche.

In Dublin, culture is increasingly being used to sell a desirable city image. Temple Bar is an area in central Dublin that has been re-invented, packaged and sold as Ireland's cultural quarter. (see Corcoran, 1998). Temple Bar is an example of how cultural incentives can aid economic gain. Temple Bar is, on one hand, a success story. It has won awards for its post-modern architecture and attracts more than 50,000 visitors a day. However the area has now become 'trendy' and attracts a different consumer than previously. The cafes, shops and restaurants are those, which sell a specialised eclectic, mix of styles and tastes and as such are expensive. 'In other words development in the area is oriented toward a particular type of consumer: the young, single, high-earning resident or visitor', (Corcoran, 1998:13). In fact many of the indigenous residents have been pushed out within this gentrifying process.

Capital accumulation within Dublin is facilitated by government policies. Urban renewal in areas like Temple Bar is an example of how culture can be utilised as a means to capital accumulation. This is similar to what Zukin terms an 'artistic mode of production' (1988)

and it is a strategy used in many cities as a means of reversing declining economies. What is clear is that economic expansion within the transitions of the 'posts' involves internal differentiation of already developed urban spaces. These processes show how capitalism uses space as a strategy for growth and how this expansion is aided by government policies.

As Dublin has been renewed as a desirable location in which to live there has also been a renewed importance attached to building desirable accommodation within or close to the city centre. In 2004 there were 16,810 new homes built in Dublin while in 2005 there were a further 18,019 built. The forecast for 2006 is 18,000 new homes however there is a supply shortfall as there is a current demand for 26,000 new homes, (Martin, 2005). The emphasis within Dublin City is on the building of private apartment blocks and again tax incentive schemes were used in many areas to encourage investment. Between 1991 and 1995 15,000 people moved into city centre apartments, (*The Irish Times*, 29<sup>th</sup> June 1996). By 2000 in excess of 4,000 new apartments were being built in Dublin on an annual basis. In 1992 26 per cent of all housing units built in Dublin were apartments and by 2004 this had risen to 42 per cent. (Source: *Bulletin of Housing Statistics*, March Quarter, 2004). Apartment living is a relatively new concept in Irish society. There were flats and bedsits to rent but these were seen as short-term residences, as places of transition. Most Irish people tended, and still tend, to prefer to buy their own house. Since the 'boom', apartments in Dublin, as in the rest of Irish cities, have begun to appear in increasing numbers. Of the 180,661 private households in permanent housing units in Dublin's city centre 36,089 of these are apartments in newly constructed purpose built blocks, which are in effect 'gated communities'. (Source: Central Statistics Office, Census 2002, *Housing*, table 2). Between 1997 and 2001 11,086 new units had been built in the docklands alone. The tax driven 1990s apartment schemes are mostly composed of one-bedroom units and are therefore not conducive to family living therefore it is no surprise that it is estimated

that eight out of ten of new residents within Dublin are either single or couples without children, (Dublin City Council).

It is clear that the restructuring of Ireland's and Dublin's economy has meant that while jobs within industry have fallen employment in the service sector has steadily increased. Dublin is now a post-industrial city and as such it is dominated by the service industry. Chapter One highlighted Ireland's growth in service employment. Table 2.1 highlighted the figures in relation to service employment in Dublin City (inner city and inner suburbs). These figures show that while manufacturing employment has steadily increased employment in the service industries has risen. However, Table 2.1 also highlights that while industrial employment declined steadily between 1961 and 1996 expansion in the service sector was initially slow. In addition according to Punch while there has been a rapid expansion in service employment in the 1990s these jobs are not readily accessible to those traditionally employed in the industrial sectors, (2004: 5). 'Importantly, the expansion in service employment between 1961 and 1996 was entirely accounted for by the professional and personal services sectors', (Punch, 2004: 5). This reflects the tendency within contemporary urban restructuring, as examined in Chapter One, towards a polarised occupational structure. The trend within inner city, previously industrial areas, is towards a loss in manufacturing employment and a growth in high paid professional services and relatively lower paid personal service employment. This is reflected in the statistics for Dublin City set out in table 2.1. Against this there has been a steady growth in both industrial and service employment in Dublin County (the outer suburbs and periphery). (see Punch, 2004). This is also reflected on a national scale where service sector employment in 2002 represented 69 per cent of total employment while industry's share of total employment has steadily decreased from 32 per cent in 1981 to 25 per cent in 2002. (Source: Central Statistics Office, Census 2002, *Principal Socio-Economic Results*).

Since the 1990s the population of Dublin has steadily increased. The population of Dublin has increased from 1,003,164 in 1981 to 1,122,600 in 2002 while the population of Dublin City in 2002 was 495,78. (Source: Census of Population, 2002 *Principal Socio-Economic Results*, Table 1; Table 10A). In 1991 the population of the inner city stood at 76,500 and this had increased to 104,200 in 2002. However, as previously examined the population of the inner city in 1961 was 159,000 so the overall proportionate decrease is still substantial. (Source: Census of Population, 1961-2002). However, what is interesting for this thesis is that the inner city is being repopulated by a new class of residents. Studies show that the majority of new residents within the inner city are middle-class. Research by MacLaran et al. (1995) showed that in the designated areas within Dublin 77 per cent of new residents has a third-level qualification, 38 per cent were from the professional classes while only one percent were unskilled or semi-skilled. Of the 250,330 total persons in the labour force in Dublin City 21,881 are manufacturing workers, 22,897 are service workers while 45,305 are professional, technical and health workers and a further 52,742 are clerical, managing and government workers. (Source: Central Statistics office, Census 2002, *Occupations*, table 2A). This is in direct contrast to the working-class populations that previously dominated these spaces.

The transitions to the 'posts' have produced new dimensions of inequality and dominance. The transition to a post-industrial economy is characterised by severe job loss within manufacturing and industrial employment while growth tends to be concentrated in either well-paid professional services or low-paid, often temporary, personal services. The boom has benefited many however, this has led to spiralling house prices. The average house price paid for a house in Dublin in February 2006 was €378,822. (Source: ESRI House Price Index). There have been criticisms, particularly at grassroots level, of the effects and implications of urban renewal within Dublin. The approach taken didn't address the structural problems of economic change for inner city communities rather it was an

approach which offered fiscal incentives to encourage private investment. These criticisms also include the promotion of high-rise office and residential development, which many communities feel are intrusive within their areas and are impacting on the regeneration of community. Chapter Seven examines the effects of re-structuring for the community in Ringsend. Many of the areas in which the new apartment blocks are being built and in which the new middle-classes are moving into are formerly working-class areas. These areas have been transformed to allow middle-classes access and in order to encourage them to locate within the city centre.

It is clear that the process of gentrification is occurring within Dublin's inner city where the 'gated community' has become a dominant feature in the landscape. 'Gated communities' are a typical feature of post-industrial landscapes and a particular feature of 'renewed' inner city locations. As the case of Dublin has showed government policies have actually aided this process and this needs to be taken into consideration for a fuller understanding of contemporary urban renewal and contemporary gentrification. This form of gentrification differs to older forms of gentrification, which involved the acquisition and upgrading of existing housing stock. However it is best to consider them as part of the same process as these new residential spaces differ from the older physical and social fabric of the inner city. As these new developments are juxtaposed with the older working-class housing and public housing flat complexes the lines of division are more marked.

This chapter has highlighted the fact that one major consequence of the transformation of Dublin within the context of post-industrial growth has been a surge in gated communities within the inner city and the gentrification of working-class areas. Ringsend is one such inner city area, which has experienced industrialisation, de-industrialisation and post-industrial gentrification. Chapter Four examines Ringsend's changing landscape. This local area case study will provide a more nuanced account of the patterns of development and the implications of this for a particular working-class neighbourhood. General processes of

capital accumulation impact more or less everywhere. However, the precise implications and outcomes of these processes are mediated locally. Ringsend offers an important case study of how these general processes impact at a local level.

## **(2.6) Conclusion**

One of the spatial implications of the shift to a post-industrial society is the renewed importance of urban centres. This coupled with changing housing preferences of the new middle-classes has resulted in the gentrification of many inner city areas. This chapter examined the theoretical debates that surround the process of gentrification in order both to establish its causes and manifestations and to provide the necessary background to examine how Ringsend can contribute to these debates. This chapter also explored the implications for place both within the shift to a post-industrial society and within the gentrification of specific locales embedded in these transitions. This restructuring also impacts on identity, and identification, which was also explored throughout this chapter.

While gentrification initially became a means of addressing the decline of many inner city areas it is now fully integrated into wider global urban restructuring. Gentrification was once closely allied to the acquisition and upgrading of existing housing stock within traditional working-class neighbourhoods. However, contemporary gentrification also involves purpose built construction. It is a re-population of urban space that fits image and needs of contemporary post-industrial cities. I argue that contemporary gentrification is a key feature of post-industrial growth. Gentrification takes different forms in different cities depending on their specific histories of development and government policies. However, although gentrification is individualised within specific cities this chapter has focused on certain generalisations in relation to its occurrence.

Many of the earlier debates within gentrification coalesced around what have been defined as 'production-side arguments' and 'consumption-side arguments'. Under Smith's (1986, 1987, 1996) hypothesis it can be argued that contemporary gentrification is related to the

shift to a post-industrial society and the increasing need for a white-collar workforce within, or close to, the city-centre. This is clear in relation to Dublin and Ringsend where changing economics has seen the need and subsequent increase of a white-collar workforce within the city centre. For Ley (1980) the gentrification of the inner city is linked to the growth of professional and managerial employment in service industries and the cultural politics of the new middle-class. In Ringsend it is clear that the 'gentrifiers' wish to reside close to the city centre for a variety of reasons. This has placed a demand on inner city housing. This will be examined in detail in Chapter Six.

Gentrification is the result of both supply and demand factors and these must be examined in tandem for a more detailed explanation of the process. However, I argue the renovation and marketing of specific central can in effect create a demand and preference for gentrified housing. This is especially clear in relation to the place marketing of Ringsend which will be examined in Chapters Four and Six. The state also plays a major role through the designation of certain areas for tax incentives and subsidies, a factor that is also salient in the context of Ringsend.

Aside from debates relating to purely supply and demand explanations for gentrification this chapter also examined other factors for a more detailed understanding of the process. These included changing consumption patterns of the new-middle class. Gentrification can be viewed as a means of achieving a particular identity. However, it is also a process that impacts on the preservation of identity of the population within the area undergoing gentrification. Another factor that needs to be taken into consideration is the process of social preservation (Brown-Saracino 2004). Brown-Saracino has found evidence of social preservation in both urban and rural North America. The process of social preservation is also to be found within Ringsend. This will be explored in Chapter Seven.

During the 1990s worldwide recession led to some commentators announcing a 'post-gentrification' era of de-gentrification however it seems there was merely a lull in the

process. Since the mid 1990s other themes have emerged in the gentrification debate. Smith (1996) focuses on the link between gentrification and 'the revanchist city' while Caulfield (1994) and Lees (2000) put forward the idea of the city as 'emancipatory'. In light of conflicting theories and debates Lees (2000) argues for a need to move the gentrification debate forward by what she calls the new 'geography of gentrification'. Lees (2000) highlights the fact that we need to consider processes of gentrification in the context of urban policy. In Dublin it is clear that urban regeneration policies can be linked to the gentrification of certain inner city areas. This will be explored in relation to Ringsend in Chapter Four.

For some theorists (Castells, 1989; Emberley, 1989) place has become less meaningful within contemporary processes. Other theorists like Harvey (1990), Massey (1994) and Strassoldo (1992) argue for a renewed importance attached to 'place'. It is my argument that 'place' has not become meaningless and social life, for many, is still anchored within specific locales. Both 'space' and 'place' are playing a pivotal role in the shift to a post-industrial society and in the gentrification of specific inner city locations. 'Place' is important for many people who live their lives rooted in and attached to specific places. This thesis aims to explore perceptions of 'place' within Ringsend for both the 'Ringsenders' and the 'gentrifiers'.

Place also plays a pivotal role in the construction and maintenance of identity and the restructuring of place also impacts on identity. Within the processes associated with contemporary gentrification it is important to examine how group identities and identification are impacted on and acted out within this restructuring. This thesis aims to capture an insight into the gentrification process by examining its causes, manifestations and implications within a particular neighbourhood in Dublin. These issues will be examined in relation to Ringsend as a specific locale, which is at present undergoing this restructuring process. The gentrification process in Ringsend shows similarities and

differences in regard to the theories highlighted in this chapter and an examination of this process within Ringsend shows how this particular locale contributes to the gentrification debate.

## **Research Methods**

### **(3.1) Research Question**

This thesis is concerned with experience; how contemporary trends in urbanism are experienced, understood and negotiated. The research question I choose to look at was 'what are the implications of post-industrial growth at the level of place, Ringsend, in Dublin?' My topic of inquiry concerns the general transformation of Ringsend in the context of post-industrial growth in Dublin. This thesis argues that contemporary urban renewal is linked to post-industrial growth and that the process of gentrification is an integral part of the contemporary re-generation of cities. It is through the process of gentrification that one can examine the effects of economic re-structuring. The process of gentrification within Ringsend offers a unique opportunity to examine some of these processes. Ringsend is a place in motion. Its landscape is changing from one which was previously dominated by industry to one in which the office and apartment complex now dominates. The area is at present undergoing intense contemporary gentrification and this is linked to Dublin's post-industrial growth. For these reasons I choose Ringsend as my case study. This research is concerned with understanding how Ringsend is being re-structured within these processes. Therefore from this research question, three sub themes have emerged: What are the implications for place within these processes? How is the process of gentrification manifested in Ringsend and what are the implications of this process? What are the implications of these processes in terms of 'community'?

My research aims to add to the growing body of knowledge within this area. It is within this international literature on changing cityscapes and gentrification that my research is located. My research locates contemporary gentrification within these processes and examines how the process of gentrification is experienced and understood at a local level. Although there is a growing body of international literature relating to the gentrification

process it must be understood that the internal differentiation of already developed urban spaces is both place specific and historically specific. In this regard the gentrification process in Ringsend, Dublin, although connected to global processes, is specific to that area. An understanding of these processes within an international context does not necessitate a complete understanding of how they are manifested, negotiated and understood within an Irish context. This research project will not only contribute to a growing body of international literature in the area but will also add an Irish perspective to this arena. This research aims to develop a deeper understanding of global processes within an Irish context. It highlights the impact of global processes within Ireland, specifically Dublin, how these global processes are expressed in Dublin's changing landscape and the implications of these on spatial development. This will enable not only a deeper understanding of how these processes are manifested within Dublin but will also offer an 'Irish case study' which could be used as a comparative study within international debates.

### **(3.2) Dublin/Ringsend**

Ireland, and specifically Dublin, has undergone a period of economic boom, proclaimed as the 'Celtic Tiger'. This is reflected particularly in the amount of construction that is completed and on going throughout the city. This is especially visible in and around the city centre. Alongside, and facilitating, this economic boom Dublin has been re-imaged and re-imagined. Dublin's newfound prosperity is linked to the fact that it is undergoing a shift to a post-industrial society. Dublin's landscape has changed at a dramatic pace as it reflects, and is defined by, its position within the global network of accumulation.

Ringsend, situated primarily in Dublin's Southeast constituency, is an area that is caught up in the re-structuring and re-imaging of Dublin as a whole. The area has traditionally been a working-class area. The main source of employment in the past was due to its close proximity to the docks as well as a multitude of local industries. However, the introduction of containerisation in the 1960s, major changes in work practices, government policies

aimed at tackling regional inequality, the depression of the 1980s and subsequent global restructuring all meant that serious industrial decline was widespread throughout the country and particularly in the Dublin region. Within Ringsend the Small Area Population Statistics examined in Chapter Four, shows that between 1981 and 1996 the number of people at work declined from 1,686 to 1,481. Accompanying this decline was a degradation of the built fabric.

In recent years Ringsend has attracted considerable private investment due to its close proximity to the city centre, the designation of the area for tax incentive schemes in the Urban Renewal Act of 1986 and its inclusion in the Dublin Docklands Development Authority. However, this thesis argues that the main impetus for Ringsend's development is Dublin's post-industrial growth. As an inner city location Ringsend has become an important place within capital accumulation. Much of the new development has been in the form of office complexes and 'gated communities'. These apartment blocks are designed to cater for young single professionals or couples without children. This can be seen in the 1986, the 1996 and the 2002 Small Area Population Statistics examined in Chapter Four. In terms of employment there has been a steady decrease in every sector apart from the professional and service sector. In fact employment in the professional and semi-professional sector has increased steadily. There has also been a significant decline in the percentage of couples with children and an increase in the one or two person households. Lastly the most significant rise in population has been among the 25-44 age group. Generally speaking the new residents of Ringsend seem to fit the profile of the 'new middle classes' or 'newly affluent'. Ringsend is an area undergoing intense contemporary gentrification; it is a place in motion.

Ringsend is caught up in the restructuring, and re-imagining of Dublin as a whole. It is in a state of flux. As such the landscape is changing. Chapter Four provides visual evidence of this changing landscape. There is a physical and symbolic division between the apartments

and older housing throughout the area with each being defined in opposition to the other. Economic, social and cultural differences between groups and individuals that may occupy the same space or different spaces within the one neighbourhood also exist. In this sense the identity of place itself is contested as meanings vary between different groups. My aim is to capture this sense of a neighbourhood as a landscape which is inscribed with a range of different social, cultural and economic practices and which simultaneously shapes the ongoing, everyday experiences of residents.

The landscape we see initially on entering a neighbourhood like Ringsend is different from the one produced through local practice, a fact we come to recognise through fieldwork. For the term landscape not only refers to the physical surroundings of place but also to *the meanings imputed by local people to their cultural and physical surroundings*, (Bourdieu, 1977). Landscape cannot be isolated from the related concepts of place and space, inside and outside, image and representation, (Bourdieu, 1977). Landscape is more than the physical environment but is also produced within social and cultural processes. It is these experiences and understandings that this thesis aims to capture.

### **(3.3) Methods of research**

It is through a combination of research data and social theory that this thesis aims to explain and understand the changes occurring in the contemporary cityscape and in Ringsend in particular. This research combines three elements:

- Theorising the processes of transition within the contemporary city
- Examining the manifestation of gentrification as a by-product of urban renewal
- Identifying the consequences and implications of this process at the level of place - Ringsend

This thesis is broadly concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced and produced by people. Therefore, I choose to adopt a qualitative approach to this study. In addition the fundamental concepts examined in this thesis such as changing

cityscapes, gentrification, place and identity are all concepts whose meanings are contested. As such qualitative methods of research offer methods that are beneficial to my research question. Qualitative research is research that gathers information that is varied, in-depth and rich. It is a broad term that describes research that focuses on how individuals and groups view and understand the social world and construct meanings from their experiences. In my opinion an understanding of Ringsend's changing landscape, in particular contemporary gentrification, in the context of post-industrial growth in Dublin required an examination of how these processes are understood by individuals located in Ringsend. This required an examination of how these processes are perceived by both the 'Ringsenders' and the 'gentrifiers'. Before examining the qualitative approach that I have taken in this research it is first necessary to define the parameters of classification I used to distinguish the 'Ringsenders' and 'gentrifiers'.

#### ***Defining 'Ringsenders' and 'gentrifiers'***

The term Ringsenders is how the 'indigenous' residents of Ringsend refer to themselves. The term implies someone that has been born in the area however this understanding is problematical at times. For some birth distinguishes Ringsenders from non-Ringsenders however for others it would also have to imply that the family has been residing in the area for generations. Marrying into the area does not bestow the title of Ringsender on the individual. However, on other occasions I have been informed that someone who has married a Ringsender and has moved into the area can now be considered a Ringsender. The reason for this is that they choose to stay in the area and raise their children as Ringsenders and also by the fact that they have an attachment to the area. As one woman stated 'My husband is not from here but he's a Ringsender now. Sure he's here years and he loves the place. He wouldn't live anywhere else now'. In contrast another man stated 'My wife isn't from here. We've been living here for years now and raised our kids here but she's still an outsider you know. She's not a true Ringsender,'. What is interesting in

this quote is that this woman is from Pearse Street, which is just outside the boundaries of Ringsend and has lived in the area for over 40 years but is still considered an 'outsider'.

The following quote highlights another factor in relation to insider/outsider. This is Respondent G's experience of arriving in the flats:

**Interviewer:** Did you feel welcomed by the neighbours when you came here?

**Respondent:** Yes very welcome. Actually people warned me that I would never be accepted in Ringsend. They said 'you have to be three or four generation there before you'll be accepted' and particularly because I had lost my Dublin accent. I was told I hadn't a hope. But from the very first second that I came here I was made feel welcome and I was helped and made feel at home. Apart from the fact that people are actually genuinely nice....I suppose it also depends on how you react to people but apart from that I very strongly suspect, and it has been my experience, that I didn't hide my hardship... I think people were able to relate to that and identify with it and I think that's why they were so good to me. I was accepted cause people could identify with where I was coming from....Because it is a goldfish bowl everyone could see that I arrived with nothing....That helped if you know what I mean. I remember a short time after moving in....it was 1985 and the people who were in their 50's then were the ones (the mother types) who came forward who were particularly accepting or friendly.... It was unbelievable, it was a lovely warm feeling particularly for me and that's what I still like about it to this day. I have for the first time in my life put down roots. (Respondent G: Ringsender).

This quote highlights that for this woman being accepted in the flats was due to the fact that people could relate and identify with her. This was due to class position. She was considered to be 'one of them'. Perhaps this woman is not considered to be a 'Ringsender' but she is not considered an 'outsider'. In this regard the concepts of 'insider' and 'outsider' become blurred. The parameters of classification of these groupings are socially constructed and in Ringsend this depends on varying factors such as length of residence, class position and attachment to the area among others. If one is not considered to be a Ringsender this does not necessarily translate that they are automatically an 'outsider'. In this regard we need to understand that classifications of 'insider' and 'outsider' are open to challenge and are not fixed categories.

The term 'gentrifier' refers to the newer residents in the area. Generally speaking they have moved into the area from the 1990s when the area began a process of intense re-

development. The gentrifiers are also distinguished in terms of class. They are the groups who are working in the post-industrial sectors of the economy and in particular in the high paid sectors. These groups have either bought or are renting the cottages, houses and apartments within the area. They are also distinguished in terms of the fact that they do not identify with Ringsend in the same way as the Ringsenders. In general they work and socialise within the city centre. They do not have the same attachment to Ringsend as place. As examined in Chapter Six there are different 'types' of gentrifiers within Ringsend and as such the term 'gentrifier' is also problematical. However, class position is the main defining feature of both groups. Chapter Four explores the fact that Ringsend has historically developed as a working-class area whereas the gentrifiers can be broadly defined as middle-class or 'new' middle-class.

Defining these groups as 'Ringsenders' and 'gentrifiers' is not to imply homogeneity of either group but rather to provide indicative soundings for the older and newer residents, broadly defined. This research specifically wanted to examine the implications of these processes at the level of place or locality. Therefore the emphasis was on how both the long-term residents and newcomers perceived these processes. These categories do not exemplify the total populations of Ringsend they do however, provide a framework through which to explore the implications of the shift to a post-industrial society and the subsequent gentrification of the area.

### *Description of sample*

Initially I had to gain access to residents living in the Ringsend area. I wanted to interview people from the flats, houses, cottages, terraced housing and apartments in order to gain a wide sample. To do this I distributed a letter to local residents alerting them to the nature of the study (see Appendix One). This letter guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. I distributed 200 letters on the first letter drop to the Whelan House flats, Cambridge Avenue, South Lotts, Camden Loch and Fisherman's Wharf. I got one reply from Whelan

House. In total I distributed letters on four occasions (800 letters) over the course of a year and I received fourteen replies – ten Ringsenders and four gentrifiers. This is a low response rate however, a letter is impersonal and as this research was requesting an interview I did not expect a high response rate from these letter drops. The divergence in response rate between the Ringsenders and the gentrifiers suggests that the Ringsenders were more prepared to discuss these issues. This is not surprising considering that this group has more of an attachment to, and knowledge of, Ringsend.

In total I carried out twenty nine qualitative interviews and I also use some quotes from field notes I took during my participant observation. Fourteen of these people I contacted through the letter drop the additional fifteen were mostly recommended to me. As such fourteen of my respondents were randomly chosen while fifteen were a snowball sample. Within snowball sampling ‘...the researcher makes initial contact with a small group of people who are relevant to the research topic and then uses these to establish contacts with others,’ (Bryman, 2004:100). Snowball sampling is often used within qualitative research however, there are concerns over validity and the ability to generalise, (Ibid.). According to Bryman these concerns ‘do not loom as large within a qualitative research strategy as they do in a quantitative research one,’ (Ibid.). Issues of validity will be addressed later in the chapter.

I interviewed nineteen Ringsenders and ten gentrifiers in connection with this research project. Of these fourteen respondents I contacted through the letter drop ten were Ringsenders and four were gentrifiers. Of the following nine Ringsenders interviewed seven were recommended to me while one Ringsend man I asked to interview when I met him working on his boat. Of the following six gentrifiers interviewed four were recommended to me while two gentrifiers I accessed by standing outside the apartment complexes and introducing myself as they returned home from work. The areas I interviewed people from were: Whelan House flats, Camden Loch, Cambridge Avenue,

South Lotts – cottages and terraced housing, Malone Garden’s, St. Patrick’s Villas, Fisherman’s Wharf, Charlotte Quay, Portview Apartments.

**Table 3.1: Table of interviews**

Respondent	Gender	Age	Occupation	Ringsender/ Gentrifier	House Type
A	Female	60+	Retired (worked in local industry)	Ringsender	Terraced Cottage
B	Male	60+	Retired (worked in local industry)	Ringsender	Terraced Cottage
C	Female	40+		Ringsender	Flat
D	Female	40+	Director of Company	Gentrifier	Terraced Cottage
E	Female	30+	Teaches Aerobics in local Community Centre	Ringsender	Terraced House
F	Male	40+	Plumber	Ringsender	Terraced House
G	Female	40+	General Office Administration Dublin Corporation	Ringsender	Flat
H	Female	40+	Works in local organisation	Ringsender	House
I	Female	40+	Works in local organisation	Ringsender	House
J	Female	40+	Chef in local college	Ringsender	Flat
K	Female	40+	Works in local organisation	Ringsender	Terraced Cottage
L	Female	60+	Retired	Ringsender	House
M	Male	50+	Has a local Fruit and Vegetable Delivery Service	Ringsender	House
N	Female	30+	Works in local organisation	Ringsender	Flat
O	Female	30+	Unemployed	Ringsender	House
P	Female	60+	Retired (worked in local industry)	Ringsender	Flat
Q	Male	40+	Works in Docks	Ringsender	House
R	Male	20+	Computer Technician	Gentrifier	Apartment
S	Male	20+	Internet Banking	Gentrifier	Apartment
T	Male	30+	Architect	Gentrifier	House
U	Female	30+	Architect	Gentrifier	House
V	Female	40+	Librarian and Writer	Gentrifier	Terraced House
W	Male	40+	Teacher	Gentrifier	Terraced House
X	Male	20+	IFSC	Gentrifier	Apartment
Y	Female	20+	Unemployed	Ringsender	Flat
Z	Quotes taken from Participant Observation				
A1	Male	30+	Labourer	Ringsender	House
A2	Female	20+	IFSC	Gentrifier	Apartment
A3	Female	20+	IFSC	Gentrifier	Apartment
A4	Female	20+	Works in local Public House	Ringsender	Flat

I would have liked to interview more gentrifiers but I found it very difficult to access this group. These were not as keen to talk to me as the Ringsenders were. I found it difficult to actually gain entry into some of the apartment blocks in order to conduct letter drops. I had to wait outside for someone to return or leave in order that I could gain entry through the controlled gates. I interviewed five gentrifiers that had bought houses in the area and these were more enthusiastic to discuss these issues with me than the gentrifiers who lived in the apartment complexes. One of the reasons for this is that some of these people can be defined as 'social preservationists' and therefore have more of an awareness and interest in the issues I wished to discuss. In addition those who have bought houses in the area have more of a connection with Ringsend as place than those who are residing in the apartment complexes. I waited outside various apartment complexes on six different occasions and stopped people to introduce myself however, only two people agreed to be interviewed. Some of the new residents stated that they had no interest in talking about these issues and as they knew very little about Ringsend they had no desire to talk about the area. Some also stated a lack of time. However, the interviews I conducted with the gentrifiers produced a lot of data so I feel that the fact that I interviewed less gentrifiers than Ringsenders was not a significant issue.

Other points in relation to my interviews, interviewees and interview techniques will be examined later in the chapter. Firstly it is necessary to examine sociological understandings of the qualitative approach.

### **(3.3.1) The qualitative approach**

This thesis is based on qualitative methods of research and is broadly concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced and produced by people. Qualitative research is concerned with meaning. The qualitative approach allows for a deeper understanding of the subject's perspective, (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). According to Kincheloe and McLaren (1998) as qualitative methodologies integrate different methods

they have the potential to provide rich and detailed descriptions. Qualitative research typically uses interviewing, participant observation, and document analysis to produce data. I used this triangulated approach to gathering data with interviewing being the primary source of data collection. I used this approach to develop an understanding of how Ringsend is being re-structured through post-industrial growth. This methodological approach also provides a visual interpretation of the changes occurring within Ringsend and the juxtaposition of industrial and post-industrial landscapes within the area. This method of data collection allows the researcher to make a more informed and detailed analysis of the data. Each of these methods will be critically explored in this section. Firstly it is necessary to give a general overview of the qualitative approach.

According to Silverman (2000:26) and Kane and O'Reilly-de Brún (2001:22) qualitative research is viewed as 'soft science' whereas quantitative research is seen as 'hard science' and claims to present objective findings to research questions. Objectivity is defined as:

the basic conviction that there is or must be some permanent ahistorical matrix or framework to which we can ultimately appeal in determining the nature of rationality, knowledge, truth, reality, goodness, or rightness, (Bernstein, 1983:8).

Objectivism is an ontological position that asserts that social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors. It implies that social phenomena and the categories that we use in everyday discourse have an existence that is independent or separate from actors, (Bryman, 2004:17).

However, whether any method of research can in itself be objective is open to debate, (Bryman, 2004; Kane and O'Reilly-de Brún, 2001; May, 2001). Not only is the notion of 'truth' a contentious issue the notion of the maintenance of 'value-freedom' is also open to considerable debate. According to May it can be argued that our 'membership of a society...is a necessary condition for understanding the social world of which we are a part, as well as being a fact of life from which we cannot escape', (2001:2). The ontological position taken in this research implies that social phenomena and categories are produced through social action and are also in a constant state of revision, (Bryman,

2004:17). However, this does not imply that all 'knowledge' of the social world is merely relative. I argue that there are underlying mechanisms that inform people's actions and constrain their behaviours. This thesis has highlighted the fact that capitalism has economic, social and political implications. Indeed capitalism has contained two distinct 'phase shifts' (Byrne, 2001) that have highly influenced the spatial and social form of the urban landscape. People's position in the capitalist system influences how they view and understand the social world.

The question of objectivity is problematical in both quantitative and qualitative research. Both types of research are in some ways interpretative. Within quantitative research the researcher must decide what questions are to be asked, what social groups are being researched and what findings are presented. In addition much research is carried out through funding and the question arises as to who funds the project and to what end. There are different perspectives on different phenomena and varying methods of obtaining and analysing resulting data, (May, 2001:8). As a result the question of 'objectivity' is in itself problematical. Both forms of research aim to produce data in relation to the meanings that people give to their environment. While both types of research are open to criticism within qualitative research the researcher can gain a deeper understanding of the subject's perspective through interviews and observation, (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). In addition qualitative research allows for the dynamics of social life to be investigated within the economic, social and historical context in which it is produced. Qualitative research allows for an understanding of research phenomena within the contexts in which they are occurring.

A common criticism of qualitative methods of research, particularly from a positivist perspective, is that they are 'unscientific' and do not present 'hard data'. This criticism is also based on levels of 'objectivity' as well as on the validity of the data being produced. Inherent in this argument is a belief that some methods of research are more objective than

others and that complete objectivity can in fact exist. As examined above the notion of objectivity is a contentious issue. In relation to the criticism of interpretative analysis of data I wish to explore the concept of 'science'. 'A science is often thought of as being a coherent body of thought about a topic over which there is a broad consensus among its practitioners', (May, 2001:8).

When it is claimed that science is special because it is based on the facts, the facts are presumed to be claims about the world that can be directly established by a careful, unprejudiced use of the senses. Science is to be based on what we see, hear and touch rather than on personal opinions or speculative imaginings. If observation of the world is carried out in a careful, unprejudiced way than the facts established in this way will constitute a secure, objective basis for science, (Chalmers, 1999:1).

The above quote by Chalmers is a popular view of science. However, even within natural science there are different perspectives to a given phenomena and alternative methods of gathering and analysing data, (May, 2001:8). Here we are dealing with the social sciences and the idea of a science that offers an all-embracing explanation of the social world beyond our criticism is open, and should be open, to challenge, (ibid.). Indeed feminist perspectives have highlighted the fact that the norms of 'science' perpetuate and hide the myth of the superiority of men over women. This myth is based on the assumption that social roles are 'natural'. According to feminist critiques social sciences have perpetuated this belief thus highlighting a bias in science towards particular values. This undermines the assumption that there is an objective basis for science. Indeed there are many changing perspectives on reality, (Kane and O'Reilly-de Brún, 2001:12).

This criticism is also based on validity of the data being produced and assumes that the interpretative approach entails an epistemological relativism. However, the validity of the data produced in this research is contextualised through the use of participant observation and documentary research and analysis. This will be further explored in the next section. The epistemological framework employed in this research contradicts the notion of relativism. The aim of this thesis was to collect knowledge's about the social world and to

explain these knowledge's within theoretical frameworks that examine the underlying mechanisms which inform people's actions and constrain their choices, (May, 2001:12). Chapter Two clearly outlines the fact that changing cityscapes are deeply connected to changing economic structures. Capitalism is both an economic system and a social and cultural system. The understandings that my respondents have of the processes operating in Ringsend are bound to specific shifts in capitalism that have facilitated the structural transition of the cityscape from an industrial to a post-industrial landscape. Interviews with both the Ringsenders and the gentrifiers show that there is not one overriding objective 'truth'. Multiple 'truths' exist however these are deeply connected to specific structures of economics and historical conditions. In this way the data produced in this research and the understandings that respondents have of the changes occurring in Ringsend are not merely relative.

According to Merriam within qualitative research it is argued that meaning is socially constructed by the individual in interaction with their social world. Reality is not fixed but there are multiple interpretations of reality that change over time. Qualitative research aims to come to an understanding of these interpretations 'at a particular point in time and in a particular context', (2002:4). The aim of this research was to examine the changes occurring in Ringsend at a particular point in time and in a particular context. The structural transitions associated with the shift to a post-industrial society have facilitated the intense contemporary gentrification that is visibly evident within the area. My research highlights the varying interpretations of these changes within this context and highlights the fact that although multiple interpretations exist these are informed by the theoretical frameworks examined in Chapters One and Two. This research does have an interpretative dimension however, this does not mean that it simply reflects understandings. The origins and effects of such understandings are examined through inquiry.

Other factors are also salient in relation to validity and reliability. Firstly in relation to 'external reliability' (LeCompte and Goetz 1982) that is the degree to which a piece of research can be replicated. This is difficult to achieve in qualitative research as according to LeCompte and Goetz 'it is impossible to 'freeze' a social setting and the circumstances of an initial study to make it replicable', (Bryman, 2004:273). Secondly in relation to 'external validity' (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982), the degree to which the findings can be generalised across social settings. As this qualitative research entails the intensive study of a small group the findings are significant to the social world being studied, (Bryman, 2004:275). The aim is not to establish a piece of research whose findings will hold in some other context or at some other time. The findings are specific to the time and context of the study. The validity of this research is also assured through triangulation that is the use of different methods to verify findings. Questions of reliability also arise due to the fact that the researcher in qualitative methods is the research tool. Therefore it is necessary to address the issue of positionality.

According to feminists the idea that the researcher should maintain a level of detachment is not only a mythical aim but also an undesirable aim, (May, 2001:21). 'Both the researcher and those in the research carry with them a history, a sense of themselves and the importance of their experiences', (May, 2001:21). According to Creswell all inquiry is laden with values, (2003:182). For Bryman the question of values can intrude at any number of points in the process of social research. These points include the choice or research area, the formulation of research questions, the choice of method, the formulation of research design and data collection techniques, the analysis and interpretation of data and the conclusion drawn from this analysis, (2001:21-22). As such it is necessary that I acknowledge my role within this research project.

As a working-class woman I feel that this is a topic that has interested me for a number of years. I have seen the effects of de-industrialisation and the shift to a post-industrial society

on both my family and on many of the places that I have lived in. My perceptions on the shift to a post-industrial society and contemporary gentrification led me to look at this topic in the first place. As this study is an investigation into the gentrification process in operation in Ringsend it can deepen our knowledge in relation to this process in an Irish context. I felt that the implications of these processes at the level of place in Ireland would be an interesting area to explore. The reason I choose Ringsend is that I had worked in a Public House in the area and had witnessed the landscape changing first hand. I will examine this in more detail in the 'participant observation' section below. In addition my role as 'researcher as instrument' will also be explored in detail in the following sections. Ringsend is an area undergoing intense contemporary gentrification and as such it was a valid area in which to conduct this research. In addition as Ringsend is considered to be an 'urban village' I felt it would offer an interesting case study.

Data are not collected, but produced. Facts do not exist independently of the medium through which they are interpreted, whether that is an explicit theoretical model, a set of assumptions, or interests that have led to the data being collected in the first instance, (May, 2001:28).

Data is not simply collected but generated, as the researcher is active in the research and influences the knowledge produced. In this regard I also brought to this research my perception of the implications of gentrification for working-class neighbourhoods. In some instances my perceptions were proved inaccurate particularly in relation to the fact that gentrifiers are not a homogenous population and there are those who engage in social preservation. In Chapter Six I explored the fact that there was evidence of social preservation in Ringsend. In these instances the gentrifiers wished to maintain the community in which they lived. They actively engaged with their neighbours and were more committed to Ringsend as place than other gentrifiers that I spoke to.

My perceptions also had ramifications for the questions I wished to raise as well as to the theoretical frameworks I adopted. I also feel that I concentrated more on the working-class

population, the Ringsenders, within this research. This was due to the fact that I feel their understandings were crucial in explaining the implications of the gentrification process. However, this may also reflect my own bias towards this group. According to Bryman it is common for researchers working within a qualitative research strategy, and in particular when they use participant observation or intensive interviewing, to develop a close affinity with the people they study, (2004:22). While I interviewed both the Ringsenders and the gentrifiers as outlined above I interviewed more Ringsenders in this research. In addition during my participant observation within the area I have developed a knowledge and attachment to Ringsend which may also impact on my analysis. As examined earlier I found it extremely difficult to access the gentrifiers. I feel this may be addressed in future research as the gentrifiers who have bought into the area may be more open to discuss these issues once they have lived there for a time. Ultimately however, I would argue that while my own views may have had an impact on this study I do not feel that this necessarily impacted on the overall shape of the study or the analysis I have drawn from the data produced. I recognise that research cannot be value free however, I have tried to ensure the undue incursion of values in the research process and have exhibited reflexivity about the part played by such factors, (Byman, 2004:22). This will be further explored in the following sections.

### **(3.3.2) Ringsend as a case-study**

Ireland's recent transformations can be placed within the context of the transitions associated with the shift to a 'post' society. Within these shifts Dublin's landscape has changed at a dramatic pace. According to Peillon, Ireland has managed to establish itself as a post-industrial enclave within global capitalism, (2002:1). It is within these processes that the gentrification of Dublin's inner city, and Ringsend, is occurring. Understanding the processes associated with gentrification and its implications for inner city working-class communities is crucial to understanding the contemporary cityscape. As I wanted to

examine the implications of post-industrial growth at the level of place in an inner city location the case study format was the best option. I choose Ringsend as a case study because as stated earlier I had worked in this area and witnessed the changes occurring in this neighbourhood first hand. This will be further explored in the participant observation section. In addition the process of contemporary gentrification is extremely visible within Ringsend and as such it was a valid area in which to conduct this research. General processes of change impact globally however, outcomes vary at a local level. Ringsend is an inner city working-class 'urban village' and I feel that this area offers a particular case study of how global processes impact and are mediated at a local level.

'The basic case study entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case,' (Bryman, 2004:48). The case study research examines the complexity and particular nature of the case in question, (Stake, 1995). The emphasis in this case study is on the extensive examination of a single location or setting. The researcher can choose to examine a case study in either a covert or overt way. However, covert researching is a controversial method on ethical grounds, (Bryman, 2004:49). In my research I was honest in relation to my role as researcher and the nature of my investigation. I also plan on placing a copy of this research in the local library. This research should add to the body of local literature in relation to the area.

According to Bryman 'one question on which a great deal of discussion has centred concerns the *external validity* or *generalizability* of case study research', (2004:51). The answer to this is that case studies cannot be generalised to all areas. They are historically and socially specific and are also specific to a certain context. However, case studies allow the researcher a chance to explore key social processes. A case study can provide insights that survey techniques ignore. This case study was chosen because Ringsend provides a suitable context in which to examine and answer my research questions. Ringsend was chosen as a case study because it provides a suitable setting for exploring the changes

occurring within contemporary cities and in particular the implications of contemporary gentrification. This does not mean however, that the findings are merely limited to this social setting. Many localities are experiencing the changes that are occurring within Ringsend and while these shifts will be mediated at a local level and the implications will be context specific this case study can be used as a comparative analysis.

According to Merriam the case study format examines 'a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries', (2002:178). Ringsend represents a bounded entity. As a result I am not arguing that the findings here are indicative of all places undergoing these processes. However, I do argue that the data produced in this research throws light on changing inner city landscapes in the context of post-industrial growth. Ringsend offers a valid case study to add to our understandings of these global processes.

### **(3.3.3) Participant observation**

Participant observation entails the involvement of the researcher in the social setting of that which they wish to study. Participant observation helps you to gain a better understanding of complex processes and is particularly good for understanding something within a larger context, (Kane and O'Reilly-de Brún, 2001:218-219). Within participant observation the researcher immerses themselves in a group or setting '....for an extended period of time observing behaviour, listening to what is being said in conversation both between others and with the fieldworker, and asking questions', (Bryman, 2004:292). As such the researcher is involved in the data produced or generated. The following is an account of the participant observation that I have conducted in Ringsend.

I began working in a local Public House in Ringsend during the summer months of 1998. This was a local Public House and I worked behind the bar from 10am to 6pm. On my breaks I walked around the area and I became aware of the changes occurring within the landscape. This interested me in what was happening in this locale and I began to talk to the customers in the bar about their understanding of these changes. During this time the

majority of my conversations were carried out between the hours of 2pm and 6pm. The bar was relatively quiet during these hours and was clientele was mostly composed of regular local residents. The bar is on one level and quite small and there is also a beer garden to the side. The décor is old and could be described as 'traditional'. There are bar stools around the bar and tables to the side. My time working in this Public House and my interest in the changes occurring in Ringsend influenced my research topic and my decision to use Ringsend as a case study.

I returned to work in this pubic house for the summer months of 1999 and I also worked here for the summer months of 2000 and also part time in the evenings throughout this year. I occasionally worked there during 2001 and 2002 to fill in for staff on holiday leave. During these times I had started my research and as such I informed the clientele of the nature of my research. The bar was frequented by a regular clientele, which were mostly composed of local men during the day and a mix of local residents in the evenings. Therefore the bar and was frequented mainly by Ringsenders. However, as this bar also served food lunch times were extremely busy and the lunchtime clientele was also composed of people working in the area. In addition during 'after work hours' – 5pm-7pm – there was a broader mix of clientele as people who worked in the area also frequented the premises during these hours. However, these were people that lived outside the area. The newer residents, the gentrifiers, did not frequent this Public House. As such the majority of my conversations were conducted with the Ringsenders.

The time spent working in Ringsend allowed me the opportunity to observe the changes occurring within the area and to discuss these issues with numerous people. According to May in the process of participant observation researchers:

....witness the 'reflexive rationalization' of conduct: that is, the continual interpretation and application of new knowledge by people (including themselves) in their social environments as an ongoing process. The ethnographer is *the* instrument of data collection (Brown 1984). Ethnographers gather data by their active participation in the social world; they enter a social universe in which people

are already busy interpreting and understanding their environments, (May, 2001: 154).

The above quote demonstrates how I view my role as researcher in relation to the participant observation I conducted in Ringsend. I was honest in relation to my research and felt that as people became familiar with me they were keen to discuss these issues. As the above quote demonstrates the social researcher enters a world in which people are already interpreting their environments. This was certainly the case in Ringsend. The area was changing at a dramatic pace and people were trying to understand these changes. However, I did not merely collect data but the data was produced by my active participation in these discussions. I also initiated many discussions, which is a clear indication of data being produced and not gathered. Therefore I must acknowledge my effect on this social research.

I was initially an 'outsider' within this social setting but as I was there for a long period I did build up a rapport with the individuals and groups within the environment I was working. The specific setting also allowed for a more relaxed discussion of issues. I was the only bar staff working from 2pm to 6pm and this allowed me to build up relationships with the clientele. As people got to know me on a personal level they began to approach me themselves to discuss specific issues and changes and to talk about their understandings of these. As this was a Public House and as I became more familiar with the clientele there was a lot of humour in our conversations. In addition the clients were also familiar with each other and this prompted a lot of group discussions around these issues.

Often people talked about their memories of childhood and their memories of when Ringsend was an industrial area. These conversations revolved around the industries they and their families had worked in and the devastation caused by the closure of specific industries. This enabled me to come to an understanding of the effects of de-industrialisation within this area and also the fact that the shift to a post-industrial society

was understood within the context of previous de-industrialisation. For the Ringsenders the new post-industrial and gentrified landscapes within Ringsend are understood in opposition to previous landscapes. As such my participant observation in the area helped me to understand that I could not examine contemporary changes in a vacuum. Recent transformations needed to be examined alongside the development of Ringsend as an industrial area and the subsequent process of de-industrialisation.

I spent some time familiarising myself within this social setting before taking field notes. The field notes I took were guided by my theoretical interests and they in turn helped to modify these, (May, 2001:160). This is a two-way process as my initial participant observation helped me to develop my theoretical interests and these theoretical interests guided subsequent participant observation. I took field notes during working hours in the bar however, I did not take detailed field notes at this point because I did not want people to feel self-conscious throughout our conversations. Also as I was working it was not possible for me to take copious field notes during working hours. I wrote these notes up in detail when I returned home and also included my reflections on these notes. Over time I was able to assess the depth of emotion that people had over specific topics and also the level of consensus within the group. I felt that this was a vital part of my research as it helped me to understand the implications of the changes occurring within the area in more depth. 'Participant observation is about engaging in a social scene, experiencing it and seeking to understand and explain it', (May, 2001:173). I feel that this is the path I took in relation to my participant observation and I am grateful for the insights I gained from this.

#### **(3.3.4) Interviewing:**

Of the twenty nine interviews conducted for this research twenty six were taped. Of the three that were not taped two were conducted in the Ocean Bar in Ringsend and one was conducted in a coffee shop in the city centre. These three interviews were conducted with gentrifiers. They did not wish to be interviewed in their homes as they stated they did not

have the time and also they preferred not to be taped. As such I took a lot of notes during these interviews. All three of these interviews were an hour in length. Twenty three of the remaining interviews were conducted in the interviewee's homes. These interviews were an hour and a half to two hours in length. The remaining three interviews were conducted in the interviewee's place of work. These interviews were conducted in a private room. Two of these interviews were an hour and a half in length while one was two and a half hours in length.

### *Interviews*

Qualitative interviewing involves:

...encounters between a researcher and a respondent in which the latter is asked a series of questions relevant to the subject of the research. The respondent's answers constitute the raw data analysed at a later point in time by the researcher, (Ackroyd and Hughes, 1983:66).

Data is not simply collected but generated, as the researcher is active in the research and thus influences the knowledge produced. The interviews conducted represented the most sizeable part of this research project. In all I conducted twenty nine individual interviews with residents from a mix of socio-economic housing complexes. The interviews varied in length from one and a half hours to two and a half hours. The majority of interviews were audio taped and fully transcribed. My primary concern was to interview people living in the area. This included both the Ringsenders and the gentrifiers. All were aware of the changes occurring within Ringsend.

This research used a combination of semi-structured and focused interviews. Semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to probe beyond the answers and enter into a dialogue with the interviewee. They also allow the interviewer to seek clarification and elaboration on the answers given, (May, 2001:123). I had certain themes that I wanted to discuss and I organised the interview around these themes. Focused interviews can be defined as 'conversations with a purpose'. As they are loose and open-ended they give

access to the subject's point of view, to the meanings and interpretations they hold on the issues they are interpreting. According to May focused interviews allow the interviewee to answer questions within their own frame of reference, (2001:124). In particular this was useful when interviewing Ringsenders in relation to the changes they have seen occurring in the area. This allowed the meanings that these individuals attributed to certain events, such as de-industrialisation, and relationships such as community, to be discussed and understood in their own frames of reference. I began all interviews with descriptive questions in order to establish rapport and then moved to explore the themes I wished to discuss. I also allowed the interviewee the opportunity to discuss issues that she/he wished to raise. In relation to my rapport with the interviewees it is interesting to note that both the Ringsenders and the gentrifiers identified with me in different ways. The Ringsenders recognised that I had an understanding of the implications of the changes occurring within their area and were open and relaxed in their discussions with me. They also identified me as working-class. On the other hand the gentrifiers identified with me more in my professional capacity as a researcher and were also open in relation to the issues I wanted to discuss and in the issues they wished to raise. However, I need to acknowledge that these identifications could have been based on my performance in different social settings. Identity is based on performance and I may have acted differently when interviewing both groups. This was not something I was consciously aware of at the time but only on reflection. When interviewing both groups I was honest when asked questions in relation to my understandings of the issues.

The themes that I wished to discuss included the implications of de-industrialisation, the shift to a post-industrial society and the process of gentrification. Key issues explored within the interviews also included demographic profiles, an overview of 'community' and perceptions of place. As the Master Plan for the Dublin Docklands gives special reference to the 'community' of Ringsend it was necessary to examine the dynamics of the Ringsend

community (e.g. social, physical, cultural), the driving forces behind community as well as an examination of the implications for community within contemporary changes. In addition it was also necessary to explore the gentrifiers understanding of community. As these interviews were semi-structured many other points were raised and discussed. These included issues of identity and identification. The semi-structured and focused interview format allowed me to have a clear aim in mind when conducting the interview while also allowing for flexibility and an understanding of meaning. I felt that the themes explored varied between the Ringsenders and the gentrifiers. The Ringsenders had a knowledge and understanding of Ringsend prior to the gentrification process and as such I explored themes within these interviews that related to the historical development of the area. In contrast discussions with the gentrifiers revolved around their reasons for choosing to locate in Ringsend, their perceptions of Ringsend as place and the degree to which they were involved in social networks within the area.

### **(3.3.5) Document analysis**

The documentary analysis used in this research included:

- Relevant literature within the current state of research and bibliography in the area.
- The Master Plan for the Dublin Docklands of 26 November 1997.
- Official statistics
- Visual documentation- photographs and detailed descriptions of the area

All documents used in this study are easily accessible. These allowed me to build up a background to the issues I wished to examine. Official documents have been subjected to charges of bias. For these reasons Dorling and Simpson (1999) argue that the production of accurate information has been subject to critique. This has the effect of rendering official statistics problematic for conducting research into some issues, (May, 2001:85). I understand that official statistics should be examined with caution and are subject to criticism however, according to Bulmer (1984) that while they have their problems they

are still useful for research purposes. The statistics used in this research provided useful empirical data for this research. In addition the statistics used were in relation to changing demographics, employment and housing and I feel that there is a reduced risk of bias in these classifications.

I also used documents that were published by the DDDA. These documents are also subject to critique. As such I employed critical analysis in my use of these publications. However, these documents offered insights into the aims of the DDDA in relation to dockland areas and in relation to Ringsend in particular. These helped to shape my debates in relation to the changes occurring in Dublin and Ringsend. Any other documentary analysis and secondary analysis were also treated with caution however, they also provided useful information that helped shape this research.

### **(3.3.6) Photographic representation**

Chapter Four provides a visual representation of the contemporary changes occurring within Ringsend. These were photographs that I had taken over the course of this research. They helped to not only provide a visual representation of the area but also to show the juxtaposition of the contrasting landscapes of the new apartment complexes and the older housing. These photographs also capture the change from an industrial to a post-industrial landscape, as some of the older industrial sites are still present in the built environment of Ringsend.

The use of visual material in social research has increased in recent years. (Banks, 2001; Pink, 2001; Rose, 2001). The photographs used in this research were produced for the purpose of this piece of research. These are representations of Ringsend that the researcher has constructed. There are a number of ways in which photographs have been employed in qualitative research: As memory aids in the course of fieldwork and as such become part of the researchers fieldnotes; As sources of data in their own right and not simply components of fieldnotes; As prompts for discussion with research participants, (Bryman, 2004:312).

The way in which I used photographs in this research was as representational tool and therefore as a source of data.

For Pink (2001) within social research photographs have been predominantly used to capture a setting and therefore they become a 'fact' for the researcher to interpret alongside other data. However, Pink (2001) also highlights the fact that photographs can also be used in a reflexive way. This entails awareness by the researcher that they have an impact on what a photograph reveals. The researcher influences what a photograph reveals and how it is composed, (Bryman, 2004:312). Harper (1987) argues that visual representations are narrative and reflexive. For Harper visual research addresses two concerns, firstly what the researcher photographs and secondly how the researcher organises the photographs to represent what has been photographed, (1987:2). Photographs are objective in that they represent a specific moment in time and place however they are also constructed as they reflect the photographers interpretation of the world. As such the photograph as a representation of a social world is problematic, (Banks, 2001). For Banks (2001) academic research tended toward placing the photograph in a separate section to the text thus placing it in a marginal role to the analysis contained in the main body of the text.

In order to avoid using photographs as merely descriptive and marginal to my arguments I have incorporated the photographs used into the text. They are used to highlight and develop my arguments in relation to Ringsend's changing landscape in Chapter Four. However, according to Morgan and Pritchard (1998) photographic representations are selective as the researcher can decide what images are selected and also what meanings are assigned to particular images. They argue that images can be used to construct specific representations of people and places, (1998:171). It is also necessary to acknowledge that images are not fixed and can be viewed by people in different ways, (Pink, 2001). Pink gives the example of when she showed students slides of a woman's bullfighter's performance some members of the group interpreted them in terms of an anti-bullfighting

discourse while bullfight aficionados focused on the details of the bullfighter's technique and her female body, (2001:52). The meanings invested in photographs can vary depending on cultural and social context.

Researchers need to understand the individual, local and broader discourses in which photographs are made meaningful. Work on historical photography (Edwards, 1992; 1997) critically deconstructs the theories and political agendas that informed the intentions of those who produced and used these images. (see Pink 2001). However Pink is referring to a specific type of historical photography mainly colonial archival photography. I would argue that it is difficult to state what exactly constitutes 'historical photography'. The pictures I choose to take for this research project are contemporary photographs however they could also be viewed in terms of historical photography. These images are representations of apartment complexes in Ringsend and I use them to argue that Ringsend is undergoing a shift to a post-industrial landscape and highlight the juxtaposition of landscapes within the area. While these images reveal newly constructed complexes they also tell a story of industrial decline. There is no industry in these photographs because these sites have been eradicated from the landscape. Therefore these particular images also reveal what has been historically removed from the landscape. This is not revealed in what the image discloses but in what is missing from the same image. In addition it could also be argued that all images can be said to represent an historical moment in time because once the image is captured that point in time has passed.

The meanings given to photographs can be renegotiated. New audiences can give new meanings to images and can embed them in a number of discourses. In addition according to Pink (2001) when researchers take photographs they do so with reference to specific theories and in the context of particular social relationships. Indeed the photographs taken for this research were used as representing both industrial decline and post-industrial growth. As such they are embedded in both discourses. I used the images in Chapter Four

as representations of place at a particular moment in time and in a particular context. They are used in a way that is relevant to the research question. I believe that photographic representation of the area was appropriate in this research in order to give the reader a sense of the changes occurring within Ringsend. The pictures I took constructed a particular image of Ringsend however, they do capture the changes occurring in the landscape.

According to Byrman as sources of data, visual research methods require an ability on the part of the researcher to 'read' images in a manner that is sensitive to the context in which they were generated, (2004:315). I understand that the photographic representations used in Chapter Four do not provide an unproblematical depiction of reality. Indeed the Ringsenders and gentrifiers within Ringsend have different understandings of the changes occurring in the landscape. While the Ringsenders may view the images in relation to industrial decline and changes in the landscape of Ringsend the gentrifiers and other audiences may locate the same images in a discourse of renewal.

According to Grady (1991) the use of visual images in sociological research allows the sociologist to provide a wider context and deeper insight into the social world. Photographic representations of Ringsend were used in this research in order to illustrate points and to provide some visual images of Ringsend's landscape. 'There is a great deal that photographs do not tell us about their world', (Scott, 1990: 384). This implies that the photograph should not be taken at face value. While this research provides visual images of Ringsend these images are provided within a framework that gives considerable additional knowledge about the area, of what these images represent and the social context in which these images were produced. While I have incorporated these visual images into the text and have used them to highlight and develop my arguments I would also argue that these representations also provide their own knowledge within the image itself. I have

provided a framework for interpreting the image in relation to the arguments that I present however, they may be viewed differently in a different context.

### **(3.3.7) Oral evidence**

This research draws heavily on the voices of the people that I interviewed. Many of these voices speak of Ringsend's historical development and understand the changes occurring in the area against memories of past landscapes. In addition this qualitative data also explores changes in identity and identification through changes in the landscape. My aim was to allow the contemporary voices of Ringsenders speak from interviews rather than to explore the social and labour history of the area. The reason for these decisions is that this thesis aims to capture understandings of contemporary transitions through the voices of those who are experiencing these changes. While some argue that oral evidence, or oral history, suffers from the weakness of subjectivity this research argues that the very subjectivity of oral sources can also make them uniquely valuable, (Thompson, 1988:138). According to Thompson subjectivity is as much the business of history as the more visible 'facts', (1988:138). History is not just about events or structures but also about how these are remembered and experienced in the imagination. This research examines economic change through statistics in relation to industrial decline and post-industrial growth. Statistics in relation to changing demographics in Dublin City have also been extensively explored. The voices of the respondents in this research explore the implications and understandings of these changes. Often contemporary changes are understood in terms of class and also in terms of memory, in particular memories of past landscapes within Ringsend, and it is these understandings that this thesis aims to capture.

The use of oral sources raises some fundamental issues in relation to 'how reliable is oral evidence?' (Thompson, 1988:vii). According to Thompson the use of interviews as a source of data is both long-standing and perfectly compatible with scholarly standards, (1988:2). The use of oral history '....can give back to the people who made and

experienced history, through their own words, a central place.’ (Thompson, 1988:2). According to Thompson once the life experience of people can be used as raw material a new dimension is given to history, (1988:5). The voices of the people in this research add a new dimension to understanding the changes occurring in Ringsend and Dublin. This allows evidence from a new direction and allows for a more critical reconstruction of the past, (Thompson, 1988:5). In addition for Thompson the nature of the interview implies a breaking of the boundary between the educational institution and the world, between the professional and the ordinary people, (1988:11). The interview represents a method of research whereby the reconstruction of the past becomes a collaborative process.

However, there are criticisms of this approach. For Thompson (1988:19) on the level of the interview itself there have been criticisms that the professional appears with a recorder in hand and disappears with a tape of someone’s life that they never hear of again. To avoid this I plan to place a copy of this research in the local library in Ringsend. Further I plan to offer to hold a discussion on the findings of this research in the local community centre. In addition Thompson (1988:19) argues that the selected group of respondents will never be fully representative of a community as it is likely to be composed of its central groups. The upper class and the very poor will rarely be represented. This is a valid criticism however it is a criticism of all research and not just oral evidence. Rarely can a select group be representative of a whole community however, as examined in the previous sections this does not mean that generalisations, in relation to this specific social setting and in the context of this research, cannot be made on their evidence. The aim is not to establish a piece of research whose findings will hold in some other context or at some other time. The findings are specific to the time and context of the study.

While I tried to interview as broad a mix of residents as possible Thompson’s (1988) criticism that a select group of respondents will be composed of central groups is a valid issue. It was impossible to interview members of all groups within the area however, my

interviews represent a broad range of respondents. In addition I also interviewed a section of the newer residents, the gentrifiers. As this research is mostly composed of oral evidence in relation to the history of place, and contemporary understandings of place, as opposed to individual personal histories I do not feel that this impaired my research. The oral evidence gained provided rich and detailed descriptions of a changing landscape and the implications of these changes. The origins and effects of such understandings are examined through inquiry and the use of a triangulated approach to gathering and producing data.

### **(3.4) Analysis of data**

Analysis of the data was an ongoing process throughout this research. My research was designed to examine how contemporary trends in urbanism, particularly gentrification, are experienced, understood and negotiated. Indeed I argue that gentrification is a lens through which we can examine contemporary trends in urbanism. The research question I choose to look at was ‘what are the implications of post-industrial growth at the level of place in Dublin?’ My topic of inquiry concerns the general transformation of Ringsend in the context of post-industrial growth in Dublin. The argument I present in this research is that contemporary gentrification is a key aspect of urban renewal. This is linked to the structural changes occurring within contemporary cities. These are referred to variously as post-Fordist, post-industrial and post-modern. However, I argue that there are key areas of intersection between all three theoretical approaches. The argument I present is that capitalism is both an economic system and a social system.

#### **Figure 3.1: An outline of the steps taken in this qualitative research project**

1. Initial contact with Ringsend



2. Formation of general research questions and initial theoretical framework



3. Collection of relevant data – Participant observation; Interviewing; Photographic representation; Documentary analysis; Literature review



4. Interpretation of data



5. Conceptual and theoretical framework



5a. Tighter specification of the research question



6. Write up findings/conclusions

(Figure adapted from Bryman, 2004:269)

Figure 3.1 presents an outline of the steps taken in this research project. When working in Ringsend initially I became aware of the changes occurring within the area. This impacted on the research questions I wished to ask and also influenced my decision to use Ringsend as a case study. I began to form general research questions and to develop an initial theoretical framework. I took comprehensive field notes during the participant observation stage of my research. The majority of interviews were taped and transcribed. During the transcription of the interviews I became very familiar with each interview and this was extremely beneficial when I came to writing up my analysis chapters. I applied category codes to appropriate chunks of text in a consistent manner. I organised the data produced under appropriate headings for analysis. This analysis was descriptive, interpretative and critical. A key process of analysis is the establishment of classes of things, persons, events and their properties. The researcher must then try to establish linkages between these classes. This critical analysis of the data generated sociological concepts that I linked to the theories and concepts discussed within the theoretical framework in order to gain a deeper insight into the objectives outlined earlier. My analysis chapters represent the themes that

were discussed in these interviews: Place Matters, Gentrification Matters and Community Matters.

On careful examination of the literature I chose to examine the effects of the shift to a post-industrial society under three headings – Place, Gentrification and Community. All of these areas are interrelated as the gentrification process impacts on place and understandings of place and also on community that is embedded in and sustained by place. To me these three areas are crucial in forming an understanding of the implications of recent structural transitions on the cityscape. They are also crucial areas in understanding the effects of these same processes at the level of locality. While these were the themes I wished to explore in the interviews these were also themes that were raised in the interviews. As such it was a combination of the literature and of the data produced in the interviews that helped define these areas of inquiry and to tighten my research questions. These areas of inquiry helped to define both how the data was produced and presented and were also the main factors in shaping the conclusions that were reached within this research. There was a constant comparison between the literature and the data produced in the interviews. This highlights the cyclical nature of research and further research can also produce new insights.

The use of the data produced in the interviews along with notes I had taken from participant observation and documentary analysis were all used in the findings chapters. This data was used in order to critically examine these three topics. However, other themes also emerged in the interviews that are also incorporated into these findings chapters. The sub-headings in all analysis chapters were designed from both specific issues covered in all interviews and also from issues that arose within discussions. All quotes taken from interviews were classified as emanating from ‘Ringsenders’ or ‘gentrifiers’. This was not to imply homogeneity of either group but rather to provide indicative soundings from the older and newer residents, broadly defined. In all of these chapters I have tried to present

findings that incorporate the varying views that arose in interviews and I also highlight the views that were most prevalent in both groups. A main aim of all social research is to explain and understand the social world. According to May this requires the development and application of social theory, (2001:29). This research sought to explain and understanding the data produced in my triangulated method of research within conceptual frameworks. The data produced within this research also influenced this theorising. 'In other words, there is a constant relationship that exists between social research and social theory', (May, 2001:29). The data produced helped to organise and refute certain aspects of these theoretical models employed. In this way this research shows how both social research and social theory can be incorporated in order to develop a deeper understanding of general processes at the level of locality or place.

As discussed earlier one of the criticisms of qualitative research is the validity of the data produced and also of the analysis drawn from this data. This research has placed emphasis on the subjective understandings of the changes occurring in Ringsend and on place and community. The perspective of the subject has been viewed as providing an insight into how place is constructed and re-structured through contemporary process and the implications of these processes. However, In relation to the validity of the data produced this study used a triangulated method of research. This involved interviewing, participant observation and documentary analysis. This method of data collection allows the researcher to make a more informed and detailed analysis of the data and enabled me to examine the validity of the data produced. I have also critically examined the researcher's position in this research and acknowledge the fact that this has impacted on this research project. In addition this research was conducted for a PhD and as such it has being carried out under constant supervision and assessment. This research was also partly funded by the Irish Research for Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) and I provided regular progress reports to this body in the first three years of my research. I was also required by

NUIM to give regular presentations of my findings. These processes also helped to ensure validity in my work.

A major criticism of interviews in general seems to be that they tell the social researcher little about a reality external to the interview. I disagree with this as the data generated within an interview reflects the meanings people construct from their surroundings and meanings are important in understanding social reality from specific viewpoints. The ontological and epistemological position that I have taken in this research meant that the case study format was the best option. A case study represents a bounded entity. This means that the views and findings resulting from this research represent a particular situation that is both socially and historically specific. The findings do not form a totalising picture but a part of a picture that is equally as valid as another part.

# **Ringsend: An Historical Overview and Visual Representation**

## **(4.1) Introduction**

Post-industrial growth has seen Dublin's landscape transformed in recent years. A key element of this transformation has been the gentrification of much of the inner city. The contemporary gentrification of Ringsend, as an inner city location, is situated firmly within the transitions to the 'posts'. Its landscape is in the process of changing from one that was previously dominated by industry to one, which is now dominated by office complexes, apartment complexes and 'gated communities'. It is the implications of these transitions that will be examined within my analysis chapters. Ringsend is a place in motion. It is caught up in the re-imagining and re-imagining of Dublin as a whole. Ringsend's changing landscape offers a particular case study of how global process impact on a particular locale and the implications of these changes at the level of locality or place. Ringsend also highlights the implications of changing global economic structures at the level of place.

The new apartment complexes, within Ringsend, differ in both scale and design to the older flat complexes, cottages and houses within the area. These 'gated communities' and office complexes are indicative of the shift to a post-industrial society and their dominance within the landscape highlights the fact that it is unlikely that industrial employment will return to this area. The changes occurring are not only physical but are also economical and social. It is the physical landscape that functions as the visual expression of these shifts. This chapter aims to explore contemporary changes within Ringsend. However, this needs to be examined against the historical development of the area as it the contrasting landscapes that highlight the implications of the processes occurring. This chapter also provides some visual examples of Ringsend and the juxtaposition of these contrasting physical landscapes within the area. These pictures give a sense of the enormous changes

occurring, not only in Ringsend but also in former industrial and dockland areas in cities and regions throughout advanced capitalist countries.

#### **(4.2) Ringsend's changing landscape**

Ringsend is situated south of Dublin's river Liffey, which is considered to be the more 'fashionable' and 'upmarket' half of Dublin. Dublin's south side has a greater number of middle-class residential areas. Ringsend is Dublin 4, a very desirable postal address, however for many years this area was Dublin 4 in name only. Ringsend lies approximately 2km from the city centre however rather than been an extension of the inner city it has a distinct character of its own.

##### *Plate 4.1 Ringsend Village*



Much of the literature refers to Ringsend as a working-class urban village and indeed this is how the 'Ringsenders' themselves refer to their area. They identify with Ringsend as a village and not as an extension of the city centre. The above photograph of the main street shows how the centre of Ringsend still maintains the look and 'feel' of an urban village. This photograph shows a Post Office, Take Away, Pharmacy, Barbershop, Newsagents and two Public Houses. There are also other shops, local businesses and Public Houses within Ringsend. In recent years Ringsend has been undergoing not only a process of

gentrification but also a total transformation. This has occurred due to a number of factors and with various implications. However, before examining contemporary Ringsend it is first necessary to briefly explore how it developed. The identity of Ringsend as 'place' and of the identity of the Ringsender's themselves is deeply rooted in its historical development.

#### **(4.2.1) The development of Ringsend**

Ringsend and its surrounding areas was once a watery marshland dissected throughout by the gullies of the river Dodder and the river Liffey which flowed through there to the sea. This waterlogged environment gave rise to three distinct but inter-related communities – Ringsend, Irishtown and Sandymount. The history of the growth of these three villages is linked to the history of the growth of Dublin City itself. 'For it is largely upon the development of Dublin as a city port that these communities – and in particular Ringsend – owe their evolution', (McKenna *et al*, 1993:2).

The name Ringsend comes from the Irish word *rinn*, meaning a point or a spit of land, and the English word *end*, (McKenna *et al*, 1993:2). This is an apt name as Ringsend was once situated near the end of a narrow spit of land and was almost surrounded by water. During the 16<sup>th</sup> century there was an increase in trade with Britain and at this time ships docked in Dalkey and goods were transported from there to the city centre. This however, was a costly journey. By the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century ships began to anchor off the coast of Ringsend in a deep pool known as Poolbeg as it was nearer to the centre of Dublin and therefore more cost effective. A customs house was also set up in Ringsend and a watchtower to guard the vessels. In addition the herring industry was also re-located from Clontarf to Ringsend. This was:

..the start of Ringsend's long association with the fishing industry, an association testified to by the village's later nickname, *Raytown*. The fishery itself, along with ancillary services such as ship-building and repair, was to provide employment in the Ringsend/Irishtown area up to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, (McKenna *et al.*, 1993:6).

By 1685 Ringsend was the base for the Dublin fishing industry, the main anchorage for trading vessels and the regular landing port for passengers from Britain. This small village which had less than 100 inhabitants in 1649 was beginning to develop into a prosperous place with a growing population. According to McKenna *et al.* it also began to acquire a 'cosmopolitan flavour...as many of the fishermen and merchants....were of English and Scottish origin', (1993:6). However, the fact that Ringsend was surrounded by water, and cut off from Dublin by the river Dodder, was providing a barrier to its future development. A bridge was thus erected to link Ringsend with Dublin however this was prone to flooding in high waters. As such people wishing to travel into the city had to transverse across in what was called a 'Ringsend Car' – a horse-drawn contraption and also the first public transport within Dublin.

In 1707, the Corporation established the Ballast Committee of the Corporation as the sole authority for the development of Dublin Port. The Ballast committee and its successors, the Corporation for Improving and Preserving the Port of Dublin (1786-1897) and the Dublin Port and Docks Board (1867-present), were to be responsible for the embankment, widening and deepening of the river Liffey, as well as the construction of the North and South Walls, (McKenna *et al.*, 1993:10).

By 1730 the embankment of the Liffey had nearly reached Ringsend. This construction had reclaimed large amounts of land. This land was leased out as agricultural plots in a lottery system, which earned this area the title of South Lotts. Although South Lotts lies across Ringsend Bridge it is statistically included in Ringsend. However, there are differences between the two areas and many residents of Ringsend claim that South Lotts peoples are not 'true Ringsenders'. This thesis combines both areas as Ringsend however, the differences between them will also be examined in my analysis.

The North Wall and The South Wall, completed in 1823, were constructed on either side of the river Liffey which meant that Dublin Bay now had a channel from the sea to the quays to accommodate trading vessels. In addition work began to divert the Dodder river through a new channel through Ringsend and a flood water reservoir was built. This meant that the

area was now less prone to chronic flooding and also the newly constructed bridge over the Dodder was also less prone to destruction. Ringsend now had a secure link with the city.

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century the Grand Canal Company was established and work began on the construction of the Grand Canal. In 1796 the Ringsend Basins were completed, which offered both 'floating and graving' docks, and which provided a link from the Liffey to the Shannon. 'Covering an area of over 35 acres....the Ringsend Basins were at the time equal to the entire docklands of Liverpool', (Mc Kenna *et al.*, 1993: 30). It was believed that the Grand Canal would be successful in the transportation of both goods and passengers and this would justify the enormous sums invested in its construction. However, it was never a commercial success due to the fact that high tolls were charged in order to recoup some of the investment and also in the 1930s the railroad arrived which became the dominant form of transport. Today the Grand Canal Basins are being re-invented as a residential and recreational site. This will be further discussed in relation to contemporary Ringsend.

The 1880s saw the arrival of the trams – firstly horse-drawn then later converted to electric. The powerhouse was situated on Ringsend Road. The trams were extremely successful. The 20<sup>th</sup> century however saw the rise of the motorcar and the last of the trams ran in 1949. The tracks were subsequently removed which in hindsight was a mistake as the city, and Ringsend, now faces severe traffic congestion. Ringsend's connection to the city centre is marked by a series of transport developments – boats, horses, trains, trams and cars. Alongside these successive phases of development in transport there occurred phases of industrial development and decline throughout the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Before examining this industrial development and decline it is first necessary to examine the development of Ringsend as a working-class village.

#### **(4.2.2) Ringsend as a working-class village**

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century not only was Ringsend beginning to develop an industrial base it was also the '...main landing place for the Liverpool packets, and...a popular resort for salt

water bathing', (McKenna *et al.*, 1993:10). These combined '...all lent the area a sense that it was on a permanent upward spiral', (McKenna *et al.*, 1993:10). In addition the area also began to gain a 'cosmopolitan flavour' and attract many merchants. However, this sense of upward mobility was soon to be impacted upon, (Ibid.).

'As the better off classes moved out from the crowded and infectious city the Townships were formed to accommodate them', (Cooke *et al.*, 1993:16). Ringsend was part of the Township of Pembroke established as a Township in 1863. The Township lands comprised of the areas north and northwest Baggotrath and Ringsend, to the east Simmonscourt, Sandymount and Merrion and to the south and southwest Donnybrook and Clonskeagh. The Pembroke Township became part of the Greater Dublin Area in the 1920s. The professional and wealthier classes initiated the move to the suburbs and it was Pembroke that catered for this class. The status of the areas within as middle-class and desirable places of residence grew through the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Pembroke Township installed new sewage, roads, lighting etc to cater for this middle-class of residents however, Ringsend contrasted with these newly developed areas. In 1963 when the Pembroke Township was established Ringsend had a population of 1,931 in 209 houses, (Crook *et al.*, 1993:16). Many of these houses were dilapidated. Also 'Ringsend was an old fishing village and....compared with other Townships, represented a strong industrial base', (Cooke *et al.*, 1993:16-17). As a result many of the middle-classes choose not to reside in Ringsend but moved further into the Township into areas such as Sandymount. These areas are still considered middle-class residential locations while due to its industrial base Ringsend became working-class and it kept this status.

Ringsender's have a very proud working-class identity which one respondent described as being 'similar to the mining communities in England'. This strong working-class identity developed around its industrial development. The breath of industries within the area provided a range of employment opportunities. This is not to suggest that Ringsend did

not suffer from periods of recession as the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century were ‘...dogged by occasional inflation and recession, which were in turn reflected by labour unrest and increases in poverty’, (McKenna *et al.*, 1993:52). Ringsend has undergone many periods of growth and slumps, which is highlighted by its industries.

#### **(4.2.3) Industrial development and decline**

Due to its close proximity to the city, its reliable water supply, which could also be used a source of power and the Grand Canal Docks, Ringsend began to attract a variety of manufacturers and industries. As well as fishing services, package companies and shipbuilding, and the fact that Ringsenders also found employment in piloting barges to the city centre, these industries throughout the years also included mills, distilleries, breweries, salt works, rope works, glass works, ESB Works, Gas Works, CIE, a forge, pubs, groceries and various other local services. Ringsend is also situated close to the docks, which also provided a number of employment opportunities.

As the area was developing there was a sense ‘..that it was on a permanent upward spiral. As it reached these dizzy heights, however, a fly soon spotted the ointment’, (McKenna *et al.*, 1993:10). The success in improving access to Dublin Harbour meant the end of employment in piloting barges to the city. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century sewage works were constructed on the South Wall which contributed to the departure of the herring shoals from the area. This saw the decline of the fishing industry within the area.

Perhaps the main factor precipitating Ringsend’s decline was the transfer of the packet station from the Pigeon House Harbour....to the newly established harbour at Howth, (McKenna *et al.*, 1993:12).

According to Mc Kenna *et al.* after the packet station left an air of gradual decline began to invade Ringsend village. However, Ringsend still maintained many industries that provided local employment. The growth and decline of some of these industries needs to be examined in more detail as they are deeply connected to the Ringsender’s sense of identity.

### **Shipbuilding:**

Ringsend has had a long tradition with shipbuilding and boats in general.

The shipbuilding industry gave a wide diversity of work to many, and trades involved included platers, riveters, drillers, engineers, blacksmiths, angle-iron smiths, boilermakers, shipwrights, joiners, painters, plumbers and riggers, (McKenna *et al.*, 1993:44).

Morton's yard was established in Ringsend in 1813 and other companies followed Morton into business in the area. The last major company – Scott and Smellie Ltd. – 'employed over 400 people right into the current century', (McKenna *et al.*, 1993:44). The reason for the culmination of the shipbuilding industries within Ringsend is due to the fact that:

It quickly became noticed that Ringsend, still a new port, had no long-term future as a deep sea port and that shipbuilding was more suited to the more advantageous geographically positioned ports such as Belfast and Newcastle on the mainland, (McKenna *et al.*, 1993:44).

However, despite the demise of the shipbuilding industry there is still a strong connection with the sea that survives until the present. Many of the people that I spoke to in the area told how their fathers had boats and due to the fact that they spent so much time on these boats they were known collectively in the area as 'the mistresses'. The boats and the surrounding waters are deeply rooted in the Ringsender's memories and sense of identity.

### **Baking and Boland's Mills:**

Boland's Mills was established in 1823 and is one of the longest operating mills in Ireland. It moved to Grand Canal Street in Ringsend in 1874 and the mill there was rebuilt and expanded in the 1950s due to a boom in trade. Boland's is a famous landmark in both Ringsend's and Irish history. During the 1916 rising about 150 men led by Eamon De Valera 'seized' Boland's Bakery in Grand Canal Street. It was a strategic site as it lay between the city and Beggar's Bush Barracks.

The siege lasted five days and on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> of April, De Valera was the last Commander to lay down arms, after Pearse's unconditional surrender, (McKenna *et al.*, 1993: 48).

Due to advances in technology the size of the workforce was scaled down throughout the years. Boland's Mills still employed 90 people in Ringsend in 1993. However in this year it moved from Ringsend to Deansgrange. Boland's was situated in Ringsend for 119 years and many generations of 'Ringsenders' worked there.

*Plate 4.2 Boland's Mill*



*Plate 4.3 Boland's Mill looking from South Lotts*



As the above photographs show Boland's Mills is a dominant building in the area however, the site now stands abandoned and dilapidated. Boland's site lies within the Grand Canal Docks and this is an area under intense re-development at the moment. This close re-development further highlights the fact that Boland's Mills, and what it symbolises in terms of industrial employment, represents a past era. Indeed like the majority of industrial sites in Ringsend, and in line with the changes occurring within the Grand Canal Docks, Boland's is at present undergoing re-development.

The historic 19<sup>th</sup> century building at Grand Canal Dock in Ringsend, Dublin 4, is to be redeveloped for apartments and offices after being sold for around €42 million...Versus Ltd., outbid more than a dozen developers for Boland's...With government policy now favoring high density developments close to transport nodes – Boland's Mills is a two minute walk from Barrow Street DART station – Mr Kelly [owner of Versus Ltd.] is expected to seek planning permission for a tower block even higher than the mill, which stands 21 storeys at one point. Boland's Mills stands on the opposite side of the Ringsend Road to Millennium Tower, the 16-storey apartment building completed by Liam Carroll of Zoe Developments. Mr Kelly will be hoping to get planning permission for 300 apartments in the proposed tower block and in three listed buildings on the site. The planning application, which is likely to be handled by architects Scott Tallon Walker, will also include provision for 18,580 sq m (200,000 sq ft) of offices and 6,965 sq m (75,000 sq ft) of retail facilities. There are also plans to provide a walkway along the waterfront, (Fagan, *The Irish Times*, 24<sup>th</sup> November 2004).

Boland's Mill, a once dominant industrial landmark, is at present undergoing a transformation to a dominant post-industrial space. Indeed:

Boland's Mill Wharf - a 300million euro, 400,000 square foot development in Dublin's historic Grand Canal Dock.....has a proposed 24 storey tower of high end commercial offices surrounded by beautifully restored listed buildings containing apartments, an art gallery, crèche and restaurant, (<http://www.bolandsmill.com/>).

The aim of the DDDA is to develop the Grand Canal Basins into a 'lively city quarter'. This type of urban renewal is indicative of the contemporary transformation of cities and is linked to post-industrial growth, the renewed importance of urban centers and both the need for young professional workers within the city center and their desire to reside within renewed inner city locations. It is clear from the above quote that the development of Boland's Mills is in line with the DDDA plans for the area to become a 'lively city

quarter'. The changes happening in this once former industrial site are indicative of the changes taking place in the contemporary cityscape. Ringsend's changing landscape offers a lens with which to explore the implications of these changes.

### **The Irish Glass Industry:**

That glass manufacturer was traditionally in Ringsend can be explained by the availability of water power and its proximity to the port, vital for access to raw materials, (McKenna *et al.*, 1993:48).

The glass industry developed and prospered in Ringsend throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1895 there were eight glassworks operating in the area. These were amalgamated in the 1930s into the Irish Glass Bottling Company. The Irish Glass Bottling Company remained in Ringsend and had a virtual monopoly on the Irish market. The company had a capacity for producing one million bottles a day and employed 1,200 people at its peak. Advances in technology led to rationalisation, strongly opposed by the workforce, and hence a reduction in employment to 560 in 1985.

A Ringsender may travel the length and breadth of Ireland...and he or she will always get a reminder of their beloved town of Ringsend that's in the presence of a glass container, (McKenna *et al.*, 1993:106).

According to McKenna *et al.* writing in 1993 Irish Glass is one of the most modern and best-equipped factories in Western Europe and remains an important part of the local economy of Ringsend. Sadly today this local tradition no longer exists. On 28<sup>th</sup> February 2002 Ardagh, formerly the Irish Glass Bottling Company, announced to the 375 people employed in their factory in Ringsend that they were to be laid off. This came after months of negotiations with SIPTU who up until the announcement believed their negotiations were ongoing. On the same day it announced its closure in Ringsend, Ardagh also announced it had purchased an Italian glass manufacturers. The reason given for the closure was that its Ringsend operation was no longer competitive. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of June 2002 management began the process of shutting down the furnaces while workers staged a sit in at the plant in outrage at Ardagh's rejection of the Labour Court's recommendations

on redundancy payments. Despite this the company closed in July with the loss of 375 jobs. In October after months of protests the workforce reluctantly accepted a revised severance package. They are however, still angered by the treatment they received from Ardagh.

Like Boland's there has been a long tradition of generations of Ringsend families who have been employed in Irish Glass. For example three generations of the Maher family, from Ringsend, worked at the plant. Liam Maher worked there for 30 years, his father worked there for 50 years and his two sons had worked there for 2 years before the company closed. Liam Maher is very bitter at Ardagh's decision to move its operation and at their dispute over the severance packages. In a statement to Lisa Jewell of the *Daily Dublin* newspaper he stated 'We were thrown away like dirty Rags', (*Daily Dublin*, 14<sup>th</sup> April 2003). The decision to move this industry from Ringsend to Italy is a prime example of how rationalisation and the restructuring of the global economy can have devastating effects at the level of locality. It is at the level of locality that the implications of global restructuring are most visible.

### **The Docks:**

Most of the buildings that developed in the docklands were linked to the port and many Ringsenders were employed in various industries within the docks and as labourers and carters for the loading and unloading of ships. Again there was a tradition of generations of families working within the docks. On working there for a number of years men received 'buttons' which meant they could hand these on to their sons who would, with the button, be guaranteed employment. These were very much sought after and some of my respondents were proud to inform me that their fathers had a 'button', which gave them a 'standing in the community'.

From the 1950s containerisation and roll-on, roll-off ferries removed the need for storage facilities and large dockside areas where cargoes could be unloaded. As a result many sites

around the docks became derelict and there was a large reduction in employment. The decline of the docklands was also due to the factors that led to industrial decline within Dublin as a whole. These include: de-industrialisation, rationalisation, job losses due to technological innovations, plant closure due to foreign competition following Ireland's entry into the EEC, the depression of the 1980s and unfavourable government policies. (see MacLaren, 1999). These patterns of decline and dis-investment are indicative of economic restructuring and it is clear that global influences began to manifest themselves in Ringsend's changing landscape. As examined in Chapter Two these changes had devastating effects for the working-classes who depended on these industries. Chapters One and Two examined global restructuring of economics however, when one examines these implications at the level of place or locality one gets a clearer picture of the implications of these processes. Chapter Two highlighted the important role played by the Urban Renewal Schemes for Dublin's changing landscape. One important element of these schemes for Ringsend was the establishment of The Custom House Docks Development Authority later succeeded by the Dublin Docklands Development Authority. The dockland areas, including Ringsend, are now incorporated into the Dublin Docklands Development Authority. The following section will examine the implications of these authorities for the docks including Ringsend.

#### **(4.2.4) Urban Renewal: The Custom House Docks Development Authority and The Dublin Docklands Development Authority**

The types of problems associated with dockland areas in other parts of the world have also manifested themselves in Dublin. These include declining employment opportunities, both in the docks themselves and in dock-related industries, and a declining and increasingly marginalised residential population, (Drudy, 1999: 35).

Chapter Two examined urban decline within Dublin's inner city and the subsequent renewal of inner city areas. The docklands was one such area and this area was circumscribed as a 'Designated Area' for development under the Urban Renewal Act of

1986. The above quote by Drudy highlights the devastating consequences of the loss of industry within the docklands. Capital dis-investment led to a loss of employment, a declining population and a degradation of the built environment. One of the most important elements of the Urban Renewal Schemes for Dublin's docklands and Ringsend was the establishment of the special renewal authority the Custom House Docks Development Authority (CHDDA) succeeded in 1997 by the Dublin Docks Development Authority (DDDA). The area was designated as a tax incentive area in order to encourage development. The aim was to encourage private investment and to develop the area as a place in which to live and work and also for shopping and leisure pursuits. The Custom House Docks received the most favourable tax treatment. The CHDDA:

..facilitated significant office and residential development...By mid 1997, its major flagship project, the International Financial services Centre (IFSC), had 111,500 square metres...of offices. A total of 691 projects had been certified by the Minister for Finance to trade in the centre and an estimated 4,600 people were working there, (Drudy, 1999: 35-36).

Although this was an improvement on the situation of a decade before it was questionable whether this development benefited the local communities. House prices within the area soared and the development offered little in terms of local employment. In fact unemployment actually increased in a number of wards where new economic activity in financial services was most intense e.g. North Docks, the location of the IFSC. (See Drudy and Punch, 2000). In addition the residential development that occurred within the area was dominated by middle-class renters and owner-occupiers. For MacLaren (1999) the inner city has become a middle-class residential location. This group tends to be a relatively young, upwardly mobile and transient population who has developed few connections with the local communities. (MacLaren 1999, Drudy 1999). In 1996 a study commissioned by the government to assess the impact of the Designated Area Scheme concluded that:

The indigenous and adjacent communities feel that something is missing and that urban renewal as defined by the incentive schemes has not addresses issues which are central to the regeneration and sustainability of these areas such as employment, the lack of public amenities, education, training and youth development, (KPMG, 1996: 116).

The CHDDA was succeeded by the DDDA in 1997 with the responsibility of developing the dockland area and promoting the social and economic regeneration of the area on a sustainable basis. In addition it also aimed to secure the continued development of services for and in support of the financial sector of the economy. The emphasis was placed firmly on post-industrial growth within the inner city in order to avail of global economic flows. The DDDA is comprised of an Executive Board of eight members and a Council of twenty-five representatives from the public and private sectors and from local community groups. Other functions of the DDDA include the provision of education and training opportunities for local residents, the provision of infrastructure necessary to induce people to live, work and shop within the area and the development of residential accommodation including a mix of housing for people from different social backgrounds, (Drudy, 1999:40). The strategy of the DDDA is set out in the Dublin Docklands Area Master Plan published in 1997. The development area covers 1300 acres.

According to the DDDA's Master Plan the docklands is broadly composed of five residential communities centred loosely in villages - East Wall, North Strand, Sheriff Street/North Wall on the north side and City Quay/Pearse Street, Ringsend/Irishtown on the south side. In 1997, according to the DDDA, one fifth of the area was composed of derelict or low value industrial land and although there was a strong active sense of community the area had severe economic and social problems. Unemployment in 1997 averaged 30percent while only 35percent of children were still attending school in the Leaving Certificate year. The plan covers a fifteen-year development period and the aim is to increase the population of the area from 17,500 in 1997 to 42,500 in 2012. According to their mission statement the aim of the DDDA is to develop the Dublin Docklands into a

'world-class city quarter – a paragon of sustainable inner city regeneration – one in which the whole community enjoys the highest standards of access to education, employment, housing and social amenity'. The area is also expected to contribute to the social and economic prosperity of Dublin and Ireland.

The DDDA aims to create a minimum of 30,000 new jobs between 1997 and 2012. All of these new jobs are to be within the service industry. Many of the new jobs being created 'demand levels of education and skills which most of the local population of the docklands do not currently possess', (Drudy, 1999: 41). However, according to the DDDA, it is their policy that 20 per cent of new jobs created will be on offer to local residents. They accept that this is dependent on the availability of appropriate skills and have committed to work toward providing the necessary education and training to rectify skill shortages, (DDDA, 1997: 189). The DDDA have appointed a Local Labour Liaison Officer to implement this Charter. In terms of housing the DDDA states that 20 per cent of all new residential units on DDDA land will be in the 'social and affordable' category, (DDDA, 1997: 56). This however is problematical as in recent years there has been a sharp increase in house prices in the area which has pushed even the social and affordable units out of reach of the majority of the local populations.

By 2000 unemployment had decreased in line with trends in Dublin and in the country as a whole. For example the numbers on the live register in Cumberland Employment Exchange (which caters for the docklands) decreased from 10,884 in January 1996 to 2,889 in January 2000. Similar declines have been noted throughout the inner city, (Drudy and Punch, 2000: 249). However, Drudy and Punch also note that this may be due to a range of factors including new employment opportunities throughout the inner city in recent years in construction, services, leisure and various training schemes which reduce numbers on the live register. It could also be caused partly by displacement from the area. The jobs being provided for the local populations are mainly short-term construction work

and low-skilled service employment and therefore education is a crucial issue. There are a range of educational and training initiatives in operation in the Docklands area however the results of many of these initiatives remain to be seen.

The DDDA also wish to develop the docklands into an area for people 'who wish to avail of the benefits of urban living in an attractive harbour setting'. They also wish to 'capitalise on the appeal of significant water bodies for living and leisure' and to promote architecture and urban design that is of 'world standard' and 'delightful and attractive'. It is clear from the Master Plan that there are elements of the post-modern within the urban design that the DDDA envisions for the docklands area. This is especially clear in relation to Ringsend, which will be examined in the following sections. In relation to Ringsend in particular the Master Plan identifies one of the major strengths of the area to be the 'established residential community.' According to the DDDA within Ringsend village there is a scarcity of available sites for development and existing lower value uses such as industrial sites and workshops are under pressure for change to private residential use. There is also pressure within the area for more affordable housing but again according to the DDDA there is a difficulty of achieving this at present due to escalating site values and housing prices.

It is within the area of the Grand Canal Basins in Ringsend that much development is occurring. This comprises lands framing the inner and outer basins of the Grand Canal Docks, in total 38.2 acres. The DDDA owns this site and is re-developing this area in partnership with the private sector. This re-development will include apartments, offices, shops, restaurants, pubs, hotels, leisure, arts/cultural facilities and a new civic square. A large proportion of the area fronts the river Liffey, the Basins or the Dodder. As such the water has become a unique selling feature. According to the DDDA it intends to use 'the waterside context in order to create a unique sense of place'. The area was predominantly industrial and contains many warehouses and stores however according to the DDDA

many of these structures offer opportunities for conversion, as has already occurred, with the increase in residential/office demand in the area. The aim is to promote 40 per cent commercial and 60 per cent residential land use. Within the Grand Canal Basins the aim of the DDDA is to 'encourage a diversity of people with shops, bars, restaurants and employment opportunities.' My analysis chapters show that while endeavouring to create a 'unique sense of place' within certain parts of Ringsend this has impacted on the Ringsenders' sense of place. As a result the newer residents within the area and the 'old-timers' have competing perceptions of and attachment to place.

The area is well connected to the city. The Dart which links Bray to Howth runs through the area and the nearest station is on Barrow Street. The proposed Macken St. Bridge across the Liffey will further improve access to the area. According to the DDDA the existing Ringsend community will also be able to take advantage of the hotels and restaurant facilities that are likely to develop within the area. My analysis shows that the Ringsenders do not have the same impression of these new developments and they feel that the development within the area is not having a 'trickle down' effect in Ringsend.

The 'vision' of the DDDA is to provide mixed land use within the Grand Canal Basins that 'integrates living, working and leisure' and which will create a 'busy pleasant place with a strong balanced community.' The aim is to integrate the community in the Grand Canal Basins with the wider Ringsend community. In Ringsend, as in other parts of the inner city, the majority of new residents are middle-class. As such the developments within the area highlight the process of contemporary gentrification examined in Chapter Two. There is little evidence of integration between the 'Ringsenders' with the 'gentrifiers', which has implications for community regeneration.

### **(4.3) Ringsend as a post-industrial landscape**

Dublin's landscape is changing to a post-industrial landscape and the contemporary gentrification of many inner city areas is deeply connected to these transitions. These

processes are very visible within Ringsend. An examination of these processes in Ringsend adds to the understanding of the implications of these transitions within Dublin and on a global scale. Landscapes change continuously and Ringsend's landscape is no exception. Throughout the years Ringsend has developed from being situated on a peninsula separated from Dublin City to developing a link with the city and attracting a variety of manufacturing industries. Ringsend had a thriving industrial base, which contributed to the high levels of employment among the working-class residents of the area. However, the restructuring of the global economy led to de-industrialisation and this coupled with the introduction of containerisation in the 1950s and 1960s, major changes in work practices within the other industries and government policies caused the level of unemployment to steadily increase. This was followed by a decline in population within the area a steady degradation of the built fabric. However once again Ringsend is in the process of re-development. This re-development is now connected to Ireland's position in the global economy.

In recent years Ringsend has attracted considerable private investment due to its close proximity to the city centre, the designation of the area for tax incentive schemes in the Urban Renewal act of 1986 and its inclusion in the DDDA. In addition Ringsend is Dublin 4, which in Dublin is a very attractive address. The new developments in Ringsend are deeply connected to the transition to a post-industrial society at both a national and international level. The area is experiencing contemporary gentrification. Much of this investment has been in the form of 'gated communities' and office complexes. These 'gated communities' are what could be called, 'state of the art development' and each comprises high levels of security. Many of them also display signs of post-modernist architecture which will be examined in more detail later.

It is within the area of the Grand Canal Basins that much of this development is occurring. Indeed the development of the Grand Canal Basins show how a post-industrial landscape is

being created within this area and also how these developments are endeavouring to create a particular sense of place. The following press releases from the DDDA show the scale of these developments:

The remaining retail and commercial opportunities at Grand Canal Harbour in Dublin's South Docklands have just been released. This follows the successful launch of the three apartment schemes in the area - Longboat Quay, Hanover Quay and Forbe's Quay, where 275 units were sold over the past few weeks. By 2005, there will be thousands of people living and working in the area, with as many as 10,000 residents forecast to be living there in three years time. The Docklands Authority has now released office, restaurant, cafe and retail space to let, or to purchase, for occupation from Summer 2005. 20,000 sq feet of retail is already under offer, but there are a further 11 units (15,000 sq feet) of varying sizes now available. Nearly all have waterside frontage on to Grand Canal Dock or the River Liffey and would be suitable for retail, restaurant or café operators. The strong lure of high quality waterfront apartments in an accessible city location at Grand Canal Harbour resulted in sales of 110 apartments in the first phase of Hanover Quay; 120 in the first phase of neighbouring Longboat Quay, and a further 45 apartments off the plans at Forbe's Quay recently. All three developments will be releasing further apartments in second phases later this year and in early 2005. Nearby Gallery Quay on Macken Street is already completely sold out. On the commercial side, work has already started around Grand Canal Square.... The centrepiece of the area, the landmark 2,000-seater Performing Arts Centre designed by Daniel Libeskind, is at design detail stage, as is the new 5-star hotel. These amenities will be complemented by an array of shops, bars, restaurants and cafés and a stunning plaza and civic space, Grand Canal Square. As Dublin's South Docklands develops so will access and transport facilities. The spectacular new Macken Street Bridge designed by Santiago Calatrava will link Sir John Rogerson's Quay and the North Docklands. Further up river, the Docklands Pedestrian Bridge is well under way and expected to open in January 2005 making access to the Point Depot and the IFSC even easier, (11<sup>th</sup> October 2004, [www.ddda.ie](http://www.ddda.ie)).

In the last quarter of 2005, the first major tenants took up residence in the south side of Dublin's Docklands. O2 moved 820 of its staff into its new Irish headquarters on Sir John Rogerson's Quay and around the corner on Cardiff Lane, the four-star, 211-bed Quality Hotel opened its doors for business in October. Meanwhile, Google has announced that it will be expanding its Barrow Street headquarters with a lease for an additional 100,000 square feet of Docklands office space for a further 600 employees. Take up of office space in the Docklands will continue in 2006 as a number of developments reach completion. One of the most high profile will be the move across the river of legal firm McCann Fitzgerald to a new 11,000 square metre state of the art building at Grand Canal Dock. The building will house over 1,000 employees when it opens in late summer 2006....Residential property buyers continue to flock to the Docklands. Keys for over 200 apartments have been handed over at Gallery Quay and 150 residents have moved in to HQ's 298 apartments, all of which have been sold. Initial phases in the Forbe's Quay (124 apartments) and Longboat Quay developments have all sold out with first residents due to move in next Summer. Alongside the significant influx of new workers and residents into the area, restaurateurs and retailers are

also taking up space at Grand Canal Dock....On the development side, the momentum will continue in 2006 as the Studio Libeskind-designed Grand Canal Theatre goes on site with completion expected in 2008. The adjacent five-star Le Meridien Hotel, designed by Portuguese architect Manuel Aires Mateus, is already on site. Another development that will transform the south side of the Docklands is the construction of the 100-metre U2 Tower, which will house U2's new recording studio on its top floors. Construction of this landmark tower is expected to begin in 2007, (13<sup>th</sup> April 2006, [www.ddda.ie](http://www.ddda.ie)).

The above quotes highlight the grand scale of the developments occurring in the South Dock area. All of the employment opportunities are within the post-industrial service sector. In addition the developments also include leisure facilities and a plaza. The aim is to develop both a living and working space within the area. The focus is on urban living within an attractive harbour setting an objective that the DDDA stated in its Masterplan. I will return to this point in the following sections. As the above quotes highlight these developments have been hugely successful from both a residential and business perspective. Ringsend, like Dublin, is experiencing post-industrial growth which is transforming the landscape at a dramatic pace. Alongside post-industrial growth Ringsend is also experiencing intense contemporary gentrification. This thesis addresses the implications of these transitions for Ringsend. Although these transitions are evident within the landscape of Ringsend it is also necessary to examine the statistics in relation to changing demographics.

#### **(4.3.1) Demographic profile<sup>1</sup>**

It is difficult to give exact statistics in relation to Ringsend as the area lies between three different Wards. These Wards are Pembroke East A, Pembroke West A and South Dock. Ringsend village lies in Pembroke East A. South Lotts lies in Pembroke West A while the Grand Canal Basins are situated in South Dock. However, some parts of other areas are also situated in these three wards but the statistics will give a general overall picture. All statistics relate to the three areas combined unless otherwise stated.

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<sup>1</sup> All statistics are taken from the 1986, 1996 and 2002 Census of population Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS).

### **Population Change:**

In 1986 the total population was 10,659. This had increased to 10,948 in 1996 and further increased to 11,309 in 2002. Between 1996 and 2002 Pembroke West A, Ringsend village, actually saw a decrease in population from 3,292 in 1996 to 3,241 in 2002. Pembroke East A also recorded a slight decrease in population in these years from 4,349 to 4,304. Therefore the increase in population has been accounted for in South Dock. In South Dock the population was 3,307 in 1996 and this had increased to 3,764 in 2002. This is where the Grand Canal Basins are located and also where the majority of the apartment blocks are located. In fact within the Grand Canal Basins there has been a large increase in apartment complexes since 2002 and as the above quotes by the DDDA show the forecast is that 10,000 people will be residing in the area of the Grand Canal Harbour alone by 2007.

There are also some large developments that have been completed since 2002 in Pembroke West A in particular the Gas Works where 600 residential units were completed in 2006. In addition within Pembroke West A there are sites also nearing completion that will see these statistics change further in the future. As such it can be assumed that the Small Area Population Statistics for the next census will show significant population increases within the area. At present the slight population decreases recorded in both Pembroke West A and Pembroke East A are in the older parts of Ringsend and it can be assumed that it is the indigenous population that is declining.

### **Occupational Changes:**

In relation to occupation the statistics will be examined in relation to those at work by industry. The categories being examined are Manufacturing workers, Professional workers (Professional, technical and health workers) and Sales and Commerce workers (sales, commerce, insurance, finance and business services). It is these categories that show the largest variations:

**Table 4.1 Occupational change in Ringsend: Manufacturing workers/Professional workers/Sales and Commerce workers**

	1986			1996			2002		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<b>Manu.</b>	533	150	<b>683</b>	401	75	<b>476</b>	363	56	<b>419</b>
<b>Prof.</b>	190	335	<b>525</b>	461	482	<b>943</b>	688	571	<b>1259</b>
<b>Sales/ Comm.</b>	159	159	<b>318</b>	375	343	<b>718</b>	512	528	<b>1030</b>

The loss in manufacturing employment is indicative of the decline in industry within the area. There has been a steady increase in employment in the Professional and Sales/Commerce sectors, which have increased dramatically. These figures are quite remarkable considering Ringsend is a traditional working-class area however, they are indicative of a shift to a post-industrial economy and also of the fact that the area is undergoing intense gentrification at present. I will return to this point.

**Change in persons by Age Group:**

In relation to Age the most significant rise in population has been among the 25-44 age group. This increased from 1,187 males and 1,370 females (2,557 total persons) in 1986 to 1860 males and 2,027 females (3,887 total persons) in 1996 and further increased to 2,175 males and 2,387 females (4,562 total persons) in 2002. This is a total increase of 2,005 persons within this age category. Another interesting point is of these total persons 40.32percent were classified as single in 1986, 61.10percent were classified as single in 1996 while 67.65percent were classified as single in 2002. Therefore not only has there

been an increase in persons in the 25-44 age group there has also been a steady increase in people defined as single within this category.

### **Social Class:**

The biggest increase has been in the categories of Professional and Managerial and Technical. These categories increased from 1372 total persons in 1986 to 2,594 in 1996 and had further increased to 3,722 in 2002. This is an increase of 2,350 persons in the Professional and Managerial and Technical categories between the years 1986 and 2002. The biggest decrease has been in the categories of Skilled Manual and Unskilled. These categories decreased from 4,280 in 1986 to 3,288 in 1996 and had further decreased to 2,508 in 2002. This is a decrease of 1,722 persons in the Skilled Manual and Unskilled categories between the years 1986 and 2002. Again this is remarkable for a traditional working-class area however this is indicative of both a shift to a post-industrial economy and the gentrification of the area.

### **Household Composition:**

There has been a significant increase in one-person and couple households. One-person households rose from 1,144 in 1986 to 1,537 in 1996 and had further increased to 1,388 in 2002. Couple households rose from 363 (726 persons) in 1986 to 526 (1,052 persons) in 1996 and this had further increased to 786 (1,572 persons) in 2002. There has also been a decrease in the number of couple households with children from 1,012 in 1986 to 855 in 1996 and this had further decreased to 750 in 2002.

The type of households within the area has also changed dramatically. In terms of apartments (defined as apartments, flats or bedsits) there were 1,167 in 1986 compared with 1,822 in 1996 and this had further increased to 2,104 in 2002. There has been an increase in apartments built within the area from 2002 particularly within large developments in the Grand Canal Basins and the Gasworks site so therefore these figures will also have increased. In fact within the Grand Canal Harbour one apartment complex

Gallery Quay has 300 residential units while there are 600 residential units within the Gasworks development. As the above articles by the DDDA show the forecast is that 10,000 people will be residing in the area of the Grand Canal Harbour alone by 2007. All of these new residential units are apartments in purpose built blocks.

**Educational Attainment:**

The number of people whose education had ceased at 21+ has increased from 436 in 1986 to 1,557 in 1996 and this had further increased to 2,413 in 2002.

**Profile of Ringsend:**

The general profile of the residents in Ringsend has changed in recent years since its inclusion in the Urban Renewal Act of 1986, which designated it as a tax incentive area. There has been a marked decrease in the number of people employed in manufacturing and other skilled and semi-skilled manual work. In contrast there has been a marked increase in those employed in the professional, technical, financial and business sectors. In addition there has been an increase in 'knowledge' workers as there has been a marked increase in the numbers of people who have attended Third Level Education. It is clear from the statistics that the general profile of the residents of Ringsend seems to be moving towards, that which is indicative of a post-industrial society.

Although this is unusual for a traditional working-class area this increase is related to post-industrial growth within the area and also the fact that the area is experiencing the contemporary gentrification discussed in Chapter Two. These changes have seen an increase in professional service workers and a dramatic increase in 'gated communities' and apartment complexes within the area. There has also been a significant decline in the number of couples with children and an increase in 1-2-person households. This runs concurrent with the building of the apartment blocks which have not been designed to cater for families as the majority of them are either one or two bedroom.

It would seem that the apartment blocks are designed to cater for young single professionals or couples without children. Generally speaking the new residents of Ringsend seem to fit the profile of the 'new middle-classes' or newly affluent as previously discussed. This group is described as young, single or couples without children and are also defined by the fact that they are highly educated and highly paid workers within the service industry. It is clear from these statistics that Ringsend is undergoing gentrification and as such is a valid area in which to examine the implications these process. The area has also been re-imaged and re-imagined and as such is a realistic location in which to examine the objectives of this study. The growth of offices within Dublin has seen an increase in the need for white-collar workers within or close to the city centre. This is being facilitated by an increase in apartment blocks in the inner city and greater Dublin area. Also many people are choosing to reside within the city to be both close to their places of work and also in order to socialise, shop etc., a theme explored in this study.

#### **(4.4) Contemporary Ringsend: A visual representation**

A once working-class urban village with a strong industrial presence Ringsend is now dominated by offices and apartment blocks. Ringsend, like Dublin, is at present being transformed into a post-industrial landscape. As examined the office and apartment complexes that have come to dominate Ringsend's skyline are not small isolated complexes. The Grand Canal Basins are undergoing intense re-development while the former site of the Gas Company includes the highest number of apartments in any complex in the Dublin region. This section will explore the visibility of these complexes in Ringsend's landscape. The following pictures capture Ringsend as its landscape changes. From these pictures it is possible to gain a sense of Ringsend as a place in motion.

*Some of the development occurring on the Gasworks site:*

*Plate 4.4 The Hibernian*



*Plate 4.5 The Clayton*



*Plate 4.6 The Alliance (Gasometer)*



*Plate 4.7 The interior of The Alliance (Gasometer)*



The Gasworks is a 7.8 acre site in South Lotts and has nine residential blocks – 600 residential units in total – consisting of one, two and three bedroom apartments and penthouses with private roof gardens. The project as a whole includes a mix of apartments, duplexes, townhouses, retail units and offices. The scheme also has a multi-level underground car park. The steel frame of the gasometer on the Gasworks site is a protected structure and while this structure has been maintained it is now developed into one of the most prestigious apartment complexes within Dublin – The Alliance. The Alliance Building consists of 200 apartments in a nine-storey block, which is built around a central courtyard over a seven storey underground car park. All of the apartments are two bedroom (78sq m) and prices rise with each floor. The apartments went on view in June 2006 with prices on the ground floor starting at €675,000, units on the first floor starting at €725,000, third floor units starting at €775,000, seventh floor units starting at €975,000 while ninth floor units will start at over €1,000,000. Car park spaces cost an additional €40,000, (Mulcahy, *The Irish Times*, 8<sup>th</sup> June 2006). One bedroom apartments in The Hibernian (pictured above) start at €445,000 while one bedroom apartments in The Clayton (pictured above) start at €423,500, (The Gasworks Advertising Brochure). It is clear that these apartments are designed to cater for professionals. Indeed the majority of people that have moved into The Gasworks have been described as young, affluent professional workers. This is a total contrast to the working-class populations that previously dominated these spaces. The above picture of The Alliance shows the juxtaposition of the past industrial landscape and the present post-industrial landscape within the same space. It is the post-industrial landscape that has now become the dominant feature. The protected gasometer is all that remains of the 19<sup>th</sup> century gas works. Ingle (2006) states that the development has been dubbed ‘googleland’ because of the fact that Google have located their European Headquarters in the Gasworks development. Google employ around 600 people from more than 40 countries and also

announced 600 more jobs in December 2005. (Ingle, *The Irish Times*, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2006).

It is clear that South Lotts is changing dramatically into a post-industrial enclave.

Another example is the Charlotte Quay complex on the Grand Canal Basins. The penthouse apartments in this development were advertised as providing 'restful views of sky and water' that 'epitomise modern city living'. They went on sale in 1998 for prices ranging between €318,000 and €635,000. The complex consists of 242 units with terraces overlooking the water, the Ocean Bar and restaurant, 800m<sup>2</sup> of offices while amenities include dockside campshire and jetties and a watergarden:

***Plate 4.8 Charlotte Quay Complex***



The 16-storey tower block – The Millennium Tower – is the focal point of the Charlotte Quay development and has been described in the media as one of Dublin's new landmark buildings. The Millennium Tower is the tallest residential building in the country and is

cited as the first example of a new generation of tall buildings to be located in the docklands area:

*Plate 4.9 The Millennium Tower*



*Plate 4.10 The Ocean Bar*



The Ocean Bar is situated on the bottom floor of the tower and has an outside patio on the waterfront. Within the Charlotte Quay complex there is an obvious emphasis on style and design in keeping with contemporary urban architecture. Opposite the Ocean Bar, on the other side of the Grand Canal Basins, Gallery Quay has recently been completed. Before its completion the site was surrounded by a billboard by the DDDA which stated 'Over 1,000 Years After Its Birth On the Riverside, Dublin's Being Reborn. Right Here.' This emphasis on 're-birth' in connection with the new developments occurring in Ringsend show how the area is not just being re-developed and re-imaged but also re-imagined.

*Plate 4.11 Charlotte Quay*



There is a public promenade at the back of the Charlotte Quay complex that runs alongside the Grand Canal Basins. The Millennium Tower is visible in the background. These photographs show the magnitude of the Charlotte Quay development and the size of this development, like other developments within the area, contrasts with the older landscapes of Ringsend.

*Plate 4.12 Charlotte Quay*



The back of the Charlotte Quay apartments face out onto the Grand Canal Basins where there are many boats moored. Not all of these boats are owned by the new residents many Ringsenders also have a boat here and there is a strong tradition of keeping boats within the area. The following quote captures a sense of a past era in Grand Canal Dock:

I've always been fascinated by the Grand Canal Dock in Ringsend. As children, returning from Sunday expeditions to Dollymount, we tried to persuade Dad to drive home down the south quays and around by the Dock...Later, exploring the city by bike, the homeward route often went the same way, adding miles to the journey. There was always something of interest in or around the Dock, although it was a bit frightening too: people moving about on mysterious errands, lock gates and a forbidden wonderland beyond, a sense of men at work...But I always loved visiting the Dock...there were always interesting boats to look at, (Goggin, 2002:1).

The contemporary development of the area is impacting on this tradition. The number of boats on the quays is decreasing. According to Goggin (2002) since the summer of 2002 the dockmaster has not admitted boats to the dock from the Liffey unless he could be assured that they intended to continue Westward. In the Southeast corner of the basin, on a site owned by Waterways Ireland, Shipwatch provides hard standing and security for boats (afloat and ashore). Two other small businesses (one making metal trailers and cradles and

the other fibreglass moulding) also have bases there. Waterways Ireland gave Shipwatch and both these small businesses notice to quit as they want vacant possession of the land. There are three graving docks on this site and Waterways Ireland intend to fill in one dock, make the second dock available for non-noisy boat jobs while the other dock will become a water feature. There will be no facility for hard standing and as such the boats will be gone from the dock, (Goggin, 2002: 1-2). The boat yard is at present being developed as an apartment complex. The Ringsenders have been informed by the DDDA that the basins may need to be drained in order to carry out repairs. The Ringsender's feel that if this happens they may not be allowed to put their boats back onto the basins or the price of mooring a boat in the basins may increase to a level that they will not be able to afford. The following quote captures the changes occurring within the Grand Canal Basins for those whose memories are entwined with previous dock activity:

And so, two hundred and six years after it was opened, the Dock will cease to be used for working on boats. No doubt there will be high-quality houseboats....and a modern marina, and very decorative it will all look: a nice backdrop when seen from the flats and offices. But cargo-carrying went years ago and now boat repair is going too, and a working dock becomes a duck-pond, (Goggin, 2002: 2).

*Plate 4.13 View across the Grand Canal Basins from the Ocean Bar 2004*



Opposite the Ocean Bar across the Grand Canal Basins the large brick chimney of the former Dublin Gas production site dominates the landscape. This is a protected structure and although the site is being re-developed the chimney is being conserved. This chimney also stands as a reminder of when Ringsend was dominated by industry and of a time when Dublin Gas was a source of employment for the Ringsenders. In the background lies the landscape of the IFSC. This skyline of offices is in sharp contrast to both the chimney and the warehouses at the front of the photograph. Standing in Ringsend looking over the skyline of what was once an industrial area one gets a sense of the enormous changes that the area is experiencing. The process of gentrification is visible within the landscape.

The above picture was taken in 2004 however the pictures below were taken in 2005 and the landscape has altered further. The chimney is still visible however there are new apartments and offices in the skyline, which have now obstructed the view of the IFSC. In addition there is a new development opposite the Ocean Bar which consists of offices, shops, bars and restaurants. These pictures indicate the scale of the development occurring in the Grand Canal Basins, the dramatic changes occurring in Ringsend's landscape and the speed in which these changes are occurring:

***Plate 4.14 View across the Grand Canal Basins from the Ocean Bar 2005***



*Plate 4.15 View across the Grand Canal Basins from the Ocean Bar 2005*



*Plate 4.16 Gallery Quay 2005*



Gallery Quay is a joint venture involving the DDDA. It is a €120 million development and has been defined as a prestigious new development comprising of one, two and three

bedroom apartments, three bedroom duplex and waterfront penthouses with private roof gardens overlooking Grand Canal Dock. When completed, Gallery Quay will contain 17 apartment buildings with a total of 298 units, (O'Regan, *The Sunday Business Post Online*, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2003). Phase 1 & Phase 2 of the Gallery Quay development was launched on the 6th March 2003 to enormous demand from both first time buyers and investors. Amenities in this complex include a 2,000 seat performing arts centre, a five star hotel, shops, bars restaurants, cafes and a plaza and civic space called Grand Canal Square. Lighting, cobbling, trees and seats have been added to the quayside at Grand Canal Dock. These large developments are not just apartment complexes but are aimed towards professional people with particular lifestyles. These lifestyles are also been created by the design and amenities included in these developments.

It is clear that the new developments in Ringsend are not small, isolated complexes rather they have become dominant features in the landscape. Aside from The Gasworks and the developments within the Grand Canal Basins there are a multitude of apartment and office complexes throughout the area. The following pictures are examples of some of these other developments:

***Plate 4.17 The Watermarque***



The Watermarque is situated on Ringsend Road and is advertised as high specification offices. As the photograph shows to the right of The Watermarque along South Lotts Road

and beside the Shelbourne Stadium another apartment complex is in the process of being built.

*Plate 4.18 Grand Mill Quay 2004*



*Plate 4.19 Grand Mill Quay 2005*



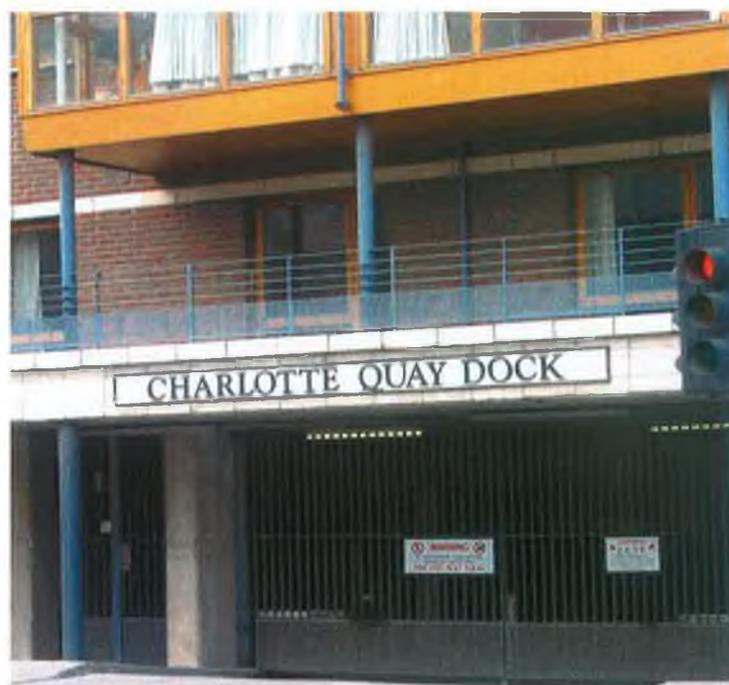
This complex on Barrow Street – Grand Mill Quay – is a development by Treasury Holdings Ltd. and was advertised as a high specification office complex. Directly opposite Grand Mill Quay is the entrance to The Gasworks. Barrow Street was once dominated by

industrial sites and terraced houses and cottages. These originally working-class homes still remain as reminders of a past era while the new developments are symbols of post-industrial growth. This juxtaposition of modes of capitalist production highlights the creative destruction inherent in capitalist accumulation.

*Plate 4.20 Camden Lock*



*Plate 4.21 Charlotte Quay Dock*



*Plate 4.22 Grand Canal Wharf*



The above pictures are further examples of apartment complexes on Ringsend Road. Camden Lock, built in 1990, was the first of these three complexes to be completed. Grand Canal Wharf as the above picture shows is under construction however, the sign on the front of the development offers 'Spectacular Waterfront Apartments & Penthouses'. It is clear from this advertisement that the developers are seeking to attract a particular 'type' of customer. It is the young, professional classes that are buying these apartments.

The above images of the new complexes appearing within Ringsend's landscape are a visual representation of the process of gentrification occurring within the area. These developments are associated with contemporary, post-industrial gentrification. This involves the construction of purpose-built office and apartment complexes. These new developments stand in sharp contrast to the previous industrial landscape and also the older flats, cottages and houses in the area. The following pictures indicate this juxtaposition:

*Plate 4.23 Whelan House*



Whelan House flat complex was built by Dublin City Council in the 1950s. The complex is situated opposite the row of shops in Ringsend village. Above the chimneys can be seen the newly completed Portview Apartments and Portview House office complex. The size and design of these two complexes differ completely and while the Whelan House flats would have once dominated this skyline it is now Portview House and apartments that has become the dominant landmark.

*Plate 4.24 Whelan House and Portview Apartments*



The Whelan House flat complex backs onto the river Dodder. The Portview House complex is visible at the end of the flats and the differences between them are visible. Whelan House represent a style of modernist architecture while many of the new complexes in Ringsend represent a post-modernist form characterised by eclecticism, pluralism and a greater emphasis on style.

*Plate 4.25 Camden Lock*



On the opposite side of the river Dodder and facing Whelan House is the Camden Lock apartment complex. Built in 1990 this complex is again different in design to Whelan House. These two complexes which stand opposite each other across the Dodder are visual examples of the differences between the corporation flats and the private apartment complexes and they represent the juxtaposition of the two landscapes.

The new 'gated communities' are visually different from the surrounding landscape. The majority of new apartment complexes have one single controlled entrance. Apartments are fitted with intercoms and the gate into the apartments is electronically controlled by these intercoms or can be opened by a code given to residents. As such it is hard to gain access into these complexes. Car parks are also secured by an electronically controlled gate and the signs on them indicate that this is private property, no trespassers are allowed and illegally parked cars will be clamped. All car spaces are designated to particular

apartments. These features also differentiate the apartment complexes from the other residences within the area. Within the court yards there are also landscaped gardens and trees and many have water features. Indeed it is the aim of the DDDA to promote architecture and urban design that is of 'world standard' and 'delightful and attractive'. It is clear that there is a link between the aim of the DDDA in regard to the visual appearance of the new developments within the Ringsend area and post-modern architecture.

*Plate 4.26 Whelan House*



In contrast Whelan House and other public housing complexes within the area have no controlled entrances. There are also many entrances into these flats and there are no designated car spaces. The flats surround concrete spaces in which resident's park cars. There are also sheds and communal washing lines located in these areas. In contrast to the new developments there are no landscaped gardens or trees. As the photograph shows residents hang there washing out in the courtyard, which is also in direct contrast to new developments in which there are no washing lines and residents are not permitted to hang their washing on balconies as this it is assumed would detract from the aesthetics.

Another contrast between the corporation complexes and the new private developments is that in the corporation flats, as the above photograph shows, there is one continuous

balcony along each floor. However, within the recent private complexes each apartment has its own balcony. Some of my respondents, within Whelan House, have commented that the shared balcony can help to develop a sense of community within the flats. The word 'community' appears a lot when reading articles and books in relation to Ringsend and in my interviews. Indeed according to the DDDA the 'established residential community' within Ringsend is one of the major strengths of the area. The concept of 'community' and the implications of recent developments on 'community' will be further explored in Chapter Seven. As 'gated communities' have become a common feature within Ringsend and in the majority of major cities my analysis will also address the level of community evident within these complexes and the links between these complexes and the surrounding area.

Within South Lotts this juxtaposition of landscapes is even more striking. The following photographs will explore the changes occurring within the South Lotts area

*Plate 4.27 South Lotts 2004*



*Plate 4.28 South Lotts 2004*



The above photographs were taken in 2004. It is clear from the amount of cranes in the skyline that there is a lot of new development occurring within this area. To the background is visible the steel ring of the former Gasworks site.

*Plate 4.29 South Lotts 2005*



*Plate 4.30 South Lotts 2005*



*Plate 4.31 South Lotts 2005*



*Plate 4.32 South Lotts 2005*



*Plate 4.33 South Lotts 2005*



It is clear from these photographs that the landscape within South Lotts is changing dramatically and quickly. These developments stand in sharp contrast to the houses and cottages of South Lotts. These photographs also give a sense that the area is being 'surrounded' by high-rise development. One respondent from South Lotts described this as 'being stuck in a valley surrounded by concrete'.

As Ringsend has become a desirable residential location house prices within the area have also soared and are out of range for many of the locals. Within the area red brick turn of the century houses and the cottages are very sought after so their prices are being inflated as well. This is especially visible within South Lotts where there have also been instances where people have bought two cottages or houses and have knocked them together. There is a sign in O'Dwyers Estate Agency, which says 'Cottages needed urgently. Thinking of selling? We have a number of serious loan approved purchasers.' This estate agents opened in the area eight years ago which is also significant as it shows the demand for housing in the area. As such Ringsend is experiencing both the gentrification process noted by Glass (1964) as well as the contemporary gentrification associated with new construction. The implications of this will be examined in my analysis.

Ringsend's landscape has changed from one, which was dominated by industry to one, which is now dominated by office complexes and 'gated communities'. Some of these industrial sites remain as visible reminders of a past era. The juxtaposition of these two landscapes reveals not only the transition occurring in Ringsend but also the transitions that are occurring both in Dublin and in many other contemporary capitalist cities. The loss of industry within the area has altered the landscape. The loss of industry has also meant the loss of employment opportunities for the Ringsenders and has impacted on their identity and their identification with the landscape.

*Plate 4.34 Boland's Mills and Charlotte Quay:*



Boland's Mills remains as a reminder both of past employment and its historical significance during the 1916 Rising. The building stands neglected and dilapidated. The building is a protected structure however as stated previously the site is at present under redevelopment. Boland's Mill is situated directly opposite the Charlotte Quay complex and is a visible example of the contrast between the industrial and post-industrial landscape. In a few years this contrast will no longer exist as Boland's Mill, as it stands, will have been removed from the landscape and converted into another post-industrial site.

*Plate 4.35 View across the Grand Canal Basins from the Ocean Bar*



In this photograph the warehouses stand in direct contrast to the apartment complex which dominates the skyline. To the right are the graving docks, which have recently been filled in. According to the DDDA the warehouses and storage depots form an important part of the historic character of the area however they also state that they will inevitably restrict development. As such it would seem that in the future those that are not protected structures will also be eradicated from the landscape.

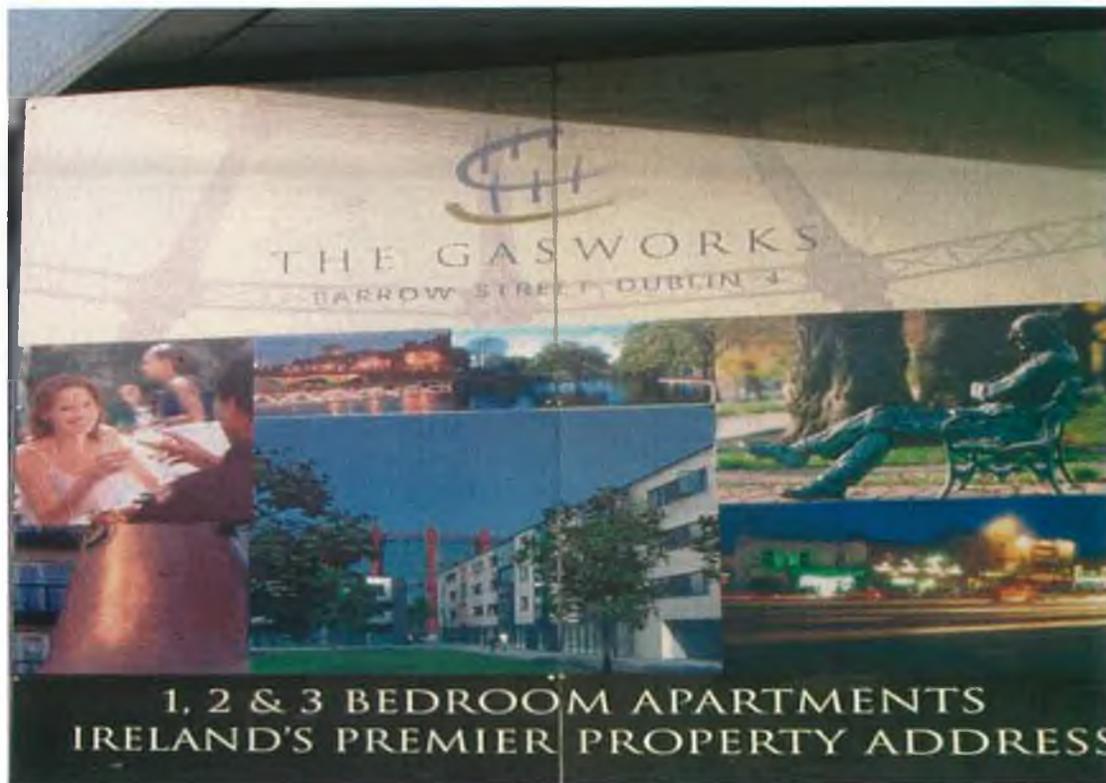
#### **(4.5) Selling Ringsend**

Many of the names of the new apartment complexes are based on their proximity to the sea, the rivers and the Grand Canal Basins. For example some of the names include: Fisherman's Wharf; Alexandra Quay; Portview House; The Moorings; Camden Loch; Grand Canal Dock; The Watermarque; Fitzwilliam Quay; Gallery Quay; Longboat Quay. This has become a major feature in the advertisements for these apartments. Within these names there is an emphasis on the traditional relationship that the area has to the sea and surrounding waterways. In addition some of the buildings are also designed to highlight this relationship. For example the entrance to The Watermarque building bears a

resemblance to a ship with portholes and steel masts while within the Camden Loch apartment complex all of the front doors have porthole stained glass windows with anchors in the centre.

The emphasis is placed on a specific way of life. However, while these complexes are being sold as located in an 'attractive harbour setting' it must be remembered that for the Ringsenders this traditional relationship to the surrounding waterways is being eroded. Shipbuilding and related industries have disappeared from the landscape while the boat yard has been redeveloped as an apartment complex. Another important point to note in the advertisement of the apartment complexes within the area is that often Ringsend is omitted from the address. The sign for Grand Canal Wharf advertising 'Spectacular Waterfront Apartments and Penthouses' states Dublin 4 with no mention of Ringsend.

**Plate 4.36** *Billboard advertising The Gasworks*



The above poster also indicates that Ringsend has been omitted from the address of The Gasworks development. The address given is The Gasworks, Barrow Street, Dublin 4. This development is described as 'Ireland's Premier Property Address' and as examined earlier

Dublin 4 is considered to be one of the most desirable postal codes in the city. However, for years Ringsend's industrial landscape and working-class identity meant that it was considered Dublin 4 in name only. This has changed in recent years as it is developed and sold as an upmarket urban landscape. However, the fact that some developers have chosen to omit Ringsend from the address of their complexes would seem to imply that the area has not fully discarded its roots.

It is interesting to examine how these apartment complexes have been portrayed within the media:

Penthouse apartments which provide restful views of sky and water on the edge of the Grand Canal Basin in Ringsend, Dublin 4, go on sale today at prices ranging from £250,000 to £500,000. The Charlotte Quay Dock homes are in an area which up to recently was dominated by industry and shipping, but is now poised to become one of the trendiest locations in the Dublin docklands. The apartment scheme, due to be completed shortly after Christmas, is the largest and most important along the Grand Canal Basin. It has 242 units which epitomise modern city living, with tall windows and terraces overlooking the water. The focal point of the development, a 16-storey tower block, is in line to become one of Dublin's new landmark buildings and is expected to set a precedent for other apartment developments in the docklands. Over half the homes have already been sold, mainly to owner-occupiers and the remainder are expected to be bought by well-heeled young professionals, business people and retired couples trading down from large period houses in south Dublin.....The quayside at Charlotte Quay is being developed as a public promenade, with jetties alongside the bridge to provide moorings for boats. The lower storeys of the dockside buildings and the tower will have commercial uses, including a restaurant and bar. A ground floor premises has been set aside for local residents, who are to have the use of a jetty which is due to be built at Charlotte Quay....., (Jack Fagan, 'By The Waterside', *The Irish Times*, November 1998).

An £11 million development of 55 apartments on the verge of Ringsend village has been given the go ahead by Dublin Corporation. Its location at 11/12 Fitzwilliam Quay provides an opportunity to offer some of the residents attractive views over the River Dodder within a few minutes walk of Ringsend village.....Designed in three blocks, this latest development will range in height from four to six storeys around a landscaped courtyard. This variation in height should also facilitate more of the residents having views of the waterside either at the nearby Sandymount Strand or of the Dodder.....With the development of the docklands and the nearby Grand Canal Harbour this city neighbourhood is being transformed from a former industrial area into an upmarket urban landscape.....Ringsend is fast becoming one of the capitals more sought-after areas after many years of neglect. The fine architecture which is a strong feature here is now being fully appreciated for the first time in generations, (*The Irish Independent*, 16 February 2001).

From these articles we get one impression of Ringsend as an attractive, desirable location - 'a former industrial area' which is now 'an upmarket urban landscape'. The residents of these new apartments are described as 'well-heeled young professionals'. In contrast however, according to the Ringsend Community Council, Ringsend meets all the criteria of a long-term disadvantaged area. According to Share (2002) in one of the older flat complexes in Ringsend the unemployment rate was 57 percent, only 3 percent of adults had attained the Leaving Certificate, 10 percent of families were headed by a lone parent while 32 percent of households were consisted of a lone elderly person. Also, there hasn't been any public housing (as opposed to affordable housing) built in the area in over 40 years, and there are no plans at present to do so.

The place marketing of Ringsend has been extremely successful. On the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2003 200 apartments in Gallery Quay and 90 apartments in The Gasworks sold off the plans in one day. In fact a queue formed outside the marketing suite before it opened. Within Gallery Quay the waterfront apartments were first to sell. One bedroom apartments with water views sold for between €460,000 and €480,000 while six penthouses also sold for prices ranging between €825,000 and €1.25 million. In fact new apartments in the two schemes worth over €135 million sold in ten hours even though they were not ready to be occupied for over two years, (Jack Fagan, *The Irish Times*, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2003). According to Fagan, Gallery Quay is a purpose-built neighbourhood that will eventually consist of over one million sq. ft of offices, a few thousand apartments and a range of restaurants, shops and leisure facilities, (*The Irish Times*, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2003).

Fagan (2003) describes Gallery Quay as a 'purpose-built neighbourhood'. Ingle (2006) describes The Gasworks as 'Dublin's shiniest new neighbourhood'. The place marketing of the area is deeply connected to the place marketing of a specific way of life embedded in place but also somewhat removed from the place being sold. Ringsend is close to the city centre and as such it has become a desirable address within Dublin's shift to a post-

industrial landscape. As such within these marketing campaigns it is not Ringsend itself that is being sold but the complexes themselves, their proximity to the city centre and a particular urban lifestyle. The following quote by Ingle captures the essence of the changes occurring within this former industrial area:

Think elegance. Think affluence. Think easy like Sunday morning. First get your bearings. This new area begins in Ringsend around Barrow Street and South Lotts where the glass-panelled Gasworks rises like a totem of things to come....Once a close-knit, clannish community where everyone knew everyone else, this area has now been dubbed Googleland....it won't be long before the area could double for the set of Ally McBeal. The imminent arrival of top legal firms....should see bright, young, handsomely paid legal types exchanging gossip over lunch and letting their hair down after work in a wine bar, (*The Irish Times*, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2006).

The above quote describes the contemporary gentrification of Ringsend and highlights the fact that post-industrial society is also linked to a specific urban lifestyle. The urban lifestyle evident within place marketing is one of the affluent, young professionals. This lifestyle feeds into urban growth in a post-industrial context. The new developments within Ringsend highlight a significant factor in contemporary urban renewal that of the creation of specifically defined urban enclaves. These developments may be situated in Ringsend however they function as separate places. They are embedded in place while at the same time removed from the place in which they are embedded. The aim is to develop specific urban neighbourhoods defined by post-industrial growth within already developed urban space. This is highlighted in an advert for Gallery Quay:

Residents of Gallery Quay will find themselves at the heart of a major social, cultural and leisure initiative to create Dublin's first Urban Village, ([www.galleryquay.com/introduction.php](http://www.galleryquay.com/introduction.php)).

The above quote echoes the aim of the DDDA, which is to create a particular inner city lifestyle. Some of the major developments are designed to cater for living, working and leisure pursuits of the urban professional. They are defined as 'urban villages'. However, the above quote states that the aim within Gallery Quay is to create 'Dublin's first Urban Village'. This apartment complex is in Ringsend; an area defined by both the DDDA and

the Ringsenders themselves as an 'urban village'. Gallery Quay is not Dublin's *first* urban village however, it is distinguished from the urban village in which it is located by the fact that it is an urban village designed for the urban professional. The distinction is that Ringsend developed through a process of industrialisation as a working-class urban village while Gallery Quay is being built and designed as a post-industrial urban village specifically for the young affluent workers of the post-industrial economy. The juxtaposition of these landscapes within Ringsend highlights the shift to a post-industrial society. The gentrification process within Ringsend has placed new 'trendy' apartment complexes, or 'gated communities', in close proximity to older working-class flats and houses. These developments are also testimony to the uneven development of contemporary urban renewal and the transition to the 'posts' and as such can be seen to reflect the complex interplay of power dynamics. According to Bourdieu these symbols function as powers and can be used according to symbolic and material interests, (1991:220). The question must be whose interests are they serving?

#### **(4.6) Conclusion**

The contemporary renewal and gentrification of Ringsend, as an inner city location, is situated firmly within the transition to a post-industrial society. Dublin's changing landscape offered a particular case study of how these processes operate at the level of a particular city. Ringsend's changing landscape offers a particular case study of how global process impact on a particular locale and the implications of these changes at the level of locality or place. Ringsend also highlights the implications of changing global economic structures at the level of place. This chapter aimed to explore contemporary changes within Ringsend. These changes were examined against the historical development of the area as it the contrasting landscapes that highlight the implications of the processes occurring. This chapter also provided some visual examples of Ringsend and the juxtaposition of these contrasting physical landscapes within the area. These changes are not only happening in

Ringsend but in many former industrial and dockland areas in cities and regions throughout advanced capitalist countries.

The identity of Ringsend as place and of the Ringsender's themselves is deeply rooted in its historical development. Ringsend developed as a working-class urban village and its strong working-class identity developed around its industrial development. Ringsend's development is marked by a series of industrial development and decline. Ringsend attracted a variety of manufacturers and industries and it is also situated close to the docks, which provided a number of employment opportunities. However, from the 1970s Ringsend has undergone a process of de-industrialisation, which was devastating for this inner city community. Unemployment rose and this was followed by a decline in population within the area a steady degradation of the built environment. The decline of Ringsend shows the devastating effects on some areas of the restructuring of the global economy.

In recent years Ringsend has attracted considerable private investment due to its close proximity to the city centre, the designation of the area for tax incentive schemes in the Urban Renewal act of 1986 and its inclusion in the DDDA. The contemporary restructuring of the global economy and the transition to the 'posts' have seen this urban village not only restructured but also re-imaged and re-imagined in recent years. Its landscape is in the process of changing from one that was previously dominated by industry to one, which is now dominated by office complexes and 'gated communities'. These new complexes differ in scale and design to the older flat complexes, cottages and houses within the area. Many complexes have been built which are large in scale and which represent a new form of urban planning within Dublin. These developments are indicative of a shift to a post-industrial society and their dominance within the landscape highlights the fact that it is unlikely that industrial employment will return to this area. The changes occurring are physical, economical and social.

The new developments coupled with the areas changing demographics indicate that Ringsend is undergoing a process of intense gentrification. Gentrification of inner city areas is a key element of the shift to a post-industrial society. The population of the area has risen in recent years but it is being repopulated by the young, affluent workers of the service economy. The area has been re-imaged to attract, and accommodate, these groups. The area is being packaged and sold as an upmarket urban location. These images are creating a new sense of place but this is ignoring the sense of place that previously existed and still exists within the area. The visual representations of Ringsend show the juxtaposition of the past industrial landscape and the present post-industrial landscape within the same space. It is the post-industrial landscape that has now become the dominant feature. These new developments also stand in sharp contrast to the older flats, cottages and houses in the area.

Ringsend as a place in motion offers a particular valid insight into the implications of contemporary shifts. It captures these shifts as they are occurring and as the landscape changes further the opportunity to explore this particular juncture may not arise again. Ringsend is caught up in the restructuring, and re-imaging of Dublin as a whole, it is in a state of flux. Allen (2003) paints a vivid picture of what is happening in Ringsend:

Across the river Liffey in another working-class area, Ringsend, there have been regular protests. Here generations of families have lived side by side, for a period in local authority housing and later in houses they have bought themselves, but this pattern is changing. The 'gated communities' have arrived complete with intercoms and high earners in more flash cars come and go with little connection to the surrounding area. House prices have rocketed as a location near an inner city waterway becomes desirable, (Allen, 2000:33).

Ringsend Bridge across the river Dodder is the link between Ringsend village and the city centre. The bridge also separates the Grand Canal Basins and South Lotts from Ringsend village.

*Plate 4.37 Ringsend Bridge*



On the Ringsend side of the bridge a Café has recently opened named 'Bridge the Gap'. It has been remarked that this could also mean 'bridge the gap' between Ringsend and Dublin or between the 'Ringsenders' and the 'gentrifiers'. This 'gap' will be explored in my analysis. The following analysis chapters aim to examine the issues I have raised in connection with the transition to a post-industrial society and the gentrification process that is occurring within Ringsend. They will examine the implications of contemporary shifts at the level of place. These will be examined under the themes: Place Matters, Gentrification Matters and Community Matters.

# Place Matters

## (5.1) Introduction

Contemporary capitalist cities are in the process of transition – referred to variously as ‘post-industrial’, ‘post-Fordist’ or ‘post-modern’. These transitions are altering the spatial and social organisation of cities. ‘Space’ and ‘place’ are playing an important role in this restructuring process. Advances in communication technologies and advanced globalisation have reduced time/space distancing. As a result there is a constant flow of information, capital, commodities and people through a system of networked cities across the globe. This is not to suggest that this is an equal process as many people are locked in space and time due to economic and social constraints. As Massey points out different social groups have distinct relationships to mobility: some people are more in charge of it than others, (2000: 58-59). For Bauman mobility is a scarce and unequally distributed commodity, (1998: 2). However, while these processes may be unequal there is no denying the heightened reality of time/space compression for many and the fact that cities are interconnected in a variety of ways.

Some theorists argue that within contemporary processes social meaning evaporates from places and is subsumed within a space of flows between cities and areas across the globe. For Castells (1989) and Emberley (1989) the flows of communication, capital, commodities and people between cities across the globe creates a situation whereby it is the space of flows in which meaning becomes embedded, the network itself, and not in any fixed place necessarily. It has often been commented that we are experiencing a loss of place, or that place is becoming less relevant.

*We have been told about the “transcendence of place” (Coleman 1993), the “placelessness of place” (Relph 1976), cities “without a place” (Sorkin 1992), and how place becomes, with modernity, “phantasmagoric” (Giddens 1990), (Gieryn, 2000:463).*

In contrast other theorists such as Harvey (1990), Massey (1994), Gieryn (2000) and Dreier et al. (2004) argue for the relevance of place and the fact that there is a renewed importance attached to place in contemporary processes. Does place matter anymore?

Ringsend is one such place that is caught up in the restructuring of the global capitalist system. It is a specific locality that is embedded in the transitions to a post-industrial society and as such is enmeshed in the network of flows that exist between cities. Does Ringsend still retain its identity as place and as a specific place? Is social meaning still embedded in Ringsend as place? One of the main themes that has emerged from my interviews is perceptions of place, the importance of place, the diverse meanings place holds for people and how place can be a marker for identity and identification. Of course the importance of place, that is Ringsend in this case, differs between both groups – the ‘Ringsenders’ and the ‘gentrifiers’. Also as both groups are not homogenous it also differs within groups. However, what comes through clearly is that place matters to my respondents.

This chapter shall examine, and refute, the contention that ‘social meaning has evaporated from place. However, both space and place are being disrupted within contemporary processes and within gentrification, which is an integral part of these processes. What happens to notions of place within these processes? How do we conceptualise place in these global, mobile times? The answer is not to ‘do away with place’ but to rethink our notions of what place is and its importance in contemporary transitions.

Firstly it is necessary to define both ‘space’ and ‘place’. Then the issues that my respondents have raised in relation to place will be examined under the following headings: Ringsend as Place, Ringsend in a wider Economic Context, Place Marketing, End of Place? and Place as Identity and Identification. Finally I will provide an overview of the sociological significance of place in Ringsend and its implications for contemporary urban processes.

## **(5.2) Defining concepts**

The concepts of 'space' and 'place' are contentious issues therefore it is necessary to define precisely what I mean by these terms, within the scope of this thesis. The two terms although not mutually exclusive will be examined separately in order to emphasise these differences.

### **Space:**

According to Harvey space is complex – it has direction, area, shape, pattern and volume as attributes, as well as distance, (1990:203). Within this definition space is detached from material form and cultural interpretation, (Hillier and Hanson, 1984). It is an abstract three-dimensional setting void of human meaning and interpretation. Space is not place.

### **Place:**

According to Massey and Jess place is any part of the earth's surface, however large or small, (1995:3). This however, could also be said of space. What therefore is it that distinguishes space from place? How does space become place? According to Carter et al place becomes space:

*By being named: as the flows of power and negotiations of social relations are rendered in the concrete form of architecture; and also, of course, by embodying the symbolic and imaginary investments of a population. Place is space to which meaning has been ascribed, (1993:xiii).*

Therefore, place is space which is occupied by people, practices, objects and representations – real and imagined. Place also embodies the power and negotiations of social relations within the built environment itself. According to Gyeryn place has three necessary and sufficient features:

#### **1. Geographic location:**

A place is a unique spot in the universe. Place is the distinction between here and there, and it is what allows people to appreciate near and far. Places have finitude, but they nest logically because the boundaries are (analytically and phenomenologically) elastic.

## **2. Material Form:**

Place has physicality. It is a compilation of things, or objects at some particular spot in the universe. Places are designed by and created by people.

## **3. Investment with Meaning and Value:**

Without naming, identification, or representation by ordinary people, a place is not a place. Places are constructed, interpreted, narrated, perceived, felt, understood, and imagined, (Soja, 1995). The meaning or value of place is flexible in the hands of different people or cultures, malleable over time, and inevitably contested, (Gyeryn, 2000:464-465)

Both terms – space and place – have been separated in the above explanations in order to distinguish the differences and similarities between them. However, both terms are not mutually exclusive and are often used interchangeably – i.e. the term space is often used to refer to the meanings attached to the definitions of place above.

Place within these definitions is equated with locale and our understandings and perceptions of what is locale. According to Giddens, place is best conceptualised by means of the idea of locale, which refers to the physical settings of social activity as situated geographically, (1990:18). It is with this conception of place that this chapter is concerned. Place is space that has been invested with human meaning. However, place can be filled with a multitude of perceptions and meanings and as such it is not a static concept. It is also necessary to point out here that place has often been falsely identified with community. Place does not in itself signify community – based on a high degree of personal intimacy and sociability – although this may be present. This is the case within Ringsend and will be explored in Chapter Seven.

Place is not ‘..merely a setting or backdrop, but an agentic player in the game-a force with detectable and independent effects on social life’, (Werlen, 1993 quoted in Gieryn, 2000:466). A sociological study informed by, or sensitive to, place must incorporate all

three defining features of place i.e. location, material form and meaningfulness, (Gieryn, 2000). Place is the built landscape as well as the actors who interpret and identify with understandings of this landscape. Places are made and continuously re-made as people impute meanings to their surroundings and these meanings can continually change. These meanings that people ascribe to place are often historically significant and based on shared understandings of an area.

### **(5.3) Ringsend as place**

Ringsend fits neatly into Gieryn's definition of 'place' as geographic location, material form and investment with meaning and value. Ringsend has developed from a fishing village and as it is situated close to the sea, the river Liffey, the river Dodder and the canals. It is surrounded by water. Ringsend is situated on a peninsula and occupies mainly reclaimed land:

Well we're surrounded by water. This was a peninsula and it was separated from Dublin so everyone was into either boats or fishing. (Respondent F: Ringsender).

This is where the Liffey and the Dodder and the canals all flow to- we get everyone's rubbish (laugh). As well as that because we're surrounded by so much water there was always great adventures. My father and uncle had a boat called the Kingfisher. (Respondent J: Ringsender).

The development of Ringsend proceeded in distinct stages from a fishing village to a docklands area with a strong industrial base. Now the area is once again changing to a post-industrial landscape:

Ringsend was closed off cos it is a peninsula and it had its own industry with the docks and the bottle house and people had no reason to go in or out of Ringsend. It wasn't a place you would pass through to get from A to B as you would pass by the end of it as it is a peninsula....It had its own sort of language- not its own dialect- but everyone had nicknames which meant nothing to anyone outside it. Because the transport improved and with new jobs and with the extra affluence and the opening up of the area that is what is bringing about the changes. (Respondent B: Ringsender).

There's a lot of history in the area. You know it developed from a fishing village and it's all reclaimed land really. Then there was the industry and the docks and now that's gone and there's apartments and offices. It's all progress I suppose and places change. (Respondent P: Ringsender)

However, despite these changes Ringsend is still perceived and defined as an 'urban village'. This is due to the fact that it has established and maintained a strong sense of community, which is deeply connected to a sense of place:

It's right beside town and yet it's not in town, which is why I like it really. (Respondent X: Gentrifier).

It's a real village. It's an urban village and people don't really understand that. It's not the city and it's not suburbia. (Respondent D: Gentrifier).

Oh yea it's a real village inside Dublin but I think there are a few places like that here. Dublin is small and has that village feel anyway. But Ringsend is a village. (Respondent R: Gentrifier).

What is also clear is that Ringsend had finitude. Although the statistics in relation to Ringsend treat the area as a coherent bounded entity it is clear that these boundaries are perceived differently, on the ground. In the past Ringsend was considered to be 'the village' and anyone that resided over the 'bridge' was not a 'Ringsender'. As such South Lotts, which lies over the bridge, was not considered to be a part of Ringsend even though it is included in the official statistics for the area:

Yea but this is such a tight knit community that the real Ringsend doesn't go over the bridge. It really is a close community and before no one came in or went out over the bridge. You even didn't marry over the bridge. (Respondent G: Ringsender).

My Da never went over the bridge. He didn't deem it necessary. He thought you had everything here that you'd ever want. He always said you had the strand, the sand and the river and there's nothing more you need. The man next door has photographs of the sea coming right up to the wall that runs along the drains there. I am always meaning to get copies from him because that's all apartments now and that was all reclaimed land. (Respondent E: Ringsender).

Down around Ringsend would have a very strong sense of identity. They're Ringsenders....Years ago if you weren't a Ringsend man you wouldn't get over the bridge. Even here in South Lotts even though it's named Ringsend the real Ringsend is over the bridge in the village - the fishing village. (Respondent B: Ringsender)

It was the bridge that demarcated the territory; the bridge was the boundary. It was perceived that anyone from over the bridge was an 'outsider' and it was preferable to marry 'one of your own' in order to maintain the established identity of the area:

I'll tell you a true story about my mother, who was from Pearse Street, and my father and they went to the parish priest you know for the papers to get married. Well the parish priest turned around to my dad and said 'could you not have gotten one of your own Skipper instead of going over the bridge to get one?' Oh yea you never went over the bridge and you had to get one of your own not an outsider. You had to keep it in the area. (Respondent E: Ringsender).

However, in recent years this symbolic boundary has shifted and it is recognised that South Lotts is also Ringsend. The inclusion of South Lotts began with Ringsend forging links over the bridge either through marriage or from the fact that people from the village moved to South Lotts while maintaining relationships across both areas. However, although South Lotts is considered to be part of Ringsend and to have a Ringsend identity, it nevertheless maintains another embedded identity linked to the specific area. Therefore two place bound identities exist in the locale:

South Lotts is of course Ringsend now but then I would never have thought it was because I lived on this side of the bridge. I would never have thought of them as being Ringsenders. And then they didn't mix as well with us. You wouldn't have known very many people down over the bridge like here really. Cos they had houses you see and we only had flats. And people now still tell me about Pigeon House Road 'We used to be told not to talk to anybody from the flats.' And we'd be told 'All those snobby people down in thing like...' But they would mix; some of them would always come down because the children would be lonely so they'd come down to the flats to play. But we didn't mind like. But the people over in South Lotts we would always know everybody to see cos you'd always see them at the church. But you never got to know them really well unless you went to school with them and that's how people would know other people from over the bridge and the links would be made then. They're all the one now and when we want something or if there's a meeting they'll all be there....It's Ringsend (including South Lotts), Irishtown and surrounding districts. Even the community centre now is not known as the Ringsend Community Centre it's Ringsend, Irishtown community. Because we didn't want it just about Ringsend because Irishtown would have been offended. And the communities of the surrounding areas too....And of course the links are all there now yea and the links are strong like and an awful lot of people from the flats actually live over in Dock Street and South Lotts and all around that area like. (Respondent E: Ringsender).

Oh they never used to say South Lotts was part of Ringsend but of course it is now. Sure there's lots of people from here living there. I have a sister there. And anyway we're all the same area and we all stick together. (Respondent M: Ringsender).

Oh yea South Lotts is Ringsend. They still have their own identity over there as well but they have a Ringsend identity too. It depends on who you're talking to. (Respondent H: Ringsender)

Place is not a static concept. Although place has geographic location and physicality it is also constructed, interpreted, imagined and contested. While place has finitude i.e. boundaries, these boundaries are elastic and are sometimes re-negotiated in practice.

#### **(5.4) Ringsend in a wider economic context**

See all those new apartments and offices well that's where all the factories were. I worked here and my father and everyone I knew really. That was what we did but all that sort of work is gone. (Respondent Z: Ringsender).

The space that place occupies is also located within the 'global system of material production and distribution, and variable patterns of political authority and control', (Agnew, 1993:262). People's lives and actions are embedded in place but this too is embedded within a wider economic and political context.

The place that Ringsend occupies is embedded within a wider economic and political context. Ringsend is at present moving from an industrial to a post-industrial landscape. According to Duncan and Duncan landscapes are the visible, material surfaces of places, (2001:387). However, I wish to move beyond this fixed definition of landscape as mere material form. For Bourdieu the term landscape not only refers to the physical surroundings of place but also to the meanings imputed by local people to their cultural and physical surroundings. Landscape cannot be isolated from the related concepts of place and space, inside and outside, image and representation. Landscape thus emerges as a dialectical, cultural process, (Bourdieu, 1990).

Ringsend has developed from a fishing village to a docklands area with a strong industrial base. Many of my respondents listed a multitude of industries that existed within the area.

Their identification with specific sites is connected to the industry that once existed on that site and to the people that each particular industry employed:

Now the apartments up the top of the road that was a motor factory - Reg Armstrong's. The lads all worked there welding or whatever. Now they're all apartments and no industry. All the far side of the road was Wallis' coal and Heaton's coal and the bus garage was always there. There was also the rope works - now I'm going back 50 years here - and there was a lot of people employed there too.....God do I remember those days - all gone now. I worked down that road in a place called The Packing Cases and they used to make wooden boxes. And at the corner when you go over the bridge where Heaton's is, well that's even gone now to make way for even more apartments. The Irish Glass Bottle Company. They're all gone now. Kennedy's bakery is gone and when we were younger we used to get our bread and our cakes there - now that's going back a long time. I'm sixty-five now this year. It was terrible around here when they all went cos the way it was if you lived in Ringsend you worked in Ringsend. And Ringsend people are very proud people so when the work went it was very depressing....It's a working class area and we are proud of that. (Respondent B: Ringsender).

Ah yea there was a lot of people worked around here. There was Boland's, the sack factory, which was mostly women working there and they never got a penny when it closed, the Docks. Jesus there was loads of places that are now gone and that really had a bad effect on Ringsend..... Oh yea there's nothing here anymore. Well if you're an office worker then there's plenty of work but for the labourers there's no work. (Respondent A: Ringsender).

I want to go through this street just to show you how much it's changed. This is where the garage was it's now an apartment block. That was Glass Bottle, it employed locals, it's now an apartment block....That was Heaton's, and employed locals, it's now going to be apartments plus community apartments.... The Mills, which used to employ a lot of people, are closed and it's to be redeveloped. This factory which used to make concrete bases for buildings has closed. This was a meat plant which employed a lot of people from the area and that has closed. It was knocked and became a very high rise apartment block and offices for a white-collar workforce. There are a lot of offices built but for what I would call a white-collar workforce there is nothing for the locals. It's much more than de-industrialisation cos it's a totally different infrastructure catering for a totally different class of people. You had O'Brien Printing Press and they employed local people and it was replaced by GTS Global and Telecommunications now that is no local jobs again. It's all middle-class well educated workforce and not designed to give the locals work. It's the Kitty O'Shea crowd. It really is because all of these were traditional employers who employed generations of people here. Like Glass Bottle, Dublin Bus all the factories go back generations. And all of that's gone. (Respondent D: Gentrifier)

When I was younger all the men around here and a lot of the women worked in the area - in the Docks or Boland's, Irish glass... God there were lots of places...You were saying earlier about the apartments well most of those sites were industry.....God yea it's all apartments and offices. Now it looks good but it's the

same old thing who is it really benefiting? Not me or my family that's for sure or most of the people around here. (Respondent F: Ringsender).

These industries provided security for generations of families within the area. Throughout the years of industrial employment, and employment within the docks, there developed a strong working-class identity of which the Ringsenders are very proud. Many childhood memories are also connected to these industries as people recall not only what they and their parents worked at but also the pride attached to this trade and the social relationships that developed around this. For many of the Ringsenders the basis of their social lives were characterised by their relationship to the means of production. For example they were gaffers, dockers, barge pilots, glass makers, millers etc. and their identity was rooted in their occupations. The local histories within Ringsend are connected both to its specific location and to the industrial landscape that once existed:

Now we didn't have much but my father was a docker right and at least we had an income daily. They were always paid on a daily basis initially. So he always had something. He'd get up at five o'clock to bring in the boats at that time. They moved with the tides. When the banana boat came in at four in the morning they had to get them out on the next tide cos they couldn't afford to keep the ships in the harbour. My dad used to have all these grappling hooks - different ones for different things. He had all his things in the pram sheds, which were downstairs in the flats. Most of the Dockers kept all their stuff there and no one would break into them sheds. They had all these different hooks and they wore them on their belts - ones for prodding cattle, for moving things - lots of them. He'd go to sugar boats, banana boats and he'd bring home sugar sometimes. The majority of the people from Ringsend would be initially Dockers. They also worked in the coal yard, they worked in the Bottle House. That employed thousands and a lot of people relied on that for their livelihood. Some of these fellows I know have been working shifts since they were fourteen years of age. Now they're only 47 or 48 and they're getting handed minimum and there's nothing else for them. Any of them would have tried to get into the docks because most men there had their buttons. That would be handed from father to son. My father never had a button cos his father never worked on the docks. He kind of mooched his way in and because he was there from the time he was eleven when he used to go over after school. He got a button to hand down but then the buttons were defunct you couldn't hand them down. But then the docks started to go down and none of the boys wanted to go onto them then. It wasn't a secure job then. (Respondent E: Ringsender).

Within Ringsend the strong industrial base that existed was embedded in place thus assuring the availability and reproduction of labour power. The spatial form of Ringsend

developed as a result of economic processes. The landscape of Ringsend was dominated by industry at a time when manufacturing within that area was economically beneficial for the capitalist system. The advent of containerisation and advances in technology led to a scaling down of the workforce while the subsequent economic restructuring led to an almost total loss of industry within Ringsend. As examined in Chapter Two the period from the 1970s to the 1990s, and in particular the 1980s, was a time of severe depression within Dublin and this was more marked within the inner city and dockland areas. The loss of industry led to a loss of employment and the dereliction of the built environment stood as a testimony to this:

As the docks started to fall they were letting people go because containerisation meant they needed less people and they needed less people to work the ships too. They didn't need as many men and unemployment was just going up and up and kids were leaving school early. All the industries in the area started to go. The Bottle House went and all of Ringsend Road was at one stage the Bottle House. So the docks and The Bottle House, which were the biggest two industries in the area, went. The Bottle House just went bang and the docks went like it went from thirty people working on a ship it went down to five men. So this was huge stuff and it all happened from the early eighties through to the nineties. It was just devastation absolute chronic, it was off the wall. (Respondent Q: Ringsender)

When the industry went the area became very depressed. Unemployment was really bad. Now the Glass Bottle is gone as well.....There were lots of derelict sites and I suppose something had to be done with them and some of them are nice. (Respondent A: Ringsender)

There's a lot of redundancy. Like the last one to go which would have had a big impact was the Glass Bottle Company. A lot of people in the area were affected by that. Most people that worked there would have lived in the area as well.... It's a traditional working class area that had a lot of work for people. But I don't know now what's going to happen where the chance for local employment will come from....Then they would have had a lifestyle over thirty years or so where they were being well paid where you suddenly go from that to having to survive on much less. It's a big jump down and it's hard to come back from that you can't. (Respondent I: Ringsender)

Even where we have the FÁS, which is the old cinema in Regal House, I'm sure it's only a matter of time before that will be sold for apartments.

**Interviewer:** I thought that was a protected structure.

But you can still build you just have to preserve certain aspects of it. Sure Boland's is a protected structure and that's going to go. That was a huge factory and that's going to be apartments too and that employed a lot of local people. That gave local employment for years and years in the community. (Respondent H: Ringsender)

It is clear that Ringsend is at present undergoing a transition to a post-industrial landscape. It is the office and apartment complex that has come to dominate Ringsend's contemporary landscape. Built on sites that were once dominated by industry to the locals these developments represent the loss of traditional employment and the transformation of spatial and social relations that once existed with these sites. A shift has occurred in the relationship to place. The skills that were once needed have now become defunct and the people that held these skills have become redundant within these new processes. This re-representation of place impacts both on place and perceptions of place:

The land that the companies are, and were, on is so valuable that they are selling off the land and the premises and they are getting millions for it. They are probably getting more money for selling the land than they would in profits in manufacturing in the same short period of time. It would probably take a much longer period of time to make that sort of profit by whatever industry or company they had...But there's no employment down here anymore. The only employment would be in the service industry in the shops and stuff like that. But there's no manufacturing anymore at all here..... It must be very scary for them though. If you've been in a particular industry for twenty years or more there was a comfort zone in that as well as it being a well paid job and it must be very scary. I think that generation can not see themselves going in for re-training. And as well as that while they were being retrained they would be on extremely low wages and that would be very insulting to their dignity and their self-respect. (Respondent J: Ringsender).

While Ringsend as place is embedded within a wider economic system people's lives are also embedded in place and in the economic system that exists within place at any particular time. The loss of industrial employment within Ringsend had an impact not only on the landscape but also on the people that worked within these industries. The loss is more apparent for the generation of employees who worked in manufacturing and are at an age whereby they are too young to retire and too old to retrain for the type of work available in a post-industrial economy. Economic restructuring impacts both on place and on the individual:

I know when I left school all I wanted to do was go away to sea because the fella next door went to sea and so did the fella down the road and they were talking about America and Africa and I wanted to go to those places. I know others whose dads worked on the docks and they were going to be a docker. That tradition of work was passed down. Now this is my age group. Others had worked in the Port

and Docks itself and their dad had drove a pilot boat and that's what they wanted to do. No one ever looked at anything else like we didn't want to be bankers or solicitors or anything like that. It was always focused in on what we knew and what was around. But I think attitudes are changing now and most of the kids now see the big American banks around and they are thinking maybe that's the place to be now. Like this is the new industry now. I mean most of the people who are living around the docklands now are working in these big banks and stuff. It's like Sheriff Street and Ringsend. Sheriff Street back in the fifties was built to service the Docks. Ringsend at the time was built in around fishermen and dockworkers. Ringsend was kind of the elite of the thing they went out and piloted the things in and they were the gaffers who employed the dockers at the time. But things developed then and the historical stuff went away and people began to become redundant and unemployment grew. In Sheriff Street flats at the time when they were built all the men there had their big belts and off they went working in cattle boats or the sheds you know all the way down along. The kids in school would even tell you the history that they have around it. The kids in Ringsend have a different history like their fathers were fishermen and all that. Now the docks is gone well containerisation has taken over the whole thing. You see Sheriff Street flats they were just wiped out. Now whether that was allowed to happen because it was known that developers were going to come in and develop the whole place and hoping that the people in Sheriff Street and Ringsend and that would not kick up and everyone would just move out to another Ballymun or Tallaght or that. But that's all changed now and attitudes have changed. They knew then that they couldn't shift the people so now they have to come in and deal with them..... I think the banks and financial centre are the new industries of the future so the main thing for the community now is to focus on education, on retraining. (Respondent Q: Ringsender).

For many there is a sense of a loss of ownership of place and of identity. People identified with the occupations that once existed and are now defunct. While the banks and financial centres that have come to dominate the landscape of the docklands may be the new industries of the future at present there is a perception among the Ringsenders that they are excluded from these new 'industries'. This is especially clear in relation to the older population where there is an acknowledgement that they have been 'put out to pasture':

There were a lot of families affected by the closure of the Glass Bottle Company. It wasn't only one person in the household working there cos in a lot of cases there was more than one person. They could have lost two or three wages from one household. Whereas the younger ones may have some opportunity for employment in the future I think the older ones were just put out to pasture really. They are never going to be working again and that's devastating for them....you see they were good paying jobs like the docks and the Glass Bottle. And they would have been secure with a pension and that and union membership and that's gone..... That skill's not needed now. They would have to retrain completely and they would feel probably too old for that and scared. The people who had learned that skill and

had used that skill for twenty or more years where do they go with that skill now.  
(Respondent H: Ringsender)

Indeed as Respondent J points out the community of Ringsend, like many other communities, faces the prospect of becoming 'low paid workers' within the service industries as traditional occupations are swept away by the post-industrial re-configuration taking place in the locale. Place is playing a key role within the restructuring process resulting in new sets of relations within place. Ringsend occupies a place embedded within a wider economic context and earlier rounds of urban development have affected subsequent spatial patterns.

#### **(5.4.1) A post-industrial demand/preference for inner-city housing**

The shift to a post-industrial economy has further implications in terms of place. As examined in Chapter Two one of the geographical consequences of the restructuring of the global capitalist system is that firms need to locate within urban centres in order to facilitate the rapid flow of information and capital through a system of networked cities. This has seen an increased demand for white-collar workers within or close to the city centre resulting in the gentrification of many places of which Ringsend is one. For Smith gentrification occurs because capital has returned to the inner city creating opportunities for residential relocation and profit. For Hamnett (1991) and Munt (1987) Smith's argument focuses too much on economic restructuring and they in turn argue that gentrification cannot take place without the existence of a pool of gentrifiers, or consumers, who desire to reside in the inner city.

Here I will briefly examine the extent to which the shift to a post-industrial economy and the subsequent relocation of firms within the city centre is a factor in the decision to locate to Ringsend. Clearly, I am focusing here on the incoming gentrifiers in the locale. A fuller exploration of the causes and consequences of the gentrification process within Ringsend

will be detailed in Chapter Six. Work considerations were indeed an important factor in the decision to reside in Ringsend:

I work for Bank of Ireland. I do the Internet banking stuff. The girls I live with one are a manager in Bank of Ireland and the other works in New Ireland Insurance and my girlfriend is a solicitor. She works in the IFSC. Again it's very handy here for everyone to get to work in town. (Respondent S: Gentrified).

I work in [near Ringsend] which is the main reason why I bought here. (Respondent V: Gentrified).

My three priorities were to be walking distance from work and shops and to be close to the sea - and hopefully public transport. (Respondent D: Gentrified).

Well I worked in [Ringsend] and the place where I worked found me the apartment so I moved in there. It was just two minutes walk from work so it was great in that sense. (Respondent R: Gentrifier).

Well I work in the IFSC so I wanted to be near work. I wanted to be able to walk in and when the new bridge is built it will be so much easier as well. (Respondent A2: Gentrifier).

I wanted to move back to Ireland I suppose but I wouldn't have moved back to Cork or that cos that would have been too much of a change. Dublin has really changed in recent years and it has a lot to offer now....Now I wouldn't have moved back if the work wasn't here, like the work I do, because I was earning a lot in London but there's great opportunities here now and there wasn't when I left college. (Respondent A3: Gentrifier).

The majority of my respondents who had recently moved into the area could be classed as white-collar workers. Many of them work within, or close to, the city centre and within the post-industrial landscape that has developed within Dublin. These are members of the 'service-class' defined by Thrift (1987). For Thrift post-industrialisation has created a 'service-class' which has gained strength through '...boosted income, favourable access to educational opportunity and ....a common consumption-oriented lifestyle', (1987:222). This group has a high level of disposable incomes and a desire to reside close to their place of work. As a result they have created a demand for inner city residences evidenced in the increase in the construction of apartment complexes and the gentrification of specific areas.

In Munt's (1987) study of Battersea in London he found that changing employment structure within central London increased gentrification as this led to an increase in professional and managerial employment which in turn led to an increased demand for specific inner-city residential areas. These arguments show that urban economic restructuring is a factor in the production of a pool of gentrifiers and how economic restructuring affect the spatial form of the urban landscape.

These arguments, to some extent, also explain the reasons for the gentrification process within Ringsend. The growth of white-collar employment within Dublin City has created a pool of gentrifiers and an increased demand for inner city residences that are close to places of employment. A shift to a post-industrial economy and the subsequent relocation of firms within the city centre is a key factor in deciding on residential location. My respondents wish to be close to their places of employment and this employment is overwhelmingly located within the centre of Dublin. This is highlighted by the figures in relation to the rise in service sector employment within Dublin examined in Chapter Two. As Smith (1987) has demonstrated gentrification occurs because capital has returned to the city centre thus creating the opportunity for residential relocation.

It must however be noted that increased opportunity for gentrification i.e. the return of capital to the city centre does not in itself indicate that this process is inevitable. The economic restructuring of the capitalist system has made specific areas within or close to the city centre ripe for gentrification and although this is an important factor in creating a demand for inner city accommodation other factors must also be taken into consideration. Consumer demand plays an important role in the gentrification process and these issues will be examined in Chapter Six. However for the purpose of this section it can be argued that the move to a post-industrial economy has created the conditions for the resurgence of the middle-classes or the service class of white-collar workers in downtown areas. This

highlights the importance of place and the fact that place is increasingly being impacted upon in the shift to a post-industrial economy.

### **(5.5) Place marketing**

Within the restructuring process places are increasingly being packaged and sold in order to attract a specific clientele. Indeed, place marketing has become an important factor in the regeneration of cities and also in the regeneration of specific places. As cities have to compete for highly mobile capital they are being regenerated, packaged and sold as attractive locations. Places compete for both corporations and the qualified workforce that these corporations require:

*Imaging a city through the organisation of spectacular urban spaces becomes a means to attract capital and people (of the right sort) in a period of intensified inter-urban competition, (Harvey, 1990:92).*

Wider changes in the economy (what Harvey labelled 'flexible accumulation') have led to a post-modern consumption ethic which has a geography when we consider inner city housing as a commodity at the disposal of the new middle-class, (Slater, 2002). For Mills (1988) inner city living is given cultural meaning by marketing and advertising.

*The active production of places with special qualities becomes an important stake in spatial competition between localities, cities, regions, and nations, (Harvey, 1990:295).*

For Harvey it is within this context that we can better understand the striving for cities to create a distinctive image and quality of place that acts as a lure for capital and people 'of the right sort', (1990: 295). As examined in Chapters Two and Four Dublin, and Ringsend, have undergone a process of intense re-generation and re-imaging underpinned by favourable tax policies, infrastructural provision and the designation of particular sites for tax incentives. Not only are cities themselves being re-imaged and sold but so too are specific places within these cities. Ringsend is one such place. Chapter Four highlighted the place marketing of Ringsend and the fact that the new complexes are designed to cater

for the urban professional. Here I will explore the implications of the place marketing of Ringsend and in particular, its construction as an 'attractive' and 'desirable' location.

Before the regeneration of Ringsend, which began in earnest in the late 1990s, it was considered, by people outside the area, to be 'rough' and 'run down'. There was a distinction made between the flats and the rest of Ringsend with the flats perceived in a more negative light:

But the area is nice you know... it's a bit rough because with the flats and everything. ....the flat people are rough....I didn't get hassle in the apartments but sometimes in Pearse Street near the flats but not much. I didn't really go near the flats in Ringsend though cos I'd say they're bad too. (Respondent R: Gentrifier).

Jesus everyone wants to live down here now and years ago that would have been unheard of (laughs). I went to Ballsbridge Technical School right and I was told – now this is the truth now Mary – 'Change your address when you're applying for a job, put down Sandymount'. Jesus I said 'Then I'll never get a reply because they won't find me!' I said 'I'm not putting Sandymount down I don't live in Sandymount I live in Ringsend!' ....you see because Ringsend wasn't a place that anyone would want to be coming from especially if you were from the flats. You definitely wouldn't be putting that down – that you were from the flats. And I told them well I don't care, if they wont accept me because I can type, I can do shorthand so accept me for who I am do you know what I mean. I remember the teachers urging anybody from here or Irishtown to change their addresses it was terrible.... It was eh..Ringsend was supposed to be considered a rough area but I never thought it was a rough area and do you know it wasn't rough. There was no bullies and there was nobody breaking in anywhere because most of the men would keep the young fellas in line... Some of the women would throw buckets of water over you if you drew beds outside their doors in the flats you know. And my mother or whoever's mother would say 'Good enough for her, you were told not to do that in the first place' (laughs). You know what I mean that's the way it was. (Respondent E: Ringsender).

However for many respondents growing up in the flats brings back fond memories of childhood and feelings of safety:

But growing up here in the flats was great there was just so much freedom but it was also very safe. The reason why it was safe and it is only in later years that I understand this but community is family and everybody minds you but everybody rats on you as well. The fishbowl syndrome. (Respondent C: Ringsender).

This contradicts the impression Respondent R has of Corporation flax complexes which he believes are 'rough'. People who have come into Ringsend may have 'common prejudices'

about the flats, which do not necessarily conform to the lived experiences of the people who reside there:

I suppose when I moved in here I had the common prejudice about the flats but I was totally wrong of course like most people are about the flats. It's strange cos I actually feel so comfortable and happy here now. I feel totally at home in the flats. I actually feel more ill at ease in a middle class suburban house now. I definitely didn't feel comfortable then so I must have had this general feeling about flats that people have.....in point of fact I couldn't have been happier anywhere else. I have excellent neighbours and great views. It's a brilliant situation. And there's the river there and [son] went to the sea scouts. (Respondent G: Ringsender).

Competing impressions of place co-exist in Ringsend. As Respondents A and E demonstrated it was considered detrimental to put Ringsend down on job applications. Some Ringsenders find it unsettling that not everybody embraces the Ringsend identity, and that some have gone so far as to hide it:

There's a lot who won't even give Ringsend as their address. Now they would put say 7 Burren St., South Lotts Rd., Shelbourne Park, Dublin 4. Now they'd be people from South Lotts or even the new people. There was a girl who lived across the road for years and never would give her address as Ringsend. She was born up in Bath Avenue in the little Corporation houses in Marlborough Place. Years ago Jo the Postman who we knew well cos he was involved with the soccer with the lads. Anyway he used to be laughing and he'd say 'another Shelbourne Park address Betty'. He'd know all the one's who would give Shelbourne Park as their address. Years ago if you had an address in Ringsend you wouldn't get a job because it did have bad name years ago. It was supposed to be tough. I always say there's good and bad everywhere and that's the way it is. Yea, it's a working class area but the real Ringsenders are very proud of their roots. I think that's very good. Around here has changed so much it's sad. (Respondent A: Ringsender).

Respondent A, like Respondent E who would not change her address when urged to do so by her Technical School, perceives that the 'real Ringsenders are very proud of their roots' and their working class identity.

In recent years Ringsend has undergone a process of intense re-generation and many of the gentrifiers refer to it as 'an up and coming area':

My impressions of Ringsend wouldn't have been brilliant ...I suppose my impressions were just that it was inner city Dublin. That it was a bit rough. It was D4 in name only and that was it. But being from the country you just don't worry about that to the same extent as maybe you would if you were a Dub or even a D4 Dub. Or from the Southside. It wasn't really an issue for me. But it is great here cos you're beside everything and if we had a choice we'd stay as long as

possible.....people at work who I wouldn't have considered inner city Dublin types – your horsy D4's or sorry your South Foxrock type people- are starting to buy in Irishtown/Ringsend. If they're giving it their stamp of approval then something has changed. I don't know enough about it but definitely something has changed. It may be that they have compromised but they have decided that here is adequate for them. And for me and us here cos we're all twenty something's it's smashing. And other people that come out here say that you're so close to everything. (Respondent S: Gentrifier).

Well I'm from Sandymount and I suppose I've known Ringsend when it was really run down and had a bad reputation but that's changed now and it's a real up and coming area. It's definitely changing for the better. (Respondent X: Gentrifier).

It is believed, by Respondent X that these changes are 'for the better'. One way in which Ringsend's image has been changed is through place marketing, and in particular, the evolution of a new docklands dreamscape.

New images are being constructed for cities and for place '...to replace either vague or negative images previously held by current or potential residents, investors and visitors', (Holcomb, 1993:133). This packaging of place is very evident within Ringsend. As examined in Chapter Four Ringsend is being marketed and sold as an upmarket urban location. Ringsend has been re-imaged and re-imagined for the urban professional. The Masterplan of the DDDA aims to provide a renewal strategy that guides the development of the docklands into an area for people 'who wish to avail of the benefits of urban living in an attractive harbour setting'. They also wish to capitalise on the appeal of significant water bodies for living and leisure. The media has also sold Ringsend as one of the trendiest locations in the Dublin Docklands; an area which epitomises modern urban living for the well-heeled young professionals; a city neighbourhood which is being transformed from a former industrial area into an upmarket urban landscape; one of the capitals most sought after areas after many years of neglect and as having fine architecture which is only now being fully appreciated for the first time in generations. A major feature for the advertisement of the new apartment complexes has been an emphasis on the water amenities within the area and many of the complexes are defined as spectacular waterfront

apartments. Indeed, as examined in Chapter Four, many of the new apartment complexes have nautical names. The emphasis is on a particular way of life. It is a re-imagining and re-imagining of place in order to attract investment and the professional employees that are needed for the post-industrial landscape. This representation of place also appeals to those who want to avail of city living in an aesthetically pleasing environment. 'The transformed image is a product both of economic changes and of an energetic marketing campaign', (Holcombe, 1993:135).

Within Ringsend there is also a display of post-modern architecture with a jumbling of styles, an emphasis on the traditional and the stress of the aesthetic. The twin signifiers of tradition and the aesthetics are important signifiers within the discourses deployed by developers and the media alike:

*Dream a dream by the old canal and have it come true by putting your name down for one of the apartments in the second phase of the Gasworks development in Dublin 4....for lovers everywhere, the Gasworks is a nostalgia-inducing familiar part of Dublin's skyline providing a great view...the apartments themselves are larger than normal and of good quality and design, making it a slam-dunk for any prospective purchaser looking for a great city dwelling....As one of the last undeveloped sites in the extremely popular Dublin 4, it is expected that these properties will achieve above average appreciation in the years ahead. If location, history and quality weren't enough to sway you already, add great investment potential to the list and make a move to secure your own little piece of our great Dirty Old Town, (Mackey, Sunday Independent, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2004).*

As examined in Chapter One the selling of places involves a nostalgic recreation of a past that no longer exists. The above article epitomises the packaging and consumption of the past. For Mackey The Gasworks in Ringsend can make a 'dream come true' for those who want to reside in a historical, 'nostalgia-inducing' place within 'our Great Dirty Old Town' that no longer exists. The Gasworks development creates a second-hand image of an industrial city that has passed from our skyline the signs of which only have consumption value.

Post-modern architecture represents a play on the traditional and history while rarely taking the problem of historical reference seriously. For Harvey some postmodernists

simply make gestures towards historical legitimacy, (1990:85). Mackey's reference to 'dreaming a dream by the old canal' and 'Dirty Old Town' is taken from a song of the same title written by Ewan MacColl. What is interesting is the fact that this song refers to the industrial landscape and way of life in Salford and not Dublin. The image being sold is one of a lost industrial landscape. However, the signifiers used are not of the landscape in question. People are being sold second-hand images and experiences of a past that once formed the basis of social life within Ringsend. Missing from this article is the impact of the loss of this industrial landscape. Indeed Ringsend is not even mentioned as a selling feature again the more upmarket and desirable address of Dublin 4 is used.

*At first blush it might be assumed that place marketing, with its enthusiastic embrace of place, its appeal to the supposedly unique attractions of particular locations, and its passionate text, is anything but postmodern. Yet ultimately, the deconstructed discourses of the packaged newly post-industrial cities replicate the same images, amenities, and potentials and contain the same silences with respect to poverty, race and blight. The pastiche of upscale places is contextless: presumably intentionally so, since the fashionable fern bars are often in not-yet-completely gentrified neighbourhoods. The time of places marketed is present and future. The only past that matters is the packaged past of the heritage industry, (Holcombe, 1993:141)*

In fact what we are dealing with here is image versus reality. When one looks beneath the surface of the newly constructed and packaged image a different picture emerges. Ringsend is going through a period of industrial decay and economic re-organisation. These apartment complexes and office blocks are situated on former industrial sites that once provided employment for the local working-class population. The loss of industry has economic, social and spatial implications. There is a tension that exists between the newly constructed aesthetic image and the lives of many Ringsenders who are rendered invisible in this process. A billboard on the front of the Grand Canal Basin, developed by the DDDA in 2005, announced 'Now these streets have a new story to tell' which signifies a break with the past and a new image for the future. However there are competing and contradictory stories to tell, which do not make it into the marketing brochures:

This area has a disadvantaged status so tell all those people living in those apartments that they're living in a disadvantaged area. We meet all the criteria for a long-term disadvantaged area. You wouldn't think it by looking at all those new apartments and the price of them. (Respondent C: Ringsender).

I think there's a presumption that it's Dublin four but there is an issue of ...mainly around women, early school leavers, cleaning jobs. They don't want to be cleaning all their lives especially the kids so they are looking to go back and do courses. Maybe not that they're going to come out and be computer scientists or something but at least that they can manage and work with their kids in a different way than they did before. Yea there would be people on the poverty line and below it as well. I was talking to one woman last week and her total income for herself and two kids was €157 a week. She pays €40 for rent out of that a week. Now this woman only gets out about every six weeks if she gets out at all. She has no family in Ringsend as they moved to England so she has no family network. So there would be pockets of that in Ringsend. And then the whole drugs scene would have caused more problems in Ringsend. That's been really dealt with well at the moment. Then of course there's housing there's a major problem with housing in the area. The Corporation are not building anymore housing here. (Respondent K: Ringsender).

I live in a one bedroom flat with two kids. I'd have to stay in the flat even though it's one bedroom because you need 120 points for a two-bedroom and I've only 76 points. I sleep in the sitting room and the kids sleep in the bedroom. I have two boys they're ten and eight. There's other people with three and four kids in a one bedroom and they're still not guaranteed a two-bedroom flat. (Respondent Y: Ringsender).

...the area became trendy to live in cos it's D4 and that and that pushed prices up for us and we can't afford to buy here now. The housing issue is really big. (Respondent O: Ringsender).

We did a survey back in 1986 and seventy six percent were early school leavers now that's huge. We did another survey in 1989 and I think there was 60% unemployment in parts of Ringsend at the time. Now that's improving slowly. (Respondent Q: Ringsender)

There is a silence within place marketing in relation to the issues of unemployment, poverty, drugs, early school leaving and a shortage of public housing, all of which are salient for the residents of Ringsend. As Ringsend has become re-invented as an upmarket area it has attracted investment. The marketing of place has been, for the developers, successful. Impressions are changing and many of the gentrifiers comment on the improvement to the area. These improvements seem to be concentrated within the built fabric. Derelict sites have been renovated and land value in the area has soared. However, the representation of Ringsend masks the contradictions and struggles that exist in specific

places that are embedded in the transition to a post-industrial place. As Respondent F states 'Now it looks good but it's the same old thing who is it really benefiting? Not me or my family that's for sure or most of the people around here'. What implications does this have for communities that are embedded in places undergoing these transitions? This will be examined in Chapter Seven 'Community Matters'.

### **(5.6) The end of place?**

*.....the possibility of space being invested with human meaning, such that it could be interpreted as 'place', has evaporate, (Emberley, 1989:754)*

*The fundamental fact is that social meaning evaporates from places, and therefore from society, and becomes diluted and diffused in the reconstructed logic of a space of flows whose profile, origin, and ultimate purposes are unknown, (Castells, 1989:349).*

In an era of heightened globalisation and advanced capitalism it has often been commented upon that we are experiencing a loss of place, or that place is becoming less relevant. It has been argued that social meaning evaporates from places and is subsumed within a space of flows between cities and areas across the globe. Advances in technology have reduced, to a large extent, the restrictions placed on interaction by location and/or distance. Restrictions on the flow of goods, information and capital have also been eliminated, (Gieryn, 2000:463). 'Social life now moves through nodes in one or another network.....but not anchored at any place necessarily', (Gieryn, 2000:463). This poses the question 'does physical space still support spatial relations and spatial interactions, or are they becoming independent, as may be the case in social space, intellectual space, and cyberspace?' (Cutter et al, 2002: 308-309). Ringsend is one such place that is caught up in the restructuring and re-imaging of the global capitalist system. The question arises does Ringsend as a place still support meaningful social relations?

My research indicates that social life within Ringsend is still anchored in place. Community develops and exists within these spatially bound relationships. Here I will briefly examine to what extent Ringsend as place still maintains and supports social

relations. A fuller exploration of the implications of Ringsend's changing landscape on 'community' will be detailed in Chapter Seven. Social life within the area revolves around family, friends, neighbours and some respondents still work within the area or close by:

I was born and bred here. All my family are from here. There was thirteen of us. We're from down at Stella Gardens beside the Dodder. Then we moved down to the new houses, well we still class them as the new houses. I've seven sisters and five brothers.....One of my sisters is a Northsider now she lives in Dorset Street (laughs). One of my brothers lives in Clondalkin and there's another one in Australia. The rest of us stayed around here. There's eleven of us around here. It's brilliant here, I wouldn't move out of Ringsend....My main priority is to stay in this area. It's my home, it's where I know and where me friends and family are. Everyone gets on so well here and we all stand together and all. They say when you move from here you always end up moving back in. there's a girl I went to school with and she moved out and it took her ten years to get back into Ringsend and she had to pay a fortune for a house and all. And she had to knock it down and rebuild it. She came back in after ten years. See you always end up coming back in. We're very attached to the actual area. (Respondent O: Ringsender).

My sister lives down in Irishtown in Chapel Avenue. My mother lives in one of the new houses here cos she got a house out of Canamooney Gardens. My other sister lives on Irishtown Rd facing the credit union and my other sister lives in South Lotts. My brother lives around in the new houses. (Respondent E: Ringsender)

For many there is a sense of continuity with the past, a long-term rootedness in community that is embedded in place:

We're living in this cottage for 32 years...Our son lives down there he must be married 15 years.... we know all the locals and we raised three children here. I go to half ten mass every Sunday and I go to the park afterwards cos their might be a match. (Respondent B: Ringsender)

We're living here 42 years and I never regretted one minute of it. He's [her husband] like the Lord Mayor of Ringsend. He knows everyone. But then again in Ringsend everyone knows each other. It would take you 2 hours to get through Ringsend with everyone saying hello and that. They [her children] all went to school round here. Haddington road and that's where I went too. The three of them went to primary there and there was no secondary for the lads so they went to the Christian Brothers in Westland Row. They were football mad and they used to play in the street and I don't know how many panes of glass they broke or how many wooden spoons I broke on them (Laughs).. it's great cos the kids around here still do that. (Respondent A: Ringsender).

There is a deep sense of Ringsend as 'home':

I lived in Sandymount just up here when I first got married for eight years then I moved back here again. But I always used to come around here always because this is home for me and I always wanted to come home. I love Ringsend and I wouldn't

be happy anywhere else I know I wouldn't. All my life is here and I work here too.  
(Respondent N: Ringsender)

This comes through in the stories of childhood memories and the sense of a community spirit that existed and still exists in Ringsend as place:

That was Breezy Bakers place and he used to give us money for the empty bottles. Then there was Ducky Austin's place where the chipper is now....We used to go fishing down there and moor the boats. Those days were great Skipper Daly's still alive and he must be ninety. Jigger Bukkerly's another one and Rubber Legs Gaffney, Spread Eagle Bean, Airedale Murphy. I could go on all day. (Respondent B: Ringsender)

The first trip you get, well we got, outside was our school trips. Our holidays was down the Shelly Banks, you know down the Pigeon House, well we always called it the Shelly Banks. We would also go down there picking cockles in the spring and summer then in September/October you would be brought picking blackberries. This was a great tradition cos your mammy and daddy brought you and you were on the beach and they were teaching you how to identify where these cockles would be buried. That was a great tradition in this community they also used to bring in old ships that were out of service to be taken down. They were great adventure grounds. Those are all things you remember like happy times.... (Respondent C: Ringsender).

Ah do you know what the flats were the best. We always still talk about it. Like in the evening time we'd play handball against the wall. We had our seasons. Like the season for marbles than the season for playing piggy and the best part was when the fellows used to put their go-karts together. They'd be looking for steel for the wheels and that and they would spend weeks putting these things together and they'd fall apart after two goes. You didn't really need anything when you think of it. Like we used to go down to a garden in the flats and take sheets down and make camps and that. The mothers used to lower down a bottle of water on piece of twine and you'd be dead pleased. My sister who's just gone forty always says 'God Marian it used to be great in the flats.' The community were great though and they still are to this day if anything goes wrong. Like if someone's in dire need they will be there for you. It's still there that spirit. It's a Ringsend spirit. (Phone Rings).....That's my niece looking for her cousin. The cousins are very close like. We all live around the area still. (Respondent E: Ringsender).

What comes through quite clearly in these quotes is the fact that social life is varied and meanings are multiple and it is the layers of meaning and perception that create place.

For Giddens (1990) in pre-modern societies space and place largely coincide, since the spatial dimensions of social life are, for most of the population, and in most respects, dominated by 'presence' – by localised activities. However, modernity increasingly tears space away from place by fostering relations between people that are geographically

removed. Therefore, relations have moved from one of face to face interaction to being locationally distant. According to Giddens, place, within modernity, has become increasingly phantasmagoric i.e. locales are thoroughly penetrated by and shaped in terms of social influences quite distant from them, (1990: 18-19).

However, the lived experiences of people who are rooted in Ringsend indicate that despite the transformation of Ringsend as place, social relations are in many respects still dominated by 'presence'. It is clear that social relations are still fixed within a local context and these relations are informed by place and also place is constructed within these relationships. People know each other and this recognition has developed over time:

Like when you mention someone the other person says 'oh yea and their mother was so and so and their grandfather...' it goes back generations that recognition.  
(Respondent G: Ringsender)

There is a sense of security and belonging in this recognition. For many people Ringsend is 'home' as they have been raised in the area and their family and friends still reside there. Their social networks are embedded in and sustain place.

*It is often claimed that the paradigmatic experience of postmodernity is that of rapid mobility over long distances, it is important to note that this paradigm still actually applies only to 1.6 percent of the world's population, (Morley, 2001:429).*

Morley (2001) points out that within the UK rates of geographical mobility have in fact been declining in recent years. The majority of people still live within one hour's journey time of their relatives and within five miles of where they were born. This tends to suggest a fairly low level of intergenerational mobility. Globalisation has seen an increase in mobility and also rendered global cities a familiar sight on television and in the cinema. Despite this studies have shown that the majority of people still have an 'horizon of action' which is very local often extending no further than the boundaries of their own neighbourhood, (Morley, 2001:429). According to Worpole, for most people, the town or city that they are born into is still the one that will shape their lives and become the stage set of their hopes and aspirations, (1992 in Morley 2001:429).

In Ringsend there is evidence to support this contention. Many respondents live near relatives and many have been born in Ringsend. Their 'horizon of action', in many cases remains within their neighbourhood. However, there are also people who have chosen to move from the area and have since returned:

Well I left when I was seventeen.... all my sisters...followed soon after me.... Three of my brothers at one stage lived in Berlin....We are all back now. I have a few sisters who never actually lived or worked abroad you know. They go on holidays and visit people but you don't know a country till you live there and get a handle on the culture and that. But I still travel I go on holidays. I went to Peru last year with Trailfinders and climbed the Andes. I was fine in the altitude but most of the group were sick. You can't kill a Ringsender (laughs). (Respondent E: Ringsender).

I went away to France when I was 17. I went into school in France. I have sisters living in California and I lived in the states as well...I came back here with my kids to live. I feel like I'm back home now.....Now I live back in a corporation flat and I can look out my windows and see the swans and boats and the Dublin Mountains etc it's beautiful here. (Respondent C: Ringsender).

My son went travelling just to get away from here for a while you know to see other places. He has come back now and is living back with us.... He's going to try and get a place around here because he loves it here. (Respondent M: Ringsender).

The sense of home and belonging attested to by my respondents is connected to place and to the relationships that are rooted within place. It must be noted that while many people are rooted in place, others who would like to be similarly rooted may not have the choice. Chief among the difficulties are the financial barriers to putting down more permanent roots:

...my other three brothers couldn't afford to live around here with the prices gone the way they have so one of them lives in {} and two of them live in {}. They would live here if they could it's where they're from and who they are. They couldn't afford to buy here imagine! (Respondent E: Ringsender).

I'm a lone parent and I'm stuck in a one-bedroom flat with two kids. I can't afford to move and if they give me a bigger flat outside the area I have to go. I don't want to leave here it's where I'm from but I really have no choice. (Respondent Z: Ringsender).

There's a history of travellers in Ringsend. They've constantly been moved from one side of the road to the other side....with the development that are taking place now and in the future these Travellers will be moved out of Ringsend. It's just

‘move on you’re in the way’. You see the land is extremely valuable and all of the land around here is being sold for development. (Respondent K: Ringsender).

Clearly for many people choices are limited. Access to resources is a differentiating factor in respect of mobility. However although limited resources may affect one's ability to move it must also be recognised that this can also force people into a position whereby they have no choice but to move. Mobility must be examined in relation to what Massey (1994) terms the ‘power-geometry’ of contemporary spatiality. The key question is how much control different individuals and groups have over how contemporary processes affect their lives. Respondent K points out that within the development processes that are occurring in Ringsend the Travellers, who have a history of living in Ringsend, will be moved out. Their social relationships are embedded in place and this is where they wish to remain. However the transition that Ringsend is at present undergoing has meant that land value has risen in the area and there is a fear that their site will be sold for development. Respondent Z also has no choice in whether she will remain in Ringsend or not. The decision lies with Dublin City Council housing services and on whether they can find suitable accommodation for her within the area. As there are no plans to build public housing in the immediate future this seems unlikely. As Respondent E indicates the prices of housing in Ringsend has soared in recent years thus excluding many people, who do not have the resources, from the housing market. Chapter Four highlighted the prices of apartments within the new developments in the area. Rent prices within the area have also soared. For example short-term leases are advertised in the Gasworks at €2,600 monthly for a two-bedroom apartment. Long-term leases in the Gasworks for a two bedroom apartment start at €1,400 (€1,550 with parking) monthly. Levels of choice and constraint clearly have an impact on people’s decisions and also impact on place and the meanings place hold for people.

Place is not produced in a singular or uniform way. According to Elwood individuals are simultaneously embedded in several discourses that constitute their identities and experiences in place, (2000:160). It is this multiplicity of influences, experiences and identities that shapes space and which shapes the meanings of the places that people inhabit. In addition it must be noted that people will construct and represent place differently. For example many of the gentrifiers that have moved into Ringsend have done so because it is close to town, to their place of work or because they see it as an 'up and coming' area. Their attachment to Ringsend differs to that of the Ringsender's. In many instances their social life and relationships are removed from local contexts:

Well I'm from Brazil so I would have ties there too but I have a lot of friends here now as well as I've been here four years and so at the moment my life is here. ....I'd walk through it [the village] down to Sandymount to the beach I don't know... there's nothing really to do in the village there's only houses and old people. I wouldn't drink here, I wouldn't stay locally, I would come into town most of the time. My friends all drink in town....I knew a few people's faces just to say hello and whatever but you never get to meet them cos it's all just coming and going you know. And I didn't spend much time there anyway it was just a sleeping place. (Respondent R: Gentrifier).

The nicest thing about Ringsend is the lovely areas that you can get to from here and it's central but outside of that I can't think of anything else (laugh). I think it's alright if you were born here. It's different for them but I wasn't, I'm from England, so to me it's just a place. (Respondent W: Gentrifier).

It is clear that many of the gentrifiers do not have the same attachment to place as the Ringsenders. There is evidence that in many instances their social relations are not embedded in Ringsend and have thus been removed from local habits. Many of the gentrifiers do not socialise in Ringsend and indeed do not know any people within the area that they are living. Ringsend is not 'home' and they do not feel a sense of belonging or attachment to the area:

I'm from the country I'm not from here so I suppose it's different for me as I don't feel attached to here. I don't want to be involved in the community, in any community I just want to live my own life. I don't socialise in the area but a lot of my friends are in Rathmines and that's very near which is good too I'm in a writer's shop there and I do the drama on a Saturday too. So I'm big into the arts

and very busy....You can live a private life here without them interfering they let you get on with it. (Respondent V: Gentrifier).

Ringsend does not hold any intimate meaning and as such their perception of Ringsend as place differs to that of the Ringsender's. They do not feel the need or desire to involve themselves at a local level. This is not to assume that they are not involved in social networks that are removed from place such as the gym, work, pubs and restaurants within the city centre or socialising in their homes with friends. They simply have different social circles that are not anchored in Ringsend:

I'm from Sligo so I go home at weekends a lot. We barely know anybody in this block and we're here over two years. I don't socialise around here but it's handy cos you can go to the gym in town or to wherever else you want to go. So there's a hell of a lot more access to amenities here than in other places. If people do crash here they just marvel at how close it is to town so this becomes a base camp for people for a weekend sometimes. That's much better than been stuck out somewhere like Leixlip and trying to get into town or whatever....I stay around some weekends and go into town but in general people just bail out and go back down the country or wherever. It's like a ghost town. My impression is that on a bank holiday weekend Dublin is empty cos all the culchies get out. I think most people do their time in Dublin and then they get out. There possible isn't the community thing that there should be but that doesn't bother me enough. I don't need it enough so therefore I don't miss it....If I say home I suppose I mean here now not Sligo. I'm comfortable with that. I identify with here as my home for now and that's grand. I don't know if I necessarily belong here – I definitely don't belong with being a culchie and all the rest of it. But nobody gives you any trouble and there's enough people around now that you don't get the squinting windows thing here which is grand. That suits me grand. (Respondent S: Gentrifier).

However, the spaces that they occupy with friends are invested with meaning and therefore can be considered as place. In this regard their social networks are located in specific places rather than not anchored in any one place. Nevertheless, even though many of the gentrifiers do not socialise in Ringsend itself they do live within this place:

I mean at a social level we don't really engage socially well Christmas and stuff. I'd nip into [neighbours] for a coffee and a chat but socially we wouldn't go down to the pubs or anything. Well I have once or twice but definitely we have a different social circle but yet I'd like to think we co-existed like but we definitely don't share I suppose. (Respondent T: Gentrifier).

It's very nice this community. They are very, like I wouldn't even say I feel like I was different here, they are very like I can't even say I am accepted because there is no such thing. There is no such thing as not being accepted. I can't even say oh

I've been very welcomed because it's not about being welcomed. Like I am here and they are there and they are cool about that fact. They don't interfere or talk about my colour or ask us in for tea or that they are wonderful. They are so wonderful like if I say I feel so accepted in the community it's not about that I don't even think about that but I feel very grounded here, I'm completely grounded which is very nice. (Respondent U: Gentrifier)

Some may have limited contact with the area but know their neighbours and feel that they engage on some levels. As Respondent S states 'I'd like to think we co-existed but we definitely don't share' and for Respondent U 'I feel very grounded here, I'm completely grounded which is nice.' Crucially, this kind of engagement occurred among householders in the area. I did not find evidence of a similar attitude among those respondents within the apartment complexes.

As Respondent S points out many of the apartment complexes 'empty out at weekends'. People return 'home' to places around Ireland and as such are involved in family networks and relationships that are rooted in place. Their social relations are not as 'removed from local contexts and thus freed from local habits' as Giddens (1990) would suggest. The emergence of new spatial relations does not necessarily imply the disappearance of place. There does seem to be new ways of constructing and understanding social relations. They are becoming more 'stretched' but perhaps it is best to conceptualise social relations as being embedded in a multitude of places and not anchored necessarily in one over-arching place.

This 'stretching' process is not new as the migration of peoples, cultures and information is not a new phenomenon. However, '..even accepting that globalization is unequal, uneven and disjointed, there is no denying that in recent years there has been an acceleration in its pace and a deepening of its impact', (Massey and Jess, 1995:1). As this global connectedness deepens places and perceptions of places are being restructured.

The recently completed complexes surrounding the Grand Canal Basins differ in some degree to the other apartment complexes within the area. Gallery Quay complex includes

shops, restaurants, a hotel, a public plaza and other leisure spaces. The aim of this development is to create an 'urban neighbourhood'. This is echoed in the place marketing of The Gasworks and the plans for the development of Boland's Mills. The aim is to create a specific urban lifestyle in a designed neighbourhood. What is interesting about these developments is that they are designed to create a specific sense of place however, they are removed from the place in which they are situated. The creation of a sense of neighbourhood in these complexes remains within the complexes themselves. These designed neighbourhoods are not connected to the already existing neighbourhood within the area. These are specific urban enclaves that are built in Ringsend because of its close proximity to the city centre and also due to the fact that the Grand Canal Basins have become a unique selling feature. However, although Ringsend as place is not an important component of these developments the place that it is situated in is. The city centre has become an important factor in post-industrial growth and this highlights the importance of place within contemporary processes. The areas that are close to the city centre and have unique features, such as The Gasworks and the Grand Canal Basins, are the places that can be re-structured to develop an urban lifestyle that appeals to the new middle-class or urban professional.

Although contemporary process have impacted on place for many people place still plays an important role in their lives. For many of the Ringsenders place is central to their lives and their social relationships are embedded in, inform and are informed by place. For many of the gentrifiers the landscape of Ringsend does not hold the same connotations. Their relationships are not rooted in Ringsend as place but are stretched between a variety of spaces and places. However, place continues to assume importance and retains its significance as a marker of identity. The theorists writing about an evaporation of place would seem to suggest that place has an over-arching objective meaning. My respondents show that although there may be some objective qualities of place – for example Ringsend

has developed from an industrial to a post-industrial landscape – place is also composed of multiple layers of subjective meanings. As such place may alter within contemporary transitions but it will not be rendered meaningless.

### **(5.7) Place as identity and identification**

*Humankind establishes an identity with pieces of geographic space, and a sense of place, comparable with the deepest of emotional ties and feelings, (Smith, 1990:2).*

As humans we have the imaginative capacity to produce a ‘sense of place’ and with it identification and identity construction. According to Massey and Jess individuals and groups can identify with a particular place which then becomes part of their own sense of personal identity. Place can take on a particular significance as a place of belonging and as a site in which to construct, maintain and assert a particular identity, (1995:1). The landscapes of place plays a central role in the construction and performance of place-based social identities and distinctions.

Place and identity are inextricably linked. Individuals, and groups, derive a sense of identity from perceptions of place. A sense of place can be deeply imbued with a sense of belonging- a feeling of knowing who we are and where we belong. Individuals or groups may identify differently with place depending on class, gender, race, sexuality etc. People may identify with places beyond the boundaries of where they live or they may identify only with specific spaces within these boundaries - for example they may have specific sites of identification. The newcomers into Ringsend may only identify with the apartment complexes in which they live while also identifying with other places.

Smith refers to these identities as ‘territorial identities’. According to Smith territorial identities may require and be reinforced by symbols, (1990:2) For example the bridge in Ringsend functions as a symbolic marker of identity and as a territorial demarcation:

We hardly ever went over the bridge and then when we went over the bridge we felt like we were leaving Ringsend. Years ago everyone used to say if you were from over the bridge you weren’t from Ringsend but that was years ago. (Respondent O: Ringsender).

As we used to say years ago no one from Pearse St. would get over the bridge into Ringsend. You'd have to have a pass to get over the bridge. (Laughs). It's really hard for a community that strong to have so many outsiders moving in.....Any of the kids around here don't want to move. They're from Ringsend and that's their identity and they want to stay in Ringsend. (Respondent A: Ringsender).

Individuals and groups may identify with certain buildings or sites within a landscape. This has been previously examined in relation to the industrial sites that once existed in Ringsend and became markers for both identity and identification.

People may identify with place as 'home' however, others may feel themselves as outsiders in places that are primarily claimed by others:

We're outsiders. They wouldn't be interested in outsiders I think. (Respondent V: Gentrifier).

I suppose you're an outsider and you're always going to be an outsider particularly if you don't have a Dub accent. (Respondent S: Gentrifier).

Well I suppose we see ourselves as blow-ins and you know in the Irish culture no matter where you're from unless you've been born in the area and are in it for a couple of generations you're still considered a blow-in. Linda who's married to Rayme who lives next door she married into the area so effectively she's considered an outsider. We joke a lot about that among ourselves. (Respondent T: Gentrifier)

A common notion of place especially perhaps of small-scale places such as Ringsend is one of settledness, homogeneity and continuity. However, in today's era of advanced capitalism and globalisation this is called into question. International migration as well as movement of people within cities means that this simple relation between local place and local culture cannot be assumed. This movement of people can lead to claims over territory, longings for 'home', people feeling 'out of place', others feeling displaced which further produces meanings of place and its identities and impacts on the future character of place. 'In such a context, what meaning can be retained, or rebuilt around the concept of place?' (Massey and Jess, 1995:1).

*If places are thought of a settled, coherent worlds of their own, then they are surely under challenge in an age when everywhere seems to be being opened up to wider forces. Are the alternatives limited to the end of a uniqueness of place on the one*

*hand or a return to a (mythologized) exclusivity of place on the other?* (Massey and Jess, 1995:1).

The concept of place is a social construct and the meanings of places are open to challenge. If a group claims ownership over an area and identifies with that place, it can create a sense of territoriality that may lead to negative consequences. The concept of place, the meanings attached to specific places and the memories these places hold ‘...are directly involved in struggles over identity, control over social spaces, and social power’, (Elwood, 2000:12).

*The meaning of a place may vary between different groups and such meanings may be mobilized in battles over the material future of places- whether a new development should occur, whether new people should be allowed to move in, whether a place should remain ‘unspoilt’. Rival claims are often based on rival interpretations of their pasts,* (Massey and Jess, 1995:2).

However, is the situation that we are now faced with, as Massey and Jess (1995) ask, one of an end to the uniqueness of place on the one hand or a defence of an imagined exclusivity of place on the other? This question is somewhat misleading as not only does it limit our options to two polar extremes but it also ignores the power dimensions within which action must take place. In many instances ‘battles’ concerning the meaning of place, the identity of place and ‘ownership’ of place occur between unequal forces. One must be careful when dealing with issues of ‘territoriality’ to place these issues within a wider political, economic and social context. The changes occurring within Ringsend’s landscape are due to economic re-structuring. The development within the area has led to a process of gentrification. The newer residents within Ringsend do not have the same attachment to Ringsend as place and identify with specific parts of the area as renewed post-industrial sites. On the other hand these same sites once provided industrial employment within the area and as such represent the loss of this employment to many of the Ringsenders. There is an underlying conflict in relation to the identity of place. Rather than place been rendered meaningless within contemporary processes within Ringsend it maintains

significance. Place in particular inner city areas are significant within post-industrial growth. In addition specific places are also been used to sell particular lifestyles. The issue of identity and identification is also a major feature in the gentrification process and this will be further explored in Chapter Six.

### **(5.8) Conclusion**

*Hey pal! How do I get to town from here?*

*And he said: Well just take a right where they're going to build that new shopping mall. Go straight past where they're going to put in the freeway and take a left at what's going to be the new sports centre. And keep going until you hit the place where they're thinking of building that drive-in bank. You can't miss it.*

*And I said: This must be the place,* (Anderson 1982, in Rutherford, 1990:13).

Anderson's post-modern elegy on loss and displacement captures the essence of the 'place' from which we are writing. Ringsend is a place in motion. The processes of advanced capitalism and globalisation are altering the organisation of space. This has disrupted existing forms and concepts of place resulting in new sets of relations within place and across space and new ways of constructing and understanding social relationships.

The transitions occurring in Ringsend has seen the landscape change from one which was dominated by industry to one which is now dominated by apartment complexes and office blocks. This transition to a post-industrial landscape is impacting on place and the meaning that place holds for people. However, the loss of industry has not only impacted on place but also has economic consequences. With the loss of industry came a loss of security and identity, which also impacts on place identification. Previous understandings of place are being disrupted, challenged and re-structured.

Many theorists have suggested that place has become subsumed within a space of flows and as such the possibility of it being invested with human meaning has evaporated. Has the concept of place been eradicated within these processes? Ringsend conforms to the definition of place as geographic location, material form and investment with meaning and value, (Gyeryn, 2000). Ringsend is also embedded within a wider economic context; it is

enmeshed in the restructuring of the global capitalist system. My respondents have shown that place continues to matter and constitutes the basic element of the social life of many long-term residents of Ringsend. It matters less so for the newer population. Ringsend as place has not been subsumed within a space of flows. In fact place has become an integral part of these processes as they compete for both capital and people. The marketing of place has increased as Ringsend is being packaged not only as an upmarket location but also as a way of life. In addition place continues to be invested with meaning and to support both spatial and social relationships. Social life is still, for many people, anchored in place.

Doreen Massey also asks:

*Do individual places still have their own distinctiveness within 'the global village' and, if so, is this distinctiveness still constructed in the same way as it was before? With the mixing of cultures, the migration of peoples, and the increasing internationalization of economic structures, does the notion of distinct local places make any sense at all? (1995:46).*

The answer is yes. For the Ringsenders their 'local place' is distinct, as it has developed within its own particular history. For many this history is embedded in memories of childhood and the meanings that specific sites hold for many people. In addition individual places still hold their distinctiveness as changes, although global in their impact, are mediated by local relations and in many cases are contested in everyday practice. However, this distinctiveness may not be constructed in the same way as it was before.

To imply that social meaning has evaporated from place is to treat place, in some regards, as a static concept. These arguments treat place as bounded coherent worlds. As examined earlier place it is not a static concept but is constantly open to interpretation, contestation and change. Place is a social construct which has always been restructured and disrupted and yet for many has retained significance. As place is elastic it will alter with these processes but not become redundant or meaningless. Many of my respondents live their lives anchored in place and the meanings that place encapsulates. While others may at first glance seem not to be anchored in place this does not mean that place in itself holds no

significance for them. Place is not produced in a singular or uniform way. The identity of spaces, and places, like the identity of individuals, are always cross cut with multiple tensions and contradictions, (Valentine, 2000:82).

According to Harvey, our subjective experience can take us into the realms of perception, imagination, fiction, and fantasy, which produce mental spaces and maps as so many mirages of the supposedly 'real' thing, (1990:203). However, is there any one 'real' meaning of place, an over-arching objective meaning? The theorists writing about an evaporation of place would seem to suggest so. Also many studies treat both space and place as possessing an objective meaning from which other perceptions are analysed. As my respondents have shown although there may be some objective qualities of place – for example Ringsend has developed from an industrial to a post-industrial landscape – place is also composed of multiple layers of subjective meanings.

Groups and individuals experience place differently. This is largely because they evaluate the meanings these hold for them through their identification as members of other groups. For example, the 'Ringsenders' and the 'gentrifiers' may experience Ringsend differently from each other depending on the meanings this holds for them. However, they are not homogenous groups so they may also evaluate these meanings through their identification as members of other social groups. What is clear is that different societies, groups and sub-groups have different perceptions of place. This is not to say that groups may not come together over particular issues in relation to the place they occupy or that they may have similar perceptions in relation to this place. It is necessary to recognise the array of both objective and subjective qualities encapsulated within place and that also impacts on how place is constructed, negotiated and understood in everyday practice.

# **Gentrification Matters**

## **(6.1) Introduction**

It is at the level of 'place' that one can clearly see the effects of global and national economic restructuring. An integral part of this restructuring is the process of gentrification. Indeed it is through the process of gentrification that one can examine the effects of economic restructuring. The demographic statistics, in relation to Ringsend, examined in Chapter Four showed that the process of gentrification is occurring within the area. However, statistics do not in themselves reveal the causes, effects and implications of this process. Drawing on the testimony of my respondents, this chapter offers an insight into the gentrification process at work in this particular locale.

The gentrification process will be analysed within the wider theoretical frameworks examined in Chapter Two. How is this process manifested within a specific place at a specific time? Does urban policy play a role in post-recession gentrification as Lees (2000) contends? To what degree does the term 'gentrification' capture contemporary processes of change? Firstly, I will examine the visible form that gentrification takes within this specific locale. Following this an examination of competing explanations for the gentrification process; the dynamic of social class; and gentrification as marginalisation and displacement will be critically explored. In conclusion these issues will be drawn together in order to assess the causes, effects and implications of the gentrification process within Ringsend.

## **(6.2) The visibility of gentrification in Ringsend**

The process of gentrification within Ringsend is manifested in two distinct forms. Firstly, the contemporary gentrification associated with the rise of the 'gated community' and the post-industrial landscape. This is visible in the proliferation of both apartment and office complexes that have come to dominate the landscape. Secondly, Ringsend is also experiencing the gentrification process that focuses on the acquisition and upgrading of

original working-class housing. Although both forms of gentrification are visibly distinct from each other this section will examine if they are part of the same process. Both distinct forms of gentrification will be analysed separately and then drawn together for a more complete picture.

### **(6.2.1) Gentrification associated with new construction**

As examined in Chapter Two the process of gentrification also includes the construction of office complexes employing thousands of professionals all looking for someplace to live. The apartment complexes in Ringsend would at first glance seem to offer this accommodation. These complexes have been marketed as 'upmarket urban landscapes' for the 'well-heeled professional'. These landscapes are visible indicators of a shift to a post-industrial society. However, they are built on sites that were once dominated by industry. As such they are indicators of not only a shift to a post-industrial landscape but also a shift in the social and spatial relationships that are embedded in place, (see Chapter Five).

The apartment and office complexes are visibly distinct from the surrounding landscapes within Ringsend:

This is a village and whether you're an urban or a rural village then a thirteen-storey will not fit well in a village. It doesn't go with the landscape. Many of those apartment complexes stand out so much they don't fit into the landscape here. (Respondent J: Ringsender).

The area is, in a way, now surrounded by apartments and offices and they are much higher than the buildings that were here before. I suppose it's their height and design that make them so obvious really. (Respondent I: Ringsender).

Oh the apartments and offices are everywhere. At the back of us now we're going to have I don't know how many apartments and a hotel - right at the back of us. And the gas works and all...I was just saying to a neighbour the other day that they won't be calling us South Lotts Road anymore they will be calling us 'South Lotts village' 'cos we'll be stuck down in this little hole and all the apartments will be towering over us. (Respondent A: Ringsender).

As bad as it is around the village and other parts of Ringsend South Lotts is probably the worst. South Lotts was and is a beautiful area and they are gone up so high all around that area it's so sad really because they are losing what they are really. They will be lost in it. It's absolutely disgraceful. They will be a little valley in amongst towers of concrete. (Respondent H: Ringsender).

It is clear from these quotes that the apartment, and office complexes, are perceived to be 'out of place' within Ringsend. It is also clear that these are not small, isolated complexes but that the residents feel that their area is being 'surrounded' by high-rise development. Many complexes overlook the cottages and terraced housing of South Lotts, (see Chapter Four). The residents of South Lotts feel that this is having a detrimental effect on their area. Respondent A explains this as 'being stuck down a little hole with all the apartments towering over us' while Respondent H states that South Lotts 'will be a little valley in amongst towers of concrete'. This resonates with the objections of the docklanders to Spencer Dock, (See Corcoran, 2002).

There is an obvious distinction between the new construction within the area and the older phases of development that existed within the landscape:

You see if you look at it like this we used to have factories around us here and now it's all apartments and offices. They have kept some of the structures that were protected and you can still see many of them. It's not that we wanted to keep the buildings themselves but it's what they were really. They were workplaces for most of the people around here. That's all gone, the work for us is gone and now it's all office work and fancy apartments. (Respondent B: Ringsender).

They're too high and there's too many for the area. I remember when they were all factories and half the area used to work in them. We lost a lot of work around here and I know there's a lot more offices but that's not the same. Everyone around here had a trade and worked hard there's nothing for the locals anymore. I suppose they look nice like they are designed well but you have to think about other things like work and that. (Respondent M: Ringsender).

There are a lot of offices built but for what I would call a white-collar workforce there is nothing for the locals. It's much more than de-industrialisation 'cos it's a totally different infrastructure catering for a totally different class of people...It's all middle-class, well-educated workforce and not designed to give the locals work. (Respondent D: Gentrifier).

Phases of capitalist development are visible within the landscapes of cities and within specific areas within these cities. The landscapes of previous phases remain as a reminder of previous histories of development. The landscape of the industrial phase serves as a reminder of when there was employment for the working-class population of Ringsend within their area. The post-industrial landscape, although representing a new phase of

employment, is not deemed to cater for the original working-class inhabitants of Ringsend. The gentrification process that is visible within the area is associated with a sense of loss of both employment and the landscape that signified previous employment opportunities. There is also a sense of a loss of 'ownership' of place and that this new phase of production is creating places that do not fit in with the Ringsenders perception of what place signifies to them.

This feeling of being 'surrounded' by new development is a way of explaining how the Ringsenders feel marginal to the processes occurring within their area. The places they occupy, and once occupied, were the dominant features and signifiers of place, identity and identification in previous generations. However, the new construction within the area signifies a different mode of production and this is not only replacing the former industrial landscape but also making a powerful claim on place. They feel that they are not only marginal to this shift but will eventually be rendered invisible as their cottages and houses will be engulfed by 'towers of concrete'. This differs to the theories in relation to the gentrification process discussed in Chapter Two. As examined many of these theories focus on 'taste' and 'culture' as a means of distinction. In Ringsend the process of contemporary gentrification associated with the apartment and office complexes shows that distinction is achieved by rendering the Ringsenders marginal, and in some cases invisible, within this gentrifying process.

The newly constructed complexes stand in stark contrast to the flats, houses and cottages in the area. However, the former industrial landmarks, which they replaced, also stood in contrast to these residences. These were not deemed to be 'out of place' as they provided employment opportunities for the working-class population and therefore they identified with the places these buildings occupied. In addition, these industrial sites developed over time whereas the apartment and office complexes have appeared on the landscape in quite

a short space of time. The lifestyles and economic trends they represent are not ones with which the majority of the Ringsenders can identify.

Many of the apartment and office complexes in Ringsend display signs of post-modernist architecture with a 'play' on the traditional identity of the area. This emphasis on 'place' may be a way to find a mooring in a post-modern world of flux. However, the traditions that are being represented are those that many of the Ringsenders still identify with not as mere representation but as the basis of their lives which is now fast disappearing. The emphasis on the *aesthetic* is clearly visible however the *social* considerations of the urban professional are given precedent over those of the working-class population. This feeling is echoed by Respondent M 'I suppose they look nice like they are designed well but you have to think about other things like work and that.'

Another way to view these new constructions is not that they appear 'out of place' rather that they occupy a different place, a place that is within Ringsend yet removed from Ringsend. Much new development is situated on the margins of the area. There are a variety of reasons for this. Many of the complexes are situated on former industrial sites, which lie on the outskirts of Ringsend. They are also mostly situated alongside the river and canals, which skirt the edges of the area. The Grand Canal Docks, which is part of the DDDA and therefore part of their development plan, is the site that has been developed as a mixed use site consisting of residential, work and leisure spaces, (see Chapter Four). These development are clearly designed to suit the tastes and needs of the new middle-class and this site lies on the perimeter of the area. In addition the village itself is composed of small shops, pubs and is surrounded by flats and housing and as such has little room for large-scale developments. The village, the centre of Ringsend, is visibly and distinctly still the domain of the Ringsenders. This shows that gentrification is a diverse process and is specific to particular areas.

This understanding of the apartments as occupying a different place, a place within place, is also illustrated in the following quote:

**Respondent:** ...The apartments although they are in the area are also sort of removed from it. There isn't a lot of mixing between the two. Now maybe that's a bad thing I don't know. I don't think there needs to be but I haven't really thought about it a lot. I think they live their life and we live ours.

**Interviewer:** So for you they are really two separate places?

**Respondent:** Yea they are. But then again each apartment complex is also separated. It's not like all the apartments are one place and Ringsend is another. I suppose the apartments are all similar and that but they are not combined I suppose. It's hard to explain really except that they are all separate. (Respondent A2: Gentrifier).

Post-recession gentrification is described in the literature as the construction of apartment complexes on obsolete industrial land. However, while these sites may have become obsolete in terms of economics they are situated in specific areas. The industrial sites in Ringsend were connected to the Ringsender's sense of place and identity. They were part of the landscape as Ringsend as place and not considered as separate places or 'out of place'. The Ringsenders have described the complexes as 'out of place' because they have no relationships to these new sites. However, as the respondent cited above demonstrates the new construction may also be seen as occupying a different place to the rest of Ringsend. This perception has developed from the fact that there are no noticeable connections between the apartment complexes and the rest of Ringsend. They are separated both physically and symbolically. Respondent A2 also highlights the fact that the apartment complexes are also separated from each other and the places they occupy are not a unified whole. However, she does acknowledge that the apartments are similar and therefore the places they occupy are more linked to each other than to the rest of the area.

Respondent A3 also highlights this separation:

**Interviewer:** Would you ever drink around here?

**Respondent:** No I'd normally go into town well I would pop into the Ocean Bar [A bar and restaurant built into the lower floor of Fisherman's Wharf. This is a large residential and office complex situated on the Grand Canal Basin] a bit I suppose. I often go there on a Sunday afternoon or the odd evening but that's not really part of Ringsend.

**Interviewer:** Why not, it's in Ringsend?

**Respondent:** Yea but it was built with these apartments. It's removed from the village and it's part of this complex. A lot of people come out from town to here because it's lovely in the summer 'cos you can sit outside and there's the canal and that. (Respondent A3: Gentrifier).

The Ocean Bar is seen as part of the office and apartment complex but disconnected from Ringsend. In this quote Ringsend is described and understood as being 'the village' as the village is the centre of the area and composed mainly of Ringsenders. Respondent A3 establishes a connection with the city centre as she states that people come out from town to drink in the Ocean Bar due to its attractive surroundings and she also states that she would normally drink in town. The apartment complexes appear to be more connected to the city centre than to Ringsend.

The apartment complexes may appear to occupy places on the margins of Ringsend however the processes operating in the area should not be seen as marginal. The shift to a post-industrial landscape and the consequent gentrification of Ringsend are central processes that are occurring within Dublin and other cities. Areas like Ringsend are an integral part of these processes. Although much of the new development is situated along the periphery of the area more recent developments however, have appeared on sites that are closer to the village itself, the centre of Ringsend. Whether this encroachment on the village will continue in the future remains to be seen. In addition, although the majority of complexes lie on the periphery of Ringsend they have come to dominate South Lotts and have had a major impact on this area. While the cottages and working-class terraced housing were once the dominant feature in this area they are now being 'dwarfed' by luxury apartment complexes and mixed use development. The juxtaposition of these two landscapes, and what they represent, indicates that the new construction is simultaneously within and removed from Ringsend. The process of gentrification in the area can be seen as providing new understandings and representations of place.

Contemporary gentrification associated with the construction of apartment complexes is indicative of both post-industrial and 'post-recession' gentrification. For Lambert and Broody (2002) post-recession gentrification has seen a new vitality in many cities in the UK and USA and signs of a re-population of the urban core. They argue that this process of gentrification is not only found in London, where large-scale conversion of former industrial and commercial sites has been described as spectacular, but also, in recent years, in a number of provincial cities in the UK. These cities include Glasgow, Liverpool and Manchester. The process in these cities is exemplified by an increase in residential developments in and around central areas, which have often previously been dominated by industrial sites and other commercial uses. For Lambert and Broody (2002) these unlikely sites have been converted, not only into residential use, but also into prestigious and high priced housing. They also highlight the fact that media campaigns promoting city centre living have been a regular feature in local papers in many provincial cities and Sunday Supplements frequently run features on the interior design elements of such developments, (2002:4). The new construction in Ringsend and the media campaigns promoting both urban living, and the apartment complexes in the area, are trends that have been noticed in many UK core cities. These are key features of 'post-recession' gentrification.

The form of gentrification associated with newly constructed complexes differs in many respects to the gentrification studies discussed in Chapter Two where aestheticised consumption involves the upgrading of previous existing stock. Those gentrifiers who reside in the apartment complexes buy into an image that is already constructed for them as opposed to constructing an image and identity for themselves through the renovation of existing stock. It is aestheticised consumption but of a ready-made aesthetic product.

Studies on gentrification in London (Butler, 1997; Butler and Robson, 2001) found differences in the consumption strategies of gentrifiers between different areas. For Butler and Robson (2001) in certain areas gentrifiers have high levels of economic capital and

engage in a more commodified version of gentrification. In other areas 'the emphasis is on cultural effort and involvement in the local community alongside considerable sweat equity in the properties', (Bridge, 2002:3). Of course there are differences within areas as well. For Warde (1991) these distinctions are highlighted by the fact that newly built apartment complexes seem to serve young singles while terraced housing seems to be the preference of young families. I will examine whether or not there are differences in Ringsend between the gentrifiers that live in the apartment complexes and those who have chosen to renovate terraced, artisan housing later in this chapter.

### **(6.2.2) Gentrification associated with acquisition and upgrading of working-class housing**

In addition to the gentrification process associated with the increase in new construction within the area Ringsend is also experiencing the gentrification of its existing housing stock. For Glass (1964) gentrification involve the acquisition and upgrading of working-class residences. In Slater's (2002) examination of Bellevue Road in London he describes the renovation and restoration of terraced housing. This restoration also involves a deliberate attempt to rid terraced housing of its uniformity and to dispense with the distinctive grey or red bricks of a different era. For Slater (2002) the interior of homes are also decorated to exhibit the belongings and 'taste' of a different class of resident. Indeed gentrification associated with the acquisition and upgrading of working-class homes is very much linked to 'taste' and the pursuit of difference and distinction. For Redfern (1993) gentrification manifests itself in differences in consumption and style. Consumption becomes a means of expressing a particular identity.

'Studies of gentrification have acknowledged the importance of a gentrification aesthetic', (Bridge, 2002: 2). This emphasis on the aesthetic is explicit in the gentrification process occurring in Ringsend. There is an upgrading of property similar to that noted by Jager (1986). For Jager (1986) the new-middle class buys within the inner city and renovates

their properties as a means of expressing their social distance from the classes below. In Ringsend the upgrading of property can be viewed as a means to differentiate between those who have recently bought into the area and those who are indigenous to the area:

I suppose when we saw the house it was so fantastic because we had such a great garden. But we've done a lot of work with it I mean the house was a wreck when we bought it.... I mean where we are at the moment like we're working from home and I just got off the phone with the planner there and we need a home office so we're seeking permission to build an office in the back. But also we have a big problem now we have three children now and we only have two bedrooms so we have to seriously think how we can extend now. We've been told that a third story on top of this is out of the question but we have to argue our case. The nature of these houses they no longer can accommodate a family. Well I suppose they accommodate everyone else on the street but I'd say that's sub-standard in terms of daylight, ventilation, room size and that. (Respondent T: Gentrifier).

Respondent T and his partner are architects and have carried out considerable work on the house that they bought. Both the interior and exterior of the premises are visibly distinct from the surrounding houses. This may be a means as Jager (1986) suggests of expressing social distance from the surrounding residents. Indeed respondent T also makes this distinction when he states that he considered the house he bought substandard before the renovations but admits that they accommodate everyone else on the street. Respondent T's house also displays a distinction in 'taste' and an emphasis on the aesthetic. This is something that he emphasises – 'I suppose we have different tastes as well and we want our home to reflect our taste and style.'

According to Cameron and Coaffee (2005) the role of the artist plays a significant role in the main long-established theories of gentrification, which emphasise 'culture' and 'capital'. For Ley (1996) the artist provides cultural capital which identifies the attraction of de-valourised inner city neighbourhoods for aesthetic valorisation.

*It is the aesthetic eye that transforms ugliness into a source of admiration...Such an aesthetic sensibility is found particularly among social groups that are rich in cultural capital but poor in economic capital, (Ley, 1996:301).*

For Ley the urban artist represents a fraction of the new middle-class which he refers to as the 'new cultural class', (1996:15). These are not only attracted to decayed inner city areas

purely for aesthetic re-valorisation but also for the society and culture of working-class neighbourhoods. In addition as they are 'poor in economic capital' the low cost accommodation is also appealing. Respondent T shares some similarities with this fraction of the new middle-class. There is definitely an emphasis placed on the aesthetic in the re-valorisation of his property. However, he also states that they choose to live in Ringsend because 'this was the only property we could afford at the time' and also because he believes that working-class communities like Ringsend are 'the foundation stones for the city'. Respondent D shares similarities with Respondent T in that she choose to live in Ringsend because the cottage she bought provided an opportunity for re-valorisation and she wanted to live within an inner city working-class neighbourhood. Both of these respondents expressed a dislike of middle-class suburban life. They also both possessed high cultural capital and, in comparison to more recent gentrifiers, low economic capital when first locating within Ringsend. For example, the renovations they have carried out have been achieved over a longer time span than the more recent gentrifiers. However, they seem to possess more economic capital than the 'new cultural class' described by Ley (1996).

It is interesting that both Respondents T and D were part of the 'first wave' of gentrification in Ringsend in the 1990s. They may be considered to be part of a counter-culture in that they have disassociated themselves from the suburban lifestyle of the middle-classes and have constructed a different identity through gentrification. Although they may not wholly conform to the definition of the 'new cultural class', as they have more economic capital, they are a variant of this. These people moved into artisan dwellings in the terraced housing and helped to render the area more attractive as a location due to the aesthetic makeovers of their homes.

These variants of the 'new cultural class' were followed by 'moneyed gentrifiers'. These constitute the second wave of gentrification and these groups have moved into both the

terraced housing throughout the area and the apartment complexes. The ‘moneyed gentrifiers’ who have moved into the apartment complexes are buying into an already constructed aesthetic. The apartment complexes, and in particular the newly constructed complexes such as The Gasworks and the developments surrounding the Grand Canal Basins have been designed to suit the taste of the urban professional. In relation to those ‘moneyed gentrifiers’ who have moved into the terraced housing these differ to the ‘new cultural class’. The gentrifiers in these instances are moving into an area that has already begun to become an attractive location. They also possess more economic capital and much of the re-valorisation and renovations have been carried out over a much shorter time span. Houses that have been passed on within families for generations are now being bought and totally renovated. Indeed there are instances where people are acquiring two houses and knocking them into one:

I couldn’t find anywhere to buy years ago – people didn’t put up signs then ‘House For Sale’ yea! (Laughs) They never did! You had to go around knocking on doors asking them ‘do you know anybody that’s selling a house’. That’s what I had to do. (Laughs). Not anymore though this is a trendy area so they all want to live here now. Sure look at what they are going for. The house across the road went for 360,000 and that’s not even as big as this one because we have the gardens and I have an attic as well. I had an attic extension because one of my boys lived in there. This was only two up two down then I extended one bedroom and put an en suite in it and I built another bedroom and I built the attic and that kitchen. We just kept building on in bits and pieces (laughs). Now in hindsight if you had have had the money years ago you would have just gutted it and rebuilt it all at the same time. That’s what they do now but we didn’t have a penny then....There are a lot of new people on this road now...Mary and Sandra are from Irishtown and another one or two but the rest would be new all right. Now [she names a T.D.] she’d be new wouldn’t she (laughs). She has two houses here yea she was a crafty bitch she was. There was a woman who died right next door to her and it went into probate and she bought the house and knocked the two into one. Oh yea her daughter goes in and out too. She was there last night you could hear her (puts on a posh laugh). She’s always having parties. And I have [famous poet] living next door to me, the poet. He’s lovely he is. (Respondent E: Ringsender).

Well in the South Lotts area is a place of small streets and small houses and for generations the way it worked there was the kids moved into the houses in that area when an old person died – they just passed them on to each other for generations. Nobody from outside their community or this community would have wanted to live in those houses ‘cos they were pokey and that and there were kids playing on the streets and all that. No one wanted them and they were private houses but they

were affordable for that community- for a craftsman and his family. Now since the apartments and the area has become attractive they are selling for crazy prices and now as the people are dying they are being sold to outsiders. Either speculators are buying them and renting them out at horrendous rents and very wealthy young couples are even buying two and knocking them together and things like that. (Respondent G: Ringsender).

As these are small houses built to cater for the working-classes they were affordable and were bought by families within the area. Up until recently, as Respondent G notes, nobody outside the area desired to live within these residences however with the recent developments occurring within the area and also within Dublin itself, the area has become a 'trendy' location in which to live. House prices have risen dramatically. Many houses are being bought by people who are not from the area and have the finances to renovate completely and in some instances to buy two residences for the purpose of combining them into one large dwelling. The terraced housing and cottages within the area are being totally upgraded, 'guttled' or knocked down and rebuilt.

These 'moneyed gentrifiers' are buying into an area that has already become an attractive location. House prices are considerably higher than those paid by the 'new cultural class'. These gentrifiers must have greater economic capital to purchase and carry out renovation. The emphasis on 'taste' and the 'aesthetic' that runs through much of the gentrification literature is also clearly visible within the renovation of existing housing stock:

We paid £850 for this cottage thirty-two years ago and we'd get over 260,000 for it now. Now we put on an extension and the place is tidy and clean and anyone who would buy it tomorrow would only have to hang up their coat, as the fella would say. But they don't do that anymore they knock them down and rebuild them the minute they buy them, and they're buying them for a colossal amount and they're putting half that back into them.... Oh god in our time there has been a lot sold especially in the last few years. It's very trendy to live here now. (Respondent B: Ringsender).

In the last few months it's kind of slowed but before that they [cottages and terraced housing around South Lotts] were up for sale one week and sold the following week. There's a guy who bought one down the road last year for 178,000 and he knocked it down and rebuilt it and he's looking for 350,000 now. They're just gutting them and it doesn't matter how nice you have them. It's not to their style I suppose. They would have different tastes. (Respondent A: Ringsender).

Respondent's B and A highlight the fact that what is occurring is not a new emphasis on 'taste' but an emphasis on a different aesthetic to that which went before. For Ley (1994) the aesthetic eye of the gentrifier transforms ugliness into a source of admiration. However the Ringsenders do not view the transformation occurring as one from 'ugliness' to a source of 'admiration'. They do not feel that their properties require total renovation. The transformation is one that highlights an aesthetic that appeals to a particular group of people – the gentrifiers. This upgrading of property may be a means of differentiation. The renovated houses are visibly distinct from the surrounding houses. This social distance is evident and as Respondent A2 states 'Maybe that's one way of seeing the difference like in the way the homes are decorated. I suppose the style would be different. A lot of the people who are buying here now earn a lot of money and this is reflected in their homes. Well our homes I suppose.' (Gentrifier).

'Moneyed gentrifiers' can be divided into two groups. Firstly, as examined are those who move into the area in search of a particular lifestyle – 'lifestyle gentrifiers'. However, property re-valorisation is not only about identity it is also a strategy for some owners to either increase profits on the resale of the property or to make the property more attractive for renting. Therefore, the second type of 'moneyed gentrifier' can be defined as 'investment gentrifiers'. Much of the gentrification literature refers to middle-class 'invasion' and to owner occupation. Although this is occurring in Ringsend some houses, cottages and apartments are also being bought as investments for renting. This challenges cultural explanations of gentrification reviewed earlier as a lifestyle choice, (Chapter Two). For Ley (1996) inner city living is viewed as a response to the conformity of the suburbs. The new-middle classes are moving into downtown areas in search of an urban lifestyle. The result of this is the gentrification of the inner city. This argument does not explain the purchase and renovation of property in gentrifying areas for purely investment reasons. Those renting these newly purchased and re-valourised housing can be defined as 'renter

gentrifiers'. Those renting within the area may be pursuing an urban lifestyle but crucially, unlike householders, they inhabit a particular aesthetic that has already been constructed. The properties may reflect their 'taste' in that they choose to live within a particular property but it is not a 'taste' that they have constructed.

### **(6.2.3) An overview of the gentrification process in Ringsend**

Capital both creates and destroys its own landscape, (Harvey, 1985). This is clearly visible when one examines the gentrification process within Ringsend. The former industrial landscape has been destroyed and in its place stands the post-industrial landscape of the apartment and office complex. Secondly the gentrification process associated with the acquisition and renovation of previous working-class residences is also clearly visible.

The gentrification process within Ringsend can be divided into different processes. There are indications of a 'first wave' of gentrification. This was defined by Glass (1964) as the small-scale movement of individual middle-class households into old, working-class inner city neighbourhoods. These gentrifiers have been attracted to Ringsend not only for aesthetic purposes but also because they wish to live in this working-class neighbourhood for a variety of reasons. They possessed relatively high cultural capital and, in comparison to more recent gentrifiers, low economic capital when first locating within Ringsend. Like the 'new cultural class' the emphasis remains on the aesthetic but it is an aesthetic in that it does not take account of historic preservation and leans more towards conspicuous consumption.

A further wave of gentrification is also noticeable within Ringsend. This wave, however, does not fit neatly into the analysis of gentrification noted in other research. Hackworth and Smith (2001) suggest that within the US a second wave of gentrification was '...characterised by the integration of gentrification into a wider range of economic and cultural processes at the global and national scale', (467-8). Within New York City the presence of an arts community led to residential gentrification and also served to smooth

the flow of capital into neighbourhoods, (Hackworth and Smith, 2001:467). A third wave of post-recession gentrification is described as the movement of gentrification towards a generalised strategy of capital accumulation seen in the second wave. It is the intensification of capital accumulation through gentrification, (Cameron and Coaffe, 2005: 44). For Hackworth and Smith post-recession gentrification is an expression of the economic conditions that make re-investment in inner-city areas so alluring for investors, (2001:468).

Within Ringsend the second and third waves, outlined above, are combined into one process. The gentrification of the area became an intensified process of capital accumulation with the redevelopment of the area following Dublin's recent rapid growth. This process began in the 1990s and is still occurring. Some theorists argue that the arts and the artist play a specific role in second and third wave gentrification, (Zukin, 1988). What follows from first wave gentrification is a commodification of art whereby culture and the artist's lifestyle becomes a cultural model for the middle classes. In this process the original urban artist of the first wave of gentrification gets displaced by subsequent gentrifiers with more economic capital. This commodification of culture is not visible within Ringsend. Culture is used as a selling point in that urban lifestyle is highlighted. A main selling point however, is not that the area possesses a cultural model but that it is close to the cultural model that has developed within Dublin itself. In addition the displacement of the first wave of gentrifiers have not occurred because although they possess less economic capital than those involved in the more recent process their economic capital is still substantial enough to withstand these further developments. However, with the new developments occurring around the Grand Canal Basins, outlined in Chapter Four, Ringsend is developing a cultural model similar to the city centre. Unlike Zukin's (1988) observations Ringsend's cultural model has developed after subsequent waves of gentrification and may initiate a further wave of gentrification in the future.

A type of investment gentrification is also discernible in Ringsend. In addition many of the apartments within the area have also been bought as investment properties for renting. Renters are moving into an already constructed aesthetic and therefore the term 'gentrification' or 'gentrifier' may not neatly apply to them. However, although the term gentrifier may not fit all the people who are renting within the area, many of them work within the high paid sectors of the economy. These 'well off' renters should be seen as part of the same process of gentrification because the apartments and houses within the area have been constructed and re-valorised in order to attract them. The rents demanded are high and the effects of displacement are the same. As such this research refers to these groups as 'renter gentrifiers'.

It is best to consider the gentrification process associated with the acquisition and upgrading of existing housing stock and the gentrification process associated with the apartment complexes as part of the same process. They are both intrinsically linked to changing economic conditions, which will be further highlighted in the following section. For Zukin this 'creative destruction' produces places that are '...sharply divided between landscapes of consumption and devastation', (1991: 5). It is clear that Ringsend could be described as one such place. The landscapes of former industrial sites have been destroyed and replaced by a post-industrial landscape, which excludes the Ringsenders on many levels. As Zukin so aptly points out this creative destruction creates a different landscape of economic power, (1991: 4-5).

### **(6.3) Explaining gentrification in Ringsend**

Theories of gentrification range between those stressing individual choice and consumer demand to those stressing capital and changes in the structure of economic production. Furthermore, theories in relation to gentrification tend to place the process *either* within the cultural realm *or* within a broader economic context. A combination of *both* cultural and

economic explanations provides the best understanding of the reasons behind the gentrification process in Ringsend.

### **(6.3.1) A social/cultural explanation**

One popular notion within social and cultural explanations of gentrification is that young, usually professional, middle-class people have changed their lifestyle, (Smith, 1996:52). This change shows a trend towards fewer children and younger homebuyers and renters who prefer to live within urban centres. There is also an emphasis placed on changing consumption patterns associated with post-industrial growth. The inner city is seen as a consumer landscape and gentrification as a consequence of consumer sovereignty. Here I will compare the meanings and motivations of apartment dwellers and owners of traditional housing stock.

#### **Gentrifiers within the apartment complexes:**

In keeping with social/cultural explanations the respondents that I have interviewed within the apartment complexes tend to be young, professional and have no children. This is also borne out by the demographic information and media articles examined in Chapter Four.

I work for Bank of Ireland. I do the Internet banking stuff. The girls I live with one is a manager in Bank of Ireland and the other works in New Ireland Insurance and my girlfriend is a solicitor. She works in the IFSC. Again it's very handy here for everyone to get to work in town... I'd never live in the suburbs I'd rather be in town and close to everything. It's a great spot...we choose here because...it was near work, within walking distance of town, the dart is nearby and all the rest of it. Most people are working in town that live here so it's really handy... It really is great to be that close to town. You just can't beat it. (Respondent S: Gentrifier).

**Respondent:** I was looking for a place in town or near the centre and I wanted to buy a place of my own as an investment too. I didn't want a house I wanted an apartment and I liked these. Well I looked at lots and I liked it here. It's very near to town and all.

**Interviewer:** Why did you want to live so close to town?

**Respondent:** Well I work in the IFSC so I wanted to be near work...Also I go out in town and I like being close to the city centre for shopping and that as well. I wouldn't like to live in the suburbs. I grew up in a suburb but I much prefer to live in the city. I feel I have more in common with people in the city like in where I like to go and what I like to do and that. There's more on offer in the city, there's a buzz and I love these apartments as well. I like the way they are designed and they overlook the water and you can see over the city from the balcony. Most of my

friends live around town as well and we all meet up there. This is really an ideal area for me. (Respondent A2: Gentrifier).

Well we choose to rent here really because it's so close to college and to town. We go out in town all the time and you can walk home. (Respondent X: Gentrifier).

**Respondent:** I wanted to move back to Ireland I suppose but I wouldn't have moved back to Cork or that 'cos that would have been too much of a change. Dublin has really changed in recent years and it has a lot to offer now. There's a lot more people here now and it has a similar vibrancy to London only on a smaller scale. Like there's a lot more to do in terms of pubs, restaurants, clubs, theatre and all that and the shopping is great now even. There's lots more variety in terms of shops now and cafes and that. I love Dublin now. Now I wouldn't have moved back if the work wasn't here, like the work I do, because I was earning a lot in London but there's great opportunities here now and there wasn't when I left college. Anyway I got offered a job over here and some of my friends had moved back and they are all in Dublin so I decided to move over too.

**Interviewer:** Why did you choose to live in Ringsend and not say an area like Lucan outside Dublin?

**Respondent:** Well I wouldn't live in the suburbs I really don't like suburbs. If I'm going to live in a city then I want to live in or near the centre 'cos that's what I like about cities. Ringsend was perfect really because it's very close to town and I work in town it's close to everything really. I like the apartments here and I liked being beside the water. (Respondent A3: Gentrifier).

These quotes highlight some aspects of the 'demand side' arguments for gentrification.

People express a desire to live within or close to the urban centre for a variety of reasons.

These respondents have all grown up in middle-class suburban areas and express a strong anti-suburban sentiment. The emphasis is placed on urban lifestyles and urban culture.

Clearly, this demonstrates that an explanation that only emphasises supply side factors will overlook these important consumer preferences that drive the demand for apartments.

Ley (1980,1996) identified a 'class in emergence' due to a shift to a post-industrial, service based economy. These are defined as the 'new middle-class' and the emergence of this class is connected to the growth in professional and managerial employment. Ley (1996) argues that the anti-suburban, pro-urban preference of this class produces a pool of gentrifiers resulting in the gentrification of the inner city. Ley (1996) argues that this pool of gentrifiers are involved in aestheticised consumption. Aestheticised consumption involves the valuing of historic preservation and the consumption of craft or bespoke

communities, which are set against the newness and mass-produced characteristics of housing in the suburbs, (Bridge, 2002:2). The pro-urban preferences expressed by the respondents quoted above are linked to aestheticised consumption in that they express an admiration for the design and style of the apartment complexes and the array of facilities on offer in Dublin city. Again there is a sense that the apartments complexes are removed from Ringsend as place and more connected to the wider downtown landscapes of consumption. However, unlike Ley's (1996) observations there is little to suggest that these respondents value historic preservation as the apartments are built on previous industrial sites which have been eradicated from the landscape. Indeed they are consuming a previously constructed aesthetic.

For Bridge the inner areas of post-industrial cities are given over to the arena of reflexive consumption associated with the new middle-class, (2002:2). The respondents cited above have all chosen to live within Ringsend because the area is close to the facilities on offer in Dublin. The design of the apartments and the waterfront are also consumed as a ready-made aesthetic product. The characteristics of Ringsend do not feature in their decisions to locate within the area. What is important is the aesthetic considerations of the apartment complexes themselves as well as the fact that Ringsend offers easy access to specific forms of consumption (cultural and leisure facilities). In addition in contrast to Ley's (1996) observations there is little evidence that the gentrifiers in the apartment complexes are involved in the consumption of 'bespoke' communities. However, there is evidence that the apartment complexes represent a different understanding of community. This will be explored in Chapter Seven. It is clear that the apartment complexes represent a different conception of the gentrification process than previous studies in relation to the upgrading of existing housing stock. Again this research in Ringsend highlights the need for a 'geography of gentrification' (Lees 2000) to address the specificity of locality.

While preference for inner city living is a key factor in the gentrification of Ringsend this is also linked to the growth in post-industrial employment in Dublin. All of the respondents cited above work in prestigious white-collar occupations and all work in the new post-industrial landscapes that have developed in Dublin City. They desire to be close to their place of work. The growth in apartment complexes within Ringsend and the gentrification of the area is deeply connected to the changing economy. Gentrification as Smith (1996) notes is not only the outcome of a common consumption oriented lifestyle but also predicated by the growth of white-collar employment and of a professional and managerial group who move to the city in response to capital relocation. I will return to this point later.

**Gentrifiers who have acquired and upgraded existing housing stock:**

In contrast to the respondents living in the apartment complexes for those who have decided to buy existing housing stock the reasons for choosing Ringsend are more varied:

I work in [near Ringsend] which is the main reason why I bought here. There are a lot of my friends in my age group who could only afford to buy houses out where they were building them say in Templeogue, Finglas or wherever but then if you were single you had no friends in the area and no one would drive out that far to visit. ....Here is good 'cos it's central to town so I go in there a good bit. Also I have two poetry books out so I go in to check on them and that as well. That's what's so good about living here it's so central really. That's the biggest reason why I moved here. Also the houses are well built you don't hear the neighbours at all. Also it's very secure you don't have to worry about it being broken into. (Respondent V: Gentrifier).

I'm from the city and I love the city. I love living in the city and being here you have everything really. We are so near the city and yet we're still surrounded by water and I love that. I also like the people here I like the community and the buildings. I like the fact that we could do so much work on our house we could put ourselves into it. We choose here because of those reasons and I love it here now. (Respondent U: Gentrifier).

We love the area and we love being here. We have two fantastic neighbours who I wouldn't swap for anything. I wouldn't live in the suburbs like Leixlip or Lucan and I think it's because of the establishment of the community here. It's solid here. There's a lot of things especially in this street that I admire not just as well I suppose more as an architect looking at the city and looking at what exists in the city and the fabric that exists around here is essential to what we need to comprise a good city you know. And these areas are the foundation stone to the city....We didn't choose Ringsend I think Ringsend choose us. In the sense that this was quite reasonable four years ago and we knew it would go up around here with all the

changes and that and we were looking in an area that had a lot of water and this area is surrounded by water. There's water everywhere there's the Dodder, the Canal, the Liffey and the sea... we lived down in Newbridge Avenue so this area was close to us ...so that's how we got to know the area and the reason why we stayed here was because we were in the area and we knew about it. And eh I suppose when we say the house it was so fantastic because we had such a great garden. But we've done a lot of work with it I mean the house was a wreck when we bought it... (Respondent T: Gentrifier).

The preference to live near the city centre still feature strongly however other reasons include the fact that the area is surrounded by water, the area is safe and some of my respondents had previously lived close to Ringsend and there is therefore a familiarity with the area. Both Respondents T and D also choose Ringsend because of its established community:

I'm more South Lotts...I bought in 1990 but I had been living in that greater area for a while... Basically I bought in Hope Street when the area was not developed. How I found my house was that I went through the death columns of the November and the December columns of that year and I knocked on the doors and I got a house for sale and I bought it in cash and I moved into the area....because of working near here and I looked at the area and it was settled. I had lived in apartments and I never want to go through that again. I wanted a settled area with a strong community. My three priorities were to be walking distance from work and shops and to be close to the sea- and hopefully public transport. So I decided Ringsend was where I want then I had to make the decision do I want – do I look at Irishtown, main Ringsend or where I bought. The reason I chose where I bought was that it was a slightly different community than this part of Ringsend. We have no say corporation flats in my area. Most of them were purchased or long-term tenants in third generation so I said ok that's what I want. It was also slightly nearer for walking into town. That's why I bought there and I really looked at the social aspect of it as in 'what's the community?' I really wanted a settled and strong community. (Respondent D: Gentrifier).

Respondent D also researched into the specific areas within Ringsend and choose South Lotts because it was closer to town and also because there were no Corporation flats within that specific part of the area. She bought her house before the area became developed and as such she paid a relatively low price compared to present house prices within the area. She was obviously very interested in moving into the area as she states that she searched the death columns until she found a house for sale and then paid cash for it. Her main decision in choosing Ringsend was that it was settled and had a strong sense of

community. Among these householders there is still an emphasis placed on 'lifestyle choice' and reflexive consumption. Crucially, however, they display more awareness of Ringsend as place. Ringsend has an intrinsic value for them. Unlike the apartment complexes which seemed removed from Ringsend as place there is more of a connection with the area itself. Respondent's U, T and D all mentioned the established community as one of the attractions of the area. These respondents have a deeper sense of the community than those who reside in the apartment complexes.

For Jager the new middle-classes are buying into history in inner city areas not only as a means of expressing their social distance from the classes but also as a means of constructing an identity based on 'consumption as a form of investment, status symbol and means of self expression', (1986:87). All of the above respondents have renovated the houses they bought either because they bought as in need of total renovation, as a means of expressing 'distinction' or to increase the value of their properties. The majority also expressed the desire to preserve the history and community that exists within the area. This points to the somewhat paradoxical nature of gentrification:

*The argument for historic preservation conceals the fact that with gentrification almost nothing is preserved. The original households are replaced and the meaning of the structure is redefined from a working-class use value to an aestheticised symbolic value, (Ley, 1996:310).*

There are differences in the reasons for choosing to live in Ringsend between those who live in the apartment complexes and those who have bought houses throughout the area. In Ringsend the apartment complexes seem to serve young singles or couples without children. The terraced housing however seems to be not only the preference of young families but also older couples and older single people without children. The above respondents are also keener to maintain the vitality of Ringsend as a working-class neighbourhood. However, this is paradoxical as gentrification itself leads to displacement and the loss of authenticity. There are also similarities between the two categories of

gentrifiers. All emphasise 'aesthetic', whether this is consumed as a ready-made product or constructed. All express anti-suburban pro-urban preferences and all subscribe to reflexive consumption and urban lifestyles.

There is definitely an emphasis placed on 'choice'. Many of my respondents choose to live in Ringsend for a variety of reasons. Gentrification is indeed an expression of consumer sovereignty and therefore an expression of post-modernity. However, we should not ignore the importance of capital investment in shaping the urban form. In addition the majority of respondents stated that one of the main reasons for choosing to locate in Ringsend was to be close to their place of work. The majority worked within the city centre. Therefore the gentrification of Ringsend cannot solely be explained through 'demand-side' theories. The importance of capital investment needs to be considered. The following section will examine the 'supply-side' arguments for gentrification in relation to Ringsend.

### **(6.3.2) Gentrification within a broader economic context**

For Smith a broader theory of gentrification must take the role of the producers, and other agents, as well as the consumers into account. (1996:57).

I moved in in 1999...Well I worked in [Ringsend] and the place where I worked found me the apartment so I moved in there. It was just two minutes walk from work so it was great in that sense. (Respondent R: Gentrifier).

I think a lot of them are for renting. I think the modern ones are just built for people who own loads of apartments and they bought them before they were finished just to rent them out. To make money on them. (Respondent R: Gentrifier).

I certainly don't like the amount of apartments blocks been built here it's all about making money and they just throw them up. You see they can build so many around here because they know people will take them because it's so near town and they all work in town....The other thing I'm afraid of, and even in my own street I would see that three of the houses that were bought on my street have subsequently been sold on and moved up. You see higher income people bought them as their first house with the full intention of not lasting more than three years. They bought to make a profit. When I bought you bought to stay there. Also people are buying and renting out straight away it's just an investment. See that's all happening in the last few years and it was different before that 'cos people couldn't afford to just buy and sell on or rent they bought to live in the house. (Respondent D: Gentrifier).

To examine gentrification purely in terms of consumer sovereignty ignores the fact that many agents play a role in the gentrification process. The above quotes highlight other factors in relation to the gentrification process. These include work considerations and investment potential. For respondent D this process of buying for resale or for renting is new. Previously, people who bought in the area did so to live in the area. Now the local population is made up of individuals who may be investors as well as consumers.

They were bought for investment under section 23. I know the landlord that owns the workshop bought five of them and he has them rented out. At the time they were £80,000 and he could afford to buy five knowing they would go up to 200,000 – 300,000 in a few years time and knowing that he was going to get a rent that would pay the mortgage he had taken out to buy the bloody things anyhow. (Respondent Q: Ringsender).

I suppose if you had the money now you'd buy this end of the city 'cos it is lovely and there's so much development going on and you know there's so much going on with the gas works and this place is going to be very changed in 5-10 years. But the only thing that's really going to change is that everything is going to go up by 10 or 15 times what it currently is. (Respondent S: Gentrifier).

Some of those apartments would be section 23 investment properties anyway which are nearly coming out of their time of ten years so a lot of them would be rented. (Respondent I: Ringsender).

Respondents Q and I state that a lot of the apartments built are 'Section 23'. Section 23 is an Urban Renewal Scheme, under which the government has designated specific areas as tax-designated sites with various tax breaks available. Ringsend was designated as a tax incentive area in order to encourage development. The relief given to investors who buy apartments within designated sites is generally referred to as Section 23 relief and gives a rental deduction for the cost of construction, refurbishment or conversion. Typically the amount available for relief is 90 per cent of the purchase price. The relief can be used against net rent from properties in the year in which the dwelling is let and the balance can be carried forward against future rents. The dwelling must remain as rented residential accommodation for ten years or the relief will be clawed back, (Mee, *Sunday Business Post*, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2000). Therefore the rent received on Section 23 properties is tax-free and

as such these properties are attractive to investors. It is clear that the state also plays a major role in the development of Ringsend through the designation of the area for tax incentives. The government has played an important strategic role in the gentrification process within the area.

Respondent Q also points out that the DDDA has also been an agent in the regeneration of Ringsend:

We got the twenty percent social and affordable put into the Masterplan and any developers coming in and it was a DDDA site had to give twenty percent. Now that's if they were going in on a DDDA site and if they were going under Section 25 planning scheme. That was the rules. Section 25 was the fast track planning. That means the DDDA say they have to keep to a certain height and density and then the developer doesn't have to go through the planning application process that people normally have to do and they wouldn't be open to objection and all that. If you were in the Masterplan the DDDA would sign it off under Section 25 and away you go and you build but you must give twenty-percent within that. If you want to go through that scheme you give your twenty- percent. In Ringsend...the only site they had there was in there was in the Grand Canal Basin...(Respondent Q: Ringsender).

Within the land under the control of the DDDA there is a Section 25 planning scheme. As respondent Q explains Section 25 is what is known as 'fast track planning' and under this scheme developers do not have to go through the planning process but rather have to keep the height, design and density of their complexes within the guidelines given by the DDDA. If a developer wishes to use Section 25 in order to bypass planning objections then they must give twenty percent of their scheme over to social and affordable housing or some other agreed form of community gain. Within Ringsend the Grand Canal Basin is the site controlled by the DDDA, which falls under Section 25.

Government policies have encouraged mixed-use regeneration schemes within Ringsend. The aim of the DDDA is to create mixed-use sites within the area. For Cameron and Coaffee the type of development which has developed in Gateshead in North England is part of what they define as the usual 'Dockland' package which can now be found in similar localities in most British cities, (2005:51). This 'Dockland package' is visible

within Ringsend where the apartment complex has come to dominate the skyline and recent developments are also including hotels, restaurants and bars. However, in the case of Gateshead the regeneration of the area was accomplished through an arts-based regeneration programme while in Ringsend the regeneration is linked to favourable government policies and the fact that Dublin is being transformed into a post-industrial economy. The regeneration of the area has made it an attractive investment and consumption location.

One of the functions of the DDDA is to build the necessary infrastructure to induce people to live, work and shop within the area and the development of residential accommodation. According to their mission statement the aim of the DDDA is to develop the Dublin Docklands into a world-class city quarter – a paragon of sustainable inner city regeneration. The area is also expected to contribute to the social and economic prosperity of Dublin and Ireland. These policies echo that of the UK and the USA and it is a policy discourse, which echoes that of gentrification. It is clear that the contemporary debate around gentrification is part of a broader policy context that aims to reverse declining population and employment of core inner city areas. The gentrification of Ringsend is closely linked to urban regeneration policies. It is also linked to changing class formations, identity, patterns of consumption, a new emphasis on urban lifestyle and a growth in white-collar occupations in the service sector.

Within Ringsend the de-valorisation of the neighbourhood also made it ripe for investment under favourable conditions. Respondents A, I, Z and X clearly speak to Smith's (1996) conception of 'the rent gap' in explaining the process unfolding around them:

You see these houses used to be very reasonable to buy but then the yuppies started to buy them and they went up so much. The yuppies will buy the cottages and live there for a bit – maybe three years- and then they're gone. Then another yuppie will move in. Now that's even worse up the side street for some reason. They like the cottages up the side streets....This side of the street seems to be lucky but when you go down a bit that's when you notice the real difference 'cos it's changed completely. (Respondent A: Ringsender).

God when this area went down, like when the factories closed and that, it was so cheap to buy here. Now with all this development the price of property has gone sky high. It's crazy really 'cos people wouldn't buy down here years ago but that's all changed and the developers made so much 'cos they bought the land here cheap. (Respondent Z: Ringsender).

Well you just have to look around to see that they made a killing in this area. This was derelict ten years ago and now look at it. They bought cheap and sold it all at huge profits. They knew they were going to get it because it's so close to town and with all the new offices and everything in town people had to live somewhere and the docks was ripe for development. (Respondent X: Gentrifier).

For Smith (1996) the processes that make an area ripe for gentrification are related to the flows of capital investment and dis-investment. As capital moved from inner city areas property values decreased and the areas became downgraded. As neighbourhood decline increases the rent gap widens. Gentrification occurs when the rent gap is sufficient that developers can purchase the land and develop it for a suitable profit. This leads to further development and the neighbourhood begins 'a new cycle of use'. (Smith, 1996:68). It is clear that a 'new cycle of use' is occurring within Ringsend as the landscape is changing from an industrial to a post-industrial landscape. Chapter Four outlines the rising costs of property in the area further indicating a closing of the rent gap.

Much of the landscape of the urban form is connected to the movement of capital in search for profit. Apartment complexes and mixed-use sites are being built within the area, as this is the development that can exact the highest amount of profit in today's climate. The need for an increase in apartment complexes within or close to the city centre is also driven by the need for the professional and service workers necessary for a post-industrial economy.

### **(6.3.3) Gentrification: combining both social and economic explanations**

The post-modern emphasis on consumer preference and consumption activities does not totally explain the gentrification process in Ringsend but must be viewed in tandem with the economics of capitalism in particular the movement to a post-industrial economy. This research highlights the fact that these agents include investors, developers, government

agencies as well as consumers. It is in the context of the interaction of all of these processes and changes that the landscape of Ringsend is being re-created.

Gentrification is the result of both demand and supply. The renovation and marketing of specific locations as attractive locales for young professionals can create a demand and a preference for an area experiencing gentrification. Such a demand is enhanced by designation for renewal under the tax incentive schemes. For Smith it is the needs of production and in particular the need to earn a profit which is the decisive initiative behind gentrification, (1996: 57). It would seem that this is also the decisive initiative behind the gentrification process within Ringsend.

#### **(6.4) Class matters**

Skeggs defines class as lived as a structure of feeling, as a major feature of subjectivity, a historical specificity and part of a struggle over access to resources and ways of being, (1997: 74). According to Scott it also refers to the quality of relations between classes, the experiences of oppression that shape class identities and the solidarities that arise on the basis of these experiences, (1994: 97). Class is related to both the means of production and of consumption. For many people however, consumption practices are defined by their economic means and therefore to the means of production. Class is also embedded in lived experience and is historically specific. The industrial base that developed within Ringsend helped foster a strong working-class identity in which there was a lot of pride. This working-class identity was sustained by relationships that developed around work and the social relationships that were rooted in place. Perceptions of class divisions are salient to both Ringsenders and gentrifiers accounts of everyday life and culture in Ringsend:

#### **Ringsenders:**

...it's a working class area but the real Ringsenders are very proud of their roots. I think that's very good. Around here has changed so much it's sad... There's too many Yuppies coming in to South Lotts so the class is also changing. It's terrible. (Respondent B).

This is a working-class community and that {the people moving into the area] certainly is impacting on the whole nature of the community because although young people and couples are moving in it is a totally different culture of people. Their kid's wont go to Ringsend schools, they won't join the organisations like the scouts or that. They won't even mix in the area. Both of them will be professionals and out working, they are just a different class. (Respondent G)

All the people that are moving in now they're all yuppies...Every old person that dies around here the house goes up for sale and another yuppie moves in...Now those new people are completely different- they're a completely different class of people altogether. We're so used to everyone being friendly and getting involved in the community and sticking together and they're not like that. (Respondent A).

Oh I don't go to the Ocean Bar 'cos that's for all the beautiful people in the apartments. And they wouldn't drink down here with us. We're totally different groups but they must use the shops here sometimes 'cos lately ye see changes like the shop carrying more than two copies of the Irish Times and having funny stuff on the shelves. (Respondent G).

### **Gentrifiers:**

I think they still probably see it as a working-class area but there's one or two people now in work who have recently started buying here in Ringsend and in Irishtown and they see it as a good gentrified area. (Respondent S).

I don't really care but it is very obvious that Sinn Fein have meetings and all round here. There are posters. You can see that they actually are tapping into something and they're the only people who really seem to articulate inner city, or we'll say poverty, or working class issues. I suppose our class is part of the problem but we don't really effect the area too much. How can we, we don't even get involved in it. (Respondent S)

I know they look at us as if we're yuppies or something. Like they look at you funny if you even want your meat minced in the butchers. (Respondent V).

When I moved here I was the only yuppie ok....the class of people buying into the area are a totally different class than those from the area...It's all middle-class well educated workforce...It's the Kitty O'Shea crowd and again very few locals drink there they drink around here. (Respondent D).

Class distinctions still exist in the lived experience of people. They articulate their differences in terms of class with one being defined in opposition to the other. It is possible that the gentrification process in the area has made these distinctions clearer and class is a way to articulate these differences. There are other instances whereby the process is not defined in terms of class but in terms of occupation or consumption:

Well if you watch them coming out [from the apartments] some of them are very young. There's a mixture if you watch the underground car park and the people who come down to use the dart. The ones using the dart seem to be of a lower end....Well lower middle class or even lower I'd say but if you watch the car park well there's a lot of really upmarket cars. There's a yellow BMW convertible and there's only two of them in the country....they're not all gentrifiers but a lot of them are. Like this car park was flooded and there were four Porches in it (laughs). I couldn't feel sorry for them 'cos so many of the Ringsenders were left with no houses so I thought what the fuck were you doing driving a Porsche anyway. On the other side you will equally have four students sharing an apartment with a 1994 car. But that's in that apartment block the others are more upmarket really. Like this one here and the one with the tower are different. (Respondent D: Gentrifier).

Now Tesco in Sandymount is not really where the locals shop- they go into town to Dunnes. The Baggot St. Tesco is for consumers like me who can afford to go and buy ready made meals. (Respondent D: Gentrifier).

As respondent D notes the residents of the apartment complexes fall into a variety of class categories. She also explains that the apartment complexes themselves differ. She explains this differentiation in terms of consumption patterns, which in this instance is reflected in car ownership. As well as differentiating between the new residents this respondent also distinguishes between the Ringsenders and the gentrifiers in terms of consumerism.

Em I don't see myself as a different class but maybe others see me as a different class but it doesn't enter into the spirit of conversation at all. I don't think that would associate me as being....well I'm definitely odd and first of all my wife is from Malaysia so she would have brown skin and we don't have a TV well we have a TV but it's in the attic, so when the kids come in they're probably thinking we're a bit weird but we take it with a pinch of salt as it's as much as someone from a middle class, or upper class background, or a higher social class whatever may come in and say the same thing. That's what I'm saying it doesn't ring a bell we just laugh at those who thinks it's mad not to have a TV like we find it kind of amusing. I find the TV to be part of the consumerist culture and I have no time for it whatsoever....I suppose our house is done differently and that and I suppose we buy different things and believe in different things. (Respondent T: Gentrifier).

Respondent T does not define himself in terms of class but admits that the Ringsenders may view him as a different class to themselves. He would however, define himself as 'odd' or more exactly assumes that others would view him that way. Like respondent D he makes a distinction between himself and the Ringsenders in terms of consumption patterns. He believes that his house is decorated differently and that his consumption patterns would also differ.

Yea they [the new residents] are working in the IT Sector are earning a lot more money but they're also paying through the nose on rent or mortgage. They're paying through the nose for their car repayments. Then there's restaurants and all that.....Yea they earn a lot more money but they spend a lot more as well. I'd say they're into more debt. They need to earn big money for their lifestyles. (Respondent C: Ringsender)

Respondent C makes a distinction between the new residents and the Ringsenders in terms of occupation and lifestyle choice.

There is a divide I suppose. There's the flats and then there's the old people and then all these modern IT people that go to Ocean Bar....The other ones [the new residents] they just come in with loads of money and they have their fancy apartments and jobs. They are higher middle-class but they are really new rich. Well we all have to work to pay the bills so we're all working-class at the end of the day. Well I don't really classify myself as new rich 'cos I don't make as much money as a lot of them. I don't have a car. I'm new working-class ha ha. (Respondent R: Gentrifier).

Respondent R also places an emphasis on the fact that there is a division within the area between the newer residents who reside in the apartment blocks and the rest of the population of Ringsend. For Respondent R the 'divide' is also based on occupation and consumption. He points out he wouldn't necessarily define the gentrifiers as middle-class he prefers to use the term 'new rich'. This emphasis on lifestyle, occupation and 'new rich' that is clear in the voices of these respondents seems to fit the profile of the 'new middle-class' discussed in Chapter Four.

However, the new residents within Ringsend do not view themselves as a homogenous population and neither are they perceived as such by the Ringsenders:

There are some students as well living in the apartment blocks and they get a two-bedroom and there are four of them living there. There are all sorts I suppose but more new rich. There are some foreign students there too. They just get whatever they can first and then they move on. (Respondent R: Gentrifier).

It's not all the middle classes who rent and live there or who own and live there there's students as well. Well maybe they're from middle class backgrounds I don't know. A lot of them are students and I know 'cos I get a lot of them in my aerobics classes. (Respondent E: Ringsender).

A lot of the apartments down there are being rented out.....to professionals, students anyone really but mostly they are a professional population. (Respondent Q: Ringsender).

The question arises can this process still be considered one of gentrification if all the newer residents do not fit neatly into the category of 'Gentrifier'? For Rose (1984) those who do not fit our conception of the gentrifier can be considered 'marginal gentrifiers'. Rose (1984) uses her concept of the 'marginal gentrifier' in order to show how gentrification cannot be understood totally in economic terms and to show how changing household structures and alternative lifestyles also have a role to play. Zukin (1982) also highlights the importance of the role of the marginal gentrifier in the earlier stages of the process. Smith argues however that although gentrification has become a housing option for a larger reservoir of people in general and women in particular those who are surviving on low incomes should not be considered as part of the process. This has the effect of blinding us to the polarisation that exists between those who participate as gentrifiers and those who are displaced, (1996: 103-104). Some of the residents who reside in the apartment complexes in Ringsend cannot be defined as gentrifiers. Those on low incomes do not fall into the category of gentrifier. Although these groups may be marginal to the processes occurring within the area this does not detract from the fact that the demographic evidence, discussed in Chapter Four, reveals that the majority of newer residents are professionals. It is these residents who define the process of gentrification and not those groups who are marginal to this process.

Perhaps gentrification cannot be totally reduced to a two-class model. This is not to imply that gentrification is not inherently a class-based process because it is however, it is also more than this. There are varying degrees of class distinctiveness associated with work, income, consumption patterns and lifestyle and it is these degrees that my respondents highlight. Some of the newer residents within Ringsend can be considered marginal gentrifiers. Overall however, the change occurring in the area can be defined as a movement from low income to high-income residents. For Smith gentrification is a process and ought to be defined at its core rather than its margins, (Smith, 1996:104).

While gentrifiers do not share the same class position, the majority are considered to be those benefiting from the shift to a post-industrial economy and who are earning high incomes in order to sustain their lifestyles. It is clear from the quotes throughout this chapter that the gentrifiers, whatever position they occupy, are 'other' to the working-classes within Ringsend. The gentrifiers within Ringsend are 'other' in terms of class position, consumption patterns, occupation and lifestyle. As examined this is visibly reflected in the re-valorisation of terraced housing which is a means of differentiation. It is also visible in the apartment complexes in terms of 'aesthetics' and the fact that they are in some ways removed from Ringsend as place. Within the gentrification process it is not only economic capital but also cultural capital that creates a divide. Dividing gentrifiers into core and marginal and into a multiple of class positions as well as into owner-occupiers and renters should not detract from the point that the process is creating displacement. This has the effect of impacting on the existing community a theme explored in the following chapter.

### **(6.5) Gentrification as displacement and marginalisation**

While the new residents of Ringsend may often choose to reside close to the city centre for either work purposes or to be near the array of goods and services on offer for many these choices do not exist. This is not to suggest that the choices of the new residents are not constrained rather that for many the choices on offer are more limited. Gentrification induces displacement and those effected by this tell a different story to that of lifestyle choice.

According to Cameron and Coaffee in most UK provincial cities '...middle-class incomers to the inner city have to date mostly been accommodated in new-build developments on former industrial land....with no displacement of an existing residential population', (2005:46). Although this is occurring in Ringsend and although the apartment complexes have been built on former industrial sites this does not imply that there have not been

struggles over displacement. The displacement of industry has had implications in terms of employment opportunities and on the spatial and social relationships that had developed with these sites. The gentrification of these sites has made the area an attractive location, which in turn has impacted on the gentrification of the surrounding area resulting in direct displacement of working-class residents. These sites are no longer the domain of the working-classes they represent a new phase of capital accumulation and urban development which excludes the working-classes on many levels. The term is still one of gentrification whether there is direct displacement or 'knock-on' displacement because the effects are the same.

Respondent M gives a clear account of what has happened to his business in recent years:

You'd think with the thousands of new people in the area I'd have a lot more business but it's the opposite. Over the last few years my business has actually gone down. I do my rounds [vegetables and fruit] on a Tuesday, Thursday and I used to do one on a Saturday as well but I've stopped that. There is no need to have the Saturday one now because the area is so quiet at the weekends. I just have the same customers I used to have and a few new ones who have moved into the houses in the area...Years ago we used to be much busier..but now everyone goes to the supermarket. Also people don't cook much vegetables anymore they don't have the time it's all quick food everyone is in a hurry. I don't go to the apartments but I did try them. There's never anyone there as they are all working and anyway I cant get into them! They're all security gates and that no one can get in at all. They aren't interested in buying from me. I used to do the some of the companies in the area but they have all closed down and the offices don't buy either I tried some of them but again they're not interested. (Respondent M: Ringsender).

The new influx of people into the area has not had the effect of increasing his business rather it has had a negative impact. The reasons he states for this are threefold. He cannot gain access to the apartments as they have security gates. In addition he used to sell to the industries which have since closed and the office complexes are, as he states, 'not interested'. Finally, he feels that the majority of people now shop in supermarkets for convenience food. This can be seen as both a rise in consumer culture as well as the fact that people are working longer hours and therefore do not have the time to cook fresh food.

Respondent Q also addresses the contradiction between an increase in people in the area and a decrease in local business:

...we did a survey in around the area of what was spent in the local shop. Like a whole new influx of people had come into the area so did the local shops make more money and they didn't. Some made less due to the fact that locals are being forced out of the area. (Respondent Q: Ringsender).

For respondent Q the decrease in local business is due to the displacement of local people from the area. In addition he also points out that the majority of people within the apartment complexes do not remain in the area at weekends and as such do not shop or socialise within the area. The regeneration of the area and the transition to a post-industrial landscape can be viewed as detrimental to at least some local businesses. In some instances however, there has been an increase in businesses that cater to the residents of the new complexes. There has also been an increase in demand for specialist shops. In this regard there is a rise in the niche markets associated with the transition to both a post-Fordist and post-modern landscape. Chapter Four highlighted the fact that it is the new complexes surrounding the Grand Canal Basins that are providing many of these niche markets. These restaurants and shopping facilities are removed from Ringsend and designed to cater to the urban professional.

It is not only industry and businesses but also local residents who are in danger of displacement. Gentrification is an appropriation of central urban space 'for elements of a new urban middle class', (Zukin, 1991: 187). In order to appropriate this space it must first be cleared of its existing usage. Within Ringsend this can be seen in the growth of office and apartment complexes on previously industrial sites. In addition the gentrification of existing housing stock is also part of this process of appropriation. However, there is another part to this process, which is the displacement of people who wish to remain in the area.

It's changed completely around here....It's changed so much like you don't know your neighbours. We're lucky 'cos some of our neighbours are here all our lives but

down the road and up the side streets you wouldn't know anyone any more. (Respondent A: Ringsender).

And now just to move on to my street just to take an example. When I moved here I was the only yuppie ok. Now if you look [*takes out Thom's directory of her street and goes through the houses one by one*]. Basically this streets been decimated in terms of original population. All of the people when I came here were indigenous to the street, they were all first and second generation but that's all changed. The house I bought well I was the first non-local to move into it. (Respondent D: Gentrifier).

One of the implications that comes through from the above quotes is the fact that 'you wouldn't know anyone anymore.' There is a sense of a loss of neighbours and an influx of 'strangers'. This transition is very difficult especially for the older population. As respondent D explains she was the first 'yuppie' or 'non-local' to move into her street and in recent years the process of gentrification has increased and now her street 'has been decimated in terms of original population':

...the locals cant afford to stay here...my own daughter is in that position. She would give her right arm to get a place here but she can't. She lives with us now but she's going to have to move out of the area and that breaks my heart. As a matter of fact she was down in Navan looking 'cos the further you go out the cheaper it gets. It's terrible the way our kids have to leave the area. It's heartbreaking for them. Then when they have kids they don't have us nearby to help and mind the kids and that...Yea I'd like houses for our kids. That would be my number one priority. The lad [daughter] goes out with is from Sandymount so they're both from around this area. There's two of them caught...All her life has been here. (Respondent A: Ringsender).

There is no question of anyone been able to afford the prices to buy here. If you want to buy and even for the people on a fairly ok wage with the partner working as well you would have to move quite a bit away to afford it. That's horrific for those forced to move and I would say the apartments are pushing the prices in the area up. (Respondent G: Ringsender).

Well most people can't afford to stay here now. Lots of people have moved out of the area and that's having a bad effect. Like my son has had to move to Lucan. Now he wanted to stay around here but he couldn't it was too dear. Now that affects him 'cos he works with me so he has to drive up here a lot and also his wife works so my mother and her mother mind their kid for them and now she has to come here everyday to drop him off because the crèche over there is expensive....she's from here as well. They used to rent a place here – one of the houses down the road – but the guy who owned that decided to sell and they couldn't afford to buy it. Anyway they wanted to buy a place so they got one in Lucan. Like everything is changed. There's no work and the house prices have gone mad and all our kids have to move away. (Respondent F: Ringsender).

There is a lot of issues within the area in relation to housing. There is no housing or very little, in the community that the kids around here could afford... There are no child care facilities and the ones that are set up here are private and then the mother has to pay all her wages to childcare. My daughter works in town she's an architect and I mind her little girl for her. She has to leave her house at six in the morning because she doesn't live around here and drop the little one up to me and she also has another girl, which she sends to school in this area. She has to put her in school here because she would never get back in time to pick her up where she lives. She finishes work at two and picks them up. Now if she didn't have me she would be spending all her wages on childcare. (Respondent L: Ringsender).

It is the voices of the displaced and those affected by this that are often rendered silent in accounts of urban regeneration. Many of the Ringsenders cannot afford to buy within the area and are forced to move away from the city centre in search of affordable accommodation. Respondents tell the stories of sons, daughters, neighbours and friends who have been displaced. This movement has many implications. There is a sense of loss of place and also a sense of exile. For these people the changing landscape of Ringsend does not signify renewal rather it is cross cut with multiple tensions and contradictions.

Respondents F and L explain how this impacts on the family support network. Many people rely on families to mind their children while they are at work. Grandchildren are brought back into Ringsend on a daily basis to be minded within the family or to attend school within the area. Therefore although both live outside the area their stories are of constant returning and as such this impacts both on the landscape in which they reside and the one in which they return to. As Bender and Winer note the landscape of those left behind is also affected, (2001:13). This has implications in terms of the continuity of community, which will be examined in the following chapter. As gentrification results in enforced displacement it creates landscapes of power and exclusion. Those displaced have been excluded from the landscapes of economic power that have come to dominate the skyline. It is through this displacement and marginalisation that gentrification can create divisions. These divisions are evident within the landscape and resonate in the stories told

by my respondents. In this sense gentrification can best be understood in relation to the divisions produced.

## **(6.6) Conclusion**

Lees (2000) suggests the need for a 'geography of gentrification' to address the specificity of locality. This chapter has addressed the specificity of gentrification within a specific place at a specific time. Gentrification takes two distinct forms in this area. The former industrial landscape has been destroyed and in its place stands the post-industrial landscape of the apartment and office complex. Secondly, the gentrification process associated with the re-valorisation of existing housing stock is also clearly visible.

The apartment complexes are a visible indicator of a shift to a post-industrial society. This chapter has argued that they offer accommodation to those professionals who work within the expanding service sector. However, these complexes have been built on sites once dominated by industry and not only represent a shift to a post-industrial society but also a shift in the social and spatial relationships that were embedded in Ringsend as place. The gentrification process associated with new construction is associated with a sense of loss of the landscape that signified previous employment opportunities. The places that these industries occupied were the dominant features and signifiers of place, identity and identification in previous generations. For the Ringsender's these new developments are perceived as 'out of place' because they have no relationships to these new sites. The lifestyles and economic trends they represent are not ones with which the majority of the Ringsender's can identify. As such the gentrification process is associated with a loss of 'ownership' of place.

In contrast for the gentrifiers these new developments are seen as representing a 'different place'. This chapter has argued that another way to view these new constructions is not that they appear 'out of place' rather that they occupy a divergent place, a place that is within Ringsend yet removed from Ringsend. Although the apartments are within Ringsend the

complexes, what they signify and the people who reside in them are more connected to Dublin City than to Ringsend. They are simultaneously within and disassociated from Ringsend. In this regard my research highlights the fact that the process of gentrification in the area can be seen as providing new understandings and representations of place.

Many theoretical debates in relation to the process of gentrification focus on 'taste' and 'culture' as a means of distinction. This chapter has argued that the process of contemporary gentrification associated with the apartment and office complexes shows distinction is also achieved by rendering the Ringsender's marginal, and in some cases invisible, within this gentrifying process. This is especially clear in South Lotts where there is a perception that the cottages and terraced housing are being engulfed by development. This chapter has also highlighted the fact that much new development is situated on the margins of the area. The village, the centre of Ringsend, is visibly and distinctly still the domain of the Ringsenders. This shows that gentrification is a diverse process and is specific to particular areas. However, while many of the apartment complexes may appear to occupy places on the margins of Ringsend the processes operating in the area should not be seen as marginal. The shift to a post-industrial landscape and the consequent gentrification of Ringsend are central processes that are occurring within Dublin and other cities.

The form of gentrification associated with newly constructed complexes differs in many respects to the gentrification studies discussed in Chapter Two where aestheticised consumption involves the upgrading of previous existing stock. Those gentrifiers who reside in the apartment complexes buy into an image, and identity, that is already constructed for them. It is aestheticised consumption but of a ready-made aesthetic product. Within the re-valorised terraced housing the emphasis on 'taste', 'distinction' and 'aesthetic' is also clear. However, unlike the residents of the apartment complexes who

consume a ready-made aesthetic the gentrifiers within the terraced housing are actively involved in the construction of 'difference'.

While many studies in relation to gentrification treat it as a unified process this chapter argues that the gentrification process within Ringsend is multi-faceted. There are indications of a 'first wave' of gentrification defined by those who moved into the terraced housing in the 1990s. These gentrifiers can be defined as a variant of Ley's 'new cultural class'. These gentrifiers have been attracted to Ringsend not only for aesthetic purposes but also because they wish to live in a working-class neighbourhood for a variety of reasons. They possessed relatively high cultural capital and, in comparison to more recent gentrifiers, low economic capital when first locating within Ringsend. The 'first waves' of gentrifiers within the terraced housing have more of an awareness and appreciation of Ringsend as place and of the community. More recent processes have seen the acquisition of housing stock because the area has become re-invented and is now seen as a 'trendy' location.

A further wave of gentrification is also noticeable within Ringsend. These groups can be divided into 'moneyed gentrifiers' pursuing an urban lifestyle and 'investment gentrifiers'. These 'moneyed gentrifiers' are buying into an area that has already become an attractive location. House prices are considerably higher than those paid by the 'new cultural class'. The 'lifestyle gentrifiers' who have moved into the apartment complexes are buying into an already constructed aesthetic. In relation to those 'lifestyle gentrifiers' who have moved into the terraced housing these differ to the 'new cultural class'. These gentrifiers must have greater economic capital to purchase and carry out renovation. However, property re-valorisation is not only about identity it is also a strategy for some owners, the 'investment gentrifier', to either increase profits on the resale of the property or to make the property more attractive for renting. This challenges cultural explanations of gentrification reviewed earlier as a lifestyle choice, (Chapter Two). Those renting these newly purchased and re-

valorised housing can be defined as 'renter gentrifiers'. Those renting within the area may be pursuing an urban lifestyle but crucially, unlike householders, they inhabit a particular aesthetic that has already been constructed. The properties may reflect their 'taste' in that they choose to live within a particular property but it is not a 'taste' that they have constructed.

The term gentrifier may not fit all the people who are renting within the area however, many of them work within the high paid sectors of the economy. These 'well off' renters should be seen as part of the same process of gentrification because the apartments and houses within the area have been constructed and re-valorised in order to attract them. The question arises can this process still be considered one of gentrification if all the newer residents do not fit neatly into the category of 'gentrifier'? Although some groups may be marginal to the processes occurring within the area this does not detract from the fact that the demographic evidence, discussed in Chapter Four, reveals that the majority of newer residents are professionals. It is these residents who define the process of gentrification and not those groups who are marginal to this process.

The gentrification of the area became an intensified process of capital accumulation with the redevelopment of the area following Dublin's recent post-industrial growth. While it is argued that a cultural model plays a pivotal role in subsequent waves of gentrification this commodification of culture is not visible within Ringsend. Culture is used as a selling point in that urban lifestyle is highlighted. A main selling point however is not that the area possesses a cultural model but that it is close to the cultural model that has developed within Dublin itself. However, with the new developments occurring around the Grand Canal Basins, outlined in Chapter Four, Ringsend is developing a cultural model similar to the city centre. Unlike Zukin's (1988) observations Ringsend's cultural model has developed after subsequent waves of gentrification and may initiate a further wave of gentrification in the future.

In contrast to the respondents living in the apartment complexes for those who have decided to buy existing housing stock the reasons for choosing Ringsend are more varied. It is clear that the apartment complexes represent a different conception of the gentrification process than previous studies in relation to the upgrading of existing housing stock. However, both processes are connected. They are both intrinsically linked to changing economic conditions. The different waves of gentrification that have occurred in the area highlights the complexity of the gentrification process. Although however, different forms of gentrification may be distinguished in Ringsend this chapter has argued that they are part of the same process. Both forms result in a shift in the class structure of the area and in displacement.

An examination of demand and supply explanations for gentrification reveal that it is a combination of the two, which has produced Ringsend's changing landscape. Although the reasons cited for choosing to reside in Ringsend are more varied for those who have bought houses within the area than for those residing in the apartment complexes certain themes emerge which link both. There is an anti-suburban, pro-urban preference among the gentrifiers. Lifestyle choice, aesthetics and reflexive consumption feature in all accounts. However, the shift to a post-industrial landscape has seen capital return to the inner city and much movement is in response to this relocation. Those who have bought houses and who are associated with the 'first wave' of gentrification are keen to maintain the vitality of Ringsend as a working-class neighbourhood. However, this is paradoxical as gentrification itself leads to displacement and the loss of authenticity. This chapter also highlights the point that the gentrification process in Ringsend is also part of a broader policy context, which aims to reverse the decline of inner-city areas. Again this research in Ringsend highlights the need for a 'geography of gentrification' (Lees 2000) to address the specificity of locality.

In contrast to some post-industrial theorists and post-modern arguments this research shows that class distinctions still exist. Perceptions of class divisions are salient to both Ringsenders and gentrifiers accounts of everyday life and culture in Ringsend. The process of gentrification is inherently class based. However, gentrification is not a homogenous process and not all gentrifiers share the same class position. There are varying degrees of class distinctiveness associated with work, incomes, consumption patterns, lifestyles and cultural capital and it is these degrees that my respondents highlight. The majority of gentrifiers are those benefiting from the shift to a post-industrial economy and are earning high incomes in order to sustain their lifestyles. It is clear from the quotes throughout this chapter that the gentrifiers, whatever position they occupy, are 'other' to the working-classes within Ringsend.

While Cameron and Coaffee (2005) argue that in most UK provincial cities the gentrification process associated with new construction on former industrial land has not resulted in displacement of an existing residential population this chapter highlights an important factor in relation to this. The displacement of industry has had implications in terms of employment opportunities and on the spatial and social relationships that had developed with these sites. The gentrification of these sites has made the area an attractive location, which in turn has impacted on the gentrification of the surrounding area resulting in direct displacement of working-class residents. These sites are no longer the domain of the working-classes they represent a new phase of capital accumulation and urban development which excludes the working-classes on many levels. The term is still one of gentrification whether there is direct displacement or 'knock-on' displacement because the effects are the same. Within Ringsend the process of gentrification has also resulted in the displacement of local businesses and small shops. There is not only a demise of shops within the area but also a redirecting of services to suit the needs of the changing landscape. In this regard there is a rise in the niche markets associated with the transition to

both a post-Fordist and post-modern landscape. Chapter Four highlighted the fact that it is the new complexes surrounding the Grand Canal Basins that are providing many of these niche markets. These restaurants and shopping facilities are removed from Ringsend and designed to cater to the urban professional. In addition there has also been displacement of the local population and in particular the younger population who cannot afford to buy property in the area as a result of rising house prices. It is the voices of the displaced and those affected by this that are often rendered silent in accounts of urban regeneration. For these people the changing landscape of Ringsend does not signify renewal rather it is cross cut with multiple tensions and contradictions.

# Community Matters

It's a great place really; a great community with a great community spirit and the majority of people are friendly and welcoming. (Respondent L: Ringsender).

## (7.1) Introduction

Park (1967) suggested that the city represented the loss of 'community'. This was due to the fact that within the urban environment the individual lives their social life within a multiplicity of contexts. For Park these contexts are physically distant from each other. Although this may be true for some people who reside, work and socialise in different settings for many others their lives and social relationships occur within the same geographic location. For many of the Ringsenders Ringsend represents one such setting. However, it is increasingly the case that individuals may be involved in social networks and communities that exist outside the location in which they reside. This does not necessarily translate into the loss of community. Park's assertion that communities do not exist within urban contexts is not borne out in the stories my respondents tell of the established community that exists within Ringsend.

Some communities are embedded in, sustain, and are sustained by place. As specific places are re-configured, re-imaged and re-imagined this impacts on the communities that are embedded within these locales. According to Sennett '...as the shifting institutions of the economy diminish the experience of belonging somewhere special...people's commitments increase to geographic places like nations, cities and localities', (Sennett, 1999:15). This may be seen as a nostalgic desire to forge a sense of belonging in an increasing insecure world. For many people whose lives are embedded in place and the communities that exist there it is also a necessary means of survival. Within capitalism's 'creative destruction' many communities have been restructured. The shift to a post-industrial society coupled with gentrification has impacted on the landscape of Ringsend and on the community that exists within the area. As such the global restructuring of

capitalism has implications which reach beyond the realm of economics. This restructuring impacts on the daily lives of individuals, groups and communities.

This chapter is not, nor is it intended to be, an in-depth analysis on the meanings of the term 'community'. However it is necessary to briefly explore how conceptions of community have changed and how the term is defined in the context of this thesis. Within the transition to a post-industrial society new representations of place are being created within Ringsend. This chapter also aims to come to an understanding of the implications of the changes occurring within Ringsend on the established 'community'. This will be explored by an examination of what the community in Ringsend means to my respondents. How is community understood, negotiated and sustained? What are the effects of the gentrification process on the community of Ringsend? In addition can the newly constructed 'gated communities' within the area be termed 'communities'? These issues will be examined under the following headings: 'An exploration of community', 'The meanings attached to community', 'Gated communities?', 'Community as an exclusionary practice', 'Social preservation within Ringsend' and 'Gentrification: A transient population?'

## **(7.2) An exploration of community**

The Dublin Docklands Development plan identified the established residential community in Ringsend as being a major strength of the area. However, what does the term 'community' mean and what is the meaning of community to my respondents? The term 'community' has been used in such a wide range of contexts that it's meaning has become blurred. It is hard to give a concise definition of community, as the term must be looked at contextually. It is used to describe both a geographical area and communities of interest. But the word also has other connotations. According to Corcoran (2002) a number of rather intangible factors which we often think of as 'community spirit' are important in creating positive feelings about neighbourhoods and neighbourhood organisations. 'Words

have meanings: some words, however, also have a 'feel'. The word 'community' is one of them, (Bauman, 2001:1).

In sociological studies community has been viewed as a normative ideal, as having a transformative role, as a romantic notion of traditional society, as a moral force and as a mode of belonging and imagining social relations. For a broader analysis of these positions see Delanty 2003. This section will briefly explore the varying conceptions of the term community before coming to an understanding of the term for this thesis.

The classical conception of community was that it '...signified a normative conception of society – an ideal to be attained', (Delanty, 2003:29). However during the twentieth century:

*Community became perceived as based more on the allegedly 'thick' values of tradition, a moral entity on the one side and, on the other, society became increasingly an alien and objective entity and based on very 'thin' values, (Delanty, 2003:28).*

Much of modern sociology equates community with 'tradition' and with a premodern world that was lost with the advent of modernity. For Tönnies, writing in 1887, community (Gemeinschaft) was viewed as based on traditional values and on a common understanding shared by its members while in opposition to this, society (Gesellschaft) was viewed as modernity and lacking the traditional face-to-face relations of community, (Tönnies, 1963). For Tönnies Gemeinschaft is associated with rural village life while Gesellschaft is associated with city life, (1963:231). Thus he establishes a rural/urban dichotomy and a tension between the countryside and the city. In these arguments community does not exist within the urban form and the advent of modernity and urbanism is seen as eradicating the world of the traditional and rural community.

'Since Tönnies, modern sociology became greatly preoccupied with the problem of the survival of community in modernity', (Delanty, 2003:34). Durkheim's *The Division of labour in Society*, first published in 1893, gave a different conception of community as

collective activity that exists both in large and small groups. Durkheim argued that community in contemporary societies is similar to that of traditional societies and that modernity actually produces organic forms of solidarity, (Durkheim, 1964). This moved to an understanding of community as post-traditional with an emphasis placed on community as a moral force and essentially civic in nature, (Delanty, 2003:36-39). The emphasis, particularly in British sociology, moved from the concept of community as 'tradition' to an understanding that community is possible in a 'post-traditional' world.

One of the main themes that runs through urban sociology is the fate of the urban community. The Chicago School was concerned with the decline of community through urbanisation. However communities do exist within urban environments and Ringsend is one such example. This thesis is concerned with recent economic transitions and the implications that these changes have on the community of Ringsend. In defining the term community, for the purpose of this thesis, David Byrne (2001) proffers a valid point of reference.

Byrne (2001) defines the genesis of community as the formation of collective social relations based on spatial association. He points out that people do create communities in urban contexts. These have their origins in complex mixtures of ethnic and other identities and, above all else, in class positions. However, in contemporary societies communities need not be based on spatial proximity as relations can also be maintained across space and may also exist in the virtual world. 'However, spatial proximity...still matters and much urban social politics has its foundation in communal identities and communal interests', (Byrne, 2001:16). The understanding of community here is one that is based on spatial proximity and spatial association.

The concept of 'social capital' is seen as necessary to build and maintain communities. For Tiesdell and Allmendinger (2001) New Labour's approach to neighbourhood regeneration includes the recognition that social capital helps to integrate people and communities. For

Woolcock and Muirhead (2005) the developers of master planned community developments in Australian suburbs have adopted ideas of 'community building' and 'social capital' as central to their planning and marketing. According to Kearns 'social capital has arisen as a means to the end of social inclusion and as a way of tackling social exclusion', (2004:5). The DDDA wish to develop the docklands into a model of sustainable inner city regeneration. This includes the integration of the newer residents and the existing communities into a city quarter in which 'the whole community enjoys the highest standards of access to education, employment, housing and social amenity', (1997). This would involve increasing levels of social capital – particularly bridging capital – in the community.

Understandings of community cannot be reduced to levels of social capital. However, the concept of social capital is seen as a factor that is necessary in order to build and maintain communities. This chapter is not meant to be an in-depth analysis of social capital however it does explore to what extent social capital exists within Ringsend. As such it is necessary to define how this chapter views the concept of 'social capital'. For Bourdieu (1991) capital is composed of various forms – economic, cultural, symbolic and social. Combined these serve to constitute the social position of a person. Kearns (2004) looks at the various definitions of social capital and concludes that there are three main components of social capital:

*The three components of social capital most referred to are: the social networks used by people; the social norms adhered to in people's behaviour, and in particular whether these norms are widely shared; and the levels of trust people have either in their neighbours, in people in general, or in the institutions of the government, (2004:7).*

### **(7.3) The meanings attached to community**

This section will explore the visibility of community within Ringsend and the meanings that it holds for my respondents:

Oh god yes it's very strong [the community] and always was. All Ringsend people stick for each other and that. It's a really strong community. (Respondent B: Ringsender).

The community here is great they all stick together and we all know each other. My neighbours on either side have been there for 30 and 40 years and I mightened see them from one end of the week till the next but if I needed anything you could knock. Now that would be anything even a lift to Timbuktu. We always help each other out. Now I'm very lucky in that respect cos I have them. (Respondent A: Ringsender).

Here everybody looks after each other. I mean if I need anything even a cigarette I know I can knock on my neighbours door at any time and I can get one or milk or anything. Now I don't know anywhere where you can do that. So community starts at that small level. And if there's anything wrong they will all knock on your door to help like with a funeral or anything. Or if anyone is sick like when my daughter was in hospital they all knocked and they were pushing money on me cos they know it takes money to travel in and out of the hospital every day. The first thing you're always offered is money cos it's the first thing that is whacked out of you is your money. When you're dealing on a low level it doesn't take much to pull the rug out from under you. (Respondent J: Ringsender).

These quotes demonstrate how community is understood and negotiated on a daily basis. Community, as these respondents show, is the familiarity that people have with their neighbours and people throughout the area. As respondent J states community starts at the level of direct neighbours and the relationships that have developed over time. There is a sense that people interact and support each other on both a daily basis and in times of crisis. There is an understanding that for many people a crisis within the family can result in financial hardship. As respondent G states 'In the community there is a great spirit that arose from shared hardship.' This sense of understanding and shared hardship is also obvious in the following quote:

..my dad was always collecting for the new school. Him and about four of the men would sell tickets in the pub for the new school they were great. There was a great community spirit really. If anything happened to anyone I mean at the time there was no insurance. My dad had a very bad accident on the docks years ago. Now there was a union but they didn't really get paid sick pay as such they got a week or two or something like that. But my dad was out for six months or something like that but the Dockers always used to make a collection every week just to give him something cos they knew he had ten children....The community were great though and they still are to this day if anything goes wrong. Like if someone's in dire need they will be there for you. It's still there that spirit. It's a Ringsend spirit. Like my sisters young one had meningitis and so did another little one and all the

community got together sent them to Lourdes and they sent the mother and father and everything.....My brother in law died last may from a brain tumour...The community all got together for that as well and offered to help with the funeral and that. (Respondent E: Ringsender).

Again this quote by Respondent E shows how community can be relied upon for financial and emotional support. This 'community spirit' has developed over generations. These quotes indicate that community is rooted in a sense of place. People may participate in community at different levels from helping in times of crisis to collecting for 'the new school'. It is clear that community the understanding of community is similar to Byrne's (2001) observations of community as the formation of collective social relations based on spatial association. However, the social relations that my respondents speak of are not due to a 'shared understanding' alone but to understandings and negotiations that have developed over time and which are entrenched in place. As Byrne (2001) observes the origins of these collective social relations are often based on shared identities or class positions. This is clear in relation to the 'shared hardship' that my respondents speak of. Ringsend developed as a working-class area and the Ringsender's sense of identity is deeply connected to the development of the area and their social class:

There really is a very strong working class identity in Ringsend. There really is. And there still is today even though a lot of people are not still on the docks do you know what I mean. It's still here and the pride is still very evident oh yea. I was always proud when I was in school and I didn't change my address. I didn't care what any teacher said I said 'My community is as good as any.'(Respondent E: Ringsender).

Community is also associated with a sense of belonging:

There is a sense of closeness – you know you still have people go to Bingo, the older ones, and they gather together there. People still know each other around here and that's the reason I love Ringsend. I mean I can just. Like even if I know I need to go out for a drink I know for a fact that I could walk into any pub and I wouldn't be sitting there on my own. It would be 'sit here [respondent]' or whatever. Now that's the thing and you wouldn't find that in an awful lot of places do you know what I mean? It's like even if you walk up the street and you're feeling depressed you know you're not going to just come back, you're bound to find four or five people to talk to and chat away and you come back feeling better. And sometimes I can never get up the street and back (laughs) it would take me ages like you know. My cousins are always amazed when they come over from London they say 'you're

like the Queen, you go up the street and you have to fight your way back' and I say 'I know everyone, I can't just walk by them'. Even though I see them ten times a day and it's 'hiya how's it going' you always have to stop and say hi no matter how many times you see them, it's like that around here. (Respondent E: Ringsender).

Community is equated with recognition and the feeling of belonging and security that that entails. For Bauman 'community' feels good because of the meanings that the word conveys. These include a sense of safety and a common understanding. Bauman argues that '...in a community we can count on each other's good will. If we stumble and fall, others will help us to stand on our feet again', (2001:2)). However, this help is not contractual and there is no obligation to assist rather it is the duty of the members of the community to help each other and this is done with pleasure. In a community people are not strangers and this familiarity brings security, confidence and trust, (Bauman, 2001: 2-3). However, Bauman (2001) argues that the feeling's the word community evokes is in fact an imagined community. 'In short, 'community' stands for the kind of world which is not, regrettably, available to us – but which we would dearly wish to inhabit and which we hope to repossess', (2001:3). For Bauman the term community is another name for paradise lost or a paradise still to be found. It is not, he stresses one that we inhabit or know from experience. It doesn't exist because the feelings of comfort, security and belonging which the word implies are imagined and longed for ideals.

In contrast to Bauman, my respondents speak of the community he describes as 'imagined' as a sociological reality. There is a deep sense of community and community spirit within Ringsend. Much of this has developed from the fact that people have knowledge of each other's lives and are willing to help each other in times of need. In addition people have grown up in the area and friendships have developed over time. The recognition and belonging that my respondents speak of is based on face to face interaction within Ringsend; it is a community built on continuous micro-level interactions embedded in place. This is also clear in the following quote:

It was a very enclosed society, an enclosed community, where we were brought up we didn't know anything outside our own environment. We went to school locally and we played locally. I think we only went into town to get our communion clothes and our confirmation clothes. Everything was within the community and you had so many of your local shops here and your food was bought everyday- you know your fresh meat and your fresh vegetables. You had a meal everyday. We were kind of not comfortable but we were okay if you understand. I don't even know what comfortable was then cos we were very insular. Communities like these are very insular. So you don't even know what's going on outside. The first trip you get, well we got, outside was our school trips. Our holidays was down the Shelly Banks, you know down the Pigeon House, well we always called it the Shelly Banks. We would also go down there picking cockles in the spring and summer then in September/October you would be brought picking blackberries. This was a great tradition cos your mammy and daddy brought you and you were on the beach and they were teaching you how to identify where these cockles would be buried. That was a great tradition in this community and they were safe to eat then not like now with all the pollution. Those are all things you remember like happy times. (Respondent J: Ringsender).

Perception of community is also embedded in memories of childhood like 'picking blackberries' and 'picking cockles'. For Bellah *et al.* (1996) community is seen as part of the daily lives of people through everyday practice as well as through memories. These communities of memory are also defined as 'communities of commitment' and community is itself kept alive within these shared memories and in practices of solidarity, (Bellah *et al.*, 1996:153-4). It is argued that 'communities of memory' are found in ethnic, racial and religious groups as well as within families and at the level of the nation. 'Communities of memory' are also found at the level of place, or neighbourhood, and based on collective activities that occurred within place and which are both defined by place and also help to define place. These collective memories also include memories of growing up within the area and as many of the people that grew up in the area still reside there these shared memories not only define place but also define and sustain perceptions of community. Respondent J defines her childhood community as insular however it must be remembered that this perception is based on memories of a time when many people in Ireland did not have the resources to travel outside their communities or localities. Nowadays, levels of mobility have increased and so too has the level of choice in relation to mobility.

Community exists at different spatial levels above the daily intimate encounters between neighbours on a given street:

Well community for me is here in the flats. I know them all and you know they help with the kids and that. Now it's not all rosy there's fights as well but it's like I know here and me friends and family are here. I go to the meetings and that and then that's everyone from the area as well...(Respondent Z: Ringsender).

I love Ringsend. It's a very close knit community. Like all communities it has its ups and downs but what I like about it is when the going gets tough Ringsend sticks together. Everyone has their own issues but when it really comes to a serious issue Ringsend sticks together. (Respondent N: Ringsender).

As Respondent Z states at one level community for her is 'here in the flats' and at another level community is also at the level of Ringsend itself. Therefore community has a layered meaning from a balcony on the flats up to the neighbourhood itself and people participate in 'community' in different ways. Community at the level of locality is negotiated and understood in relation to the community meetings that are held and also in relation to factors that have implications for the locality itself.

Community is lived experience. People refer to community as part of their daily lives, how people help each other out on a day to day basis. It's a feeling of belonging and of knowing who you are and where you come from. Some of my respondents also mentioned 'the fishbowl syndrome' - how 'community' can also be restrictive:

...growing up here was great there was just so much freedom but it was also very safe. The reason why it was safe and it is only in later years that I understand this but community is family and everybody minds you but everybody rats on you as well. The fishbowl syndrome. Everybody watches you and everybody interferes... It can be like valley of the squinting windows but it would be worse if they weren't looking out for you I suppose. You just have to strike a balance. (Respondent Z: Ringsender)

Community can also imply an element of regulation and intrusion. This quote demonstrates that in some ways community can be seen as a contradiction. It can convey a sense of belonging but also a sense of restriction.

*There is a price to be paid for the privilege of 'being in a community'...The price is paid in the currency of freedom, variously called 'autonomy', 'right to self-*

*assertion', 'right to be yourself'. Whatever you choose, you gain some and you lose some, (Bauman, 2001: 4).*

According to Bauman although community offers security it also restricts freedom. He argues that this loss of freedom and individuality will, in the end, become oppressive. He suggests that 'the argument between security and freedom, and so the argument between community and individuality, is unlikely ever to be resolved...', (Ibid.). Community will remain a dream and we will never find in any self-proclaimed community the pleasures we find in the community of our dreams. However, he also states that although we cannot have security and freedom at the same time this is not a reason to stop trying for the best solution, (2001: 5). Although Bauman makes a valid argument and my respondents also feel that community can in some instances be restrictive this does not translate into oppression and the total loss of freedom and individuality. According to Delanty (2003) individualism and expressiveness does not erode community and community is capable, and does, sustain individualism. In fact Delanty argues that individualism is the basis of much communal activity and strong individualism can sustain many kinds of collective action, (2003:120). The majority of my respondents feel that although community can at times be restrictive 'the good tends to outweigh the bad' (Respondent J: Ringsender) and as Respondent Z states 'you just have to strike a balance'.

Community in Ringsend is a rich source of social capital. Social capital exists in the social networks that exist within the area. These networks have developed over time and help to establish and maintain community. There are multiple examples of levels of trust between neighbours and within the neighbourhood. This trust has developed over time and is a resource that people can rely on in periods of need. For the Ringsenders community is sustained by and helps to sustain place. However, place is being re-structured within the transition to a post-industrial society and in the contemporary gentrification process occurring within Ringsend. This has implications for the established community, which

will be examined, in the following sections. The apartment complex or 'gated community' have become a dominant feature in the landscape. Gated communities are becoming more established as a new form of housing not only within Ireland but also on a global scale. In Ringsend they constitute new constructions of place. The question that the next section will address is whether or not they also constitute new constructions of community?

#### **(7.4) Gated 'communities'?**

According to Blandy et al. gated communities can be defined as follows:

*Walled or fenced housing developments to which public access is restricted, often guarded using CCTV and/or security personnel, and usually characterised by legal agreements (tenancy or leasehold) which tie the residents to a common code of conduct, (2003:2).*

Therefore gated communities are physically segregated from their surroundings. They are also socially differentiated as they are mainly targeted at upper/middle income households. Within Ringsend they have become a spatial expression of the social division that exists within place. Gated communities are becoming increasingly popular. According to Blandy *et al.* almost every country now has some examples, (2003:3). In Ringsend the gated community is becoming increasingly dominant within the landscape. 'Forting up' has become common, both in America and elsewhere, and gated communities have been seen as providing refuges from urban crime', (Blandy *et al.*, 2003:3). Gated communities are also characterised by legal agreements. These usually require that residents pay annual fees to formal associations designed to manage the communal property on the site. According to Respondent H it is not just the price of the apartments within these complexes that have placed them 'out of reach of the locals' but also the management fees. For Blandy *et al.* this legal framework represents a shift from private property rights of the individual owner to ownership by the community, (2003:3). To what extent can these complexes be defined as 'communities' and are they perceived as such by the 'gated' residents who reside in Ringsend?

Spatial proximity exists within the complexes and residents are subject to communal restrictions, but are there other forms of rich and textured spatial associations present?

I've been here for a few years now and I don't know any of my neighbours to talk to. I doubt very much if anyone knows anyone really. You get to know faces but that's it really. So I wouldn't say there was a community here like in the community that exists in Ringsend say. I wouldn't knock on my neighbours for anything. (Respondent S: Gentrifier).

We don't know anyone in the apartments. We have some friends that live in another apartment block down the road and we go down there sometimes or they come up here. They don't know anyone else either. It's not like here really. (Respondent X: Gentrifier).

The type of community that the Ringsenders speak of does not exist for these respondents in the apartment complexes. Although they share spatial proximity there is little evidence of spatial association. However, spatial association does exist in the fact that people live within close proximity to each other and forms of recognition develop:

**Respondent:** I don't know anyone from Ringsend itself. As for the apartments well I know a few people now. You get to know faces from coming and going and sometimes you would see them down in the Ocean Bar or at the jetty or the gardens.

**Interviewer:** Would you like to get to know people around the apartment complex more than just to say hi to?

**Respondent:** No I wouldn't say so. Like a lot of the people here are like me. Many of them are in their twenties or thirties and do their own thing. I know what you mean like we don't have a lot of contact with each other but that's okay. I have friends and family and I don't feel the need to interact with the people here. I suppose you just say hi when you see a face you recognise but that's really as far as it goes. There is acknowledgement

**Interviewer:** There seems to be a great community spirit within Ringsend itself and the Ringsenders seem to like this and to rely on this. I'm wondering if this is missing within the apartments.

**Respondent:** I suppose there is a strong community within the area because they all grew up in the area together. Like at home in Sandymount I would know a lot of people because I grew up there and my parents would know their neighbours and that. I suppose you don't get that sort of community within the apartment complexes but it's different here. We have all recently moved in here and many of the apartments are rented out as well and it's a different sort of life really. But I don't feel like that's missing here. I suppose you have your friends and that and people from work and you do things with them. (Respondent A2: Gentrifier).

For Respondent A2 spatial association exists in the fact that there is 'acknowledgement' between the residents of the complex that she lives in. People know each other to see and

although there is not a lot of contact between the residents there is still recognition. As Respondent A2 also notes this recognition has developed from coming into contact with people at particular communal areas. It is interesting to note that this apartment complex differs in a significant way to the complexes described by respondent's S and A. Communal areas such as the 'bar' and 'jetty' do not exist in those complexes. These communal areas may be a way as Woolcock and Muirhead (2005) state to 'build social capital' however, social encounters are minimal and seem to be limited to purely recognition:

I know a few peoples faces just to say hello and whatever ...you'd see them around the gardens in the apartments a little bit or in the Ocean Bar but you never get to meet them cos it's all just coming and going you know. It's not like you'd want to meet them or spend time with them cos for me they're just sleeping places really. The majority of people here are young and like me they have good jobs and go out in town and that. We all have our own lives. (Respondent R: Gentrifier).

It is interesting that there is no perception of a 'loss of community' in these quotes. Indeed respondent A2 explains that she does not feel the need to interact with the other residents from her complex. For respondent R there is a level of recognition but he has no desire to develop this spatial association any further. Spatial association may only revolve around recognition of familiar faces and this is considered adequate:

My friend lives in these apartments as well and I know a couple of people just to say hello to really. I don't think there is a community spirit here in the way you mean but I call to my friends and she calls over here and we have people over and that. There isn't a community spirit in terms of everyone knowing each other and that but it's not like that's missing. I'm used to living in London and you don't have that there in apartments either. But that's good too because people leave you alone and you don't feel like people are judging you and that. (Respondent A3: Gentrifier).

People coming in here are like me 20 something's who are only here for a few years and there's no community ethos or I suppose no attempt to develop some sort of community. We barely know anybody in this block and we're here over two years...but it's not like 'god there's no community here' cos people just do their own thing and for us that's fine. (Respondent S: Gentrifier).

This 'minimalist' approach to community is in total contrast to the Ringsenders, whose perception of community is based on intensive spatial association and is viewed in a

positive way. It would seem at first glance that there is a lack of social capital within these complexes particularly in comparison to that which exists in the rest of the area. I would argue however, that social capital does exist but in a different form. One element of social capital is based on mutual understanding and shared values and behaviours and this does exist within the apartment complexes. There is an understanding that the majority of the residents share similarities in terms of occupation and they all refer to themselves as being similar in terms of age and lifestyle.

This shared understanding is also reflected in the fact that the residents of the apartment complexes generally do not desire, or require, 'traditional' forms of community. The majority of respondents however do state that one of the reasons that they do not feel the need to participate in community is that they have no children. As respondent R states 'I haven't been motivated to participate in community or to develop some sort of community and until such time as I need someone to baby-sit my kids or something like that then it isn't a pressing issue for me. That does sound mercenary but it's probably typical of most of the 20 something's moving in here and living here for a couple of years.'

Although there are only minimal forms of spatial association within the complexes themselves this does not imply that the residents are not involved in social networks outside these complexes. Newer residents within Ringsend are involved in social networks that are not embedded in Ringsend. They socialise, and work, within the city centre and often 'return home' to families, and communities, that lie outside the area in which they live. These social networks exist outside Ringsend and are not defined by spatial association within their residential spaces:

I have some friends that live in the city centre and that and we all hang around together so I suppose we have our own little community. Like we meet up at the weekends and that and we have certain places that we drink in and go for dinner and they come over here and I go to their homes. It's really like living in London in that respect when you all get together and meet up and you have things that you do together. (Respondent A3: Gentrifier).

The apartment complexes are physically and socially separated from the surrounding area. The walls that surround these complexes isolate them from not only Ringsend as place but also from the community that exists within place. The apartment complexes within Ringsend can be characterised as new representations of place and provide a template for new forms of identification with place. Their residents in the main do not adhere to traditional forms of community bonding. However, not all of the gentrifiers within Ringsend reside in gated communities. The following sections will examine whether or not the newer residents exclude themselves, and are excluded from, the existing community. What are the implications of the gentrification process for the existing community within Ringsend?

### **(7.5) Community as an exclusionary practice?**

The term community also implies a distinctiveness – a division into an 'us and them', an inside and an outside. The gentrification process in Ringsend has seen the arrival of 'outsiders' into the physical space of its community. This has drawn the boundary between inside and outside more sharply. The distinction is more marked because both groups do not have the same attachment to Ringsend as place and both groups occupy different social class positions. This is not to imply that both groups are totally homogenous.

I suppose you're an outsider and you're always going to be an outsider. I suppose I'm more aware of it that way- of being an outsider- than necessarily that there is a really tight community. But you do get all the community stuff in the leaflets and pamphlets from the various action groups and the community groups and all the rest of it that comes in the door. Then there's that local paper that comes out. So you would be conscious that there was somewhat of a community. Also it is visible like in the shop and at the bus stop, everyone knows each other and they mess around with each other- joking and that. (Respondent S: Gentrifier).

There is a good community but we're outsiders. They wouldn't be interested in outsiders I think; they're not very friendly. I suppose although they aren't friendly that suits a lot of us too. You can live a private life here without them interfering they let you get on with it..... I don't want to get involved in the community, in any community. (Respondent V: Gentrifier).

The only way they're effected is by the house prices cos we're not meeting them on a day to day basis well at least I'm not. That's because here is somewhere where

you crash. You get up and go to work. It's terrible really when I think about it. That's the way it is for people in their 20's or 30's. There isn't the need for us to get involved cos we're not in family networks here. We don't need the community or a community. We live twenty or thirty feet up in the air- we are somehow removed from the community and anyway even if I wanted to get involved I don't have the time. (Respondent S: Gentrifier)

It is clear that the gentrifiers are aware of the established community. It is visible in posters, leaflets as well as in their observations of how the local population interact with each other. However, what is most clear to them is not the established community itself but the fact that they are not part of it. They feel they are treated as 'outsiders' and so are not welcome to participate. The friendliness that the Ringsenders spoke about is not evident. The boundary between 'inside' and 'outside' is clear.

For Redfield community is distinctive, in so far as it is clear where it begins and ends, small and self-sufficient, (1971:4). For Bauman this distinctiveness means 'the division into an 'us' and 'them'' and as there are no 'betwixt and between' cases it is clear 'who is 'one of us' and who is not'. 'Smallness' means that 'communication among the insiders is all-embracing' while "self-sufficiency' means that isolation from 'them' is close to complete, the occasions to break it are few and far between', (Bauman, 2001: 12). For Bauman all three defining features of Redfield's community join to protect it's members from outside challenges. The unity of the community then depends on 'blocking the channels of communication with the outside world', (Bauman, 2001: 13). According to Bauman, Redfield's 'unity of community' and the 'communal understanding' put forward by Tönnies are communities that are based on homogeneity. This homogeneity is impacted upon by an increase in communication with the world outside the walls of the community. Once the balance between 'inside' and 'outside' communication becomes more even the distinction between 'us' and 'them' becomes blurred and will eventually evaporate. This breach in the protective walls of community occurs with both advances in transport and more recently with the 'advent of informatics'. For Bauman from now on all homogeneity

must be 'hand-picked' and unity must be 'artificially produced' by a process of selection and exclusion, (Bauman, 2001: 13-14).

The gentrification process within Ringsend has blurred the boundary between 'inside' and 'outside'. The gentrifiers now reside within the community. They have stated that they feel that they are perceived as 'outsiders' and therefore do not feel welcome to participate in the community. For Bauman (2001) this would be viewed as the erection of protective walls by the Ringsenders, in order to protect their habitual ways and as a method of constructing unity through separation and exclusion. However, membership of the Ringsend community is not decided in an arbitrary way. Rather membership in the community is defined by birthright, length of residence and if new residents desire to involve themselves in the locality. Some of my respondents have not been born within Ringsend and yet they feel a part of the community because they have chosen to involve themselves either with other people in the area or to analyse on specific issues. It must also be remembered that the erection of barriers is not simply a means of exclusion but also a means of survival. Ringsend is at present undergoing rapid transformation and there is a fear that the community will be eradicated.

In addition arguments such as Bauman's do not address the fact that many 'outsiders' do not wish to involve themselves within the community and as such exclude themselves and others. Their lifestyles also reflect exclusionary practices. When there are community meetings in the area the majority of the newer residents do not attend even though they have been invited to do so:

I was saying to a couple of them that they've moved into the area and not even into the high-rise apartments but into places like Stella Gardens and Brendan's Cottages and that. And they're at work all day and they come home in the evening and no one sees them and they are not part of the community or even trying to become part of it. We tried to do a drop around saying that would all the new neighbours who have moved in like to attend any of the meetings and I think we had two people who showed up to any of the meetings. It's like you going around trying to find anybody to interview there's no reply. I don't think they are there they work all day

and seem to clear out at weekends. They don't seem to want to get involved in any community issues. (Respondent Q: Ringsender).

Respondent Q is involved in various community groups in Ringsend and he states that they have tried to encourage the new residents to involve themselves in community issues. However, this has failed. While many of the gentrifiers perceive themselves to be outsiders they also comment that they have no desire or need to participate in the community at any level. There are many reasons for this. Lack of time, the desire for privacy and the transient nature of many of the gentrifiers themselves, are all salient.

We've been asked to attend the residents association you know but there's a kind of reluctance to get involved at that level primarily I suppose going through where I am in my own life I am extremely careful about what I commit to. Like I don't watch TV much and I don't go to the pub now, I've stopped going to the pub a lot, so I see myself to be very different culturally anyway and that's not just relating to the area cos I see myself quite different not only as an Irish person but as a bloke in the Irish context. (Respondent T: Gentrifier).

As respondent T states he feels himself 'very different culturally' not just to the other residents within Ringsend but also 'as a bloke in an Irish context'. There is an assumption that the people who involve themselves in community and community issues are a homogenous cohort within the population and that because he is 'different' it would be inappropriate for him to be involved.

For a range of reasons the newer residents do not wish or feel the need to get involved in issues within the community or in the community itself. However, they are involved in social networks outside the area. This lack of commitment to community can be viewed as a desire by the gentrifiers to maintain their individual autonomy. For Bauman 'identity' means being different and unique. Community restricts individual identity. Bauman describes this lack of commitment to community as the 'secession of the successful' a phrase taken from Robert Reich's *The Work of Nations*. This phrase:

*..refers to the new detachment, indifference, disengagement and indeed mental and moral exterritoriality of those who do not mind being left alone providing that the others, who think differently, don't bid for them to care..*, (Bauman, 2001:50).

As Respondent V states 'I don't want to be involved in the community, in any community I just want to live my own life.' (Gentrifier). For Bauman these new elites remove themselves from community behind security gates in 'gated communities' that are communities in name only, (2001:51). These communities bear little resemblance to the communities that exist within the 'traditional' locale of Ringsend. They are highly individualised private spaces where people live their lives separate not only from the surrounding area but also from each other. They are removed from the commitments that community might require and they pay a high monetary price for this separation.

Empirical evidence from North America and England suggest that there are low levels of association between gated communities and the surrounding neighbourhoods, (Atkinson *et al.* 2004). Evidence from Ringsend also shows little contact between the residents of the gated communities and Ringsend people. For Minton (2002) the growth of gated communities in the UK can be viewed as a reinforcement of social segregation. For Atkinson and Flint gated communities provide a force for exclusion in new and different ways to earlier forms of residential patterning, (2004:3). As they are physically walled off from the rest of the neighbourhood and are more connected, economically and socially, to the city centre there is very limited contact between the residents of the complexes and the rest of the area.

The gentrifiers of Ringsend do not want to commit to community. Those who reside in the 'gated communities' scattered throughout the area are likewise uncommitted to Ringsend as place. As previously examined they do not socialise in the area nor have they formed social relationships within the area.

*The world inhabited by the new elite is not however defined by their 'permanent address' (in the old-fashioned physical or topographical sense). Their world has no 'permanent address' except for the e-mail one and the mobile telephone number. The new elite is not defined by any locality: it is truly and fully exterritorial. Exterritoriality alone is guaranteed to be a community-free zone., (Bauman, 2001:54).*

Bauman goes as far as to state that the lifestyles of the new elites celebrates the irrelevance of place, (2001:56). However, Chapter Five examined the fact that place has not become irrelevant within contemporary processes. Place may be less meaningful to those who are not anchored in place and who are removed from place behind security gates. However, these gated communities need to be situated close to the city centre to both places of work and the services and facilities the gentrifiers desire. In this regard the places in which these gentrified neighbourhoods are situated are of utmost importance. They are marketed and sold as desirable locations and in these marketing strategies place plays an important role.

Bauman (2001) states that the new elite are not defined by their 'permanent address'. Many of my respondents who live in the apartment blocks within Ringsend refer to their homes as temporary accommodation. They are viewed, and view themselves, as a transient population. However, this transience and non-attachment to community and place seems to be a temporary existence, a function of their age cohort. Respondents who reside in the apartment complexes are adamant that they will eventually settle in some place and when they have a family they intend to involve themselves in both place and community. Therefore although some of the gentrifiers may be defined as exterritorial, this may only be a temporary phase while they cherish their individual autonomy they also feel the need to belong and can envision putting down an anchor at some point and in some place. However, while the gentrifiers may live transiently in Ringsend the Ringsenders are rooted in place. The Ringsenders celebrate place and community that is embedded in its confines, as it is this that defines their sense of belonging.

In terms of trying to involve the gentrifiers within the community the community groups have focused on the newer residents that have moved into the terraced housing and not the newly constructed apartment blocks. There is a sharp divide between the apartment complexes and the rest of the area:

Remember there is no exchange of information with these people. When we want a big public meeting and we know from experience that you have to inform people through their own letterbox cos they're not going to read it in the local shop. We deliver about 5,000 leaflets and we don't touch the apartments cos we actually don't communicate with them and they don't really communicate with us either. If they're a transient population which most of them are and their not really interested in the issues of our community. Like we have to live here and our children. Our future generations have to live here so we have to care and they don't. (Respondent J: Ringsender).

It is clear that there is a lack of communication between the residents of the apartment blocks and the rest of the community. In addition it is assumed that many of the residents of the apartments are there on a short-term basis – they are a 'transient population'. This has also been articulated by residents of the apartment complexes themselves. However, there are some 'gentrifiers' who choose to reside in Ringsend in order to both participate in and preserve the existing community. These people do not practice exclusionary tactics. Rather they practice a set of practices, which Brown-Saracino defines as 'social preservation'.

### **(7.6) Social preservation within Ringsend**

The gentrifiers within Ringsend differ from each other in some respects. While many gentrifiers who reside in the gated communities and terraced housing have little attachment to Ringsend as place, there are others who have developed a sense of attachment and identification with Ringsend. Similarly there are some 'gentrifiers' who are involved in and wish to sustain the community within the area. However, although these people fit the profile of 'gentrifier' they differ in their regard for the neighbourhood.

According to Brown-Saracino in contemporary urban and rural America there is a social process separate and distinct from gentrification: social preservation, (2004:135).

*Social preservation is the culturally motivated choice of certain people, who tend to be highly educated and residentially mobile, to live in the central city or small town in order to live in an authentic social space, embodied by the sustained presence of..... 'original' residents, (Brown-Saracino, 2004: 135).*

For social preservationists community is equated with individuals bound together by shared religion, ethnicity, class etc. but most importantly by way of life. For Brown-Saracino (2004) social preservation is a set of practices that seek to preserve 'authentic community'. These practices include: resistance to gentrification through political and social practices such as the symbolic use of festivals, political protests, as well as a set of private practices rooted in their appreciation for the old-timers with whom they live.

There is also some evidence of social preservation in Ringsend:

We love the area and we love being here. We have two fantastic neighbours who I wouldn't swap for anything. I wouldn't live in the suburbs like Leixlip or Lucan and I think it's because of the establishment of the community here. It's solid here....I mean ninety nine percent of me would never want to move from this area. We both love the city. But it's mainly because of the area you know I mean the neighbours are fantastic. (Respondent T: Gentrifier/Social Preservationist).

I wanted a settled area with a strong community... So I decided Ringsend was where I want then I had to make the decision do I want – do I look at Irishtown, main Ringsend or where I bought. The reason I chose where I bought was that it was a slightly different community than this part of Ringsend...Most of them [the houses] were purchased or long-term tenants in third generation so I said ok that's what I want. That's why I bought there and I really looked at the social aspect of it as in 'what's the community?' I really wanted a settled and strong community....It meant a place which wasn't full of blow ins. And I say that in the nastiest possible way. I say that because I am from rural Ireland as well and because I am conscious of how that can change the structure of an area. (Respondent D: Gentrifier/Social Preservationist).

The desire to live among original residents that are associated with authentic community is a pre-dominant factor for social preservationists' residential choice, (Brown-Sarancino, 2004:141). Respondent's T and D like living in Ringsend because of the established community. Indeed respondent D chose to live within Ringsend *because* of the established community. 'Authentic' community is defined primarily in terms of length of residence within the area. She wanted an area that had an established community. Social authenticity is established by the presence of old-timers and a lack of what she terms 'blow-ins'. The social preservationist actively distinguishes themselves from gentrifiers as the following quotes highlight:

We're different to the other people who have moved in because we are in a house in the area so we are integrated into it more. I think that's because of the two neighbours we have, they're probably the best neighbours anyone could have, they are so warm and friendly... (Respondent T: Gentrifier/Social Preservationist).

It's very nice this community...like I wouldn't even say I feel like I was different here...I can't even say I am accepted because there is no such thing. There is no such thing as not being accepted. I can't even say oh I've been very welcomed because it's not about being welcomed. Like I am here and they are there and they are cool about that fact...they are wonderful. They are so wonderful like if I say I feel so accepted in the community it's not about that, I don't even think about that, but I feel very grounded here, I'm completely grounded which is very nice. I suppose we are different because we are newcomers but we are here to stay. We are making our home here and our children will grow up here and they see that and we are accepted. That's why I want to live here and I would hate to see all that change. (Respondent U: Gentrifier/Social Preservationist).

**Interviewer:** But you are saying that as a 'blow-in'...well you were coming in as a blow-in.

**Respondent:** Precisely but one difference – I came in as a single individual knowing I was going to get involved in the local community. That was my thing. I said 'ok I'll come in and if I can help – if I see a socio economic difficulty then I'll get in there and I'll get involved'...I bought the house, recognised it needed to be knocked down, gutted it and did all my own work. From day one all of the locals joined in as they recognised I wasn't a yuppie and I wasn't in there for that. Like their kids used to come up and help and other things like that used to happen. So they recognised me as not being a threat or a yuppie.

**Interviewer:** Did you find that they accepted you easily or readily?

**Respondent:** Relatively yea they thought I was stone cracked (laughs) they accepted me..because they saw me mucking in and doing the hard work myself they treated me differently- and I knew they would. Within two years I was chairperson of Ringsend Projects in the area. I was brought in on the political side – both Labour and Fine Fail encouraged me to get involved even though I was not a member of the parties. They said 'look we know you're record outside and you're right and you're in the right place so will you come in'. (Respondent D: Gentrifier/Social Preservationist).

Respondent's T and U make a distinction between themselves and the other gentrifiers in that they actually engage with their neighbours. The reason for this engagement is that they live in a house in the area and as respondent T states in relation to the apartment complexes 'Not only are you up in the sky but you're also like separated at street level.' Respondent D actively distinguished herself from the gentrification process and became politically involved in the organisations within the area. She is aware of the implications of gentrification and de-industrialisation within the area:

And now just to move on to my street just to take an example. When I moved here I was the only yuppie ok..... Basically this streets been decimated in terms of original population. All of the people when I came here were indigenous to the street, they were all first and second generation but that's all changed. The house I bought well I was the first non-local to move into it. (Respondent D: Gentrifier/Social Preservationist).

As well as being aware of the displacement of the old-timers respondent D also lists a multitude of factories that have closed down and states that this has a huge impact on Ringsend as a 'working-class community'. For respondent D the processes occurring within the area are '..much more than de-industrialisation cos' it's a totally different infrastructure catering for a totally different class of people.' She is opposed to the apartment complexes within the area because she feels they are detrimental to the community:

They block themselves off from everyone. They have gates. I can see that polarisation I can see it and its ghettoism. Whether you like it or not they have no involvement in the area at all...I certainly don't like the amount of apartments blocks been built here it's all about making money and they just throw them up. You see they can build so many around here because they know people will take them because it's so near town and they all work in town. Which is why I got into community housing in the beginning when I insisted that to get one of the houses you had to be on a housing list and you weren't supposed to sell them on unless you sold on to the community. Having lived in an apartment block this is why I chose this area! I'd seen too much transience and that's why I choose Ringsend. That's also why I wanted to encourage community housing. (Respondent D: Gentrifier/Social Preservationist).

Respondent D is actively engaged in preventing the displacement of old-timers from the area and in preserving the 'authentic' community. For Brown-Saracino the social preservationist also engages in a set of 'interactional practices' to establish themselves in the community and to prevent displacement. These include the 'be-friending of old-timers, patronising old-timers' businesses, and the decision to stay in the neighbourhood or town, rather than to sell property for profit', (2004:153). These are typical of Respondent D's interactional practices:

And they [newcomers] are not people who are indigenous to the area so they don't understand the idea of a strong community. People who come from suburban backgrounds, and a lot of them seem to be from that, who wouldn't have had

community....ok the reason I'm saying this is if you come from the country you are used to what community is and what strong ties are like and how the interaction can go and how you have to be careful not to step on toes and that. I would be conscious of that because of where I am from and my work and that but other people like suburban people wouldn't be conscious of that. (Respondent D: Gentrifier/Social Preservationist).

In Ringsend if there's a funeral and if it's a localer you walk to the corner here and you wait to accompany the coffin over the bridge and you line the street to the church and you walk behind it to the church regardless of traffic you walk and not drive. Now you tell me where that happens in suburbia. That is strong community and in suburbia that doesn't happen. Even when Mrs. Mackey died I didn't even know the woman but I made bloody sure I was there because she was a strong member of the community and I met some people who when I was walking down who have bought here and they asked what was going on so I told them and they said 'Jesus we better go down as well'. (Respondent D: Gentrifier/Social Preservationist).

Respondent U also engages in interactional practices:

Again unfortunately those apartments don't provide the spaces necessary to integration or family life.... like what we did at the front by making our garden an extension of the street and such a small thing worked because it's used by all the kids even the older kids. They sit on the box with their ghetto blasters. It's a hanging space and some people didn't understand it. Like middle class friends will ask us do we have insurance and we're going 'yea maybe we should get insurance' but for gods sake that wasn't even thought about. (Respondent U: Gentrifier/Social Preservationist).

For Brown-Saracino for social preservationists community cannot be taken for granted and arises out of conditions distinct to those which characterise the suburbs, (2004: 141). In the above quotes respondent D makes a distinction between the community in Ringsend and suburban areas. She also engages in the symbolic act of the funeral, as she is aware of the importance of such rituals. For Brown-Sarancino such symbolic acts cement the relationship between neighbourhood and old-timers, (2004:153). However, as respondent D shows they are also a means employed by the social preservationist to cement their relationship with the community. Respondent D has also employed other interactional practices such as the be-friending of old-timers and the patronage of local businesses as well as involving herself in protests aimed at maintaining the community. She clearly states that when she decided to relocate to Ringsend it was with the intention of remaining

in the area and although her house has dramatically increased in value she has no intention of selling. Respondent U actively removed the boundary between her house and the street. The aim was to make the garden an extension of the street to allow for more interaction.

These respondents are examples of how the social preservationist is distinguished from the gentrifier. It is also clear that when examining the role of the social preservationist one can establish a clearer picture of how community is negotiated and understood and that community change and preservation is fuelled by a variety of social actors. Although there may be some residents who fit the profile of 'gentrifier' but seek to preserve and participate in the existing community there are others, as examined, who have no desire to involve themselves in the existing community at any level. In addition many of the newer residents, particularly those who rent within the area or who reside in the apartment complexes, can be defined as a transient population. The following section will explore the factors associated with this transience and the implications of this for the community in Ringsend.

### **(7.7) Gentrification: A transient population?**

Society is characterised by pluralism and diversity and this needs to be recognised and accepted. Transience and diverse communities are important elements of city life. However, the main issue for the community within Ringsend is the issue of sustainability.

This is characterised by the presence of a transient population:

I'd say there's a lot of turnover in the apartments. You never feel at home. You never feel like it's a proper home. It looks like a hotel really and it feels like on as well.... It's not built for children. (Respondent R: Gentrifier).

Well I don't know anyone here really. Most of the people here stay for a while and then move on. Most of them are young so they are not settling down here. It's just a place for a few years like anywhere really. You rent and you move on. (Respondent X: Gentrifier)

Many of the newer residents within the apartment complexes are living in Ringsend on a short-term basis. There seems to be a consensus that the apartment blocks cater for a young

population who remain in the area for a few years and then, as respondent X states, 'you move on'. There is little opportunity in which to develop social relationships or networks within the complexes themselves. In addition, the apartment complexes are not designed to cater for children. As a result there are few families within the complexes, which is one of the main reasons cited for a lack of commitment to both the area and to community issues. Respondent S gives a clear example of how the apartment complexes are differentiated from the surrounding area: 'You're 20 feet up in the air here so you're removed and you don't talk to anyone except the people living beside you sometimes. That's just the way it seems to be.' There is a sense here that the residents of the apartments are not only distanced from the area but also from each other. This transience is coupled with the fact that it would seem that many of the residents of the apartment complexes mainly reside there during the week:

I was afraid when I saw the amount of apartments they were building that the place would be flooded. Sometimes even at worst there is a very gradual influx of people and the community gets larger but they were built so quickly that I thought they would wipe us out. But it was even weirder in a sense that when they went up and they were all sold and they were clearly been lived in but we never saw anyone! Then it began to dawn that they were obviously all working a lot and they would go home at the weekends. You see more people walking around now that are clearly from the apartments but they are only here for a short while and then they move I think. (Respondent G: Ringsender).

People coming in here are like me 20 something's who are only here for a few years and there's no community ethos or I suppose no attempt to develop some sort of community. We barely know anybody in this block and we're here over two years... and then again several weekends we won't be here cos we go back home or whatever so you're not necessarily going to be doing anything in the community cos we're not around long enough. (Respondent S: Gentrifier).

Respondent G paints a clear picture of the process occurring within Ringsend. The apartments were built on a large scale and in a relatively short period of time. She was concerned that this rapid development and influx of people from outside the area would overwhelm the community. Although the apartments were clearly being lived they didn't seem to have any initial impact in terms of a larger volume of people within the area.

However, with the even greater volume of apartments been constructed certain changes are occurring within the area. Critical mass has become important. The fact that they are residing in the apartments on a short-term basis is also evident. It impacts on local businesses, some of which have actually seen a decrease in business since the regeneration of the area. Many of the newer residents have networks and 'community' ties, which extend beyond the spatial area in which they live. As a result of this lack of commitment to place there is no 'community ethos' within the apartments because the residents do not feel the need for this. This impacts on community and community regeneration in Ringsend.

The transience of many of the gentrifiers as well as the fact that they have little attachment to the area is clearly visible to the Ringsenders:

There's no circulation of their income in this area. They may buy bread and milk but that's the limit. They don't socialise in the area. They don't socialise but you can't force people to socialise they can if they want. I mean they only sleep where they live it's not even their base really. Like we probably have more parties in our homes and stuff. You know by the look of the homes as well...The people who live in Corporation flats are constantly cleaning and decorating. They always have lovely curtains up. In the private rental sector they don't even clean their windows. If walk through Ringsend and look up you'll see they're black. It's not their home so there's no emotional contact. There's no emotional contact with the area as well. I use the word 'Economic Cleansing' because that's the argument we used against that big 13 storey building they were trying to put down the end of the street. (Respondent J: Ringsender).

Respondent J points out that the newer residents do not socialise in the area and they have a lack of spatial attachment to Ringsend as place. There is a distinction made between those with commitment to place and those without. There is recognition of the significance of place attachment. The old timers are perceived to have an 'emotional contact' with the area whereas the newcomers are seen to be detached. The reasons cited for this lack of spatial attachment is the fact that 'they only sleep where they live it's not even their base really'. Respondent J makes a distinction between this and the fact that for the Ringsenders their houses and flats are their homes. This distinction also arose in other interviews:

I must admit I was taken aback when I went down to the river and I saw the windows. They were so dirty and they are so obviously been lived in by people

who are not making homes out of them. I notice over in the apartments over there that there seems to be quite a turnover and because they're not been used as homes and they are clearly not built to cater for children that they will not be upkeep and they will get run down. Several people said to me that they will be the tenements of the future. (Respondent G: Ringsender).

Respondent G also makes the distinction between living in an apartment and making a 'home' of where you live. Again there is an underlying observation that there is no emotional contact with either the apartments or the area. Respondent S (Gentrifier) explains that he doesn't have the time or really the interest to worry about the apartment. He describes it as his home because it's where he lives however he also says that it's really only a place to sleep and as he only rents he doesn't really feel like it's his. As he doesn't intend to remain there he doesn't feel any attachment either to the apartment or to the area. As some of the gentrifiers that reside in the apartment complexes feel little emotional contact with the area this creates a sharp divide between them and the Ringsenders. This distinction is visible in the upkeep of residential property.

Respondent Q states people within Ringsend take 'pride' in their houses and as such they would notice these distinctions that exist. This pride comes from the fact that people have struggled hard in order to obtain houses within the area and also from the fact that due to a lack of affordable accommodation within the area many Ringsenders are now being displaced. This issue of 'pride' also arose in other interviews:

Em I am concerned about some of them [apartment blocks]... I see Fisherman's Wharf and that and a lot of people that are in them just come in and they don't take care of them or anything. Ringsend even the flats and that there is this pride in them and we keep our area as best we can and they don't seem to have that pride. .... To me a lot of them are stop gaps for them and then they will eventually sell these and move out and buy homes where they will get involved in communities and all. That's what I see a lot of them as. My own personal opinion is that I believe some of the apartment blocks em will be the slums of the future like the tenement houses of years ago. Because the people have no real interest they wont look after them and they will let them get run down now that's what I see in some of them around here. Whereas the people of Ringsend have this pride in their area so you can see the difference in the places that are occupied by people who actually live in the area and love the area as opposed to people who have just moved in because they could afford it...Yea because this is our area and we love our area, these are our homes and we intend to stay here they are not just stopgaps for us....Well even in the

council flat complexes like you only have to walk around them in this area and you will see that they are all kept well. So it's not even about buying them it's about pride in our area. It's about wanting to maintain the area because we live here and our kids will grow up here and wanting to keep our area well. (Respondent N: Ringsender).

For respondent N the transience of the residents of the apartment blocks is tangible in the low standards of upkeep of some of the apartments, as compared to the rest of Ringsend. The emphasis is on the continuity of both the area and the community, now and into the future. She also makes an interesting point in relation to attachment to place, that the residents of the apartments do not have any attachment to Ringsend as place. They don't socialise or shop within the area neither do they get involved in local issues. For respondent N this is due to the transient nature of the gentrifiers themselves. This suggests that attachment to place is the main requirement for involvement in community issues. Indeed it is suggested by several respondents that it is the Ringsender's attachment to place, which ensures the survival of the community. There is a symbolic differentiation between those who are viewed as a transient population and those seen as 'real Ringsenders'. The visibility of this differentiation is expressed through the maintenance of property, through 'pride' in the upkeep and aesthetic of the area. However, what is interesting is that it is the Ringsenders who emphasise aesthetics as a signifier of material culture whereas it is the apartment complexes which are packaged and sold as a form of 'symbolic capital', (Bourdieu 1977; 1984).

For Bourdieu (1984) symbolic capital is a collection of luxury goods that declare the taste and distinction of the owner. Within 'the condition of post-modernity', the process of contemporary gentrification and post-industrial growth there has been a greater emphasis placed on urban design. According to Harvey by exploring the realms of differentiated tastes and aesthetic preferences architects and urban designers have re-emphasised a powerful aspect of capital accumulation - the production and consumption of 'symbolic capital', (1990:77). Social distinction is visible through the acquisition of symbols of

status. In Ringsend the new apartment complexes, with their emphasis on the aesthetic, are symbols of status. The acquisition and upgrading of the cottages within the area can also be viewed as symbols of status. These properties may function as symbols of status however the upkeep of the outwardly visible aspects of these properties, such as windows and doors, also functions as a symbol of community, and place, attachment for the Ringsender's. They are sites for multiple representations. Therefore within community and place there are certain symbols which are viewed as cultural forms that require interpretation. 'Unclean windows' or 'clothes hanging in front of windows' are material artefacts which act as a signifier as a lack of pride and therefore lack of commitment to the area.

#### **(7.7.1) Transience and displacement: implications for community and sustainability**

This transience and dearth of emotional contact outlined above has many implications for community and community regeneration. Firstly, there is a sense of the community being 'overwhelmed' by development:

It's huge, it's massive the amount of apartments that's going to be built, the scale of them, over the next few years and there's nothing here for the local people. In fact the Ringsenders are getting pushed out of the process altogether and removed from the area. (Respondent I: Ringsender).

As respondent I states the locals are not only excluded from these processes but are in fact being displaced. This displacement is coupled with the fact that the newer residents are not only a transient population but also a young population:

..the difference with the apartments blocks that's we're seeing here is that they're starter apartments for the majority of people and when they eventually want to have a family they will move out. So that's the difference they are not being built for families. They are not family oriented units and they're not pro-family units... which is a problem for the future then. That's what I'm saying about continuity cos when we were fighting the thirteen story one of the things that we kept emphasising was that it takes hundreds of years to develop a community, for the community to gel and for there to develop generations of families in the area. And that's what creates communities it's families. But it only takes about ten years to wipe all that out because once you start removing the children then you are breaking the continuity and then you have a set up where you have either low-income who cant afford to buy and get out and then you have the older generation who are left on their own. So the whole support mechanism is being removed. So that's what it's about maintaining that type of support mechanism. (Respondent J: Ringsender).

As previously examined there is a need for a young, educated workforce within or close to urban centres in order to facilitate the requirements of a post-industrial economy. Coupled with this is a desire to reside near the multitude of services and markets available within the city centre. These affluent workers tend to be single or couples without children, (see Chapter Four). The apartment complexes are catering for this population. They cater for a mobile transient population which is the polar opposite of the settled, generationally stable community of Ringsend.

Respondent J makes a very valid point in relation to continuity of community within the area:

...once you start removing the children then you are breaking the continuity and then you have a set up where you have either low-income who cant afford to buy and get out and then you have the older generation who are left on their own and get their once a week visit or with the mortgages now their once a month visit. So the whole support mechanism is being removed. And now it takes two incomes to pay a mortgage so the children's own families are being delayed constantly. Most people that are getting married are not having children for five or six years because they cant afford to. This is having an impact and then when they do have children there is the impact of child care costs as well because the family support mechanism, which was always in place within the community, has been removed. So it's a double whammy both for the next generation and the older generation. So that's what it's about maintaining that type of support mechanism. (Respondent J: Ringsender).

For respondent J this type of development does not induce continuity rather it has the opposite effect. This is because she argues the apartments are in effect removing the children. It is the children who ensure the survival of the community. This situation creates future problems. The result is an ageing population coupled with a loss of familial support mechanisms for this group. This is not to suggest that all family relations are or should be embedded in place rather that there should be a level of choice involved.

Respondent Q makes another valid point in relation to displacement:

All the expertise is moving out of the area as well and that's part of the problem. You get a group of kids that have gone to primary and on to secondary and even if not into third level they are beginning to stay till their leaving now which is great. They were in the Youth Club, the Football Club, the Karate Club, the Disco club or whatever and they are coming to an age now where they can now give something

back and they have to leave because there is no where for them or nothing for them. They have to go because there is no where for them; they can't stay in the area that's the problem. Their parents are living in such tight accommodation that they cant hold onto them, they have to go and everything is pushed out you know. And then those that are moving in are staying for a while and then moving on so there's no commitment to the community and this is really effecting our community and where it will be in a few years time. (Respondent Q: Ringsender).

The loss of young people from the area is also considered problematic for the continuity and survival of the community. As respondent Q explains these people have been involved in many of the organisations throughout the area and also a higher percentage of these people have also attained a higher level of education than previous generations. They have now reached an age whereby they could 'give something back' to the community but unfortunately as there is no suitable housing for them they have to move away from the area. It is this situation which he believes is really affecting the community and its continuity.

The problems associated with the focus on the building of private apartment blocks and the transience of these residents is further exacerbated by the fact that there is a lack of emphasis on social housing.

Well first of all there's been no investment in the area in forty or fifty years. The last block of houses that was built was over fifty year's ago - I mean public housing for families. (Respondent C: Ringsender).

This dearth of public housing within Ringsend, and indeed throughout Dublin, coupled with rising house prices means that many people have to move outside the area to find accommodation. Although the DDDA state that the area is undergoing development and renewal it would seem that this renewal does not adequately address key concerns of the Ringsenders. The renewal seems to focus on the building of apartment complexes and office blocks, which encourages a transient population and induces displacement. As respondent C states:

That's not renewal. They can call it what they like but it's just more accommodation at the end of the day. Short term accommodation for people, long term eyesore. They don't mix, they don't socialise, they don't have children. This

all has long term impact on our community and you can go to the states or anywhere and it's been proven that this is bad development. You're doing a very one-sided development and the whole point is it takes generations to build a community and only one generation to wipe it out...They're undermining the community by taking away its most valuable resource, which is its next generation. (Respondent C: Ringsender).

Respondent C believes that the development occurring within Ringsend cannot be termed 'renewal'. She refers to it as 'short-term accommodation'. For respondent C the development within the area is actually 'undermining the community by taking away its most valuable resource, which is its next generation'. The focus of renewal within the area is on the building of private apartments. However, this has led to the gentrification of the area and the subsequent displacement of the 'indigenous' population.

..sustainable development is about creating a family environment where people feel they want to invest in it. And also where people decide that they want to be here in twenty years that they like their home and the community and they want to stay and have their children go to the schools in this area. But if you're building the type of apartments which everybody knows will suit people for three or four years and then they will be gone and they have no intention to raise kids in those apartments well that's not sustainable development. (Respondent J: Ringsender).

By creating spaces for families respondent J believes that people will remain in the area and this will have a knock on effect. Maintaining families within the area will ensure the continuity of the community. However, she maintains that the type of building currently occurring within Ringsend is not sustainable development, as the apartments do not cater for families the bedrock of community.

The kids that have had to move out want to stay here...most definitely because the area would have a strong tradition of generation living and the children do want to live in the area, very much so. I'm not saying every child like some of them do want to take off and go further afield but there are a lot of them who do want to stay in the area and many of them can't they have to leave and that's devastating for the community. So trying to keep them here is our number one priority and then build it from there...we have to keep them definitely if we are to try and sustain our community. (Respondent I: Ringsender).

It is not the transience associated with the apartment complexes that is the main issue of concern. Rather it is the displacement of the younger generations of Ringsenders that threatens community continuity and sustainability.

The area of Ringsend is incorporated into the development plans of the DDDA. The DDDA wish to develop the docklands into a model of sustainable inner city regeneration. However, for the Ringsenders the sustainability of their neighbourhood is also dependent on the sustainability of the existing community something they feel is not adequately addressed by the urban regeneration strategy for the area:

I don't think the DDDA is focusing on the long-term implications of this development on our community. It's the same with the docklands in London they built them and they walked away. They devastated an awful lot of communities in the London area because they were only focusing on short-term... We're trying to strike some kind of balance. It's ridiculous to think like a lot of the children now have the opportunities here to go to college which was never the case here years ago and it's crazy to lose those children from our area. We bring them up and send them off to college and we should be trying to hold them children in the area. If you can sustain a community you can sustain the country community by community. They need to be focusing on communities and I know you have to look at the bigger picture but sometimes too you have to look at your building blocks, which make up the bigger picture. (Respondent H: Ringsender).

Drawing on the London experience, this respondent calls for a more balanced approach - to work towards development that also takes into account the sustainability of the community. One way in which she deems this to be possible is to make a concerted effort to retain the youth in the area. The de-industrialisation of the area left the area downgraded and the recent post-industrial development has upgraded the area once again and brought new developments into the area. However, it is necessary to ensure that this development co-exists within the area as opposed to causing displacement:

At the moment there are so many empty sites in Ringsend and Irishtown I mean compared to any other European city... There is enough space around Ringsend to hold these apartments and that's just what I see from walking around the area... This area can hold all that and we need that to sustain the city cos it has a strong community that won't be eradicated in these changes. We can't lose areas like this either because they are the building blocks of the city and we need both. (Respondent T: Gentrifier).

For respondent T the issue of sustainability is also important. For respondent T cities are diverse and are composed of a multiplicity of lifestyles. For this diversity to occur he states that 'we need people in the city'. As such he welcomes any development that encourages

people to locate within the city centre. He believes that the continuation of communities like Ringsend is just as essential to city life as the influx of new people and lifestyles associated with the apartment complexes. These sentiments are also echoed in other quotes:

...the community here is strong you can see that. There's also lots of space around here for the apartments. I hope it can all gel together I suppose and that one isn't going to push the other out. (Respondent X: Gentrifier).

Respondent X wants Ringsend to be able to sustain both the apartment complexes and the Ringsenders. The city needs to support both communities like Ringsend and the transience associated with the apartment complexes. However, if the city is to sustain this diversity then it is essential that all can co-exist and one group is not eradicated or displaced by another. The question for the community of Ringsend is to ensure the continuity of their community within the processes that are occurring within their area. The future situation would not be the displacement of one group by another, but rather the brokering of peaceful co-existence. A major objective of the DDDA is to develop the docklands into a model of sustainable inner city regeneration. This includes the integration of the newer residents and the existing communities into a city quarter. While the DDDA wish to integrate the newer residents in Ringsend with the established community it would seem that this is not occurring. However, it can be argued that this is not necessary. Both groups can live separately however, it is important that the established communities are not displaced within these processes. It is not the integration of Ringsenders and gentrifiers that will ensure community continuity but rather the continuance of the Ringsenders in the area.

## **(7.8) Conclusion**

Park (1967) suggested that the city represented a loss of community however it is clear that Ringsend represents a well-established urban community. However the transitions occurring within Dublin, in particular the shift to a post-industrial society and the

subsequent gentrification of Ringsend, are impacting on community and community regeneration. This chapter has examined the implications of these processes for 'community'.

The stories that my respondents tell show how community is constituted through the formation of social relations based on spatial association, (Byrne, 2001). These social relations are due to understandings and negotiations that have developed over time and which are rooted in place. They are also based on shared class positions. Community for the Ringsenders is multi-layered and is sustained by, and helps to sustain, place. It is also a rich source of social capital and a source of identity and identification.

A major part of the restructuring of place in Ringsend is through the construction of apartment complexes that serve to provide accommodation for a young, educated workforce. These have little attachment to Ringsend as place or to the community that exists within the area. As such we have seen the emergence of different types of communities and these are less bounded than those of the past. As Delanty states:

*The communicative ties and cultural structures in the contemporary societies of the global age – as opposed to in industrial and traditional societies – have opened up numerous possibilities for belonging, based on religion, nationalism, ethnicity, lifestyle and gender. It is in this world of plurality rather than of closure that the new kinds of community are emerging, (2003: 187).*

The processes occurring within Ringsend have opened up the possibility for the emergence of new forms of social relationships, communities and possibilities for belonging. The apartment complexes are physically and socially separated from the surrounding area. They are the spatial expression of the social division that is evident within the area. The walls that surround these complexes isolate them from not only Ringsend as place but also from the community that exists within place. The apartment complexes within Ringsend can be characterised as new representations of place and new forms of identification with place. They also represent differing forms of community. Although 'community', defined by spatial proximity and spatial association, is only present within the gated communities

in Ringsend in terms of recognition other forms of social networks exist which are not necessarily embedded in Ringsend. The forms of networks and 'communities' that exist within the apartment complexes differ to the everyday understanding and practice of community by the Ringsenders. However, the lack of attachment to place that exists within the apartment complexes, and among some of the gentrifiers who reside in the terraced housing, has a negative impact on community. Indeed my respondents have shown that attachment to place is the main requirement for involvement in community issues and which ensures the survival of the community.

A major objective of the DDDA is to develop the docklands into a model of sustainable inner city regeneration. This includes the integration of the newer residents and the existing communities into a city quarter. However, this research indicates that there are few links between the two groups and both are physically, economically and socially separated from each other. Evidence suggests the sharing of social capital between the established community and social preservationists but the latter constitute only a small constituency within the gentrifying population. Although there may be some residents who fit the profile of 'gentrifier' but seek to preserve and participate in the existing community there are many others who have no desire to involve themselves in the existing community at any level. In addition many of the newer residents, particularly those who rent within the area or who reside in the apartment complexes, can be defined as a transient population.

The transience of some of the gentrifiers has implications for the existing community in terms of the sustainability and regeneration of community. For Respondent J sustainable development 'is about creating a family environment'. Maintaining families within the area will ensure the continuity of the community. However she maintains that the type of building currently occurring within Ringsend is not sustainable development, as the apartments do not cater for families rather they encourage a transient population. This is coupled with the displacement of some of the 'original' residents. If the city is to sustain

diversity then it is essential that all groups can co-exist and one group is not eradicated or displaced by another. The question for the community of Ringsend is to ensure the continuity of their community within the processes that are occurring within their area. While the DDDA wish to integrate the newer residents in Ringsend with the established community it would seem that this is not occurring. However, it can be argued that this is not necessary. Both groups can live separately however, it is important that the established communities are not displaced within these processes. It is not the integration of Ringsenders and gentrifiers that will ensure community continuity but rather the continuance of the Ringsenders in the area.

# Conclusion

## **Introduction**

Cities are in the process of structural transformation and intense re-generation. As a result of these processes it is argued that we are witnessing the development of new 'types' of cities defined variously as 'post-industrial', 'post-Fordist' or 'post-modern'. Understanding the implications of these changes is crucial to understanding the contemporary urban form. The city is in a constant state of flux, of destruction and renewal. However this thesis has highlighted the fact that new developments occur on sites that once encapsulated different ways of life. An examination of Ringsend indicates that the city retains fragments of urban pasts in the landscape itself. As the landscape of the city changes new spatial and social relationships are made possible. These changes also impact on the social and spatial relationships that existed in specific places. It is these understandings and experiences that this research has aimed to capture.

The research question I choose to look at was 'what are the implications of post-industrial growth at the level of place, Ringsend, in Dublin?' My topic of inquiry concerned the general transformation of Ringsend, in particular the process of gentrification, in the context of post-industrial growth in Dublin. From my research question, three sub themes have emerged: What are the implications for place within these processes? How is the process of gentrification manifested in Ringsend and what are the implications of this process? What are the implications of these processes in terms of 'community'? This chapter aims to draw my analysis of these issues together and to present my findings.

## **Analysis/Findings**

While each of the chapters in this research offers a detailed conclusion this section aims to highlight the main points of these analyses and the findings that this research reveals. These issues will be examined in four separate sections. Section one will examine the

theoretical context within which this research is located and an overview of Dublin's and Ringsend's changing landscapes. The following sections will explore the analyses and findings that this qualitative research project has generated. The main question that these sections will explore is 'how does a sociological analysis of Ringsend contribute to an understanding of contemporary changes?'

**Shaping the city: an analysis of the processes that shape the landscape of the city in general and Dublin and Ringsend in particular.**

**Theoretical context:**

***Changing cityscapes***

While cities are shaped by a diverse set of processes through an examination of successive configurations and 'phase shifts' (Byrne, 2001) of capitalism Chapter One explored the fact that economic systems have a *crucial* impact on city forms and their social geography. The process of industrialisation produced distinct urban landscapes. During industrialisation the inner city became predominately the domain of the working-classes. These working-class communities depended on the industries that existed in these areas. Their relationship to the means of production helped to define identity, identification and the socio-spatial relationships that developed in place.

Since the 1980s there has been a growing body of international literature highlighting the fact that contemporary cities, within the metropolitan core of capitalism, are in the process of structural transformation or 'transition', (Byrne 2001; Harvey 1990; Castells 1996, 1989; Fainstein 1996; Crook et al. 1994; Sassen 1991; Harvey and Scott 1989). Although there is a general consensus that this transition is occurring there are fundamental differences concerning the form this is taking. This is often referred to variously as post-industrial (Byrne 2001; Kumar 1995; Rose 1991; Bell 1973, 1971), post-Fordist (Amin 1994; Harvey 1987, 1990; Lash and Urry 1987) or post-modern (Kumar 1995; Featherstone 1991; Baudrillard 1988; Jameson 1984).

Although many theorists examine economic, social and cultural shifts separately, while admitting to an elective affinity between them, this research has argued that it is necessary to connect these directly. This research has highlighted the key points of intersection between these approaches. The recent rise in information technology, decline in manufacturing, increased flexibility, changing lifestyles, differentiation and consumption patterns are some of the key characteristics that are highlighted. Agency, lifestyle choice and difference also feature strongly in all accounts. Although 'choice' is a characteristic of emerging trends it must also be noted that the level of 'choice' is greater for some groups than others. The contemporary gentrification of Ringsend highlights this point. As there are key points of intersection between the 'posts' this research incorporated these processes under the title post-industrial growth. Post-industrial capitalism is both an economic system and a social and cultural system.

These shifts have facilitated the emergence of a service class of highly paid workers often referred to as the 'new-middle classes'. This factor is salient within the context of this research project. These new-middle classes of white-collar workers are young, innovative and highly skilled and they are the groups who are working in the high paid sectors of the post-industrial economy. This research has examined the fact that for these groups cities are both their workplaces and the stages for their cosmopolitan lifestyles.

Although there are many spatial implications involved in the shift to a post-industrial society this thesis has highlighted one major trend, which is the renewed importance of urban centres of competitive capitalist cities. In these shifts cities and city-regions are both crucial for national economic growth and also are becoming crucial nodes within the global economy. To attract post-industrial investment and to facilitate the new-middle classes that this private investment requires cities need to develop as attractive locations. This involves intense regeneration and a re-imagining of the city. The city must also provide suitable accommodation for these groups. This has been accounted for by an increase in

apartment complexes, or 'gated communities' within the inner city resulting in the gentrification of many previously industrial areas. It is within this transformation that Dublin's changing landscape, and the contemporary gentrification of Ringsend, is located.

### *Contemporary gentrification*

It is within the prefix of 'post' that contemporary gentrification is located. Alongside the growing body of international literature relating to the transition of the city there has also been a growing body of international literature concerning the gentrification process, (Brown-Saracino, 2004; Zukin 1987, 1991; Zukin and Kosta, 2004; Slater, 2002; Corcoran, 1998; Smith 1996; Ley, 1996, 1987, 1980; McGuigan 1996; Marcuse 1995; Morley and Robins 1995; Robins 1993; Strassoldo 1992; Zukin 1991; Thrift 1987; Smith and Williams, 1986; Hamnett, 1984; Glass 1964). Research on gentrification initially concentrated on documenting its extent and speculating on its consequences for reversing urban decline and suburbanisation. Theories were broadened to highlight either the underlying dynamic of economic restructuring or cultural trends. More recent literature highlights the fact that gentrification is a specific form of urban renewal aimed at accommodating the young, highly skilled, innovative workers of the new information age.

While gentrification initially became a means of addressing the decline of many inner city areas this research has argued that this process is now fully integrated into wider global urban restructuring. Gentrification was once closely allied to the acquisition and upgrading of existing housing stock within traditional working-class neighbourhoods. However, this research highlights that contemporary gentrification also involves purpose built construction. This includes the construction of office buildings employing thousands of professionals and the construction of large-scale apartment complexes, or 'gated communities', to accommodate these workers. It is a re-population of urban space that fits image and needs of contemporary post-industrial cities. I argue that contemporary gentrification is a key feature of post-industrial growth.

According to Smith, gentrification has become a key theoretical and ideological battleground between those stressing culture, individual choice, consumption and consumer demand on one side and others emphasising the importance of capital, class and the impetus of shifts in the structure of social production, (1996:41). My research highlights the need to integrate economic and cultural analysis however, the shift to a post-industrial economy is a crucial factor in the contemporary gentrification of Ringsend. In light of conflicting theories and debates Lees (2000) argues for a need to move the gentrification debate forward by what she calls the new 'geography of gentrification'. Indeed the complexity of the process in Ringsend also highlights this point. Lees (2000) argues that we need to consider processes of gentrification in the context of urban policy. In Ireland urban regeneration policies can be linked to the gentrification of certain inner city areas, in Dublin and elsewhere. Ringsend is one such area.

### **Ireland/Dublin/Ringsend in context**

#### ***Ireland***

This research highlights the fact that the Irish economy conforms to Bell's analysis of post-industrial society and theories of the 'information society'. However Chapter Two highlighted the fact that post-industrial growth in Ireland has not produced a more equal society rather the trend is towards growing inequality and polarisation. As such the claim to greater equality and the end of 'class' society is unfounded.

Theories of post-industrial society examine the movement from an industrial to a post-industrial society however Ireland does not fall neatly into this pattern. Ireland seems to have skipped the heavily industrialised stage that characterised much of the development of other Western countries. Ireland has not gradually moved from an industrial to a post-industrial society rather the country seems to have 'leapt' into a post-industrial phase in a relatively short space of time. Ireland's shift to a post-industrial economy is the culmination of a series of government policies that aimed to attract high-tech foreign

investment, our young educated workforce and our position as an export platform to Europe. According to O'Hearn (2002) it was increasing international trade which enabled Ireland's post-industrial growth. However, according to Ó Riain (2000) the policies put in place to attract these firms have also helped to develop an indigenous software sector, which also is responsible for Ireland's emerging post-industrial economy. How Ireland and 'Irishness' is constructed has also changed during this phase of economic success. In particular Dublin is being sold as a post-industrial, vibrant and cosmopolitan city.

There are many elements of the condition of post-modernity (Harvey, 1990) that are evident within Irish society. It is argued that allegiance to brand names has replaced allegiances to locality. This shift represents a move towards to more privatised forms of identity formation. However, this research has argued that within these shifts there is also a movement towards a renewed importance of place and collective identity for those who may not fit, or may not want to fit, the desired image of the post-modern man/woman. In Ireland at present there are increased struggles within certain neighbourhoods like Ringsend over attachment to and ownership of 'place'. I argue this is a means to ensure the survival of particular places that are being impacted upon within these transitions.

### ***Dublin***

Ireland's recent transformations can be placed within the context of the transitions associated with a shift to a post-industrial economy. Within these shifts Dublin's landscape has changed at a dramatic pace. The restructuring of the global economy is particularly visible within the urban landscape. General processes of change impact globally however, outcomes vary at a local level. Dublin's changing landscape offers a particular case study of how global processes impact on a particular city.

Dublin's cityscape is continually changing and various stages of economic development are visible within its landscapes. However, in recent years Dublin's landscape has changed at a dramatic pace as it reflects, and is defined by, its position within the global network of

accumulation. Much of the growth within the Dublin region is based on what can be termed 'knowledge industries'. Dublin is at present undergoing a shift to a post-industrial landscape. However, the case study of Dublin highlights a number of important factors in relation to the transitions that are occurring. This research has argued that within advanced capitalist countries post-industrial growth has seen the city emerge as the driving force behind social and economic change. Dublin's changing landscape highlights this point. As a European gateway and capital city contemporary Dublin is both the engine for Ireland's growth and a cosmopolitan city that caters to the tastes and needs of global finance, the ruling elites and new middle-classes. However, this research has argued that to understand contemporary Dublin and the implications of recent economic developments for inner city working-class communities it is necessary to see these developments in the context of previous dis-investment in these areas.

Although Dublin was never heavily industrialised to the degree of British and other European industrial regions the inner city was a location for some important manufacturing functions. The inner city and dockland areas relied on the availability of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled manual labour. The working-class communities within the inner city also relied on this industrial base. Their way of life and identity was connected to the industries that had existed. Dublin's industrial base has been constantly eroded leading to severe urban decline. The degradation of the inner city was due to a number of factors which include: de-industrialisation and global economic re-structuring, rationalisation, job losses due to technological innovations, plant closure due to foreign competition following Ireland's entry into the EEC, the depression of the 1980s and unfavourable government policies. (See MacLaren, 1999). The statistics examined in Chapter Two highlight that de-industrialisation in the inner city was accompanied by rising unemployment and severe population decline. These trends show a pattern of urban dis-investment, de-centralisation

and suburbanisation. All of these trends were extremely hard on inner city communities like Ringsend.

These patterns of decline and dis-investment are indicative of economic restructuring and it is clear that global influences began to manifest themselves in Dublin's changing landscape. Both the public and private sectors showed little interest in investing in the inner city and particularly in the dockland areas. By the mid 1980s the inner city had become a symbol of urban decline and social deprivation. Working-class communities that had previously enjoyed secure industrial work were now faced with the loss of this employment and the reality that economic restructuring meant that this type of employment was unlikely to return to the inner city.

Dublin's changing landscape also highlights the fact that in Dublin government intervention was necessary in order to halt inner city decline. This intervention came about through Urban Renewal Schemes. The response of the government in terms of Urban Renewal Schemes shows how Smith's 'rent gap thesis' is not sufficient on its own to indicate re-investment in Dublin's inner city. Investment was initially enticed into the inner city by government policies. Under these tax incentive schemes many of the areas that have been designated for renewal are inner city locations. These areas are crucial to economic growth within the shift to a post-industrial society therefore this research highlights the fact that within Dublin it is clear that government planning is playing a major role within contemporary transformations. However, government policies alone cannot account for the amount of re-investment that followed and the economic 'boom' that accompanied this. Post-industrial growth also assured that re-investment would be profitable. It is a combination of favourable government policies and post-industrial growth that saw capital return to Dublin's inner city.

During the 1990s Dublin went through a process of renewal and re-invention and an unprecedented period of economic 'boom'. Dublin accounts for a large proportion of the

population in the country as well as half the national output and two out of every five jobs in the country. So it must be remembered that Dublin is an enormously important driver for the whole economy and Ireland's positioning globally, (Quinn, 2006: 5). This highlights the importance of city regions in the context of post-industrial growth. Dublin as Ireland's global centre has been very successful at attracting post-industrial foreign direct investment. Dublin's changing landscape is an example of the renewed importance of urban centres and the fact that cities must compete for the attraction of global finance. Those cities that can attract the leading MNC's in the post-industrial sectors of the economy will benefit the most.

Along with attracting global financial investment it is also necessary to attract, and facilitate the young, qualified workforce that this private investment requires. As examined this workforce is composed of the 'new' middle-class and for this group cities are both their workplaces and the stages for their cosmopolitan lifestyles. In order to attract the necessary young, qualified workforce and to create a vibrant climate Dublin began a process of re-imaging, re-invention and renewal. In many cases these workers desire to reside within the city centre in order to be close to their places of work as well as to specialised shops, restaurants etc. Dublin also had to cater to the tastes and post-modern sensibilities of these workers. Dublin changing landscape highlights an important fact that economic expansion within the context of post-industrial growth involves internal differentiation of already developed urban spaces. These processes show how capitalism uses space as a strategy for growth and how, in Dublin, this expansion is aided by government policies.

As Dublin has been renewed as a desirable location in which to live there has also been a renewed importance attached to building desirable accommodation within or close to the city centre. Within the context of post-industrial growth apartments in inner city Dublin have begun to appear in increasing numbers. The emphasis within Dublin City is on the

building of private 'gated communities' and again tax incentive schemes were used in many areas to encourage investment. This highlights the fact that contemporary gentrification has become a key feature of post-industrial growth.

This research has also highlighted the fact that the tax driven 1990s apartment schemes are mostly composed of one-bedroom units and are therefore not conducive to family living. It is estimated that eight out of ten of new residents within Dublin are either single or couples without children, (Dublin City Council). This impacts on the communities that lived in these areas as well as having a detrimental effect on community re-generation. It is clear that the shift to a post-industrial society is not unproblematic. In addition '...the expansion in service employment between 1961 and 1996 was entirely accounted for by the professional and personal services sectors', (Punch, 2004: 5). This reflects the tendency within contemporary urban restructuring towards a polarised occupational structure. The trend within inner city, previously industrial areas, is towards a loss in manufacturing employment and a growth in high paid professional services and relatively lower paid personal service employment. This is reflected in the statistics for Dublin City set out in Table 2.1.

Since the 1990s post-industrial growth in Dublin has been accompanied by an increase in population. What is interesting for this thesis is that the inner city is being repopulated by a different class of resident. Studies show that the majority of new residents within the inner city are middle-class, (MacLaren et al. 1995). Of the 250,330 total persons in the labour force in Dublin City 21,881 are manufacturing workers, 22,897 are service workers while 45,305 are professional, technical and health workers and a further 52,742 are clerical, managing and government workers. (Source: Central Statistics office, Census 2002, *Occupations*, table 2A). This is in direct contrast to the working-class populations that previously dominated these spaces.

The transition to a post-industrial society has produced new dimensions of inequality and dominance. It has been argued that urban renewal within Dublin didn't address the structural problems of economic change for inner city communities rather it was an approach which offered fiscal incentives to encourage private investment. (see Drudy and Punch, 2000). Many of the areas in which the new apartment blocks are being built and in which the new middle-classes are moving into are formerly working-class areas. These areas have been transformed to allow middle-classes access and in order to encourage them to locate within the city centre. It is clear that the process of gentrification is occurring within Dublin's inner city where the 'gated community' has become a dominant feature in the landscape. 'Gated communities' are a typical feature of post-industrial landscapes and a particular feature of 'renewed' inner city locations. As the case of Dublin has showed government policies have actually aided this process and this needs to be taken into consideration for a fuller understanding of contemporary urban renewal and contemporary gentrification. This form of gentrification differs to older forms of gentrification, which involved the acquisition and upgrading of existing housing stock. However this research argues it is best to consider them as part of the same process as these new residential spaces differ from the older physical and social fabric of the inner city. As these new developments are juxtaposed with the older working-class housing and public housing flat complexes the lines of division are more marked.

### ***Ringsend***

A major consequence of the transformation of Dublin within the context of post-industrial growth has been a surge in gated communities within the inner city and the gentrification of working-class areas. Ringsend is one such inner city area, which has experienced industrialisation, de-industrialisation and post-industrial gentrification. This local area case study provides a more nuanced account of the patterns of development and the implications of this for a particular working-class neighbourhood. General processes of

capital accumulation impact more or less everywhere. However, the precise implications and outcomes of these processes are mediated locally. Ringsend offers an important case study of how these general processes impact at a local level. Ringsend also highlights the implications of changing global economic structures at the level of place.

This research has highlighted the fact that contemporary changes in Ringsend need to be examined against the historical development of the area as it the contrasting landscapes that highlight the implications of the processes occurring. The identity of Ringsend as 'place' and of the identity of the Ringsender's themselves is deeply rooted in its historical development. Ringsenders have a very proud working-class identity which one respondent described as being 'similar to the mining communities in England'. This strong working-class identity developed around its industrial development.

As examined in detail in Chapter Four Ringsend's development is marked by a series of industrial development and decline. However, from the 1970s Ringsend has undergone a process of de-industrialisation, which was devastating for this inner city community. Unemployment rose and this was followed by a decline in population within the area a steady degradation of the built environment. The decline of Ringsend shows the devastating effects on some areas of the restructuring of the global economy.

In recent years Ringsend has attracted considerable private investment due to its close proximity to the city centre, the designation of the area for tax incentive schemes in the Urban Renewal act of 1986 and its inclusion in the DDDA. The contemporary restructuring of the global economy and the transition to a post-industrial economy in Dublin have seen this urban village not only restructured but also re-imaged and re-imagined in recent years. Ringsend's landscape is in the process of changing from one that was previously dominated by industry to one, which is now dominated by office complexes, apartment complexes and 'gated communities'. Ringsend is a place in motion. The process of contemporary gentrification is visible within the landscape. The new

developments within Ringsend are not small isolated complexes. Many complexes have been built which are large in scale and which represent a new form of urban planning within Dublin. These 'gated communities' and office complexes are indicative of the shift to a post-industrial society and their dominance within the landscape highlights the fact that it is unlikely that industrial employment will return to this area. The changes occurring are not only physical but are also economical and social. It is the physical landscape that functions as the visual expression of these shifts.

The new developments coupled with the areas changing demographics examined in Chapter Four indicate that Ringsend is undergoing a process of intense gentrification. The population of the area has risen in recent years but it is being repopulated by the young, affluent workers of the service economy. The area has been re-imaged to attract, and accommodate, these groups. The area is being packaged and sold as an upmarket urban location. These images are creating a new sense of place but this is ignoring the sense of place that previously existed and still exists within the area.

The DDDA have the responsibility of developing the dockland area and promoting the social and economic regeneration of the area on a sustainable basis. In addition it also aimed to secure the continued development of services for and in support of the financial sector of the economy. The emphasis was placed firmly on post-industrial growth within the inner city in order to avail of global economic flows. The DDDA also wish to develop the docklands into an area for people 'who wish to avail of the benefits of urban living in an attractive harbour setting'. Indeed the new developments in Ringsend can be considered 'attractive' however, these developments also highlight the growing polarisation that is evident in the area.

It is within the area of the Grand Canal Basins within Ringsend that much development is occurring. This comprises lands framing the inner and outer basins of the Grand Canal Docks, in total 38.2 acres. The DDDA owns this site and is constructing, in partnership

with the private sector, a combination of apartments, offices, shops, restaurants, pubs, hotels, leisure facilities, arts/cultural facilities and a new civic square. A large proportion of the area fronts the river Liffey, the Basins or the Dodder. As such the water has become a unique selling feature. According to the DDDA it intends to use 'the waterside context in order to create a unique sense of place'. My analysis chapters show that while endeavouring to create a 'unique sense of place' within certain parts of Ringsend this has impacted on the Ringsender's sense of place. As a result the newer residents within the area and the 'old-timers' have competing perceptions of and attachment to place.

These developments have been hugely successful from both a residential and business perspective. The place marketing of the area has played a significant role in this success. It is clear from an examination of these marketing campaigns that developers are seeking to attract a particular 'type' of customer. It is the young, professional classes that are buying and renting these apartments. The emphasis is placed on a specific way of life. However, while these complexes are being sold as located in an 'attractive harbour setting' it must be remembered that for the Ringsenders this traditional relationship to the surrounding waterways is being eroded.

The place marketing of the area is deeply connected to the place marketing of a specific way of life embedded in place but also somewhat removed from the place being sold. Ringsend is close to the city centre and as such it has become a desirable address within Dublin's shift to a post-industrial landscape. In some advertisements for the apartment complexes Ringsend itself has been omitted from the address. This would seem to imply that the area has not fully discarded its roots. It would also seem to imply that within these marketing campaigns it is not Ringsend itself that is being sold but the complexes themselves, their proximity to the city centre and a particular urban lifestyle.

The urban lifestyle evident within place marketing is one of the affluent, young professionals. This lifestyle feeds into urban growth in a post-industrial context. The new

developments within Ringsend highlight a significant factor in contemporary urban renewal that of the creation of specifically defined urban enclaves. These developments may be situated in Ringsend however they function as separate places. The aim is to develop specific urban neighbourhoods, defined by post-industrial growth, within already developed urban space. This highlights that economic expansion in the context of post-industrial growth involves the re-making and re-imaging of place. This also highlights the point that through extensive place marketing one can in effect create a demand and preference for 'gated communities'. As such cultural explanations do not fully explain the process of contemporary gentrification. These must be examined alongside urban planning and place marketing.

Ringsend as a place in motion offers a particular valid insight into the implications of contemporary shifts. It captures these shifts as they are occurring and as the landscape changes further the opportunity to explore this particular juncture may not arise again. The changes occurring in Ringsend highlight the fact that contemporary gentrification is a key feature of Dublin's post-industrial growth. It is a combination of post-industrial growth, favourable government policies and intensive place marketing that has led to the contemporary development of this area. This highlights the complex processes involved in contemporary urban renewal. While general theories of change show general trend this research has highlighted the exact nature of such trends at the level of the neighbourhood. The following sections will examine my findings in relation to the implications of post-industrial growth and gentrification in Ringsend. These will be examined under the themes: Place Matters, Gentrification Matters and Community Matters.

### **Place Matters**

The transition to a post-industrial landscape in Ringsend is impacting on place and the meaning that place holds for people. With the loss of industry came a loss of security and identity, which also impacts on place identification. These findings have shown that within

contemporary transitions previous understandings of place are being disrupted, challenged and re-structured. For some theorists (Relph, 1976; Castells, 1989; Emberley, 1989) place has become less meaningful within contemporary processes. This research has argued that 'place' has not become meaningless and social life, for many, is still anchored within specific locales. Ringsend as place has not been subsumed within a space of flows. In fact place has become an integral part of these processes as they compete for both capital and people. The marketing of place has increased as Ringsend is being packaged not only as an upmarket location but also as a way of life. Indeed, these findings indicate that place marketing has become an important factor in the regeneration of cities and also in the regeneration of specific places.

Another important finding highlights that it is not Ringsend as place that is being sold in these marketing campaigns but rather its close proximity to the city centre and therefore to post-industrial employment, social and cultural facilities. Ringsend as place matters less so for the newer population but the place that Ringsend occupies and the apartment complexes themselves are still crucial factors in post-industrial growth. This finding indicates that place itself is being re-structured in these processes and new representations of place are emerging. The marketing of Ringsend highlights the processes through which inner city living is given cultural meaning. Ringsend has been re-imagined and re-imagined for the urban professional. Ringsend's transformed image is the result of changing economics and an energetic marketing campaign. Again this attests to the importance of place.

When one looks beneath the surface of the newly constructed and packaged image a different picture emerges. Ringsend is going through a period of industrial decay and economic re-organisation. These apartment complexes and office blocks are situated on former industrial sites that once provided employment for the local working-class population. The loss of industry has economic, social and spatial implications. There is a

tension that exists between the newly constructed aesthetic image and the lives of many Ringsenders who are rendered invisible in this process. The representation of Ringsend masks the contradictions and struggles that exist in specific places that are embedded in the transition to a post-industrial place. Therefore these findings highlight that there are competing representations of place existing in the one area.

This research highlights the fact that although the statistics in relation to Ringsend treat the area as a coherent bounded entity it is clear that these boundaries are perceived differently, on the ground. Two place bound identities exist in the locale – Ringsend and South Lotts. While place has finitude i.e. boundaries, these boundaries are elastic and are sometimes re-negotiated in practice. These findings also highlight that within recent transitions other place bound identities are being created in Ringsend. The apartment complexes and in particular those developed in conjunction with the DDDA are endeavouring to create a unique sense of place within each complex. These urban enclaves represent new impressions of place within Ringsend. However these developments are built on sites that were once dominated by industry to the locals these developments represent the loss of traditional employment and the transformation of spatial and social relations that once existed with these sites. A shift has occurred in the relationship to place. For many of the Ringsenders there is a sense of a loss of ownership of place and of identity. Therefore these findings suggest that new place bound identities are being created in Ringsend that contradict previous place bound identities in the area. Perhaps in the future Ringsend will hold a number of contradictory place bound identities.

Doreen Massey asks does the notion of distinct local places make any sense at all? (1995:46). My findings suggest that the answer to this question is yes. For the Ringsenders their 'local place' is distinct, as it has developed within its own particular history. For many this history is embedded in memories of childhood and the meanings that specific sites hold for many people. For the Ringsenders there is a sense of continuity with the past,

a long-term rootedness in community that is embedded in place. In addition individual places still hold their distinctiveness as changes, although global in their impact, are mediated by local relations. However, this distinctiveness may not be constructed in the same way as it was before. For the gentrifiers Ringsend as place does not hold the same connotations. Ringsend also signifies a new landscape associated with post-industrial growth. For these groups Ringsend may not be as distinct an urban locality as it is for the Ringsenders.

For Giddens (1990) place, within modernity, has become increasingly phantasmagoric. My findings suggest that this isn't quite an accurate description of what is occurring in Ringsend. The lived experiences of people who are rooted in Ringsend indicate that despite the transformation of Ringsend as place, social relations are in many respects still dominated by 'presence'. It is clear that social relations are still fixed within a local context and these relations are informed by place and also place is constructed within these relationships.

In contrast many of the gentrifiers that have moved into Ringsend have done so because it is close to town, to their place of work or because they see it as an up and coming area. Their attachment to Ringsend differs to that of the Ringsenders. In many instances their social life and relationships are removed from local contexts. However they are involved in social networks that are removed from the place in which they live such as the gym, work, pubs and restaurants within the city centre or socialising in their homes with friends. They simply have different social circles that are not anchored in Ringsend. These findings also suggest that the newer residents in Ringsend are networks and relationships that are rooted in place just not in the places in which they live. Their social relations are not as 'removed from local contexts and thus freed from local habits' as Giddens (1990) would suggest. The emergence of new spatial relations does not necessarily imply the disappearance of place. There does seem to be new ways of constructing and understanding social relations.

They are becoming more 'stretched' but perhaps as my findings would suggest it is best to conceptualise social relations as being embedded in a multitude of places and not anchored necessarily in one over-arching place.

To imply that social meaning has evaporated from place is to treat place, in some regards, as a static concept. My findings show that place it is not a static concept but is constantly open to interpretation, contestation and change. As place is elastic it will alter with these processes but not become redundant or meaningless. Many of my respondents live their lives anchored in place and the meanings that place encapsulates. While others may at first glance seem not to be anchored in place this does not mean that place in itself holds no significance for them. Place is not produced in a singular or uniform way. The identity of spaces, and places, like the identity of individuals, are always cross cut with multiple tensions and contradictions, (Valentine, 2000:82).

According to Harvey, our subjective experience can take us into the realms of perception, imagination, fiction, and fantasy, which produce mental spaces and maps as so many mirages of the supposedly 'real' thing, (1990:203). However, is there any one 'real' meaning of place, an over-arching objective meaning? The theorists writing about an evaporation of place would seem to suggest so. Also many studies treat both space and place as possessing an objective meaning from which other perceptions are analysed. As my respondents have shown although there may be some objective qualities of place – for example Ringsend has developed from an industrial to a post-industrial landscape – place is also composed of multiple layers of subjective meanings. It is necessary to recognise the array of both objective and subjective qualities encapsulated within place and that also impacts on how place is constructed, negotiated and understood in everyday practice.

### **Gentrification Matters**

Lees (2000) suggests the need for a 'geography of gentrification' to add to the gentrification debate. My research definitely highlights not only the specificity of locality

but also the fact that the process of contemporary gentrification must also be examined within the context of changing economics. The gentrification process in Ringsend shows that capital both creates and destroys its own landscape, (Harvey, 1985). Gentrification takes two distinct forms in this area. Firstly the contemporary gentrification process associated with new construction. Secondly, the gentrification process associated with the re-valorisation of existing housing stock is also clearly visible. Therefore these findings suggest that the process of gentrification within contemporary shifts is not uniform.

The apartment complexes are visible indicators of the shift to a post-industrial society and this research indicates that they offer accommodation to those professionals who work within the expanding service sector. However, Ringsend offers an important insight into how contemporary gentrification and the re-structuring of place are linked. These complexes have been built on sites once dominated by industry and not only represent a shift to a post-industrial society but also a shift in the social and spatial relationships that were embedded in Ringsend as place. These findings indicate that the gentrification process associated with new construction is associated with a sense of loss of the landscape that signified previous employment opportunities. The places that these industries occupied were the dominant features and signifiers of place, identity and identification in previous generations. For the Ringsenders these new developments are perceived as 'out of place' because they have no relationships to these new sites. The lifestyles and economic trends they represent are not ones with which the majority of the Ringsenders can identify. As such the gentrification process is associated with a loss of 'ownership' of place. These findings highlight the complexity of contemporary gentrification.

Another way to view these new constructions is not that they appear 'out of place' rather that they occupy a divergent place, a place that is within Ringsend yet removed from Ringsend. Although the apartments are within Ringsend the complexes, what they signify and the people who reside in them are more connected to Dublin City than to Ringsend.

These new constructions are simultaneously within and disassociated from Ringsend. In this regard my research highlights the fact that the process of gentrification in the area can be seen as providing new understandings and representations of place. As such these findings provide an insight into the process of contemporary gentrification and into the restructuring of contemporary capitalist cities.

The process of contemporary gentrification associated with the apartment and office complexes shows distinction is also achieved by rendering the Ringsenders marginal, and in some cases invisible, within this gentrifying process. This is especially clear in South Lotts where there is a perception that the cottages and terraced housing are being engulfed by development. In Ringsend much new development is situated on the margins of the area. The village, the centre of Ringsend, is visibly and distinctly still the domain of the Ringsenders. This highlights the fact that gentrification is a diverse process and is specific to particular areas. These findings testify to the importance of the specificity of locality within contemporary gentrification. General theories in relation to gentrification cannot capture the diverse manifestations of this process in specific landscapes. However, while many of the apartment complexes may appear to occupy places on the margins of Ringsend this research highlights that the processes operating in the area are not marginal. The shift to a post-industrial landscape and the consequent gentrification of Ringsend are central processes that are occurring within Dublin and other cities.

The form of gentrification associated with newly constructed complexes differs in many respects to the gentrification studies discussed in Chapter Two where aestheticised consumption involves the upgrading of previous existing stock. Many theoretical debates in relation to the process of gentrification focus on 'taste' and 'culture' as a means of distinction. However, those gentrifiers who reside in the apartment complexes buy into an image, and identity, that is already constructed for them. These findings highlight that this is aestheticised consumption but of a ready-made aesthetic product. Within the re-valorised

terraced housing the emphasis on 'taste', 'distinction' and 'aesthetic' is also clear. However, unlike the residents of the apartment complexes who consume a ready-made aesthetic the gentrifiers within the terraced housing are actively involved in the construction of 'difference'.

This research adds a further dimension to our understandings of the process of gentrification in relation to the pursuit of 'taste'. Initially the process of gentrification was associated with the active construction of 'difference' by the gentrifiers. The marketing of place has appropriated this use of distinction in order to construct places of distinction that can be easily consumed as a ready-made product. The pursuit of distinction has become commodified. While the active construction of difference is still evident in Ringsend this appeals to a specific 'type' of gentrifier. The commodification of difference within the apartment complexes may appeal to a wider population. In this regard the process of contemporary gentrification has become a key feature of urban re-generation. The gentrification of the inner city is closely allied to post-industrial growth and capital accumulation and within this process the commodification of distinction has become a means of reversing urban decline.

While many studies in relation to gentrification treat it as a unified process the findings of this research indicates that the gentrification process within Ringsend is multi-faceted. There are indications of a 'first wave' of gentrification highlighted by a variant of what Ley (1996) defines as the 'new cultural class' who moved into the terraced housing in the 1990s. These gentrifiers have been attracted to Ringsend not only for aesthetic purposes but also because they wish to live in a working-class neighbourhood for a variety of reasons. They possessed relatively high cultural capital and, in comparison to more recent gentrifiers, low economic capital when first locating within Ringsend. The 'first waves' of gentrifiers within the terraced housing have more of an awareness and appreciation of Ringsend as place and of the community that exists in the area.

This research also shows that a further wave of gentrification is noticeable within Ringsend. These groups can be divided into 'moneyed gentrifiers' pursuing an urban lifestyle and 'investment gentrifiers'. 'Moneyed gentrifiers' are buying into an area that has already become an attractive location. 'Lifestyle gentrifiers' who have moved into the apartment complexes are buying into an already constructed aesthetic. These findings indicate that in relation to those 'lifestyle gentrifiers' who have moved into the terraced housing these differ to the 'new cultural class'. These gentrifiers must have greater economic capital to purchase and carry out renovation. However, this research highlights that property re-valorisation is not only about identity it is also a strategy for some owners, the 'investment gentrifier', to either increase profits on the resale of the property or to make the property more attractive for renting. This challenges cultural explanations of gentrification as a lifestyle choice. This research has defined those renting these newly purchased and re-valorised housing as 'renter gentrifiers'. Those renting within the area may be pursuing an urban lifestyle but crucially, unlike householders, they inhabit a particular aesthetic that has already been constructed. The properties may reflect their 'taste' in that they choose to live within a particular property but it is not a 'taste' that they have constructed.

The new residents within Ringsend do not view themselves as a homogenous population and neither are they perceived as such by the Ringsenders. The term gentrifier may not fit all the people who are renting within the area however, many of them work within the high paid sectors of the economy. These 'well off' renters should be seen as part of the same process of gentrification because the apartments and houses within the area have been constructed and re-valorised in order to attract them. The question arises can this process still be considered one of gentrification if all the newer residents do not fit neatly into the category of 'gentrifier'? Although some groups may be marginal to the processes occurring within the area this does not detract from the fact that demographic evidence reveals that

the majority of newer residents are professionals. It is these residents who define the process of gentrification and not those groups who are marginal to this process.

These findings make a considerable contribution to current understandings of the process of gentrification. This research highlights the fact that contemporary gentrification is a multi-faceted process and gentrifiers are not a homogenous population. In Ringsend the process of gentrification may be diverse however the process is still one of gentrification. The multitude of processes noted are all contributing to the social displacement of the working-class residents in the area. It is the newly valorised housing and apartment complexes that signify the prestige of the gentrifiers.

This research has also emphasised the fact that the gentrification of the area became an intensified process of capital accumulation with the redevelopment of the area following Dublin's recent post-industrial growth. While Zukin argues (1988) that a cultural model plays a pivotal role in subsequent waves of gentrification this commodification of culture is not visible within Ringsend. Culture is used as a selling point in that urban lifestyle is highlighted. These findings show that a main selling point however is not that the area possesses a cultural model but that it is close to the cultural model that has developed within Dublin itself. However, with the new developments occurring around the Grand Canal Basins Ringsend is developing a cultural model similar to the city centre. Unlike Zukin's (1988) observations this research indicates that Ringsend's cultural model has developed after subsequent waves of gentrification. This may initiate a further wave of gentrification in the future.

In contrast to the respondents living in the apartment complexes for those who have decided to buy existing housing stock the reasons for choosing Ringsend are more varied. This also highlights the diversity of the gentrification process. The apartment complexes represent a different conception of the gentrification process than previous studies in relation to the upgrading of existing housing stock. However, both processes are

connected. Findings suggest that within Ringsend both forms of gentrification are intrinsically linked to changing economic conditions.

An examination of demand and supply explanations for gentrification reveal that it is a combination of the two, which has produced Ringsend's changing landscape. Although the reasons cited for choosing to reside in Ringsend are more varied for those who have bought houses within the area than for those residing in the apartment complexes certain themes emerge which link both. There is an anti-suburban, pro-urban preference among the gentrifiers. Lifestyle choice, aesthetics and reflexive consumption feature in all accounts. However, the shift to a post-industrial landscape has seen capital return to the inner city and much movement is in response to this relocation. These findings indicate the necessity to combine both cultural and economic explanations for a deeper understanding of gentrification however, they also indicate the fact that changing economics plays a crucial role in the construction of the landscape.

The gentrification process in Ringsend is also part of a broader policy context, which aims to reverse the decline of inner-city areas. The policies of the government and the DDDA have been successful in revitalising Ringsend and other dockland areas however this has also resulted in the gentrification of these areas which has led to some displacement of the 'indigenous' populations and some local businesses. Again this research in Ringsend highlights the need for a 'geography of gentrification' (Lees 2000) to address the specificity of locality and the context of urban policy.

In contrast to some post-industrial theorists and post-modern arguments this research shows that class distinctions still exist. Perceptions of class divisions are salient to both Ringsenders and gentrifiers accounts of everyday life and culture in Ringsend. Findings indicate that both groups are consciously aware of a class divide. The process of gentrification is inherently class based. However, these findings highlight the fact that gentrification cannot be totally reduced to the two-class model of classical Marxism. This

is not to imply that gentrification is not inherently a class-based process because it is however, it is also more than this. There are varying degrees of class distinctiveness associated with work, incomes, consumption patterns, lifestyles and cultural capital and it is these degrees that my respondents highlight. The majority of gentrifiers are those benefiting from the shift to a post-industrial economy and are earning high incomes in order to sustain their lifestyles. These findings show that the gentrifiers, whatever position they occupy, are 'other' to the working-classes within Ringsend.

While Cameron and Coaffee (2005) argue that in most UK provincial cities the gentrification process associated with new construction on former industrial land has not resulted in displacement of an existing residential population this research highlights an important factor in relation to this. The displacement of industry has had implications in terms of employment opportunities and on the spatial and social relationships that had developed with these sites. In Ringsend the gentrification of these sites has made the area an attractive location, which in turn has impacted on the gentrification of the surrounding area resulting in direct displacement of working-class residents. These sites are no longer the domain of the working-classes they represent a new phase of capital accumulation and urban development which excludes the working-classes on many levels. This research argues that the term is still one of gentrification whether there is direct displacement or 'knock-on' displacement because the effects are the same.

There is also a demise of shops within the area and a redirecting of services to suit the needs of the changing landscape. In this regard there is a rise in the niche markets associated with the transition to both a post-Fordist and post-modern landscape. It is the new complexes surrounding the Grand Canal Basins that are providing many of these niche markets. These restaurants and shopping facilities are removed from Ringsend and designed to cater to the urban professional.

It is the voices of the displaced and those affected by this that are often rendered silent in accounts of urban regeneration. Respondents tell the stories of sons, daughters, neighbours and friends who have been displaced. This movement has many implications. These findings show that there is a sense of loss of place and also a sense of exile. For these people the changing landscape of Ringsend does not signify renewal rather it is cross cut with multiple tensions and contradictions.

### **Community Matters**

Park (1967) suggested that the city represented a loss of community however these findings contradict this view. Ringsend represents a well-established urban community. In sociological studies community has been viewed as a normative ideal, as having a transformative role, as a romantic notion of traditional society, as a moral force and as a mode of belonging and imagining social relations, (Delanty 2003). This research has examined community as 'lived experience'.

Community, for my respondents, is the familiarity that people have with their neighbours and people throughout the area. It is also a resource that people can rely on in times of need. The stories that my respondents tell show how community is constituted through the formation of social relations based on spatial association, (Byrne, 2001). These findings indicate that these social relations are due to understandings and negotiations that have developed over time and which are rooted in place. They are also based on shared class positions. Community for the Ringsenders is multi-layered and is sustained by, and helps to sustain, place. It is also a rich source of social capital and a source of identity and identification.

This research indicates that the apartment complexes in Ringsend represent a re-structuring of place. They also serve to provide accommodation for the young, affluent workers of the post-industrial economy. These groups have little attachment to Ringsend as place or to the community that exists within the area. Findings suggest that in Ringsend these new

developments signify the emergence of different types of communities and these are less bounded than those of the past. The processes occurring within Ringsend have opened up the possibility for the emergence of new forms of social relationships, communities and possibilities for belonging.

Although 'community', defined by spatial proximity and spatial association, is only present within the gated communities in Ringsend in terms of recognition other forms of social networks exist which are not necessarily embedded in Ringsend. The residents of these complexes are involved in social networks however these networks are not embedded in the places in which they live. Therefore these findings indicate that the forms of networks and 'communities' that exist within the apartment complexes differ to the everyday understanding and practice of community by the Ringsenders. The lack of attachment to place that exists within the apartment complexes, and among some of the gentrifiers who reside in the terraced housing, has a negative impact on community as understood by the Ringsenders. For the Ringsenders attachment to place is the main requirement for involvement in community issues and which ensures the survival of the community. In this regard although the apartment complexes may represent different understandings of community they also signify a loss of community in Ringsend.

A major objective of the DDDA is to develop the docklands into a model of sustainable inner city regeneration. This includes the integration of the newer residents and the existing communities into a city quarter. Findings suggest that there are no links between the two groups and both are physically, economically and socially separated from each other. Evidence suggests the sharing of social capital between the established community and social preservationists. These social preservationists fit the profile of 'gentrifier' but seek to preserve and participate in the existing community. However, they constitute only a small constituency within the gentrifying population. Findings suggest that many gentrifiers have no desire to involve themselves in the existing community at any level. In

addition many of the newer residents, particularly those who rent within the area or who reside in the apartment complexes, can be defined as a transient population.

Findings show that the transience of some of the gentrifiers has implications for the existing community in terms of the sustainability and regeneration of community. It is argued that this would only be achieved through the creation of family environments. However this research indicates that the type of development currently occurring in Ringsend is not sustainable development. The apartments do not cater for families rather they encourage a transient population. This is coupled with the displacement of some of the 'original' residents. If the city is to sustain diversity then it is essential that all groups can co-exist and one group is not eradicated or displaced by another. This research highlights that the question for the community of Ringsend is to ensure the continuity of their community within the processes that are occurring within their area. This research also suggests that contrary to the aim of the DDDA integration is not necessary. Both groups can and do live separately. However it is important for the Ringsenders that the established communities are not displaced within these processes. Importantly these findings highlight the fact that it is not the integration of Ringsenders and gentrifiers that will ensure community continuity but rather the continuance of the Ringsenders in the area.

## **Appendix One**

Mary Benson

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To the Residents of Ringsend,

My name is Mary Benson and I am currently undertaking a PhD in Sociology at NUI Maynooth. My Thesis is concerned with the changes that are currently occurring within Ringsend, that is the increase in apartment blocks and offices within the area. I am examining the implications and effects of these changes.

I am looking to talk to people who live in Ringsend on their impressions of the area. I wish to talk to people who have recently moved into the area as well as those who are from the area. These conversations will be taped however they will only be used for my own research. All information is confidential and names are not used.

I would be grateful if you would contact me on the above telephone numbers and will come to meet you whenever is convenient for you.

Yours Sincerely:

Mary Benson

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All statistics from the Central Statistics Office used in this research can be obtained from the Central Statistics Office Website: <http://www.cso.ie/>