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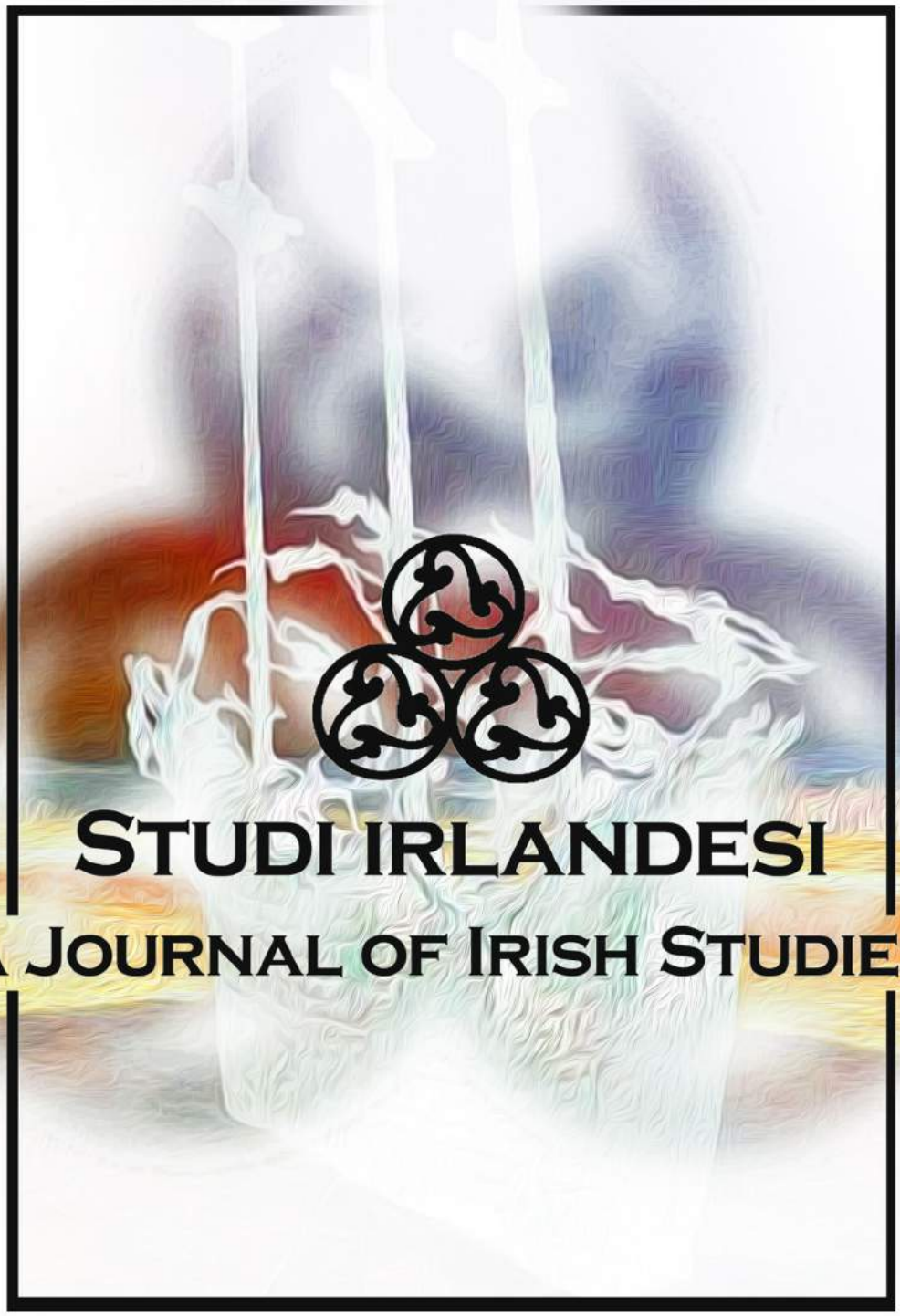

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A JOURNAL OF IRISH STUDIES

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loving memory of Mirella Billi

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Arianna Antonielli, Fiorenzo Fantaccini, Samuele Grassi

"Whose Homelands?" raccoglie i saperi, l'esperienza e l'impegno appassionato di oltre sessanta esperti di studi irlandesi e di diaspora. La mia gratitudine va ad ognuno di essi: alle autrici e agli autori dei diversi saggi, per l'entusiasmo con cui hanno contribuito allo studio di un tema attuale, fortemente sentito ed affascinante; ai lettori anonimi, puntuali, precisi e sempre generosi nel condividere le proprie opinioni e la propria conoscenza. La volontà di ricordare, e di non dimenticare, emerge tra le pagine di ogni articolo, un sentire condiviso da chi qui ha voluto interrogarsi sulla natura della diaspora irlandese, le sue origini, il suo futuro. Nel leggere i diversi contributi, nel curare la sezione monografica di *SiJIS* 9, avevo impressa nella mente la voce dei singoli autori, e per loro tramite quella delle irlandesi e degli irlandesi che hanno ispirato la raccolta e che da tempo attraversano il mare alla ricerca di una nuova casa, oltre la natìa Irlanda.

Loredana Salis

* * *

This time we wish to thank Eavan Boland and Eugenio Lucarelli for granting permission to print the poems included in Carla dePetris's essay;

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Arianna Antonielli, Fiorenzo Fantaccini, Samuele Grassi

This collection gathers the knowledge, the expertise, and the keen interest of more than sixty scholars in the field of Irish and of diaspora studies. To them all I owe a great debt. To the authors, for their contributions and enthusiastic responses throughout. To the anonymous readers, for their punctual and generous feedbacks, and for their always enriching insights. The will to remember echoes throughout the section and in each essay's view of Irish diaspora, of where it comes from and where it stands today. All along, while reading, writing and editing this monographic collection I had in mind their voices, and though their words I almost felt like I could hear the voices of Irish exiles whose narratives, dreams, desires and loss have inspired the fictions, the facts and the questions explored here.

Loredana Salis

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Tom Murphy: il trionfo del Sì alla vita, al di là del ricordo con rabbia e dell'angoscia

Rosangela Barone
Independent scholar (<rbarone0@gmail.com>)

Il drammaturgo irlandese Tom [*per* Thomas] Murphy si è spento a Dublino il 15 maggio 2018. Il degno tributo alla sua grande figura umana ed artistica è stato rappresentato dalla cerimonia funebre laica tenutasi nella mattinata del successivo giorno 19 nella Round Room della Mansion House, sede storica della Capitale: lì, il 21 gennaio 1919, si radunò il primo *Dáil* (termine gaelico tuttora usato per "Parlamento") dell'Irlanda repubblicana (a leggere il Proclama della Repubblica nel 1916, dai gradini del General Post Office di Dublino, era stato Padraig Pearse, Capo dell'Insurrezione di Pasqua soffocata nel sangue dalle forze imperialistiche britanniche).

Dal grande schermo sulla parete frontale della sala gremita dominava la fotografia in bianco e nero di Tom Murphy, il cui feretro era posizionato nel corridorio centrale, dinanzi al podio. Fintan O'Toole, autorevole opinionista dell'*Irish Times* e autore del volume *The Politics of Magic – The Work and Times of Tom Murphy* (1987), venuto espressamente da New York appena appreso della morte del drammaturgo amico, ha tenuto l'elogio funebre. Il Presidente della Repubblica d'Irlanda, Michael D. Higgins (per gli Irlandesi Michael D.), nel suo discorso ha dato spazio al ricordo commosso delle sue fitte conversazioni con l'artista, fatte di sottili disquisizioni, feroci battute, affettuose confessioni, gustose risate e tanta musica. La "voce" della famiglia Murphy è risuonata, penetrante, attraverso le parole della vedova (seconda moglie), Jane Brennan, e della giovanissima nipote (dal primo matrimonio), Molly Murphy. La parte dominante della cerimonia è stata riservata a stralci da drammi di Tom Murphy recitati da grandi attori a suo tempo protagonisti di quelle *pièces* teatrali e a brani musicali a lui più cari, eseguiti da musicisti e cantanti di fama. A suggello della manifestazione, è echeggiata la voce di Beniamino Gigli nella memorabile interpretazione di "O Paradiso", dall'opera *Vasco de Gama (L'Africaine)* di Giacomo Meyerbeer.

Ho avuto il privilegio di partecipare a quella significativa cerimonia pubblica, dopo aver tributato l'ultimo saluto personale a Tom nella sua dimora nel quartiere di Rathgar ed aver espresso il mio cordoglio alla cara Jane, che conosco da anni, e agli altri familiari raccolti attorno a lui.

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Il mio rapporto di affettuosa stima con Tom Murphy risale a più di quarant'anni fa (meno vetusto di quello col poeta Seamus Heaney). Di entrambi porto con me – oltre all'impatto del loro genio artistico – il ricordo di tante stimolanti conversazioni, in cui la loro presenza s'imponeva per la profondità delle osservazioni (esaltata dalle significative pause), la voce (bassa e "incassata" quella di Heaney, tenorile e "spiegata" quella di Murphy), l'umorismo (sottile quello dell'uno, tranciante quello dell'altro). Presenza che s'imponeva ma in modo "orizzontale", non gerarchico, perché a muoverli era il genuino interesse nei confronti di chi era in ascolto, qualunque ne fosse l'età (corridoio privilegiato per i giovani), il livello culturale, la provenienza: le loro stimolazioni a intervenire nel discorso scioglievano con naturalezza le remore anche del più timido ascoltatore, aggiungendo fascino alla loro forza affabulatoria. Così, l'incontro con Seamus e Tom (via i titoli, via i cognomi) diventava subito *convivium* e, di lì, si andava avanti senza badare allo scorrere delle lancette dell'orologio; con Tom, poi, si finiva sempre in musica: era lui ad aprire il repertorio con la sua bella voce tenorile, chiara e ben impostata (come James Joyce, era un mancato cantante lirico; diceva sempre che avrebbe voluto essere Beniamino Gigli) e si cantavano melodie vecchie e nuove, ballate popolari e brani d'opera lirica (arrossisco ancora al ricordo dei miei miseri contributi canori rispetto alle aspettative legate alla mia provenienza italiana)! Immancabile nel repertorio lirico di Tom: "O Paradiso".

In Italia il nome di Tom Murphy, morto a 83 anni, non ha la notorietà di cui gode Seamus Heaney (vincitore del Premio Nobel per la Letteratura 1995, spentosi nel 2013, all'età di 77 anni), eppure si tratta del talento irlandese che, a partire dagli anni '60, con Brian Friel, ha portato l'Irlanda nel Gotha nel teatro mondiale e, oltre ad essere stato insignito di varie onorificenze, tra cui il prestigioso titolo di *Aesdána* (4.9.2017), ha passato validamente il testimone ad una nuova generazione di drammaturghi (penso a Frank McGuinness, Marina Carr, Martin McDonagh). Per questo, ed anche per una ragione personale che spiegherò a conclusione del mio *excursus*, sento l'obbligo di presentarne un profilo per i lettori italiani, dopo quello – succinto – da me pubblicato da *La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno* il 16.6.2018 (*Bloomsday*). Un tributo sentito, il mio, per quanto molto più modesto di quelli a firma degli amici Fintan O'Toole (*The Irish Times*, 19.5.2018) e Declan Kiberd (*The Sunday Times*, 20.5.2018) – entrambi, in tempi diversi, ospiti della Facoltà di Lingue e letterature straniere dell'Università di Bari, allorquando vi insegnavo Inglese e dirigevo il *Theatre Workshop*.

Fig. 1 – Un angolo dello studio di Tom Murphy nella sua casa nel quartiere di Rathgar, Dublino 6 (18.6.2018). Foto di Rosangela Barone che ringrazia Jane Brennan per la autorizzazione

Thomas (poi, per tutti, Tom) Murphy nasce il 23 febbraio 1935 nella cittadina dell'Irlanda Occidentale chiamata Tuam, Contea di Galway, svantaggiata come il nostro Sud. Ultimo di otto figli, vede i fratelli lasciare ad uno ad uno il focolare domestico ed emigrare in Inghilterra per cercare lavoro. Dopo la debita qualificazione, egli insegna metalmeccanica nelle scuole tecniche del paese natale, distante un 200 chilometri dalla capitale e, comunque, relativamente grande rispetto alla media dei centri urbani rurali irlandesi, ritmato da addii e benvenuti e poi ancora addii (emigranti che vanno ed emigrati che tornano *ma* per ripartire al termine delle ferie trascorse con parenti e amici, tra pareti domestiche e *pub*). Egli si sente comunque gratificato dal rapporto con gli studenti e i colleghi, dalle chiacchierate con i concittadini d'ogni ordine e grado, in particolare dal coinvolgimento nella Società Drammatica locale (uno dei tanti gruppi amatoriali fiorenti nell'isola): a dispetto del significato del toponimo originale (in gaelico Tuaim significa Tumulo

sepolcrale), per Tom la sua Tuam resta sempre "la Metropoli" (con quel microcosmo, potente forgia del suo inconfondibile linguaggio drammaturgico, egli continuerà a mantenere rapporti di grande familiarità anche quando si trasferirà altrove, e fino alla fine dei suoi giorni).

Grazie al gruppo teatrale locale, Tom scopre autori del teatro internazionale e la propria inclinazione alla scrittura drammaturgica. Assieme all'amico Noel O'Donoghue s'imbarca nella stesura di un testo teatrale, ma con l'adamantino proposito: "Niente ambientazione tra le pareti di una cucina" (pane quotidiano distribuito *in primis* dall'Abbey Theatre, Teatro Nazionale Irlandese). Il dramma, scritto a due mani nel '59, esce col titolo – a un tempo provocatorio e profetico – *On the Outside* (l'opera sarà trasmessa da Radio Éireann nel 1962). Segue la stesura di un testo teatrale in proprio, *A Whistle in the Dark*, che egli invia al Direttore dell'Abbey Theatre, Ernest Blythe, ma per vederselo respingere con lo stigma che la famiglia protagonista del dramma non riflette la realtà irlandese: "The Carneys couldn't exist".

A Whistle in the Dark è un dramma in 3 atti ambientato tra le pareti domestiche di una famiglia irlandese emigrata a Coventry (tutti maschi, tranne Betty, la moglie inglese del primogenito, Michael): emarginati semidelinquenti, che sfogano le proprie frustrazioni dandosi all'alcol ed interagendo con violenza verbale e fisica; Michael fa di tutto per stabilire un modo "civile" di stare insieme, si sforza di essere l'opposto del padre, irresponsabile e fannullone (il vero cancro della famiglia), ma sarà proprio lui, nel vortice di una rissa più furibonda delle altre, ad uccidere Des, il più giovane dei fratelli. Tra scene di crudo naturalismo e sospensioni che rimandano alla tragedia greca, colloquialismi irlandesi ed echi ibseniani, *A Whistle in the Dark* scava nella psiche (del maschio irlandese soprattutto) e, senza alcuna presunzione moralistica, sfida la società di appartenenza invitandola ad un'onesta analisi dei propri connotati e all'assunzione delle proprie responsabilità. Attraverso *A Whistle*, Murphy tenta di decostruire il mito della "età dell'oro" pre-coloniale caro ai Revivalisti e propinato sistematicamente dall'*establishment*: quello dell'Irlanda "terra di santi e di poeti" trucemente violentata dall'imperialismo britannico: il drammaturgo provoca senza mezzi termini i potenziali spettatori, parte del gregge ammaestrato dal potente bastone pastorale della Chiesa cattolica irlandese. Si spiega, a questo punto, il rigetto da parte di Blythe e la conseguente decisione di lasciare l'Irlanda da parte dell'esordiente artista di Tuam: sulla scia dei suoi fratelli, egli emigrerà in Inghilterra; tenterà la fortuna nel contesto teatrale inglese, dove spira aria nuova a seguito della svolta determinata dal *Look Back in Anger* di John Osborne (1956).

A Whistle in the Dark esordisce nel 1961 al Theatre Royal, Stratford East, creando grande scalpore, e, subito dopo, approda nel West End di Londra. A portarlo al successo è la Compagnia Theatre Workshop diretta da Joan Littlewood, nota per il suo modo nuovo di fare teatro: improvvisazione, riscrittura del testo nel corso delle prove, allestimenti teatrali in spazi non canonici

per renderli disponibili alla classe operaia. Quella rappresentazione teatrale ha un effetto seminale su giovani drammaturghi inglesi quali Pinter, Wesker, Bond; a sua volta, l'esperienza condivisa col Theatre Workshop della Littlewood risulta seminale per il drammaturgo irlandese, che trova quell'ambiente a sé congeniale e si sente incoraggiato a seguire la propria inclinazione artistica: quell'esperienza lo aiuta a decidere che si dedicherà al teatro a tempo pieno.

Nel 1968 – sette anni dopo il debutto londinese – Murphy ha la soddisfazione di vedere due suoi nuovi drammi rappresentati a Dublino: *Famine* al Peacock Theatre (sala teatrale piccola dell'Abbey, che intanto ha cambiato Direzione) e *The Orphans* al Gate Theatre; segue, a distanza di un anno, *A Crucial Week in the Life of the Grocer's Assistant* all'Abbey Theatre.

Il tema – ossessivo – dell'emigrazione trova in *Famine* la sua espressione più intensa e struggente: l'atto unico in 12 scene, agli antipodi dal crudo Naturalismo di *A Whistle in the Dark*, propone in chiave espressionista e in un linguaggio icastico da tragedia greca quel fenomeno epocale che va sotto il nome di "Great Famine" e che, tra il 1845 e il 1850, cambiò per sempre i connotati dell'Irlanda. La causa naturale fu la *Phytophthora infestans*, che, nel 1945 e poi recidivamente, distrusse il raccolto delle patate, l'alimento primario (anzi unico) dei "servi della gleba" irlandese (cattolica), e si tradusse in morte per fame e conseguenti malattie, ma anche in emigrazione di dimensioni bibliche, da cui la popolazione dell'isola uscì dimezzata. Ispirandosi a quella catastrofe naturale, nell'atto unico ambientato – come tempo – tra l'autunno 1846 e la primavera 1947 e – come spazio – a Glenconor, villaggio di poche anime preso nel giro esiziale della catastrofe naturale, la penna di Murphy incide in profondità, con nettezza da bisturi, il corpo socio-politico-culturale del Paese che gli ha dato i natali e, con onestà intellettuale, senza moralismi, scava nel "cuore di tenebra" degli uomini e delle donne d'Irlanda per esporne i mali: se, per via della peronospora, la natura s'accanì crudelmente contro la povera gente dell'isola, alla magnitudine di quella catastrofe epocale – denuncia Murphy, andando controcorrente rispetto all'unanime versione revisionista – contribuirono anche le scelte politiche delle istituzioni del tempo e l'incapacità dei nativi colonizzati a dare voce "strutturata" ai propri bisogni, a "gridare" il proprio diritto alla sopravvivenza. In *Famine*, il gesto umanitario di John Connor, erede del *clan* di Glenconor (nel toponimo, una sola "n") risulta ancor più eroico nella sua inanità perché dettato dall'istinto alla sopravvivenza: Conor *sente* che la vita deve continuare, nonostante la devastazione, nonostante la disperazione. E qui la penna-bisturi si fa penna-piuma, andando a toccare le corde più profonde della nostra umanità. Il finale di *Famine* – suggestiva parabola per i tempi moderni – rimanda a quello di *Riders to the Sea* di John M. Synge, che aveva debuttato all'Abbey Theatre nel 1904 – icastica tragedia greca dei tempi moderni – ma non all'insegna dell'accettazione del destino richiamata da Maurya, la donna a cui il mare ha strappato marito e figli, nel finale del dramma synghiano:

MAURYA: Michael has a clean burial in the far north, by the grace of the Almighty God. Bartlet will have a fine coffin out of the white boards, and a deep grave surely. What more can we want than that? No man at all can be living for ever, and we must be satisfied.
She kneels down again and the curtain falls slowly. (Synge 1962, 30)

L'ultima (XII) scena del *Famine* murfiano si apre sulla figura solitaria di John Connor: il personaggio a un tempo patetico e carismatico – *silouette* nello sfondo, in cima a un'altura – ha in mano una pagnotta di pane, prende a chiamare gli altri per dare la notizia che è arrivato qualcosa da mangiare, ma si accorge di essere circondato da morti; man mano che l'illuminazione s'intensifica, si coglie la figura di Maeve, la figlia sedicenne di John, affranta davanti ai resti di Mickeleen O'Leary; entra in scena il giovane Liam Dougan, uno dei pochi sopravvissuti, che le offre un pezzo di pane. Questo il finale della XII scena, intitolata "The Springtime", che chiude, emblematicamente, il dramma:

LIAM offers the bread to her again.
MAEVENo, there's nothing of goodness or kindness in this world for any one. But we'll be equal to
it yet.
LIAM Well, maybe it will get better.
MAEVENo.
LIAM And when it does we'll be equal to it too.
He puts the bread into her hands. She starts to cry. (Murphy 1977, 87)

Il pianto della giovane che prende il pane tra le mani è barlume di speranza, segno di attaccamento alla vita a dispetto di qualsiasi sventura. È questo il filo rosso che tiene saldamente legati tutti i drammi di Tom Murphy, al di là della eterogeneità delle sue "esplorazioni" tematiche e tecniche. La "kindness" richiamata da Maeve rimanda in qualche modo a "the milk of human kindness" del *Macbeth* shakespeariano, che è ben più della "gentilezza" (il lemma italiano non ha la portata del lemma inglese con radice: *kin*, che sta per "legame familiare", rapporto umano attraverso la carne, insomma sangue che ci unisce, calore della vita: la vita, che – per Murphy – va vissuta, qualunque sia lo scotto che ognuno di noi paga).

Procedendo nell'*iter* biografico dell'artista di Tuam, nel 1970 egli decide di riattraversare il Mar d'Irlanda e stabilirsi a Dublino. Nella sua isola i tempi sono ancora duri per il teatro, ma il drammaturgo della Contea di Galway non tarda ad affermarsi come artista di primo piano; assieme a lui si affermano Brian Friel, uomo del Donegal, e John B. Keane, uomo del Kerry, come lui impegnati nel dare linguaggio teatrale alle "dislocazioni" della psiche irlandese ossessionata dal ricordo del passato da rigettare. Nel 1972 Murphy entra a far

parte del Comitato Direttivo dell'Abbey (lo sarà fino al 1983); intanto continua a scrivere per il teatro, con alti e bassi: produzioni – anche a grappolo – si alternano con silenzi legati a crisi depressive. Con l'eccezione di un romanzo, *The Seduction of Morality* (1994), fino al 2014 egli scrive complessivamente una trentina di drammi (compresi alcuni adattamenti: da Goldsmith, Synge, O'Flaherty, Cechov, Saltykov-Ščedrin), lavorando gomito a gomito con registi, attori, tecnici incaricati della messa in scena delle sue opere, discutendo con loro il testo, traendo dall'interazione suggerimenti per l'approfondimento di temi che gli stanno a cuore, per possibili soluzioni alternative al copione originale, per la sperimentazione di nuove tecniche, in un dare-e-avere costantemente improntato al binomio: perfezionamento del linguaggio teatrale e convivialità (in uno di questi laboratori nasce l'intesa con l'attrice Jane Brennan – esponente di una famiglia di attori di grosso calibro e interprete di alcuni dei suoi drammi – poi coronata dalle nozze).

Rispetto a Shaw, O'Casey, Joyce, Beckett – geniali anatomisti della propria terra d'origine, ma da auto-esiliati – per dar sfogo al proprio estro creativo, Tom Murphy ha bisogno di sentire sotto i propri piedi la terra che gli ha dato i natali, ha bisogno di stare a contatto con la propria gente e di attingere alla sua ricca parlata. L'anatomia dell'Irlanda che emerge dal suo rapporto ravvicinato è spietata, specie nella messa a nudo della "rispettabilità" ipocrita e del bigottismo cattolico, ma il suo scavo nell'inconscio collettivo e individuale (dell'uomo e della donna) irlandese fa vibrare corde universali.

Ogni volta nuovo, dirompente, scomodo e magico Tom Murphy, caparbiamente impegnato nell'esplorazione del "cuore di tenebra", infaticabile nel ricercare l'oro nascosto nelle viscere anche della più squallida delle esistenze, nel ricercare (tutt'uno con la ricerca esistenziale) "le mot juste" drammaturgico, la parola teatrale capace di comunicare la sacralità della vita, di trasmettere la magia di sentirsi vivi.

La sua non molto vasta ma variegata produzione teatrale porta tracce multiformi (dal teatro greco a Shakespeare a Ibsen, da Brecht a Synge a Williams, da Čechov a Lorca a O'Casey e altri ancora), ma il suo percorso esistenziale-formale è radicato primariamente nella realtà irlandese. Il ricco assortimento degli ambienti scelti per l'articolazione dei temi a lui cari provoca inaspettate risonanze: il villaggio di poche anime di *A Crucial Week in the Life of a Grocer's Assistant* (1969), che fa da sfondo alla schizofrenia del giovane protagonista diviso tra la dipendenza dalla madre (e dall'Irlanda rurale) e il sogno di uno spazio tutto suo nel "nuovo mondo"; la foresta surreale di *The Morning after Optimism* (1971), in cui si muovono due coppie di amanti confusi che si cercano (in senso reciproco e riflessivo) – prospezione moderna del *Midsummer Night's Dream* shakespeariano; l'interno di una chiesa illuminata (alla Rembrandt) dalla fioca lampada votiva dinanzi alla teca del S.S. Sacramento, in *The Sanctuary Lamp* (1975) – "correlativo oggettivo" del panorama interiore dei tre protagonisti alla

disperata ricerca della luce: della redenzione dalle colpe passate e della speranza nella rinascita[1].

Lo spettro dell'interazione linguistica tra i personaggi a cui il drammaturgo dà vita ne attesta la straordinaria "*negative capability*" (nel senso keatsiano, di ricettività dell'immaginazione artistica) e avvincente creatività: lo straniato monologare del suicida che ripercorre le 'stazioni' della sua vita in terra, in *The Morning after Optimism* (1971); il concitato dialogo fra 'maschi' convenuti al *pub* per salutare il compaesano emigrato anni addietro in America, in *The White House* (1972); lo *story-telling* dipanato dal personaggio femminile nel letto al centro della scena, in *Bailegangaire* (1985) – versione, da vecchia, della Molly Bloom nell'ultimo capitolo dello *Ulysses* joyceano.

Scrive Fintan O'Toole in *The Irish Times* :

> What made Murphy such a distinctive, original and restless presence was this ability to fuse the intense exploration of private anguish with epic treatment of history, politics and myth.
>
> In his vision, a pub in Tuam could house terrible tales of exile and return and a seedy Dublin office could be where the Devil tempts Faust.
> Like the latter, he was a magician with ambitions to encompass the whole world. Unlike him, he never sold his soul. (O'Toole 2018)

Il "seedy Dublin office" a cui fa riferimento O'Toole nel paragrafo finale del suo 'Obituary' è quello del protagonista di *The Gigli Concert* (1983), che vede sulla scena tre protagonisti (il terzo, meno prominente come presenza fisica, ma di cospicuo significato):

1) J.P.W. King, un inglese trapiantato a Dublino, che, in un monolocale rabberciato alla meglio anche come studio, tenta di mettere insieme il pranzo con la cena esercitando la professione di "Dynamatologist" – oscura e poco accreditata branca scientifica fondata sull'uso dell'energia, *alias* sulla proiezione dell'io oltre i confini della realtà fattuale, per l'auto-realizzazione (la stessa parola: 'Dynamatologist' non compare nel dizionario); è sua la battuta di

[1] Nell'orizzonte dostoevskiano prospettato in *The Sanctuary Lamp*, la luce ritrovata dalle "anime perdute" protagoniste, al termine del proprio 'viaggio dentro la notte' fatto di violenza e sofferenza, è di marca "totalmente umana": la rinascita è tutta e solo nelle mani dell'Uomo, che, reso maturo dalla propria sofferenza e dalla presa di coscienza della sofferenza del prossimo, ritrova la speranza e il coraggio di affrontare il futuro; non c'entra la volontà degli Dei (come nell'*Orestea* di Eschilo, a cui la *pièce* murfiana si rifà apertamente) né, tanto meno, la volontà di Dio (quello della dottrina inculcatagli fin dall'infanzia dalla Chiesa Cattolica irlandese, comunque onnipresente nella ricca *imagery* della *pièce*). Quando *The Sanctuary Lamp* esordì, all'Abbey Theatre nel 1975, fu tacciato di "blasfemia". Senza nulla cambiare nella tesi portante, il drammaturgo rielaborò il testo, apportandovi efficaci snellimenti; la nuova versione fu messa in scena, dallo stesso Abbey Theatre, esattamente dieci anni dopo.

apertura, in cui, dopo un esagitato farfugliare al telefono, esclama: "Christ, how am I going to get through today?" (Murphy 1984, 11);

2) An Irish Man, un facoltoso imprenditore edile irlandese che si è fatto da sé, ma, nonostante il successo, ora non riesce ad andare avanti, per via di un'ossessione che lo tormenta, e, per questo, dopo aver scartato l'idea di consultare uno psicologo o uno psichiatra, si affida al Dynamatologist (in italiano: Dinamatologo – forse meglio: Dinamologo) – significativamente, la frase usata dall'Irlandese (MAN) nella prima seduta terapeutica nello "studio" di J.P.W. King: "In the mornings I say Christ how am I going to get through today?" (17; cfr. 11) riecheggia quella pronunciata dallo stesso "medico" ad apertura del dramma; quanto alla sua ossessione, ciò che lo tormenta è la smania di poter cantare come Beniamino Gigli (più volte menzionato nel dramma come "Benimillo");

3) Mona, la donna irlandese che, nelle sue sistematiche prestazioni sessuali e non, dà la priorità allo scalcagnato King, peraltro ancora invaghito della bella Elena, la donna che l'ha abbandonato.

Nel dramma, che si apre con le note di "O Paradiso" nell'interpretazione di Beniamino Gigli e si dipana in 8 Scene, il "medico" (J.P.W. KING) persegue nel suo *iter* terapeutico in un rapporto sempre più empatico col suo "paziente" (MAN), che, però, ad un certo punto, getta la spugna: rinuncia alla propria struggente aspirazione per rientrare nella *routine* quotidiana, assicuratrice di benessere materiale; in pratica, preferisce l'"avere" all'"essere". Chi non è, ora, disposto a rinunciare al salto oltre la realtà contingente è il "Dottor" King, specie dopo che MONA gli ha fatto capire che cos'è davvero l'amore – alle suggestioni del mito faustiano (King = Faust; Irlandese = Mefistofele) si aggiungono quelle che hanno a che fare con l'energia vitale (rappresentata da Mona), col sentirsi e far sentire vivi, con l'"essere", che è "dare/darsi" senza pensare all'"avere". Perduto il paziente, salutato dall'amante, che, serenamente, gli annuncia di aver scoperto di essere affetta da un cancro incurabile, King decide di suicidarsi preparandosi una *overdose* di pillole che erano destinate al suo cliente: continuerà lui l'*iter* che doveva essere del paziente – nelle sue parole:

This night I'll conjure. If man can bend a spoon with beady steadfast eye, I'll sing like Gigli or I'll die". (74)

Dopo aver serrato porta e finestra, staccato dalla presa il registratore (con la voce di Gigli) che era servito come strumento terapeutico, allineati accuratamente sulla scrivania i quadratini di pane e marmellata ognuno con al centro una pillola, egli comincia a ingerirle aiutandosi con sorsi di vodka; dopo vari sforzi – non riusciti – di far uscire la voce impostata per il canto, all'improvviso si ferma, come preso da una 'illuminazione' che lo riconcilia con la vita:

… Abyss sighted! All my worldly goods I leave to nuns. Leeeep! Pluh-unnge! (*Plunge*) (*Sigh of relief*) Aaah! Rebirth of ideals, return of self-esteem, future known. (Murphy 1984, 75)

A quel punto, dirigendo un'immaginaria orchestra, egli intona – e canta fino in fondo – *con la voce di Gigli* "Tu che a Dio spiegasti l'ali" (dalla *Lucia di Lammermour* di Donizetti): l'impossibile è reso possibile!

J.P.W. King raccoglie alla meglio le sue poche cose, riaccende il registratore, apre a metà la finestra e, come invitando Gigli, che ora interpreta "O Paradiso", a non rimanere al chiuso, esclama:

Do not mind the pig-sty, Benimillo . . . mankind still has a delicate ear . . . that's it . . . sing on for ever ... that's it . (*Ibidem*)

È l'ultima battuta del dramma, cui fa da suggello la didascalia:

He unlocks the door and goes out, a little unsteady on his feet. (*Ibidem*)

Mi sono soffermata più a lungo su *The Gigli Concert* per due ragioni.

La prima è che cantare come Gigli è sempre stato il sogno di Tom Murphy, affascinato dall'impareggiabile intensità emotiva di quella voce (come egli stesso ebbe a dire in un'intervista rilasciata alla Radio irlandese nel 2017: Gigli aveva due voci: una robusta, viscerale, intrisa di passione ed emozione, e l'altra celestiale, che attingeva alla sfera degli angeli e trascinava oltre l'umano).

La seconda ragione è più strettamente personale – e qui mi avvio alla conclusione.

Ho avuto la fortuna di essere spettatrice di gran parte dei drammi di Tom Murphy e di conversare a lungo con lui di tutto e di più: teatro e società, scrittura e oralità, cronaca e vita familiare. Il punto di saldatura più forte della nostra preziosa amicizia resta *The Gigli Concert*, che esordì all'Abbey Theatre (29.9.1983) nell'ambito del Dublin Theatre Festival. Il nome del grande tenore di Recanati come immediato *appeal* per me italiana e la forza comunicativa delle parole e della musica nella suggestiva realizzazione teatrale diretta da Patrick Mason mi spinsero a chiedere a Tom una copia del testo per tentarne una traduzione in italiano (conservo ancora il testo uscito per i tipi della Gallery Books nel 1984 annotato/emendato dall'autore; sarebbe seguita l'edizione riveduta, definitiva).

Il Concerto di Gigli, nella mia traduzione, andò in scena al Teatro Trianon di Roma il 14.2.1990 (*La Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno* ne dava l'annuncio il g. 12 precedente, col titolo: "Lavoro irlandese in ricordo di Gigli", a p. 12). Purtroppo, un malore per crisi cardiaca di uno degli attori, Glauco Onorato, dopo il debutto, non consentì di mantenere le repliche previste dal cartellone.

Per amore di cronaca, nel progetto iniziale *Il Concerto di Gigli* avrebbe dovuto essere messo in scena al Teatro Abeliano di Bari l'anno precedente; per ragioni finanziarie locali, il progetto non andò in porto e fu passato al Trianon di Roma. Riuscimmo, comunque, ad avere come ospite a Bari (5.5.1987) la famosa regista Garry Hynes, direttrice del Druid Theatre di Galway, che a lungo ha lavorato gomito a gomito con Tom Murphy.

Vorrei concludere questo mio *excursus* (omaggio alla figura artistica e umana di Tom Murphy) con l'appello che leggo tra le righe del tributo scritto da un altro grande amico, il Prof. Declan Kiberd, alla notizia della scomparsa dell'artista di Tuam:

Ireland has long known his greatness: and the wider world is coming, a little more slowly, to recognize it too. (Kiberd 2018)

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Whose Homelands?
Fictions, Facts and Questions of the Irish Diaspora

edited by

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Whose Homelands? Fictions, Facts and Questions of the Irish Diaspora

Introduction

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With over 70 million living outside the island of Ireland, the Irish are today one of the largest diaspora communities in the world. This "diverse array of people" scattered throughout the globe view Ireland "as a place of origin", and "claim some connection with her, either directly through emigration or indirectly through descent from emigrants" (Robinson 1995; Fitzgerald and Lambkin 2008, 294). The so-called "global Irish family" is highly influential to the life, the politics, and the economy of their "homeland", as well as being central to exile narratives that question, explore and engage with aspects of cultural "rooting and routing" (Clifford 1994, 309), while also shaping new notions of identity and of belonging. Focused on conceptions of "home" from a transnational perspective, this special issue of *Studi irlandesi. A Journal of Irish Studies* draws attention to migrant narratives and stories of the dispersal of the Irish over the centuries to reflect on ways in which individual and collective experiences of migration forge people and places – both homelands and host-lands. "Home" is intended here as a special space where "the whole *self*, the self beyond the street-wise surface, can come to rest, where there is *room* for *morally open and complete relationships*, in which *proximity* is searched for, no *distance* is kept, where *responsibility* is needed and wanted" (Bauman 1995, 135, emphasis added). The place we call "home", in other words, is inherently mutable and adaptable, and this is especially so within diasporic contexts and dynamics whereby migration is "a way of life" proper (O'Connor 1996, 50). The field is vast and complex, but it is also extremely fascinating and challenging as present understandings of the past change, migration networks expand and develop to become more sophisticated and varied, therefore demanding that further investigations are carried out, old narratives are re-read, and new narratives produced. For such reasons the approach here is deliberately multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary, with each essay seeking to capture and shed light on a broad range of fictions, facts and questions of the Irish diaspora.

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The expression "Irish diaspora" is of a relatively recent coinage. Academically it was introduced in 1976 in the title of a survey by Lawrence McCaffrey (*The Irish Diaspora in America*), and it was mentioned again in the title of an article on the Roman Catholic Church in the 19th century (Gilley 1984), neither of which fully engaged with the complexity of the historical and cultural phenomenon they referred to[1]. The notion that the "Irish diaspora is a world phenomenon" and therefore that "it can only be understood as such" is found in *The Irish Diaspora. A Primer*, D.H. Akenson's seminal study of 1993 (271)[2]. By then, the semantics of "diaspora" was beginning to extend beyond its traditional confines. No longer simply used to define "the dispersal of the Jews" and of the Armenians, in the 1960s "diaspora" encompassed also the Afro-Caribbean community living in the United States, and by the 1990s it acquired a more inclusive and clearly "secular" meaning (Spindler 1998, 10), owing largely to the launch of *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, a dedicated forum for academic discussions of the phenomenon[3]. The notion of *diasporas* (in the plural) was soon introduced (Safran 1991), and within a few years the concept evolved further into "global diasporas" (Cohen 1997) as scholars from different fields of knowledge engaged in what looked like, but clearly was not, "an impossible quest" (Spindler 1998). Indeed, the pursuit of a theory of the diaspora brought to an understanding of it in terms of what Kenny here defines "an *idea* that people use to interpret the world migration creates", prompting several questions as well as a diverse outlook on the history of migration across the globe of which the Irish are no doubt among its most prominent actors.

Over the past two decades "the Irish abroad" have become *de facto* "the Irish diaspora" (Fitzgerald and Lambkin 2008, 277), a significant lexical and conceptual change encouraged from outside academic circles by the work and words of Irish Presidents Mary Robinson and Mary McAleese. In 1995, the former pioneered a caring culture that would embrace the communities of Irish people across the globe and reinforce the connection between the nationals liv-

[1] Fitzgerald and Lambkin (2008, 280) trace an earlier reference in Fr. John O'Brien's *The Vanishing Irish. The Enigma of the Modern World* (1954). An Irish-American priest, O'Brien "was the first commentator to discuss the Irish worldwide coherently in terms of "homeland" and "diaspora" (2008, 40).

[2] For a history of the term see Enda Delaney (2006), and Kenny, here.

[3] Edited by Khachig Tölölyan, *Diaspora* "is dedicated to the multidisciplinary study of the history, culture, social structure, politics, and economics of both the traditional diasporas – Armenian, Greek, and Jewish – and the new transnational dispersions which in the past four decades have come to be identified as 'diasporas'. These encompass groups ranging from the African-, Chinese-, Indian-, and Mexican-American to the Ukrainian- and Haitian-Canadian, the Caribbean-British, the Antillean-French, and many others" (<www.utpjournals.press/journals/diaspora/scope>, 05/2019).

ing at home and those living abroad. Robinson's urge for a new stance on the past called for a different attitude, one that would "cherish" the diaspora, and move beyond the undeniable trauma of enforced migration that was so central to Irish history (Robinson 1995). A year later, in an address to the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, Robinson reiterated her conviction that "the painful pattern of emigration has resulted *ironically* in a *vibrant resource* which should be included into a *modern* (i.e. broader) *sense of Irishness*" (Robinson 1996; emphasis added), beyond territoriality. Echoing Art. 2 of the Irish Constitution, her speech was an invitation to look back with different eyes to Ireland's past, incontrovertibly traumatic yet not exclusive to the Irish, ultimately (indeed *ironically*) functional to the country's booming economy of the Celtic Tiger years. President McAleese was equally influential in popularizing the notion of a "global Irish family" as a "resource" and a "strength" that would allow Ireland to effectively *re-imagine* herself, and to "transcend, transform, *reduce the imagined thing to reality*" (McAleese 2003; emphasis added).

The belief that Ireland was an "an unfinished business" or a "first world country *with a respected and real third world memory*" (*ibidem*; emphasis added) prompted political and scholarly discussions that would succeed in relocating the Irish diaspora and the controversial issue of Ireland's migration history within a wider conceptual and globalized framework. Such a rethinking of the past as an empowering and liberating force that can effect community cohesion, strengthen international relations, enable self-assertion and enfranchisement for women (Gray 2003; Nolan 2009; Walter 2003; and Charczun, here), to cite a few instances of its potential, has proved advantageous on many counts, possibly leading to the creation, in 2014, of a dedicated Ministry of State, and the launch of the Global Irish Diaspora Strategy and of the Global Irish Civic Forum. Both practices treat diaspora as a *process* (entailing relocation, connection and return), and as an *idea* "through which people seek to make sense of the experience of emigration" (Kenny 2017). In 2013 the government's policies were expressed in the new design of the Irish passport, which celebrates Ireland's culture through popular images of her landmarks, poetry, music, dancing, sports and the recognition of the diaspora by way of Art. 2 of the *Bunreacht na hÉireann*, the Irish Constitution, significantly cited in Gaelic and in English[4]:

Tá gach duine a shaolaítear in oileán na hÉireann, ar a n-áiríteara oileáin agus a fharraigí, i dteideal, agus tá de cheart oidhreachta aige nó aici, a bheith páirteach

[4] On the launch of "Global Irish: Ireland's Diaspora Policy" see <www.dfa.ie/our-role-policies/our-work/casestudiesarchive/2015/march/global-irish-irelands-diaspora-policy-launched/> and <www.dfa.ie/media/globalirish/global-irish-irelands-diaspora-policy.pdf> (05/2019). The dual language text of Art. 2 is reported between p. 3 and p. 33 of the new passport.

I náisiún na hÉireann. Tá an teideal sin freisin ag na daoine go léir atá cáilithe ar shlí eile de réir dlí chun bheith ina saoránaigh d'Éirinn. Ina theannta sin, is mór ag náisiún na hÉireann a choibhneas speisialta le daoine de bhunadh na hÉireann atá ina gcónaí ar an gcoigríoch agus arb ionann féiniúlacht agus oidhreacht chultúir dóibh agus do náisiún na hÉireann.

It is the entitlement and birthright of every person born in the island of Ireland, which includes its islands and seas, to be part of the Irish Nation. That is also the entitlement of all persons otherwise qualified in accordance with law to be citizens of Ireland. Furthermore, the Irish nation cherishes its special affinity with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage.

The new passport is an interesting narrative in its own right, one which reflects today's broader understanding of "the Irish Nation" and of how it has come to represent a homeland to 70 million "Irish" people across the globe. It is no longer or simply "a question of time, blood or territory", as Kay McCarthy maintains in her contribution, but rather a "psycho-socio-cultural" matter, "a matter of perception, tradition and practice". It is indicative of what Kevin Kenny here terms the "second" or "contemporary diasporic moment", which views "Ireland and the overseas communities connecting in an interactive global network" with the Irish government acting "as the central player". The question of *whose homeland* thus becomes apt and timely in the light of contemporary changes and translocations worldwide, with the Irish diaspora being especially interesting to our scope. Matters affecting the home community shape the reality and landscape of the host community, and in turn these influence the way in which diasporic experiences are recounted and received.

Whether fictive, factual or a combination of both, narratives of the Irish diaspora rely upon national mythologies and popular literary sources on exile and migration to tell their stories of individual and collective transnationalism[5]. The staple of much literature and drama from and about Ireland, exile and migration have inspired works dedicated to the intricacies of dislocation long before "the currency of diaspora discourse" (Clifford 1997, 255) gained its place in the global communication market. James Joyce was a pioneer in this respect, and to a large extent he remains unchallenged in his capacity to express the condition of displacement, a state of being somehow similar to a river's flow or a cycle, where the end is the beginning, where home can be everywhere, nowhere, and elsewhere, at the same time. Tom Murphy (remembered in Rosangela Barone's tribute) and Brian Friel (recalled by Carla

[5] In "Cherishing the Irish Diaspora", President Robinson cites from Tom Murphy's *Famine* (1977) and from Eavan Boland's "The Emigrant Irish" (1987), while President McAleese recalls Derek Mahon's "Rathlin Island" (1982) in her speech of 2003.

de Petris) most especially follow in Joyce's footsteps in that they adopt and adapt his migrant idiom and insights to investigate, each in their own special way, "the elusive quality of home" and the inevitable "confusions, unease and discontents" of everyday life, with exile and migration being central to both playwrights' aesthetic preoccupations[6]. These experiments in life writing, to borrow Melania Terrazas' wording, have shaped the grammar of future generations of writers who have since contributed to explore and articulate tales of uprooting and rerouting. A comprehensive bibliography of literary works on the Irish diaspora would be too long to be reproduced in the present context, but it would certainly include the names of Pearse Hutchinson, Anna Livia, Cherry Smyth, Joseph O'Connor, Mary Morrissy, Mike McCormack, and Eimear McBride, the writers featured in the essays that make up this monographic section. Along with them is also Evelyn Conlon, author of "Imagine them …" (a title that perhaps echoes McAleese's diction), a short story written for this occasion and published here for the first time. Like other tales of the Irish diaspora this one too is about impossible encounters, broken dreams and great expectations; it is a narrative which amplifies distant voices, records their untold stories, and seeks to "interpret between privacies", to use Friel's words (1980, 90)[7]. Mary Lee, Conlon's protagonist, is one of several female heroines whose existence surfaces among other narratives of disconnection, often linked to the Famine decade (1845-1855) and to the indelible mark Ireland's holocaust has left on the collective sense of home. It is no wonder that the Famine/Great Hunger is cited in a number of contributions published here, including articles by Kenny, McCarthy, Anna Charczun, and Heather Levy. A primary cause of that "foundational moment in the formation of Irish communities abroad" (Kenny), the *Gorta Mór* is O'Connor's setting in *Star of the Sea* (2002), a celebrated novel which reports the life story of Irish governess and Famine survivor Mary Duane and provides "a feminist excavation of strategies of diasporic strength" along the lines of Gayatri Spivak's conceptualization of the "Other" (Levy)[8].

Mass migration of the Famine period allowed its survivors to "remake themselves through work", itself a "defining force in the Irish-American experience" (Murphy 2009, 20 and 19) of which a career in acting or dancing remain fine expressions. In this respect, the history of the American Musical

[6] Brian Friel, in Richard Pine, "Obituary notice", *The Guardian*, 2 October 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2015/oct/02/brian-friel> (05/2019).

[7] The notion of "listening to and amplifying voices" as opposed to "giving voice" to the voiceless is central to Alessandro Portelli's democratic approach to oral history recording, a methodology that treats interviewees as full humans rather that flat sources of knowledge. Cf. Portelli (2013, 276), cited in Sarah O'Brien (2017, 24).

[8] The author of "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988), Spivak is also a member of the Advisory Board of *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*.

(Moloney 2009), and the development of a specific dancing tradition, represent fertile grounds for enquiry within and beyond academia, as McCarthy's reflection shows. Her article tells of how diaspora gave life to hybrid performance practices resulting from "the encounter between traditional [Irish dance] modes and the pre-existing cultures of the host countries" which "had an impact on the old styles in the so-called pure form". Over a century later, Michael Flatley's *Riverdance* venture, a global phenomenon begun 25 years ago, would offer audiences worldwide a remarkable instance of "cross-fertilisation between the Irish-born and those who believed they belonged to the diaspora, especially the large transatlantic, Hiberno-American contingent" (McCarthy). An understanding of diaspora as a creative process facilitating cross-fertilisations and cultural encounters is central to Pearse Hutchinson's experience as a migrant writer. "A wonderer and a keen observer" of Spain, Hutchinson was attracted by that country, and eventually moved there in 1951. Similar to Ireland, regional Spain (Catalonia and Galicia) inspired his poetry over two decades (1950s-1970s) as Verónica Membrive argues in her article. Based on unpublished sources archived at Maynooth University, her study explores the life of an Irishman who felt an "exile at home, neither in exile nor at home", a poet who engaged in the language and identity question of his adopted homeland.

Life in diaspora allows for a re-definition of one's identity, but it also helps re-orient "the self's sexual identity to emerge on different terms to those prevailing in the country of origin", as contended by Charczun. Her article, and the one that follows (by Emer Lyons), are powerful expressions of the diasporic sense of place as lived from a queer perspective. Charczun focuses on the experiences of writers that explore and speak of "lesbian desire" beyond the restrictions of Irish patriarchal heteronormativity while also dealing with aspects of inclusivity within already established lesbian communities. Lyons reflects on the homelessness of lesbian poets within the dominant (i.e. patriarchal) poetic tradition, in the face of which poetry enables a re-appropriation of the homeplace – a place "to come to", through a process at once creative, "painful, shameful and erotic".

Post-Tiger austerity and post-crisis migration trends make up the geopolitical dimension that is central to Kenny's research on the history of the Irish diaspora and which is crucial also to works of fiction by Mike McCormak (*Solar Bones*, 2016), Mary Morrissy (*Prosperity Drive*, 2016) and Eimear McBride (*The Lesser Bohemians*, 2016). Addressing the question of "whose homelands", Jason Buchanan considers how "austerity fiction" serves to articulate the impact of global capitalism upon local communities, with special emphasis on the interaction between cultural products and economic forces. His article reflects on Ireland's recent transformations to contend that "the complex nature of the global financial crisis is not only an economic and political issue but also one that is deeply embedded in the emotions

and thoughts of the individual". The traumatized individual is the start and end point of McBride's neo-modernist fiction, which Gerry Smyth views in theatrical terms, as a "rehearsal of (versions of) national identity". Exposing the bad faith of both austerity and political isolationism, McBride's second novel seeks redemption for its displaced protagonists, ultimately affirming that "Irishness was and continues to be negotiated throughout the modern era" (Smyth).

Questions of integration are central to articles that investigate the Irish diaspora from a non-literary standpoint, nonetheless disclosing interesting views of its practices, transitions, transformations and adaptations. Gráinne O'Keefe-Vigneron charts Irish emigration to France to fill a scholarly gap of thirty years and map the community of Irish people living "on the ground". Looking at recent EU policy, and to the potential impact of Brexit upon Irish-French relations, this essay traces a profile of the Irish diaspora based on recent data on education, employment, language, integration, and standard of living, proving in its conclusion that "on the whole", the Irish in France "have integrated with relative ease", having registered a "high level of job and life satisfaction" in their new home place. Celine Kearney and Martin Andrew take us to *Aoteara*, New Zealand, the place where Kearney's Irish-born grandparents moved to, and where she currently lives and works as a researcher and a representative of the "Southern Celt" community. The study presents ethnographic and auto-ethnographic insights based on a narrative enquiry conducted among 40 Irish residents of the region and dedicated to the discursive construction of culture and identity. These people's "lived and told stories" remind us that language is both a "contingent" and a "significant and constitutive factor of identity", especially in contexts of colonization by force – a common ground for both the Maori and the Gaelic languages. We are also reminded that readers ought to become active participants in processes of cultural connections and re-connections with "subjugated voices" (Kearney and Andrew). Along the same lines, albeit with a different methodology and scope, Aedan Alderson – a "mixed-Indigenous Mi'kmaq and Irish scholar" – considers the Irish diaspora and its "participation" in situations of "illegal occupation of Indigenous nations by British colonialism". Focusing on Canada, Australia and the United States, this compelling study poses questions as to the responsibility on the part of the Irish diaspora in countries where the indigenous community suffers "dehumanization and colonization", and calls for a "shared sense" of homeland from "responsible guests of *our* host-nations" who should partake in the global project of decolonization.

Facts and fictions often intertwine in narratives of the Irish diaspora that explore, challenge and question concepts of the place we call "home". And "place", as Ivan Brady writes, is a "geography of earth, mind, body and lived experience of the seen and unseen" (2005, 905). The quote concludes

one of the essays collected here but it sums up the perspective and focus of other contributions equally centered on diasporic homelands. Among them is a group of articles about the political and politicised dimensions of the Irish diaspora. Andrew Maguire looks across the Irish sea, to a region in Yorkshire called "West Riding", a stronghold of political activism on the part of constitutional Irish migrant nationalists seeking to obtain "legislative independence for their homeland under the banner of Irish Home Rule". The article assesses "the deep sense of *amor patriae*" of the Yorkshire-Irish to demonstrate "the effectiveness of the migrant vote" in the area in the period 1879-1886. Political activism of Irish emigrants is the theme of Thomas Tormey's thorough investigation of nationalism in Scotland from 1913 onwards. The revolutionary Scottish-Irish "played a major role in the transnational movements associated with campaigns for Irish independence", most especially the Easter Rising of 1916, in which they fought. Tormey analyses the activities of the Volunteers in comparison to other veterans of 1916 as well as showing how they were well integrated within the local community as well as the wider separatist movement. Political and cultural activism lie also at the heart of Patrick Callan's detailed reconstruction of the history of Glasnevin Cemetery and its role in relation to religion and constitutional nationalism. From its foundation, in 1832, Dublin's unique resting place became a focus of commemoration of the patriotic dead largely owing to the influence of the Irish diaspora in America. Acknowledged in papers that had an outreach to the Irish-American community, Glasnevin soon began to attract a steady stream of visitors and gained its status as a national cemetery. Seen from our "decade-of-centenaries" (2013-2022) perspective, nineteenth-century debates over this contested "home" place emerge as illuminating, if not thought-provoking. And indeed, as Callan concludes, Ireland's national cemetery "continues to interrogate and respond to its historical legacy".

North-American print media had a determining role in matters such as public memory of the Nation's dead and the revival of the Irish language as a transatlantic cultural and political endeavour. The latter aspect is the subject of Fiona Lyon's investigation. Focusing on the period between 1857 and 1897, Lyons demonstrates how US revivalist publications and organizations helped consolidate "imagined communities" of Gaelic speakers, across geographical borders, thereby showing "a sense of responsibility towards the homeland in terms of language and politics". Her study ultimately asserts the value of transatlantic networks between the US Irish diaspora and Ireland in terms of language revival movements, and other political, cultural and educational developments in the decades that followed.

The Irish-American experience is no doubt a chapter of primary importance in the history of the diaspora worldwide. One half of the 70 million Irish living abroad resides in the US (Kenny 2013), a remarkable figure

which has contributed to the consolidation of myths such as "the hands-that-built-America" legend, popularised by the U2 in a song in 2002, and based on the widely-accepted idea that the Irish, more than any other immigrant ethnic group, had really made America. This would have been through their work and commitment, and through a deep-felt gratitude towards a land that had saved them and given them all sorts of opportunities (Salis 2019). As with most myths, not everything about them is accurate, yet something holds true. A case in point is the long-standing and mutual influence of Ireland and the US, a double bind between homelands that embraces various ambits – cultural, political, economic, social, religious – to which all essays here turn their perceptive eyes. One especially – by Timothy J. White and Emily Pausa – interrogates the difference made by the US diplomacy in negotiations of the peace process in Northern Ireland. This research traces and evaluates the complex pattern of cooperation between Irish nationalist politicians, the Irish-American diaspora, Irish-American politicians and the US government in the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 and how such interactions helped change American foreign policy towards Northern Ireland.

The history of the Irish diaspora is an unfolding tale of dislocations and relocations; like a "field of force" it helps connect trauma and stability, austerity and prosperity, peace and conflict, memory and forgetting, distance and vicinity, local and global. These encounters demand diaspora to be constantly re-negotiated, re-articulated, somehow narrated again[9]. A powerful *idea*, to recall Kenny's words, diaspora is also a potent and enriching motif, whose endurance would hardly trivialise what Edward Said terms "the tragic fate of homelessness in a heartless world" (2002, 146), even when value is given to its creative potential and "more benign variety" (145), the way Robinson and McAleese have done. Exile *is* "a terminal loss" (138), which prompts the question of what gets lost and what is found as de Petris reminds us in her (reflection on) translations. For her, Eavan Boland's exile poetry is a political act of "appropriation" and "critique" of Irish emigration that also defines the contours of Ireland's historical diaspora. While images of a traumatic past are being evoked, we are reminded of the horrors of displacement, of exile's discontinuities and unbearable pressures, the fact that diasporas are phe-

[9] The notion of the "field of force" is taken from Theodor Adorno and adapted to Seamus Heaney's conception of the work of art in Eugene O'Brien's study of the poet's prose. The field of force "connects the emotional, the rational, the conscious, the unconscious, the somatic and the cerebral" and it represents a "constituent of poetised thinking". Accordingly, Heaney, who often returns to the themes of place and displacement in his writings, focuses on "given binaries of thought in order to dislodge and relocate in a more fluid structure, wherein their own adversarial potency will become lessened through being part of this broader and more plural structure" (2016, 127-128).

nomena of enormous political, economic, cultural and social implications. We are also reminded that exile stories and histories testify the complexities, tensions, fragilities and potentialities of people who are "permanently in transit" (Morrissy 2016, 62) as they long for a sense of home, away from an ancestral home.

Diasporas are about homelands and their people, and every people "is a fact […] of mentality, language, feelings, history. A fact of spiritual ethnicity. […] A fact of will […] *the will to exist*." What nationalist Jordi Pujol writes of his people, the people of Catalonia, equally applies to the Irish, wherever they may be. To them too, perhaps more than anything else, the will to exist "assures survival, promotion, blossoming" (1980, 22). It is this *voluntat de ser* that grants "the possibility to build up one's own country" when threatened "by the loss of collective and individual identity, subjected to an alienating situation as a people and as individuals" (1980, 277)[10].

Scholars and readers who engage with narratives of the Irish diaspora are called to reflect on the issue of Ireland's exceptionalism, and therefore the extent to which her diasporas ensue from a peculiar national trend or character. No doubt there is a distinctive set of traits in the Irish transnational experience, but as scholars have argued, as the history of other diasporas tells us, and as some of the essays here demonstrate, the phenomenon is also peculiarly global, owing largely to new modes of migrating and of conceiving one's sense of "home" within a cosmopolitan web of connections and interconnections. Ireland today is both "part of the global, multi-levelled diasporas of most countries of the rest world" and "a global aggregate of its own multi-levelled, local and regional diasporas" (Fitzgerald and Lambkin 2008, 284). This complex web of interweaving narratives, settings and characters is ultimately what makes the study of the Irish diaspora a challenging and rewarding experience. The following essays reflect this spirit and conviction as they add to extant and current research, each one with a different voice, approach and focus, each of them offering stimulating and original insights. Altogether they provide a comprehensive and updated bibliography on Irish transnationalism, a valuable resource that can contribute to future investigations and further our understanding of the fictions, the facts and questions of the Irish diaspora.

[10] The will to exist "is the effort of a country to strengthen its identity by building up a nationalism which does not stand against others nor attempts to defend the country by isolating it" (Guibernau 1997, 100).

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Fictions

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Two Diasporic Moments in Irish Emigration History: The Famine Generation and the Contemporary Era*

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Abstract:

In some usages "diaspora" refers to a social process (relocation or migration) and in others to a social entity (a migrant group or ethnic group). Both approaches require scholars to define diaspora, but the criteria often seem arbitrary. Rather than posing a timeless question ("What is a diaspora?"), this article examines diaspora as an *idea* that people use to interpret the world migration creates. Diaspora in this sense reached its peak historical significance for Ireland in two distinct periods, but for quite different reasons: the era of the Great Famine, when mass emigration gave rise to a powerful transnational sense of exile; and the era since the 1980s, when changes in the academy, popular culture, communications, and especially government policy produced a new sense of connectedness among the global Irish.

Keywords: Diaspora, Emigration, Famine, Government, Irish

1. The idea of diaspora

About 10 million Irish men, women, and children have emigrated from Ireland since 1700. Remarkably, this figure is more than twice the population of the Republic of Ireland today (4.8 million), it exceeds the population of the island of Ireland (6.7 million), and it is higher than the population of Ireland at its historical peak (8.5 million) on the eve of the Great Famine in 1845. As many as 70 million people worldwide claim Irish descent, about half of them in the United States (Hout, Goldstein 1994; Ireland Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade [hereafter DFA], 2015, 10). Most people

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who have grown up in Ireland since the Famine have known that, by early adulthood, they would have to grapple with the decision of whether to stay or leave. The decision is part of the Irish life cycle. How are we to explain a phenomenon of this scale and impact? Diaspora is perhaps the most common explanatory framework in use today.

Until quite recently, "Diaspora" – usually with an upper-case "d" – referred principally to the dispersal and exile of the Jews. Over the course of the twentieth century, the term expanded to cover the involuntary dispersal of other populations. Although mass emigration has long been one of the defining themes of Irish history, "diaspora" was rarely used in Irish academic circles before 1990, and scarcely at all in popular culture. It has since become the term of choice in the Irish case. The popularity of diaspora in Ireland is generally dated to the presidency of Mary Robinson, who lit a symbolic candle in the window of her official residence, *Áras an Uachtaráin*, to recognise all people of Irish descent around the world as being in some sense part of the Irish nation, a gesture that embraced everyone from the most recent wave of emigrants to the descendants of those who had left in the distant past.

During the "Celtic Tiger" (1995–2007), a period of extraordinary (if in the end unsustainable) economic growth fuelled by American investment, EU funding, and speculation in the construction sector, Mary Robinson's call for cooperative projects between the Irish at home and abroad paid off in numerous ways. Many Irish emigrants returned during the boom and, for the first time, significant numbers of immigrants arrived from other countries. For only the second time since the Great Famine, the population of Ireland rose rather than declining due to emigration. In a speech called "Cherishing the Irish Diaspora" in 1995, delivered to a joint session of the *Oireachtas* (Ireland's Parliament), Robinson noted how the "diaspora", forged in the tragedy of the Famine and involuntary emigration, had become one of Ireland's greatest treasures – a term she clearly intended in an economic as well as a political and cultural sense. Significantly, when the Irish Constitution was revised in 1998 as part of the Belfast Agreement bringing peace to Northern Ireland, a clause was added to Article 2 stating that "the Irish nation cherishes its special affinity with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage" (*Bunreacht na hÉireann* [Constitution of Ireland] 2018, 4).

It was in this optimistic – indeed, headily optimistic – economic, political, and cultural context that the term "diaspora" came to occupy a central place in the discourse about Irish emigration. As President Robinson had noted, the word evoked an element of tragedy in the Irish case (as it often does). But the Celtic Tiger roared triumph rather than tragedy, with the term "diaspora" celebrating the new global Irish family rather than lamenting the circumstances of its creation. "Diaspora" always has multiple possible meanings, some of them contradictory, and recent Irish usage is no exception. It will be good at the outset, therefore, to consider some of these meanings.

Problems arise when the term is too rigidly defined, but also when its meaning is left entirely open-ended.

The etymology is worth dwelling on for a moment. The Greek noun *diasporá* derives from the verb *diaspeirein*, a compound of *dia* (over or through) and *speirein* (to scatter or sow). Contained within "diaspora" is the root, *spr*, which can be found today in such English words as "spore", "sperm", "spread", "sprout", and "disperse" as well as the Armenian word for diaspora, *spurk*. It was in Jewish history that the term assumed its most familiar form. The noun *diasporá* first appeared in the Septuagint, a Greek translation of the opening books of the Hebrew Bible produced by Jewish scholars in Alexandria around 250 BCE. In the Septuagint, *diasporá* connotes a condition of spiritual anguish accompanying God's dispersal of those who disobeyed His word. As Deuteronomy 28:25 puts it: "The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies. You will come at them from one direction but flee from them in seven, and you will become a thing of horror to all the kingdoms on earth" (*New International Version*). The *New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, citing this passage, gives two related meanings for "diaspora" – a social *process* ("the dispersion of Jews among the Gentile nations") and a social *entity* ("all those Jews who lived outside the biblical land of Israel"). As an example of the latter usage, the dictionary cites the case of the Irish in the United States: "the Famine, the diaspora and the long hatred of Irish Americans for Britain" (*New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 1993, s.v. "diaspora"; Kenny 2013, 2).

The semantic span of the term "diaspora" expanded dramatically after World War II, for reasons that were only partly connected to the history of migration. The number of international migrants increased significantly, such that the period since the war is sometimes referred to as the Age of International Migration or the Age of Diaspora (Castles, Miller 2013). The total number of migrants today is certainly higher than ever before, yet the *rate* of migration – measured as a proportion of the global population – is not as high as it was a century ago. A combination of other forces contributed to the rise and current ubiquity of "diaspora". The dismantling of European empires inspired new forms of transnational solidarity, for example among people of African descent in the Caribbean, France, England, and the United States. Decolonisation also forced certain communities to remigrate, for example South Asians in East Africa and Chinese in various parts of Asia. Involuntary migration achieved greater international prominence through the UN's definition and protection of refugees. New forms of technology and communication facilitated faster, more efficient migration. And national governments began to devise inventive ways to connect with their overseas populations in search of economic and political support (Kenny 2013, 9).

In this context, "diaspora" came to be applied retroactively to groups other than the ancient Jews whose dispersal had been notably involuntary –

including Armenians, people of African descent, and the Irish. Then, starting in the 1980s, the term began to proliferate to an extraordinary extent in both academic and popular usage, to cover migration and displacement of all kinds. With the proliferation of usage, inevitably, came a decline in coherence. Diaspora is often used today as a synonym for international migration. But if every migration is diasporic, what does the term "diaspora" signify? If migration and diaspora mean the same thing, is there any reason to use the latter term other than for purposes of stylistic variation? How does migration history look different if diaspora is used as category of analysis? The sociologist Rogers Brubaker (2005) nicely captured the problem in an article called "The Diaspora Diaspora", in which he demonstrated how the concept had acquired so many meanings that it was in danger of signifying nothing in particular.

Ironically, much of the confusion about the term "diaspora" stems from the quest to impose a single, fixed definition (Kenny 2013, 11; Kenny 2003a, 141-142). Scholars have produced a variety of typologies for this purpose. One group has proposed frameworks so comprehensive that almost every form of migration counts – not just the catastrophic cases but also the migration of merchants, workers, and colonisers (e.g., Cohen 1997). A second group, finding this approach too broad to be useful, has tried to establish fixed criteria to pin down what diaspora is and is not, with a given group qualifying (or failing to qualify) as diasporic depending on how many of the criteria it meets (e.g., Safran 1991, 83-84). But who gets to decide on the criteria? The lists often seem arbitrary, and because they include different orders of experience – the nature of emigration, for example, as distinct from the experience of alienation abroad – consistent comparison across migrant groups becomes impossible (Kenny 2013, 11-12). With these concerns in mind, a third group of scholars, mostly literary and cultural critics, has tried to determine not what "diaspora" *is* but what it *does*, in other words how the term produces meaning in systems of discourse (e.g., Clifford 1994). Who uses "diaspora", under what circumstances, and to what effect?

Building on the third approach, this article sees diaspora neither as a process nor as a social entity, as the dictionary definition suggests, but as an *idea*. Instead of seeking a definitive answer to a timeless and static question – "What is a diaspora?" – historians can examine evidence to determine how and why people use the idea of diaspora in specific times and places. People of many different kinds – migrants, but also scholars, journalists, and policy makers – use this idea to interpret the world that migration creates. Viewed in this way, diaspora is simultaneously a category of analysis and a category of practice, and it carries different meanings depending on who is using the term and for what purpose. As an idea, diaspora has three overlapping elements: *relocation*, *connectivity*, and *return*. This formulation, it should be emphasised, is not intended to smuggle in a typology through the back door. It

is simply that whenever people use the idea of diaspora, they always have one or more of these three elements in mind. All three elements do not have to be present at once, and people do not necessarily need to use the *word* "diaspora" to think about migration within the conceptual framework described here (Kenny 2013, 13-15).

The first element, *relocation*, refers strictly to the process of departure, regardless of the subsequent history of settlement abroad. For the most part, diaspora is used to describe population movements that are catastrophic in origin or involuntary in character – the Babylonian captivity, African transatlantic slavery, the Irish Famine exodus – even if, in recent years, the term has increasingly been deployed to describe migration in general. Irish emigrants in the Famine era had an understandable and well documented tendency to see their departure as involuntary exile, making diaspora in its more traditional meaning an appropriate explanatory framework. Historians can acknowledge and interrogate the diasporic claims of Irish emigrants in various periods, examining how they used diaspora as a category of practice. But historians can also use diaspora as an analytical category in order to distinguish between different kinds of departure in different periods (Kenny 2013, 16-39).

The second element, *connectivity*, stands independent of the first. In other words, regardless of the form of migration, emigrants and their descendants can and do build diasporic connections abroad. When the members of an emigrant community in a given country of settlement involve themselves economically, politically, or culturally in the affairs of their "homeland", they may or may not begin to see themselves as a diaspora. This form of interaction, after all, is very common. A less common, but more interesting, form of connectivity involves communication not only between a single overseas location and the "homeland" but within a web of globally scattered communities – for example, modern Chinatowns – connected in a multipolar rather than a unilinear form. These interrelated global communities can be seen as nodes within a network, in which the "homeland" forms an essential but not necessarily central location. When connectivity is understood in this way, diaspora provides a powerful framework for understanding migration history. Irish nationalists in nineteenth-century New York, Toronto, and Sydney, for example, engaged in a self-consciously transnational conversation about the liberation of Ireland and the creation of an Irish nation. For the hardline, physical force republican tradition of Irish nationalism in particular, New York City rivalled and at times surpassed Dublin in generating leaders, ideas, and money (Kenny 2013, 40-60).

The third and final element of the idea of diaspora is *return* (60-86). Every conception of diaspora features a homeland, whether real or imagined. Return can be literal, as in the Zionist movement; more often it is metaphorical, spiritual, or political, but no less potent for that. People of African descent in the Americas who longed to go "back to Africa" in the nineteenth

and twentieth centuries knew that, for the most part, they had no place to go to and could not have afforded to return even if there was such a place. But this very impossibility, far from rendering their longing to return irrelevant, made it all the more poignant and powerful as a source of solidarity. Irish Americans at the turn of the twentieth century had some of the lowest rates of return from the United States, comparable to those of Jewish Americans. Even when finances were not an obstacle, there was little to go back to in an Ireland whose dismal economic performance compelled more than two million Irish people to emigrate over the remainder of the century, most of them to Britain. In the absence of large-scale return, Irish communities abroad were sustained by a powerful sense of exile. The exile motif originated partly in the pre-migration culture of rural Ireland (Miller, Boling, Doyle 1980; Miller 1985), but it was also the product of bitterness and alienation stemming from the Great Famine – the gravest catastrophe in Irish history and the central event in the country's emigration history.

2. The Famine generation

In the standard scholarly works on diaspora, the Irish are the European emigrant group most likely to be included, typically by virtue of the Great Famine and the emigration it unleashed (Cohen 1997; Chaliand 1997). A strong case can be made for the utility of diaspora as an explanatory framework for this massive wave of emigration. It was triggered by a catastrophic event. It featured considerable involuntary relocation. The emigrants dispersed to several destinations at once. And they nurtured a strong sense of banishment and exile overseas. That said, one needs to be careful not to collapse the entirety of Irish emigration history into a template set by the uniquely traumatic events of the Famine generation. Most emigrants who left Ireland before and after the Famine – and some who left during the crisis – did so for conventional economic reasons, in search of work and opportunity abroad, the same fundamental reasons that have been at the heart of most mass emigrations throughout history. For the Famine emigration in particular, however, a diasporic framework has considerable explanatory power.

Between 1846 and 1855 – the period that historians refer to as the "Famine decade" – Ireland's population was reduced by one-third, an event without parallel in European history. Over 1 million people died of starvation and famine-related diseases and about 2.1 million emigrated, more than in the previous two centuries combined. About 1.5 million of the emigrants went to the United States, just over 300,000 to British North America (many of whom then trekked overland to the United States), roughly the same number to Britain, and tens of thousands to Australia and New Zealand. These 2.1 million emigrants represented one-quarter of Ireland's population on the eve of the Famine and accounted for the largest European mass emigration,

in proportional terms, in the nineteenth century. The Irish were the single largest immigrant group in the United States in the 1840s, accounting for 45 per cent of the total flow. In the 1850s they and the Germans each made up about 35 per cent of the immigrants. By 1860, one in every four residents of New York, Boston, Liverpool, and Glasgow were Irish-born. The Famine also set in motion the massive wave of emigration from 1856 to 1921, when another 4.5 million emigrants left the country (Kenny 2018, 666, 669).

The Famine emigration was the foundational moment in the formation of Irish communities abroad – especially in the United States, where the emigrants asked hard questions about British relief policies. Did crop failure necessarily have to lead to starvation and mass emigration? When the potato failed, why was no adequate source of food provided as a substitute? The British government experimented with various temporary measures, selling corn meal at cost price, providing indoor relief in workhouses and outdoor relief via public works projects, and even briefly distributing food free of charge via soup kitchens. In 1847, however, these centralised efforts were abruptly abandoned in favour of local responsibility and chargeability. "There is only one way in which the relief of the destitute ever has been, or ever will be, conducted consistently with the general welfare, and that is by *making it a local charge*", wrote Charles Trevelyan, the British official in charge of Famine relief in Dublin (quoted in Gray 1995, 153; emphasis in original). The Poor Law Extension Act of 1847 placed the burden of relief on local taxes, with landlords and commercial farmers supposed to support the new system. The results were catastrophic: as tenants could no longer pay their rents, their landlords could not pay the taxes and, rather than subsidising the poor, they had every incentive to evict them, sometimes with packages of assisted compulsory emigration (Gray 1995, 64-73; Ó Gráda 2000, 49-52). The moderate Irish nationalist leader and member of the British parliament, Isaac Butt, objected that Irish starvation was an imperial rather than a local problem. There was "no such thing as an English treasury", he pointed out, merely "the exchequer of the United Kingdom". Converting Famine relief from a central to a local responsibility, Butt concluded, made the Union "a mockery" (quoted in Gray 1995, 157).

It was the Irish in the United States who voiced the most stringent criticisms of British policy. From his American exile in 1861, the Irish revolutionary John Mitchel wrote that "a million and a half of men, women and children were carefully, prudently, and peacefully *slain* by the English government" (Gray 1995, 179). Potatoes had failed all over Europe, yet there was Famine only in Ireland. "The almighty, indeed, sent the potato blight", Mitchel notoriously concluded, "but the English created the Famine" (178). Most historians, especially those based in universities, have disagreed with this verdict on the grounds that genocide involves deliberate intent to exterminate (Ó Gráda 2000, 10). Nonetheless, as Gray (1995, 82, 152-154; 1999, 227-283, 328-338)

has demonstrated, many high-ranking officials and members of the British establishment embraced providentialist and *laissez-faire* thinking in their eagerness to let history take its course unhindered by government intervention. And more recent historians have raised the case for genocide, understood in a historically specific sense: not "the deliberate, systematic annihilation of an entire ethnic group or religious group by mass murder" as defined by the post-Holocaust U.N. Convention of 1948, but "the deliberate, systematic use of an environmental catastrophe to destroy a people under the pretext of engineering social reform" (Ó Murchadha 2011, 196-197; MacSuibhne 2013, 9-12). When confronted with the horror of Famine, a natural reaction is to recoil and treat it as an undifferentiated whole. But any judgement on the Irish catastrophe requires the historian to enter into the internal history of the crisis, to understand how it changed over time, and to evaluate the policy decisions that were taken and not taken. Regardless of what conclusions emerge from this analysis, it is undeniable that Mitchel's words mobilised Irish emigrants and their descendants around the world, especially in the United States. Historians therefore need to take these words seriously, even if they disagree with them analytically. The idea that the British created the Famine contributed to a powerful sense of exile among the Irish abroad, lending a strongly anti-imperialist dimension to their diasporic nationalism.

Partly as a result, the overseas Irish were unusually active in the political affairs of their homeland. From the Famine generation onward, Irish immigrants and their descendants in Britain, North America, and Australia were deeply involved in the two major types of Irish nationalism: moderate, non-violent constitutionalism and physical force republicanism. Within the various countries of settlement, support for different types of Irish nationalism varied by class, gender, and recency of arrival. There was also significant variation between these countries: republican and anti-imperial nationalism found a natural home in the United States; moderate constitutionalism was stronger in the British imperial settings of Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. Leading Irish political figures such as Charles Stewart Parnell and Michael Davitt made extensive tours of the United States in the 1880s, building support for Irish nationalism among the communities established by the Famine generation. The American Irish orchestrated the escape of Irish political prisoners from Australia to the United States and sent money, arms, and munitions to support insurrections in Ireland. Irish revolutionaries and journalists in New York City, Boston, Chicago, London, Sydney, and Dublin engaged in an explicitly transnational exchange of ideas about the best strategies for securing Ireland's independence (Brown 1966; Brundage 2016).

In an apparent paradox, diasporic nationalism of this kind could serve as a powerful force for assimilation rather than accentuating the alienation of the Irish overseas. The origins of Irish-American nationalism, as Brown (1966) demonstrated in a still-influential thesis, often lay not so much in di-

rect concerns about Ireland as in a desire to improve the standing of the Irish in their new communities abroad. Irish-American nationalists fought for Irish freedom, to be sure, but in doing so they were hoping to win acceptance and respectability in their adopted country. An independent Ireland, they believed, would raise their status internationally, and the very act of political mobilisation would demonstrate their fitness for citizenship in a participatory democracy. This argument, it must be said, fits moderate constitutional nationalism better than the physical force tradition, given that engagement in political violence was an unlikely path to respectability. And, as Foner (1980) pointed out, most Irish Americans during and after the Famine were members of the working class, forging an oppositional culture of their own rather than simply aspiring to middle-class status. Yet their radical brand of nationalism too was directed mainly toward American ends. The trope of exile at the heart of Irish diasporic nationalism, in short, was never simply a matter of lamentation or homesickness; it could also be a powerful force for communal cohesion, political mobilisation, and social advancement in the host communities.

It is important to reiterate, in conclusion, that the Famine generation was only one episode in the long history of Irish emigration. Two million emigrants left the country in the Famine decade, but the history of Irish emigration stretched over three centuries from 1700 to the present. At least 1.5 million emigrants left Ireland in the 150-year period before the Famine, and as many as 6.5 million in the 150 years after the catastrophe. Imposing a single, undifferentiated concept of "diaspora" on the entirety of Irish emigration history can reduce that history to a morality tale based on the unique trauma of the 1840s (Kenny 2013, 32). One of the biggest pitfalls of diaspora is homogenisation. The concept, as Patterson and Kelley (2000, 20) remarked, has a strong tendency to conceal "differences and discontinuities" and to erase "complexities and contradictions as it seeks to fit all within the metaphor". The history of Irish emigration consisted of five distinct waves – the eighteenth century, the pre-Famine era, the Famine era, the post-Famine era, and the twentieth century and beyond – that varied considerably in their causes, regional origins, and destinations as well as by class, gender, and religious composition. To collapse these separate phases into a single type is to rob history of its diversity and diminish its protagonists.

Diaspora has an even stronger tendency to homogenise emigrants once they have settled overseas. Viewed from this perspective, the Irish (like many other migrant groups) become a single global people, ignoring divisions of class, gender, and regional origin as well as the considerable differences between the countries where they settled. A single point of geographical origin, in other words, produces an ostensibly unitary people abroad, regardless of local circumstances or social differentiation. To offset this tendency, it is useful to adopt a comparative perspective alongside a transnational approach,

analysing the differences and the similarities in emigration patterns over time, and between the countries and regions of settlement, and not just the exchange of people and ideas between these places (Kenny 2013). By the same token, just as patterns of emigration differ from one period to the next, the relative weight of the three constituent elements of the idea of diaspora can be expected to shift accordingly.

The remainder of this essay will examine precisely this kind of shift. If relocation was the dominant element in the Irish idea of diaspora during the Famine era, the dominant element in the contemporary era is connectivity. This is not to say that either element was absent in the other period, merely that their relative importance changed over time. The massive relocation of the mid-nineteenth century gave rise to new communities overseas, which built connections back to Ireland and, eventually, among themselves. Connectivity was important in this era, in other words, even if relocation was fundamental. By the same token, emigrants continue to leave Ireland in sizeable numbers today – mostly for Britain and Australia rather than the United States – even as Ireland and the overseas communities are tied together in a complex global network by forms of connectivity that do not involve migration. Technology and communications are one important dimension of this network. But perhaps the most significant development in recent years is that national governments have emerged as major players in the diasporic arena, forging powerful new connections with their overseas communities. The Irish government in particular has launched a sophisticated and successful campaign to connect with its "diaspora".

3. The contemporary era

For many social scientists, the term "contemporary era" might refer to the current decade, but for historians it is likely to cover a longer time span. The contemporary era of immigration history in the United States, for example, refers to the period since the reforms of 1965, which abolished the national origins quota system and ushered in a genuinely global phase of immigration. For the purposes of this article, the "contemporary era" refers to the period since the 1980s, when diaspora assumed its current popularity in academic and popular discourse about Irish emigration. This period, in turn, contains two distinct and slightly overlapping phases: from the 1980s through 1998, when associational life among the overseas Irish, especially in the United States, derived much of its vitality from engagement with the political conflict in Northern Ireland; and from 1995 to the present, when the promise of the "Celtic Tiger" gave way to severe economic recession, renewed emigration, and a profound national crisis. The emphasis of the Irish government's "diaspora engagement" shifted accordingly, from high-level political and diplomatic cooperation during the peace process, to confident

cultural assertion at the height of the economic boom, to hard-headed outreach efforts after the crash.

It is worth considering at the outset that there are ways of thinking about ethnicity and diaspora other than through the popular but elusive category of "identity". The sociologist Dan Lainer-Vos (2012, 2013), for example, examines the formation and functioning of ethnic and diasporic groups – and nations – as a *practical* matter, involving governments, institutions, and associations. For Lainer-Vos, putting together and maintaining affiliative groups of this sort involves a set of concrete problems to be solved rather than (or in addition to) a community to be created in the abstract. These groups, he argues, are "stitched together" rather than "imagined" (the seductive but elusive term favoured in much of the humanities). Lainer-Vos concentrates on financial transactions, for example bond drives, in his analysis of how diasporic communities work.

Ted Smyth (2018), in a compelling analysis of the retention and transformation of Irish-American ethnicity over time, adopts a similar approach, revealing a strikingly broad and powerful array of Irish cultural, academic, and political institutions in the United States in the 1980s. Among the most prominent of these were ethnic newspapers, county associations (based on place of origin in Ireland), the Gaelic Athletic Association, *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Eireann* (which promoted Irish traditional music and dance), the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the American Conference of Irish Studies, and the Irish American Cultural Institute. Politically, the "Four Horsemen" of Irish America – Thomas P. O'Neill (Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives), Senators Edward Kennedy and Patrick Moynihan, and Governor Hugh Carey of New York – emerged as powerful supporters of moderate constitutionalism, working closely with John Hume in Northern Ireland and exerting considerable influence over American policy. Noraid (Northern Irish Aid), on the other hand, supported physical force republicanism, serving as the U.S. fundraising agent of Sinn Féin and the IRA. Overall, Smyth concludes, Irish-American associational life in the 1980s was so robust largely because of its engagement with the political conflict in Northern Ireland.

By the late 1990s, at the height of the "Celtic Tiger" and with the worst of the conflict in Northern Ireland at an end, Irish cultural self-confidence was at an all-time high. Most of the organisations Smyth discusses were thriving, along with many more. *Riverdance*, which was first performed in 1994, brought unprecedented attention to Irish dance and music. In the academic world, important new centres of research and study were joined in a network of conferences, journals, student and faculty exchanges and, above all, by the Internet. The critical electronic forum at this time was the Irish Diaspora list, moderated by Patrick O'Sullivan, the director of the Irish Diaspora Research Unit at the University of Bradford. O'Sullivan edited a six-volume se-

ries of essays called *The Irish Worldwide* (O'Sullivan 1993-1997), doing more than any other individual to help create the emerging field of Irish Diaspora Studies. By the year 2000, the United States had nine Irish Studies centres or programmes, Britain had five, Canada and Australia had three each, and Brazil had one. Most of these centres and programmes dealt with themes of migration and diaspora as part of their conception of Irish Studies, and at least six in Ireland were devoted specifically to this theme (Kenny 2003b).

Then, in 2008, disaster struck. With the collapse of the "Celtic Tiger", Ireland suddenly and brutally became a nation of emigrants once again. From 2008 to 2014, over 240,000 people left the country (DFA 2015, 14). The Irish government was already closely involved with diaspora affairs. A report by the Task Force on Policy Regarding Emigrants, an independent advisory group established by the government led to the establishment of the Irish Abroad Unit and the Emigrant Support Programme within the Department of Foreign Affairs in 2004 (13). At this point, the primary focus was on aging Irish immigrants in Britain, most of whom had left Ireland in the 1950s. The government's engagement with diaspora affairs rose significantly after the economy collapsed. In 2009 and 2010, the Global Irish Economic Forum and the Global Irish Network were established "to provide mechanisms for some of the most successful Irish overseas Irish to connect with Ireland and identify ways to contribute to Ireland's continued recovery and economic development" (14). The government declared that 2013 would be the "Year of the Gathering", an opportunity for all people of Irish origin (or inclination) to contribute to the country's cultural and economic recovery (Glucksman Ireland House Podcast 2017). This announcement was greeted with considerable cynicism in some quarters, with the Irish actor Gabriel Byrne, who had been named Ireland's first "cultural ambassador to the United States" in 2010, denouncing The Gathering as a "scam" and a "shakedown" (*Irish Times*, 10 November 2012). What would have been really surprising, however, was if the Irish government had *not* engaged in efforts of this kind, especially during so grave a crisis, given the size and resources of the overseas Irish population.

Governments around the world were busily engaged in similar efforts. In 1998, Armenia declared that it would strengthen links with its diaspora (*spurk*) through a special department within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The first Armenia-Diaspora conference met in Yerevan in 1999, and five more were held by 2017. The Armenian Constitution was amended in 2008 to introduce a form of dual citizenship, including voting rights, for qualified people of Armenian descent abroad. The Chinese government, although it does not permit dual citizenship, encourages economic, scientific, and cultural cooperation among the global Chinese via the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO). The Indian government, which also prohibits dual citizenship, has offered a variety of incentives to attract investment by overseas Indians. The African Union, meanwhile, declared the African Diaspora its sixth region in 2003.

In March 2015, the Irish government released a major report, *Global Irish: Ireland's Diaspora Policy*. Throughout the report, the government used "diaspora" in the familiar sense of a social entity – Irish and Irish-descended people living abroad. But in deploying the idea of diaspora the government was also constituting the meaning of the term. As the "first clear statement of Government of Ireland policy on the diaspora", the report began by announcing its vision of "a vibrant, diverse global Irish community, connected to Ireland and to each other" (DFA 2015, 2). On this basis, *Global Irish* outlined a comprehensive and imaginative set of proposals and guidelines. Ireland, the report noted, had long been recognised as "a leader in diaspora engagement" (10) and this expertise showed through on every page of the report. In his Foreword, the *Taoiseach* (head of government), Enda Kenny, T.D., laid out the rationale for the new policy:

> The voice of this small nation is hugely amplified by the many millions around the globe who are Irish by birth or by descent or by affiliation. Our diaspora are [sic] an important part of our story as a nation. They are part of who we are as a people, what we have done and where we have gone in this world. Their existence is the end result of a long history of emigration which for many was not considered a matter of choice. (6)

It was in this context that Kenny announced the creation of Ireland's Ministry for Diaspora Affairs, with Jimmy Deenihan T.D. as its head (DFA 2015, 6). Deenihan, in his own Foreword to *Global Irish*, noted that the new Ministry spanned the Department of the Taoiseach and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and he announced that he would chair an Interdepartmental Committee to ensure "a whole of government approach towards diaspora issues" (9).

The government was forthright about the economic crisis that had triggered its new policy. At the end of the twentieth century, the *Taoiseach* noted, the Irish people had thought the days of mass emigration were behind them, but "the economic crash of 2008 once again deprived our people, and particularly our young people, of the jobs and opportunities at home that they deserve" (6). As the *Tánaiste* (deputy head of government), Joan Burton, T.D., noted in her Foreword:

> The size of our diaspora gives us a reach and a voice throughout the world that is the envy of many other nations. We have been very fortunate to be able to draw upon their experience and expertise in overcoming our recent economic difficulties and getting this country back on its feet and creating jobs. […] As we strengthen our economic recovery we look forward to continuing to work with the diaspora to ensure that Ireland's future is secured for all of our people. (7)

Burton concluded optimistically: "The cranes are on the skyline again, the jobs are emerging again. A generation stands ready to come home to a

Republic of equality, of opportunity, of hopes and dreams and possibilities" (*ibidem*).

Global Irish took seriously the government's commitment, indeed obligation, under the constitutional amendment of 1998 to connect with and support the overseas Irish. As the introduction to the document put it:

> The Irish have an affinity to and with each other that is not bound nor defined by geography or time. This first ever comprehensive statement of Ireland's diaspora policy is firmly rooted in Article 2 of the Constitution of Ireland which states that 'the Irish nation cherishes its special affinity with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage'. There can be no more clear-cut statement of the importance of the relationship between Ireland and our diaspora. (10)

Successive generations of the Irish overseas had "given Ireland a reputation and reach that other nations envy", the report noted, but emigration continued to be perceived as a loss to Ireland, especially "a loss of young people, with their energy, innovation and capacity to drive change" (*ibidem*). While many emigrants found opportunity abroad, others suffered hardship and needed support.

The government would come to the assistance of these needy emigrants, just as it called on the more prosperous members of the "diaspora" to assist Ireland in a time of great need. "Irish people all over the world", as Charles Flanagan, T.D., the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, noted, "have played their part in Ireland's recovery in recent years, and in restoring Ireland's reputation and place in the world after a period of unprecedented economic challenges". Those who wanted to give back to Ireland had done so in a myriad of ways – through the Global Irish Network and the Global Irish Economic Forum, by encouraging friends to visit Ireland, by setting up businesses, and by introducing people abroad to the richness of Irish culture. "Our diaspora is both an asset and a responsibility", Flanagan concluded. "For some the journey has been hugely positive while for others emigration has been a cause of pain and heartache" (DFA 2015, 8). This phrase, "an asset and a responsibility" nicely captured the report's reciprocal conception of diaspora. The government had a responsibility to the overseas Irish; but, as members of the extended Irish nation, they too had a responsibility to help Ireland when they could.

While a few governments – notably Mexico's and Italy's – have formalised such *quid pro quo* arrangements by extending voting rights to their citizens abroad, *Global Irish* was circumspect on this matter. "The issue of voting rights in Irish elections is of enormous importance to many Irish citizens abroad", the report acknowledged. "They have expressed this through well organised and vocal campaigns and in submissions to this review of policy"

(19). The government conceded that allowing Irish citizens abroad to vote in certain elections – for example, for President of Ireland – would "allow them to deepen their engagement with Ireland and to play a more active role in Irish society. It would further the wider goal of enhancing diaspora engagement" (*ibidem*). But implementing and managing such a policy would be challenging, *Global Irish* warned, and it would raise questions about the extent to which voting rights might be extended in cases where citizenship was passed down through the generations, "including to those who have never visited or engaged with Ireland". Rather than proposing action, the report recommended that various ministries analyse the policy, legal, and practical issues and report back to the government (*ibidem*). In the meantime, Ireland's diaspora engagement would be based on a five-part policy based on the guiding principle of connectivity.

4. A five-part policy for the Irish diaspora

The five-part policy proposed by *Global Irish* exemplifies the range and power of government outreach efforts in the contemporary era. The policy was designed as one that:

> *Supports*: those who have left Ireland and need or want support;
> *Connects*: in an inclusive way with those, of all ages, around the world who are Irish, of Irish descent or have a tangible connection to Ireland, and wish to maintain a connection with Ireland and with each other;
> *Facilitates*: a wide range of activity at local, national and international level designed to build on and develop twoway diaspora engagement;
> *Recognises*: the wide variety of people who make up our diaspora and the important ongoing contribution that they have made, both individually and collectively, in shaping our development and our identity;
> *Evolves*: to meet changing needs in changing times. (DFA 2015, 4)

Under the first heading, "Supporting the Diaspora", the Irish government committed to provide multiannual grants under the Emigrant Support Programme, keep welfare at the heart of its approach to diaspora issues, and increase its focus on the mental health of emigrants (4, 26-29). "While many of our emigrants are better equipped than before for the demands of emigration", the report noted, "there are still those who remain vulnerable and for whom emigration is a challenging experience" (25). The government recognised the needs both of departing and returning emigrants and of people of Irish descent around the world. In 2014, it had provided financial support to 210 organisations working with emigrants and the Irish diaspora in more than twenty countries across five continents (*ibidem*).

The Emigrant Support Programme (ESP), managed by the Irish Abroad Unit in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in partnership with Ire-

land's embassies and consulates abroad, was the key to this first component of the policy. As "a tangible expression of the Government's support of, commitment to, and interest in the global Irish community" (*ibidem*), the ESP assisted over 470 organisations in more than 30 countries in the period 2004-2014. Grants totalled over €126 million, ranging from very small amounts for grassroots community and voluntary groups to large allocations for non-profit organisations (*ibidem*). The ESP, *Global Irish* promised, would continue to fund projects that celebrated, maintained, and strengthened links between Ireland and the global Irish, and addressed the needs of vulnerable emigrants, including Travellers, the undocumented, the elderly, prisoners and former prisoners, and those suffering from mental illness, alcoholism, or psychological distress. It would also fund projects that furthered the work of the Global Irish Economic Forum, supported business networks in their efforts to connect Irish people at home and abroad, and improved awareness and understanding of diaspora issues through research (25, 28-29).

Under the second heading, "Connecting with the Diaspora", *Global Irish* addressed the central element of the idea of diaspora in the contemporary era. "One of the main themes running through this Policy is that of *connectivity*", Minister Flanagan wrote. "Our network of embassies and consulates around the world will continue their outreach to the diaspora engaging with Irish communities" (8; emphasis added). The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade would build on that outreach "by availing of the opportunities presented by fast evolving technology which, in recent years, has transformed the ability to stay in touch and to remain connected" (*ibidem*). *Global Irish* placed a strong emphasis on improving "communications and connectivity between Ireland and its diaspora". As the report put it:

> Effective communication is essential to real diaspora engagement. With modern technologies, it is more important and more possible than ever to engage with Irish communities globally. The need to communicate better with the Irish abroad was one of the strongest themes to emerge from the public consultation on diaspora policy. People want to feel connected and they want the Government to play a role in achieving this. (34)

The report noted that since the establishment of the Irish Abroad Unit in 2004, communications had evolved significantly: "Current means of mobile communications and widely available social media were in their infancy at that time – Facebook was set up in the same year as the Irish Abroad Unit, Skype was established just a year earlier, and other networks and tools, such as Twitter did not yet exist" (11). Social media would play an important role in the new policy, but also more traditional forms of communication such as letters, telephone, and email. As the report put it, "We want to communicate with the Irish abroad in the ways they choose to communicate with each other" (35).

To facilitate better communication, Flanagan announced the creation of the Global Irish Hub (<https://www.dfa.ie/global-irish/>). Run by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Hub would "provide a portal for the diaspora – a single place to find information on support services, Irish heritage, staying in touch, business and education, finding Irish networks in other countries and information on returning to Ireland" (DFA 2015, 8). Flanagan encouraged people abroad who were born in Ireland or of Irish descent to register on the Hub and to subscribe to the new *Global Irish Newsletter* (<https://www.dfa.ie/global-irish/staying-in-touch/newsletter/>), which would issue regular communications by email to the overseas Irish, along with a weekly *eNewsletter* with the latest news and job announcements. Efforts would also be made to enhance access to Irish television and radio stations and to support media coverage of diaspora issues at home and abroad (DFA 2015, 35).

Among the cultural arenas identified by *Global Irish* for particular attention and development were genealogy, arts, culture, music, language, and historical commemorations. "The desire to trace family history", the report noted, "is often the incentive for an individual of Irish ancestry to activate their links to Ireland" (33). Here, once again, was a corrective to cynicism: whereas the figure of the "returning Yank" in search of his or her roots is sometimes ridiculed in Ireland, the government respected the search for origins and saw opportunities to make further connections. Arts, culture, and music, meanwhile, were the source of deeper and more extensive links. "More than any other aspect of Ireland or our Irishness, our culture reaches all corners of the world", the report noted. "It is one of the most effective ways of connecting with the global Irish diaspora, strengthening links to home and maintaining expression of Irish identity through generations" (36). "Culture Ireland", a division of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, would continue to support Irish arts, film, and music worldwide, helping to generate new audiences among the global Irish and beyond (*ibidem*). The government would also support *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in its promotion of traditional Irish music and dance, including classes, festivals, tours, published recordings, and books and tutorials (*ibidem*). Literature got only a passing nod – to Joyce, Yeats, and Beckett – perhaps because this form of Irish culture was already renowned around the world, but the report acknowledged the Irish Studies programmes at Notre Dame University, New York University, and Charles University, Prague as providing "a formal opportunity for the diaspora to engage with their heritage in an educational setting" (7). In the realm of Irish-language, the government would continue to fund initiatives by *Glór na Gael*, *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, and other organisations. And, with the period 2013-2022 billed as the Irish "Decade of Commemorations", the government saw an important role for the Irish abroad, not least because many of the leaders of the 1916 Rising

were born or spent part of their lives overseas. Ireland's network of embassies and consulates, the government noted, would have a central role to play in this regard, as would the ESP (39).

Global Irish also announced a special initiative, *Fréamhacha*, aimed at "deepening the ties with Ireland of younger non-Irish born members of the Irish diaspora" (5, 38). A pilot programme, modelled on the "growing focus in countries with large diasporas on providing an opportunity for the children of emigrants to strengthen their links with the country of their parents or grandparents through immersive visits to their 'home' country" (38), would sponsor two-week stays by young Irish Americans (similar to the visits by many Jewish American teenagers to Israel). These short visits, the government anticipated, would be "an important tool to nurture a greater mindfulness of heritage in diaspora populations" (*ibidem*). The programme was abandoned after the one-year pilot, but private groups continued to organise a limited number of visits. Just as Irish-American cultural organisations today realise the importance of connecting with young people if a sense of ethnicity is to survive, the success of outreach efforts by national governments would seem to depend in part on similar initiatives.

Finally, *Global Irish* identified sports and St. Patrick's Day as especially important in fostering diasporic connectivity. Among Irish sports, the report naturally singled out Gaelic games, which it claimed were being played increasingly abroad (36). With approximately 400 clubs outside the island of Ireland, the Gaelic Athletic Association had "arguably […] greater reach into the Irish diaspora than any other organisation" (42). "In many locations", the report noted, "GAA clubs provide a first port of call for new emigrants, giving them an immediate circle of familiarity and support" (*ibidem*). In the United States, however, Gaelic games do not have a realistic chance of competing with the national sports of baseball, basketball, and football, and to a growing extent soccer, which suggests that the government's position was more patriotic than pragmatic in this case. As for St. Patrick's Day, *Global Irish* noted that it was "celebrated in more countries around the world than any other national day and reflects the distinctive nature and reach of the Irish nation". This day of national and international celebration offered "a platform for Ireland to engage with the world", an opportunity "to communicate with the world when the world is listening" (8).

"Facilitating Diaspora Engagement" was the third component of the new policy. Working with the Clinton Institute at University College Dublin, the government convened a Global Irish Civic Forum in Ireland in 2015 "to discuss the challenges facing the Irish abroad and to capture the voice of ordinary Irish emigrants" (5, 42). This conference was followed by the Fourth Global Irish Economic Forum, also in 2015, in a new format emphasising greater engagement with organisations based in Ireland and greater participation by women and young people (5, 44). Another Irish Civic Forum met

in Dublin in 2017. Although *Global Irish* was a blueprint for policy, the report emphasised that the government was "just one part of the complex web of networks and organisations that connect people in Ireland and across all continents under the single banner of being Irish" (23). Its role was "primarily one of support and facilitation". Financial support was a key part of this approach, but also institutional support through Ireland's network of embassies and consulates (*ibidem*).

Irish business networks, the report noted, were flourishing around the world due to increased emigration and enhanced technology, but they had yet to reach their potential. These networks, the government believed, could be used to promote Ireland as an attractive location for business and to attract investment and entrepreneurship. Yet there was no platform to bring Irish business networks from around the world together. The government announced that the ESP would welcome proposals to this end, especially those concerning "diasporic networks for female professional development" – a theme emphasised in a recent report by the Clinton Institute, "Supporting the next Generation of the Irish Diaspora", which had identified "the emergence of a young, female, professional element in the Irish emigrant communities" (Kennedy, Lyes, Russell 2014; DFA 2015, 45). Philanthropy, as *Global Irish* observed was "still at an early stage" in Ireland, whereas members of the "diaspora" both Irish-born and of Irish descent, had given significant sums to Irish projects, programmes, and organisations. Alongside particular individuals, the report singled out the Ireland Funds as "as a remarkable example of diaspora giving". Founded in 1976, the Funds were operating in twelve countries by 2015 and had raised more than $480 million for over 3,000 organisations. The Ireland Funds' vision of "the global Irish making a difference together", the report concluded, "could serve as a guide to all those seeking to work for shared good in this area" (DFA 2015, 45; Smyth 2019, 5).

Global Irish placed a strong emphasis on the possibility of return to Ireland. "In times gone by", the report noted, "leaving Ireland was often perceived as a life sentence particularly by those who were left behind. That is no longer the case and attitudes to emigration have changed along with the changing nature of emigration" (DFA 2015, 11). In its "ongoing work to deepen economic recovery", the government would strive to create the conditions whereby those who had to leave the country for economic reasons could return. The government would work to ease the logistical challenges, including recognition of qualifications acquired abroad and lack of affordable housing and job opportunities. The "Safe Home" emigrant support service (which had originally provided help in securing affordable housing only for older Irish-born emigrants seeking to return) would provide information and advice for anyone who was considering returning to Ireland, along with support for those who had done so (<https://www.safehomeireland.com/>).

In a creative touch, *Global Irish* envisaged an important place for Ireland in the field of Diaspora Studies. Given the centrality of emigration to Ireland's historical development, the government committed to "Support efforts to use Ireland as a hub for research into the potential and reach of diasporas and the practical application of such research" (DFA 2015, 5, 47). With more than 230 million international migrants in the world in 2015, the report noted, Ireland was "ahead of most countries in efforts to engage with our citizens abroad and their descendants. Initiatives like the Emigrant Support Programme and the Global Irish Network are original and inventive and point the way for others to follow" (46). Learning, the report continued, is based on sharing knowledge, and in this respect Ireland's universities, non-governmental organisations, private individuals, and the government itself had much to give and much to receive. The government would "support efforts to use Ireland as a hub for research into the potential and reach of diasporas and the practical application of such research" (*ibidem*).

In the fourth component of the new policy, "Recognising the Diaspora", the report saluted the day-to-day work of Irish officials overseas in their efforts to connect with Irish communities and noted the high-level engagement with those communities during ministerial visits. The government encouraged Irish people, organisations, and communities to engage with the nomination process for the Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad, initiated in 2012 to recognise persons living abroad "who have given sustained and distinguished service" to Ireland or to Irish communities overseas (DFA 2015, 5, 49). The report also promised to reevaluate the ill-fated Certificate of Irish Heritage scheme (5, 50). Introduced in 2011, the certificates recognised the Irish identity felt by people around the world who were not entitled to Irish citizenship. The government honoured some high-figures under this programme, including former U.S. President Bill Clinton, President Barack Obama, the actor Tom Cruise, and the Olympian Lord Coe, but everyone else had to buy the certificates (€40 for the piece of paper or €120 with a frame). Not surprisingly, only 3,000 had been sold by 2015 and the scheme was discontinued later that year.

Finally, and importantly, *Global Irish* recognised that Ireland's "diaspora" was not static. Under the heading "Evolving Diaspora Policy", the government declared that it would encourage research and implement policy in line with the changing character and needs of Irish communities abroad (5, 17, 52). As a subset of this policy, it would launch "an alumni challenge fund to provide seed-funding to new collaborative initiatives by Irish institutions to target their Irish and non-Irish graduates working internationally" (5, 53). The report also recognised the substantial number of immigrants who had come to Ireland in recent years, their contributions to local communities, and the new networks of migration and diaspora opened up by their presence (5, 52).

5. Conclusion

Of the three elements of the idea of diaspora, relocation and connectivity have been uppermost in the Irish case, with their relative weight varying over time, while return has been of much less importance. Reverse migration from the United States to Ireland was more significant than historians have realised and it had a considerable impact on Irish rural history (Fitzpatrick 2019). But it was on nowhere near the scale of Italian return, which reached rates as high as almost 50 percent from New York City and Buenos Aires at the turn of the twentieth century (Gabaccia 2000, 72-73). In the absence of reverse migration, however, connectivity contains within itself an element of return – not literal or physical, but emotional, cultural, or political. To forge connections with Ireland or with other Irish communities abroad is to partake in the creation and maintenance of something akin to a transnational Irish nation – in other words, the idea of a diaspora – that does not entail living in Ireland as a *sine qua non* of Irishness. The Irish nation, as the *Global Irish* report put it, "includes all those who feel a bind to Ireland" (DFA 2015, 11).

With emigration from Ireland to the United States reduced to a trickle today compared to the Famine generation, Smyth (2018) has raised important questions about whether, and in what form, Irish American associational life can survive. While the content of Irish-American ethnicity has changed in the generation since the 1980s – from nationalist politics to culture, to put the matter in shorthand – he finds that its vitality has not diminished. The current and emerging sense of Irishness in the United States, far from being simply a diluted version of the old, is more "inclusive and confident" (Smyth 2018, 16, 69) and for that reason it is likely to endure. But for how long, and in what form, remains an open question. Irish America today, as Smyth observes, lacks a single animating political issue comparable to its engagement with the Northern Ireland conflict in the 1980s. And the lack of replenishment through immigration raises the spectre of symbolic ethnicity. Yet connectivity can survive in the absence of immigration, providing a powerful force of economic, cultural, and political cohesion.

This article has demonstrated how the Irish created an idea of a diaspora in two quite different periods, under two distinct sets of circumstances. Out of the trauma and upheaval of the Famine years, emigrants built regional and local communities abroad, sustained by a common sense of exile, which eventually formed connections between themselves as well as with Ireland. The Irish idea of diaspora in this period emerged from the bottom up and it had a strong political dimension in the form of nationalism. In the contemporary era, with Ireland and the overseas communities connected in an interactive global network, diaspora also has a strong political dimension but the Irish government has emerged as the central player. "A diaspora policy will not create or define the diaspora", the *Global Irish* report states. "What it

can do is contribute to the activation and mobilisation of the Irish overseas, and further a sense that they are part of a community" (DFA 2015, 11). Yet this assertion, born of a tactful desire to be been seen as facilitating rather than directing the activities of the overseas Irish, does justice neither to the extent of governmental power nor to the idea of diaspora. Everyone who uses this idea helps shape its meaning – and no-one more so, in the contemporary era, than national governments that reach out to engage with their overseas populations.

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"Exiles at home, neither in exile nor at home". New Insights in Pearse Hutchinson's Image of Spanish Regionalism in the 1950s-1970s[1]

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Abstract:

After his journeys around a continent that was still licking the wounds of WWII, the Irish poet Pearse Hutchinson (1927-2012) chose Barcelona as his residence in different periods in the 1950s and the 1960s. There is considerable agreement in the notion that Hutchinson reflected the parallels between Spain and Ireland and both countries' cultural and language oppression in his poetry (Veiga 2011; Keatinge 2011; Mittermaier 2017). Yet, the understanding of his involvement with Spain and its regions/nations is still limited. While existing literature on this issue relies heavily on the poetic production of the author, little attention has been paid to Hutchinson's uncatalogued papers held at UCC and Maynooth U., which include unpublished poems, personal letters and postcards, annotations and his collection of books. The purpose of this paper is to increase the existing knowledge about the poet's representation of Spain and, in particular, of the regions of Galicia and Catalonia.

Keywords: Irish diaspora, Irish poetry, Pearse Hutchinson, Spain, Spanish regionalism

Although Pearse Hutchinson was born in Glasgow in 1927, he was raised in Dublin, in a "political household" (Coleman 2011, 217) with solid Fenian principles. His mother, Cathleen Sara, was acquainted with Countess Constance Markievicz and she "ideolize[d] Dev[2] (Eamon de Valera) until he

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[2] Hutchinson used to refer to the Irish leader as Dev, even in the letters sent to his parents during his years in Spain.

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began executing republicans" (*ibidem*, 219). Harry Hutchinson, his father, became the treasurer of Sinn Fein in Scotland, but between 1919 and 1921, he was interned in Frongoch[3]. The proximity of Hutchinson's parents to the nationalist movement would have a relevant impact in the poet's image of Spain, in particular, of specific regions like Catalonia and Galicia. The germ of Spain in Hutchinson's imagination was especially premature. At the age of seven, Pearse Hutchinson (1927-2012) wrote on a scrap paper that he found when he was forty one years old, a note addressed to his mother which read: "Mamy I am going to tell you a secret and the secret is that when I am a young man I will take you to Spain and take you to all the cities in Spain" (Hutchinson 1934). Hutchinson never took his mother to the country but certainly his poetry is inextricably linked with her experience abroad, in particular Spain, and this space would become her locus of cosmopolitanism to the same extent that Paris, London or Trieste would be for Beckett, Bowen and Joyce respectively, who left Ireland "to live and work in capital cities of international modernism" (Pearson 2015, 2).

The relevance of his first trip to Spain was such that the author selected a relevant date to show his determination to live in the country, as other Irish writers who sojourned in the country did, such as Walter Starkie (whom Hutchinson met in Madrid in 1951 to ask him for help to find a job in Spain). In Hutchinson's case, it was ironically April's Fools Day of 1951. The fact that Hutchinson found the interconnectedness of Irish nationalism with Catholic puritanism "repellent" (Mittermaier 2017, 284), helps to understand his decision to leave for Spain as an escape or a "break" which "now is essential" [*sic*] (Hutchinson 1951a), but not as "consciously making a literary gesture" (Hutchinson 1971). To Hutchinson, this could have been a way of liberating himself from the puritanical obsession of his mother and from a suffocating society:

> I had fallen in love with the idea of Spain. I'd been on holiday there for three weeks with a friend in 1950 and I discovered that I wanted to live there, and I'd already fallen in love with the language. I wanted to get away from the Irish climate […], and I wanted to live in a sunny country, a warm country. And I also wanted to get — escape — from my mother's influence which severely restricted my freedom, and from the society which was still — John Jordan had a great phrase for it afterwards — it was the 'dark circumscribed fifties' — well the '40s/'50s, it was the same. I had to get away from all that. Now the fact that I wanted to get away from it to Franco's Spain is odd but I had fallen in love with Spain so at least I would be away from my mother, the mommy. (Coleman 2011, 223-224)

[3] An internment camp located in Wales during World War I, which held German prisoners until 1916, when these were replaced by Irish supporters of the Republic. Prominent leaders of the independent movement were also imprisoned there, namely Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins.

Ireland and Spain in fact, were going through a similar progression during the 1950s and 1960s, which involved a large economic expansion, industrialisation and urbanisation. The challenging issues of self-sufficiency as well as the perpetuity of the rural tradition of both countries were being reconsidered. In view of the similar momentum that both countries were facing, it might sound paradoxical that Hutchinson considered his decision to go to Spain as an "escape", especially bearing in mind his rejection of any form of political or cultural subjugation. The poet meditated on this incongruity back in 1951, before living permanently in the country:

> I had fled from Ireland to escape the narrow oppressive, organised religion or pseudo religion of that time and place, and where had I escaped to? To the equally if not more repressive Catholic regime of Salazar and where was I on the way to via Portugal? I was on the way to the monstrous supposed bulwark of Christianity called Franco's Spain. Maybe the absurdity of all that, of my own trajectory had subconsciously brought on the panic. (Hutchinson 2009, Tape 8)[4]

However, Hutchinson considered Spain as "extraordinarily open and charming" (Hutchinson 1997, 26) and explained his attraction to Spain in a radio programme for RTÉ, in which he asserted that, "even under Franco, it could be a wonderful country" (Woods 2000). These ideas would resonate in the poem "Mama Poule" (1972), in which he defined Dublin as a "somnolescent city" (1972, 22) and Irish politics as a "gob of laughter" (*ibidem*). Hutchinson then turned his attention towards Spain as the only breakout from his home country: "He left her there, and boarded the next plane for Granada, where he spent a long time trying in vain to kill pigeons in the public square" (*ibidem*).

There is considerable agreement of the notion that Pearse Hutchinson reflected the parallels between both countries' cultural and language oppression in his poetry (Veiga 2011; Keatinge 2011; Mittermaier 2017). The purpose of this paper is to increase the existing knowledge about the poet's representation of Spain and, in particular, of the regions of Galicia and Catalonia since, while existing literature on this issue relies heavily on the published poetic production of the author, little attention has been paid to Hutchinson's catalogued and uncatalogued papers held at University College Cork and Maynooth University (which include his unpublished poems on the country in English, Spanish and Catalan, his unpublished and unfinished memoir in thirty tapes titled *Iberia*, recorded in 2009 with references to his time in Spain and Portugal in the 1950s, an unpublished memoir titled *Three Cells in Barcelona*, several personal letters and postcards to his family and friends,

[4] Hutchinson would later consider himself "(though this is not a very definitive statement) rather an agnostic – but an agnostic whose agnosticism is roughly 97% atheistical" (Hutchinson 2009, Tape 25).

annotations, notebooks, and his personal collection of books on Galicia). As a result, the understanding of his involvement with Spain and its regions/nations is still limited. Thus, by delving into this extensive documentation, the insights into his ideology provided by the analysis of these papers can be greatly enhanced. It must be mentioned, though, that full access to all items held at Maynooth University was not given due to both copyright issues and the unfinished and ongoing cataloguing process at the time of writing. Thus, the goal of this paper is to place another stone on the path toward improved insight of Hiberno-Spanish cultural relations by offering a close examination of Hutchinson's Catalan and Galician poetry and papers and to enrich this area of study by filling in details.

An early knowledge of Spain and its regions is accredited by Hutchinson in his memoirs through two links: the first one was through his grandfather who received the Freedom of the City of Bilbao after rescuing a ship about to go down in the Bay of Biscay. The second connection came through his attendance at a meeting at the Mansion House in Dublin where a Basque Priest was trying to rally support among the Irish for the Spanish Republic around 1939 or 1940, an event which "made quite an impression upon [him]" (Hutchinson 2009, Tape 1). These events, together with his years at the University College Dublin, when he "fell in love and began to really study and really learn the Spanish language" (Hutchinson 2009, Tape 1), would contribute to his decision to take an extensive tour, which can be tracked through his extremely detailed unpublished memoir as well as through the letters and postcards he sent to and received from his parents and his friends. Hutchinson's European and African route would comprise short visits to Vigo, Portugal, Huelva, Seville, Granada, Algiers and Tangier, Madrid, Paris and London for a three-week holiday in 1950 accompanied by his Trinidadian friend Bert. After coming back to Dublin, Hutchinson recognised the relevance of his first contact with the country:

> Nothing could have possibly been the same, or anything like the same, as it was before that first trip to Spain. I had seen, felt, the heat and light of Spain like no heat or light I had ever known before; I had lived in contact with the people of Spain, their kindliness, friendliness, obligingness. Nowhere I'd been before, London, Paris, Geneva, had I encountered anything like this high Spanish obligingness. Everywhere we went we had, naturally enough, to ask directions of complete strangers, and every time, but one, the Spaniard in question had taken us the whole way to where we were going , or walked part of the way with us, and then given us clear directions. The degree to which this sort of kindness made travelling and sightseeing pleasanter cannot be overstated. (Hutchinson 2009, Tape 5)

A year later, in 1951, he visited Vigo, Portugal, Seville, Granada, Cordoba, Madrid, Barcelona, and Geneva to work for the International Labour Office until 1953. He also took a two-week holiday in Spain in 1952 (visiting

Barcelona, Palma de Mallorca, Valencia, Madrid, Ronda, Granada, Jerez de la Frontera and Seville). Hutchinson had already admitted in a letter from 1951 that he had come to Spain "with more than purely tourist effect" (Hutchinson 1951b), which was reflected in his poetry on the country. After his journey around a continent that was still licking the wounds of World War II, Pearse Hutchinson chose Barcelona as his residence between 1954 and 1957, then from 1961 until 1967, and finally again during the summer of 1969, the year he received the Butler Award for Irish writing. The impact of his Spanish experience was such that all his collections (even his posthumous one published in 2014) include poems in which his years in the country under the regime still resonate and he would even recognise in an unpublished poem (from the 1960s) that "Yet every Iberian returning since / meant some kind of rebirth" (Hutchinson PP/10/2/1/21/31/1[5]).

Hutchinson remarked on the contrasts between his native country and Spain in a letter sent to his parents during his first years in the country in the 1950s (the exact date is unknown), in which the poet admitted to have seen "so little of Ireland, comparatively speaking, and it's kind of loneliness is such a complete foil to the fierce splendors of Spain" (Hutchinson undated a). Later in 1961, after his first period in the country, the Irish poet was " 'determined' to live in Spain 'for ever' " (Hutchinson 2003, 17). Observations on the affinities and parallels between both countries gradually abounded in Hutchinson's correspondence from his early years in Spain onwards to the point that he agreed with what the Venezuelan poet José Rafael Pocaterra[6] used to say to his daughter Soledad Pocaterra (whom he met while living in Barcelona): "the Irish and the Spanish are more, more than any other peoples, to get on together" (Hutchinson 1965).

Hutchinson's identification of the analogies of Spain with his native country led to a progressive construction of his image on politics under Franco's oppressive regime: "If away from your country that I claim to love / in slightly freer countries I speak" (Hutchinson PP/10/2/1/21/43). Yet, he particularly focused on Catalonia and Galicia, and the issue of regionalism in Spain. British Romantic travel writers in Spain like Richard Ford, George Borrow or Henry David Inglis had considered regionalism a synonym of disunion, decadence or isolation. Even well-known 20th century authors like Gerald Brenan (whom he met in Málaga in the late 1950s) detracted the value of the *patria chica* (Brenan 1960, ix) and regarded Spain as an ungovernable place

[5] Unpublished poem (ca. 1960s) from MS. Special Collection, Maynooth, National University of Ireland Maynooth. Henceforth PP/10/2/1/21/31/1.

[6] José Rafael Pocaterra (1889-1955) was a politician and writer from Venezuela. He was imprisoned twice for declaring himself against the government of Cipriano Castro in 1907 and in 1919 for showing his sympathy with the Allies during World War II.

whose population was particularly individualistic, and whose difficulties to deal with the concern on regionalism provided a sense of disunion that hampered the progression of the place as a cohesive nation.

Although Pearse Hutchinson did not provide an open position on the claim for separatism existent in these regions during his years living in Spain or even in his extensive poetic production on the country, the poet disclosed a progressive and ongoing stance for freedom and democracy and a particular attention to situations of oppression and despair in these places. Pearse Hutchinson believed that "only fools could be only proud, or only ashamed, of their own country. Or of a segunda patria" (Hutchinson 2002b, 89)[7]. This assertion would influence Hutchinson's image of Spain in relation to his native country: as opposed to British travel writing, which tended to epitomise Spain in terms of inferiority when compared to England, his poetry would, on the contrary, tend to avoid a textual attitude in terms of either supremacy or inferiority in relation to Ireland, thus establishing a position of understanding and empathy towards different regions in Spain. The following poem illuminates Hutchinson's awareness for this concept of "patria chica" that criticises a misrepresentation of Spanish regionalism:

Oh if only the stranger on the train,
as it trundled through the all-but-Spanish-coloured
Sussex Downs,
when I,
fresh from interminable journeys on Spanish trains
where everybody asked everybody else about their patria
chica,
asked him where he was from,
had instead of getting embarrassed
cried out proud:
'I'm a Kentish girl myself!' (Hutchinson 2002a, 271)

The issue of regionalism affected the poet's image of the country to the point that he would assert that "Spain made [him] irreversibly political" (quot-

[7] This is related to Hutchinson's sense of patriotism: His poem "Shamrock and Harp" (2008) criticises Ireland's emblems and considers them a "dangerous beast of prey" (Hutchinson 2008, 50). Yet in 1975, in a television review for the *Irish Times* (for which he briefly worked as a television critic for six months), the poet stated his discontent with RTE's inclusion of the Irish anthem after the daily transmissions and his sense of relief when it was substituted by poetry readings. Hutchinson affirmed that, "it's the imposition that offends. No single tune or song sums up once and for all the meaning and beauty of any nation (thanks be to God: it would be a poor nation that could be so quickly portrayed – or betrayed)" (Hutchinson 1975, 8). His feeling about patriotism would be utterly opposed to that of British patriotism shown by travellers in Spain, especially evident in their comparisons with the country.

ed in Woods 2000). As a consequence, throughout his poetry, Hutchinson provided a negative enactment of European and global pro-fascist government's oppressive ideological mechanism[8]. Thus, with this thought, it is not surprising that the issue of regionalism in Catalonia and Galicia would become one the most relevant subject-matters of Hutchinson's poetry on Spain.

"This Country" (first published in 1963) is one of the most illuminating poems about Hutchinson's image of Spain concerning this issue. Although the poem has been understood as a representation of Hutchinson's "ambiguous attitude towards his host country" (Mittermaier 2017, 288) and as drawing "Irish and Spanish linguistic dilemmas" (Keatinge 2011, 155), the notion of the heterogeneity of the territory becomes the cynosure of the poem, as well as the process of evolution of this territory as a nation:

Cicada, chameleon, lagarto:
exotic names have come to mean
more than exotic creatures: they mean Spain:
a youthful healing of some northern shame,
a southern place that happened to be Spain,
which then, its callower use outgrown, became
a real place, that could be loved and hated,
half-understood, abused, accepted, left. (Hutchinson 1982, 20)

It could be claimed that the terms "Lagarto", "chameleon", "cicada" would refer to the diverse places and peoples that can be found in the territory, which to him, highlighted Spain's particular cultural and historical heterogeneity and richness as well as oppression[9]. Besides, Hutchinson might have intentionally included the ambiguous French word "contrée" in this poem because of its twofold and interchangeable meaning: "region" or "country", which reinforces Hutchinson's "polyglot versatility" (Keatinge 2011, 149). An unpublished and untitled poem previous to "This Country" vividly exposes Hutchinson's itinerary through different Spanish regions and the same awareness on diversity:

[8] As a result, his poems oozed with references of conflicts in Cuba ("Homage to José Martí", 1972), China ("Inter-Crevice Memo", 1975), Mexico ("To Bring Posada Back from the Grave", 1975), Guinea-Bissau ("European Prayer", 1975), Amsterdam ("Flames", 1985), Italy ("Music", 1990; "Midnight", 2008), Northern Ireland ("A Memory of Belfast in 1974", 1995), Australia ("Anna Bligh", 2014), to name a few.

[9] In Hutchinson's Galician papers held at University College Cork, he marked two references to "lagartos" in two collections of short stories: Anxel Folé's book *A Lus do Candil* (1953), and Ramón de Valenzuela's *O Naranxo* (1974), which may have inspired Hutchinson's poem.

In Granite, in Curry, Cicada,
By Cockroach, Olive, Iguana,
Through Octopus, Red-weed, Mica,
Inciting Lizard, Pine, Chameleon,
Invoking Valerian, Jasmine, Scorpion,
Because of Squid, Focaccia, Dandelion
?Chiffon? Goatskin, Gorge:
Plant. Beast. Rock. Bread.
?Hermanos? Well, Cul-d'-Jatte-Or.
The Stilt Runners… (Hutchinson PP/10/2/1/21/10)

These lines tackle Hutchinson's Spanish experience as a wanderer and keen observer, using similar terms to refer to different regions and cities, and they also expose the poet's pacifism with his intent for a possible reconciliation in spite of opposed ideologies.

Hutchinson's devoted relationship to Spain cannot be grasped without considering his concern with language diversity, the disruption of linguistic imperialism and cultural authority, and his relationship with minorities. He used several languages to write his poems (German, French, Spanish, Catalan, Galician, English, Gaelic, Italian, Dutch, and even other vernacular voices like Milanese) as a means to reinforce the demand of countries and/or regions to defend their linguistic inheritance and as a source of "spiritual self-replenishment" (Coleman 2009)[10]. Yet, the unpublished poem written in Spanish "El Poeta Disputa con sí Mismo" included in a notebook from the 1950s (the exact date is unknown) reveals his early anxiety when writing in a language he learned during his years as a student in UCD: "¿Cómo te atreves palurdo / a cantar en esta lengua que balbuceas / peor aún que yo mismo, / peor que traductor de postales?" (Hutchinson PP/10/2/1/12/18)

The Irish poet believed that "when one language has been displaced – to a great extent replaced – by another, conquering language, those natives who do not [*sic*] desert the older tongue, the natives tongue, are often driven, in that tongue or in the both tongues, into obliqueness" (Hutchinson 2002b, 90), a claim that could be applied to both Ireland in relation to Great Britain, and Catalonia and Galicia in relation to Spain. Both places experienced the dislodgment of the language(s) for political strategies of unification, which propelled Hutchinson to identify the previous colonial situation of Ireland in the hands of the United Kingdom, with that of regions like Galicia and

[10] Even in a special edition of the journal *Amastra-N-Gallar* (entirely devoted to Hutchinson), contributions in different languages were included. Moreover, letters included in Hutchinson's papers in the UCC and Maynooth University were used to advise his Catalan and Galician friends in their translations, and he also collaborated in the promotion and divulgation of Galician and Catalan literature in Ireland.

Catalonia from the first years he visited Spain: "I began to sense, dimly at first, that the Madrid/Castilian/Centralist slogan, 'España no es más que una' [Spain is One and only One], mightn't be altogether true" (Hutchinson 2003, 16). Thus, Hutchinson's empathy towards cultural and linguistic oppression in Catalonia and Galicia during the 1950s and 1960s could have been influenced by his perception of Ireland's own fragmented identities. The different societies of the island, the suppression of Gaelic language during the colonial period, and the impossibility of the population to articulate their cultural and linguistic legacy without restraint, provided Hutchinson with a manifest bond with Galicia and Catalonia. Like Galician and Catalan cultural agents, the Irish poets aimed at confronting the contradictions "of an unresolved cultural and political identity" (Smith 2005, 88)[11].

When referring to the different languages spoken in Spain, Hutchinson differentiated Castilian from Galician and Catalan as a means to reinforce the identity of these two linguistically mutilated places, since in his poetry, Hutchinson showed a "special and deep affinity with the countries of Spain where the author lived for many years" as shown in the cover of *Selected Poems* (1982)[12]. Hutchinson questioned in depth the ludicrousness of the linguistic despotism in these two diglossic communities in particular and rummaged through the history of linguistically divested places of the territory, because he "adumbrate[d] the sense of cultural dispossession through linguistic dispossession" (Goodby 2000, 76). His vision led to a total identification with the condition of Catalan and Galician on the same footing as Scottish or Gaelic for having faced a prolonged phase of rejection. The poem "Questions" assesses the slight differences between all these languages:

Mock those well you may;
but listen have you lived where
you look behind before you dare
speak your own language?
Where mica's granite, piss wine?
Where later — hate as futile as it's fierce —
you've barely to glance at your neighbour before you dare
speak your own language? (Hutchinson 1969, 50)

[11] The poet called English "the language of money, and therefore of survival" (Hutchinson 1990, 13), which would define his relationship with the language first imposed and later adopted by the Irish population.

[12] Hutchinson used to refer to the Spanish language as Castilian (Hutchinson undated b). Additionally, he used the word "countries" persistently to vindicate the notion of Catalonia and Galicia from the rest of the Spanish territory.

The overtone of the poem bestows his bitterness for the imbalanced authority in Ireland and Galicia and Catalonia. Some of the friends Hutchinson made from these two regions (namely Celso Emilio Ferreiro and Jaume Fabre) manifested their concern about the situation in Northern Ireland in the letters sent to Hutchinson, which showed the identification with the cultural violence and repression experienced in Galicia and Catalonia. By the same token, the poem "Resistance" (2014), assessed the restrictions imposed by the Church and the civil institutions to christen Galician and Catalan people with local names, prevailing the "official imperial versions" (Hutchinson 2014, 41), because in narratives of encounter, "naming" implies power and that power "confers and limits identity, shape and place" (Bartkowski 1995, xxv)[13]. The poem "The Frost is All Over", might encapsulate Hutchinson's approach to the atmosphere of historical linguistic persecution in an international context: the verses "To kill a language is to kill a people" and "to kill a language is to kill one's self" (Hutchinson 1975, 42) express Hutchinson's sensitisation with the anguish of diglossic territories and the fight of oppressed regions for the prevalence of their own identity[14].

According to the first tape included in his unpublished memoir, the first place in Spanish territory where Hutchinson set foot was Vigo in 1950 and then in 1951, a place that he had come "in [his] own way to love" (Hutchinson 2009, Tape 7). Although it was a brief visit to take the boat to Portugal, he became conscious of the similarities between the massive emigration experienced in Galicia – as a consequence of extreme poverty and repression – and Ireland:

> Neither their faces nor their cheap suitcases, often fastened around with ropes or even string, were at all unlike the cases and faces of my own compatriots on the Liverpool boat from Dublin or the mail boat to Holyhead and the jam-packed train to Euston station. Now indeed were they at all unlike those Galician or Irish emi-

[13] The issue of "naming" is frequently found in Hutchinson's poetry, as in the poem "Brown with no Whites" (1985), in which the incongruences of marginalization derived from naming are exposed. Hutchinson applied the topic of naming to revolve around the oppression that England exerted towards Ireland in the poem "Affection" (1985). Likewise, Spain was not overlooked by Hutchinson in relation to naming. "The Flames are False" (1982), "Only the Hell is Real" (1982) and "She Made her False Name Real" (1982) dealt with linguistic dismemberment and name changing, which implied the conversion of Catalan names to their Castilian equivalent.

[14] Hutchinson's interest in and respect of languages was also reflected in the many documents found in the archives of both UCC and Maynooth University, in his emphasis on the correct spelling of words, proper names or places, including diacritical marks, which demonstrates that he was not only "an Irish poet who was connected to Galicia or Catalonia, […] but *someone* in Ireland who experienced the existence of these 'minority' regions in any active way" (McLoghlin 2013).

grants, the Andalusians I was later to see travelling in the cheap slow trains with their hard wooden seats, all over Andalusia and up to Madrid and even Barcelona. (Hutchinson 2009, Tape 7)

In both cases, the population migrated to the United States, also referred to by the poet (Hutchinson 2003, 16). The cultural parallels between Galicia and Ireland fostered his enthusiasm to learn about the history, traditions and literature of the region, a fact that was very significant in Hutchinson's poetry. In fact, his papers on Galicia reveal that Hutchinson kept an extensive bibliography on the region as part of his personal collection. Hutchinson learnt about Galician-Portuguese poetry and he perused all volumes and brochures on Galician history, traditions and literature, and also on the conflicts related to the Galician language. The poet's interest in Galician poetry inspired him to read the classics of Galician medieval poetry, or 19th and 20th century writers like Uxío Novoneyra (1930-1999)[15], Xosé Luís Méndez Ferrín and his pseudonym Heriberto Bens (1938-), Ramón Cabanillas (1876-1959), Ramón de Valenzuela (1914-1980), Ánxel Fole (1903-1986), or Rosalía de Castro (1837-1885), especially those who wrote against cultural and linguistic oppression. However, Hutchinson was also interested in contemporary and emergent poets like Xulio Calviño (1947-) or Martín Veiga (1970-). Hutchinson's papers also disclose the poet's close relationship with the Galician artist Emilio Araúxo (1946-) until his death, since they used to exchange letters (Araúxo 2003; 2005; 2007; 2008a; 2008b) discussing poetry and translation, and Hutchinson frequently collaborated in the journal *Amastra-N-Gallar*[16], edited by the Galician poet. Hutchinson's personal Galician collection included many notes and comments, some of them related to his belief in the revitalisation of local languages.

Hutchinson's poetry reflected on the social reality of Galicia during the 1950s and 1960s and the difficulties of the population derived from Franco's dictatorship. Galicia was used as a kind of laboratory by Francoism, because the regime insisted on exhibiting a country unanimously identified with the conciliatory aim of the central administration. Nonetheless, the complex and polyhedral reality presented divergent political sectors in the region, and a multifarious, passive and uncommitted Galician population to whom the regime tried to appeal.

Hutchinson was thoroughly acquainted with the historical and cultural similarities between Galicia and Ireland, as well as with the twinning of Celtic territories. In his personal collection he kept a copy of number 8 of

[15] Maynooth collection on Hutchinson includes a translation into English of *Elexía do Caurel*.

[16] This journal has been edited by Emilio Araúxo since 2001. Its primary aim is the promotion of contemporary poetry. It is not commercialised.

Boletín Mensual da Cultura Galega, Órgao da Sociedade "NÓS"[17] (5 December 1921), whose ideals against oppression were inspired to a great extent by De Valera's doctrine of "Ourselves Alone" and the fight for independence of the Irish population. The volume included a homage to Terence MacSwiney[18] for giving his life in the name of Ireland's fight for freedom, and asserted that Irish and MacSwiney's nationalism held common ground based on love, comprehension and idealism (Editorial Department Group Nós 1921). The poem "Irlanda!" by Cabanillas, positions the country as a mythical place whose population has performed a heroic deed. More interesting for the purpose of this research would be the final section of this manifesto in which Vicente Risco[19] (as director) devoted a three-page text to enquire into the economic, geographical, historical and cultural similarities between Ireland and Galicia: "as catro divisiós d'Irlanda: Ulster, Connnaught, Munster e Leinster, corresonde ás catro provincias de Lugo, Coruña, Pontevedra y Ourense" (Risco 1921). Their motto, "Like Ireland, stand up and walk"[20] taken from Cabanillas' poem, "A Brañas" (1917), showed an elegiac tone, which tried to promote the uprising of the Galician people. His interest in the parallels between the two places (Galicia and Ireland) was reflected in his poetry, "non resulta estraño, polo tanto, que os irlandeses se sintan moi vinculados a España, un país do que recibiron axuda na época da persecución e durante os anos que houbo carencia de ensino" (Keating 1990, 8)[21].

Alfonso Castelao had a prominent place in Hutchinson's vision of Galician culture, politics and history[22]. Hutchinson considered this Galician leading figure "a man of independent mind" (Hutchinson, annotation written in *Verbos de Chumbo* 1992, UCC archives). His profound knowledge of Castelao's complete works, biographies, discourses, conferences and critical collections, as well as his "interest in his progressive radicalization" (Hutchinson, annotation written in *El Primer Castelao* 1972, UCC archives) have

[17] Grupo Nós (meaning "ourselves") was composed of a group of Galician writers whose aim was to confer on Galician letters and culture a higher level of intellectual relevance. The group was created in the first third of the 20th century and its director was Vicente Risco.

[18] Terence Joseph MacSwiney (1879-1920) became the major of Cork in 1920, during the Irish War of Independence. He was arrested and sent to prison by the British forces the same year and died after 74 days on hunger strike.

[19] Vicente Martínez Risco y Agüero (1884-1963) was a Galician politician and writer. He was one of the most relevant figures in the history of Galician literature.

[20] "Como en Irlanda, érguete e anda". Hutchinson's Archives at UCC holds a copy of the poet's poster with this slogan.

[21] "It does not result odd, thus, that the people of Ireland feel more linked with Spain, a country from which they received asylum in the times of persecution and lack of education" (my translation).

[22] Alfonso Daniel Rodríguez Castelao (1886-1950) was a Galician writer, politician and painter who was considered the founder of the Galician nationalism.

provided a reflection on Hutchinson's poetry insofar as both shared a realistic, acute and ironic point of view on language politics. Castelao asserted that "Ningún idioma alleo – por ilustre que sea – poderá eispresar en nome do noso os íntimos sentimentos, as fondas doores e as perdurables epranzas do pobo galego; se ainda somos diferentes e capaces de eisistir, non é máis que por obra e gracia do idioma"[23] (quoted in Freixeiro Mato 1997, 24). This statement might reveal Hutchinson and Castelao's shared recognition of language as the essential concern of the identity of a social group.

Similarly, Celso Emilio Ferreiro was another Galician poet with a wide presence in Hutchinson's personal library[24]. It could be claimed that the celebrated work *Longa Noite de Pedra* (1962) might have also influenced his poetry on Galicia, Catalonia, and Spain at large[25]. Ferreiro identified both Ireland and Galicia as brother countries: "It also makes me happy the idea of publishing in Galician or Scottish journals, countries which, together with Ireland, we consider brothers because of our common Celtic roots" (Ferreiro 1970)[26]. In his personal copy of Ferreiro's collection, Hutchinson marked sixteen poems, all of them revealing heartrending desolation[27]. The oppression, open pacifism, social denunciation, fear and silence, the loss of the land but also a sense of hope, freedom and the celebration of nature, are also some of the main themes in Hutchinson's poetry, which evidences the impact of his interest in Galician letters on his poetry. Hutchinson's poem titled "Galician Folk-Songs" was dedicated to Ferreiro (in exile during the Spanish Civil War) and, denounced the repression of Galician culture and language exerted under Franco's regime using the trope of a scribe as the oppressor: "There's great rejoicing in hell: / the scribe has gone to his rest: / The quill and the ink-well / are dancing on his desk" (Hutchinson 1975, 29).

[23] "Any alien language – even if it is the most prestigious – will be able to express the inner feeling, deep and resilient hope of the Galician people; we are different and we are able to resist, but by the work and grace of the language" (my translation).

[24] Celso Emilio Ferreiro Mínguez (1912-1979) was a Galician politician and writer whose main work was *Longa Noite de Pedra* (1962), a collection of poems with a profound social content.

[25] In fact, in a letter sent to Hutchinson in 1970 from Caracas (Venezuela), Ferreiro asked him to translate this poetry collection into English since, to him, the main aim was to gain a larger dissemination of Galician letters abroad.

[26] "También me hace feliz la idea de publicar algo en revistas galegas o escocesas, países que, con Irlanda, nosotros consideramos hermanos por nuestra común raíz céltica" (my translation).

[27] "Libremente", "El Perro Rabioso", "Monólogo del Viejo Trabajador", "Una Vez", "Carta a mi Mujer", "El Árbol", "Prometeo Encadenado", "Ahora es el Tiempo de Pensar", "Invierno", "No", "Niño Huérfano con Caballos al Fondo", "El Hórreo", "Un Pobre por la Calle de la Ciudad", "Hermanos", "Nunca Podré Olvidarlo", "Los Sometidos".

The poems "Teaching Mathematics" (2008) and "Believers in a Possible Freedom" (2008) exposed the deleterious effect of political and cultural oppression and the anguish of the Galician population during the regime. In the first poem, a teacher mourned the fugacity of the good results of the elections in 1936 and, in the second poem, the politician and journalist Cándido Carreiras visited the writer Leiras Pulpeiro's grave to leave flowers on the day of the proclamation of the Second Republic in Spain in 1931, with the hope of a new stage in the history of Spain and Galicia:

And when they got there Cándido
went down on his knees, and laid
the flowers on the friend's gravestone,
and proudly, not too quietly,
he told their old comrade in hope:
'The Republic has come!
The Republic has come!'
They believed in a possible freedom. (Hutchinson 2008, 45)

Both poems included the expression "they believed in a possible freedom", related to the collapse of freedom in Galicia after the outbreak of the Civil War in 1936 but also the optimism for regaining the lost freedom after the end of the regime.

If Galicia had a powerful effect on Hutchinson's representation of Spain, Catalonia had even more presence in his poetry. His relationship with Catalonia was much closer than that established with Galicia, a fact motivated by his sojourns in the city of Barcelona[28]. Hutchinson's first time in the city was in October 1951 after rambling around Portugal, Andalusia and Madrid; by that time, the poet had limited resources: "My surviving wealth consisted of the clothes on my […], a blue duffel-bag full of books, jotters, and garments, a half-empty litre-bottle of white wine, a one-way ticket to Geneva, and no money at all" (Hutchinson undated d)[29]. Then he lived in the city between 1954 and 1957, and again from 1961 until 1967, years, which he claimed to be "depressed" (Hutchinson PP/10/2/1/21/57(2)), and finally during the summer of 1969. However, his first contact with the region took place during his time working at the International Labour Office in Geneva from

[28] In fact, many poems included in the volume *The Soul that Kissed the Body* (1990) recalled Hutchinson's time in Barcelona during the 1950s and 1960s with nostalgia. In his unpublished papers, the poet was recognised to have "fallen – irredeemably – in love with Barcelona" (Hutchinson undated b).

[29] This would recall Walter Starkie tours around Spain as a wanderer when going around the country in the 1930s and 1940s. Starkie abandoned his life as a recognised academic and dressed like a beggar to go around different regions in Spain.

1951 to 1953, where he met a number of Spanish republicans, one of them a Catalan[30]. In his first journey to Spain in 1950-1951, in a letter to his parents, Hutchinson described Catalans as "determined people, but rather Swiss in their attachment to labor" (Hutchinson undated b). He then contrasted the Catalans and the Andalusians: "the fiesta de la Merced, and everything is organized and has to be paid to be seen. When I think, in contrast, of the spontaneity of the Andalusians" (Hutchinson 1951b).

Although the poet did not identify Catalonia with an Iberian replica of Ireland (Hutchinson 1997, 23), his reflections on his experience in Barcelona stem from some parallels he establishes between the two places on the issue of oppression and a claim for rights:

> On March 1966, at 11 am, I learnt from a Spanish (not Catalan) friend that the IRA had finally got Nelson. I don't normally read the papers in Spain, so it was real news to me. […] I wasn't surprised to hear, that night, from a Catalan pupil, the first I'd heard of it – that there were 200 students besieged, in sanctuary, in the Capuchin monastery in Sarriá. With among other "intellectuals" – is there any uglier, solemner word? Perhaps "homosexual", "alcoholic", "prostitute"? – Salvador Espriu […], Tapies […], Moragas […], Pere Quart. They had gone there to discuss how to break the Falange Grip on the SEU, the student body; but also to assert Catalan rights. (Hutchinson PP/10/2/1/21/57(1))

Hutchinson also linked some aspects of the Spanish and the Irish character of the population in a conversation between a Catalan and an Andalusian, during which Hutchinson recalled that "the Andalusian said that even if a Catalan has a million pounds in the bank he can't resist rising out to work all day. This seemed to him, as to me, insanity of a high order. How they can talk, the Spaniards! They bear even the Irish, and therefore Banagher" (Hutchinson undated b).

On his first visits to Spain, and during his visit to Gerona in 1951, Hutchinson considered the city "odd: a garrison town with no bars […]. Fine cathedral. Fierce advertising. Stenchy river. Wonderful air" (Hutchinson 1951c). Regarding Barcelona, in 1951, the poet says that "to be quite honest, I don't like this city much, it's industrial and a port" (Hutchinson 1951b). However, after some time working and living in the city, he felt "some slight misgivings about Catalonia, seen as a world apart, a bit 'outlandish', too complex and wealthy to be ignored and too different to be taken lightly" (Parcerisas 2002, 7). Subsequently, Hutchinson started to read about the history, culture and literature of Catalonia and became proficient in the Catalan language, which made him consider the place "a kind of fly in the Spanish ointment" (Hutch-

[30] Hutchinson also met the Mexican poet Octavio Paz who was, by the time, the first secretary of the Mexican Embassy in Bern.

inson 1997, 23). Hutchinson's sensibility about the languages of Spain, and specially Catalan, became so relevant from his first visit to the region: "Speaking a language new to me: Catalan. I just about knew it existed. […] The general attitude of Irish and English Hispanists in those days was one of distaste towards all things Catalan. Catalans, we were told, were 'not real Spaniards'. And therefore, it went without saying, beyond the Pale" (Hutchinson undated d). In his first year in Barcelona Hutchinson also revealed his attitude towards the repression established in Catalonia by General Franco (whom he called "Frankie Frog" in his personal notes, PP/10/2/1/21/57(1)):

> I admire the people's grit – tho, unlike Ireland, the street names and official titles on bldgs., etc, are nowhere given in other than the conquerors language, again, unlike Ireland, nobody speaks it – all Catalan – unless, of course, to other Spaniards or foreigners like me, who can't. They certainly deserve their independence – and I, if I were a Spaniard, wld [sic], be only too delighted to give them in." […] "They are not at all Spanish, or like the Spanish: the language sounds very ugly and characterless, the people are not as good-looking or as pleasant, they remind me both in appearance and dourness of the Scots, they are almost Swiss in their money – and work, worship, etc., etc. (Hutchinson 1951b)

The extract indicates the strong rejection of the poet of authoritarianism and his identification with Irish oppression before the island gained its independence from Great Britain. Hutchinson's interest in Catalan letters increased vividly after some time living in Barcelona to the point that, after meeting Patrick Kavanagh (who worked for the British Institute in Barcelona) in 1955, they endeavoured to hold two Catalan poetry readings (in 1955 and 1962, the latter with John Whybrow as the successor of Kavanagh), a challenging venture during the regime. These readings fostered the promotion of Catalan language and literature in Spain and abroad.

Hutchinson translated five poems from Francesc Vallverdú into English, all of them about the topic of words and language[31]. Yet, his first volume was a collection of translations from Josep Carner[32] in 1962 as a "protest against the distortion that happens when only the dominant culture gets noticed" (Ní Chuilleanáin 2011, 105). Although an extensive analysis of the influ-

[31] Francesc Vallverdú (1935-2014) was a poet, translator and sociolinguist who promoted the right to use the Catalan language freely. Hutchinson's papers at Maynooth University include his translations of the poems titled "LLI", "V", "VI", "Our Humanity" and "Coffee and Cigars" (PP/10/2/1/12/18).

[32] *Josep Carner: Poems* (1962), Oxford, The Dolphin Press. Carner (1884-1970) was the most representative literary figure of the *Noucentisme*, a Catalan cultural and ideological movement that took place during the first quarter of the 20th century, which defended the professionalization of the Catalan language. During the Spanish Civil War he was exiled in Mexico and then in Belgium. He never returned to Catalonia. Carner and Hutchinson exchanged letters in 1960.

ence of Catalan and Galician poetry on Hutchinson's production is beyond the scope of this research, in *Watching the Morning Grow* (1972), references to the figure of a squirrel were frequent, which might show Hutchinson's inspiration in the Catalan poet: Carner used the concept of the squirrel as a symbol of freedom. Carner's interaction with Hutchinson's poetry is manifest especially because of Hutchinson's identification of the Catalan fight for cultural freedom with that experienced by Ireland and due to the significance that both poets bestowed on "humble things, the importance of public spiritedness sustained in silence, of self-denying integrity" (Parcerisas 2002, 9).

Similarly, Hutchinson considered *La Pell de Brau* (1960) from Salvador Espriu[33] "one of the greatest works of the 20th century" (Hutchinson 2003, 22). Hutchinson's close relationship with Salvador Espriu was evidenced through the several letters they exchanged between 1956 and 1960 (held at Maynooth University), which also portrayed the rigid prohibition of the use of Catalan and a subsequent relative relaxation during the 1960s, together with the general isolation of the Spanish territory. The Catalan poet wrote his first letters to Hutchinson in Spanish but later correspondence was written in Catalan by both poets, with Hutchinson using a "potable catalá" (Espriu 1960). Both worked on translations to Catalan and Gaelic and Hutchinson affirmed that he was, to him, "a poet of a lifetime, one of the very few, a poet for a whole life, uno de los míos in fact. His bleak serenity, and bleak music, his refusal, in a desperate situation, to give in entirely to despair, spoke to me even more persuasively than Beckett. I knew at once that his work was essential [*sic*] to me, and the only way into it was to learn the language" (Hutchinson undated c). Hutchinson not only mastered the Catalan language, but also wrote some poems in this language. Four unpublished poems were written, in which he highlights the particularity of the region in terms of recognition by the Spanish nation: "Començaré amb una confessió… / Que la Catalunya no era Espanya / He trobat-quina sorpresa! – que / no era tan sols una 'junction' sino un lloc-viu, interessant" (PP/10/2/1/12/18)[34]. The term "lloc-viu" (alive place) reinforces Hutchinson's image of Catalonia as a vivid and multicultural place and the Catalan as a language, which would survive the restrains of the regime.

There are plenty of references to Catalonia in the 1950s and 1960s in Hutchinson's poetry and especially to the prohibition to speak Catalan, a language he loved, as stated in the second unpublished poem: "¿Me permites

[33] Salvador Espriu (1913-1983) was a poet, playwright and novelist whose career was curtailed after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. He devoted around twenty years of his life to working as a public notary and, in spite of his anti-regime political vision, he never left Catalonia. *La Pell de Brau* is regarded as a symbol of the injustice experienced during the regime in Catalonia.

[34] "I will start with a confession: … / Catalonia was not Spain / I found it as a surprise! – that / it was not just a 'junction' but an alive place, interesting" (my translation).

tutearte, / idioma amado? / ¿I vos, catalá, / m'estimau? / Amb tant que us estimo! / Vella plata / da minha i alma –" (Hutchinson PP/10/2/1/12/18)[35]. As in the poem "Achnasheen" (1975), in which Hutchinson paralleled the harmful effects of linguistic mutilation upon both Ulster and Barcelona, where Gaelic and Catalan languages were the victims of political and religious conflicts, another of his unpublished poems in Catalan parallels the subsistence of Catalan with Gaelic in Ireland:

Com a teoría: jo soc irlandés, allá
tenim idioma propi, nostre, vell,
orgullos, i va morint(se). Conec catalans
que son molt pessimistes en tót això del
sobreviure del catalá; pero puc asegurar
que, comparat amb l'irlandes, es en una
situació gloriosísima.
[…]
El simple fet de que, a pesar de tants
obstacles, tal idioma pot tenir un capital –
lo esencial per a ta sobrevivença ó una
llengua – m'ha seduit, sense remei.
Tants pis per tots. (Hutchinson PP/10/2/1/12/18)[36]

Although the poem "The Palace of Injustice or the Swallow's Well" (1990) "recalls his frightening brush with the Spanish authorities in 1962" (Mittermaier 2017, 287) after being imprisoned for one night together with two Irish friend[37], and denounces "injustice and fear during the final years of the Franco regime" (Veiga 2011, 144), the linguistic conflict is present as the poem exposes the distress caused by bureaucratic obstacles to stay in the city for a longer period, and criticised the political corruption and the milieu of fear in using the Catalan language. Likewise, in "A Rose and a Book for Sant Jordi" (1972), he defended the right of Catalan citizens to express in their own language and referred to the Galinsoga

[35] "Can I address you as 'tú', / loved language? / And you, Catalan, / do you love me? / I love you so much! / Old silver / of my heart –" (my translation).

[36] "As a theory: I am Irish, there / we have our own language, ours, old, / proud, and it is dying. I know Catalans / that are very pessimistic about / the survival of Catalan; but I can assure / that, compared to the Irish language, it is in a / glorious situation. […] The simple fact that, despite so many / obstacles, this language can have a capital – / the essential for your survival or a / language – , it has seduced me, without remedy" (my translation).

[37] This event is explained in the unpublished memoir titled *Three Cells in Barcelona* held at Maynooth University.

incident[38] as an example of the triumph of freedom and popular pressure for justice:

Proud Galinsoga, the boss-man countryman,
the overpaid hireling, the white-collar jackboot-in-office,
called the word loud and clear, over and again,
just as the people were learning, at last, again,
the almost-forgotten, almost-undreamt-of-feeling of freedom to sing
to God in their own language. (Hutchinson 1972, 26)

The poem "Enriqueta Bru" (2002) also grounded in the issue of the Catalan language. Hutchinson remarked on the "Castilian tyranny" over the Catalan language through the story of a twenty-four-year-old woman in the mid-1960s. Hutchinson's profound compassion regarding the subjugation of Catalonia during Franco's dictatorship because he was a "civic poet" (Hutton 2006, 54), was exemplified through the use of pronouns "she" and "I":

but at last, in some shops,
even in some shop-windows,
books in her native tongue:
la vella plata, the long-
banned speech
we talked in, she and I,
when once a week I came. (Hutchinson 2002a, 256)

The inclusive use of "I" would also infer Hutchinson's identification of language oppression in similar terms in both Ireland and Catalonia, as well as a deep comprehension of the situation faced by the Catalan population during the Francoist regime, to the point that Hutchinson asserted that "through languages I love the people who made them" (Hutchinson 1997, 28). Enriqueta Bru also embodied those citizens who decided to stay in Catalonia during post-war Spain and tried to subsist in a coerced environment, a situation defined by the poet as "exiles at home, neither in exile nor at home" (Hutchinson 2002a, 258). The fourth unpublished poem in Catalan (untitled) summarises his position as a writer who felt comfortable with Castilian/Catalan on the one hand, and English/Gaelic on the other:

[38] Luis Martínez de Galinsoga was appointed director of the Spanish newspaper *La Vanguardia* in 1939 by the Francoist regime. After attending mass in Barcelona in 1959, Galisoga protested at the use of Catalan in a religious ceremony, and it was said that he uttered the words "All Catalans are shit". As a consequence, a group in the Catalan community organised a campaign against the newspaper in 1960, and Galinsoga was removed from his position.

T'escrit poems en quatre llengues,
cuyo dominio sobre mi voz
no es pot dir, exactament, perfecte
salvo, quizá, la maternal, primera
pero es, i tu illentens aixo,
vull/tranquil, que l'entengui
todo el gran/ancho mundo de las 4,
que es massa gran el meu amor
para que en uno solo idioma quepa
por rico que esto, el otro, sea:
em cal que tot el mon amplíssim. (Hutchinson PP/10/2/1/12/18)[39]

The poem "Ode to the Future" evoked Hutchinson's "cultural proximity" (Coleman 2011, 70) with the Catalan publisher Josep Queralt I Clapes[40] and epitomises Hutchinson's devotion to friendship by including Queralt's epigraph to him: "he donat la meva vida al amor des amics" (Hutchinson 1972, 40). Hutchinson lamented that the bonds of friendship founded during his years in Barcelona were severed when his residence permit's renewal to stay in the city was declined by the administration and admitted with irony the difficulties in returning to the city as long as the dictator was alive and the regime still maintained a tight administrative control: "The man who struck down friendship / had still twelve years to live" (Hutchinson 1990, 81).

Although we are assured that Hutchinson chose the poems included in the volume *Done into English* (2003) because he "liked it" (Hutchinson 2003, 25), his translations from relevant Galician and Catalan poets could be regarded as the epitome of his impressions and interest in the cultural manifestations of subjugated places, probably because of the equation between "the discrimination experienced by Catalans and Galicians in Spain and that experienced by Jews or so-called people of colour in other European locations" (Keatinge 2011, 163). Hutchinson selected poems like Rosalía de Castro's "Come all ye men and women", or "This man goes and that man goes", Celso Emilio Ferreiro's "Freely", "The Kingdom" or "Old Workman Speaking", Josep Carner's "Fidelity", "Absence", or "An Old Man Returns", and Salvador Espriu's poems from *La Pell de Brau*. Subsequently, his selec-

[39] "I write to you poems in four languages, / whose mastery over my voice / it is not, so to say, perfect / except maybe the mother tongue, the first / but it is, you try this, / I want/ quiet, it to be understood / by the great/wide world of the 4, / that my love is so great / that fits in just one language / no matter how rich this one, the other, be: / I need the whole wide world" (my translation).

[40] Josep Queralt I Clapes (1896-1965) was a property manager with political and cultural concerns who founded the publishing house Edicions Proa in 1928, which promoted the dissemination of European modern novels in Catalan. He was exiled to France after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, where he lived until his death.

tion of poems illuminated his concern on restraint, subjugation, separatism, exploitation, exile, and estrangement of the place. His translations and the inclusion of words from different languages in his poems result in the conclusion that Hutchinson might be considered not only a bilingual poet but also a "trans-lingual poet" (O Gormaile 2006, 91). The unpublished poem "A Long Lasting Slavery" from 1967 encapsulates his final statement on his policy on language and injustice since the four languages (English/Gaelic and Spanish/Catalan) coalesce:

Freedom is hard to find.
To begin with, it doesn't exist.
When I started writing in Irish
a man who should have known better
asked me why.
When I went on writing in English too
a man who never know better
asked me why.
Such ignorance enslaves both them and us.
When a Catalan friend of mine
bred to Castilian wrote in Castilian
Some called him traitor.
When he took to Catalan
feeling if in him
some called him false.
Freedom is hard to find, but believe
that looking for it we arrive
at something like it. (Hutchinson PP/10/2/1/21/23)

Overall, Hutchinson's connection to Catalonia and Galicia and his poetry related to these regions reveal a deep knowing look at the social situation and language restrictions. Although his poems alike denounced injustices in both Catalonia and Galicia, his poetry on Catalonia was based on his real experiences in Barcelona, while those poems related to Galicia were more absorbed by his interest in the history and cultural apparatus of the region. To sum up, the perusal of Hutchinson's personal archive would further support that Hutchinson's particular interest in the issue of regionalism in Spain would also demonstrate a relevant separation from British narratives of encounters, which developed the generalised idea that considered that the claim for independence of regions like Catalonia and Galicia jeopardised a sense of patriotism and made the country an ungovernable and fragmented place. His archive at Maynooth University is still in the process of cataloguing and there are several unpublished poems related to democratic Spain in the 1990s and 2000s (after another trip to the country), an area of research that is well worth considering.

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Lesbian Migrant Writing: From Lesbian Nation to Queer Diaspora

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Abstract:

The paper examines selected texts of Anna Livia and Shani Mootoo, whose diasporic experiences allowed them to discuss lesbian desire from a non-stigmatised point of view. It also portrays how writing from white, western countries towards the end of the twentieth century, privileged the Irish lesbian narrative to represent a more globalised approach towards lesbian desire. Firstly, the paper will illustrate how distance from Ireland allowed authors to discuss issues affecting and disturbing Lesbian Nation and lesbian community of the 1980s, and secondly, it will discuss how queer diaspora and hybridity shaped lesbian diasporic writing in non-western societies at the turn of the century.

Keywords: Irish Lesbian Diasporic Writing, Lesbian Nation, Migration, Queer Diaspora and Hybridity

1. Irish women's migration and queer diaspora

The theme of diaspora has been a thread that reoccurred in works of Elizabeth Bowen, Kate O'Brien, Edna O'Brien, and Emma Donoghue, authors who have always had a strong link with Ireland. This paper will examine texts of writers whose diasporic experiences enabled them to discuss lesbian desire more openly and earlier on, as they were subjected neither to censorship nor to the contempt of Irish patriarchal heteronormativity. However, it will also portray how Livia's writing from England, and Mootoo's from Canada, created a worldwide interconnectedness and thus broadened the writers' possibilities, effectively allowing Irish lesbian narrative to represent a more globalised approach towards lesbian desire. Nevertheless, in the 1980s and early 1990s, at a time when lesbian writing from the Republic of Ireland was

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concerned with issues of coming out, Anna Livia and Shani Mootoo were discussing problems of inclusivity encountered within already established lesbian communities in their respective countries of arrival.

In the 1980s, Livia emphasises the conflicting disparities of age, race, ethnicity, class, social status, and position, whereas Mootoo, in the 1990s and 2000s, touches upon subjects of nationality, transculturality, and gender performativity troubling lesbian communities. This paper will, firstly, delineate Irish women's migration before investigating queer diaspora. Secondly, it will illustrate how distance from Ireland allowed Anna Livia to discuss issues affecting and disturbing Lesbian Nation and lesbian community of the 1980s, and thirdly, based on Shani Mootoo's fiction, it will discuss how queer diaspora and hybridity shaped lesbian diasporic writing and reshaped Irish lesbian literature at the turn of the twenty-first century. The term Lesbian Nation was coined by Jill Johnston in *Lesbian Nation: The Feminist Solution* (1973). She proposed to build the nation of lesbians in order to portray her disagreement with the anti-lesbian branch of the women's liberation movement, as well as her conviction of the oppression of lesbians by heteronormative institutions (Sayer 2003, 461). The term adheres to European and North American lesbian utopian separatists, who believed in creating women communities, with an emphasis on women's superiority. Lesbian Nation, however, soon became to be criticised for its white exclusiveness and class hierarchy. The need to make the connection between Lesbian Nation and queer diaspora is extremely crucial, since it challenges the prevalence of gay white men in queer diasporic discourse and emphasises the presence of lesbians within queer diasporic communities. The essay, however, will portray the shift away from Lesbian Nation in Livia's work towards the inclusivity of queer diaspora, which allows Mootoo to emphasise the need for the inclusion of non-white lesbians in the tradition of queer writing.

There were three major waves of Irish emigration in the twentieth century, each of which was highly populated by young women in their rejection of family life (O'Carroll 1990, 145). Diaspora, therefore, is undoubtedly marked by gender, which means that although economic causes, such as employment opportunities, may have been initially the main motive for Irish women to emigrate, this changed with time, and around the mid-twentieth century other social causes began to play an equally important role (146). Thus, as an alternative to marriage, Irish women chose emigration as a way of emancipation from patriarchy, which considered women's migration as threatening to the image of their purity, and as undermining their national and religious identities (Ryan 1990, 45-67), given that the traditional Irish family was endangered by the women's search for better opportunities and liberation abroad.

In the 1980s and 1990s, Irish women who became more open about their lesbian sexuality were proclaimed as sexual transgressors and were brought to

courts and public attention in order to be shamed. Although Breda Gray sees such punishment, especially in the mid-1990s, as having a rather opposite effect, as more and more women gained the courage to express their sexuality, the numbers of women emigrating during the 1980s, unfortunately, proved that many could not withstand being exposed to public scrutiny (2004, 29). Furthermore, this also suggests that many of these women were most likely lesbians, since public shaming would reveal their sexuality, an event that, of course, many tried to avoid at all costs. The latter statement emphasises the interrelation of Irish women's migration and queer diaspora, as many lesbians left Ireland in order to be able to escape both contempt and prosecution. In fact, until as late as the 1990s, many Irish gay men and lesbians believed that they were expected to emigrate, as their lesbian sexuality was incompatible with Irishness (O'Carroll, Collins 1995, 1-10).

Categories of migrancy and diaspora are deeply interrelated. Diaspora provides a space that is inclusive of identification with the country of origin and the country of arrival. In an Irish context, it "highlights multi-generations, multi-connections [...] a global imagined community of Irishness, and the contradictory relationship between the 'homeland' and [the host country]. It also undermines nation-state identities and profiles hybrid identities and it challenges assimilation paradigms" (Hickman 2002, 16). This means that the experience of identifying as Irish is different for each individual, depending on their social status, religion, colour, or other historical motives, such as reasons for the dispersal itself.

Queer diaspora entails the creation of queer spaces within the already ethnically defined diasporas, and it refers to the transnational and multicultural web of connections of queer communities. In opposition to the restrictive Lesbian Nation, queer diaspora not only problematises, but also recognises differences within the group (Fortier 2002, 185). Frank Mort, for instance, writes about a "well-established homosexual diaspora, crossing nation states and linking individuals and social constituencies" (1994, 202-203), which provides gay men and lesbians with spaces for sexual identification and expression that is independent of borders and boundaries. In Britain, for example, the Irish Women's Centre, established in 1983, meant that the identities of "Irish and woman, Irish and feminist, Irish and lesbian could be supported and legitimized" (Gray 2000, 73).

Anna Livia and Shani Mootoo, by adopting imagery of queer diaspora in order to portray lesbian sexuality devoid of discrimination, succeed in remodelling the homeland and place of arrival into queer spaces that permit "identification, affiliation, and communication across class and racial boundaries [...] that would inevitably fall outside traditional place-bound readings of Irish diaspora" (Madden 2012, 175-193). In the Irish context, therefore, queer diaspora represents minoritised lesbian sexualities that were hitherto undertheorised and often historically omitted from traditional as well as gay

diasporic discourses. Accordingly, for the purpose of my argument, I will adopt the notion of queer diaspora as a space from which Irish-born female authors could write freely about lesbian desire, and which equipped them with the possibility of addressing the female-loving-female issues in a direct manner, and with the use of an infinite, non-restrictive vocabulary. As Gopinath suggest, "suturing "queer' to "diaspora' [...] recuperates those desire, practices and subjectivities that are rendered impossible and unimaginable within conventional diasporic and nationalist imaginaries" (2007, 11).

This paper does not use the term only in relation to the Irish-born authors' opportunities to portray lesbian desire explicitly; it also employs it as a counterpart of Lesbian Nation. The word "queer" in queer diaspora includes a variety of lesbian sexualities that would not be permitted in just simply gay or lesbian diasporas. The use of the term "queer" opens new inclusivity, quite distinct from the restrictiveness of Lesbian Nation, as "queer" not only dislocates the assertive categories of "gay" and "lesbian" (13), but also "encourage[s] the breakdown of traditional scholarly or cultural categories [as it refers to] topics outside of the range of lesbian/gay studies, employing it instead as a kind of position against normative or dominant modes of thought" (Whittington 2012, 157). Nevertheless, the obliteration of Lesbian Nation and the concomitant move of diasporic fiction to represent an all-inclusive queer diaspora does not only reduce the risk of creating a transexclusionary space, but also defies the concept of a post-lesbian era. In fact, Jack Halberstam visualises the interconnectedness of those two fields, and refers to it as "a queer lesbian studies", and argues that " 'lesbian' is a term that modifies and qualifies 'queer', and 'queer' is a term capable of challenging the stability of identities subsumed by the label 'lesbian' " (1996, 259). Moreover, the juxtaposition of queer diaspora and Lesbian Nation offered here allows for the imagining of lesbian desire across national and cultural borders, often characterised by, but not limited to, queer hybridity. The intention of this paper is to portray how lesbian narrative depicts the politicisation of lesbians of colour and from a variety of backgrounds not only to oppose heteronormativity, but in order to become more inclusive, and to emphasise lesbian presence within queer communities of the world. Moreover, the essay offers the reconsideration of lesbian desire and national belonging in the global context, as both Lesbian Nation and queer diaspora are independent of national borders. Diasporic lesbian writing, furthermore, challenges national borders and subverts national bonds. Thus, lesbian fiction from (queer) diaspora connects lesbians of all nationalities, races, ethnic backgrounds and classes. At the core of all Livia's novels, owing to her own emigration, stands a comparison of various countries and issues that national displacement causes within the lesbian community.

Following the second wave of feminism in England, which, similar to Ireland, included lesbian activism, Livia is at pains to point out the disparagements between lesbians. The disappearing of this shared sense of a united

lesbian community, to which Jill Johnston, who coined the term in 1971, refers to as Lesbian Nation, is the focal point in the majority of Livia's fiction. Lesbian Nation, argues Bonnie Zimmerman, "is a separate lesbian space inhabited by a community of women who share lifestyle, a set of beliefs, an ethic, and a culture. [...] The lesbian community is a space, or a group of people, or even a concept, within which the individual lesbian feels herself welcome and at home" (1990, 120-121). Although Lesbian Nation has failed because of its privileging of white women (177), it is the idea of an ideal lesbian community, however, a community where "the lesbian individual may feel a sense of camaraderie with other lesbians, a sense of support, shared understanding, shared vision, shared sense of self 'as a lesbian, vis-à-vis the outside world' " (Krieger 1982, 92) that Livia seems to be problematising the most. Queer diaspora, therefore, offers the heterogeneity of which Lesbian Nation was devoid.

2. Lesbian nation

Probably the most prolific writer of lesbian fiction writing from diaspora was Anna Livia, who is often omitted from the canon of Irish writers and is only considered to have "an Irish background" (Donoghue 2002, 1090). Anna Livia Julian Brawn (1955-2007) was born in Dublin and spent her early childhood in Africa, where her father worked as a filmmaker. In 1970, the family returned to England, where Livia graduated from University College London, and later worked at Onlywomen Press that, at the time, was the only lesbian and radical feminist press in Britain. In the early 1990s, she moved to Berkeley, California, to complete her PhD in French linguistics. During her writing career, and later as an academic, Livia published six novels, four collections of short stories, and three scholarly books on language, gender, and sexuality. Whereas her first novel emphasises the existence of Lesbian Nation, her later works argue for an establishment of a lesbian community that, unlike Lesbian Nation, will be inclusive to lesbians of different ages, races, social positions, cultural backgrounds, and ethnicities. Her first work of fiction, *Relatively Norma*, was published in 1982 by the Onlywomen Press. It is Livia's only book where the main narrative is distant from issues of lesbian equality; at that time, Lesbian Nation was still unified in its common cause for acceptance, as it was regarded as a refuge by the wider society (Sayer 2003, 462). Therefore, *Relatively Norma* concentrates on the issue of lesbian otherness in relation to the rest of heterosexual society and vice versa. Zimmerman suggests that the title of the book itself points to the division between the two sexualities: "all concepts of normality are relative, not because homosexuality is normal and natural, but because heterosexuality itself is weird and crazy. Who among us, gay or straight, is capable of defining what is or is not normal?" (1990, 43). As the protagonist of the novel, Minnie,

travels, just like Livia herself did, to Australia to visit her mother and sisters to come out, the overt representations of lesbian desire pervade the narrative, which constantly questions and ridicules the dominance of heterosexuality.

Minnie, the London-based lesbian, hides her sexuality "very well and her family accepted her as an honorary heterosexual. [...] [However, she is] waiting for her disease to show" (Livia 1982, 17, 22). The partition between hetero and homosexuality was so great that, at the time, many gay men and lesbians expected expulsion from their family homes; in fact, Minnie waits for "her family to throw her out" (22). However, this is not the stance which Anna Livia has decided to take in her novel, as Minnie's eventual confession meets with her mother's full approval, and is, in fact, dismissed and deemed as predestined (177). As the title of the novel suggests, an emphasis is placed on portraying lesbian desire as the better option in the existing binary. Therefore, by placing lesbian sexuality at the top of the ladder, Livia emphasises the concept of a coalition of lesbians of different races and cultural backgrounds, as, it may be suggested, it is useful in the battle of eradication of the dominance of gay white men within queer discourse.

Time and again, Livia's characters highlight the (un)importance of men and the need for lesbian separatism. Minnie, for instance, although she believes that some men "have their own unique contribution to make" (23), reduces them to the status of sperm producers. Such attempt at the reversal of gender roles allows women to enter the public arena and to develop their own, independent communities, whilst confining men to the domestic sphere. In *Relatively Norma*, newspapers write about adolescent boys who, in order to replicate menstruation, "cut themselves open once a month so they can bleed like *normal* people" [my italics] (*ibidem*). This clearly demarcates the division between men and women, and in particular between gay men and lesbians. Moreover, as the private begins to be influenced by the political sphere, this gendered role reversal brings to mind a reiteration of the feminist slogan "the personal is political", which undermines the hitherto prevailing family values and the solely domestic and reproductive role of women. Livia returns to the obliteration of this conception in her third novel, *Bulldozer Rising*, where she frees women of this obligation by introducing artificial wombs (Livia 1988, 88).

Shortly after the publication of *Relatively Norma*, the notion of Lesbian Nation became a strain on lesbian-feminist writing, as the once idyllic setting of the reimagined isle of Lesbos began to be signified by the exclusive whiteness of its members. In order to become more inclusive, Lesbian Nation needed to become ethnically and racially diverse, especially in terms of identity politics. The movement of radical feminism, therefore, was in conflict with its two major tenets: the unification of all lesbians based on similarity of sexuality and gender, and the acceptance of differences that may arise as the outcome of those – class, age, race, or physical ability (Zimmerman

1990, 166). Therefore, whereas Livia's first novel is rather utopian in its representation of the lesbian community, her own diasporic experiences made her aware that in order to avoid the mimicry of male imperialism, her portrayal of Lesbian Nation must negotiate the terms of its inclusiveness based on similarities as well as differences, even though this could result in its dissipation into smaller, polychromatic communities.

Such position is transparent in Livia's, as well as Shani Mootoo's, later fictions, as both writers attempt to place their culturally diverse characters within a wider lesbian community. As one of the characters from "Little Moments of Eternity" observes, "all lesbians [are] foreigners; though it might sound exotic to be different, it is hard to have no country, and even the community [lesbians] make, [they] call it a 'ghetto', in case [their] need for it shows through" (Livia 1986, 70). This existence of ghettos, "the ruins of the world" (Livia 1990, 57), instead of a unified place of belonging, arises time and again in works by lesbian writers from across Irish lesbian diaspora. Anna Livia further extrapolates her view of the disparities in the countless lesbian communities by describing a "planet of water and song, harbour for aliens from countless galaxies, countless timezones[...] the planet of song where both of us and all are alien" (*ibidem*). The metaphor of aliens and galaxies transforms Lesbian Nation into what Bonnie Zimmerman refers to as "a microcosm of the dominant culture" (1990, 175). By imposing the views of white Western lesbians upon the rest of the community, Lesbian Nation becomes what it is trying to distinguish itself from: a female version of a patriarchal imperialist nation.

As Lesbian Nation becomes more of an imaginary concept rather than an achievable target, Livia's fiction begins to concentrate on the unification of lesbians as part of a wider, globalised society. *Bulldozer Rising*, therefore, depicts a resistance force of "oldwomen" of various ages, backgrounds, classes, social statuses, and nationalities, who have decided to live above the prescribed age of forty-one. Whereas writings from 1980s Ireland concentrated on equality between men and women, and later between heterosexual, lesbian, and gay persons, Anna Livia, a decade earlier, emphasises inequalities troubling lesbian community that must be addressed first, before lesbians can come together as a whole and assimilate into the wider society: issues of race, age, ethnicity or multiculturalism. Those exact issues recur and reappear frequently in Livia's *Accommodation Offered*, as well as in Shani Mootoo's *Out on Main Street* and *Valmiki's Daughter*, both of which will be discussed later in relation to diaspora, hybridity, and multiculturalism analysed from the perspective of post-colonialism.

Age inequality that Livia describes in *Bulldozer Rising* takes a form of portraying one of the "oldwomen", a fifty-five-year-old Karlin, in a relationship with much younger, androgynous Ithaca. The two women do not only remain together despite Karlin's age, but also maintain to find common-

ground despite their different social positions in an organised society, the structure of which very much resembles the rigoristic rules of the hegemonic patriarchal order:

> A city of scarce resources requires of its inhabitants a jigsaw fit: the antagonistic harmony of the parts which perfects the harmony of the whole. A muscle flexes, another will stretch: without either, the limb fails to function. Zappers stride and nellies trot, the different pace permitting staggered use of walkways. Youngmen it behoves to barrow and billow; demure youngwomen space for a thrusting strut. First principles of concavity and convexity. (Livia 1988, 44)

By depicting the city as a well-oiled machine, Livia ridicules its orderly structure in the larger context of the novel. The aim of *Bulldozer Rising* is to emphasise the exclusion of old and invalid members of the society that can symbolise sexual minorities and the inequalities between the younger and older generations of lesbians. By positioning her characters in the science fiction genre, Livia further accentuates the very preposterousness that may lead to the ruin of the whole lesbian community: a nuclear explosion caused by the young citizens who could not find a way of communication with older women. At the climax of the novel, only a handful of women survive – this symbolises the division of lesbian sisterhood into smaller communities that, without a reconcilement, will not have any power to survive within the dominant society.

Apart from drawing close attention to issues of equality within the lesbian community, Livia also engaged in writing in post-modernist genres other than science fiction. In *Minimax*, she adopts the parody of lesbian Gothic to draw attention to the age divide between the lesbian community, as well as to negate the misconception of the femme/butch paradigm, or the generic, decadent image of a lesbian in pre-Butler sense before she made the distinction between gender and biological sex. This was especially interesting to readers of the time, as the 1980s and 1990s witnessed attempts at re-evaluation of this stereotype (Palmer 1999, 111): lesbians of *Minimax*, instead of visiting barber shops "now go to the ladies' salons and have their nails done and their cuticles removed" (Livia 1991, 13). Livia's fiction rearticulates female masculinity/butch and femininity/femme in order to underline the disentanglement of sex and gender, and to disseminate the butch/femme cliché which she depicts as "a viable sexual practice" (Roof 1998, 33) rather than a mere travesty of heterosexuality. Her aim, therefore, allowed by her diasporic positioning, is to move away from the stereotypical perception of lesbians as imitations of men, and portray the butch/femme paradigm in a new light. Furthermore, Roof suggests that butches were often compared to men to show that lesbian-feminism strived for coalition amongst lesbians against heterosexual patriarchy and the stereotypical characterization of les-

bians (30). As a result, in the second half of the 1980s, issues of racial, class, ethnic and sexual differences dominated the scholarship of lesbian studies, and consequently lesbian fiction. Judith Roof writes that "once racial differences are acknowledged as producing real and viable differences among lesbians, the door is open for a reconception of lesbian politics that no longer insists on homogeneity as a political requisite, but rather on an acknowledgment of differences as a political necessity" (33). This decidedly marks the moment in Livia's fiction, at the end of the 1980s, that witnesses the movement away from lesbian separatism towards the coalition of lesbians within a much broader queer community.

By the 1990s, the distinction between sex and gender was theorised by Judith Butler in *Gender Trouble* among others. The terminology of queer replaced the limiting ring of the word "lesbian", which was characterised with the association of racial and ethnic differences. The term queer, Mattilda Bernstein Sycamore proposes, "reframes[s], reclaim[s], and re-shape[s] the world […] [through] struggles to transform gender, revolutionize sexuality, build community and family outside of traditional models, and dismantle all hierarchies of race, class, gender, sexuality, age, and ability" (2008, 6). Whereas the use of this terminology is especially beneficiary in case of my analysis of Livia's and Mootoo's lesbian fictions, the word itself must not be romanticised into being a tool for cutting across differences of all lesbian and queer communities. In fact, many lesbians oppose the term "queer", as it denies them political individuality and specificity for which lesbian-feminists and activists have fought for decades. Similar to Biddy Martin, I also see the use of "queer" as an opposition to lesbian-feminism and failed efforts of creating alliances between lesbians and gay men (1994, 104-105); however, I use the term restrictively, and in compliance with Bernstein Sycamore's definition, in the sense that coalesces lesbians of all ages, races, and social classes.

Livia shows how living in diaspora, despite a lot of stigma connected with the subject, allows one to redefine the self's sexual identity to emerge on different terms to those prevailing in the country of origin. In *Accommodation Offered*, for instance, one of Livia's three main characters, Sadie, who is described as "a homeless derelict, a lesbian, a foreigner" (Livia 1985, 63), finds that many years of national displacement and comparison to other countries taught her to appreciate the freedom of expressing her sexual identity that she has found in England, and she is ready to call this strange country home. Queer diaspora, therefore, at last allows lesbians the freedom and safety of domesticated lives, often away from restrictive laws of their countries of origin: "women were unpacking rucksacks. [...] They were replacing sleeping bags with cotton sheets, [...] waking by reflex not wrist alarm" (52). However, the elimination of inequalities within the lesbian community also means smoothing out the inequalities between sexes and genders within the wider society, thus inviting the prospect of assimilation that was implausible

and uncompelling to the lesbian separatists of Lesbian Nation. Domestication of lesbian relationships becomes similar to the one of the heteronormative order: "being a lesbian was becoming a very common or garden affair, it seemed [...] homogeneity [...] means [...] [that] everyone is getting more like everyone else" (Livia 1991, 44, 139).

As already observed, Anna Livia's fiction is a transgressive tool not only in highlighting the differences and suggesting affinities within the lesbian community, such as age or social position. In large measure, it also concentrates on issues of national belonging, race, ethnicity, and multiculturalism, as all of the above are the limiting factors to achieving equality within lesbian communities, as well as in the wider society. *Accommodation Offered*, Livia's second novel, incorporates the pressing need for the obliteration of those disparities by encompassing into its plot three lesbians of different ages, nationalities, and statuses.

Whereas in *Relatively Norma*, Beryl, Minnie's mother, emigrated to Australia to escape her abusive husband, one of the main protagonists of *Accommodation Offered*, Polly, leaves Ireland to move to England with her new husband, whom she married for financial reasons and under the pressure of Irish tradition, which imposed marriage on young women as the only option of securing their futures: "my father's firm was doing badly [...] and I didn't have any other suggestions" (Livia 1985, 9). Thus, once her marriage proved to be a failure, she decides to explore her sexuality further and answers a newspaper ad to meet with a woman (15). Upon meeting Margot, who is also Irish, Polly embarks on a journey to consolidate identities of her newly-discovered sexuality and her sense of national belonging. Her search for identifying her sexuality is demarcated by long hours spent in various London libraries:

> [Margot] […] showed me [...] a yellow hardback with HOMOSEXUALITY [...] down the spine. We flicked through it [...] "promiscuous lesbians … comparatively rare birds … particularly dangerous … dominant, forceful personalities … weaker, more pliant women …" Far worse than "Mutual Masturbation". "The butch or 'dyke' type, swagger along in men's trousers and parody the normal male … exhibitionistic minority … more discreet deviants …" (25, 26)

The fact that Polly comes across the thirty-year-old *Homosexuality: Its Nature and Causes* by D. J. West, which was first published in 1955, reflects, despite the Women's Liberation and the toils of lesbian activism, the need for a distinctive acknowledgment of the varieties of lesbian sexualities by the larger society, as well as for a rendered historical presence of lesbians. Moreover, Polly's inability to identify with any definitions, highlights, similarly to *Minimax*, the common misconceptions about lesbians caused by their invisibility and misrepresentation in official discourses.

These shortcomings of information in Polly's search are regulated by "the Assumption", which can be read, similar to the city from the *Bulldozer Ris-*

ing, as the equivalent of heteronormativity that is, in large measure, ordained by the Church. It is a patriarchal institution that dictates the desired modes of life and behaviour. Consequently, the "deviants" of West's definition will be, in line with the Church's preaching, not forgiven[1]. Although Livia's fiction was never indicative of being iconoclastic, the connection between the strict rules and the Church, as well as the dominance of men within the religious institution, cannot remain unnoticed:

> The right side. The Assumption. According to the Assumption everyone was white, middle class and heterosexual, aged about forty. They were also male. Of course the Assumption knew that some people were working class, black or homosexual. They were also female. But if a person was walking down the street his skin was 'flesh' coloured, his suit expensive, he had half an eye out for pretty girls and probably voted C of E [the Church of England]. People were men. (Livia 1985, 50)

Livia's stance on sexual or religious identities, however, is not the main focus of the novel. Whereas her other works of fiction are largely concerned with societal inequalities within the lesbian community, *Accommodation Offered* deals predominantly with other categories of social identities, such as a sense of national belonging that, positioned outside of one's place of origin, becomes central to the creation of diasporic identity.

As I already mentioned, Polly's migration was a result of her financial situation, as well as Irish societal expectations regarding women. She represents all Irish women who emigrated in order to escape the parochialism and insularity of Ireland. Therefore, once in England, Polly can embark on becoming a PhD student, as well as on initiating relationships with other women. Although Irish diaspora dates back to the times of the Great Famine, when between 1845 and 1849 over two million people were estimated to have left Ireland, the new generations of Irish people, and especially women, are motivated by the freedom of their chosen countries of arrival. Along with globalisation, however, where the flexibility of labour markets enhances motives of migrants even further, Ireland is still experiencing large numbers of emigration.

3. Hybrid queer identities in Shani Mootoo's Out on Main Street *and* Valmiki's Daughter

Anna Livia and Shani Mootoo both discuss the problematic identity formations within diasporic queer hybrid settings. Discussions of ethnic and cultural hybridity emerged in the eighteenth century in the context of inter-

[1] There are a handful of passages in the Bible to proclaim homosexuality as sinful – there are two in the Old Testament (Genesis 19, and Leviticus 18 and 20), and three in the New Testament (Romans 1: 18-21, Corinthians 6: 9-10, and Timothy 1: 8-10).

racial contact and fears over the contamination of white European bodies as a result of colonisation and migration, and again in the wake of decolonisation movements (Brah, Coombs 2000, 3; Kraidy 2002, 318). It was in the twentieth century, however, when the term adopted an entirely new meaning owing to the formation of postcolonial African, South American and Asian cultures in the West, and, in the latter half of the century, from the development of national diasporas across the world. Homi Bhabha was the first person to disintegrate the concept from its previous racial meaning. In his analysis of the relation between the coloniser and the colonised, Bhabha emphasised their interdependence. He developed his concept of hybridity from analysing transformation and translation of language, placed alongside cultural theory, to describe the construction of cultural identity. Bhabha's hybridity, therefore, denotes the emergence of a new cultural identity formed by the colonised or, in postcolonial contexts, diasporic subjects in their place of arrival in the West. Those new identities are created in what Bhabha terms the "third space". It is a space that "initiates new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration and contestation" (1994, 1-2). It accommodates the articulation and production of new cultural meanings that obfuscate the extent of existing boundaries, thus providing the displaced subjects with new politics of difference.

Nowadays, in times of globalisation, the terminology of hybridity is changing, as the term does not allude solely to postcolonial interactions, but it expands its reach to signify diasporic practices in dominant cultures (Dirlik 1994, 329). In its recent usage, "hybridity appears as a convenient category at 'the edge' or contact point of diaspora, describing cultural mixture where the diasporized meets the host in the scene of migration" (Kalra, Kalhoon, Hutnyk 2005, 70). Hybridity, as the integration of cultural bodies, is now known to deconstruct the inequities of race, language, and nation (Yazdiha 2010, 31). Stuart Hall terms diasporic culture as characterised "not by essence of purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity" (2003, 244). Such approach undoubtedly celebrates difference and ethnicity, de-centralises ethnic or religious totalitarianism, and allows us to create an image of diaspora whose foundations are built on celebrating differences. Recently, however, critics have embraced the idea of rejecting the concept of hybridity as a defining process of creating of diasporic identities, as Bhabha's concept of hybridity has been criticised for disguising cultural differences. Instead of placing cultures within a set special context, the concept of hybridity offers a global solution to transculturation within dispersed communities. Sissy Helff, in particular, believes that hybridity does not seem to be the most accurate term to discuss postcolonial experiences and forced diasporas of marginal society members (2012, 191). Whereas the

concept adheres to colonial/imperial and postcolonial concepts, migration studies scholars purport that Bhabha's term is too restrictive and instead suggest the use of terms such as transmigrancy and transculturality. Both of those terms describe cultures and cultural encounters, and allow for new, transcultural imagery characterised by heterogeneity (*ibidem*). Thus it seems that the assertion of hybridity as a postcolonial condition runs the risk of delocating and de-historicising cultures from their particular temporal contexts.

The fiction discussed in this final part of the essay accommodates diasporic and hybrid queer identities, or identity formations, that struggle with incorporating various subject positions, such as class, race or gender, as cultural hybridity is an unnegotiable aspect of (queer) diaspora. The cultural diversity of all places bears a mixture of cultures and beliefs from various backgrounds. Combined with the notion of queer, as in the case of characters of Mootoo's *Valmiki's Daughter* as well as *Out on Main Street*, diasporic hybridity, whether acquired or inherited, poses complications, confusion, and even shame. The notion of queer itself is hybrid in the sense that lesbians and gay men, whom Alan Sinfield considers to be an ethnic group, also need to fight for their rights of inclusion within the society: "recognition that race and ethnicity might be constructed, hybrid and insecure, but yet necessary, has obvious resonances for lesbian and gay cultural politics [...] for [queer] subculture, is certainly hybrid" (1997, 200). Whereas Livia's fiction was confined to multinational Britain and Australia, Shani Mootoo's writing takes her readers to multiculturally-varied Canada and Trinidad and Tobago. Consequently, her fiction incorporates the binary notions of straight/queer, white/coloured, and citizen/migrant, to represent the multiplicity of identities and subjectivities of lesbians of colour in a foreign setting, which is translated into a division in diasporic writing between white and non-white, as well as Western and non-Western authors.

Shani Mootoo was born in Dublin, in 1957, to a white Irish mother and an East-Indian-Caribbean father, where they remained for three months after their daughter's birth before returning with her to Trinidad. Mootoo, who therefore grew up in Trinidad, moved to Canada at the age of nineteen, where she received her BA and MA degrees in Fine Arts and English and Theatre respectively. Between 1994 and 1999, Mootoo lived in New York, creating and exhibiting her visual and video art. Mootoo's close association with Canada can be seen clearly in her poems "All the Irish I know" and "All the Hindi I know" (Mootoo 2001, 95, 96). The poetry illustrates Mootoo's limited knowledge of Hindi vocabulary and culture, which effectively points to her strong link with her new Canadian citizenship. She commemorates that in her childhood she only knew her version of Trinidadian English, and in her late twenties she was actually deprived of her Trinidadian citizenship, as she was not allowed to hold the dual Trinidadian-Canadian citizenship ow-

ing to the fact that she was born in Ireland[2]. In fact, Mootoo feels strongly about her Canadianness, as it allows her to take a stand against discrimination of lesbians in Trinidad, as well as elsewhere, and to represent the queer minorities of diaspora (Helff, Dalal 2012, 74). She states:

> The stories I write, the art I make all speak of the desire to break and simultaneously to braid given identities, to make transformative leaps into [...] a self-defined "other".[...] It is through my writing [...] that [...] I dare [...] to attempt to purse [my] lips and blow at the borders of lesbian identity, create new spaces where [...] the inequalities and discrimination of genders within lesbianism itself get addressed, and where that multiplicity of genders is celebrated. (Mootoo 2008, 83, 94)

This statement does not only portray Mootoo as an advocate of LGBTQI+ rights – it argues, similar to the novels of Anna Livia, for a positive approach to the differences between lesbians across the world. Thus, Mootoo creates an image of queer diaspora, whose foundations are based on celebrating the differences.

She is, as she refers to herself, a "multiple migrant", and this certainly finds reflection in her writing as well as in her art. In her first work of fiction, *Out on Main Street*, the characters of the title short story experience feelings of a concomitant national and sexual displacement. Asvin Kini argues that diaspora in *Out on Main Street* is "not inherently nostalgic for times gone by and places left behind, but rather is formed in relation to the material, racial, gender, and sexual dynamics of colonialism, indenture, nationalism, and globalization" (2014, 186). Thus, the story, portraying a lesbian Indian character in Canada, engages with cultural practices in diasporic context whilst exemplifying other reconfigurations of the term, such as sexuality and gender.

In the story, published in 1993, the setting, an Indian sweet shop on a Canadian main street, could signify the hybrid queer third space, which the narrator and her girlfriend Janet, both descendants of Indian labourers and Trinidadian migrants, visit sporadically to buy *meethai.* "Kush Valley Sweets", as a contact zone of changing power relations between genders, sexualities and nationalities, is "the space of colonial encounters, the space in which people separated geographically and historically come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict" (Pratt 1992, 6)[3].

[2] The Irish Consulate General, after Mootoo's reading of "All the Irish I know", said to her: "Madam, whether you like it or not, you were born in Ireland, and you are Irish. There is nothing you can do about that. Or at the very least it would not be easy to renounce your Irish nationality. Ireland does not easily give up its citizens, you know" (Mootoo 2008, 89).

[3] The word "kush" in "Kush Valley Sweets" in Hindi and Urdu means happy, which is used concurrently with the word "gay", therefore, the sweet shop, essentially, is marked as a queer contact zone (Kini 2014, 193).

Factually, within the short twelve pages, Mootoo reconfigures dichotomous notions of lesbian/heterosexual, Indian/Indian-Caribbean, white/coloured, male/female, and encapsulates issues of gender performativity, as well as those of sexual, ethnic, national, class, and cultural/linguistic disparities. Those, however, seem to be disrupted and in constant flux, as power relations shift constantly to allow the emergence of the "new ways to conceptualizing the self and others" (Gopinath 2007 , 167). Moreover, the connection between images of eating sticky delicacies and the lesbian act of lovemaking further evokes the association of the sweet shop with the queer contact zone, where the protagonists' desires of homeland, tradition, and sexual desire, should all become fulfilled at once. Queer diaspora in this context is associated with the combination of a free expression of sexuality with one's cultural origin, thus providing queer migrants with the sense of inclusion and self-acceptance, which may not have been possible in their place of origin.

First of all, class, national, racial, cultural and linguistic inequalities can be seen in the narrator's description of herself and Janet:

> We is watered-down Indians – we ain't good grade A Indians. We skin brown, is true, but we doh even think 'bout India unless something happen over dere and it come on de news [...] Mostly, back home, we is kitchen Indians; some kind a Indian food every day, at least once a day, but we doh get cardamom and other fancy spice down dere so de food not spicy like Indian food I eat in restaurants up here.
>
> [...]
>
> Yuhask [Indian store clerks] a question in English and dey insist on giving de answer in Hindi or Punjabi or Urdu or Gujarati. [...] And den dey look at yuhdisdainful disdainful – like yuhdisloyal, like yuh is a traitor. (Mootoo 1993, 45, 48)

The narrator's insistence on the categorisation of Indians already portrays that, even at the end of the twentieth century and in a foreign country, the caste system is still the ruling element in dividing *varnas* and *jatis*[4]. However, it is the issue of authenticity that plays a more important role. The unnamed narrator feels inferior compared to other Indians, as her multiplicitous diasporic positioning is preconditioned by her ancestors who were labourers brought to Trinidad during the colonial indenture between 1845 and 1916: "I used to think I was a Hindu *par excellence* until I come up here and see real flesh and blood Indian from India" (47). Although the narrator's textual creole dialect and accent may suggest the putative Indian authenticity, this is

[4] *Varna* and *jati* are the two most proximate terms to portray the caste system in India. *Varna* means "colour" and groups people into four classes: the Brahmins (priestly people), the *Kshatriyas* (administrators and warriors), the *Vaishyas* (merchants, tradesmen and farmers), and *Shudras* (labouring classes). Convergently, *jati*, which means "birth", are people who form more flexible social groups.

soon disproved in an encounter with the shopkeeper at "Kush Valley Sweets", with whom she argues over the terminology of sweets. His victory over the narrator's knowledge of Hindi, however, is short-lived, as the authenticity of the shop's proprietor himself is soon undermined and disproved when he is challenged on racial grounds by two white Canadian customers. As a result, power relations shift back in favour of the narrator as the shopkeeper has to admit reluctantly that he is from Fiji and not India. Anita Mannur suggests that, despite their initial hostility against each other, this experience binds the narrator and the shopkeeper, as they now identify in unison as immigrants of both colour and Indian descent (2010, 45).

Secondly, the portrayal of the lack of a defined ethnic identity in the narrator and her girlfriend can be observed in the comparison of her own family and ascendancy to the one of Janet's, as they were one of the first families to convert from Hinduism to Presbyterianism. Janet's knowledge of the origins of certain Hindu customs is vague, and her name itself is the result of her mother's defying the traditional Indian ritual, which, instead of being performed by a reverend of the mission, Janet's mother decided to undertake herself. This does not only problematise the fixity of Hindu culture, but also emphasises the multiculturalism of Trinidad as well as Canada, thus pointing to the heterogeneity of the culture that is infused with diasporic discourse, and Mootoo's emphasis for the need of coalition based on difference and dispersion.

Lastly, Mootoo's text questions discourses influencing the construction of diasporic queer identity by shifting the power relations from heterosexual to lesbian, and from male to female. Gender and masculinity/femininity are disrupted as the narrator bases her gender performance on the femininity of gay men:

> Walking next to Janet, who so femme dat she redundant, tend to make me look like a gender dey forget to classify. Before going Main Street I does parade in front de mirror practicing a jiggly-wiggly kind a walk. [...] I jiggle and wiggle in mih best imitation a some a dem gay fellas dat I see downtown in Vancouver, de ones who more femme dan even Janet. (Mootoo 1993, 48, 50)

Whereas the racist incident imposed by the white males bonds the customers of the café as Indians/foreigners, the power relations shift again after their departure – the shop owner and his brothers, back in their familiar environment, return to the roles of sexist males, imposing their staring glances and touches on their female clientele. This establishes a gendered unity that replaces the previous unanimity, and women begin to solidarise against male tyranny. However, their unison is short-lived, and clearly based on the presumption of the narrator's and Janet's heterosexuality, as the arrival of two white lesbians, friends of the narrator and Janet, soon realigns their solidarity with the proprietors: "well, all cover get blown. If it was even remotely pos-

sible dat I wasn't noticeable before, now Janet and I were over-exposed [...] insteada any recognition of our buddiness against de fresh brothers, I get a face dat look like it was in de presence of a very foul smell" (57). It can be assumed, therefore, that the narrator's will to achieve class privilege is manifested in her attempts at "passing" as heterosexual, feminine, and Indian (Wall 2011, 11-13), which points to the multiplicity of areas of affiliation to non-normative sexuality.

The fact that the story ends with a rhetorical question: "So tell me, what yuh think 'bout dis nah, girl?" (Mootoo 1993, 57), leaves the reader with a choice of "the recognition and acceptance of the difference of the other rather than through an attempt to narcissistically mirror the self in the other" (Gopinath 2007, 189). Essentially, Mootoo's own diasporic experiences, similarly to Livia's, allow her to position lesbian desire across more than just one location. She discusses it from a global point of view, where an individual, concomitantly with homo-/lesbophobia, has to face other barriers conditioning the power struggle of self-identification. Whereas the short story is set in Canada, Mootoo's third novel, *Valmiki's Daughter*, is an astute testimony of what fate meets sexual "deviants" in Trinidad.

The embodiment of the consequences awaiting lesbians in Mootoo's *Valmiki's Daughter* is seen in its minor character, Merle Bedi, who was banished from her family home and now lives on the streets trying to survive. It is said of her that her prostitution is actually a better option than her same-sex desire and that it "might cure her" (Mootoo 2010, 23). In fact, homosexuality in Trinidad is still illegal. Men can expect a lifetime in prison for the crime of sodomy, whereas lesbians are subject to the maximum of five years of imprisonment. Furthermore, homosexual people who are not citizens of Trinidad and Tobago are denied the right to entry. Not surprisingly then, characters of *Valmiki's Daughter* hide their desires and do not discuss them publicly, excluding even their closest friends or family members. However, the connotations of the androgynous name Merle, as it can be given to a man as well as a woman, crosses the boundaries of gender and sexuality, and symbolises knowledge, intelligence, and wit. Therefore, Merle's existence on the streets, even though she is a social outcast, is not portrayed as hopeless. Rather, it can be supposed that her knowledge gave her freedom, which she would not be able to experience had she stayed at her upper-class family home to fulfil her daughterly duties of becoming a wife and a mother. Merle Bedi is a constant reminder of the consciousness of Valmiki's daughter, Viveka, whenever the latter fantasises about women.

The novel comprises of two stories of same-sex attraction of first Valmiki, and then Viveka. Valmiki's story constitutes an introduction to later events of Viveka's affair with her French lover, Anick, who is married to the son of their family's friends. It can be said that by the juxtaposition of characters of different sexes and ages, Shani Mootoo challenges and calls for the revision

of the Trinidadian laws introduced by the "buggery" (Section 13) and "gross indecency" (Section 16) acts of the 1986 Sexual Offences Act, which have only been strengthened in the year 2000. Additionally, such stance reinforces the notion of modernity and globalism, especially when considered from the point of view of the close proximity of Trinidad to countries of North America, where the LGBTQI+ rights are some of the most advanced in the world, and where the laws of Trinidad and Tobago seem outdated and barbaric.

Valmiki Krishnu, a respected doctor of one of four Trinidadian major municipalities, San Fernando, works hard to earn himself a title of a womaniser in order to hide his same-sex passion, of which he became aware in his early adolescence. Societal and familial pressures prove to be so insistent, that after graduating from medical college in Canada, Valmiki decides not to pursue an affair with the love of his life, Tony, but instead returns to Trinidad to fulfil his expectations of becoming a husband and a father, and congratulates himself about what it "publicly confirm[s] about him" (Mootoo 2010, 69). With time, however, the duty that he feels towards his family recedes, and yet again he pursues to initiate sexual relations with a man. Therefore, upon his realisation of Viveka's feelings for Anick, he begins to worry that his daughter may have to face a similar existence of denial and shame.

Anick, a French citizen who met her husband, Nayan, in Canada, and moved to Trinidad to allow him to pursue his career in the family cocoa business, had had previous intimate relations with women. It is interesting to see Trinidadian homophobia at work, as Nayan's attitude towards Anick's past changes from fascination to disgust as the couple moves from Canada to Trinidad (233). To avoid shame, Nayan forbids his wife from any contact with people who may accept, or even encourage her "sexual deviance" (252). The status of a newcomer allows Anick to describe her own, as well as Viveka's and Valmiki's, sense of exclusion and entrapment within their own desires by comparing Trinidad to a prison, from which there is no escape (177). Truthfully, when Viveka and Anick's relationship becomes known to some of their family members, the former is aware, just like her father was, of her obligations:

> She had a glimpse of who she was, of what her desire looked like for her: she wanted to feel again and again all that she had with Anick. [...] But with this ephemeral knowledge came another thought: the dreadful possibility of losing her family. Which was greater, she wondered – to be all that you were, to be true to yourself, or to honour one's family, one's society, one's country? (326)

Other than evoking the threatening notion of heteronormative nationalism, the above passage is also an astute portrayal of one's inability to merge their national and sexual identities. However, whereas the battle for an all-inclusive identity is already more or less resolved on the pages of Irish lesbian fiction, as Ireland enters into a new era of globalisation and trans-

nationalism, Mootoo's characters revert to (compulsory) heterosexuality in order to protect themselves and to preserve their families' good names.

Just as Ireland needed generations of writers to emancipate lesbians from their narrational invisibility, so do other authors from non-Western countries have to endure their sufferings in order to accommodate, and speak freely of, lesbian sexuality. "Going away won't solve a thing for us" (335) says Viveka, mirroring Mootoo's own views, as she realises that although emigration may resolve the predicament of a queer individual, it will not be sufficient to save the entirety of Trinidadian queer population. It is a role of the author, as the queer migrant, to convey their message to the wider public, and to reiterate and highlight the differences in the LGBTQI+ politics between their country of settlement and the country of origin. Therefore, writing from diaspora is an important aspect of lesbian writing, as it allows one to invent worlds and scenarios in which writers' creativities imagine possible realities: "I am interested in fixing things and making them beautiful. Suddenly I can see the possibilities in how you can use words and I get trapped in that. [...] I can fix and I fall into [...] exoticising my own landscape" (Helff, Dalal 2012, 81). Viveka's remaining in Trinidad signifies her stand against its gender and sexual oppression, which "becomes a way of [...] working to dislodge its heteronormative logic" (Gopinath 2007, 14-15). It is her conscious decision to overturn the dominant heteronormativity of Trinidad by battling it from within its source, and Mootoo's encouragement to lesbians to remain in their countries and fight for their rights, especially countries where lesbian desire is still outlawed either by their respective governments or heteronormative social structures.

Although written in 2008, *Valmiki's Daughter*, owing to its Trinidadian setting, is not as progressive in terms of representation of lesbian equality as writings about Ireland were at that time. Compared to Emma Donoghue's *Landing*, for example, Mootoo's second work of fiction highlights the advancement of homosexual and lesbian laws empowering LGBTQI+ communities in Ireland, in line with, if not ahead of, other Western countries. The time of the economic boom in form of the Celtic Tiger, aided by globalisation and interdependency, created a new Ireland, which became a country of immigration, rather than emigration. As a result, Ireland now hosts nationals from over hundred and ninety countries and is considered to be as inclusive and as multicultural as the US, England or Canada (Onyejelem 2005, 71).

4. Conclusion

The diasporic experiences of Anna Livia and Shani Mootoo, allowed those writers a greater freedom to discuss and problematise issues encountered by lesbian communities. Mootoo's and Livia's problematisation of lesbian issues

within their own communities allowed those writers to shift away from the notion of the restrictive and separatist Lesbian Nation, and towards a more inclusive notion of queer solidarization and integration, however, as I noted, without losing the emphasis on the distinctive lesbian identity and individuality. Recently, when the Schengen agreement was threatened by the influx of immigrants from other continents, and as the border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland faces a reinstatement following Brexit, it is vital to emphasise the importance of diasporic and migrant writing as the re-appropriation of lesbian existence across the world. As Gloria Anzaldúa writes: "As a *mestiza* I have no country, my homeland cast me out; yet all countries are mine because I am every woman's sister or potential lover. (As a lesbian I have no race, my own people disclaim me; but I am all races because there is the queer of me in all races)" (2012, 102). Therefore, it is not just the fiction written from the Republic of Ireland, but also from outside its borders, that is crucial to the ongoing negotiation of lesbian identity within the State, as Irish migration reinvents and rearticulates the notion of lesbian desire across Irish and global histories.

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Coming Home: Lesbian Poetics and Homelessness*

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Abstract:

As a poet of the Irish diaspora, Cherry Smyth queers the environment of her construction (Northern Ireland) by examining the experiences and perceptions of her non-heteronormative orientation when she returns home from London. Smyth delves into memory, nostalgia, forgetting and remembering to articulate her search for a home. This can be read most vividly in her poem "Coming Home". The visibility of lesbian poets has been historically displaced, silenced and eradicated by the patriarchal domination of lyric poetry, often leaving lesbian poets homeless in the tradition. Rather than ever arriving at home, Smyth is continually coming home and this coming is painful, shameful and erotic all at once and thereby makes a home out of being queer. These, and other issues, are discussed using an auto-theoretical queer approach.

Keywords: Diaspora, Home, Lesbian, Cherry Smyth, Visibility

1. (Re)Orientation

> It must be wonderful to wake up in the morning and know just which door you're going to walk through.
> (Lauren Bacall as Amy North in *Young Man with a Horn*, 1950)

In January 2017 I visited the Ulster museum's exhibition on the Troubles in Northern Ireland. On the wall large letters spelled out a sentence that resonates with me still: "While we have a shared past we do not have a shared memory". Over the course of the few weeks I was at home in Ireland, I repeated the phrase to many, including my aunt as we discussed familial memory.

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This was a fervent topic at the time as my paternal family began the search for their grandmother's death certificate and grave. The, to this day, inconclusive search means that my father and his siblings do not have a claim to their mother's family home. As older relations die, so too does the memory of their grandmother. The shared familial past of siblings becomes nothing but a lost memory disorientated by time. As a queer Irish woman living in New Zealand I often feel the boundaries of belonging and home becoming more a memory or an impossible reality. Minnie Bruce Pratt's 1983 article "Identity: Skin Blood Heart" captures this feeling of ambiguity as she moves between three different locations, remapping and transgressing boundaries to question the ambivalence of "being home" and "not being home". In Pratt's article her coming out as a lesbian is "what makes 'home' impossible, which makes her self nonidentical, which makes her vulnerable" (Martin, Mohanty 1986, 229). The Irish poet Cherry Smyth faced similar vulnerabilities:

> My coming out as a lesbian paralleled and informed my emergence as a post-prod Nationalist. Common sexuality allowed me to identify with Republican lesbians and gay men in a new way, just as feminism had given me the opportunity to forge new links with women across different backgrounds of class, nationality and race. (1995, 224)

Smyth's experience is similar to Pratt's, and to my own: we all changed direction in our lives by detaching from the heterosexual world; we became in Sara Ahmed's words "reoriented". This reorientation "involves the disorientation of encountering the world differently", which leads Ahmed to also wonder about the impossibility of home, "and how much 'feeling at home', or knowing which way we are facing, is about the making of worlds" (Ahmed 2006, 20). I return to questions of home constantly as for me, and for many queer people, home can invoke isolating feelings of shame, of "[re]entering a closet of furtive whispers and private pain" (Aguilar-San Juan 1998, 267).

The language of reorientation has also been used negatively. In 2008 Iris Robinson, a former Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) MLA and MP in Northern Ireland, made a series of, by now infamous, statements about homosexuality suggesting that homosexuals could be "cured" with psychiatric treatment and promoted the services of a "very nice" psychiatrist she knew who could help to "re-orientate" homosexuals back to heterosexuality (Young 2008, referenced in Duggan 2012). Robinson's statements direct me back to the epigraph of this section, and how it must be wonderful for Iris Robinson to know which door she is going to walk through every morning, to be so sure of the way she is orientated. While she also promotes the belief that she is facing the right way, and that in turn, there is a right way to be orientated towards. This paper is a reading of Cherry Smyth's poem "Coming Home" and concerned with the process of reorientation, and the shame involved in being disorientated, or in other words, homeless. In "Coming

Home" Smyth displays the complicated internalisation of what it means to really *be* Irish, and how speaking about one's heritage with pride is complicated by a fraught diasporic and queer existence.

2. Visibility and "Lesbian chic"

> If you're gay, first they try to tell you that it's really not true, then they spend years trying to change you. You just have to hate yourself more than straight folks do. Everything that comes at you tells you it's sick, wrong, perverted, demented. You never get reinforced. (Hollibaugh 2000, 111)

Cherry Smyth's poem "Coming Home" was originally published in 1993 and appeared as part of her first collection *When The Lights Go Up* in 2001. 1993 was the height of "lesbian chic", a phenomenon in the 1990s which was believed to have increased the visibility of lesbians in the media and popular culture. The term was coined after k.d. lang appeared in May of 1993 on the cover of *New York* Magazine with the heading "Lesbian chic: The Bold, Brave New World of Gay Women". The following month, *Newsweek* ran a "lesbian issue" which, "presented lesbianism to its presumptively straight readership as an interesting but deeply problematic phenomenon" (Halperin 1995, 49). In the U.S., Dorothy Allison was one of the most prominent lesbian writers to gain increased visibility as she moved from small lesbian publishing networks to major presses and gained the ability to earn a living from her writing (see Cvetkovich 2003). In Ireland Mary Dorcey won the Rooney Prize in 1990 for her short story collection *A Noise from the Woodshed*, and like Allison, moved from a small lesbian publishing press, Onlywomen Press (based in the UK) which published both her short story collection and her first poetry collection *Kindling* (1982), to one of Ireland's major presses, Salmon Poetry. In December 1992 the President of Ireland at the time, Mary Robinson, invited 34 delegates from the gay and lesbian community to Áras an Uachtaráin. Mary Holland reported for *The Irish Times* (December 17), that

> […] about half of the 34 people said that they did not want, could not afford, to be identified. What a reproach to the rest of us. That the guests of the President should feel that they had to conceal a meeting which, for the overwhelming majority of people in Ireland, would be something to talk about with pride. (1992, 12)

Holland insinuates that the LGBTQI community should feel pride at this invitation to be seen at last by heterosexual society, and that queer people are not like the "majority". Similar meetings occurred in the US, and some wondered at the expense of this visibility, "The good news is, We finally exist to people other than ourselves. The bad news is. On what terms?" (Hollibaugh 2000, 178). Others, like the actor Harvey Fierstein, saw the increased

visibility of the lesbian and gay community as an achievement after existing for so long without it: "Visibility at any cost. I'd rather have negative than nothing" (quoted in *The Celluloid Closet*, 1995). The nineties also saw the emergence of Queer Theory. In 1992 Cherry Smyth published her pamphlet *Lesbians Talk Queer Notions.* Within, she queries what queer means and what it has to offer the lesbian community, "Despite reservations I and other lesbians, gay men and queers have expressed, queer politics offers a radical reclamation of the past and urgent questioning of the present" (1992, 59-60).

In order to negotiate this complex field of visibility, Smyth turns to writing, "I wrote at first to be seen. Be heard. I was very conscious of giving the state of being an Irish lesbian a presence. It was a way of writing myself into language, into love, into being" (Smyth in Brown 2002, 268). In her poem "Coming Home" she uses what I read as a queer language. I mean this in the sense of how the language reads in its questioning of identity and the performativity of self that occurs when Smyth is at home. A performativity that is both generated by others and by the self. This brings to mind the theorising of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, whose writing has become synonymous with the affect shame.

> Shame interests me politically, then, because it generates and legitimates the place of identity – the *question* of identity – at the origin of the impulse of the performative but does so without giving that identity-space the standing of an essence. It constitutes it as to-be-constituted, which is also to say, as already there for the (necessary, productive) misconstrual and misrecognition. (1993, 14)

Smyth's coming home requires her to perform differently as she begins to misrecognise herself, her identity and to question her sense of belonging.

These questions of identity and visibility are given prominence in the very first stanza, as the language disorientates and shifts in time and space.

Coming home is like dying
and coming back from the dead all at once.
Time stops and time begins again where it left off –
leaving at eighteen. Here, time isn't pressing to go somewhere,
the last call, the last tube. Instead it can sit
and watch the waves rolling, behind the raindrops running,
being blown or flung or just clinging to the windowpane.

Smyth's poem associates home with a different time zone where time stops and starts "where it left off", and she becomes her past self again, at "eighteen". Her present self becomes disorientated and disappears into this past self of a rural country girl in contrast to the urban dwelling queer woman she feels was left, or had to be left, behind in London. She uses the verb *coming* in the title, and also in the first and second line of the poem. This continu-

ous sense of time and shifts in the spatial are intertwined and weaved into the stanza with the use of words like "leaving", "pressing", "rolling", "running", and "clinging". The reader gets a sense of the reclamation of the past and how this recovery of time allows Smyth to question her relationship to time when she is in London rushing for "the last call", or running for "the last tube". This repetition of "the last" shows the reader that there is something to be missed, and that perhaps, what is to be missed is the "pressing" urgency of time. The poet seems uneasy with the view from where she sits, in her direction away from London, and towards the "waves rolling". The waves and rain are beyond her control unlike her ability to be on time or to miss, something dictated by a schedule like "the last tube".

I find myself often in this position when I return home. I am outside of myself, directed away from the life, the home away from home, that I have created in New Zealand, and that can be confronting. It can be confronting in the sense of what you see in front of you (for Smyth the rolling waves), but also, in what you are forced to see of yourself through the eyes of those around you. I have often felt myself disappearing into the way things were, into the person I was. I cover myself up, as it is usually less confronting and more socially acceptable to be ashamed than proud. When people ask, and they do so frequently, whether or not I have a boyfriend, they don't want to hear that I'm a lesbian and have a girlfriend not a boyfriend. So I just say no. I *just* say and don't say a lot of things when I'm at home. But living so far from Ireland I feel myself, to paraphrase the words of Martin Luther King, to be sleeping through a revolution. Ireland is changing and part of the difficulty with that change is that I still associate Ireland and Irish people with past attitudes. It's not true that people don't want to know that I have a girlfriend, I *just* don't tell them.

3. Troubling the self

I see the sea from the house.
The dark blue rim at the edge of the sky
is the circle round your iris,
flecked with yellow like marram grass.
I unpack clothes smelling of London.
Lulled by the tease of familiar voices
I still yearn for the anonymity of the city,

peace to read, think, eat, not eat, to swear,
clutter, clatter, stay in bed all day with the one I love
and talk about her openly.

From here I begin to consider, using the work of Elspeth Probyn, belonging rather than identity. In belonging we can begin to capture "more ac-

curately the desire for some sort of attachment, be it to other people, places, or modes of being, and the ways in which individuals and groups are caught within wanting to belong, wanting to become, a process that is fuelled by yearning rather than positing of identity as a stable state" (Probyn 1996, 19). Belonging also suggests permission to belong and the exclusion from belonging, both of which create a sense of yearning. This yearning can be felt in the continuous sense of time in Smyth's use of verbs and the continuous present tense discussed in the second section. This yearning can also be felt in the ambivalent sense of self expressed in the second stanza and the beginning of the third stanza (quoted above) where Smyth fluctuates between a desire for attachment and intimacy, and a desire for distance and anonymity. The resulting alienation of this ambivalence is what keeps Smyth coming home. She is "not quite here" (Muñoz 2010, 21) in either Northern Ireland or London, she never arrives in either place.

Directed towards the sea, she makes reference to the presence of you, "the circle round your iris". The reader could think that here she is referring to a lover, but then why does she continue in the next stanza to refer to "the one I love / and talk about her openly". This movement from your to her, eliminates the lover as "your", and we see the poet herself, written of in the second person, reflected back to us against the windowpane. Smyth splits herself into multiple persons, the person speaking, the person reflected in the window, the person she was at eighteen, and also, in the next stanza, her mother as a reflection of a potential future self that she seeks to escape. I take this idea of persons rather than subjects or selves from Michel Snediker's *Queer Optimism,* where in his reading of contemporary poetry Snediker demonstrates a theoretical preference "for persons over subjects extends from questions of how personhood … might be characterized, removed from the columbarium of subjectivity" (2009, 3). In doing so I align myself with Smyth, who writes of her battle with subjectivity, and the concept of a fixed notion of self:

> I do wrestle with the question of subjectivity. I am less interested in creating a coherent self across time than in showing a shifting, contextual, contingent self. I like the idea of drawing the reader into a critical intimacy between our respective subject-selves. I interrogate the self through the work. (Cherry Smyth in Brown 2002, 268)

Smyth expresses this shifting sense of self in how she chooses to structure the poem, moving from "I unpack clothes smelling of London", to "Lulled by the tease of familiar voices". She then refers to the "anonymity of the city", using verbs in their infinite forms, "to read, think, eat, not eat, to swear / clutter, clatter, stay in bed", rather than the present continuous tense of the first stanza. It is as if the poet is saying that in London she is present, whereas at home she is in a continuous state, she is coming rather than here. At home, she is just beginning. While it seems she is also saying that Lon-

don is both a city of anonymity and intimacy. To lie in bed with one's lover is not to be anonymous but to be known, "stay in bed all day with the one I love", whereas in Ireland things are both "familiar" and the cause of feelings of "anonymity".

My decision to couple shame with belonging and personhood in this reading of "Coming Home" allows me to expand on Smyth's own troubled notions of fixity in the self. Negative affects, such as shame, unsettle the self and allow for the possibility of change, and here I mean change as an ongoing process. For Lauren Berlant and Lee Edelman, negativity "refers to the psychic and social incoherences and divisions, conscious and unconscious alike, that trouble any totality or fixity of identity" (Berlant, Edelman 2014, vii-viii). Shame allows Smyth and me to explore the disorientation of perception that is part of the politics of queerness as a lived state of being. In queerness, we are always shifting, always becoming, always questioning what it means to *really* belong. Belonging is a concept that is unsettled beyond queerness for those of us that are queer, and also members of the Irish diaspora. Smyth quotes Fintan O'Toole in her 1995 article "Keeping it Close: Experiencing Emigration in England":

> Ireland is a diaspora, and as such is both a real place and a remembered place, both the far west of Europe and the home back east of the Irish-American. Ireland is something that often happens elsewhere. (222)

If belonging as a queer person is intimately attached to personhood, and that personhood is attached to the erotic, then the process of coming home is a constant, active movement contained in shame. In the words of Audre Lorde, "The erotic is a resource within each of us that lies in a deeply female and spiritual plane, firmly rooted in the power of our unexpressed or unrecognized feeling". If the erotic, like shame, remains unexpressed or oppressed then it lessens the subject's power to enact change, in any form but specifically in the area of queer activism.

An important part of queer activism has always focused on the removal of stigma and shame associated with sexuality. Speaking openly, and proudly, as a queer person is supposed to rid queer people of their feelings of shame[1]. Many queer people historically have faced extreme social and personal repercussions as a result of their openness. This is not just a historical phenomenon, "the survival of feelings such as shame, isolation, and self-hatred into the post-Stonewall era is often the occasion for further feelings of shame. The embarrassment of owning such feelings, out of place as they are in a move-

[1] Mary Hollands's *Irish Times* article "Afraid to be identified" which I quoted from in second section, displays the complications of showing face.

ment that takes pride as its watchword, is acute" (Love 2007, 4). The battle between feelings of pride and shame is expressed throughout "Coming Home". I feel it is most blatant in the beginning lines of the fourth stanza,

Family engulfs me.
I search their eyes for myself,
see only the nice wee girl they want, not the proud woman I am.

Is this "nice wee girl" the same one we saw reflected in the window? In this instance Smyth's desire is to see herself reflected in the eyes of her family, shows us her need, and "What is perhaps crucial to shame is the very exposure of our fleshly wanting, of the immensity of human need" (Burrus 2008, 48). The expression "proud woman" directly contrasts with the memory of the "nice wee girl", giving the sense that the memory of this girl, the infrequent you in the poem, is one that involves shame. Pride in this poem is a diasporic feeling, a feeling that happens elsewhere, away from home. Home is where "time begins again", where the poet is the "nice wee girl", eighteen and ashamed. The engulfing feeling of family becomes a powerful tool of regression. I often feel myself, like Smyth, a child again when I return home. I feel the structures of my mind weaken. I am never wholly present, but coming. My mother's voice follows me every time I leave the house asking when I will be coming home.

4. Imagination

> When you soak a child in shame, they cannot develop the neurological pathways that carry thought...you know, carry thoughts of self-worth. They can't do that. Self-hatred is only ever a seed planted from outside in. But when you do that to a child, it becomes a weed so thick, and it grows so fast, the child doesn't know any different. (Hannah Gadsby, *Nanette*, 2018)

From the first line, "Coming home is like dying", Smyth starts the poem from a state beyond feeling, a deathly state we can only imagine. Throughout she drifts through time and space but there is only one distinct section that offers a full regression into childhood memory and imagination.

My childhood was full of light.
Daz-white fluorescent gleaming on formica,

Frenchtoast for tea on Saturday night,
when the whirl of Doctor Who sent us flying behind chairs,
greetin' and gurnin'. And then we'd queue up to slide down
the smooth, dark wood of the banisters,
hands and thighs warmed and squeaking like mice.

In Amber L. Hollibaugh's essay collection *Dangerous Desires: A Queer Girl Dreaming Her Way Home* she writes of imagination as a necessity to her survival as a queer, working-class, femme, sex-worker and the crucial role it played as an escape from her difficult childhood, "I knew early on that imagination and day dreams were the most expressive reality I had" (2000, 25). Margaret Atwood says that the origins of the writing personality lie in childhood, in a disposition to prefer living in the world of dreams and daydream to living in the real world[2]. In Smyth's depiction of childhood she incorporates tangible facts with the use of specific names for products, food, and television programme; "Daz-white", "formica", "Frenchtoast", and "Doctor Who". The memory comes alive with imagination physically when the body moves, in "the whirl" of movement that sends the children "flying". Smyth's use of the words "greetin' " and "gurnin' " are unusual in the sense that they both express a form of communication. People come into contact with each other or make themselves known through greeting. Gurning is a distorted facial expression, meaning to literally *make* a face. When the children are flying in their imagination, they are not themselves, they are making themselves known in an alternative expressive reality. Smyth does not enter into this world alone, she is part of an "us" that creates an imaginative realm, a realm created by the contagiousness and playfulness of childhood. This highlights the contagious quality of shame, "Shame – living, as it does, on and in the capillaries and muscles of the face – seems to be uniquely contagious from one person to another" (Sedgwick 1993, 14). By omitting the g ending, or g dropping, of "greetin' " and "gurnin' ", the reader hears the colloquial quality of speech used within the memory. Smyth is showing a different self, a younger self with an accent, a self that sounded like they were from somewhere and therefore belonged somewhere. The phrase "greetin' and gurnin' " is itself a colloquialism in Northern Ireland which means to excessively complain[3]. This past self in the memory that dropped their g's had a voice "familiar" with colloquialisms, a voice not so adaptable to "anonymity". The change of texture in Smyth's voice after emigrating from Ireland to England has caused her to feel silenced and ashamed, "At times, when I've gone back to Ireland, I've felt an uncomfortable embarrassment when people think I'm English, which undermines my right to speak as an Irish lesbian" (1995, 232). This embarrassment may have darkened the present for Smyth as she says in the poem, "My childhood was full of light", making the continuous process of coming home impossible.

[2] Quoted by Dave Lordan: <https://www.writing.ie/resources/out-of-all-cirriculums-dave-lordan-on-his-teen-summer-schools/> (05/2019).

[3] I owe thanks here to Dr. Neil Vallelly.

We become aware here of the infiltration of English life into the Northern Irish childhood through programmes like *Doctor Who*. My own childhood in Cork was awash with the genteel ways of the English. As children we would often speak with English accents when we were playing at being "posh". The media saturated both Smyth's childhood and my own with the English sensibility, so much so that we internalised that Irish people were not presentable in the same way. It was as if Irish people and programming were not as prevalent in the media because there was something about us that wasn't as watchable. We were somehow not performing to an acceptable standard that would be deemed worthy of space in a television schedule[4]. But also, as in evidenced in *The Irish Times* article in section 2, otherness was reinforced by the national media. The more queer people and people who don't fit the rigid categories of Irishness (in Smyth's case the fact that she was raised Protestant and perceived as sounding English) were made to feel outside of belonging, the more these "others" end up leaving Ireland. By leaving Ireland, we are respecting the boundaries set up by the dominant group. "Sociologists tell us that if the stigmatized respect the boundaries set up by the dominant group, stability is assured; if shamed and stigmatized, they are tolerated" (Stein 2006, 105). If we begin to challenge this stability, we are made to feel even more outside, as often conservatives (more often than not, in the form of Catholic Church) feel compelled to rally against us.

There is some solace to be found in the body and the erotic, in the warm "hands and thighs" that slide and squeak, along with the "gurnin' " facial expressions, giving this sequence a sexualised quality that veers against "an ontology of origins" and queers "the nostalgic line" (Probyn 1996, 117). This is not to say that Smyth pathologises memories in the poem to justify her present queerness, as the following stanza unearths her femme origins in the form of "teenage jewellery with broken fasteners", and "rusty hairclips in drawers reeking of cheap perfume". She refuses to represent the popularised narrative of childhood progression from tomboy to lesbian – "I became a lesbian feminist, a queer dyke, a femme top. I refused the fixity of the identity I had been expected to conform to with a vengeance" (Smyth 1995, 222). Smyth refuses the expectation to conform to either a queer notion of self (homonormativity), or a heteronormative identity, while expressing how the playfulness of childhood offers a strangeness that refuses the fixity of adult identity[5].

[4] TG4, an Irish-language public service broadcaster, was launched in 1996.

[5] There has recently been a spate of interesting articles on the fluidity of femme identity. Here are two I found intriguing: <https://www.out.com/news-opinion/2019/2/13/how-our-generation-changing-definition-femme>; <https://thebodyisnotanapology.com/magazine/my-femme-identity-does-not-invalidate-my-queerness/> (05/2019).

5. Nostalgia

> Emigration teaches you of reinvention and loss as you move between nostalgia and disdain. (Smyth 1995, 232)

In this section I move from, or more accurately between, considerations of imagination to nostalgia. Svetlana Boym parodied Roman Jakobson's theory of the two types of aphasia in her article "Estrangement as a Lifestyle", to develop a theory of two types of nostalgia, both of which feature in Smyth's writing:

> The first one stresses *nostos*, emphasizing the return to that mythical place somewhere on the island of Utopia, with classical porticos, where the 'greater patria' has to be rebuilt. This nostalgia is reconstructive and collective. The second type puts the emphasis on *algia*, and does not pretend to rebuild the mythical place called home [...] This nostalgia is ironic, fragmentary, and singular. (1996, 512)

Smyth carefully manipulates the line breaks in the first sentence of "Coming Home" to stress *nostos* in the first line and *algia* in the second.

> Coming home is like dying
> and coming back from the dead all at once.

Smyth expresses nostalgia in the present tense, "I still yearn". In the final sentence of the third stanza, she begins with the unusual phrasing, "The spinster is come home", to speak about herself objectively. In doing so she not only transgresses between differing nostalgic states, but also between differing states of shame:

> There are two different types of shame: overt shame, in which an individual says "I am ashamed," where one's emotions are relatively accessible, and therefore less potent and destructive; and "bypassed shame," which begins with a perception of the negative evaluation of self where the individual is overly conscious of his/her self-image from the other's viewpoint. (Stein 2006, 114-115)

These two different types of shame, proffered above by Arlene Stein, can relate to different phases of the self. Smyth's fluctuation between the use of *I* and *me* when referring to herself, connects to the work of the sociologist G.A. Mead (1934). The *I* phase, that predominates the consciousness, means that one becomes overly subjective in the style of overt shame, while the *me* phase is overly objective in the style of bypassed shame (Scheff 1990, 289). In the last stanza Smyth uses the objective, me, for expressing a want, or a desire, "Saying goodbye made me want to weep. I did". This "me" phase, as Mead refers to it, expresses a bypassed shame at the desire to display emotion.

The poem flips from the objective to the subjective *I*, to allow the reader to experience the overt shame of the emotional display she allowed to happen, "I did". Within a line of two short sentences, the speaker battles with her shame and from this we can read more about her sense of self. The speaker wants to objectively be seen as composed, as a self-named, "proud woman". But the subjective I dominates the poem, with the dizzying traversal of emotional plateaus that leaves the reader with a sense of the unbelonging, and disorientation within the poet.

Smyth describes how this disorientation is linked to her religious upbringing, "Having grown up in the Protestant tradition, yet seeing myself as Irish, I already experienced a sense of unbelonging, an internal emigration, because I was not Catholic and therefore could not really be Irish" (1995, 222). Yet Smyth does not cast an overt religious veil over this poem. There are glimpses in her interactions and wonderings about her mother, about her "martyrdom", and hoping her mother "can't hear in the next room, / the sin of my self-pleasure". In his book on Foucault, David Halperin states, "Unlike desire, which expresses the subject's individuality, history, and identity as a subject, pleasure is desubjectivating, impersonal: it shatters identity, subjectivity, and dissolves the subject, however fleetingly, into the sensorial continuum of the body, into the unconscious dreaming of the mind" (1995, 95). This sense of a desubjectified continuum is evident from Smyth's choice to use the continuous present in the title of the poem, as if she is eternally "coming home", and with the sexual connotations of the word "coming" hanging over the poem from the beginning. But is it only in the rare glances of the objective *me* offered in the poem that we glimpse the conscious mind of the poet? Smyth only uses *me* when referring to her family, and in particular, her mother; "Family engulfs me", "The tragic banality of my mother's days consume me", "She commands me to affirm her martyrdom", "My mother desperate to know me", and finally as stated above, "Saying goodbye made me want to weep". The use of words like engulfs, consume, command and desperate, communicates how the subjective I has been overwhelmed leaving room for glimpses of the objective to slip through and expose the poet's conscious mind. These moments seem far from pleasurable, but they do succeed in connecting us to a bodily consciousness, they feel almost, to use a word that Smyth herself uses, authentic:

> It becomes more difficult to retain an 'authentic' identity the longer we stay away and the more idiomatic language and cultural gestures we shed. Many of us perceive Ireland as home when we're in England and yet when we return, England becomes the place we want to be. (Smyth 1995, 228)

The moments of bodily consciousness appear more obvious as so often the poem and poet seem in exile from home, the body, and a sense of self.

6. Shame

The jumble of I and me with the varying degrees of nostalgia and shame create an almost competing (queer) narrative of the past, or what Michel Foucault called counter memory:

> A competing narrative of the past composed of memories that exceed official public history. Noting that resistant memories show disempowered people "not who they were, but what they must remember having been," Foucault contends that "if one controls people's memory, one controls their dynamism. And one also controls their experience, their knowledge of previous struggles". (From Castiglia 2000, 168)

Smyth uses a TVAM announcement overheard on the morning of her "leave-taking", to display such a competing narrative. In this instance the competing narrative between Northern Ireland and England.

TVAM announced that 'a man was shot dead last night
In Mag-here-a, on the shores of Lough Nee.'
Ahoghill, Aghadowey, Magherafelt—
The sticky place names of the North
get caught in an English throat.
Old meaningless conjectures woven out of lost tongues,
evolving Irish-Anglo non-senses.
They call us British, stamp out our language,
undermine our culture, swallow our pride.

This section of "Coming Home" captures the turbulence between a shared history and a shared memory, and it is one of the two references in the poem to pride. I am reminded of David Halperin here when he writes, "Gay pride does not even make sense without some reference to the shame of being gay" (2009, 3). In much the same way, it could be said that pride in being Irish does not make sense without reference to the shame of being Irish, a shame that Smyth argues here is a result of colonisation. In reference to Puerto Ricans' situation as a colonised people, the filmmaker, scholar and writer Frances Negrón-Muntaner suggests that colonisation "creates a state of inferiority internalized as shame, particularly manifested in the diaspora" and that individuals constantly try to displace this shame by articulating a discourse of pride (in La Fountain-Stokes 2011, 62). Shame in the Irish diaspora could be a result of an internal judgement, a judgement against the self that sees the self as bad, defective, or weak, as a result of having left Ireland. Smyth plays out this weakness in the face and body, "Pale with separation we drag slowly / with our suitcases and memories to other lands". Shame arises in Smyth's negative view of the diasporic self, as a weak "pale" being that can merely "drag" a suitcase, and therefore a negative view of her-

self. But she expresses it through the point of view of others with the use of "they", showing the narrative as beyond the control of the self, and displaying herself (and other members of the Irish diaspora) as disempowered. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has made the concept of shame central to her understanding of performativity, in the inner workings of shame's contagiousness and volatility (see Love 2007). The inner workings of the performativity in "Coming Home" operates in both a contagious and volatile way, as Smyth moves from childhood memory and memorabilia "goodies, / photos, pencil-written stories" to death "TVAM announced that 'a man was shot dead last night […]' ". Through her display of a disempowered, disorientated sense of self that performs at differing levels of subjective and objective states, Smyth acknowledges the volatile reality of a life lived in Northern Ireland.

One instance of the contagiousness of shame can be read in the last stanza, in the dialogue performed by Smyth and her parents as she prepares to leave.

'See you soon,' I lied, guilty and relieved to part.
'If there's anything you need, wee pet,' he said.
'Be sure and let us know you arrived safely now,' she said.

As the poem is written by Smyth, then as readers we are orientated through her perspective. In this exchange, she reminds us of this by elaborating after her spoken dialogue to give the reader feeling cues. We know she was being disingenuous, "I lied", and that as a result she felt both "guilty and relieved". However, after her father and mother speak, she writes just "he said" and "she said". We are not made unaware of how they feel, but the structure makes me think that Smyth is insinuating that her parents felt the opposite of her, or at least that in that moment she felt that they did. One antonym for guilt is happiness, and for relief, unhappiness. If we are to take these antonyms as accurate descriptors of her parent's feelings, then her parents would have felt as conflicted in that moment as Smyth did. It is difficult to acknowledge that your parents may be, in some part, glad to see you leave.

In *The Trouble with Normal*, Michael Warner considers shame as the basis for a "special kind of sociability" and a relation to others that "begins in an acknowledgement of all that is most abject and least reputable in oneself" (1999, 35-36). Warner is writing with the queer community in mind, but I can see evidence of this special sociability in this conversation. If her parents could feel the guilt and relief in Smyth, then that could have enabled them to acknowledge those feelings within themselves. Therefore shame spreads between them like a contagion as shame is itself a form of communication that lives in the face and body – "Blazons of shame, the 'fallen face' with eyes down and head averted – and to a lesser extent, the blush – are semaphores of trouble and at the same time desire to reconstitute the interpersonal bridge" (Sedgwick 1993, 5). We can't see the body language of this conversation but in Smyth's choice

of sparse reply from her parents' "he said" "she said", we can begin to imagine it. Smyth focuses throughout the poem on the gaze, particularly between her and her mother, in the first part of the poem: "your iris"; "I search their eyes"; "I look at my mother's face". Only in reference to herself in the second person, does she use simile to make a comparison, "your iris / flecked with yellow like marram grass". She queers the poetic blazon with shame, by cataloguing her own physical attributes. Drawing on work by Sedgwick and Warner, Douglas Crimp considers the potential of shame to articulate "collectivities of the shamed" (Love 2007, 13-14). Smyth, both with herself and with her parents, deconstructs and constructs the interpersonal bridge to become a collective in shame.

In 2017 I was at home for nearly three months, longer than has become customary for both myself and my parents. I was constantly "greetin and gurnin' ", whether it was about the dog, or cat hair on my clothes, or the excessive amount of cutlery in the kitchen drawers. I was openly upsetting my parents' routine as I found it impossible to climatise to the time zone of their lives. I was agitated, and this made me volatile, to which my parents were provoked to react in an equally volatile manner. I usually felt terrible after, and made many consolatory cups of tea, before the whole cycle would begin again. But through these shame cycles, I expressed things to my parents about myself that perhaps otherwise I wouldn't have. I showed them something of myself. I'm not claiming that was an entirely positive thing.

> Shame is a bad feeling attaching to what one is: one therefore *is something,* in experiencing shame. The place of identity, the structure "identity," marked by shame's threshold between sociability and introversion, may be established and naturalized in the first instance *through shame.* (Sedgwick 1993, 12)

Similarly, through the interactions between Smyth and her parents in "Coming Home" we see *something* more of Smyth's personhood. As readers, we are momentarily orientated away from Smyth's perspective. It could be said that for a moment we are, "living in the minds of others without knowing it" (Cooley 1922, 208).

7. Exile

> Julia Kristeva's *Nations Without Nationalism* describes the "cult of origins" as a "hate reaction" which creates "a sullen, warm private world, unnameable and biological, the impregnable 'aloofness' of a weird primal paradise — family, ethnicity, nation, race." It's the loss of this "weird primal paradise" that fires my work and the sharp relief of "exile" gives it both context and constancy. The expression of loss is unifying. It creates an intimation of homeland wherever I am. It's warm. I'm sullen. It becomes cold. I recover the private world by making it nameable. It may try to shut me out,

> but I come back to expose its secrets, mess its symmetry and their fantasy images of what constitutes family, Irishness and Ireland. I insist on belonging where I have not always been wanted. "It's all very well," my mother once said, "doing those things in England, so long as you don't do them here. The ill feelings run too deep". (Smyth in Brown 2002, 263-264)

When Smyth is referring to the English as a people she uses they, "They call us British". When she is referring to her parents she uses them, "My fear was not of losing them". The way in which she uses the third person plural in reference to both England and her parents could be read as a conflation of two modes of colonisation, state and familial. This conflation correlates with the two mentions of pride in the poem. The first mention, "proud woman", is a reaction to the engulfing, or colonising, feeling of family, "Family engulfs me". The second, "swallow our pride", is a reaction to the undermining attitude of English towards Northern Irish culture, "They call us British, stamp out our language". Both instances create moments of volatility, and a distinct feeling of anger. These feelings of anger, however, are short-lived and what follows on are feelings of alienation, or exile. In the first instance from her mother, "the tragic banality of my mother's days consumes me", and in the second from her parents, "emptiness deepened in the night. / Gossip ran out by Ballymena".

> When anger is repressed and when centers of power have sufficient resources to control collective mobilization, the shame that is often the root source of this anger may transmute into alienation. (Turner 2007, 19)

Smyth's feelings of exile and alienation transmute throughout the poem. For instance, when she feels she should be feeling sad, she feels instead fear, "My fear was not of losing them rather how to stop their tears / if they should let them fall". In Ann Cvetkovich's *An Archive of Feeling* she uses Lisa Kron's performance piece *2.5 Minute Ride* to challenge expectations of the emotional impact of Kron's visit to Auschwitz with her father, whose parents were imprisoned there. Kron is terrified of, like Smyth, the guilt of feeling nothing but also she is terrified "by the responsibility of being a witness to her father's reactions, wondering what will happen if he breaks down and she must comfort him" (2003, 22). Both Smyth and Kron fear witnessing emotional states they have repressed or bypassed, they fear overt emotional displays. The Irish writer Brian Dillon expresses a similar fear of witnessing in his memoir *In the Dark Room: A Journey in Memory.* He remains with his back to his mother as he listens to her crying: "And I cannot tear myself from this spot and turn towards her to acknowledge her suffering – a movement which would be so alien, so unthinkably intimate that it would surely thrust us both into an atmosphere even more confusing than that which already

hovers like a black fog between us" (2005, 23). Dillon's use of the phrase "unthinkably intimate" is reminiscent of Hannah Arendt's concept of the banality of evil, as Smyth uses "tragic banality" to describe her mother's day[6]. This nod to Arendt can be read as Smyth claiming that her mother's tragic day is undertaken thoughtlessly, that her mother is unaware of what she is doing. In Smyth's observance of her mother and acknowledgement of the "unthinkably intimate", she acknowledges her own unawareness of feeling. Perhaps what Smyth is feeling is shame, not guilt. She does not feel guilty about lying to her parents, but ashamed of herself for not feeling guilt. Acknowledging this shame would mean engaging with the exile she feels at home as a queer woman, the entanglement and ambivalence of wanting a place to call home when she has created an alternative home in London that is not so much a physical place as a community, and the shame of feeling shame at all.

> And there's part of me despite all of my little signs, you know, like, 'Happy!' 'Proud!' 'Well-adjusted!' 'Bi-sexual!' 'Queer!' 'Kinky!'—you know, no matter how many posters I hold up saying, 'I'm a big pervert and I'm so happy about it'—there's this part of me that's like, 'How could I be this way?' (Susie Bright quoted in Love 2007, 16)

Disabled and genderqueer writer Eli Clare examines exile and alternatives to the concept of home, influenced by their physical (in)ability, "I will never find home on the mountains. This I know. Rather home starts here in my body, in all that lies imbedded beneath my skin" (2015, 10). They see the body as home, and offer this idea to other queer people as an alternative to the exile, displacement and estrangement often experienced by queer people at home and also *within* the queer community. Clare investigates whether queer identity is worth the loss of home as a physical place. Smyth writes of the longing for the physical place of home, "There is also a restlessness in my work, the longing for home, and the love of the beauty of the coastal landscape which made me feel rooted in the North" (Cherry Smyth in Brown 2002, 272). Yet, at the beginning of "Coming Home" I feel that Smyth is expressing a distance from the coastal landscape, "Here, time isn't pressing to go somewhere, / [. . .] Instead it can sit / and watch the waves rolling". I do sense a longing for home in the poem, but more often than not, that home seems to be London, "I still yearn for the anonymity of the city". Smyth uses the act of clearing out her material belongings from the house to express the lack of belonging that she feels, "Once I've emptied all the cupboards, / taken the last box from the attic, / will there be anything more to come back for?". In this clearing she seems to be displacing herself from her home in Northern Ireland, making herself anonymous there, as anonymous as she feels in

[6] This observation is a result of conversation with Bridie Lonie.

London. This active untethering of possessions seems to overcome her inability to "sit still" when she returns home. If her childhood home becomes as strange to her as her created home in London, she will be able at last to "relax" as both places will then resemble each other in some small way. She will be able to settle into the home that lies imbedded in her skin, and be released from the perpetual state of *coming*.

Every time I go home, my mother makes a reference to things I have left somewhere in the house. At her insistence, I spend hours and days of my time at home clearing out clothes, papers, books, and going through photographs. One night, my mother tells my brother and me that she believes the ceiling is caving in with the weight our belongings. So, we clear away more traces of ourselves from the house. When I go home now, I can sleep in what was once my brother's bedroom or what was once mine, without much difference between them except the distance from my parent's bedroom.

Tossing, turning and touching,
I hope she can't hear in the next room,
the sin of my self-pleasure.

8. Forgetting to Remember

I look at my mother's face for the first time
since I arrived, as she futters away in the kitchen.
A tired sighing mouth, once full-lipped,
her cheeks have sunk into mid-life hollows
as her children grew up and away.
I steal pieces of her past when she's off-guard
and hoard them for when she's no longer there to ask.

The word "futters" is used in a colloquial sense to mean to busy oneself but the archaic meaning of the word is to perform intercourse, it comes from the French word *foutre* (Williams 1994, 538). Again, Smyth manages to queer the nostalgic order of things with her chosen line structure by placing, "I look at my mother's face for the first time", directly preceding the line "as she futters away", she embodies the stanza with the sexual, the erotic. The stanza continues to reference Smyth's own "sin of self-pleasure" which leads me to read the verb "futters" with the sexualised intention I believe it was written with. In doing so, Smyth reminds the reader of female sexual desire. An oft forgotten thing, especially in terms of lesbian sexuality as lesbianism, unlike male homosexuality, was never criminalised, and therefore never seen. Lesbian sexuality was never considered authentic enough to warrant being a threat. I'm not saying that I wish lesbianism was a criminal act, but I am saying that the value of a queer approach to writing lies in recognising and

maximising the abject, and in taking risks.

I take risks in my writing and teaching around sexual representation and believe that women could have less repressed attitudes to their bodies and their desires if there were more spaces to present diverse images and texts. (Smyth, 1992)

This erotic risk taking can also be read in the relations to time in the poem. For Elizabeth Freeman, queer relations to time are accessed through new arrangements of bodies, pleasure, history, and time, arrangements that she names as "erotohistoriography" or "counterhistory of history itself" (2010, 95). Through Smyth's disorientating traversal of time in "Coming Home", the concepts of past, present and future are often hard to distinguish. Even though the poem seems to follow a (mostly) clear narrative arch, the colliding and separating persons add to a sense of disorientation. However, in the fifth stanza Smyth begins to think about the future in a distinguishable way. She considers a time when her mother may "no longer be there". For the queer theorist José Esteban Muñoz, queer futurity is a "realm of potential that must be called upon" and that is "not quite here" (2010, 21)[7]. Smyth enters the realm of "not quite here" in order to access her mother's past, a past her mother only shares when she is "off-guard". She calls on futurity's potential to get to know something hidden about her, which in turn Smyth hides, "hoard them". Smyth creates a poetics of forgetting and remembering, as she stores her mother's past inside her for the future, as there are no details given about the "pieces" in this poem. She represses it down inside herself, becoming the parts of her mother that will one day "no longer be there". In this surveying of her mother, Smyth enters a commentary about how women appear rather than act. In the words of John Berger, "A woman must continually watch herself […] And so she comes to consider the surveyor and the surveyed within her as the two constituent yet always distinct elements of her identity as a woman" (Hertel, Malcolm 2015, 212). This forgotten narrative weaves an intergenerational thread between mother and daughter. The reader is made aware that Smyth did not seek this information from her father. It is her mother's lineage that she fears will be forgotten. Forgotten history is an area that women and queer people are sensitive to as so much of our history has been written out, or over, or misrecognised, or destroyed. In *The Queer Art of Failure* J. Jack Halberstam makes a claim that forgetting for women and queer people can be useful as it disrupts the smooth operation of the normal and the ordinary, while he also questions why women and queer people should have to learn to forget. He sees the de-linking of the process of generation from the historical process as a queer project:

[7] I see the concept of "not quite here" used to the fullness of its queer capacity in the TV show *Stranger Things* and alternative realm of "The Upside Down".

> We may want to forget family and forget lineage and forget tradition in order to start from a new place, not the place where the old engenders the new, where the old makes a place for the new, but where the new begins afresh, unfettered by memory, tradition, and unusable pasts. (Halberstam 2011, 70)

Smyth does not advocate an unfettered approach but a poetics that is in line with her queer politics. She desires to reclaim the past, "I steal pieces", as it allows her to continuously question the present which she does in "Coming Home" through her predominant use of the present tense. She uses the Nietzschean notion of an "active forgetfulness, a doorkeeper as it were, an upholder of psychic order, of rest, of etiquette: from which one can immediately anticipate the degree to which there could be no happiness, no cheerfulness, no hope, no pride, no *present* without forgetfulness" (Nietzsche 1998, 35). The use of the continuous present from the title and throughout the poem expresses this active forgetting, as well as an active remembering.

The future is also broached in the question that breaks over the ninth and tenth stanza.

> Once I've emptied all the cupboards,
> taken the last box from the attic,
> will there be anything more to come back for?

Nietzsche combines happiness and forgetting, as he believes that only in the repression or suppression of certain memories that we have space in our consciousness for new experiences (1998, 35). So perhaps when my mother is eagerly persuading me to cleanse the house of my belongings when I return home, she is not trying to rid the space of traces of my presence, but in fact trying to allow the house to experience new things and in turn, allow us as a family the space to experience new things[8].

9. Afterwardness[9] – Conclusion

> you can't make homes out of human beings
> someone should have already told you that.
> (Warsan Shire, "for women who are 'difficult' to love", 2012)

[8] The 2019 TV show *Tidying Up with Marie Kondo* advocates keeping items in your house only the items that "spark joy".

[9] A concept that Derrida deemed to "govern the whole of Freud's thought": *Nachträglichkeit*, loosely translated by a range of critics as "deferred effect", "belated understanding", "retro-causality", and "afterwardness": a "deferred action", whereby events from the past acquire meaning only when read through their future consequences (Stockton 2009, 14).

I began this paper with thoughts of disorientation and homelessness, and here I would like to end on a similar note. I initially wanted to convey the feeling that lesbian poets are homeless in the queer poetic tradition. But Smyth is not alone among Irish lesbian poets in "Coming Home". Mary Dorcey was the first out lesbian to be published in Ireland with her collection *Kindling* in 1982. The second poem in this collection is titled "Coming Home", and it begins, "Coming home / the streets seem more narrow than ever". When Dorcey republished a number of poems from *Kindling* at the end of her first collection with Salmon Poetry, *Moving into the Space Cleared by Our Mothers* in 1991, "Coming Home" was not one of them. In Sarah Clancy's 2014 collection *The Truth & Other Stories*, her poem "Homecoming Queen" gives a slightly different take. Clancy accompanies her lover as she returns home, the poem beginning with an ellipsis, "… in your humpy pine-lined hometown, / I am damaged goods". And I'm sure there are a great many more examples to be found.

I was hoping to find in Smyth a justification for the homelessness I so often feel, and hoping that my lesbian reorientation could be pinpointed as the cause. I aligned forgetting with repression and imagination, to create a nostalgia that disorientated me. In this disorientation I found, to use Victor Turner's phrase, *communitas*. Unlike Warsan Shire, I believe a great capacity of queerness is in the potential to make homes out of human beings. As Turner asks,

> Is there any of us who has not known this moment when compatible people—friends, congeners—obtain a flash of lucid mutual understanding on the existential level, when they feel that all problems, not just their problems, could be resolved, whether emotional or cognitive, if only the group which is felt (in the first person) as "essentially us" could sustain its intersubjective illumination? (1982, 47-48)

Through this close reading of Cherry Smyth's "Coming Home", I have attempted to convey this sense of homecoming, otherness and shame as a remembering, a coming, and a constant process of reorientation aptly captured by Smyth in the final lines of the poem:

> Memories of Ireland
> are ice and sunlight which falls down an escalator.
> Always in the same place, yet never still.

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Star of the Sea: Resistance and Adapted Homelands

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Abstract:

Joseph O'Connor's *Star of the Sea* (2002) offers a nuanced depiction of the lifelong patterns of resistance of the Irish governess and Famine survivor, Mary Duane. Following Gayatri Spivak's notions of the Other and of "wordling" – the practice of the more powerful who seize their impressions of the experiences of those perceived as weaker to elevate themselves to "Sovereign Selves" – this essay charts the intersections of power and the production of meaning and knowledge and argues that *Star of the Sea* is a feminist excavation of strategies of diasporic strength. O'Connor's heroine is not a victimized female Other who can merely report; she is not permanently elusive and powerless, rather she is gradually revealed as a resourceful and inspirational character who relies on the idea of a noble Irish homeland which she adapts to navigate moral dilemmas, trauma and chaotic borders.

Keywords: Famine and migration, Female autonomy, Gayatri Spivak, Joseph O'Connor

In her celebrated essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Gayatri Spivak argues that the Other can only report (1995, 28). She uses the terms "othering", "worlding" and "Colonizing Power" to describe the practices and entities involved in the human tyranny of racial and gender subordination (Felluga 2015, 325), and explains that this is a daily rather than monolithic tendency. "Worlding" is practiced by the more powerful who seize their impressions of the experiences of those perceived as weaker in order to elevate themselves to "Sovereign Selves" (*ibidem*). Diasporic narratives are also concerned with power and examine the coping strategies of the displaced. Kevin Kenny argues that "to be diasporic, […] is to be uprooted from one's place, detached from one's nation, and searching for both" (2003, 162). Most of the steerage passengers in Joseph O'Connor's 2002 international bestseller *Star of the Sea* are presented so obliquely that they cannot even report. Ninety-four

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steerage passengers die on the transatlantic voyage and all that is known of them is their names and some of their occupations which are recorded in Captain Lockwood's log. Joseph O'Connor's fictionalized epic of the voyage of a Famine ship sold eight hundred thousand copies in just one year. *The New York Times* assures the reader of Mariner's mass market paperback "a ripping yarn"[1]. *The Boston Globe* (seemingly without irony) promises "a feast"[2]. *Kirkus Reviews* praises a "gloriously overstuffed story"[3]. *The Economist* is rapturous, "this is a confident and sumptuously entertaining book, filled with the voice of O'Connor's native Ireland and composed with the sweep of the Atlantic"[4]. Clearly Joseph O'Connor is marketed as a native informer and the Irish Famine is sold as poignant entertainment.

The first two sections of this essay investigate Mary Duane's strategies of resistance and discuss key episodes which prove that she is not permanently elusive or powerless in her life in Ireland or on board the Star of the Sea. The third section argues that Duane is revealed as a resourceful character who adapts the idea of a noble Irish homeland to negotiate a workable sense of kin which allows her to cross the final border and arrive in the promising, yet challenging city of New York. The next sections examine how Mary's audible acknowledgment of maternal loss instills a sense of community among the female steerage passengers as they try to escape their silent suffering. Mary's resistance inspires the other migrant women to witness their loss and try to escape their subaltern status. The final two sections consider Dixon's practice of Othering and establish that Mary exceeds his worlding grasp and reassert that she is a decisive agent of networking rather than a voiceless victim.

The appeal of *Star of the Sea* is wide-ranging. It was a best seller in the United Kingdom in 2004 and within five years it was translated into twenty-six languages. Its reception in Ireland was appreciative and it was shortlisted for the *Sunday Independent* Irish Novel of the Year Award and nominated for International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award. It won *The Irish Post* Award for Literature. The *Irish Echo* strikes a solemn note with a contemplative reminder that "O'Connor has written not only an epic novel, but also a very important one"[5]. Irish novelist Roddy Doyle declares that "This is Joseph O'Connor's best book. It is shocking hilarious, beautifully written and very, very clever"[6]. Aidan O'Malley best describes the strategy of O'Connor's sensational epic: "By posing questions about the boundaries between history and fiction, this

[1] See the front cover of the Harcourt edition.

[2] See the frontispiece of the Harcourt edition.

[3] The diction of this advertising is sensuous and indulgent.

[4] It also markets veracity and excitement.

[5] This observation is sandwiched between three American promotional quotes.

[6] Back cover of the hard cover Harcourt edition.

polyphonic, ironic echo chamber, reverberating with fictional and historical voices constantly focuses attention on who is doing the writing, who is telling the tale, and from what perspective" (2015, 138).

According to Clíona Ó Gallchoir the life of Mary Duane is "unwritten" (2013, 347). Contrary to such view, this essay will argue that the governess and heroine of *Star of the Sea* is not a victimized female Other who merely reports. In this respect, Joseph O'Connor observes that "If Mary Duane is the book's hero – and to me she is – it is Mulvey who lives at the center of its web" (2002, unpaginated). Merridith and Dixon try to maintain life at the center of the web and their imbroglios threaten to dominate the narrative. They are both in crisis. Merridith has just managed to purchase tickets for seven-thousands of his tenants to sail on the cheaper, more dangerous voyage to Quebec and only has enough money left to buy first class tickets to New York for his family and his love interest, Mary Duane who works as their governess[7]. His health is failing, and his estate is bankrupt. Dixon has failed to publish his first novel. He is returning to the United States to take stock of his career and his prospects with Laura, Merridith's wife. Although Dixon occupies a personally and professionally precarious position, he retains enough power as an American journalist to practice "worlding" during his voyage and throughout his life. He writes over the experiences of Pius and Mary and sells them. Mary reclaims her experience by the end of the narrative because she gains power.

Gayatri Spivak examines the dynamics of power and explores the gaps and dissonances that appear during the process of worlding: "If the project of Imperialism is violently to put together the episteme that will 'mean' (for others) and 'know' (for the self) the colonial subject as history's nearly-selved other, the example of these deletions indicates explicitly what is always implicit: that meaning/knowledge intersects power" (Spivak 1990, 215). *Star of the Sea* carefully charts the intersections of power and the production of meaning and knowledge. Dixon is at the helm for most of the epic but the flaws in his worlding and Othering tactics become obvious by the end of his account. Spivak also notes that "feminist historiography often excavates" (1990, 198). In these terms, *Star of the Sea* is a feminist excavation.

Mary believes that she will find respect and freedom in New York once she is able to escape the grasp of Merridith, her first love and subsequent employer. Pius Mulvey, her ex-lover and arch enemy is also on the voyage and this is another challenge she must navigate. She never discovers that Merridith is her half-brother and although Mary was involved in a love affair when they were adolescents, his advances are only tolerated during the years of her employment in his house. Mary intends to break free as soon as the ship reach-

[7] See M. Fagan's (2011) discussion of these risks.

es America. Their relationship becomes even more fraught when Merridith discovers a letter while settling the bankrupted family estate before leaving Ireland which reveals that his father had a sexual relationship with Mary Duane's mother when she worked as his servant. Although Merridith is shocked by the revelation that Mary is his half-sister, he cannot curtail his feelings.

Her struggle for survival during and after the Famine is initially subsumed by detailed accounts of the picaresque suffering of Pius, the self-serving musings of the Captain and the erotic intrigues of first-class passengers which culminate in bankruptcy, syphilis and murder. Grantley Dixon serves as the primary narrator. He sailed on Star of the Sea as a first-class passenger and became obsessed with Mary. He later extracts and capitalizes upon salacious details from Pius's gory revelations about his life as the Newgate Monster to jumpstart his flagging career.

Near the end of his ultimately prosperous life, Dixon laments that "looking back over these pages, they seem to say almost nothing about her; it is though she was merely a collection of footnotes in the lives of other, more violent people" (O'Connor 2002, 389). Dixon summarizes and embellishes Mary's plight. She escapes in the second commandeered lifeboat when Star of the Sea is detained with hundreds of other Famine ships in the New York harbor on December 8, 1847. Dixon insists that the real danger commences once she arrives on shore[8]. He imagines that there is no new healthy or supportive community for Mary in New York; she is only offered more of the painfully familiar and chronic conditions of hunger, sexual abuse and penniless anonymity which she hoped to permanently leave in Ireland.

Maeve Tynan argues that "O'Connor is motivated by a postcolonial concern to highlight the plight of marginalized subjects […] the colonial Irish Famine victims" (2009, 83). However, she also stresses that "the ultimate elusiveness of the central character Mary Duane signifies that many stories will remain lost, never to be recuperated" (*ibidem*). Similarly, Clíona Ó Gallchoir focuses on "the qualities of irony and subversion […] in historical fiction which have all appeared within the period now notoriously known as the Celtic Tiger" (2013, 344). She observes that "O'Connor's book appears at first to counter the trope of silence: it fairly bristles with words, and wears its intertextuality on its sleeve, quoting, referencing and copying all manner of texts and genres from the period of the Famine – novels, ballads, newspapers, reports, diaries, letters and so on" (346). Ó Gallchoir also draws upon Margaret Kelleher's insightful and impressively rich study of the "twentieth century representations of female Famine victims" which identifies reductive narrative tendencies or emerging "recurring characterizations […] the

[8] O' Connor's (2007) *Redemption Falls* explores the struggles of Eliza Mooney, eighteen years after the arrival of Mary Duane, her mother.

Famine mother, the ministering angel, the sacrificial victim" (1997, 111). By the end of *Star of the Sea* "Mary Duane has played almost every role available to a female character in nineteenth century fiction – lover, abandoned woman, mother, servant, fallen woman and prostitute" (359). Ó Gallchoir (*ibidem*) views Mary as an "icon [and] a permanently elusive figure of profound meaning", and concludes that

> Mary in fact moves from being a recognizable character, an individual with interiority constructed through the norms of realist fiction, to being effectively a metafictional construct, a commentary on previous representations of women in fiction. What remains constant throughout these multiple roles is the fact that she can never determine her own fate. (*Ibidem*)

1. Acts of resistance and emotional agency

In the early bucolic sections of the saga in Ireland before the Famine, Mary falls in love with her landlord's son and acts upon her desire. They cavort in the fields and forests of the Kingscourt estate until David tells his irascible father about their involvement. Lord Kingscourt insists that the liaison ends. He is motived by predictable class concerns but he is also worried about incest in her bloodlines. The family tradition continues, and now Lord Kingscourt's son is involved with his half-sister. David confesses to Mary that he must obey his father and offers financial compensation. She strikes his face and in spite of her poverty, refuses the blackened coins: "If she'd had a knife, she would have murdered him then. Gashed him in the throat like a slaughterman felling an ox" (O'Connor 2002, 76). Mary experiences violent rage after her rejection but has the foresight not to act. David believes that gifts of money will appease Mary and in their final days in Ireland, he gives her his sketchbook and five pounds. She burns his drawings and donates the money to a charity organized for the starving. She will not be seen as a victim.

Ó Gallchoir (2013) identifies Mary's multiple stereotypical roles over the progression of the novel but overlooks how she consistently demonstrates emotional agency despite her limited economic and social resources. This pattern of self-respect and meaningful resistance later continues after Pious abandons her when he hears of her pregnancy. She makes the practical decision to accept Nicolas Mulvey's offer to leave the priesthood and marry her. After she asks the community priest for advice, she decides to pursue an erotic relationship instead of settling for a marriage of convenience. She later courageously escapes from the workhouse, and even demonstrates some agency in her role as servant – she tries to withdraw from ugly dining scenes with Pius aboard Star of the Sea, chooses silence or duplicity instead of self-recrimination, teaches herself to read, saves her wages and most importantly, she decides that she is going to leave her position as servant in Merridith's family

once she reaches New York[9]. She is not a passive victim and by 1847, Mary was waiting in the New York Harbor with the real possibility of a better life.

Additional proof of Mary's agency in her roles as mother, maid and emigrant can be found by turning to other key episodes. Ó Gallchoir argues that Mary's life "has been determined largely by the actions of the central male characters" (2013, 359). She mentions Mary's letter to the Else Be Liables secret society, acknowledges that Mary denounces Pius, calls for his killing and notes that her accusation "is equally focused on his crimes as a land robber, a seducer and a blackguard" (358). Mary calls upon vigilantes to eliminate her enemy rather than do it herself. This is realistic rather than cowardly since Pius or the Monster of Newgate is a seasoned and brutal killer who feels no remorse for his victims. Even his enemies respect his homicidal capacity and they conscript him to kill Merridith before he disembarks. He climbs through the porthole wearing a black mask and brandishing a knife during his search for Merridith. His mission is abruptly aborted when he mistakenly ends up in the cabin of Jonathan, Merridith's young son who awakens and sees the interloper. Pius escapes this foray without blame because no one believes the histrionic child.

Mary's profound agency reappears in the final third of the novel when she confronts Pius about his role in the death of Alice-Mary. She also blames Pius for the killing of their cow which led to their financial ruin, the subsequent violent expulsion from the estate and Nicholas' mercy-killing of their baby (without Mary's knowledge or consent) because he could not provide for his family during the early years of the Famine. Mary is unsparing in her expression of hatred of the miscreant. She lashes out verbally but refrains from physical violence and this is another wise and self-preserving choice. Pius tries to deflect her anger and garner her sympathy by displaying his gangrenous lacerations inflicted by the Else Be Liables gang. She instantly retorts: "Good enough for you, then. I hope they kill you. I will laugh" (O'Connor 2002, 293).

He further challenges her resolve by asking if she would be capable of actually holding the knife and she remains silent. At the start of their altercation, Mary swears that she would have jumped off the ship had she known that he was there, yet in another example of restraint she waits for a lifeboat. This confrontation (which is followed by calculated silence) also requires courage. She makes the aggressor hear an account of his crimes and rejects

[9] "Failure of the 1846 potato crop ushered in an extended period of disaster, made worse by the harsh weather conditions. Nature played a cruel trick in 1847, when high yields per acre far from compensated for the greatly reduced acreage under potatoes […] the 1848 crop was non-existent." Cfr. Ó Gráda (1994, 177).

his paltry excuses by invoking the power of her dead husband to curse him[10]. This threat profoundly affects Pius who despite his sociopathic characteristics, still believes in the power of priesthood.

Pius feels guilty because of his despicable conduct toward his only brother who initially joined the priesthood so that they could have a better chance of survival on their small patch of rented, barren land after the death of their parents from hunger. Mary's blistering malediction profoundly unsettles him and gives her peace in an otherwise unbearable situation. The altercation is recorded in the Jamaican sailor's sworn statement to the New York Police Department. John Wainwright was stationed outside the First-Class quarters when he overheard the heated exchange. Eventually he is forced to open the cabin door after hearing screams. Mary reverts to self-preserving silence when the sailor tries to confirm her welfare and rather than condemn Pius and reveal his identity, she leaves the stateroom. Arguably, she is not covering for Pius but is trying to avoid creating a scene which might endanger her position as governess. The statement ends with the sailor's account of the stench of the infected scarlet letter carved on Pius's chest by the Else Be Liables.

News of Mulvey's aggression has reached the United States and he remains on permanent police record. This episode is an additional record of Mary Duane's agency. Wainwright intervenes and cares enough to officially report the abuse experienced by an Irish female servant. Ó Gallchoir argues that the letter to the Else Be Liables "testifies to her ability to narrate her own experiences, the novel ultimately shifts its focus from her words and her specific experiences, to instate her instead as a purely symbolic figure and undocumented nature of her life" (2013, 359). John Wainwright bravely helps to document this oppressive episode because Mary found the courage to confront her aggressor: "I curse the living day I ever let you near me" (O'Connor 2002, 293).

2. Resisting worlding

It is true that for the lion's share of the novel, Mary does not directly recount her own experiences, which are embedded primarily in two official documents – the police report and the doctor's case notes, as well as in Dixon's editorialized musings. Nevertheless, her life experiences are not erased[11]. Near the end of the saga, in Chapter 34 "a verbatim selection" of Dr. Wil-

[10] See José Carregal Romero's critique of the abnegation and passivity of Irish mothers (Carregal Romero 2012, 123).

[11] Pius Mulvey, David Merridith, Dr. Mangan and others sometimes claim to know what Mary is thinking and their impressions of her thoughts are sometimes focalized through their perceptions. This may lead to distortion which is less apparent in the autodiegetic sequences.

liam James Mangan's case-notes appears (O'Connor 2002, 337). The physician examines sixty-seven steerage passengers, one servant and four first-class passengers. Mary is the penultimate patient and this encounter and the social history which he embellishes for her dominates his case notes. Six terse paragraphs are allotted to the steerage and first-class clients while fifteen detailed paragraphs are allocated to Mary. The doctor is moved by her ravaged beauty and remarks upon "intelligence notably above average. Very fluent English. Strange Chaucerian kind of flavor. Watchful" (339). He has just examined Merridith, diagnosed advanced syphilis and heard his confession about his long involvement with Mary. He is concerned for Mary's health and pressures him to promise that he will leave Mary alone. Dr. Mangan is also fascinated by the siblings' "strong similarity, now one sees it" (*ibidem*).

Mary's considered responses to the doctor's queries are another form of meaningful and strategic resistance. She protects the reputation of her deceased husband Nicolas by skillfully mischaracterizing the mercy killing of their daughter as an accident, disguises her life as prostitute with the probable and conventional fiction of having lived in hostels and worked in convent laundries. Mary tells Dr. Mangan about her miscarriage during her one hundred and eighty mile walk to Dublin after her daring escape from the oppressive workhouse. Her sexual history with Merridith remains a secret and is replaced by a succinct wish to leave the family for "no reason, sir" (338). Mary further demonstrates autonomy in her revelation that she "had never been a servant until relatively recently; felt it was not the life for her" (339). She shares her plan to travel to Cleveland to stay with others from her County or perhaps venture as far north as Nova Scotia to seek shelter with a distant relative. Mary is willing to travel to find the right circumstances and she is also eminently resourceful as indicated in her preference, "to work as a seamstress or a shopgirl, perhaps, but will take any opportunity 'except for domestic service'" (340). This episode demonstrates her determined agency, independence and willingness to traverse the Atlantic and an entire continent to secure respect and safety.

One of the most compelling observations in Margaret Kelleher's *The Feminization of the Famine* is that "women's hungry bodies emerge as the central object, famine's effects most graphically imagined through the construction of the female spectacle […] woman's body receives from the gaze of the narrator, an unprecedented physical inspection" (1997, 49). Mary survives hunger and prostitution in Ireland and must be examined by a physician before the ship's arrival. In his professional and therapeutic role, Dr. Mangan examines Mary's body and describes a "number of healed but visible scars on abdomen, upper back, buttocks, thighs and other areas but for these she offered no explanation other than roughhouse play with her two charges" (O'Connor 2002, 340). He thoroughly inspects her genitals, "No exanthema at present. No lesions or subcutaneous swelling and can remember none. No

discharge or pain. Showed her a number of symptomatic illustrations but she said she had never had any" (*ibidem*). It is a demonstration of the strength of Mary's resolve that she remains composed during the examination. Her body is a record of her suffering and her survival. She directly asks the doctor whether he is looking for syphilis and reassures him that she "had never had anything like that […] would know if she did" (*ibidem*). Dr. Mangan offered that his assistant could break the news to Laura about her husband's sexually transmitted disease if he Merridith could not find the courage. Mary is far more independent and knowledgeable about her own health and body and the damage it records.

The doctor is suspicious of Mary's account of her occupational history and her inability to remember addresses or names of convents or hospitals where she claimed to have lived. He records that he is "nevertheless v. troubled as to reason for evasiveness or dissembling re the scars. Not scrapes or bruises as might result from horseplay, but severe abrasions, welts, and striations to the skin" (O'Connor 2002, 341). The physician decides that "the unfortunate girl may at one time have earned her living in a certain matter. Possesses a far greater knowledge of maters of conception and how to avoid it, indeed of the mysteries of the female assemblage in general, than is customary" (*ibidem*). Mary realizes that the doctor does not believe her fabrications and reassures him that she has not been whipped by her employers, also indicating that she will not disclose additional details about her sexual past while asserting that she is aware of his conjectures.

Mary does not allow herself to be underestimated. She explains that she created an ointment from honey to soothe her irritated skin and he is impressed that she is very familiar with a remedy he has just discovered in a current medical journal. Her most graceful gesture occurs at the end of her examination. Dr. Mangan may see Mary as a poignant and alluring representative of "the deserving poor", to use Kelleher's wording (1997, 96), and accordingly offers help if she ever returns to Dublin. She declines and in turn offers to pray for his family, thankful for his gentleness at the end of the appointment. This remark demonstrates how little solicitude she has received in her life. Her magnanimity impresses the doctor who feels that he has "been in the presence of a very exceptional person" (O'Connor 2002, 342). Mary carries herself with poise during this official medical examination on the pivotal night before Star of the Sea arrives in New York. Even though she has been travelling First Class, as a servant, her medical report still matters. Steerage passengers were even more vulnerable, and although some were comparatively healthy, they were forced to live in a limbo for seven desperate weeks with barely any food, water, suitable bedding or clothing on board Star of the Sea. Upon final release from the oppressive and unseaworthy ship, all steerage passengers were confined indefinitely at inspection stations on Ward's Island. They managed to survive the inhumane voyage and even

though many had relatives (within sight of the vessel) who were anxiously inquiring about their well-being, they were powerless however desperately they wanted to disembark into the promise of their new lives.

3. Navigating borders / adapting homelands

Mary's most decisive and powerful demonstration of agency occurs near the end of the novel in the mutiny scene in the Buttermilk Channel, within sight of Staten Island to the west and Brooklyn to the East (O'Connor 2002, 348-349). Although the traumatized steerage passengers rejoice at the sight of the American coast, the seasoned Captain of Star of the Sea is alarmed:

> I knew something was badly amiss, for in fourteen years making the voyage this had never happened before. A very heavy feeling of foreboding came down. From there we were towed around the island and into the harbour to meet a situation of extreme concern. Such a scene I had never seen in my life. At my estimation, about a hundred vessels are lying at anchor in the harbor at present, all having been refused permission to tie up at the dock. (348)

Steerage passengers throw their bedding overboard fearing that the inspectors will discover lice. They do not realize that this will make their lives even more miserable because they are still to face a lengthy quarantine below deck and if they become ill, they will be deported.

Mary joins a group of fifty steerage passengers who have managed to cut loose two lifeboats from their iron chains. She decides that she will jump and try to board the lifeboat rather than wait indefinitely until the American authorities release the vessel. Predictably, the first-class passengers are briefly detained and promptly rewarded for a comparatively minor inconvenience with a complete remission of their fares. They are also treated to a lavish champagne reception at a luxurious hotel at the expense of the owners of Star of the Sea. Mary's decision to leave the ship without permission also required courage under pressure since she could see the group in the first life boat panicking and flailing after losing their oars, the desperate fugitives were seen trying to paddle with their hands" (363). At this tense moment, she must defend herself from the importunate and egregious Pius who tries to push aside the enfeebled Daniel Grady, an old man whose Bostonian relatives anxiously await his arrival on the dock. His family rejoices when they see that he has been given the last seat on the crowded lifeboat. Grady succumbs to Pius's whimpering and offers his seat. He also takes the opportunity to remind Mary about the importance of respecting her kin. Mary decides to admit that Pius is her "only living relative in three thousand miles" (366). In this exchange, Mary and Grady share what James Clifford identifies as "the currency of diaspora discourses […] The language of the diaspora is in-

creasingly invoked by displaced peoples who feel (maintain, revive, invent) a connection with a prior home" (1994, 49).

Pius selfishly contravenes Mary's initial wish that the old man be given the last seat. Grady dies shortly after within sight of his bewildered relatives who have made many painful sacrifices to pay for his passage to America, "Often they themselves had gone hungry just to save him. There was no need for him to do it, only simple human mercy" (O'Connor 2002, 364). Grady finds tremendous comfort in his memories of Galway and is proud of his community and he reassures Mary, "That name is wealth to you. Your people were great" (*ibidem*). Unlike Pius, who uses the violent past to try and cajole Mary into forgiving him and publicly claiming him as kin so that he can take the last seat, Grady's apotheosis lies in his heartfelt tribute and loyalty to their shared idea of homeland. In such respect, James Clifford emphasizes the tenuous nature of the currency of diaspora, and observes how a "sense of connection must be strong enough to resist erasure through the normalizing process of forgetting, assimilating and distancing" (1994, 310). Grady's reverential memories of Mary's family give her the courage to leave the ship as quickly as possible and risk the final journey on the lifeboat. His intervention invokes pride, nostalgia, longing, a sense of belonging. Mary experiences additional pain in this scene because Pius is a destructive and malicious force in her life in direct opposition to the earnestly invoked memories of her beloved family. There is a dissonance in the "lived experiences of diasporic women" which involves "painful difficulty in mediating discrepant worlds. Community can be a site both of support and oppression" (Clifford 1994, 312).

Mary faces a triple border or multiple sites of "regulated and subversive crossing" (310). Her first journey was the long but regulated crossing on Star of the Sea which required careful negotiations with Merridith, Pius and Dr. Mangan. Her next test demanded her ability to quickly reconcile the difference between Grady's recollections of her deceased heroic family with the present reality of her remaining kin, the threatening Pius. She invokes her daughter's loss at this perilous junction and this act of witnessing past trauma permits her to begin her shortest but most dangerous journey on the commandeered lifeboat. This episode resonates with "forms of longing, memory and (dis)identification" (303). Dan Lainer-Vos considers the role of gifts in fortifying a communal sense of homeland, "The language of gift-giving and exchange is absolutely central to the way people understand their relationship to the nation. Selfless giving often serves to attest to one's ties to the nation" (2012, 78). Mary and Grady have very limited resources, but they honor their memory of a noble homeland by giving the undeserving Pius the gift of a very scarce commodity.

Dixon is not on deck to hear this pivotal exchange and so he relies on the accounts of the steerage women of Mary's grace. He characterizes her actions in messianic terms: "When the moment of retribution rolled up out of

history and presented itself like an executioner's sword she did not seize it" (O'Connor 2002, 366). The crisis in this scene is amplified when a bystander asks the distraught Mary whether she would rather return to the ship and perhaps risk deportation to Ireland with Pius. Dixon indicates that "She wavered briefly […]" (363). It is noteworthy that even in this episode of duress she takes the time to evaluate her best course of action. She faces a dilemma: either she claims Pius as kin and saves his life and risks endangering herself by prolonging her contact with him when she hoped for an unencumbered and fresh start in the United States, or she claims revenge by disowning him and forcing him back to the ship where he may likely die of his infected wounds or the violent machinations of the Else be Liable gang who would certainly find a way to board the quarantined and immobile Star of the Sea. And though Grady encourages Mary, he also acts as her conscience:

> Was he indeed related to her? She must speak the truth. To deny one of your own family was a dreadful thing to do. Far too many in Ireland had done it before. So many had turned against their own blood now […] For a man to turn his back on his brother was the blackest sin. But men were weak. So often they were afraid. For a woman to do it could never be forgiven. (364)

In this dramatic confrontation, Mary must balance her need for self-preservation and refrain from denouncing Pius as an act of revenge[12]. She hesitates but ultimately stays on her practical course of jumping ship. She manages to distance herself from him even in the act of claiming him, "[…] she confirmed that Pius Mulvey of Ardnagreevagh was the brother of her late husband […]" (O'Connor 2002, 366). Carna represents dignity and greatness and her husband signifies decency. Mary honors her suffering by implying that although Pius is kin, he is not from Carna and he is not her husband. This is a poignant example of how diaspora affects a sense of place. She is within site of the New York shoreline but the only way she is able to reach it is to adapt her sense of truth and the meaning of kin. She must bend her view of Pius to match Grady's belief in the nobility of family.

Dixon notes that Mary and the others "were last seen drifting in the direction of the dock" (366). This scene may easily be misread as proof of Mary's dispensation of saintly forgiveness to Pius. She honors the spirit of Grady's view of homeland and claims her only living, albeit murderous family skillfully manages her anger while sitting beside Pius. She renegotiates the mem-

[12] See José Carregal Romero's (2012) discussion of the impact of the older Irish generation's attempt to transmit their values to younger generations. Romero suggests this process can sometimes be "menacing" (133). Although Mary's encounter with Grady reminds her of the inspirational power of community, his public challenge also adds to intense the pressure she faces before deciding if she should jump into the unstable and chaotic lifeboat.

ory of trauma and blessings of her homeland without damaging her hope for the future during this altercation. Accordingly, "the inbetweeness of the passage of the ship, of the migrants on board who are about to renegotiate their identities as immigrants in the United States, and of the novel itself, which lies somewhere on the border of fiction and history, brings the uncanny to the heart of the text" (Beville 2014, 36). Mary has safely crossed the Atlantic but not without danger or strife and now she has faced the final crossing. Her admission that Pius is her relative permits her to claim the last place. As Clifford reminds us, "identifications not identities, acts of relationship rather than pre-given forms: [are] a network of partially connected histories, a persistently displaced and reinvented time/space of crossings" (1994, 321).

Near the end of the novel, Dixon becomes obsessed with tracking down Mary, "It is almost seventy years since the events of that night and not a day has passed in those seven long decades – I mean not one single day –without my searching my mind for some explanation of what happened next" (O'Connor 2002, 365). She becomes his new *cause célèbre*. This preoccupation alleviates his guilt about profiting from publishing lurid accounts of Pius's violent life. He has escaped punishment for murdering Merridith, married his widow and enjoyed the affection of his victim's sons. His lifelong interest in Mary's life also distracts him from the fact that his grandfather once owned slaves. Dixon accepted a generous monthly allowance from the wealthy patriarch for several years so that he could pursue his impecunious novel writing aspirations in London. His family lore insists that their beloved patriarch only bought the slaves in sympathy because of his own Choctaw blood and his pressing need to give minorities a better life. This tradition of rationalization likely motivated Dixon's bold yet calculated decision to slit Laura's husband's throat one hour before midnight on the last night at sea. It also assuaged his fears that she might never leave her husband. The timely murder also provided him with the opportunity of cultivating close bonds with Merridith's two sons who rapidly begin to think of him as their new and financially fit father.

Dixon absolves his conscience after the murder because he knew that Merridith was in the advanced stages of syphilis and that a sudden and mysteriously violent death spares his family from censure. He is aware that the education of Merridith's sons would now be funded by the Navy pension which would have been forfeited if he committed suicide or died from a stigmatized sexual disease. It is common knowledge that Merridith was on the verge of bankruptcy and his poorly conceived and tasteless plans to quickly amass wealth by building replicas of Irish Manor houses in Manhattan (instead of embracing the practical and profitable trend of skyscrapers) would only bring additional financial anguish to his beleaguered family. His advancing syphilis would have rendered him blind, unable to work and requiring constant medical care. He is so debilitated that the ship's doctor recommends

he enters hospice care as soon as he disembarks. Laura's patience is likely to run out, but her father's wealth ensures that her new American future was certainly bright unlike Mary, who had to take her chances and continuously strive to advance herself.

Merridith was fully aware that Laura was having an affair with Dixon. His conspicuous bravado inspired his melodramatic performance with his razor, insistent dismissal of his armed guard shortly before midnight on his last night on earth and his declaration "Lay on MacDuff" all suggest that he knew that Dixon was intent on murder (O'Connor 2002, 362). It is possible that he welcomed a sudden death which would preserve his honor and unburden his family. He likely planted the Else Be Liable note so that suspicion would be deflected from Dixon who could then support Laura and her two sons for the rest of their lives. Mary survives the voyage while her employer succumbs. In such terms, *Star of the Sea* deftly illustrates the inevitable decay of the Anglo-Irish landlords and the survival of their servants.

Mary did not have the luxury of relying upon marital income. She does not have the financial means to buy "flexible citizenship" (Clifford 1994, 312). She is one of the fifty thousand of "assisted emigrants" (Miller 1999, 182). Once she decides to sever her ties with Merridith, her success will mostly depend upon her own resilience and resourcefulness. Star of the Sea landed in the New York harbor in December of 1847. Tyler Anbinder observes that "fewer cities had ever grown so big so fast. By 1845, New York was home to 70, 000 Irish immigrants, 65,000 immigrants born elsewhere, and 236, 000 American born residents" (2016, 27). Meanwhile, in Ireland, "excess mortality mounted from the summer of 1846 on and was at a peak in 1847-1848 though it was to persist until 1850 or 1851 in some areas. Hunger induced dysentery and typhus accounted for most of the deaths" (O Gráda 1994, 197). Mary was from County Galway, which along with County Clare experienced "high death rates" (O Gráda 1999, 110). As Kevin Kenny (2017, 7) explains:

> Throughout the post-Famine era, Ireland bucked the trend of social and economic history elsewhere in the West […] Ireland's population by contrast was cut in half, its industrial base contracted, and the number of people living in cities declined. Migration from the countryside to cities was common everywhere […] but those who left the countryside had little choice but to move abroad.

4. New homelands: the subalterns speak

Dixon sanctifies Mary and turns the altercation at the lifeboats into a pietà with Pius kneeling in contrition at her feet. The journalist imbues his reaction to the scene with a mysterious inconclusiveness and characteristically inserts himself into the middle of the trauma:

> I have spoken to every living person who witnessed the occurrence: every man, every woman, every child, and every sailor. I have discussed it with philosophers, doctors of the mind. Priests. Ministers. Mothers. Wives. For many of those years I saw it in dreams; sometimes still, I see it even now. And I believe when my own time comes, I will see it again; an event I never saw only reported. (O'Connor 2002, 365)

His obsession over Mary's reaction for the rest of his life may absolve him of regret for his sins. He offers accounts from the women who overheard Mary weeping when she called out the name of her murdered daughter, "For she wept that night on the Star of the Sea, as perhaps only the mother of a murdered child can weep" (*ibidem*). The passengers also begin to keen and call out the names of their own lost children. The women in steerage are the true subalterns in the novel, suffering squalid and dangerous conditions in the bowels of the converted slave ship. Up until this dramatic moment, they were seldom seen and never heard. They are a ghostly presence except for their mention in the Captain's log of daily internments in the sea. Mary's expression of loss leads to a collective bonding of the mothers in steerage and they help her stand. In this moment, Mary's memories of homeland resonate with their own experiences and they help her rise from her grief which is facilitated by a collective "backward glance towards the Irish homeland" (Jenkins 2009, 86). It is cathartic and inspires the women to position Mary toward the future. Their literal and symbolic support of Mary is even more meaningful because there is no room left for them on the second craft. Lucy Collins stresses the importance of unity in the collective experience of emigrant women, "This […] shift is an important one for migrants, giving memory a particular valency in defining their past selves and in recording the transition they have undergone" (Collins 2015, 52). It is significant that this is also the exact moment in the novel when Mary is liberated from Dixon's worlding. The Global Irish Diaspora Strategy explains, "The Irish diaspora comprises emigrants from Ireland and their descendants around the world and those with a tangible connection to Ireland. This is not static […] Interest can be prompted by major external events, by changes in circumstance or by chance" (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2015, 16). Here the once silent women of steerage are emboldened by the major event of the sight of America and the prospect of better lives. Mary's invocation of loss is a flashpoint of unity and serves as a tangible connection to their homeland and this acknowledgement of their collective loss as mothers leads them to additional diasporic strength. Fiona Adamson maintains that a "diasporic identity is a means of asserting a political identity, which can be taken up by a group as a source of empowerment" (2008, 30). Their choral incantation of maternal grief empowers through connection. Adamson identifies the process as transnational networking which is "defined primarily by a shared collective identify – in other words, networks that are defined by a common identity

marker or category" (2008, 30). The female migrant passengers mourn the loss of their children in Ireland and also honor the memories of their family members lost *en route* to New York. Mary's lamentation for her child is an act of resistance which inspires the steerage women to join her in protest and facilitate her escape on the lifeboat. These acts of resistance inspire a third intervention. Captain Lockwood planned to dispose of the corpses in steerage with rat poison but Captain Daniel O' Dowd of the New York Police intervened and sent two barges to pick up the dead. The relatives of the steerage passengers were denied seats until the Pilot overheard their crying. He offered a compromise, "[…] Rose English, a married woman of Roscommon was selected, her husband being among the dead" (O'Connor 2002, 369). Rose English asserts herself and asks that the ceremony might be delayed for a few minutes until it is six p.m. in Ireland, when "the bells would be tolling all over [the country] for the Angelus" (*ibidem*). Like Mary Rose relies upon an adapted sense of a noble homeland: she controls the timing of the ritual in America so that it corresponds with the Catholic call to prayer back home. This enables her to honor her kin and their shared spirituality. Perhaps inspired by Mary, she becomes an agent of networking when the Pilot's mate from Naples joins her recital of the Rosary in Latin. She agrees to Reverend Deedes's request to read from the *Book of Common Prayer* and takes the hand of Lady Kingscourt thus honoring the spirit of goodwill of the Angelus. This is another powerful example of diaspora's profound affect upon a sense of place.

Dixon does not explain Mary's ability to survive the icy journey on the crowded lifeboat in the sleet. In his imagination, she has landed but does not manage to thrive. Instead she immediately succumbs to her former vagrancy and quickly digresses to tuberculosis and prostitution. He also tries to locate any of her living relatives in Ireland and explains that Mary's only brother was an Irish revolutionary who was killed after helping to murder a British police officer. Clearly, (and unfairly) for Dixon, this only surviving male Duane is a dangerous example of "the undeserving poor". He transfers his worlding practice and downplays the heroic nature of the Fenian rescue attempt. Dixon cannot imagine that anything good will ever happen to Mary. He suggests that she was arrested twice while working as a prostitute in lower Manhattan, became a beggar in Chicago and that she spent two days in a Minnesota hospital for a chest ailment in 1854. Dixon hires investigators and detectives, posts rewards, and collects reports of various sightings. His efforts are indefatigable and varied: she has become a nun in Ontario, a lavatory sweeper, a brothel maid, a frontiersman's wife, an orphanage cook, or a janitor on trains. Only the last possibility promises agency: she is a senator's grandmother. In this scenario Mary must wait to gain the power she can only acquire through the success of her male progeny.

Generations later, near the end of his own life, Dixon imagines he sees Mary selling violets on Broadway. His rational mind registers the age discrep-

ancy, but he is still fixated on propagating her marginalization and perpetual martyrdom. He is sustained by these unverified reveries of the disenfranchised Mary after the death of his ex-wife. In one of Dixon's more honest and humble moments, he confesses that if he "found Mary Duane now it would be a kind of loss" (O' Connor 2002, 382). Although Mary is his most venerated yet prostituted saint, he believes she has not amounted to much in America. He imagines that countless iterations of Mary clean toilets. She serves as Dixon's fetishized emblem of disenfranchised and underemployed Irish victims. Tyler Anbinder reveals that in the years after the Famine, "Irish immigrant women were much more likely to work for pay than any other female immigrants or native-born women" (2016, 164). By 1860, thirty-five percent of Irish-born women were employed with the majority working as servants or in the needle trade. Four percent of Irish immigrant women in New York owned their own businesses while three percent worked as nurses (2016, 169). This is a conservative estimate because many married Irish women faced stigma in the U.S. workforce. Mary's demonstration of resourcefulness in Ireland and her skillful negotiation of conflicts in liminal spaces and borders suggests that she will be successful in her new life.

5. New homeland possibilities

Mary could have continued working with Laura after the death of Merridith, and she may have been free from abuse in upstate New York. By 1872, in neighboring Massachusetts, "the annual earnings of servants exceeded those of most other women workers, without even taking into consideration that servants got their board free" (Ó Gráda 2015, 8). And although male and female employers sometimes abused their workers, "domestic service held out several advantages. It offered a healthier lifestyle than factory or needlework and steadier employment. It involved living in private dwellings in middle class streets rather than tenements. It facilitated saving and remitting funds home" (9). Of course, in Mary's case, there was no one to receive money since all of her remaining family in Ireland starved to death except for her previously mentioned brother who was allegedly one of the Fenian prisoners killed in the Clerkenwell Explosion of December 1867 while awaiting trial[13]. Merridith's choice of New York was a boon for Mary, although it was more expensive she could earn a higher wage.

Dixon is wedded to the trope of Mary's perpetual martyrdom and abject poverty. He undersells her economic possibilities and overlooks her demonstrated traits of unwavering stamina and resourcefulness. Emigration to

[13] See Melissa Fegan's (2011) compelling discussion of one of the most famous events in Irish Nationalist History.

North America did not spell universal misery for those who fled the Irish Famine. Several newcomers found prosperity and happiness and, as Ó Gráda observes, "the very early history […] offers testimony of the adaptability of emigrant Irish, even the very poorest among them" (2015, 9). Dixon prospers because of his *schadenefreude*. Mary Duane always refuses the role of "ministering angel" and this saves her from perpetual victimhood. Her experiences are embedded and recorded in the police report, Dr. Mangan's case notes and the accounts from the steerage passengers of her crying out the name of her drowned daughter during the lifeboat crisis. Her courage can be distilled from Grantley Dixon's prolixity and privilege. She also has the foresight to ensure that the Merridith family provides her with an excellent recommendation[14]. And although Mary did not want to work as a domestic servant, a good recommendation letter would help to secure gainful employment in other occupations.

In "The Haunted Man" chapter, Dixon anticipates critics who might accuse him of using Mary's struggles as a ghoulish muse just as he profited from selling accounts of Pius's depravity: "Only once, in response to a newspaper advertisement, did I receive anything she might have written herself" (O'Connor 2002, 358). Dixon is intent on convincing his audience that he made every effort to find the truth about Mary's life. He critiques the misspellings in the letter and questions its provenance because of its missing return address. He maintains that it was "laden with the speech patterns of southern Connemara" (359). The fact that it was sent from Dublin, New Hampshire on Christmas Eve, 1871, adds to the suspicious bathos. And since the author used the third person, it is likely that they were trying to collect some of the ample reward money that he had advertised across the United States. He characteristically absolves himself of prurience:

> I would have liked to have been able to say more in the present account, to do more than record the few known facts of her existence in terms of the existences of the men who hurt her. But I am simply not in a position to do so. Some things I have invented but I could not invent Mary Duane; at least no more than I have already done. She suffered more than enough composition. (389)

As a final act of cultural appropriation Dixon names his only child (who died shortly after her premature birth) Verity Mary Merridith Dixon, thus producing an incongruous memorial or hybridized amalgamation of various tropes. Clearly he values the pathos of the virtuous Anglo-Irish landlady who dies after ministering to her tenants. The naming of his child is a tribute to Verity and ameliorates her loss. If she had lived, she would have been con-

[14] "One of the most difficult aspects of domestic service for an immigrant was finding the first job without references". See Anbinder (2016, 165).

fronted with the indignity of her husband's chronic infidelity and the scandal of Merridith's syphilis and murder. Dixon is an unpunished murderer and his hubris is crowned by his choice of names. Every tragedy somehow reminds him of his own regrets. He laments that he could not conceive another child with Laura. Adoption is not possible and he claims marginalized and oppressed status in his explanation that he was forbidden to adopt because of his father's partial Choctaw heritage, "the colour of my body is the same as President Wilson's but the colour of my soul is legally not"[15] (389). He is incensed that the Office of Minors mislabeled him and listed the reason for his unsuitability "with the single word 'Negritude'" (*ibidem*). Dixon is overjoyed with his relationship with Laura's sons who become "the joy of my days" (393). He is proud that they have fully assimilated into American life: "They never talk about Ireland now. They tend to say that they were born in America" (*ibidem*). Ultimately, O'Connor's male protagonist displays mock humility when he boasts they both decided to legally change their names to his in their early twenties, "an election as unexpected as entirely underserved" (*ibidem*).

6. Dying habits of sovereignty

Mary in the end eludes the worlding grasp of Merridith and manages to travel beyond the reach of the relentless Dixon. Even until his dying days, he continues his imperial habit of collecting impressions about the poor and those he perceives as Other:

> I sometimes see a child netting the astonishing butterflies that cluster in the nettles near the back of the chapel. He sells them in fruit jars at his shoeshine station on 12th Street; this bright little mulatto boy who whistles southern gospel as he tiptoes between the gravestones chuckling to himself… I like to think of the boy whistling gospel over me, and his sons whistling, when he grows to be a man. But I know this will not happen. I will hear nothing then. (O'Connor 2002, 394)

In this racist and self-pitying vignette, Dixon recreates symbolically his grandfather's "munificent" relationship with his slaves. Mary has travelled beyond the range of his worlding tendencies so now in order to retain his status as "Sovereign Subject" he must find a new preoccupation. In this respect, Sinéad Moynihan considers the "strong connections O'Connor creates between the respective situations of Irish immigrant to America and African Americans […]" (2008, 44), a connection that may be vexed and which "foregrounds the central issue that is troubling in relation to *Star of the Sea*,

[15] O'Connor explains that he invented the existence of this adoption law in New York (2012, 400).

namely the nature of its assumed relationship with the Black Atlantic" (*ibidem*). Dixon's habit of "othering" is predictable. Mary has escaped his grasp and this means that he must he return to his primary guilt while he continues his pattern of limiting the possibilities of those he classifies as Others. Dixon imagines nothing but misery in America for Mary and although she was not landing in Paradise she did have the will to succeed.

Mary is now free and Dixon needs another "cause". This explains his fascination with the whistling shoeshine "boy" who is a comfort to Dixon who enjoys what he perceives as the street worker's happy-go-lucky acceptance of stultification and economic deprivation. The child tries to earn extra cash with his impractical venture of selling butterflies; a poignant details which serves as a replacement for the report of Mary Duane weeping while uttering Alice Mary's name. The cherished *memento mori* is a badge of Dixon's sovereignty: "They were born, and they lived and they died. And I see myself on the deck in a scream of vengeance; as though it were my own spouse who had been scourged to despair; my own helpless child so cruelly destroyed" (O'Connor 2002, 366). Here Dixon claims center stage in the real suffering of those he has "Othered". The American journalist thrives by feeding vicariously on real pain and cataclysmic Irish loss, but he is not immortal.

Dixon is imaginative enough to ensure that his fetish is never depleted and fantasizes that the children of the shoe polisher are equally listless and stereotypically musical. In Dixon's hierarchal musings, they have nothing more pressing to do than serenade the murderer into the afterlife with their mellifluous southern hymns which may remind him of the family plantation in Louisiana. The children of the street worker never become men. It is important to the aging Dixon that they remain boys[16]. In this soliloquy, he needs the reader to pity him in his last diseased, mournful days. He reveals his craving of admiration for his self-professed stalwart strength as a widower lunching with his sons when he gamely brags about overhearing the waiters joke about the trio resembling "Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego" (O' Connor 2002, 393)[17]. Mary Hickman reminds us that:

> nineteenth-migration from Ireland to the United States of America is seen as fulfilling the criteria of a classic 'diaspora'. Irish immigrants arrived during a century in which the United States of America became a post-slavery society, at a time

[16] Consider the perpetual apprentice role of Wash in Titch's scientific career in Esi Edugyan's Booker Prize nominated tour de force *Washington Black*.

[17] This is a very odd joke for the waiter to make about the stepfather and his two sons since it is a parable in Daniel 6 about three Jewish boys who refuse to worship King Nebuchadnezzar and his golden statute. They survive the attempted immolation because the wrathful king becomes penitent when he see that God joins the boys in the inferno. After the King witnesses the miracle, he promotes the dissidents and becomes a believer. Perhaps the joke appealed to Dixon's sense of entitlement.

when racial differentiations cleaving America were reconfigured after the civil war and a bifurcated hierarchy emerged. (2005, 122)

The last full paragraph of the novel is dedicated to Dixon's confession of murder. His admission is qualified by the self-serving speculation that men and women since Cain have suffered from homicidal tendencies which they have inherited from their vengeful fathers. The last ironic flourish of his account of his voyage and senescence is his careful record the date of Easter Sunday, 1916 under his confession and his current location of New York City. He is not yet aware of the Easter Rising in Dublin and five other counties which led to the execution by firing squad of fifteen Irish nationalists and the arrest and deportation to England of eighteen thousand without due process[18]. This detail is not merely coincidental. The last two words of the novel serve as a coda which reminds the reader of Dixon's chronic hubris and misguided yet profitable enjoyment of the pain of others.

Dixon, Pius (and to a lesser degree Merridith) tried to capitalize upon their interest in Mary while underestimating her life-long practice of strategic resistance and virtually unlimited resourcefulness. Her unwillingness to be captured, tracked, delayed or controlled suggests that she was much more than an underwritten life. Gayatri Spivak considers the predicament faced by those forced to report rather than speak, "Between […] subject-constitution and object formation, the figure of the woman disappears, not into pristine nothingness, but to a violent shuttling […] caught between tradition and modernization, culturalism and development" (2010, 61). Mary made herself visible and heard despite Dixon's worlding and sadistic ventriloquism. Her resistance inspired the steerage mothers to unite in protest and determination in the New York harbor.

Robert Garratt argues that the early trauma novel "offers only occasional portrayals of the traumatized mind in action opting instead to devote most of the novel to a consideration of trauma as subject matter […]" (2011, 28). Unlike such novels, *Star of the Sea* excels at portraying the anguish of Mary's traumatized mind. She is not a victim but a character who travels toward liberation and self-assertion. Sylvie Mikowski raises the possibility that O'Connor's narrative strategy of embedding and accumulation "tends to make the reality of events recede" (2010, 8). Fortunately, although Mary's voice is not the loudest or the most frequently heard, it is arguably the clearest and most resonating force in *Star of the Sea*. Once Dixon's bluster and bombast recedes, the deck is cleared to reveal a self-empowered working-class Irish woman who adapts her idea of a noble homeland to help her face struggles of identity and power in the diaspora. Melissa Fagan reminds readers of Margaret Kelleher's argument that "Famine novelists choose the female as the

[18] See McNamara (2016).

'archetypal victim' despite historical evidence indicating the higher survival rate of women during the Famine" (2002, 211). Joseph O'Connor's portrayal of Mary resists such a reductive tendency. Mary is not a victim and her ability to confront and reconcile the gap between the idealized and the actual facilitates her border crossings and ensures her survival.

After his murder, Merridith's corpse is shrouded in a Union pennant from the mast of the Star of the Sea and carried onto a barge where he joins eight passengers from steerage who are committed to the depths of Lower Bay. Grady is one of the deceased. Surviving steerage passengers remind the Captain that nine hundred corpses were dumped in a mass grave in Bantry the day the Anglo-Irish landlord embarked on his voyage to America. Pius lasted only one year in New York before he was murdered. Dixon withered away, trapped in his practice of Othering. It is Mary who outlives the scrutiny of colonizing forces. Judith Palmer reveals that Joseph O'Connor's habit of meticulous research led him to find a sea chart from 1847 so that he could correctly calculate the longitudinal and latitudinal details for the Captain's log. He also investigated the heights of Atlantic waves, wind speeds and sea temperatures in his quest for historical accuracy (2003, 5). This study contends that Mary Duane is not a voiceless, archetypal female Famine victim, her enduring and adaptable vision of a noble Irish homeland partially accounts for the success of Joseph O' Connor's progressive epic.

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Displacing the Nation: Performance, Style and Sex in Eimear McBride's *The Lesser Bohemians*

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Abstract:

Eimear McBride's second novel revisits many of the stylistic practices and conceptual themes which made *A Girl is a Half-formed Thing* such an important intervention within post-Tiger Irish cultural politics. By setting *The Lesser Bohemians* in London during the 1990s, however, McBride displaces both the temporal and spatial focus on the here (Ireland) and now (post-Crash) which has tended to dominate contemporary Irish fiction. The theatrical milieu within which the main characters operate, moreover, as well as the novel's emphasis on the redemptive power of sex, likewise militate against any attempt to regard it as just another Irish "trauma" narrative. By revealing the extent of Irish/British cultural interpenetration, McBride exposes the bad faith of both austerity economics and political isolationism.

Keywords: Eimear McBride, Modernism, Neoliberalism, Performance, Sex

1. Introduction

"Ireland", the journalist Fintan O'Toole once wrote, "is something that often happens elsewhere" (1994, 27); to which I would add that one of the most important places where modern Ireland has "happened" is London. With a population roughly twice the size of the whole island, London looms dauntingly large in the Irish spatial imagination. Besides being the seat of the imperial overmasters, the great metropolis to the east is also a cultural melting pot and an economic powerhouse – *entrepôt* or final destination for generations of emigrants. Irish London, London Irish: the English city

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haunts the Irish nation in ways and to an extent that, curiously, it doesn't its own regions. In this sense, London represents the Irish migrant experience writ early and writ large: it's where Paddy comes to a sense of the reality of his separation from the land, where Mary's traditional experience confronts modernity head-on, and where the relationship between ideas of "home" and "not-home" is under constant negotiation. London, in short, is (like Paris and New York, although for different reasons) one of the key co-ordinates of the modern Irish diasporic imagination – a place whose presence (actual or implicit) may be felt in every "Irish" cultural encounter.

Over the years, London has acted as a kind of Irish unconscious – a place where issues too traumatic to confront in "reality" may be (literally) displaced and, once in that "other" place, either rationalised or repressed entirely. Levels of poor mental health amongst the Irish in Britain have always been distressingly high (Leavey 1999); what no researcher has even been able to answer satisfactorily is whether this is a result of the emigrant experience – the trauma of separation from home – or whether it's something that emigrants bring with them. In Ireland, as a seemingly endless series of reports and revelations since the 1990s has revealed, that "something" tends in one disturbing direction: abuse – much of the time, abuse perpetrated upon children.

One high-profile contemporary text in which these discourses coalesce is *The Lesser Bohemians* (2016), the second novel by the Irish writer Eimear McBride, which is set in London in 1994/95 and tells the story of a love affair between an eighteen-year-old Irish woman named Eily and an older English actor named Stephen (although we don't learn the characters' names until late into the text). Eily has come from rural Ireland to train as an actress at a well-known drama college; Stephen, twenty years older, is already an established actor of modest standing, who we learn grew up in Sheffield in the 1960s to an Irish mother and an English stepfather. The heavily sexualised relationship is played out against the backdrop of central north London – Camden Town, Regents Park, Primrose Hill – in the months just after the IRA ceasefire of August 1994, a development which precipitated the peace process later in the decade, which in turn contributed to the normalisation of relations between the two islands[1].

Eily and Stephen, we learn, are deeply damaged individuals; in each case, moreover, the damage relates to abuse they suffered as children. Eily, as narrator, is not particularly forthcoming about the kind or extent of the abuse she experienced aged five at the hands of a family "friend" – only that it was painful and systematic, and has left her an emotionally crippled teenager.

[1] At the time of writing, this "normalisation" is under threat from the political process known as Brexit, a subject about which McBride has written passionately. See her article "Brexit has Disfigured the Britain I've Known" (2016).

Part of the retained pain derives from the suspicion that her mother knew the abuser's reputation, yet still allowed him unmonitored access to her daughter. In a long section in the book's third quarter, Stephen tells (more frankly) of the abuse he suffered at the hands of his Irish mother, and how it too led to lacerating self-hatred which, in his case, eventuated in drug addiction. It was only the love of a homosexual friend, and his fortunate discovery of acting as a technique for processing emotion, that enabled Stephen to learn to cope with the trauma. "Coping" is about all that each character appears to be doing when we first encounter them, however, until their stumbling love affair provides each with a means to move beyond victimhood.

Although not as well regarded as *A Girl is a Half-formed Thing* (2013), *The Lesser Bohemians* represents a clear development out of and beyond McBride's debut insofar as the common theme of abuse is modulated and mutated with reference to the theme of displacement – the idea that if, as O'Toole suggested, Ireland is something that often happens elsewhere, then such is true also of the trauma consequent upon an Irish childhood. Departure from the land, physical displacement and emotional disinheritance – these are the traditional causes of the emigrant's pain; but pain now has a different name, and it is: abuse. Where there is understanding, however, there can also be redemption; and London, so often the nightmare landscape of the Irish cultural imagination, becomes in McBride's discourse a place where the process of healing may at least be broached.

2. Abusing the Irish child

After her first term in London, Eily travels home on 9 December 1994. Precisely one week later, the Irish government (a coalition of TDs from the Fianna Fáil and Labour parties) fell as a result of the scandal arising from the case of Father Brendan Smyth. Smyth was a Catholic priest from Belfast who took refuge in the Republic to evade charges of child abuse going back over forty years and encompassing more than 100 victims. It soon became clear that the Catholic Church had colluded deeply and extensively in Smyth's horrific career; and if the affair signalled the commencement in earnest of a process (ongoing) of judicial investigation, it may also be regarded as a decisive step in the precipitous decline of that particular institution's influence in modern Irish life.

We have no way of knowing if Eily "really" encountered the Smyth case when she was back in Ireland over Christmas 1994. McBride makes no reference to it, so in some senses it's irrelevant; in one important sense, however, it remains a crucial question that goes to the heart of modern Irish experience – home and away, on and off the Island. It may be that Eily makes no mention of the Smyth case because she is not (apparently) particularly politicised, and simply too immersed in her relationship with Stephen. Indeed,

her time in Ireland between terms (at Christmas and Easter) is passed over in each case with barely a glance: "So happy home to London" (77) she thinks when she returns to the city in January 1995, in a clear indication that her emotional centre has already relocated[2]. But it's not only her youth or the distraction of her London love that prevents Eily from engaging with such a high-profile scandal "at home".

Eily and Stephen each meet the definition of child sexual abuse that was in place for the Irish Child Care Services in 1994: "the involvement of dependent, developmentally immature children and adolescents in sexual activities which they do not truly comprehend, to which they are unable to give informed consent or that violate the social taboos of family roles" (Gilligan 1991, 63). They are also typical insofar as each experiences a variety of "enduring psychological symptoms that reliably occur in reaction to a highly distressing, psychically disruptive event" (Briere 1992, 20). These symptoms include guilt, low self-esteem and self-blame, as well as anxiety, defensiveness and depression; in extreme cases, the subject can also experience hysterical responses tending towards paralysis and mutism. "The ultimate avoidance strategy", Briere goes on to say, "may be suicide" (1992, 61). We must be free to speculate that Eily doesn't mention the Smyth case because it's linked to frightening and deeply painful feelings that she wishes to avoid. In this respect, she's an emblematic figure in modern Irish life – not only in respect of her spatial displacement from "real" Ireland, but also in respect of her possession of a "voice" whose ability to articulate has been compromised by a traumatic childhood event.

The experiences of Eily and Stephen come into focus in relation to a model of childhood trauma associated with dissident writers such as Jeffrey Masson and Alice Miller. In his book *The Assault on Truth: Freud's Suppression of the Seduction Theory*, Masson claimed that Freud deliberately suppressed the reality of childhood abuse at the hands of adults (on which he published an early paper) under pressure from the patriarchal bourgeoisie that was his principal audience. Successive generations of therapists colluded in this suppression, according to Masson, denying the initial "act of cruelty and violence which wounds the child in every aspect of her being" (1985, 3), and replacing it with a series of improbable ideas relating to spontaneous childhood sexuality and the theory of the drives. At more or less the same time, the Swiss psychologist Alice Miller was researching and publishing a series of studies focused on the seminal impact of childhood abuse in the perpetuation of social violence. Her work culminated in *Thou Shalt Not Be Aware: Society's Betrayal of the Child* (1981), in which she (like Masson) indicted Freudian-

[2] In his review of the novel Fintan O'Toole wrote: "Eily is at home in London, exiled when she has to go home to Ireland for the holidays" (2016).

ism for what she regarded as its implicit vindication of adult (much of the time, incestuous) abuse of children. "When a patient who has been sexually abused as a child enters analysis", she writes,

> she will be told that it is her fantasies and desires that she is relating, because in reality she dreamed as a child of seducing her own father. Thus, with the aid of the invention of the concept of "infantile sexuality," which was a figment of Freud's imagination, the absurd childhood situation is repeated: the patient is dissuaded from recognizing the truth the same way the child was once dissuaded from recognizing her perceptions. (1985, 324)

A complacent establishment institution in pursuit of its own agenda, refusing to countenance an other's narrative of abuse: such an image cannot fail to resonate in relation to modern Irish history. It resonates also in relation to the experience of the two principal characters in *The Lesser Bohemians*, each of whom stands as the latest link in a chain of abuse emerging from an unknowable past, each of whom must negotiate an array of negative emotions linked to this inheritance. Eily awakens from a distressing dream of her father, and rejects Stephen's attempt to comfort her:

> You must miss him. But that miss is already making chain with the weight of my heart, then the body it hates. Blind in revulsion at what it did. On a floor. In a half-thought. It should spit itself out not to mingle with memory or become what I might. I hate it. I fucking hate it. What? All of myself. Take it easy, he says. All my fucking skin. I'd rip it off if I could. I'd start again. I wouldn't be this. (112)

In passages such as this we observe Eily struggling on a number of fronts: to confirm, in the face of "normality", the reality of what has happened to her; to manage the anger generated by this reality; to resist the temptation to accept her designated role as perpetual victim; and, most testing of all, to imagine a different narrative which a new "Eily" can inhabit.

Contemporary Irish cultural criticism has processed the traumatised subject in a variety of ways. In his essay "A Race Bashed in the Face: Imagining Ireland as a Damaged Child" (1999), Richard Haslam traces a strand of Irish cultural-critical discourse emerging from the work of figures such as Patrick Pearse, Roddy Doyle, William Trevor, Sinead O'Connor, John Waters, Terry Eagleton and Luke Gibbons. The image of Ireland as a traumatised child has its roots in colonial culture, Haslam claims, but was still being invoked as part of a range of discourses (competing and over-lapping) when, during the 1990s, it was overtaken by reality itself in the form of the emerging abuse scandals.

At this point, Haslam deviates into a consideration of style and media – important issues to which I shall return in the next section; in the meantime, the question of Irish "traumaculture" is taken up by Conor Carville with ref-

erence to a strand of contemporary Irish writing focused on "exploring the significance of childhood ordeal in the formation of adult identity" (2011, 24). One characteristic strategy of "pathography" (as this form of writing is sometimes referred to) is to imply a parallel "between personal histories bedevilled by the secrets and violence of childhood and the history of the nation as a whole" (25). Carville contends that such a literary strategy remains problematical because of the deeply compromised model of subjectivity on which it is predicated[3]. The high-profile abuse scandals emerging since the 1990s, he goes on to suggest, have embedded "traumaculture" in Irish literary and cultural studies, with the effect of obscuring or denying alternative temporalities and alternative modes of being.

Carville exposes an Irish critical discourse which is thoroughly infused with patriarchal values, and whose typical gesture is to mitigate an historical act of abuse by the restoration of the coherent (normative) subject in the present. This point resonates in contemporary feminist theory also, where there is a concern with the persistence of traditional gender relations behind the illusion of a contemporary female subject who is apparently free and empowered (McRobbie 2009). From a sociological perspective, Debbie Ging argues that child abuse has been processed in Ireland in ways that cement rather than challenge gender differences, and that feed "a highly lucrative future market of adult men and women who understand themselves as polarised, incompatible and unable to communicate" (2009, 64). And Geraldine Meaney has pointed out that apparently radical reconfigurations of Irish gender politics (such as Joyce's widely commended depiction of Molly Bloom in *Ulysses*) can actually work to reinstate "a myth of the feminine" in other, less familiar, terms[4].

Such hesitations overshadow traumaculture, and (to coin a phrase) "traumacriticism" of the kind with which I am concerned here. Both Eily and Stephen are indeed "bedevilled by the secrets and violence of childhood"; and it is indeed possible to infer parallels between their experience and "the history of the nation as a whole". Which is to say: both Eily and Stephen embody the figure of the abused child theorised by both Masson and Miller as in some senses the absent centre of Freudianism (and its many offshoots and applications). As (part-) Irish subjects, moreover, they come clearly into fo-

[3] Carville cites a number of influential texts as being indicative of the "pathgographical" turn in Irish writing, including *Angela's Ashes* by Frank McCourt, *Are You Somebody?* by Nuala O'Faolain, *Reading in the Dark* by Seamus Deane, *Paddy Clarke* by Roddy Doyle, *The Speckled People*, by Hugo Hamilton, *The Bend for Home*, by Dermot Healy, and *The Gathering* by Anne Enright (2011, 24-25).

[4] It should also be remembered that the abuse scandals unfolded against the backdrop of an economic disaster overseen by an egregious, self-perpetuating political class characterised (in equal measure) by stupidity and complacency.

cus in relation to the image of abuse that featured so powerfully within the national narrative towards the century's end. At the same time, McBride's characters are susceptible also to the hesitations voiced above, insofar as their pursuit of an authentic identity, *beyond* or *after* trauma, might be regarded as locking them into normative subject roles within a conventional narrative underpinned and thoroughly informed by the conjoined ideological twins of neoliberalism and patriarchy.

Several factors in McBride's discourse militate against this indictment, the most significant of which (as pointed out in the introduction) is the text's status as an "Irish" story that is not actually set in Ireland. This spatial displacement extends to the level of style – McBride's so-called return to or rechannelling of modernism, but it is prefigured also in the principal discursive milieu wherein Eily and Stephen operate – theatre and the discourse of acting. There is, moreover, the question of sex – its heightened conceptual significance in relation to the recovering adult, certainly, but also the challenges attending its effective literary representation (and its subsequent critical engagement). The remainder of this essay examines these issues in a little more detail.

3. Irish modernism – the return of the repressed

Masson and Miller suggest that Freud may have deliberately repressed his own encounter with widespread, systematic child abuse in Vienna at the end of the nineteenth century. If so, his subsequent theorisation of repression as a fundamental psychological mechanism represents a classic instance of displacement, whereby the original experience is retained but relocated to a different discourse – in this instance, the pseudo-scientific discourse of psychoanalysis. "Repression" enters the general cultural-critical lexicon as a means for thinking about the ways in which the subject operates with regard to their own past – what they choose to remember and refashion for their own ends, and what, because of association with a raft of negative emotions such as pain, guilt and shame, they cannot openly countenance. Freud himself was happy to shift analytical gear from the individual to the social in relation to repression; and sometimes it can be useful to think about what different societies choose to remember and, perhaps more tellingly, what they choose to forget.

One of the most intriguing developments in recent Irish cultural criticism has been the proposition that contemporary Irish fiction has reconnected with the spirit of modernism from a century ago. In an *Irish Independent* review of *The Lesser Bohemians*, the critic J.P. O'Malley claimed that the author "revives Irish modernism":

> McBride is a daring writer who is not afraid to mess with language, displaying its malleability, randomness and irregular rhythms in equal measure. Words and

phrases often go back to front and scenes are pieced together almost like an impressionist painting through fragments, hazy images and a blur of uncertainty […] McBride has a rare gift as a writer: she combines high modernism, page-turning plot and melodrama into a narrative that will appeal to mainstream audiences and fans of literary *avant garde*. (2016)

There's a similar assessment in a *New Statesman* review entitled "Bedad he Revives: Why *Solar Bones* is a Resurrection for Irish Modernism" (2016), in which Stephanie Boland offers this assessment of the tradition within which writers like McBride and Mike McCormack are working:

It has become something of a truism recently to note the resurgence of the experimental Irish novel. Not without justification: if Ireland's twentieth-century literary output is often feted as one which inaugurated a new strain of literary modernism, of which James Joyce's *Ulysses* is the most cited example, closely followed by Samuel Beckett and, increasingly, Flann O'Brien, then recent novels like Eimear McBride's acclaimed *A Girl Is a Half-Formed Thing*, markedly influenced by her reading of Joyce, have been widely seen as marking a return to (radical) form [...] McCormack's writing is the latest in a growing canon of literature which draws self-consciously on an Irish modernist heritage to tackle contemporary concerns.

The terms within which such a "revival" has been invoked are far from straightforward, as we shall presently observe. Nevertheless, it's interesting to consider what a reheated modernism might portend for an understanding of post-crash Irish culture; especially intriguing from my perspective here is McBride's designated role as in some senses the spearhead of twenty-first-century Irish modernism.

The inference of a modernist aesthetic abroad within contemporary Irish literary discourse is problematic, but not entirely unwarranted in McBride's case. Insofar as her moral, emotional and artistic centre appears to be dispersed between Ireland and Britain, McBride instantiates the "displacement" that is one of the hallmarks of modernists such as Joyce and Beckett for whom Ireland came to exist primarily as a memory increasingly distant in time and space[5]. Her insistence on the centrality of sex to human experience likewise implicates her in a modernist discourse which was itself in revolt against bourgeois denial (in the Irish case, Catholic demonization) of the body. And there is of course the key issue of style: McBride's celebrated attempt to deploy language in the service of "real" experience – or at least the "real" experiences of two first-person narrators who are young, female, Irish and profoundly damaged.

[5] The Joycean influence was explored further in McBride's version of "Ivy Day at the Committee Room", her contribution to a book entitled *Dubliners 100: Fifteen New Stories Inspired by the Original* (2014, 153-164), edited by Thomas Morris.

Eily's appears initially to be somewhat less traumatised than the unnamed narrator of *A Girl is a Half-formed Thing*, something reflected by the language in which she relates her story. Nevertheless, the readerly contract is similar in each case:

> I move. Cars move. Stock, it bends light. City opening itself behind. Here's to be for its life is the bite and would be start of mine. (3)

From the outset, we are intended to be "in" the narrator's mind, seeing as they see, thinking as they think. Grammar, syntax, punctuation and (present) tense still apparently exist, but they do so within a discourse that also features an array of linguistic effects intended to replicate or in some senses encapsulate the personality of the narrator – effects (as described by O'Malley) such as malleability, randomness, irregularity, fragmentation, haziness, and uncertainty. Such, it might be argued, represents an appropriate discourse for these half- or part-formed narrators – characters who barely manage to maintain an outer appearance of (grammatical) control while struggling with the internalised demons of residual trauma.

If there is a sense (associated with critics such as Luke Gibbons and David Lloyd) in which twentieth-century Irish modernism is prefigured in the colonialist culture of the nineteenth century, then it may also be the case that the kinds of discursive displacement associated with high modernism extend easily to the depiction of contemporary characters whose sense of self is in constant danger of dissolution. In each case, moreover, the experience of trauma lies at the root of all: the trauma of the mid-nineteenth-century Great Famine, on the one hand, and the trauma of the late twentieth-century abuse scandals, on the other.

This being so, it is interesting that McBride decided to render Stephen's confession, extended over nearly seventy pages (148-217), in a much more straightforward, much less "modernist", style. There are still no "perverted commas", few reporting clauses, and still some stylistic markers (such as extra spaces between words) by means of which the author attempts to recreate the rhythms of "real" conversation. By and large, however, Stephen narrates the story of his abuse at the hands of his mother, and the emotional and sexual dysfunction to which it led, clearly and accessibly. Eily's interjections during this section, likewise, become less fragmented and more coherent, as if influenced by or responding to Stephen's more controlled discourse:

> We all shared a room and got on fairly well but we had to stick together back then.
>
> When I ask What was she like? he gives a weird smile.
>
> Intelligent and very angry. (149)

Why is Stephen's narrative less disjointed than Eily's? Is it because he's a man? This is unlikely, given the author's sensitivity towards gender politics, particularly in relation to matters of voice and style. My impression, rather, is that it's because he's not the principal focaliser, and that Stephen's discourse represents in this regard a technical problem which McBride struggles to overcome. In fact, the narrative structure gets extremely complicated towards the end of the text; and in order to expedite the plot, the author is obliged to abandon temporarily the style of "modernist" discourse associated with her main character. Consider the following sentence, for example:

> She said While I was watching him I realised I didn't love his father any more and that he was a fool for not caring about his son. (286)

Here, in conversation with Eily in the present (London, 1995), Stephen is quoting his ex-girlfriend Marianne, who is quoting Stephen's stepfather, who in turn quotes Stephen's mother ("She", then "I"); behind her, moreover, there's the echo of still another voice – Stephen's father, at some unspecified time in the past, saying or doing something which communicated the impression that he did "not [care] about his son".

Such passages expose McBride's deployment of "modernist" style to a charge of mannerism. Joyce deploys stream of consciousness as one amongst many styles; and he does so not merely to foreground "style" as the means whereby linguistic communication occurs, but in order to signal it as the embodiment, the very principle, of both subjective and national experience. McBride, however, seems to associate stream of consciousness with Eily as a direct function of her traumatised state. It is *her* essential style; it *belongs* to her in a way that it does not *belong* to Stephen Dedalus – being merely the sympathetic style that Joyce has chosen in order to convey aspects of Stephen's brittle personality. Joyce's modernism, in other words, represents a life-long meditation on style as the conduit between experience and expression; McBride has opted for a style "appropriate" to her main character, and that style prevails so long as Eily remains (so to speak) centre stage. This is a love story, however, and love demands another, an *other*, with whom the speaking voice will perforce engage and, at some point, identify. The question then becomes: what is to be the other's style? How is *their* voice to be articulated, *their* identity to be expressed, *their* story to be told? That is the technical challenge which McBride confronts (and struggles to overcome) in *The Lesser Bohemians*.

4. Neoliberalism and the continuous present

This critique extends to the subject of narrative tense which, as we saw in relation to the earlier quotations, is in the present throughout *The Lesser*

Bohemians. Mary McGlynn has suggested that the widespread use of the present tense in contemporary Irish fiction represents a stylistic trace "of the neoliberal moment" (2017, 35) – that is to say: besides its traditional function (which writers have long exploited) of creating an impression of immediacy and urgency, the consistent use of the present tense in post-Tiger Irish fiction reflects a paradoxical perspective simultaneously opposed to, and underpinned by, neoliberal discourse. The latter is characterised by an array of practices and attitudes that have their political origins, as Sean Phelan writes,

> in the transformation of the global political economy that has taken place since the 1970s and its (immediate) theoretical origins in the influence of seminal thinkers like Hayek and Friedman. (2009, 75-76)

As a political/economic system, neoliberalism is predicated upon the twin pillars of competitive self-interest and extreme individualism; as a highly flexible ideological effect it penetrates all areas of society from education to mental health, from high politics to popular music. Although born of the political and economic fallout from the Second World War, neoliberalism appears to have found its optimum moment in the opening decades of the new millennium with the advent of smart technology, the internet and the phenomenon of social media. Despite its name, it also represents a fundamental assault upon traditional liberal values – in particular, the latter's faith in a continuity of interest between the individual subject, the community and the democratic process. And nowhere has its influence been felt more profoundly than in Ireland where, consequent upon the crash of 2008, a fundamental change in the cultural landscape was precipitated by the political class's insistence on the need to re-orient the relationship between state, multinational industry and the individual.

McBride's work seems in some respects an obvious product of that process of change. *The Lesser Bohemians* is clearly not *about* post-Tiger Ireland in the way that novels such as *Solar Bones* or *The Spinning Heart* or *The Green Road* clearly are; that in itself doesn't mean that it *is not* or *cannot* be informed by the version of neoliberalism to have emerged in early twenty-first-century Ireland, however. The relocation of "Irish" cultural activity to London is one clear indication of this – in particular, the radical assault presented by neoliberal aesthetics to established spatial discourses along a continuum from small and local (the house, for example), to large and international (the renegotiation of the categories of "Irish" and "non-Irish" in geo-cultural terms).

It is also represented by McBride's deployment of the present tense in the two novels that she has published thus far (albeit in different ways and for different ends). As observed above, in *A Girl is a Half-formed Thing* the use of the continuous present tense and a highly disjointed narrative style seem

intended to *represent* or *express* the narrator's damaged personality. The past and the future are temporalities of fear; they implicate the narrator in a discourse of memory and anticipation where pain resides. The only way to evade that pain is to occupy the continuous present as fully as possible. Because of the physical abuse to which the narrator was subjected at such a young age, moreover, her own body becomes the preferred site of that occupation; the pattern of loveless sexual activity in the present derives from the violence of that first invasion, while the mortification of her own body distracts the narrator from having to return to the place of pain.

Similar techniques are broached in *The Lesser Bohemians*, although the effect is somewhat different. Eily's emerging personality has also been warped by sexual abuse; she too struggles with guilt, trust and self-esteem, and also has a tendency towards self-destruction. Her experience, likewise, is narrated in a continuous present, as if the reader is overhearing her part-formed thoughts from moment to moment. Whereas the narrator of McBride's debut novel eventually succumbs (through the act of suicide) to the victimhood generated by her sexual abuse, Eily manages to find resources of hope amongst the urban landscape of 1990s London. Whereas the "girl" embraces the continual present represented by death, Eily learns (in time) to live *in* time – a painful past from which she has escaped, and a hopeful future towards which she moves (even if temporarily) with Stephen. This fate (which is in some senses functions as a clear rejoinder to the relentless negativity of the first novel) is facilitated by two conjoined fields or practices, to which I wish to turn in the final section.

5. Performance, sex and style

As with her creator, Eily comes to London from rural Ireland to train as an actor at the Drama Centre London (in Kings Cross). In an interview McBride described the training she received as "hard core method school", and said that her own approach to writing was influenced by that training, with its emphasis on accessing the "truth" of any character through an extended process of emotional, psychological and sociological research. As we observed above, McBride's neo-modernism has been traced to the work of James Joyce – an influence that is both Irish and novelistic; but Nina White has linked what she describes as "the inherent theatricality of the McBride's writing" (2018, 564) to the influence of the playwright Sarah Kane – an influence which, in terms of its subject matter (trauma), its medium (theatre) and its geopolitical context (England), speaks equally readily to McBride's artistic development. I would suggest that her theatrical training impacted directly on McBride's literary practice in two principal ways, the first of which we observed in the two previous sections – that is: her deployment of a variation on the stream of consciousness technique as a means to discover

and to express the authentic inner lives of her characters. McBride uses language, she claimed, in ways that attempt "to capture the parts of life that are destroyed by conventional language … [and] to recapture the singularity of a person's experience"[6].

Actors routinely deal with language, of course; but theirs is also a physical discipline, and part of "the method" (and of the Stanislavsky system on which it is based) focuses directly on training the body to operate sympathetically with language in order to be able to "perform" any character as fully and as authentically as possible. In the same interview in which she discussed her use of language, McBride alluded to the importance of the sexualised body in her two novels, and her struggle to find a means to represent that body authentically and sympathetically. It emerges that the two areas – language and physicality – are linked, moreover, and that McBride's early training in a discipline which stressed their total interdependence was key to the development of her literary technique as well as her emotional imagination.

As we have seen, the Irish female body – particularly as it relates to sex – was foregrounded in *A Girl Is a Half-formed Thing*, and this is something we find replicated in *The Lesser Bohemians*; behind these interventions, moreover, stands a long history of Irish gender politics in which that same body operated as the site of intense ideological struggles relating to "authentic" cultural experience. To write about the Irish female body – to write in particular about Irish female sexual desire – is to engage a field of experience defined and directed by an array of powerful political, religious, social and cultural discourses. It was that power bloc which, in the latter part of the twentieth century, came to identify the Irish female body as in essence a vessel for procreation – a walking womb, in effect. Irish female desire was subject to strict control; "excessive" expressions were subject to severe sanction. And it is in the image of that restricted body, and in the name of that system of control, that both the half-formed girl and Eily are inculcated.

The condition of being "half-formed" implies a fullness or repletion that is somehow absent, but which may be achieved through some combination of physical and / or emotional activity. It's in search of that fullness that Eily comes to London; and it's through the experience of acting, and the training that she receives at drama school, that she comes to understand the process of "formation" through which identity is attained. At her audition in March she is unsurprisingly nervous, but relaxes once she begins to recite her first piece: "I don't know but it's done by some switch of the brain, this fooling off the girl I am" (3). The formulation here is, I think, intentionally ambiguous: what does it mean to "fool off"? Is "the girl I am" the secret self, carrying the

[6] "Novelist Eimear McBride in Conversation with Jenni Murray" (2016), *Woman's Hour*, BBC Radio 4.

pain of abuse, now hidden "by some switch of the brain" behind the identity of the assumed dramatic character? Or is "the girl I am" the authentic self, the *real* Eily who, "by some switch of the brain" is liberated from the identity she was forced to assume precisely in order to cope with the memory of abuse? Or does she move uncertainly between these possibilities, precisely as the actor is obliged to move between the role and the self who performs the role?

The use of a theatrical idiom, with its link to issues of style, performance and identity, has a long pedigree in Irish cultural discourse. Declan Kiberd has discussed this trope as part of what he described (after Timothy Brennan, 1990) as a "national longing for form" – the search for a style adequate to the representation of a nation; and engaged in different modes (in the Irish case) in the work of writers such as Wilde and Yeats – each of whom was much exercised by the idea of "the mask" as a means to understand the writer's role in relation to society. Kiberd's description of the dilemma facing the "national" poet resonates closely with Eily's ambivalent status, as noted in the previous paragraph:

> Whitman's theory of poetic suggestiveness is close to the Yeatsian doctrine of "the half-said thing". Their poems are founded on a necessary contradiction: they celebrate a nation's soul, while at the same time insisting that it has yet to be made. (1995, 128)

Yeats's "half-said thing" is of a piece with Eily's "half-formed" status at the novel's commencement; and the poet's movement between celebration (of the already existing nation) and construction (of the as-yet unformed nation) anticipates the existential crisis facing Eily as a result of her abuse – which is to say: the rejection of one identity (the abused child) before another (the fully realised, authentic self) has been claimed. This in turn echoes the actor's movement between the "real" self one brings to the role, and the "authentic" self one attempts to become during performance.

During their last sexual encounter before Eily returns home for Christmas, Stephen asks if they can have unprotected penetrative sex. In an era in which sexually-transmitted HIV infection was still a major concern, Eily's acquiescence on this occasion demonstrates the power of desire to mitigate the negative feelings – guilt, distrust, unworthiness, and so forth – characterising her identity as a victim of sexual abuse. More interesting perhaps is her reaction after the act: "Am I not my own self now?" (69), she asks, rehearsing once again the movement between a pre-existent inauthenticity (then) and the achievement of an authentic self through the sexual act (now). If acting provides Eily with a discursive mode through which she may renegotiate her identity, then the "performance" of sex functions in a similar, although far riskier, way – risky in the sense of infection, certainly, but also, and much more tellingly, in the sense of her search for an authentic self beyond "the girl I am".

One sexual act Eily finds particularly fraught. Casual adolescent fellatio was the subject of an international moral panic during the first decade of the new century (Curtis, Hunt 2007). The issue emerged in Ireland during this period in relation to the so-called "Celtic Kittens" – young middle-class women whose perceived sexual promiscuity became in some senses the symptom of a society which (in the common idiom) had lost the run of itself (Connelly 2006). Having being marginalised from the national narrative for so long, the sexualised teenage girl became the site of intense ideological debate regarding the state and the fate of a society undergoing rapid, profound change. And as mentioned above, this is the context within which the child (the half- or mal-formed Eily) approaches the adult – the woman that she feels London will allow her to be; it's also the context within which the representation of fellatio changes emphasis from being a prurient, exploitative act (the theatrical idiom is key) to one that is intimate, tender and loving.

The sexual stimulation of the penis with the lips, tongue and mouth represents arguably the most intimate physical act of which humans are capable, and it's one that Eily wishes to share with a lover to whom she already feels deeply attached. She's extremely nervous the first time she attempts this act, however, and insists that Stephen distract her with a recitation – he opts for the opening speech from Shakespeare's *Richard III*. Even so, she desists before his climax, so that he ends by ejaculating on her chest and hair. Afterwards:

> Sorry, I say for not letting you you know in my mouth. Don't be, he says I think it's rude to expect. And I look all around at the mess made by our versions of sex. I've been naked, embarrassed, touched and kissed and brought the whole way like any woman might. So after that what is it to say When I was little someone used to and now I don't think I can any more. And the past sits forward and the cold comes pouring in. (70)

The horrific image of the child's oral rape by "someone" is conjured but not foregrounded; instead the reader is left to infer the intense psychological processes involved in Eily undertaking this particular sexual act when it is so negatively freighted. Nevertheless, the movement from the "little" girl she used to be in "the past" to the "woman" she becomes when engaged in sexual activity with Stephen is appreciable and in fact it is key to the process whereby Eily will overcome her half-formed status.

A second act of fellatio is described, at some length and in extensive detail, towards the end of the novel; on this occasion, however, the outcome is different:

But in a moment he says again Eily, I'm really close now. So I take him out, to say So come then. He just looks at me, tortured with want and full of feeling. I can't do that to you, he says. I want you to, I say Let's just be us today.[7]

What Eily is proposing here is that two vulnerable individuals come together to form a unit – an "us" – inured to the victim status attached to its constituent parts. Acceding to such a process is difficult and risky; describing it is a task for which McBride's neo-modernist style, and in particular the first-person continuous present tense, seems eminently suitable. In a discourse characterised by failure – of the individual, the family, the community, the nation, and of the forms by and through which all these agencies are routinely represented – the redemption discovered by Eily and Stephen through sex is liberating; for the performance of this particular sexual act only truly comes into focus when the full extent of the narrator-actor's vulnerability is apparent.

6. Conclusion

The "May to September" romance is a recurring trope within literary history. Teenager Marianne Dashwood accepts thirty-something Colonel Brandon after she is disabused of her "sensibilities", for example, and Jane Eyre marries a depleted Mr Rochester. Happiness is available despite the age gap, it seems, so long as the characters reach a "proper" understanding of themselves, of each other's role within the relationship, and of the socio-cultural context within which the bond has been formed. The pattern is repeated in *The Lesser Bohemians*, in which the central relationship – founded on a shared history of trauma, and expressed in joyful sex – releases both Eily and Stephen from the pain of the past. "Two months Eily, he says or two years or twenty, whatever you'll give me, I'll take" (305). Thus, the text ends where the relationship may not (and where *A Girl is a Half-formed Thing* certainly *did* not): in love and hope.

Clear commonalities are discernible between McBride's two novels to date – most obviously, the emphasis on the traumatised girl as a key discursive trope of the post-Tiger era, and the perception of sex, with its conjoining of physical activity and psychological effect, as in some senses *the* most important site for the rehearsal of (versions of) national identity. Key also is the

[7] McBride 2016, 305. Sex is notoriously difficult to render in narrative prose. On publication *The Lesser Bohemians* was in fact considered for the London *Literary Review*'s "Bad Sex Award", which since 1993 has been highlighting questionable scenes of sexual description in otherwise good novels. The nomination is light-hearted, but even so it misses the point: sex is not merely another dimension in the unfolding of McBride's narrative but its central theme.

continued search for both a style and a form adequate (in Seamus Heaney's resonant phrase) to our predicament (1980, 56). The distressful theme of each text presents a significant challenge to the writer, and also (as I have discovered in researching and writing this article) to the critic who would engage with such matters.

The differences between the two texts are just as significant, however – in particular, the temporal (1990s) and spatial (London) displacement which, taken together, defamiliarise the standard terms within which the ongoing crisis of post-Tiger Ireland tends to be debated, while at the same time mitigating what might be regarded as something of an obsession (both artistic and critical) with the contemporary moment. Eily and Stephen are both products of the diaspora; the "Irish" identity that she embraces on the streets of north London in the 1990s is linked to the troubled identity that he assumed in his Sheffield suburb in the 1960s. Each in turn is linked to the matrix of discursive practices (including, quite centrally, exile) wherein Irishness was and continues to be negotiated throughout the modern era.

A number of hesitations persist, however, relating to the function of neo-modernism and the representation of the "girl" – of the abused Irish girl, moreover – within the postfeminist, neoliberal moment. Eily and Stephen "live" in the 1990s, so to speak, but they were made in 2010s, and at least some of their issues attending their representation have emerged from the economic, political and cultural matrix of our deeply troubled decade.

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Like a Scattering from a Fixed Point: Austerity Fiction and the Inequalities of Elsewhere

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Abstract:

After the financial collapse of 2008, Ireland imposed a program of fiscal consolidation that was designed to address the debt concerns of the nation. The implementation of austerity measures became the inverse to the high-flying years of the Celtic Tiger. Mike McCormack's *Solar Bones* and Mary Morrissy's *Prosperity Drive* represent examples of post-austerity literature in how they engage with ideas of austerity as an inverted capitalist narrative of success. Their books examine a post-austerity Ireland where the influence of global capitalism has resulted in a disruption of local communities. Both McCormack and Morrissy critique post-austerity Ireland to show the psychological, emotional, and human cost of the nation's transformation into a post-austerity country.

Keywords: Austerity, Globalization, Mary Morrissy, Mike McComack, Neoliberalization

Across many genres of fiction and non-fiction, the collected literature of the Celtic Tiger and its aftermath often presents a sense of shock and confusion. From the beginning of the boom to the implementation of austerity measures, the dramatic changes that occurred in Ireland seemed to dislodge the country from a firm grounding in ideas about its past and present. This sense of disorientation is found in both the writers trying to grapple with the events of the Tiger and the general populace trying to survive the post-Tiger environment. From the outset of the Tiger, Ireland had a full-tilt transformation into a neoliberal country riding the waves of a pre-9/11 belief in the benign expanse of global capitalism[1]. The profound transformation of the

[1] While the Tiger was in full throat a litany of economists, social theorists, and journalists adopted a "benign view of the link between economic growth and social well-being" that embraced the changes to Ireland almost without question; as a result, any socio-cultural

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Irish economy, framed as it was in the context of neoliberal values, had the "unfortunate tendency" to assert that the boom was "an end in itself rather than […] a means to the end of a better quality of life for all in society" (Kirby 2010, 50). The idea that this economic transformation was good for its own sake masked more complex and systemic issues that occurred during the Tiger. The neoliberal language used to describe the Tiger had the effect of obfuscating the realities of the boom. The language of risk and reward, investment and loss, and regulation and freedom seemed to permeate all discussions about the social conditions in post-Tiger Ireland.

In analysing the contours of how the economic realities of Ireland's rapid globalization – including the boom and austerity – complicated the way Irish authors wrote about their experiences, it is important to note how the role of a hyper-awareness of global forces disrupts and changes local notions of Irish identity. Eamon Maher and Eugene O'Brien argue that in order to fully understand the realities of the Tiger – including the impact of migration – it is vital to examine the interaction between cultural products and economic forces. They assert that the "realms of language, fiction, drama, film and public culture provide a supplement to the economic aspect of society, as they both contribute to, and are largely constituted by, the economic paradigm" (2014, 13). Post-Tiger and post-austerity fiction depict the changes to Irish migration as it becomes enveloped in the language and ideology of global capitalism. Mary Morrissy's *Prosperity Drive* and Mike McCormack's *Solar Bones*, both published in 2016, represent a continuing trend in contemporary fiction that Mary McGlynn notes are critical "reassessments of economic agency and the potential for social mobility in the wake of the Irish economic crash" (2018, 184). The works of Morrissy and McCormack fit within this new strand of austerity fiction due to their analysis of the role of migration and movement, which examines how contemporary Irish people navigate a world that privileges transnational mobility as the extreme openness to the values and narratives of neoliberal globalization.

Morrissy and McCormack portray how the Irish both conform to, and push back against, the global influence that resulted in local disruptions of Irish identities, homes, and communities. Both authors shape the influence of globalization into a narrative of a global elsewhere that is simultaneously vague in its scope and concrete in terms of its impact. The global elsewhere of austerity fiction is a paradoxical element that both normalizes certain inequalities inherent to globalization – such as relations to debt – while fostering feelings of alienation when the realities of these inequalities manifest in local communities. Morrissy's and McCormack's books depict the inner

changes that would have been seen as problematic, such as traffic congestion or work-related burnout, were brushed off as the growing pains of a new, better Ireland (Kirby 2010, 82).

lives of their characters as representing an alternate connection to space and identity that can function in opposition to the global economic pressures of "elsewhere" that shape and disrupt their characters' relationship to Ireland. Their texts focus on the interiority of their characters to create a narrative juxtaposition that places the global background of their texts against the feelings, emotions, and values of their characters. Morrissy and McCormack use the interiority of the characters to make their inner lives the focal points in a critique of the "unconscious aspects" of the "repressed and suppressed narratives" of the Tiger that "may help us to understand more fully what happened in [that] period and, more importantly, why it happened" (Maher and O'Brien 2014, 13). This argument traces how austerity fiction develops the notion of an ominous global elsewhere in order to articulate how *Prosperity Drive* and *Solar Bones* are both texts that dig into the unconscious aspects of a post-Tiger, post-austerity Irish life to engage, directly and indirectly, with the emotional and psychological cost of living in a world with a turbulent global elsewhere.

1. The mainstreaming of austerity as a standard interaction between national and global spaces

Austerity, similar to the Tiger that came before it, has become an integral part in analyses of the fallout that occurred after the financial collapse of 2008. As governments scrambled to address the damages caused by the global banking crisis, austerity became a key recovery strategy promoted by politicians and economists[2]. In general, austerity is a form of fiscal consolidation where governments seek to cut spending or raise taxes, which results in widespread and involuntary unemployment (Wren-Lewis 2017, 18). In discussing how austerity programs manifest in ways other than strictly economic or political, Vickie Cooper and David Whyte describe austerity as a damaging act of institutional violence – such as rising housing costs, eviction rates, and homelessness – that has been normalized in popular discourse as a necessary way for governments to respond to a crisis (2017, 24). This normalization hides the fact that the violence of austerity "pervades people's lives over long periods of time" and, therefore, results in a consistent slow burn of an "ever present *threat* of physical and/or psychological harm" (*ibidem*). For Cooper and Whyte, then, austerity acts akin to a headache that sits behind the eyes, constantly causing pain and dis-

[2] The economic crisis is an incredibly complex event that involves multiple national and international actors. Ireland's position in a post-2008 global landscape was a product of national policies that promoted a deeper integration into the economy of the European Union (Reidy, White 2017, 102). Broadly speaking, the economic crisis was not simply a national issue nor a global issue, but was the result of this new relationship between Ireland and the mechanisms of global capitalism.

comfort. Also, to extend this metaphor, the headache also has the potential to turn into a deadly tumour at any point.

Daniel Finn describes that, after the financial crisis, two interconnected messages were circulated in the press about the future of Ireland and the role austerity would play in securing that future. These two messages worked to argue that the "sacrifice" of austerity would help a "return to the *status quo ante*" of the Tiger, which would then help prevent any repeat of "the bad old days" (Finn 2018, 33). Both of these narratives obscure how austerity would be instituted by presenting it as a dutiful sacrifice that would forestall any further slippage into the "bad old days" of Irish history (with all cultural, historical, and political spectres contained in that phrase). Along with the threat of a return to a "bad" Irish past, political parties – especially those on the right of the political spectrum – "used simple analogies between household and government budgets" to defend cuts and other austerity measures. This analogy equated the basic act of families saving money to have a better life with a massive government project that planned to cut services and benefits (Wren-Lewis 2017, 33). The impact of this messaging also ignored that even before the financial collapse, Ireland "already had the second-highest rates of poverty and inequality" in Western Europe (Finn 2018, 36). Any attempt, therefore, to course-correct back to the good old days of the Tiger – as opposed to a return to the bad old days before the Tiger – implies a return to a standard of neoliberal globalization that had high levels of social and economic inequality. Due to this pervasive narrative of sacrifice and good citizenship, austerity can mean different things beyond an economic philosophy and social program. Austerity can be seen as a "concept" driven by an elite political and business class to justify particular "neoliberal objectives and expressions of macroeconomic shock" where the benefits and costs of austerity are unevenly spread across parts of a nation (McHale, Moore-Cherry and Heffernan 2017, 7-8). Cooper and Whyte more forcefully describe the experience of austerity as "disproportionately target[ing] and affect[ing] working class households and communities" to buffer the cost-cutting of "concentrations of elite wealth" (2017, 11). These arguments separate austerity as a concept from how it is a lived-experience, which focuses on how the goals of austerity never quite align with the experiences of austerity; in other words, the principled image of fiscal consolidation is undercut by the very implementation of those plans that require an economic shock to fix the economy.

Ireland, as it is presented in Morrissy's and McCormack's texts, is being strained through a narrative prism of austerity, even if this is done in a subtle and nuanced manner[3]. McCormack's Marcus Conway and Morrissy's cast

[3] Though, it could be said, that Morrissy and McCormack present different "Irelands" that describe the country at different times throughout its history.

of characters – all of which have a tangential connection to the community of Prosperity Drive – move through narratives in which background forces carry the weight of global concerns that press on the local issues directly confronting the characters. Both texts work to represent this slow, institutional pain of austerity in the examination of characters that confront an austerity of global plenty where the movement of goods and people increase while the emotional and psychological health of their characters are damaged. Even though the nature of austerity, and its slow violence, are not the central focus, Morrissy's and McCormack's books align with Susan Cahill's description of post-Tiger authors as critical of the idea that historical progress follows a linear model. Cahill frames post-Tiger fiction as written in a specific cultural moment that exposes "the disturbances and disruptions that complicate linear models of progress" (2011, 185). The narratives of Morrissy and McCormack do not follow a linear structure as both progress in loops and recursions that swing the reader through various times and places. McCormack's text is written in a stream of consciousness where Marcus's life and thoughts are recounted in one continuous sentence. While more traditional in its structure, Morrissy's short stories still lacks a stable and consistent narrative as it shifts between various characters. The narrative structures of both texts reflect how the global context of their stories – neoliberal globalization – disrupts and, at times, damages the lives of their characters.

2. The individual human scale: crisis novels and the hazard of the global

The presence and push of global pressures are clear in McCormack's novel because even though the narrative unfolds solely in the mind of Marcus – an intensely local and intimate setting for a novel – his thoughts are constantly pressed on by global concerns and worries. *Solar Bones* follows the thoughts of Marcus as his consciousness shifts between the stages of life and death. The formal experimentation of the novel represents an extension of the listlessness and self-doubt of a post-austerity environment. Marcus's thoughts – and the novel as a whole – are carefully constructed by McCormack to wander forward and backward through the timeline of Marcus's life. As his thoughts flow, the reader sees Marcus attempting to locate his identity in an expanding nautilus of Mayo, Ireland, Earth, and the universe. He describes himself as "an engineer whose life and works concerned itself with scale and accuracy, mapping out and surveying so that the grid of reason and progress could be laid across the earth" (McCormack 2016, 92). Marcus thinks of his work as an attempt to reverse-engineer the messiness of his life into the same sense of order he feels as a surveyor and urban planner. Marcus understands the world according to the logic of a subdivision where "horizontal utilities" are the material linkages "that drew the world into settlements and community" (*ibidem*). Yet, this ordered world patterned after the model of a distribution grid does not provide

him with any fundamental "wisdom"; instead, he is left only with a "giddy series of doubts" and "an unstable lattice of questions" (*ibidem*). The matrix of interconnected communal utilities is transformed into an unstable ground full of doubts and uncertainties. This relationship between order and uncertainty mirrors the narrative style of the text as the interconnected moments of Marcus's life lead to an unstable lattice of emotions and memories. The narrative contains a consistent tension between the belief that the world can be subdivided into ordered spaces and a growing sense that there exists only a chaotic otherness underneath the systems and utilities. This uncertain tension dislocates the certainties Marcus has about his identity and Ireland.

The idea of an ordered and properly balanced world is an appealing thought for Marcus as it allows him to see his "job of caring for [his] particular family" as the "most banal thing in the whole world as there were millions of men everywhere who, at precisely the same time, were doing the same thing" (77). By imagining his life as a point in a banal global experience full of familial routines, Marcus hopes to find a sense of comfort in the idea that the world moves to the same morning rhythms and small rituals as his life in Ireland. For Marcus, the normalness of a banal experience of everyday life depends on framing the larger context of the world as calm and without crisis. Yet, the very structure of the text unsettles this belief in banality by pushing or pulling Marcus through his memories and never lets the readers fully locate themselves in a secure rhythm of the text.

One of the main reasons why Marcus seems unable to ground himself in his memories, and in some respects the wider culture of contemporary Ireland, is his attempt to find a stable platform for understanding his identity shifts as globalization impacts the country. When Marcus negotiates a deal with an Irish quarry for an urban planning project in Ardrahan by "faxing them a cheaper quote for the same stone quarried on the other side of the world in South China", he engages with the neoliberal aspect of globalization that privileges capital over space (65). The local business in Ireland is always enmeshed in a global economic lattice as the sixty-mile difference between Marcus and the quarry in Ardrahan is superseded by the closeness of capital offered by the company in China. The closeness of the space of capital that overwrites the relationships between local Irish communities is representative of what Suman Gupta has noted to be the natural "geopolitical dimension" of post-crisis novels (2015, 460)[4]. For McCormack, the geopolitical dimen-

[4] Gupta argues that novels interested in the financial collapse are particularly focused on the experiences of Western nations, especially those of the United States and the European Union. She notes that the issues and fallout created by the global financial crisis were not "particularly manifested […] in China, India, Canada, Australia and some other states" (Gupta 2015, 460). According to Gupta, this makes crisis novels less about a postcolonial or decentralized version of the world and more a product of how Western nations experienced the financial crisis.

sion found in *Solar Bones* is always a persistent element of worry, concern, and discomfort for Marcus as he can never quite locate himself in the new world of post-Tiger, post-austerity Ireland.

The geopolitical dimension of austerity novels is unique due to the precise manner in which divisions between local and global spaces are intimately folded together to create a new understanding of space. Any divide – cultural, economic, or social – that exists between local areas and global forces is made into a continuum where the power relationship between local and global spaces is continually shifting, fluctuating, or turning inside out. As Gupta notes, the financial crisis of 2008 has been felt acutely in "the USA and EU member states" because "their geopolitical dimension in the current capitalist – neoimperialist – order" is what, centrally, "confers a global air to the financial crisis" (460). The centrality of the USA and EU in relation to the mechanisms of global economics is what made the crisis a global issue as opposed to any true concern for the impact of global capitalism on non-Western nations. The geopolitical dimension of austerity novels is the fear that, due to nationalistic economic constructs, the centrality of Western nations will be disrupted by global pressures. Gupta argues that crisis fiction "tend to draw a line from vividly evoked localities (offices, homes, cities) to hazily or abstractly grasped global determinations and repercussions" (462). This abstract construction of the global nature of the financial crisis frames the background pressure of neoliberal globalization as a force that disrupts the local settings, such as those depicted in McCormack's novel. The reader follows the vivid locality of Marcus's mind as he tries to grapple with how the changing nature of Ireland, and the world, are rocked by global determinations and repercussions.

Throughout the novel, McCormack has Marcus's thoughts and memories become distracted and disrupted by news reports that reflect how the geopolitics of post-austerity Ireland insert global issues into local frameworks. For instance, when he hears the news in the morning, he thinks:

> the time signal which led in the news, the sound of which always assured me that now the day was properly started, the world up and about its business with all its stories of conflict and upheaval at home and abroad cranking into gear, its tales of commercial and political fortune convulsing across borders and time-zones with currencies and governments rising and falling, the whole global comedy rounded out by the weather. (McCormack 2016, 118)

As the text unfolds, the global news is a lingering spectre of crisis and austerity that, at any moment, dramatically alters the day-to-day routines of Marcus's life. His morning routine of listening to the news – which Marcus feels is a part of his "responsibility as a citizen" – highlights how the background of McCormack's book contains a persistent global threat "convulsing" across the "whole global comedy" of international commerce and

politics. The idea that Marcus understands the world as a global comedy reflects, again, the idea that the machinations of global commerce and politics do not follow a logical and ordered plan. The news of an unstable world directly counters Marcus's belief in a banal world of normal rituals, which undercuts his certainty about his privileged position of comfort and safety. Marcus notes that there is "conflict and upheaval" happening at "home and aboard" to reflect how Ireland has a role in the tale of commercial and political fortune that connects the disparate parts of the globe. Marcus's thoughts about global news and conditions place those issues in a complicated and shared relationship with his thoughts about Ireland and his family. There is no stable border between home and aboard as the problems impacting one help shape the reality and landscape of the other.

McCormack's placement of global forces – with their power to cross national borders with ease – into the mind of Marcus subtly asks the reader to question the role Ireland plays in a pervasive and intrusive global structure of communication and business. Despite Marcus's belief that the global nature of "history's vast unfolding" is "unlikely to touch me with the violent immediacy of bombs or bullets," he cannot shake the thought that global crises could "lay their electric fingers on me in some other way which could push my life into some new alignment or along some other route" (McCormack 2016, 119). The electric fingers of globalization do not just reflect the medium through which Marcus receives his information but hints at the technological aspect of the global financial collapse. For many in Ireland, the aftermath of the financial collapse was presented in a virtual language where issues of liquidity, debt, bank guarantees, and bailouts were "electric fingers" pushing large sections of the Irish population into a new alignment with global capitalism. Marcus has a vague sense of dread about this new alignment, or route, because it reflects a critique of how the Irish understood the background issues of global capitalism that caused the financial collapse.

McCormack's text also underlines Gupta's argument about "crisis novels" in that his narrative is concerned with how the shifting tides of global commerce have created a dislocated and disoriented feeling that Europe is not a safe-guarded and dominant hub of globalization. Gupta notes that crisis novels tend to emphasize a "strong localization of narrative" that is "accentuated by concerns that radiate seamlessly away from and outside (perfunctorily registered) nation-states" (2015, 462). Following this point, McCormack depicts Marcus's "news habit" against these radiating global concerns that impact his life despite his position as an Irish, and European, citizen. He states: "While I might have some abstract recognition of myself as a citizen – a fully documented member of a democracy with a complete voting record in all elections since I had come of age – I never had any intimate sense of history's immediate forces affecting my day-to-day life" (McCormack 2016, 119). Marcus's focus on his identity as a voting citizen of Ireland underscores his belief that

his active participation in national politics and plans can orientate his position in the abstract flow of history's immediate forces. It is a belief that the electric fingers of global capitalism cannot dislodge a privileged individual such as Marcus from his secure place in the hierarchy of globalized nations. The awareness of the forces of history, however, undercuts this feeling of confidence due to the realization that his local identity as a voting citizen is threatened by historical forces outside of his control.

History is intimately placed in McCormack's novel as an invisible force that exists, simultaneously, inside and outside national borders. He increasingly views the health and care of his wife Mairead who is suffering from a virus caused by a cryptosporidium outbreak in Mayo as related to, and in ways ignored by, a globalized Irish media that has its attention placed elsewhere[5]. He feels that this crisis is being ignored due to a focus on "global issues which commanded the main headlines" (120). McCormack's text, however, uses Marcus as the joint through which the text connects the global issues and crises with an Irish locality. For instance, Marcus grows angry at the "latest update with its gradual escalation and rising numbers", which are only addressed in "broad strokes" by the "municipal authorities" (*ibidem*). Marcus is "simmering" with anger at the reporting about the cryptosporidium outbreak because it leaves "the individual human scale of the thing untouched, the human grit of the situation untold" (*ibidem*). Marcus has localized the reasons and causes of the outbreak to the suffering of his wife. The viral, and invisible, nature of cryptosporidium is a manifestation of the virtual forces of globalization that can cause markets to collapse. It represents, for McCormack, how unseen viral forces can sweep through local communities and cause damage to unsuspecting individuals. Marcus understands the post-financial crisis world as an unseen force that, like an outbreak of a disease, is damaging and disrupting his personal life. The external pressures of the world – global crises or viral outbreaks – are dangerous and disruptive forces that can, invisibly, step across national boundaries to damage the lives of individuals. Despite global politics existing only in the background, the impact it has on Marcus's life and mental state is acute and pointed.

3. "What's going on in the background": global elsewhere and collapsing identity

Along with the impact of the global as a pervasive and potential threat to the stability of local identities, the characters in post-austerity narratives also follow a spatial dislocation in terms of transnational movement. The locales of post-austerity texts do not stay focused on the counties of Ireland

[5] In 2015, the Westport Public Water Supply identified the presence of a cryptosporidium outbreak in Mayo.

but spread out to include the global context of a world still struggling with the effects of the economic collapse of 2008. Where McCormack internalizes the global background by localizing it in the head of his narrator, Morrissy's text uses a patchwork style to present her Irish characters as a part of a global elsewhere throughout which they move and live. Both authors use narrative techniques that force the reader to navigate dramatic shifts in time and place, which reveals how background influences can connect to the lives of their protagonists.

Morrissy presents the Dublin suburb of Prosperity Drive as a small part in a larger global network where the economic forces of neoliberal capitalism continually interpellate local spaces. Her suburb is not so much the central setting but is an emotional backdrop to analyse how contemporary Irish life is one thread in a geographic tapestry of crises. Morrissy's collection of short stories was modelled after James Joyce's *Dubliners* and like it, works to form a panoramic view of Ireland. In an interview, Morrissy describes how *Prosperity Dive* focuses on more than just a Dublin community: "the stories spring from a fictional suburban street in Dublin but, of course, it is impossible to write about Ireland without coming up against the theme of emigration […] So, the 'diaspora' theme is built into the content, and this also reflects the form of the stories which is like a scattering from a fixed point" (as cited in Salis 2016, 311). The fluid depiction of space in Morrissy's text, her scattering of narratives and characters, mirrors McCormack's use of the news to present a pervasive global element always positioned in the background of post-austerity Ireland. Morrissy embeds the global as an important element that her characters must explore or confront as they inhabit Ireland's present and past. Her text reflects Carla Power's comments that, after the economic explosion of the Tiger, Ireland "awoke" from its colonial "nightmare" and "instead of escaping it, the Irish are increasingly willing to explore it" (as cited in Brewster 2009, 25).

One of the ways Morrissy explores the nightmare of a post-Tiger global environment – namely, Ireland under austerity – is to push her characters into uncomfortable situations within a global world. Similar to McCormack, Morrissy highlights how the background pressures of global capitalism encroach on the emotional and psychological lives of her characters. The story "Body Language", for instance, follows the character of Trish Elworthy as she mentally travels through her memory while she physically returns to Ireland to visit her dying mother. Trish is framed as a fully transnational person who, in contrast to Marcus's desire to be fixed to a local spot, has always "wanted to be elsewhere" (Morrissy 2016, 234). She remembers Prosperity Drive as a "stifling landscape" and views her home "with a good deal of self-righteous, adolescent gloom" (237). When she moves to Italy, she feels "emphatically elsewhere", but eventually even this elsewhereness is simply "a passing phase" that, along with the landscape of her new home, retreats to a

"homely distance" (237-239). Morrissy's story underscores how the need to be elsewhere depends on reliable places to be considered elsewhere. The nature of constructing a reliable elsewhere is a way for her characters to create reliable forms of certainty that can put up borders between local and global spaces. Trish's belief that a reliable elsewhere exists allows her to reaffirm her complicated angst about Ireland and her upbringing. Both Morrissy's and McCormack's texts are concerned with how notions of a global elsewhere can have an important role in shaping the life of their Irish characters. McCormack's Marcus is constantly worried about the balance between a stable elsewhere and his local community, whereas Morrissy's Trish relies on the stability of a European elsewhere to provide her with a landing place to escape her local community.

The ease with which Morrissy's Trish can assimilate into a European elsewhere represents what Joe Cleary terms the "ascendency of the new neoliberal regime" in Ireland as the "country's ongoing integration into the world-economic system is so widely credited as a process of emancipation" (2004, 232). Trish's thoughts reflect Cleary's point about Ireland's ascendency into a neoliberal Europe as she enjoys the idea of "being in the heart of Europe and not secreted away on a tiny speck in the Continent's armpit" (Morrissy 2016, 246). Trish's desire to emigrate is not simply motivated by a sense of self-loathing for her Irishness but is a desire to live in a place with a "lack of associations" (240). Having a lack of associations equates, for Trish, an escape from her personal and familial history into a comfortable elsewhere of Europe. Similar to Ireland's integration into Europe, Trish's fairly easy assimilation into life in Italy marks her as a privileged neoliberal individual. Her Irishness is no longer connected to a "revolutionary history" but codes her as an acceptable European citizen (Cleary 2004, 234). It is akin to a feeling of normalness that represents stability and safety from feelings of anxiety.

The core of this story, however, turns the idea of a global elsewhere inside out as Trish's return visit to Ireland brings back a painful memory of fracture and loss that is directly tied to the notion of being elsewhere. Trish remembers that during an engagement party for her sister Norah that her soon to be brother-in-law made a flirtatious touch on her shoulder. This touch occurred while the family was taking a photo by the water. This photo is the central piece of the scene and underscores the ominous notion of elsewhere that impacts Trish's understanding of the world as separated into distinct spaces. Even though Trish describes the photo as an awkward portrayal of the group, Norah keeps the photo because of "a huge cruise ship" in the background (Morrissy 2016, 243). The ship is described as the central image of the chapter:

> The ship filled the entire background – a giant white wall of glinting windows, a riveted fortress on the move. There must have been six floors of decks and the pas-

sengers were crowded at the rails, a sea of indecipherable faces, some waving, others sending out semaphore flashes with their cameras, others just standing there, forlorn with farewell. The whale-ish ship dwarfed the three of them and blotted out everything else – the jaunty sky, the choppy waters, the landmark beacon at the mouth of the harbor. (243-244)

The ship in the photo represents the enterprise of a global elsewhere with a collection of "indecipherable faces" that blot out the entirety of the landscape. This is the elsewhere to which, eventually, Trish escapes to avoid the feelings of uncomfortableness she feels about her family and her brother-in-law. As a representation of a global elsewhere, the ship is an ominous "fortress on the move" that is a force that helps disrupt the focus of the photo. It is a force that completely alters the frame of the photo, moving the importance from an Irish family celebrating to a globalized ship carrying a "sea" of humanity to an international destination. Similar to the promise of a global elsewhere that Trish believes offers her an escape, the cruise ship promises a withdrawal from the anxieties of local Irish life. Norah highlights the importance of the ship by calling it "surreal" and stressing the true nature of the photo is "all about what's going on in the background" (244). The surreal nature of the photo is directly tied to how, as an image of a global elsewhere, the ship upends the relationship between the local landscape and the background of elsewhere. The firm boundaries between local space and an elsewhere are broken as the force of the ship overcomes the entirety of the photo. The family drama that is the central plot of the chapter is diminished by the role of the background as it covers and changes the focus of Morrissy's text. Trish's uncomfortable relationship with her native country is no longer framed, by the text, as solely reducible to a family drama but is a part of wider global influence that pushes people into a different relationship between home and elsewhere. Similar to McCormack's protagonist, Trish and her family are caught in the context of a global elsewhere that disrupts their local relationships and intrudes on their space.

The emphasis on the background of the photo continues, in the vein of austerity fiction, to invert the relationship between global space and local Irish communities. As a representation of an ominous global elsewhere, the cruise ship undercuts Trish's belief in a stable global elsewhere that maintains an established boundary between native and foreign spaces. At the end of the story, Trish feels she and her sister are left in "absurdity and grief" at the death of her mother (249). The decision to end this chapter on the grief over a lost parent makes Trish's attempt to melt into a global elsewhere unsatisfying. The emotional end of the chapter in "absurdity and grief" points to Norah's proclamation that "it's all about what's going on in the background" where the role of Ireland in a new global elsewhere is confusing and disorientating. Despite Trish's best efforts to reinvent herself in Italy, Morrissy's text imposes a "forlorn" global influence that keeps her from actualizing a new

identity. The folding over of her mother's death with the image of a forceful global other reflects how Trish is unable to construct a stable and segmented narrative of her life. This inability to envision a world of stable borders and relations is key to how austerity fiction expands on Gerardine Meaney's assertion that "the domestic and familial are vortices of economic and political forces" (2010, xi). The vortices of familial and political themes in Morrissy's story reflect the confusing and chaotic place of Ireland in a post-austerity world where the background represents a world of global opportunities and dangers that cannot be relegated to remain in the background.

4. Inequality of movement in post-crisis migration

One of the effects of the Tiger that was heavily influenced by neoliberal discourse was the role of migration to Ireland. While the Tiger was in full force, the narrative of a global elsewhere was flipped from a space to escape to a place from which new and returning Irish would originate. Reports and stories about people moving to Ireland, both those returning and new arrivals, were portrayed as an important indicator of the success of the neoliberal Tiger. Ireland was framed as a neoliberal paradise where the incoming population of new arrivals and returned migrants could all join the good times of the boom. Donal Donovan and Antoin E. Murphy summarize these feelings about migration as a moment when an entire narrative had been rewritten: "net migration, a hardy perennial of the Irish economy and society up to the 1990s, had disappeared and the airports were full of immigrants from Eastern Europe flown in primarily on the hugely successful low-cost Irish airline, Ryanair" (2013, 1). In many respects, the numbers and data backed up this narrative that negative net migration was a thing of the past. Beginning in the late 1990s, the rate of people moving to Ireland increased for over a decade, "reaching a high point of almost 17 per thousand of the population in 2006" (Barrett, Bergin, and Kelly 2011, 1). This influx of people moving to Ireland emphasized how continual movement both to and from the country was now a positive part in the fabric of Irish life. Ireland's new position reflected the belief that the country had shed its position as a colonized country with a history of exporting goods and people. It was part of a neoliberal narrative that suggested one could move to Ireland to make money and travel abroad from Ireland to make global investments.

Similar to other issues born or exacerbated by the Tiger, migration was another aspect of the boom that was skewed by the language of neoliberal globalization. As the Tiger crashed, the pattern of migration reversed, which revealed the fragility of this narrative of migration. Kieran Allen and Brian O'Boyle describe how the return to mass emigration occurred in a "remarkably short period of time […] almost as if the Celtic Tiger was no more than a brief period of fantasy" (2013, 51). The fantasy period of the Tiger did not,

however, result in a return to the pre-Tiger norm of emigration and exile. After a post-2008 spike in mass emigration, 2018 represented the first year since 2009 where Ireland was a net importer of people (Kenny 2018). Instead of falling back into a pre-Tiger version of Ireland, this contemporary shift in Irish diasporic theory highlights how migration embraces "ostensibly post-modern conditions," such as "transnationalism and globalization" (Delaney, Kenny, MacRaild 2006, 46). In essence, then, migration to and from Ireland continues to be shaped by global and neoliberal principles that combine both narratives of prosperity and austerity. This continued transnational turn in Irish migration made the country a node, or hub, in a much more diverse and interconnected network of human movement where the traditional divides of exile, ex-pat, and emigrant have become fluid and different concepts.

The way the narrative of global capitalism influenced and mainstreamed issues of inequality also shaped the narrative surrounding the movement of people to and from Ireland. Bryan Fanning has noted that even though "prosperity fostered a quiet transformation of Ireland" it soon "became apparent that, left to themselves, the Irish aboard might not return in sufficient numbers to meet the demands of the Celtic Tiger labor market" (2014, 119). Despite the popular narrative that the Celtic Tiger reversed the long history of emigration – a narrative that was often presented as Ireland healing itself – the reality was that Ireland had entered the supercharged enterprise of neoliberal globalization that required more bodies in order for the economy to function[6]. As a result, to maintain a deep workforce, migration became framed as a double-sided issue where the movement of people was, for some, an investment in personal and professional development and, for others, an act of survival. Ireland built a "neo-liberal approach to immigration" where, in order to meet the needs of a productive globalized nation, the country "had become radically open to immigration, but at the same time made it considerably harder for migrants to become Irish citizens" (122). This bifurcated approach to immigration was a direct product of the language of neoliberalization that, despite the inherent inequality, framed transnational movement as a positive part of the contemporary experience.

[6] A continually replenished workforce is a key component of neoliberal capitalism as the idea of an ever-increasing economy requires an endless supply of workers. Ireland's approach to managing immigration during the Tiger can be directly connected to Milton Friedman's declarations about the value of unofficial workers. Friedman asserts that an undocumented labor force is "a good thing for the illegal immigrants [and] a good thing for the citizens of the country" (1977). Friedman frames an undocumented workforce as a good thing "because as long as it's illegal the people who come in do not qualify for welfare, they don't qualify for social security, they don't qualify for the other myriad of benefits that we pour out from our left pocket to our right pocket" (1977).

In "Diaspora", Morrissy highlights the unequal disparity between Irish migrants to critique the neoliberal narrative of positive migration. Morrissy's story splits the narratives of its protagonists along the neoliberal line where people are deemed official and unofficial migrants. The narrative switches between Mo Dark, an Irish citizen of colour that grew up on Prosperity Drive, and Trish as she returns to Italy after a job interview[7]. By setting her story in a Spanish airport, Morrissy outlines an uneven relationship between Trish and Mo, who were childhood sweethearts back in Ireland (2016, 51). "Diaspora" recreates, and inverts, the moment when the young couple had planned to leave Ireland, but Trish had cold feet and did not join Mo on the journey. Trish and Mo are placed on opposite ends of the inequality spectrum as Trish is interviewing for a new job where Mo is struggling as a homeless person. Morrissy sets this story in a global elsewhere of an airport, which an important space in a global system of migration and movement because airports stress the "urgency of the present moment" (Augé 2008, 82). The airport represents a temporal and spatial dislocation in which culture, society, and life proceed "as if space had been trapped in time" due to the constant circulation of people (84). In trapping her characters in an airport – a space that emphasizes transit and movement – Morrissy freezes her narrative to focus on the inequality found in the differences between Mo and Trish.

When Mo first notices Trish at the airport, he is aroused by the memory of their past relationship but is quickly depressed since he feels "disfigured or emaciated" due to his current condition (Morrissy 2016, 52). Mo describes his life as "permanently in transit" where he can never earn enough money "to get back on the carousel of life" (62). When Mo hears that an anthropologist studying his airport community has termed them "airport vagrants", Mo recognizes how this label "makes him" and his position in the airport "sound transitory, a rite of passage, not a destination" (64). The categorization of Mo as an airport vagrant remakes him into an unofficial migrant that exists on the margins of European society. He is no longer Irish because that category has been overwritten by the status of being an airport vagrant. Mo's position in the text reflects how Ireland's post-Tiger immigration plan created a

[7] Although it is beyond the scope of this article, it should be noted that the story "Assisted Passage" has a difficult connection to the other stories of Irish diaspora presented in Morrissy's text. While other stories show a nuanced approach to the way global capitalism creates damaging social divides along race, gender, and class lines, this chapter has a scene that is problematic in terms of its racial politics. The main character, an Irish woman emigrating to Australia, has an empowering sexual relationship with an unnamed Egyptian man. She becomes pregnant from this romantic encounter and views her pregnancy as a transgressive act against the gender politics of pre-Tiger Ireland. In many respects, this scene is a representation of an act that seeks "to bring the Orient closer to Europe [and] thereafter absorb it entirely" (Said 1979, 87). The story could be included in any further study of how race functions in post-Tiger Irish literature.

neoliberal schism between those with so-called legitimate claims to Irishness and those like Mo that were deemed suspect due to "the impossible equation" of being a "brown baby" in Ireland (66). The description of Mo as an "impossible equation" underscores how his position as a migrant reflects a pattern in global migration where the "invisibility of migrants" is a central part in maintaining the inequality of working and living conditions (Gilmartin 2017, 202). Mo's role highlights how he has a connection to Ireland while at the same time erasing him from narratives surrounding traditional Irishness.

Trish's narrative further underscores the invisibility of Mo's position as she gets a glimpse of him yet is never shown to engage with him fully. Even though she hopes that she can reconnect with Mo, Trish still initially views him as a "complete stranger" and a "hobo" (Morrissy 2016, 67). This categorization of him as a stranger and hobo represents how Mo's identity has been over-coded by his position as an airport vagrant. Despite Trish's feelings of guilt over not joining Mo in the past, she is never seen to make a connection with Mo in the airport. Her initial thought that Mo is a "hobo" immediately shows how Trish views all the men of the airport community. To her, they are faceless people that are, at best, a nuisance to be ignored. Morrissy keeps the two characters separated with only the hint that they may form a connection. Trish hopes to talk with Mo and explain why she did not join him years ago in "some mad notion that she can undo everything" (67). The lack of connection between the two characters reflects their completely divergent experiences in the neoliberal global diaspora.

Morrissy uses the notion of a neoliberal global diaspora to reflect on Ireland's status as a diasporic destination. "Diaspora" ends when Trish thinks she sees Mo, but when she turns to call out to him, he ignores her. The reader is never given a chance to see if Mo and Trish could overcome the many ways they are separated. Instead, the reader is left with the impression that Mo remains invisible to Trish just as migrants remain invisible to official governments and agencies. Morrissy's story argues that Irish citizenship, like most formations of national identity caught in the continual global diaspora, follows the neoliberal trend where rights and visibility only "adhere to a limited group of people who belong to a nation"(Robinson and Santos 2014, 14). As a result, there will be people such as Mo that will always "fall outside of the nation" and therefore be excluded from national rights (14). Morrissy's text aligns with Thomas Docherty's assertion that migrant readings reflect how literature "materializes a community" and determines "the shape of the world, and the attendant idea of citizenship" (2018, 843). Trish and Mo, as Irish citizens, are materialized by Morrissy in a world of global inequality where they cannot engage with each other and are separated by a system of global capitalism that establishes an unequal structure for migrants in a global elsewhere.

5. Entrepreneurial Migration and the Risks of the Global Elsewhere

Along with critiquing how neoliberal patterns in migration work to maintain structures of inequality, austerity fiction critiques how narratives of neoliberalization often frame migration as an entrepreneurial activity. Ireland, like most of the West, was agreeable to the influence of neoliberalization because it related to narratives of Irish emigration that presented the concept as a path to acquire marketable skills. Fanning has shown that, in Ireland, migration had been thought of as a way for an individual to express agency and enterprise. He argues: "Emigration in a sense came to be presented as developmental. It afforded those without the skills needed to find employment in Ireland the opportunity to become eligible for return" (2014, 125). Emigration became, for some, not a difficult or desperate choice for survival but an entrepreneurial and aspirational activity that could allow the individual to return home in a better, more successful position. This changes the very act of migration into an investment of time in building skills more agreeable to the global labour market. This ideology is captured in Mo's explanation of his emigration from Ireland where, "somewhere along the way, work drifted out of his existence and his existence *became* his work" (Morrissy 2016, 65). The experiences of emigration are flattened out to a simple expression of labor.

Surprisingly, the idea that migration was a form of personal development continued after the recession. Irial Glynn and Philip J. O'Connell write about how, after the financial collapse, the motivation to leave Ireland was not solely tied to basic economic necessities: "While unemployment was a major driving factor, underemployment and lack of job satisfaction also spurred many to emigrate" (2017, 301). Glynn and O'Connell, while noting that harsh economic circumstances were a factor in emigration patterns, have found that this tendency to view migration as an act of professional development extended to the lives of Irish migrants after arriving at their destinations. Emigration allowed "many to experience a higher standard of living" and were "much happier with their jobs, salaries, and employment prospects" (302-303). Overall, the migratory patterns that occurred after the financial collapse could be argued to be important to Ireland's recovery because "it is very likely that Ireland would have experienced even higher rates of unemployment" if not for emigration (303).

McCormack engages with this neoliberal description of contemporary migration in the way Marcus interacts with his son. Darragh, Marcus' son, is on a trip of personal discovery and fulfillment as he works low-paying jobs in Australia. Darragh is working in Australia by choice since he comes from a financially stable family and is described as having a "gifted" if undisciplined "academic mind" (McCormack 2016, 31). Marcus believes his son is having "adventures down under" as a part of an extended adolescence where the "whole Waltzing Matilda thing" mainly entails hanging out around a

"campfire in a woolen hat" and "skulling cans of Four X" (58). In this context, the whole experience of emigration is normalized as a process of personal enjoyment and "adventure" where young Irish people can learn about themselves in a global elsewhere. Even Skype conversations are just part of a routine for Marcus that includes looking at "news sites" and "Amazon" (64). The whole nature of Darragh's time in Australia is presented as a very casual experience where technology shrinks the distance between Ireland and Australia by allowing face-to-face conversations about "sport, politics, and local gossip" (83).

McCormack, however, undercuts the normalcy of Darragh's adventure down under by revealing how the distance of migration – a life lived in a global elsewhere – comes with an emotional cost. Even though Marcus can have face-to-face conversations with his son via the internet, he acutely feels the distance and separation. After Darragh shuts down their Skype connection, Marcus feels "the connection [is] broken now" and the "immense distance closed down in an instant," which leaves him with only a sensation that "the world is nothing more than the four walls of the room within this house" (32). The technology that allows for more direct conversation between father and son creates a more distinct feeling of loneliness and absence. After feeling the collapse of distance when the Skype connection was closed, Marcus has a strong feeling of confusion: "a feeling of dislocation as if some imp had got in during the night and shifted things around just enough to disorientate me, tables, chairs, and other stuff just marginally out of place by a centimetre or two, enough to throw me" (33). McCormack draws a direct line between Marcus's conversation with his son and the "feeling of dislocation" where things appear to be slightly out of place. The absence of Darragh is part of this disorientating feeling because even though Marcus can have conversations with his son over Skype, he still feels the absence of shared physical space as a disorientating force. The lack of physical closeness is replaced by a technological closeness that fails to replicate the face-to-face connection. Marcus's reaction to the migration of his son is a part of an emotional price that undercuts any narrative that argues contemporary migration is just a normal stage in a world where personal development requires an engagement with a global elsewhere. Marcus's feelings of dislocation and disorientation are similar to the results of a study done on Irish people over the age of 50 that found an increase of depression and feelings of loneliness among the parents of migrant children (Glynn and O'Connell 2017, 303). Darragh's grand adventure – which is made possible by the migration patterns of contemporary neoliberalization – privileges his status as a person, like Morrissy's character Trish, that can escape into a global elsewhere. His escape, however, is framed in the text as creating a painful and emotional cost for Marcus who carries the weight of Darragh's absence, despite current communication technologies.

The conclusion of the novel underscores how the post-austerity Ireland of *Solar Bones* is one where the impact of a global elsewhere is part of the growing restlessness that marks the end of the text. As the novel reaches its end, Marcus becomes "agitated beyond all comfort" with a "grating current" that forces him to "keep moving, drifting from room to room like one of those sea creatures who cannot stay still for fear they may sink and drown" (McCormack 2016, 222). Marcus's final thoughts again interact with an abstract background force that he sees a "vast unbroken commonage of space and time, into that vast oblivion in which there are no markings or contours to steer by nor any songs to sing me home" (223). The end of the novel forces Marcus to interact with a cognitive experience that shares a similar structure to a global elsewhere where space and time are placed into continuous flux. He is trapped in a continual present that leaves him agitated and uncomfortable without any ability to locate himself in the ordered world he so craves to experience. It is a general feeling of crisis where the only action that can be done is to continue the restless wandering of life. Or, as Marcus expresses it, there "is nothing else for it but to keep going, one foot in front of the other, the head down and keep going, keep going, keep going to fuck" (*ibidem*). The agitated desire to keep moving forward is not dissimilar to the attitudes of post-austerity Ireland where, despite the narratives of sacrifice, the only possible action is one of existential survival. The final words of Marcus make for a narrative that does not end in a typically novelistic manner but simply stops, which leaves him to trudge endlessly in a blank oblivion of an extended moment. The end of the novel mirrors a deflation of austerity where the richness and detail of McCormack's language are narrowed down to a repetition that leads to an agitated state of unsatisfied searching.

Although not the concluding story in her collection, Morrissy's "Love Child" offers her strongest critique of the costs of living in a global elsewhere. The narrative follows Julia Fortune as she travels to New York to end her life. Throughout, Julia's attempt to shed her Irish nature by embracing a new identity is undercut by the very nature of living in a global elsewhere. For instance, Julia wants to distance herself from a standard narrative that includes "bedding down at some ready-made address in Queens with half a dozen other illegal Paddies" (Morrissy 2016, 128). Instead, Julia understands her departure from Ireland as a "Hollywood film" that has been mixed with an "Irish version" where "two inarticulate people" are attempting to "give the other the brush-off" (129). Julia is attempting, quite forcefully, to brush off her connection to Ireland by leaving it behind.

As a contained narrative, "Love Child" pushes its setting back into the 1980s to use the "New Irish" period of the Irish diaspora as a historical lens to critique the reality of post-austerity migration. Linda Dowling Almeida describes the "New Irish" as a "more transient population than previous generations of migrants" (2001, 6). The "New Irish," she asserts, were not "de-

fined by the traditional markers of religion and nationalism but determined instead by some future vision as yet undefined" (6). Morrissy's text makes Julia representative of this "New Irish" migration because the idea of a migratory class of Irish undefined by traditional cultural markers is similar to how post-Tiger migrants understood themselves a part of something new. The irony, of course, is that Julia is travelling to New York to negate any future in her goal to commit suicide. She wants "to sleep in a city that never wakes" (Morrissy 2016, 140).

Morrissy frames Julia's entire experience in New York as caught in a double-bind of diaspora where the newness and opportunity promised by a new start are unable to be separated from the culture and memories of Ireland. This double-bind is highlighted by Julia's time spent in the "Hotel Nathaniel", which is a dilapidated hotel that is carrying the legacy of a transnational past since its previous name was the "Alhambra" (124). Julia's fragmented sense of self is reflected in this "ghost hotel" where, she believes, the residents live "caged, solitary lives" (127). Her belief that the residents are caged and solitary replicates the assertion that the passengers on the cruise ship seen in the story "Diaspora" are isolated and indecipherable on their moving fortress. The interior of the building reflects this experience of a global elsewhere back toward Julia and the reader. She feels "the doors" of the building "kept making nervous forays as if they ached for closure but some neurotic hesitancy prevented them" (126). Similar to Julia's experience as a dislocated individual, the New York hotel is caught between the identities of a regular American (the Nathaniel) and a residual foreign past (the Alhambra). The theme of overlapping identities is persistent throughout the chapter where each new identity cannot find closure due to a neurotic hesitancy. There can never be a full transformation into something completely new because the lingering ghost of another, different, identity is always present since the Hotel Nathaniel still retains its "motif of Middle Eastern splendor" (127).

The conflict of identities is continued when Julia adopts the identity of her American friend, Henrietta Gardner, who died in a childhood accident back on Prosperity Drive. When meeting a fellow resident of the hotel named Gloria, Julia gives her name as Hetty and begins to merge her background with that of her friend (142). She tells Gloria, for example, that the death of her friend "Julia" is the main cause of her depression. This mixture of American and Irish identities creates a new, unique, global identity for Julia but does not offer her any sense of escape. Instead, it only sharpens her sense of isolation and depression. Julia thinks "of all the dislocating experiences of the past 24 hours, this was the strangest, hearing herself being described posthumously in the third person" (144). This is the most dislocating experience for Julia because it represents a symbolic transformation into a new identity. The choice to have Julia adopt an American identity not only mirrors the migration patterns of many Irish citizens but also parallels how the very na-

ture of the Tiger relied on Ireland joining a neoliberal model of statehood that is heavily associated with an American political and cultural identity. Even though Julia is a part of the New Irish migration of the 1980s, Morrissy crafts her situation and desires in a very post-Tiger environment of a dislocating global elsewhere. She becomes more American, and more global, right at the moment her future is coming to an end. Morrissy presents the transformation of Julia's character as a metaphor for Ireland's transformation during the Tiger; essentially, it is a moment of complete transformation that does not produce a new future or reality but can only represent the end of an era.

In the end, Julia burns her passport and imagines her "past" as fading into a "charred blackness" (145). This image of a destroyed passport critiques the post-Tiger idea of Irish migration as one that always includes the possibility of return to a new and better future. Morrissy's text reveals how any understanding of contemporary migration cannot focus on how the movement of people is a beneficial action of professional development that is required in the neoliberal and globalized world. Julia's fateful trip to New York is a story that undercuts any notion of migration as a life-affirming action that always changes the person for the better. Like McCormack, her text draws attention to the unseen emotional and psychological costs of migration. Morrissy and McCormack present movement within a global elsewhere as never quite matching up to what the narratives of neoliberal globalization promise.

6. Conclusion: global futures and elsewheres

As the economic forces of the Tiger transformed Ireland, the narrative of neoliberal capitalism stressed a desire for newness as a defining cultural element of Ireland's transformation. It was a desire, as stated by former Taoiseach Bertie Ahern, to refute "the cynics" that "may be able to point to the past" in order to stress that the Irish "live in the future" (as cited in Foster 2008, 1). Of course, the future predicted by Ahern was entirely different from the future that occurred after the financial collapse. The language and reality of austerity replaced the promise and potential of prosperity.

As writers of austerity fiction, Morrissy and McCormack articulate a post-Tiger relationship between Ireland and globalization. Their narratives depict an environment where issues of global capitalism are folded into the emotions, lives, and communities of their characters. They present instability as a threat of an elsewhere that crosses international borders. Yet, despite being framed as a dangerous elsewhere, the role of uncertainty has become enmeshed and hidden within the memories and experiences of the characters. Instability weaves its way into the fabric of Irish fiction as an awareness that the background of potential global crises is always intimately placed in the structures of local life. Irish austerity fiction pulls the context and background of neoliberal capitalism into the foreground to reflect how, after 2008,

the complex nature of the global financial crisis is not only an economic and political issue but also one that is deeply embedded in the emotions and thoughts of the individual.

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Irish Diaspora Politics: The West Riding of Yorkshire, 1879-1886

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Abstract:

This article seeks to explore the Irish migrants' political experience within the geographical confines of the West Riding of Yorkshire during several key election campaigns during the period 1879-86. The focus will be on the constitutional, or moral force, philosophy of Irish nationalism in its diasporic/external context. The central aim is to explore how Irish migrants engaged in political activism in the pursuit of legislative independence for the homeland under the banner of Irish Home Rule. Attention will focus on specific parliamentary election contests where Irish Home Rule became *the* dominant platform. This will be achieved through an analysis of the Home Rule Confederation & Irish National Leagues of Great Britain and its activities as a political "fifth column" operating in the industrial heartlands of Yorkshire.

Keywords: Diaspora, Elections, Home Rule, Irish nationalism, Yorkshire

"Even in England, Ireland is a power"
(Heinrick 1872, 68)

The predominance of emigration in the history of a relatively small island on the north-western fringe of Europe is unmistakable. During the 19th century Irish migration is considered as "one of the most significant movements of population in modern European history, in terms of the total number of people involved and the proportion migrating" (Hickman 2005, 117). The duration and numerical significance of this exodus has resulted in the Irish making their presence felt right across the Anglophone world and beyond. Although the Irish diaspora has received much scholarly attention, especially that of the United States, a lot still needs to be done to document the Irish experience in Britain – particularly its political dimension. Moreover, specific cities and regions in Britain have predominated. Thus, the focus here

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is the political activities of the Irish diaspora community in Britain, specifically the region of West Riding, or the "Western Third", England's largest county of Yorkshire[1]. To borrow O'Day's phrase, I will essentially focus on the "Yorkshire Face of Irish Nationalism" (1977). The overall intention is to explore the intertwining of *migration* and *politics*, what are arguably *the* two most dominant themes within 19th century Irish history. Both become significantly more complex and fluid when occupying the same time and space. Thus, our attention will be towards the political dimension, through an analysis of the expatriate nationalist response to the pursuit of legislative independence in the form of Irish Home Rule, which came to represent a central facet of the diasporic experience from *c.* 1870-1920. The focus will rest upon assessing migrant political activity within the constitutional, or moral-force, philosophy of Irish nationalism in Yorkshire's most industrialised and populated area. This will be undertaken through an analysis of some of the electoral contests in which the Yorkshire-Irish community came to play a significant part.

As a direct result of mass immigration of the Irish into British towns and cities, a considerable working-class Irish vote emerged in many constituencies which soon became aware of its electoral muscle (Biagini 2007, 2). The migratory experience, largely attributable to British misrule, imbued the migrant with a sense of alienation, frustration and more importantly, a love of the homeland. There then emerged what might be described as an "ethno-political" or "ethno-nationalist" network/movement based upon "institutional affiliations" (Fitzpatrick 1993, 1). This resulted in the creation of a formal pan-British Irish political organisation (Delaney, MacRaild 2007; MacRaild 2005; Miskell 2005). The "League" as it often referred to, operated under three main titles during its lifespan: Home Rule Confederation – 1873-79 (HRC); Irish National League – 1879-1900 (INL); and United Irish League – 1900-22 (UIL), all of Great Britain. According to E.P.M. Wollaston, the guiding motive of the League centred upon the "application of electoral pressure" whereby Irish voters in specific constituencies would be "welded into a solid, disciplined unit that centred on a branch, or branches, of the Irish organisation and would deliver its votes in a solid bloc according to the policy formulated by the leaders of the Irish Parliamentary Party". This vote would then be used solely for the advancing of "Ireland's national struggle, irrespective of purely British party issues", thus creating "a weapon

[1] West Yorkshire and West Riding are interchangeable terms. The Riding is no longer a geographical reality due to electoral boundary changes in 1972, which resulted in the creation of South and West Yorkshire. The West Riding originally incorporated both of these areas and more, but is now confined to a term of nostalgia and historical reference. The word "Riding" has its origins in Old English – *thrithing*, from Old Norse – *thrithjungr*, meaning "third part" which denotes the three ancient jurisdictions of Yorkshire: East, West & North Ridings.

no English party could disregard" (1958, 8-9). Across the West Riding there emerged a network of branches headed by a regional organiser. Within towns and cities with a substantial Irish population there often existed a branch, or several branches, of the League with the Leeds-Bradford nexus containing some thirteen branches between them at its height.

Each of these successive organisations of diasporic Irish nationalism existed and operated for a variety of reasons in exerting political influence, which can be succinctly reduced to *four* main functions. Firstly, electoral registration of eligible members of the migrant community was *the* central plank in its strategy – and in the words of one contemporary, "its most potent weapon" (Heinrick 1872, 22). The *raison d'être* of the League was "to unite the Irish voters in Great Britain so that they may be an effective weapon for furthering the cause of Home Rule whenever opportunity occurs" (*Tablet*, 13 June 1908). This "weapon" was intended to create a bloc vote that could be marshalled at elections behind the banner of Home Rule, which in turn would be used to exert political influence on various electoral candidates. Holding the balance of power in certain Yorkshire constituencies was therefore the objective – a difficult task, though not impossible (Wollaston 1958, 9). The League was also charged with educating and informing the British public on Ireland, its history and claims, and the legitimacy of Home Rule. Thirdly, the nation-wide network of branches and the harnessing of an Irish electoral force contributed to the all-important financial aspect of the League and its parliamentary body. And finally, in addition to the "official" dimension, the League "unofficially" acted as a hub that fostered cultural, social and ethnic cohesion (O'Day 1993). These additional activities also included the likes of philanthropy, education, sport, Irish language and culture (Holmes 2010, 290-91). The scene was now set for a diasporic political initiative, with the region being noted as "one of the most vigorous centres of nationalism" maintained through powerful branches of the League (Wollaston 1958, 40-41).

In its simplest sense, Home Rule was based on the idea of self-government for Ireland through the re-establishment of an elected Irish parliament in Dublin (O'Day 1998; Jackson 2003). But given that Home Rule was not a fixed idea or concept, that it was indeed fluid and open to interpretation, it came to be viewed by the diaspora in slightly different terms. Thus, Irish nationalism outside of Ireland, or at a distance, emerged as a phenomenon imbued with different feelings of patriotism toward the homeland. Irish diasporic nationalism was instilled with sentimentalism and was highly emotive. It was the *idea* of Home Rule, rather than its specifics that plucked at the heart-strings of the migrant's nationalist consciousness. For the Irish in Britain there was little concern expressed as to the fine detail or framework of legislative independence, but merely that they wanted it – it was a moral duty to the homeland and the condition of its people. For them, their principal task was one of acting as a fifth column and nothing more – at least in

theory. There were no real tangible benefits to be gained by the Irish in Britain through the implementation of Home Rule and it is also worth stressing that diaspora nationalism was not altogether synchronised with that which existed at home (Belchem 1995, 112).

The Riding eventually became a melting-pot of Irishness, which facilitated an intermingling of the Irish from all parts of Ireland in forging an exile Irish nationalism that did away with parochialism and regionalism (Brown 1966, 20-21). Following the tumult of the Famine, by 1870 it was very much a settled community that had established itself firmly in the urban setting of the "Broad Acres"[2]. This stemmed from migratory patterns of settlement whereby the main industrial centres such as Leeds, Bradford and Sheffield absorbed the Irish, resulting and the creation of "Irish quarters" (Richardson 1968; 1971; Supple-Green 1990; Supple 1982)[3] or "little Irelands" that promoted resourcefulness that helped reinforce a sense of identity and solidarity (Belchem 2000, 129; Busteed 2000, 110). Deprivation at home and the attractiveness of Yorkshire's employment opportunities in the likes of the wool industry, mining, and rail construction exemplify the typical push/pull factors (Cowley 2004; McGowan 2009, 21). Sectarianism was also largely absent in Yorkshire, leading to better settler-host relations than in other British cities – namely Liverpool and Glasgow. Yorkshire's uniqueness in terms of its identity is also noteworthy as the "Tyke" identity offered succour and scope for political manoeuvre to the aspirations of the migrant in a "fiercely independent county proud of its difference" (Woodhouse 1996, 9). However, the wider British experience is captured by one contemporary migrant when writing about his activism in diaspora politics, referring to Britain as a "stony-hearted stepmother" (Denvir 2007).

Through the creation of the League there emerged *local Irish elites* (migrant political leaders) that formed part of a tripartite system of political relations, that extended to *Irish political elites* (those technically Irish-based), and *indigenous political elites* (Yorkshire politicians) who comprised the interplay of homeland-diaspora politics. Reciprocal relations developed between nationalist leaders in Ireland and the "Sea Divided Gael", whose fervent nationalism was cultivated by Irish politicians over many decades. It is also worth emphasising that in contrast to their financially stronger Irish-American counterparts, the Irish in Britain that were enfranchised and could apply their vote in the imperial parliament. Accordingly, contemporary political propagators viewed the Irish vote as a significant threat in certain

[2] "Broad Acres" is a colloquial name used for the county of Yorkshire.

[3] Richardson points to a specific example of some 500 Irish arriving from Queen's County in response to the decline of the wool trade in that region and its growth in Yorkshire. Migrants mainly came from counties Mayo, Sligo & Queens.

constituencies through an urban population that varied between 15-30 per cent – particularly in the North; but it has been argued that "in the event, Irish votes never lived up to the expectations of national leaders or fears of British politicians" (O'Day 1989, 185). It was, however, a *perceived* threat, compared with an *actual* threat, which played on the minds of many British politicians and society. The period under consideration is also noteworthy for franchise reforms that affected the potential of the Irish vote. Such reforms were critical in the development of an expat electorate, with the 1867 Reform Act virtually doubling the electorate (with further increases in 1884), "gave the Irish in Britain – many of whom were newly-enfranchised – added significance since they were potentially able to exert an Irish influence in urban Parliamentary elections" (Swift 2000, 30; Supple 1986, 238). If Hugh Heinrick's survey (1872, 58) is anything to go by, Yorkshire's urban centres contained an Irish population large enough "to exercise a political influence sufficient to rule the destinies of parties [*where*] the power of political parties is so nearly balanced that, with proper organisation and preparation, the issue of an electoral contest would depend on the Irish vote". He described the Gaels of West Yorkshire as "possessing power, position, and intelligence, and exercising in every relation of life a marked influence on the communities among whom they reside". A plan to muster the Irish vote, where it was deemed sufficiently powerful could ultimately "decide the battle of parties to restore party equilibrium, and prevent either of the rivals from weighing the scale, so that the position of power will depend on whether we choose to kick the beam and destroy the equipoise of the party" (Heinrick 1872, 67).

John O'Connor Power's (1880, 411) assessment of the Irish in Britain is also illuminating. He describes the Irish communities in Britain as "welded together" in a political organisation that has "for its object the redress of Irish grievances and the advancement of Irish nationality". He points to the Irishman residing in Britain as one who keeps tabs on Irish national politics and "where a wider franchise prevails, he finds himself possessed of a political power which he was never permitted to exercise in his own country, and his first thought on becoming conscious of this fact is that it is his duty to utilise this new power for the advancement of Irish rights and Irish interests". Amongst a population of some two million who were to be found in the "most crowded centres of large towns" he saw great political potential, but like other contemporaries he lamented the temptations of alcohol and general social degradation. He nevertheless underlined the fact that the migrant was in England, but not of it. The Irishman's "selfishness" for Ireland resulted in them being politically separated which could easily "expand into an ardent sentiment of patriotism" that had caught the attention of British politicians who were keen to court the Irish vote. He also described the migrant as not indifferent to the "welfare and glory of their native land" and that they had "nothing to gain" from Home Rule or tenant rights (O'Connor-Power 1880, 414-415).

Although the League entered its first political forays during the 1870s, the ensuing period of 1879-86 can be viewed as a crucially important era in its subsequent development as that is when the Irish question "achieved the status of the pre-dominating issue, the great and abiding preoccupation of politicians" (Hamer 1969, 237). Events specific to the Riding would set it apart from other major areas of Irish settlement and organised Irish nationalism. Events both at home, and those at the local level contributed to this. One aspect that shaped the period was the increased contact and ever-developing relations between migrant political representatives and indigenous political elites, as well as members of the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP). The three-way interaction was stimulated from within the local level, but also from without, through visits from the likes of Parnell, that became the life-blood of the movement and constituted what can be termed as a process of "servicing" (Belchem 2000, 132)[4]. A migrant middle-class element acted as a conduit between the leadership of the IPP and the migrant community, a type of internal stratification that offered ethnic leadership that was both cultural and political. There were two levels to such servicing: firstly, that which emanated from the upper echelons of the Irish political establishment – from without; and secondly, servicing from within by an Irish migrant middle-class. There existed what has been termed "culture-brokers" who contributed "to the construction of an "imagined" national identity" that sought to influence the lower strata of the immigrant community and to "superimpose a wider "invented" affiliation upon traditional and instinctive sub-national loyalties" (Belchem 1999, 191-94). A prime example of such elite servicing is demonstrated in Charles Stewart Parnell's visit to Leeds in 1879. In his address to a political gathering in the city, Parnell sought to remind his fellow Irishmen that they were in a "peculiar position" and that "it was their duty as Irishmen to hold themselves entirely aloof from every political party in the town" until they received clear instructions as to which party to support in the furtherance of Irish national interest. He urged that:

> No Irishman ought to identify himself with any English political party. (Hear, hear.) He should hold himself absolutely aloof from every English political combination, for in no other way could he hope to serve his country or do his duty to Ireland. They had in Leeds a very important power. They held the balancing power as regarded the second seat. They could give it either to the Tories or to the Liberals. They could either return two Liberals or two Tories. The power was clearly theirs, and he hoped that they would exercise it calmly and judiciously for the good of their country, regardless of any other necessity, local or otherwise. Until Ireland had obtained her right it was their duty, as Irish exiles in England, to stand by their countrymen at home, and assist them in their struggle for freedom. (*Leeds Mercury*, 13 November 1879)

[4] Belchem also highlights a similar occurence in Liverpool.

Parnell went further in stressing that as Irish exiles in England, their duty was to remain true to the country "that gave them birth". Of interest here, is the stipulation that "regardless of any other necessity, local or otherwise", the Leeds-Irish should act according to their moral obligations, which was very much centred on stimulating sentimentalism as opposed to pragmatism. The issue of the *local* taking precedence over the *national* was clearly a problem for the hierarchy of the movement, as the pragmatism of local concerns invariably held greater immediacy and relevancy to the Irish of Leeds. This would be a recurring problem that would manifest itself in a variety of ways in the coming years. Nevertheless, such impassioned calls to an expatriate community in Yorkshire shows that a significant Irish population, that was well organised and strategically placed to sway political outcomes, existed in the city of Leeds.

The election year of 1880 then, would be a proving ground for the movement in the Riding. In order to fully understand the relevance of the elections to the Yorkshire branches, it is important that attention is dedicated to the election build-up as well as election outcomes. Commencing in the south, Sheffield provides an illustrative example of such activity in December 1879 for a hotly contested by-election. In many ways a traditional contest between Liberal and Conservative, it presented itself as an important seat ahead of the general election, yet it posed some serious questions for its Irish community. Unlike their more northerly compatriots in Leeds-Bradford, the Sheffield-Irish were not represented by a formal HRC branch system, but a self-styled "Irish Electoral Committee"; the apparent difference being that this Committee was beyond the jurisdiction of the central executive of the Confederation. The Committee was noted for performing the very same function as formal branches elsewhere. It sought to formally interview parliamentary candidates in relation to their position on Home Rule and other Irish matters, but this is where similarities ended.

The Sheffield by-election illustrates many of the subtleties and complexities that effectively dictated how a sub-regional variant of diaspora nationalism performed. A precursor to the general election, it shows migrant activity at the micro-level, how one locality could significantly diverge from another (i.e. Leeds/Bradford versus Sheffield) for an election where the Irish vote was considered by some as *the* determining factor. It is important to stress that Sheffield's electoral character was greatly affected by what we now term a military-industrial complex whereby the steel industry depended to a large extent on military expenditure which the Liberals had a reputation for stalling on in comparison to the Tories (Pelling 1967, 229-38; Hey 1998, 136)[5].

[5] In relation to Sheffield, Hey notes that the Irish numbers were much smaller than Leeds or Bradford.

The activity of "interviewing" prospective candidates was essentially an appendage to actual voting behaviour – canvassing in reverse. Having heard the replies of both Sheffield candidates – Samuel Danks Waddy (Liberal) & Charles Stewart-Wortley (Conservative) – the Sheffield Electoral Committee announced that the Sheffield-Irish would give their "full strength and voting power to the Liberal candidate" (*Freeman's Journal*, 22 December 1879)[6]. Before proceeding any further, it is worth pausing to highlight James Lysaght Finigan's speech (MP for Ennis) at a meeting of Irish electors at Sheffield's Temperance Hall who described himself as "an Irishman born in England [*and*] brought up in the midst of the enemy" (*Freeman's Journal*, 22 December 1879)[7]. His speech is most telling in that it reflected the sentiments of many politicised Irishmen resident in England at this time, which undoubtedly earned him a special place in the hearts and minds of his fellow expats. In direct reference to the Famine he attacked *The Times* for its negative portrayal of the Irish, which described them as "going from Ireland with a vengeance".

> They quite forgot that the Irish people, if they were going from Ireland with a vengeance, were going to England to maintain that vengeance (applause), and when English statesman imagine that they were driving the Irish out of Ireland they did not calculate that in England they will continue to be Irish–ay, more Irish than the Irish themselves. These false prophets imagined once they had got us out of Ireland that they had settled forever the Irish question, and they then thought that when they forced them into poverty and misery to settle down in the British hives of industry, in the great centres of commerce and in their great marts and seaports, they would at once become Britons. They thought when they came over here they would immediately succumb – fall down and lick the chains which bound their country. (Voices – "Never", and cheers). (*Freeman's Journal*, 22 December 1879)

Lysaght Finigan's evocative speech encapsulates the mind-set of the Irish exile and their wider experiences of being Irish in the home of the "enemy"; it was also a vital component in cultivating Irish nationalist sentiment and channelling the Irish diasporic vote. He commented further that he was not "surprised to find a committee of his countrymen in Sheffield meeting at a critical period like the present, determining to do the best they possibly could for the interests – and alone for the interest – of Ireland". Crucially though,

[6] Dr. T. O'Meara made this announcement and was a prominent member of the Sheffield Electoral Committee.

[7] "A meeting of the Irish electors" at the city's Temperance Hall, was convened for the purpose of "hearing addresses from several Irish members of Parliament on the subject of the coming election". On the platform were A.M. Sullivan, Justin McCarthy, J.L. Finnegan, John Barry (Vice President of the HRCGB) and Mr. O'Callaghan – President of the "Home Rule League", Leeds. John Delaney – President of the Sheffield Committee.

he went on to implore the Sheffield-Irish to set the bar ahead of the coming general election in sounding a "note of Irish Nationality" in England, so that their countrymen at home would thank them and "will see that the Irish race in England are determined to do battle – to do a valiant battle – for the restoration of Irish liberty and Irish freedom" (*Freeman's Journal*, 22 December 1879). The Sheffield by-election then, and the actions of its Irish inhabitants, was essentially concerned with setting the tone for successive parliamentary elections that could ultimately impact upon the future of the movement.

In what transpired to be an "Irish Victory at Sheffield" sheds light on what the nationalist press perceived to be a critical strike for Irish nationalism in Britain (*Nation*, 3 January 1880; Craig 1977, 274)[8]. Although the actual impact of the Irish vote is difficult to determine, the Liberal victory of Waddy over Stewart-Wortley could plausibly be attributed to the Irish. Waddy had certainly won Irish support as a consequence of his previous record on Irish matters in parliament, and was noted by Justin McCarthy (MP for Longford) as an individual who had "habitually voted with the friends of Ireland". It was documented that a potential Tory victory in the radical stronghold of this "great Yorkshire constituency" was once conceived of as being totally absurd, but even more absurd was the "idea that its political destinies would be finally decided by the votes of Irish Nationalists", certainly shows a coming of age for the League. Believing Conservative support in Sheffield to be significantly stronger than that of the Liberals, the journal firmly held that it was "thanks to the efforts of the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain, [that] the Irish electors are able to step in, and, on the promise of concessions to the principles they espouse, to give the victory to the candidate of their choice". The home rulers of Sheffield were deemed to have given a "stinging reply" to the Premier and his government (*Nation*, 3 January 1880). Yet in terms of religion, this by-election is not only notable for the Irish dimension being a factor, but for the tactics employed on religious grounds.

The Conservative campaign sought to draw on the support of the Catholic vote through the conduit of sympathetic English Catholic priests in swaying Irish voters. According to the *Nation*, it was compounded by the fact that almost all employers were Tory and their employees were expected to follow suit in matters of politics (Joyce 1980, 204-5). Yet it was the issue of divided Irish loyalties – that of religious fidelity versus politics – that dominated proceedings. The *religio-political* dimension of the movement was thus a kink in the armour of Sheffield's home rulers, and Irish Catholics were reminded that Waddy was "anything but a strong popular man, and his aggressive Methodism rendered him obnoxious to Churchmen [Anglicans]

[8] Result: Waddy - 14,062; Wortley - 13,584; a winning margin 3.5% (478 votes) from an electorate of 39,270.

and Catholics alike". Believing the Irish vote to be safely in their hands, the Conservative manipulation of the Irish Committee is indicative of the difficulties that could thwart the efforts of the movement. The following account by the *Nation* sheds more light on the complexity of the Catholic- and Tory-manipulated Electoral Committee:

> The local clergy, who (as is mostly the rule with English Catholics) were 'stern unbending Tories', had under their control a Catholic Registration Society, which, for the purposes of the election, was transformed into "The Irish Committee". It mustered about a score, and its members were simply nominated by persons in the background, without any elective process or popular sanction. By the aid of this body, however, and the influence of the Conservative priests, it was hoped to secure the entire Irish vote for Mr. Wortley. The secretary of the Home Rule Confederation had been in communication with this committee in the hope that due action would be taken, but only dubious and incomprehensible replies were received by him, and everything so far as outsiders were concerned remained shrouded in mystery. (*Nation*, 3 January 1880)

The result of such "dubious and incomprehensible" replies prompted the Executive of the HRC to send John Barry (ex-Fenian and founding member of HRC) to Sheffield to organise things in accordance with its objectives, only to find that the so-called "Irish Committee" had already reached a conclusion as to which candidate would be the recipient of the Irish vote. Barry's objective became one of getting this "non-selected and unrepresentative body" (partly composed of Englishmen), enlarged to approximately one hundred "and formed into an elective body representing all shades of local Irish opinion" so that each candidate could be suitably interviewed a second time. Barry was dogged, and ultimately successful, in his endeavours. Upon being interviewed by a revamped Committee, Wortley made clear that he "would not vote for the Home Rule motion unless Obstruction ceased". Waddy on the other hand issued a public letter apologising for a previous anti-Amnesty speech and "pledged himself to sweeping reforms on the land question", and in relation to Home Rule, "he promised not only to vote but speak for a measure giving Irishmen complete control over all Irish affairs". On election day proper, further electoral stimulus arrived in the shape of A.M. Sullivan (MP for Louth), Justin McCarthy and James Lysaght Finigan (all travelling from London) to address a mass meeting of the Sheffield-Irish, approximately 10,000 in number, to complete the "final rout of the English "Catholic" faction!" (*Nation*, 3 January 1880)[9].

[9] The machinery of the election is also worth discussing, as approximately eighty Irish canvassers were deployed on election day with the Irish reportedly having entirely polled by three o'clock, and following the result the *Wearing of the Green* was noted as being "never so popular in Sheffield" as it was sung by Irish and indigenous Sheffielders alike.

In fact, Waddy's success in obtaining Irish support was not solely down to a successful interview, but interestingly enough, was made possible through the efforts of a fellow Liberal – Anthony John Mundella (sitting MP for Sheffield) – who along with Waddy "signified his intention thenceforward to support the Home Rule motion" (*Nation*, 3 January 1880). The support of Mundella is important here in that he was himself a second-generation immigrant. The son of an Italian Catholic political refugee who fled to England in 1820, and a wealthy hosiery manufacturer, Mundella was elected in 1868 and noted for his Chartist leanings and popular radical agitation[10]. This pedigree and particularly his immigrant heritage, must have drawn him toward the plight of other migrants and what he must have perceived as their radical politics. As a consequence, Mundella would remain a key supporter of Irish nationalism in Sheffield for many years to come. The interventions of the HRC Executive in the Sheffield by-election was a clear indication of its electoral policy. It also signified the inherent complexities of marshalling the vote of their fellow ex-patriots in relation to competing allegiances. Yet, it was through the direct input of Barry that the Sheffield Committee was changed in its composition and structure to one that met the requirements of the Confederation – eventually being incorporated into the soon-to-be-created local branches of the HRC (*Nation*, 4 September 1880)[11].

With the 1880 general election came the first real test for Irish electoral influence in the West Riding as a whole. A brief survey of prominent constituencies provides us with a means of evaluating the extent of the Irish influence, but also the prevailing local conditions that impacted upon the operations of the HRC. The first thing to note about this election is that the Executive had opted for the "withdrawal of test pledges", that usually required would-be recipients of the Irish vote to give assurances to support Home Rule in Parliament. It was decided that in light of Lord Beaconsfield's manifesto, which was seen as a "declaration of war against Ireland and Irishmen", a significant departure from previous electoral policy was required (*Sheffield & Rotherham Independent*, 11 March 1880). Beginning with Sheffield, the contest there was in some respects a re-run of the by-election of the previous December but with two seats being contested on this occasion. The campaign became more anti-Irish and xenophobic in character as a result of Waddy's by-election victory over the Tory candidate Charles Wortley. Certain sections of the Sheffield electorate, fuelled by commentary in the *Shef-*

[10] Mundella held his Sheffield seat for nearly 35 years from 1868.

[11] As a direct result of the 1879 by-election the Sheffield "Electoral Committee" then decided that all future political action should be taken in the name of the Home Rule Confederation.

field Daily Telegraph and the wider Tory camp, it was argued that Waddy's victory was attained through securing the Irish vote in the town. It was an outcome that resulted in a borough of 39,270 electors (Craig 1977, 274) being deprived of its voice and "disenfranchised" through the efforts of some 800 Irish voters (*Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 23 & 27 March 1880). According to the *Telegraph*, both Waddy and Mundella had utilised the Irish vote previously, whereby the bludgeon of the "Home Rule Shillelagh" would be "flourished over the heads of the electors" for a second time (*Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 23 March 1880). In a slight U-turn however, Waddy strenuously denied that he secured Irish support for his position on Home Rule, having only received Irish support on the basis of being the best candidate in the field. As with the by-election, both Waddy and Mundella found themselves before a mass meeting of Irish electors in March 1880, under the auspices of the Sheffield Irish Electoral Committee, where both candidates were required to publicly declare their position on Irish matters. Evidently on a high from what they saw as *their* by-election victory, the Irish audience listened to the election guarantees of both candidates, the result of which was unanimous support with the following resolution being passed:

> We the Irish electors of Sheffield, desirous of promoting the best interests of Ireland in the Imperial Parliament of the United Kingdom, hereby pledge ourselves to use every legitimate means to secure the return of the Liberal candidates, Messrs. Mundella and Waddy. (*Sheffield & Rotherham Independent*, 30 March 1880)

Support for Mundella was a given in light of his "long and faithful services" for Ireland during his twelve-year tenure in parliament, and Waddy's brief spell as MP also made him an acceptable candidate once again. Although the "Irishmen of Sheffield were no longer obliged to hamper Liberal candidates with home rule questions" as this was not an election stipulation, and that they were always "found on the side of Liberalism", the issue of Home Rule still featured prominently (*Sheffield & Rotherham Independent*, 30 March 1880). Both candidates argued that they acted not to secure the Irish vote *per se*, but in following their principles of justice and equality, automatically met the desired expectations of the Irish electorate. However, this election would be different from the recent by-election. Stemming from this, the Irish vote was labelled as a "Fenian vote" from "strangers and foreigners"; accusations which Waddy sought to defuse in stating that "I look upon you not as Irishmen, but as Sheffielders". In fact, both views clearly illustrate the extent to which the Irish were perceived as integrated citizens, or as unwelcome outsiders. Sheffield was arguably a very early example of an election being fought almost exclusively on an Irish issue; not so much on Home Rule and other related concerns, but more so on the actions of a perceived internal electoral threat. This elec-

tion divided opinion along ethnic lines and proved to contain strong indigenous resentment. As a result, indigenous voters appear to have reacted to the overtures of the local press and Tory political agenda which sought to prevent the return of two Liberal members who had, in their estimations, "pandered to the Irish vote". So close was the contest that Wortley secured the second seat over Waddy by a mere forty votes, with Sheffield being noted as standing "firm and true to the old national instincts" in the midst of a "torrent of Liberal successes" in the north of England (Craig 1977, 274; *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 13 April 1880)[12]. The 1880 general election was therefore the first real test for the HRC. It again shows that Irish support was clearly with the Liberals while united action, accompanied with central directives, was employed throughout. The effectiveness of the Irish vote is debatable, but the Sheffield by-election of 1879 shows that the vote was effective in stirring up an indigenous backlash if nothing else. Sheffield's parliamentary seats were closely fought affairs, and there is an argument in suggesting the Irish *could* in fact determine the outcome, although it is difficult to say conclusively.

Under the Third Reform Act, the resultant franchise reforms led to an increased Irish electorate that was complimented with a "splitting of parliamentary boroughs into single-member divisions, under the terms of the Redistribution Act of 1885", which held out the possibility for a small but "well-disciplined group of voters" to hold the balance of power. With these altered conditions the Irish migrant, "with their traditional flair for political management and the cohesion engendered by their common religion, were in an excellent position to take advantage of this state of affairs" even though they did not command numerical strength (Howard 1947, 42). Following this, Wakefield represented a test case for the Irish vote in the Riding ahead of the general election of 1885 (O'Day 1993, 53). The Wakefield by-election in July prompted prominent members of the Wakefield Irish community to call upon the services of Thomas Sexton (MP for Sligo) to provide guidance and direction on how they should vote. The purpose of his visit was to explain why they were "bound to vote for the Conservative candidate, Mr. [*Edward*] Green, in preference to the Liberal candidate" William Lee, in what was a marginal constituency where the Irish vote could decide the outcome. Such was the importance of winning this marginal seat ahead of the general election that Herbert Gladstone also made the trip to Wakefield to promote the Liberal cause – even travelling on the same train as Sexton. Voting Conservative was essentially perceived as a revenge tactic against Liberal policy in Ireland and as Sexton advocated, an opportunity to give a Tory govern-

[12] Sheffield election result (2 member constituency): A.J. Mundella - 17,217; C.B.S. Wortley - 16,546; S.D. Waddy 16,506.

ment "fair play" in governing Ireland. As with other elections, the influence of the Irish vote cannot be gauged precisely. But with the Wakefield-Irish consequently endorsing Sexton's proposals and voting for the Conservative candidate (who took the seat) it could be asserted that the Irish vote may well have been the deciding factor (Craig 1974; *Freeman's Journal*, 2 July 1885)[13].

Following the Wakefield by-election "victory", electoral potential of the Irish in the Riding became a growing concern for Central Executive. James J. O'Kelly's (MP for Roscommon) tour of Yorkshire and visit to Leeds highlights the regional campaign to obtain consent from local branches for Executive actions and ensure electoral consensus. In Leeds for example, the branches pledged that the Irishmen there would support Parnell and his party in "whatever policy they considered necessary to obtain the legislative independence of Ireland, and to support no candidate in any of the divisions of Leeds who was not approved of by the Executive of the Irish National League of Great Britain". Kelly outlined that he was in Leeds to make sure that the Irish vote remained separate and as representatives of the Irish nation they were morally obliged to follow IPP directives. Kelly's visit to the Riding is interesting in so much as it outlines the *realpolitik* of Irish diaspora nationalism within the confines of England in that the Irish expatriate community in Yorkshire could not return Irish members to Parliament, unless of course they were sufficiently numerous and concentrated in a given constituency to return their own Irish candidate – as T.P. O'Connor would be in Liverpool's Scotland division. Their task, then, was one of preventing what were regarded as "undesirables" being returned: "They could not help to elect Irish Members, but they could help to prevent the election of men who were undesirable in Parliament. (Cheers.) A negative exercise of political power was sometimes a very effective one" (*Leeds Mercury*, 22 September 1885). Kelly appealed to the Irish to "reserve their political action" until advised on how to act, yet it was quite clear from the Wakefield by-election what direction their political action would take (*Freeman's Journal*, 24 September 1885). Parnell's wider appeal to the Irish vote in Britain expanded upon the expected conduct of the Irish electorate that was very much a top-down dictate. He advocated that "Having given a survey of the two great political parties that were now seeking the suffrages of the Irish electors in Great Britain" the Irish electorate in Britain was duty-bound "to vote as their leaders told them" and "to be in unison of act and policy, as they will work in one heart, sentiment, and opinion", with their people in Ireland and not be enamoured by either Liberal nor Tory, but only support either party if it "is favourable to the Irish

[13] Wakefield did not appear to have a branch of the INLGB at this stage and asked for central advice in establishing one; Edward Green defeated William Lee by 1,918 votes to 1,661 (a margin of 257 votes - 7.2%); (*Leeds Mercury*, 2 July 1885).

cause and the restoration of Ireland's native Parliament" (*Freeman's Journal*, 6 October 1885). The question raised by those speeches is whether or not individual League branches in Yorkshire and their respective members, not forgetting other independent Irish voters, followed such strict directives on polling day. The political realities of operating within a diasporic context also meant that political activism was not as restricted or supressed as it was in Ireland, thus equating to more manoeuvrability and toleration in an external context, though curtailed in other regards.

Commentary on the coming election reveals the extent to which the Irish vote was viewed in certain localities. In East Leeds, for instance, where there was a highly-concentrated Irish population, the vote would be an important factor during the election. Woodhouse has described it as a "dark horse" and unpredictable for the Liberals since an estimated Irish vote of approximately 2,000 could command a great deal of respect from both main parties and aspiring MPs (Woodhouse 1996, 37). In Bradford it was noted by the *Leeds Mercury* that the town occupied a "very exceptional position". With three seats available and six candidates seeking election, the campaign was dominated by the illness and subsequent absence of two Liberal candidates – William Edward Forster and Angus Holden (the former being terminally ill). The election campaign is interesting in that Forster was absent from all electioneering in the Central Division, which in turn prompted the Conservative candidate, Mr. G.W. Waud to make "no appearances before the constituency". Regardless of absences, the Conservative camp maintained that Waud's candidature was "seriously meant in any case, and that, with the certainty of the Irish voters opposing Mr. Forster, they have reason to believe he has a good chance of being elected" (*Leeds Mercury*, 23 October 1885). In preparation for the general election, the Bradford-Irish organised one of their routine political rallies as part of the League's own electioneering. Held at the Mechanics Institute, approximately 1,600 gathered to hear T.P. O'Connor speak. The chairman on the platform, Mr John Daly, a prominent figure in the Bradford Home Rule movement, reminded the audience that:

> On the eve of the last general election they met in a similar manner and agreed to support two candidates. He believed that on that occasion the Irish vote was given in accordance with the resolution, and it swelled the great majority by which those two candidates were returned. Since then things have passed which were not very pleasant to them, and this remark referred in particular to one of the successful candidates, whom he did not wish to name. ("Buckshot" and "Forster") They knew that Mr. Forster did not act in accordance with their desires in Ireland, and he hoped that Mr. Forster would be ousted from the Central Division of Bradford. (Applause.) (*Leeds Mercury*, 19 November 1885)

In his capacity as president of the Bradford Central branch, Michael O'Flynn, also asserted that the Irish electors of Bradford placed their full

confidence in Parnell and would only vote for the sanctioned candidate. However, the bitter taste left in the mouths of the Bradford-Irish in supporting Forster in 1880 was of no small significance. They undoubtedly felt betrayed, yet possibly unsure of Parnell's guidelines as they had followed such directions previously in supporting Forster. In addition to O'Flynn and Daley, another prominent member of the local political Irish elite, William Sullivan reiterated the sentiments of his fellow countrymen in underlining the fact that "in voting they must be guided by Mr. Parnell; if their leaders said they must vote for Mr. Forster – though he hoped he would never have to vote for him – they must do it, for the sake of Ireland". The importance of the Irish vote in relation to Forster's candidature increased in significance from the perspective of both camps. Apart from Forster being attacked for his Free Trade principles by the Conservatives, the contest roused a degree of bitterness due to the interventions of the League's Executive and its proposed use of the Irish vote. According to the *Mercury* there existed sentiments of sympathy towards Forster "among all classes in the community – except perhaps amongst the extreme section of Irishmen". It was maintained that the strength of each party in the Central Division of Bradford was such that any candidate seeking election did not have the "slightest chance of being returned unless supported by the Irish voters" – estimated to be 800. There was little doubt that the bulk of Irish voters would opt for Mr. Motley Waud but T. P. O'Connor's "special pilgrimage to Bradford in order to entreat the Irish electors", to vote for the Tory candidate would be unpalatable to many of those gathered, but his task was to convince them that the "Tories were after all the real friends of Ireland!". Furthermore, O'Connor implored the Bradford-Irish "to take their revenge on the late Chief Secretary for Ireland" as a consequence of his record in office. This "vindictive advice", as it was described, given to Irish electorate by the IPP elite was deemed to be for the sole purpose of not holding the balance of power as in other English constituencies, but "with the one desire of getting rid of Mr. Forster in his absence". It was also deemed as "further proof of that persistent and implacable hatred with which Mr. Parnell and his allies have pursued him [Forster] both in and out of office", and with such support Mr. Motley Waud hoped to be returned as the first Member for the Central Division of Bradford (*Leeds Mercury*, 26 November 1885).

What can be gleaned from the following newspaper article is that the Irish vote was considered to be crucial for the Tory candidate and illustrates that not all Irishmen would follow central directives. The perceived threat of the Irish vote and the conduct of its leadership merely provided greater support and a spur in Forster's absence. This campaign ultimately represented not only a means of striking a blow against the Liberals, but was also a personal vendetta against Forster – a task laid squarely at the feet of the Bradford-Irish. The Liberals, however, recognised the "heavy odds of the Irish

vote against them", yet were still confident that they could still place Forster at the head of the poll without a large majority (*Leeds Mercury*, 26 November 1885). At a Liberal gathering convened for the "furtherance of the candidature of the Right Hon. W.E. Forster" in the town, Mr. T. A. Watson made his feelings known. He drew attention to the attempts made by T.P. O'Connor "to alienate the sympathies of the Irish electors of Bradford from Mr. Forster", and condemned his "endeavour to stir up bitterness and strife where hitherto none had existed", appealing to his "Irish fellow-burgesses not to be dictated to by this stranger from Ireland as to how they should vote" (*Leeds Mercury*, 20 November 1885).

The campaign for Bradford Central is of special significance here as it outlines the manner in which the Irish vote was perceived by indigenous politicians. Both parties were evidently appealing to what would most likely transpire to be a swing vote in this particular Division, but Forster's seat also drew added attention as it undoubtedly represented a revenge "scalp" in political terms for Parnell's party. At a more local level, and of more interest, is the way in which the external involvement of Irish elites in the shape of T.P. O'Connor (and others) was seen as wholly unwelcome and unnecessary. Regarded as a "stranger from Ireland", O'Connor's visit to the constituency reveals the extent to which the Bradford-Irish were regarded as an important minority interest vote worthy of consideration – in some ways an integral part of Bradford society and not viewed as outsiders. If Irish political elite involvement was considered to be as "alien" and in some way "foreign", then the Irish residents of the town must have been perceived in quite different terms by indigenous politicians. Also of importance, is the stress placed upon the "bitterness and strife" being roused in a town that had hitherto seen very few sectarian problems in the past – apart from the tumult caused by the "Baron De Camin" some twenty-three years previous (*Bradford Observer*, 18 September 1862). Yet, even this rabble-rousing, anti-papal ultra-Protestant hate preacher was attributable to external stimuli. It was thus felt by some sections of Bradford's political establishment that the involvement of IPP hierarchy was not welcome in this election.

The election build-up and results for Bradford are indicative of the nature of organised Irish nationalism in a Yorkshire industrial town. The added dimension of targeting Forster made for quite unique electoral activity. In spite of such efforts, the Liberals managed a clean sweep for all three seats in Bradford by returning Forster, Illingworth and Holden (Craig 1974, 79-81)[14]. Bradfordian Liberals revelled in the fact that two of their candidates were returned in spite of being "laid aside by illness" whilst facing the issues of fair

[14] Bradford election results:- Central: W.E. Forster 5,275; G.M. Waud 3,732. East: A. Holden 4,713; J. Taylor 4,367. West: A. Illingworth 4,688; H.B. Reed 3,408.

trade and the Church, along with the "utmost strength of the Parnellite faction". Whether or not the Irish voters in Bradford adhered to the directives of the Irish political leadership in London, support for Forster by the likes of Mundella from Sheffield had the possible effect of counteracting O'Connor's efforts. Though impossible to determine exactly how the Irish voted on the day, it can be assumed that the majority acted as advised (especially given the Forster factor), while the rest may have simply found it impossible to support a Conservative candidate (*Leeds Mercury*, 30 November 1885)[15].

The build-up to the Leeds election was equally important in terms of the Irish vote. In the East Leeds constituency, an Irish stronghold, the Liberal candidate John Lawrence Gane QC, a nonconformist described as a radical and a true representative of the working classes, undoubtedly had some appeal with Irish voters. At an open-air Liberal rally "composed of the poorest of the most working-class part of Leeds", indirect appeals were made by Gane to the Irish in reminding them of the "beneficial legislation passed by the Liberals for Ireland", through Disestablishment and various land laws. It was emphasised that the Liberal Party had demonstrated loyalty toward Ireland in the past, imploring Irish voters to "perpetuate their support to that party" once again, in order that "they would obtain further benefits for Ireland in the future, if they only place faith in the party as they used to do", in supporting Lawrence Gane. More importantly, however, at the conclusion of Gane's speech, he stressed that he would not support Irish separation, but a bill giving "the Irish people the management of their own internal affairs". He reminded his audience that polling day would soon be upon them and that they should place their confidence in him as his party "had fought for the working classes and for the Irish" (*Leeds Mercury*, 23 November 1885). Gane's candidacy and electioneering faced quite difficult opposition in the form of the Conservative candidate Richard Dawson. The *Leeds Mercury* stated that "there would be little doubt about the result but for the presence of a considerable number of Irish voters" in the constituency who will act upon Parnell's" advice and vote Tory. Dawson, an Irishman from Limerick, whom the Tories adopted as their candidate, was deemed a strategic political manoeuvre "in securing the support of the Irish element" due to his ethnicity. Yet if Lawrence Gane could "secure the seat for the Liberals in spite of the Irish vote, as his friends believe he will, he will score a signal victory" (*Leeds Mercury*, 24 November 1885)[16]. As shown already, Gane was fully aware of the importance of securing Irish support and he made attempts to get them

[15] Forster's majority 1,543: Alfred Illingworth 1,280: Angus Holden 346. The election was noted for a large turnout at the poll and noted as orderly with an Irish electorate in the Central Division (estimated at approximately 800) reportedly acting with "solidity" against Forster.

[16] The number of electors in the Borough is listed as 53,083 with the Central being 11,135; East at 8,831; West at 12,058; South at 10,931; North at 10,128.

on-board. In contrast to Bradford however, Leeds returned three Conservatives out of a possible five (North, East & Central) (Craig 1974, 131-35)[17]. Albeit possibly exaggerated, the *Nation* records the Irish vote in Leeds as: East 1,500, Central 800, and the North at about 400, "so that without it the Conservatives could not have obtained a single seat" in what is one of the "most Radical towns in England outside of Birmingham" (*Nation*, 12 December 1885). Nevertheless two seats were won by very small majorities in a Liberal stronghold, and the Irish in East Leeds possessed more than enough clout to decide the outcome. Despite such victories as those in Bradford the Liberal party was left without an overall majority, and Gladstone pointed to the Irish vote and its impact in this regard. In acknowledging the damaging effects of fair trade, he attributed the main reason for poor Liberal returns in borough elections as a direct result of the Irish vote. Gladstone lamented that what was needed in Britain "was the voice of Ireland from Ireland" and the voice of Britain from Britons. He pointed out that the voice that came from English counties was "tinged strongly with the Irish brogue" with the result that twenty-five seats had been decided by the Irish vote. It was an "infusion", in his words, of the Irish vote and the "delusion of fair trade" that had cost his party the general election (*Freeman's Journal*, 1 December 1885)[18].

1886

Gladstone's conversion to Home Rule intimately affected the tactics of the INL ahead of the 1886 general election, and rightly or wrongly, it brought a "moral" conviction to solving the Irish issue (Boyce 1998). Described as the "politics of humanitarianism" and a "crisis of public consciousness", Home Rule ultimately came to represent a test case for democracy. The Grand Old Man's conversion would lead to increased activity from the Irish in Britain, and he would eventually become their "surrogate leader" (Biagini 2007, 3-4, 40). But prior to the general election of July, Bradford yet again was the focus of Irish nationalist activity with respect to a by-election. The death of Forster on 5 April 1886 quickly resulted in a very interesting struggle for Bradford Central. In contrast to the position of the Irish vote in the general election, it was now operating in a different context, the reason being that the election was essentially fought on purely Irish issues, which were noted as "the burden of the platform". The Liberal candidate George Shaw-Lefevre was standing against a

[17] Central: G.W. Balfour 4,589; J. Barran 4,275. East: R. Dawson 3,849; J.L. Gane 3,504. North: W.L. Jackson 4,494; A.W. Rucker 4,237. South: L. Playfair 5,208; S.C. MaCaskie 2,869; West: H.J. Gladstone 6,130; J. Wheelhouse 3,804.

[18] Irish vote in Scotland estimated at 10% and 4% for England. Gladstone acknowledged that without the Irish vote in the boroughs, his party "had not the smallest chance even of a respectable minorority".

Conservative and Unionist candidate, Edward Brodie-Hoare. Election commentary shows that he was chosen simply on the basis of being a Unionist irrespective of his political leanings and other important political credentials. Preceding the election, placards were placed around the town "adorned with a coloured representation of the 'Union Jack', urging a vote for Brodie and to 'maintain the Empire'". Following a hard campaign, the result was a victory for the Liberals and Home Rule with Shaw-Lefevre securing a majority of 780, which again points to the Irish acting as the determining factor (Craig 1974, 79). In his victory speech, Shaw-Lefevre stated that he would go to parliament "with their [*the Irish*] mandate to give his best support to Mr. Gladstone in the task he had undertaken" in giving "contentment to Ireland" and free the English parliament from the Irish difficulty (*Leeds Mercury*, 22 April 1886)[19].

With the election proper in July of that year, Sheffield's Irish community once again came into focus through its relationship with indigenous political elites. One example is seen in a pre-election speech by Anthony J. Mundella, in which he supported Home Rule as the best and only solution to the Irish question, particularly given its stifling effects on the legislative process in England. Mundella pointed out that England had attempted to resolve Irish issues over the past quarter of a century but had failed in that it sought to give an English solution to an Irish problem. He also noted that "from the age of eighteen to thirty he had lived in Dublin, and had often heard of O'Connell', holding the view that a "reinstated Irish Parliament in line with that which existed in the late eighteenth century *was* the solution' (*Leeds Mercury*, 29 April 1886). When Mundella contested the election for the Sheffield Brightside Division, he stood against the Conservative candidate Lord Edmund Talbot, whom he had defeated the previous November by some 1,200 votes. The Tories were not in receipt of the Irish vote now as would have been the case previously – although there is doubt as to whether they voted against a friend of Ireland in Mundella – and they hoped that through better organisation they could take their seat in a working class district. The Irish vote in the division was estimated at around 300, which were solidly cast for Mundella; similarly, in the Central Division both parties were confident of victory with Mr. Howard Vincent having won the last election with a majority of approximately 1,100. On this occasion the Irish vote (described as very large) went against Mr Vincent, who won the election nevertheless with a significant majority of 4,522 to Joshua Hawkins 3,323 (*Leeds Mercury*, 7 July 1886).

[19] Shaw-Lefevre's election campaign was actively supported by Alfred Illingworth; Central Division contained 11,297 voters spread over five wards.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this article has shed light on some of the parliamentary political contests that constitutional Irish migrant nationalism became entangled with. What occurred in the West Riding of Yorkshire was an intertwining of emigration and nationalism, arguably *the* two dominant themes in 19th century Ireland. For the Yorkshire-Irish, political engagement in local parliamentary seats on behalf of the homeland offers a very different perspective on Irish nationalism. The League, whether under the auspices of the HRC or the INL, brought pressure to bear upon British politics from within. The effectiveness of the migrant vote has often been questioned by historians, but the evidence points to a well-organised movement capable of agitating and disrupting proceedings at a minimum, to one that could arguably determine electoral outcomes in marginal constituencies in the interests of Old Erin. The plight of the homeland instilled in the migrant a deep sense of *amor patriæ* that comprised of sentimentalism and moral obligations. Home Rule translated as something quite different to the Irish in Britain, due largely to its vagueness and malleability, which was exacerbated in diasporic contexts. The League in Britain ultimately operated in a completely different context to that which existed in Ireland, or anywhere else for that matter. Unlike their American counterparts, the Irish in Britain possessed a vote, but this vote relied upon sufficient concentrations of eligible voters to be effective and had to contend with a variety of competing allegiances and native-backlash. Politics also offered aspiring Irishmen upward social mobility though advancing purely Irish issues inhibited assimilation and integration. This would eventually change during the 1890s and the early decades of the 20th century owing to competing or shifting allegiances of homeland, Catholic Church and the lure of indigenous politics. This "diaspora dilemma" came about through fratricidal Irish politics and the immediacy of the migrant context (Hutchinson 2010, 107). The electioneering above points to a well-organised migrant community that was both strong-willed and outwardly confident in acting as a political fifth column. That same community offered the IPP a means for promoting Home Rule from within British constituencies which it exploited to the utmost, whereby the Yorkshire-Irish were more than happy to oblige.

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Irish Diaspora, Cultural Activism and Print Media in Transatlantic Contexts between Ireland and North America c. 1857-1887*

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Abstract:

This paper examines ideas, concepts, and theories, in relation to the revival of the Irish language as a transatlantic venture c.1857-1887 focusing on print media and cultural organisations in the United States. The study of these forums in the context of the Irish language revival allows us to assess theories and methodologies relating to the media's role in a transatlantic context. It demonstrates the transcending of the Irish language across transnational borders, the creation of debate and discussion in a hybrid community public sphere, and the role print media, and media events, played in constructing this transatlantic and transnational community, highlighting that movements in the US and Ireland influenced one another in the context of ideology, methodology and organisation.

Keywords: Irish-America, Irish language, Print media, Revival ideology, Transnationalism

1. Introduction

The large-scale Famine emigration to the United States to escape hardening living conditions, as well as previous emigration routes established with flaxseed ships and trade, meant that there was already an Irish presence

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in the US before the 19th century which increased largely in the latter half. Not only were the Irish population outsiders in terms of culture, religion, and ethnicity but many also still spoke Irish as their mother tongue. Census reports from Ireland at this time indicate a decrease of 407,963 Irish speakers between the years 1851-1861 (Central Statistics Office, 2018). Whilst this cannot be attributed to emigration alone, it does show that there was a vast drop in Irish speakers in Ireland. This was due to, and not limited to, the increase in English proficiency for economic and social advancement, the presence of English in the education system, and the overall decrease in everyday spoken Irish and many when emigrating to the US took the language with them. A study of Irish-American print media and cultural organisations formed in the latter half of the nineteenth century offers context on this minority ethnic group and how they functioned in their new public sphere. As Doorley accounts in his study on the New York newspaper the *Gaelic American* the "ethnic newspaper is a useful tool in reflecting the concerns of a particular minority group within a host society during a precise period in that group's history" (2015, 63).

Similarly, in the study of cultural organisations with regard to the movement towards cultural identity and acceptance, we discover the type of people who joined these societies and how they took part in classes and events societies organised. An overview of the aims and objectives of the societies are also understood whilst analysing their methodology and ideology. This societal progression is the stepping stone for the understanding of the Irish diaspora in the US in terms of the creation of social groups and in turn it enhances previous scholarship regarding the formation of new community and linguistic groups in the US in the nineteenth century before such flourished back in Ireland, the "homeland". As Wolf mentions, the Irish diaspora in the US at this time were far from "silent Irish-language communities" (2017, 125) and they began to organise themselves to use their voice in the context of a journalistic sphere to further the Irish language revival movement. Three objectives will be raised in the present paper, therefore, regarding this study. First, to highlight that the Irish-American print forums and cultural organisations understood the use, and the significance, of using the press in the language revival in order to reach a wider audience and to create debate and discussion in a hybrid community public sphere. Second, by analysing the use of the Irish language, print media, and the formation of cultural organisations in the US, similar methodologies and ideologies begin to emerge attesting to the language revival as a global movement and that other aspects of this movement such as linguistics, debate, organisation and emotion transcended geographical and imaginary boundaries and borders to create global and international links. Third, that through the analysis of key media events and subsequent sociolinguistic engagement presented in this article, we can study the role print media played in constructing a transnational and trans-

atlantic community which later shaped what happened in the homeland in the context of ideology, methodology and organisation.

2. Revival of the Irish language in a transatlantic context

The Irish diaspora in the US in the 19th century attests to the linguistic capabilities of the emigrant community in the context of the Irish language revival, in particular for their use of bilingual print media. Nilsen (1996, 254) gives some insight into the number of Irish speakers in the US at the time, especially those who settled on the East Coast and attributes to numbers such as these the fact that there was a large population of Irish language speakers in the US which contributed to a new public sphere in which societies and periodicals were established for the cultivation, and later revival, of the Irish language. This community was not only bilingual in nature but also had a hybrid identity which formed transatlantic links in the forum of print media, ideology, and cultural society formation in both the pre-revival and revival period (Uí Chollatáin 2015).

Many associate the Irish language revival with the establishment of *Conradh na Gaeilge* (The Gaelic League) in Dublin in 1893 since it was the work of this society which really elevated and promoted the Irish language in the public sphere in Ireland in the 19th/20th century as both a written and scholarly language with "a unique quality of its own" (Ó Tuama 1972, 109). However, there were various ways in which the culture was given a "unique quality" in this bilingual US society in the nineteenth century and two methods in particular, that of print media and cultural organisations. These synergies created the cultural context in which print media played a critical role in the development of Irish language revival ideology in Ireland by means of a transatlantic venture without boundaries. Similarly, a lot of the revival methods used in Ireland can be seen as echoes to that which were already carried out in the US. As Uí Chollatáin explains:

> Faoin am ar cuireadh tús leis an phlé ar an chéad nuachtán Gaeilge do ghluaiseacht na hathbheochana in Éirinn in 1897, bhí irisí agus nuachtáin na Stát Aontaithe a bhí ag díriú ar phobal léitheoireachta Éireannach, fréamhaithe i sícé an Ghaeil thar lear […]. (2015, 302)[1]

The acknowledgement of the print media forum in a transatlantic context assesses the connection between these articles and the broader journalistic field in which they appeared, and examines the links between Irish and US societies as a result.

[1] By the time discussion began regarding the first Irish newspaper of the revival movement in Ireland in 1897, US journals and newspapers which were directed at an Irish reading public were rooted in the psyche of the Gael abroad […] (Translation mine).

The methodology and use of Irish-American print media to develop Irish as both a literary and a print language was a parallel transatlantic movement to that in Ireland. Periodicals published there such as *Bolg an tSolair* (1795), *Ancient Ireland – A Weekly Magazine* (1835), *An Fíor-Éirionnach* (1862), *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* (1882) and *An Claidheamh Soluis* (1899) also printed Irish language material in a journalistic context. This provided a platform for Irish language print media and developed the language in journalistic writings. *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* and *An Claidheamh Soluis* published bilingual articles so the material would reach both English and Irish readers, which is similar to the methodology practised in Irish-American newspapers as they would often print notes and translations to the Irish language material in order to access a wider reading audience. The teaching of Irish by printing vocabulary in print media was also seen in journals and periodicals in Ireland such as *Dublin Penny Journal* (1831-1837), *The Citizen* (1839) and *The Nation* in Dublin but to name a few (Nic Pháidín 1998, 7), a method frequently used by Irish-American print media also. Other transatlantic connections in terms of print media are found in font choice and article subject matter. Print media on both sides of the Atlantic was used as a voice for the various US cultural societies promoting the Irish language. The Boston Philo-Celtic Society used the *Irish Echo* in Boston as a medium for society news and events and Michael Logan, a Galway born man who had emigrated to New York, established the newspaper *An Gaodhal* and used it to disseminate news about Ireland and to print Irish language lessons and minutes of the Philo-Celtic Societies, especially of that in Brooklyn, to his readers, for example[2].

The symbiotic relationship between society and publication allowed those who could not attend, or who did not want to attend classes, to learn the language themselves in their own time. It also kept them informed of society meetings, minutes, aims, and objectives. It was this synergy that transnationally influenced the usage of print media by cultural organisations as a media forum for their subscribers, *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* and *Cumann Buan-Choimeádta na Gaeilge* / The Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language (SPIL) in Dublin, for example (Nilsen 1996, 268). Following the increase in public discussion and vernacular print media it was a natural progression that members of the new social and intellectual society would come together as a group to discuss ideas and similar interests. The movement evolved into Irish language societies and cultural organisations where members of the wider public could interact with one another with common interests and goals. The Philo-Celtic Societies in the US also had similar aims and objectives to the Irish language societies in Ireland. Their aim for the cultivation of the Irish language in the context of a revival ide-

[2] See also Uí Fhlannagáin (1990 e 2008), McMahon (2008).

ology corresponds to the printing of Irish language material by means of a journalistic forum on both sides of the Atlantic. Their use of print media as a vehicle for Irish language revival shows the transatlantic influence of ideas in the context of this bilingual print forum. The Boston Philo-Celtic Society was founded in 1873, 3 years before the foundation of SPIL in Ireland, and *An Gaodhal* began printing in 1881, a year before *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge*. This common usage of a bilingual print forum highlights also that the Irish-American press was more advanced in their understanding of the significance of the Irish column amongst the reading public (Uí Chollatáin 2014b; 2015, 303), a method later used in the revival movement in Ireland.

The transatlantic links between Ireland and the US echo concepts of transnational circuits and communities as established by Faist, Fauser and Reisenauer (2013). Transnational circuits are "sets of ties between people and organizations in which information and services are exchanged for the purpose of achieving a common goal" and transnational communities:

> comprise dense and continuous sets of social and symbolic ties, characterized by a high degree of intimacy, emotional depth, moral obligation and social cohesion. Geographical proximity is no longer a necessary criterion for the existence of a community – there are "communities with propinquity". (2013, 14)

The two concepts aid in the understanding and study of the Irish diaspora on both sides of the Atlantic and relate to the theory of imagined communities by Anderson (1983). The diaspora and organisations in Ireland and the US had similar goals to promote the cultivation of the language through publications and its teaching to preserve its antiquity and to promote its use as a national language. The "ties" they had with one another were their motivation to keep the language a living tongue, as seen in the US in particular, and to organise Irish language learners and enthusiasts together to aid in its advancement and survival. This is seen also in the experience of other diaspora communities emigrating to the US in the nineteenth century, the Czech immigrants, for example. At a time of brewing Czech nationalism within the Austro-Hungarian empire Czech emigrants had a similar experience to that of the Irish in the US; they understood the importance of recognising themselves as individuals in an immigrant country whilst creating a new hybrid identity, the responsibility to keep ties with their homeland, and the development of learning and teaching Czech studies to keep nationality alive amongst the Czech-American community (Garver 1993, 103-108). Geography held no boundaries for these emigrants, and the Irish-American community in particular developed both "social and symbolic" ties with one another in a transatlantic context (Faist, Fauser, Reisenauer 2013, 14).

2.1 Irish Language print media

The Irish speaking community began to print Irish language poems, stories, and manuscript material in Irish-American print media in the 19th century. Current research indicates that the first Irish-language column was printed in the *Irish-American* newspaper in 1857 and their aim for the Gaelic Department was to "vindicate the beauty of the Irish tongue, its high culture in ages far remote, and the advanced civilization of the Irish people as compared with any European nation" (*Irish-American*, 25 July 1857). They also asked readers to send them copies of manuscripts, Irish songs, or Irish literature they had in their possession to their offices in order to print copies in the paper (*ibidem*). An article published before this also mentions the difficulty in procuring Gaelic font for publications and that the type they wanted to print was to be "the same as that adopted by the Irish Archaeological Society for their publications and it [had] been cast in a manner that reflects much credit on the eminent firm who whom the order was entrusted" (*Irish-American*, 18 July 1857). Similar aims to this are seen in the objectives of the Boston Philo-Celtic Society and the use of textbooks in their language lessons which they ensured were the same as those with SPIL in Ireland (*Irish-American*, 24 November 1877). From these examples two key thought-processes emerge: that the publications in Irish-American newspapers in the US were to be printed as similar as possible to those already read by the Irish language reading public in Ireland, and that the beginning of the Gaelic Department in the forum of print media was originally used for the cultivation and preservation of the Irish language and cultural material. This cultivation is similar to societies formed in Ireland at the same time whose primary aim was the protection of Irish language material, the Ossianic Society (1853) and the Archaeological Society (1840), for example. The Irish diaspora in the US were trying to maintain their history, culture, and sense of belonging, amongst readers which was a parallel aim of those at home at this time.

As the movement for the language revival progressed print media in the US evolved from using the forum to keep the Irish diaspora knowledgeable about their homeland and cultural heritage, to one of keeping the diaspora informed of affairs relating to themselves in the US. Quinlin attests to this in his study of Boston newspapers stating that "the foremost mission of Boston Irish newspapers in the nineteenth century was to speak on behalf of the Irish community, not simply about it" (2013, 85). Irish-American print media initially began using the Gaelic Department as a means to keep the Irish accustomed to their literary tradition but from the 1860s onwards there was a switch from the cultivation of the language to the teaching of the language in these Gaelic Departments. There was another development in the teaching of the language in the 1870s-1880s when print media forums began printing

reports from newly established Irish language classes and Philo-Celtic societies instead of solely focusing on the teaching of the language. During the years 1870s-1880s in particular when the Philo-Celtic societies, and other Irish language societies and classes, were gaining popularity there was a shift in the Gaelic Departments from the teaching of the Irish language back to the publication of Irish language poems etc. as before. The teaching was mostly dominated by the societies at this time which shows a change in focus regarding the organisation of societal structures and provides an insight on how the movement in the US presented itself (as an organisation of activism and as an individual group which no longer relied on the Gaelic Departments in print media to teach the language to readers). With societies providing classes and lectures it also highlights that the print media forums acted as a catalyst for the establishment of language classes in the US, and that eventually the societies began to evolve and structure themselves. The Irish language public now began to move towards an extension of the spoken language in the formation of diaspora networks by forming these classes and organisations.

As the years progressed the presence of debate and discussion was also an important stepping stone in the transatlantic revival movement and this aspect is seen especially in the Irish language revival in Ireland with newspapers such as *An Claidheamh Soluis* and *Fáinne an Lae*, for example (Nic Pháidín 1998; Uí Chollatáin 2004). The criticism of literature, and in particular the criticism of language teaching, is just as important as the act of revival itself. One of the aims of the Gaelic League was to extend the use of the spoken language in Ireland and, therefore, the presence of debate in Irish language print media before 1893 shows the intellectual context of the public sphere which spoke the language in the US. It shows another extension of the spoken language as the appearance of the Irish language in terms of discussion highlights the language's progression in this public sphere. This presence would later develop into the creation of a separate, yet shared, identity, community, and voice, which would influence the homeland in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

2.2 Irish language cultural organisations

In the study of the Irish language communities in the US at this time Nilsen mentions that "the question of the Irish language in nineteenth-century New York [and in the US as a whole] cannot be dismissed by mere reference to a 'language movement' " (1996, 274). Whilst this was by and large a "movement" for the revival of the language, there was also the foundation of a community forming, both in terms of a linguistic and an imagined community. Cultural organisations created in the US as early as the 1860s give an insight into the beginning of transatlantic connections arising from community groups formed by the Irish diaspora. The Ossianic Society, established

in Dublin in 1853, had a New York branch and a newspaper, the *Phoenix*, which frequently published articles about meetings and members relating to the parent society in Dublin. An article that highlights strong transatlantic interactions between these two branches discusses the support and aid given by New York to Ireland:

> The N.Y. Ossianic Society can render important services to the cause of Gaelic literature, […] Its labors are extremely light, being – at least for the present – confined to the admission of members and the transmission of their subscriptions to the parent Ossianic Society in Dublin. All the real work, in as far as regards literary production, is performed by the latter, while the object of the New York Society is but to give it pecuniary support. (*Phoenix*, 9 June 1860)

The connection between the two countries on both sides of the Atlantic in regard to the language revival is enhanced again with the formation of the New York branch of SPIL in 1878 and the transatlantic connection between the Brooklyn Philo-Celtic Society and SPIL in Dublin, when the Brooklyn society resolved to "affiliate with the Parent Society, in Dublin" (*Irish-American*, 9 March 1878). These examples attest to the building of international networks as part of the move towards subsequent cultural activism on a transnational basis and the formation of global links.

Further examples of Irish/US cultural activism in the context of cultural organisations are the articles published in Irish-American newspapers referring to societies formed in Ireland. An article in the *Irish-American* entitled "Cultivation of the Irish Language" talks of the beginning of the Society for the Promotion and Cultivation of the Irish Language. The newspaper publishes an address and the prospectus of the society, and with its formation in particular, the editor attests to parallel ideologies and aims of this society to those in the US, hoping that both movements will aid one another:

> We are rejoiced to find that the necessity of association for the purpose of preserving and increasing the little knowledge of the ancient tongue of Ireland yet remaining among our people, had been at length recognized at home, and that a Society having in view this purpose, as its primary basis of organization, had been started in Dublin. – We give below their prospectus, and the address of the provisional committee to the people of Ireland, in the hope that their publication may lead to the initiation of a similar movement among our fellow countrymen here, where it is needed probably as much as on the other side of the ocean. We know that there are numbers of Irish scholars in New York and other large cities throughout the Union who would gladly lend to such an association the assistance of their talents and acquirements. (*Irish-American,* 28 August 1858)

The main cultural organisations for the promotion of the Irish language in the US were the Philo-Celtic Societies established in the 1870s. To the

Irish World Logan sent an article ("A Practical Suggestion") about his wish to create classes for the teaching of the Irish language and for the paper to print lessons for their readers (*Irish World*, 25 May 1872). He wrote under the pen name of the "Gael", which he would use later as the name for his Brooklyn newspaper, *An Gaodhal*. Logan followed out his wish and created an Irish language class in Our Lady of Victory School in Brooklyn in 1873. In another letter to the *Irish World* he explained that he was to provide classes to those who wanted to learn the language once a week and after some time he would start to "deliver lectures *in Irish,* on national topics, composed wholly of the words contained in the lessons previously learned […]" (*Irish World,* 8 March 1873). This was the beginning of the establishment of the Philo-Celtic societies across the US which, in light of recent scholarship, has been said to be a stimulus for organisations in Ireland such as SPIL or the Gaelic League, for example. They provided entertainment such as lectures in both Irish and English and annual picnics for members alongside weekly lessons which promoted Logan's vision for the language. The Boston society was founded in 1873 and the Brooklyn society in 1876 with many other branches forming in the 1880s. These were similar to branches formed across Ireland under the Gaelic League. They were regional, as were those in the US and they allowed for more interaction with both societal movements on opposite sides of the Atlantic due to the involvement of a wider audience.

3. Print media's role in a transatlantic context

In the 19th century the Irish language was often seen in print media in the form of language departments or letters to the editor. The newspapers and periodicals in the US created a public sphere in which the Irish language was read and debates and discussions formed. These publications proved necessary to mould and create a society that gave the Irish language a presence in print media and journalism, and later to shape important aspects of public discourse in the language (Uí Chollatáin 2004, 226; 2008, 21; 2014a, 32; 2016a, 177). This can be seen in the work of Nollaig Mac Congáil (2011) on the impact of Irish language columns in English medium newspapers on the wider public sphere and in the work of Aoife Whelan (2015) and the "Irish-Ireland" ideology in Irish language columns published in the Irish Independent in the 20th century.

Readers often interacted with the paper offering advice on what to publish, praising the paper for their constant work in favour of the language. They also interacted with one another and criticised letters previously published in the paper surrounding the language. Criticism such as this is found in a letter written by "Milesian" to the *Irish-American* entitled "Our Native Tongue". Sent from New York, the letter praises and criticises the newspaper.

The criticism in particular refers to an incorrect translation that had been printed previously alongside an Irish language poem in the paper's Gaelic Department. The *Irish-American* responded stating that "Milesian" was correct, that they had not adequately translated the last stanza of the song, and that it was not "as closely translated as it [was their] want" (*Irish-American*, 7 November 1857). The reasoning behind this was that they "were about to omit the said stanza altogether, for it is so manifestly inferior to its fellows, both in poetic merit and versification, that it seems either to have been corrupted or to have formed no part of the original song" (*ibidem*).

Whilst this shows the sociolinguistic impact of the paper's Gaelic Department, and the correspondence generated from it, it also demonstrates that the paper placed more emphasis on the reprinting of the manuscripts than editing and translating them. This correction in translation highlights the dual language discourse the paper portrayed and the fluency of its readers in both languages. Corrections such as those are also seen in the Brooklyn newspaper *An Gaodhal* (and Michael Logan, its editor, with the Irish scholar Thomas O'Neill Russell). Douglas Hyde, in his 1918 memoir, described O'Neill Russell as a man "with the most intense convictions […] little things and great things bulked equally big before his eyes […] and he expended his intense energy on the very smallest of them just as he might have done upon the very biggest" (MS SOD/4/X/1961). His description of Russell attests perfectly to his character in relation to the controversy with Logan. The debate was printed through the medium of Irish-American print media and related to Logan's improper use of grammar in *An Gaodhal.* The front page of *An Gaodhal* stated that the aim of the paper was "the preservation and cultivation of the Irish language and the autonomy of the Irish nation", and O'Neill Russell attacked Logan in the Irish-American press claiming that the Irish present in *An Gaodhal*, and on the front page in particular, was grammatically incorrect. The basis of O'Neill Russell's argument was that the genitive was to follow "chum" instead of the word being in the nominative as found in Logan's paper. This debate, which began in December 1882, was well documented in Irish-American newspapers at the time especially in the *Citizen* in Chicago, the *Irish-American,* and in *An Gaodhal*. O'Neill Russell was known for his extreme opinions on the language and Hyde mentioned in his memoir that O'Neill Russell stated that if the grammar was to be so incorrect in *An Gaodhal* it "would be better to see the Irish language dead than so profaned [and] far preferable would it be to have no Irish language at all" (*ibidem*). His opinion correlates to an editorial note printed in *An Gaodhal* on January 1887 when the editor, Logan, wrote that O'Neill Russell once "said that he *sat down* on the Gael because it printed *bad* Irish" (*An Gaodhal*, January 1887)[3].

[3] Emphasis in the original.

One of the outcomes of this controversy was the discussion and debate it created regarding orthographical and morphological issues of the Irish language at a time when the language was entering a period of transformation. Through the forum of print media, and through the medium of English, Irish language affairs were discussed and commented upon. As Uí Chollatáin states, it was the instrument of English language periodicals and newspapers that helped Irish language revivalists:

> […] work alongside the Irish language community in order to ensure the replacement of a culture that had been displaced for centuries […] creating an unlimited public sphere regardless of linguistic or other boundaries. […] By crossing the boundaries of language, class, creed and writing genre through the passage for journalistic freedom, they allowed the Gaelic culture to "exist" and rejuvenate. (2010, 55-56)

Another example of the crossing of transatlantic and linguistic borders is Thomas O'Neill Russell involvement of Irish language scholars from Dublin in a similar grammatical question he created with Logan. O'Neill Russell sent an open letter to John Fleming, editor of the *Gaelic Journal*, in the *Irish-American* on January 14, 1888, regarding faults he found with expressions within Irish sermons printed in the *Gaelic Journal*. Previously appointed "corresponding member" to the Gaelic Union in 1882 for "being resident abroad, and the official representative of the society" in the US (*Irish-American,* 4 March 1882), O'Neill Russell began attacking the *Gaelic Journal* in the early 1880s for several grammatical points he found in the paper to be incorrect (several criticisms were responded to, and many were ignored). In 1888 Fleming decided that he could no longer be silent and responded to the open letter O'Neill Russell had sent to the *Irish-American*. He stated, amongst other things, that:

> Mr. Russell is not an Irish scholar at all. In his life he has not written or spoken half a dozen consecutive sentences in Irish correctly. Nor is he improving. […] Now I would ask Mr. Russell, should he not distrust the temper that made him fall out with so many friends at both sides of the Atlantic? At this side of the Ocean, our text-books are being corrupted, and even our catechisms. On our tomb-stones a barbarous Irish jargon is being cut ; and Mr. O'Neill Russell is silent. But when a preacher once or twice uses a grammatical expression, Mr. Russell fills a long column with *ungrammatical,* but euphonious quotations to show *the ignorant* that the preacher was not correct. (*Irish-American,* 5 May 1888)[4]

This response from Fleming highlights the negative impact dual language discourse could achieve "with so many friends at both sides of the Atlantic"

[4] See also *Irisleabhar na Gaedhilge* (28, 3, 1888); emphasis in the original.

(*ibidem*). O'Neill Russell was a founding member of the Gaelic League and his attack on Logan was just one of many he created in the Irish-American press regarding methods used for language revival in the US. His negativity, destruction of relationships, and verbal disapproval, would have associated the League with a negative image due to a founding member criticising rather than praising international Irish language revival efforts. By writing in the English language the articles would appeal to a wider audience and disseminate their ideologies further afield, but it also, however, allowed them to be harsh, critical, and often at time relentless in their discourse on the language and revival methodology which at times could have been detrimental to these international links.

4. Development of societal structures and political activism

With the development of societal structure in the US at this time there was a shift in the reading public's focus from the spoken language to the organisational. Self-made structures such as this were seen in the *Irish-American* when articles published by various societies suggested the establishment of an Irish language convention in the early 1880s. An article entitled "A Convention Suggested" printed in the *Irish-American* on March 10, 1883, is an example of this. It was mentioned in the article that in a recent meeting of the Boston Philo Celtic Society a resolution passed where the members of the society "deem[ed] it advisable to suggest a union of all societies in this country instituted for the cultivation of the Irish language, for the purpose of carrying into effect the objects for which they were instituted" (*Irish-American*, 10 March 1883). All societies would elect representatives to go to this convention to "discuss ways and means whereby the movement could be advanced, and to effect a union for the better furtherance thereof" (*ibidem*). This demonstrates the moving away from the reliance of print media and the Gaelic Department forum to the creation of their own identity and formation within US society. The gathering of all Irish language societies in the US for this convention to advance the movement is an interesting contrast to the parallel cultural organisation structure in Ireland at the time. As the movement in the US was growing stronger with the establishment of more Irish language classes and Philo-Celtic societies in the 1880s, there was a breakdown of relationships in Ireland within the same time period, the spilt of SPIL, for example.

With the creation of new community and societal structures a sense of cultural nationalism and identity, not only amongst members, but also amongst the wider journalistic sphere, was established. The progression of these societal structures aided Irish language revivalists in Ireland in later years as the methods used in the US positively impacted those in Ireland. As Uí Chollatáin states, the periodicals and newspapers in the US were:

> instrumental in the creation of a shared, transatlantic identity, "which brought new perspectives to the "language world" of Irish speakers" and that this endeavour

constituted a "preservation project", for others it was viewed as the opportunity to reinstate a shared identity, which would "supplement rather than burden" changing notions of Irish language identity as affected by migratory flows. (2016b, 353)

Irish-American publications encouraged the formation of new societies in Ireland and appealed to their readers to support the cause and aid in the vision both societies and paper shared. The publication of the aims, minutes, and meetings of the societies allowed the Irish-American, American, and Irish readers, to follow the movement in Ireland and enabled them to encourage the process. The ideology of the journalistic field and audience in which the articles appeared is seen by those who sent letters appreciating the publication of such articles relating to the Irish language matters. This linked the Irish and US communities together with a shared outlook on the revival. For any language to grow and thrive speakers of said language must keep in contact with other speakers on a transatlantic and global basis, a concept introduced by Pádraig Pearse in 1906 in an article he wrote in *An Claidheamh Soluis*. He discussed the influence literature can have on others on a global scale and the importance of having Irish literature, and perhaps Irish language material, seen in publications and in writings abroad:

> Irish Literature, if it is to live and grow, must get into contact on the one hand with its own past, and on the other with the mind of the contemporary Europe. It must draw the sap of its life from the soil of Ireland; but it must be open on every side to the free air of heaven. (Pearse 1906)

As Pearse attests to the importance of Irish literature on a global scale, the same is said for articles relating to the revival and the development of social consciousness. In the Irish-American public sphere of the 19th century a form of social consciousness and political activism began to emerge, not only regarding the antiquity, cultivation, and revival of the Irish language, but also relating to politics and its links with the language.

A key example of such political hinderance on the language movement is seen in an article in the *Irish-American* in 1878 entitled "The N. Y. Philo-Celtic Society: Public Meeting in Support of the Irish Language Revival". Whilst in the US, Thomas O'Neill Russell gave a lecture to the New York Philo-Celtic Society on September 21 and the *Irish-American* published it. Although the lecture was for the purpose of the Irish language revival movement, as the title suggests, underlying tones of political and social consciousness were also expressed. O'Neill Russell stated that "emancipation failed; Fenianism failed; and if the present [language] movement is not persevered in, all hope for Ireland is lost". He also mentioned how he had "impressed on his hearers the absolute necessity of preserving the Irish language, without which it will be utterly impossible to preserve Irish nationality. We are now, he said, playing our last card" (*Irish-American*, 21 September 1878). The empha-

sis on the necessity of the language movement succeeding in order to preserve Irish nationality also highlights an obstacle in the revival's progression in the US due to the presence of political action and consciousness. The language and autonomy of Ireland began to be seen as a parallel aspiration amongst Irish language revivalists in Irish-American print media. Articles also discussed the necessity of learning and speaking the language, not only for its revival, but also for the taking back of Ireland's freedom and for her separation from English rule in order to become a "complete" nation. The aims of revival figures in the US, spurred on by the prospect of an independent Ireland which depended on the revival of their national language was, as Leerssen states, a "node in the mycelium of intellectual and cultural developments […] the celebration of the nation (defined in its language, history, and cultural character) [was] an inspiring ideal for artistic expression; and the instrumentalization of that expression in political consciousness-raising" (2013, 28).

Other examples of the connection between social and political consciousness in Irish-American print media at this time include a letter to the editor of the *Irish Echo* from Thomas O'Neill Russell in 1886 and the visit of Douglas Hyde to the New York Gaelic Society in 1891. O'Neill Russell's letter addressed the language movement and contained political echoes throughout. He stated that out of all the Irish nationalists present in the city of Chicago none had taken interest in the Irish language, whether they are familiar with it or not, and that "the native Irish parliament, will be bound to take some steps towards giving the Irish language national recognition" (*Irish Echo*, June 1886). Throughout the article he constantly referred to the responsibility of the Irish Parliament to acknowledge the language movement and establish Gaelic chairs in colleges throughout Ireland. Similarly in 1891, when Douglas Hyde visited the New York Gaelic Society on his return from a year of lecturing at the University of New Brunswick in Canada, he gave a lecture which was printed in *The Chicago Citizen* entitled "Mr. Douglas Hyde". The article reports that in his speech Hyde was:

> […] justly severe on the Irish parliamentarians for not having done something for the language, and for not taking even a little interest in it. Hardly one of them has open his mouth about anything connected with the language or his country for nearly half a score years. (*The Chicago Citizen*, 27 June 1891)

The sentiment Hyde portrays in 1891 echoes that of O'Neill Russell in 1886. Both share similar criticisms and ambitions for the language and its connection with politics, and mention the incumbent duty, or lack thereof, of the Parliamentarians in regard to the language movement and both also refer to the necessity of the Irish Parliament recognising the language and its revival. The relationship between language and politics is one which is represented often in language revival movements such as that in Poland in the

1800s as referred to by the Polish historian Joachim Lelewel. In his article published in the French *Journal de Rouen* and in the Polish émigré journal *Naród Polski,* Lelewel wrote that "the legitimacy of the Polish nation was based on two major criteria – language and the political consciousness of Polish society. Political consciousness […] was the most important unique characteristic of Polish society" (Skurnowicz 1981, 96). This again highlights the international aspect of the Irish language revival as the linking of language, politics, and nation was also seen in other global movements.

5. Emotional attachment to the homeland and Romantic nationalism

Emotional attachment to the homeland in the context of sociolinguistic engagement can be analysed through US print media across the 1880s in particular, especially with the split of SPIL in Dublin leading to the formation of the Gaelic Union in 1882. Examples expressing emotion such as hurt are found in articles and letters to the editor in the US press in the aftermath of the split. One includes an article in *An Gaodhal* entitled "The Dublin Societies" in which Logan comments:

> For some time we have been publishing the reports and transactions of those societies [in Dublin]. In doing so we thought that there was only *one* society in Dublin, and consequently, we mixed things considerably as we do not desire to take sides in the differences which, apparently, exist there, we publish the annexed communications without comment except that we recommend them to close up their ranks and bury their differences for the good of the cause. (*An Gaodhal,* October 1882)

Another example is seen again in *An Gaodhal* in an editorial from 1886, most likely written by Logan, referring to the lack of any new publications from the Gaelic Journal in Dublin:

> A large number of our Gaelic friends throughout the country write to us to express their regret at what they call the failure of the Dublin Gaelic Journal. […] We do not look upon the Gaelic Journal as dead, it only sleeps, and we hope it will soon awake into renewed life and vigor. We question if there are many men in America, or outside of it, who have paid more in time and money to the Language and Home Rule movement than we have, yet we don't miss it. […] Who is to supply this money except those who take an interest in the language. (*An Gaodhal*, June 1886)

The emotional attachment to the homeland in this case is highlighted through Logan's continued support to the Dublin Gaelic Journal in the wake of lack of funds available to the society for its continuation. He also acknowledges that the journal isn't alone in its struggles and that *An Gaodhal* had the same struggles with regard to finance and overall interest in the

journal's success by Irish language enthusiasts. This shows not only that the two journals suffer with similar hardships, but also that emotional attachment to one another in terms of empathy and understanding transcended transatlantic borders by means of print media. The forum was used to communicate and express emotion such as concern surrounding the current obstacles felt by both.

Another media event which evoked emotion and attachment to the homeland in this context is the discussion regarding the printing of Irish language material in either Roman or Gaelic font. Articles indicating annoyance and anger are seen in reports from the Boston Philo-Celtic Society in particular. Their report to the *Irish-American* in 1879 demonstrates the hurt they felt as a result of SPIL printing Irish language material in the Roman font as it:

> would destroy all our prospects of ever having a genuine Irish literature, […] the adoption by the Irish people of Roman letter as a type for the Irish language would be a slavish acknowledgment to our Saxon oppressors, […] if they [SPIL in Dublin] should lose their national pride, and cartoon our language, by burlesquing it with Roman, or rather English type, it shall be our duty to treat them as Anglicised enemies of the Irish language, hardened into West Britons, by the contaminating atmosphere of Dublin Castle. (*Irish-American*, 22 February 1879)

The report is direct, strict, and relentless in character, which conveys the strong emotion of the Brooklyn society. It is clear that the society felt that if SPIL was to turn its back on one of the main characterises of the Irish language, a symbolic aspect of separation from the English language, they would be regressing rather than progressing with the revival movement. The political undertones also highlights the increased opinion that the language was fundamental to the nation's independence. In the context of transatlantic revival we see the combined nature of both nationalism and Romanticism which established itself in terms of "whose homelands?". The Irish diaspora in the US created a community whereby separate yet combined entities existed combining "dynamic progressivism and nostalgia for permeance" (Leerssen, 2013, 26).

Leerssen describes the connection between Romanticism and nationalism as being "usually seen as a situational one: the two arose simultaneously, concurrently, in one specific part of the world at one particular historical moment, and therefore unavoidably shared common features, interactions, and cross-currents" (2013, 10). This concept is found in articles highlighting emotions of longing and support for the homeland, as well sentimentality when reminiscing on how the Irish language was once supported and recognised as a scholarly tongue in Irish society.

In the February 1888 issue of the *Irish Echo,* a letter from "Eirionnach" entitled "Ireland's Distinctive Nationality Will be Lost of the Irish Language is

Not Preserved" was published having previously been published in the Dublin *The Nation* on 21 January of the same year. "Eirionnach" writes of nationalism and political freedom and mentions that it would have been a shame for Ireland to have "[…] lost our language, our faith, our morality, our old ideas, our traditions – everything that distinguishes Irishmen as a separate people […]" (*Irish Echo*, February 1888). There are political connotations throughout the letter, but the Romanisation of Ireland also features in the way in which her traditions are expressed and described as something to be cherished, protected, and placed out of harm's way. The romanticised version of Ireland also conveys the utopian vision Irish revivalists had for Ireland in the 19th and 20th century. This was particularly evident in the *fin de siècle* period of cultural nationality, as Bríona Nic Dhiarmada describes it: "the revival and restoration of the Irish language itself became an important part of the utopian project of cultural nationalism and can be read as a form of nostalgia in its earlier formulation – that of 'a desire to go home' " (2007, 369)[5]. Also Crystal (2000, 41), in his study of language death, assesses that "the desire to know about our ancestry is a universal inclination – but it takes a language to satisfy it. And, once a language is lost, the links with our past are gone. We are, in effect, alone". This contextualises why many articles in the Irish-American print media frequently referred to the connection between language, antiquity, and the importance of the language for the nation. The past and the desire to return to the past is often mentioned in print media at this time, it is what Leerssen (2013, 23) attributes to a "nation's enduring identity" which, in this context, not only transcends time but also linguistic and geographical borders.

Between the years 1867 and 1877 alone there were roughly 55 articles printed in various Irish-American newspapers referring to the antiquity of the language, its importance as a Celtic tongue, and the necessity of the preservation and cultivation of Irish literature in order to aid the revival of the language. One letter to the editor in particular amplifies this. Entitled "Ireland's Literary Fame Greater in Ancient than in Modern Times", it was sent by Thomas Noonan and combines the usage of language "with the moral, intellectual, and emotional faculties of man" (*Irish World*, 22 March 1873). Noonan maintains that the melody and the syntax of the Irish language are a delight, and also that:

> History abundantly testifies that in every department of science and literature, such as existed in those ages, the Irish-speaking literary stars of Erin shone as brilliantly in the intellectual firmament as their English-speaking ancestors of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. "Whilst Greece and Rome were laid waste by the arms of barbarians, Ireland was improved by the institutions of its learned men". (*Irish World*, 22 March 1873)

[5] See also Ó Conchubhair (2009) and Nic Congáil (2012).

The importance of Irish literature is compared to that from Greece and Rome which is often referred to as the most scholarly of all literature and writing. This echoes Leerssen's (2013, 27) concept of Romantic nationalism when all global languages can "raise claims to recognition in one form of another". Similarly, in lectures provided by the US societies, emphasis was placed on the Romanisation of Ireland in enthusiasts' quest to portray Ireland's antiquity. This is seen in a letter addressed to the president of the NY Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language, written for the *Irish-American* in 1884 by Frederick F. L. O. Roehrig, Professor of Sanskrit and Living Asiatic Languages in Cornell University. The letter, printed in May, attested to the necessity of the cultivation and antiquity of the language, echoing the concept of Romantic nationalism once again in the way in which the language is seen as something to be cherished and protected, as an identifier of a distinct nationality, and as a key aspect of nationhood:

> For in Ireland, the people will look up to their countrymen in America to see what they will do when wholly unrestrained and free. And this should be to teach them to love, to cultivate, to preserve and perpetuate their venerable mother-tongue, -so superior to the greatest number of the languages spoken all around them on European soil, for its antiquity, its originality, its unmixed purity, its remarkably pleasing euphony and easy, harmonious flow […] its philosophical structure and wonderful literary susceptibility. (*Irish-American,* 17 May 1884)

The global movement for the validation of a nation was fundamental in her reviving the language, and the two were symbiotic in nature during the "dual development of the nations of Europe" (Skurnowicz 1981, 2).

6. Conclusion

Ó Dochartaigh (1979, 66) mentions that when the Gaelic League was founded in Dublin in 1893 the main aim of the society was to keep the speaking of the Irish language alive amongst the people of Ireland and that this was a completely new concept. However, as new research coming to the fore in recent years suggests, the role of the Philo-Celtic societies across the US in the 19th century in fact lay the foundation for the Gaelic League in Dublin as significant similarities between both language movements can be seen to have been already taking root in America 40 years previously. As Uí Chollatáin (2015, 284) states some of the stepping stones of the Irish language revival were laid out in a transatlantic context 50 years before the founding of the Gaelic League. The role of the diaspora in international networks of cultural activism before the establishment of the League is particularly evident in a letter sent by Fr. James Keegan of St. Louis, Minneapolis on August 15, 1890, to John Glynn, editor of the *Tuam News* in Galway. Glynn outlines key work to be done for the language:

1. We must get the language and culture into schools and colleges;
2. We must open the entire Irish national press daily, weekly and monthly to contributions in Irish;
3. We must publish Irish books, ancient middle and modern. Also we must compile and publish cheap and good text books;
4. We must circulate Irish literature;
5. We must gather funds for the carrying out of the projects here laid down. (National Library of Ireland, MS 3254)

The majority of these demands were carried out by the Gaelic League, which was established 3 years after the letter was sent and by Douglas Hyde (who undertook a tour of America to raise funds for the Gaelic League and its proposed projects 15 years later in 1905/1906). This shows that networks from the US continued to influence not only the language revival in Ireland, but also political, educational, and cultural developments in the decades that followed.

It is also clear from newspaper and periodical accounts between c. 1857–1887 that the Irish language community was seen as a group of people who had a similar native language instead of people who lived in the same geographical place, as with the Gaeltacht regions today. The study of this group in the US moves away from the concept of a mere geographical area and instead concentrates on the language community themselves as a network of people who transcended linguistic boundaries and borders in their correspondence and association with the language movement. These were native speakers linguistically rather than geographically grouped, coherent with Anderson's (1983) theory of an imagined community. As Bruna and Wilsdon suggest, it was at the time of the language revival that a:

> reconstruction of an Irish cultural identity by engaging their audiences across geographical borders, class, language, education, religion, and different media. […] It captur[ed] the complex upheaval of the time through sustained engagement with spaces where the material and ideal "organising" energies converged, collided, and blended. (2014, 4)

Transatlantic networks between the Irish diaspora in Ireland and the US in terms of cultural activism and print media continued to influence the language revival and political and cultural developments throughout the pre-revival and revival years. Far from being fragmented parallel movements separated by thousands of miles, in fact, revival organisations and publications were inextricably linked from the outset creating a greater capacity for productive organisation leading to the implementation of a new ideology and a new context for language and culture as a transatlantic concept.

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"This cemetery is a treacherous place". The Appropriation of Political, Cultural and Class Ownership of Glasnevin Cemetery, 1832 to 1909

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Abstract:

Dublin's Glasnevin Cemetery became a focus of nationalist commemoration after 1832. The Irish diaspora in America celebrated it as the resting place of nationalist heroes, including Parnell, O'Connell and others linked with Irish Catholicity or culture. American newspapers reported on commemorations for the Manchester Martyrs and Parnell. The Dublin Cemeteries Committee (DCC) managed the cemetery. In the early 1900s, the DCC lost a political battle over who should act as guardian of the republican tradition in a tiny area of political property within the cemetery. A critical sequence of Young Irelander or Fenian funerals (Charles Gavan Duffy, James Stephens, and John O'Leary) marked the transfer of authority from the DCC to advanced nationalists. The DCC's public profile also suffered during the 1900s as Dublin city councillors severely criticised the fees charged for interments, rejecting the patriarchal authority of the cemetery's governing body.

Keywords: Commemoration, Diaspora, Glasnevin Cemetery, Parnell

1. Introduction

Dublin's Glasnevin Cemetery opened in 1832 as an ideal of the nineteenth-century garden cemetery. Daniel O'Connell's Catholic Association successfully worked to repeal the surviving Penal Laws against Irish Catholics, leading to Catholic Emancipation in 1829. In part, the campaign had focused on the need for new regulations to allow for the establishment of Catholic cemeteries such as Glasnevin, formally known as Prospect Cemetery. The cemetery immediately became a focus of Catholic and national-

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ist commemoration. The Irish diaspora celebrated it as the resting place of the heroes of constitutional nationalism (including Charles Stewart Parnell and O'Connell), and other figures associated with Catholicity or Irish political culture. The Irish diaspora in America eagerly followed the burial rituals associated with prominent individuals, especially those associated with the struggle for freedom. The "Manchester Martyrs" referred to three Fenians, William Allen, Michael Larkin, and Michael O'Brien, who were executed for the murder of a police officer in 1867. While they were not buried in Glasnevin, papers such as the *New York Times* regularly reported on their annual commemorations held in Glasnevin. The cemetery became, as outlined in Glasnevin's first history (printed in 1879), a "place of pilgrimage to all in our own land, and to visitors from different lands who would meditate over the hallowed graves of many Irishmen whose memories are immortal" (DCC 1879, 34).

In the first decade of the twentieth century, a two-pronged assault upon the guardianship of the governing body known as the Dublin Cemeteries Committee (DCC) eroded its control over commemorations within its boundaries. Up until then, the DCC had controlled all activities, including the wording of inscriptions on monuments. Significantly, advanced nationalists insisted that they would no longer allow the DCC to dictate the rules of remembrance for those from their political tradition. A critical sequence of funerals from the 1900s involving Charles Gavan Duffy, James Stephens, and John O'Leary diminished the DCC's control over a tiny yet influential area of political property within the cemetery. Advanced nationalists rejected the DCC's role since 1832 as gate-keeper, guardian and exhibitor of Irish nationalism's "sacred bodies". In addition to this political dimension, local councillors in Dublin rejected the DCC's monopolistic, elite and patriarchal status, severely criticising its interment fees and alleged manifestations of disrespect towards the dead.

2. Establishing a national cemetery

From its establishment in 1832, the memorialization of prominent citizens took precedence over family and other private sites in the cemetery. National cemeteries testified to an imagined community – a nation – and its shared history as represented by its honoured special dead (Laqueur 2015, 212). Ariès, in 1976, concluded that celebration of prominent political activists demonstrated how the cult of memory in the late nineteenth century spread from the individual to society, with the cult of the dead emerging as one of the forms or expressions of patriotism (73, 75). In 1907 Chart described Glasnevin as an "open air Pantheon or Westminster Abbey of Catholic and Nationalist Ireland". He stated that the place was "so beautifully kept that the visitor is not overwhelmed, as he is at Westminster, but merely saddened

to a tender melancholy and to wistful musings on the whys and wherefores of political strife" (Chart, 321). By 1909, the *Irish Independent* [*II*] could declare that Glasnevin was "precious to millions of men and women of Irish blood in every quarter of the globe" (21 September 1909).

Richard O'Duffy in his 1915 *Historic Graves in Glasnevin Cemetery* considered that the "great" Irish liberation movements that arose immediately before or after 1800 were represented in "this great necropolis of Ireland, either in leaders or their adherents" (2-3). In his view, the two O'Connell circles within the cemetery contained many who aided O'Connell's "noble and unselfish efforts to make his country the home of civil and religious freedom" (*ibidem*). O'Duffy celebrated Thomas Davis's cultural Irish-Ireland principle. The ideals of Davis, a Young Irelander, poet and journalist, influenced major figures such as Arthur Griffith, Patrick Pearse, and Éamon de Valera. O'Duffy noted that four of the founders of the Young Ireland movement (but not Davis) had been "granted in after years to pillow their heads" on Glasnevin earth (5-6), and he complimented the "Committee of the Dublin Cemeteries" for recognising the "traditional love of the Irish for the departed of their race" (203). In his epilogue, O'Duffy also considered that the "carn, the dun, the rath and the keep" indicated that the "memory of the dead" had always been held in "tender reverence in Ireland" (204-205). The *carn* (a misspelling of *cairn*) served as a place of burial in megalithic Ireland, while the other terms – rath, dun, and keep – have no association with burial practice, and it is unusual to see them cited as such.

James Barry, another cemetery chronicler, indicated in 1932 that throughout its history Glasnevin had witnessed scenes of national mourning when "countless thousands" assembled to pay the last tribute "to those who have worked, to those who have suffered, and to those who have died for Ireland". He attributed the popularity of Glasnevin to the presence of the "earthly remains of these immortal dead" that made it a mecca for many pilgrims "who come from foreign lands to pay a tribute of a sigh and a prayer at the gravesides of Ireland's honoured dead" (Barry 8, 13). Aligned with this notion of Glasnevin as a resting place for the great and the good, the DCC in 1837 arranged for the remains of John Philpot Curran to be repatriated. An Irish granite sarcophagus marked the resting place of the well-known politician and lawyer who had died in London in 1817 (Geoghegan 2009). The *Irish Penny Journal* congratulated the DCC for reclaiming "for Ireland the bones of Curran, which were transferred from England to the cemetery over which they preside" (26 June 1841).

As early as 1879, some five decades after the establishment of the cemetery, a commentator in the *Irish Monthly* wrote that it was "startling to find what a long array of names dear to Ireland are already carved in this garden of tombs" (Anon. 1879, 165). But not all celebrity Irish figures accepted the grace and benefit of burial in Glasnevin. Thomas Moore was a writer and

musician, and author of *Irish Melodies*. When he died in 1852, his family declined an offer of £500 from the DCC to bring his remains to Glasnevin from England, a strong indication that the Committee regarded the presence of suitable celebrities there as important to affirming the status of Glasnevin as a national cemetery (DCC 1879, 41-42). The Moore Memorial Fund in 1904, a society of advocates who described Thomas Moore as Ireland's national poet, decided to approach the DCC to see if they could consider bringing over his remains from London for reinternment in the cemetery, but to no avail (*Freeman's Journal* [*FJ*], 18 June 1904).

On the title page of his 1915 Glasnevin history, Richard O'Duffy placed a quatrain from John Kells Ingram's 1843 poem about the 1798 rebellion, "The Memory of the Dead". Ingram's poem is popularly known by its first line, "Who fears to speak of Ninety-Eight?":

> The dust of some is Irish earth,
> Among their own they rest;
> And the same land that gave them birth
> Has caught them to her breast. (O'Duffy, title page)

O'Duffy acknowledged that the privilege of burial in Glasnevin did not extend to those who went overseas – the Irish emigrant yearned for a burial on Irish soil, and Glasnevin nurtured them in its unique exhilaration of "Irish earth". He lamented that the "last hours of the dying Irish exile were saddened by the reflection that his dust would not commingle with his own kindred in the old churchyard at home" (O'Duffy, 205). Gifford in his annotations on James Joyce's *Ulysses* alluded to an equivalent Jewish burial desire to be buried in "native" soil. With the soil of "Palestine" believed to have "special holiness", Jews longed to have a handful of soil from Palestine put in the coffin under their head (Gifford, Seidman 1974, 121).

3. Hands Across the Ocean

Laqueur, a distinguished historian of death practices, observed that the reburial of "distant bodies" in "magnificent spaces" during the nineteenth century enabled the deceased to become the "bodies of the nation" (Laqueur 2015, 212). William J. Fitzpatrick, in his 1900 history of Dublin Catholic cemeteries, recorded the consignment of remains from remote places to Glasnevin, with burials originating from Australia, the U.S.A., France, Russia, Italy and India, amongst other foreign consignees (Fitzpatrick, 47). O'Duffy acknowledged that Glasnevin was the "resting place of many who owed no allegiance to Ireland except the hospitality of a home and a grave" (O'Duffy 1915, 3). He noted that the names of Frenchmen, Italians, Spaniards, and Russians peeped "out of their epitaphs from the myriads of monuments that

encircle us" (*ibidem*). Dublin undertakers regularly collected coffins from a variety of railway stations on their way to or from rural destinations, with an occasional one coming from or routed through Britain.

Reaching across the Atlantic, the Glasnevin cemetery sought to crystallise the strong bonds of kinship wrought through emigration by facilitating the reinternment of "distant" bodies. Father Daniel Cahill, a professor of "natural Philosophy", died in Boston aged 68 in October 1864. As a columnist in a very popular Catholic newspaper in mid-nineteenth century Ireland, he was widely read and appreciated. Twenty years later, an Irish committee raised the funds for his repatriation, furthering the concept of Glasnevin as a "holy ground". Cahill's reinternment in Glasnevin took place in March 1885, and it served as a proxy for those who lay in lonely emigrant graves. They could never make the return journey, with their foreign graves never to be visited by grieving relatives (Roddy 2016, 155-157).

Cahill's grave inscriptions, carved in English, Latin and Irish, mentioned that his countrymen had fulfilled his dying wish that his remains be brought back to "his native soil" because of his labours on behalf of "faith and fatherland" (Cahill inscription, Glasnevin cemetery). A Minneapolis newspaper, the *Irish Standard*, chronicling Fr. Cahill's journey from America, reported his internment "among the most revered of Ireland's dead". The newspaper also cited some of his writing, highlighting his belief that the history of Ireland was "learned from the crimsoned tombs of the dead" (30 October 1897).

The trans-Atlantic transfer of bodies was not confined to Glasnevin. Father Eugene O'Growney, the Gaelic revivalist and author of a very popular Irish language primer, died in 1899 in America. His Dublin funeral procession took place in 1903, prior to his burial in Maynooth College. The *Connaught Telegraph* reported that the Dublin district committee of the Gaelic League organised the funeral procession, intending it to "be worthy of the memory of this great priest and a testimony of the deep respect with which Irish Ireland regards his memory" (3 May 1902). When David P. Moran, the acerbic editor of *The Leader,* commented that the funeral procession of the scholar priest was "impressive and meant something", he suggested that it was "more than can be said of every Irish procession" (3 October 1903). According to Arthur Griffith, editor of *United Ireland* and founder of Sinn Féin, O'Growney earned the distinction of having the longest funeral procession, stretching from California to Kildare (*United Ireland*, 3 October 1903).

The concept of the cemetery standing as the political memorial point for an absent body emerged in the 1867 procession in honour of three republicans (Allen, Larkin and O'Brien) collectively known as the "Manchester Martyrs". Over 35,000 people marched along the route from Dublin to Glasnevin cemetery for that theatrically patriotic event. A Fenian, John Martin, made an emotional speech by the symbolic plot that highlighted the importance of Glasnevin in that political showcase. He declared that the procession

was "escorting three empty hearses", since the "three bodies that we would tenderly bear to the churchyard and bury in consecrated ground" were "not here". They were buried "away in a foreign and hostile land where they have been thrown into unconsecrated ground, branded by the triumphal hatred of our enemies as the vile remains of murderers" (*FJ*, 9 December 1867). A report in the London *Times* (reproduced in the *New York Times* [*NYT*]) recorded the trio's "ignominious death at the hands of the British hangmen", while also noting that the funeral procession passed St. Catherine's Church in Thomas Street, the scene of Robert Emmet's hanging in 1803 (*NYT*, 23 December 1867). The *Freeman's Journal* declared also that the spot where Robert Emmet "closed his young life on a bloody scaffold" was regarded by thousands of his countrymen as a "holy place" (*FJ*, 9 December 1867).

Glasnevin's status as a national cemetery was acknowledged in papers that had an element of outreach to the Irish diaspora. Irish news made its way to America on a regular basis, culled from agency reports or recycled from Irish newspapers. M. D. Bodkin from the *Freeman* reported on the 1904 World Fair in St. Louis where he had met an Irish emigrant who had been twenty-five years in the States and who never ceased to read the paper (*FJ*, 1 June 1904). The cemetery featured in a compelling sequence of articles that appeared in the *New York Times,* which focussed on what Irishmen had suffered at the hands of English oppression, ranging from Emmet in 1803, through the Fenians, down to the death of John O'Leary in 1907. The headline for O'Leary highlighted his role as a "Fenian Leader that spent 5 years in Jail and 15 in exile" (18 March 1907). This reportage fed a powerful association within the Irish diaspora that Glasnevin's role was to hold in reverence those who had opposed British rule, and had paid with their lives for doing so.

In 1875, the first article on the *New York Times* front page noted that Glasnevin cemetery served as the venue for a demonstration of 40,000 supporters of Home Rule and a campaign for amnesty for Fenian prisoners (8 August 1875, 1). The newspaper recorded in November 1883 how supporters subverted the banning of the anniversary procession for the Manchester Martyrs by the authorities. Small groups made their way to the cemetery and then walked around the graveside (26 November 1883). In 1886, for the same event, the *New York Times* indicated that wreaths had been laid at the grave of "O'Donnell, the slayer of Carey, the Phoenix Park informer" by those who attended commemorations (22 November 1886). James Carey had testified in court against his Invincible colleagues following the murders in 1882 of Lord Frederick Cavendish (the Chief Secretary for Ireland) and Mr Thomas Henry Burke in Dublin's Phoenix Park. The newspaper gave substantial coverage to the funeral of Parnell in 1891, even reporting that the grave was dug to a depth of seven feet in a plot that had long been used to "inter the poorest people", a reference to the cholera pit which was chosen for his interment (12 October 1891).

The desire to elicit a close physical link with Glasnevin emerged in New York soon after the death of Parnell. In November 1891, the *Sun* (New York) reported on a Parnell memorial meeting at the Academy of Music in the city. Beneath a portrait of the Irish leader rested a wreath "made of laurel and ivy from Parnell's grave in Glasnevin Cemetery and shamrocks from the hills of Cork" (16 November 1891). American newspapers regularly carried news of the annual Parnell commemorations held in Glasnevin. In 1893, the *St. Paul Daily Globe* (Minneapolis) newspaper reported on the second anniversary of Parnell's death, noting that the Independent Irish Party of New York had sent a handsome floral harp. It was five feet high, three and a half feet across, and the "top was made of green and gold immortelles, enlivened by red flowers of the same kind". The strings were of red immortelles, with "Charles Stewart Parnell" spelt out with white flowers overlaid on the strings. Across the base of New York's tribute to the dead leader was the inscription, "In Loving Memory, From the Irish of New York" (9 October 1893).

A headline in the *Herald* of Los Angeles in 1893 noted that "Irishmen From All Over the World Visited His Grave", while the Associated Press report highlighted how the "imposing" commemorative procession was "headed by a black draped wagon upon which were piled memorial wreaths sent from different parts of the country, as well as several from the United States, Canada and from Australia" (9 October 1893). For the 1897 Parnell procession, the *San Francisco Call* wrote that shamrocks took the place of crape, while "nearly every county delegation raised the stars and stripes next to the green flag" (11 October 1897). The *Kentucky Irish American* indicated for its readers that the 1903 Parnell commemoration had been "poorly attended" (17 October 1903).

Glasnevin's stature as a national cemetery attracted a steady stream of visitors. For O'Duffy, "this Valhalla of the Nation" became the "inspiration and the goal of many a pilgrimage from distant lands where the Celt has found a home and liberty". Visitors knew that the "ground upon which you tread is holy" (O'Duffy 2015, 206). As early as 1880, *Sullivan's Dublin Guide Book* included a map of the cemetery showing the location of the "principal" graves (*The Nation*, 31 July 1880). In August 1880, Joseph Cowen, an English Liberal MP and journalist, visited Glasnevin. He reported that a Fenian showed him the monument to the "Manchester men" (*ibidem*, 4 September 1880). A tourist from Wisconsin visited the cemetery in 1894. Her local newspaper (the *Wood County Reporter*) stated that there was no monument over Parnell's grave. She observed that the site featured an Irish harp raised on a tall post with a large Parnell portrait in the centre, surrounded by shamrocks. She also saw that the grave had a covering of glass globes with wax flowers under them (23 August 1894).

The *Waterbury Evening Democrat* (Connecticut), in 1904, reported that Judge Lowe had paid a flying visit to his native Westmeath, and that he had

been to Glasnevin even though he "didn't have time to tarry" (30 August 1904). In 1886, a letter in *The Nation* written by E. G. McAuliffe, an Irishman from London, showed the intense political and personal emotion behind many of the tourist visits. He stated that his parents were "forced by foreign rule to leave its shores some fifty years before". McAuliffe visited the patriots' corner in the "famous cemetery", admired O'Connell's tomb and his "splendid Irish round tower". Some years before that visit, Lowe had made a donation to the "Young Ireland Society" to fund a monument for Leo Casey, a well-known local poet (28 August 1886).

4. Burying the patriotic dead

Sir Charles Gavan Duffy (1816-1903), one-time proprietor and editor of the *Nation* newspaper, had been a Young Irelander. He left Ireland in 1855 for Australia. After serving briefly as prime minister of Victoria, he received a knighthood in 1873 (Maume, 2009). In 1903, in line with Glasnevin's reputation as the national cemetery, the DCC offered the family of Charles Gavan Duffy a free site in "the hallowed spot which holds all that was mortal of many of those who in days long since gone by worked side by side with Duffy in the cause of Ireland" (*FJ*, 14 February 1903). His family, in response, said that they would gratefully "accept tribute, if it be wish of the Irish people to honour their father's memory". A delegation of five chose a "beautiful site" in the south-east of the O'Connell Tower Circle, facing the monument of John Blake Dillon (another Young Irelander) (*Cork Examiner*, 16 February 1903; 27 February 1903).

Gavan Duffy's body lay in state at Dublin's Catholic Pro-Cathedral from 27 February to 8 March 1903. His funeral cortege to Glasnevin attracted considerable attention with extensive newspaper reports indicating that the boys of the Vincent de Paul Glasnevin Orphanage joined the "Irish National Foresters, Robert Emmet Costume Association" to provide a guard of honour for the hearse and chief mourners' carriages. Split into sixteen separate units, the *cortège* featured an advance guard on horseback, with general carriages at the back. Thousands of children marched at the front of the procession to the beat of muffled drums. The *Freeman* reporter commented that they were the emblem and embodiment of Ireland's rising generation (*FJ*, 5 March 1903; 9 March 1903). The spectacle was such that an editorial in the unionist *Irish Times* observed that he was buried "after a demonstration of mourning worthy of the illustrious dead and of the nation upon which his career shed so much lustre" (9 March 1903).

Reporting on the funeral, Fr. Matthew Russell of the *Irish Monthly* underlined the popular conjunction of nationalism and Catholicity in the cemetery, insisting that Duffy's burial at Glasnevin would ensure that "his body will await the Resurrection under the shadow of the noble Celtic Round

Tower that marks the grave of the greatest Irishman of them all" (Russell 1903, 222). Father John Fitzpatrick, reflecting on Gavan Duffy, put into metrics Glasnevin's important role as the national cemetery: "His grave be Ireland, for it is but just / That, while our nation lives, from Duffy's dust, / Be made the shamrock of his native land". He was "No more an exile from his native skies" (223).

The DCC controlled very strictly the content of inscriptions that appeared on monuments within the cemetery. They banned the use of the term "Fenian", a clear indication of the DCC's strong adherence to constitutional nationalism. While the DCC would not allow the term to be inscribed on monuments, Fenian supporters erected monuments that marked their graves. In August 1896, the *Evening Herald* noted that "another of the Fenian poets has had a monument put over his remains in Glasnevin", this time in honour of Matthew Francis Hughes (15 August 1896). John O'Leary (a Fenian leader born in 1830) had received a twenty-year sentence for "treason felony" in 1865. He anticipated that his death would provide welcome publicity for advanced nationalism. As reported in his London *Times* obituary in March 1907: "Once he was condoled with on the neglect shown him by the people of Ireland in his old age. 'Ah', he replied with characteristic irony, 'they'll make up for it by giving me a grand funeral'" (18 March 1907). In 1908, a bitter conflict over the use of politically-sensitive descriptors within Glasnevin showed how Irish nationalist sentiment pivoted towards a more radical tinge in the new century. The controversy over the use of the word "Fenian" on O'Leary's monument took a Jesuitical intervention to ultimately settle matters in 1909.

At O'Leary's 1907 interment, the *Freeman* drew attention to a powerful metaphorical moment. After Fr. Coffey, one of Glasnevin's Catholic chaplains, had recited the graveside prayers and before the coffin was lowered, "an old woman reverently kissed the lid" (20 March 1907). Jack B. Yeats, in a paean in the *Irish Independent* to O'Leary, declared that he had stood for "Ireland of the past, heroic," with his "unselfish suffering" leading to his "own detriment and ruin" (20 March 1907). His death provided also an opportunity for James Joyce. According to his brother Stanislaus, he had commented on the *Il Piccolo della Sera*'s report of John O'Leary's death: "his name had been mutilated as almost to be unrecognisible [*sic*]" (Bulson 2001, 440). Roberto Prezioso, the editor, subsequently invited Joyce to write a series of articles on Ireland. The first – on Fenianism and O'Leary – appeared on 22 March 1907. Joyce drew attention to a bitter "double struggle" between the "moderate patriotic and the so-called party of physical force" that espoused the "dogma of separatism" but "no longer uses dynamite". He characterised O'Leary as a "figure from a world that has disappeared", calling him the "last actor in the turbid drama of Fenianism". Commenting on O'Leary's death, Joyce insisted that the "Irish, even though they break the hearts of those who sacrifice

their lives for their native land, never fail to show great respect for the dead" (Joyce 1959, 188-192).

At the request of T.A. Finlay, S.J., the DCC donated a site for O'Leary's burial, as they had for other patriots such as Parnell or Gavan Duffy. An impasse then arose over the wording of an inscription on the monument, after the DCC initially authorised Finlay to approve any inscription. When they learned that the proposed inscription included the term "Fenian Leader", they declared that it had been "irregularly engraved" without their approval. Rev. Miles McManus, who signed the minutes for 7 October 1908, inserted his objection to the "fact of passing an inscription subject to the approval of a Gentleman not a Member of the Board". Subsequently, the DCC suggested that the word "Patriot" be substituted for "The Fenian Leader" (DCC minutes 1908). The proposed revision set off a public firestorm. O'Leary's memorial committee refused to accept the change, as Fr. Finlay had originally approved the inscription. A public meeting of "various National, trade and labour bodies" complained that the DCC's suggestion was "entirely against the feelings of every true Nationalist and Sympathiser with the Fenian movement" (*II*, 9 November 1908).

In December 1908, Finlay submitted a full list of the various inscriptions for the monument. One of the panels would contain an extract from John O'Leary's speech from the dock, delivered in 1865: "Dante places traitors in the ninth circle of his hell, I believe, the lowest circle". Finlay proposed that an Irish translation of the main inscription be carved on the monument. Conceding that the monumental committee had engraved the inscription before "the formal approval of the Board was signified to them", Finlay suggested to the DCC that the "interests of peace would be served without sacrifice of principle" if they allowed it to stay. Utilising his status and diplomatic skills, Finlay persuaded the DCC to accept the inscription (DCC minutes 1908, 1909). The O'Leary monument controversy over the term "Fenian" marked the disruptive intrusion of contemporary radical politics into the repose of the cemetery. The outcome of the crisis confirmed that the DCC could not continue to act in mindful contravention of Dublin's radical political society, nor to exclude political terminology that challenged the DCC's constitutional complexion.

The *Freeman* did not mince its words – "John O'Leary Monument. Cemeteries Board Cave In". The *Freeman* predicted that a second O'Leary procession would be attended by the "trade and labour bodies of the city, the members of the G.A.A., the Gaelic League, Sinn Fein, the Irish National Foresters, the various bands, and other national bodies" (5 March 1909). The newspaper understood that the unveiling of the monument would provide yet another opportunity for a political parade in Dublin, consistent with James Joyce's contention that "Now that he is dead, his countrymen will escort him to his tomb with great pomp" (Joyce 1959, 192). The DCC's inability to insist

on the substitution of the word "Patriot" for "Fenian" found an elegiac coda in W. B. Yeats's lines from "September 1913": "Romantic Ireland's dead and gone, / It's with O'Leary in the grave". Yeats admired O'Leary for his "long imprisonment, his longer banishment, his magnificent head, his scholarship, his pride, [and] his integrity" (Yeats 1961, 510). Given his intimate knowledge of O'Leary (with whom he corresponded), Yeats was undoubtably aware of the inscription crisis. Yeats, although in Ireland at the time, decided not to attend O'Leary's funeral. Later, he stated that he "shrank from seeing about his grave so many whose Nationalism was different from anything he had taught or that I could share" (Foster 1997, 367) The concession by the conservative DCC ground suggested an additional nexus for the poet's observation, with the controversy concluding four years before the poem's publication.

The conflict over O'Leary's inscription paved the way for a more sustained assault on the autonomy of the DCC whose constitutional tendencies would be further challenged in the revolutionary decade to come. The DCC concern over the use of Glasnevin for theatrical displays of radical political sentiment only deepened as the advocates of advanced nationalism continued to ignore the DCC's control over inscriptions and orations. Buried in Glasnevin with his coffin "wrapped in the Irish republican flag of green, white and orange", the *Freeman* reporter noted in March 1901 that the grave of James Stephens, another Fenian leader, was "situated appropriately close to the Martyrs' plot, where his wife had been already interred" (1 April 1901). On 1st August 1909, Dublin's Lord Mayor unveiled a Celtic cross dedicated to Stephens. The *Irish Independent* published a photograph of the Lord Mayor beside the large cross, while the *Freeman* reported his speech (*II*, 2 August 1909, 7; *FJ*, 2 August 1909). The engraving on the base of Stephens's cross eulogised him as "Founder, Organizer [*sic*] and Chief of the Fenian Brotherhood", another potent reference to Fenian leaders in Glasnevin. The DCC privately considered that the speech violated its regulations, and John O'Connell, the Superintendent of the cemetery, acknowledged that "no officer was present at unveiling, as we had no intimation of same". He declared that he would have "protested against the breach of the Bye Laws of your Committee, as I have done on many previous occasions" (DCC minutes 1909).

The sequence of declining deference in the 1900s towards the DCC started with the burial of Stephens in 1901, continued with Gavan Duffy in 1903, peaked with further "Fenian" inscription debates in 1908 and 1909, before culminating with the graveside orations of Dublin's Lord Mayor in 1909. For advanced nationalists, the O'Leary controversy confirmed the symbolic value of a republican commemorative space within Glasnevin, an ownership that reached an apex with Patrick Pearse's speech at the graveside of O'Donovan Rossa in 1915. Pearse underscored the power of tribal remains: "They have left us our Fenian dead, and while Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree shall never be at peace" (Pearse 1924, 137). The graves of O'Leary and Stephens are adjacent,

with O'Donovan Rossa's only yards away in the next line of graves. The DCC lost a symbolic cultural and political battle over a tiny area of property, diminishing its authority and the role it had played during the nineteenth century as guardian and exhibitor of the great and the good of Irish nationalism. The controversy over the use of the Fenian signifier within the bounds of the cemetery pointed to the emergence of a newer society outside the cemetery gates, a society that would soon successfully challenge British sovereignty in Ireland.

5. "The Pit" and beyond – Critics of Glasnevin cemetery in 1909

Alongside the O'Leary controversy, another vigorous campaign developed in 1909, threatening to further undermine the DCC's reputation. The Glasnevin district (as part of the township of Drumcondra, Clonliffe and Glasnevin) had been amalgamated with the city of Dublin by Act of Parliament in 1900, thus bringing the cemetery within the remit of a more radically-inclined assortment of critical councillors than previously, when Glasnevin dealt with a more conciliatory local authority. A new range of cemetery bye-laws were introduced in 1901, attracting a slew of remonstrance from some of Dublin's trade and smaller municipal organisations that addressed burial practices and the cost of internment. In 1906, the North Rural District Council complained that "pits were being opened beside the public road and coffins left exposed for a considerable time, thereby endangering the public health" (*The Irish Times* [*IT*], 3 May 1906). In Britain, it was not uncommon for the term "pit" to be applied to the communal burial grounds, but it was not used as a disparaging term for Glasnevin until the late 1900s, the preferred traditional term being the Poor Ground.

In May 1909, a critical letter from William Richardson to the *Evening Telegraph* sparked a maelstrom of criticism, leading to the establishment of a special group termed the Glasnevin Cemetery (Investigation) Group, with representatives from some municipal bodies in Dublin (*II*, 11 May 1909; 3 August 1909). Between 1909 and 1913, the affairs of the DCC featured twenty-seven times in Dublin Corporation's proceedings, indicating the extent of the campaign to obtain public representation on the DCC, and to promote the establishment of municipal cemeteries. Nineteen items appeared in 1909, indicating the pressure from Richardson's campaign to undermine the DCC's authority (Dublin Corporation, Minutes 1909 to 1913). Dublin Corporation even engaged its law agent to examine the original charter of the DCC to see if they could apply any pressure to lower Glasnevin's charges (*IT,* 10 September 1909). At an early stage of the 1909 controversy, the DCC made a vigorous defence of its operation in a letter to the Corporation. It emphasised the great pressure on the space of the original Cemetery, and the high cost of acquiring and preparing new land. They expressed concern

that "at no distant time" the available burial space would be exhausted (*IT*, 22 June 1909).

Richardson's letter sparked off a persistent and virulent campaign against Glasnevin. His onslaught was consistent with a changing perspective towards the status as distinct from the function of a cemetery. The moral, uplifting, and educational arguments previously posited in favour of cemeteries dwindled as utilitarian and egalitarian notions came to the fore towards the end of the nineteenth century. Cemeteries began to be written about with similar distaste to that shown to burial-grounds earlier in the nineteenth century (Curl 2001, 177). In 1910, an anonymous article in the influential *British Medical Journal* charted the growth of the cremation movement as an alternative to the traditional burial. Criticising the general practice of "burial in common ground or pit burial", it cited Glasnevin as a negative instance of the practice. The article dramatically cited some of Richardson's Glasnevin claims: "spectators standing at a pit burial saw the bodies of ten men and women introduced into one yawning hole without the religious service of any church, seven of the deceased being Protestant and three Catholics". It stated that there was "not a cemetery in which any common ground did not contain as many bodies, and sometimes more, than were interred at the present time in Glasnevin Cemetery" (Anon. 1910, 579-580).

Joseph P. Nannetti and William Field, Dublin's highest-profile MPs, were on opposite sides in terms of how to approach DCC reform. Nannetti served on Dublin Corporation and was elected to the DCC in 1908. Nannetti's inclusion in Pike's 1908 list of contemporary Dublin biographies confirmed the status endowed upon him by his DCC membership, while William Field, his parliamentary colleague of longstanding and owner of a string of butcher shops, was excluded (Pike 1908, 127). At the DCC meeting of May 1909, Nannetti brought Richardson's critical letter to the attention of the members, but they just noted it. The DCC took umbrage at charges that they buried the very poor in what is commonly known as a "Pit". To so do would be "contrary to the instincts inherent in Irish Catholics" (DCC minutes, 1909).

The Dublin Trades Council convened a public meeting in June 1909 at Smithfield to protest the running of the cemetery. Nannetti, then in London, stated that had he been in Dublin, he would not have attended. Declaring that he did not want to hamper his line of policy by attending public meetings or by writing letters to the press, Nannetti's contemporaries would have interpreted this as a pointed barb at Field, for whom meetings and letters were meat and drink. Nannetti's experience convinced him that the way to bring about reform was to "awaken in those from whom reform is to come the justice of the grievances complained of". This amounted to a classic statement of the Home Rule position, with constitutional nationalists hoping to convince the British government that they deserved a measure of devolved government. Nannetti's letter justifying his non-attendance was read at the

open-air meeting "amidst interruption", accompanied by cries of "Throw him out" and "Burn it". Richardson suggested that Nannetti had never "made a move until he was put in the pillory" over the burials (*FJ*, 28 June 1909).

In line with his constantly critical position on the DCC, Field aligned himself fully with the goals of the new investigation committee. At the Smithfield meeting, he produced one of the quips for which he was noted. Stating that a previous Smithfield gathering had protested "against the over-taxation of the living", he contended that the current meeting was held to protest "against the over-taxation of the dead" (*ibidem*). In July, Field proposed that a special general meeting of the "Catholic Cemeteries Committee" be held to consider the range of complaints (*FJ*, 7 July 1909). Field had previously recommended that the Corporation should be given the right to purchase Glasnevin. Later in 1909, he suggested that the Corporation might establish a new municipal cemetery so that Dublin citizens could avail of "decent economical burial". As part of the campaign, he requested that the DCC allow reporters into their meetings (*FJ*, 14 September 1909; 5 October 1909).

The language of the DCC critics bordered on the gruesome and the gothic. A North Dublin Poor Law Union Guardian (C.L. Ryan) described in an unflattering manner the scene at a burial of the "destitute poor" as they were "deposited in the pit" (*II*, 3 June 1909). He said that he had seen quicklime thrown over bodies brought to the cemetery from Dublin's College of Surgeons, alleged that the "children of destitute people were buried for 1s 6d, if they were brought at 6 o'clock in the morning" and added that "only a shovelful of dirt was cast over the top, and the stench was terrible". Lorcan Sherlock maintained that it "would take an Edgar Allen Poe to do it justice". He advocated that a meeting should be held outside Coyle's house, outside the DCC offices in Rutland Square, and even outside the houses of all the members of the Committee (*IT*, 12 June 1909). At the Smithfield meeting, Daly protested at how the DCC allegedly treated the poor "when sorrow afflicted them". They were "fleeced in sums which they paid at a sacrifice to themselves and their families (Cries of 'Scandalous')" (*FJ*, 28 June 1909).

Richardson insisted that "sentimental souls" would be "shocked and their ears offended by the lurid language in which the average Dublin man or woman will express his or her opinion of Glasnevin". According to him, this would "shock a policeman, or even a cab horse" (*II*, 23 September 1909). Such strong feelings manifested themselves on the streets during the Father Matthew procession from the centre of Dublin to the Phoenix Park in August 1909. A participant carried a placard with the slogan: "The pit for Irish Catholics", to which objections were voiced, giving rise to "hostile cries" along the route. At Church Street Bridge, the Dublin Metropolitan Police intervened to stop a "determined attempt" to tear down the slogan. A second fruitless effort to seize the slogan eventually led to clashes between op-

posing crowds. The reporter attributed the clashes to the inscription "being evidently misunderstood" (*II*, 23 August 1909).

In July 1909, the DCC set up a special committee at the instigation of Nannetti to respond to that controversy. They issued an important report that identified the scale of the cemetery's operation, and the sense of social mission evinced by the Committee. By 1909, Glasnevin was the largest public cemetery in the United Kingdom. It had approximately seventeen miles of walks alone in its care. Regretting that the term "pit" had been applied "to bring discredit upon [the] committee", the Poor Ground burial area had never been designated as such by any person connected with the cemetery. The DCC was careful to describe how the deceased were treated: "The graves in which the very poor are buried are nothing more nor less than two graves opened side by side as one grave. Each plot is now opened in the shape of a coffin, and each coffin is most carefully and respectfully laid in it" (*IT*, 4 November 1909).

Richardson's initial campaign had lost traction, but it succeeded in lessening the reputation and status of the cemetery and its members. The DCC's considered response took the heat out of this controversy, although it could not and did not stifle future criticism. In 1911, Dublin Corporation Councillor Byrne suggested that the DCC be replaced with one involving the Corporation, the North Dublin Poor Law Union, and others. He condemned the composition of the DCC, arising from the right of the committee to nominate its own members, making them "more unrepresentative and irresponsible than the British House of Lords", accusing them of ruling "more despotically than the Tsar of Russia" (*IT*, 13 May 1911).

The 1909 controversy had implications in terms of a broader United Kingdom debate on cremation as an alternative to traditional burials. One of the most vocal proponents for cremation in Britain had worked for some time at Glasnevin, in the Botanic Gardens that shared a long boundary with the cemetery. In 1880 William Robinson published *God's Acre Beautiful or The Cemeteries of the Future*, a manifesto arguing for garden cemeteries and the use of cremation (Curl 2001, 186-187). The "Cremation Act 1902" regulated the "burning" of human remains. Strange suggested that Edwardian cremation propaganda failed to take account of the conservative working-class view that the funeral was a means to express identity, affection for the dead and a sense of social status. In addition, cremation publicity from the early decades of the twentieth century drew on the confusion between common and pauper burials by evoking the imagery of the "pauper's pit" as a means of emphasising the egalitarianism of the crematorium (Strange 2005, 100, 161).

A glut of publications at the start of the century had extolled the mission and success of the cemetery after seventy years in existence. The 1909 controversy sullied that reputation. This slide was shown most starkly in the differences in the portrayal of the cemetery in a comic monthly, *The Lepracaun. Cartoon monthly*. Thomas Fitzpatrick's benign and affectionate character por-

trait of John O'Connell, the Superintendent, in 1907 morphed into a vicious portrayal of the DCC in a cartoon of November 1909. Entitled "The Glasnevin Shylock, or the Pound of Flesh", the latter featured Glasnevin's iconic tower. A thin, hook-nosed, bearded figure holds a sharp knife engraved with the word "fees", while a poor family grieves over an infant's plain-deal coffin with the inscription, "died of starvation now called consumption". Behind the family is a sign, "this way to the pit" (*The Lepracaun. Cartoon monthly* II 24, 447; *The Lepracaun. Cartoon monthly* V 59, 81).

As if Richardson's criticisms were not enough, the DCC's shortcomings in relation to the provision of religious services for some of the poorest in the Catholic community further diminished their credibility. The burials of still-born and young children "over whose remains the Catholic Church does not consider it at all necessary to have any service" took place "usually" between six and seven o'clock in the morning before the arrival of the chaplain at the cemetery. However, allegations emerged in late 1909 that some adults had been buried early in the morning without the consoling presence of a priest. This led to accusations that Glasnevin did not always facilitate a Christian burial. Acknowledging this possibility, the DCC committed themselves to ensuring that the "burial of any Catholic adult person" would not be allowed "until after the remains have been brought to the chapel for the Burial Service" (*IT*, 4 November 1909). This slack clerical practice led to a serious rebuke for the cemetery's two chaplains. Privately, the crisis strained the relationship between the DCC and its clerical committee members, with the lay majority on the Committee holding the clerics substantially responsible for this controversial practice, one that reflected badly on Glasnevin's reputation. The DCC bluntly informed Bishop Donnelly and Rev. McManus that they "could not defend themselves from censure in their not having the Chaplain in attendance at all hours for burial" and asked them "most kindly" to liaise with the chaplain to ensure that he would be there once adult funerals were taking place. The chaplain committed to saying mass at 7am each day as of September 1909 (DCC minutes, 1909).

6. Postscript

In James Joyce's *Ulysses*, as Tom Kernan prepares to leave Glasnevin cemetery after the burial of Paddy Dignam, he declares: "This cemetery is a treacherous place" (Joyce 1986, 215). From its foundation in 1832 the cemetery of Glasnevin played an important role as a sanctifier of racial memory, a function valued substantially by the Irish diaspora. During the nineteenth-century Glasnevin provided a theatrical space for the remembrance of Irish nationalists, especially those of a constitutional persuasion. The O'Leary inscription controversy undermined the DCC's tight regulation over political ceremonies in the cemetery, reflecting abiding shifts in political opinion out-

side the ground's high walls. The appropriation of republican sites of public memory within the cemetery from the conservative management board corroded the high esteem that the DCC had enjoyed as the guardian of an idealised nationalism symbolised by O'Connell and Parnell. Richardson's assault on the DCC's integrity in 1909 further stripped away the bourgeois veneer of respectability that the Committee had nurtured since its foundation. By 1910, the cemetery, with its political aura diminished, was increasingly and principally viewed as a utilitarian private provider of a valuable social and hygienic service to Dubliners.

The debates over Glasnevin's contested spaces during the 1900s prefigured the dramatic political changes that engulfed Dublin and Ireland in the upcoming revolutionary decade. The Fenian funerals, including O'Donovan Rossa's in 1915, determined the ceremonial parameters performed within a definitive republican space in Glasnevin, a notion that gained even further resonance after the 1916 Rising, an ownership that persists into the present day. The funerals also provided an effective template for republican funerals that took place in Dublin and elsewhere (including Northern Ireland) during the remainder of the twentieth century. In the words of David Gross, they celebrated a "constellation of beliefs, or a mode of thinking that exists in the present, but was inherited from the past" (Gross 1992, 8).

The anti-treaty republican groups resisted the co-option of their dead into the founding narrative of the new state. On their behalf, the National Graves Association, established in 1926, promoted the commemoration of "those who died in the cause of Irish freedom" as well as maintaining the graves and memorials of "our patriot dead of every generation" (NGA [National Graves Association]). Ian McBride, who has commented extensively on the differing styles of commemorations relating to the 1798 rebellion, highlighted how Free State governments fought hard to "establish a monopoly on the graves of the patriot dead at Glasnevin and Bodenstown". Neither W.T. Cosgrave nor Eamon de Valera succeeded in "appropriating nationalist remembrance for themselves" (McBride 2016, 206). However, the reburial following state funerals of Roger Casement (1965) and Kevin Barry (2001) reaffirmed the status of Glasnevin as a national cemetery.

In 2005, in advance of a decade of Irish centenaries between 2013 and 2023, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Dermot Ahern insisted that Ireland could "no longer have two histories, separate and in conflict". He envisaged a "shared history" of 1916 in which "we will also remember another event of particular significance for the people of this island – the Battle of the Somme" (Ahern 2005). In line with this political desire, Glasnevin has pursued a broader consensus. Inside its walls, it acknowledges the possibility of a shared or complementary "public memory", engaging with issues and subjects that would previously have been regarded as outside its subtle political and religious remits. Beyond the earlier historical paradigm of consti-

tutional nationalists and advanced republicans, Glasnevin accommodates a new range of commemorative tableaux – a Celtic cross commemorating the Famine dead (2016), a Cross of Sacrifice provided by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (2014), and an artistic installation sponsored by the French government to remember Irishmen who died in France during World War I (2016). As a modern site of "public memory", Glasnevin continues to interrogate and respond to its historical legacy.

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Scotland's Easter Rising Veterans and the Irish Revolution

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Abstract:

In 1916 members of the Scottish unit of the Irish Volunteers were deeply involved in preparations for the Easter Rising in Dublin and some republican activists travelled from the west of Scotland to participate in the rebellion. What follows is a limited prosopography of the revolutionary involvement of those members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), the Irish Volunteers, or Cumann na mBan, who were resident in Scotland between 1913 and 1915 and who fought in Ireland in 1916, or who were prevented from doing so because they were imprisoned. By covering militant activity in both Ireland and Britain, this treatment will argue that Scotland's Irish republicans were highly integrated with the wider separatist movement in Ireland and beyond, while being very much of the Glasgow, and Europe, of their time.

Keywords: Irish Diaspora in Scotland, Irish Republicanism, Irish Revolution, Militant Activism

1. Introduction

A part of Scottish life for over 200 years, Scotland's Irish community has also been part of the global Irish diaspora during that time. As such it has played a major role in the transnational movements associated with the campaigns for various forms of Irish independence. This was vividly illustrated throughout the Irish revolution as there were Scottish connections to separatist activity in Britain, Ireland and beyond. This article will examine and contextualise the activities of a small group of separatist veterans of 1916 from the Rising, through the guerrilla campaign by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) against the British from 1919-21, and during the Irish Civil War that followed the split in the IRA over the Treaty with the British govern-

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ment. In looking at what might be termed the revolutionary biographies of the members of this particular group, it will, having established certain common characteristics in that group, attempt a collective revolutionary biography or prosopography that details the activities of that group. Taking prosopography to be a historical approach which involves the compilation of multiple biographies in order to establish some pattern within that particular group, the purpose here is to analyse the activities of the Volunteers in the sample in comparison to other veterans of 1916 and to highlight the integration of Scotland's Irish community into the separatist movement.

In addition to placing the sample group in the context of the Irish separatist movement, the article will also seek to place it in the context of the politically tumultuous post-World War I years in Scotland, Glasgow and Europe. The years of the Irish revolution saw political unrest across Britain and the continent also. In addition to the republican insurgency that took place between 1919 and 1921, Ireland also experienced troubles related to land agitation and labour disputes (Dooley 2004, 36-39; Grant 2012, 94-96). Scotland, too, experienced: a recrudescence of rural agrarianism (Cameron 1993, 75) and an increased number of labour disputes, including the famous events known as "Red Clydeside", in 1919 (Devine 2012 [1999], 314-315). A salient feature of the political history of Glasgow during this time was the rise of the Labour movement and the increasing levels of participation in that movement by the city's Irish Catholic community (McCaffrey 1978, 151; Knox 1988, 619-623).

These events in Ireland and Scotland were echoes, of various register, of the political change and paroxysms of violence that spread across other parts of Europe in those years. Indeed, taking the events of Easter week 1916 in Ireland to be a part of the Great War, as one recent work has done (Grayson 2018) and thus taking our sample to be veterans of that conflict, we can, arguably, see some definite similarities to the continental experience. The reaction of those Volunteers who travelled from Glasgow to Dublin in 1916 to their defeat in the Rising, and other, as they saw it, setbacks for the cause of the Irish Republic, such as: the failure to gain recognition at Versailles, the imposition of the Government of Ireland Act 1920 by Westminster, and the Anglo-Irish Treaty of December 1921, under which the Irish Free State remained a part of the British Empire, involved making further attempts to right the wrongs that had been done through further revolutionary action. At the micro-level, that is in the decision-making of the individual Volunteer, this resembles very much some recent scholarship of paramilitarism in post-World War I Europe. Robert Gerwarth has described how a culture of defeat, either military in the case of the Central Powers, or diplomatic in the case of Italy, drove this post-war paramilitary violence (Gerwarth 2016, 12-15). A key "vector or violence" within this culture of defeat was a refusal to acknowledge or accept a reversal as those who had wielded force previously

sought to undo a political outcome they found uncongenial (Gerwarth, Horne 2011, 491-492). There are parallels between the reactions of those soldiers to the outcome of the war, the so-called "the mobilizing power of defeat", and the actions of many members of our sample group between Patrick Pearse's surrender on the 29 April 1916 and the end of the Irish Civil War in 1923.

2. Historiography

It is hoped that this article's prosopographical approach will add to our understanding of the role of Scotland's Irish diaspora in the Irish revolution as it has been fostered by previous work in the area. Certainly, it should be noted that the arguments presented below in relation to the integration of the Scottish section of the Irish Volunteers/IRA into the wider paramilitary organisation echoes the conclusions of two previous studies of the political activity in support of Irish republicanism in Britain by Keiko Inoue (2008, 162-164) and Darragh Gannon (2014, 124) respectively[1]. Both of these studies highlight the strength of the Sinn Féin party in Scotland, as opposed to the Irish Self-Determination League, a support organisation which supposedly covered all of Britain but in practice was restricted to England and Wales. On the military side of the Irish separatist movement, previous work on the Scottish units of the IRB/Irish Volunteers/IRA and the connections of those organisations as a whole to Scotland, has included: Iain Patterson (1993) and Máirtín Ó Catháin's (2007 and 2009) studies of Irish physical force organisations in Scotland; Ó Catháin's (2008) further article on Scottish republicans in Dublin in 1916, and Gerard Noonan's (2014) monograph on IRA operations in Britain from 1919-23[2]. Noonan's work does encompass the activities of IRA Volunteers from Britain, and thus Scotland, in Ireland during the Civil War but since Ó Catháin's article on events in Dublin concludes in 1916, and Ó Catháin's other articles, and that of Patterson, mainly concern events in Scotland, the role of Volunteers with connections to Scotland in the War of Independence in Ireland itself has not been fully considered. The recent publication *We will rise again: Ireland Scotland and the Easter Rising* (Ó Catháin and Coyle 2018) has further advanced matters, most particularly essays on the Military Service Pensions as they relate Scottish Brigade and the confusion surrounding the orders from Dublin for Scottish units to

[1] Dr Inoue's thesis is available to download from TCD's institutional repository <http://www.tara.tcd.ie/handle/2262/78429> (05/2019).

[2] Peter Hart's (2003, 141-177) chapter, which had previously been published in the *English Historical Review*, has been omitted from this list as it has been entirely superseded by Noonan's work.

join the Rising[3]. This publication was the first on Irish republicanism and Scotland to make use of the newly-released online Military Service Pensions Collection (MSPC), available through the Military Archives of Ireland website. However, it does not offer a contextualised treatment of militant activism at a micro level.

3. The Rising and the sample

The activities of twenty-two Irish republicans, members of the IRB, Irish Volunteers or *Cumann na mBan*, the women's revolutionary support organisation, who were resident in Scotland but travelled to Ireland to participate in the Rising form, the core of this article. Nineteen of the sample were members of A Company of the Glasgow/West of Scotland Regiment of the Irish Volunteers. This company had been founded by members of the IRB shortly after the foundation of the Irish Volunteers in Dublin. Margaret Skinnider was a member of *Cumann na mBan*. Neither Joe Vize nor Patrick Mahon were members of the Volunteers in Glasgow. However, both were in Dublin in 1916 deliberately in order to take part in the Rising.

This sample group of twenty-two includes eighteen activists who took part in the fighting in Dublin, two others who fought in country areas and two senior Volunteers, Joe Robinson and Séamus Reader, who travelled to Dublin in advance of the Rising but were arrested on a return trip to Glasgow. There were also some Glaswegian Volunteers and *Cumann na mBan* members who were in Dublin in the spring of 1916 but returned home before the rebellion, and more who were involved in the abortive attempts to foment a rebellion in Tyrone, but these were not included. Nor does this article really concern those who were involved in the Rising and who subsequently had a connection to Scotland, of whom there are 24[4]. Although this last fact is another testament to the Irish community in Scotland's deep involvement with the separatist movement. Many emigrated there because of connections within the various nationalist and republican organisations.

Name	Gender	Grew up?	Easter Wk?	Pension File No.
Alexander Carmichael	Male	Scotland	GPO	NA
Charles Carrigan	Male	Scotland	GPO	DP1538
Bernard Friel	Male	Scotland	GPO	MSP34REF54981

[3] Although the whole work is recommended for its blend of newly released Irish State sources and deep specialist knowledge of anti-state republicanism and the Glasgow scene.

[4] This figure is taken from my own, as yet unpublished, PhD research.

Seán Hegarty	Male	Dublin	GPO	NA
John Lafferty	Male	Derry	GPO	24SP6369
Patrick Maguire	Male	Fermanagh	GPO	NA
Patrick Mahon	Male	Unknown	GPO	MSP34REF21428
James/Séamus McCarra	Male	Monaghan	Galway	MSP34REF21270
James/Séamus McGaleagly	Male	Scotland	GPO	1D321
John/Seán McGallogly	Male	Scotland	GPO	MSP34REF1762
Bernard McMullan	Male	Scotland	GPO	MSP34REF14737
Patrick Morrin	Male	Scotland	GPO	NA
Matt O'Brien	Male	Scotland	Wexford	NA
Francis O'Flanagan	Male	Dublin	Four Courts	MSP34REF20616
Michael O'Flanagan	Male	Dublin	Four Courts	MSP34REF13684
Séamus Reader	Male	Scotland	Imprisoned	MSP34REF4300
Joe Robinson	Male	Belfast	Imprisoned	MSP34REF298
Séamus Robinson	Male	Scotland	GPO	MSP34REF147
Francis Scullin	Male	Dublin	GPO	MSP34REF60223
Margaret Skinnider	Female	Scotland	Green	MSP34REF19910
Cormac Turner	Male	Dublin	GPO	24SP5421
Joseph Vize	Male	Wexford	Jacob's/Green	24SP9904

Table 1 – List of Scottish-based Irish Volunteers who were granted active military service by the Irish government, or who would have been had they applied[5]

Of this cohort of twenty-two activists, listed above, seventeen were awarded pensions and medals by the government of independent Ireland. Therefore, it has been possible to use their pension application files in the MSPC to trace their activities. Furthermore, three of these pensioners gave witness statements to the Bureau of Military History (BMH) and Margaret Skinnider left a memoir of the early years of her revolutionary involvement

[5] Unless otherwise stated the information in this article come from these listed files. The reference is Irish Military Archives/Military Service Pensions Collection (IE/MA, MSPC) and the references above. The files are searchable at <http://mspcsearch.militaryarchives.ie/search.aspx> (05/2019). James/Séamus McGallogly is referred to as McGaleagly on his pension application although the other form is used also. For clarity, I have used the same style as his brother in the text.

(1917)[6]. Some death notices, a commemorative booklet from the fiftieth anniversary of the Rising (Heuston 1966, 64-65), a roll file for the Scottish units of the Irish Volunteers/IRA compiled as part of the MSPC, and an annotated list written by a Scottish IRA commander that is held in the Eithne Coyle-O'Donnell papers in the University College Dublin (UCD) Archives Department have also been used[7]. In three cases, Stephen Coyle's recently published biographical dictionary (2018, 40-64) has been relied upon. Some use has been made of Dublin historian Jimmy Wren's work also (Wren 2015 and 2016)[8].

Eleven of the sample appear to have been Scottish-born or living in Scotland from a young age, while ten had grown up in Ireland and had migrated to Scotland. There are no details on Patrick Mahon prior to his arrival in Dublin in January 1916 bar the fact that Mahon states that he, as a member of the IRB, had left Scotland for Ireland in order to participate in the Rising. The two Robinson brothers are listed as growing up in separate places because their family moved to Glasgow when they were thirteen and sixteen respectively. Joseph, the elder, returned regularly to Ireland, whereas Séamus did not (Coleman 2009; Murphy 2015).

It is difficult to assess whether or not these figures represent a fair reflection of Scotland's Irish community. Diasporic identity can be a nebulous thing. Alan O'Day (2009, 334-335) wrote of a "mutative" or "adaptive" Irish identity in which nationalism in its various forms was used to bolster the community's distinctiveness. This had the effect of allowing the community to sustain itself and cast its membership net beyond the bounds of Irish-born immigrants. There is plenty of evidence to show that this process took place in Scotland also (Wood 1980, 74-76; Kavanagh 2016, 94-99). Indeed, the community began to integrate a lot more more once Irish independence had been achieved (Gallagher 1987, 100-104). For the half-century or so before that, however, there is likely much truth in Tom Gallagher's observation that "[s]econd or third generation Irish, who were counted as Scottish in the census returns, often retained the attitudes and traditions of their Irish parents or grandparents, even if outwardly these heirs of the original settlers seemed to have adopted the speech and ways of west central Scotland" (42). Professor Gallagher's sentiments were echoed almost exactly by an internal

[6] Bureau of Military History (BMH) Witness Statement (WS) 244 (John McGallogly); BMH WS 156, 1721, 1722 (Séamus Robinson); BMH WS 800, 908 (Michael O'Flanagan).

[7] University College Dublin (UCD) Archives Department, Eithne Coyle-O'Donnell papers, P61/13; *Irish Press*, 23 September 1933 and 25 September 1933; *Irish Independent*, 25 September 1933 (Seán Hegarty obituaries and reports on funeral); *Irish Press*, 23 November 1938 (Patrick Morrin obituary).

[8] I am extremely grateful to Stephen Coyle for making some of this information available to me in advance of the publication of his book.

Scottish Office document, written during the preparation of a report on Irish immigration for the Empire Migration Committee in which one official reminded another to: "refer to the Irish classes as those of Irish descent and not only those whose immediate parents were born in Ireland … Irish colonies [*sic*] are as much Irish and distinctively Irish when they are grandchildren as when they are children of Irish born people"[9].

Five of the sample who had grown up in Ireland were from Dublin. This is a surprisingly high proportion, given the well-known migratory connections between the west of Scotland and the province of Ulster (Devine 2012 [1999], 487). In part this is a reflection of the fact that most of the fighting in the Rising took place in Ireland's capital. Had some fighting taken place in Belfast or Tyrone then some northerners like Daniel Branniff, Pat McCormick and Thomas Kelly would have been included in the list above[10]. In part the high proportion of Dubliners is a reflection on the close connections between the Liffey and the Clyde in this era of ferry travel. These connections were particularly strong in the Labour movement: Dublin trades union leader "Big Jim" Larkin had spoken in Glasgow as early as 1908 and maintained links with the Catholic Socialist Society, the organisation led by future British Labour Cabinet minister, the Waterford-born John Wheatley (Gunnin 1987, 229-230).

This sample group illustrates how membership of the Irish Volunteers was often a family affair. In addition to the Robinsons, it contains two further sets of brothers. One set of brothers grew up in Glasgow, one set in Dublin. The set of brothers who grew up in Dublin were the O'Flanagans of Moore Street, a staunchly republican family. Their father had been involved in the IRB for many decades[11]. The other set of brothers, the McGalloglys, were Lanarkshire-born. John, the youngest, had never been to Ireland, prior to travelling to Dublin for the Rising. Furthermore, Francis Scullin's brother, Patrick Scullin, is listed as being Glasgow-based in Séamus Robinson's bureau statement. However, no evidence could be found to suggest that Patrick was ever resident in Scotland[12]. It is probable that Patrick was mistakenly included in Robinson's list. Likely he was associated with the Glaswegian con-

[9] Private letter from Tom Johnston to William Adamson, 19 September 1930, National Records of Scotland, Scottish Office Irish Immigration Files, HH1 563, quoted in Ritchie (2013, 130).

[10] BMH WS 222 (Daniel Branniff); BMH WS 339 (Pat McCormack); WS 378 (Thomas Kelly).

[11] BMH WS 800 (Michael O'Flanagan); see also Wren 2015 (206-209). In addition to using the MSPC and newspaper sources, Wren has spoken to some of the O'Flanagans' descendants.

[12] BMH WS 156 (Séamus Robinson) and Leo Patrick Scullin pension file, IE/MA, MSPC, MSP34REF21722.

tingent during the period leading up to the Rising, when many Volunteers from Britain lived together in billets around Dublin (including the fabled "Kimmage Garrison") and also during Easter week itself and the period of internment which followed[13]. The familial nature of Irish republican activism in Scotland remained a constant throughout the revolutionary period. According to Gerard Noonan (2014, 65-67), the Scottish Brigade contained at least 22 sets of brothers during the 1919-1921 period.

The numbers in the sample are very low. They are a small proportion of the roughly 250 Irish Volunteers in Scotland in 1916. This latter figure rose to around 2,500 by the time of Truce between the IRA and the British in 1921[14]. Noonan (2014, 230) estimates that roughly 250 members of the Scottish Brigade of the IRA fought in the Irish Civil War on the pro-Treaty side and five died. While roughly 50 fought on the Republican side. Of course, these figures are dwarfed by the numbers who fought in the Great War. Géraldine Vaughan (2013, 123) quotes a figure of 15,000 Irish Catholics from Scotland for 1915, that is before conscription had been introduced. Elaine Mac Farland (2008, 137) states that 30,000 Glaswegian Catholics were in the British armed forces in 1916. Given that around a fifth of Vaughan's figure joined Irish Regiments, and that these regiments were heavily involved in British efforts to supress the Rising, it is possible that there were more Glaswegian Catholics voluntarily fighting for the British than against them in Dublin in 1916. Stephen Coyle (2018, 18-20) lists three Crown Forces fatalities of the fighting with Glasgow addresses.

The size and characteristics of the sample of 22 activists was affected by the circumstances of the build up to the Rising in both Ireland and Scotland. Ironically, the apparent militancy of this sample may have been affected by the strong anti-insurrectionist tendency within the IRB in Scotland. Seán T. O'Kelly remembered being sent to the west of Scotland, to a steel works outside Glasgow, around 1915 to swear a member of the supreme council out of the IRB. The man in question had opposed plans for a rising during the Great War and agreed to O'Kelly's request. It is not wholly clear from O'Kelly's statement who the individual was or if he did leave the Brotherhood[15]. It does, however, seem likely that this man was John Mulholland of Motherwell. Pat McCormack remembered that Mulholland resigned from the Supreme Council after disagreements over a rising at a meeting that took

[13] *Ibidem*; A detailed account of life at Kimmage can be found in Matthews (2010).

[14] Irish Military Archives (IE/MA), Military Service Pensions Collection (MSPC), IRA Membership Series, Roll file of the Scottish Brigade, RO 603 (<http://mspcsearch.militaryarchives.ie/docs/files//PDF_Membership/8/MA-MSPC-RO-603.pdf>, 05/2019).

[15] BMH WS 1765 (Seán T. O'Kelly). It should be noted that O'Kelly was President of Ireland by the time he gave this statement.

place early in the Great War[16]. However two Motherwell Fenians, James Byrne and Patrick Mills described how Mulholland had disrupted mobilisation for the Rising in north Lanarkshire in April 1916. Apparently, a joint meeting of the three Motherwell and Wishaw circles of the IRB was called[17]. Mills remembered that Mulholland was vague about the timing of the Rising while Byrne claimed that he, Mulholland, had been supposed to bring a letter from the leadership of the IRB. There is no way to reconcile the fact that Mulholland was described by some as resigning from the "Organisation" as the IRB was known to initiates, but he seems to have been still trusted in his local area. Unless he was taken back into some confidences in 1916 after so many of the local leadership had left Scotland or been imprisoned. Those who had left included very senior figures such as Daniel Branniff, a co-opted member of the supreme council of the IRB, and Charles Carrigan, Scotland's representative on same body[18]. Carrigan was also a leading member of John Wheatley's Catholic Socialist Society (Patterson 1993, 49).

Leading Glasgow Fenian Tom McDonnell appears to have disrupted attempts to mobilise also. McDonnell accepted responsibility for not passing on instructions to John Carney, an ex-US Army man who was a leading figure in the separatist movement in Glasgow. McDonnell also appears to have been in Dublin during the Rising but not to have taken part. Strangely McDonnell seems to have only baulked at the Rising at the last moment. He passed on instructions for Volunteers to travel to Ireland in January, acting on orders sent by Seán McDermott via Séamus Reader, and later ordered Séamus Robinson to go to Dublin[19]. What exactly McDonnell and Mulholland did or were trying to do is opaque. The title of Stephen Coyle's essay on this topic, "Confused Counsels", is extremely apposite (2018, 34-38). What seems certain is that Seán McDermott sent gun-runner Liam Pedlar to Glasgow to give word to the republicans there about the impending insurrection[20]. MacDermott seems to have been a point of contact for the Scottish sections of the movement, possibly because of the fact that he used to live in Edinburgh (Lusk, Maley 2016, 21). Pedlar was familiar to the Clydeside republicans having lived there previously with his Glasgow-born wife. Following a meeting convened by Pedlar late in Holy Week, Pat McCormack left Glasgow for Belfast as another contingent from Scotland was supposed to bolster the

[16] BMH WS 339 (Pat McCormack).

[17] BMH WS 777 (Patrick Mills) and WS 828 (James Byrne).

[18] BMH WS 222 (Daniel Branniff); Branniff was later elected as Scotland's representative on the supreme council, in 1918.

[19] BMH WS 627 and 1767 (both Séamus Reader); WS 156 and 1721 (both Séamus Robinson).

[20] Liam Pedlar pension file, IE/MA, MSPC, MSP34REF21572.

rebels in Ulster.[21] Two other west of Scotland Fenians, Daniel Branniff and Thomas Kelly, had travelled across some weeks earlier[22]. Although McCormack left word for others to follow, none did. Margaret Skinnider arrived in Dublin on Holy Thursday. Whether or not she knew the Rising was due is not entirely clear from her memoir (Skinnider 1917, 69-70). Thus, the sample may be taken to be more militant than other groups of 1916 veterans. In general, those who made it to Dublin were hard-core militants, including those who had been participating in arms procurement and transportation for the previous eighteen months, and tradesmen who were known to the senior leadership and whose skills were required.

Arms procurement, including: raids for arms and explosives in various quarries and shipyards, and the purchase of small quantities from men who worked in these places, had been ongoing in Glasgow in the years preceding the Rising. Michael O'Flanagan, who had been forced to leave Dublin due to his involvement in the Labour movement during the 1913 lockout, ran a bar in Glasgow and used this as cover to purchase small quantities of explosives and detonators off his customers. O'Flanagan, Joseph Robinson, Séamus Reader, Barney Friel, Cormac Turner, and Patrick Morrin were all present when an experiment with these materials went awry and blew the boundary wall off the side of the Volunteer drill hall, which unfortunately abutted Glasgow Central Station[23]. Séamus Reader and Joseph Robinson were deeply involved in transporting arms to Ireland and made several trips backwards and forwards to Dublin and Belfast in the months prior to their arrest in January 1916 (Murphy 2015)[24]. Joe Robinson, Reader, Barney Friel, Cormac Turner, Frank Scullin, Alex Carmichael, Seán Hegarty, Michael O'Flanagan and the two McGalloglys all took part in at least some raids for arms[25]. This activity attracted a degree of attention from the authorities. Although it appears most of the sample left Glasgow voluntarily, some did have to leave to escape police attention at the time Joe Robinson and Séamus Reader were arrested in mid-January 1916. Following Joe Robinson's arrest, his brother, Séamus who had been an ordinary Volunteer up to that point, campaigned on Joe's behalf. This appears to have radicalised Séamus to a degree as well as convincing other leading republicans of his bona fides and competence. He was inducted into the IRB by Tom McDonnell at this time. Séamus' witness statement noted that he was never formally attested

[21] BMH WS 339 (Pat McCormack).

[22] BMH WS 222 (Daniel Branniff); WS 378 (Thomas Kelly).

[23] BMH WS 800 (Michael O'Flanagan).

[24] BMH WS 1767 (Séamus Reader).

[25] BMH WS 244 (John McGallogly); WS 1767 (Séamus Reader); WS 800 (Michael O'Flanagan).

to the Volunteers. They and he simply took each other for granted[26]. By the time of the Rising, Séamus Robinson was a leading figure among the Glasgow Volunteers who had travelled to Dublin.

All accounts point to an increased level of activity during the winter of 1915-1916, from both the police and the Glaswegian republicans. Increased raiding led to increased police attention and some Volunteers were forced to depart Glasgow, although, as noted above, the threat of imprisonment was not their sole motivation for leaving. Séamus Robinson was among the second batch of Volunteers to leave Glasgow for Dublin. James McCarra travelled with him. The first batch had left across a few days in mid-January. Joe Robinson decided to launch a major raid for explosives at that time to make use of the fact that many of the hardcore of the IRB arms raiding group were about to leave for Dublin. Militant leader Seán McDermott had ordered that any members of the Irish Volunteers who were in danger of being conscripted should move to Ireland and that some IRB men who were skilled workers, should transfer to Dublin earlier. Alexander Carmichael, (carpenter), Barney Friel (plumber) and Paddy Morrin (slater) were members of the latter group[27]. Reader lists himself, Seán Hegarty, Frank Scullin, Cormac Turner and Séamus McGallogly as going over following the last big raid. After delivering the explosives to Dublin, Reader was sent back to Glasgow with further instructions from McDermott[28]. Like another group who travelled with Seán McGallogly, Reader made a stop at James Connolly's family on the Falls Road in Belfast while en route to Dublin. McGallogly remembered travelling across with his brother Séamus after Reader and Robinson's arrest. These accounts clearly conflict as Séamus McGallogly is thus reported to have crossed with two different parties. While it is possible that he returned to Glasgow having travelled across with Reader, it seems more likely that Reader simply confused him with someone else when giving a statement to the Bureau over thirty years later. Cormac Turner only remembered travelling with Reader and Scullin when giving Reader a reference for his pension, again thirty years later, and when interviewed by RTÉ in the 1960s[29]. The McGalloglys had intended leaving the following week but police attention, and the knowledge that Reader and Joe Robinson had been arrested, hastened their departure. The McGalloglys met with fellow Glaswegians Bernard "Barney" Friel and Alex Carmichael en route[30].

[26] BMH WS 156 (Séamus Robinson).

[27] BMH WS 1767 (Séamus Reader).

[28] *Ibidem.*

[29] <www.rte.ie/archives/exhibitions/1993-easter-1916/2017-survivors/793811-the-survivors-cormac-turner> (05/2019).

[30] BMH WS 244 (John McGallogly).

On arrival in Dublin, these four Scottish-born republicans, some on their first visit to Ireland, found themselves walking the streets. After failing to find Tom Clarke's shop they resorted to calling on Constance Markievicz's Surrey House even though the police were thought to have been looking for them there. They then found a *Cumann na mBan* meeting where they met Kathleen Clarke who managed to find someone that provided them with accommodation[31]. Séamus Reader had experienced similar difficulties on his visits to Dublin when looking to deliver explosives and other material[32]. An unfamiliarity with the Irish capital was not universal. For Frank Scullin and Michael O'Flanagan the move to Dublin was a return home. On his arrival in the city with Séamus Reader, Frank Scullin simply headed for his residence on the northside of the city[33]. Although he did not stay there and ended up in the Plunkett residence in Kimmage by March. Michael O'Flanagan was actually moving house back to his home town, with explosives packed in with his furniture[34]. Apart from the O'Flanagan brothers, all of the others, including Cormac Turner, seem to have been at Kimmage for a period. It would be a mistake to view the experiences of the Scottish-born Volunteers in essentially getting lost in an unfamiliar city as a sign of their isolation from the separatist movement. The list of names they interacted with: Seán McDermott, Constance Markievicz, the Connollys, the Clarkes and the Plunketts tells a different story.

The Glasgow Volunteer's experiences of Easter week 1916 again emphasise that they were deeply involved in, and integrated with, the separatist movement. The Glaswegian contingent lacked neither militancy nor valour when compared to the local Republican units. There is absolutely no sense of them being tourists, of it not being "their fight", or of them being in Ireland simply to avoid conscription: this having been introduced in Britain in early 1916. Since many of the members of a Company of the Glasgow/West of Scotland Regiment of the Irish Volunteers were members of the Kimmage Garrison, they were part of the group who seized the General Post Office. The Glasgow group helped to clear O'Connell Street after the rebels had taken over the GPO, their accents causing understandable confusion amongst local civilians[35]. Seán Hegarty was responsible for raising the flag of the Irish Republic above the rebel's HQ. Scottish-born Charles Carrigan was one of the last rebel casualties of Easter week: he died having being caught in the open by British machine gun fire following the evacuation of the GPO (Wren 2015, 33; Coyle 2018, 42-43).

[31] *Ibidem*.

[32] BMH WS 627 and 1767 (both Séamus Reader).

[33] *Ibidem*.

[34] BMH WS 800 (Michael O'Flanagan);

[35] *An t-Óglach*, 1 May 1926.

There were rebels who had travelled from Scotland and spread around many other locations. The O'Flanagan brothers were heavily involved in the fighting around North King St, the second heaviest in the Rising. Another O'Flanagan brother, Patrick Joseph, better known as Padjoe, who had been resident in Dublin rather than Glasgow, was killed defending "Reilly's fort" at the corner of North King Street and Church Street[36]. Francis, Michael, and another O'Flanagan brother without a Glasgow connection, George, were in close proximity[37]. Joe Vize, who had worked as an engineer with a shipping company and later on Glasgow docks, was sent to join D Company, 2nd Battalion of the Dublin Brigade of the Irish Volunteers when he moved to Dublin in the winter before the Rising[38]. Vize began the Rising in Jacobs Factory, now the location of the National Archives of Ireland, on Dublin's south side, but was ordered to the Turkish Baths on St Stephen's Green on Tuesday and spent the rest of the week there. Nearby was Margaret Skinnider of *Cumann na mBan*. Skinnider joined the Irish Citizen Army (ICA) on arrival in Dublin and fought as part of an ICA group under Michael Mallin in and around St. Stephen's Green and the Royal College of Surgeons building. She also worked as a courier, a more usual role for a woman in the Republican forces' gendered activities. Skinnider was wounded, (Skinnider, 1917, 156-157) thus becoming famous as the only female combat casualty on the rebel side[39]. Others were involved outside Dublin. Matt O'Brien (Coyle 2018, 54-55) was in Enniscorthy where Volunteers took over the town centre, while James McCarra was involved in fighting in Galway having been sent there from Kimmage. McCarra managed to escape once the Galway Volunteers dispersed. Having been involved in some fighting with the RIC the Galway rebels had fallen back on the occupation of a building in anticipation of some sort of last stand, before discretion prevailed (Greaves 1971, 86-94; Newell 2006, 129-130). McCarra, a native of Monaghan, eventually made his way to Belfast.

Two of those who travelled from Glasgow to Dublin to fight in 1916 died before the later part of the War of Independence, Carrigan and Alexander Carmichael. Carmichael was buried at his own request in Glasnevin Cemetery in Dublin. Often referred to as Sandy or Alec, Carmichael had been prominent during the arms raids of 1915 and was a company captain from 1917. Carmichael played a leading role in the re-organisation of the Volunteers in

[36] Patrick Joseph O'Flanagan pension file, IE/MA, MSPC, 1D94; BMH WS 800 (Michael O'Flanagan).

[37] George O'Flanagan pension file, IE/MA, MSPC, MSP34REF2391; BMH WS 131 (George O'Flanagan).

[38] BMH WS 493 (Seamus Kavanagh); *Bray People*, 23 April 2016 (interview with Vize's sons Joe Jnr and John).

[39] For one example amongst many see: *Irish Times*, 17 January 2014.

Glasgow, having returned there following the mass release of prisoners from Frongoch in late 1916[40]. Carmichael had sided with Joe Robinson in a major argument which almost split the separatist movement in Scotland. Robinson had attempted to take to task Tom McDonnell and the anti-insurrectionists, plus those who had been in Dublin, but not fought in the Rising. Joe Robinson kept his company apart from the other structures in Scotland, and Carmichael took over from him as captain once Joe was arrested[41].

All of the Glasgow contingent bar two: Séamus McCarra and Margaret Skinnider, were captured following the Rising. Perhaps they lacked the local knowledge that allowed so many rebels to escape. Skinnider avoided arrest thanks to the fact she was taken away in an ambulance in the period between the ceasefire order and the actual surrender of the rebel forces in the St Stephen's Green area. Skinnider returned to Scotland after the Rising but could not return to her work as a teacher due to her injuries and later spent some time touring the United States.

All but one of those captured were eventually interned in Frongoch prison camp in north Wales. Yet, Séamus Robinson was moved to Reading jail after being part of a group who demanded trade union wages for the War Office work the Frongoch internees were obliged to do[42]. His brother, Joseph and Séamus Reader had been moved to Reading from Edinburgh Castle following the Rising[43]. The only Glasgow Volunteer to be sentenced, rather than interned, was Seán McGallogly. McGallogly was convicted for holding up an officer, Lt. Stanhope King of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers[44]. This is a noteworthy incident: a Scottish born-and-bred Catholic rebel holding up an Irish, almost-certainly Protestant, officer of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers Regiment of the British Army.

Resistance continued in Frongoch. The internees prevented the camp authorities from identifying those Volunteers who had been resident in Britain so that they could either be conscripted or made to face trial (Murphy 2014, 64-65). Séamus Robinson claimed in his Bureau statement that the Volunteers from England, principally London and Liverpool, were "harried" to a much greater degree about this issue because the British War Office were wary of the Glasgow contingent, although this may be simple bravado[45]. The

[40] BMH WS 627, 933 and 1767 (all Séamus Reader); BMH WS 648 (Catherine Rooney née Byrne).

[41] BMH WS 933 (Séamus Reader)

[42] BMH WS 1721 (Séamus Robinson).

[43] BMH WS 627 (Séamus Reader).

[44] The (UK) National Archives, Easter Rising Courts Martial files, Trial of William Pearse, John McGarry and John Doherty, WO 71/358. McGallogly used O'Doherty, his mother's maiden name, as a cover.

[45] BMH WS 1721 (Séamus Robinson).

vanquished rebels do not seem to have accepted their reverse for any length of time. Michael O'Flanagan remembered a meeting of IRB men from Britain in Frongoch just before the general release. This meeting resolved to continue the fight and to use the IRB "to perpetuate the ideals for which they had gone out in Easter Week 1916". Efforts were to be made to find work for those Volunteers who could not return to England or Scotland. The Glasgow group at the meeting included Patrick Morrin, Barney Freil, Seán Hegarty, Alexander Carmichael and both O'Flanagan brothers; an interesting mix of Irish-born and Scottish-born Volunteers.

4. Behind the numbers: the War of Independence

In terms of post-Rising activism, all, including McGallogly, were involved in re-organising the Volunteers upon their release in late 1916 and early 1917. By the time of the Truce with the British on 11 July 1921 only 3 of the 20 who remained alive had completely dropped out of the IRA. That gives a 15% drop out figure with 85% who were still members. This compares to a roughly 37% drop out figure for Irish volunteer veterans of the fighting in Dublin and 60% who had some post-rising involvement in the military side[46]. As mentioned above, it is likely the militancy of the group dealt with here has been increased by the reduced numbers who travelled from Scotland to take part in the Rising as a result of the disruption caused by senior IRB men there. The roles the various Volunteers played in the War of Independence speak to their militancy, their refusal to accept reverses, and their integration with the separatist movement.

Of the three who were no longer militarily active at the Truce in 1921, two were still politically active. Cormac Turner remained a member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. Turner had dropped out of the IRA in 1919. Bernard McMullen had dropped out to become a trade union organiser having moved to Limerick for work. Limerick, with its fabled "Soviet" in 1919, was a centre of Labour militancy in this period (Grant 2012, 93-94). While many revolutionaries joined different units as they migrated for economic reasons, as can be seen repeatedly in the case of the IRA in Scotland, the partly social nature of Volunteer activism meant that many did not, so McMullan's actions were not unusual. The only Volunteer who appears to have completely dropped out by the time of the Truce was Barney Friel. Friel had served a three-year sentence of imprisonment having been arrested for arms smuggling in 1918. As such, Friel was the exception that proved the rule. Even the sample's one definite drop-out had been particularly militant for at least some of the post-Rising period.

[46] These figures relate to my unpublished PhD research into the veterans of 1916.

Some of our group took a behind the scenes role in armed resistance in Ireland. Having played a prominent part in re-organising *Cumann na mBan* in Glasgow, Margaret Skinnider moved to Dublin and joined the large Ard Craobh branch. Interestingly Skinnider's rank of captain did not carry from Scotland. Skinnider also noted that *Cumann na mBan* members worked more closely with the IRA in Glasgow than in Dublin. On Clydeside the women often went with the men in raids for arms. Skinnider worked giving first aid lectures, storing arms, and distributing funds to prisoners' dependents on the north side of Dublin throughout the War of Independence. Volunteers could have such activity recognised as military service if they were "key men" providing support to "fighting men" in areas where armed resistance was taking place (Brennan 2012, 70). Frank Scullin, in his regular occupation as a lamp-lighter with Dublin Corporation, was sometimes called upon to extinguish lights in certain areas in order to hinder the Crown Forces and/or facilitate IRA operations. Another former member of the Glasgow unit, Michael O'Flanagan, used money paid to him by the Green Cross, a republican prisoner's welfare association, to open a poultry business in Dublin's south inner city. The business became an arms dump and a post-restante centre for the IRA General Headquarters (GHQ). O'Flanagan also won the contract for supplying poultry to the local British Army barracks. The fact that a man who had to leave Glasgow on the run in 1915 and fought in the Easter Rising could be awarded such a contract says much about British intelligence failures and/or complacency in this period[47]. Although it should be noted that Michael O'Flanagan and his brother Francis were arrested in the round ups that followed Bloody Sunday in Dublin on 21 November 1920[48].

Francis O'Flanagan was one of two Volunteers to participate in an attack on the Crown Forces during the War of Independence. He had come over to Dublin in 1916 later than his brother, and was involved in the attack at Monk's Bakery, September 1920, in which three very young British soldiers of the Duke of Wellington's Regiment were killed after resisting an IRA attempt to relieve them of their arms. This was the attack for which republican icon Kevin Barry was executed[49]. O'Flanagan was also involved in an attempted rescue of Barry that was called off because of the crowds surrounding Mountjoy Prison where he was held. Barry was the first Volunteer to be executed since 1916 and the three soldiers were the British Army's first

[47] BMH WS 908 (Michael O'Flanagan).

[48] Yeates (2012, 205-9) gives a description of the atmosphere in Dublin at this time.

[49] BMH WS 493 (Séamus Kavanagh); BMH WS 1154 (Seán O'Neill); for an account of the ambush itself see Kautt (2010, 193-194), for an account of the ambush and its importance see Ainsworth (2002), 272-287. This article is open-access here: <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/247/1/Ainsworth_Kevin.PDF> (05/2019).

fatal casualties in Dublin since the Rising. Both O'Flanagan brothers had joined C Company of the 1st Battalion of the Dublin Brigade on their return from Glasgow. Francis had moved unit to the newly established H Company as a section commander in 1918. H Company was established as C Company was simply getting too big. This was a common experience for ordinary rank-and-file Rising veterans who regularly moved up the ranks and were used as experienced cadres to stiffen newly organised units in the Dublin Brigade. This phenomenon continued to 1923 on both sides of the Treaty divide.

Séamus Robinson travelled to Tipperary to help organise the Volunteers there after his release from post-Rising internment. Appointed officer commanding the Third Tipperary Brigade of the IRA, a particularly militant unit, Robinson led the IRA action responsible for the first Crown Forces casualties of the War, the shooting of two policemen at Soloheadbeg on 21 January 1919 (Hopkinson 2002, 116-118; Townshend 2013, 78-80) and was involved in several other well-known incidents. Usually, they are well known not for their size but because of their impact. They occurred early in the conflict before Ireland became inured to violence and when there were few other events competing for attention. Robinson stated that he had been trying to start a guerrilla war at Soloheadbeg, he did not think that the war had ended at the surrender in 1916, rather he felt that this was the same war that had been ongoing since 1172 (i.e. the Norman invasion of Ireland). Having been involved at the very earliest phase of the War of Independence, the Third Tipperary Brigade were by no means a spent force as the conflict progressed. They played a full part in the IRA offensive of early 1921 that followed the failure of peace talks and the passage of the Government of Ireland Act in late 1920 (Augusteijn 1996, 164, 180-181; Hart 2003, 65-71). Robinson felt that, as an outsider in Tipperary, he never got the credit he deserved in the local historiography/legends of the War. Although he believed that this was because his upbringing in Belfast and Glasgow meant that he was seen as an urbanite, rather than his being perceived as Scottish[50]. Séamus Robinson had spent around half his life in Scotland by the time he arrived in Tipperary.

Séamus' brother, Joseph, the man he was arrested with in 1916, Séamus Reader, and Joe Vize were three of the leading figures in the Scottish Brigade of the Irish Volunteers/IRA between their release in 1917 and the Truce of 1921. All three were heavily involved in the IRB-led gun-running operations which took place across the Scottish central belt and the north of England. Joe Robinson had been engaged in arms smuggling almost from the time of his release at Christmas 1916. Joe Robinson was arrested in 1918, shortly

[50] For a discussion of Robinson's fractious relationship with the brigade see: <http://www.theirishstory.com/2014/12/08/a-bitter-brotherhood-the-war-of-words-of-seumas-robinson/#.W3Etm-hKguE> (05/2019).

after Barney Friel, and remained in jail until March 1922. Vize was sent to Scotland in Joe Robinson's stead in 1918 before being recalled to Dublin in the summer of 1920. During this time, he managed to heal the split between Alex Carmichael's A Company and the rest of the movement in Scotland. He also worked with Séamus Reader in doing a large amount of organising and founded companies across central Scotland, including in Falkirk and Edinburgh[51]. Vize was later arrested in a shootout on Dublin's Talbot St. This was the well-known incident in which Séamus Robinson's Tipperary comrade, Seán Treacy, was killed. Séamus Reader had co-operated with Vize in his work. Reader had been advancing within the Volunteer hierarchy in Glasgow since his release in 1917 and during Vize's period in Scotland, Reader helped Vize consolidate the old IRB networks into the IRA[52]. Following Vize's departure Reader continued to drive the arms smuggling operation, using contacts in Hamburg, Edinburgh and Liverpool. Reader claimed to have supplied the majority of the Mauser pistols, known as "Peter the Painters", in the IRA's collective armoury, particularly favoured by IRA units in urban areas.

These operations were the main IRA effort in Scotland. Séamus McCarra was a full-time Volunteer on this work as a purchasing officer on the Scottish Brigade staff from January 1921. At one point "purchasing committees" were established to concentrate on arms procurement and they were kept apart from the regular Volunteer units of the Scottish Brigade which continued the routine of meeting to drill and train in a similar manner to IRA companies in the quieter parts of Ireland (Ó Catháin 2009, 168-169; Fitzpatrick 2017, 539). John Carney acted almost as a dummy o/c Scotland and often toured the central belt inspecting companies and liaising with political support groups[53]. It should be noted that the bluff worked, and British intelligence were far more interested in the IRA's main organisation than the purchasing committees, as evidenced by the intelligence reports sent to the British cabinet[54]. However, as recent studies have found the perceived existence of a secret army, and the imagined threat that it posed, were significant underpinning factors in the development of the Church of Scotland's racist anti-Irish campaign of the 1920s (Agnew 2009, 125-129; Ritchie 2013, 40-44).

Paddy Morrin, Patrick Maguire and Matt O'Brien are listed as members of the Scottish Brigade on the MSPC roll, but they are not listed as be-

[51] BMH WS 933 (Séamus Reader); WS 696 (Henry O'Hagan).

[52] BMH WS 933 (Séamus Reader).

[53] John Carney pension file, IE/MA, MSPC, MSP34REF993.

[54] (UK) NA, CAB 24/112, CP 1978, "Illegal drilling in Scotland' Memorandum by the Secretary for Scotland", 18 October 1920; and CP 1997, "Report on revolutionary organisations in the United Kingdom (Circulated by the Home Secretary), Report No 77", 21 October 1920.

ing heavily involved in the gun-running or as being arrested for the famous/infamous "smashing of the van" incident, in which a Scottish policeman was shot as local IRA members attempted to free Frank Carty of the Sligo Brigade who had been on the run in Scotland before his arrest[55]. Although the three men may have been involved in low-level company activity (Coyle 2018, 49-53)[56]. Another three of our sample: Séamus Reader, Séamus McCarra, and Séamus McGallogly, were arrested for the "smashing of the van" incident. Reader was released after about a month and had to pick up the pieces of a Scottish Brigade that had been shattered by the arrest of over 100 of its prominent members including DP Walshe their GHQ liaison. Séamus McCarra was charged over the incident. Perhaps Reader was not charged because the Scottish authorities were aware that he had opposed the operation. McCarra had been peripherally involved in the incident, but escaped sanction through the Scots Law verdict of "not proven".

Séamus McCarra's activities in the period between the Rising and his return to Glasgow in the summer of 1920 had been extraordinarily varied. In 1918 McCarra was, with many other veterans of Easter week, involved in travelling around Ireland to participate in the street violence between Sinn Féin supporters, mainly Irish Volunteers, and the supporters of the Home Rule Party that accompanied by-electoral contests at that time (Laffan 1999, 122-128). McCarra also took part in similar street fighting in Belfast. As quartermaster of his company, McCarra was involved in an exchange of shots with the RIC when moving weapons in the Short Strand district. McCarra was repeatedly dismissed from his employment owing to his activities and left Belfast on the 28th of June 1920, shortly after the beginning of the major anti-Catholic pogrom around the shipyards and Belfast docks and the civil unrest that followed (Parkinson 2004, 29-55; Lynch 2008, 378-381).

The two McGallogly brothers had left the Glasgow IRA in 1917 following the split that had been engendered by disagreements over senior west of Scotland-based IRB members' opposition to the Rising in 1916. Seán had felt the time for the Volunteers had passed and that purely political action would be required going forward. However, with the cause of Irish independence stalled by, amongst many other things, the failure of Seán T. O'Kelly and his delegation to get a hearing at Versailles, both McGalloglys re-joined the Volunteers in Manchester[57]. Although there is contradictory evidence as to

[55] For a good account of this incident see Coyle 2008 and IE/MA, MSPC, IRA Membership Series, Roll file of the Scottish Brigade, "Scottish Brigade Press Cuttings", RO 603A, <http://mspcsearch.militaryarchives.ie/docs/files//PDF_Membership/8/MA-MSPC-RO-603A.pdf> (05/2019).

[56] IE/MA, MSPC, IRA Membership Series, Roll file of the Scottish Brigade, RO 603.

[57] BMH WS 244 (Seán McGallogly).

when[58]. Both McGallogly brothers were involved in arms smuggling as the IRA units in Britain moved from operating through Clydeside to using Liverpool docks and the Manchester Brigade became a key link in the chain. Séamus McGallogly was taken ill while collecting a consignment of arms in Scotland and ended up in a Glasgow hospital where he was arrested over the Carty rescue attempt but was let go some days later. Upon release, he was moved to Dublin to convalesce, although he died from his illness in 1924. His brother Seán was also arrested in May 1921, during the police round up that followed a burst of IRA sabotage activity in the Lancashire countryside in which he participated (Noonan 2014, 178-180). In fact, Seán McGallogly had participated in a large amount of militant activity in the Manchester area and had helped Gary Holohan, a Dublin battalion engineer, to conduct assessments on major installations such as power stations with a view to escalating the IRA's punitive campaign. Seán McGallogly was a company captain in the Manchester IRA at the time of his arrest[59].

Lastly, it is not entirely clear what role John Lafferty, Patrick Mahon, and Seán Hegarty, played in the War of Independence. John Lafferty appears to have been a founder-member of his local company but did not engage in any major activity until 1922. Mahon claimed to be involved in the transport and storage of arms in the latter period of the conflict. Sometimes the ambiguous nature of the work of these "key men" left scope for the exaggeration of claims. Mahon asserted that he had been excused from parading with his company. He was certainly active in the early period after the Rising. He was involved with other members of his unit, C Company 1st Battalion, Dublin Brigade, in slaughtering some pigs that were scheduled for export in 1917[60] and also, similarly to Séamus McCarra, travelled to South Armagh and Waterford to engage in the street fighting and campaigning that accompanied the by-elections in those places. Mahon claimed to have been excused from attending parades by his company captain, Seán Flood, because he was using the horse and cart usually used for his dairy business to transport arms for the quartermaster Frank Harding. Flood left C Company in the summer of 1920 and there is no trace of Harding outside some Bureau statements,

[58] Seán McGalloghly's pension file states that he re-joined in January 1920, while his Bureau statement (BMH WS 244) states that he travelled to Manchester with brother. Séamus McGallogly's pension file claims that he was involved in the rescue of Piaras Beaslaí and Austin Stack in Manchester in late 1919. Beaslaí's (1926, 372) account lists both McGalloglys as taking part.

[59] BMH WS 244 (Seán McGallogly); BMH WS 847 (Patrick O'Donoghue); IE/MA, MSPC, IRA Membership Series, Roll file of the Manchester Brigade, RO 608.

[60] A Dublin history blog has recently published an account of this incident: <https://comeheretome.com/2019/04/16/feeding-the-people-when-the-irish-volunteers-commandeered-pigs-on-the-streets-of-dublin/> (05/2019).

and all mentions of him there appear to be in relation to activities in 1920 or before[61]. Mahon does not appear on the MSPC roll for either C company or I Company, his Civil War unit[62]. Obituaries for Seán Hegarty, carried in both the *Irish Independent* and *Irish Press*, mention or imply his involvement in the War of Independence. The *Press* tribute is a little vague as a result of that paper's reluctance to draw a distinction between the pre- and post-Truce IRA: it described Hegarty as "an active member of the IRA from the Rising in 1916 until the 'Cease Fire' order", meaning Frank Aiken's order of 1923. The *Independent* recorded that Hegarty "took an active part against the Black-and-Tans and later opposed the Treaty"[63].

5. Behind the numbers: Civil War

There was little support for the Treaty among the sample. As will become clear, the exact allegiances of some members are opaque, but an overall level of militancy and reluctance to accept the Treaty can be discerned. Three members of the sample joined the National Army, seven remained entirely neutral, and ten fought with the anti-Treaty IRA. At best, the pro-Treaty figure is 15%, and the neutral figure is, at worst, 35% and could be as high as 55%. Given that the small sample size means that each Volunteer represents 5%, these figures are broadly in line with the overall figures for Irish Volunteer veterans the Dublin fighting. These are 27% for pro-Treaty, 46.5% for neutral. However, the figure for fighting with the anti-Treaty IRA by members of the sample is likely to be 50% and is certainly no less than 40%. Considering that equivalent figure for Irish Volunteer veterans of the fighting in Dublin city is 26.5%, this again highlights the militancy of the group. The roles of those who participated in the Civil War again highlight the integration of the sample into the wider movement.

John Lafferty, Cormac Turner and Joe Vize were the only three of the group to ever join the pro-Treaty National Army. This is significant given the number of Scottish Volunteers who fought with the National Army in the Civil War. Indeed, the majority of the senior members of the Scottish Brigade from the War of Independence, including most former members of the "purchasing committees" backed the Treaty[64]. This was possibly due to the personal loyalty the IRB gun-runners felt towards Michael Collins. Fol-

[61] BMH WS 1387 (Hugh Maguire); BMH WS 678 (George Joseph Dwyer); BMH WS 576 (Kathleen O'Donovan, née Boland).

[62] IE/MA, MSPC, IRA Membership Series, Roll file of the 1st Battalion, Dublin Brigade, 2nd Eastern Division, IRA, RO 2.

[63] *Irish Press and Irish Independent*, 25 September 1933.

[64] IE/MA, MSPC, IRA Membership Series, Roll file of the Scottish Brigade, RO 603.

lowing his escape from Hare Park internment camp in September 1922, Joe Vize was sent to Scotland to smooth over the ongoing internal divisions in the Scottish Brigade (Ó Catháin 2009, 173)[65]. This was essentially the same dispute over the failure of some to turn out in 1916 that had been ongoing since the Rising. Vize spent the Civil War as Director of Purchases in GHQ. His appointment was announced publicly on 31 March 1922, but it is likely he was working in the role from before that date[66]. The National Army census, taken in November 1922, records that Vize had surrounded himself with other ex-members of the Scottish Brigade such as Séamus Fullerton, Seán Golden, George O'Reilly and Thomas Kirkpatrick[67].

Turner and Lafferty were lukewarm National Army men: Turner, who had dropped out of the Volunteers in 1919 but remained in the IRB in Dublin, only joined a rear echelon unit of the National Army in 1923. Lafferty was enrolled in the National Army in Donegal on June 14 1922 having escaped from the six-county area in May as the Ulster Special Constabulary waged what amounted to a state sponsored terror campaign following the failure of the so called "Joint IRA offensive". This was the attack on Northern Ireland involving both pro-and anti-Treaty IRA members conducted in the spring of 1922 (Lynch 2006, 191-192; Grant 2018, 136-137). It seems that Lafferty's unit did not take part in any activity prior to the countermanding order from pro-Treaty GHQ in Beggar's Bush, Dublin[68]. Lafferty's support for the Treaty, like that of many National Army members, was inchoate. Indeed, it might be debated as to whether Lafferty supported the Treaty at all. He is possibly listed as a member of the anti-Treaty element of the 2nd Northern Division of the IRA[69]. However, Lafferty's willingness to work the Treaty's structures, even if it was as he wrote to Éamon de Valera in 1932 "for no purpose other than to train and prepare for going back to the 6 county area on active service" does suggest a degree of acceptance. At no

[65] For a detailed first-hand account of this escape see (Andrews, 199-204). Confirmation of Vize's involvement can be found in the Bureau statement of Tom "Boer" Byrne, a veteran of fighting against the British in the South African War of 1899-1902: BMH WS 564 (Thomas Byrne).

[66] *An t-Óglach*, 31 March 1922. Interestingly Vize's clandestine work in Scotland is not mentioned "Comdt.-Gen. Vize fought in the GPO in 1916 [incorrect] and subsequently served under various commands".

[67] These census returns have been digitised and are searchable at <http://census.militaryarchives.ie/index.php> (05/2019). Details about the census can be found at <http://militaryarchives.ie/en/collections/online-collections/irish-army-census-collection-12-november-1922-13-november-1922> (05/2019).

[68] I am grateful to Kieran Glennon, historian of the Northern Divisions of the IRA, for his guidance concerning the situation in the north of the country in early 1922.

[69] IE/MA, MSPC, IRA Membership Series, Roll file of the Derry City Battalion, RO 399. The address for the John Lafferty in this file is not listed anywhere in Lafferty's own pension file.

point does he co-operate with the explicitly anti-Treaty IRA in Donegal under Seán Lehane. Lafferty's MSPC file contains a reference from the commander of the IRA unit in Dunboe, Co. Londonderry, that states that Lafferty was "always in favour of the Free State". The Dunboe unit was an outpost of the Derry City Battalion as was the nearby Magilligan unit of which Lafferty was a member[70]. Lafferty found himself in an awkward situation following the beginning of the Civil War as he was being trained as a member of the National Army but did not fully support the Treaty or the new Provisional Government. A company of Volunteers who travelled from Coatbridge, six miles east of Glasgow, to Dublin found themselves in this predicament also (Noonan 2014, 230). Lafferty's personal situation in the second half of 1922 is not entirely clear as his pension files contain two contradictory accounts. By the first account he was asked to renew his attestation to the National Army in mid-August by leading Ulster pro-Treatyites Dan McKenna and Seán Haughey, and was confined to barracks by Haughey and McKenna having refused their request. By this account, given to the Military Service Pensions Board when *Cumann na nGaedheal* were in government, Lafferty was later arrested by McKenna and the supposedly neutral Tom Morris before escaping and heading to Dublin to plead his case with Richard Mulcahy. By the second account Lafferty and his comrades in Moville Barracks refused orders to attack the anti-Treaty IRA in Donegal and also refused to re-attest be sent to the Curragh with the rest of the neutral men from the north (Grant 2018, 144-145). These men then escaped to the Donegal hills. Both of Lafferty's accounts agree that he went to Dublin to plead his case and was detained in the National Army's Griffith Barracks. The second account claims that Lafferty was only released after he threatened to go on hunger strike. It seems likely that Lafferty is exaggerating his conflict with the National Army authorities in the second account. The report of the Director of Intelligence in the MSPC file does not record it and Lafferty was awarded a pension by the Free State authorities.

This pattern of involvement on the pro-Treaty side has many echoes in the broader picture including the fact that the GHQ man supported the Treaty and the fact that a man who had dropped out of military activity, Cormac Turner, joined the National Army. The soft support for the Treaty among the group is further emphasised by Cormac Turner's position as a prominent member of Fianna Fáil in later life (Wren 2015) and John Lafferty's membership of the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic, and later Fianna Fáil, in Chicago. In this Turner and Lafferty were unusual but not exceptional. Indeed, the path from a National Army background to the Soldiers of Destiny was also trod by Seán Haughey's son, Charles James.

[70] IE/MA, MSPC, IRA Membership Series, Roll file of the Derry City Battalion, RO 399.

Seven members of the sample group definitely avoided taking sides in the Civil War. Séamus McCarra and Barney Friel both stayed neutral having dropped out on their release from imprisonment: McCarra in August 1921 having escaped conviction over the "smashing of the van"; Friel in 1920 having been convicted in 1918 and having served a prison sentence for arms-smuggling. There is no suggestion in any source of activity by Matt O'Brien after 1921[71]. Bernard McMullen also remained neutral although he was imprisoned in Dundalk for a period by the pro-Treatyites in 1922. Seán McGallogly, having moved to Ireland in February 1922 following his release from imprisonment, refused to take sides in the IRA split that was calcifying during that spring. McGallogly's brother Séamus was in Dublin's Four Courts building, which had been occupied by the anti-Treaty IRA. However, Séamus was in a non-combatant role due to his illness. Like Seán McGallogly, Michael O'Flanagan had also resolved to stay neutral during the split in the IRA in 1922. O'Flanagan found himself rendering some assistance to the anti-Treaty forces, putting his car at the disposal of elements of the Dublin Brigade and later providing food and shelter to Séamus Reader and a group of Glasgow republicans who had travelled to Dublin to fight in the opening battles of the Civil War in Dublin city centre[72].

Ten of our sample, including Reader, opposed the Treaty as members of the IRA. Although Patrick Morrin and Patrick Maguire remained with their companies for the Civil War, there is a lack of direct evidence about their participation in the activities of the Scottish Brigade, such as continued attempts to engage in arms procurement through both raids and smuggling; and attempts to block recruitment to the National Army. They do not seem to have travelled to Dublin with Reader. Indeed, Reader was the only one of that group to have been involved in 1916[73]. The group had travelled to Dublin on the regular ferry once they heard about the attack on the Four Courts. Reader and his crew had escaped from the fighting in Dublin City Centre following the collapse of Republican resistance there and later returned to Glasgow on a normal civilian boat after hiding in Michael O'Flanagan's house for a few hours[74]. Joe Robinson was already in Dublin and was in the Four Courts two hours before it was attacked, but was sent back to Scotland. We should note that as Reader and his men were fighting against the Treaty in the vicinity of Dublin's O'Connell Street, other members of Scottish Bri-

[71] Coyle (2018, 54-55) states that O'Brien's activity finished in 1920. Since he is on the Roll (note 54 above) for 11 July 1921 he has been assumed to be with his company until the Truce.

[72] For details of this fighting see Hopkinson's lucid account (2004 [1988], 121-126) or the more lurid (Neeson 1989 [1966], 120-132).

[73] IE/MA, MSPC, IRA Membership Series, Roll file of the Scottish Brigade, RO 603.

[74] BMH WS 908 (Michael O'Flanagan).

gade of the IRA were guarding the pro-Treaty Provisional Government less than a mile away[75].

In addition to Reader, four others members of our sample: Seán Hegarty, Patrick Mahon, Frank O'Flanagan and Frank Scullin, all took part in the fighting in Dublin city centre. All were in the not unusual situation, for Dublin IRA Volunteers, of seeing much more combat during the Civil War than in the War of Independence. Their arrests: Patrick Mahon on surrender, Frank O'Flanagan a month later, and Frank Scullin in early 1923 after taking part in a large number of guerrilla actions in Dublin, are typical of the broad range of experiences of anti-Treaty Volunteers in Dublin[76]. Hegarty, Mahon and Frank Scullin, took part in the hunger strike in late 1923. Scullin lasted thirty-five days before giving up. Hegarty's health was affected in later life by his involvement in at least two hunger strikes during the revolutionary period[77]. Mahon was among the last group of Republicans to be released from internment.

Margaret Skinnider had a behind the scenes role in the anti-Treaty IRA's quartermaster-general department. Although Skinnider does not seem to have been involved in the clandestine distribution of arms, a usual role for an IRA quartermaster, she bore the heavy responsibility of administering the anti-Treatyites' payments to the cadres of full-time volunteers attached to both their GHQ and Dublin Brigade. Skinnider was involved in this work from the beginning of the conflict until her arrest at Christmas 1922.

The two Robinsons had political roles, and they were the only members of our group to do so. Although Joe Robinson was also the IRA's o/c Scotland from his release from prison in 1922, working closely with Séamus Reader, until he (Joe Robinson) was arrested as part of a major round-up of anti-Treaty Republican sympathisers in the spring of 1923 (Noonan 2013, 244). Séamus Robinson spent much of the Civil War working as aide-de-camp to Éamon de Valera, then the political leader of the anti-Treaty side. Robinson is a fitting veteran to conclude with as he is a very good example of the integration of the Scottish sections of the Irish republican movement into the wider whole. He was later a Fianna Fáil senator, a board member of the Bureau of Military History, and a referee for the military service pensions board, and thus intimately involved in the production of a great deal of the source material for this article (Coleman 2009).

[75] BMH WS 939 (Ernest Blythe).

[76] For a comprehensive account of the guerrilla phase of the Civil War in Dublin see (Dorney 2017, 152-176 and 220-257).

[77] For Hegarty see *Irish Press*, 23 September and 25 September 1933, and *Irish Independent*, 25 September 1933 (Seán Hegarty obituaries and reports on funeral). For an account of the Republican hunger strike of 1923 see Hopkinson (2004 [1988], 268-271).

6. Context and conclusion

Overall, the Volunteers in this sample differ from other veterans of Easter week in three important respects. Firstly, very few of them drop out, and even those that do are relatively active. Two of the three that dropped out before the Truce remained politically active and the third only dropped out having served a three-year jail sentence. Secondly, very few of them serve with the Scottish Brigade in the War of Independence. Usually the figure for Volunteers moving brigade is about 5%[78]. Although in this case the situation is not directly comparable given the number of the sample who are Dubliners who had only been in Glasgow on a temporary basis. Lastly, only one of the group was a whole hearted supporter of the pro-Treaty side during the Civil War. This is deeply ironic given how many active members of the Scottish Brigade in the War of Independence later joined the National Army. However, in spite of the well-known examples of split friendships and families, IRA members tended to make up their minds on the Treaty issue along social or familial lines (Hart 1999, 264-266; Tormey 2016, 45-53).

The prosopographical approach adopted by this study has highlighted the integration of Scotland's republicans with the wider separatist movement. The stories of the Glasgow Volunteers of Easter week run like a thread through both the War of Independence and Civil War. This highlights very well the integration of the Scottish section of the Irish diaspora with the wider separatist movement. From brigade commanders to ordinary Volunteers, from political activists to gun-runners and on to hunger strikers; from "key men" to "fighting men", and on to *Cumann na mBan* activists; whether they were raising the flag over the GPO or fleeing their home in the six counties, their lives ran the gamut of militant republican activist experience.

The sample group was made up of separatist veterans of the fighting of Easter week who had been resident in Scotland between 1913 and 1915. Their experiences highlight the existence of a mutative transnational Irish identity: Michael O'Flanagan, a Dubliner, interacted freely with the Irish community in the west of Scotland when purchasing weapons; Séamus Robinson, born in Belfast but with many years spent living in Scotland, led the IRA in Tipperary; Seán McGallogly, born and raised in Lanarkshire, became captain of an IRA company in Manchester; Séamus Reader, from Glasgow, fought alongside the Dublin Brigade in 1922, as many of his comrades had done in 1916.

It is possible to trace a left-wing thread through the sample. The labour activism of Michael O'Flanagan, Margaret Skinnider, and Brian McMullen; Séamus Robinson's demand for "trade union wages" for internees in Frongoch, and, indeed, Charles Carrigan's membership of the Catholic Socialist Society all serve to highlight this and locate the sample in the Glasgow of their time.

[78] Figures from my own PhD research.

A city with a growing radical reputation, and a city whose Irish community was increasingly lending its support to the Labour movement.

Also, Séamus Robinson's comment about 1172 places these Volunteers very much in the nationalist milieu of early twentieth century Europe. In terms of a European context it is also possible to view the actions and experiences of the sample as being analogous to the actions and experiences of some Great War veterans, particularly those from countries who had experienced defeat, or felt that they had. The refusal of the Volunteers in the sample to accept political reversals, and, in fact, to engage in further action, such as resisting authority in Frongoch, smuggling arms in Britain and Ireland, or engaging in armed action on the streets of Dublin, Belfast and Glasgow, mirrors the paramilitarism of the vanquished elsewhere.

All good biographies must offer contextualising information. The context of this collective biography highlights that the Volunteers in this group were of the Glasgow, Scotland, Europe, Ireland, and Irish diaspora, of their time. As such, they were highly integrated into the transnational Irish separatist movement.

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"… a lone a last a loved a long the riverrun…" A Brief Non-Academic Reflection on *Riverdance,* a Seemingly Never-Ending Success Story of Diasporic Cultural Cross-Fertilisation

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Abstract:

A long chorus of native, diasporic and elective "Irish" danced along the embankment of the River Liffey in Dublin in July 2013 as a very modern bid to enter the *Guinness Book of Records* as the world's longest ever *Riverdance* line; a form of contemporary "religiosity" celebrating a blend of fame and fortune, entertainment and fun. Later, as I watched these myriad click-clacking feet on YouTube, I asked myself two questions. First, what the James Joyce of *Finnegans Wake* might have written about this interesting example of commercially successful Irish diasporic circulation and recirculation, given his tormented relationship with the river, the city's famous brewery, music and money. And secondly, who and how many the diasporic Irish are, where they live and how they helped to forge *Riverdance.*

Keywords: Irish music and dance, James Joyce, *Riverdance*, The Great Hunger or Famine, Water

On the 21st July 2013 a mile-long chorus of 1,693 people, all Caucasians and mostly women and girls[1], click-clacked in hard shoes for over five minutes in the sun, along the embankment of *Anna Livia Pluribella* not far from "Eve and Adam's" without, however, taking a "commodious vicus of recirculation back to Howth Castle and Environs" (Joyce 2012 [1939], 7). Here the destination was the *Guinness Book of Records*, the purpose that of

[1] Evident when one looks at the YouTube video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66ZKf6qeG54> (05/2019). The only unknown are two persons wearing a horse's head mask.

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making history joyfully – judging by the hundreds of smiling faces – as the longest *Riverdance* line ever. They succeeded. When I watched the footage a few years later, on YouTube, I did not think so much of the performance as such as of *Giacomo Joyce*[2] (Joyce 1968), his rapport with the river and the famous brewery (Gubernatis Dannen 2011), the closing and opening words of his ebb-flowing[3], riverrunning *Finnegans Wake* (Joyce 2012 [1939]), especially the last water-referred eight words of the book: "a lone a last a loved a long", with their four iambic feet and lilting L's, which bring to mind the names of the rivers upon which three of Ireland's four provincial capitals[4] stand: Liffey (Dublin), Lagan (Belfast) and Lee (Cork). Today, these rivers lend their names to three of the ten companies which perform various versions of *Riverdance* worldwide[5] a quarter of a century after its first embryonic seven-minute slot during the interval of the 1994 Eurovision Contest broadcast by RTÉ which made the international audience present at Dublin's Point Theatre jump spontaneously to its feet to attribute the performance a standing ovation, and which mesmerised TV audiences who began to feel that Irish showmanship had undergone a sea-change and that Irish dancing would never be the same again (Carr 2017). After this seven-minute "Big Bang", the amazing success of *Riverdance* was to produce a diaspora of its own and impact significantly on the practice and reception of Irish music, dance and choreography worldwide.

Riverdance's successful bid to enter the Guinessian annals of human endeavour was part of an initiative called the *Irish Gathering of the Clans*, also known as *The Gathering*, a commercially-driven project seeking to tempt at least 2% of Ireland's presumed 70/80 million diasporic population[6] (Kenny 2015) to visit the country during 2013 and take part in local get-togethers and events held throughout the year, including the longest-Riverdance-record bid. The *Gathering* was designed and championed by the Irish Republic's National Tourism Development Authority (Bord Fáilte) (Holland 2012), and the Tourism Ireland organisation – one of the six cross-border initiatives set up after the Good Friday Agreement of 1998. The campaign, morally endorsed by the Dublin Government, could count financially only on a response

[2] The title of a posthumous text by James Joyce published by Faber & Faber in 1984 and set in Trieste. The only one of his works not set in Dublin.

[3] The time span of *Finnegans Wake* is 18 hours, 37 minutes, three times that of a single tidal ebb or flow which is 6 hours and 12 minutes.

[4] The fourth, Galway, the gateway to the west, to Irish-speaking Connemara and Aran Islands, stands, exceptionally, on a river called the Corrib.

[5] The enterprise has grown so much that there are *Riverdance* continues to be performed all over the world by ten various-sized companies, each named after an Irish river: Liffey, Lee, Lagan, Avoca, Shannon, Boyne, Corrib, Foyle, Moy and Bann.

[6] <https://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/Irish-emigration.html> (05/2019).

from private individuals and non-governmental organisations as it received no public funding. While aimed at attracting the "Irish of the diaspora" to visit the home of their ancestors, its main goal was to boost the country's tourist industry (*ibidem*) which, like most of the rest of the Island's economy had been shaken to the foundations by the 2008 crunch and tarred as one of the I's in the ominous PIIGS[7] acronym, the other being Italy, the elective destination of my own personal "diaspora". The *Gathering* was a resounding financial success (Miley 2013) though many criticised it as a mere money-maker (Mullally 2012). *Riverdance* especially the lead male dancer, Michael Flatley, came under criticism for this and other reasons, though nobody could find fault with the excellence of its showmanship (Sweet 1996)[8]. So, twenty-five years after its debut, the show has become so "viral" that it still continues circulating like the children's reiterative street rhyme *Michael Finnegan*[9], which Joyce probably knew and which, along with the famous Dublin song *Finnegan's Wake*[10] and reference to the ancient myth of Fionn Mac Cumhaill, may have inspired the title of the book as Joyce himself wrote in a letter to a friend[11]. On Saturday 25th of August 2018, sixty-three members of the various *Riverdance* casts performed alongside five hundred Irish Dancers from all over the country at the World Meeting of Families in Croke Park, Dublin, in the presence of Pope Francis[12] thus bringing together the essential elements of the three-fold cliché we often associate with Ireland: water (including the "water of life", *aqua vitae*, *uisce beatha*[13], whiskey), music and religion, all very

[7] PIIGS is an acronym for five of the most economically weak Eurozone nations during the European debt crisis that started in 2008-2009: Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece and Spain. At the time, the acronym's five countries drew attention due to their weakened economic output and financial instability, which heightened doubts about the nations' abilities to pay back bondholders and spurred fears that the nations would default on their debts. See: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/p/piigs.asp> (05/2019).

[8] The words "extracting the Michael" are an obvious parody of the well-known colloquial saying "taking the Mick".

[9] "There was an old man named Michael Finnegan / He had whiskers on his chin again / Along came the wind and blew them in again / Poor old Michael Finnegan.... Begin again". For the complete version: <https://lyricsplayground.com/alpha/songs/m/michaelfinnegan.html> (05/2019).

[10] For the lyrics see <https://genius.com/The-irish-rovers-finnegans-wake-lyrics> (05/2019).

[11] "Joyce informed a friend later, he conceived of his book as the dream of old Finn, lying in death beside the River Liffey and watching the history of Ireland and the world – past and future – flow through his mind like flotsam on the river of life […]"(Ellmann 1984, 543-546).

[12] <https://riverdance.com/blog/2018/08/29/riverdance-performs-during-pope-francis-visit-to-ireland/> (05/2019).

[13] The words *Uisce beatha* feature twice in the song by the *Anúna* choral ensemble which opens *Riverdance*: "Hear my cry / In my hungering search for you, / Taste my breath

much present in the life and works of James Joyce who, though a voluntary exile, a member of the Irish "intellectual diaspora"[14], seems to have been unable to free himself of the rivers, sounds and beliefs of his native country, especially Dublin[15], against which he protested so much. Too much? That's for the critics, not me who have always imagined Nora Barnacle's Jim smiling sardonic-benignly at readers trying to make sense of his final book, his masterpiece, his hilarious "fun-for-all-funeral" of traditional narration pushing language to the limits of comprehension[16] which he actually believed anyone could read, if they put their mind to it[17].

Diaspora, etymologically "dispersion of seed", conjures up explosions, scattering elements from circumscribed centrifugal "somewheres" to centripetal "elsewheres". Like demographic Big Bangs, the fragments fly out from the centre in all directions to enter other spaces, although, perhaps the Cyclic astrophysical theory[18] with its succession of explosions might suit Ireland's case better and reflect Joyce's G.B. Vico-inspired notion of *corsi e ricorsi*, which we might call here "circulation and recirculation". When we associate the terms "diaspora" and "Ireland" we are inclined to think of departures only, although one of the most important mediaeval Irish manuscripts in Middle

on the wind, / See the sky as it mirrors my colours / Hints and whispers begin / I am living to nourish you, cherish you / I am pulsing the blood in your veins / Feel the magic and power of surrender / To life. Uisce Beatha / Every finger is touching and searching / Until your secrets come out / In the dance, as it endlessly circles / I linger close to your mouth / I am living to nourish you, cherish you / I am pulsing the blood in your veins / Feel the magic and power of surrender / To life. Uisce Beatha."

[14] Like Swift, Wilde, Shaw and Beckett before him, Edna O'Brien and Eavan Boland, by way of example, after him.

[15] "The clearest object in time in the book is the Liffey, Anna Livia, Dublin's legendary stream, and the most continuous character is HC Earwicker, 'Here Comes Everybody': the Liffey as the moment in time and space, and everything, everybody, all time as the terms of reference, back to Adam or Humpty Dumpty, but never away from Dublin" (*The Guardian*, 2002 [1939]).

[16] "and look at this prepronominal fun feral, engraved and retouched and edge wiped and pudden padded, very like a whale's egg farced with pemmican, as were it sentenced to be nuzzled over a full trillion times for ever and a night till his noddle sink or swim by that ideal reader suffering from an ideal insomnia […]" (Joyce 2012 [1939], 44).

[17] In Hoffmeister 1979, Joyce is quoted as saying, "I don't think that the difficulties in reading it are so insurmountable. Certainly, any intelligent reader can read and understand it, if he returns to the text again and again. He is setting out on an adventure with words. 'Work in Progress' can satisfy more readers than any other book because it gives them the opportunity to use their own ideas in the reading. Some readers will be interested in the exploration of words, the play of technique, the philological experiment in each poetic unit. Each word has the charm of a living thing and each living thing is plastic" (131).

[18] <http://www.physics.princeton.edu/~steinh/endlessuniverse/askauthors.html> (05/2019).

Irish, *Leborgabála Érenn, the book of the taking of Ireland*[19], provides accounts of the many "takers", who, according to the ancient oral tradition, are reputed to have hailed in successive waves from Israel, Greece and Spain among other places. There is also a fascinating theory that the Native Americans may have reached the shores of Connemara before Christopher Columbus ever set out to find a westward route to India (see Forbes 2007).

These *gabálaí* of Irish mythology were followed by historically documented series of "takers" like the Vikings, the Normans, the Henrician, Marian, Elizabethan, Jacobean and Cromwellian Planters, as well as more recent immigrants from abroad seeking a living from the *Celtic Tiger*. Even today, ten years after the so-called crunch of 2008, the country, according to a 2014 survey, hosted a proportionally higher non-national population (11.8%) than any other of the EU member states[20]. However, here, I shall concentrate on "diaspora" as the outward flow, that is to say emigration rather than immigration.

While the disastrous *Gorta Mór* or Great Famine of 1845-1848 caused the unstaunchable haemorrhage of Irish people which continued well into the second half of the 20th century, it was by no means the first demographic "dispersion", not all dictated by despair, the country witnessed in the course of its history, although it was the humanly most disastrous and culturally most far-reaching.

We might mention the mediaeval Irish monks who travelled to the European Continent, including Italy, to rekindle Christianity there (Ó Fiaich 1986), the Flight of the Earls from Ulster in 1607[21], the *Wild Geese,* Irish nobles who fled the country, after the 1690 defeat of James the II/VII Stuart and the failure on the part of the victors to honour the Treaty of Limerick in 1691, to fight in Europe where they formed Irish Brigades[22], not only in France, Spain and Austria but also in countries as far apart as the USA and Russia[23]. Irish emigration to the Americas actually began in the late 16th century with the transportation of criminals, mendicants and prisoners of war to the West Indies, a pattern emulated in the 19th century when lawbreakers were

[19] <https://www.vanhamel.nl/codecs/Lebor_gab%C3%A1la_%C3%89renn> (05/2019).

[20] <http://www.theirishworld.com/foreigners-in-ireland-11-8/> (05/2019).

[21] Their tombs are in Rome, in the Church of San Pietro in Montorio on the Janiculum Hill.

[22] There was also a Saint Patrick's Brigade, later Company of St. Patrick, in the army of Pius IX in 1860-1861: papers on this topic can be consulted at the Roma State Archives in Corso Rinascimento, at Propaganda Fide, at the Vatican Library, and at the National Library, Dublin.

[23] <https://militaryhistorynow.com/2014/03/14/the-wild-geese-a-brief-history-irelands-foreign-armies/> (05/2019).

transported to Australia and New Zealand. In the mid 17th century, under Cromwell, thousands of young Irish people were shipped to the plantations in Barbados[24]. The first large-scale wave of civilian immigration from Ireland came mostly from Ulster in the 1700s, when several families of descendants of the Northern-Irish Ulster-Scots Planters sailed to Philadelphia to settle in the Appalachians, the Ohio Valley, New England, the Carolinas and Georgia[25] where, unlike the 19th century Catholic Irish immigrants who forsook agriculture, they continued farming. The size of this Ulster-Scots diaspora to North America meant that in 1790, of the US white population of about three million, about half a million were Irish-born or of Irish ancestry. Furthermore, about 300,000 of these seem to have originated from Ulster (Leyburn 1962, xi). Besides their Presbyterian religious beliefs and their farming techniques these Ulster-Scots brought to the States many of the musical ciphers and sounds we associate with the folk tradition of the Appalachians and a lot of Country and Western, which the less-informed distracted ear might place under the generic umbrella of "Celtic music" (Ó hAllmhuráin 2017).

The Irish Diaspora *par excellence* is certainly that provoked by Ireland's Great Hunger [26] of the mid-19th century which created a dispersive trend that continued right into the second half of the 20th century. The devastating human and cultural effects of this century-long haemorrhage have long been discussed by scholars from all fields – from history to sociology, economics to psychology, from medicine to chemistry, from linguistics to literature, from religion to music and dance, to name but a salient few. Besides their Roman Catholic beliefs and mindset, their often imperfect mastery of the English language, the first generation of "economic refugees" who fled the country between 1845 and 1849 hounded by hunger, cholera and despair brought with them a wealth of oral culture, especially music and dance, while the decline and loss of their ancient cradle tongue was the price paid to this particular outcome of agricultural-mono-culture-induced destitution.

Most of those who departed the country at the time and did not die *en route* on the "coffin ships", landed in Great Britain and the USA where, initially, as the latest arrivals, though formally English-speaking, they began their new lives in menial jobs, working as labourers, domestic servants while some of the more fortunate males swelled the ranks of the police forces of cities like New York and Chicago. Not all of those who left back then were

[24] <https://www.historyireland.com/early-modern-history-1500-1700/shipped-for-the-barbadoes-cromwell-and-irish-migration-to-the-caribbean/> (05/2019).

[25] A detail which may help readers understand why Margaret Mitchell made a girl of Irish descent, Scarlet O'Hara, the heroine of her 1936 novel, *Gone with the Wind.*

[26] Quoting part of the title of one of the best documented accounts of the famine (Woodham Smith 1962).

destined to soar to the ranks of the truly wealthy like the Kennedys and the Kellys[27]. Since then and up until a few decades ago, the outflow from Ireland continued towards the traditionally preferred destinations of the world's Anglophone states only to be staunched by the "miracle" of the "Celtic Tiger" when, not only did people remain in Ireland but the country attracted workers from abroad. With the arrival of motorised transport, when ships and trains were superseded mostly by planes, migrations of all kinds, including tourism to and from the country, changed the face of Ireland and the perception of its history and culture at home and in the rest of the world. The impact of the Northern "Troubles" of the 1970s brought the country to the attention of the world, kindled interest in the Island and, in a manner that may be defined as perverse, made "Irish" or "Celtic" music a fashionable phenomenon leading to the mushrooming of groups performing this genre all over the globe.

As to dance itself, we might recall Mr Fitzwilliam Darcy's rude retort to Sir William Lucas in chapter VI of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, that "every savage can dance" (Austen 2006 [1813], 28). Despite its caustic intent, this statement is fundamentally true. Dancing is one of the world's most common though most ephemeral forms of art and has been an aspect of Irish culture as far back as we can trace it, in history as well as in mythology. There are very few accounts of banquets or gatherings in Irish mythology where music and dance are not mentioned. The first documented reference of dance in Ireland are the frequently-quoted two lines from a 14th century middle-English love poem entitled "Ich am of Irlaunde":

Icham of Irlaunde
Come and daunce with me in Irlaunde. (Brennan 1999, 15)

It is not clear whether the implication is that there was a consolidated tradition of dance in Ireland back then, or whether the poet referred to the smaller sister island as some kind of idyllic, exotic *topos*. It is plausible, however, that there was a long standing and high standard of performance in Ireland before these verses were penned given that the Norman clergyman Giraldus Cambrensis (1146-1223), hypercritical of everything else Irish and who branded the inhabitants of the "*divisa dal mondo ultima Irlanda*" (Tasso 2014 [1581], 16), as "barbarians", found that when it came to music, they were "incomparably more skilled than any other nation I have seen" (Giraldus Cambrensis 1982 [1951], 103). So much for Mr Darcy's acrid comment.

The problem with trying to trace Irish music and dance is that they belong largely to the oral tradition. The traditional music and dance of Ireland introduced by the Irish to America in the 19th century was by no means mon-

[27] The forebears of Grace Kelly, Princess Grace of Monaco.

olithic, as each area of the country boasted a style of its own (Brennan 1999, 165-171) also because each of the home-country's provinces spoke a different dialect of Irish, which, in turn, imposed different kinds of prosody on song which overflowed to affect instrumental and dance performance. The loss of the language itself, the encounter between traditional modes and the pre-existing cultures of the host countries had an impact of the old styles in the so-called pure form. Later, the arrival of cinema, records and television produced a "circulation and recirculation"[28] of musical and choreographic ideas, blending endogenous and exogenous elements, so that, while the essence remained familiar, the form was refreshed, refurbished as it were, making the practice and role of music and dance change both at home and abroad. Once a social event, a homespun pastime, Irish music today has entered the globalised world of industrialisation, become a show-business commodity, performed for a fee before audiences, a fact which has changed the function and quality of performance considerably, altering the expectations and taste of musicians and listeners alike and depending for success on excellence of showmanship.

This takes us back to the success and proliferation of *Riverdance,* which, in twenty-five years not only has become a thriving business, but also a paragon of performing excellence, so much so that, besides its ten official companies, it has generated spin offs like Michael Flatley's *Lord of the Dance* and several other imitations. Due to their commercial success, these shows have provided the world with a rather narrow view, however beautifully packaged, of what Irish dancing used to be, regardless of its references to the country's "glorious past". And since scholarship and philological accuracy are not the task of entertainment, we cannot honestly accuse these shows of betraying the tradition as others have done. They are simply what they are: well-produced, well-honed enthralling pieces of profitable showmanship which have put Irish dancing on the global map of gobsmacking professional performative art, have impacted on the syllabi Irish dancing schools offer their pupils today and ignited the (often misplaced) ambitions of learners and parents alike, both in the home country and in those of the diaspora. As international cultural historian Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin puts it, when commenting on *Riverdance*:

> Since 1994, this formulaic bastion of national dance has changed from an old competitive world of medals and *feiseanna* to a new commercial milieu of theatrical extravaganza. In the resulting cocktail of Celtic twilight and Broadway panache, World Music Esperanto and Hollywood, Irish musicians and dancers, like their

[28] If we see the cinema, recording and television industries as "products of America and England" we might say that their influence on Irish music and dance belongs to the domain of Joyce's of never-ending circulation.

vaudevillian predecessors, have radically retailored their art for a new stage, a transnational audience and an intensely competitive marketplace. (Ó hAllmhuráin 2017, 89)

He adds that the success of the show has triggered much debate concerning continuity, change, purism and innovation in traditional music, including dancing resulting in "intergenerational dissonance, passive aggressive entrenchment, and an unspoken distrust of intellectual discourse around the music" (*ibidem*), as the younger generation of musicians seeks fame and fortune at home and abroad, especially in the countries with the largest populations of people claiming Irish descent, in particular the United States of America.

And this brings us riverrunning back to the unsolved issue of who the diasporic Irish may be and to the "overwhelming question" of "insidious intent" (Eliot 1963, 3); that is, what it takes to qualify as a member of this global community. How many generations weaken the link, how many Irish-born forebears does one need to be included? The purists sustain that the diasporic Irish need to be Irish-born, while those with the broadest view retain that any forbear from a grandparent to a great-great-great-great-grandparent suffices. Some speak of "jus sanguinis", others of "jus soli", and so the debate continues. I feel that rather than a question of time, blood or territory the issue is psycho-socio-cultural, a matter of perception, tradition and practice. If people, wherever they may live, have been taught to believe they are "Irish", continue to observe certain customs and practice the oral tradition, we may consider them as belonging to the Irish diaspora. As to *Riverdance*, it was cross-fertilisation between the Irish-born and those who believed they belonged to the diaspora, especially the large transatlantic, Hiberno-American contingent, that produced the mix that underscored and continues to underscore the show and its offshoots.

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Questions

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Lost (and Found) in Translation. Women and Emigration in Two Poems by Eavan Boland, Translated into Italian, with an Italian *Envoi*[*]

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Abstract:

Taking as its cue the concept of emigration and translation as connected to the idea of metamorphosis, this paper focuses on Irish women's experience of emigration with the traumas that change of place, language and *mores* provoke. In her poetical and critical works Eavan Boland, now an outstanding female voice of Irish poetry and literary scholarship, provides a remarkable and perceptive reading of that experience, juxtaposing it to the symbolized role of mothers of male heroes or to that of an ugly, grizzling and dangerously demanding old woman as represented in the Irish tradition. This contribution is also an exercise in translation, a *metaphorical mirror*, i.e. a *reflection* of/on a text: it offers Italian translations of "The Emigrant Irish" and "Mise Eire", two poems by Boland, and of Padraic Pearse's poem in the Irish language "Mise Éire", which inspired the second, with some considerations and critical remarks. The Italian *envoi* consists of "Fogli bianchi", a poem about emigration written by Eugenio Lucarelli, now working in Switzerland, translated into English and *Gaeilge* by Irish speaker and musician Kay McCarthy.

Keywords: Eavan Boland, Eugenio Lucarelli, Irish language and tradition, Irish women and emigration, Kay McCarthy

[*] All the poems included in the essay have been used by permission of the poets.

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Eavan Boland

"The Emigrant Irish"

Like oil lamps we put them out the back,
Of our houses, of our minds. We had lights
Better than, newer than and then
A time came, this time and now
We need them. Their dread,
  makeshift example.
They would have thrived
  on our necessities.
What they survived we could not
  even live.
By their lights it is time to
Imagine how they stood there, what they stood with,
That their possessions may become our power.
Cardboard. Iron. Their hardships parcelled in them.
Patience. Fortitude. Long-suffering
In the bruise-coloured dusk of the New World.
And all the old songs. And nothing to lose.
(Boland 1995, 129)

"Gli irlandesi emigrati"

Come lampade a olio li abbiamo messi via,
Riposti in fondo ai nostri pensieri. Allora
Avevamo luci migliori, più nuove e ora
È venuto il momento, proprio ora
Ne abbiamo bisogno. Del loro tremendo
  esempio e improvvisato.
Sarebbero vissuti alla grande con ciò per
  noi solo necessario.
Col poco che per noi non sarebbe vita, loro
  sono sopravvissuti.
È tempo di immaginare alla loro luce
Come ressero e con che,
Le loro misere cose ci diano forza.
Cartone e latta. I sacrifici stipati lì dentro.
Pazienza. Coraggio. La lunga pena
Nel livido crepuscolo del Nuovo Mondo.
E tutte le vecchie canzoni. E niente da perdere.
(Italian trans. by de Petris)

Pádraig Pearse (Pádraic Mac Piarais)

"Mise Éire"

Mise Éire:
Sine mé ná an Chailleach Bhéarra

Mór mo ghlóir:
Mé a rug Cú Chulainn króga.

Mór mo náir:
Mo chlann féin a dhíol a
  máthair.

Mór mo phian:
Bithnaimhde do mo shíorchiapadh.

Mór mo bhrón:
D'éag an dream inar
  chuireas dóchas.

Mise Éire:
Uaigní mé ná an Chailleach
  Bhéarra
(Pearse 1912)

"I am Ireland"

I am Ireland:
I am older than the old woman
  of Beare.
Great my glory:
I who bore Cuchulainn, the brave.

Great my shame:
My own children who sold their
  mother.

Great my pain:
My irreconcilable enemy who
  harasses me continually...
Great my sorrow
That crowd, in whom I placed
  my trust, died.

I am Ireland:
I am lonelier than the old
  woman of Beare.
(English trans. by de Petris)

"Sono io l'Irlanda"

Io sono l'Irlanda:
Più vecchia della Vecchia
  di Beare.
Grande la mia gloria:
Io che ho generato il prode Cuchulain.

Grande la mia vergogna:
I miei figli mi hanno
  venduta

Grande il mio dolore
Perseguitata dal nemico
  inesorabile..
Grande la mia tristezza
I prodi in cui posi la mia
  fiducia sono morti.

Sono io l'Irlanda
Più sola della Vecchia
  di Beare.
(Italian trans. by de Petris)

Eavan Boland

"Mise Eire"	"Sono io l'Irlanda"
I won't go back to it –	Non tornerò più sull'argomento-
My nation displaced Into old dactyls, Oaths made By the animal tallows Of the candle –	La mia nazione dislocata In vecchi dattili, giuramenti fatti al lume di una candela di sego.
Land of the Gulf Stream, The small farm, The scalded memory, The songs That bandage up the history, The words That make a rhythm of the crime	La terra della Corrente del Golfo, della piccola fattoria, della memoria sterilizzata, dei canti che coprono di bende la storia, di parole che danno ritmo al crimine
Where time is time past. A palsy of regrets. No, I won't go back. My roots are brutal:	dove il tempo è sempre il passato. Una paralisi di rimpianti. No. Non ci torno più su. Le mie radici sono brutali:
I am the woman –	Sono io la donna –
A sloven's mix Of silks at the wrists, A sort of dove-strut In the precincts of the garrison –	Una sciattona con lerci Polsini di seta Che si pavoneggia Nei pressi della caserma –
Who practises The quick frictions, The rictus of delight And gets cambric for it, Rice-coloured silks.	E pratica Veloci sfregature, servizi di bocca che danno piacere per i quali riceve percalle e seta color del riso.
I am the woman –	Sono io la donna
In the gansy-coat On board the 'Mary Belle', In the huddling cold Holding her half-dead baby to her As the wind shifts East And North over the dirty Waters of the wharf.	Dallo scialle di lana A bordo della 'Mary Belle' Nella calca di gente gelata, che si stringe al petto il figlioletto mezzo morto mentre il vento vira a est e a nord sulle luride acque del molo,

mingling the immigrant
guttural with the vowels
of homesickness who neither
knows nor cares that

a new language
is a kind of scar
and heals after a while
into a passable imitation
of what went before.
(Boland 1995, 102)

che mescola le gutturali
dell'emigrante alle vocali
della nostalgia che non sa
né gliene cale che

una nuova lingua
sia una specie di ferita
che dopo un po'
rimargina in una imitazione accettabile di ciò
che c'era prima.
(Italian trans. by de Petris)

Eugenio Lucarelli

"Fogli bianchi"

Fogli bianchi. Ecco
Cosa siamo.
Imbrattati dall'inchiostro
anonimo
Del destino qualunque.
Accatastati e inermi
Nei vagoni dei lunghi addii;
Risme smisurate
Di speranze torturate
Malmenate, violentate,
calpestate
E persino dimenticate
Negli scaffali polverosi
Della segreteria dell'attesa vana:
E' caduto un foglio pulito da
ogni pretesa,
L'ho rimesso a posto
Sporcandolo di amarezza e
disillusione
Ora sono anch'io tra quegli
scaffali!
(Lucarelli 2018)

"Blank sheets of paper"

Blank sheets of paper. There.
That's what we are.
Bespattered with the
anonymous ink
Of a just-any destiny.
Heaped and helpless
In the third-class cars of long adieus;
Endless reams
Of hopes, tortured,
Battered, raped and trampled
underfoot,
Forgotten even
Upon the dusty shelves
Of the secretariat of pointless
expectation:
A blank sheet fell cleansed of any
claim,
I put it back in place
Dirtying it with bitterness and
disillusionment
Now I too stand among those shelves!
(English trans. by McCarthy)

"Bileoga"

Bileoga de pháipéir bhán. Sin
sinne.
Loite le dúch gan ainm cinneam-
háin ar bith i ndán dúinn.
Plódaithe, lag-nochta, gan
chosaint
i gcarráistí traein na mbeannachtaí
síoraí
líonta móra gan chríoch
ár ndóchais, céasta,
buailte, éignithe, brúite,
dearmadaithe fiú
ar seilfeanna dheannachúla
rúnaíochta na ndochas díomhaoine:
Do thit bileog bán amháin, gan
éileamh, anuas,
Chuir mé ar ais arís é
agus é salaithe agam le searbhas is
díomá.
Anois tá mé féin i mo sheseamh i
measc na seilfeanna sin!
(Irish trans. by McCarthy)

The title of this contribution harkens back to *Lost in Translation*, the film written, directed and produced by Sofia Coppola in 2003. The addition of the

word "found" was suggested to the present writer by the unexpected emotional enhancement and transformation of the co-protagonists. The male lead, Bill Murray, a man living out his latter days and the young, self-doubting Scarlett Johnson, experience a kind of empathy of far greater significance than an erotic rapport, which does not actually take place. This special relationship made of fondness and feelings stems from the fact that the two Americans find themselves catapulted – *trans-lated* – by events into a totally "other" culture, that of a hotel in Tokyo. It should be remembered also that Coppola's title is, in turn, a quotation from Robert Frost: "poetry is what gets lost in translation" which seems particularly meaningful in this context where the emphasis is on translating poetry and its cultural and political value (cf. Polezzi 2012).

A second source of inspiration was Brian Friel's *Translations* (1980), a play that has influenced Eavan Boland's poetry and the work of other poets from her same generation. In *Translations*, Friel bestows masterly artistic form on the theory expressed by his colleagues Tom Paulin, Seamus Deane, Seamus Heaney and Richard Kearney, among others, who were involved in the Field Day enterprise, and contributed to the seminal Field Day plays and pamphlets on the acceptance of the complex discontinuity of the Irish tradition and the need to forge a unifying future for Ireland, not so much in political as in cultural terms. These intellectuals dreamt of a "fifth province", that of the mind, an ideal space suggested by the term *cúige*, literally *one fifth*, used in Irish to translate *province*[1] implying a fifth ideal possibility in addition to the four geographical provinces of the island defined at the beginning of the 17th century. To Friel, the act of translation is a metaphor for all this.

Translations is a historical drama set at the time of the English Ordnance Survey of the country at the beginning of the 19th century when the first signs of the Great Famine were also raising their head. The principal aim of the play was, however, to offer a novel reading of ways in which its ominous past had generated contemporary Ireland. Translation may be necessary, as in the case of emigrants or of the colonizers, who want to control the alien territory but it may also be inspired by love like that between the English soldier Yolland and the Irish girl Máire in Friel's play. The English cartographers in charge of the Ordnance Survey were required to translate Irish place-names into English, thus depriving the Irish inhabitants of Baile Beag, where the two words literally mean *Town* and *Small,* into the Anglicised Ballybeg of their *ubi consistam,* with its demeaning suffix *-beg,* meaning to *mendicate*. The very act of translating engenders Yolland's infatuation for Ireland and his love for Máire, who, hoping to see him again and not knowing he has already been murdered by her own people during an ambush, asks the local schoolmaster, Hugh, to

[1] In medieval Ireland, although the number of districts into which the island was divided varied, there were often five provinces, hence *cúige*: the fifth province was *Midhe* (Meath).

teach her English. He gives her a wise piece of advice, "I will provide you with the available words and the available grammar. But will that help you to interpret between privacies?" (Friel 1981, 67).

Translation is a kind of pruning of the original, but it is also the addition of a new graft, of new sounds, and new ideas that are inscribed in the different language and culture into which the work is translated. The standard definition of "translation" includes: 1) the removal or conveyance from one person, place, time or condition to another; 2) the action or process of expressing the sense of a word, passage, etc., in a different language; 3) transformation, alteration, change; changing or adapting to another use. Now rare (cf. s.v. *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* 1993).

The third definition is especially significant in the present context as it conveys both a sense of change of position in space and a semantic shift implying "changing or adapting to another use". The poems chosen here allow us to focus on important concepts especially because they have undergone the reactive practice of translation which produces linguistic, cultural and emotional enrichment. In actual fact, the author is holding a mirror up to the poems, as it were, hoping that their Italian reflection may be of some use to today's Italian readers who, having forgotten Italy's past mass emigration, are now at a loss when faced with the epochal immigration to their shores of people from the south of the world. For this reason, the article ends with an Italian *envoi*, that is a poem entitled "Fogli bianchi", written by an Italian migrant to Switzerland, and translated into English and Irish by Kay McCarthy, a musician and a competent user of the Irish language, though not a native speaker, who, as part of the Irish diaspora emigrated to Italy some fifty years ago, married there, and brought up her bilingual-bicultural daughter in her adopted country, is now back in Northern Ireland. Her experiences, as she herself claims, make her a rightful member of both the Irish and Italian diasporas.

The first poem, "The Emigrant Irish" by Eavan Boland[2], was first published in *The Irish Times* on June 4, 1983. The inversion of the two substantives, "Irish" and "Emigrant", traditionally presented in that order when describing the plight of single emigrants (as, for example, in the song recorded

[2] Eavan Boland was born in 1944 in Dublin. Her father was a career diplomat and her mother a painter. She graduated from TCD. In 1969 she married novelist Kevin Casey, moved to the suburbs of Dublin and had two daughters. She is currently a professor at Stanford University, where she has taught since 1996. Her work deals with Irish national identity, and the role of women in Irish history. In the preface to her *Collected Poems* published in 1995 she wrote: "I have tried to leave intact the untidy and telling shape which the truth of any poet's work is. […] When I […] moved into the shadow of what I had learned to think of as an ordinary life […] I had no clear sense of how my womanhood could connect with my life as a poet, or what claims each would make on the other" (Boland 1995, xi). Throughout her career she had managed to connect the two aspects of her life and to give an original contribution to Irish literature.

by tenor John McCormack in 1928, "The Irish Emigrant")[3] underlines the right to Irish nationality of emigrants from the country because they remain Irish even as exiles. The strength of this syntactic inversion is confirmed by the meaning of the poem itself: the experience of emigration belongs to the Irish nation and culture which often appears to have forgotten this highly important fact. The use of the personal pronoun *we* is also significant and it indicates that everyone is at fault. In these terms, Boland performs an act of both re-appropriation and denouncement.

In the 1980s, 1984 to be exact, Rome hosted a seminar as part of the EAAS's (European Association for American Studies) biennial convention on the subject of "Immigrant Literature". Remarkable was the absence on that occasion of an authoritative critical voice in the representation of the rich heritage of Irish-American literature, while the symposium reflected extensively on the literary fruits of the encounter between European and Jewish writing and that of the United States of America. More than a decade after the publication of Boland's poem, President Mary Robinson[4], in an address to a unified sitting of the Irish Houses of Parliament, the *Dáil* and the *Seanad Éireann*, on February 2, 1995, the 113th anniversary of James Joyce's birth, availed herself of the definition "Irish Diaspora" to re-evaluate the undeniable cultural roots of Irish emigrants worldwide, associating it with the definition of *Ulysses* as an "epic of two races (Israel – Ireland)" (Joyce 1975, 271), given by Joyce to Carlo Linati, marking the beginning of a new post-colonial phase in the interpretation of Irish literary culture (cf. Anselmi 2005).

The second poem is "Mise Éire" by Patrick Pearse (Pádraic Mac Piarais) (1879-1916). It is a kind of compendium of Ireland's national iconography, so much so that it used to be studied by heart by Irish school children. This brief poem sums up the cultural tradition whereby Ireland is personified in two mythical figures: *An Chailleach Bhéara*, the old hag who refers back to pre-Christian magical times, and the distraught *Mater-Dolorosa*-like Christian mother of heroes betrayed by her own offspring. The strength of this identitarian tradition confirms the passive role allocated to women by Ireland's society and culture, although women are the object and subject of both awe and fear. The first "translation" undertaken by female-poets, from the last century to the present, regards a transfer of gender, therefore the point of view is no longer a man's. The woman-poet makes herself subject in or-

[3] See <http://unitedireland.tripod.com/the_irish_emigrant_song.html> (05/2019).

[4] "After all, emigration is not just a chronicle of sorrow and regret. It is also a powerful story of contribution and adaptation. In fact, I have become more convinced each year that this great narrative of dispossession and belonging, which so often had its origins in sorrow and leave-taking, has become - with a certain amount of historic irony – one of the treasures of our society. If that is so then our relation with the diaspora beyond our shores is one which can instruct our society in the values of diversity, tolerance, and fair-mindedness" (Robinson 1995).

der to give voice to the "entwined destinies" of a woman who transits into the crude reality of colonised Irish society. This explains the choice in "Mise Eire" (spelt without a *fada*, accent, on the E of Eire), by Boland, who assumes a practically polemical attitude towards Pearse. This poem was published in the *Irish Times* on the June 16, 1984 (another significant Joycean reference). The author overturns the meaning as well as the historical and ethical value of the lines by Pearse, who was also a revered hero of the 1916 Easter Rising – speaking in the name of women until then left "outside history" (Boland 1990). No more lies to mask defeat intended as castration to be concealed in the self-absolving and "andro-centric" poetic tradition:

I won't go back to it–
My nation displaced
into old dactyls,
oaths made by the animal tallows
of the candle–
Land of the Gulf Stream,
the small farm,
the scalded memory,
the songs
that bandage up the history,
the words
that make a rhythm of the crime
Where time is time past.
A palsy of regrets.
No, I won't go back.
My roots are brutal. (Boland 1995, 102)

For Boland it is better to denounce the unembellished truth of Ireland, Britain's first colony, a reality experienced at the expense of women, making them either prostitutes or emigrants. At this point the woman poet's attention focuses on that "kind of scar" caused by emigration which made it necessary to learn a new language in a new land, relegating the mother tongue to a feeling of nostalgia, to a *νόστος* of an improbable if not impossible return. It was no chance that "A Kind of Scar" became the title of a seminal essay in which Boland summed up her poetics as a woman and a poet.

By way of final reflection, this paper presents the poem "Fogli bianchi" by Eugenio Lucarelli, published in the daily newspaper *Il Fatto Quotidiano* in a column significantly called La *valigia di cartone* (The Cardboard Suitcase) and translated here both into English and Irish by Kay McCarthy. The Italian poem takes us back to Boland's "The Emigrant Irish", in which emigrants are simply erased from national history. In this case the human being becomes a name in the registers of bureaucrats, as it happened on Ellis Island, New York, and is now happening in Europe. The Italian transla-

tion of Pearse's lines is based on a number of English-language translations, ranging from an anonymous dual-language version of the poem online, to one included in *Woman and Nation* by C.L. Innes (Innes 1993, 25), and to a version by Lady Gregory (who knew and spoke Irish) used by Yeats (who did not) in his edition of *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse 1892-1935* (1938).

The most suggestive difficulty regarded the term "Cailleach". According to the Patrick S. Dineen's *Irish-English Dictionary*[5], the term indicates literally "a veiled woman, from *caille*, a nun, a woman celibate, a nun wearing black drapery. In more modern Irish it refers to an old woman, a hag, a witch". According to Alexander Macbain's *An Etymological Dictionary of the Gaelic Language*, *cailleach* means the "veiled one" or "the old woman" (Macbain 1911, 63). In some stories of the old tradition the Cailleagh appears to the hero as a hideous old woman, and when he is kind to her, she turns into a lovely young lady who rewards him for his good deeds[6]. The *Book of Lecan* (c. 1400 a.d.) claims that *An Chailleach Bhéara* was the goddess of the *Corcu Duibne* people from the Kerry region. In Scotland the *Cailleach Bheur* serves a similar purpose as the personification of winter; she has a blue face, and is born old at *Samhain* (October, 31), but grows younger over time until she becomes a beautiful maiden at *Bealtaine* (May, 1). Her grandchildren and great-grandchildren are believed to have formed the tribes of Kerry and surrounding areas. Some authors believe she descends from a very early – most probably pre-Celtic – divinity who moulded the land and controlled the forces of nature, including harsh winter. There are suggestions that she may be a survival of an early earth goddess demonised, or reduced at least, to preternatural status, by the Christian church (cf. D'Este, Rankin 2009).

McCarthy suggests translating "Cailleach" as "strega" in Italian for the sake of the "e-a" assonance in "Str**ega** di B**e**ar**a**". The "a" before the "r" of Beara is not pronounced, it is there only to balance the final "a" because of an Irish-language spelling rule called *caol le caol agus leathan le leathan*[7]; ("narrow with narrow, broad with broad"), but the translation recuperates the English *old woman* (in Italian *vecchia*) which links well with *beara* [bera]. As to the English translation, the version used here is an anonymous one available online (Pearse 1912). It is interesting to note that the last four lines before the final refrain are missing from Innes' version, and in the version made available by Lady Gregory and used by W.B. Yeats in a conference, the line "Modern Ireland" before "Great my shame" seems to involve modern Ireland in the betrayal of the country perpetrated by her children[7].

[5] First published in 1904; reprinted, with additions, several times between 1927 and 1996.

[6] She may be the inspiration of the like "Cathleen ni Houlihan" myth.

[7] "I am Ireland, / Older than the Hag of Beara. / Great my pride, / I gave birth to brave Cuchulain. / *Modern Ireland* / Great my shame, / My own children killed their mother. / I am Ireland, / Lonelier than the Hag of Beara" (Yeats 1965, 22).

To conclude, it is worth pointing out what McCarthy observes in a private email exchange with the author in connection to her translation of Lucarelli's poem in Irish:

> I was able to render "ecco cosa siamo" with two whispered words "sin sinne" (pronounced as per English rule /*shin* / /*sh**i**nne*/). *Sinne* is the plural of *Mise* (pronounced as per English rule /*m**i**she*/). These are simply two personal pronouns in their so-called "strong form". The "weak" forms are Sinn /*shin*/ (we) and Mé (I) and they are pronounced exactly like the equivalent Italian pronoun. In Irish the strong personal pronoun can stand alone without the copula "is" /iss/; therefore *Mise Eire* actually means *I Ireland*, though the verb is implied. So strong is the suffix added to the simple pronouns in Irish: mise (I), tusa (you singular), seiseann (he/it), sise (she/it), sinne (we), sibhse (you plural), siadsan (they), that the copula becomes redundant. *Is mise Éire* would weaken the sonorous solemnity of *M**i**se **É**ire* [two trochees], both as meaning and as prosody.

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When did the Irish-American Diaspora Make a Difference? Influencing US Diplomacy toward Northern Ireland

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Abstract:

This article explains the changing relationship between Irish leaders, the Irish-American diaspora, Irish-American political elites, and American diplomacy. Specifically, we explore the transnational advocacy networks (TANSs) associated with the Irish diaspora and their impact on American diplomacy. In the early twentieth century, de Valera failed to mobilize Irish-America to convince President Wilson to recognize the Irish Republic. By the late twentieth century Irish-Americans became effective foreign policy entrepreneurs in Congress re-orienting US diplomacy toward Northern Ireland. Irish political elites utilized both the diaspora and their elite connections to transform the American policy of deference to its Cold War ally to an engaged diplomacy mediating and promoting peace.

Keywords: Congressional Foreign Policy Entrepreneurs, Four Horsemen, Irish-American Diaspora, Northern Aid Committee (NORAID), Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANs)

There is a long history of Irish governmental efforts to mobilize the Irish-American diaspora to influence United States foreign policy. The first President of the Irish Republic travelled throughout the United States (US) seeking to mobilize this diaspora to convince President Wilson to grant diplomatic recognition to the Irish Republic in 1919. Though the mission failed, it symbolized the Irish understanding that the diaspora in America could be used to pressure the US government and thereby shape American foreign policy to its interests. The Irish thus have differentiated the diaspora in the US from the Irish diaspora in other states based on the emerging power of the US in the twentieth century. The belief that the Irish-American diaspora could be utilized to modify American policy on behalf of the Irish cause was

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highlighted in more recent years by John Hume's efforts to elicit the support of prominent Irish-Americans and the Irish diaspora in America in support of the Northern Ireland peace process. While analysis of the Irish-American diaspora has most frequently focused on the role of nationalist and republican politicians, Unionists in Northern Ireland have recognized and attempted to mobilize the large Scots-Irish diaspora in the US for their political agenda as well. Increasingly, scholars have identified diasporas as important actors in world politics, and our research seeks to link the transnational advocacy networks (TANs) associated with the Irish diaspora in the United States with the formal diplomacy between the governments of Ireland, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States during the Northern Ireland peace process. As such, this article does not focus on the historical development of the Irish diaspora in America or systematically compare the Irish diaspora in the US with the Irish diaspora in other states. While the Irish diaspora is truly global, the Irish in Britain, Australia, Canada, Latin America and other countries did not exert much influence on the Northern Ireland peace process. Thus, we focus on the Irish diaspora in the US' influence and ability to facilitate an emerging peace process in Northern Ireland. Foreign policy entrepreneurs in the US Congress were the critical intermediaries between Irish nationalist politicians and the Irish diaspora in America that ultimately brought about the change in US policy from one of deference to British policy in Northern Ireland to one of diplomatic engagement, often on behalf of the Irish nationalist/republican cause. This article highlights the complex pattern of cooperation that developed between government representatives and the diaspora in formulating, developing, and changing American foreign policy toward Northern Ireland and how this impacted on the peace process.

1. International Relations Theory, Diasporas, Diplomacy, and the Northern Ireland Peace

Liberal theorists of international relations recognize that individuals can have influence based on their charisma and their ability to promote their interest. In peace processes, despite the importance of structural conditions (Ruane and Todd 2014), leaders are important when they take advantage of opportunities to achieve peace. Ripsman (2016) has identified two stages in peace processes. First, peacemakers from above, leaders of states, negotiate an agreement and then groups in civil society build peace from below. In Northern Ireland, Alderdice (2014) and Dixon (2017) believe political elites were critical in leading the peace process. McLoughlin (2017a) has highlighted the important role John Hume played as the leading nationalist politician in Northern Ireland in convincing American leaders of his vision for peace. Hume was able to both articulate a clear vision for peace based on power-sharing and North-South cooperation in Ireland and act as an effective political agent to achieve this plan

for peace. David Trimble, as leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), took risks for peace by negotiating with and ultimately sharing power with nationalists and even republicans (McDonald 2000; Godson 2004; Millar 2004). He understood that power-sharing was necessary in order to gain the decommissioning of republicans. The peace he advocated allowed Northern Ireland to remain in the United Kingdom, the ultimate goal for unionists. After the electoral demise of Trimble and the UUP, Ian Paisley and subsequent leaders of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) agreed to share power with Sinn Féin in the aftermath of the St. Andrews Agreement. Bertie Ahern and negotiators for the Irish government proved effective in providing a viable mechanism for North-South cooperation while rescinding territorial claims to Northern Ireland and helping to promote the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement (McDermott 2014). Simultaneously, Tony Blair and negotiators for the British government like Jonathan Powell were adept at keeping the negotiations and peace process going even if it meant fudging the truth (Aughey 2002; Gormley-Heenan 2007; Dixon 2014 and 2019). Finally, republican leaders in Northern Ireland, especially Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, demonstrated a willingness to negotiate and ultimately promoted ceasefires, various peace agreements, and disarmament that were critical to the peace process (Hazleton 2000; Stevenson 2011). In sum, effective and talented leaders from multiple political parties and in a number of states contributed to the achievement of peace in Northern Ireland.

Peace, however, is not made by elites alone. Putnam (1988) conceived of diplomacy as a two-level game where governments negotiate with each other and their own constituencies. Liberal international relations theorists have stressed not only the role of elites but the role domestic groups play in the formulation of a state's foreign policy. Applying selectorate theory developed by Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson, and Morrow (2003), Owsiak (2017) has demonstrated the important role that domestic constituencies played in the Northern Ireland peace process. Diasporas are a specific kind of domestic group that seek to influence a government's foreign policy, especially toward their historic homeland (Shain and Barth 2003; Shain 2007). Diasporas can be a source of conflict (Shain 2002; Adamson 2013) or a source of conflict resolution (Shain 2002; Shain and Aryasinha 2006; Bercovitch 2007; Baser and Swain 2008) depending on how the diaspora views the conditions in its ancestral homeland and the proper role of its new government. A state's effort to utilize a diaspora to assist it in influencing another state is quite similar to historic efforts to use propaganda to achieve influence. However, instead of attempting to reach a large percentage of the other state's population, efforts to utilize a diaspora recognize the important link that those who live in a diaspora have to their ethnic homeland. This can motivate some in the diaspora to influence the government of their new state on issues of special interest to those in the land of their ancestors.

While diasporas can be resources that states seek to mobilize to influence other states, they are also autonomous groups that play an important role in shaping the politics of their adopted homeland. Members of a diaspora may identify with the land of their ancestors, but this does not mean that a diaspora does whatever the historic state or government wishes. The autonomy gained by living in another state frees members of a diaspora from an obligation to the do the bidding of the state of their birth or ancestry. Nevertheless, many in a diaspora continue to feel an important connection to the land, territory, and people of their home state. As a result, many scholars have suggested that diasporas play an especially important role in defining and redefining the identity of their home nation (Anderson 1998; Anthias 1998; Ma Mung 2004; Tölölyan 2007; Hickman 2012). Their experience abroad informs the politics of their homeland as emigrant experiences challenge traditional norms and place pressure on the governments of their homeland to offer more economic opportunity and political security to prevent the need for emigration in the future. Inevitably, emigration is a sign of failure in the traditional conception of a state which included a population *within* a given territory. The fact that the physical boundary of the state fails to provide the opportunity or security that its citizens seek inevitably places pressure on states to change policies to accede to the needs of its citizens. Akenson (1996, 10) notes that in the twentieth century emigration has been a sign of failure for numerous Irish governments.

While scholars historically conceived of groups as domestic or internal actors, the increased linkages that exist across states means that scholars no longer conceive of groups as isolated and parochial but as groups who share interests, information and even identities across state borders. This has meant that diasporas can increasingly interact with those living in their home state. Gupta (2017) has applied the concept of Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANs) to explain the numerous licit, semi-licit, and illicit relationships that existed connecting organizations in the US to nationalist and republican groups in Ireland during the Troubles and the peace process. These networks linked individuals in the US and Ireland through a common interest in Ireland and Irish freedom. A wide array of organizations existed, some autonomously and independently created by individuals in the US but some were sponsored or linked to political groups in Ireland. Networks connecting the Irish diaspora and Irish politicians and interests date back to the late nineteenth century (Keown 2016), but Irish-America and ultimately the US government became motivated to engage and attempt to influence Northern Ireland during the Troubles, especially in the aftermath of the British policy of internment. American groups and prominent Irish-Americans in Congress, especially Senator Ted Kennedy, pressured the Nixon administration to protest British policy as the Troubles intensified (MacLeod 2016, 27).

As Keck and Sikkink (1998) contend, TANs are likely to develop in states that seek to raise their international standing by a successful intervention.

Groups formed autonomously in the US and those that were linked to parties or individuals in Ireland recognized that American engagement in Northern Ireland would be diplomatic and would not be based on the threat of or use of military force. US diplomatic engagement in Northern Ireland was more practical and comparatively less expensive than military interventions that might lead to a quagmire or casualties (Hazleton 2000). Another factor that allowed groups to emerge with influence in the US was the permeability in the welcoming of groups within its territories (Shain and Barth 2003). The United States has historically offered economic hope for many immigrants, inviting many – both legal and undocumented to come to its shores. The United States has arguably been lenient towards the Irish as an immigrant group, favoring them for multiple reasons. Ignatiev (2009) has suggested that the Irish were able to succeed and integrate into American culture and society because of their race. Despite a history of discrimination, especially in the nineteenth century, American society came to accept the Irish, who by the late twentieth century they had emerged as the wealthiest and arguably the most successful ethnic group in the American public. Gupta (2017) stresses that the power of a group or social movement is based on how the state perceives this group, not on how the groups perceives themselves. The Irish were fortunate to have a positive image in American society that allowed them access to power and influence. McCourt (2000) contends that Irish-Americans considered themselves strong and united, superior to other immigrant groups.

We stress the importance of this American diaspora in how Irish officials engaged the US government to support their interests. Irish officials realized that the Irish-American lobby or diaspora could put pressure on the US government to support their objectives. Irish elites, whether they were republicans, nationalists, or unionists, sought to mobilize members of the Irish diaspora. When the Troubles emerged in the late 1960s, Irish elites attempted to connect with Irish-American groups and interested Irish-American elites who could lobby the US government to support policies friendly to their cause. For example, Gupta (2017) highlights the illicit network that emerged in this period to support the Irish Republican Army's (IRA's) bombing campaign against the British. This network heavily relied on support from Irish-American groups like NORAID (Northern Aid Committee) to fund their efforts. NORAID succeeded in attracting support from Irish-Americans who related to the discrimination experienced by Catholics in Northern Ireland based on their own hardship and discrimination in America (Hanley 2004). Gradually, led by John Hume, Irish nationalists mobilized more moderate elements within the Irish-American community to promote a more peaceful intervention by the United States into the conflict (Fitzpatrick 2017; Gupta 2017; McLoughlin 2017a).

The networks connecting Irish-Americans with Irish elites highlight how TANs play an important role because of their position as mediators between

the foreign country and the home country. These networks serve as conduits for information, resources, and services (Gupta 2017). In the case of Northern Ireland, US government officials achieved a better understanding of the Troubles largely thanks to TANs which persuaded them of the importance of ending violence and of seeking a diplomatic solution. Transnational Advocacy Networks, thus, proved to have capacity into modifying material conditions through patronage as well as ideational power in their reframing of the situation for stakeholders (Gupta 2017). During the Clinton administration, the Americans for a New Irish Agenda encouraged the IRA to abandon its armed struggle and prove its credibility. The advent of the ceasefire due, in part, to the lobbying of Irish-American associations gave TANs even more credibility and induced some republicans to give more importance to Irish America (Wilson 1997). As previously stated, the importance that a country gives to a group determines how much power TANs have in influencing in decision-making. As much as the Irish wanted to influence America, they realized the importance of having the US government on their side in the negotiations. This provided the Clinton administration important influence in the shaping of the peace settlement (Guelke 1996). To appreciate fully the role of TANs in the peace process, one must understand the historic development of the Irish diaspora in the United States and the efforts by Irish politicians to utilize this diaspora for Irish political purposes.

2. The Irish Diaspora in the United States

Since the United States is a democracy, domestic groups associate freely and thereby influence the foreign policy of the state. One such means of association is organizing based on national origin through diaspora groups. Of all the diaspora groups in the US, the Irish are one of the most famous and studied because of the large number of people who have emigrated from Ireland over the past few centuries and the disparate contributions the Irish have made in America. The prominence of the Irish diaspora in the US and around the world has led historians to increase their focus and attention on both the process of leaving, crossing, and arriving as well as whether how this diaspora segregated, integrated or modulated between their new homes and Ireland (Fitzgerald and Lambkin 2008). Studies of more recent migration patterns and experiences, especially those from Northern Ireland, emphasize the connectedness of those who migrated in the twentieth century, how they impacted on their native lands and how members of the diaspora frequently return (Trew 2013). Increasingly, historians compare the Irish in America to the Irish diaspora in other parts of the world identifying similarities and differences based on their destination (Kenny 2003). Akenson (1996) has stressed that the Irish in America are part of a complex grouping who can only be truly understood based on their common connection with

other members of the Irish diaspora and on their connection to the home of their origin, Ireland. He also contends that the Irish in North America are in some ways quite distinct from the overall Irish diaspora that has settled in many other parts of the world (Akenson 1996, 218-219).

While most popular accounts of Irish emigration focus on the Famine and its effect on large scale migration of Catholics from the 1840s to World War I (Akenson 1996, 6), an earlier wave of Protestant migration primarily from Northern Ireland came in the eighteenth and early decades on the nineteenth century (Miller 1985; Griffin 2001; Miller 2006; Doan 2012; Hofstra 2012; Bankhurst 2013). This part of the Irish diaspora is less studied because it integrated into American society earlier than the later primarily Catholic wave of migration. Nevertheless, Delaney (2014) and others emphasize the dual traditions of the Irish diaspora in America. Lambkin (2018) argues partition has served to undermine the process of understanding the Irish diaspora from an All-Ireland perspective and tended to replicate the dual narrative of Irish migration. While many of the early Protestant migrants to America might have been better understood as Republicans in their lifetimes, increasingly scholars are recognizing the networks that attempt to link unionists in Northern Ireland with their Scots-Irish descendants. The attempt to reestablish a link between unionists in Northern Ireland and their diaspora in America has been part of a slow process of redefining unionist identity in the wake of the Northern Ireland peace process (Radford 2001; McCall 2002; Stapleton 2006; White, Wiedenhoft Murphy, and Peden 2016). Despite this effort, unionists have been less successful in forging an effective diasporic connection with Scots-Irish in America than the continuing link between nationalists and Catholic Irish-Americans (Ó Dochartaigh 2009).

Fitzgerald (2008) speaks of transnationalists as people who want to recreate community, a sense of belonging, within the foreign country because they were lost in their own nation-state. The Irish in America did just this by forming several groups that spanned different realms of society. The Irish-American population was organized for political advocacy in the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) (Ó Dochartaigh 1995; Wilson 1995), the American Congress for Irish Freedom (ACIF) (Wilson 1995), *Seanóglaigh na hÉireann* (which took the place of the old veterans' association) (Ó Dochartaigh 1995), the National Association for Irish Justice (NAIJ) (Ó Dochartaigh 1995; Wilson 1995), the National Association for Irish Freedom (NAIF) (Ó Dochartaigh 1995; Wilson 1995), the Irish National Caucus (INC) (Wilson 1995; Guelke 2012; Gupta 2017), the Committee for Justice in Northern Ireland (CJNI) (Ó Dochartaigh 1995; Wilson 1995), the Irish Action Committee (IAC) (Ó Dochartaigh 1995; Wilson 1995), Americans for a New Irish Agenda (ANIA) (Guelke 1996; Wilson 1997; Guelke 2012), the American Committee for Ulster Justice (ACUJ) (Funchion 1983; Wilson 1995) and, more recently, in the Friends of Sinn Féin and other groups organized to sup-

port political parties in Ireland and Northern Ireland. Irish Americans also were connected through illicit networks mainly through the IRA with NORAID (Ó Dochartaigh 1995; Guelke 2012; Cooper 2015; Gupta 2017). The quantity and diversity of TANs that linked Irish groups with Irish-America in the late twentieth century symbolized the fractured nature of Irish America by this era. Nevertheless, the large population of Americans who identified with Ireland and the increasingly prominent role they played in society were prerequisites for the assertion of this diaspora in the politics of the peace process (O'Dowd 2000), but the critical intervening factor that facilitated the transformation of American foreign policy toward Northern Ireland was not just the presence of a diverse and large Irish-American population but a group of leaders who emerged in American national government that were effective agents in promoting changes in US policy that facilitated peace.

To understand the influence of the Irish (nationalist) community in the United States, one has to appreciate how the identity and policy positions of this group evolved during the Troubles. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, many in the US came to support the cause of Irish republicans based on the media coverage which focused on the violence perpetrated by British forces in Northern Ireland. This narrative played into the old axiom that all that was necessary for peace in Ireland was to get the Brits out. In this time period, the Irish in America who did not support the IRA were called "lapsed Irishmen" or "lace curtain Irish" and were seen as a disgrace and betrayal to the home country (Wilson 1995). As the Irish in America modified their own conceptions of their identity and their beliefs, the way others, including policy-makers, came to see these groups also changed (Gupta 2017). The Irish in America gained more influence in the US as they became wealthier, took up more prominent positions in business and the professions, and became economically and socially successful. For example, Niall O'Dowd was a publisher of the *Irish Voice*, Chuck Feeney and William Flynn were corporate executives, and Joe Jameson was a labor boss. These represented a new generation of Irish American power brokers proving that Irish-Americans had emerged in leadership roles in society (Hazleton 2000). Diasporas tend to be wealthier than their counterparts at home (Shain and Barth 2003), and in the US context this allowed Irish-Americans to support financially families, civil society projects, illicit groups like the IRA, and political parties in Ireland (Guelke 1996; Almeida 2001).

Beyond becoming a wealthy and successful subgroup of the American population, how and why did members of the Irish-American diaspora with sympathies toward Irish nationalism come to have power and influence? We contend that the critical intervening variable or factor that made Irish nationalists successful in mobilizing the US government to play a role on its behalf were the political elites who the nationalists came to rely upon to modify US policy. Historically, the Irish-American population was espe-

cially well-organized in cities such as Boston, New York, and Chicago. This had allowed the Irish in America to become leaders of urban areas since the early twentieth century. However, it was not till the late twentieth century when Irish-American politicians from a nationalist background became important national leaders in Congress and the Senate. The four critical actors of immense political influence were Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Senator from New York; Hugh Carey, Congressman and then Governor of New York; Ted Kennedy, Senator from Massachusetts; and Tip O'Neill, Speaker of the US House of Representatives from Massachusetts. These Irish-American politicians were called the Four Horsemen. Their roles in government enabled them to influence the US government's foreign policy. Interest on their part in US Foreign policy motivated them to assert their influence on behalf of the Irish cause. As such, they operated as what has been identified as "Congressional Foreign Policy Entrepreneurs" (Carter, Scott, and Rowling 2004; Carter and Scott 2009 and 2010). It was these political elites who effectively translated pressure from Irish-American groups to influence US foreign policy toward Northern Ireland. Tip O'Neill and Ted Kennedy were especially important as they had developed the skills, knowledge, and influence to change US policy toward Northern Ireland to no longer defer to the British regarding Northern Ireland but instead pressure for a diplomatic solution to the conflict. As such, these foreign policy entrepreneurs were able to achieve what Carter and Scott (2009, 27) identify as a "policy correction" based on a recognition that the extant US policy toward Northern Ireland was "ineffective or inappropriate".

What made the appeals of the Four Horsemen for the Irish nationalist cause find receptive responses in the White House? By the late twentieth century, Irish-Americans represented a large voting bloc that could be used by politicians for their campaigns. President Carter utilized the potential of gaining Irish-American votes to justify his positions in the 1976 campaign and once he assumed office (Cooper 2015). McLoughlin (2017b) attributes to him and his work with the Four Horsemen, the initial spark that began the entire peace process. President Clinton catered to the Irish-American lobby in his 1992 campaign promising to consider granting a Visa for Gerry Adams to gain votes from Irish-Americans in the New York Primary against his last remaining rival, Jerry Brown (O'Grady 1996). After assuming office, Clinton became heavily involved in the Northern Ireland peace process, and some see this as a result of his campaign promise and desire to appeal to the large Irish-American Catholic electorate in the US (Hazleton 2000; Lynch 2003; Dixon 2010; Riley 2016, 229). The fact that American politicians, not just the Four Horsemen but also US Presidents, were so strongly connected to TANs organized to influence US foreign policy related to Northern Ireland demonstrated the effectiveness of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in lobbying American decisions regarding Northern Ireland (Cochrane 2010).

It is also important to recognize that the diplomatic effort to promote peace in Northern Ireland fit well within Clinton's overall foreign policy of engagement and enlargement (Soderberg 2005).

The ability of numerous Irish-American groups, including elected officials, to utilize St. Patrick's Day as an annual reminder of the need for the US not to forget Ireland and the peace process continues even in an era when the Trump administration has considered ending the role of the US Envoy to Northern Ireland. The St. Patrick's Day tradition became an important part of the peace process when President Clinton publicly greeted Gerry Adams in 1995 (Wilson 1997). While St. Patrick's Day is usually seen as a celebration exclusively for nationalists, David Trimble, the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, first met President Bill Clinton on St. Patrick's Day in 1998, demonstrating St. Patrick's Day could be used by unionists as well to press their agenda (Dixon 2010). Unionist leaders had earlier decided to not attend the event in 1995 as a means of protesting US policy in Northern Ireland (Hazleton 2000). While St. Patrick's Day was typically seen as an opportunity for Irish nationalists to pressure the US government for their cause, under President Bush, the US disinvited Gerry Adams to the White House as part of the St. Patrick's Day celebration to protest against a bank robbery attributed to the IRA and the lack of decommissioning (Clancy 2007). Thus, the celebrations of St. Patrick's Day in the US offer insight into both the specific power of organized networks and the more general sympathy the US government has for the Irish nationalist cause based on the large number of Irish-American voters.

3. Irish Diplomacy: utilizing the diaspora and effective foreign policy entrepreneurs

Because of the history of Irish immigration to America, Irish politicians have come to see the Irish diaspora in the United States as a resource to be utilized to further Ireland's diplomatic goals. Even before Eamon de Valera's famous trip, the Irish while seeking independence saw important allies in the United States (Nyhan Grey 2016). De Valera's extended visit to the United States during the Anglo-Irish War (what Irish nationalists call the War for Independence) in 1919 was based on his belief that his tour across the US would mobilize the Irish-American diaspora to persuade President Wilson to recognize Ireland as an independent state (Ward 1969; Hannigan 2010; Cosi 2016; Keown 2016). As a Democrat, Wilson was dependent on the Irish-American vote in major cities and one could think that he might have succumbed to the pressure of this important constituency (Marnane 2018, 187). In the end, de Valera's visit was unsuccessful in garnering diplomatic recognition for the Irish state (in the aftermath of World War I, the US was just too closely linked with Britain). Despite the failure to gain recognition, de Valera's effort highlights the perception among Irish political elites that the Irish diaspora in America can be useful in furthering their political objectives.

US-Irish diplomatic relations were cordial after the Irish Free State was

created with formal diplomatic recognition not coming until 1924 (Whelan 2006). Continuing close relations between the United States and Britain meant that the US would not side against Britain or be used against the British during the Economic War that occurred between Britain and Ireland in the 1930s. As World War II approached, the Irish government's policy of neutrality tended to strain Irish-American relations. While Irish policy was clearly based on seeking to assert its independence from Britain, many in the US would clearly have preferred if the Irish had joined the allied cause (Carter 1977; Duggan 1985). The popularity of neutrality in Ireland during the Emergency or World War II meant that Irish post-war governments continued this policy rather than join the US in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). While Irish-American relations remained cordial in the 1950s and 60s, Ireland's peripheral role in the Cold War as a neutral country meant that the US focused little on her in its diplomacy.

When the Troubles emerged in Northern Ireland in the late 1960s, the world took notice including the United States. Though it was very unwilling to challenge in any way its closest Cold War ally, the United Kingdom, US government officials and members of the Irish-American community became increasingly concerned with the violence in Northern Ireland. By the time of Jimmy Carter's presidency, Irish officials became increasingly assertive in asking the US government to take a public stance regarding the continuing violence in Northern Ireland (Meagher and McLouglin 2016). Irish government officials pressured the Reagan administration to have the President use his personal influence with Margaret Thatcher to convince the British to sign the Anglo-Irish Agreement (McLoughlin 2017a, 82).

While the Irish-American diaspora provided little pressure during the George H.W. Bush administration, things rapidly changed with President Clinton. The end of the Cold War meant that the US needed to defer less to the British government, and this allowed the US to become a more effective broker in peace negotiations (Dumbrell 2013). With less international constraints, US government policy was increasingly influenced by domestic considerations. This allowed domestic Irish-American groups to gain influence (O'Cleary 1996) and shift American policy from one of deference to the British government to one of engagement in a Northern Ireland peace process. The Irish government under Albert Reynolds seized the opportunity in the early 1990s to pressure President Clinton and the American government to become more engaged in the emerging peace process. Specifically, the Irish government pressured the US government to give a visa to Gerry Adams, hoping this would both legitimate the republicans in Northern Ireland and encourage them to commit to a ceasefire and negotiations (Clancy 2013). This decision gained widespread support among the Irish-American community as it appealed both to those in the US who continued to support and identify with the Irish republican cause as well as those who had

become more moderate and were searching for means of promoting peace in Northern Ireland. The US government under President Clinton subsequently continued to play an important, if supporting, role by nominating George Mitchell to chair the commission that would set the parameters for paramilitary participation in the negotiations which culminated in the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. The Irish government continued to utilize the United States as an effective third party in the process of implementing the Good Friday Agreement as well (White and Murphy 2015). Clinton's endless optimism, positive determination, and ability to empathize and relate to the numerous and diverse parties in the conflict, not just siding with the nationalists and republicans, made him an important actor in the peace process (Gartner 2008). Dixon (2019) portrays the US and Clinton's role as purposefully exaggerated so as to influence republicans to abandon the armed struggle. The choreography of the peace process meant that under President George W. Bush, the US government played the role of bad cop encouraging the IRA to decommission while the British and Irish governments played the role of good cop more gently supporting IRA decommissioning (Clancy 2013). While President Bush was much less involved in the Northern Irish peace process than his predecessor, his envoys, Richard Haass and Mitchell Reiss, were given great autonomy to make policy and seek to promote peace and were important if secondary players in the process of seeking to implement the Good Friday Agreement.

Throughout the peace process, a complex and evolving relationship existed between various groups in Northern Ireland and the United States, the Irish government, and the US government. Linking the diasporic and diplomatic relationships provide a means of comprehending the complex interaction that existed between the different parties to the conflict in Northern Ireland and how the US government ultimately intervened when and how it did (White 2017). US government action might have been much less willing to engage diplomatically in Northern Ireland had it not been for the perceived benefits of placating Irish-American voters and their elected representatives. This important constituency in American politics which had developed important urban bases of support by the late nineteenth and early twentieth century reached its apex of influence in American national politics in the aftermath of the election of President Kennedy. After his election, a number of Irish-American politicians reached the highest echelon of power within the US political system, including the heretofore mentioned Four Horsemen. Of special importance to the peace process as it unfolded in the 1990s was the assassinated President's brother, Ted Kennedy (Vargo 2019). By the 1990s Senator Kennedy had become one of the most accomplished legislators of the late twentieth century. The Irish government and Irish nationalists, especially John Hume, became effective in convincing Kennedy and other important Irish-American political leaders that the US needed to

play a greater diplomatic role in Northern Ireland (McLoughlin 2017a). They subsequently lobbied a number of administrations effectively to promote a greater US diplomatic role in Northern Ireland, often pressuring their long-time ally, the British government, in the process.

4. Conclusion

In sum, the Irish diaspora in America, organized in a myriad of TANs, and Irish-American political leaders as Congressional Foreign Policy Entrepreneurs became important actors in making peace in Northern Ireland. In the late twentieth century Irish nationalist politicians sought the US government's assistance in mediating the conflict recognizing that the fundamental differences were between unionists and nationalists in Northern Ireland. Because the British state had historically sided with unionists, it could not effectively mediate the conflict. From a nationalist and republican perspective, this required the US to challenge the British policy toward Northern Ireland by granting a visa to Gerry Adams, who the British (and the US previously) had classified as a terrorist. While tense diplomatic exchanges ensued between the British and US governments, the granting of the Visa worked to mainstream Irish republicans led by Adams and foster an IRA ceasefire, laying the groundwork for open, direct negotiations between Sinn Féin and the British government. Continuing US diplomatic efforts assisted the local parties as well as the British and Irish governments in reaching a settlement, the Good Friday Agreement. The US government continued to support the Northern Ireland peace process by assisting in the implementation of this Agreement. The complex pattern of interaction between Irish nationalist politicians, the Irish-American diaspora, critical Irish-American politicians and the US government demonstrates that diasporic involvement can work to promote peace even if it confronts and challenges historic diplomatic relationships.

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Southern Celts: Voices from *Aotearoa* New Zealand[*]

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Abstract:

Interview narrators reflect on living their cultural connections to Ireland and Scotland while living in *Aotearoa* New Zealand. Among the questions they focus on are whether the experience of colonisation in the northern hemisphere has influenced relations with Maori, the indigenous people of *Aotearoa*. These co-created, layered and complex narratives are viewed as ''lived and told stories'', with the reader seen as a co-participant in the narrative. Applying the narrative analysis lenses of time and place left the researcher with a sense of the passage of time and the constant change that it bought for her own family and for interview narrators. These narratives are offered with a sense of celebration for the strength of cultures which can remake themselves across hemispheres and generations.

Keywords: Auto-ethnography, Celtic Studies, Diaspora narratives, Ethnography, Irish Studies

American novelist Colum McCann wrote "We get our voices from the voices of others […] our stories are created from a multiplicity of witness" (2006, 277), which accurately describes my PhD journey. Through collecting the stories and engaging with the voices of others I am left with a clearer sense of my own voice, as the granddaughter of three Irish-born grandparents: my mother's parents from County Tipperary, my father's mother was from County Antrim, while his father was born to Irish parents in *Aotearoa*[1]

[*] My thanks to referees who made comments on the first draft of this text. Their advice and suggestions have strengthened it and widened its scope.

[1] The name *Aotearoa*, according to Michael King, is believed to be derived from a myth of *Pakeha* origin about the discovery of New Zealand by Kupe, a Polynesian voyager. Nearing land the shout went up "Aotea" or "white cloud" so that land became known as *Aotearoa* "the Land of the Long White Cloud". While King critiques the myth around this name, he acknowledged it as "an antidote to the concurrent and widespread view that Dutchman

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New Zealand, his father's father, from County Londonderry. In the practice-led narrative inquiry I used interviews to explore how women and men, with Irish and Scottish backgrounds, live out their cultural connections to the northern hemisphere homelands while living in *Aotearoa* New Zealand, in the southwest Pacific.

This article offers excerpts from the interview narratives which provide insights into individual lives and families across generations. It backgrounds the inquiry, analyses the co-construction of the narratives and explores responses to two questions, one about the use of Gaelic languages and the other about whether the experience of colonisation in the northern hemisphere homelands might have influenced how Irish and Scots have related to Maori, the indigenous people of *Aotearoa* New Zealand, in the colonisation of the country. It reflects on one incident which enabled me to understand that change is a constant in how I experience my connection to Ireland, and also for interviewee narrators. To conclude it briefly reviews responses to a question about what might remain in the Kiwi psyche from earlier Irish and Scottish settlers, then it celebrates the strength of cultural identities that can remake themselves across generations.

1. Scottish and Irish settlement

Historically the Scots and Irish were large European settler groups, so there are significant numbers of New Zealanders who share these cultural backgrounds. Historian Michael King writes that in the first 50 years of European settlement close to 50% of people came from England and Wales, with the Welsh fewer in number, Scots made up 24% and the Irish were up to about 19% (2003, 175). Using Presbyterianism as a proxy for Scottishness, historian James Belich notes that the provinces of Southland and Otago were about half Scottish in 1871, and this background remained in 1956. Scots were also between 17-20% of the *Pakeha*[2] population of the other provinces, except for Taranaki and Nelson, where the English were predominant (2001, 220). "New Zealand is the neo-Scotland" according to Belich, who argues that outside of Scotland there is probably no other country in the world in which Scots had more influence (221). However, he cautions that identifying people through ethnic difference has been difficult because the use of the word "British" collapsed significant difference amongst English, Scot-

Abel Tasman and Englishman James Cook 'discovered' New Zealand" (2003, 39-40).

[2] King notes that the use of the word *Pakeha* to describe people of European origin was current in the Bay of Islands, in northern New Zealand by at least 1814. He describes the word as a necessary descriptive word to distinguish European from Maori and that it probably came from the pre-European word *Pakepakeha*, denoting mythical light skinned beings (2003, 169).

tish, Irish and particularly Welsh people. Historian Angela McCarthy also addresses this issue of ethnic identity in her book *Irishness and Scottishness in New Zealand since 1840*, in which she highlights "the standard trope of New Zealand society" that emphasised its Britishness through "overarching categorisations that subsume divergent and individual and collective ethnic affiliation" (2011, 4).

Canadian diaspora scholar, Donald Harman Akenson wrote that it is difficult to estimate numbers of Irish immigrants to New Zealand with any accuracy because they left from English and Scottish ports, and may have been recorded as such, while many came through Australia (1990). Belich writes that Irish as a percentage of *Pakeha*, Protestant and Catholic, rose from around 10% in the 1850's to about 18% in the 1880's though fell thereafter. Irish Catholic immigrants were not offered immigration assistance as easily as the Scots, though the Irish immigrated through Australia in large numbers. They were not so noticeably dominant in any region, except in Westland, on the South Island West Coast, where one third of the population had an Irish background (Belich 2001, 221). King notes a number of those would have followed the gold rush from California, to Victoria, in Australia, then crossed the Tasman Sea to New Zealand. Their presence there led to public engagement with Irish political issues and the arrest of some who supported the Irish struggle for sovereignty in their homeland (2003, 208). Belich records the Irish as more dominant in smaller areas, like Temuka in South Canterbury, and urban areas, in South Dunedin and Grey Lynn in Auckland. He describes them as "clustered occupationally" in hotel keeping and policing, just on the "fringes of respectability". The institutions of the Church and Catholic schools ensured New Zealand Catholic Irish maintained their differing sense of identity (Belich 2001, 222). Looking to the present, the New Zealand Government Online Encyclopaedia, *Te Ara*, records that over a half a million people of the current population of approximately four million, claim Irish ancestry (2015). There was no difficulty therefore finding participants, the issue was how to choose who to interview.

2. Theoretical and methodological framework

Cultural theorist Christine Weedon, influenced my decisions around interview participants, through her belief that cultural identity is "neither one thing nor static […] it is constantly produced and reproduced in the practices of everyday life, education, the media, the museum and heritage sectors, the arts, history and literature" (2004, 155). Mary Chuang's nuanced description of culture and cultural identity, referencing nationality, race, ethnicity, gender, life-style choices, organisations, age, class, group membership, regional identity and spiritual identity, also made me conscious of trying to choose

interviews from differing groups (Fong, Chuang 2004). Between 2010 and 2013, I travelled around the country interviewing 40 people, aged from 30 to 70 years old: the most recent arrival had lived there for just over a decade, while some families have been here for up to seven generations. One interviewee had no Gaelic family connections, but he designs and builds coracles, boats which have traditionally been made and used in some Celtic societies, while another member of the boat club builds traditional Irish *curragh*, all skills pertinent to this inquiry about the discursive construction of culture and identity. I represented 25 of the edited interviews, including the coracle maker, as full-length interview narratives in a book with a working title of *Southern Celts*. Three of the interviewees were Irish-born and three Scottish-born, 15 of the 25 had either discrete Irish backgrounds or a combination of cultural backgrounds, including Scottish, English, Maori and German. The 13 women and 12 men include business people, teachers and speakers of Gaelic, visual artists, writers and poets, musicians and singers, museum professionals, sports people, a Presbyterian minister and a religious studies teacher.

The inquiry used narrative as method and text (Clandinin, Connelly 2000; Clandinin, Rosiek 2007). Putting narrative in a wider academic context, narratology, which is the study of narrative as a genre, approaches narrative as a text-type and also as a mode, in which theorists view narrative as fundamental to human cognition and understanding of the world (De Fina, Georgakopoulou 2012, 2). These understandings informed a "narrative turn" in qualitative research in the 1980s which emphasised human experience and a narrative epistemology that recognises and accepts different kinds of human inquiry. Narrative methods and analysis are used across a range of disciplines including Sociology, Psychology, Education, Anthropology and History (17-18), encouraging researchers to maintain a high degree of reflexivity. Narrative scholars Molly Andrews, Corinne Squire and Maria Tamboukou (2013) acknowledge that the term "narrative" differs in meaning and uses across disciplines, and it is often used interchangeably with the word "story", as it is in this article. An essential aspect of narrative is the linking of events chronologically or otherwise, and I argue as narrative theorist Catherine Riessman (2008, 3) does that the speaker or the writer is influenced in selection and organisation of events by the audience the narrative is aimed at. In this case each interviewee was asked the same series of questions (see Appendix).

The interviews, edited to tighten repetitive oral language, and to focus on answers to the question, were returned to interviewees for clarification and additions. Qualitative research theorist Irving Seidman cautions that text representations "frame and reify" the lives of narrators that continue in time, constantly changing over time (2006, 129). Taking that into account I view the narratives in which narrators re-story aspects of their lives as snapshots in time, valuable in themselves, given that since completing this inquiry

three interview narrators have died. The main tools of analysis are narrative theorists Patricia Clandinin's and Michael Connelly's (2000) three lenses of time (past, present and future), place, and sociality, or the intersection of the personal and the social. When applied they highlight the layered depth and complexity of the narratives.

The exegesis which critiques the process of creating the book of interviews and analyses related academic issues is underpinned by postmodern and poststructuralist understandings, including sociologist Laurel Richardson's metaphor of the crystal through which each interview narrative is viewed conceptually as a refraction of a crystal, "what we see depends on our angle of repose" (2000, 934). It acknowledges that narrators' Irish or Scottish backgrounds are only one aspect of more complex identities, supported by narrative theorist Elliot Mishler who writes that individuals have multiple identities, each rooted in different sets of relationships "that form the matrix of our lives" (2006, 41).

Questions about memory and truth were apparent from the beginning of the inquiry. Working with personal memory and family stories, truth is often viewed as relational rather than historically accurate, as narrative theorist Arthur Bochner has observed (2012). My own experience of interviewing both my parents about their experiences as children of Irish migrants supports that. In my mother's case, I showed the text to her sister, my aunt, whose opinion about experiences differed markedly in some cases, including dates of occurrences. However, family stories are important, I argue, because they help shape our sense of identity.

My own family story is included as an autoethnographic essay alongside the other interview narratives. In doing that I have broken down the subject/object split of more traditional research frames according to Deborah Reed-Danahay, in her analysis of autoethnographic methods (1997). Australian scholar, Josie Arnold, calls this use of the researcher's personal experience, as data, ''academic narrative'' (2011). Using autoethnography in qualitative research has been criticised as self-indulgent, but I argue, as Tessa Muncey (2010) and Heewon Chang (2008) have done, that if written reflectively and critically, drawing connections to the wider world, this self-disclosure allows the reader insights into influences which have shaped the researcher/writer, and how these have influenced the inquiry. Johanna Spry believes that the use of autoethnographic methods makes the researcher the epistemological and ontological nexus of the research process (2001, 711) and over time the inquiry unexpectedly also became an exploration of my personal and professional identities.

Through using ethnographic and autoethnographic methods (Ellis, Bochner 2000; Holman Jones, Adams, Ellis 2013) and reflecting on underpinning literatures, I am left with a clear insight and a new understanding.

As a former journalist and an academic writer my ideas may have been expressed, but my voice had felt buried or "homogenised" as Richardson described (2000; Richardson, St. Pierre 2005). Through the inquiry process, however, I have come to understand that professional distance has collapsed, that I have been writing "myself and the social world" (Reed-Danahay 1997, 17), through collecting stories of others I have been collecting myself (Clair 2003, 3) and as a consequence of reflection, analysis and using writing as a way into understanding (Richardson 2000), I feel I can hear my own voice at last.

The inquiry is entitled "Southern Celts": Southern, for New Zealand's position in the South West Pacific, and Celts for the northern hemisphere tribes who spread up into and across Europe to the Atlantic coast over millennia, their journeys analysed by DNA specialist Stephen Oppenheimer (2006) and archaeologist James Patrick Mallory (2018). I met with resistance to the use of the term Celt from one New Zealand academic who cautioned against using it, because some historians are sceptical about the actual historical reality of Celtic tribes. As an applied linguist, drawing on Diarmuid O'Neill's research about Celtic languages (2005), I knew that one of the branches of Celtic languages, was the Gaelic languages, of Irish, Scots Gaelic and Manx, therefore I proceeded with the title "Southern Celts". I am aware that Irish and Scots will likely view their identities in terms of their nationality, however, as a researcher and a writer, it is my choice to view myself as a Southern Celt: there was no objection from any interview narrator and one master carver of Irish and Scottish background felt the name accurately represented him.

I basically see myself as a Southern Celt, a South Pacific Celt. The way I look at it, as the Celts came across Europe they could have pick up influences of different cultures. In a sense if I didn't reflect a certain Polynesian influence in my work it would mean I was insensitive. Maori people will come in and see my work and say it's very Maori, and people who come straight from England look at it and say it's pure Celtic. I like to see it as a mixture of both.

3. Narratives as co-produced

Narrative theorist Catherine Riessman writes that a story is co-produced in a "complex geography", "in spaces between teller and listener, speaker and setting, text and reader, history and culture" (2008, 105), illustrated in the first excerpt from the interview narrative of a sculptor who lives on Waiheke Island, a ferry trip from Auckland city, whose father, from an active republican family in South West Kerry, arrived in New Zealand in 1939, just before the outbreak of World War II:

My father was almost thirty when he came to New Zealand […] I always say he never really landed here. As a child, for years I did not understand where he was

talking from. It didn't seem to be the world around us at that point in time […] As an artist I started making art works about where he might possibly be talking from and that might be about some internal landscape.

That was before I'd been to Ireland myself […] In 1985 I spent a lot of time in Central Otago and something was absolutely a dam overflowing, because I recognised the landscape in Central Otago as the internal landscape that he was speaking from. My father came from a part of Ireland that was quite barren, and this land clearly represented it in my mind. So this unleashed a body of work over three decades: just that realisation, that I finally understood my father was actually talking from his native landscape, not the New Zealand landscape.

In a moment of epiphany in a dry, rocky area of the South Island of New Zealand he understood for the first time that his father had lived out of the landscape that had formed him in Ireland both physically and emotionally, an understanding that has played out powerfully in his son's life in his work as a sculptor, in which he has used a variety of materials, including stone, limestone and slate. The sculptor's narrative tells a story of three generations: his father, himself and his daughter, who he says "completed a circularity of life. She is a unique example of how the 'New World' informs the 'Old World' in ways people could never have dreamed". Completing an Archaeology masters at Auckland University, she worked on her MA supervisor's site in Hawaii, learned satellite mapping skills, and later worked at the British Museum for a short time. She did a doctorate in Ireland becoming a part of academic life in Dublin, for fifteen years. Though she lived in Ireland, the influence of the place she grew up was evident, as her father describes:

She researched sites up the north of Scotland and in Ireland […] She was very conscious of the places she took me to look at in Ireland, that these had resonances with her childhood here on Waiheke Island. We are talking about one of those very imaginative intelligences, where the child can teach the adult, the parent. That was going on with three or four of my trips with her in Ireland. She would take me to a place, but she wouldn't explain it. She would know I would very quickly understand the imprint of some aspect of her life here on the top of that site. That's what I marvelled at. I suppose she absorbed my sensibility as she was growing up in my studio here. Crawling around, she was fascinated with dust which I've created quite a lot of. She became one of the world authorities on dust as an archaeological material. So there was just a brilliant conversation going on with her research and her learning about where it might have located itself in her childhood. She said her childhood inspired some of her breakthroughs in thinking and research over there.

His daughter tragically died of a virulent cancer and her father gifted a sculpture to the Dublin university and a native New Zealand tree was planted there in her memory. The sculptor's narrative is illuminated through applying the analysis frame of "place". Place is experienced as physical landscapes, in Ireland, Scotland and *Aotearoa* New Zealand, and significantly as internal

landscapes, illustrating Ivan Brady's understanding that "Place is the geography of earth, mind, body and lived experience of the seen and unseen […]" (2005, 985). This excerpt, as Riessman (2008) describes, is clearly co-produced in a complex geography of history and culture, crossing generations and the hemispheres, telling a story deeply informed by Irish family and cultural connections, one in which place encompasses powerful emotional landscapes: geography is indeed experienced as land, mind and body as Brady believes.

4. Language as constitutive of identity

The metaphorical crystal refracts in the following three excerpts from narrators' responses to a question whether they could speak Irish or Scots Gaelic. The choice of this question was prompted by my professional role as an applied linguist who has explored influences of social identity on language acquisition (Kearney, 2003) also because my mother's parents were Irish speakers. My mother and my aunt remembered their parents using Irish at home, though none was passed on to us. An older sister and I have since both learned some basic Irish. *Aotearoa* New Zealand scholar Stephen May provided me a broader context for understanding the functions of language, through his exploration of the postmodern concept of "hybridity", in which "social, political and linguistic identities are inevitably plural, complex and contingent" (2005, 329). In this context language can be viewed as a *contingent* factor of identity, though none the less significant or *constitutive* of identity (330).

Interview responses to the question about experience of or attitude to Irish or Scots Gaelic varied widely. Interviewees generally acknowledged the importance of language to a culture, but several had no personal interest in the language. Of the 25 narrators, two were Irish-born and had learned Irish at school and two New Zealand-born participants had applied themselves to learning Irish in New Zealand. The first of the three excerpts came from a Dublin-born Irish speaker who lives in Nelson at the top of the South Island. She reflects on the difficulties of keeping Irish a living language in *Aotearoa*.

A few of us tried for a while to keep the language going. We used to meet on a regular basis with some other people to speak Irish and to up-skill ourselves in the language. In that group initially were two New Zealanders of Irish extraction who wanted to learn the language, but it was pretty daunting. One of those guys had never ever learned another language so I'm afraid he just didn't have the skills to do it, but the other chap had learnt Spanish and Maori and he was very good. But then I got full-time work and we sort of stopped meeting on a regular basis … It's really hard to keep that a living thing**.** Life is very full with other things, so it is not a priority.

My connection with the Irish language now is through learning songs in Irish**.** Some I particularly like are "Mo Ghile Mear", "Anach Cuain", "Fill a Run",

"Gabhaim Molta Bride Teir Abhaile Riu", "Molly nag Cuach Ni Chuilleanain", "Bruachna Carraige Baine", "Siul a Run", "Ta mochleamhnas a Dheanamh", "An Mhaighdean Mhara".

The narrator sang in an all-women band, *Cairdre,* for some decades, though it has now disbanded. She taught other women in the group to sing songs of Irish history, in Irish. One of their CDs of New Zealand Irish music was gifted to the then Prime Minister, James Bolger, who himself has an Irish family background. She and her husband, a professional musician, have been involved as founder members in *Ceol Aneas*, an Irish Music festival, which draws participants from around New Zealand and overseas, including Ireland.

The second excerpt comes from an archivist and curator at the museum of early settlement in Dunedin, a southern city which still values its Scottish heritage. A teacher on the Irish and Scottish Studies Programme at Otago University, he has written his family history of a multi-generational chain of families from County Kerry between 1860 and 1873. This vibrant community of Irish migrants, called Kerrytown, in South Canterbury, has passed into history, with only a plaque in a paddock now recording its existence. He reflects on learning both Irish and Maori.

In terms of the language, it annoyed me when I looked at Irish words I couldn't make any sense of the letters and the sounds. I just felt pathetic that this is my ancestral language and I can't even read what the sound is. I'm good with languages, I learnt French and German at school and university. I've learned Maori and am capable to a basic degree in Maori, so I was determined to make some progress at learning Irish and have had a few cracks at it. I eventually bought a very good self-help course on Amazon and have read the first ten chapters. It is still sitting there waiting for me to carry on, but I got to the point I could look at an Irish word and most of the time I could understand what the sounds were, without having to think about it.

[...] I am also doing that for the music. I'm in a *waiata* group (singing group) here in the city council and we learn Maori songs and sing them in public. I decided every time I learned a new Maori song I'd try to learn a new Irish song. The Maori songs are easier to learn but the Irish songs are hard – I've persevered so have now got quite a big repertoire of Irish songs and I've taught my children some of them. When they were little they were open to that, now they wouldn't bother so much, but when I die they'll probably sing an Irish song over my body. They know I'd like that.

He had his singing group learn an Irish folk song, "Ora Se do Bheatha Abhaile", which they sang at an Irish exhibition opening, attended by the Irish ambassador from Australia and the New Zealand Irish Consul General, interposing it with a Maori song called "Ko Tou Rourou" based around the importance of sharing resources. They sang a verse of that and then the first line of the chorus of "Ora Se do Bheatha Abhaile", proceeded with the second verse, and carried on finishing with the final chorus. For him the cul-

tural capital of facility with Irish is realised in song, in both personal, family and professional environments. Applying the frame of time across generations in to the future, he has taught his children Irish songs, and hopes now they might sing one for him when he has died.

The third excerpt is from an *Uilleann* pipe player, with "a mixed Irish, Scottish, Northumbrian" background, who belonged to the Auckland Irish Society for a number of years and was also a member of the New Zealand *Uilleann* Pipers Association, *Na Piobairi Uilleann*, in Dublin, and subscribed for many years to *Irish Music* magazine.

> I started to learn Irish Gaelic at Continuing Education at Auckland University in […] Once this course had finished, the class carried on at the Auckland Irish Society clubrooms […] Our teacher was from Belfast and very experienced. I am not by nature a sociable type, but I made many friends in this class – we shared musical and literary, as well as linguistic, interests. I believe that having an understanding, even if not as a fluent speaker, of any language is central to understanding the culture – the rhythms and thought patterns – and for the music in particular. Slow airs played on the *Uilleann* pipes usually derive from songs in Gaelic, so to get the phrasing it is helpful to know and understand the words. The sound of the spoken language carries through into the form and phrasing of the music.

From a classical music background originally, she is now a "lapsed" *Uilleann* pipe player, though she still has a picture on her Facebook page of her playing for the sesquicentennial of Auckland coming into the harbour in a *curragh* accompanied by a Maori *waka* (a traditional canoe). Each of the three narrative excerpts has a common theme in the connection between language, music and song. Other participants spoke or had learned Irish and Scots Gaelic, either formally at night classes in an institution or in a private home. I have explored attitudes to and use of Gaelic in an earlier published article from this PhD inquiry, written with Martin Andrew, my lead PhD supervisor (Kearney, Andrew 2013).

5. The experience of colonisation

One question I asked participants was whether they thought the history of colonisation in the northern homelands might have affected how people have related to indigenous Maori in the colonisation of *Aotearoa*. This question was prompted by my understanding of Irish history gained early from my grandmother, mother, and an aunt, a Dominican religious sister, who taught me Irish history in secondary school. I have since read more widely about Irish history, most instructively written with a feminist analysis (Ward 1983). I also spent nearly a year in Ireland, in the mid 1980s, where I saw the militarisation of the North and understood the violence of colonisation, for the first time. I knew that Irish people in New Zealand have benefited

from access to Maori land and resources, as have my own families. The silencing of indigenous languages is likewise a powerful tool in colonisation, a process I have some understanding of through gaining insight into Maori experience. In an analysis of language rights May points out that laws used to suppress Maori in *Aotearoa* were earlier used to supress Gaelic in Ireland and Scotland. He analyses similarities between the struggle for survival of Gaelic languages and Maori in the context of broader social and political environments and influences, including that of colonisation by force (2001). Several participants in the inquiry had attempted to learn *Te Reo* (the Maori language), one woman of Irish background, who chose to learn *Te Reo* rather than Irish, said by way of explanation, "If I don't speak Maori here, who will?"

The first of the following four narrators is a Belfast-born religious studies teacher who settled with her family in New Zealand in the early 1970s. She compares Irish and Maori struggle for land and cultural similarities.

When you see the Maori wanting to go for their land, you think, "It is their land, but it was our land in Ireland too and we never got anything". The Scottish as well. It's hard because we didn't get it. It's easier here for Maori, because as soon as they say something everybody says, "Yes, it is the Maori's land". I suppose we are older countries in Ireland and Scotland. If we were to do that now you wouldn't get anywhere. You can sympathise with the Maori though, it's very hard, when I think about it. The shoe is on the other foot, because we're here, and we don't want to take anything away from them. But we give a lot too, to the country. I suppose if I was in Ireland I'd want the same thing. I just realised that. I think there's a lot of Maori and Gaelic similarities. You look at some of those carved patterns, they are very similar. When people die, it's not just, "that's the funeral and it's all over", there's a lot of holiness and *tapu* (sacredness) there. It's all about family really, and there's something spiritual there. I think there's a very close connection.

The narrator suggests by her comment "I just realised that" that she has gained a new perspective on the situation since being in *Aotearoa* New Zealand. She comments on her perceptions of similarities between the cultures. The second excerpt comes from a Dublin-born fiction writer, who emigrated with her family five decades ago,

I'd like to be able to say that the colonised in one country were sympathetic to those colonised in another, but I have to say looking at history, I think people learn from their own experience, the bullied become bullies […] So sadly I don't think there would be any truth in thinking that they would have that sympathy […] I don't think historically there is any evidence of widespread sympathy of the Irish towards any other colonised people. And as we both know the Irish and the Scots made up a huge percentage of the British imperial army. But then that was because they were colonised and it was one of the few things they could do to escape the poverty. Just as many Maori join the New Zealand army.

At the same time I would say the Irish and the Maori probably do have certain things in common that on a personal level might make or have made empathy between them. I think the oral tribal society is one area and the ability to sing and entertain and orate to make entertainment is something that Irish and Maori probably share […].

She too finds similarities between Irish and Scots and Maori in the process of colonisation, though she is clear that having experienced it did not necessarily stop Irish people from benefiting from the process in *Aotearoa* as they did in other parts of the world.

The next excerpt is from a man who has devoted several decades, along with his wife, to educating New Zealanders about the Treaty of Waitangi[3]. He and his daughter have written about their work in the book, *Healing Our History* (Consedine, Consedine 2001). He doesn't consider his Irish background consciously directed him into the work, though he highlights the combined influences of his knowledge of Irish history and Catholic social teaching as important.

I don't think the experience of colonisation has necessarily affected how Irish and Scots have related to Maori. Global literature tells us that the Irish tended to join the dominant class for a variety of reasons […] Irish who went to America tended to support the slave owners. They often benefitted from colonisation wherever they went. I've never encountered anything in New Zealand that would change that broad idea. There are of course individual exceptions, but the broad idea is that people who have been oppressed tend to end up joining the oppressor. I don't think it's confined to the Irish. Paulo Freire, the famous Brazilian educator wrote that "the oppressed became the oppressors". I think, right through the empire, escaping from oppression meant joining the oppressors.

In his workshops he highlights the importance of *Pakeha*, people knowing their own history.

I often say to people in workshops in the dialogue around personal journeys "If you knew your own story you'd become a natural ally of the Maori struggle". A large number of people don't know their own story. For example, I say to people, "Why did your ancestors leave Ireland?" They wouldn't have heard of the penal laws and some may have not heard of the famine. They wouldn't know anything about the colonisation of

[3] In his book *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou: Struggle Without End*, Dr Ranginui Walker describes the history of the Treaty of Waitangi, signed on February 6, 1840, by representatives of Queen Victoria and Maori chiefs, though not all, as facilitating the cession of sovereignty from Maori to the Queen of England (1990, 91). He records, from a Maori perspective, the elevation of the treaty from a "simple nullity" to a constitutional instrument in the renegotiation of the relationship between Maori and Pakeha in modern times (266).

Ireland. One of the connections we make is to talk about the way colonisation dispossessed their own ancestors in much the same way as Maori were dispossessed. People get a glimpse of the connection. It's rare to encounter people who have already figured that out.

He recalled that James Bolger, former New Zealand Prime Minister between 1990 and 1997, supported the work of the Waitangi Tribunal which is a mechanism for government to offer recompense to Maori for loss of land and resources, because he knew his own Irish history. Narrators repeatedly acknowledged that at a macro social level Irish and Scots escaping dispossession in their own lands dispossessed Maori in *Aotearoa*, as they did indigenous peoples in Australia and the United States.

The following excerpt offers another narrative, a less well known and often subjugated voice, from a publisher and writer with Irish, German and Maori, *Te Arawa iwi* (tribe) cultural heritages, who tells a story in the song he wrote in the 1990s. It is a narrative based on a story of a soldier in the 65th Regiment of Foot, who fought in the New Zealand Land Wars[4]. Historically large numbers of Irish fought in the regiment and the writer has ascribed an Irish identity to the soldier, though another narrator and other sources identify the soldier as English.

To escape from the famine, starvation and pain

And seeing his dear ones dying

Patrick Fitzgerald left old Erin's Isle

And headed for the South Seas sailing

He landed here without a pig or a bob

And decided to join the army

Because it was the only job

To take the land from the Maori

Chorus

He thinks to himself by the fire at night

[4] Belich dates The New Zealand Wars as 1845-1872 (2001). These military actions dispossessed Maori of their land as a response to the growing demand for land from increasing numbers of *Pakeha* settlers.

I don't know why we kill them
O, sure they're the same as the people at home
Potatoes, fish and children

His orders were clear to set up a fight

So the crown could claim confiscation

Of land to which they had no legal right

Then one winter when the cloud hung low

When the moon was hidden by mist and by damp

He picked up his gun and some food in a sack

And crept silently out of the soldiers' camp

He travelled by night and he rested by day

To escape from the pay of the crown…

Chorus

The beauty he saw in this wonderful land

Reminded him of his far away home

He fell asleep for a very long time

And he dreamed that he was no longer alone

The tribe that found him took his body back

From *te wahi moemoea* (the sleeping place) and restored him to life
For they saw in his eyes when they opened
Potatoes fish and children ("Potatoes, Fish and Children")[5]

While on a macro level Maori were disenfranchised personal narratives such as the one this song is based on show that some individuals recognised an essential humanity across ethnic and cultural differences. Another inter-

[5] I interviewed Michael O'Leary on 16/07/2011. He gave me a copy of the words of his song, "Potatoes, Fish and Children" explaining he had written it for the Dunedin Irish band, Blackthorn, in the early 1990s.

view narrator with Irish, English, Scottish and Maori, *Te Rarawa iwi,* backgrounds told of how his great, great, grandfather, an Irish trader, who spoke fluent Maori, married a local chief's daughter. His story details a cross generational struggle to regain control of family land and to have enough resources to develop and use the land, ironically echoing Irish experience of colonisation. New Zealand scholar, Angela Wanhalla, her father of Irish, German and Maori ancestry and her mother of Irish and Manx, writes about marriages across races in her book *Matters of the Heart* (2013), often providing touching understandings of individual lives and relationships across 200 years.

6. A linguistic insight

One moment of insight crystallised the heart of the inquiry for me. At a dance performance about place, choreographed and danced by Karen Barbour (2014) the background video was of a Maori woman who led her people to reclaim tribal land from government control. She spoke about the importance of land, reminding listeners that the Maori word for "land" (*whenua*) also means "placenta" or "afterbirth". On reflection, this linguistic insight allowed me to bring together the three frames of narrative analysis, time, place and sociality, and contributed to a more layered sense of my own cultural identity, underpinned for me by a sense of spirituality which collapses time and place.

There is a Maori tradition of burying the placenta and the umbilical cord where there is family or significant connection, the land then is a link between past generations and those to come, providing both a physical and spiritual link to that place and through this a strong sense of identity over time (*Te Ara Online Encyclopaedia* 2018). While I was born in the south of the South Island, our farm bordering the Pacific Ocean, my genetic and cultural inheritance from my parents is Irish and New Zealand Irish. I love that southern land and ocean, and feel grateful to have been born there, but my deepest sense of myself comes from my parents and their families in Ireland and as time passes, much of this resides in memory.

New Zealand novelist Gillian Ranstead, in a novel about the consequences of intergenerational violence caused by colonisation in Scotland and *Aotearoa*, writes that "Memory, "Memory is a quicksilver thread woven in and out of our lives through the centuries, illusive and ineffable […] it searches for us, wanting to be found, it chimes like a bell within us, ringing true" (2008, 393). That chime of memory has rung true for me in the years of this inquiry as I have negotiated external and internal landscapes, accompanied by the quiet presences and strength of family beyond the veil of this physical world, or so it seems to me. It is hard for me to remember a time when I was not aware of Ireland as a place and the place where my people came from. My

parents never travelled to Ireland and it would have been possible for them to go in their older age. They seemed to have no need to go.

7. Generations Pass

Irish American scholar, Oona Frawley writes that "Cultural memory in the diaspora is often a search for consciousness, the quest to fill in what are felt as blanks and losses in the landscape of cultural memory" (2012, 10). I would not describe my experience as a search for consciousness, rather a process of remaking relationships. My three sisters and I have travelled to Ireland, sometimes taking children, so the family is knit together again across the world. Members of our Irish family have visited us, once again connecting our southern family with our northern hemisphere cousins. Electronic communications and easier access to air travel mean that distance is not the barrier it was for my grandparents. During this inquiry, my mother and her sister died leaving my siblings and me with one of my mother's brothers to connect us directly to our Irish-born grandparents: our father's generation now rests in death, though we were not able to re-establish links in Ireland with his father's or mother's people in the northern counties. As our older generations die we are actively constructing and reconstructing relationships within our families, in the southern and the northern hemispheres that hold our cultural memories. Our mother's mother lived with us for some years, and she died with us, and the sound of a soft Irish voice still brings her back across time to me. For my generation then the link to Ireland is living, but the children and grandchildren of this generation, with less emotional connection, will make what they will of their New Zealand Irishness.

8. The role of the reader

As highlighted earlier in the article, the reader in this narrative inquiry is viewed as a co-participant in the narrative. I chose full-length interviews for the book so that readers might have an opportunity to read each individual narrative and reflect, to bring their own experience to the narrators' stories. I aimed to keep the speaker's individual tone and choice words and phrases, to give the reader a sense of the individual narrator's voice, not wanting my voice as the researcher and the writer to overlay the voice of the narrator. My aim in representing full-length interview narratives is to encourage readers to read *with*, rather than *about* narratives as Arthur Bochner and Nicholas Riggs suggest (2014). Like Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner I believe that "Evocative stories […] long to be used rather analysed; to be told and retold rather than theorised and settled; to offer lessons for further conversation rather than undebatable conclusions; and to substitute the companionship of detail for the loneliness of abstracted facts" (2000, 744).

Susan Chase (2005, 669) quotes Ken Plummer to suggest that "For narratives to flourish, there must be a community to hear […] for communities to hear, there must be stories to weave together history […] The one – community – feeds upon the other – story". There are large communities of Irish and Scots in New Zealand, who I hope will have access to these narratives. I have shared them with one community which has met yearly for thirty years, in the north of the North Island in a community historically associated with Scots who came to New Zealand via Nova Scotia. Called "The Gaeltacht", it is a week-long gathering (<www.nzgaidhealtachd.org>), drawing people from Celtic backgrounds Scottish, Irish, Welsh, Breton, and Galician to share histories, music, dance and other cultural traditions.

9. Conclusion

What is there in "the Kiwi psyche" which might relate to our Irish and Scots ancestors? An inappropriately stereotypical idea perhaps that an entire nation would have one psyche, particularly in an inquiry which is underpinned by the concept of identity being multiple and changing: interview narrators found no difficulty responding to the question. Several connected their Irish and Highland Scots backgrounds with New Zealand traditions of hospitality and having an open home for visitors. Others spoke about a sense of egalitarianism: one recalls the saying that in New Zealand people may look down, but no-one looks up, adding a saying from Scotland "We're all Jock Thompson's *bairns* [children]". Another suggests that a Scot, Peter Fraser, former education minister, then Prime Minister (1940-1949) helped embed a sense of egalitarianism into our education system, though the narrator admits that with economic globalisation this attitude is changing and wonders how New Zealanders will tolerate "astronomical" differences in salaries. The influence of a Scottish respect for education, particularly of women, was referenced, as was a certain lack of emotion or "dourness" in Kiwis that was ascribed to the Central and Lowland Scots. Ease of participation in rituals and traditions around the experience of death and dying, for people with an Irish Catholic background, was also mentioned.

Reflecting on what this "Southern Celts" inquiry might offer to others of the Irish diaspora, I hesitate to make generalisations. The broad definitions of culture and cultural identity that underpin the inquiry are prefaced with the understanding that these are not static, nor necessarily singular. My questions were deliberately kept general so that people might speak of their life experience in their own ways. I chose interviewees whose lives illustrated certain aspects of culture, therefore I have to an extent predetermined the content of the narratives. These narratives do however tell of individuals and communities whose lives have contributed to and influenced the development of *Aotearoa* New Zealand.

My intention was to create a narrative, a multi-voiced narrative, and my wish is for people to read these stories, bringing their own life experience to the engagement and then as co-participants in the narrative to generate new insights, as Ellis and Bochner suggest (2000, 744). The narratives do not finish in this text, they are ongoing "lived and told" stories. I offer them in a sense of celebration for the family and communities who have nurtured me, and for the interview narrators and their families, also for the strength of Irish and Scottish cultures which can remake themselves anew, far from the northern hemisphere homelands. In this exploration of the discursive construction of culture and identity, the lens of place has provided me with powerful insights, expressed with depth and subtlety in Ivan Brady's understanding that "Place is the geography of earth, mind, body and lived experience of the seen and unseen [...]" (2005, 985).

Appendix

1. What is your/your family's Celtic/Gaelic (Ireland, Scotland) cultural background?

2. Were you born in New Zealand? If not, where were you born? When and why did you move to New Zealand? How old were you? Could you tell me more about your experience?

3. Tell me more about your connection to New Zealand. How has it been expressed in your life (for instance, experiences of your grandparents or parents; food, clothes, music, stories, religion?) Are there particular stories, people, or objects that you associate with, or that embody your experience?

4. Have you visited/revisited the homeland of this cultural connection? Has this made a difference to your feelings, attitudes, and personal understanding?

5. Do you speak any of the language[s] of the country? Do you think that this is important?

6. Do your choices in terms of business, art, music, employment, hobbies (or any other aspect of your life) reflect your cultural connection to New Zealand?

7. Has this cultural connection shown itself at particular times of your life? Have you been conscious of it as you have had important life experiences, such as celebrating achievements, having a child, burying a family member or a friend? Have you taken any particular action because of this?

8. Has your attitude to and understanding of this cultural connection changed over time? Has this been influenced by particular factors?

9. Is there anything in the Kiwi psyche which you can link to Celtic/Gaelic cultural roots? Can you identify any characteristics or behaviours in New Zealand society or in New Zealanders that might reflect the Celtic/Gaelic connection?

10. The Irish and the Scots have been systematically colonised and they have suffered for this. Do you think that their experience has influenced the way they have related to Maori, in the process of colonisation of Aotearoa/New Zealand?

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Decolonizing the Irish: The International Resistance and Entrenchment of the Global Irish Diaspora

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Abstract:

Narratives of Irish decolonization often take up local (rather than global) arguments focused on the liberation of Ireland, instead of looking to the participation of Irish people in decolonization efforts internationally. This paper argues that the Irish diaspora, whose population has extended into all corners of the Earth, has a key role to play in decolonization not simply because of the history of anti-colonialism in Ireland and its role as a test site for British colonialism, but specifically because of the need to extend sentiments about national liberation to the nations whose oppression the diaspora has become entrenched in. Through examining on historical examples of Irish roles in the colonization of Canada, the United States, and Australia, this paper explores some of the ways that the desire to contribute to the liberation of Ireland within the Irish diaspora has often become linked to participation in colonization. In so doing, it argues that the Irish nation cannot become decolonized by liberating its own land alone; it must become a force for anti-colonialism by rejecting participation in colonial occupation wherever the Irish find themselves. Drawing attention to opportunities for advancing allieships between the diaspora and other nations struggling against colonialism, the author puts forth a call to action for decolonizing the Irish.

Keywords: Anti-colonialism, Colonization, Decolonization, Global Irish diaspora, Irish nationalism

1. Introduction

On January 24th, 2018, pro-Palestinian activists around the world celebrated that the Seanad (Upper House) of the Oireachtas put forward a reso-

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lution to pass the Control of Economic Activities (Occupied Territories) Bill of 2018. The bill which aims to enact the rules of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and customary international humanitarian law in-regards-to trade has been criticized for being anti-semitic. During the debates about the Bill on January 30th, the Tánaiste Sean Coveney opened the discussion with the following comments:

> The relentless expansion of Israeli settlements on Palestinian territory is unjust, provocative, and undermines the credibility of Israel's commitment to a peaceful solution to a conflict to which we all want an end. The introduction and settlement of communities from an occupying power to alter the demography of the area is unambiguously illegal under international law. The process of establishing settlements also inevitably involves violations of the rights of the occupied population through seizure of their land, demolitions, discriminatory treatment, including unequal implementation of planning laws, and other restrictions, including on movement. The Government has consistently and repeatedly condemned the construction and expansion of settlements. (Houses of the Oireachtais, January 30, 2019)

Coveney defended the proposed legislation by claiming that it does not apply to activities within the internationally recognized boundaries of Israel, and that rather than targeting Israel, it aimed at upholding international law that opposes the illegal occupation of sovereign nations. However, if we take these qualifying remarks seriously, they have important implications for Ireland's relationship with the territories that the majority of the Irish diaspora live in. In particular, all of the characteristics used above by the Tánaiste to describe the occupation of Palestine, can be equally applied to several of the main sites of migration for the Irish diaspora.

Within the past two years, the international media has been replete with examples of settler colonial governments using force to occupy, settle, or otherwise develop land which does not belong to them. In the United States, members of the Irish diaspora need only look at the violent encroachment of all levels of government onto Indigenous[1] land to try to enforce the development of the Dakota Access Pipeline for a recent example (Estes 2019). At the time of writing this article, it has been only two months since Canada, despite all of its talk about reconciliation, sent the Military and the Queen's Royal Canadian Mounted Police, to illegally enter and occupy unceded Wet'suwet'en territories in order to force the development of the GasLink/TransCanada pipeline (Unist'ot'en Camp 2019). Indigenous land defenders at the site were violently arrested, while officers refused to release them unless

[1] The term Indigenous is deployed throughout this paper to refer to the original inhabitants of land and the descendants of their nations, who have existed on their land from time immemorial.

they swore an oath to the Queen. In Australia, the Uluru Statement from the Heart, which culminated years of consultations with Indigenous communities, was met with outright rejection by the federal government because it asked for Indigenous sovereignty to be enshrined into the decision-making processes of the nation via the constitution (Grattan 2017). While numerous Irish politicians and activists around the world have noted the similarities between Ireland's struggles against colonial oppression and the experiences of Palestinian populations, these other comparisons might prove to be more challenging to confront.

The year 2018 marked the 20th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, and while numerous authors have problematized viewing the conflict between the Republic, loyalists and unionists as being one of an anti-colonial nature, the current political context of Brexit is once again bringing Ireland's relationship with British-rule back into question (Gormley-Heenan, Aughey 2017). While some people may characterize the Republic as having entered a post-national stage via their participation in the European Union, sentiments around the long history of liberatory struggles against colonialism continue to shape Irish national mythologies, held both within Ireland, and around the world by those claiming Irish heritage. This paper argues that these sentiments must be examined critically when faced with the contradictory realities produced by the Irish diaspora's ongoing role in global history: as populations living in territories occupied by colonial states; as descendants of populations who upheld and expanded British colonialism; and as a diasporic nation that has continued to both resist and rely upon colonial laws, politics, and economics, while participating in or joining in the resistance of the British occupation of Indigenous lands across the globe.

This paper also tries to work towards confronting such contradictions for the benefit of those members of the Irish diaspora, whose mixed-heritage connects our Irish ancestors to other colonized peoples around the world. I write this as someone whose heritage as a mixed-Indigenous Mi'kmaw and Irish scholar, has led me to study and compare the ongoing impacts of colonization in Ireland and Mi'kma'ki (the unceded territories of the Mi'kmaq Confederacy on the East Coast of Canada). I believe that through facing the harsh realities of the Irish diaspora's past and current entrenchment in colonialism, white supremacy, and empire, others who are like me will begin to want to share their histories with the rest of the diaspora. The call for this type of comparative research is widespread by authors who have questioned Ireland's postcolonial (or even colonial) status (Lloyd 1999; Howe 2002; Carroll, King 2003; Wilson 2013). The conclusion that the Irish have a very long history of utilizing colonial racial hierarchies to their advantage, and have benefitted from various forms of entrenchment in Empire is nothing new. However, by taking the position that the Irish diaspora needs to engage seri-

ously in the work of decolonising themselves, and that the independence of the Republic does not mean that the Irish have been freed from the clutches of "the colonial mind", this paper attempts to show that reductive narratives of Irish interactions with colonialism restricted to the locale of Ireland, tend to ignore the globalized nature of colonialism. Drawing on historical examples from North America and Australia, this paper argues that the Irish nation cannot become decolonized by liberating its own land alone, it must become a force for anti-colonialism, rejecting participation in colonial occupation wherever the Irish find themselves. To do so, this paper engages literature in Irish history, and debates that have emerged in Irish and post-colonial studies. In calling for the Irish diaspora to think through how decolonization must therefore be seen as a global project, I ask readers to reflect on how narratives of Irish decolonization can move beyond focusing solely on the liberation of Ireland rather than the anti-colonial struggles of Irish people internationally. By highlighting some of the varied and deep seated relationships that the Irish have to colonialism, I hope to respond directly to the question raised by the title of this special volume, *Whose Homelands?,* in two ways: firstly, by examining critically how nationalist mythologies have influenced the actions of the Irish diaspora's anti-colonial sentiments in defense of the diaspora's imagined homeland; and secondly, in relation to the current struggles over land and sovereignty of the actual people whose homelands the diaspora continue to occupy.

2. Pre-colonial arrivals of the Irish Diaspora

It is worth noting that the ancestors of the Irish diaspora could very well have landed in regions like North America prior to the arrival of European colonialism. Given the documented intermixing of Irish and Norse culture, the migration of the diaspora may very well have begun with the Viking settlement called Vinland, in the region now known as L'Anse aux Meadows, in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. Vinland, which is thought to have been established by the Viking explorer Lief Erickson around 1000 AD, is widely believed to have been abandoned because of war with the local Indigenous nations. While it may be true that skirmishes took place between the Norse populations and Indigenous nations like the Beothuk, it may also be the case that this belief is an ahistoric projection of Eurocentrism onto the past – propagating the belief that Indigenous civilizations did not have the capacity or ability to absorb European travellers into their societies, which contradicts much of the historical data we have around Indigenous host-nations, practices with refugees, etc. Despite the belief that Vinland was a failed settlement, in 2016, a second site which could establish a potential longer history of Norse settlement in North America was found at Point Rosee (Farand 2016). There are also other unsubstantiated rumours that St. Bren-

don had reached North America in previous millennia (Howley 2013), and that the Irish might have been the "White-Natives" that D'Anghiera wrote about and who reached the region now known as South Carolina (in the 1530 text *De Orbe Novo*). These are but a few of many examples demonstrating that the Irish are looking to understand their nation's history in North America. The earliest known case of Celtic populations in North America, can be found in the oral histories of the Mi'kmaq confederacy, which tell of the Mi'kmaq encountering the Scotsman Henry St. Clair, who is believed to have "landed in Guysborough Harbour and travelled to Pictou and Stellarton" in 1398 (Cape Breton University 2007). Since the English project to colonize Ireland was well underway by this time, there can be no doubt that some of the ship's passengers would have been of Irish-descent. These examples offer us insight into pre-colonial migrations of the diaspora. However, after John Cabot landed in Acadia and Newfoundland in 1497, he claimed to "discover the land" in the name of King Henry VII. From the end of the 15th century, the migration of the Irish diaspora to North America became entangled with English colonization, as the English began to work to populate Indigenous land with subjects of the crown (*ibidem*).

3. Anti-colonial sentiments and colonial entrenchment

It is worth noting that like any nation or diasporic group, the characteristics and values of each person cannot be generalized in any substantive way without risking creating ahistorical or essentialist representations. The Irish diaspora in North America have been made up of people of all different walks of life, from those travelling through military service, to farmers and prisoners being sent via convict transportation. To understate the hardships that the Irish struggled through during the past four centuries as a colonized people trying to make a better life as a diasporic population, would be both unhelpful and historically inaccurate. However, while it should be evident that the Irish have much in common with other colonized nations around the world, they have also endured centuries of struggle through working as mercenaries for other European nations, and in some cases, agents of colonialism. From the 16th century onward, Irish troops which are now remembered as the Wild Geese of Ireland, served in the ranks of armies in various nations around intercontinental Europe. The work done by the Irish, there could have led many members of the diaspora to the far reaches of the globe as European powers sought to expand their access to distant geographies.

In North America, historical documents trace the arrival of Irish settlers to the start of British colonization in Virginia, which coincided with the development of the Plantation of Ulster. The establishment of Virginia, as the first English Settler-colony in North America (in 1607), preceded the estab-

lishment of the royal charter in the city of Derry/Londonderry[2] in 1613, and the colonial regime at the time was developed in both regions. The support of loyalist Ulster-Scotts, and Irish Protestant populations who intermarried with the Scottish settlers brought over to Ulster to help run the plantations, was instrumental in maintaining English-rule (Betit 1994). By the middle of the 17th century, as the regions under English-rule continued to grow, Cromwellian forces began to use prisoners granted transportation, and indentured servants from Ireland, to populate more of the English colonies, including those in Jamaica (Collins 2017). Although many of these groups were forcibly displaced, once they served their term of indenturement they often became entrenched in the ruling class. For example, in Jamaica, many of these settlers would go on to become slave-owners. Participation in colonization was therefore, at this point, forced in some cases and chosen in others.

According to Betit (1994), the 18th century brought an increase in the number of Ulster-Irish settlers arriving to live in the colonies, many of whom were loyalists from in and around cities like Derry/Londonderry. By mid-century, the Irish diaspora was deeply involved in intercolonial warfare, with Irish soldiers working for both the French and British during the North American battles of the Seven Years War, and both sides of the American War of Independence. The sectarian nature of conflict between the Ulster-Scotts supporting English Protestant rule and the Catholic-Irish populations, made for alliances based more along religious grounds than national ones. It is important to note that the skirmishes during this era were focused on who would control colonization in occupied territories in North America. It is likely (and certainly this is seen later with the Fenian Raids) that the resistance to English-rule in North America, was regarded as being part of the overarching battle against English-oppression that the diaspora had experienced in Ireland. However, whether we can qualify this as properly anti-colonial is more complicated. The fact that these battles were not aimed at preventing European invasion, rule, and occupation of Indigenous territories, makes claiming that Irish participation in the North American theatre of the Seven Years War or the American "War of Independence" was anti-colonial, entirely problematic. Even in Latin America, where the Irish diaspora played key roles in the liberation of Chile, Argentina, and Venezuela, the long history of the Irish working as mercenaries for competing colonial

[2] Derry is the anglicised toponym for Doire, which is Old Irish Gaelic for Oak Grove, and the original name of the city. A Royal charter in 1613 decreed its name as Londonderry. Today the second biggest urban centre in Northern Ireland bears both names, to reflect its coexisting cultures, Catholic and Protestant, and it is often shortened to L'Derry or colloquially referred to as "stroke city" because of debates around writing Derry/ Londonderry as its name. The county is called Londonderry and has been part of Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom since Partition, in 1922.

powers complicates any simplified analysis that would reduce resistance to Spanish-rule as being equal to anti-colonialism (Fanning 2018).

Nevertheless, the success of the American Revolution inspired Irish Republicans to form the United Irishmen, who subsequently led an uprising against the British in Ireland in 1798. The suppression and punishment of this rebellion provided a large population of prisoners for transportation to English colonies – most arriving in the region now known as Australia. Cornwallis, who was in charge of suppressing the rebellion, was also engaged in warfare against Indigenous nations in North America, putting out scalping bounties on Indigenous nations (Paul 2007). The failure of the Irish Rebellion of 1798, inspired unrest in the colonies in North America. In one example, in 1800, a group of Irishmen were caught planning a mutiny that is now known as the United Irish Uprising in Newfoundland (FitzGerald 2001).

The 19th century is famous for its large influx of members of the Irish diaspora fleeing the Great Famine, which was exacerbated by colonially enforced starvation in Ireland. What is perhaps less known, is that many of the Irish families who arrived in areas in North America, were actually given plots of land that had been stolen from Indigenous nations like the Mi'kmaq, who were undergoing colonially enforced starvation themselves, through forcible displacement and containment in non-arable lands (Paul 2007). It is possibly these members of the Irish diaspora who had the most in common with Indigenous nations, with their shared histories of oppression by the English (it is known that in regions like Mi'kma'ki, the Mi'kmaq recognized them as refugees). Kim Anderson (2000) has noted that Mi'kmaq families even took in babies from Irish families who were in danger because they were born out of wedlock. Indigenous nations also saw another influx of Irish migrants in 1848, as members of the diaspora fled to North America after the failed Young Irelander Rebellion. Unfortunately, some of the supporters of the rebellion went on to become the architects of colonial rule in North America.

In the region known as the United States, the 19th century was also one of extreme brutality, as then President Andrew Jackson, a member of the Irish diaspora of Protestant descent, implemented the large-scale forced removal of Indigenous nations from their homelands through the Indian Removal Act of 1830 (Deloria 1984). Many of the populations that were displaced, were forced to leave their homes without their belongings, walking to the regions that they would be re-settled in across long tracts of land, with thousands of people dying from starvation, exposure, and disease. Resistance was met with violence and full-scale military confrontations like the second Seminole War (La Duke 1999). Jackson and the subsequent governments that took up his work to depopulate the region for settlers and gold mining, would later have their legacy be known as the "Trail of Tears", which devastated Cherokee, Muscogee, Seminole, Chickasaw, Choctaw and Ho-Chunk (Winnebago) nations. Despite the hardships they encountered, the Choctaw nation raised

money and sent it to Ireland to help support those suffering from the Great Famine (Russell 2017). Indigenous nations like the Choctaw clearly saw the parallels between what they were experiencing and what the Irish were going through. This act of kindness is still celebrated and commemorated by a monument in County Cork in Ireland. It is unfortunate that there is no evidence demonstrating that the Irish have helped support the survival of Indigenous nations when they have experienced forced displacement and famine as a result of colonization. That the architects of colonization in the region now known as the United States have been primarily Irish, is not problematized by most members of the Irish diaspora – instead the fact that roughly half of the Presidents have been of Irish descent, is seen as a source of pride for Irish-Americans who live in occupied Indigenous territories.

Perhaps one of the most prominent examples of international anti-colonialism in Irish history, can be seen in the work of Irish abolitionists. As numerous Indigenous authors have noted, colonialism relied upon a triad of settler-slave-Indian (which arguably has now been replaced with a triad of settler-migrant-worker-Indigenous person). By disrupting the white supremacist foundations of colonialism, Irish abolitionists like Daniel O'Connell, who is famous in Ireland for getting the British to grant rights to Catholics, confronted some of the main contradictions that allowed colonialism to exist in the first place (Kinealy 2011). Further, when Frederick Douglas was visiting Ireland, and went to see O'Connell, groups like The Cork Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society worked directly with Douglas in helping him to organize, fundraise, and support his message of civil rights for Black Americans (Hume 2018).

By the middle of the 19th century, the development of anti-British sentiment amongst Irish settlers in the United States, many of whom were hardened by fighting in the civil-war, led to the establishment of the Fenian Brotherhood. The Fenian Raids against British North America were aimed at gaining control over territories held by the British, in order to use them as a bargaining chip for the liberation of Ireland (Senior 1991). The fact that some of the Irish people who fought for emancipation did not find the seizure of Indigenous land problematic, shows how deeply engrained the dehumanization of Indigenous people had become in the colonies. Had they been successful, these members of the Irish diaspora would have effectively re-colonized a region of North America, and held Indigenous nations and their land ransom for Irish liberation. Pressure caused by the Fenian Raids on British forts between 1866 and 1871, prompted the British to begin to work towards connecting the different colonies in British North America under one federal government in defense of British-rule (Stacey 1931). Irish intercolonial warfare became the basis for the transformation of the British colonies via confederation, and once again it was a member of the Irish diaspora who played a major role in that transformation.

Thomas D'Arcy McGee, whose life is celebrated by Irish-Canadians for having a huge role in the formation of Canada, was a Catholic who had fled to the

United States after having been a public supporter of the Young Ireland movement. Initially believing that the United States should win control over North America and push out the British, D'Arcy McGee had become disenchanted with religious sectarianism and republicanism both in Ireland and in the United States. As a result, he had become a vocal supporter of British colonization and argued that through confederation, the colony could forge a new national identity where Irish people could live together regardless of what faith they believed in (Wilson 2011). Some of D'Arcy McGee's remarkable achievements include ensuring that Catholic rights were enshrined in a region where previously Protestant forces had refused to acknowledge any rights for Catholics. In his later life, he was known as a fierce advocate for the creation of national unity amongst British-Canada, and believed that he was forging a better place for the Irish to live.

The Canadian nationalism that D'Arcy McGee fought so hard for, has overtime been used to prop up a national-mythology that Canada is no longer a colony, but is rather a consensual form of governance that emerged as separate. Further, the consolidation of British power via confederation was followed by the immediate contravention of prior treaties, such as "The Treaty of Niagara", between the British-crown and Indigenous host-nations. A legislative regime that drew on the strategies that had been used against the Irish in Ireland, was immediately deployed against Indigenous nations who had their jurisdiction trespassed against by the colony. From the Gradual Civilization Act, to the modernf-day Indian Act, laws that are eerily reminiscent of the Penal Laws and the Statute of Kilkenny in Ireland, were violently enforced to try to supress Indigenous sovereignty. In spite of these similarities, numerous descendants of the Irish diaspora went on to be the administrators of colonialism in this region. There is no doubt that the Irish diaspora has shaped this region for better or for worse – from Prime Minister John Sparrow David Thompson, who gave the order to execute Louis Riel in his role as the Federal Justice Minister, to Lester B. Pearson who instituted Canada's internationally leading universal healthcare, members of the Irish diaspora have invested their lives into shaping what Canada has become. It is unfortunate that so many of the Irish people who have shaped Canadian nationalism were willing to participate in the ongoing and illegal occupation of Indigenous nations by British colonialism.

On the other side of the planet, in Australia, the Irish had become deeply entrenched in genocide towards Indigenous Australians. Many of the original members of the Irish diaspora that arrived there, were sent via convict transportation, which was arguably a forced displacement (or at the very least a trip made under duress). The anti-colonial sentiments of convicts who had been transported after the 1798 Irish Rebellion, led to the Castle Hill convict rebellion of 1804. Later in 1854, the Eureka Rebellion again attempted to refuse colonial authority and was led by Irish descendants. Unfortunately, despite their anti-colonial sentiments, Irish people were also heavily engaged

in the Frontier Wars and other violent actions that worked to displace Indigenous populations from their homes (Malcolm, Hall 2019).

Unlike in Canada, no treaties were signed between the colonial government and the Indigenous nations whose land was invaded. However, by the middle of the 19th century, the colonial governments in Australia began to use strategies similar to Canada's in an effort to enforce assimilation via legislation. The *Victorian Aboriginal Protection Act of 1869*, and its amendment commonly known as the "Half-Caste Act", became the basis for the later *Aborigines Act of 1905,* all of which aimed to allow colonizers the jurisdiction to remove Indigenous and mixed-Indigenous children from their communities, and/or to forcibly assimilate them into white society. At the turn of the 20th century and the years that followed, the actions taken by the newly federated government had such a devastating effect on Indigenous communities, that the era became known as the "Stolen Generation". At the time when the federation was established, in 1901, members of the Irish diaspora were involved in all aspects of Australian life and made up 25% of the continents non-Indigenous population. Descendants of the members of the Irish diaspora who helped enforce the removal of Indigenous populations from their homes, would do well to read about the conditions in places like the Moore River Native Settlement, which was used also for internment. For other members of the diaspora, the conditions imposed on the Stolen Generation are a part of their history – as those who were mixed-Indigenous were some of those taken from their non-white families. It is a disservice to those families that the Irish diaspora continues to promote Australia as if it has resolved the harms of this contentious past, or is beyond continuing the harms of colonization. In 2015, the mainstream media began to note that once again, Australia is using withdrawal of financial support, removal of Indigenous children, and other methods of force and coercion, to attempt to force the closure of Australian Indigenous homelands which have been targeted for natural resource development projects by the Australian state (Pilger 2015). These tactics, Pilger notes, are in direct contravention of international law:

> Article 5 of the International Convention for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (Icerd). Australia is committed to 'provide effective mechanisms for prevention of, and redress for ... any action which has the aim of dispossessing [Indigenous people] of their lands, territories or resources'. The Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is blunt. 'Forced evictions' are against the law. (*Ibidem*)

It is extremely disappointing to see that former Prime Minister Tony Abbott, whose large-scale cuts to Indigenous supports caused these concerns to become present in the mainstream media, is now being given the role of special envoy for Indigenous Affairs to the new Prime Minister. If the actions

taken by the Australian, Canadian, or United States governments constitute violations of international law, why is the international community not intervening? Further, if the Indigenous nations in these countries are experiencing colonial oppression that has evolved from the strategies that were deployed by the British to rule and oppress Ireland, why are these places still some of the most popular destinations for the Irish diaspora to move to?

One reason most definitely pertains to the relationship that the Irish have to race. Several authors have historically linked the ethnic discrimination faced by the Irish to the experiences of people of colour around the world. The use of caricatures and animalistic epithets of the Irish, and various forms of stereotypes, were common in anti-Irish media around the world (De Nie 2014). Some Irish people also experienced slavery, which links the Irish to many other peoples around the world. However, it is evident when examining the history of the Irish diaspora, that the Irish have benefitted from their ability to pass as white, and that many of the people fleeing Ireland to make a better life, have spent their entire lives refusing to acknowledge the basic human rights of the nations whose sovereignty continues to be denied by settler-states.

To make matters worse, Irish people have the tendency to overlook their history of exercising whiteness while making claims about experiencing racism. On 23 February 2019, *The Irish Times Abroad*, posted an article entitled "Brexiles: 'It has become okay to make racial comments in the UK' ", with a caption that read: "Why people are leaving Brexit Britain: "My friend's kid in school was told: 'why don't you f**k off back to Ireland?'" (Carswell 2019). Articles such as this are misleading and continue to attempt to equate ethnic discrimination and other forms of discrimination with racism. Irish people who are attempting to discuss racism should note that race is distinct from the term ethnicity. Racism is the system of oppression built around upholding white supremacy and shadism that oppresses people based on their inability to pass as white. Ethnicity, on the other hand, is the cultural or national background that people have. White Irish people cannot experience racism precisely because they are white[3]. Members of the Irish diaspora may face

[3] This paper deliberately takes interventionist position on the enduring arguments supported by authors such as Hickman and Walter (1995) who argue that racism should not be limited to "colourism" because the Irish have experienced being dehumanized and othered by nations like Britain. Their perspective obscures all experiences of othering and dehumanization into the category of racism, which then would be applicable to numerous types of discrimination (for example, ableism, homophobia, etc.). It is my argument here that while the Irish have endured harsh discrimination as a result of the dehumanization they have faced both in ethno-nationalist and religious persecution, it is precisely their whiteness which has allowed them to ascend through the colonial mechanisms of white supremacy. Irish people who refuse to understand racism from the perspective of non-white peoples who have extensively written about how racism is a system that upholds white su-

xenophobia, ethnic discrimination, religious discrimination, class discrimination, and a wide variety of other forms of oppression, but to mislabel this as racism, for anyone who is not both Irish and a person of colour, is a disservice to all Irish people. It also erases the unique experiences of mixed-race Irish diaspora members who are also people of colour and/or Black. Historically, Irish people have been actively engaged in resistance to anti-blackness through their work in struggles against apartheid in South Africa (Lodge 2006), their fights for abolitionism, and in the solidarity work that has been done connecting the Civil Rights movement in the United States with the Civil Rights movement in Derry/Londonderry (O'Dowd 2019). I do not intend to downplay the struggles for survival that many of the diaspora faced when they encountered the harsh realities of ethnic discrimination after they arrived to places like North America. But it needs to be said that claiming that white Irish people experience racism, is not only harmful in that it ignores that racism *is* white supremacy, but it also causes harm by deflecting from the responsibility that the Irish diaspora has to undo the damages caused by our ancestors and relatives who have helped to create, sustain, and uphold colonial regimes that have functioned by dehumanizing Indigenous and Black communities. Beyond the historical legacies that members of the Irish diaspora inherit, that the continued oppression of Indigenous nations in Australia, Canada and the United States is secured through the ongoing support of diasporic populations who are willing to become subjects and to benefit from colonial regimes.

4. The Irish Diaspora, migration, and colonial jurisdiction

Colonial regimes in Canada, Australia and the United States, have relied on the continued migration of Irish populations for quite some time. In Canada, Irish people aged 18-35 are eligible to attain work visas for up to 2 year stays through the International Experience Canada programme (Kenny 2018). This year, over 10,000 visas are available in the programme. In both Australia and the United States there are similar reciprocal agreements for Irish citizens of the same age range (working holiday visas) which allow Irish workers to contribute to the national economies in the colony, while also allowing them to experience what life could be like if they decide to move there. For Irish people facing lack of employment, or urban housing crises in cities like Dublin, these moves seem like ideal opportunities. However, for those who do decide to leave their homeland permanently, the process of gaining

premacy and normalizes whiteness feed into myths about reverse-racism, and also undermine the difference between their experiences and the experiences of racism that mixed-race descendants of the Irish face as people of colour.

citizenship is also a process of re-enforcing colonial jurisdiction. In Canada, this entails taking an oath of allegiance to the Queen of England (because Canada is still a British colony). Since 1994, new citizens of Australia do not have to pledge allegiance to the Queen, but she remains the head of state for the country. Regardless of the beliefs that these countries are post-colonial, there has never been any formal decolonization in either region, and if there was, it would have to involve a different kind of governance, not based on colonial jurisdiction (via Indigenous-rule). While in North America there are Indigenous laws that can (and should) be followed, and treaties that are still considered legally binding to this day, Irish people moving to North America, whether in Canada or the United States, are not given the opportunity to be naturalized or become citizens within the nations whose land they will live on. The ability for Indigenous nations to naturalize citizens has been restricted since the introduction of quantum blood laws, and settler colonies continue to presume that Indigenous nations are in fact sub-communities of national subjects, rather than (at most) dual citizens. By restricting access to education about the obligations that newcomers from the Irish diaspora have as guests on Indigenous land, the colonial governments are able to increase settler populations that will uphold the process of colonization.

For members of the Irish diaspora who are interested in uncovering and strengthening their alliances with the Indigenous nations whose land they visit or move to, some may look to taking part in the wide-spread practice of saying land acknowledgements in their daily practices[4]. Dr. Ruth Koleszar-Green (2018) has noted that many of these statements that acknowledge the enduring presence and sovereignty of Indigenous countries, are phrased in a way to frame the people who speak them as guests on Indigenous land. To be a guest, however, means that to have the responsibility of understanding the reciprocal relationship with the host nations whose land we travel to (175). It is this distinction that Koleszar-Green so eloquently explores. Members of the Irish diaspora, whether they have lived in Indigenous lands for generations or are just moving there, have an opportunity to learn the history, laws, and protocols of the regions they are in. In this way, they can become advocates for upholding Indigenous jurisdiction and move beyond being settlers whose presence continues colonization. The process of becoming responsible guests in Indigenous territories, is not a matter of discouraging the Irish from taking part in the landscapes that have been a part of so much of the

[4] Land acknowledgements are statements used daily in professional settings in countries like Canada and Australia. They are generally used to preface the start of meetings, classes, lectures, and other events with a speaker verbally acknowledging and identifying the Indigenous nations whose land they are currently speaking on, the enduring Indigenous rights of that nation and the responsibilities of non-Indigenous peoples as guests on their land.

Irish diaspora's history. Instead, it is a process through which the Irish diaspora can really acknowledge whose homelands they are living on, and find ways to have their presence as guests contribute to the work being done by these nations in the present.

5. A call for decolonizing the Irish

Since the turn of the 20th century, the revolutionary events that transformed Ireland into its present-day political configuration, have had significant impacts on Irish culture. Mythologies around Irish nationalism, influenced in large part by the heroic efforts of those who fought and died in the struggle to end British-rule, have been complicated by the complex realities of the sectarian qualities of anti-colonial conflict in Ireland. Since partition, the way that religious identity has been a driving force in the reasoning behind violence between Irish people has led many people to avoid characterizing the struggle for a united Ireland as an anti-colonial struggle at all. Is it possible, that the historical participation of the Irish in the dehumanization and colonization of North America and Australia, is because of the sectarian focus that has dominated Irish nationalism? If this is the case, there certainly should have been more records of alliances with Indigenous nations like those in the Mi'kmaq Confederacy who adopted Catholicism officially not long after Ireland was deemed a vassal state. In bringing attention to the entrenchment of the diaspora, I recognize the very real-risk of readers generalizing the Irish experience in these places – of ignoring the unwritten or less famous everyday narratives of solidarity and decolonial alliances that may have been taking place between the Irish and populations in these regions all along. As a mixed-Indigenous Mi'kmaw and Irish scholar, I continue to encounter many brilliant Indigenous people who identify as part-Irish, and who are actively committed to decolonization. Their stories, and the stories of their families, are part of a larger history of the Irish diaspora that has the potential to show a deep-rooted embeddedness in struggles against colonialism all around the world. I am encouraged not only by the work these members of the diaspora are doing in showing our mixed and shared heritages, but also in the enthusiasm that I have seen in academic circles in Ireland towards supporting research that can strengthen alliances between the Irish and Indigenous nations.

Currently, my own research explores in depth the ways that colonization in Ireland served as a testing-ground for strategies that were used in North America, and it is my hope that through understanding the similarities between Irish and Indigenous experiences members of the diaspora will become more committed to the liberation of all of the places they call home. The Irish have experienced first hand what it means to have their cultural practices banned, their language banned, to be removed from their land, to be forced into working on plantations, and so many other experiences that link

them with other colonized nations. Perhaps more importantly, they have at long last achieved at least partial decolonization of Ireland. For Indigenous nations who continue to fight while feeling like colonial occupation is a permanent reality after hundreds of years of oppression, the Irish have an opportunity to help Indigenous nations become more hopeful, by mapping the long view of their homes both in Ireland and around the world.

Returning to my opening comments on the Occupied Territory Bill of 2018, it is important to note that Palestine is struggling with misrecognition in the international community. Out of 193 member-states in the United Nations, only 137 recognize the Palestinian state (Lemon 2018). Without recognition of statehood and affirmed international boundaries, Palestine will not be considered a country in the international community. Despite this, the Irish government has recognized and re-affirmed the sovereignty of Palestine over its territories and the illegality of acts of aggression to settle Palestinian land by invasion. The strategy of misrecognition and denial is one of the most important weapons that colonialism has in its arsenal today (Coulthard 2014). Consider the fact that Indigenous nations, much of whose land has never been ceded to settler colonial governments in North America or Australia, have their own sovereignty, governments, and territorial boundaries, and yet none of the international community recognizes them as countries. There is a natural opportunity for alliances between these nations and the members of the Irish diaspora whose families have struggled to make it so that Ireland was able to become self-governing, be considered a country, and to exercise the jurisdiction of a nation-among-nations rather than a sub-community within the United Kingdom (or simply an ethnic-identity). Even for those members of the Irish diaspora who would consensually participate in unionism in Ireland, the support of colonial-rule in North America and Australia cannot be premised on more than a ruse-of-consent (Simpson 2017). Part of the way that I bring forward this work in my own research is by referring to Indigenous territories as countries, just like I imagine some people must have recognized Ireland as more than an adjacent appendage of the British Isles (Alderson 2019).

As members of the Irish diaspora continue to live in many of the world's colonized countries, working towards decolonization must mean something more than simply ending British-rule in Ireland. Decolonization must mean ending Irish participation in colonization itself. Ireland has often been recognized for its potential to be an important site of comparison in the struggle against colonialism (Said 2003). The global political system of British colonization, which caused nearly a millennia-of-suffering in Ireland, can arguably be traced as far back as the Anglo-Norman invasion in the 12th century (Cosgrove 2008). Examining the way that the Irish have survived and resisted against colonialism in Ireland may help the Irish diaspora to become resources for helping support international decolonization, but only if they are also willing to confront the legacies of Irish colonizers. I believe

that now that the dehumanization of the colonized is finally being confronted for the white supremacist mythology that it is, this era represents a crucial opportunity for the Irish to uncover those stories of the diaspora's history that go beyond the lack of empathy that is demonstrated when we celebrate the role of the Irish in colonization in other countries. It was precisely this point that David Lloyd re-iterated in 1999, when he wrote that the Irish have an opportunity to learn from their experiences, and to show real allieship with people of colour, both as the diaspora encountering colonial oppression of others outside of Ireland, and in Ireland where racism and membership in "Fortress Europe" offers to once again allow the Irish to invoke their white privilege (107). In reflecting on the histories and arguments laid out in this article, I hope that members of the Irish diaspora will join those of us asking the questions posed by this special issue of *Studi Irlandesi*: *Whose Homelands?* We have much to gain through asking ourselves whose homelands we are on; whose homelands we are connected to; and whose homelands we are supporting. In asking these types of questions, with an aim to extending to other nations struggling with colonialism the same empathy that some of us feel for our relatives and ancestors who live(d) in Ireland, I believe we can finally piece together where the Irish diaspora fits into the global project of decolonization. To do so, we must go beyond the white-washing of the diaspora's history that normalizes and celebrates white-Irish advancement through entrenchment in colonial occupations. For members of the Irish diaspora who live on occupied Indigenous land, this means taking on the work of prioritizing being responsible guests of our host-nations (Koleszar-Green 2019). Finally, and perhaps most importantly, if we can build on our ancestors' wisdom, and draw on our experiences as a diasporic nation, I believe we have the potential to become agents of the type of international accountability that will bring an end to the colonial era.

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The Irish in France: Assessing Changes in the Profile of Irish Emigrants in France Over the Last 30 Years

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Abstract:

The "Irish in France Research Project" was set up to fill the gap in the knowledge regarding Irish people living in France. This article will compare the data from this project with the principle research study available on Irish people living in Paris carried out by Piaras MacÉinrí in the late 1980s and will evaluate the key changes in the make-up of this migrant group since this time. MacÉinrí concluded that the Irish in Paris were a community in transition and that an Irish presence would develop and grow. He posited that Irish emigration to France would become the norm rather than the exception. This article will assess just how this migration movement has evolved in the last 30 years and if these changes are indeed in line with MacÉinrí's predictions.

Keywords: Diaspora, Diaspora strategy, Emigration, European continent, Irish in France

1. Introduction

Research studies focusing on contemporary Irish emigration to France have been very limited and this migrant movement has remained relatively invisible in the study of Ireland's global diaspora. Irish emigration to France has always been on a vastly smaller scale to that of Irish migration to America and Britain for example. The Task Force report on Ireland and the Irish abroad, published by the Irish Minister of Foreign Affairs in August 2002, included just one paragraph on this population movement (Walter, Gray, Almeida-Dowling 2002, 93). The authors of the report noted that despite the close connections between the continent and Ireland down the centuries, emigration to European destinations for employment reasons was a relatively recent phenomenon.

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The report mentioned one of the main qualitative studies available on the Irish in France, but particularly Paris, which was carried out by Piaras MacÉinrí in the late 1980s when 132 Irish people were interviewed for a 49-question survey (MacÉinrí 1989, 65). Apart from this notable exception, studies on this emigrant group have been minimal in the contemporary period.

Research on the Irish in Europe has tended to be more historical in nature ranging primarily from the medieval period up to the 19th century. Some examples would include Chambers 2018; Flechner and Meeder 2017; O'Ciosáin 2001; O'Connor and Lyons 2001 2006. Studies on Irish emigrants on the continent in the last 30 years are scarcer, Kockel 1993, MacÉinrí 1989, 1991 are just some examples. Emigration to English-speaking destination countries, such as the USA, the UK or Australia, is much more documented and researched: Miller 1985; Almeida-Dowling 1992, 2001; Harman Akenson 1993; Corcoran 1993; Ignatiev 1995; Hickman 1997; Walter 1997, 2001, 2002; Mac Laughlin 1997; MacRaild 1999; Bielenberg 2000; Kenny 2000; Delaney 2000, 2007; Gray 2002, 2004; Fitzgerald and Lambkin 2008; Malcolm and Hall 2018; O'Keeffe-Vigneron 2003, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, and many others.

Irish emigration to the European continent in the most recent period has not generated the same level of interest, perhaps because European countries have not attracted Irish emigrants in the same numbers as the English-speaking destinations but also because it is extremely difficult to obtain reliable statistics on the Irish based on the continent. There is no legal requirement for Irish people living overseas to register with their local Embassy, nor are there any formal exit procedures at Irish airports and ports which would record the number of Irish people leaving Ireland to live on mainland Europe. In addition, the Irish census does not give a detailed breakdown of the European countries where emigrants go, rather people leaving Ireland for Europe are amalgamated under an EU15 (EU countries up to enlargement in 2004 and excluding the UK) or EU28 states (the states integrated into the EU after enlargement in 2004).

Towards the end of the 1990s, Irish embassies compiled some useful statistics as to the population of Irish emigrants living on the European continent (Harvey 1999, 21). These statistics showed that the largest Irish-born populations were in France (16,000), Germany (16,000), followed by Belgium (10,000) and Spain (8,000) with smaller numbers to be found in the Netherlands and Italy (Harvey 1999, 21). Today, the Irish Embassy in Paris estimates a population of approximately 25,000 Irish people living in France but it is difficult to prove the accuracy of this number. In addition, apart from a very identifiable presence of Irish people in Paris, other Irish citizens are spread out all over France making it difficult for the researcher to establish a representative sample.

The late 1980s was a time of increased emigration from Ireland (Mac Laughlin 2000). The growing presence of an Irish population in Paris led

MacÉinrí to carry out his study on this population group. Britain was still the most popular destination of Irish emigrants in the 1980s. Some 70% of all emigrants went there, the majority of them going to London. The US and Canada accounted for just under 20% of emigrants and the European Community accounted for less than 6% (Mac Laughlin 2000, 326). European Community countries were however considered to be offering new possibilities and destinations for Irish people. The creation of the Single European Market (1993) with one of its four freedoms being the free movement of persons would make it easier for European citizens to settle and work in another member country. It was also a time when these Irish migrants were referred to as "new wave" migrants (Mac Laughlin 1997). They were considered to be generally more educated and better qualified than those who had gone before even though this was not true for all those leaving Ireland. These educated migrants would supposedly rise to the challenges of life in a foreign non-English speaking country, find employment in sectors demanding high qualifications and settle in easier than previous generations of Irish migrants.

In his research in 1989, MacÉinrí sought to assess the profile of the Irish in Paris in the context of this "new wave" migration and to establish whether this population group was in fact atypical of other Irish emigrant groups. He concluded that the Irish in Paris were a community in transition and that an Irish presence would develop and grow in the future. He posited that Irish emigration to France would become the norm rather than the exception.

This article aims to establish how right MacÉinrí was in his predictions and whether France as a country has indeed become a destination of choice, a "normal" host country for Irish emigrants. In other words, taking the example of the Irish in France, has the creation of the Single Market resulted in an opening up of the European job market where European citizens move freely to find employment and live their lives without encountering many obstacles?

Firstly, the profile of Irish emigrants in Paris in 1989 will be discussed to assess what type of Irish person was moving to France at this time (MacÉinrí 1989, 1991). Then, data from the "Irish in France Research Project" (2018) will be examined and finally comparisons will be made with MacÉinrí's findings to evaluate what has changed but also what has remained the same over the last 30 years and to examine if France has indeed become a viable option for Irish people.

2.1 The Irish in Paris in 1989

> The persistence of such strongly established patterns of emigration as those demonstrated by the links between the west of Ireland and certain American cities is striking evidence of the fact that the great bulk of emigrants will opt, all else being equal, for going from the familiar to the familiar. Emigration as a wrenching process of social dislocation is mitigated for the individual by the existence of a wide variety of informal social networks, so that some emigrants, in a sense, never leave home. (MacÉinrí 1989, 58)

The above quotation is taken from MacÉinrí's article on the Irish in Paris published in 1989, 30 years ago, and refers to the persistent patterns in Irish migration towards the "familiar" destinations for Irish emigrants such as America. Indeed, chain migration has often led migrants to the same destinations as their predecessors where Irish communities are already settled and where "finding their feet" in a foreign country may not seem so daunting. In addition, emigrating to an English-speaking destination reduces one of the key obstacles to gaining employment in the host country, that of being able to speak the local language.

That being said, MacÉinrí noticed in his study a change in the profile of the Irish emigrant in the late 1980s as being well-educated and having a new self-confidence which previous generations had lacked. He noted that after 16 years membership of the EC, continental Europe was gaining in popularity as a possible destination for Irish people.

2.2 The Survey

In the late 1980s there was an estimated 6,000 Irish people living in Paris (63). MacÉinrí carried out a survey with a team of interviewers from various nationalities. 132 Irish people were interviewed for a 49 question survey, 82 of them women and 50 men.

The survey was divided into three main sections:

a) The background of each respondent was examined by sex, region, age, education and social background;

b) The reasons why the respondents left Ireland (the "push" factors) and the particular reasons which led the respondents to choose France as a destination (the "pull" factors) were analysed;

c) The respondents' experience of France, their occupation, earnings, accommodation issues, integration into French society and social life were studied. Administrative, social and legal challenges were also examined.

It should be noted that MacÉinrí outlined the difficulty of conducting a scientifically random method of selection since there was no way of establishing the total size of the Irish community in Paris. Only those who had some kind of contact, however informal, with other Irish people, could easily be located. However, the interviewers endeavoured to interview a selection of Irish people which was as representative as possible. The survey concentrated on the social occasions and places where the broadest section of Irish people were likely to come together - pubs, a traditional music concert and religious occasions (65).

2.3 The Profile of Irish Emigrants in Paris in 1989

The survey showed the presence of more women (62 per cent of respondents) than men (66). The majority of the sample were in the younger age group; 49 per cent of those surveyed were under 25 and 69 per cent were under 30 (66). Very few men were under 20 but 16 per cent of women respondents were in this age group (66). It was revealed that more women had completed French, often to a higher level, which explained in part the higher number of females in the sample. It is evidently easier to access employment if the language of the host country is spoken. However, the job opportunities in Paris at this time were of specific kinds and there was a concentration of employment in the secretarial sector and as *au pairs*.

Dublin and its surrounding area were home to 40 per cent of the respondents and 69 per cent described themselves as being from an urban background (66). A comparatively large percentage of women (12 per cent) came from the Cork area. Another interesting finding was the relative absence of men from western seaboard counties, traditionally the areas of highest emigration. It was speculated that the American connection was strong in these areas and more male emigrants were attracted to the relatively well-paid jobs in New York at that time. The overall regional breakdown was as follows: Dublin 40 per cent, rest of Leinster 13.6 per cent, Munster 24.2 per cent, Connacht 11.4 per cent, Ulster (3 counties) 4 per cent and Ulster (6 counties) 6 per cent (66).

The Irish in Paris showed non-typical characteristics in relation to education compared to other Irish migration flows: 76 per cent of those surveyed had a post-secondary education ranging from a one-year secretarial course to a university-level qualification (67). Nearly 70 per cent of men had a university-level qualification with only 51 per cent of females (67).

While these high-level type of qualifications were not typical of the traditional Irish emigrant profile, the situation had been changing in the 1980s as Irish education policy and investment was leading to higher-level qualifications for Irish people.

Teaching was a profession that was highlighted in MacÉinrí's survey. Thirty-five per cent of those surveyed had some kind of teaching qualification with two categories standing out: TEFL and post-primary teaching. TEFL is a certificate that those with no formal teaching qualifications can access quite easily and it enabled people to enter the French labour market finding teaching posts most probably in the private language schools sector.

The overwhelming majority of MacÉinrí's sample (84 per cent) had some knowledge of French before arriving in France (68). This was not surprising

as French was one of the most common languages to be taught at secondary schools. There was however a gender difference, 92 per cent of women and 72 per cent of men had some knowledge of French (68). However, the real difference was between those who had some basic knowledge of French and those who studied it to a higher level whether it be at university or a similar institution or at the *Alliance Française*. 57 per cent of women had studied French at a higher level compared to only 22 per cent of men (68).

These statistics reflected a certain bias in the Irish educational system where more girls studied languages than boys. Interestingly, slightly more than half of those interviewed were positive about how French was taught in school. It must be added though that a very small number of women had no French before coming to France whereas 22 per cent of men surveyed were in this position.

If the "push-factors" are taken first, MacÉinrí discovered that most of his sample were not forced abroad because of extreme economic necessity. Only 21 per cent said they were unemployed at the time they left Ireland (70). Those who had had jobs fell into various categories- badly paid jobs in Ireland or were in fear of redundancy. However, the sample also showed that not all jobs being done by Irish people were "dead-end" work.

Some of the sample had never worked in Ireland but had moved to France directly after completing their education, to work or continue their studies. Another group had been living in other countries such as Britain prior to moving to France.

The sample showed that the large majority of those interviewed came to France on their own. Some did come with friends and some were married couples but the profile was mostly that of a young age-group for the Irish in Paris.

So why did this sample choose France as opposed to another destination? It was discovered that the single most common reason was a prior job offer. Nearly one third of all women and a quarter of all men surveyed were in this position (70).

Other reasons:

- spoke French and thought they could find work (19 per cent)
- marriage or some other long-term relationship (12 per cent)
- because of a posting to France from some other country (7 per cent)
- or even though non-French speaking they thought they would find work (7 per cent)
- miscellaneous reasons (18 per cent). (70)

Those who answered "miscellaneous" usually gave some extra information:

- the desire to travel
- the desire to get away from Ireland

- the desire to learn another language and culture
- a long-term personal relationship (the number of men who came to France because of a long-term relationship was bigger than the number of women who came for the same reason: 20 per cent to 7 per cent). (71)

At the time of MacÉinrí's survey a clear progression in the arrival of Irish people to Paris was in progress; 39 per cent of all those surveyed had arrived less than a year before; 29 per cent came from 1-4 years previously; 23 per cent came to France from between 4 and 15 years and only 9 per cent came before that time (71). This confirmed the trend that Irish emigration in the 1980s really accelerated from 1984 onwards and the survey reflected this tendency since nearly 70 per cent of those surveyed had come during this period (71). Also the number of women arriving seemed to be increasing with 44 per cent of all women surveyed having arrived less than one year before the study was carried out (71).

MacÉinrí concluded that the knowledge that an Irish community in Paris existed provided an incentive for other Irish emigrants to choose Paris as a possible destination. He put forward the figure of a possible Irish population in Paris of 15,000-20,000 by the mid-1990s.

Women seemed to find work easier than men but it was restricted to a narrow range of sectors; almost 73 per cent were working as teachers, nurses, secretaries or au-pairs (72). Teaching was an important feature, especially for women, 29 per cent of those surveyed were teaching and two-thirds of them were women (73). Nine per cent were *au-pairs* (73). Other women were working in a range of graduate-level administrative and unskilled jobs, such as fast-food outlets. None of the women in the survey were working in sales, marketing and management, whereas an important minority of men were doing this kind of work. Men were doing a wider range of tasks, including sectors such as engineering, information technology, bar and restaurant work and accountancy.

The survey noted a broadening of the base concerning employment for the Irish in Paris with the traditional dominance of teaching and *au-pair* work giving way to a far more varied picture although women were still concentrated in specific categories.

2.4 MacÉinrí's Conclusions

MacÉinrí concluded that the Paris Irish were a *community in transition.* They were no longer a small untypical group. The vast majority were doing well at an even broader range of jobs and the number of Irish people was increasing. The Paris Irish came from a more privileged background with an higher than average education but the trend was towards a broad-

ening of the base. Job opportunities largely depended on specific skills and skilled job opportunities in areas such as bilingual secretarial work, information technology, teaching, nursing, architecture, some branches of engineering, marketing and management were available. The Paris Irish appeared to integrate with remarkable rapidity into their new environment; the majority spoke French, had French-speaking friends, were familiar with French-language media and culture and in many cases intended to remain in France. French people were very well disposed towards the Irish which obviously helped.

A conscious sense of community among Irish emigrants was observed and this was one way that the Paris Irish resembled Irish emigrants in other destinations through the way they organised themselves and the informal networks which grew up and helped people to settle in.

The increased movement of Irish emigrants towards the European continent in the 1980s was seen as the beginning of a trend that would gain importance in the years that followed. The possibilities offered by the free movement of people across the European Union were expected to encourage European citizens to take advantage of employment and life opportunities in other member states. Taking the Irish in France as an example and analysing the data from "The Irish in France Research Project" (2018) the evolution since MacÉinrí's study will now be examined.

3. Irish in France Research Project: Methodology

"The Irish in France Research Project" was started by this author 5 years ago to fill the research gap which has existed since MacÉinrí's study. In order to gather the necessary statistical data to create the required profile of Irish people living in France today, an internet site was created for "The Irish in France Research Project" where an on-line questionnaire could be filled in by respondents. The questionnaire was aimed at two cohorts: Irish emigrants who left prior to 1995 and those who left after.

The questionnaire contained 53 questions and was modelled to some extent on the one used by MacÉinrí and his team for the Émigré project, *Irish Emigration in an Age of Austerity* (Glynn, Kelly, MacÉinrí 2013). The questions within the survey took the form of boxes to be checked. However, space was provided for respondents to elaborate on a number of central themes thus generating some qualitative data. Their comments have provided invaluable insight into life in France for Irish people.

The major obstacle of this project was finding Irish emigrants to fill in the on-line questionnaire. In addition, there was no reliable way to know where Irish people were based in France. Therefore, it was problematic to establish a representative sampling frame for this migrant group. Apart from

a very visible presence of a large Irish population in Paris, other regions in France do not stand out as much as Paris as "centres" for Irish emigrants.

With the financial assistance of the *Emigrant Support Programme* (ESP) run the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Dublin, a logo was created and flyers and posters were printed to publicise the project. The ESP funding covered postage costs to send these flyers and posters all over France. Irish pubs were targeted and the chain of shops called *Comptoirs Irlandais,* which sells a range of Irish goods and products, were also chosen. The flyers and posters were sent to 75 Irish pubs and 44 *Comptoirs Irlandais*.

Irish people tend to get together for sporting occasions, such as the 6 Nations for example, Irish pubs can be an obvious location to watch these types of sporting events. In addition, even if an Irish person does not necessarily seek out other Irish people or is not a big fan of sport, they could be attracted by products consumed in Ireland but difficult to find in France. However, such an approach may exclude those Irish emigrants who have purposefully chosen not to associate with other Irish people or those who may not have the choice and may not live near other Irish emigrants. This strategy had limited success however and by 2017 only about 80 people had completed the survey.

The situation changed positively in 2017 with the creation of the "Irish in France Association" whose aim is to bring together the Irish in France and create a forum for exchange among Irish emigrants:

> The Irish in France Association was founded on the 1st of February 2017. The aim of the association is to create a structure for the benefit of the Irish community in France, run by the Irish community in France. It will create and support community activities and initiatives that foster a vibrant sense of Irish community and identity, and allow the voices of the Irish in France to be heard within the worldwide community known as the Global Irish. (<http://www.irishinfrance.org/>)

Through the help of the Irish in France committee, publicity for the project was carried out via the association's Facebook page and twitter account. The association organised the first St. Patrick's day parade in March 2018 and flyers were distributed at this event. The Irish Embassy in Paris also played a key role in forwarding information on the project to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade which promoted the research through its "Global Irish" internet site and twitter page. In addition, a specific Facebook page and twitter account for the project were created.

Consequently, information about the study was picked up and retweeted by various groups and organisations which significantly helped the response rate; from 80 people to 207 people.

4. Irish Emigrants in France today

4.1 Background

The sample analysed here are all emigrants who left Ireland after 1995 when the Single Market was in place and at a time of rapid change in Irish society during and after the Celtic Tiger boom. Of the 207 people who answered the questionnaire, there was almost an equal number of men and women- 51.2 per cent male and 48.8 per cent female.

61 per cent of the sample came from urban areas, 26.1 per cent from a city, 18.8 per cent from a town and 16.4 per cent from a suburb (a total of 61.3 per cent) whilst 38.6 per cent came from the country or a rural village. Respondents were therefore mainly from urban areas in Ireland. Participants came from all over Ireland. The breakdown was as follows:

- Ulster: 28 respondents
- Leinster: 107 respondents (64 from Dublin)
- Munster: 48 respondents (23 from Cork)
- Connacht: 24 respondents.

The highest number of participants came from Leinster with 64 people from Dublin which is hardly surprising being the capital of Ireland[1]. The province of Munster came second with 48 respondents with nearly half from Cork (23 people). The lowest numbers came from Ulster (28 respondents) with Connacht the least represented with just 24 people completing the questionnaire making France a less popular destination for Irish people from this province, emigration from Connacht being traditionally associated with emigration to America.

The sample was representative of different age groups. Nearly one-third of emigrants were in the 18-24 year old age group (31 per cent) when they had arrived in France which is not surprising as it is traditionally the younger age groups, generally without family obligations, who are free to move as they wish. The 25-29 year old category represented 22 per cent of the sample which makes a total of 53 per cent in the under 30 age group. However, 28 per cent of emigrants were in the 30-35 year old age group who are generally at a different stage in their lives where settling down and having a family might be envisaged. 19 per cent were over 35 years old. For a proportion of the respondents, France had not been their first destination. 42 per cent had lived in another country before moving to France with the majority having lived in the UK.

[1] About 1.2 million people live in Co. Dublin today. <http://worldpopulationreview.com/world-cities/dublin-population/> (05/2019).

4.2 Leaving and settling

During the worst of the economic recession in Ireland (between 2006 and 2012), 37 per cent of respondents had arrived in France but interestingly 31 per cent had moved to France during the Celtic Tiger boom. This signifies that Irish people are not only influenced by a poor economic climate in Ireland in their decision to leave (their motivations will be discussed below). Since the onset of recovery in Ireland, the numbers arriving have fallen off, only 13 per cent of respondents arrived in France since 2012, Australia and the UK being the principle destinations for Irish emigrants at this time (Central Statistics Office, 28/08/2018).

120 participants or 58 per cent lived in Paris and its surrounding region (*Ile de France*). The rest of the sample (42 per cent) was spread out all over France which allows an analysis of Irish people who are not solely based in Paris as were those in MacÉinrí's project in the 1980s. The "pull" factors of employment and lifestyle opportunities in a large city such as Paris make it a highly attractive location for Irish emigrants. The region of *Nouvelle Aquitaine* and *Pays de la Loire* came second and third with 8 per cent of the sample respectively. *Bretagne* and *Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes* came fourth (6 per cent) and fifth (5 per cent). The west of France is well represented, the regions *Bretagne* (Brittany with its Celtic heritage, language and cultural links with Ireland makes it a region that attracts Irish people), *Pays-de-la-Loire* and *Nouvelle-Aquitaine* making up 22 per cent of the sample[2].

However, it should be taken into account that information about the project may not have reached Irish people to the same extent in some regions as in others, *Normandie*, *Grand Ouest* and *Bourgogne-Franche-Comté* being less represented.

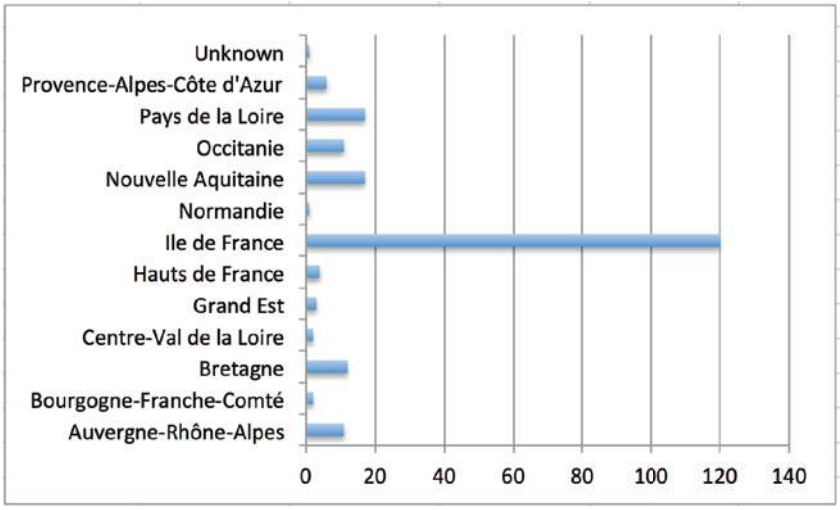

Fig. 1 – Number of respondents and region of settlement

[2] 1 per cent unknown.

When evoking their reasons for leaving Ireland, nearly 40 per cent of respondents ticked the box to "find employment" or to "gain work experience" and were influenced to some extent by events in Ireland and the situation of the Irish economy in their decision to leave. However, the economic situation in Ireland was not the only influence on the emigrant's decision. 41.1 per cent stated that this had had no influence ("Not at all"). 16.4 per cent stated that it had "Not a lot" of influence. This makes a total of 57.5 per cent of Irish emigrants to France who were not that influenced by the economic situation in Ireland. Shuttleworth and Kockel (1990) have described this type of voluntary migration as "walkabout" emigration which leaves space for other rationale in the emigrant's decision to leave by not simply equating migration with economic necessity (for example, 16 per cent of the sample moved to France to "discover another culture", 4.3 per cent to "study", 3.8 per cent to "improve life" and 2.8 per cent to "travel").

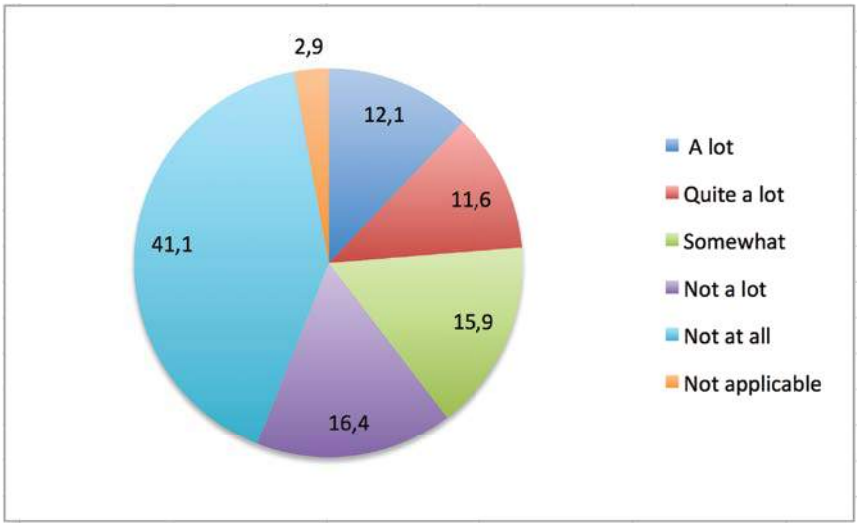

Fig. 2 – Influence of economic situation in Ireland on decision to leave

A relatively high percentage of Irish people (17 per cent) who settled in France for "love" shows a certain *entente* between Irish and French people. King (2002, 99) has called this "love migration" and holds that the libidinal factor in migration should not be under-estimated. The increased expansion of linguistic competence for young people (8.3 per cent of this sample went to France to "improve language skills"), mass travel, study abroad (Erasmus encounters) and tourism have greatly increased this "transnational intimacy" and perhaps as far as migration factors are concerned "love conquers all" (King 2002, 99).

The majority of the sample (64.7 per cent) moved to France alone but a significant minority (23.7 per cent) left with a partner or spouse. Others left with- a partner or spouse and children; friends; or family (parents, brothers, sisters … etc.). Only 37.7 per cent of the sample did not know anyone before arriving. A large majority (62.3 per cent) were therefore not moving into the unknown alone. Being accompanied, especially if an emigrant is settling down with a national of the host country, can facilitate the whole emigration process and makes the administrative procedures involved in a move to a foreign country (especially France!) easier.

Nearly 43 per cent of respondents were married, 7.2 per cent in a civil union and nearly 22 per cent were in a relationship. Only 23.2 per cent were single and had never been married. The remaining 5.4 per cent were divorced, separated or widowed. This data is worthy of note and would suggest a more settled migrant group where issues around security of employment, housing, and bringing up children are likely to be dominant themes.

Indeed, over half of the sample had children and were thus bringing up families in France. Many people were raising their children in a predominantly bi-cultural environment, only 7.7 per cent were married to an Irish person. Nearly 33 per cent were married to a French citizen with the rest of the sample married to various nationalities. Those cited the most were English, Welsh, German, Italian, Dutch, Tunisian, Venezuelan, Danish, Chinese, Canadian, Australian and American. Therefore the large majority of Irish people who were married had chosen non-Irish partners.

4.3 Education and employment

The education level of these Irish migrants reveals a highly qualified emigrant group. 38.6 per cent held a Bachelor's degree, 28 per cent had qualified with a Master's degree and 8.7 per cent with a postgraduate diploma. This makes a total of 36.7 per cent with a postgraduate qualification (or 75.3 per cent having completed a university education). This reflects the increased access to third-level studies for Irish young people but also reveals that France as a destination country still attracts those with high level qualifications.

The level of employment of Irish emigrants was very positive. Over 77 per cent of Irish people were in full-time employment in France and only 5.3 per cent were unemployed. Over half of the sample (57 per cent) were employed with a permanent contract with 9.7 per cent with a fixed term contract. This shows a certain stability of employment for over half the sample. Some people were freelancers, auto-entrepreneurs or did not have a work contract without specifying why this was so.

Research on skilled and professional Irish migrants has been carried out since the 1980s (Shuttleworth 1991; Hanlon 1992; Mac Laughlin 2000) and the migrant flows of highly skilled individuals would not be considered as

"new" today. According to King (2002, 98), the movement of skilled people was at the centre of attempts to integrate Europe through the free movement of people, goods, services and capital within the EU. The predominantly highly-qualified profile of these Irish emigrants in France appears to validate King's hypothesis as the less educated and less skilled Irish migrants are not represented in any significant way.

For instance, in the "Current Irish Emigration and Return" (Émigré) project (2013), 17 per cent of Irish emigrants in this study had worked in the construction sector before leaving Ireland (Glynn, Tomás, MacÉinrí 2013, 39). It would seem that France as a destination country does not attract the lower qualified emigrants in this important employment sector for Irish people. France does not seem to offer the same job openings in the construction sector as other host countries. However, it must also be taken into account that Irish people looking for employment in this area would be in competition with other migrant groups traditionally found in this type of employment in France such as Portuguese, Moroccan, Algerian and Tunisian workers (Martini, 2006).

The Irish in France were principally employed in:

- Business and Management: (25 per cent)[3]
- Teaching: (13.2 per cent)
- Information Technology: (9.04 per cent)
- Communications and Marketing: (6.3 per cent)
- Hospitality Industry (6.3 per cent) (Irish people are often employed as barmen and barwomen in the many Irish pubs all around France).

Sector of employment	Number of respondents
Accountancy	1
Advertising/Media	2
Archaelogy	1
Architecture	6
Arts (writer, musician, artist, photographer)	5
Banking	2
Bar/food industry	12
Business and management	47
Civil service	4

[3] The percentage of those working.

Communications and Marketing	12
Documentation	1
Education (other than teaching)	5
Engineering	5
Events Management	1
Financial sector	1
Cabin crew	1
Childminding (au pair/nanny)	2
Hotel Industry (b+b..)	1
Information Technology	17
Journalism	6
Nursing	3
PA/secretarial work	5
Psychology	1
Retail	1
Teaching	25
Telecommunications	2
Tourism	4
Translating	5
Waitering	1
Wine sector	1
Miscellaneous	8

Table 1 – Sector of employment

There are very few health care professionals in the sample as compared to the medical migration of Irish people to the UK, Australia, the USA, New Zealand or Canada. Approximately 3798 doctors migrated from Ireland to these five key destination countries between 2008 and 2014. Those doctors who have trained or practised in Ireland are native or fluent English speakers, which makes them more sought after as migrants to English-speaking destination countries (Humphries, Crowe, McDermott 2017). Emigration to non-English speaking countries can be more problematic and may explain why the medical profession is under-represented among Irish emigrants in France. The procedure for the recognition of Irish qualifications or the work or pay conditions in France may also discourage future Irish emigrants.

English-language teaching and teaching in general was a popular profession for Irish people. However, those who wish to teach in schools in permanent employment as civil servants in France would have to complete and pass the very demanding French "*concours*" or competitive exam (the *CAPES* or *Agrégation*). However, those wishing to teach in the private sector, in language schools for instance, would have easier access to this profession through on-site training or TEFL qualifications.

A large majority of the Irish people working, 85.5 per cent, agreed that the work they were doing corresponded with their qualifications and skills. Respondents were globally very satisfied that their qualifications were being put to good use in the job market and that they were not being "underemployed" for the level of their studies or training. This satisfaction can avoid the emigrant feeling that they are being exploited or not reaching their full potential in their respective professions in the foreign country they have decided to settle in. The respondents who were in employment were asked whether they were satisfied or not with the salary they were earning in France. Nearly 58 per cent of the were satisfied with their salary and only 21.7 per cent expressed dissatisfaction. The remaining 20.3 per cent did not give their opinion.

Irish membership of the EU and the mutual recognition of qualifications within the EU[4] has undoubtedly helped Irish people find work in their professions even though obstacles can still be encountered in some areas[5]. Nevertheless, 73.9 per cent of participants estimated that their qualifications had been recognised in the job market in France.

On a scale of 1-10 (1 being the least satisfied and 10 being the most satisfied), respondents were asked to assess their level of satisfaction with their work in France. There was a high level of job satisfaction with nearly 55 per cent of the sample ticking from 8-10 with only 14.5 per cent ticking from 1-5 the lowest levels. Emigrants appear to be generally happier with the jobs they are doing in their host country than if they had remained in Ireland. Working in a job that is in line with a person's qualifications, for a salary that they are satisfied with, makes people feel more positive about their working life.

[4] The French introduced the "Licence-Master-Doctorat" reform in 2007 to align French qualifications with European norms.

[5] Some job sectors can encounter problems on this level: "The Professional Qualifications Directive (2005/36/EC) aimed to clarify, simplify and modernise the existing directives, and to bring together the regulated professions of doctors, dentists, nurses, veterinary surgeons, midwives, pharmacists and architects in one legislative text. This directive specifies, among many other things, how the "host" Member States should recognise professional qualifications obtained in another ("home") Member State" (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/42/the-mutual-recognition-of-diplomas>, 05/2019).

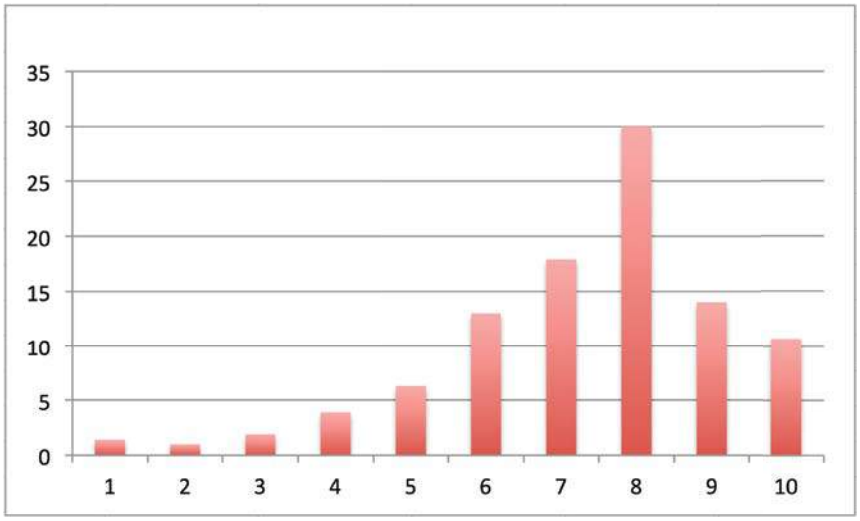

Fig. 3 – Job satisfaction from 1-10 in %

4.4 Language

Irish people moving to France are in a less comfortable position than those emigrants moving to English-speaking destinations. Nearly 77 per cent of the sample had learnt French prior to departure[6]. In 2016, nearly 26,000 students or 45 per cent of Leaving Certificate students took the French leaving certificate exam out of a total of nearly 57,000 students (*ibidem*).

42.5 per cent of the sample described their French as "fluent" (14.5 per cent) or a "good level" (28 per cent). 18.4 per cent stated their French level was "average" and 30 per cent stated it was "quite weak". Therefore, 48.4 per cent would not consider their French as being extremely good. The mastery of the host country's language facilitates the integration of an emigrant and on the contrary, difficulties with this language can render life problematic and pose obstacles on a professional and personal level.

Some Irish people left comments following this question and their remarks were quite revealing. Emigrants having an inadequate level in written or spoken French can encounter barriers to advancement at work, "Not having adequate French writing skills has totally limited any possibility for progression in my job in terms of administration tasks and also lim-

[6] *Irish Examiner,* 17 August 2016, <http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/leaving-cert-results-take-up-of-honours-irish-rises-in-2016-416211.html> (05/2019) German-7,627; Spanish-6,500; Italian-512.

its the possibility of doing any other work except English language based work" (female, 50); "Not having the spoken language to a high level has been a disadvantage in terms of credibility. Not having the language to a high level on a written basis has been a barrier to promotion and progression" (female, 50).

Not completely mastering a language can also be difficult during moments of pressure at work or in a stressful situation for example when it is important for a person to make themselves understood quickly, "Every day is a school day. In moments of pressure, communicating in a second language is a challenge one can do without" (male, 42). "In certain situations, I still feel limited in my ability to get my point across (differences of opinion in stressful situations). I would like to sound more French" (male, 32). Even though Irish people in Britain, America or Australia cannot hide the fact that they are Irish when they speak, they will still be able to make themselves understood as they are living and working in their native language. By not reaching a high level in a foreign language that allows a migrant to compete on the same level as host country nationals, emigrants can be prevented from reaching their full potential in their professional lives and from being awarded promotions in certain cases.

4.5 Integration

The Irish people in this study had a high level of integration in French society, for example, 76.3 per cent of the sample had close French friends. Nearly 80 per cent considered that they had successfully integrated in France but a substantial minority (20.8 per cent) did not feel this way.

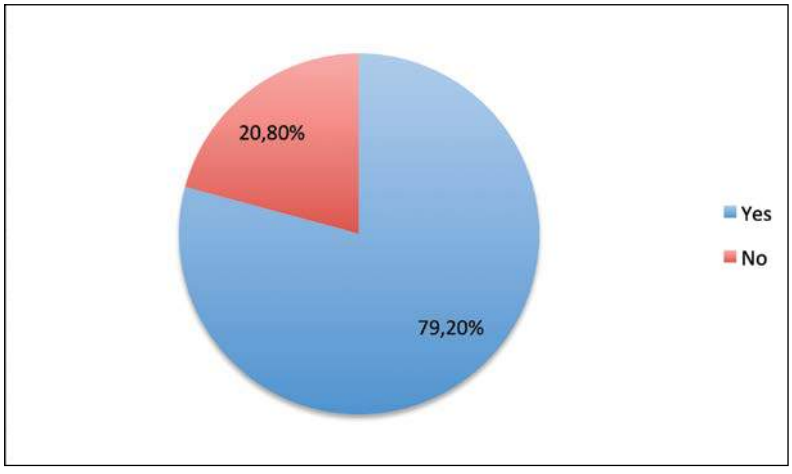

Fig. 4 – Integration

The respondents were asked whether they felt they "belonged" in France. At the beginning the question on the questionnaire was formulated as follows, "Do you feel you "belong" in France?". After several comments made by Irish people[7] who had filled in the questionnaire, the author added the qualifying remark, "belong- *in the sense that you are in the right place for you"*. 63.3 per cent agreed that France was the right place for them but nearly 28 per cent replied "No" and 9.2 per cent did not know.

Some of those who had spent a long period in France felt that they did not belong in Ireland anymore, they had become part of a community abroad, were comfortable and settled: "Almost 20 years since I arrived here, that's half of my life, I don't feel I belong in Ireland anymore, everything I know and have is here" (male, 43); "I feel I am part of the community here, I can not see myself returning to Ireland at all" (female, 57); "It's not a sense of "belonging" as in I feel French...I belong to the Irish community and that will never change... It's more like a feeling that I've found a place where I feel settled, comfortable... just part of the puzzle but it took a while to reach this point" (female, 35).

Bringing up children in France, having a French partner and close French friends can help people find their place and integrate better into French society, "I have developed some very close French friends, since making the move. My partner is French, I have a French social security number" (male 31); "We are very happy with our move to France. Our son was born in France and this is where we see our future. We have made some French friends but our work schedule and language limitations hold us back a little from making very good or close French friends. Our son is starting pre-school in September and we are hopeful that this will help us to integrate further" (female, 46); Another person said, "I belong here only in as much as my children were born here and I have many dear friends who I would never have met if I hadn't moved here. But whether I am likely to spend the rest of my life here - that I doubt. Still it is as good a base as any and certainly I would feel more at home here in many ways than I would in Ireland" (male, 51); "I have become a fluent French speaker, I have a French family, I deal with French clients every day, I love French politics, my home is here!" (male, 49).

However, other people found themselves caught between Ireland and France, neither belonging here nor there, one person described this as a sort of cultural limbo: "After 13 years in Paris, I have lost some of my connection with Ireland, while still remaining a foreigner here, although successfully integrated into French life. A kind of cultural limbo..." (male, 31); Another person said, "I feel like I neither belong in Ireland nor in France. However, I have integrated well here, thanks to my own efforts to do so" (female, 28).

[7] The word "belong" was not specific enough for some participants.

Nevertheless, several respondents were not very positive about French people who did not allow them to feel particularly welcome and had a negative opinion of the French "*façon d'*être":

> Not to be a smart ass but does anyone belong anywhere? And especially in France. Let's be honest here, the French are not the friendliest of people. They do not integrate or take the time to get to know people especially foreign ones with bad accents. I've made a few French friends but not many. I have a French boyfriend, that's enough. Having said that, I'm now in my 40's, I don't feel a need to completely 'belong' here. I have good friends, a job and a life. I think I'm doing well. However, compared to NY, this is a totally different experience. (Female, 49)

Another person was, "Having a hard time with French behaviour but I enjoy living in this beautiful country surrounded by my family and friends" (male, 49); One woman was highly critical of French people, "Beautiful country inhabited by self-centered, over-assisted, moaning citizens who have little concept of solidarity. They are overly rude and lack general good manners, politeness and general hospitality whether it be on the roads, in the park or in a restaurant…" (female, 50).

Despite the negative aspects of evoked by some migrants, Irish people expressed a high level of satisfaction with their lives in France. On a scale of 1-10 (1 being the lowest level and 10 being the highest), 84.6 per cent expressed great satisfaction (7-10 on the scale) with only 15.4 per cent ticking the boxes from 1-6.

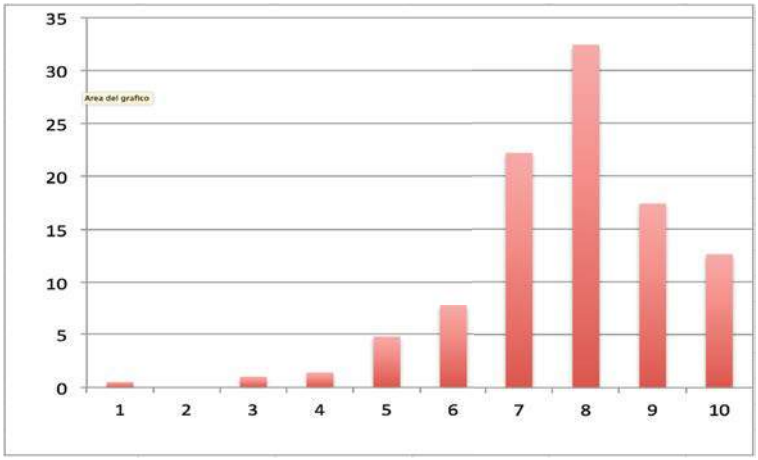

Fig. 5 – Satisfaction with life in France

A high proportion were also satisfied with the standard of living they had. Over 68 per cent rated their standard of living above 8 which is a high rate of overall satisfaction with only 4.3 per cent (from 1-5) expressing some dissatisfaction.

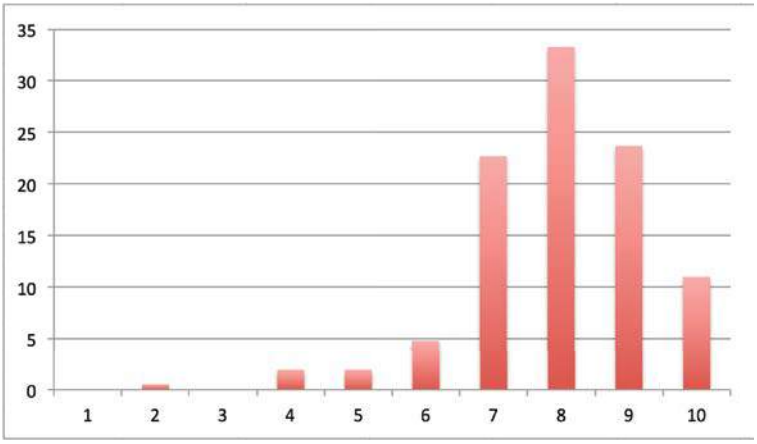

Fig. 6 – Standard of living in France

When asked how they thought French people saw Irish people, whether being Irish was something "positive" or "negative", 100 per cent of the sample ticked the "positive" box. There is therefore unanimous agreement that possessing an Irish identity in France is not something to hide but is seen as being very positive. It is reasonable to say that it would be extremely difficult to obtain the same result for Irish emigrants in other Irish emigrant destinations where anti-Irish sentiment has often been expressed (Hickman, Walter 1997; Calnan 2017). This positive view of Ireland and Irish people gives emigrants a head start in their lives in France. Being considered in a positive way by the host country greatly facilitates the integration process on every level.

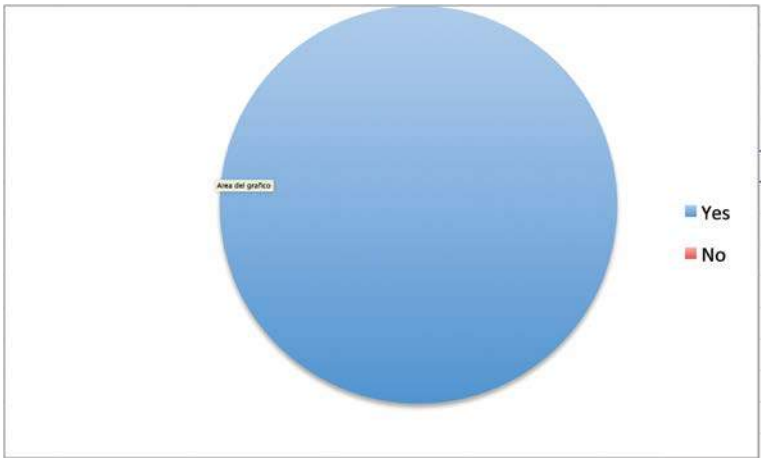

Fig. 7 – Is being Irish seen as something positive or negative by French people?

5. Comparisons

While making direct comparisons between MacÉinrí's study and the findings of the "Irish in France Research Project" are problematic – MacÉinrí concentrated his research on the Irish in Paris, the sample size is not the same, similar questions were asked but others were different – a comparison of both studies can still give an idea of the evolution of the profile of the Irish in France in the last 30 years. There are many similarities but also differences between the findings of both studies.

The emigrants in MacÉinrí's project were of a younger profile (69 per cent were under 30). In the more recent study, if the year of arrival is compared with the emigrants' age in 2018, 30 per cent of the participants are in their 30s today and nearly 40 per cent in their 40s. This makes up 70 per cent of the sample. This would suggest that a large majority of the sample has been living in France for a number of years as opposed to being recent arrivals. This calls into question the attractiveness of this destination for Irish migrants. The traditional English-speaking Irish emigrant destinations have not lost their appeal.

In both samples, emigrants were primarily from urban backgrounds, 69 per cent in 1989 and 61 per cent in 2018, with 40 and 30 per cent respectively from Dublin. The province of Connacht was the least represented in each study.

Throughout the years, Irish people have generally left alone and for many different reasons. Finding employment, while important for a many Irish people, was not the primary reason for them having made the move to France and responses were as varied as the people themselves.

France can offer another cultural context to that of other English-speaking countries and can enable people to improve language skills or even start a new language. Both studies showed that a large majority had some knowledge of French at various levels prior to leaving (84 per cent in 1989 and 77 per cent in 2018). The French language is taught widely in Ireland so it is not surprising that Irish people would have had some contact in the Irish education system with this language before emigrating.

Indeed, Irish people in France were and are a highly educated group. Third-level qualifications predominate and in general the work sectors where Irish people can be found demand high-level qualifications. In 1989, there was a concentration of people, mainly women, who were working as secretaries, nurses, *au-pairs* and teachers (35 per cent had some sort of teaching qualification). Men were to be found in a more broad range of occupations: engineering, IT, bar and restaurant work and accountancy. Thirty years later, there is a wider range of occupations, for example a high representation of professions in business and management with 22 per cent of the sample. Teaching is still a popular choice but *au-pair* work is much less present than 30 years ago. The medical profession is poorly represented in the most re-

cent study and more manual employment like in the building or construction industry are generally absent from both studies. While there has been a certain "broadening of the base" in the job sectors occupied by Irish people as MacÉinrí predicted, this has mostly been in the more qualified job areas. There is a still an under-representation of the more manual, unskilled jobs for Irish people based in France.

On the whole, Irish people integrate into French society with relative ease. Their knowledge of French is likely to help this even though some people had difficulties working in French. Nevertheless, the positive view of Ireland and its people in France and the personal relationships formed with French people have no doubt greatly contributed to this integration and feeling of "*bien être*". Indeed, Irish emigrants in France have a high level of job and life satisfaction in France.

At the time of MacÉinrí's research, it was thought that Irish migration to the European continent would evolve and increase with the development of the EC (and after the EU) and the increasing employment opportunities open to its members through the Single Market. However, migration to European member states for Irish emigrants has not come to rival the traditional destinations such as Britain or America.

King (2002) has noted that, "The shrinking of a borderless Europe is the privilege of a relatively small section of European society" and it would seem from the results of both studies of Irish emigrants in France in the last 30 years that indeed France is still largely a destination of the more privileged.

6. Conclusion

Researching Irish emigrants on the European continent today as compared to 30 years ago is much easier with the advent of the Internet and social media such as Twitter and Facebook. While more Irish people can be reached in this way, it is still difficult to establish a representative sample though and to generalise findings to all Irish emigrants in the country under study. Nevertheless, the paucity of information is such that any quantitative data which can be collected is much needed to give some idea of the profile of these emigrants and their lives in their host country.

While generally the feedback from those surveyed in the last few years paints a very optimistic picture of life in France, there was however a proportion of Irish people who were not so positive about their experiences in France. While statistics can give a certain amount of information, qualitative data, through interviews, can really complete the picture and allow the researcher to delve into the meaning behind the numbers.

Irish pubs along with associations and organisations promoting Irish culture or sport have existed for many years in France, for example, the *Association Irlandaise* of Paris for Irish music and dance was inaugurated in 1984

and the *Fédération de Football Gaélique* was created in 2004. More recently, in 2010, *NetworkIrlande* was set up to promote business and trade links between Irish people in France and with Ireland. However, it was not until 2017 that the "Irish in France" association came into being with the aim of bringing people together and creating a platform for giving advice and exchanging experience and ideas between Irish people. This association aims at fostering a sense of *community* between Irish emigrants based in France which perhaps was lacking in the past.

Irish emigrants in other locations have had access to these type of organisations for years (and actual buildings) where volunteers try and bring Irish people together (the New York Irish Centre or the London Irish Centre for instance) but such centres do not exist in France. The Irish Embassy in Paris has taken on an outreach role to some extent by trying to connect with Irish people and support initiatives between Irish emigrants themselves or by creating links with Ireland.

Ireland's biggest trading partner post-Brexit will soon no longer be a member of the EU and Ireland will inevitably seek a *rapprochement* with other EU members. France is the nearest EU country geographically speaking and the Irish government has already started thinking about its future relationship with this country in regard to trade and business but also in tourism, culture and the arts (Marlow 2017). A series of road shows in various cities in France were organised by the Irish Embassy in Paris in late 2018 (Lyon, Nice, Strasbourg, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Rennes, Paris) under its "Review of relations between Ireland and France" strategy to reach out and meet its diaspora on the ground to exchange ideas and experiences with Irish people (Irish Embassy, France, website).

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney, on a visit to the Irish Embassy in Paris in 2017, was quoted as saying, "As our friends and closest neighbours see through the decision they have made to leave the European Union, much to our regret and disappointment, the relationship between Ireland and France will become even stronger and more strategic than in the past" (Marlowe 2017). The Irish government is preparing for a new configuration in the post-Brexit EU.

Indeed, in 2018 Ireland became a member of the club of French-speaking countries (International Organisation of Francophonie (OIF)) as an observer. Ireland's European Affairs Minister, Helen McEntee, told the OIF that Ireland, "was looking beyond Brexit and developing new relationships within Europe and further afield". "With Brexit, given we'll be the only native English-speaking country in the EU, we need to place greater emphasis on languages," McEntee said, admitting that she herself did "not speak it as well as I should". She said that joining the OIF was also a way to "boost ties with France"(The Local 2018).

The relationship between Ireland and France is one that is going to take on much greater importance in the years to come. The positioning of its Irish

people "on the ground" with their experience and expertise has not gone unnoticed by an Irish government keen to ensure future markets, consolidate business links for Ireland and develop the "soft power" provided for by its diaspora in France. Looking at the profile of Irish emigrants in France today, the Irish government may just find what it is looking for.

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Miscellanea

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The Island of the Saints and the Homeland of the Martyrs: Monsignor O'Riordan, Father Hagan and the Boundaries of the Irish Nation (1906-1916)

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Abstract:

The priests Michael O'Riordan and John Hagan led the Pontifical Irish College in Rome in the early decades of the twentieth century. At a crucial time for the birth of the Irish State, they promoted the demands of the Irish Church to the Vatican and participated actively in the debate on the political events of their nation. Thanks to the study of the writings they published in Italy from 1906 to 1916, we can determine what their ideas on the Irish homeland were, and why these ideas changed over the years. Their thoughts were not always the same, but the two Irishmen finally elaborated a more common national vision after the trauma of the Great War and a resounding episode as the 1916 Easter Rising.

Keywords: Easter Rising, Irish College Rome, John Hagan, Martyrdom, Michael O'Riordan

1. Introduction

Michael O'Riordan and John Hagan were two important exponents of that particular type of diaspora represented by the worldwide spread of Irish Catholic clergy. During the first decades of the twentieth century, they both held top positions in the Pontifical Irish College in Rome, one of the most emblematic institutions of the international projection of Gaelic Christianity. Pope Gregory XIII had established the seminary in 1628, and it had become a sort of agency of Irish episcopate from the years of Paul Cullen's rector-

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ate (1832-1849)[1]. Monsignor O'Riordan, from County Limerick, was born in 1857 and was educated at the Irish College, Pontificio Collegio Urbano de Propaganda Fide and Pontificia Università Gregoriana in Rome (Baylen 1974, 188, 22)[2]. After serving as a parish priest and working as a professor in his native region, he became rector of the Irish college in 1905. Pius X appointed him protonotary apostolic in 1907, and O'Riordan continued to lead the seminary until his death in 1919. Father Hagan was born in County Wicklow from a family of farmers in 1873 and studied in Rome at the Irish college. After spending the first years of priesthood in Ireland, he was sent back to the Italian capital, where he served as vice-rector of the seminary from 1904 to 1919 and as rector until his death in 1930[3].

Their pastoral mission took place in an extremely turbulent period, marked by the Great War and the fresh outbreak of the political and military conflict in Ireland. They faced exceptional circumstances and, bound by a deep bond to the vicissitudes of their motherland, worked constantly to influence the Roman Curia views about the Irish question. The priests established a solid personal relationship by pursuing this goal together. Their friendship was also animated by the common belief that the Holy See underestimated the tribute paid by the Irish people for the cause of the universal Church (Keogh 2008, 243). Moreover, they collaborated in the editing of *The Seven Hills Magazine*, a quarterly published from 1906 to 1908 as the journal of the Oliver Plunket Society, on which they both wrote articles on historiographical and religious subjects.

Although they were connected by a mutual esteem, there were also some differences between the two men. O'Riordan, a fine intellectual, was more prone to the study than to patriotic propaganda. The Rector was close to constitutional nationalism, but he decided to deal actively with political issues only when he arrived in the Italian capital to compensate for the lack of Irish representation inside the Vatican (Aan de Wiel 1999, 138). Hagan, a younger and more radical nationalist, was instead a passionate historian and a lively polemicist, who collaborated with many Italian and foreign newspapers and was the Roman correspondent of Dublin's magazine *The Catholic Bulletin* from 1911 to 1919[4]. Both O'Riordan and Hagan became real points of refer-

[1] Archbishop Paul Cullen was a key player in the history of the Irish Catholic Church. For an overall look of his life, see Bowen 1983.

[2] According to Maurizio Tagliaferri, however, O'Riordan was educated at the Almo Collegio Capranica (Tagliaferri 2004, 525).

[3] Father John Hagan was named *Monsignore* only in 1921 (Keogh 1995, 6).

[4] Father Hagan studied in detail some phases of the Irish history and paid particular attention to the period of the Counter-Reformation. He published his researches and the documents he found in the immense Roman archives on the Irish history journal *Archivium Hibernicum,* established in 1912.

ence for the episcopate of the Emerald Isle, but some scholars have portrayed the Vice Rector as the most pivotal character of the "Roman dimension […]" of Irish politics because of his activism (Keogh 1986, 4). This personal and political inhomogeneity reverberated also on the different nuances that the priests gave to their ideas of the Irish nation in the writings they published in Italy from 1906 to 1916. However, their national visions came closer and closer during those years, and they reached a more shared political thinking following the 1916 Easter Rising.

In recent times, some historical works have analysed the political relations between Ireland and Italy from the age of Italian Risorgimento to the beginning of Second World War[5]. From this perspective, the study of O'Riordan and Hagan's political evolution can offer an interesting point of view on the role played by the small but influential Irish diaspora in Italy in the struggle for Irish independence at the dawn of the 20th century. Indeed, only few Irish citizens resided in the Kingdom of Italy, but a significant number of Irish clergymen lived in Rome. Several Irish prelates resided in the headquarters of various religious orders and congregations, and they had contrasting views on the current political affairs (18-22). The leaders of the Irish College acted in this difficult context, facing the hostility of some factions of the Irish high clergy, but they succeeded in carrying out their goals with some success, and their action probably contributed to influencing Vatican decisions in dramatic moments, such as after the Easter Rising. The description of the development of O'Riordan and Hagan's national ideas can therefore illustrate the process that led them to take an important part in the events of Anglo-Irish conflict.

2. Before the tempest: Ireland, insula sanctorum

The two clerics debuted in the cultural panorama of Italian Catholicism by introducing the themes of the book *Catholicity and Progress in Ireland*, which O'Riordan composed in 1905 to respond to the famous volume *Ireland in the New Century*, written by the pioneer of the agrarian cooperative movement Horace Plunkett (Plunkett 1904; O'Riordan 1906 [1905]). In his work, the eminent liberal unionist described the causes of the endemic underdevelopment of the Irish countryside. Plunkett recognized the faults of the colonizers, but he attributed the heaviest responsibilities to the socially harmful effects of the Catholic doctrine, which was guilty of generating an apathetic and anti-industrial human type. The *Monsignore* replied to these accusations analysing the structural mechanism of backwardness and prais-

[5] See, for example, Phelan 2012; Carter 2015; Chini 2016; Crangle 2016; Moretti, Wood 2016.

ing the commercial initiative of the exiguous Catholic bourgeoisie and the participation of the clergy in the rural cooperatives.

O'Riordan's thesis brought into play the question of the relationship between the Church and the new Irish society. A germinal process of urbanization threatened in fact to weaken the cultural hegemony exercised by the Catholic nationalism since the ecclesiastical reform of the mid-19th century, the so-called devotional revolution, which had shaped a more aligned with Rome Irish Catholicism (Larkin 1972, 625; Larkin 1975, 1254-1258; Coldrey 1988, 53). O'Riordan's book was also an attempt to reorganize this type of nationalism, which considered the Catholic faith as the core of Irishness, in the context of the Emerald Isle entrance into modernity[6].

In an article published in April 1907 in the magazine *Rivista Internazionale di Scienze Sociali e Discipline Ausiliarie*, bound to the reformer Catholicism of Giuseppe Toniolo, the Rector explained the central theme of his volume: the contrast between the technocratic and pagan model of industrial development, built on the privileges of the few and on the sufferings of salaried workers, and the Catholic vision of the progress as the endogenous evolutionary motion of a society. If the Catholic progress had originated the great social achievements of humanity as "the doctrine of the equality of men, the sanctity of marriage, the rights of women, the spirit of sacrifice, the duty and dignity of work [...]", the pagan one was exemplified by the imperialist expansion of the Protestant England in America, India and Oceania, characterized by "a systematic oppression that constitutes one of the darkest pages in human history" (O'Riordan 1907, 502, 506). The article did not deal directly with Ireland, but the message was clear: to emancipate themselves from the colonial dependency, the Irish people would have to build their own modernity, which should have been alternative to the invaders' one and consistent with the teachings of the social doctrine of the Church.

Hagan had already reviewed *Catholicity and Progress in Ireland* on the monthly *Rivista Storico-Critica delle Scienze Teologiche* about a year before. However, compared to his superior, the Vice Rector seemed moved by a more urgent need to attest to the progressive nature of Catholic thought. In his reflections, O'Riordan stated that the Church could not be responsible for the material development level achieved by a civilization because its teaching was primarily spiritual. Hagan, conversely, observed that, if the irreconcilability between the general improvement of living conditions and the

[6] Monsignor O'Riordan's correspondence is now inaccessible. However, his particular interest in the figure of former Rector Paul Cullen, who become the apostolic delegate of the Holy See in Ireland and drove the devotional revolution, is also evident from Hagan's epistolary, in which there were also several references to the possibility that O'Riordan would undertake the writing of a biography of the important personality. P.J. Walsh to John Hagan, 23 September 1912; Michael O'Riordan to John Hagan, 7 August 1913.

Catholic faith had been proven, the human beings could have understandably concluded: "if there is disharmony, so much worse for the Catholicism" (Hagan 1906, 34). He also underlined the importance of the book for the Irish nation, which Plunkett's arrogance had vilified both in the homeland and in the diaspora (35).

The magazine that published the review was one of the laboratories of the Italian modernism, and it revolved around the priest Ernesto Buonaiuti, historian of Christianity and leading man of the ecclesial renewal movement in Rome, who worked for some years as a repeater of philosophy and theology at the Irish College, where he met and became friend with Hagan. Some historians have suggested the hypothesis of a full participation of the Irishman to the so-called radical Roman group, the circle headed by Buonaiuti, who in those years proposed "to instil a religious and Christian soul in socialism […]" (Buonaiuti 2008 [1945], 98), but the rigorous tones of *The Seven Hills Magazine* and the doctrinal orthodoxy that emerges from Hagan's epistolary do not seem to confirm this eventuality[7]. There was, however, an undoubted intellectual exchange between the cultural atmosphere of the Irish College and the Roman modernism. *The Seven Hills Magazine* published the texts of a series of lectures held in the College by Buonaiuti, who, in turn, acclaimed the brightness and the accuracy of the Oliver Plunket Society's quarterly on his periodical (Buonaiuti 1906a; 1906b; 1906c; 1907).

Hagan, in all probability, had never been a modernist, but he was convinced that the Church should support and influence the process of social change taking place in his homeland. In May 1909, he wrote an article for the *Rivista Internazionale di Scienze Sociali e Discipline Ausiliarie* about the technical analysis of the Irish agricultural question and the land reform laws approved by the British government from 1870 to 1909, which had gradually led to the dismantling of the latifundium. The Vice Rector praised this change as "one of the greatest social reforms that the modern legislation reminds […]", interpreting it as the result of the incessant struggle of Catholic peasants against colonial landlordism, the cornerstone of the British dominion in Ireland (Hagan 1909, 17). The conflicting methods of rural organizations were even fully justified because, faced with evictions and misery, "the right to existence took fatally the upper hand by now" (8). The participation of the clergy in the agrarian mobilisations had been a luminous page, which the conservatives had slandered accusing the priests of being "troublemakers of the plebs […]" (11). Hagan expounded to the Italian Catholics the extraordinary nature of the Irish democratic movement, which had been able to combine political reformism with Catholic affiliation, and thus he con-

[7] Several studies have described Hagan as a possible member of the radical Roman group. See, for example, Bedeschi 1972, 10-13; Fiorani 1990, 152.

cluded: "Glory to the nation which has succeeded in imposing the definitive disarmament on its economic oppressors through tenacious and heroic efforts" (*ibidem*).

Hagan's prose was inspired by the desire that in the new political phase the Irish priests would not give up the role of people's pastors they had assumed in the past. He also hoped that the new nationalism, which had become less conditioned by the confrontation with the great land ownership of the absentee Protestant nobility, turning into a mainly urban political phenomenon, did not distance itself from the Church of Rome. This aspiration placed him in the wake of the authoritative William J. Walsh, archbishop of Dublin from 1885 to 1921, who led that part of the Irish episcopate that was in disagreement with the line taken by the Vatican since Pope Leo XIII condemned the Plan of Campaign in 1888[8]. Walsh believed that the papal disapproval of the peasant resistance had damaged the Church's hold within the nationalist movement, so he consecrated his life to prevent the possibility of a divorce between the patriotism and the faith, which for him would have endangered the very foundations of the Irish national identity (Keogh 1986, 10). Hagan, who was ordained priest in the diocese of Dublin, grew up under the Archbishop's influence and entertained a close correspondence from Rome with him and with his secretaries Father Michael Cullen and Father P.J. Walsh, with whom he also debated over political current affairs. Some scholars have qualified the unprecedented capacity of a reactionary clergy to orientate a modern nationalist mobilization as the Irish exception (Green 1998, 124), but this was not the Vice Rector and Walsh's case. They were united instead by the conviction that the New Ireland should preserve the marriage between the transformative tension and the Catholic tradition to maintain its national specificity. The militant attitude of the younger priest actually constituted a radicalization of the project of social regeneration of Catholic nationalism promoted by the Archbishop (Keogh 1986, 14).

In August 1909, shortly after Hagan's article on the agrarian reform, the *Rivista Internazionale di Scienze Sociali e Discipline Ausiliarie* published the text of a speech, regarding the history of the campaign for the repeal of the Penal Laws, delivered by Monsignor O'Riordan on 1 July 1909 during a conference of the Pontifical Academy of Catholic Religion[9]. The Rector retraced the steps of a confessional movement that had united the requests of the Catholics of Great Britain and Ireland, but he did not avoid to point

[8] Pope Leo XIII condemned the boycott against landlords and the rent strikes organized by the nationalist movement through a Papal Rescript (20 April 1888) and the Encyclical *Saepe Nos* (24 June 1888), addressed to the Irish bishops (Larkin 1978).

[9] O'Riordan republished the speech text as a pamphlet in 1909 and in an extended edition in 1910 (O'Riordan 1909b; 1910).

out the double oppression, both national and religious, suffered by the Irish, which had been harder than the one Romans had inflicted on the first Christians because "the law allowed to the primitive Christians of Rome to bury their dead publicly and freely in the cemeteries of their property and with their rites; this right, on the contrary, the law denied to Irish Catholics until recently; until the nineteenth century" (O'Riordan 1909a, 478). O'Riordan observed that the faithful of the Church of Rome were a small minority in England, made up largely of immigrants, while on the Emerald Isle "the Catholics were the nation" (478-479). The cause of the Catholic Church coincided therefore with the Irish one; faith was the beating heart of the Irish community and precisely the widespread mobilization for Catholic emancipation had allowed the creation of a national counter-power (490). The Protestant fanaticism that also harassed the English Catholics could be in fact contained by one power only, "and this power is constituted by the supportive Irish people, organized to demand justice" (496).

The distinction between the national identities of the Catholics of the two islands was more clearly proclaimed in a study published by Hagan in the journal of Buonaiuti in February 1910. The article claimed the honorary title of *insula sanctorum* for Ireland rather than for England, stating that the Europeans had unduly confused the Irish with the British Catholics by virtue of the common condition of subordination experienced after the Penal Laws (Hagan 1910a, 108-109)[10]. Indeed, O'Riordan believed that the interests of English Catholics coincided with those of the Irish because only a coordinated action would have enforced the rights of the Church, and that the former ones did not recognize this reality because they were prisoners of their national egoism. Hagan instead seemed keener on accepting the distinction between the respective political demands as a fact, regardless of religious affinity. The Vice Rector based his analysis on a considerable amount of documents, especially from the Middle Ages, which attested he Irish ownership of the title of *insula sanctorum*, and he included the British usurpation of Gaelic primacy in the "process of denigration and persecution to which Ireland has been repeatedly subjected from the day when, forced to live with the neighbouring and larger island, it had become the Cinderella of the United Kingdom" (101). Therefore, Hagan claimed the genetically Christian nature of the Irish nation, which had generated "a true dynasty of saints and thinkers [...]" and had been a fundamental propulsive centre of medieval monasticism (98, 102-103).

The declared purpose of Hagan was to promote in the eyes of the Church the "high merits that the old green island has gained in front of the Christian

[10] Hagan republished an extended edition of the article as a pamphlet soon after (Hagan 1910b).

civilization [...]" (109), but he himself was struck by the repressive measure established by the ecclesiastical institution a few months later. In 1909, in fact, the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office had brought a sensational process against the radical Roman group, based on the delation of one of its former members and on a massive use of spy methods[11]. The cardinals interrogated Hagan as companion of Buonaiuti on 20 December 1909, but he denied the most serious accusations against the modernist and did not reveal other names (Bedeschi 1978, 32). The loyalty shown by the Vice Rector to his friend was punished by a disciplinary action dated July 6 1910, which decreed the removal of Hagan from the Irish College. This decision, however, had no practical effects: he was not dismissed, and Buonaiuti continued to work at the seminar (41). The modernist himself recognized his debt to the two Irish clerics in his autobiography, reminding that they had remained the only ones to guarantee him an income after the trial (Buonaiuti 2008 [1945], 137).

3. The Home Rule period: the search for the Irish civilization

In the summer of 1911, Ernesto Buonaiuti travelled to Ireland, where he sojourned at some acquaintances of the Vice Rector[12]. Back to Italy, the modernist published an account of this experience in the journal *Nuova Antologia*, describing the latent Anglo-Irish conflict as the confrontation between two distinct civilizations more than between two merely confessional, linguistic or cultural communities (Buonaiuti 1911, 463)[13]. The suggestion of Buonaiuti echoed some of the themes already contained in Hagan's writings, but it almost seemed to prefigure the thesis that Hagan clearly expounded in an article on the Home Rule published by the *Rivista Internazionale di Scienze Sociali e Discipline Ausiliarie* in January 1913[14].

The piece was purely political and reflected the new atmosphere that was produced on the Emerald Isle due to both the harsh debate on the draft law about self-government, presented by the liberal government of H.H. Asquith in April 1912, and the incipient proliferation of militias of various political beliefs, starting from the founding of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) in the

[11] For a detailed description of the episode, see Bedeschi 1986 [1972].

[12] Ernesto Buonaiuti to John Hagan, 22 July 1911; Ernesto Buonaiuti to John Hagan, 11 August 1911.

[13] The article was an anticipation of a wider reportage that Buonaiuti and the modernist priest Nicola Turchi, his travelling companion, published in 1914 (Buonaiuti, Turchi 1914). The Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office condemned the book, but the newly elected Pope Benedict XV mitigated the provision and ordered to buy all copies of the volume to remove it from distribution (Bedeschi 1970, 51-52; Verucci 2010, 61-68).

[14] Hagan republished the article as a pamphlet in a first version and then in an extended edition (Hagan 1913b; 1913c).

early days of 1913. Reconstructing the various phases of the colonial domination, Hagan denounced the agrarian question as a "real offense to humanity [...]" (Hagan 1913a, 36) and attacked the cowardliness of the British government, which over the centuries had approved reforms to alleviate the suffering of the Irish people only when it had been driven by the threats of civil war or by the Fenian violence (34, 39-40). The author qualified the Home Rule as a "vast and silent revolution" (53) and explicitly accused the residual forces that opposed the approval of the reform. Hagan criticized both the Ulster Protestants who were afraid of losing their privileges and the conservative Catholics who denounced the disengagement from England as a risk for the Church because they feared the political radicalization that would have caused by the legislative autonomy (58-60).

Polemicizing with the detractors of the Home Rule, the Vice Rector affirmed above all the irreducible otherness of the Irish nation from the cultural criteria imposed by the British Empire, and thus he evoked the image of a peculiar Irish civilization, weakened but still indomitable, whose roots date back to the pre-colonial Gaelic society:

> Located on the borders of Europe, outside the whirlwind of continental events, Ireland had found its peaceful ways, happy with its laws of the Brehons and its clan system, its culture and schools, and its intense Christian life within and his zealous effort to proselytize abroad; and these paths were followed by her until her sons had to change the pen with the sword; the crosier with the lance [...]. (19)

In Hagan's vision, therefore, various elements such as the Brehon laws, the clan social system, the early evangelization and the autochthonous monasticism contributed to a coherent attempt to redefine the profound soul of the Irish nation. This original socio-cultural unity, both Gaelic and Christian, both peaceful and virile, had been violently shattered by the colonization, which had introduced the seed of underdevelopment into the healthy body of the nation:

> However, instead of welcoming and adopting the best of Irish habits, the Irish land system and the singularly developed system of the Irish law, to which the people lent unlimited respect and to which he was deeply attached, the English committed the fatal error to order the new estates on the feudal type [...]. (19-20)

The forced and artificial importation of feudal property had dissolved the previous system of land management on a community and family basis, excluding the Irish farmers from the same human community and generating a situation of intolerable social inequality:

> The formation of two classes was deliberately required, at the antipodes of each other. On the one hand, the imported ones and their descendants, English or

Scottish, Protestant, the favourite class, forming the "Pale" or English colony, the party of predominance, with all the land, all the welfare, all the political authority in their hands. On the other hand, the Catholics, the descendants of the Irish and the Anglo-Irish, now confused together in the saddest persecution and misery, reduced to the condition of miserable servants, simple labourers on their ancient land [...]. (21)

The Irish national struggle therefore represented the rescue of the Catholic natives, the legitimate depositaries of the Gaelic cultural heritage. In the expanded version of the article, republished as a pamphlet, Hagan deplored the House of Lords as the main obstacle to the full satisfaction of the demands of this patriotic and popular movement, and he openly accused its members of being sworn enemies of progress in general, pointing out that they had opposed the granting of the political rights to the Jews as the approval of the laws for the protection of the miners; the abolition of the death penalty for petty thefts as well as the proclamation of the Catholic emancipation (Hagan 1913c, 61-65). Thus, the Vice Rector called for the Home Rule in the name of national specificity, but he inserted the Irish request into a wider process of social transformation. The scenario that was outlined by Hagan could not have been framed in the traditional Catholic nationalism because the reference to the primitive Gaelic society confuted the idea that Catholicism was the only essential requirement of the Irishness and because he characterized the claim of a greater sovereignty in a markedly progressive sense.

The revaluation of the pre-colonial legacy echoed some of the typical motifs of the cultural season of the Gaelic Revival, which had heavily conditioned the intellectual climate of the island from the last decades of the nineteenth century. The Revival had promoted the renaissance of the Irish language and traditions in order to revive a national spirit that was alternative to the Anglo-Saxon one, considered as predatory and utilitarian. Even if the Catholic hierarchy had initially called Gaelic revival to be a threat to the hegemony of the Church because of its appeal to a past that was not necessarily Christian, a certain ideal interpenetration had finally implemented between the cultural movement and the Catholic nationalism (McCaffrey 1989, 15; Mathews 2003, 46). Disagreements continued between the episcopate and some intellectuals, but a part of the clergy interpreted the rediscovery of the Gaelic heritage as an opportunity for a moral regeneration of society, as well as an instrument to rebuild an uncontaminated Ireland, purified by the drosses of the colonialism and of the Protestant Reformation (Harris 2001, 344-347). The political usage of this cultural trend was not uniform and fluctuated between the proposal of an exclusivist and reactionary agenda and a certain fascination for maximalist solutions.

Hagan did not personally participated in the associations born during the Revival years, but his analysis of homeland history seems to be also linked to that more or less radical social reformism line that was nourished by the myth

of Gaelic Ireland. He thus distanced himself from the moderatism that innervated the writings of Monsignor O'Riordan, who was less inclined to embrace a nationalism that was not eminently Catholic. In the positions that the Rector assumed during the agitations for the Home Rule, however, the germs of a new political perspective were rising. In April 1912, O'Riordan had indirectly faced the subject of the self-government by publishing a memorandum on the question of the independence of Catholic schools from the interference by the British state, which was a historic claim of the Irish Church. Archbishop Paul Cullen had inaugurated the campaign for the abolition of state control over the Catholic education in Ireland in the middle of the 19th century, and it had achieved a decisive success with the establishment of the National University in 1908 (Larkin 1976 [1975], 1259-1267). The constitutional nationalists of the Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) had always advocated the cause of Catholic schools in the name of the consolidated clergy-nationalist alliance, but now they seemed oriented to support the liberal government in a draft law concerning the elementary schools in England that interfered also with the methods of teaching religion.

In his booklet, O'Riordan asserted that the behaviour of constitutional nationalists protected the self-determination of the English Catholic schools in the best possible way, and he ensured that Irish representatives would continue to support their British coreligionists. Accordingly, he defended the pragmatic conduct of the IPP from the charges put forward by the English Catholics elders, which accused the party of treason because it tried to assure the liberal support for the approval of the Home Rule. The Rector praised the Irish deputies as "the only bulwark of Catholic schools in England", but he also stated that they had no obligations towards English Catholics and that Ireland had elected them to win legislative autonomy (O'Riordan 1912, 10). O'Riordan made therefore explicit the existence of a gap between the interests of the Catholics of the two islands more clearly than in his previous writings, identifying precisely in the IPP led by John Redmond the champion of the national demands of the Irish people.

4. Between the War and the Rising: the redefinition of the boundaries of the Irish nation

The reflections of Monsignor O'Riordan and Father Hagan about the Irish nation underwent further development due to the militarization of the Irish political life and the advent of the Great War. The conflict generated by the debate on the self-government project actually became increasingly harder, and other militias were born besides UVF, such as the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army. Both the constitutional nationalists and the republicans were part of the Volunteers, while the socialist unionists founded

the Citizen Army during the Dublin Lockout, the long and dramatic strike organized by the transport workers in 1913.

The House of Commons finally approved the Home Rule in May 1914, but the King hesitated to sign it. George V decided to ratify the reform only after the war began, in September 1914, but he postponed its application and the final resolution of the Ulster issue until the end of hostilities. John Redmond believed that supporting the British war effort was necessary to obtain the effective granting of the Home Rule, so he urged the Irish nationalists to enlist themselves as volunteers in a crusade for the liberation of the small nations, including Ireland. The majority of the Irish Catholic clergy also adhered to the IPP positions and actively participated in the recruitment and in the war propaganda, contributing to the significant successes achieved by the enlistment campaign in the years 1914 and 1915 (Aan de Wiel 2016, 162-163).

The impending of the world conflict deeply outraged O'Riordan, who in a letter to Hagan dated 2 August 1914 already defined the war as "brutal and beastly"[15]. This repulsion for the massacre that was beginning to take shape in Europe brought the Rector closer to those sectors of the Irish episcopate that disapproved of the interventionist turning point of constitutional nationalism, represented for instance by the Archbishop of Dublin William J. Walsh, who attempted in his diocese to counteract the recruitment within the Catholic community (164). O'Riordan collaborated above all with his fellow countryman the Bishop of Limerick Edward Thomas O'Dwyer, an elderly prelate, who was resistant to any patriotic mobilization that undermined the primacy of the obedience to the Holy See.

O'Dwyer had violently argued with Irish nationalists in the past, following the papal condemnation of the Plan of Campaign. They even nicknamed him the "Landlord Bishop" because he had continued to defend the actions of Pope Leo XIII even in that painful break (Macaulay 2008, 203). In the face of the World War and the neutralism of Pope Benedict XV, however, the ultramontane O'Dwyer was the bishop who more vehemently broke with the IPP, becoming a standard-bearer of a position of absolute opposition to the conflict, which was otherwise supported only by minorities like the maximalist republicans and the revolutionary socialists. Monsignor O'Riordan decided to sustain O'Dwyer's initiatives not only for the shared rejection of the war but also because he feared that Great Britain, which appointed the Catholic nobleman Sir Henry Howard as special envoy to the Vatican in November 1914, could exploit the period of fighting to re-establish official relations with the Holy See, further marginalizing the weight of the Irish Church in Rome (Aan de Wiel 1999, 138-139).

[15] Michael O'Riordan to John Hagan, 2 August 1914.

The Rector therefore systematically translated into Italian the public interventions in which O'Dwyer claimed his opposition to the Irish participation in the war in the name of the neutralist orientation of the papacy, distributing them to the Pontiff and to the cardinals of the Roman Curia. Benedict XV and a part of the high clergy of Italy showed their appreciation for the ideas expressed by the Bishop of Limerick, and the Pope significantly welcomed the translation of the appeal that O'Dwyer made to Redmond to recommend him to align with the positions of the Vatican in August 1915 (143). The controversy with Redmond had moreover increased the popularity of the Bishop in Ireland, where the enthusiasm for the war declined in the meantime, while the movements that contested the IPP collaboration with the British government were strengthening. This was the case of the Irish Volunteers' republican faction, which had separated itself from the constitutional majority, maintaining its original name.

In January 1916, O'Riordan also published a pamphlet written by O'Dwyer about a month earlier, resuming the appeal for peace that Benedict XV had uttered in the apostolic exhortation of July 28, 1915. In the libellous, the Bishop pointed his finger at the governments of the belligerent states, deploring the ongoing conflict as "a war to the last drop of blood for the dominion of the world" and addressing the Catholics of all countries to "do everything in their power to put an end to this creepy slaughter, scourge of our civilization, scandal of our religion" (O'Dwyer 1916, 6, 18). O'Riordan also wrote a few notes to the text in which he endorsed O'Dwyer's severe judgment on the behaviour of the nationalist leadership, arguing that "nothing less than the absolute subjection of Mr. Redmond to the will of the government will succeed in satisfying the government itself" (8).

In addition to promoting O'Dwyer's pacifist intransigence in the Vatican circles, the Rector also pleaded the right of the Irish Church to appoint autonomously the Catholic chaplains for the regiments enlisted on the Emerald Isle. This prerogative was a traditional privilege of the archbishop of Westminster; therefore, the claim sponsored by O'Riordan also assumed the connotations of a statement of national independence. The Rector pursued his goal tenaciously, and he printed a detailed memorial on the topic in 1916. In the writing, he criticized the distribution of the chaplains established by the English episcopate and accused the British military authorities of penalizing the Catholic troops[16]. In his work of mediation with the Vatican, O'Riordan entertained a dense correspondence not only with the Irish bishops but also with several chaplains scattered on the battlefields, whose stories about the material and spiritual conditions of the trenches fighters al-

[16] I could not find the O'Riordan's memorial (O'Riordan 1916a), but P.A. Boyle has described its contents in detail (Boyle 2008).

lowed him to delve into the tragic reality of war (Boyle 2008, 231). Indeed, the Rector was a convinced follower of the gradualist strategy of the constitutional nationalism before the war conflagration, but now he was experiencing a progressive political radicalization by virtue of some elements, such as the close collaboration with the militant neutralist O'Dwyer, the efforts to ensure spiritual assistance to the soldiers and the fear that the conscription introduced in Great Britain in January 1916 could also be extended to Ireland. His new vision, in turn, had repercussions on his interpretation of the idea of Irish nation.

In the homily given on the 1916 St. Patrick's Day, later published as a pamphlet, O'Riordan used the example of the Irish patron saint, who had returned to the land where he had been a slave in the mad enterprise of bringing the gospel there, to illustrate the doctrine of the death and the resurrection of Christ but also his personal concept of the Irishness. According to the Rector, the human history should have been interpreted as an eternal conflict between the brutality of the world power, exemplified by the arrogance of the transient earthly empires, and the apparent weakness inherent in the oxymoronic symbol of the cross, emblem of the martyrdom but also of the final triumph of eternal life on death. The history of Ireland, in turn, had to be understood in the light of the same mechanism: the Emerald Isle had preserved the purity of the Christian message taken from St. Patrick in spite of centuries of persecution, "but the price paid to save it was the martyrdom of a nation" (O'Riordan 1916b, 17). The Irish people had remained faithful in the darkest moments of the oppression not by virtue of the liturgy's splendour or of the study of the dogmas; "it must have been something else and greater. It was the power of St. Patrick's prayers; the merit of martyrdom of their fathers […]" (20). Experiencing the cross on his own skin, the Irish nation had become "the centre of a supernatural empire bound together in the unity of faith, hope and love" (26). Even in the terrible context of the World War, which seemed to proclaim the definitive defeat of the Christian heritage and Ireland, the Emerald Isle would therefore have uplifted thanks to its own prolonged passion.

By referring to the Christian conception of martyrdom, thus, O'Riordan identified not just the confessional belonging but also the willingness to make sacrifices in the name of a superior good as the essence of the Irishness, and he led back the second characteristic to the primordial preaching of St. Patrick. In the Rector's speech, the evocation of the martyrdom and the rebirth of the Catholic Ireland transcended indeed the merely spiritual dimension, and it became the cipher used to analyse the various phases of the Irish political history. Father John Hagan also abhorred the scenario outlined by the World War, and he despised the IPP's adherence to the war mobilization as much as Monsignor O'Riordan, but perhaps his dissent was even more directly dependent on a political evaluation. He in fact firmly believed that the

fervour employed by Redmond in favour of the enlistment campaign had now compromised the independence of the constitutional nationalism from Great Britain (Keogh 2007, 255).

Moreover, the Vice Rector shared with his superior the proclivity to supporting and encouraging those members of the Irish clergy who refused to adapt to the IPP collaboration policy with the British. For example, as evidenced by his correspondence, Hagan encouraged the republican priest Michael O'Flanagan in the early months of 1916, trying to advise him in what way he could avoid a provision of ecclesiastical suspension, of which O'Flanagan was threatened because he had expressed himself against the war during a public rally in Cork[17]. The radical curate had already been removed for a similar reason from his previous parish of Cliffoney, County Sligo, where he had been the protagonist of a tumultuous dispute with his own bishop, which had culminated with a prolonged picketing of the church by the parishioners who had claimed his return. O'Flanagan had been marginalized in his homeland because of his militancy, but he found an important support in Rome exactly in the Vice Rector, with whom he shared the opinion that the political credibility of Redmond was definitively decayed[18].

The relationship between the two priests thus represented a testimony of Hagan's hostility to the world conflict and of his ambition for a national liberation that was deeper than that of constitutional nationalism. If the war had changed the O'Riordan's approach to politics, in the Vice Rector's case it did nothing but reinforce his patriotism and his vision of the Irish nation, in which the need for a progressive social transformation joined the reaffirmation of the Catholic orthodoxy. Hagan reiterated the points of his national idea in a letter he sent in April 1916 to the monthly *La Scuola Cattolica*, which was linked to the theological faculty of the Milan seminary, to dispute some of the statistics contained in an article by the mathematician Rodolfo Bettazzi, in which Ireland was included among the less prolific countries due to the spread of neo-Malthusian practices. The Vice Rector wanted to demonstrate the foreignness of the Irish people to the methods for birth control, but he also denounced the living conditions of popular masses, forced to emigrate, and he emphasized the intrinsic adhesion of the islander people to the Catholic ethics even in the intimate and daily behaviours (Hagan 1916, 534-538).

When the magazine published the short priest's piece, on May 1, 1916, the tragic and unexpected event that brought the Irish question to the international limelight, the Easter Rising, had been over for a few days. The revolt was to begin on Easter Sunday, but the failure of the landing of the weapons sent by Germany and the opposition of Eoin MacNeill, who was

[17] Fragment letter from John Hagan to Michael O'Flanagan, 25 January 1916.
[18] Michael O'Flanagan to John Hagan, 25 January 1916.

the president of the Irish Volunteers, caused its postponement, compromising its outcome. In the end, on April 24, 1916, on Easter Monday, about 1,500 militants occupied the neuralgic centres of Dublin and few other places in the country, proclaiming the Irish Republic. The restricted team of extremist republicans and revolutionary socialists succeeded to resist less than a week, but the unfortunate insurrectional attempt received a large echo in Europe because it unveiled the contradictions of the Allied democratic rhetoric, revealing the threat of possible internal enemies that could have joined forces with the hostiles powers to undermine the war effort of the belligerent countries. The revolt was certainly a political hazard, and it did not receive the consent of the great majority of the citizens of Dublin, who powerless witnessed the destruction of their city. However, the excesses carried out by the British troops during the repression, the subsequent mass arrests and the summary executions of the leaders early aroused a widespread feeling of indignation.

Eminent exponents of the Irish Church hierarchy, such as Archbishop Walsh, refused to publicly condemn the insurrection, while Bishop O'Dwyer furiously contested the Military Governor, General Sir John G. Maxwell, who had invited him to bring back some priests, who were sympathetic with the rebels, to the obedience (Aan de Wiel 2016, 177-178). On the other hand, the incident caused bewilderment within the states of the Allied Powers. Almost all the Italian liberal and interventionist forces deplored the Easter Rising as a plot organized by the German General Staff with the complicity of the defeatist socialists and the most obscurantist clergy[19]. The majority of the Italian Catholic press did not make an exception. In order to defend the Church from the accusation of connivance, it stated that the rebels were members of anti-clerical, if not Protestant, secret societies, unrelated to Catholic nationalists who were demonstrating their loyalty to the Entente in the trenches[20]. Pro-British hierarchs, such as English Cardinal Francis Aidan Gasquet, were also active in Rome, and they intended to exploit the sensational episode to discredit the Irish republicanism in front of the Vatican. Even a significant part of the Irish community residing in the Italian capital, bounded to the constitutional nationalism, showed their disapproval of the uprising through a hard telegram, which was also signed by the Superior of the Irish Christian Brothers Michael Costen (Keogh 1986, 19-22).

[19] Both the liberal and the nationalist press denounced the German planning of the revolt. See, for example, Anonimo, "Dalla rivolta di Dublino alla Coscrizione" (1916a), *L'Idea Nazionale*, 27 April; Emanuel Guglielmo (1916), "La rivolta dei feniani a Dublino progettata con la complicità tedesca", *Corriere della Sera*, 27 April; Prati Marcello (1916), "Le giornate di Dublino", *La Stampa*, 30 April; Crespi Angelo (1916), "I moti d'Irlanda furon preparati a Berlino!", *Il Popolo d'Italia*, 6 May.

[20] See, for example, Anonimo (1916b), "I protestanti irlandesi e il moto dei feniani", *L'Avvenire d'Italia*, 28 April; Anonimo (1916d), "La setta dei feniani", *Corriere d'Italia*, 1 May.

The Papal Count George Noble Plunkett, whom the republican leaders had sent to Rome to confer with Benedict XV in order to avoid a clear condemnation of the revolt and to obtain the apostolic blessing for the rebels, had revealed the subversive plan to O'Riordan and Hagan in mid-April (Keogh 2007, 272)[21]. After the failure of the insurrection, the rulers of the Irish College decided to undertake an ambitious counter-information attempt because they feared that the almost unanimous condemnation of the event and the clerical anti-republicanism could influence the papal opinion on the Irish question. Therefore, they clandestinely and anonymously published a large brochure, which was titled *La Recente Insurrezione in Irlanda*, in September 1916, proposing a radically different version of the facts[22]. The booklet, which was printed in 500 copies and was distributed to the Pope, to the cardinals of the Roman Curia and to various personalities of the Irish clergy, was attributed to Monsignor O'Riordan only, but in reality Father Hagan participated in its drafting, too (301)[23].

The two priests wanted to prove that the Easter Rising was not a Teutonic conspiracy, but "the silly attempt of a small nucleus of impulsive youngsters [...]", which could have been understood in the light of the tragic consequences of the war (Anonimo [Hagan, O'Riordan] 1916, 19). The ephemeral revolt was the result of the profound social contradictions generated by the English refusal to immediately implement the Home Rule reform, which revealed itself as a "simple trap to enlist the Irish" (10). The authors denounced that British Empire was consolidating its world hegemony thanks to the blood of the soldiers recruited on the Emerald Isle, used as cannon fodder in the desperate battle of Gallipoli (13), or sent to the front after being conscripted through deception as happened to some emigrants who had gone as seasonal workers to England (16-17). O'Riordan and Hagan quoted the words of Bishop O'Dwyer, who had denounced the attempted lynching of a group of Irish emigrants carried out by some supporters of the war in Liverpool. Indeed, he had publicly stated that the Irish peasants had every right not to participate in the World War because "they would rather prefer being left in peace to cultivate the potato fields in Connemara" (14). The Irish College clerics believed that the inopportune insurrection was however animated by the vain hope of avoiding further suffering to the people. It could be consid-

[21] According to a later testimony of Plunkett himself, the Pope actually granted his blessing, while he refused to approve the revolt (Keogh 2007, 266-267; Aan de Wiel 2016, 173).

[22] The pamphlet immediately became known as the red book because its cover colour (Aan de Wiel 1999, 144).

[23] The Prior General of the Carmelite Order P.A. Magennis revealed the Vice Rector's role in the writing of the pamphlet when he published the Hagan's obituary on the *Catholic Bulletin* (1930, 301).

ered, on the contrary, a sort of preventive reaction against the government plan to annihilate the political forces that did not want to support the war effort (19). The rebels had been of course reckless, but their intentions were pure: "No one can call into question their abnegation in a mission that implied undoubtedly the sacrifice of their lives [...]" (19-20).

In his previous reflections on his homeland history, O'Riordan had identified the propensity to give life for the common good as the hidden force that allowed the Irish nation to endure through the persecutions. The mysticism of the martyrdom was also present in the political culture of some rebel leaders, such as the poet and President of the self-proclaimed Irish Republic Patrick Pearse, who had explicitly suggested a temerarious analogy in his writings: the sacrifice of the patriots would have uplifted Ireland from the colonial yoke as well as the passion of Christ had redeemed the humanity (Murphy 1991, 48). When the Rector had spoken his words about the importance of the martyrdom, he did not want to incite the armed revolt against the imperialism, as Pearse did instead, but the spiritual inspiration that nourished their meditations was the same, as the chosen date to unleash the rebellion seemed to confirm.

Attesting the goodness of the insurgents' intentions and the nobility of their holocaust, the priests could therefore defend their reputation and compose their martyrology. O'Riordan and Hagan argued that the republican leaders were not the *Carbonari,* whom Italian press had talked about, but "practicing Catholics: someone, a man of exceptional religious piety" (Anonimo [Hagan, O'Riordan] 1916, 20). In order to confirm the faith of the militants executed by the British, the clergymen reproduced some of the letters that they had written before the execution, which proved their profound devotion. The intensity of the narrative reached its apogee when the authors came to describe the entire Easter Rising as a great collective martyrdom. The British had indeed distinguished themselves through the brutality of the repression, while on the other side of the barricade, "in the buildings occupied and defended by the insurgents, rosary crowns and other devotions were recited without interruption. On Sunday during the uprising, they tried to have a priest who celebrated Mass for them, to fulfil the festive precept" (21).

The legitimation of the moral behaviour of rebels also involved those who did not come from a strictly Catholic extraction. Roger Casement, who was born into a wealthy Anglo-Irish family and had been an important official of the British colonial administration for many years, "gives his name as a Catholic to be recognized as such in the prison. An Irish priest who is a chaplain in the prison in London where he [Casement] was imprisoned, wrote me that he had instructed Casement and received him in the Catholic Church before his execution" (*ibidem*). If Casement, however, was already internationally known thanks to its anti-slavery reports in defence of the black people of the Belgian Congo and of the indigenous people of Putu-

mayo, which had a great echo within Catholic world, the inclusion of other personalities was even more surprising. The Protestant and socialist suffragist Constance Markiewicz, who fought in the ranks of the workers' militia, "was so impressed by the religious sentiments of those with whom she was associated that she asked to be received in the church" (*ibidem*). Even the marxist syndicalist James Connolly, an advocate of the social revolution and of the establishment of a proletarian republic, who was referred to as "a sort of socialist" in the pamphlet, eventually was included among the martyrs because "he died with a feeling of true and fervent Catholic" (*ibidem*).

The consecration of the socialist revolutionaries was particularly extraordinary if we consider the bewilderment that the new urban poverty and the growth of a conflictual worker movement, which was inspired by the industrialism of the American Industrial Workers of the World rather than the British trade unionism, had provoked within the Irish Church, which was largely perched on the positions expressed in the 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum* by Pope Leo XIII as regards social doctrine. Connolly himself aspired to spread the socialism among the Catholic masses, so he publicly engaged in a theoretical battle with the Jesuit Father Robert Kane in 1910 about the question of the compatibility between Catholicism and socialism that most of the clergy severely denied (Harris 2001, 349). O'Riordan also had harshly criticized the behaviour of the trade unionists, exposing his resolute anti-socialism, in some of his letters sent to Hagan during the Dublin Lockout of 1913[24]. The Rector had therefore changed his judgment on the Irish socialists only after the trauma of the World War, which had caused a considerable rapprochement of his positions to the more radical ones of Hagan. The thesis supported in the brochure precisely represented the outcome of this sudden political evolution.

The aversion to the war and the recourse to the archetype of Christian martyrdom allowed the priests to justify the insurgents from an ethical point of view and to operate a profound re-elaboration of the boundaries of the Irish nation. The idea of the Irishness could no longer be reduced either to the profession of faith or to the evocation of an ancestral Gaelic civilization, but it expanded to include even the previously excluded social sectors. The unity of the Irish nation was reshaped to include a plurality of cultural and political movements, bearers of different and potentially conflicting instances. The subsumption of new subjects did not undermine the primacy of the Catholicism, which continued to innervate the O'Riordan and Hagan's conception of homeland. On the contrary, all the rebels, both republicans and socialists, both Catholics and Protestants, were eventually welcomed

[24] Michael O'Riordan to John Hagan, 27 November 1913; Michael O'Riordan to John Hagan, 10 December 1913.

into the fold of Catholic Ireland by virtue of their martyrdom. According to the leaders of Irish College, even the members of the most extremist political components of the Eastern Rising, that the governments and the press of all the Allied Powers had stigmatized as fierce and bloody individuals, were therefore sons of the island of the saints, in all respects.

Not surprisingly, the publication of the brochure called the attention and the hostility of the Italian authorities. Furthermore, the seminar was already known as a neutralist stronghold, so some newspapers of liberal interventionism, such as Milan's *Il Secolo*, had explicitly denounced the College as a pro-German propaganda hub during the fighting in Dublin, urging the government to act against it[25]. The State apparatus feared above all that the clerics could influence the Vatican and help to radicalise the Pope's neutralism. Indeed, the Cabinet of the Minister of the Interior so addressed the Director General of the Public Security Giacomo Vigliani, the highest police charge, in a note sent on October 16, 1916: "the fanatic and ignorant Irish clergy compromises the Vatican stating that the Holy See is in favour of the insurrection that would favour peace, desired as immediate by Benedict XV"[26]. The Head of the Cabinet of the Ministry of the Interior Camillo Corradini solicited the investigations of the pamphlet at the end of October, followed in November by the Head of the military intelligence services, Colonel Giovanni Garruccio, who had come to know it thanks to the seizure of a letter sent by an Italian journalist to a New York news agency, where the contents of the booklet were illustrated[27].

The police managed to question the typographer who was responsible for the publication after several weeks of investigation, and he confirmed that Monsignor O'Riordan had commissioned the press. The Prefect of Rome Faustino Aphel obtained the seizure order on November 13; thereafter, he turned to Vigliani to ask him whether it was appropriate to proceed against the typographer and to gain access to the Irish College in order to commandeer any copies possibly held there[28]. Vigliani transmitted the question to Corradini, but there is no evidence of an answer from the latter, nor

[25] See, for example, Anonimo (1916c), "Il Vaticano e I moti irlandesi", *Il Secolo,* 29 aprile.

[26] Nota del Gabinetto del Ministero degli Affari Interni al Direttore Generale della Pubblica Sicurezza Commissario Giacomo Vigliani, 16 ottobre 1916.

[27] Lettera del Capo del Gabinetto del Ministero degli Affari Interni Camillo Corradini alla Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza, 26 ottobre 1916; Lettera del Capo del Servizio Informazioni del Comando Supremo del Regio Esercito Italiano Colonnello Giovanni Garruccio alla Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza, 18 novembre 1916.

[28] Lettera del Prefetto di Roma Faustino Aphel alla Direzione Generale di Pubblica Sicurezza, 2 dicembre 1916.

of an irruption in the seminary in search of the documents[29]. The leaders of the Ministry of the Interior therefore probably preferred to desist, partly because the text had been distributed to the Pope and the cardinals for some time. Even if the repressive action had not had any real consequences, the perturbation aroused by the pamphlet confirmed that the Great Britain-allied Italian government perceived the propaganda activity of O'Riordan and Hagan as a danger. The political perspective suggested by their new idea of homeland contemplated indeed the possibility of a collaboration among those who objected to the Irish participation in the war, while they denied whatever legitimacy to any British hypothesis to introduce the conscription into the Emerald Isle.

5. Conclusion

The idea of the Irish nation exhibited by O'Riordan and Hagan in the pamphlet about the Easter Rising, which presented the episode as a Catholic revolt against war, represented the point of arrival of a process of political maturation stimulated by the impact with the world conflict. If Hagan was probably already inclined to flank a radical nationalist strategy, the evolution of O'Riordan was much deeper and more traumatic, and it eventually convinced the moderate Rector to defend the reasons for an insurrectional attempt in which socialists and revolutionary unions' members had also participated. Anyhow, the members of the Irish College joined in a shared propaganda initiative that aimed to influence the judgment of Pope Benedict XV and to preserve the hegemony of the Catholic Church within the Irish revolutionary movement in the new political phase, too.

The two priests tried to follow their aspirations towards the rediscovery of a peculiar Christian and Gaelic civilization or towards a distinctive Irish progress, alternative to the secular and technocratic one of the rest of Europe, in the context of a country wracked by the contrasts between unionists, nationalists, republicans and socialists, by identifying those sectors that opposed the war as the guardians of the Irish national otherness. The reference to the martyrdom that distinguished the September 1916 O'Riordan's pamphlet turned out to be functional to justify the transition from a more or less organicist idea of homeland to a more multifaceted and composite conception, which was placed under the aegis of a renewed Catholic nationalism but wasn't devoid of a certain social radicalism.

We can say that O'Riordan and Hagan were oriented in their reflections and in their work by two fundamental purposes: on the one hand, the

[29] Lettera del Direttore Generale della Pubblica Sicurezza Commissario Giacomo Vigliani al Gabinetto del Ministero degli Affari Interni, 7 dicembre 1916.

need to persuade the Holy See of the relevance of the Irish question for the Catholic cause; on the other hand, the ambition to emancipate the national demands of the Irish Catholics from the universal ones of the papacy. If the *Monsignore* was probably more closely linked to the pursuit of the first objective, the Vice Rector proved to be more sensitive to the quest of a greater national autonomy instead. Nonetheless, it would be wrong to contrast an "ultramontane" O'Riordan to a "modernist" Hagan. Despite their different sensibilities, on the contrary, both men were involved in the season of labour and transformation that characterized not only the Irish Church but also the whole body of the European political Catholicism in the climate of the First World War. The same desire to achieve greater self-determination on matters of national politics that persuaded some reformist Catholics of the Allied Powers to support the war effort of their respective countries and to assume openly imperialist positions, however, convinced the Irish clerics to redefine theirs their nation boundaries in an inclusive sense, leading them to elaborate an idea of homeland with clear anti-colonial implications[30].

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[30] The bibliography about the political choices of Catholic movements in the face of the Great War is unlimited. With regard to the Italian case and to the interventionist turning point of a large part of reformist or progressive Catholicism, see, for example, Bedeschi 1959, 220-223; Candeloro 1972 [1953], 376; De Rosa 1977, 182; 1988 [1970], 295.

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Where Does the State End and the Church Begin? The Strange Career of Richard S. Devane

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Abstract:

Richard S. Devane (1876-1951) was a Jesuit priest, a campaigner on a variety of social issues and a prolific author. He was also a key figure in the legislative landscape of post-1922 Ireland. He was invited as an expert witness to the Committee on Evil Literature in 1926 which enshrined a regime of literary censorship in the newly independent Ireland and he was the only witness personally invited to submit evidence to the Carrigan Committee in 1932, the infamous government commission that helped lay the groundwork for the Criminal Law Amendment Act that banned the sale, manufacture or importation of contraception in Ireland. In both his presence as a witness and in his voluminous journalistic writings on social issues, Devane provided a politico-theological legitimacy for this kind of draconian legislation. Drawing on Devane's published works, his collected papers in the Irish Jesuit Archive and government papers in the National Archives of Ireland, this biographical paper analyses Devane's central role in the Irish Free State's project of social control and raises questions about the borders dividing Church and State in the period after 1922. Moreover, I trace Devane's later political development in the 1930s and '40s; by this period, Devane had far less input in the State's legislative agenda but was producing far more detailed political writings; his two later books, *Challenge from Youth* (1942) and *The Failure of Individualism* (1948), as well as showing a clear Fascist influence also highlight the soft authoritarianism inherent to the politics of post-1922 Ireland.

Keywords: Catholic Nationalism, Church-State Relations, Historiography, Irish Free State, Jesuits

1. Where Does The Church End And The State Begin?

There is a subtle assumption in much of the mainline historiography of twentieth-century Ireland that the "Church" is logically anterior to the "State";

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the motive force which in turn pushed for State action. Lindsey Earner-Byrne, for example, has claimed that welfare-provision in Ireland remained the preserve of the Catholic Church; "the Roman Catholic Church began to organise itself in response to *its new responsibility to guide the Irish Free State* in relation to public welfare, both spiritual and temporal. The Catholic Church became one of the central lobbying forces in Irish public life and sought to assume the power of veto on matters regarding health of morality". Earner-Byrne labels this "Catholic Supremacy" (Earner-Byrne 2007, 24, 223, *emphases added*). In such a formulation, Church power determines and delimits State actions, leaving unexamined the question of *why* the State would allow itself to be made subservient. Clíona Rattigan begins her study of single motherhood and infanticide by noting that partition had created a Free State that was 92.6% Catholic and she then proceeds to note that

> The Catholic Church exerted a huge influence in Ireland throughout the period under review but particularly in the post-independence period when conservative social policies were introduced including bans on divorce and contraception along with a tightening of censorship. The Catholic Church's influence was felt in almost every sphere of Irish life, in education, health and politics as well as private matters of morality, and sexual morality in particular. (Rattigan 2012, 3)

Chrystel Hug's much-cited *The Politics of Sexual Morality in Ireland* pushes the Catholic envelope even further, ascribing anti-contraceptive legislation in the Irish Free State to the teachings of Augustine and Aquinas and to the 1930 papal encyclical *Castii Connubii* [Of Chaste Wedlock] (Hug 1999, 76)[1].

For sure, all of these scholars just mentioned also recognise the role of other factors, such as social class, the desire to maintain an image of Ireland as a virtuous nation, or the related desire for mass eugenic control. Nonetheless, their analyses do still confirm an observation of Moira Maguire: "Irish social historians tend to take for granted that for much of the twentieth century the Catholic Church was all-pervasive and all-powerful, particularly in the area of sexual morality, and that the state willingly bowed to pressure to legislate according to Catholic principles" (Maguire 2007, 79-80). The notion that the Church ruled over the State – subtly presumed in a large amount of the historiography of the Irish Free State – is not tenable. Rather, while not always in total harmony, Church and State should be seen as inextricably connected, both contributing to a shared project of moral control, social control, and the construction of an image of Ireland as a virtuous and pious nation. It is undeniable that "the Church" was a major force in post-1922 Ireland. But as I have elsewhere argued, whether done

[1] See also McAvoy 2012, which also understands anti-contraception legislation as a function of Catholic influence.

consciously or not, Church-centric explanations serve not only to place a disproportionate amount of blame on the clerical hierarchy, they also serve to exculpate the State. And in the context of a supposedly post-Catholic twenty-first century Ireland, oppressive social control ends up being historiographically represented as something *Catholics* were responsible for *in the past*, whilst the State, then as now, remains blameless (Beatty 2016, 210-211). Conversely, scholars such as Maryann Gialanella Valiulis (2008), Maurice Curtis (2010) and Emmet Larkin (1984) have placed a greater emphasis on the role of the State in shaping the moral economy of pre- and post-1922 Ireland, whilst still having a due recognition of the work that Catholicism did for the State. Such analyses are more satisfying. And Clare O'Hagan has suggested that "the Church" should be seen as part of the "ideological state apparatus" of post-1922 Ireland, in an analysis drawing on the seminal work of Louis Althusser (O'Hagan 2006).

The Marxist state-theorist Nicos Poulantzas (1975), himself a student of Althusser's, has argued against the idea that "the State" should be understood solely in terms of its formal institutions. Rather, Poulantzas contends that the State should be understood as a strategic field that blurs the boundaries between formal state institutions and civil society; the latter being the "space" in which the State acts and enforces its power[2]. And for Poulantzas, the Church is an integral part of the State: "All the apparatuses of hegemony, including those that are legally private (ideological and cultural apparatuses, the Church, etc.), all these form part of the State" (Poulantzas 1978, 36). Where Marx and Engels (1985 [1848], 82) spoke of the state as being "a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie", Poulantzas started from the assumption that there is no single ruling class whose interests can be served by the State. Rather, States are "fractional", themselves representing ruling classes divided by industry, economic sector and ideology. And for Poulantzas, the Church was infiltrated by the State and acted on behalf of the State. This is too simplistic and ignores how much the Church itself is a power-source with ideologies and praxes that do not always align neatly with those of the State. Poulantzas over-determines the power and reach of the State; the Catholic Church in Ireland, for example, was not a mere adjunct of the State[3]. Nonetheless, Poulantzas provides a useful theorisation of Church-State power relations.

[2] For an application of Poulantzas' ideas to Irish political history, see: Dunphy 1995. Peter O'Neill (2016) has used Poulantzas' ideas to strong effect to understand Church-State relations in the US. See also: Gallas 2016, a work that applies Poulantzas' conceptions of the state whilst also critically revising them.

[3] A further recurring problem with both Althusser and Poulantzas is that it is rarely clear if they are discussing "the capitalist State" at some high level of abstraction, or merely their contemporary French state(s) of the 1960s and 1970s.

This paper is a study of the Jesuit priest, social reformer and political activist Richard S. Devane (1876-1951) and an investigation of how Devane's political-theological writings and activism reveal some of the important dynamics and conceptual problems of Church-State relations in the years after 1922. Devane was one of the key figures in the legislative history of the Irish Free State, with a strong influence on the soft authoritarian world of post-1922 social reform and social control. He was present at the legislative birth of much of the socio-political order of the newly independent state, from the Committee on Evil Literature in 1926 to the Carrigan Commission in 1930. Yet his importance has been underestimated by historians; while he makes an appearance in a large amount of the historiographical literature on the 1920s and '30s, to date there has been no sustained biography published of Devane and he has received only a small amount of direct scholarly attention[4].

2. More Cotton-Wool For Frail, Feckless Pat

Devane was born in Limerick City in 1876, growing up in solidly bourgeois surroundings. His father was "a well-known merchant of that city" [IJA J44/3 (2)]. After studying at Mungret College and St. Munchin's Seminary, both in Limerick, he moved to Maynooth, where he was ordained in 1901. Though he would later rail against the evils of English culture and the negative presence of the "garrison", which he claimed promoted prostitution (Luddy 2007, 195; Ferriter 2009, 148, 156), he spent the early years of his vocation at St. Patrick's Church in Middlesborough as well as serving as an army chaplain for ten years in Limerick. He was the curate at St. Michael's Parish in Limerick, "a large working class district", from 1904 to 1918. Already at this early point, he was involved in "rescue and vigilance work" – synonyms for proselytising among prostitutes and for censorship[5] – and in outreach to labourers that presumably aimed to protect them from the evils of atheistic socialism. He was also involved in temperance work and was a force behind the early regulation of cinemas in Limerick, which received the support of Limerick Borough Council. In July 1918, Devane entered the Society of Jesus at St. Stanislaus College in Tullamore and was professed two years later; his joining the Jesuits was apparently a shock to many. From 1922 to 1932, Devane was in charge of a retreat house for working men in Rathfarnham and also served in the 1930s and '40s as director of a retreat house in nearby Milltown Park. He was thus, fortuitously, in Dublin and promoting "social

[4] In my research, I only found two dedicated studies of Devane: Walsh 2014-2015, and O'Riordan 2015. Walsh's monograph-length biography of Devane - *Richard Devane SJ: Social Commentator and Advocate: 1876-1951* - was published just as this paper was going to press.

[5] For the history of "Vigilance" work in early twentieth-century Ireland, see: Curtis 2010.

Catholicism" at the founding moment of the Irish Free State, with a position that afforded him "more leisure and larger scope for his special talents". Indeed, he may have joined the Jesuits precisely because it would give him time and space, free from parochial duties, to devote to social activism[6].

As the new Free State emerged from civil war, with its legitimacy less than fully respected, it made an alliance with a Catholic Church that had long exhibited a fear of "the mob" and of mass politics more broadly. Both the new state and the Church sought a return to some sense of societal normality, order, and control after the Civil War (Curtis 2010, 11; Beatty 2016, 210). Much of this can be seen in a representative article that Devane wrote on "Indecent Literature" for the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record* in 1925 (and also published as a stand-alone pamphlet). In this article, he addressed what he saw as the need for the censorship of print publications in the Irish Free State. He placed this in a broader context of contemporary reforms in other areas of sexual morality, such as prostitution, age of consent laws, and the legal status of illegitimate children. Devane said the issue of "indecent literature" must be addressed using the Free State's "new-won powers" (1925, 1) but also "according to Irish ideals and Catholic standards" (*ibidem*); in other words Church, Nation, and State were melded in his conception, and he drew on his own experiences as a social-reforming priest; but where he had lead a vigilance committee in Limerick in the previous decade that pressured Catholic shop-owners to boycott certain publications, he felt that such approaches would not work in larger and more religiously diverse cities like Cork or Dublin. Thus he argued that the State has to step in, calling this "the necessity of falling back upon the law"[7] (23). Fitting with Poulantzas' conceptions, Devane's short 1925 essay certainly highlights how a statist project was being carried out through the "private" machinery of the Church.

Of central concern for Devane were publications that advertised or otherwise promoted the use of contraception. Devane condemned contraception on Catholic lines, identifying its "immorality" and discussing how adver-

[6] Devane's personal papers in the Irish Jesuit Archives contain little about his early life; he may have suppressed his personal documents from before 1918, to cover up his work as a chaplain for the British army, or he may have discarded any personal documents from before his joining the Jesuit order, also in 1918. The biographical information presented here comes from the entry on Devane by Maurice Cronin in the *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, Martin Walsh's essay on Devane (listed above) and from the obituaries of Devane in his papers at the Jesuit Archives J44/1: *Mungret Annual* (Limerick, Mungret College: 1952) and *Irish Province News* (July, 1951). Both of these draw heavily on the obituary of Devane in the *Irish Independent*, 24 May 1951; a press cutting of that obituary is available at the Irish Jesuit Archives (IJA) J44/3 (2).

[7] In one footnote to the article, Devane revealed what he means by the problem of enforcing vigilance in a religiously diverse city. He condemned one bookshop as having an Irish name "which is in strange conflict with that of the alien who owns it", in what was presumably a coded reference to a Jewish-owned business.

tisements for contraceptives educate women "in hideous forms of vice" (13). But he also called contraception a form of "race suicide" (14) promoted by dangerously independent female "Malthusians" (16). His concerns were both sacred and secular, clerical and statist, gendered and racialised. Privileging the State over the Church, though, Devane said he had "no doubt that the Ministers of the Irish Free State, who have the custody of the Nation's life and morals in their hands, will not hesitate to take every means necessary for the exclusion of this vile stuff [contraception], and we trust that they will have the support of every member of the Dáil and the Senate who has the moral welfare of the Nation, especially of the young, at heart, and who truly represent the mind of the Irish people" (14). Throughout this discussion of "indecent literature", Devane moves between Ireland and Irish politics *as it is* and as he *expects it to be* once the State, not the Church, has enacted the proper reforms (Devane 1925)[8].

Devane claimed in this article that, through his work with the Priests Social Guild, he had urged the then Minister for Justice, Kevin O'Higgins, to act on this issue, to "legally [strangle] this vile traffic". This appears to be disingenuous. According to the records of the Censorship Judgements for the Jesuit Province of Ireland, Devane wrote his article on "Indecent Literature" after it had been "suggested" to him by Minister O'Higgins, "who is conscious to excite an atmosphere in advance so as to facilitate legislation" [IJA ADMN12/13 (1)]. There is an important dynamic on display here; "the State", represented by the Minister of Justice, requested that "the Church", personified by Fr. Devane, write an article that will publicly tell "the State", the legislature, what to do. The circularity of all this reveals an important conceptual problem in Irish historiography; it is rarely clear where the Church ends and the State begins in modern Ireland. Devane ended his article by affirming that it "has been written to help to clear the way and to inform public opinion" (1925, 23), perhaps meaning that public opinion is to be massaged by the Church and convinced to go along with the State's legislative agenda? The intertwining issues on display in both Devane's article and in its background – the borders of Church and State, the power-relations between Church and State, the question of which of the two was leading and which was being led – are well known in Irish historiography and yet remain under-theorised.

Moreover, just as understanding "the State" solely in terms of its formal institutions can be narrowly restrictive, so too "the Church" was not (and is not) a coherent entity. The conceptual fuzziness of "the State" finds a paral-

[8] This essay was reprinted from *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, February 1925. Peter Martin (2006, 60-67) places Devane's views in the broader framework of contemporary debates about censorship.

lel in that of "the Church". Devane's article was published in *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, "a monthly journal under episcopal sanction". Devane, as a Jesuit, worked outside of that episcopal hierarchy. In addition, he regularly worked in concert what a number of lay vigilance groups. Such lay Catholic groups were often at odds with the hierarchy and certainly tended to have a different perception of the nature of Church-State relations[9]. The Church is just as fractional as the State.

The support for censorship of the press on display in Devane's 1925 essay on "Indecent Literature" was a trope that ran through much of his career. He had already been a strong advocate of "vigilance" in the 1910s, and showed a willingness to work "outside the law" up to and including seizing newspapers from trains as they arrived in Limerick and burning them (Devane 1950, 10). He would later fondly recall this as a "memorable and effective attack on the filthy Sunday cross-Channel papers" (Devane 1925, 4). When Devane was called as a witness to the Free State government's Committee on Evil Literature in 1926, his testimony was primarily concerned with the "hideous literature" and "filthy pornographic matter" in which the use of contraception was promoted (NAI JUS 7/1/1). He also provided the Committee with examples of this published material, which he had legally purchased in Dublin; *A Letter to Working Mothers* by Marie Stopes and Margaret Sanger's *Family Limitation (Handbook for Working Mothers)* were two prominent titles[10]. Devane's testimony was peppered with voyeuristic stories about various businesses in Dublin that sold contraception which Vigilance activists had surveilled or a story about a "jew" [*sic*] found selling contraceptives in Ballina; when the Gardaí failed to stop him, the local parish priest held an ad hoc trial and attempted to extract a £100 fine from him. "The jew paid £10 and cleared out" (NAI JUS 7/2/9)[11]. If and when the State could not enforce moral control, the Church could step in.

In a 1927 pamphlet on *Evil Literature*, which publicised his contributions to the Committee on Evil Literature, Devane spoke of the need to make the public "sufficiently prepared" for the implementation of censorship. He felt there had been a "failure to create atmosphere […] the Government needs

[9] In his study of elite Catholic schools, Ciaran O'Neill (2014, 14-15) touches on the similar problem of speaking of "The Church" in singular terms, since secular clergy, the various monastic orders, and the episcopal hierarchy are all included under this umbrella term, as are the autonomous Jesuits. And it is worth adding that the Jesuits were never as uniformly reactionary as Devane.

[10] Both books were probably purchased in Kearney's on Stephen Street, Dublin, which he mentioned in his testimony to the Committee on Evil Literature (McAvoy 2012, 43).

[11] See also: Keogh 1998, 80. For a critical study of the broader history of Irish antisemitism, see Douglas 2018. On Devane's voyeuristic knowledge of the various places one could buy contraception in Dublin, see: Ferriter 2009, 193-194.

an informed public opinion to facilitate its efforts in introducing legislation, and to help towards countering in advance a certain opposition which cannot be burked and which must be faced" (3). Devane revealed much here about the role the Church played in shaping public opinion for the State; needless to say, he saw his published work as a way to do all this (Devane 1927). In 1950, a year before his death Devane published a short pamphlet that restated his verbal assault on *The Imported Press*. What is perhaps most noteworthy about this late career pamphlet is how much it repeats Devane's views from a quarter century earlier; on issues of censorship and the building of a correctly moral nationalist culture he was not prone to changing his mind. It is not for nothing that Myles nagCopaleen once snapped that Devane sought to impose, via censorship, "more cotton-wool for frail, feckless Pat" (IJA J44/2, Undated Cutting). Devane remained motivated by a desire to protect the child-like Irish people from dangerous foreign ideas.

3. An Irish Sun Was Replaced By An English Sun

In that pamphlet on *The Imported Press*, Devane looked back at his early years as a priest in the north of England, asserting that his experiences from that time informed his desires for press censorship. He claimed to have witnessed with unease how English workers spent their Sundays reading salacious tabloid news until the pubs opened and they could start their heavy drinking (Devane 1950, 8). Devane - who on occasion let slip his contempt for the popular classes - had lived in the heavily industrial city of Middlesborough and some class-based snobbery mixed with his anti-English sentiments. The idea that England was a morally dangerous place, and thus that publications coming from that country must be censored, were intensified by Devane's emotive language and turns-of-phrase; "the cross-Channel unclean press"; "the reptile press"; "cross-Channel looseness, grossness, and vulgarity that are nowadays being propagated with impunity throughout the country"; "unclean and vulgar literature"; "tainted goods"; "Advertisements of manuals of immorality, of immoral appliances, and of diabolical books, mostly written by women, are becoming quite common in what is appropriately styled the "gutter press," which is dumped by the ton each week on the Dublin quays". He also spoke anxiously about the dangers that Irish "girls" faced upon moving to the fleshpots of England (NAI JUS 90/4/1; NAI 2005/32/105; Beatty 2016, 201). Indeed, Devane believed that "English Standards" of legislation, which gave legal sanction to contraception, were the source of much of Ireland's problems (NAI JUS 7/1/1). This moral horror in turn worked to buttress an image of Irish moral purity over and against the baseness that supposedly existed on the other side of St. George's Channel. Devane happily talked of "the clean tradition of the Irish Press" (Devane 1925, 13; Beatty 2016, 200) and said that "The Irish people have been ever remarkable for their high appreciation of purity and chastity" (Devane 1924, 58).

There was indeed a strongly felt disgust at England and English culture running throughout Devane's prose. In one of his oddest moments, he used a 1928 essay to attack Daylight Savings Time, describing it an insidious British importation. While other European nations - "saner" nations - have rejected the "hysteria" of Daylight Savings, "We retain it because it has been imposed on us together with Greenwich Time by Great Britain, and because we have neither the social sense nor the national spirit to reject it" (1928, 3). Devane saw something important in the fact that Daylight Savings Time was imposed on Ireland just after the Easter Rising, when the nation was distracted:

> Let me emphasize the fact that we were never consulted as to whether an agricultural country such as ours needed Summer Time or not; it was simply thrust on us when the nation was sorely distracted, in one of the most tragic periods of our history, and in the sole interest of Great Britain. We have had the power of removing this cruel infliction on rural Ireland for many years, but we still lie slavishly under it. (6)

Ireland had been forced into British Time, literally and figuratively: "by a few lines of a British Act we lost our own Irish Time […] an Irish sun was replaced by an English sun" (Devane 1939, 6-7). Now Ireland must break out of this[12].

It would be all too easy to caricature Devane as an unthinking anglophobe. And yet there was a certain kind of respect for England, as well as a desire for England to respect Ireland, that recurs in Devane's writings; even the notion that Ireland needs to prove its moral superiority over England draws on a tacit desire for English respect. His 1927 discussion of *Evil Literature: Some Suggestions* was introduced with a preface by Evelyn Cecil, a Tory MP who had advocated censorship in the UK and whose work had attracted European-wide attention. In a 1931 essay on the dangers of public dancing, Devane approvingly quoted the more stringent regulations enforced in Britain (discussed below) and he also praised the English system of local government as a form of social organisation that could rectify "the disintegrating influences operative to-day". With some adjustments for "our own peculiar conditions" such English-style governance would "preserve our rural traditions" and "keep our people rooted in the soil" (Devane 1931, 8). He also maintained a correspondence with Alison Neilans, the General Secretary of the English-based Association for Moral and Social Hygiene (Ferriter 2009, 145-146).

[12] For the broader history of the often heated debates over the adoption of daylight savings time, see Ogle 2015.

Indeed, Devane showed an awareness of international currents in censorship, and in moral legislation in general, that is at stark odds with the stereotypical image of Ireland as an isolated *sacra insula* in the years after 1922. He approvingly referenced the International Convention for the Circulation and Traffic in Obscene Publications, organised under the auspices of the League of Nations on 31 August 1923. Devane showed himself aware of similar work being done by the New England Watch and Ward (Vigilance) Society and looked to the British Dominions of Canada and Australia for models of literary censorship worth emulating (Devane 1925, 6, 8, 16). He praised the anti-dancing legislation passed in Mussolini's Italy, in the Netherlands, and in Kemalist Turkey and contemporary Cuba as well as the attempt in the German state of Thuringia to ban "jazz music and negro dances" which, Devane claimed, "glorify negroism and strike a blow at German kultur" (Devane 1931a, 186, 190; Devane 1928[13]). Similarly, his support for film censorship (of which more later) looked for inspiration from, among others, Japan, Germany, France, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, and, incongruously, the USSR (IJA J44/10). Devane had "an encyclopaedic knowledge of international law [related to sexual morality] and of the debates that informed it in a variety of jurisdictions" (O'Riordan 2015, 131). His transnational conservatism highlights how the moral anxieties of post-1922 Ireland - focusing on jazz music, modern styles of dancing, flapper girls - were part of a broader global moment. And in all of the places to which he looked for inspiration, he saw (or at the least, imagined he saw) interventionist states willing to regulate and control the leisure activities of their citizens, the model of social control he wished to import back into Ireland. Devane's internationalism did important ideological work for him.

4. A Chivalrous And Catholic Nation

Devane's views of sexual morality, taken as whole, reiterated the notion that a Catholic conception of individual sexual morality would make for a neat partnership with the State. This was certainly the case with his contribution to the infamous Carrigan Committee of the early 1930s[14]. Devane was present at the Committee's fourth meeting, on 1 July 1930, and like Frank Duff (who had presented his evidence a week earlier, on 27 June), Devane agreed that prostitution was rife in Ireland. For Devane, it was temporary migration to England, as well as the new fashion of dance halls, which had "ruined" these

[13] This essay was reprinted from the June 1928 issue of the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*.

[14] For background, see James Smith's discussion of the Committee and the "partnership" of Church and State (Smith 2004, 208).

"girls" (NAI JUS 90/4/1)[15]. Devane, like Duff, urged that prostitutes be sent to special "homes" for treatment, something the Carrigan Report repeated in its recommendation that "Girl offenders" (i.e. those aged 16-21) should be dealt with via a borstal system (NAI 2005/32/105). In other words, Devane was a supporter of what James Smith has aptly called Ireland's "architecture of containment", the institutional machinery that allowed "the decolonizing nation-state to confine aberrant citizens, rendering invisible women and children who fell foul of society's moral proscriptions […] a national identity that privileged Catholic morality and valorized the correlation between marriage and motherhood while at the same time effacing nonconforming citizens who were institutionally confined" (Smith 2007, 46-47)[16].

The fallout from the Carrigan Committee also shows that "the Church" is not a singular or static entity. The "Catholic" input into the Carriage Committee was from figures such as Devane or lay activists like Frank Duff, founder of the Legion of Mary, as well as conventional priests subject to episcopal authority[17]. And Devane and Duff's attitudes were far closer to the extreme measures recommended in the Carrigan Report than was the Catholic Hierarchy. Indeed, the Hierarchy were themselves far closer to the Government in their shared unease about Carrigan's findings[18].

A year after his appearance at the Carrigan Committee, Devane returned to the perceived dangers of public dancing in an article for the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*[19]. Here, he described dance halls as "A moral and national menace" and claimed they were bastions of drunkenness and even worse: "Not only is drink taken by the men but girls [*sic*] are induced to do so. Hence the orgies one sees so often reported in the Press and which centre round the dance-halls". Devane spoke of dance venues as "man-traps" and physically dirty places; notions of sanitised space were central, if subtle, elements in his thinking (Devane 1931a, 174)[20]. Fitting with his complicated perceptions of British society,

[15] See also: NAI JUS 90/4/13, Memo of Evidence of Rev. R.S. Devane, S.J. These are "Heads of Evidence", rough notes based on Devane's evidence. Under the heading "Preventive Work" Devane spoke of "Unmarried Mother; Mentally Defectives; Girls out of Control; Dance Halls…".

[16] For Devane's views of Magdalen Laundries, see: Luddy 2007, 120.

[17] See: National Archives of Ireland (NAI), JUS 90/4/2, Criminal Law Amendment Committee, List of Witnesses.

[18] NAI JUS H247/41B, Criminal Law Amendment Committee (1932-1933), Rough Notes made by the Minister for Justice after an interview on the 1st December, 1932, between the Bishop of Limerick, the Bishop of Ossory, the Bishop of Thasos and the Minister.

[19] For the broader history of the gendered and racial history of dancing, and of moral panics surrounding it, see: O'Connor 2003; Craig 2013.

[20] One article by Devane, *The Dance Hall: A National and Moral Menace*, was censored by the Jesuits' authority for the "province" of Ireland, since it was felt that the earlier draft included language "more indelicate or suggestive than need be", particularly in its descriptions of dances (IJA, Censorship Judgements (1924-1968), ADMN12/15 (2), *Judicium Cen-*

Devane approvingly quoted the more stringent regulations enforced in Britain, whereby dance halls were more closely monitored by the authorities: "There is a spirit of discipline in all this that it would be well we should copy, if for no other reason than to teach many of our young folk a sense of restraint and discipline, of which they seem scarcely to have a rudimentary idea" (Devane 1931a, 191-192). Whereas Devane saw Irish public spaces as increasingly polluted by dance halls, British state authorities, he believed, had hygienically disciplined their public spaces. His conclusion was that "The moral health of the [Irish] Nation is not quite sound and shows signs of being gradually undermined… There is a general languor and *malaise* in the body corporate which seem to imply a general poisoning of the national system" (*ibidem*). Pushing his medical metaphor, Devane urged: "Remove the source of infection and a surprising recovery will soon take place… We need the hand of a national surgeon, of a strong Minister, to rid us of its poisoning influence and so to lead to the restoration of our normal moral health. God send it soon" (*ibidem*)[21]. Where organisations such as the Catholic Truth Society argued for a Church-led reform of Irish society, Devane saw the State as the ideal motive force (Beatty 2016, 202)[22]. He felt the State should work in a negating way, to remove the problem of public dancing, while the Church, the Home and the School would work in a positive way, to promote a better alternative morality (Devane 1931a, 194).

Yet Devane's sense that England was also a source of moral danger did play a determining role in his views of Irish sexuality. In a 1928 pamphlet on *The Unmarried Mother and the Poor Law Commission*, Devane claimed that 317 pregnant Irish women had arrived in Liverpool in 1926-1927, based on statistics supplied by the Liverpool Port and Station Work Society. Reflecting the surveillance culture of Irish sexual morality in the Free State years, Devane said that "It would be interesting to follow the careers of these 300 of our young country women, stranded in a large seaport city, and to discover their

sorum Provinciae Hiberniae, 29 December 1930). Like his fellow Jesuit, Edward Cahill, who dabbled in Republicanism, antisemitism, and conspiracy theories about the Free Masons, Devane also found himself at stark odds with the Irish leadership of the Society of Jesus. It is highly questionable if Devane can be seen as representative of the broader Jesuit order, whose leadership tended to be more politically cautious.

[21] Devane also supplied copies of this article to the members of the Carrigan Committee, along with a contemporaneous article, also from the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, on "The Legal Protection of Girls" (NAI JUS 90/4/13).

[22] It is perhaps also the case that public dances tapped into Devane's fears of anonymity and social control in a modern society no longer based around isolated villages: "[I]n lonely country places the dangers are too obvious to need description. If the dance were confined to the people of the district one could be more tolerant. But, when it is open to all and sundry who come from many miles away, and who are complete strangers, then a new element of danger becomes only too apparent" (Devane 1931a, 170).

fate" (1928, 6). It is telling that in Devane's prose, Irish women seem to have no free will; they are "stranded" in England, rather than being emigrants. This recurs throughout this piece, which moves to a discussion of age-of-consent laws. Devane worked from the premise that any sexual contact is initiated by men, with "prematurely developed girls, inexperienced and an easy prey to the seducer", being acted upon *by* these men (12). He elsewhere spoke of "the insuppressible lust of men" which exists in contrast to "the independent and free and easy airs of the growing girl of to-day". Thus, Devane concluded that there was a "greater need for protection", to guard "girls" from both "the seduction of the designing blackguard" as well as from "her own silliness and stupidity". Such protection was something women had a right to expect in "a chivalrous and Catholic nation" (Devane 1924, 58-64). In this mode of analysis, Devane departed sharply from the views of Frank Duff, perhaps *the* prominent lay Catholic social reformer of the early Free State. For Duff, sexually active girls and women were a source of danger who actively seduced otherwise innocent men (Beatty 2016, 191-196). For Devane the dangers resided within men themselves as "girls" remained innocent victims or, at most, foolish children[23]. And both State and Church would need to legislate for this.

5. The Films Are A Grave National Menace To Our Culture

Later in life, Devane developed a keen interest in film production and the regulation of the cinema industry. He saw films as a useful means of modern mass education and also as a prophylactic against "demoralising and denationalising influences" (IJA J44/14). Accentuating the need for a nationalist cinema to educate the people was Devane's fear that Irish children's nationalist education would be erased by the deracinating effects of commercial movies. "Will their impressionable minds be any more able to resist the seductive lessons of the screen than African primitives armed with bows and arrows can oppose a modern mechanised army with airplanes and tanks?". He also believed that adults were just as liable to be infected by the commercial cinema. Films, he said, have the potential to be "a grave national menace to our culture" (Devane 1942, 4), using almost the exact same phraseology he had used to warn about dance halls and imported literature.

Unsurprisingly, Devane had favourable views of film censorship. He was certainly aware of the (in)famous Hays Code in the US, having learnt of it from the book *Decency in Motion Pictures* by Martin Quigley, which he also recommended to the Archbishop of Dublin, John Charles McQuaid, in 1941

[23] Elsewhere, though, Devane showed himself to be closer to Duff's horror in the face of uncontrolled female sexuality (Luddy 2007, 200, 207).

(IJA J44/22)[24]. On this issue, Devane returned to his regular idea that public opinion needs to be "formed" so as to support film censorship and said that the film industry is so powerful that "nothing but the State can control them" (Devane 1942). He was particularly interested in establishing a National Film Institute that could co-ordinate all this and thus ameliorate the "baneful influences" (IJA J44/14) of commercial cinema:

> The National Film Institute should link up various organised elements of the nation and help towards awakening national consciousness as regards the propagandist, cultural and educational value of the films. It would act as a clearing house for information on all matters affecting films at home and abroad, particularly as regards education and general culture, influence public opinion to appreciate the value of films as entertainment and instruction and advise educational bodies and other organisations. (*Ibidem*)

As with so much else of his proposals, Devane looked overseas for examples worth emulating, identifying the Danish Film Institute as a useful model.

There was also a certain kind of fear of global capitalism here. In his contribution to *The Irish Cinema Handbook* (1943), Devane spoke of "our commercial exploitation by cosmopolitan adventurers" in the film industry. He claimed that Irish cinema owners worked under "oppressive conditions imposed by foreign film renters" who force Irish cinemas to take their products. He called this a "despotic invasion of authority from outside" which "should not be tolerated in a sovereign State", though it is not clear if he was offended by the coercion itself rather than its foreign origins (Devane 1943, 13, 14, 16, 18). Confirming the idea that Devane was animated by a certain fear of capitalism, his obituary in his alma mater's school magazine talked of how he "did not underestimate the power of paganism backed by wealth" and "he often met bitter opposition from those who made money at the cost of human souls" (IJA J44/1).

In a preface [*Brollach*] he wrote for a one-off film magazine published by the short-lived fascist group *Ailtirí na hAiséirghe* [Architects of the Resurrection] (Devane 1942a), Devane voiced his fears about the denationalising effects of the film industry, "which has all the driving power of limitless capital behind it, appealing to the taste of the ignorant and the half-educated who constitute the great majority of humanity" (3-5), thus mixing his idiosyncratic anti-capitalism with old-fashioned social snobbery. There were clearly nationalist concerns at work here, as he pondered: "Can any people preserve for long a distinct national character, a national culture, when these

[24] Quigley was a devout Catholic, instrumental in the establishment of the Motion Picture Production Code (Hays Code) and was the publisher of the *Motion Picture Herald*, a trade publication.

huge organisations, with unlimited resources can break into and take possession of the minds of men everywhere, creating images, sensations, ideas of life which with few exceptions are cheap, vulgar and sensational?" (*ibidem*). Anxieties about "the degeneration of culture under the impact of modernity" were one of the main "thematic prongs of the Right in the twentieth century" (Balakrishnan 2000, 6). Devane certainly appears to have feared the fissiparous effects of the global capitalist culture industry on Irish traditions and such thinking, as Peter Martin has suggested, often slipped into antisemitic hostility against an international film industry presumed to be controlled by Jews (Martin 2006, 176). Also worth noting is the suggestion, again, that some people are passive in the face of danger (as with "girls" in the face of rapacious men); even Devane's description of the culture industry penetrating men's minds has an almost sexual tinge to it (Devane 1942)[25].

In his views on the cinema, though, he did not find favour with Fianna Fáil governments. An attempt to gain an audience with Eamon de Valera, so that Devane and a group of supporters could present proposals for "a government inquiry into the use of the cinema for nationalist propaganda purposes", appears to have been received with a polite rebuttal (IJA J44/10; IJA J44/11)[26]. Despite his strong views on the topic, Devane does not appear to have been consulted in 1935 when the Fianna Fáil government was preparing the Dance Halls Act. He was thus unsurprisingly dissatisfied with this piece of legislation (Luddy 2007, 199). It seems that by the mid-1930s Devane's links to the State had been sidelined by Fianna Fáil; indeed, the Republicans never seem to have had an interest in him. Perhaps his longstanding association with the legislative agenda of Cumann na nGaedheal put him at odds with the anti-Treatyites. His contributions to the debacle of the Carrigan Committee may also have hurt his reputation in government circles. All of which raises interesting questions, again, about how the State interacts with the Church; shifts in control of the State clearly affect which factions of the Church are consulted or allowed access to State power. Additionally, Devane's own ideological development further compounded his problem of finding a stable place within fluid Church-State relations.

6. Ireland Wants Neither Extremists Of The Right Nor Of The Left

By the 1930s, Devane began to flirt with continental fascism. While he appears to have been a supporter of Mussolini (Douglas 2009, 50), he reserved a special note of affection for António de Oliveira Salazar, "one of the greatest statesmen in Europe to-day", who had expurgated French imported "Grand

[25] For the history of *Ailtirí na hAiséirghe*, see: Douglas 2009.

[26] See also Martin 2006, 151-152.

Orient Masonic Liberalism" from Portugal. In a pamphlet in the early forties, proposing reforms in local government, and which drew on examples from across Europe, Devane held particular praise for the reforms under Salazar. Only the heads of families could vote in local elections in Portugal's *Estado Novo*, a reform Devane praised for the way it made families the basic unit of society; a familial state would, he claimed, be free of internecine ideological strife. Devane, though, did recognise the existence of female political concerns, naming welfare and school lunches specifically, and so did allow that mothers, as well as fathers, should retain voting rights (Devane 1940, 13-21). Three years prior to this, Devane had used a similar vocabulary to praise de Valera's new constitution. Breaking from "conventional liberalism", with its undue focus on the individual, Devane wrote to the Taoiseach of his happiness that the family would now be the basic unit of Irish society. Fr. Devane suggested that Dev now borrow from Salazar and give votes to heads of families only in future elections. The letter leaves it diplomatically unstated, but tacitly assumed, that heads of households are generally men (NAI TAOIS/ S9856)[27]. In a 1938 article for the *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, Devane reiterated his support for Salazar, praising his focus on the family, his anti-liberalism, and his "restoration of a Christian Portugal" (1938, 26), a country that was supposedly "poisonously anti-Catholic" (24) prior to Salazar. Devane also boosted Portuguese education as a model for Irish schools, "a scheme of moral and civic instruction *drafted by the State itself* – no doubt acting in accord with the Church" (30; emphasis added).

In the 1940s, Devane published his two longest and most ambitious works, both of which continued in this far-right political vein. In *Challenge from Youth* (1942), Devane looked at various youth movements in contemporary Europe; in Soviet Russia, Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, Portugal, Pétain's France, and Britain. Much of this was a continuation of an earlier interest in adolescence as *the* deciding period in citizens' religious, moral and political development[28]. And again, Devane showed a sharp awareness of developments elsewhere in Europe[29]. He stated that in a Christian country such as Ireland, "there can obviously be no place for State regimentation of youth and, furthermore, that religion must be the basis and formative spirit of youth training" (Devane 1942b, xi). Thus, he seemed to suggest that the Church should take an unquestioned lead in organising the nation's youth. Devane was clearly shocked by the irre-

[27] The fact that this letter was summarized for the Taoiseach, rather than de Valera directly reading it himself, suggests that his ideas were being kept at arm's length.

[28] This is the central focus of O'Riordan 2015.

[29] Other than the six chapters on the USSR, Germany, Italy, France, Portugal, and the UK, Devane also drew on material related to Finland, Switzerland, Poland, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and South Africa.

ligious nature of the USSR and the Third Reich, yet he also recommended a Catholicised version of the Nazi *Arbeitsdienst* [Work Service] as a model to be adopted in Ireland and concluded that

> the secret of the success of Communists, Fascists and Nazis lies in one single fact, namely, that they have an intense, personal, all-consuming *faith*, *a totalitarian faith*, colouring their minds, influencing their outlook and operating in a conscious way throughout the actions of their daily lives. The question of questions for the whole of Christianity to-day, and much more of to-morrow is - "Can we Christians develop such a totalitarian Christian faith of a like white-heat intensity?" (149; emphasis in original)

And he spoke of his hope that the Irish could become "as consciously Christian or Catholic as the Germans are Nazi, the Russians, Communist, the Italians, Fascist" (168). What he thus seemed to be arguing for was a state-backed youth movement that would percolate an authoritarian and political Catholicism throughout Irish society (149, 168). Looking approvingly at youth labour schemes in post-1939 Britain, Devane observed that "The *laissez-faire* attitude of Liberal Democracy towards Youth is at last being buried in Britain; how long more will it be allowed to remain alive in Éire? There is a big job waiting to be tackled both by Church and State in Ireland… It is useless to suggest that we have too many things on hands at present; Britain, with her colossal war, can yet find time for her youth; why cannot we also?" (Devane 1942, 256). State and Church were, here, coterminous in his conceptualisations.

Where *Challenge from Youth* ranged across the spaces of Europe, his next book, *The Failure of Individualism* (1948) manoeuvred back in time, to find the root cause of the turmoil Devane felt was gripping post-war Europe. Devane described this book as a "Handbook of Politics and Economics" (1948, xi), for citizens who wish to understand "the present social chaos" (*ibidem*). And he traced this "chaos" back to the post-Reformation erosion of "the organic structure of society", replaced by individualism, atomism and an antisocial and unnatural isolation (5). He identified three forms of individualism; political individualism, represented by the liberalism of Locke and Rousseau (though the latter could hardly be called an anti-statist individualist); religious individualism, embodied in the English Protestantism he believed had destroyed the unity of medieval Catholic Europe; and economic individualism, also known as capitalism. Devane drew on an eclectic range of sources for all this; the Anglo-French Catholic intellectual Hilare Belloc, Thomas Hobbes, Voltaire, Montesquieu, the Chinese nationalist leader Sun Yat Sen, the French Catholic intellectual Jacques Maritain, Max Weber, and Nicholas Berdyaev, a Russian philosopher who had moved from Marxism to an Orthodox-inflected Christian existentialism and was duly exiled by the Bolsheviks. Devane also critically referenced Friedrich Hayek and, from the opposite end of the political spectrum, Harold

Laski (Devane 1948, 12, 88, 112, 140-141, 167, 285)[30]. When Devane turned his attention to economic individualism, he drew on Marx and Engels, "two remarkable men". He evinced a certain sympathy for the duo, admitting that "Capitalism was no doubt an evil economic system" but argued that socialism and communism, by destroying private property, would be far more evil and would reduce all men to the level of the oppressed proletariat (Devane 1948, 313)[31]. Devane's reference points are broader and far more cosmopolitan than is generally presumed for the dour guardians of Catholic Ireland; worldliness does not necessarily equate with the "correct" form of politics.

There is also a curious paradox here: as he moved further from access to power, his writings become far more in depth and far more sophisticated (if still deeply reactionary), from succinct polemical essays of the 1920s to 300-page treatises by the 1940s[32]. Moreover, that Devane went from consultant-at-large on important pieces of government legislation in the 1920s and early 30s, to an overt authoritarian-sympathiser in the following decade, has been largely ignored. Scholars like John Regan (1999), R.M. Douglas (2009) and Kenneth Shonk (2015) have all shown how authoritarianism was by no means alien to the political culture of post-1922 Ireland. The trajectory of Devane's writings fits with this assessment. As Devane moved from being a Cumann na nGaedheal surrogate to a booster of Pétain and Salazar, there was a marked consistency across his writings. A Catholic political theology was always central to his worldview, but so also was a strong state that could enforce this social project. Devane's clerical fascist leanings were as much statist as they were religious. Indeed, fitting with Nicos Poultanzas' model, it is rarely clear where the Church ends and the State begins in Devane's politics.

Clare O'Hagan has presented the Church as a key plank of the "ideological state apparatus" of post-1922 Ireland (O'Hagan 2006, 66). This structural Marxist analysis fits with my own (though I give more weight, I think, to fluency and agency within these structures). And building on O'Hagan, it is worth inquiring what independent "Power" did the Church, as a disciplinary machine, have in post-1922 Ireland? Did the "base" of the Repressive State Apparatus underpin the superstructural Ideological State Apparatus of the Church? Church and State needed each other, rather than one being more powerful or being logically anterior. This complicated symbiosis of Church and State is the crux of what I have aimed to investigate here, via Richard Devane's vast written output.

[30] Devane also had a strong familiarity with Freud (O'Riordan 2015, 140), but was unsurprisingly suspicious of his ideas.

[31] It is interesting that Devane writes about capitalism in the past tense here; it *was* an evil system, but presumably no longer *is* evil.

[32] *Challenge of Youth* was 297 pages. *Failure of Individualism* surpassed this, at 342 pages.

Studying Devane's voluminous writings reveals much about these tortuous dynamics of Irish Church-State relations, as well as showing how strong an impact European politics and philosophy had on the country's intellectual scene (thus countering any lingering caricatures about isolated Ireland), and how anti-capitalist notions bubbled under the surface of Irish political debate[33]. Paraphrasing a recent study of the legal theorist-turned-National Socialist ideologue, Carl Schmitt, R.S. Devane "is a difficult figure. But even people of diametrically opposite political allegiances *can* profit intellectually from taking him seriously, and not just with the intention of refuting everything he has to say" (Balakrishnan 2000, 9).

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[33] Drawing from the work of Nicos Poulantzas, Richard Dunphy has defined Fianna Fáil's economics as the "status quo anti-capitalism" common to the petit-bourgeoisie (Dunphy 1995, 39-40). Devane's writings suggest that this conservative anti-capitalism had purchase elsewhere in Irish society.

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A Female Odyssey of Romantic Illusion: Abject Women in Edna O'Brien's Five Love Stories

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Abstract:

The essay proposes to study a recurring theme of love and loss in Edna O'Brien's love stories in which women in a state of abjection become obsessive and hysterical in pursuit of a love which is ultimately unattainable within the sexually colonised cultural environment in which the stories are set. The study analyses the factors underlying the apparent emotional desolation of the heroines in five stories by Edna O'Brien – "The Love Object" (1967), "Paradise" (1968), "Number 10" (1976), "Mrs. Reinhardt" (1978) and "The Doll" (1979). Women's despair in these stories is manifested symptomatically through hysterical responses such as vomiting, insomnia, or sleepwalking and the ultimately self-destructive consequences of these symptoms. O'Brien tends to intertwine religious symbolism and metaphors with issues of sensuality and sexuality which have traditionally been taboo within a conservative traditional Irish context, in the process creating dark and twisted tales appearing to parody the biblical "paradise lost". O'Brien's heroines are often tragically attracted to a doomed love or gain a kind of gratification from the obsessive reliving of their personal afflictions. Rarely presenting any rosy fairy-tale prospect for women in her love stories as outcome of romantic encounters, Edna O'Brien seeks to demonstrate how women's ongoing struggle and difficulties are manifested through physical neurosis and unrest within a culture in which women are colonised.

Keywords: Abject, Colonised, Hysteria, Obsession, Paradise lost

1. Introduction

Edna O'Brien, now seen a doyenne of her profession, is one of Ireland's most internationally famous, prolific, and also controversial, contemporary writers. O'Brien dares to lift the veil on buried, painful memories from the

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past and explores honestly and in depth the social taboo surrounding sexuality in post-Éamon de Valera Ireland. The primary and recurring theme of Edna O'Brien's works is love. Ironically, these stories are strikingly "so little" about love (O'Hara 1993, 317; Summers-Bremner 2010). Many of her stories, set within the cultural context of conservative rural Ireland, unveil the unattainability of the kind of love to which her heroines aspire. Typically, O'Brien's women are either hopelessly trapped in problematic and abusive relationships with men, or traumatised by a male-dominated culture which incubates within them a sense of emptiness in the absence of female agency. These women tend to plunge into a hysterical behaviour of revulsion, repulsion or self-destruction. The self-loathing or annihilation depicted in O'Brien's stories can be illuminated through reference to the post-colonial approaches of Franz Fanon, which focus on and analyse the phenomenon of psychological breakdown in the post-colonial phase of a state. Building on the works of Fanon, Irene Boada-Montagut and Anne Owen Weekes have identified the post-colonial state of mind as a viable metaphor to explore how Irish women as colonised beings cease to exist in a meaningful way in their own right and, in consequence, may enter into a downward emotional spiral of oblivion and depression. This mental state of self-hatred and depression commonly seen in O'Brien's women can also be associated with abjection, a concept proposed by Julia Kristeva as a means to examine how a woman's sense of female identification may be affected within the social context of western patriarchy. In O'Brien's stories, this existential psychological crisis may manifest itself through symptoms such as obsessive or hysterical behaviour or physical reactions such as vomiting or sleepwalking. This essay approaches these broad themes and issues through a closer study of five Edna O'Brien's stories – "The Love Object" (1967), "Paradise" (1968), "Number 10" (1976), "Mrs. Reinhardt" (1978) and "The Doll" (1979)[1].

Apart from the preoccupation with love, in Edna O'Brian's works religious symbolism plays a role in shaping the cultural context in which she sets her characters. O'Brien admitted in one of her interviews that she had been searching for love in her life as a means to replace lost faith. The impact of her Catholic upbringing in Ireland, however negative, influences her depictions of the oppressive and suppressive community pressures on wom-

[1] The publication date is the original date of release of the relevant stories to the public before being published subsequently as part of story collections. The stories "Cords", "A Rose in the Heart" (later under a modified name "A Rose in the Heart of New York"), "The Love Object", "Number 10" first appeared in *The New Yorker*; "Doll" first appeared in the *Redbook*. The stories discussed in this essay are selected from two comprehensive collections – *A Rose in the Heart* (1979) and *A Fanatic Heart* (1984). These two collections comprise a representative survey of O'Brien's stories from her earliest period to the present, exemplifying a continuity of focus on women's life in Ireland.

en which are recurrent themes in her stories (Roth 1984). Apparently ironic references to the biblical tale of Adam's and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden recur especially in those stories which address the taboo territory of female sensuality and sexuality. The "fall from grace" metaphor is perhaps connected to what O'Brien has revealed about her own loss of faith and utilised as a narrative tool to express the traumatic grief generated by loss of or failure to achieve a great love.

O'Brien's work appears to be "afflicted and blessed" with the ghosts of the past from which Irish women seem to find it so hard to separate themselves (Eckley 1974, 79). Even some critics such as Maureen Grogan, Grace Eckley or Amanda Greenwood also remark a "personal odyssey" in O'Brien's "obviously autobiographical" earlier works (Greenwood 2003, 5, 11). Nevertheless, as Greenwood argues, O'Brien's texts are actually quite radical as they propose "deconstructions of 'femininity', 'Irishness' and contemporary sexual ideologies [in Ireland]" (21). O'Brien's stories become narratives of anti-romance reflecting both the cultural baggage of her heroines and also their limitations, both of which impact on their capacity to envisage "love" as other than a kind of escape or refuge which these women desperately turn to on their quest for love.

2. Irish women and the post-colonial metaphor

Modern Irish women's writings are often studied by critics as a post-colonial metaphor in which Irish women implicitly or explicitly try to "find a place [and a voice] for themselves" (Ingman 2007, 1). Anne Owen Weekes once pointed out that Irish women, having been colonised, have had to "repress their desires" and had to "encode their concerns in a muted voice" (Weekes 1990, 218). Echoing Weekes' perspective, Irene Boada-Montagut argues that some of those once colonised become themselves the colonisers who "[reproduce] the politics of centralization and exclusion", and consequently, relegate women to "the margin of the margins" (Boada-Montagut 2003, 160; Graham 1994, 39). Boada-Montagut, on the basis of Franz Fanon's theories, goes further to hypothesise a close connection between women's mental issues and the victimisation commonly represented in much of Irish women's writings on love and marriage:

> Enduring that kind of violence and even accepting a rationale for it may be a psychological disorder which is common among housewives […] This kind of violence in which women find themselves is probably the extreme result of having lost their personal sense of identity after compulsory marriage. Wives believe themselves to be mere objects, mere appendages of their lords and masters. It also shows how human beings can come to accept, and treat as normal extreme forms of abuse and degradation. (Boada-Montagut 2003, 69-70)

Writing in the 1960s, Fanon theorised a juxtaposition between the political and the mental state of people in a post-colonial context. Examining

the post-colonial state of some recently independent nations, Fanon notes that independence does not eliminate inequality and colonialism in these nations, but instead merely alters the identity of the colonists and the colonized (Fanon 1963). The people of such nations, as Blake T. Hilton observes in respect of Fanon's model, will eventually turn inward and commit destructive acts towards themselves with personal consequences for those traumatised by such acts manifested in diverse emotional disorders or suicide attempts (Hilton 2011, 45-59). As observed by Fanon, such behaviour results from the fact that the subject/object "without means of existing is broken in the very depth of [one's] substance. The desire to live, to continue, becomes more and more indecisive, more and more phantom-like" (Fanon 1964, 35). The implication is that individuals under such circumstances are psychologically blocked from refocusing on their lives in a positive way, and hence trapped in an emotional vacuum of self-loathing.

On the one hand, Irish women can be seen as, in this respect, colonised beings; on the other hand, Fanon's concept of a kind of post-traumatic syndrome amongst such people in the post-colonial state may help plausibly to decipher how and why women characters are routinely represented as those who suffer from hysteria or psychological turbulence in Irish women's stories. While Boada-Montagut has observed the impact of a controlling patriarchal culture and system on Irish women, her connection of this impact to the post-colonial theories of Fanon and others would also have significant relevance to Edna O'Brien's stories about love and relationships in which the heroines are, typically, psychologically wounded women who exist in a sexually colonised environment. Boada-Montagut's description of a socially and culturally colonised Irish woman is reflected in the writings of Edna O'Brien, which often show the woman confined and defined by her role as a dependent, wife or mother, within an abusive relationship or marriage.

Edna O'Brien's hollow women, in their desperate attempts to attain emotional or financial security in their lives, are in effect disempowered in the absence of female agency. For such women, there also is a fundamental crisis of identity. A manifestation of this lack of identity is the way in which some of the heroines of the stories reviewed in this essay remain nameless. The name of the heroine in "The Love Object" is only used once at the beginning of the story and never mentioned again. The name of the woman in "Paradise" and "The Doll" is completely suppressed, while in stories "Number 10" or "Mrs. Reinhardt", the personal name is either mentioned only once or she is only referred to by her husband's surname as "Mrs. So and So" throughout. Such a phenomenon in which women have no names in modern literature was once identified and critised by the feminist scholar Betty Friedan as a major issue contributing to women's identity crisis. In Friedan's perspective, such women with identity crisis are seen only as sexual objects living "finally in a world of objects, unable to touch in others the individual

identity [they] lack [themselves]" (Friedan 1965, 68; quoted in Greenwood 2003, 22). Nevertheless, O'Brien's deliberate strategy of suppressing the identity of her lead female characters in her stories unveils an unromantic exploration of power dynamics between men and women in relationships. If a character is not mentioned anywhere by name (that is, not personalised), this character perhaps identifies with someone else (a powerful, domineering figure or a love object) and inevitably substitutes the extraneous self for one's own, as Balzano argues, which is like "a doubling, dividing and interchanging of the self" (2006, 105). Schrank and Farquharson observe that O'Brien's reluctance to name her female characters creates a "porous feminine consciousness that subverts the notion of an individual identity and an individual story line" (1996, 22). O'Brien's seemingly systematic omission of her female character's names within her exploration of love and relationships in stories can be seen as a reflection of the collective impact of mental colonisation, loss or lack of female identity.

3. The abject women

Edna O'Brien's stories are often set in a claustrophobic setting, such as a rural village or a convent, symbols of an isolated and depressed environment in rural Ireland. Even in a modern urban environment, O'Brien's women tend to be trapped in their own mental confinement signified by an alienated and suffocating relationship (Balzano 2006, 93). O'Brien's main characters are invariably women characterised by a sense of self-exile, hysterical compulsion or abjection. Their vulnerability and self-disgust, at times, result in obsessions and hysteria manifested by recurring physical symptoms such as vomiting, haunting nightmares, insomnia or sleepwalking. Hysteria and obsessive compulsive disorders can be manifestations of extreme emotional breakdown.

Historically, hysteria has frequently been associated with women and femininity. The etymology of the word hysteria originates from Greek *hysteria*, uterus, associated in the past with a neurotic condition considered peculiar to women and thought to be caused by a dysfunction of womb. This allegedly uniquely female condition led women who manifested certain social neuroses or alienation symptoms to be classified as "hysterics", sometimes as potentially wanton women with "wandering wombs", and during the Middle Ages potentially as demonically possessed. In modern times, hysteria has been researched in a more systematic way by iconic psychologists such as Freud and Lacan who argued that those who display obsession through hysteria are "speak[ing] in bodily symptoms a larger dissatisfaction with social structures – including sexual relations – by insisting on what those structures profess to have left behind" (Evans 1991, 167-168). In other words, the hysteric tends to obtain satisfaction through an obsessive focus on personal

afflictions which prevents them from moving on from their particular emotional trauma. O'Brien's women's obsessive behavioural patterns categorise them as those who are "preoccupied with uncontrollable patterns of thoughts and action" of which the "symptoms may cause extreme distress and interfere with a person's occupational and social functioning" (Davis 2008, 8). These women relive and revisit their pain again and again, and it seems that they experience a sense of being alive only through enduring painful memories.

During the second-wave feminism era in the 1970s, scholars such as Sandra M. Gilbert, Hélène Cixous or Catherine Clément reassessed the condition of female hysteria once misread by people as wantonness or demonic possession. Feminists argue for the interpretation of female hysteria as distorted jouissance. The underlying drive for hysteria is "to escape hierarchical bonds and thereby come closer to what Cixous calls 'jouissance', which can be defined as a virtually metaphysical fulfillment of desire that goes far beyond [mere] satisfaction ... [It is a] fusion of the erotic, the mystical, and the political" (Cixous 1975, xvii; Daniels 2013, 39). From this feminist perspective, hysteria can be viewed as a way to review the deprived female agency in patriarchal culture (Bronfen 1998, xi). It is likely that Edna O'Brien, a contemporary of the second-wave feminism period, may have consciously or unconsciously integrated hysteria into her stories dealing with female reaction towards repression within the sexual politics of personal relationships.

The heroines in "Number 10", "Mrs. Reinhardt" or "The Love Object" are all shown to have to live within a framework constructed by their husband or lover. These women such as Martha in "The Love Object" or Mrs. Reinhardt in "Number 10" and "Mrs. Reinhardt" may initially not appear to be traumatised like those domestic abuse victims in "Cords" (1968), "The Rose in the Heart of New York" (1978) or "Paradise". Nevertheless, these women's hysterical obsession with a never-fulfilled desire and tragic craving for a doomed love suggests otherwise. They tend to relive their suffering and fear of loss again and again because "if [they] did (let go of the man), all [their] happiness and […] subsequent pain […] with all have been nothing, and nothing is a dreadful thing to hold on to" ("The Love Object", O'Brien 1984, 172). Women in such relationships become either oblivious "phantom-like" sleepwalkers (in "Number 10" and "Mrs. Reinhardt") or are suffocated emotionally (resulting almost in a physical drowning in "Paradise") or haunted (by a phantom figure in nightmares in "The Love Object").

O'Brien's women may also exhibit some traces of what Julia Kristeva calls a deject, referring to one who can only exist in a state of abjection, or one of those "borderline personalities" featuring a strong sense of self-loathing (Kristeva 1982, 8; Coughlan 2006, 190). These psychologically abject characters ultimately express self-revulsion through self-destructive actions, which, ironically, also define their existence and sense of self as a person (Coughlan 2006, 178). Kristeva observes abjection as one of the developmental stages

of female identification which a woman inevitably undergoes in order to be a "proper woman" in a patriarchal society[2].

Predomination of obsessive and compulsive psychological urges as well as anxiety and depression in O'Brien's women's lives can be symptomatically triggered by women's susceptibility in their search for unattainable love, typically, due to the unequal terms in a man-woman relationship. These abject women illustrate and connect with the behavioural characteristics associated by Fanon and Boada-Montagut with an individual who is, or feels, colonised and whose inner sense of self has been fragmented by trauma. There is a theme of regret, loss or betrayal running through O'Brien's stories. All too often women's self-destructive tendencies scar them and the outcome is more regrets and tragedies. This recalls once again the sense of victimhood identified by Fanon which results *in* the subject existing in a state of symbolic oblivion leading to self-denial, self-hatred or self-annihilation.

4. The fall of love

The motif of love in O'Brien's stories is sometimes represented through extensive depiction of zealous sex. In this respect, O'Brien's heroines are sometimes criticised by reviewers for their insistence on constructing their identities as women through explicit exploration of sexuality. The language adopted by O'Brien to explore love and sex is one often commonly associated with religious revelation and mysticism in respect of bliss, suffering, sacrifice and passion. Sensuality and sexuality, especially oral sex, play some significant role in both "The Love Object" and "Paradise". The satanic seduction of the forbidden fruit and the subsequent expulsion from paradise (great "love") are underlying, almost archetypal motifs running through "The Love Object" and "Paradise" (Shrank and Farquharson 1996, 26).

The figs, round in shape with blood-red flesh and abundant seeds, appear to be sexualised metaphors associated with female sexuality and symbolising sexual organs, such as ovary or uterus, as were "pomegranates" in

[2] The terms "abject" and "abjection" are used to describe a state of women's alienation (or rejection) within a culture which suppresses the primordial feminine as the "other" and sets the boundary between "self" (the "I") and "other" (the "Not-I"), either of which paradoxically might reflect one another for a woman. This concept is not only confined to the personal development but it also contains powerful social-structural implications. The social classification of objects, or designation of parts of the physical body, into filthy or clean, proper or improper, orderly or chaotic, is one laden with some cultural significance inscribing cultural values. Abjection, as argued by Georges Bataille, is considered to be a physical state to which the poor are consigned by those in power. The privileged groups in society use their power to "draw boundaries" between themselves and others, with the latter coded as unclean, improper or disorderly which elicits in turn a sense of repulsion (Bataille 1970, 219). For more see Bataille (1970), Kristeva (1982), Coughlan (2006).

the legend of Persephone (Agha-Jaffar 2002, 68). The consumption of figs, also a symbol of the forbidden fruit, with respect to transgressing a taboo of sexuality and adultery in O'Brien's stories, serves not only as an inducement to seduction and subsequent degradation but also as false redemption for the heroine. Martha in "The Love Object" tastes her first fig at a pleasant meal with her lover shortly after this forbidden extramarital romance had started. In "Paradise" the four fields cultivated with fig trees are the backdrop against which the narrative unfolds. This story is a modern twist of the garden of Eden motif except that this garden is ruled by a demon lover. Whenever the heroine in "Paradise" feels helplessly alone waking up from a nightmare in the middle of the night, she always reaches for some comfort through the consumption of figs, an aspect of the story suggesting her ultimate submission to his desires as means to her redemption. She loses her "paradise", his to be exact, by attempting to move away from subservience to this man, in a parody of how the biblical Eve is expelled for disobeying God. Martha in "The Love Object" experiences an even darker version of such an Eden-paradise scenario, a hell indeed, in which in a way she is almost like one imprisoned by this demon lover with "red hair" who sexually consumes the woman on a "goatskin rug" ("The Love Object", O'Brien 1984, 54, 152)[3]. A vivid sex scene on a goatskin rug in the heroine's recollections appears graphically associated with hell, characterised by "a confusion of body parts and excremental possibilities" (Shrank and Farquharson 1996, 27). This scene is one charged with ritual-like eroticism and primitive animality, which reminds one of an association with horned beasts in Satanic worship[4].

In "Paradise", the heroine is not only sexually colonised by her lover in his personal empire, but by the overall male-dominated culture which defines women as passive and subservient. She breaks a taboo by daring to display what she really wants, and this transgression leads directly to the ending of the relationship. There is not much detail about the unnamed heroine's background or family in the story but a couple of lines may suggest an underlying trauma about her own family with a tyrannical father back in Ireland: "[h]er father vanished one night after supper, said he was going to count the cattle, brought a flashlamp, never came back. […] but she and her mother were secretly relieved" ("Paradise", O'Brien 1984, 222). Ironically, she escapes from

[3] The name Martha in Syriac language means "master" or "lord". Martha in biblical stories was associated with selfless devotion to looking after Jesus, someone who cared for him and sat at his feet to learn from the "lord". In an ironic sense, Edna O'Brien may even have deliberately adopted the use of the name in a religious parody referring to the biblical associations of devotional Martha and Christ in juxtaposition with this obsessional Martha and her devotion (or obsession) to her lover. For more on biblical names and women, see Lockyer (1988).

[4] For more about satanic cults, please refer to Nichols, Mather, Schmidt (2010).

one tyrannical father figure only to find another domineering patriarch as her lover (Coughlan 2006, 189). O'Brien's women are frequently depicted as those fatally drawn to older, powerful, father-figure-types, or married men. In such a tyrannical love affair with an older powerful man, the heroine seeks a sense of security, and yet, for which she must pay a big price.

In "Paradise", what appears at first sight to be a luxury holiday resort is in fact a prison for the heroine located on desolate terrain where only "jungle laws" apply ("Paradise", O'Brien 1984, 230). She is an awkward, alienated outsider on this isolated island in a foreign location. Her reassurance and superficial appearance of being at peace with herself unveil an underlying fear and anxiety resulting from her lack of self-esteem in this relationship:

> She had done the right thing in coming. She need not have feared; he needed her, his expression and their clasped hands already confirmed that […] She knew she ought to speak. She wanted to. Both for his sake and for her own. Her mind would give a little leap and be still and would leap again […] They would know her predecessors. They would compare her minutely, her appearance, her accent, the way he behaved with her. They would know better than she how important the ways to him, if it were serious or just a passing notion. […] Each time as she left him she expected not to see him again; each parting promised to be final. ("Paradise", O'Brien 1984, 208, 211)

She is forced by him in a patronising manner to experience his world, as if she were just one more trophy amongst the possessions he had collected during his life. For example, she is forced to learn horse-riding and swimming, both of which turn out to be traumatic experiences for her. In a way, the heroine loses control of her life. Nevertheless, she must please him through submission: "[s]he thought, I should be honest, say I do not like the sea, say I am an inland person […] and that for me the sea is dark as the shells of mussels, and signifies catastrophe. But she couldn't. 'It must be wonderful' was what she said" ("Paradise", O'Brien 1984, 209).

Ironically, instead of closeness and hope in the relationship, aloofness and alienation pervade throughout the story, revealing the heroine and her lover inhabiting two separate worlds. The backdrop of an isolated location prefigures the realisation by the heroine of her alienation within this relationship. The distance is not only physical but also emotional, exemplified by the way in which the heroine is shut down and pushed away by her lover when he is displeased by her transgression, an attempt considered as a threat challenging him in his territory: " 'Tell me,' she said, 'what interests you?' It was the first blunt question she had ever put to him. 'Why, everything,' he said. 'But deep down,' she said. 'Discovery,' he said, and walked away. But not self-discovery, she thought, not that" ("Paradise", O'Brien 1984, 231).

Water and swimming in this story serve as metaphors for suffocation and difficulties the heroine has to struggle with within the boundaries in

which she is confined. Perhaps she is like the hero trapped on Calypso's island in *The Odyssey*. Her only way out, like Odysseus, is to break through the water barrier so as to avoid being kept in a zombie-like state of spiritual death. O'Brien uses the motif of drowning, just as Kate Chopin did in *The Awakening* (1899), as a way to express female desperation. Rooks-Hughes has commented on the significance of "[t]he prevalence alone of drowning – the undifferentiated space of water, which O'Brien alludes to in 'drowning in the abyss' " (Rooks-Hughes 1996, 91). In the context of O'Brien's stories, the "abyss" can be the desperation felt by a woman confronted by what she perceives as her unavoidable destiny in a male-dominated society. O'Brien tends to delineate a woman's victimisation with an overtone of subversion. Despite the O'Brien heroine's inability to break through the patriarchal confinement, O'Brien exposes women's underlying doubt and demonstration of unrest through their emotional breakdown and acts of abjection. Women's suppression of the primordial "I" often resurfaces in acts of emotional confusion and an implicit statement of discontent. Such repulsion in the "Paradise" story is manifested clearly in the heroine's vomiting after she was rescued and brought back to life from drowning in the pool. Her act of vomiting symbolises her frustration and perhaps also self-loathing and revulsion through the pursuit of unattainable love at the expense of surrendering her true self.

With either suicidal attempts or self-loathing actions as symptoms of aspirations to break free from emotional desolation, O'Brien's heroines are like robotic phantoms shattered in the very depth of their existence. Typically, an atmosphere of emptiness and pessimism permeates through the stories, which ends in despair. "The Love Object" is such a story about a woman's obsession with, yet again, an older married man – "Elderly. Blue eyes. Khaki hair. The hair was graying on the outside" ("The Love Object", O'Brien 1984, 147). There seems to be not much about closeness, rather more a sense of alienation between the lovers, apart from a focus for their relationship on passionate sex. Paradoxically, the heroine claims that "there [are] no barriers between us" and yet they are "strangers" (*ibidem*). In this story, the heroine's existence is totally defined by her lover and her obsession with this love affair. She feels that "he and [she] [are] two people […] that he face[s] it in one way and that [she] face[s] it – or to be exact, that [she] [shrinks] from it – in another" (157). As the story starts, it is revealed how the heroine suffers from insomnia and remains haunted by a recurrent nightmare in which she is choked to death by a ghostly male figure. Both in her dream and in reality, she appears emotionally paralysed by her lover to the point that she "[has] lost the use of [her] limbs" and "[her] tongue isn't [hers] anymore" (153).

In "The Love Object" the psychological imprisonment of the heroine's self, associated with her lover, who denies her essential being, seems to reflect a religiously inspired sense of self-guilt through which she feels condemned.

An association of a sense of abjection with religion is well observed by Kristeva in *Powers of Horror* (1982), who sees abjection at the base of all religions. Religious rituals, such as purification which ultimately expresses a primal abhorrence of the feminine, are regarded by Kristeva as the source engendering all horror and fears (Kristeva 1982, 58, 64; Crownfield 1992, 10; Beardsworth 2004, 118). O'Brien tends to juxtapose sexual taboo with religious associations in her narrative. The heroine's secret lover in "The Love Object" remains mystical through an ambiguously saintly image manifested by "a very religious smile" and the way he "kept his hands joined all the time as if they were being put to prayer" ("The Love Object", O'Brien 1984, 147). This older married man is by no means a pious, righteous figure but a demon-lover to the heroine who is troubled by a denial of her own existence in which she has to "[face] the self without distraction, without the crutches of other people" (171). This fear is expressed by her likening of her situation to being "boxed into a cell in a convent", another signifier of alienation and abjection resulting from guilt (*ibidem*). The heroine, however, relives the suffering and her guilt is intensified even more by her obsessive involvement in sexual acts with this married man. The heroine's sexual encounter, with an undercurrent of religious guilt, leads her to emphasise that she feels "so sure of the *rightness* of what [she] [is] doing" (154; italics mine). In fact, through this rationalisation the heroine appears to bury a well-founded doubt about the "not-so-rightness" of what she is engaging in with this man (Shrank and Farquharson 1996, 27).

The heroine in "The Love Object" is perhaps one of the examples of representations of those who can only exist in abjection and obsession. By the end of the story the heroine is on the verge of turning psychotic and hysterical as a result of her mental and physical suffering. After an unsuccessful suicide attempt, she then fantasises about a doubling of herself and her lover within her own psychotic cocoon world in which they reunited in a number of scenarios, and her lover eventually turns out to be "the man that [dwells] somewhere within [her]" ("The Love Object", O'Brien 1984, 170-172).

5. A nightmare like this

It is interesting to read and juxtapose the two stories, "Number 10" and "Mrs. Reinhardt", from the 1978 story collection *A Rose in the Heart*, because they appear to depict the same character in a sequel over a timeline spanning several years[5]. The heroine in both stories is like a Stepford-house-

[5] It is interesting to see how Edna O'Brien deals with the same characters in different stories. For example, O'Brien depicts the similar theme of a troubled mother-daughter relationship in two stories – "Cords" (1968) and "The Rose in the Heart of New York" (1978) with the daughter in "Cords" reappearing in "The Rose in the Heart of New York". The latter story appears to provide more detailed retrospective depictions of the mother-daughter

wife type who is always elegantly dressed, seemingly content, gentle, obedient, and capable of keeping the house spotless and tidy[6]. Very much like the "Stepford wives", Mrs. Reinhardt is like a doll kept within the enclosure of her husband's empire. She has never experienced life any way other than that initially arranged by her parents, and subsequently by her husband, who defines her role as an obedient wife and mother in his terms.

The heroine in "Number 10" remains unnamed, referred to throughout only by her married title of Mrs. Reinhardt, except for one single occasion when she is referred to as "Tilly" in the sequel story "Mrs. Reinhardt". In a broader sense, this heroine without a name is one without a face and identity in her own right. She is like one deprived of female agency, with a void, numbing existence under the shadow of her husband. Not surprisingly, the heroine in both "Number 10" and "Mrs. Reinhardt" has suffered from sleepwalking for years. The recurring metaphor, sleepwalking, or hysterical somnambulism in Freudian terms, is believed to be connected to fulfilment of a repressed desire emanating from the subconscious[7]. O'Brien tends to adopt sleeping disorders, such as insomnia, sleepwalking, or nightmares, as a code which holds the key to revealing a woman's repression of her own self. There is apparently something buried in Mrs. Reinhardt's unconscious resurfacing in her dream visions for which she tries to search because, in her dream, she is "inside them. She [is] not an outsider looking in" ("Number 10", O'Brien 1984, 313). In a way, literarily and metaphorically, Mrs. Reinhardt has sleepwalked through her entire life as an individual, that is, in a state of mental and emotional oblivion. This once again recalls what Fanon and Boada-Montagut explain about those who cannot exist beyond the framework of their victimisation and remain in a phantom-like existence.

In "Number 10", the heroine exists just like a phantom, a shadow in a cocoon life dominated by her husband. Despite her aspiration for self-discovery, she eventually fails to prevail and falls back into an abyss of numbness. The heroine does not feel uplifted even by the prospect of walking away from this darkness. She once whispers to a cow in distress and also to herself: "I know what you are feeling – you are feeling lost and muddled, and you have gone astray" ("Number 10", O'Brien 1984, 318). Therefore, the heroine eventually chooses not to step out of her comfort zone for something potentially liberating but unknown and threatening:

relationship traced as far back as the daughter's birth and her childhood when the bond was first established.

[6] *The Stepford Wives* is a 1972 satirical novel and thriller by Ira Levin which depicts a sci-fi dystopia where husbands control their wives like robots through a remote console in order to turn their wives into idealised subservient women.

[7] For more about hysterical somnambulism see Freud (2001 [1957]).

She would not intrude, no. It was perfectly clear why Mr. Reinhardt went there. He went by day to keep his tryst with her, be unfaithful with her, just as she went by night […] She […] was pleased that she had not acted rashly, that she had not broken the spell. ("Number 10", O'Brien 1984, 320)

When the heroine, Mrs. Reinhardt, finds out the truth about her husband's infidelity in "Mrs. Reinhardt", she still clings obsessively to a life around which her sense of self and personal identity has been constructed. The heroine wants to leave her husband but stubbornly would not let go of a necklace owned by him, which is "her life insurance, her last link with her husband" ("Mrs. Reinhardt", O'Brien 1984, 427). As the story "Mrs. Reinhardt" starts, the heroine behaves as if she has decided to restart a life in her own terms. However, this proves to be only an illusion as all her confidence and sense of self are no more than the search for an alternative cocoon with another man. The heroine starts to panic and realise that "how sheltered her life [has] been but this [is] no help" and she has "not a friend in the world" (425, 428). The tank lobster mating scene foreshadows the way Mrs. Reinhardt struggles to submit herself to this kind of love without which she would otherwise be lost: "What does one do, what then does a Mrs. Reinhardt do? […] one longs to touch and be reunited with, at least for the duration of a windy night" (432). It appears that all these years the heroine has sleepwalked through a dream, or a nightmare of her life, from which she is almost convinced that she can wake up but, at last, the efforts prove delusional for a woman who can never exist beyond such dreams. What she discovers ultimately is what she needs to or should do in order not to be an outsider in her own life. Eventually the heroine does not rebel in both "Number 10" and "Mrs. Reinhardt" but acquiesces to the status quo as her inevitable destiny. O'Brien's women are often shown confined within a cage inside a male dominated society which they find suffocating but out of which they feel unable to break.

6. The collapse of a double

Another O'Brien story, "The Doll" in her 1981 collection *Returning*, later collected in *A Fanatic Heart* (1984), depicts a much darker motif of an abject woman's lost paradise and exile. The heroine in this story, however, is not victimised by an abusive sexual relationship with a man but by the tyrannical culture of a community. "The Doll" is also a story about the loss of love, and about suppression, obsession and jealousy but it is not about man-woman passion, rather about a damaged sense of self as a female. The story depicts an abject woman with a shattered self, uprooted into exile. The heroine surrenders her primal paradise of "her own self" in her childhood and is later exiled to a faraway boarding school and subsequently to an indifferent, alienated city. This unnamed central character, an outcast in her own com-

munity, has to undergo injustice resulting from jealousy from her siblings, peers and an all-powerful tyrannical teacher. This experience of being ousted from a group and from home seems all too familiar to Edna O'Brien who was also exiled as a writer from Ireland to another country where she now spends much of her life.

In this story, the heroine as a young girl receives a new doll from a family friend she scarcely knows every Christmas. She regards the "seventh" doll she receives as her favorite one because, in her view, it is the "living representation of a princess" ("The Doll", O'Brien 1984, 49). The number "seven" may be a symbolic reference to the creation myth in Genesis in which all creatures and lives including the first human are created during the seven-day creation period. This splendid princess doll is somewhat uncanny to the heroine due to its lifelike size and its animate appearance which leads the heroine almost to think of it as if it "had a soul and a sense of us" (*ibidem*)[8]. This doll in the story appears to become a "double" for the heroine reflecting aspirations and her own self. The destiny of the doll is coupled with the mistreatment of the heroine in the story. Prior to the arrival of this doll, the heroine is almost an outcast amongst her own peers and in particular is disliked by an obnoxious teacher who instead favours her sisters. Because of the wonderful doll she owns, the heroine becomes popular with her peers. However, this popularity she enjoys is short-lived, as out of jealousy and malice the teacher confiscates the doll one Christmas. This teacher's monstrous image intimidates the heroine who is then left helpless and desperate:

> Everyone agreed that it was monstrous, but no one talked to the teacher, no one tackled her. The truth is, they were afraid of her. She had a bitter tongue, and also, being superstitious, they felt that she was as if she could give us children brains or take them away, as a witch might. (51)

Their fear can be seen as representing a primal infantile fear, which, in a Freudian sense, is returning to a dark, silent womb-like state associated with abjection and chaos which is personified in this story by this devouring witch-like figure[9].

[8] The concept of the uncanny was used by Freud to describe something "un-home-like" but strangely familiar. That is, an ordinary object or event is encountered in an unsettling or eerie context, such as a lifelike automaton as discussed by Freud on E.T.A. Hoffmann's story "The Sandman" in his essay "The Uncanny" (1919). See Freud, *The Uncanny* (2003 [1919]).

[9] Kristeva's abjection is coupled with Freud's theory of the uncanny in which the abject, such as in the case of a corpse, can be uncanny in the sense that some aspects are still recognisable despite it's being "foreign" out of the bounty of the symbolic order. See Kristeva (1982).

The heroine loses her childhood innocence through the loss of the doll, uprooting her and casting her out of her own private garden of Eden which she has built for herself. This leads her into exile in a place where nobody is emotionally engaged with one another – "[none] of us ever says where we come from or what haunts us" (52). On the surface the heroine has indeed tasted a different life and freedom that others from her home village might never experience; however, deep down she remains the wounded abject woman, whose individuality and female agency are blocked. On a return visit to the village, she witnesses the crude reality of the wretched doll in a cabinet of the teacher's house, a sight that distresses her enormously. The distant memory of how she has been maltreated and shattered as a young girl returns to her, eliciting a sense of disgust and revulsion: "[a] sickness [has] come over [her], a sort of nausea for having cared so much about the doll, for having let them maltreat [the doll or/and her]" (53). Perhaps, the human-sized doll evoked a similar kind of response to that of a corpse, familiar and yet alien and revulsion-inducing, the uncanny doubling of her own self in another way, reducing the heroine once more to that state of abjection from which long ago she has sought to escape:

> Walking down the street, where I walk in memory, morning noon and night, I could not tell what it was, precisely, that reduced me to such wretchedness. Indeed, it was not death but rather the gnawing conviction of not having yet lived. All I could tell was that the stars were as singular and as wondrous as I remembered them and that they still seemed like a link, an enticement to the great heavens, and that one day I would reach them and be absorbed into their glory, and pass from a world that, at that moment, I found to be rife with cruelty and stupidity, a world that had forgotten how to give. (53-54)

The doll disintegrates as it ages, and dies in a symbolic way, signifying the death of the child within the heroine, deprived of her innocence and her own self. The heroine, now remaining a deject, once again drowns herself in the abyss of emotional death.

7. Conclusion

This paper seeks to analyse the perversion of love within five stories by Edna O'Brien, each describing how women's struggle for an unattainable love within a patriarchal society manifests itself ultimately in self-loathing, revulsion or abjection. O'Brien's love stories tend to depict women as very deeply wounded, colonised beings confined within the terrain of a male-dominated relationship which, in turn, is rooted firmly in the traditions of male-dominated Irish culture. Women as such are doubly dispossessed by having to struggle in both a harsh life and relationship, while also internalising a sense of victimisation through reliving affliction and self-revulsion within a life-

less, phantom-like existence. O'Brien's heroines, reduced to a state of abjection, express their sense of emotional desolation through neurotic symptoms of hysteria which again reveal their inner self-annihilating distress and conflict. Women's psychological traumas in these stories are often caused by a combination of shame and guilt, resulting from their violation of the constraints of a conventionally accepted morality, which is endorsed by religion and deeply embedded in the psyche of Irish community.

O'Brien's stories imply a sceptical questioning of the misogynistic culture and prudish religious ideologies in which social exclusion and taboos impact on personal freedom and choice in respect of women's role and female agency (Coughlan 2006, 180). The frequent depiction of traumatised women in O'Brien's stories reflects the collective post-colonial metaphor proposed by Fanon and Boada-Montagut, in which the continuing impact of afflictions of the past on the colonised individual leads inevitably to a state of void and spiritual death. O'Brien is also concerned with subverting the cliché of a fairy tale romance represented by the Mills-and-Boon type genre through disclosing the sordidness and the uncanniness of leading an existence as an object within the social culture of which Irish women are a part.

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Ecological Theory, Protestant Theology, and Derek Mahon's Sense of the Natural World

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Abstract:

A close reading of Derek Mahon's ocean-grounded and meteorologically rounded poems with direct reference to his stance on ecology and the environment. The article argues that Mahon's sense of the natural world – and the ways in which it is under siege at the hands of man – finds a certain resemblance in his background as a Northern Irish Protestant who was brought up on a theology of apocalypse.

Keywords: Clouds, Ecology, Ocean, Protestantism, Weather

In "Day Trip to Donegal" (*NC* 22-23)[1] Mahon cites a pier as the point of arrival, and the point of departure, from whence fishermen unload their catches and where the difference between man and fish, as species, serves as a focal point of interest. The poem, and this is crucial when it comes to imagining a nuanced eco-narrative, provides a means of talking about ocean species that are endangered, if not under threat of extinction. Mahon recounts the suffering – the genocide – endured by indigenous fish populations allowing his poem to feature, as Patricia Horton puts it, "the continuing innocence which the fish exhibit despite mass slaughter" (Horton 2000, 355). Mahon makes it clear, throughout, that man is a destructive being endowed with a "land-mind" altogether different from the fish he catches, eats, and disposes of at will. The ironic stay of Mahon's line that "Theirs is a sea-mind, mindless upon land / And dead" leaves few, if any, doubts about his ecological politics concerning the treatment of the world's maritime "others". Nor can there be any doubt that massive fishing quotas represent, for Mahon, a form of needless mass destruction that is, and this is what he finds most

[1] Please note that *NC* will be used as abbreviation for *Night Crossing* collection throughout.

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remarkable, unremarkable to so many people: "Their systematic genocide / (Nothing remarkable that millions died) / To us is a necessity / For ours are land-minds, mindless in the sea".

Peter Denman argues that "Day Trip to Donegal" spells out what are the "major themes" of Mahon's poetry (1994, 36). Denman even goes so far as to say that the third stanza of "Day Trip to Donegal" "foreshadows" "A Disused Shed in Co. Wexford" except that "Day Trip to Donegal" takes as its central theme netted fish rather than mushrooms, fish "flopping about the deck / In attitudes of agony and heartbreak". Peter McDonald, meanwhile, concentrates on how Mahon improved (McDonald's term of choice) the rhetorical force of "Day Trip to Donegal" by excising the third stanza of his 1968 version claiming that this excision "improves the poem, cutting away as it does six lines of reflection on the fate of the landed fish" (McDonald 2002, 153). Other critics who have spent time on this verse include Magdalena Kay who ignores any and all pressing issues with reference to its fish populations and the depensation of keystone species (Kay 2012, 92). Christelle Serée-Chaussinand, like Kay, also ignores the ecological significance of the poem's fish species as living species (Serée-Chaussinand 2012, 54) while Ruth G.D. Wilkinson, who does mention the poem's fish quotas in passing, offers no further comment on, or concern for, the plight of the poem's dying fish (1995, 256). What Wilkinson does concern herself with is the possible differences between "land minds" and "sea minds" by making a case for the argument that the poem's land-minds are best construed as Northern and "obdurate" while its sea minds are best understood as Irish and "free" (*ibidem*). As an adjunct to her claim concerning "obdurate" vs. "free" Wilkinson explains that the poem serves to remind Mahon, as it does his readers, that "the colony to which he returns, can be 'no one's home' " (*ibidem*). Here are the first four stanzas from the earlier version of Mahon's poem with the third stanza firmly in place:

We reached the sea in early afternoon,
Climbed stiffly out. There were urgent things to be done –
Clothes to be picked up, people to be seen.
As ever, the nearby hills were a deeper green
Than anywhere in the world, and the grave
Grey of the sea the grimmer in that enclave.

Down at the pier the boats gave up their catch–
Torn mouths and spewed-up lungs. They fetch
Ten times as much in the city as there,
And still the fish come in year after year –
Herring and whiting, flopping about the deck
In attitudes of agony and heartbreak.
How could we hope to make them understand?

theirs is a sea-mind, mindless upon land
And dead. Their systematic genocide
(Nothing remarkable that millions died)
To us is a necessity
For ours are land-minds, mindless in the sea.

We left at eight, drove back the way we came,
The sea receding down each muddy lane.
Around midnight we changed-down into suburbs
Sunk in a sleep no gale-force wind disturbs.
The time of year had left its mark
On frosty pavements glistening in the dark. (*Ibidem*)

Karen Marguerite Moloney also touches on the connection between land minds and sea minds with her extended reading of "Beached Whale" (*AAW* 30-31)[2] where man encounters an ocean species, in the likeness of an outsized specimen whale, which has journeyed "league upon league of ocean" only to end up dying on Timoleague Strand[3] (Moloney 2011, 179). By writing about a beached whale in this piece Mahon seizes a rare opportunity to compare the ocean deep, and one of its largest inhabitants, to life along the strand with the poem unfolding at a liminal staging ground with the whale "fluke-thrashing as she breathes her dying / breaths and gradually subsides / under the great weight of her own insides" (Mahon 2010, 30). Mahon never wants us to forget that there remain some discrete links between Ireland's landlubbers and the beached whale: "the seas and rocks / we left to climb up on the burning shore". Indeed, before moving on Mahon makes a real point of apostrophizing the "primordial" relationship between humans and whale in terms of "the soft human paw" ("the reflex of an unthinking fin / or a nerve twitching in primordial depths") (31).

According to Eóin Flannery, Mahon's beached whale does not "exist solely as the spare sum of its bodily parts" (Flannery 2016, 43). Flannery argues, instead, that even though the "great beast" might have caused a media frenzy onshore, Mahon's sense of the whale's "unseen submarine life takes precedence over these superficial treatments of its demise on land" (*ibidem*). Flannery also argues that we would be well advised to consider how Mahon's "giant cetacean operates as a synecdoche in the poem, standing in as a representative figuration of all of the threatened species of global climate

[2] Please note that *AAW* will be used as abbreviation for *An Autumn Wind* throughout.

[3] Not to put too fine a point on it, this poem is in places reminiscent of Mahon's "Songs of Praise" (*Selected Poems*, 1991) which contrasts the reach of hymns along a rugged northern coastline, "Outside, the hymn dies among rocks and dunes. / Conflicting rhythms of the incurious", and how somewhere in the vastness a whale – a "beleagured whale", no less – serves as a maritime counterpoint to a terrestrial hymnal with its "Trombone dispatches".

change" (*ibidem*). Flannery concludes by stating that the whale, by "Defying the anthropocentric thoroughfares of the oceans", has, in a very real sense, superseded "the maps that structure and delineate the planet's marine expanses" (*ibidem*):

Out of her depths now, her rorqual pleats
ivory fading to grey as the tide retreats,
her brain at rest, with her huge size
she has admirers in her drowsy eyes –
surfers and tourists, children, families
who never saw a whale before;
and the news cameras, RTÉ, Channel 4.

A tired eye closes after so many years,
so much experience, travel, league upon league
of ocean, wild sunrises and sunsets,
tropical storms, long vistas, wind and stars;
and she gives up the ghost
not in the unfathomable dark forest
of sea, but here on the strand at Timoleague.

Pliny thought dolphins beached for love of man,
aspiring to human life. A might beast
like this has other reasons (pheromone,
exhaustion, age), yet when she gasps her last
bad breath on the glassy sand she gives
her body to flensing knives
and the flesh falls away in heavy leaves –

source once of lamp oil, glue and candle grease.
Dead of some strange respiratory disease,
reduced to the rib-cage of an old wreck,
entrails strewn on mud, the stomach
stripped and the organs – heart, liver
and lights – retrieved for research, she knows we aim to make a study of her;

to study the cortex, the skin thick and thin,
her ancient knowledge of the seas and rocks
we left to climb up on the burning shore
and still revisit in dreams and sex,
where the soft human paw
has the reflex of an unthinking fin
or a nerve twitching in primordial depths. (Mahon 2010)

In this, as in so much else, it is worth looking at Elizabeth Bishop's considerable influence on Mahon's ocean-disposed poems by way of verses like

"The Fish" and "At the Fishhouses" (Bishop 1983). Bishop is also worth taking into account, as Patricia Yeager does, that Bishop's poems not only serve as a means of entering the hidden potentialities of the ocean but also to get a handle on better understanding man's role in defining, and defiling, the ocean at large. It is, after all, Elizabeth Bishop who made an early and determined effort to replace land-based maps (viz. "The Map") with a poetic vision that positions "the land" differently: "Land lies in water; it is shadowed green" (*ibidem*). As Yaeger likes to put it, this decision to reappropriate the ocean and what the oceanic represents, and this is also clear from reading "At the Fishhouses", helps to restore it as a rich site for "contemplating the tragedy of the oceanic commons" (Yaeger 2010, 533). The same site, or sites, continues Yaeger, introduces us, more accurately, exposes us, to the possibilities of ocean studies and the challenges that such studies present when it comes to putting the ocean's "agitation and historicity" back into play (538). All this clearly makes sense to Mahon who, writing in *Olympia and the Internet* ("The Swimmer as Hero"), explains that "the fate of streams and rivers is to become sea, the greatest earthly myth, the largest tangible thing (three quarters of the globe) and our best personal experience of the infinite" (Mahon 2017, 57).

As well as Bishop, Rachel Carson should also be counted another important influence on Mahon's thinking. Lawrence Buell once said that any authentic understanding of life on our planet should begin with Carson (Buell 1998, 645). Buell also says that Carson and her successors have been instrumental in reviving "a long-standing mythography of betrayed Edens" (*ibidem*). It should come as no surprise, then, that Mahon's long-held admiration for Carson whose famous eco-paean, *Silent Spring* (1962), was preceded by *The Edge of the Sea* (1955), led him to choose the following lines, from *The Edge of the Sea*, as epigraph to "Harbour Lights": "I … a mere newcomer whose ancestors had inhabited the earth so briefly that my presence was almost anachronistic" (*HL*, 61-67)[4]. So there we have it. Mahon is a big fan of Carson as required reading. And this is something he makes altogether clear in "Bashō in Kinsale" (*HL*, 46-47) where he writes, in memo to self, "Desert island books: / Homer and Rachel Carson, / Durable hardbacks". The same Carson influence is also something that permeates Mahon's wide-ranging observations in one of his recent articles from Gallery Press, called "Rubbish Theory", about how our seas have become dumping grounds for all kinds of waste:

We hear of a sea of rubbish, hundreds of miles wide, in the Pacific.
Inquire further and you find this is only one of several in the oceans,
albeit the largest, and is actually composed of two, the interacting
East and West Pacific Gyres that combine to make up the Great Pacific

[4] Please note that *HL* will be used as abbreviation for *Harbour Lights* throughout.

> Garbage Patch north of Hawaii. It sounds benign, like "baggage patch", but is quite the opposite. Rotating slowly in a clockwise direction, it draws in plastics since these aren't biodegradable; the rest sinks to the sea floor to join an even bigger, underwater rubbish dump. Most of this debris comes from land-based activities, the rest from shipping and offshore oil rigs. Non-biodegradable but photodegradable, plastics are reduced by sunlight and gradually break down into tiny pieces resembling marine organisms, often mistaken for food by birds and fish. When they swallow these non-nutrients they swallow, too, toxic chemicals the plastic has absorbed, and these enter the food chain. (2017, 22)

Christelle Serée-Chaussinand maintains that Mahon is, almost more than anything else, concerned with betrayed places that are linked to the myriad seascapes for which he has a firm and lasting "predilection" (Serée-Chaussinand 2012, 51). To advance her analysis, Serée-Chaussinand enters Ireland's oceanic sites as sites possessing a number of important features having to do with liminality and seminality (*ibidem*). Serée-Chaussinand devotes a great deal of time to looking at seashores because such shores prove to be ideal media for Mahon to express "a pervading sense of loss and estrangement and more generally the ambivalent affiliation between his self and place" (*ibidem*). For Serée-Chaussinand, then, it is imperative that we come to grips with the exponential significance of Ireland's coastlines where ocean and land encounter one another along a "dividing line" which is as much epistemological as it is real (52). And perhaps one of the most important features of this dividing line is what Serée-Chaussinand, talking about the approximate relationship between sea, strand, and debris, is how Mahon often envisions the sea-strand encounter as a matrix which presages "alternative histories" (57).

The same kinds of sea/strand sites, ebb and flow, also allow for the distinct possibility that scattered beaches, sporadic shores, and incoming seas stir an elsewhere of cultural memories in a world which is inclined to deal with the "old ghosts of its past by banning such reminders to the margins" (Dietrich 2007, 457). It is therefore no coincidence that one of Mahon's all-time favorite seaside haunts is a mutant strand which serves as a storehouse, or, if preferred, ecological archive. In "Dreams of a Summer Night" (*NCP*, 372-377)[5] Mahon writes (with an obvious nod to Hopkins) about "So many quiet shores 'bleared, smeared with toil' " ("the unchecked invasion of crude oil / dumped on the sand by a once friendly tide"). This "invasion of crude oil", coupled with an apt reference to "unthickly wooded shores", has not changed much since Mahon wrote about detritus and diesel in "April on Toronto Island" (*NC* 30). Mahon also recounts, in "April on Toronto Island",

[5] Please note that *NCP* will be used as abbreviation for *New Collected Poems* throughout.

how "Slowly, in ones and twos", a local populace is set to come back and "stand on the thin beach among the / Washed-up flotsam of the winter" (*ibidem*).

Joanna Kruczkowska points out that even though Michael Longley has "long occupied a dominant position" as Ireland's leading nature poet, it is in Mahon's work that seascapes figure most prominently (Kruczkowska 2012, 71). Kruczkowska also underscores the fact that it is Mahon who is especially adept at rendering the "polluted, industrial areas of harbours and docks" as evidenced by the aforementioned "April on Toronto Island", as well as "On the Beach" and "Afterlives" (*ibidem*). To lend further support to her claim about "polluted, industrial areas of harbours and docks", Kruczkowska cites Mahon's "Aphrodite's Pool" (*TYB* 37-38)[6] because it is a poem that gives first-hand access to seafronts, properly speaking, "man-made" seafronts, in Greece (*ibidem*). It is this particular emphasis, writes Kruczkowska, that links Elytiss' Aegean to the "industrial version of the Irish seascape" Mahon turns to in his own verse (72). Kruczkowska is convinced that in writing "Aphrodite's Pool" Mahon devises a means of challenging the standard expectations and expectancies of pastoral convention and therefore gains entry to an alternative discourse on the sea; challenges the age old conventions surrounding the pastoral as it relates to the land and so encourages a far more open exchange having to do with the ocean, the sea, and the rest (73).

Terence Brown augments this reading of harbours and docks by setting us straight about how often Mahon is drawn to the pleasures of "miscellaneous ports" in things like "Harbour Lights" (*HL* 61-67) where he talks about his current residence, or, to be exact, the nearest quay to his home: "dark oil-drums and fish boxes on the quay, / winches and ropes, intestines of the sea/ alive with the stench of prehistoric water" (Brown 2003, 139). In the same poem, Mahon also comments on how "Slick boats click at the quayside down below" and how much he likes to study "the visible lines of tidal flow". As far as Michael O'Neill is concerned such narrative constructs – whenever they wash up against the "margins" – are instrumental in helping Mahon incorporate the sea or one of its semiological equivalents to accentuate "the limits of locality, the relativism of any notion of 'home'" (O'Neill 1983, 58). At the same time, his extensive use of littoral spaces and species, plus the vast openness of the sea, stirs us to question any number of assumptions embedded in traditional Irish discourse. This is what happens in "Beyond Howth Head" where the Irish Sea serves as both barrier and conduit – "Channel" – as a mode of shoring up "Unbosomings of sea-weed, wrack/ Industrial bile". Related leftovers, flotsam or jetsom, are part of "A Hermit" (*TSP* 26)[7], later called "The Mayo Tao" (*P* 72-

[6] Please note that *TYB* will be used as abbreviation for *The Yellow Book* throughout.

[7] Please note that *TSP* will be used as abbreviation for *The Snow Party* throughout.

73)[8], where Mahon introduces himself as "a confidant of the stinking shore". And then there is "North Sea" (*P* 92-97), Part 4 of "Light Music", which celebrates, if celebration it be, "The terminal light of beaches, / pebbles speckled with oil; / old tins at the tide-line". In similar mode, and this in a kind of back to the future, Mahon talks about "black beaches" in "The Great Wave" (*AAW* 77) and how such beaches offer you, if you are prepared to count "raw material" to be a kind of neo-resource, infinite possibilities in the making – "If 'waste is the new raw material' as they say / our resources are infinite".

Mahon is clearly an aficionado of the sea and the bountiful measure of its variegated strands. He is also, as John Kerrigan puts it, a "connoisseur" of detritus (Kerrigan 1992, 257). And in this, at least, he sometimes echoes James Joyce in his decision to use the leftovers of near-shores and read, as Joyce has it in the Proteus episode of *Ulysses*: "Signatures of all things I am here to read, seaspawn and seawrack, nearing the tide, that rusty boot" (McGuinness 2012, 4). This is, after all, the same Joyce who, as Michelle McSwiggen notes in her article, "Oceanic Longings: An Ecocritical Approach to Joyce", has Mulligan refer to the sea as "our greater mother", has Stephen count the sea "a stern, colonial, fatherly figure", and has Gerty's "attitude toward the sea" serve as an almost "perfect example of the British construction of the picturesque" (McSwiggen 2009, 138). A related sense of the sea, expressed in one or more of these paradigmatic types, is to be found in an early Mahon poem called "Straight Lines Breaking Becoming Circles" (1970) where Joyce is nothing if not an obvious influence: "You have walked by the sea / and heard the groan / of sea-desire / on railway stone / and watched the scrotum- / tightening, laced / with whistling spin- / drift" (Mahon 1969, 20).

Dan Brayton, talking about Shakespeare, provides a hardcore reminder that "Ecocritical scholarship to date has been almost entirely terrestrial in outlook" (Brayton 2011, 173). Brayton continues, and with just cause, to point out that a great many introductions to ecocriticism/environmental criticism contain "barely a mention of the sea or its denizens" (174). Because of this, continues Brayton, the sea as it has been envisaged in the course of intellectual history "has long been constructed as a non-place, and extra-social network that lies eternally outside – or on the margins – of history" (180). At one point Brayton likens the sea in Shakespeare to "a space of invisibility and unknowing, where the limitations of sight undermine epistemological certainty" (Shakespeare's ocean "remains an immense blind spot") (178-179). Considering Brayton's prime research interest, it is anything but surprising that he regards Shakespeare's "global ocean" as eschatologically suggestive. So suggestive, in fact, that he deems the Shakespearean ocean, in its geographic "alterity", to be something akin to "the epistemological *eschatia*, lying beyond the conceptual pale" (190).

[8] Please note that *P* will be used as abbreviation for *Poems 1962-1968* throughout.

As far as Mahon is concerned (and no claim here that his seas are the same as Shakespeare's) his preferred iterations of the sea involve a purposive sense of otherness; an infused sense of seascape that cannot be assimilated, at least not in standard kind, as part of the status quo back home. It is, apart from anything else, something of an untold expanse which, in the "Harbour Lights" (*HL* 61-67), speaks of "the open sea". At other times Mahon's seas emerge as if from a troubling realm with him identifying, as he does in "Craigvara House" (*ANT* 15-17)[9], the North's "rough/sea". There is also, at times, something quite ominous about some of his seas. Just take, as example, the case of "Glengormley" (*NC* 5) which hosts "conspiring seas", or in "North Wind: Portrush" (*HBN* 12-13)[10], which mentions a faraway sea that is "scarred but at peace". There is, as well, the "vigilant sea" of "What Will Remain" (*L* 26-27)[11], the "black-and-blue / Atlantic" of "Beyond Howth Head" (*L* 33-38), the "desolate sea" of "A Hermit" (*TSP* 26), the "stormy Irish sea" of "River Rhymes" (*THL* 23-24)[12] and the "violent seas" ("the whole shocking / reach of the Atlantic") that give definition to "At the Butler Arms" (*AAW* 32-33) – "not calm, contemplative ease / but violent seas".

According to Enrico Reggiani, Mahon's frequent encounters with, more properly, his references to the sea foster a "perimetral" sense of space as a "transitional area where man confronts with otherness" (1996, 203). To do this Mahon tries to envision oceanic expanses that are not just offshore but perhaps nowhere to be seen. This is true of "The Sea in Winter" (*P* 109-114) which asks us to peer "Far out" to where "the Atlantic faintly breaks" and imagine, if possible, the "Chaste winter-gardens of the sea / Glimmering to infinity". Jerzy Jarniewicz chimes in that whenever it comes to talking about such seas and their transformative horizons "No other place can be further from human society, no other approximates more conspicuously the idea of the beyond" (Jarniewicz 2002, 92). In Jarniewicz's view Mahon's sea vistas thus establish a gratuitous sense of elsewhere which helps us rethink our long-standing assumptions about place as being, first and foremost, the prerogative of "the land" (*ibidem*). As for Mahon himself, well, as he explains it in his article, "Horizons", the rise of 19th-century imperialism "gave horizons a new significance" which, give or take, brings us to question what it is all about: "surrounded by land horizons (a line of hills, fields, houses, woods), why do we think primarily of *sea* horizons? Because they're open, and because popular culture of the early 20th century, heyday of ocean travel, looked on them with such favour" (2017, 77).

[9] Please note that *ANT* will be used as abbreviation for *Antarctica* throughout.

[10] Please note that *HBN* will be used as abbreviation for *The Hunt by Night* throughout.

[11] Please note that *L* will be used as abbreviation for *Lives* throughout.

[12] Please note that *THL* will be used as abbreviation for *The Hudson Letter* throughout.

Eamonn Hughes believes that this abiding obsession with the sea's vastness and its unspoken mysteries exemplifies how much those who hail from a Northern Protestant background are "sea-obsessed" (2002, 104). And this is something Hughes talks about with direct reference to the triumvirate that is Mahon, MacNeice and Paulin; how, for these three poets, the sea functions as an expression of the "Protestant conscience" (*ibidem*). Ruth G.D. Wilkinson, exploring the same phenomenon points out how, and how often, Mahon's relatives saw entry into the merchant navy as an occupational choice that offered "possible transcendence of the North's restrictions" (Wilkinson 1995, 225). Such an abiding interest in all things ocean-bound appears in Mahon's "My Wicked Uncle" (*NC* 8-9) where one of his uncles is described as the "crookedest chief steward in the Head Line". There is also, in "Resistance Days" (*HL* 13-18), some further talk of his uncles – plural – as part of "a whole raft of Merchant Navy engineers, / northern barbarians on the Barbary coast / in their white ducks, a far cry from Belfast". Even the memories of his father-in-law, in the eponymously titled "Father-in-Law" (*P* 59-60), tack in pretty much the same direction: "I think we would have had a lot in common – / Alcohol and the love of one woman / Certainly; but I failed the eyesight test / When I tried for the Merchant Navy, / And lapsed into this lyric lunacy". Mahon also has a few things to say, in prose form, about how the men in his family were forever *concentrated* (his term) on life at sea and that if it hadn't been for his poor eyesight he, too, would have headed off to sail the seven seas:

> All the men in the family were concentrated on ships and the sea, except for those of us who were half-blind. I wanted to go to sea myself, so I was taken down to the Custom House in Belfast when I was about sixteen and given a preliminary examination, which involved looking at the chart on the wall. You know: O, X, Z, Q. The doctor said, "Read off the chart on the wall". So I said, "What chart?" And that was the end of my seafaring career. (Murphy, McDiarmid, Durkan 1999 [1991], 187)

A number of Mahon's seas and sea lanes also read like traces along which readers might spy, if lucky, ocean-going vessels as they make their way across a seemingly unfettered expanse. This is a world apart. Part free enterprise zone and part open sea it is dotted with random sightings as when, in the aforementioned "My Wicked Uncle", Mahon recalls seeing "empty freighters" (from the shoreline) "Sailing for ever down Belfast Lough / In a fine rain, their sirens going" (*NC* 8-9). This kind of sighting, once removed, is also found in "Derry Morning" where we catch a fleeting glimpse of a freighter which is tagged as a "Russian freighter bound for home" (*HBN* 11). Also included in Mahon's roster of ocean-going vessels is the "odd somnolent freighter" that is said to pass just off Rathlin in "Rathlin Island" (*HBN* 16), or, in a more re-

cent posting, a frigate that sits "on a glittering sea" in "Biographia Literaria" (*LOE* 13-14)[13]. There are also, scattered here and there, a few references to passenger ships. This is what we get in "A Dark Country" (*L* 18) where a ship is said to turn "among buoys in dawn rain / To slide into a dockyard fluorescence". Almost the exact same maneuver, accompanied by another bout of rain, is on offer in "Afterlives" (*TSP* 1-2) when a "ship trembles, turns / In a wide arc to back / Shuddering up the grey lough" (vague in aspect, said ship winds up moving "past lightship and buoy, / Slipway and dry dock / Where a naked bulb burns").

These manifold references to ships at sea, vessels on the horizon, or ships about to dock, are as close as Mahon ever gets to actually exploring the sea in, for want of a better word, the rough. One partial exception to this, in Mahon's work, might be his meditations on the fate of the Titanic. To wit, at one point we find ourselves "at sea" in "The Titanic" where Mahon entertains talk of "the grave ocean" (1961). This, coupled with another Titanic piece about Bruce Ismay, Chairman of the White Star Line, "As God is my Judge" (*NC* 31), once again offers some semblance of being on the water: "As I sat shivering on the dark water / I turned to ice to hear my costly / Life go thundering down in a pandemonium of / Prams, pianos, sideboards, winches". These Titanic poems, apart, most of Mahon's seas, far from being lived in, are reminiscent of things like Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach", with its Sea of Faith and "forlorn vastness", "Religious Isolation" and its "complaining sea", "Human Life" with its "incognisable sea" (Arnold 1963). The same seas also remind us at times of people like Swinburne who, in "By the North Sea", beckons the sea (or has it beckon?) with Dunwich as backdrop.

In a few words or less, Mahon's sea poems are a long way away from the rough-hewn dirges of London, Conrad, or Melville who wrote with a level of first-hand experience about life and livelihood on the high seas. This last point is taken up by Kristin Morrison who writes that there are, at the present time, "no Irish Joseph Conrads, no Irish Herman Melvilles" (2006, 112): that in her opinion the sea, of late, has served as "a psychological rather than a physical route" in the literary texts of today[14]. Fran Brearton feels, when it comes to talking about the sea in this or any other guise, that it is use-

[13] Please note that *LOE* will be used as abbreviation for *Life on Earth* throughout.

[14] While Morrison is of course right, it should be said, if only as hasty footnote, that a poet like Richard Murphy deserves some recognition as a sailor and devotee of the off-coast West and its rugged swells. This closeness to life on the sea is readily available in a string of Murphy poems – "The Last Galway", "Theodore Roethke at Inishbofin", "Seals at High Island", "Omey Island", "Nocturne", "High Island", "Sea Holly", "Planter Stock" – all of which tack close to an enlivened sense of the ocean in ways that Mahon never records per swells, tidal hazards, raging waters, heaving seas, outsized waves. See Murphy 2001, 19-22, 27-28, 83-84, 87, 102, 112, 134, 174.

ful to draw a close comparison between Mahon and Alastair Reid in order to tease out how their seas involve a number of meteorological issues which Brearton refers to as some of the most "dominant motifs" at work in both writers (Brearton 2008, 164). For Brearton, then, Reid's "frustration" with the Calvinist culture of Scotland is almost identical to Mahon's strained relationship with Protestantism/Calvinism in Northern Ireland. Brearton writes that this sense of denominational "frustration" is something which stirs both poets to relish "an elemental flux set in opposition to their respective communities of origin, sometimes, in stormy weather, embodying the imminent apocalypse" (*ibidem*). Drawing a close parallel between Mahon's "In Belfast" (*NC* 6) and Reid's "The Village" (1953), Brearton makes the point that by emphasizing weather conditions – "in concert with how both writers handle seascapes" – is to do nothing more than acknowledge that those who describe Mahon "as more a meteorological than a geographical poet correctly identify a preoccupation that he and Reid unquestionably share" (Brearton 2008, 163). Brearton also feels it is critical to make the point that over the course of Mahon's distinguished career "the 'sea-wind' and the rain" have remained "unpredictable elements evocative of that 'unconscious chaos', the potential embodiment of 'cosmic apocalypse' " (166).

To say, as Brearton does, that Mahon is a "meteorological" poet is to do nothing more than state the obvious considering how often his seas and seascapes involve recurring meteorological elements which, in turn, promise an introduction to a world contingent in form and infinite in scale (163). Eamonn Hughes, in sync with Brearton, agrees that Mahon is much more a "meteorological" than he is a geographical poet (Hughes 2002, 99). A consideration that brings us to a large assortment of verses including a dark portrait of Belfast Lough in "Death in Bangor" with its "great drifts of rain" (*TYB* 51-52), "North Wind: Portrush" (*HBN* 12-13), where we find "Everything swept so clean / By tempest, wind and rain", and the raw precipitation of "During the War" (*HL* 31-32) where rain is said to ring "with a harsh, deliberate chime / on scrap iron, plastic and depleted tin". The same inclement weather conditions are also, and no coincidence here, part of "Ecclesiastes" (*L* 3) with its steadfast and inglorious January rains darkening "the dark doors and sink hard / into the Antrim hills, the bog meadows, the heaped / graves of your fathers".

A similar sense of meteorological darkness is also a part of "After the Storm" (*AAW* 28-29) which recounts what took place after a massive storm hit Cork in recent years: "No one had imagined / embankments would give way under the surge,/ the River Lee engulfing market towns' / water mains, drains and residential lanes". Far from the floods of Munster, Mahon considers another troubling meteorological event in the Florida Keys with "Key West" (*THL* 69-71) and how "cloud-splitting Angie broke over the Keys last year / in June, the earliest ever, bringing torrential rains". To talk about such

phenomena Mahon references local media coverage to put things in some perspective: "Why so soon in the season? Newspapers and TV / spoke of 'El Niño', the fabulous, hot tide-thrust / born in December off Peru like the infant Christ / sea-changing all with its rough magic". At the heart of this El Niño analysis there is also a real opportunity to ponder not only how rain formations ("the fabulous, hot tide-thrust / born in December off Peru") effect life on the rest of the planet but how weather patterns augur ill for what is going on several leagues under the sea:

... Uh-oh, before dawn it came around again,
fat drops hitting on storm lanterns, demented budgies
screeching beyond the pool and the churning trees;
and I pictured the vast turmoil undersea,
a mute universe of sponge and anemone,
of conch and snapper, octopus and algae,
odd fish of every stripe in their coral conservatories,
while counting the stiff electric chimes of St. Mary's,
Star of the Sea.

In a follow-up to this meteorological verse Mahon asks, in "The Seasons" (*AAW* 26-27), "What weird weather can we expect this July? Tornado, hail, some sort of freak tempest?". He also draws a line between the rainfall of yesteryear and recent weather conditions as evidence of a planet under incredible stress. This is something he does, and does to great effect, in "London Rain" (*LOE* 52-53), where he authors an open statement that "this is a new rain, / the rainmakers have sent, / corporate and imported / to swamp a continent". What Mahon calls, in "America Deserta" (*TYB* 46-48), "the general new-age weather", finds him connecting the dots and identifying a "global-warming age / of corporate rule" as the real culprit for the ecological woes and interdebilitating global crises which far exceed national borders and threaten all the planet's living inhabitants, human or non-human, oceanic or terrestrial, on a scale that is endless in proportion and devastating in extent.

Nicholas Grene cites Mahon's firm desire to address these and other ecological concerns as a sign of him turning away from modern society and its pre-assigned talking points to more forcefully analyze what is threatening the planet's diverse but interlinked ecologies (Grene 2007, 25). Grene further observes that Mahon has, on more than one occasion, raided European literature, for example, the "meteorological explanations" of Lucretius (with a particular focus on the talk of clouds) in such things as *De Rerum Natura* (27). Grene continues with an enlarged statement that whereas Yeats and Shakespeare were inclined to use "cloud compositions for the fading of self and being" Mahon is much more inclined to use such manifold cloudscapes to "function as metaphors for identity at the frontier of non-existence, where socially and nationally specific markers become irrelevant" (28). Elmer Ken-

nedy-Andrews says something similar to Grene writing, at one point, that Mahon's reliance on such cloud formations, as compared to "fixed views of the world", indicate how much he wants to take refuge in "ever-changing symbols of a world beyond the 'mud and junk' of 'earthly intercourse' " (Kennedy-Andrews 2008, 175).

Mahon's lifelong devotion to clouds and cloud-inspired typologies rather than "earthly intercourse" is at times reminiscent of John Ruskin who, as Jonathan Bate points out, himself learned from Wordsworth "how to look at clouds" and, in so doing, reached the conclusion "that the weather was undergoing radical change" (Bate 1991, 61). Michael Wheeler believes that some of Ruskin's grimmest meteorological entries were informed by a host of apocalyptic texts and that this is most evident in *The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century* (1884) wherein he is troubled by a growing realization that "cloud formations may have been affected by industrial pollution" (Wheeler 1995, 169). This reference to what is now called man's carbon footprint saw Ruskin lean on select passages from scripture as a means of reading "the signs of the skies" and linking the evils of eco-degradation and the prophecies contained in *The Book of Revelation*: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him" (179, 184).

Although Mahon's capacious cloud references are less overtly scriptural than those of Ruskin, his cloud tracts are no less millenarian in their sense of urgent moment as evidenced by "Harbour Lights" (*HL* 6-67) which touches on clouds and cloud thoughts as "an alternative / to the global shit-storm that we know and love". More, Mahon's resolute desire to secure an "alternative / to the global-shit storm" is set against a growing perception that such alternatives are difficult to sustain since increased "levels of aviation" have retarded even "this vague resolution". Mahon also makes it perfectly clear that at this stage of the proceedings (environmentally speaking) "not even the ethereal clouds are quite immune" since they, too, "will be marketed if it can be done" Mahon recently took this, his long-held fascination with clouds, and turned it into an article entitled (well, what else?) "Clouds". Mahon begins this piece on clouds by noting that "cloud science" was initiated by Luke Howard (1772-1864) who published "On the Modifications of Clouds" in 1803 (Mahon 2017, 28). He says that Howard paid a great deal of attention to "cloud species and varieties" (hence "Cloud Nine") and tried throughout the course of his many observations to recognize "some order in the nubilous chaos" (*ibidem*).

From Howard, Mahon turns to draw a contrast between Goethe and Yeats noting that while Goethe "delighted" in Howard's scientific approach, Yeats "belonged to what we might call the indeterminate school" (30). Whatever the notion that Yeats might not have been taken by clouds to the same extent, or in the same fashion, as Goethe, Mahon remarks that even his

"sparing" cloud use was "forceful" since it represented an important "aspect of his Celtic-twilit relish for dramatic weather conditions" (29). Throughout, in fact, Mahon argues that "cloud wisdom" brings with it the "authority of the indeterminate"; that clouds signify an alternative to "organization and number, to the monetarization of life and the rule of system" ("clouds are real" – "ephemeral but substantial") (28, 33). Not only does Mahon provide an introduction to clouds in the 21st Century with "Clouds" but he also references some salient differences between the clouds that pass over the South of Ireland and those that pass over and hence, in their manner, define the North. And for Mahon, at least, the most salient difference between these regional cloud formations begins with talk of Kinsale's cirrus, stratus, cumulus, and "night-shining clouds" (32). Immediately afterwards, he compares the "fleecy flocks" of Kinsale with the dark storm clouds that hang over the North and in particular along the Antrim and Derry coasts where the heart "quails at the violent, as it were apocalyptic, contrast between earth and sky". Down South, meanwhile, things are much more "beautiful": "Down here it's milder, more domesticated, more beautiful than sublime; but vast fleecy flocks, surprising as Aristophanes' cloud chorus, are often framed in my desk window as if to establish a context" (32-33).

In all this searching – searching out "the violent, as it were apocalyptic, contrast between earth and sky" – Mahon tries, as should be patently obvious by now, to make the planet's non-human environments more and more available as talking points of lasting import. In so doing, he asks his readers to consider the oft-forgotten tenet that natural histories are an undeniable part of human history: that the environment is not some kind of external commodity but constitutes, in real time and in real terms, an amazing totality involving co-evolution between species whether those species are meteorological, oceanic, or other. Eóin Flannery readily agrees that Mahon's poetic is by any reasonable standard, in both the heavens and on the earth, ecological (Flannery 2012, 176). Flannery states that Mahon approaches "environmental history" from a far more green perspective than most of his Irish contemporaries (*ibidem*). Flannery takes this claim one step further when he announces, in unabridged form, that in sequences like "Homage to Gaia" (*LOE* 44-58) Mahon produces "one of the most explicit examples of the coincidence of ecoconsciousness and poetry in contemporary Irish writing" (ibidem). Richard Rankin Russell agrees that Mahon's "critique of the excesses of global capitalism, including the damage wrought upon our environment, has attained a laser-like clarity and is suffused with outrage" (Russell 2012, 488). And then, almost as if in response to all the naysayers who have berated Mahon's eco-poems as sub-par, Russell states that he is "one of our very greatest nature poets" (ibidem).

Sadly, Flannery and Rankin are in something of a minority when it comes to recognizing Mahon as a poet who has had an abiding interest in

the things of the environment. David Wheatley, for example, in a negative review of Mahon's New Collected Poems makes a real point of saying that Mahon's eco-poems are responsible "for some of the weakest things" in the collection before adding that "something about Mahon the eco-poet does not quite add up for me" (Wheatley 2012, 7). Billy Ramsell, in a review of the same collection, also dismisses Mahon's abiding interest in environmental issues calling him a "cookie-cutter environmentalist" (Ramsell 2011-2012). Seán Lysaght, in a discussion of Mahon's work, more specifically "Resistance Days", takes a similar stance writing that "there is something not quite convincing about Mahon's espousal of 'the real chaos of indifferent nature" (Lysaght 2011, 76). For critics like Wheatley, Ramsell, and Lysaght, and all the other critics who have dismissed Mahon's work on the grounds that his interest in, or commitment to, environmental issues is a new fad or pseudo-intellectual enterprise, it is worth pointing out, and this can't be said enough, that Mahon started writing eco-poems long before it ever became fashionable to talk about ecology and the environment in Ireland.

As long ago as 1982, in fact, Mahon's "Globe in North Carolina" (*HBN* 61-63) included mention of everything from "the hot dust of the piedmont" to "Audubon's / Bird prints" in addition to foregrounding the exigencies of natural life on the planet as a whole. Some several years before "The Globe in North Carolina", poems like "A Refusal to Mourn" (*TSP* 32-34) were also grounded, circa 1975, in the stuff of global ecologies with Mahon situating his protagonist's residence as a place inundated with the signs and presence of nature. Violeta Delgado points out, in her extended reading of "A Refusal to Mourn", that it is a poem which envisions the human condition *in terms of* its connections to nature in all its forms. Delgado argues that it is precisely because of Mahon's long-held beliefs about the natural world's irreducible links to "mankind" (and vice versa) that towards the end of "A Refusal to Mourn" the poem's central figure, upon dying, is seen to be at one with the natural elements of which he is an indivisible part (Delgado 1997, 58). Taking her argument one step further, Delgado proposes that the poem's elderly protagonist, through death, actually serves to "annihilate the linear conception of time in favor of the eternally recurring cycle of life and death" (*ibidem*). Hence, the main reason Mahon "refuses" to mourn the death of the poem's elderly figure is because "the man is part of the cycle that allows death and life to succeed each other continually" (59).

Far more recent in aspect, Mahon's essay, "Indian Ink", relates how after visiting India – an experience that had a direct bearing on writing "Homage to Goa" (LOE 60-61), "Air India" (*AAW* 22), and "Raw Material" (*AAW* 69) – he was moved to a much deeper appreciation of Gaia theory and so came to embrace the central eco-tenet that we are all part of *atma*, "the world breath or soul" (Mahon 2012, 270). This actuated sense of *atma* finds Mahon casting himself as an Ulster poet who thinks "We're cleverer than the monkeys

in most ways, but one with them in spirit at some level; one, too, with all organic and even inorganic life" (*ibidem*). Such a co-incarnational approach (unlike the fundamental Calvinist belief in Cartesian dualities between human and other) reminds us, or should, that we are indeed an integral part of nature (*ibidem*). As evidence of same, Mahon, in the course of "Homage to Gaia" (*LOE* 44-58), renews his ecological commitment by expressing his overt, and utter, disgust for the havoc that *homo sapiens* has wreaked on the planet in search of global dominance and international profit.

Calling Gaia "our first mother" in Poem 2 of the "Homage to Gaia" sequence, entitled "Homage to Gaia", Mahon rails against a human species that has done everything in its power to destroy "the woods / with crazy chainsaws, oiled / the sea, burned, up the clouds, upset the natural world / to grow fat". What Mahon also does in "Homage to Gaia", this time in Part 1, entitled "Its Radiant Energies", is to have solar panels represent something animate in the making: "What you notice about / the panes is their composure, / their heliotropic quiet". But what really shines through in "Its Radiant Energies" is the means by which Mahon's panes seek out light and how he has his poem's heliotropic panes cry out, "send us warmth and light!" ("light drinking polysilicon / raises its many faces / to worship the hot sun"). Edmund Prestwich thinks this particular poem's narrative could have been culled from a scientific paper with lines that feel altogether comfortable talking about "an average annual / thousand kilowatt hours / per photovoltaic panel" (2010). John McAuliffe adds to this ongoing exchange about Mahon's "light drinking polysilicon" by delivering a few remarks on how Mahon's ecologies celebrate, with "gusto", "the coming post-petroleum age" and anticipate, with grace, "the first hymns to alternative energy supplies" (McAuliffe 2008). And for McAuliffe this means that collections like *Life on Earth* (2008) are, contrary to popular opinion on the part of Mahon's critics, part of a sophisticated poetic enterprise that responds to "an ecological collapse which has already occurred" (*ibidem*).

According to Kennedy-Andrews a significant shift in Mahon's ecothought took place with the publication of *The Hudson Letter* and *The Yellow Book* when his work moved "beyond the apocalyptic rhetoric of earlier work towards affirmation of an ecocentric vision of hopeful new beginnings" (Kennedy-Andrews 2008, 173). Kennedy-Andrews argues that compared to Mahon's "earlier speculations on post-apocalyptic new beginnings" (he has in mind "The Apotheosis of Tins" and "Thammuz"), Mahon's recent offerings presage "visions of a hopeful future, a restoration of the broken bond between the human and the natural, a return to primitive animal and vegetable origins" (*ibidem*). In Magdalena Kay's opinion – and this even if some recent publications suggest a new phase of "acceptance" – Mahon's first (and last) "eschatological concerns remain prominent" (Kay 2012). Kay further insists that Mahon's informed sense of a "post-petroleum age" means, in po-

ems like "Insomnia" (*LOE* 22-23) and "A Country Road" (*LOE* 42-43), and she focuses mainly on "Insomnia", that Mahon is filled with an ever increasing urgency about figuring out, and confronting, the dark and darker consequences that come with "globality and, even more, planetarity" (*ibidem*).

Here, of course, we must be careful. And we must be careful because any serious discussion of the relationship between human and "other" which is based on the idea that Mahon seeks a restoration of the "broken bond between the human and the natural" might prove misleading given that Mahon's sense of evolution, not to be confused with reconciliation, has a lot less to do with restoration than it has to do with apocalypse and reversion. Edna Longley, talking about one of Mahon's earlier poems, "Consolations of Philosophy" (*L* 28), notes that this poem looks forward – *apocalyptically* –to Belfast "collapsing (back) into its natural environment" (Longley 1995, 298). She continues, and this aligns with what was said earlier in this chapter, that such a condition of collapse involves the likelihood that this, the "ultimate decolonization and expiation", will involve the sea "repossessing" Belfast (*ibidem*). Lucy Collins, writing some ten years after Longley, revisited "Consolations of Philosophy" and made a real point of reinforcing the likelihood of such apocalypse with, as she puts it, "the spectre of the city collapsing into its natural environment", "When the broken / Wreath bowls are speckled with rain water / And the grass grows wild for want of a caretaker" (Collins 2009, 261).

Barry Sloan is someone who insists – no ifs, ands, or buts – on using the term "reversionary" rather than acceding to the more anthropologically-acceptable term that is "restoration" because the latter implies man could, or should, be restored as a new and better self ready to usher in a new age of thoughtful human stewardship where eco-harmony will prevail (yet another version of all's well that ends well) (2000). Mark Nixon also pulls no punches on the question of so-called restoration theory by making it abundantly clear that in Mahon's work, whether recent or otherwise, the "departure of humanity" has always been "envisaged, without regret" (Nixon 2005, 51). What is more, Nixon actively promotes the belief that since the process of natural reclamation, *après* human departure, is seen as the next order of business then that's that: "Stillness, a coming to rest, is something aspired to in many of Mahon's poems, and more often than not it is the silence which the universe achieves after the departure of humanity that is celebrated" (52, 55). In such a post-human environment, one that is bound to post-scriptural apocalypse and end-is-nigh philosophy, the world is envisioned as a place – for one, check-out "Christmas in Kinsale" (*TYB* 56-57) – where "triumph" is measured in terms of "mud-wrestling organisms in post-historical phase": "here the triumph of carnival, rinds and skins, / mud-wrestling organisms in post-historical phase / and the fuzzy vegetable glow of origins".

In all this it is exceedingly important to remember (to "remember not to forget") that Mahon's approach to writing "the environment" begins and

ends in a place that hails from a unique eco-cultural milieu with its unique blend of fetishes, fixations, and fantasies. It is, in short type, a decidedly dark place grounded in the end-is-nigh appeal of Ulster Protestantism. Christopher Moylan is important here because he reminds us (another reminder) that whenever Mahon generalizes a certain "disillusionment with post-industrial society" his approach finds its primary source in, and is ultimately determined by, "the specific circumstances of the North of Ireland" (Moylan 2009, 259). Patricia Horton also has no doubts, none, that Mahon's ingrained sense of eco-apocalypse is best identified as a coalescent and permanent trace of the Protestant imagination back home (Horton 2000, 357). Thus while Horton's measure of Mahon's semiotic roots is nothing new it is revealing that in making the case she does, that is, by revisiting those "apocalyptic moments which abound in his poetry", she comes to underscore the fact that these ventures in the apocalyptic "often wipe out the whole symbolic order and attempt to return to a pre- or post-linguistic realm" (*ibidem*).

This is the same kind of eco-affiliation Horton refers to as one that embodies a "double sense of biblical text and written word" which emblematizes "blank nature" (360). More, Horton describes such a post-lapsarian environment as being a "chillingly silent world of 'dark / repose' " with the natural world finally reclaiming "what civilized man has taken" (*ibidem*). She is adamant that Mahon envisions this "new world" order as an ecological realm invested in difference because it is "*no pastoral idyll*" (*ibidem*). For, Horton, then, the greater disposition of such eco-scriptural narratives cry out for a new environmental covenant consisting of reflexive scripts (and readings) which implicate and involve an understanding of nature as multiform and multiplex. And such a covenant is, as it must be, expressed from within a poetic whose iterations befit an "end time" forever grounded in Protestant the optics, or, what Peter McDonald once called, "apocalyptic extremity and ecological endtime preaching" (McDonald 2012, 486).

As Fran Brearton sees it the key issue here is that an inextinguishable part of Mahon's "nostalgia is its yearning for a pre-historical, pre-linguistic, pre-civilized world with 'post' being interchangeable with 'pre' " (Brearton 2000). Such a provocative sense of nostalgia is something Brearton likes to define as follows: "the vision is not only nostalgic, it is also apocalyptic, and within that vision he plays havoc with the illusions of security in the very language in which, for a Calvinist culture, a form of security is found" (*ibidem*). This return to nature, blank slate and all, is part of Mahon's unwavering conviction that a post-homocentric age will supersede the narratives (and need for narratives) that have minimized, trivialized, neutralized, or anthropomorphized the innumerable realities of nature as defined. "What Will Remain" (L 26-27), the poem that precedes "Consolations of Philosophy" in *Lives*, is another piece that explores the possibilities of a post-apocalyptic world where, or at least that is the suggestion, "man" becomes a thing of the past. Begin-

ning with a statement that "What will remain after / The twilight of metals, / The flowers of fire" will be "the soft / Vegetables where our / Politics were conceived", the poem considers the mysteries of before and after saying, "It is hard not to imagine / What it must it must have been like / Before any of us were here" ("And to what dark / Repose it will in time return"). And then comes the rub. The point where, as far back as the 1970s, Mahon could write about an ecological end time "When we will give back" what he calls "The cleared counties to the / First forest, the hills / To the hills" and "the reclaimed / Mudflats to the vigilant sea" – thereafter announces, in no uncertain terms, that "What will remain will be / The blank nature before / Whiskey, before scripture".

So Longley, it seems, was really onto something regarding Mahon's scriptural sense of what will come after apocalypse when a new and unfettered environment emerges with a place like Belfast finally "collapsing [back]into its natural environment" (Longley 1995, 298). Longley was also onto something when she said, in a 2005 article, "'Altering the Past': Northern Irish Poetry and Modern Canons", that Northern Irish poetry "is a narrative whose time has (almost) come" though she then hesitated for a split second with, "or it's time for a closer reading" (Longley 2005, 10). Seamus Deane, like Longley, was also onto something when he said in one of his Field Day pamphlets, "Heroic Styles: The Tradition of an Idea", that when it comes to talking about issues having to do with Irish literature that "Everything, including our politics and our literature, has to be re-written – re-read" (Deane 1984, 58). Deane went on to say, in the same pamphlet, that such a process of rereading and rewriting would hopefully "enable new writing, new politics, unblemished by Irishness, but securely Irish" (*ibidem*). Clearly, Deane and Longley are both onto something when they suggest, albeit with different goals in mind, that we must begin to re-read Irish literature as known. Then, again, they are only onto something if – *if* – phrases like "our politics and literature" involve, as well as everything else, the magnanimous otherness of earth's multimodal species types and the manifest principle that any worthwhile textual analysis must include a sense of readership that is endlessly eco-symptomatic in kind and recognize how much, and how often, the North's unreclaimed nostalgias are inscribed in a pluriform of tenacious gaps, lapses, and silences, as much as they are inscribed in the availability of words on a page:

Not much distinction now between sea and land:
some sat in dinghies rowing where they'd sown,
navigating their own depth-refracted ground
and scaring salmon from among the branches.
Global warming, of course, but more like war
as if dam-busting bombers had been here:
aerial photographs of the worst-hit areas

showed road, bridges, basic infrastructure
devastated, the kind of thing you expect
in China or Louisiana but not in Cork.
("After the Storm", Mahon 2011, 344)

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The *Angel* Controversy: An Archival Perspective

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Abstract:

This paper looks at the controversy regarding the decision of the Irish Film Board (IFB) to fund *Angel*, which tore apart the Irish film industry in 1981-82 and almost made the newly-born Board derail. We rely on documents held in the Irish Film Institute Archive to offer a new, more balanced approach to this well-known issue. More specifically, we first show that it was a lack of quorum that made the decision illegal and expose the lies and half-truths that all the parties involved used to discredit each other's position in the media. Next, we examine the Association of Independent Producers Ireland-controlled IFB policies for 1982-1983 and argue that many were geared towards making *The Outcasts* the flagship Irish film at the expense of *Angel*. We finish by reflecting that, although Angel was the only success of the IFB, it continued supporting films like *The Outcasts* only until 1987.

Keywords: *Angel*, Film support policies, Irish Film Board, Neil Jordan, *The Outcasts*

1. Introduction

It was John Huston who, in the course of a conversation with Taoiseach Jack Lynch in 1967, first proposed the creation of a national film board in the Republic of Ireland. To the Irish-American filmmaker, a film board was the best chance Ireland had to develop a viable film industry that could also help promote the island as a tourist destination, two ambitious objectives the costly Ardmore Studios, opened in 1958, had largely failed to achieve.

Throughout the 1970s, two trade associations, the Irish Film and Television Guild (IFTG) and the Association of Independent Producers Ireland (AIP), would lobby for the board and policies that favoured native film companies. After some failed attempts at passing a film legislation, in December 1980, the Irish Film Board Bill received parliamentary approval, which

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allowed for the creation of a film board to plan, deploy and oversee film-related policies in Ireland, set up and run a national film archive and design, administer and grant state-sponsored film tax incentives, loans and subsidies.

The Irish Film Board Act, in spite of the fact that it was a much-welcomed addition to Irish legislation, did forebode trouble, as it made very clear that foreign and domestic producers would have to compete for public funding, established that every taxpayer's penny invested in film production, plus interest, was to be returned to the State and tied the Irish Film Board (IFB) to this responsibility by setting a maximum debt cap of £4.1 million. Also, it entitled the government to appoint and dismiss, at will, the seven members of the IFB executive board and leave up to four seats vacant.

Acting on that provision, in the summer of 1981, the Irish government appointed John Boorman, filmmaker and chairman of the National Film Studios of Ireland (NFSI), and Robin O'Sullivan, director of the Cork Film Festival, to the IFB, of which Louis Heelan, general manager of the Industrial Credit Company, was made chairman. The remaining four seats were left vacant. In August 1981, the IFB started operations on a meagre budget of £200,000.

The appointments, the vacancies and the budget aggrieved the IFTG and the AIP, which had no representatives on the Board and suddenly realised that the IFB was not to be the independent film haven they had been lobbying for and, as said before, would have to share the scarce IFB resources with transnational, commercial film companies. Resentment against the IFB brewed for months, especially in the AIP, but it would be the backing of *Angel* (Jordan 1982) that created an insurmountable rift between the trade association and the IFB.

For the last three decades, several academic authors, including myself, have been guilty of taking at face value the account of the *Angel* controversy by Dwyer (1982) and Rockett *et al.* (1987), among others. Over the years, the picture emerging out of these accounts, however biased towards the AIP, has become synonymous of sacred truth and very few, again including myself, have ever dared to question it. Furthermore, the handful of authors that have attempted to look beyond – e.g., Connors (2015) – have mainly relied on the AIP documents and contemporary newspaper pieces in the Tiernan MacBride Collection in the Irish Film Institute (IFI) Archive. Collected and eventually donated to the Archive by Tiernan MacBride, one of the leading figures in the infamous AIP campaign against *Angel*, it seems hardly coincidental that out of these materials also emerges a Manichean story of (Irish) good v. (British) evil starring the executive producer of *Angel*, John Boorman, as the lead villain[1].

[1] A major exception to this is Carole Zucker; however, she just devotes three paragraphs to the issue in her comprehensive study of the cinema of Neil Jordan (2008, 20-21).

Coinciding with the 35th anniversary of the theatrical release of *Angel*, we started to wonder whether something else could actually be added to the history of the controversy or, regardless of how unabashedly one-sided it all seemed, it was a closed case. This took us to the IFI Archive in Summer 2017, where we unsurprisingly confirmed first-hand that the papers in the MacBride Collection did indeed tell the story the way it had been told up to that moment. That notwithstanding, we decided to go through the blue-bound volumes of minutes of the first Irish Film Board (IFB), donated to the Archive by former IFB Chief Executive (CE) Michael Algar in 2011.

This paper exists mainly because we do believe that the information in the minutes allows us to offer a slightly different perspective on the controversy than the one we have become used to hearing. By putting side-by-side the documents in the MacBride and the Algar Collections, there emerges a more thorough, less biased picture of the events—a picture where John Boorman and the three-member IFB receive a fairer treatment and, more importantly, which includes details of the crucial role *The Outcasts* (Wynne-Simmons 1982) seems to have played in how the affair unfolded. The methodology used in this paper is, therefore, archival and historical. The events are approached in chronological order, starting with the first IFB meeting in August 1981 and ending in December 1983, shortly after the Irish general release of *The Outcasts*.

This picture of ours, however, has no aspiration whatsoever to become sacred truth. We are well aware that there are many documents we have not had access to that can, and hopefully will, change the story again in the future. As a matter of fact, as we went through the minutes, documents were often mentioned that are not currently in the IFI Archive and maybe never will be. Some may have been lost with the passing of time; others may be in the personal archive of Neil Jordan and will be inaccessible to researchers for quite some time yet; some others may be waiting to be dug out among the John Boorman papers in the Indiana University Library in Bloomington.

2. The three-member Board (August-December 1981)

2.1 The seeds of conflict

The maiden meeting of the IFB was held on 24 August 1981[2] with the three appointed members in attendance. Among other things, the minutes for the meeting reflect the eagerness of Boorman, O'Sullivan and Heelan for

[2] Most sources are cited by date only. The reason for this is two-fold. Pagination starts anew with each meeting record in the volumes of minutes and is missing in many other documents (news clippings, press releases, correspondence…). Also, the vast majority of records and documents are between one and three pages long.

the remaining four vacancies to be filled soon, as the absence of just one of them would prevent a quorum from being reached.

Being, at the time, the only Irish film project scheduled for shooting in 1981, *Angel* was already discussed at the meeting. The attendees noted that the film had secured financing and was due to start filming on a budget of £546,000 in October. Taking into consideration that one-third of the money was "on a temporary basis", they "agreed to consider any proposal for the re-financing of the part of the budget which the producers might submit" (Irish Film Board 1982, 24/08/81).

At the following meeting, the offer was still standing, as *Angel* was "the first fully developed [project] to come to the Board, had a high "Irish content" and was ready for shooting in a matter of weeks" (3/09/81). The official records also report that it was then that Boorman – whose production company, the Motion Picture Company of Ireland (MPCI), was co-producing *Angel* with British television Channel 4 (C4) – declared his interest in the film. According to the minutes, he "was helping Mr Jordan (without fee) to raise finance and obtain distribution for the film" (*ibidem*).

Regardless of the Board's early, undisguised sympathy for *Angel*, funding applications were called for and no decisions were taken until the call closed. When they met in October to discuss which projects would be awarded funding, C4 had already requested Boorman to executive produce *Angel*. The proceedings record that, as a consequence, he abstained from participating in the "consideration of or discussion on the case" (10/81), which concluded with the approval of a non-recourse, interest-free loan of £100,000 to the MPCI under these terms:

- Neither the director nor the executive producer could be others than Jordan and Boorman, respectively, and only minor changes could be made in the script and casting.

- The budget could not go over £516,767, including contingency (£46,979) and a completion guarantee (£26,309), which the MPCI was responsible for getting from a guarantor. C4 would "provide a non-recourse, interest-free advance of up to IR £416,767", of which £184,880 would be allotted "on delivery of the film to Channel 4" to pay "for the UK rights in the film" and £184,908 "to be repaid pari passu with the repayment of the IFB loan". The investment was secured by a lien, shared between C4 and the IFB, on "the film, the copyright in the film and final shooting script, and the rights in the story and music of the film […] and the benefit of the distribution agreements in respect of all non-UK territory" (*ibidem*).

- Once the film was completed, the MPCI was to repay the moneys above first. Then, they would "reimburse" the IFB for the "solicitors' fees and outlay in connection with the IFB Loan […] up to a maximum of IR £1,500". Finally, "not less than 50% of the net profits" were to be shared proportionally between C4 and the IFB (*ibidem*).

However rough the terms of the loan were, *Angel* would infamously become the only film to receive IFB support in 1981. Except for the £2,500 granted to the Festival of Film of Television in the Celtic Countries, no other applications went through and submissions by Vincent Corcoran, Bob Quinn, Tom Hayes, Tiernan MacBride, Jim Sheridan, John T. Davies, Ian Merrick and Tommy McArdle, among others, were steadfastly rejected, asked for further development or deferred "for consideration by the full Board when appointed" (*ibidem*). Among those who failed to get support were also Robert Wynne-Simmons and Kieran Hickey, who were encouraged to scale down *The Outcasts* and *Afterwards*, respectively, arrange for private funding and re-apply in 1982.

Utterly frustrated at the Board's decision, the executive committee of the AIP asked members to boycott it by refusing to submit further applications and withdrawing those already submitted until a full Board was appointed. An *Irish Times* cutting, aptly titled "Producers want boycott of Irish Film Board" and held in the MacBride Collection, introduces what would become the core of the AIP position throughout the conflict with the Board: the three-member IFB was incomplete, (illegally) operating without a CE, and "assessing applications and making decisions" they were blatantly incompetent for. The AIP illustrated the Board's incompetence by pointing out their refusal to consider documentary film applications for funding until a "larger board" was appointed, their turndown of "a film script which won the last Arts Council film script award" (i.e. *The Outcasts*) and especially their decision to award "a major part of its finance to a film by an inexperienced filmmaker already in production in Ardmore Studios" (i.e. *Angel*) (Kiely 1981).

An undated AIP memorandum in the same collection considers the issue from a legal perspective. According to the memo, Boorman might have disclosed to the Board that he was executive producing *Angel*, but neither had he done it before discussions started, as obliged by Section 17 of the Irish Film Board Act, nor had he informed the Board that he was also a director and shareholder of the MPCI, that is, that he had a personal interest in the matter. Considering that "the Rules of constitutional or natural justice apply to the activities of the Board" and they demand "administrators and others to be disinterested and impartial in the exercise of the their powers and discretion", especially "where the interest involved is the interest of the public body which the individual administrator represents and it is unarguable that where the individual himself is the person who holds the interest and, a fortiori, where that interest is pecuniary" (Association of Independent Producers Ireland undated), Boorman should have abstained from both attending the meetings and casting a vote. If he had done either, the Board's decision could be deemed invalid and the funds returned on request. Furthermore, if no quorum could be reached without him, funding decisions should have been postponed until at least one of the vacancies was filled.

Deeply worried about the AIP's reaction, Robin O'Sullivan wrote to MacBride on 23 October. He begins by expressing his distress at "some of the things being said on behalf of the AIP" and warning that, should the AIP persist on their accusations, "the £200,000 allocated by the government will not be spent and will, therefore, be lost to the Irish film industry". He concedes that the IFB may not have been as transparent as it should have, even though "the position adopted by [the AIP vice-chairman] Bob Quinn in particular is intemperate and, in relation to John Boorman, manifestly unfair". O'Sullivan remarks that it was Boorman who brokered the deal with C4 for four-fifths of *Angel*'s budget and the British television that demanded him to executive produce the film, which he was doing *bona fide* and after giving "a personal guarantee to Channel Four in respect of their investment". He also reminds MacBride that the AIP had agreed not to object to Board members submitting projects to the IFB and, yet, they were taking it out on Boorman, who had "been utterly scrupulous in relation to 'Angel' and the application before the Board". O'Sullivan finishes the letter by vindicating the Board's decision on the need to "get things moving" and "prepare the ground for the full functioning of the Irish Film Board" lest the government should get the impression that there was "no urgency in finding funds for film making in Ireland" and claimed back the IFB allotment for 1981. He adds that an AIP boycott "would throw into turmoil a situation where it appeared that at long last there would be a coming together and concrete hope for Irish film-making and its future" (O'Sullivan 1981).

2.2. The controversy goes public

By November 1981, *The Irish Independent*, *The Sunday Tribune* and *The Irish Press* were already pouncing on the IFB-AFI strife[3]. On 3 November, *The Irish Press* ran "Row over UK staff on Irish film", where the AIP accused the MPCI of using British crew and equipment in the production of *Angel*, which, in Quinn's opinion, disqualified the film as Irish. In the same article, Boorman, Jordan and the film's producer, Barry Blackmore, admitted that the cameraman (Chris Menges) was indeed British but pointed out that the rest of the crew were Irish and regretted the "chorus of invective" (*The Irish Press,* 1981) aimed at Boorman.

The following day, the General Meeting of the AIP decided by an overwhelming majority to boycott the IFB until a full Board was appointed[4]. A

[3] Rockett *et al.* consider that "the issue forcefully entered the public domain at the Third International Festival of Film and Television in the Celtic Countries" (1987, 119); however, by late March 1982 it had been around for more than four months.

[4] Rockett *et al.* soften the AIP's decision by saying it was "a threat to boycott the Board's proceedings" (1987, 119) rather than an actual boycott.

post-meeting press release only concedes that the award to *Angel* "might well have been made by a full seven-man Film Board including Irish film makers". Besides insisting on most of the points made in October, it remarks that the Board was "acting without any guidelines or instructions from" the government, and the call for applications had, in practice, excluded most Irish filmmakers and invited foreigners to submit projects. Furthermore, given that Boorman was executive producing *Angel* and was a shareholder and director of the MPCI, there was at least "an appearance of impropriety" in the Board's decision. The document finishes by asking Boorman, Heelan and O'Sullivan to resign so that the government could appoint a Board that would "act as a cohesive force in the industry, rather than a divisive one" (Association of Independent Producers Ireland 1981).

Despite the harshness of both *The Irish Press* piece and the press release, the copy of the latter in the IFI Archive is actually an enclosure in a rather conciliatory letter to trade union leader Liam Saurin. In the letter, dated 6 November, MacBride remarks that the AIP take on *Angel* is the one in the release, not in *The Irish Press*, which he disregards as "distorted and out of context", surprisingly adding that the "AIP fully accepts that Angel and Channel Four are valuable sources of work for Irish technicians and has no desire to adversely affect this situation". Also, he argues that "it would be of benefit to us, and to the overall picture, if the Union would publicly support us in our position" (MacBride 1981).

We cannot know whether the letter was written before or after RTÉ, after some bickering with Boorman, aired a report about the controversy on Féach, a current affairs programme, in the evening of 6 November. Although not in the IFI Archive, the episode is worth mentioning because it featured an interview with Boorman where he denied the accusations of conflict of interest in the Board's decision to fund *Angel* and the mismanagement of the NFSI. Asked about the boycott, he bluntly told a rather hostile Eamonn O'Muiri that it would actually make things much easier, as over the last few months he had "been inundated with material" he was not reading because it was "mostly rubbish" and implied that some independent filmmakers would be withdrawing their applications just because they considered the Board "incompetent to judge their masterpieces". He added that the controversy was mostly due to the fact that he and his associates had "committed the unforgivable sin in Ireland of being successful" and scorned the protesters as a "small group of paranoiacs intent on a slur campaign" (RTÉ 1981).

The Sunday Tribune must have run "Ardmore management attacked as crisis deepens" shortly after RTÉ broadcast the episode of *Féach*, although there is no date on the cutting in the IFI Archive. The article is mostly based on an interview with a sour, convalescent Vincent Corcoran, NFSI Board member and one of the filmmakers shunned by the IFB in October. In the piece, Corcoran makes Boorman and Sheamus Smith responsible for the

economic turmoil the NFSI were going through[5], and accuses them of being incompetent and non-transparent and using both the film facility and the IFB for their own profit. The text, which also makes reference to the *Féach* interview and the failed attempt by investor Vincent O'Donoghue to acquire the NFSI in late 1981, ends by casting yet another shadow of doubt over Boorman. Although the development of the NFSI land for housing has loomed over the studios since the early 1970s, reporter Angela Phelan maliciously points out that Boorman would have hired an architect friend of his to draw up development plans in 1979[6].

On 3 December, the Board was informed that Wynne-Simmons was to start shooting *The Outcasts* shortly, in spite of the fact that he had not arranged for private funding or distribution yet. Surprisingly, they agreed to offer him a loan of up to £42,000, which, nevertheless and "because of budgetary constraints", would be made payable only if the Irish Parliament "made available" funds to the IFB in 1982 (Irish Film Board, 03/12/81). The sum can seem small when compared to the £100,000 lent to the MPCI, but it should be taken into account that the IFB was willing to finance more than 50% of the total cost of a film that, unlike Jordan's, had not yet secured distribution or funding and whose budget was set at £82,000. Besides, although the risks were significantly higher, the terms were better than those offered to Boorman, as Wynne-Simmons was asked to share just 30% of the net profits.

Kieran Hickey, who, by early December, was also prepared to commence shooting *Afterwards*, was not so lucky and did not get IFB funding in 1981. As a result, on December 13, he complained bitterly about the Board in a piece called "Top director rebuffed by Film Board" in *The Sunday Independent* and related the rejection of his project to a supposedly foreign-geared, obscure, nepotistic policy of film support by the IFB, as illustrated by their decision to back "the English production" *Angel*, "produced by Board member John Boorman" (*The Sunday Independent,* 1981).

Two days later, Louis Heelan announced his resignation from the Board, and Boorman told the Minister to consider his position open. Asked about the chairman's resignation, the filmmaker told *The Irish Press* that Heelan was resigning because "he could not stand the climate of hostility which had surrounded the new body", especially "the campaign of vilification" from the AIP (Molloy 1981). However, in a letter to the government and a statement to *The Irish Press*, Heelan attributed the decision to "the pressure of work" and denied that it had anything to do with the *Angel* controversy, though

[5] The annual losses at the time were about £600,000 and the accumulated debt about £2.5 million (Agnew 1981).

[6] Boorman ended up suing the newspaper for libel. According to the British filmmaker, they desperately tried to reach an extrajudicial settlement with him (Boorman 2004, 250).

he added that the AIP should be represented on the Board, as their absence from it "had been one of the reasons for 'the amount of flak' the body had suffered" (*The Irish Press*, 16 December 1981).

3. The extended Board (January 1982-December 1983)

3.1 Policy layout: Appearance v. reality

On 12 January 1982, the Board first met under the official name of the Irish Film Board/Bord Scannán na hÉireann. It was not the only major change. Besides Robin O'Sullivan, in attendance were the secretary Michael Aherne and four of the five newly-appointed members: Muiris MacConghail, RTÉ head of production; Michael Algar, Irish Film and Television Guild chairman; Tiernan MacBride, AIP chairman and writer Carolyn Swift. In other words, the appointments followed the recommendations made at the 24 August meeting, where Jordan, Heelan and O'Sullivan expressed that they hoped the vacancies would be filled with representatives for the AIP, the Irish Film and Television Guild, the trade unions "and possibly RTÉ" (Irish Film Board, 24/08/81). Although still officially a member, the resigned chairman decided not to attend[7] the meeting and sent his apologies instead, as did Boorman and another newly-appointed member, producer Noel Pearson.

The very first decision of the revamped IFB was to note, rather than approve, as is customary, the minutes for the previous meeting. Next, they went through the Irish Film Board Act and "noted in particular the provisions of Section 17 of the Act – Disclosure of interest by Members of the Board" (12/01/82), which, as seen above, had been the casus belli for the AIP campaign against Boorman and the Board's decision to support *Angel* in late 1981. Following this, MacConghail informed that, before being appointed to the Board, "he had acted, without financial advantage or prospect of gain, as adviser to Mr. Wynne-Simmons in connection with [*The Outcasts*]. Whilst he no longer so acted, he did propose not to take any part in the Board's consideration of or decision on this case" (*ibidem*).

At the following meeting, the Board resolved that "members should declare their interest, including representations received, in relation to each item that comes before the Board for consideration, immediately prior to the consideration of that item by the Board" (19/01/82). In consequence, it was agreed that MacConghail would not take part in any discussions or decisions

[7] Heelan also resigned as member in December, but the resignation was made effective at this meeting.

related to *The Outcasts*. Having cleared that conflict of interest,[8] they went on to confirm the up to £42,000 interest-free loan to Wynne-Simmons and better the terms, so that the maximum budget was set at £108,669 and the net profit rate to be shared at 20%.

From January to March, the extended Board would spend a great deal of time laying out policy guidelines that, while keeping an indisputable appearance of objectivity and fairness, allowed them ample room for channelling public money into whatever projects they wanted[9]. Thus, on 1 February, they decided that funding requests would not be considered unless they were "supported by a completed script, budgetary details, and a synopsis" (01/02/82). One month later, however, they agreed that "if the applicant [had] a track record", they would make an exception and "consider treatments" (01-15/03/82)[10]. Likewise, an investment cap of 50% of total budget was set on 19 January and then revised on 1 February to state that it would only normally apply[11].

Regarding project assessment, on 1 February, they agreed that, to be eligible for funding, projects had to employ many Irish creative crewmembers, as this would be "one of the principal criteria to be applied by the Board" (01/02/82). In March, however, they agreed that they would also consider the regard for promotion and the "commercial viability" of projects; "the standard of the material and the technical competence"; "employment in Ireland including, if appropriate, use of the facilities of the National Film Studios"; "whether or not the production would otherwise happen if Board support were not forthcoming" and "the possible use of the finished product for theatrical exploitation" (01-15/03/82). The weight each would have in the assessment is never made clear, though, and neither is the assessment process itself. Furthermore, they decided that an expert (Fred Haines) would be hired to assess the scripts submitted, though, "in cases which the Board consider ap-

[8] Given the tiny size of the film industry in Ireland at the time, it was almost unavoidable that one or more Board members had some kind of relationship with the projects under consideration. The minutes put extra care in emphasizing that, whenever a conflict of interest arose, the member(s) left the meeting before discussions started.

[9] In a document entitled "Chief Executive's Review of Activities of the Board" dated 1 December and included in the volume of minutes for 1981-1982, Algar shows at least some degree of self-criticism about these policies: "While not wishing to tie the Board with rigid decision making, I believe firmer guidelines in a variety of areas would aid our work and place us on a stronger footing, both within the industry and as progressive body within the commercial sector generally" (Algar 1982, 6).

[10] The 1 March meeting was adjourned and continued on 15 March.

[11] On 1 February, the IFB rejected Kieran Hickey's urgent application for full funding of *Afterwards* on the basis of the cap. The project was rejected again on May 14, though the specific reasons for the decision at that time are unknown. On neither occasion, however, does Hickey seem to have complained in the press as he did in 1981.

propriate, they would commission a second opinion/assessment of a script from an assessor who would be paid a rate per script" (19/01/82).

However busy they were laying out policy guidelines, the extended Board did not forget for one moment about *Angel*. Starting 1 February, progress reports on the projects supported are routinely attached to the minutes for each meeting. The first of these reports points out that *Angel* "may run slightly over Budget" (01/02/82). By the time of the next meeting in March, the film was already expected to go £5,000 over budget, a derisory amount for a production budgeted at more than £500,000. Still, the Board rushed to send a letter to the MPCI "expressing the Board's concern and enquiring how it is proposed to finance the overrun" (01-15/03/82).

The concern, if not suspicion, over *Angel* sharply contrasts with the enthusiasm about *The Outcasts*, in spite of the fact that as late as March 1982, with principal photography almost completed, Wynne-Simmons had no private funding for finishing the film yet. Undeterred by this, not only did the Board offer to "share security and repayment pari passu" with any investors willing to put money into the project, but they also allowed the filmmaker to cash his directorial fee of £4,000 (*ibidem*). Significantly, both decisions were taken before a progress report on the project was presented to the Board. Written by Grainne O'Shannon, who had visited the set on behalf of the IFB twice in February, the report notes that the crew was "very well organised" and experienced, and "receipts and invoices [agreed] with each other". Still, she remarks that she is not "an accountant nor an auditor" and advises them to send in one to check the books. She also points out that "considering the size of the budget, the salaries were rather generous", although the crew naturally did not agree (*ibidem*).

There followed a discussion about the role the Board should play in the distribution of *Angel* and *The Outcasts* and whatever films they could fund in the future. They resolved that they should support distribution, even though this was "primarily a matter of the production company" (*ibidem*), and postponed the discussion on how exactly this should be done to a meeting with a representative of the advertising agency AML London. Right after that, however, they approved an interest, security-free loan of £5,000 to Cathal Black for the promotion of Our Boys and passed a set of ad hoc rules for making distribution loans and, therefore, justifying the loan they had just arbitrarily made:

> Additionally, the Board decided that in order to encourage some Independent film producers to undertake new productions, the Board might make an interest free loan available to enable those producers to complete the distribution and marketing of their previous productions and that such loans would be repayable against the proceeds of marketing and distributing those films. The Board decided that such loans would not exceed £5,000 per loan and a maximum of 3 might be made in 1982. (*Ibidem*)

3.2 The second AIP boycott

On 31 March, the AIP escalated the campaign against *Angel* yet another step by calling a general meeting at the time the film was scheduled for a trade premiere at the third Festival of Film of Television in the Celtic Countries in Wexford. The meeting was followed by a press release which, besides quoting part of the statement of 4 November, accused Boorman of using the Festival "to legitimise and give respectability to his activities in the Irish funding of the film". Also, it reminded readers of Boorman's alleged "contempt for Irish film makers" but remarked that the AIP had no dispute with Jordan, the crew and cast of *Angel* or C4 (Association of Independent Producers Ireland 1982).

The unofficial boycott on the screening of *Angel* had the support of the vast majority of the AIP members. Still, at least one of them protested it. In a resignation letter to the executive committee of the AIP dated 19 April, producer John Jeremy considers the boycott "as mean-spirited as anything I've encountered in twenty years in the business". He also expresses his disappointment at the abandonment of the spirit of solidarity and camaraderie that had bound Irish filmmakers together and allowed them to work out "effective, pragmatic policies" which were still badly needed in the area of film distribution (Jeremy 1982).

Fed up with the AIP, Boorman, who had stopped attending IFB meetings in December, resigned from both the IFB and the NFSI on 2 April[12]. Two days later, the Irish government closed down the studios. The Board met on 5 April and decided to ask the Minister for Industry and Energy to keep them open, as they had "facilities essential for film making […] not available elsewhere in Ireland"[13]. Also, in a rather unprecedented decision, they agreed to ask Bob Quinn "to retract the statements" he had made about Boorman and the Board during the Festival and warned him that should he refuse to do so, they would take legal action against him (Irish Film Board 1982, 05/04/82).

[12] No comments on these absences are ever made in the minutes; however, his resignation allowed room to further express the Board's unease with Boorman: "The Board agreed that the Chairman should write to the Minister suggesting that the person appointed to fill the vacancy [of Boorman] on the Board should have a knowledge of the industry and be prepared to make time available for the business of the Board" (Irish Film Board 1982, 03/05/82). The IFB would remain incomplete for several months after Boorman's resignation. In December, casting director Nuala Moiselle was appointed to fill the vacancy. In January 1983, two new vacancies arose, as Algar had become CE in June and the one-year term he and MacBride had been appointed for came to an end (Rockett *et al.* 1987, 120). On the CE's suggestion, the Minister for Industry and Energy appointed documentarian Louis Marcus and reappointed MacBride to the Board for another year. On 11 April 1983, the IFB held its first meeting with seven members in attendance.

[13] Although beyond the scope of this paper, it should be pointed out that the deep uncertainty over the future of the NFSI recurs periodically in the IFB minutes for 1982-1983.

Despite the small conciliatory gesture towards Boorman, at the meeting they also agreed to write to Blackmore and remind him of his obligation to submit the distribution plan for approval and express disgust at how the IFB funding had been acknowledged in the credits, which had not been submitted either. Also, they approved a loan of up to £3,000 to finance Jordan's attendance to the Cannes Film Festival, should *Angel* be selected for it. It should also be noted that, out of the five funding applications considered, only Jordan's turned into a loan – Aisling Walsh, Oliver Jennings, the National Film Institute of Ireland and the Dublin Cinema Club were all given grants.

3.3 Mirror opposites: the distribution of Angel *and* The Outcasts

By May 1982, whereas an extrajudicial agreement with Quinn seemed likely, Blackmore had not yet replied to the reminder. The Board decided to turn to Sheamus Smith, one of Boorman's closest associates, who had "been appointed to manage the distribution of the film" (03/05/82), and offer him a personal loan of £1,250 to help him promote *Angel* at film festivals. On 14 May, however, the loan had to be deferred to the MPCI, as Smith informed that he was no longer a partner in the company and neither could he accept the loan nor "answer the Board's queries" about *Angel* (14/05/82).

Maybe Smith was no longer a partner in the MPCI, but there is little doubt that he was managing the distribution of *Angel*, which had a general release in Ireland on 14 May. Ten days later, the Board authorised him to make two extra copies of *Angel*, at a cost of £800 each, "to be recouped" from the MPCI (24/05/83). On 18 June, the Board discussed a report submitted by Smith on worldwide distribution arrangements and the Irish box-office of the film. Perhaps noticing the contradiction between his response to the loan offer and the report, the Board demanded further information on his position in the MPCI and the promotion plan for *Angel*.

In the meantime, although C4's willingness to advance £47,000 for the completion and promotion of *The Outcasts* is noted on 5 April, by late May, the Board had not yet seen the film nor received any information on promotion and sales. On 24 May, they resolved to ask Wynne-Simmons for information on these matters and a copy of *The Outcasts*. The filmmaker's response is unknown, though one can easily deduce that it was not what the Board was expecting, as, on 18 June, they "noted the possibility of an additional investment requirement to cover promotion for the film" and their "concern with regard to obtaining adequate credits setting out the Board's involvement in the finance of the film" (18/06/82). Despite the concern, on 12 July, the IFB released "its ownership of the copyright to '*The Outcasts*,' on the understanding that its charge over the copyright gave it adequate security" (12/07/83). Still, it refused to allow distribution to "remain in the hands of Tolmayax Limited", which Wynne-Simmons would have also asked, "until such time

as a release print is available" (12/07/83). Two weeks later, the Board took over the promotion of *The Outcasts* and hired Michael Dwyer and Donald Taylor-Black, who had recently "submitted a paper to the Board" on film promotion, to "put together a promotional package for the film" (26/07/83).

Funnily enough, at the July 26 meeting, Tiernan MacBride, who along with Bob Quinn had led the campaign against John Boorman, was rebuked for having sent the Board a letter as chairman of the AIP. Besides being inappropriate, the letter proved that he would have been leaking "information on matters discussed at Board Meetings to non-members of the Board" (i.e., AIP members) and, therefore, was at least as guilty of a conflict of interest and breach of the obligations for Board members stated in the Irish Film Board Act as Boorman could have been (26/07/82).

Relations between the IFB and the MPCI deteriorated further in the latter half of 1982. On 12 July, the IFB decided against covering the £5,000 overrun. By mid-October, the London premiere of the film had been arranged for 4 November, and RTÉ had purchased the broadcasting rights for Ireland. On 18 October, however, the CE complained that the MPCI had not given any information about the sale, and the IFB "re-emphasised its concern at the absence of information and co-operation from the Motion Picture Company of Ireland" (18/10/82).

Angel had a press screening in London on 1 November. The IFB, which, by this time, was much aware of the paramount importance of distribution and promotion[14], decided that Robin O'Sullivan and the CE would go to London to attend the event and meet with representatives of C4 and the MPCI to discuss the overrun. At the meeting, C4 would have put forward a proposal "to handle theatrical and television distribution and have first charge on returns to cover their funding of the contingency and overrun costs", "outlined their plans for distribution of the film" and offered to submit "details of which to the Board" (03/11/82). There is no reference in the minutes about what the MPCI representatives said, but we find it highly significant that, on 3 November, the CE "was authorised to write, on the instructions of the Board's solicitors, to Mr. Enda Marren, solicitor for the Motion Picture Company of Ireland, to consolidate the position of the Board" (*ibidem*).

When the Board first met in 1983, the MPCI had already replied. Although there is no copy of the letter in the IFI Archive, the minutes make it explicit that the Board did not find it agreeable so they decided they would sue the production company for breach of contract (Irish Film Board 1983,

[14] This awareness was also aroused by a report by Oliver Jennings on distribution on the West of Ireland and a series of meetings with Ronnie Saunders, Tom Nicholas, Mary Jane Walshe, Leo Ward and Kevin Anderson in September 1982.

10/01/83). The decision was, however, never implemented, as the IFB's solicitors advised them against it (07/03/83).

Meanwhile, there was clearly something going on with *The Outcasts*. On 20 September 1982, the Board discussed Wynne-Simmons's request for a further grant of £15,000 to blow out the film to 35 mm. A 16 mm copy of the film was screened for the press on November 5 and at the Cork Film Festival one week later[15]; however, by early December, the director was asking "to reshoot an optical" on the grounds that the producers were planning "to enter it in the Berlin Film Festival" (Irish Film Board 1982, 06/12/82). Although the minutes provide no information on the Board's decision, we can infer that the grant was eventually given, as a 35 mm copy was submitted to the Moscow Film Festival in the spring of 1983 (Irish Film Board 1983, 16/05/83).

What the minutes do provide, though, is a rather detailed account of the successive cycles of hope and disappointment that, despite the Board's best efforts, surrounded *The Outcasts* for most of 1983. On 10 January, the Board was informed that the film had been accepted for the Berlin Film Festival. The statement had to be retracted at the 7 March meeting, where nonetheless *The Outcasts* was said to have been "entered for the Cannes Film Festival" (07/03/83). As entrance failed to turn into acceptance, on 11 April, the CE had to admit that the French festival had also rejected it. Still, the minutes for the meeting report that *The Outcasts* had just been screened at the fourth International Festival of Film and Television in the Celtic Countries in Glasgow. Also, after months of conversations with domestic and international distributors, one distributor, Petro Films, had agreed to distribute the film internationally.

At the 16 May meeting, the Board was informed that *The Outcasts* would premiere commercially in Ireland at the Dublin Metropole. Wildly enthused at the prospect of a theatrical release of the film, they "agreed that a strong publicity effort should surround" it (16/05/83). By July the Board's expectations were running even higher, as *The Outcasts* was screened in Moscow on the 9th and, according to the minutes for the 11th, scheduled for projection at the New York Film Festival in September. The publicity effort was further discussed on 11 July, when they decided that "a detailed promotional campaign" would "be undertaken in conjunction with the Irish opening of the film in September, the cost of which will be supported by the Board" and "authorised the Chief Executive to investigate the possibility and expense of arranging simultaneous openings of the film in Cork and Galway" (11/07/83). Furthermore, on 25 July, they were told that there were distribution offers from Australia, the UK and the US and resolved that the Board "should organise a press conference to promote the film" (25/07/83).

[15] We can only wonder why the minutes make reference to the press preview and leave out the Cork Film Festival screening.

In spite of the high expectations, by early October, the film had not been released in Ireland yet. On 3 October, the Board was told that *The Outcasts* was to have a press screening on the 5th and open at the Metropole on the 14th. Also, they agreed that "the possibility of producing a trailer for the film may be considered in the light of the success of the Dublin opening" (03/10/83). *The Outcasts*, however, did not premiere until the 21st and, to the Board's dismay, turned out to be a commercial failure and was withdrawn one week later after its release.

The Board put the blame on the distributor for not having confirmed the final release date "until three days beforehand" (07/11/83), which would have "caused difficulties in relation to the publicity effort" (21/10/83). Nevertheless, they decided that "a meeting should be sought with Leo Ward of Abbey Films to discuss the matter further and to seek his advice on distribution generally. The Board also agreed that the advice of an independent expert should be sought in relation to the possible release of the film in a venue outside Dublin, e.g. Cork, Limerick or Galway" (07/11/83). Although there are no data on whether this advice was actually sought, *The Outcasts* was released in Cork and Galway on 9 December, supported by an advertising campaign in the local press and street posters (05/12/83).

We can only speculate whether it was the impossibility of taking legal action against the MPCI, the resignation of Boorman from the IFB and the NFSI or the unacknowledged admission that *Angel* was actually the only IFB-financed project that was making money and building a good reputation for Irish film[16] that ultimately eased the conflict between the production company and the Board. Whatever the reason, and although some issues did persist, relations did certainly improve in 1983.

On 7 March, the Board was informed that *Angel* was still being shown in London and had been sold to Germany and America. Also, Jordan had just written to tell that *Angel* had won an award at the Antwerp Film Festival. Still, the CE complained that there was no "cohesive marketing policy for this production" so he was authorised "to come to an agreement with Channel 4 and the Director of the film regarding suitable film festivals and marketplaces for the promotion of the film" and to reply to Jordan "congratulating him on the success of "Angel" at the Antwerp Film Festival and indicating that [he] would be willing to meet with him to discuss promotion" (07/03/83). By the following meeting, he had already written to the director,

[16] Money and public relations were already pressing concerns for the Board in late 1982. Faced with the prospects of an even more limited budget for 1983 and no recoupment from the projects backed in 1982, they were lobbying for tax incentives that could attract private funding into film production, and "bring the nature of the Board's activities to a wider audience […] in order that there is no over-expectation […] of the capabilities of the Board in achieving the objectives which we have set ourselves" (Algar 1982, 6).

and C4 had "authorised to co-coordinate arrangements in relation to Festival screenings of the film" (11/04/83).

Although most of the pages in the minutes for the meetings held in May 1983 have to do with the complaints the AIP made to the Board on 2 May[17], those for 16 May report that *Angel* might have received "a distribution offer in the United States" (16/05/83). The deal was indeed confirmed by C4 a few days later, as *Angel* was acquired by Columbia Classics for US distribution. There are no details about the agreement, which Algar committed to share as soon as he got them from the British television. The references to *Angel* in the minutes for 1983, however, come to an end on 11 July, where a proposal from C4 to make a trailer to help sell the film internationally was discussed and a contribution of £1,000 for the trailer was approved.

4. Conclusion

When the documents about the *Angel* controversy in the MacBride and Algar Collections in the IFI Archive are put side-by-side, it turns into a bitter, sorry story where all the parties involved are as guilty of putting their own interests before those of the Irish film industry, twisting the law to favour these interests and taking up the mantle of the nation to legitimise their self-interest and discredit the other parties'.

It is true that, in accordance with the Irish Film Board Act, the three-member IFB should not have agreed to support *Angel* if a quorum could not be reached without John Boorman; and it certainly could not, as under no circumstances could the British filmmaker take part in a decision-making process that concerned a project he was so deeply involved with. In our opinion, O'Sullivan, Heelan and Boorman might have agreed on the public funding of *Angel* beforehand and were expecting to make it legal by a vote in a seven-member Board. The three-member IFB scenario made it impossible unless a change in legislation was made, but they proceeded anyway. Then, they went on to turn down all the funding applications from Irish independent filmmakers – a decision that was legal, but not sensible, even more so when one takes into account that the AIP and the IFTG were already angry at the Board.

The rejection of these submissions and, especially, *The Outcasts*, winner of the Arts Council film script award, added insult to injury and ushered in the AIP boycott on the Board and a vicious media war against John Boor-

[17] The AIP complained that the Board had not "built on existing film activity" in Ireland nor given any grants to Irish independent filmmakers. Instead, they had mostly invested in "London-based companies" and conventional 35 mm films. The 50% investment cap was also deemed as "unreasonable", as Irish filmmakers had it very difficult to "secure additional finance in Ireland due to the lack of incentives for investors in film production" (Irish Film Board, 1983, 02/05/83).

man. As Board member and managing director of the loathed NFSI, he was publicly maligned as a British carpet bagger and made largely responsible for all the evils of Irish cinema. Never a diplomat, the filmmaker retaliated with insult and belittling, which made things even worse and eventually left him no choice but to resign from the NFSI and the IFB.

We cannot tell for sure whether the rather unexpected loan to *The Outcasts* in December 1981 was intended as a last resource measure to try to appease the AIP. If so, it was too little, too late, as, by then, the independents were already fully intent on taking over the IFB and getting rid of Boorman, which they managed to achieve in early 1982. As partial as their predecessors, the members of the extended Board were, however, clever enough to develop a kind of legal framework to support most of their funding decisions, although on some occasions they either made the decision first and developed the supporting rules later, or took decisions that went against rules previously agreed on or even the Irish Film Board Act itself. However, as the AIP and IFTG were represented on the Board and many filmmakers shunned in 1981 got funding in 1982, the extended IFB remained controversy-free for about year and a half and could do things that would have likely been regarded as unforgivable sins had they been done by Boorman, Heelan and O'Sullivan.

Many decisions of the extended IFB for 1982-1983 can be explained by a combination of resentment towards John Boorman and an erroneous conviction that *The Outcasts*, if properly supported, would put Irish cinema on the map. That the film was being written and directed by a British filmmaker endorsed by a Board member, who was also involved in the project, and produced by the same British television producing *Angel* was irrelevant to many independents – *The Outcasts* was an Irish film, whereas *Angel* was not and, therefore, should have not ever been supported by an Irish film board. Still, rather than risk to appeal the decision in court, once they took over the IFB, they accepted it as a fait accompli and adopted a strategy of setting as many obstacles as possible in *Angel*'s way, making things as easy as possible for *The Outcasts* and hoping that all the wind they could take out of the sails of *Angel* would go into *The Outcasts*.

The wind, however, was not to go into those sails. Not easily dismayed, the extended Board kept pouring public money into *The Outcasts* throughout 1982-83, in spite of repeated delays, scarcity of reliable information about the production, evidence of too high salaries, non-commitment of private investment, festival and distribution rejection and, last but not least, a disastrous run at the Irish box office. All in all, *The Outcasts*, budgeted at £82,000 in December 1981 and £109,000 just a month later, ended up costing £130,000 (Rockett 1996, 32), of which a minimum of £57,000 were granted by the IFB, which was also responsible for marketing and promotion. The large overrun, however, did not seem to worry the extended IFB – or at least not as much as the £5,000 that *Angel* went over budget.

The Outcasts won seven awards at film festivals in Brussels, Geneva, Oporto and San Remo (Wynne-Simmons 2018); however, the IFB has not ever recouped its investment and the film was soon forgotten. Besides, it was the first and last feature film directed by Wynne-Simmons, who has since tried his luck in other artistic forms. By contrast, *Angel* launched the Irish film industry and the career of the most successful Irish filmmaker ever and, most importantly, allowed the IFB to make some money out of an investment in a feature film. As said before, we do believe that, by mid-1983, the IFB started to acknowledge that, in spite of all the bad blood, *Angel* and Neil Jordan were exactly the kind of project and filmmaker Ireland needed to kick off a film industry.

We would like to have finished by saying that the IFB learned from their mistakes and, in the following years, tried to offset the losses of films like *The Outcasts* investing in films like *Angel*. That was not the case, though. By May 1983, the AIP was complaining that the IFB was not Irish enough, supportive enough or artistic enough. Even though the debt was already mounting, in 1983, the Board contributed £200,000 to *Anne Devlin* (Pat Murphy 1984) and £90,500 to *Pigs* (Cathal Black 1984). Both were considered pretentious by critics and flopped badly at the box-office, as did most of the feature films supported by the IFB over the following three years. In 1987, the government, disappointed at the negligible ROI – £106,000 out of £1,247,000 (Flynn & Brereton 2007, 183) – of the IFB-funded films closed it down. When it was re-established in 1993, all the parties understood that a film like *Angel* was not only as Irish as one like *The Outcasts*, but also essential for the survival of Irish cinema and, especially, the IFB. Whether they liked it or not, very few could afford to ignore that it was the international success of another Jordan film, *The Crying Game* (1992), that ultimately made the Irish government come around to re-establishing the Irish Film Board.

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Adapting the Story of Suibhne in Neil Gaiman's *American Gods*

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Abstract:

Neil Gaiman's depiction of America as a mythic place in *American Gods* explores "the soul of America" – what immigrants brought with them to America and what they found there. Existing scholarship explores Gaiman's use of mythology and folklore to create a complex, post-modern narrative that is derived from different sources. This paper will focus specifically on Gaiman's adaptation and recreation of the Irish king Suibhne (also known as Sweeney) from different mythic narratives, forming an intertextual narrative that shows the power of storytelling in the formation of cultural identity. Further, he uses the wandering figure of Suibhne to explore the issues surrounding Irish diaspora: their emigration to America, and the implications of this cultural dislocation.

Keywords: Adaptation, Cultural identity, Diaspora, Exile, Irish myth

Published in 2001, Neil Gaiman's *American Gods* positions America as a mythic place made of diverse immigrant stories that explores, what Gaiman describes in a letter to his publisher as, the "soul of America" – "what people brought to America; what found them when they came; and the things that lie sleeping beneath it all" (Gaiman 2017b). Adaptation in the face of changing circumstances is a significant theme throughout the novel, as Gaiman explores America's history of immigrants and the cultures, beliefs and stories that they brought with them when they came to America. Much of his oeuvre, most notably *American Gods*, adapts and appropriates old stories so as to create something new, something relevant that speaks to the contemporary audience. This theme of adaptation is taken further when Gaiman adapts his novel into a TV show in 2017. While Gaiman's novel adapts old mythic narratives to renew them, the *American Gods* TV show adapts the narrative from page to screen thereby making it accessible, entertaining, and simulta-

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neously giving Gaiman the opportunity to update it with current events. His adaptation of mythic narratives is not limited to a specific medium, rather, these narratives seem to change form to better correspond to the current expectations and desires of society.

A minor character in an array of mythological figures, Mad Sweeney in *American Gods* is a version of the Irish king Suibhne brought to 18th century America by a girl from Bantry. As an anthropomorphic figure of the immigrants' beliefs and experiences, Sweeney is shaped through their perceptions and changes as culture changes. In the Irish tale, Suibhne is defeated by St. Ronan and cursed to wander the world. He is a figure of madness and wandering, a liminal figure that Gaiman uses to cross boundaries so as to examine Irish emigration. Gaiman adapts the Suibhne myth: his Sweeney is defeated by modern gods and drunkenly wanders around America picking bar fights. He has lost his Irish accent, drinks American liquor, and does coin tricks with gold from his leprechaun's hoard. This paper will explore the origins of *Buile Suibhne* (the medieval Irish tale about king Suibhne), its notable translations by J.G. O'Keeffe and Seamus Heaney respectively, and briefly, the literary tradition of adaptation. Gaiman's adaptation and re-creation of Suibhne from various literary narratives forms an intertextual narrative that shows the power of storytelling in the formation of cultural identity. Furthermore, in both the novel and the TV adaptation, he uses the wandering figure of Suibhne to explore the exile image central to the imagination of Irish diaspora, the emigrants' relocation to America, and the implications of this cultural dislocation. Gaiman re-creates this version of Sweeney in order to speak about the Irish immigrant experience and the eventual cultural diversity that comes to describe America. He questions what it means to be "American", delving into the creation of modern America's cultural diversity through its cultural dislocations.

1. Translation, Adaptation, Intertextuality

In his collection of nonfiction essays *The View from the Cheap Seats*, Gaiman compares myth to the fertile ground that is fundamental to humanity:

> Myths are compost. They begin as religions, the most deeply held beliefs, or as the stories that accrete to religions as they grow […] And then, as the religions fall into disuse, or the stories cease to be seen as the literal truth, they become myths. And the myths compost down to dirt, and become a fertile ground for other stories and tales which blossom like wildflowers […] New flowers grow from the compost: bright blossoms, and alive. (Gaiman 2016, 55)

He suggests that every story and myth is compost for future narratives, and it is this blossoming of new narratives that helps to make sense of the

contemporary world. This adaptation that Gaiman speaks of is important not only because it functions as the foundations of contemporary culture, but also because it allows for the subversion of traditional structures of power – traditional structures are challenged, stereotypes are undermined, and boundaries are exceeded. It is the responsibility of a storyteller to adapt and transform these traditional narratives into narratives that challenge their predecessors. The story of Suibhne begins as an Irish myth, and through translations and adaptations, transforms into Gaiman's narrative about loss, exile from one's homeland, cultural diversity in a modern society.

Gaiman's figure of Mad Sweeney is adapted from the Irish myth about an Irish king named Suibhne mac Colmain. In the tale, Suibhne flies into a rage when he hears St. Ronan building a church in his territory. After their violent confrontation, Ronan curses Suibhne to wander around the world naked, and to eventually be killed by a spear. During the battle of Mag Rath, Ronan and his psalmists bless the armies, including Suibhne, with holy water. Mistaking it for mockery, Suibhne throws his spear at a psalmist and kills him. He throws another at Ronan, but the spear only pierces the bell at Ronan's neck before breaking off as its shaft hurls through the air. Enraged, Ronan repeats his curse again. This time, the sounds from the battle drive Suibhne insane. He drops his weapons and levitates in the air like a bird. Evading several attempts by his kin to capture him, he spends many years wandering throughout various parts of Ireland, Scotland and England. Eventually, Suibhne arrives at St. Mullins, where the priest Moling gives him food and shelter in exchange for stories of his wanderings. Moling instructs his cook to leave some milk for Suibhne, but the cook's husband mistakes their meetings for a tryst and spears Suibhne in a fit of jealousy. Suibhne dies by spear-point, as Ronan had cursed, after having received Christ and being anointed by the clerics.

As far as scholars can tell, there seems to be no clear origin for the story of Suibhne. The earliest written record of his tale appears as part of a three-text cycle of Irish poetry, estimated by J.G. O'Keeffe to have been composed between 1200 and 1500. They were titled "Fleadh Duin Na N-Gedh" ("The Banquet of Dun Na N-Gedh"), "Cath Muighe Rath" ("The Battle of Magh Rath") and "Buile Suibhne" ("The Frenzy or Vision of Sweeney"). These three instalments each told the story of Suibhne at different points in his life, respectively: how the battle of Magh Rath started, how Suibhne went insane, and how he spent the rest of his life wandering. O'Keeffe's translation of *Buile Suibhne: (The Frenzy of Suibhne) Being the Adventures of Suibhne Geilt* (1913) derives from the three manuscripts. The first, on which most of O'Keeffe's translation is derived, was a "paper folio, and was written between the years 1671 and 1674 at Sean Cua, Co. Sligo, by Daniel O'Duigenan, who was one of the best of the later Irish scribes" (Sailer 1998, xiii). Considered by O'Keeffe to give "better" readings than the first, the second manuscript

had many missing stanzas while the first did not. The third manuscript only contained prose and the "occasional first lines of poetry", and was "written by Michael O'Clery, one of the Four Masters, in 1629" (xiv). O'Keeffe believes that these manuscripts were derived from different texts, and in order to reach a "common ancestor", one would have to go back a few generations. To O'Keeffe's knowledge, this "common ancestor" no longer exists, suggesting that the story of Suibhne is older than the earliest manuscripts.

In Susan Shaw Sailer's discussion on the paradoxes of the Suibhne myth, she relies heavily on previous research by O'Keeffe to argue that there are three ways to test Suibhne's historicity. The first way is through Suibhne's connection to the historical battle of Magh Rath[1] where it might yield some information on the figure of Suibhne. The second way is to investigate his title "king of Dal Araidhe" (O'Keeffe 1913, 3). The third way is through a close reading of his poetry where O'Keeffe notes that at least two Irish poems can be attributed to Suibhne. However, these three methods are ineffective because none of them provide any evidence that Suibne son of Colman Cuar existed. With the third method, Sailer acknowledges that authorship of the poems cannot be entirely attributed to be Suibhne. O'Keeffe highlights that the editors of the *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*[2] suggest that it is St. Moling who composed the poetry. Sailer concludes: "not only may a poem frequently attributed to Suibne have been written by another person, but once again from the documents as we have them, we cannot be sure whether Suibne son of Colman Cuar may have been the writer or a different Suibne" (120). To further complicate the story of Suibhne, Sailer suggests that *Buile Suibhne* is a "composite work" (126), made up of later additions and revisions that "seem to be largely independent of floating myth, and the theme is treated in a way that is free from the literary conventions of the time" (xxxvii). The story of Suibhne is made up of revisions and re-creations – "a process of mythologising" (Clune 1996, 49), in the words of Anne Clune – that is almost impossible to keep track of especially throughout its long history. Much like Gaiman's metaphor of the wildflowers constantly gaining new ground, new stories based on old ones seem to spontaneously sprout from the fertile space of myth, adding new dimension and diversity to the body of stories that shapes the way individuals live and think. The origins of the Suibhne myth may be shrouded in mystery and speculation, but it does not diminish its effect on Irish culture and its influence on future adaptations.

Seamus Heaney's influential translation of *Buile Suibhne* brings a contemporary reading to the old Irish myth. His version, *Sweeney Astray: A Version from the Irish*, was published in 1983. Along with the Suibhne's name,

[1] There is some debate on the year the battle occured, but scholars generally agree on 637.

[2] A reproduction of a historical artefact containing Irish texts central to Irish culture.

Heaney anglicised the names of various locations in Ireland mentioned in the poem. In translating *Buile Suibhne*, Heaney took the liberty of adding or removing elements he felt did not convey the meaning of the story of Suibhne. Conor McCarthy writes of the nuances in Heaney's translation:

> Sweeney Astray is not quite a literal translation of *Buile Suibhne*, which O'Keeffe translated as "The Frenzy of Suibhne" and others have given as "The Madness of Sweeney". Rendering Suibhne as "Sweeney" is an unproblematic anglicization, and there is precedent of Flann O'Brien's "Sweeny". "Astray", however, expands the sense of the original somewhat, for as well as describing Sweeney's state of mind, it also describes his physical state – Sweeney is astray in his wanderings around Ireland, as well as being astray in his wits after the battle of Moria. Further to that, the phrase has a Hiberno-English flavour in that it recalls the Irish *ar strae*, and is more colloquial and intimate in tone than a literal translation. Heaney's translation of the work's title, then, may not be strictly literal, but is subtly suggestive in more than one way. (McCarthy 2008, 16)

While not a direct translation of the Irish original, Heaney's translation is focused on keeping and, even, expanding the meaning of the text. The figure of Suibhne is transformed through Heaney's rewriting; his situation of being physically and mentally astray is clarified, and made the focus of the tale. By rewriting it in his own mode, Heaney's translation can be seen as a "coherent work" (17), a "twentieth-century reworking in English that can be read separately from the original, as a literary work in itself" (18). McCarthy terms the language of translation a "middle voice" (19) that not only channels the meaning of the original work, but also adds new meaning and resonances to make it more accessible for a contemporary audience. In this sense, Heaney's translation can be said to be a bridge that connects contemporary readers to their cultural history.

Some critics of translation argue that translating Gaelic literature is a "form of colonisation" (Harman 1999, 122), indicating "a desire to scavenge" (Cronin 1996, 175). Mark Harman acknowledges that "translation inevitably does some violence to the original language, to the target language, or to both" (1999, 122), but he argues that translation is "one way of reversing some of the damage inflicted by colonialism – the depriving of indigenous poets of an audience in Ireland, and for that matter, abroad" (128). Quoting Franz Kafka, he explains, "Truth resides in a chorus of voices" (127). Much like Gaiman, Harman advocates for a variety of voices: "Translation can help replace the old essentialism of the one true Gael with a new plurality of voices. Variety is essential. If there is sufficient variety, there will be less likelihood of betrayal" (*ibidem*). It is only through variety, and change, that narratives are able to preserve myths and cultures in some way – to speak about the contemporary, without losing touch with cultural history. As Jack Zipes writes in his introduction to Angela Carter's translation of *The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault*:

> Translating is not a mechanical art. Every time a work is translated it is re-created in many different ways, not only to communicate the "original" meaning of an author's work, but also to communicate the translator's personal view of what an author may have meant and what she thinks will make that particular author's work most accessible and meaningful in a different period of time and in another culture. (Zipes 2008, xxv)

Like translation, adaptation, too, makes the adapted narrative more accessible to the contemporary audience. With the novel first published in 2001, Gaiman updates the TV adaptation with pressing current issues of 2017, like the anti-immigrant rhetoric in America and other parts of the world. The story of Suibhne evolves under different translators or authors to speak to pressing contemporary issues. For example, in her paper on mythic insanity in modern Irish literature, Leah Richards Fisher asserts that Flann O'Brien's 1939 novel *At Swim-Two-Birds* uses the Suibhne myth to explore the repercussions of war: "in the aftermath of World War I and a number of violent uprisings and revolutions, Suibhne fleeing the battle of Magh Rath in frenzy serves as a metaphor for shell-shock. He represents the idealized wild man of the woods during the advent of extreme industrialization and urbanization" (Richards Fisher 1998/1999, 392). Gaiman's version of the Suibhne narrative places more focus on his wanderings, using it to speak to the issues of displacement, exile and cultural alterity that Irish emigrants face as a result of their emigration to America. This emphasises the need for translators and authors to constantly renew narratives to make it relevant to current issues, as mythic narratives can contain different metaphors or images that resonate with issues of different time periods. The story of Suibhne, like many other narratives, is a palimpsest with different versions of the story overlapping each other to create a multidimensional, heterogenous body of stories that are bound up with their socio-cultural and historical connections. In fact, from his title *Sweeney Astray: A Version from the Irish*, it is clear Heaney views his narrative as a "version" rather than a literal translation. As Denell Downum's analysis succinctly puts it, "translation is an inherently metonymic process, rather than a metaphoric one" (Downum 2009, 77). At their most basic level, translation, adaptation and re-creation are processes that refer to change. Narratives are changed and re-created, enabling them to examine the new and foreign without allowing the narrative to be characterised by its foreignness.

This element of adaptation and re-creation is clearly seen in Gaiman's adaptation of the Suibhne narrative for his novel *American Gods* and his adaptation of his version of Mad Sweeney for television. Keeping in line with his agenda as a storyteller, Gaiman's TV adaptation of *American Gods* does not merely bring his novel to life visually. Gaiman breathes new life into his narrative with what another producer calls "fan fiction" (Freeman 2017)

of his own work, expanding or adding new storylines to update and make his narrative relevant to the current socio-political climate of modern day America. In doing so, he challenges traditional structures and stereotypes by disregarding the authority of one narrative, and instead, focusing on the smaller, marginalised stories of individuals. Beneath the mythic battles and mysterious gods hiding in human guises, *American Gods* (be it in the medium of a novel or a television show) is about what it means to be "American". Beyond that, it also explores what it means to be a citizen of our globalised world, and its implications. Through his rewriting of old myths and stories, Gaiman communicates the fluidity of culture and tradition. Culture is not made of a static body of narratives. It is a continuous process of struggling to find or create meaning in an increasingly desacralised world.

In his novel *American Gods* and its TV adaptation, Gaiman's re-creation of Sweeney reveals influences from Irish writers such as W.B. Yeats and James Joyce, and recalls notable works like Heaney's translation *Sweeney Astray* and O'Brien's novel *At Swim-Two-Birds*. O'Brien's *At Swim-Two-Birds* begins with the line: "One beginning and one ending for a book was a thing I did not agree with" (O'Brien 2005 [1939], 1). The way he sees storytelling as organic and fluid corresponds to Gaiman's similarly organic take on storytelling. O'Brien uses the old Suibhne myth to contrast old and new stories much like *American Gods*' premise of the battle between the old gods and the new gods. This tension between the old and the new, between tradition and innovation, is a dichotomy that Gaiman navigates with his renewing of mythic narratives. The story of Suibhne "is essential for the development of *At Swim-Two-Birds* and recurs four times: first as a *pastiche* translation from Gaelic provided by O'Brien himself, then three more times as parodic manipulations of that initial translation" (Mazzullo 1995, 318). *At Swim-Two-Birds* parodies the story of Suibhne, and can be considered as a comic version of the Irish myth. The element of comedy is echoed in Gaiman's Sweeney, who is depicted as a tragicomic character trying to drunkenly overcome his struggles but failing in a spectacularly violent fashion. In *The Folkloresque*, Timothy Evans argues: "Gaiman's goal […] is the pursuit of human universals through intertextuality. Universals, for Gaiman, do not reside exclusively in literary or fine arts canons or in folklore, but must be pursued, and re-created from, elements from throughout the world's cultures, genres and art forms" (Evans 2016, 67). The re-creations and versions of Sweeney by other authors resonate in Gaiman's Sweeney – "we have Yeats's leprechauns, the mythic fiction of Joyce, and O'Brien's tragi-comic Sweeny: Irish ingredients for an American character" (Alexander 2007, 153). The narrative of Sweeney now encompasses not only Gaiman's American reimagining of the Irish tale, but the versions by Heaney, O'Brien, and other translators and authors. It is not only meant to be a modern adaptation of the Irish tale, but also an amalgamation of stories from different sources. The novel's transtextual quality

stems from Gaiman's emphasis on adaptation and the importance of remaking and updating stories to make sense of the world through them. His adaptation of the Suibhne myth updates the narrative in order to examine the contemporary issues of migration and cultural alterity – specifically, regarding the Irish emigration to America and the process of "Americanisation".

2. Emigration and "Americanisation"

In his novel *American Gods*, Gaiman's conceptualisation of America as a country of immigrants is highlighted in his frequent interludes titled "Coming to America", detailing the individual stories behind the gods' arrival in America. As Gaiman writes, "Nobody's American. Not originally" (Gaiman 2016 [2001], 125). During a speech to rally the old gods against the new gods, Wednesday (the American version of the Norse god Odin) recalls their arrival to America:

> When the people came to America they brought us with them. They brought me, and Loki and Thor, Anansi and the Lion-God, Leprechauns and Cluracans and Banshees, Kubera and Frau Holle and Ashtaroth, and they brought you. We rode here in their minds, and we took root. We travelled with the settlers to the new lands across the ocean. […] [Now] there are new gods growing in America, clinging to growing knots of belief: gods of credit-card and freeway, of internet and telephone, of radio and hospital and television, gods of plastic and of beeper and of neon. (160)

His speech illustrates the diversity of cultures and mythic narratives that arrived in America along with the immigrants. It highlights the rich and diverse cultural history of America, and the way modernisation has led to the diminishing belief in traditional mythic and religious narratives. Once popularly known as the New World during the sixteenth-century, America is frequently associated with modernisation. The new gods of America are representative of the desacralised and impersonal modern society, characterised by advances in technology, commercialisation and consumerism.

Mad Sweeney is a minor character who is employed by Wednesday to join him in his battle against the new gods. Three thousand years ago, Gaiman's version of Sweeney started out as a guardian of a sacred rock in a little Irish glade. Much like the traditional stories of Suibhne, he had a life filled with love affairs and violent feuds before he went mad. Like a bird, he ate watercress and flew across the whole of Ireland. It was his madness that gave him power, and as more worshipped and believed in him, his legend grew. Believing she had seen him one night by the pool, Essie McGowan[3] from Bantry

[3] She is known as "Essie Tregowan" in the book. In the TV adaptation, Gaiman merged the stories of two characters to extend Sweeney's involvement in the narrative.

Bay believed in Mad Sweeney the leprechaun to the extent that her immense belief brought him along to America. This version of Sweeney also seems to be conflated with the leprechauns from Irish folklore, associating him with the leprechauns' pot of gold.

The TV adaptation extends Sweeney's story, depicting how he arrived in eighteenth-century America. When Essie is wrongfully arrested for stealing, Sweeney is brought along to Newgate Prison in London by her belief in the old stories of piskies and leprechauns. He is then transported to America along with her, as she is sentenced to be an indentured servant for her multiple offences of theft. The years pass, she marries eventually and tells her children these stories, teaching them to leave the first fish of the catch or a fresh-baked loaf of bread to obtain the blessing of the spirits. When her children grow up to have children of their own, she tries to tell the same stories to her grandchildren, but they only want to hear about "Jack up the Beanstalk" or "Jack Giant-killer". In the TV adaptation of Essie's last moments, the narrator verbalises her thoughts: "There seemed no room for the spirits of old in Virginia, so Essie no longer told her tales. She kept them in her heart, where they warmed her like her father's stew on a chill night in Bantry Bay a lifetime ago" ("A Prayer for Mad Sweeney"). She dies peacefully on her porch, in the house and on the land she has come to consider her home. Uncharacteristically somber, Sweeney tells her, "It was you that brought me here, you and a few like you, into this land with no time for magic and no place for piskies and such folk" (Gaiman 2016 [2001], 121). Here, Essie and Sweeney both speak of their complex and contradictory feelings towards America. While they have both managed to live comfortably in America, there still seems to be an element of displacement and longing to be back home in Ireland. The concepts of exile, diaspora and longing for home is central to the Irish immigrant experience and the construction of their cultural identity, and are commonly explored in literature about Irish emigration.

Gaiman invokes Sweeney's mythological background as an exiled king cursed to wander the world to speak about the displacement the emigrants faced when arriving in the New World. In *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America*, Kerby Miller explains the origins of the exile image, and their reasons for characterising emigration as exile:

> The exile image was not just a rhetorical device employed by Irish and Irish-American nationalists. Nor was it merely of American origins – like the St. Patrick's Day parades – simply a product of Irish alienation or self-assertion in the New World. All emigrants in America experienced some degree of estrangement, but the Irish view of themselves as exiles sprang from sources more profound than the poverty and prejudice encountered abroad. In short, there seems no reason inherent in either the actual circumstances of most emigrants' departures or the material conditions of Irish-American life which automatically translated a homesickness perhaps common to all emigrants into a morbid perception of themselves as involuntary,

passive victims of English oppression. For, viewed objectively, they had made a rational response to structural changes in Irish society and to the promptings of their own ambitions for the better material life which recent scholarship indicates they generally achieved. (Miller 1985, 7)

While all emigrants in America had to deal with issues of displacement, Miller suggests it was more complicated for the Irish emigrants largely because of their Irish Catholic view of the world that was deeply rooted in Irish history and culture. He writes that the "subsequent historical circumstances of rebellion and defeat, despoliation and impoverishment, served to ratify and magnify aspects of pre-conquest Irish culture which made the exile motif seem more poignant and appropriate" (8). Amidst modern commercial and industrial revolutions, such a worldview disadvantaged them politically, economically and psychologically. As a result, they fell back on their cultural traditions, adapting them to deal with the pressures of modernisation. This resulted in their "ideological defense against change and misfortune, and the basis for a nationalistic assertion of Irish identity" (*ibidem*), which, in turn, lead to the perpetuation of "the archaic tradition of emigration as exile in the modern context of conflict with England as origin of both political oppressions and economic deprivation" (*ibidem*). There were specific personal reasons why Irish emigrants viewed themselves as involuntary exiles, but Miller acknowledges that these reasons had "remote, if any, connections with English 'tyranny' over Ireland" (*ibidem*). To sum it up, Miller attributes a combination of factors that led to the exile image: their strong connections to Irish culture and tradition, historical circumstances of rebellion, defeat and impoverishment, and as a way of "explaining" the impersonal workings of the modern economy. Through Essie's forced transportation to America, Gaiman distinctly invokes the exile image in an attempt to examine the complex experience of Irish emigration. In her situation, the exile image is apt: she is forced to leave for America, or be sentenced to death for her thievery. She has no choice but to adapt to her new life in America, maintaining her strong connections to Irish culture and tradition through her tradition of leaving some food for the leprechauns and fairies. She also passes on her grandmother's stories to her children and grandchildren, despite their lack of interest in her traditional Irish stories. Although she cannot return home, she remains strongly rooted in her Irish culture and identity, longing for her home where such stories of leprechauns are not out of place.

Gaiman's depiction of Irish emigration is particularly interesting because it provides an alternative view from a women-centred perspective. In her chapter on Irish women and the diaspora, Mary Daly posits that there is strong evidence to suggest that "emigration was of greater benefit to women than to men, mainly because of the poor opportunities that Ireland offered them" (Daly 2014, 23). Her analysis cites David Fitzpatrick's assertion that

emigration was "female escapology" – "for those women who left Ireland, the nineteenth century was often a time of triumph rather than subjection" (Fitzpatrick 1990, 167-168). According to Miller's research, this is because the economic value of women's labour deteriorated after the famine, exacerbating their already inferior status. Emigration, however, had the possibility of "economic independence, marriage without the need for parental dowry, or flight from moral disgrace and consignment to the unmarriageable, because she had given birth to a child outside marriage" (Daly 2014, 23). This made the prospect of emigration immensely attractive despite the struggles that they would have to face in America. She summarises Miller's overall argument: "many Irish-Catholic emigrants carried with them to the US a pre-modern, passive value system, which predisposed them to view emigration as exile, and they continued to regard the US and American industrial urban society in an ambivalent manner" (*ibidem*). However, Miller goes on to explain how "better economic prospects helped those from most disadvantaged backgrounds to overcome homesickness and adopt a more positive attitude" (*ibidem*). Gaiman's depiction of Essie's life and how she came to America gives voice to the financial issues women faced in Ireland that made emigration an attractive prospect for them. Although Essie attempts to return after she is transported, she eventually has no choice but to emigrate or be sentenced to death. Given her options, she chooses to emigrate and starts a new life for herself in America, where "anyone can be anything they insist upon" ("A Prayer for Mad Sweeney"). As she tells Sweeney in the TV adaptation, America is the place where she can start anew, where she can have a "new name, new life" ("A Prayer for Mad Sweeney"). America is thus seen as a place of exile and opportunity. Essie is displaced from her home, but she is also able to benefit from the better opportunities that America offers, as well as the freedom to start anew and enjoy a financially comfortable life there.

The tension between America as a place of exile and opportunity speaks to the complexity of Irish diaspora. As M.J. Hickman writes in her chapter "Thinking about Ireland and Irish diaspora", "Irish migrants have had an important impact on the (re)formation of the national spaces and national imaginaries of their main settlement destinations. They are not just *of* Ireland, but *of* their new place […] Individual and social groups in the diaspora are *between* and *of* the two processes simultaneously" (Hickman 2014, 137). She speaks of a hybrid cultural identity that challenges the Ireland-America binary. Emigrants are not merely of their homeland, or of their new place – their cultural identity is made up of complex processes that "change over time as part of the political, social and economic developments in and between various places of settlement (including the 'homeland')" (138). Daly, too, speaks of a hybrid identity as a kind of integration, "retaining links with the country of origin, while integrating into the country of immigration" (Daly 2014, 27). This emphasis on a hybrid cultural identity suggests that

the migrant experience is complex and heterogenous. No single experience is capable of representing the nuances of loss, displacement, and hope that immigrants experience in America. This makes *American Gods*' inclusive and heterogenous mythic narrative all the more vital in articulating the diverse, complex narratives that make up the immigrant experience in America. Its use of multiple mythic narratives and its adaptation of them advocate for nuanced and heterogenous explorations of cultural identity, dismantling the Ireland-America binary by portraying characters like Essie and Sweeney who are between and of both countries simultaneously.

While Gaiman's narrative depicts cultural identity to be complex and hybrid, its depiction of the Irish immigrant experience is still, to a small extent, problematic because it fails to explore the less positive aspects of the immigrant experience. Hickman discusses how the mid-nineteenth century's post-slavery era contributed to the "Americanisation" of the Irish immigrants:

> It was a period characterised by a rhetoric that excluded new Irish immigrants from the American Dream as the most reviled of foreign immigrants [...] The change in the positioning of "the Irish", from ambiguous racial group and reviled ethno-religious group, is directly related to the changes wrought by the processes of re-racialisation that resulted after the civil war and emancipation. Groups such as "the Irish" of previously ambiguous status were consolidated as "white" by virtue of being classified as "ethnic". Simultaneously this process opened a route to Americanisation, although this was far from a straightforward process. (Hickman 2014, 139)

This prejudice against Irish immigrants is also echoed in Daly's discussion of the prejudice against Irish women. While she believes there is no reason to assume women were targeted in particular, she acknowledges that there existed several American practices that revealed such prejudice against Irish women. Daly explains, "The American practice of using Bridget as the generic name for Irish servants, and complaints about 'how unspeakably atrocious the Hibernian maid-of-all work' are indications of the antipathy shown by many Americans towards Irish servants" (Daly 2014, 29). David Katzman also suggests that "anti-Catholicism was at the heart of antipathy towards the Irish" (Katzman 1981 [1978], 163), along with insinuations of their differences in standards and lifestyles. "Americanisation" in *American Gods*, while explored abstractly in terms of diverse cultural and religious narratives, is not fully explored as a complex process of economic, political and racial negotiations. At times, Essie's narrative alludes to her struggles in a modernising American society, but her story does not go into detail about specific instances involving prejudice or difficulty in adapting to the modern economy.

Aside from the issues of exile and diaspora, Gaiman also depicts the immigrants' struggle to adapt to modernisation. He repeatedly shows that America is no place for old stories, magic and gods. The struggle to adapt

amid constant change is not a new concept, as Sweeney explains of the history of the Irish gods:

> Wave after wave of them as they came in from Gaul and from Spain, and from every damn place, each wave of them transforming the last gods into trolls and fairies and every damn creature until Holy Mother Church herself arrived and every god in Ireland was transformed into a fairy or a saint or a dead King without so much as a by-your-leave… (Gaiman 2016 [2001], 259)

Change and transformation is inevitable, and this is seen in the way religions and cultures evolve throughout time to reflect changes in society – more specifically in the case of America, "all who inhabit it are subject to transformation […] diaspora space focuses on the creation of new social relations and identifications resulting from the specificities of encounters" (Hickman 2014, 138). This transformation as a result of the encounters between different cultures and religions is what leads to "national formation" (138). Gaiman depicts America as a world where traditions and stories of the old ways are lost, but it is also a diverse world where everyone is an immigrant with his or her own culture and story to tell. He implies that it is up to people to make connections from differences, and choosing to come together with respect for differences rather than merely uniting under a basis of essential identity. There is no doubt that some aspects of cultural identity and traditions are lost in the process of globalisation, but there is also the opportunity to learn to appreciate and gain an understanding of other different cultures. Being "American", then, is a construction of identity based on choosing to embrace cultural differences – as Donna Haraway famously advocates, a politics of "affinity, not identity" (2010 [1985], 2197).

Cultural identity, Gaiman suggests, is adaptable and fluid. Sweeney, and by extension, the rest of the American versions of the old gods, represents the evolving and ever-changing culture of America. As the gods are a personification of people's beliefs, their "Americanisation" shows how diaspora gives way to myth-making, to the re-creation and adaptation of one's culture so as to make sense of the new place one inhabits. In the TV adaptation, Gaiman alludes to this in a scene where Sweeney cryptically comments on his history: "I was a king once […] Then they made me a bird. Then Mother Church came along and turned us all into saints and trolls and fairies. General Mills did the rest" (Gaiman 2017a). It is a reference to Sweeney's mythic roots as the Irish king Suibhne mac Colmain, who, as the tale goes, was cursed by St. Ronan to wander the world as a bird after their territorial dispute about building a church in Suibhne's lands. He also alludes to the Christianisation of Europe, and the way perceptions of traditional Irish folktales changed over time. His reference to General Mills highlights the way leprechauns from Irish folklore have been adapted into commercialised cartoon figures pro-

moting cereal. Gaiman's Sweeney himself is portrayed as an amalgamation of the Irish king Suibhne and the mythical figure of the leprechaun, suggesting the mythic and cultural narratives that the gods represent are malleable:

> It means you give up your mortal existence to become a meme: something that lives forever in people's minds, like the tune of a nursery rhyme. It means that everyone gets to recreate you in their own minds. You barely have your own identity any more. Instead, you're a thousand aspects of what people need you to be. And everyone wants something different from you. Nothing is fixed, nothing is stable. (Gaiman 2016 [2001], 534)

Gaiman suggests that culture is all about storytelling, and all forms of culture demonstrate the limitless adaptability of folklore. The general plot of *American Gods* is premised on the imminent battle between the old gods, those like Odin and Sweeney, and the new gods, Media and Technical Boy (who represents the internet). However, it becomes clear along the course of the narrative that this is a "false dichotomy" (Evans 2016, 72). It is not so much a battle between the old gods and the new gods, but rather, the "battle between the multiplicity of voices and the fast-paced, mobile, transitory nature of American culture" (72). Sweeney's backstory is especially relevant here because this is not the first time he suffers due to his resistance to change. Although he acclimatises to America and grows to become more American than Irish in his preferences and habits, he is still resistant to more profound change, unwilling to use technology to maintain his power. The Irish folktale from which he is derived tells the story of a man unable to adapt to the new ways, and so, he is driven insane and spends the rest of his life wandering alone.

Gaiman's Sweeney deviates slightly from the preceding narratives – this Americanised version of the Irish mythic figure has lost his Irish accent, drinks American liquor, does coin tricks with his hoard of gold, and picks bar fights as he wanders around America. Gaiman's version of Sweeney has been adapted in order to speak about Irish immigrant experience in America. In a reflection of the original myth *Buile Suibhne*, the Americanised version of Sweeney also wanders aimlessly, struggling to remain relevant in a contemporary America where modern gods like Technical Boy and Media are more powerful because of society's immense belief in them. Echoing the way he was violently resistant against the Christianisation of Europe, Mad Sweeney likewise resists change once again and refuses to adapt in order to attain more believers. Gaiman depicts other gods like Bilquis (based on the biblical figure called the Queen of Sheba) adapting to modern technology by using dating apps. As an ancient goddess of love, Bilquis uses dating apps to attract and seduce her believers, thereby retaining a measure of her power. The Germanic goddess of spring, Ostara, compromises in order to survive,

capitalising on the celebration of Easter to stay in power even though the holiday has nothing to do with her; Vulcan (a character Gaiman created for the TV adaptation), the Roman god of fire, learns to franchise his faith by starting a bullet factory so that those who fire his bullets would be praying in his name. This is, in itself, a reflection of the way new myths are made as cultures evolve and modernise. Ostara capitalising on the commercial power of Easter and Vulcan franchising his faith are examples of the way Gaiman remakes myths into stories relevant for a modern audience. Sweeney, however, has not managed to adapt to modern culture in a way that allows him to flourish – the extent of his adaptation to the modern world is represented by General Mills' cartoonish leprechaun mascot for the cereal "Lucky Charms". Sweeney's resistance to change emphasises the difficulty of maintaining one's connection to traditional culture while adapting to the modern world enough to flourish. How would one remain "Irish" outside of Ireland? How would one preserve the Irish culture in modern adaptations without diminishing it or essentialising it? These struggles are not only present in issues of Irish diaspora, but also in any instance of cultural dislocation.

As a British-Indian writer writing about his homeland from outside his homeland, Salman Rushdie, too, struggles with the complexity of speaking about the "phenomena of cultural transplantation" (Rushdie 1992 [1991], 20). In the first chapter of *Imaginary Homelands*, he questions: "What does it mean to be 'Indian' outside India? How can culture be preserved without becoming ossified? […] These questions are all a single, existential question: how are we to live in the world?" (17-18). Rushdie does not claim to have any answers, and there is no doubt there will not be simple answers to questions as complex as those. Despite the lack of easy answers, authors like Rushdie and Gaiman tell their stories in the attempt to articulate the negotiation between conflicting cultural identities, and perhaps, even to articulate the need for hybrid cultural identity that integrates elements from both the country of origin and the country of immigration – as scholars like Daly and Hickman have argued. Homi Bhabha's conceptualises hybridity as a space where traditional concepts are relocated and translated, encouraging cross-cultural ideas that exceed the boundaries of culture and venture into new directions. His argument rejects the notion of a "pure" culture, as culture is complex and contradictory to begin with. Bhabha defines hybridity as "that Third Space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew" (Bhabha 1995, 208). Hybridity is seen as a liminal space, a "split-space of enunciation [that] may open the way to conceptualizing an inter-national culture, based not on the exoticism or multi-culturalism of the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity" (209). A hybrid cultural identity can be likened

to Gaiman's re-creation of America as being made up of diverse and different cultures coming together in a new way to create a heterogenous "American" identity that celebrates the similarities between cultures and embraces the differences as a potential for cross-cultural innovation.

Mad Sweeney is representative of the disadvantages that come with failing to adapt under the pressures of emigration and modernisation. In various versions of the Suibhne myth, he is a figure that repeatedly fails to adapt to change and forms of modernisation, rendering him exiled and disconnected from the rest of his community. These recurring themes of diaspora and displacement speak to the alienation that individuals suffer in the face of an impersonal and commercialised modern society. Gaiman uses the story of Suibhne in such innovative ways so as to articulate anxieties about a rapidly changing world: by re-telling his version of the myth, he makes it relevant for a contemporary audience; he explores the exile image central to the Irish emigrant experience; and he emphasises the power of storytelling in the formation of a hybrid cultural identity that is adaptable under the pressures of modernity.

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Voices

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Detached Lyricism and Universal Rootedness: A Critical Introduction to the Poetry of Pat Boran

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Abstract:

Pat Boran is one of the most versatile, polyvalent and innovative voices in contemporary Irish poetry. In spite of his prolific career as a poet, editor, and fiction writer, and the positive reviews his work has received over the years (i.e. Smith 2007; Linke 2009; Dempsey 2011; Cornejo 2016; Kehoe 2018), Boran has received very little critical attention in Irish Studies. This critical introduction intends to cover this gap in academia, by offering a more detailed critical appraisal of a poetic voice largely underrated within Irish literary criticism, as O'Driscoll (2007, xiv-xv) laments in his introduction to his *Selected Poems*. In particular, I will offer a brief critical overview of Boran's six collections of poetry, and I will concentrate on several aspects which seem to distinguish him as a writer: his sense of "detached lyricism" (that is to say, his intensive biographical but at the same time impersonal style); the importance that local rootedness exerts in his work; and his idiosyncratic way of handling themes such as masculinity.

Keywords: Contemporary Irish Poetry, Irish Haikus, Masculinity, Pat Boran

Pat Boran is one of the most versatile, polyvalent and innovative voices in contemporary Irish poetry. His first poetry collection was published in 1990, *The Unwound Clock*, and this was followed by an incessant literary career, which includes six volumes of poetry: *History and Promise* (1990), *Familiar Things* (1993), *The Shape of Water* (1996), *As the Hand, the Glove* (2001), *The Next Life* (2012) and *Waveforms: Bull Island Haiku* (2015); and three anthologies of selected poetry (2005, 2007 and 2017). His poetry has featured in numerous compilations of poetry from Ireland and it has been translated into Portuguese, Italian, Hungarian and Macedonian. Boran has received many awards, most notably the Patrick Kavanagh Poetry Award in 1989 and the Lawrence O'Shaughnessy Award for Irish Poetry from the University of

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St. Thomas in 2008. In 2007, he was elected to the membership of Aosdána, the prestigious affiliation of artists and writers in Ireland.

Since 2005, Boran has been the publisher and editor of Dedalus Press, a leading imprint in Ireland which specializes in contemporary poetry from Ireland and international poetry translated into English. As editor, Boran has been pioneering in many different ways. To start with, he has been credited with bringing a poet's sensibility to the publishing domain (Tillinghast 2009, 186), and this is indeed seen in the innovative, experimental work published by Dedalus. Boran has also been a source of encouragement for new voices in Irish poetry. In 2010, for instance, Dedalus published the groundbreaking first collection of immigrant poetry in Ireland, *Landing Places: Immigrant Poets in Ireland* (co-edited by Eva Bourke and Borbála Faragó), opening the market for new ethnic, minority voices in the country. This press has also – under Boran's editing hand – carried out great innovation in Ireland's publishing industry, with its bilingual publications, its anthologies combining poetry and music (i.e. *The Bee-Loud Glade: A Living Anthology of Irish Poetry* 2011), its literary compilations of essays and poems where poets reflect on their own work and on poetry in general (*Flowing Still* 2009; and *The Deep Heart's Core* 2017); and an important anthology for the charity organization Shine, assisting people with mental ill-health (2011). In this respect, Boran does things other editors have not done yet in the country.

Boran is not only a poet and editor. He has also produced fiction, most notably the collection of short stories *Strange Bedfellows* (1991), and the children's book *All the Way from China* (1998; finalist of the Bisto Book of the Year Award). In 2009, Boran published the best-selling humorous memoir of his childhood *The Invisible Prison: Scenes from an Irish Childhood*, a moving personal account of growing up in the Irish midland town of Portlaoise which mixes in a remarkable way the genres of fiction and autobiography. He is also an active writer of nonfiction, as evinced by his writers' handbook *The Portable Creative Writing Workshop* (2005) and *A Short History of Dublin* (2000).

Apart from being a writer and editor, Boran is also an active broadcaster: between 2006 and 2008, he presented the Poetry Programme on the national RTÉ Radio and he is still a regular contributor to different TV and radio programmes. Boran has also been involved in the administration of Poetry Ireland (the national poetry organization in the country), and he has directed for many years the Dublin Writers Festival.

On occasion of his visit to the University of Granada, in February 2018 (an event organized through the 2018 Irish Itinerary sponsored by EFACIS and Culture Ireland), I had the intense experience of reading and revisiting his work. Some features which single out his poetry as unique are its "analytical sharpness" (Kehone 2018), its "unadorned" style (Linke 2009) and – what I would like to call – its "detached lyricism". Boran is influenced by East European poetry. In a *Stinging Fly* interview, he acknowledges the profound im-

pact that the Czech poet Miroslav Holub had upon his work (Meade 2002). Boran was immediately drawn by Holub's simple style and his apparent lack of concern with form, artistic features clearly evident in his own work. As Linke (2009) puts it, Boran's poetry is "sparse in nature, effortlessly descriptive without excessive embellishment, eloquent, evocative and unadorned. He eschews superfluous trimmings, preferring an almost austere brevity and pared-down simplicity to his poems". From Holub, Boran has also inherited a poetic interest in scientific knowledge, which he projects in many poems such as "The Museum of the Near Future" (Boran 2017, 43-44)[1]. As this poem exemplifies, Boran's work – while sharp, realistic and full of ordinary detail – can also fall into surrealistic, dreamlike sequences.

Another interesting contradiction that we find in his poetry is that it is simultaneously lyrical and emotionally detached. On the one hand, the lyrical voice is always there in most of the poems. As Boran claims, "a good deal of what I write has its roots, its triggering impulse at least, in autobiography" (O'Connell and Boran 2017, 28). Nevertheless, the writer admits, it is essential for the poem "to go beyond or at least to point beyond individual experience towards something larger than itself" (*ibidem*). This movement from the personal to the impersonal, from autobiography to universality, is acknowledged by the writer in the interview below, and is observed in two of his most beautifully intriguing poems, "Waving" and "Tears", which are analyzed later in this critical introduction.

In spite of his prolific career as a poet, editor, and fiction writer, and the positive reviews his work has received over the years (i.e. Smith 2007; Linke 2009; Dempsey 2011; Cornejo 2016; Kehoe 2018), Boran has received very little critical attention in Irish Studies. This brief introduction intends to cover this gap in academia, by offering a more detailed critical appraisal of a poetic voice largely underrated within Irish literary criticism, as O'Driscoll (2007, xiv-xv) laments in his introduction to his *New and Selected Poems*. In particular, I will offer a brief critical overview of Boran's six collections of poetry, and I will concentrate on several aspects which seem to distinguish him as a writer: his sense of "detached lyricism" (that is to say, his intensive biographical but at the same time impersonal style); the importance that local rootedness exerts in his work; and his idiosyncratic way of handling themes such as masculinity.

The themes of Boran's poetry are many, and the scope is both personal and universal, as O'Driscoll (2007, xii) rightly notes. His first collection, *The Unwound Clock* (1990) is significant for its detailed snapshots of ordinary life in Portlaoise, the Irish small town of his birth, in Co. Laois. Boran dignifies the (apparently insignificant) life of local characters, depicting the beauty of mundane,

[1] Unless otherwise specified, most poems quoted in this paper belong to Pat Boran's *A Man is Only As Good: A Pocket Selected Poems* (2017).

routinized lives in grocery shops, market places and pubs. The poem "Widow, Shopping in Portlaoise" is significant in this respect, in its portrayal of a widow busily doing the shopping for her brother at home. As O'Driscoll (2007, xi) notes, "Portlaoise would have been largely bypassed by literature …, were it not for the fidelity and clarity with which Pat Boran has portrayed the town in his work". Boran looks at his own childhood in this town with affection. In general, the atmosphere of these poems is relaxed and gentle. In the "Castlecomer Jukebox" (2017, 12-13), for instance, Boran intersperses the harshness of his father's childhood – raised in a house with an "outside toilet", "eight boys and their six sisters" growing "approximately, into each other's clothes" – with the happy, tender recollection of his grandparents, who exhibited an "uncommonly relaxed" attitude. Local characters and local stories populate this collection: "spit-and-polish farmers" doing business "out in the Market Square", or "Martin Drennan from Ballydavis / tipping back glasses of Guinness / and whiskey in Dinny Joes" (21). As Boran suggests in a later poem, his poetry aims to create a "porch-light of language", which illuminates with intense clarity the households of ordinary lives ("The Say", 49)

This sense of local rootedness in his work, however, is always linked with a pervasive sense of the universal. In his second collection, published in that very same year, *History and Promise* (1990), local snapshots of Portlaoise are interspersed with numerous celestial images: "whole sweeps of sky, whole dusty / constellations" (50), "planets, / fading into the luxury of shadow" (59); "an endless, starless sky" waiting for "the glimmer of surprise" (69), etc. One of the most remarkable poems in this collection is "Alternative Histories", which points towards the role of poets as "historians", in charge of recuperating lost archives and stories (Boran 2013, 49). Any writer, Boran seems to suggest, has historical responsibility, in his/her act of revisiting the past and unearthing silent voices. The imagery in this collection is concise and precise. In the poem "Small Town Life", Boran depicts in detail the funeral rites of a local village:

Wreaths
hint towards a relationship
between death and beauty
as the mannequins
their eyes open, dream
in the windows of a department store. (23)

Although male characters are more frequent in his work, women – particularly old women – appear from time to time, and they stand out for their fortitude, strength, resistance and resignation. In "The Flood", for instance, Mrs O. waits patiently for the boat to come and save her, as her midland town is flooded, becoming a "nightmare Venice", a "mockery / of the honeymoon she never had" (24).

Boran's third collection, *Familiar Things* (1993), becomes a bit more universal in scope, with the inclusion of poems such as the abovementioned

"Waving", an illustrative case of the poet's tendency to move from the personal to the impersonal, from the lyrical "I" to more abstract reflections on the human condition. In this poem, the speaker reflects on different kinds of "waving", from the simple gesture of moving a hand as in greeting, and the memory of his mother having her hair waved in a particular style, to the moving ridge on the surface of water, and in more abstract lenses, the propagation of light as a wave. The personal tone with which the poem begins ("As a child I waved to people I didn't know. / I waved from passing cars, school buses, / second floor windows", 2017, 30) gradually moves into the surreal images of "Whole humans – arms, legs, backs and bellies … waving away, flickering on and off" (31). This poem is emblematic of the "detached lyricism" that can be observed in Boran's work, and it also draws our attention to the relativism of reality itself, and the fact that, depending on one's perspective in the world, one would only be able to see things that fit one's preconceptions: "though the sea / came towards the beach, it was a different sea / when it arrived; the onlooker too had changed" (*ibidem*).

This collection inaugurates as well what will become later an important theme in Boran's work: his exploration of the theme of masculinity, and the vicissitudes, insecurities and emotions that a boy experiences as he grows old and matures (a theme that, as we will see, will appear forcefully in his fifth collection of poetry). In "Born to Shave", the speaker jumps back in time, as he looks at his own self in the mirror while he is shaving himself:

Born to shave.
A child
looking in the same mirrors, I saw then
only ceiling, followed, years later,
by hints of hair, then eyes,
and then this chin. Born
to age and shave.
Born to grow up to face myself.
Born to regret and, in the light
of regret, to make promises. (32)

The poetic persona reflects on the numerous times that he has blindly performed this action in the mirror, "resisting the chemical smell until it dissipates". This routinized gesture of shaving – suggestive of polite masculinity – is being deconstructed in the poem as a social convention. As the speaker grows and gains altitude, he cannot even see his face in the mirror; thus he cannot apply the foam properly and he even has to bend his knees to see the upper part of his head. This personal journey of growth will eventually lead to death, the speaker realizes, and thus towards the end of this socially constructed costume, "where none of this means anything":

Years from now I'll reach
from some otherworldly place,
where none of this means anything, to touch
this hand-basin, these dulled blades. (33)

Boran's fourth collection, *The Shape of Water*, is published three years later, in 1996. The topic of failed love and the pain of the beloved's absence feature prominently in some poems such as "Moon Street" (50-51), "Words" (52) and "Answering Machine" (69). These highly lyrical poems also show another aspect that truly characterizes Boran's work and this is its accessibility in terms of language. These deeply emotionally charged poems are juxtaposed by others where Boran adopts a more clear detached perspective, as in "A Creation Myth", which is based on the story of a dinner party attended by a number of well-known physicists (55-56). The metaphorical title of this collection, *The Shape of Water*, reflects on the relativism of reality itself, and ultimately on the importance of transcending the egocentric intensity of personal experience. The shape of the container of liquids – Boran suggests – inevitably determines the shape of the water it keeps; thus, the importance of carrying an open attitude to the world (a flexible jar of water) when gathering external information. Bearing this in mind, it is not surprising that this collection of poetry contains some remarkable poems which clearly deconstruct essentialist assumptions grounded on nationality and exclusivist notions of belonging. In spite of the strong sense of locality which impregnates his work, one key belief underlying Boran's poetry is "the magnificent / transience of what we are" ("Cities", 17). Some poems in this collection deconstruct non-inclusive notions of identity based on land ownership. In "Untitled", for instance, Boran describes how an imaginary city, drawn on a footpath by a traveler child – with its "doorways, streetscapes and wings" – gradually disappears as "the rain washes away his world". That is why the poet realizes that "Nothing is mine here" (66). A similar metaphor is used in a latter poem, "The Island" (2017, 108), where Boran rewrites the myth of Ireland as an insular country, only open to the citizens of the neighbouring island of Great Britain (interview with Cornejo 2016)[2].

Boran's fifth collection, *As the Hand, the Glove* (2001), is chiefly marked by the death of the poet's father, to whom Boran dedicates moving, remarkable elegies such as "Lost and Found", "Penknife", or "AM". In the two former poems, the emotional connection between the deceased father and the son is palpable through the physical presence of lost and useless objects the son finds unexpectedly in draw-

[2] Here, the speaker, as a child, makes his "own small island", out of a heap of sand left in the backyard of his house by a builder: "bays / and mountains, the major rivers, greys / instead of forty shades of green" (108). At the end of the poem, the boy's imaginary country is invaded by a sudden "fleet of snails, / like so many Norse or Spanish or Phoenician sails, / their glistening trails criss-crossing the hostile dark" (108). Boran explains in detail the genesis and composition of this poem in the interview which follows this critical introduction.

ers: buttons, paperclips, a penknife, belt buckles, plasters or needles (97-99). These things are reminiscent of the presence of absence itself, of loss, discovery and recovery. The latter poem "AM" is one of Boran's most well known lyrics. In this short playful poem, the death of the father is visually confronted with the present context of the speaker, who sadly mediates on the mysteries of time, and the irremediably perishing nature of life, as he looks at his own watch in the middle of the night:

1.35 a.m.
I look at my watch and see
My life story:
I thirty-five am.

And if I press this button here
I get the date, 1999,
the year when my *am* begins to mean
something new, something else,
your *was*, your is *no longer*,
the year of your death. (81)

In spite of the elegiac tone of these poems, Boran looks at the past with affection and tender quietness, and with a remarkable sense of gratitude for what he has been given in life. As the poet concludes in the opening poem "Milkmen":

Years later – for it is years
already – I begin to know
what it means, this opening

of doors, of silences, to accept
things not made on the spot
but handed over: love, inheritance. (71)

Apart from these poems dedicated to his father, Boran's fifth collection is remarkable for a whole series of poems where he explores the theme of masculinity and the adventures, fears, sense of excitement and insecurities that a boy may experience as he grows up in an Irish local town. "Tent" is about Maurice, who "lost his virginity / in a tent … with a foreign girl", and the sense of excitement that this created among his groups of friends (including the poetic speaker) as they go to visit the site where it all happened, discovering the impression in the grass "like a door / and big enough for a man to pass through"(102). The abrupt phallic reference – "His penis hanging between his legs" – with which the poem "Literature" begins (85) becomes a symbol not only of puberty, but also of artistic creativity itself. As the man in the poem experiences an erection, Boran reflects on the private exposure of the poet himself, and on how this autobiographical element necessarily leads to something else, clearly beyond the poet's inner self:

this naked man is what I am –
and yet how unlike me he seems. (85)

This idea is emphasized at the end of the poem, where the speaker describes the artistic creator as "a man who would keep his truth concealed / this Rosebud, this Jekyll, this Dorian Gray" (*ibidem*).

Another powerful poem in the collection which revisits conventional images of masculinity while at the same time exemplifying Boran's characteristic movement from the autobiographical to the universal, from a lyrical, self-focused tone to a more impersonal perspective, is "Tears". In this poem, Boran revisits his own life in view of his ability to show his own emotions in public (90-93). In its emotional intensity and confessional tone, this poem remarkably resembles "Trickle Drops" by Walt Whitman. But as in Whitman's overall aesthetics, Boran attempts in this poem to move to a place where the self is wishfully transcended, as the speaker reaches a state of selflessness, suggestive of a more universal scope of experience. As Boran has explained in a recent conversation[3], this poem is inspired by a personal memory of a summer holiday in the West of Ireland, with his parents and his four siblings. One night, his father was suddenly attacked by a man trying to break into the car. While his younger siblings immediately cried when seeing their father covered in blood, Boran recalls how he stood in shock, unable to shed any tears. The poem reflects on this state of emotional repression experienced in young boyhood, partly determined by societal constraints which dictate that "tough" boys should not cry. At the beginning, the speaker describes "tears" as a natural, instinctive response, associated with coming into the world: "first thing I did when I was born / was cry". While during his childhood years – the speaker admits – he felt comfortable with crying, as he advances in life, his feelings towards this action change drastically, as he is unable to express his suffering in public:

Then in my teens
they stopped. My tears
went underground…

No tears for instance
at seventeen
where there was more
to cry about
than I could explain. (91)

Challenging this social repression of the sensitive, emotional side in young boys, the speaker at the end of the poem depicts himself as a more liberated in-

[3] Personal conversation with the author of this essay, 12 February 2018.

dividual, ready to express his emotions freely. Now, he refuses to repress his tears any longer, and regains his ability to cry whenever he feels like doing so: "But now / I'm always close to tears". This poem is not only a critique of hegemonic versions of masculinity, a predominant theme in Boran's work, as we have seen. It also exemplifies Boran's ability to use personal experience in non-individualistic ways, in order to encompass larger themes and concerns. As Smith (2007) notices, one of Boran's achievements is to "marry private perception to … public sphere", and by doing so, he manages to achieve an immediate connection with the reader. This aspect of his work has been deftly summarized by O'Driscoll (2007, xiii), who claims that Boran has that rare ability to establish emotional empathy with the reader while adopting the position of scientific detachment.

Boran's concern with the topic of masculinity is continued in his 2012 collection, *The Next Life*. His humorous poem, "A Man is Only as Good", for instance, similarly subverts hegemonic models of manliness. The title seems to allude to the old saying "A man is only as good as his word", which associates traditional masculinity with the values of honour and integrity. However, the fact that the title is incomplete seems to suggest that a different form of masculinity is presented in the poem. Indeed, as the speaker claims in the first stanza of the poem:

A man is only as good
as what he says to a dog
when he has to get up out of bed
in the middle of a wintry night
because some damned dog has been barking. (2017, 137)

Masculinity is measured according to the way the male persona behaves towards the dog as he is suddenly awoken in the middle of the night and "goes an opens the door / in his vest and boxer shorts" (*ibidem*). It is in such moments of exhaustion when patience is put at risk and aggressiveness can easily appear. Emotions such as animal empathy, pity and patience (traditionally associated with women) are now associated with true, "honorable" manliness. The theme of masculinity, and the social constrains usually imposed on men also reappear in another poem from this collection, "Learning to Dive", where Boran records a boy's challenge as he learns to dive, wishing to obtain "a medal struck to honour / the triumph of his simply letting go" (127).

As in Boran's previous collections, *The Next Life* is also dominated by fond childhood memories. His poems of "growth and change" (105) recall with affection his "first real love, the local stream" of Portlaoise (111), which is identified affectionately as "our sleepy, landlocked, midland town" (114). Images of the poet's own children appear for the first time, as in evocative poems such as "Let's Die", where infant innocence reverberates with strength:

Like me, sometimes they act too much,
filling the available space and time
with fuss and noise and argument. (124)

Compared with the previous work, Boran's 2012 collection, however, seems to be marked by a bleaker, more pessimistic tone. The two opening poems, "Worm Song" and "Snowman", deal with the theme of the inevitable lack of permanence in a world constantly changing. In the latter poem, for instance, the snowman becomes "snow-thing" when the meltdown comes (107). In "Up the Road" (113), Boran depicts a place where "sense breaks down", as "the whole broke country was showing off its veins / to the needle of the Lord" (113). Dublin, rather than his local town, seems to be the setting of most of the poems in this collection: the tender, quite atmosphere of Portlaoise is now replaced by the speediness and quick rhythms of city life. Economic recession and its effect on social cuts are at the backdrop of "Bargain Hunter", in which the speaker listens to desolate news in an old radio: "*Health service closures cripple nation*" (139). There is an important layer of social criticism in some poems. In "The Princess of Sorrows", written in memoriam of Michael Hartnett, Boran denounces the social exclusion and depravation experienced by an immigrant homeless girl (standing alone at night, in the rain, in Dublin's Baggot Street), whom he describes as a "Rag-doll princess, / inner child of the inner city / set adrift" (115). Immigrants are also the main characters of "Immigrants Open Shops", a poem which clearly invites us to reflect on the heated controversial debate surrounding the cultural and linguistic integration of political refugees in Ireland (140-141). In "Intruder", we witness the confrontation between the poetic speaker and a potential bugler who appears unexpectedly in the middle of the night in his backyard, with "his shaved head" and a bat in his hand, and the sense of fear and threatening atmosphere this creates in the speaker's otherwise quiet life (120-121). In "During the War", Boran depicts the cruelties and atrocities of war, and how they might interfere with a young couple, in their attempt to build a new home and raise up a family (136-137). A bleaker, somber tone is also observed in "That Pain" and "Revenge".

Boran's 2015 collection is *Waveforms: Bull Island Haiku* (2015), a remarkable compilation of haikus about Bull Island, a five-Km landmass which runs parallel to the shore in Dublin Bay, rich in fauna and flora, and which, since 1981, is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. The collection sets in dialogue images and texts, by combining the haikus with the actual photographs that the poet took of the area. Boran's haikus, following the tradition of the Japanese genre, are shaped around 3 verse lines. As he claims in the afterword of his anthology, his intention was to respect, as closely as possible, the original form of haikus, by maintaining the "kiru", that is, the juxtaposition of two clear and sometimes opposing ideas (113). Nevertheless, he also revises the traditional genre, by rhyming the first and the third lines, with the aim of producing what he describes as "a small electrical charge in the language, a charge that often brings with it some degree of illumination" (110). Boran's neat rhyme scheme is thus intended to accompany the visual epiphany offered in the haiku. This aspect is observed in this particular piece, where the visual image of the horizon is suggested by the rhyme scheme (which recalls the open space existing between the "sea" and "me"):

The sky and the sea.
And that faint line in between,
Drawn as if for me. (25)

In the words of Boran, while "the sky and sea might be said to rhyme with one another", the horizon appears as "that third distinctive line in the middle, acting as both separation and, sometimes, as mirror" (110).

One important feature of the haikus collected in this anthology is the prevalent, dominant sense of place they display. Boran offers a detailed attention to the existent fauna and flora on this unique area in Dublin Bay. In particular, he explores the connection between different forms of lives: plant, bird and human life are all related by their coexistence in Bull Island. Boran depicts with visual intensity ordinary snapshots of all kinds of birds (i.e. brent geese, hooded crows, curlews, sanderlings, etc.) as they coexist with seals, fish, worms, dogs, and all forms of plant life, while humans intervene from time to time: girls eating their picnics on the shore, boys playing with a kite or young lovers drawing their house plans on the sand (Boran 2012). Such interrelation between animal and human life is observed for instance in the following haiku which – following the Keatsian Romantic myth of artistic creation – connects the poet's task with the birds' presence in nature:

As precise as words
on a page, in the fresh mud –
the language of birds. (Boran 2015, 25)

This haiku juxtaposes – by means of a simile – the two different images of the words written by the poet on the page and the prints of birds in the fresh mud. Following the minimalist aesthetic of haikus, the visual presence of the poet – the "I" of the artist – remains hidden. What is important is not the self and the intensity of his emotions, but the common language that unites both, human beings and animals. This is one of the aspects that interests Boran most, and which explains his fascination with haikus, as he claims in the interview below: the ability to get rid of the poetic persona and maintain simply the visual image. At times, and only occasionally, Boran introduces the first person singular in these haikus, but this voice quickly dissipates as the speaker articulates emotions in the third person plural, rather than the singular:

When my best friend died
I came here and sat for hours.
The gulls cried. They cried. (74)

As Boran has recently explained in the interview, it was the death of a close friend of his which prompted his daily visits to Bull Island. His personal distress, however, is not articulated in the first person singular. In the poem, it is

the gulls who share the pain and misery the speaker seems to be experiencing, as they articulate in their cries what the persona is unable to do in words. This poem powerfully recalls Lord Tennyson's "Break, Break, Break", in which the Victorian poet laments his inability to express in words his grief over the death of his best friend, Arthur Hallam, and uses the images of the waves breaking in the shore as most powerful articulations of his inner thoughts: "Break, break, break, / On thy cold gray stones, O Sea! / And I would that my tongue could utter / The thoughts that arise in me" (Tennyson 2007 [1842], 165). In Boran's haiku, the gulls are able to express what the poet is experiencing inside. Therefore, human beings and non-human animals are united by grief; differences between life species are deleted and a new type of connection is formed through the ability to empathize with one another's suffering[4]. As Boran (2009, 146) claims in an essay, the first poems he was drawn to were about the natural world, in particular about birds and animals. As he puts it, "Poetry is one of the few places where we are invited to commune with and closely observe the natural world" (147). It is this aspect of communion with nature, and the ability to perceive all things as interrelated, that impregnates most haikus in the collection. The following haiku, for instance, links different forms of life together (human, plant and animal), by drawing our attention to the element they have in common, light:

It's all about light –
bird song, child's play, plankton bloom,
the weed's dizzy height … (26)

Birds are often heard in the daytime, especially in the early hours when the sun is rising. Similarly, children play usually in the daytime, as they are often put to bed when the sun sets. "Plankton bloom" only when there is sunlight; even in the ocean they are not able to survive too deep and far from the sun, just like "the weed's dizzy height". In conclusion, the poet juxtaposes apparently disconnected images – the song of the bird, the children playing, and the plants growing – by emphasizing the fact that all these things have elemental aspects in common.

The interconnections that Boran establishes between animal and human life are at times filled with a certain amount of ecocritical criticism, as in the following haiku, which denounces the pollution and rubbish human beings throw in the sea and which is eventually returned by the tide:

[4] A similar experience of – in this case inter-human – connection occurs in another haiku from this collection, which also draws on the universality of emotions: "Polish? Latvian? / Laughter carried on the wind / needs no translation" (Boran 2015, 46). The haiku reminds us that laughter is universal and that it dissipates artificial boundaries set up by human beings based on languages or nationalities. This poem directly reminds us, as well, of the presence of different nationalities in Ireland, and the necessity to advocate a common, intercultural ground.

Things the sea gives up:
plastic, nappies, the handle
of a china cup. (26)

But the interaction between humanity and nature is not necessarily detrimental. As in Wallace Stevens' modernist poem "Anecdote of a Jar", in which the human-made element of the "gray and bare" jar is placed awkwardly in a natural environment, amid the "slovenly wilderness", Boran places human-made artifacts in the middle of nature itself, with the aim of producing defamiliarization and revealing connections easily dismissed at first sight:

Smell that? Camping gas
fulfilling the primal dream:
beer, bunburgers, grass. (46)

A similar juxtaposition between natural and artificial elements occurs in the following two haikus, where the modern technology of cell phones interferes (or coexists) with the more natural sound of birds:

Studying bird song
on my iPhone while songbirds
gamely sing along. (38)
A cell phone ringing,
a gull screeching overhead.
No one answering. (97)

In this sense, Bull Island serves as a meeting place for all these different forms of life (bird, plant or human) to exist. In line with Ralph Waldo Emerson's Transcendentalist ideals, Boran suggests that all things are interconnected in the universe. Relying on the traditional "kiru", Boran connects apparently disconnected images, in order to draw our attention to the mystery of life and the minute correlations which rule the universe. The whole island of Bull Island, for instance, is a result of this, as it has been built by the accumulation of tiny grains of sand:

When the Vikings came
there was nothing here. A breeze
is the wind of change. (Boran 2015, 17)

Boran records here how Bull Island was created by the accumulation of sand carried out by the breeze. The haiku juxtaposes two images together, the breeze and the wind, one weak and slow and the other strong and fast, suggesting that small changes are actually part of bigger ones. A similar image is recorded in a previous haiku in the collection:

Grain by tumbling grain
the world forms before our eyes,
and may fade again. (13)

The contrasting images of tiny "grains" is thus juxtaposed with the immensity of the "world". Another typical "kiru" which emerges in the haikus of this collection revolves around the image of water, and the presence of high and low tides:

As the tide retreats
plans are made, sandcastles built …
History repeats. (18)

In this poem, Boran juxtaposes the image of the retreating tide (which allows plans to be made and castles to be built) with the implicit image of the high tide, which destroys everything. This haiku eventually makes us reflect on the endless cycle of death and life, destruction and construction, which characterizes history itself. History is thus compared to the rise and fall of sea levels, since it is made of alternating and opposing movements that succeed one another (thus the rhyming scheme in "retreat" and "repeat").

As the previous haikus have demonstrated, these poems intend to offer not only visual snapshots of life in Bull Island, but also some form of "momentary insight" (111). The simplicity of these haikus is deceiving, as they succeed in expressing in concise words the complexity of human experiences such as love, suffering, and desire. As Boran claims, all "good nature poetry" necessarily has to have "a spiritual dimension" (2009, 149). Indeed, some of these haikus are remarkable for their ability to record – in just three verse lines – larger themes such as the mysteriousness of life and the importance of finding the spiritual in everyday life:

Look what we've just found,
something religions yearn for –
the sky on the ground. (Boran 2017, 30)

This haiku offers a powerful description of nature by concentrating on the reflection of the sky on the waters of the sea and on the damp shores of the beach. By means of this visual image, the poem debunks the traditional division some religions make between the spiritual world and the earthly realm. Heaven can be found here, the haiku seems to suggest, in the everyday natural setting of Bull Island. The same idea recurs in the final haiku of the anthology:

Then it's home again,
stars like grains of sand, the sky
tide-washed overhead. (102)

Stars are found on the shore, shining in the grains of sand; similarly, the sky itself is a like a big ocean, full of tides. Everything is interconnected. The sky is under our feet; the sea is above our heads, Boran seems to suggest, in contrast to the human tendency to divide, separate, and categorize things. The world is one; man and nature are one. It is in such moments of insight that the speaker feels part of the world, and "it's home again". A similar moment of intense insight occurs in the following haiku, one of the few of the collections where Boran explicitly inserts his poetic persona:

"Glad we had this talk,"
myself whispers to himself.
(Never just a walk.) (41)

One of the main themes of the traditional haiku is the observation of the environment and the subsequent introspection and insight this offers to the observer. In this case, a simple walks allows the speaker to reach a state of self-observation and introspection. As Boran himself claimed in an interview, one of the reasons why he is drawn to poetry is because it offers moments of epiphany, to employ Joyce's use of the term: "I love poetry because it seems to me the most vital and compelling use of language, because it's condensed and largely portable, because it informs and guides and entertains and occasionally seems to shine a light into the heart of life's mystery" (Dempsey 2011).

It is this desire "to shine a light into the heart of life's mystery" that we can appreciate in Pat Boran's literary aesthetics. As reflected by the title of this critical introduction to his work, "detached lyricism" and "universal rootedness" are two phrases that may define Boran's unique literary output. His work is both intensely personal and emotionally detached; his autobiographical roots dissipate in light of his more universal preoccupations as a writer. In his poems about his childhood, Boran does not only focus on Portlaoise or on an Ireland of a particular period. These biographical poems intend to offer deeper reflections on life, the social pressures that accompany growth, and the inevitable passing of time. Similarly, the haikus from his latest collection are not only simple visual snapshots of Bull Island, but they also serve as larger philosophical reflections on the interconnections of all forms of life, on the human being's interference with nature, and on the inscrutable mystery of life and the universe.

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Poetry as "an immersion in the actual": An Interview with Pat Boran

12th February 2018

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PVA: Even though you are generally known as a poet, you have also written fiction, such as the collection of short stories Strange Bedfellows *(1991), the children's book* All the Way from China *(1998), and your memoir* The Invisible Prison: Scenes from an Irish Childhood *(2009). In the latter decades, however, you seem to dedicate exclusively to poetry. What makes poetry special? Do you prefer poetry to other literary genres, and if so, why?*

PB: Poetry is very close to the first creative impulse I have ever had, which was making music. I don't do it anymore; just occasionally in the privacy of my own room. But I've always loved making music, and poetry has something of that buzz. At the same time, I have never stopped writing bigger things. When I wrote the memoir *The Invisible Prison*, the origin was 3- or 4-page prose scenes, small vignettes which were stealing from the techniques of the world of fiction-making, allowing a certain amount of narrative and dialogue. But I keep going back to poetry because it's always waiting for me. For the last couple of years, I have been involved in the writing of a novel; I am not superstitious so I can say it! It may never happen or finish itself, of course – in my 20s I wrote three novels and never sent them to anybody. They were terrible; the writing in them, the construction of them was very traditional and very prosaic. By contrast, in this one, there is much less distance between its descriptive muscle and the nature of a good poem. It happens that I spent a lot of time making lyric poems, poems of a certain size, very few bigger. At this stage in my life, I am inclined to go to extremes. I have ended up making a lot of haikus and simultaneously writing longer, rambling texts. The worst thing that can happen to anybody who wants to be creative is to keep writing the same kind of text. I think it is good to jump to something new that puzzles you, that troubles you, a little bit. Maybe things have to be unfamiliar in order to provoke novel (i.e. fresh) solutions.

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PVA: You were just talking about writing a "good" poem? Is there any particular formula for that?

PB: The poet and novelist Dermot Healy who was a friend of mine – he died four years ago – said to me once a very interesting thing: "if you are writing a poem, always get to the end of the first draft, the first sketch". At the time, I thought that was some kind of protective magic for him; but in fact, I realized afterwards what it was. As a writer, you need to have a unit to return to, otherwise what happens is that you lose your direction half way and then you try to cut and paste something else, something that is "from the outside". It becomes a job then, a task, and the writing loses its unitary energy. So I think that idea – getting from the beginning to the end and then stopping – is really important, because even if it's imperfect, it allows you to return the next day and recommence the journey from a known point. It is a process of reading and re-reading, writing and re-writing, clearing the path between the beginning and the end, by taking out the obstacles.

In this respect, some of my poems are like little videos or movies. I wrote "Fetch" (Boran 2017, 100), for instance, shortly after moving to the suburbs. I was recently married and we had no kids. We shared a green patch with the neighbours and in the house opposite ours, there was a lovely dog. Whenever this dog spotted me, he would come straight across. If I moved the curtain, he would move; he would always be waiting for something. This poem is like a little movie, and the movie is that the dog comes and the dog goes. Once you have the geography of that clear in your head, you can turn out the lights, the moon may come up, and you can still get from A to B. Once the geography is right, a certain freedom enters and the poem, or the poet, can afford to take a risk and enter the world of metaphor, the world of dreams, and even the surreal world. But it is really important that all the physical parts are in place; that you can go and you can come back through the landscape, the furniture of the poem. In this sense, the poem is like a little transporter. It is like the movie *The Fly*, the reader is Jeff Goldblum: you close the door and you press the bottom and off you go! Well, it's a little bit like that.

PVA: You were just mentioning your poem "Fetch" and how this was inspired by a personal anecdote in your life. How important is autobiography in your poetry?

PB: For me, poems are very often derived from autobiography: something happens, a note ends up in a notebook, and afterwards that gets processed, revised or simplified and it becomes a poem. That's not the only way of making poems, of course; it is just my habit. And I think it is really important to say – and to say for myself as a defense – that my autobiography is ultimately irrelevant. It is no more interesting than yours, and it is not as

interesting as my mother's, I can guarantee you that. My life is not that interesting. I don't dress up as Superman and swing out of the building in the morning wearing red underpants over my trousers to save damsels in distress. The fact is that the writing life is pretty boring from the outside. I think that if an artist makes poems, or literature, or art, out of autobiography, paradoxically the one thing he or she must resist loving is the autobiography itself. That is only something to get you going, an injection of fuel, a kick-start on a frosty morning.

So yes, I tend to make poems out of biographical impulse. But writing is like going on an adventure: it is only when I finish that I have any chance of guessing what really are the raw ingredients, not to mention the ultimate destination. And of course, that can become a kind of a morbid fascination in itself. The American poet Wallace Stevens once said "ignorance is one of the sources of poetry" (Stevens 1997, 911). The more I think about it, the more I believe it, the more I love it. If you organize yourself and you are entirely clear about your intentions before the poem, you are doomed, because you are only going to encounter things you already knew. The making of the poem has to be a process of discovery.

PVA: And in this process of discovery, you tend to revisit your childhood quite frequently. Why are you so interested in the theme of childhood?

PB: A lot of poets are interested in childhood; I think for very obvious reasons. You have got a lot of time to think about it. It accumulates and, as you move away from it, you start to see other things in it, things you didn't notice or understand the first time around. It is a natural process. But I think one needs to be careful not to get stuck in it. As Julian Barnes (in *Flaubert's Parrot*, I think) says, "the old times were good because then we were young and ignorant of how ignorant the young can be". I wrote the prose book about my childhood, *The Invisible Prison*, to get it out of my system, but then when my kids were born I started seeing the idea of childhood yet again. Everything that happens to you changes, not just the future but the past as well. My poem "Let's Die" is the result of this (Boran 2017, 124]). So you keep going back to things; that's the process. I am like the dog in "Fetch", running back and forth; I have a stick and I want somebody to play with me! In a way, writing poems about the past is like going to the therapist, but the therapist never turns up, and then, after a long period in a chilly room, you end up noticing things you never noticed before, if you can face going back, that is.

PVA: Childhood memories in your work are usually affectionate and tender. However, I find surprising the title of your humorous memoir The Invisible Prison: Scenes from an Irish Childhood*, published in 2009. I know this is a reference to the fact that your local town Portlaoise hosts the country's maximum security*

political prison; but in the title you seem to define your childhood as a prison in some way. Why do you identify your "Irish Childhood" as an "invisible prison"?

PB: Years ago there was something of a boom in the world of "the Irish memoir", particularly of "the miserable Irish memoir" (no doubt a result of the fantastic success of Frank McCourt's *Angela's Ashes*, published in 1996, with its grim depiction of a Limerick childhood in, apparently, incessant rain). These memoirs seemed to be a way of showing off our misery to each other, of outdoing each other in a kind of "rap battle" of deprivation and religious oppression. The memoirs that were the most miserable got the most attention, and seemed to beget even more miserable memoirs in turn. That's not to say that terrible things didn't happen in Irish society and shouldn't be told; they most certainly did, and memoir is a valid way to explore the mechanics of a society from a close-up, detailed perspective. And yet, despite the fact that we were then living in a kind of misery pond, so little of the dark truth of recent Irish history that subsequently emerged (the scandals of the Magdalene laundries, of the Mothers and Baby homes, etc) was really laid bare or sufficiently examined in those books, as if the narrative of "the author who survived a difficult childhood" was the only story worth telling any more.

In *The Invisible Prison*, I suppose I wanted to look at childhood as a subject without imposing that distorting narrative device, and, in a sense, without the "frame" an adult narrator might feel was necessary to put on the story. Instead I determined to see childhood as a sequence of standalone "scenes", much as in a short story, and to leave to the reader the opinions, overviews and conclusions that I felt spoiled many of the memoirs I had forced myself to read. The truth is, of course, that none of us has an idyllic childhood; there is no such a thing. In every childhood there are points when the dark reality of life must be faced – when loss, and cruelty, and death, etc, are encountered and turn the fable of the idyllic childhood on its head. Without such encounters we remain children, our growth into adulthood stunted, our transition to the next stage of understanding and responsibility deferred or kept at arms' length. In approaching the subject of childhood, a writer has a choice of what to focus on, of what to tell and how, of where to start and how to proceed. (Do I start "at the very beginning", as the song has it: I was born, etc etc. Or do I start at some specific event and then jump forward and backwards, as one might in the unfolding of a novel?) For me, the standalone scene, which has a good deal in common with the family memory, the anecdote, was as good a place as any to begin.

When you go back to retell a scene or story, it comes alive again, or should. In writing the book, I found myself gathering individual pieces that I had written for radio, for short talks and putting them together, and on one level I recognized my own childhood, but crucially I also began to recognize somebody else's. If the work is to succeed and have a potential readership

outside of yourself, there is always an element of fiction; you have to make things up, you have to trust in your vision, your flawed memory, your faulty circuitry. I did a lot of research, through local newspapers etc, but, ultimately, once you put it down it doesn't matter what the impulse was, and it doesn't even matter what the facts were, the more minor facts certainly (though it's good to get them as clear as you can, if only to earth your doubting heart!). In writing it, the story becomes something else; and that illuminates or illustrates something for you, which is why so many of us do it. So, for whatever reason, the impulse to make something starts, for me, very often out of autobiography. But I follow it only because I am relatively confident now, in my 50s (I wasn't so confident before) that it will end up meaning something different afterwards, when I consider it again. Hopefully it will end up meaning something more.

As for the title, *The Invisible Prison,* in many ways the prison (the largest and most important building in our town back then) was almost invisible most of the time, certainly to most of us children. And that idea that the most important things can go unseen, for being right out in the open, is very interesting to me. We think of childhood as a time of great freedom, and for many of us it is. But it's odd to think that such great freedom (in my case, lived almost within sight of a maximum security political prison) could itself be a partial, even an occluded view of the world.

PVA: In which sense would you say your poetry is Irish? Is there anything particularly "Irish" about your poetry? Would you consider yourself an Irish poet?

PB: It is an interesting question. I suppose I am an Irish poet, through no fault of my own. But, as a writer, I start on an even smaller stage. So, rather than thinking "I get up in the morning, I am an Irish poet and I have all of these responsibilities", I am thinking much more of the four walls around me, the locals, and the street outside. That's the scale. It's the microcosm that leads to the macrocosm and not the other way around. Otherwise, poetry is the wrong place to start. If I wanted to convince, or to change, or to have a real immediate effect in my culture, I don't think I would go to poetry. Poetry tends to take a long time to persuade its audience of its power, of its worth. If you come from a place where poetry is as visible as it is sometimes in Ireland, then you cannot avoid that sense of being part of a group of people who are working together, no matter that you are sitting alone somewhere and working on a very solitary craft. I suppose another way to escape the responsibility as a practitioner is to recognize that the definition of Irish poetry is always going to be short of the mark, because for a long period the term "Irish poetry" seemed to suggest a poetry of rural life, of pre-industrial simplicity, of a certain romantic interaction with nature. The urban experience featured almost not at all, and it was like nothing had happened since the beginning

of the 19th century. That leaves great space to maneuver. Then in the middle of the 20th century, the urban landscape started to appear more overtly, and that led to two Irish poetries: the urban and the rural.

PVA: Where would you locate your work then? As urban or rural? Portlaoise, the local town of your birth, features prominently in your work, particularly in your initial collection. Why is it so important for you to write about your local town?

PB: The truth is that for the majority of people living – then and possibly still – on the island, the environment they lived in was neither strictly rural nor urban. They lived in small towns like Portlaoise. Dublin has now a population of 1 and half million people, or close to it. The rest of the country is approximately 3 and a half or 4 million. Most of those are located in small towns, because we don't have a lot of large cities, as you know. That small town experience is distinctively different from the rural experience and the urban experience. In my first book *The Unwound Clock* (1990), I recall living on the main street of a one-horse town; the country people came into town (the farmers, mothers, wives, daughters of the farmers) to buy supplies, and we saw them as an alien species. We were not a step up, but a step away from that rootedness, although that was the world my father had come out of. Yet, if we had gone to Dublin, we would have been the "culchies"; we were the people of the earth to them. The people in the city, who were just one generation removed, saw themselves as being the more central and typical of a more progressive Ireland. So it seemed to me that there was a gap there, in retrospect. I did not see it at the time. The poems in *The Unwound Clock* were little observations; they were not even intended to be poems, really; they were just notes, sketches, doodles. In time they have become a record of that small town world that is pretty much gone now. If you go to Ireland at the moment you see many of these small towns closed down; they are ghost towns, and in one generation, they have just collapsed. The people who were in them have moved to the cities. So it was a passing momento, though I didn't know it at the time; that world is gone. I don't regret it has gone, or at least that is not the motivation behind the writing, to somehow wish myself back into the past where all will be well again. But it is good to have some record of it because it has things in common with other worlds that are coming down the road and that these people live in and that you live in. And, however different it at first appears, there are always things that can be learned from it, about the world, about the workings of the human heart and the human imagination. So, for me, poetry is about an immersion in the actual and then you have to leave it alone; let the wind blow over it and cover it in sand for someone else to come and clear it away if they are bothered to in the future. There is a cut-off point. The writer must enter the world of the subject but then remember to leave. That is the "alternative history"

idea, echoing the name of another early poem (Boran 2013, 49); that very often what is not recorded – except in the oral histories – is that intimacy.

The danger of what I do (I am very aware of it, and this is one of the reasons why I pull in the other direction often) is that if you keep going back to things, you can end up in a nostalgic quicksand. I am utterly not nostalgic. When I am back in the moment of making a poem or piece of writing I am absolutely feeling it, but when it's over, that's it. You can only take a strong dose over a short period. The point of going back is not to stay. The point is to understand something now that is still evolving, something that still has effects on and repercussions in the now. My creative freedom involves getting it all wrong sometimes, and involves going around the facts to get to the emotion. My job is to feel it, not just to get it right.

So, going back to one of your previous questions: it is important for me to trust in the impulse of autobiography, as it can often end up leading to something more than my initial family connections and concerns. It can often turn out to be a kind of time capsule that describes something that was there before and won't be there again: the disappearing Irish small town with the families living over their shops and the small schools at the end of the streets, etc. For me, that allows a certain amount of maneuvering. I do not worry too much about whether I am an Irish poet or not. Instead, I do try to read outside of the small world of Ireland, and steal from other approaches. Apart from that, I just do my best to commit to whatever I'm currently writing, whether I know what it's really about or (as is more usual) not!

PVA: One of the poems I like most is "The Island" (2017, 108); I am particularly drawn to how you revisit the notion of Ireland as an insular country, debunking essentialist notions of identity and nationalism…

PB: I am glad you mentioned this poem… The poem is dedicated to Bob Quinn, an Irish writer and filmmaker who wrote a very interesting book, *Atlantean*. It was first published in the late 1980s, and then updated in 2006. It is a controversial book in certain circles, not least academic circles, because not all of the author's sources and conclusions will satisfy everyone. But his argument is really interesting. In essence, Quinn claimed that one misunderstands Irish culture if one keeps looking at Ireland as an island. Ireland is part of an archipelago, the other islands of which are Spain, Portugal,France, the Nordic countries, as well as Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, etc. As a result, the history of Ireland is a sea-board history and all our meaningful cultural exchanges until recent times have all been by sea. Although this is obvious, we tend to forget this, bizarrely. In Ireland we tend to imagine that the myth of our Celtic forbears entirely explains who we are and our complex relationship with the world. We tend to forget all our sea-board connections, and that is what the book *Atlantean* is about. The North African influence,

as much as the Viking influence, is seen in the round towers, the spires, and all sorts of things.

The poem "The Island" is inspired by this reading and by a childhood memory. When we were kids, at the back of the house where we grew up, my parents built up a kitchen extension, and before the bricks were to come, the sand to make the cement arrived, and a small truck brought the sand and dumped it in our backyard. No builder showed up for an unspecified period of time, and myself and my younger brother – in a pre-Lego world – went out and played for days in this pile of sand. We made a map of Ireland out of it, and we put in it what we knew from school maps, rivers, mountain ranges, etc. After having built it, I didn't want to leave it, because I thought someone was going to drive right across it to deliver the bricks, so it became a thing that I was responsible for. As you can see, the main starting point is always autobiography, but then something extra happens as you move away from it. I sense it has an importance in itself, it has an aesthetic importance; and then these images grow and transform into something else.

PVA: In interviews, you have often talked about the importance of sound in poetry, and you have referred, for instance, to the dominant role that musicality plays in a modernist poem by Wallace Stevens, "The Emperor of the Ice Cream". In which way is your poetry shaped around sound, rhythm and music?

PB: For me, it is really important to connect what the poem says with the sound of it saying it. The sound is absolutely important. When the poet gets to a place where he or she is comfortable, language changes. The sound becomes a truth-telling machine: the word choice, the structure, the grammar, the nuance, the inflections…; everything changes. No matter how ambitious, or lacking in ambition an individual poem is, I want to feel that sense that it is telling as much as it can tell. It is as open as it can be.

A poem can also step beyond naturalism and still have a lot to say without being a game or irrelevant, so long as the sound holds the interest of the senses. If you listen to a poem and you get lost somewhat as the listener, it is not a criticism of you or of the poem: it may well be that the poem is making a transition between one known and another. And to bridge this kind of gap, the sound may well be the only tool the poet has to turn to. Imagine I am listening to my favourite piece of music; I often "zone out", or "spaceoff" or disappear somewhere for a while. I am not always present to the meaning of the lyrics, or the structure of the piece. And equally, something doesn't become my favourite piece of music in one sitting, in a single listen. It is often that I have heard it on the radio, for instance, or I have heard someone singing it in the street, or I was listening to it somewhere else along the way. Then one day I find myself singing it in the shower. But how did I learn it? In fact I never learned it. At least I never *set out* to learn it. But by a process

of osmosis, I suddenly seem to possess it for a period. I have absorbed parts of it in various places and times along the way, trusting, somehow that they will all come together in time, allowing the mystery, the opacity to persist, so long as the music (the sound, the melody, the rhythm) creates a sufficient sense of connection. I think poems –perhaps more than any other form – work like that; so if the listener, or the reader – and even the writer! – of the poem does not understand everything, that's ok.

PVA: In recent years, there seems to be an explosion of haikus in Irish poetry, what has led some critics to even talk about a "distinctively Irish" haiku tradition. Your anthology Waveforms: Bull Island Haiku *(2015), is remarkable in this respect. Why this attraction for the Japanese form? And in which way are your haikus different to traditional haikus?*

PB: If Wordsworth and Basho, the Haiku poet, go for a walk together, Wordsworth would start by saying "I wandered lonely as a cloud / that floats on high…" and then he will notice the daffodils. He starts invariably with the first person singular "I"; the poet is always at the centre of his poem. The western poet tends to say "Here I am; come with me, I am going to show you things…"; whereas the Haiku poet would go straight to the daffodils, to the frog, the pond or the moon. That's it. It's the art of editing in some way. This is why it attracted me; as a poet, I could nearly disappear from the poem; I could nearly get out of the way. This is similar to what happens when one takes photographs. It is a kind of an antidote to the big build-up, the big introduction. By stripping back like that there is a kind of ecological parallel in it. How much of all the things that I bring with me every day (i.e. this stanza form, these lines, the things that I like doing, my "darlings"), how much of this is actually necessary? What can I strip back? What I found was that I could strip back a lot. Very often, at least in English, I find haikus flat: they lack some colour, that moment of transition from visible to invisible or vice versa, from dark to light. I need this moment of transition. That's what I am interested in. I wanted to see what happened if I introduced rhyme for instance. The rhyme, which is not an intrinsic part of the tradition, allowed me to make a connection between east and west. I have never pretended to be a Japanese poet!

PVA: The haikus in this collection are juxtaposed with actual photographs you took of the biosphere reserve of Bull Island. Why were you so interested in this particular geographical location?

PB: Bull Island is a little island very near to where I live. As you know, this land mass came about by an accident when almost 200 years ago, a new harbour was built which changed the tides of Dublin bay. It was not there

before; it is not in the old maps. It is incredible that something as beautiful as this place (my favourite place in the city) came about by an accident, because somebody didn't consider the implications of building this wall out into the sea. And that's so poetic as well. When this accident happened, migrating birds started coming every year, and now there are whole colonies of birds which are unique. You also find plants growing there you find almost nowhere else in Ireland, because the birds bring in seeds in their droppings. It is a unique space. How could a poet walk past it?

When a very close friend of mine died, I started going there every day to clear my head; I was very upset. Some days when I went out, there was a mist hanging down, and at the beginning I didn't even notice the horizon. After going there every day, I started seeing things, and that's where the ecological concern in the poems started to take shape. Because my field of vision was simplified, it started to become more acute; I started to notice things more. It got me into a place I had never been, much closer to that idea of the "nature poet". I am a "society poet": I am always talking about people, and there are very few poems where I don't have exchanges or "stuff" going on. But Bull Island offered me a place "to be" as well. That was the attraction.

I was also attracted to the idea of bringing images down to 3 lines, 17 syllables and 2 rhymes. This whole set of obstacles forced me to take other things out of the way. Of course, lots of the haikus didn't work. Most of them didn't go into the anthology, but the ones which were included in the end had this kind of extra charge for me. It is like taking a photograph, with not a great camera, and in black and white. By reducing it, you make it stronger. And that's a principle that is always refreshing for any artist: to reduce. The Baroque period produced some incredible things, but it also produced some of the linear, ugly simplicities that followed it as a reaction against it. Somewhere between those two things. As artists we are always negotiating stuff like that.

PVA: You have been an active broadcaster, participating in numerous TV and radio programs on poetry. In your view, what are the characteristics and the place occupied by poetry in the era of the transmedia?

PB: It is interesting because when you make poems you are narrow casting; you are taking things out of the way, aiming to make something which is certainly smaller than a novel. So it is a process of clearing space more than accumulating things. Then, afterwards, the impulse is to let it out into the world. For me, that has always involved speaking to people, reading to people, going into schools. When I had the opportunity to broadcast on radio, that was ideal because the poems were tested. They might be written on paper, but they only work – at least for me – if I like the sound of them; if they sound right. I live with them for a long time even if I don't understand them. It is a bit like moving the parts around: I might never under-

stand what it is about, I may never publish it, but the original impulse is to make things sound good, and this is the attraction of radio. It allows poetry to be brought into people's lives without any great fuss or fanfare, and, usually, without warning them that this is Poetry, with a capital P, that they must react to it in some predetermined way, that they cannot respond to it as to any other form of communication or music, prepared to stick with the parts they don't entirely follow because there is enough there (in the sound) for them to trust, at least in the shorter term.

PVA: How do you think the internet has affected the literary world and in particular, the publishing industry? Do you think it has positive or rather detrimental effects?

PB: The Internet is a similar thing. There are a lot of people in publishing who thought the internet was the end and that all the bookshops were going to close down, because the Amazon Kindle and eBooks were going to kill real physical books. The truth is that the physical book and the digital book are the same. They are not enemies of each other at all. Certainly, the new generations are familiar with accessing texts through their phones. What kind of a perversion would it be to say that this is not as valid a way to encounter a poem as on a printed page? The reason why my latest *Pocket Selected Poems* (2017) is of that small size is because I tried to get close to the size of a mobile phone. I wanted to bridge the gap to an audience who might not be as comfortable as I am with a "traditional" poetry book. I have published bigger books but I know people can't carry them. Why not make them smaller?

The other thing that the internet allows is for the sound to travel with the text, which is fabulous. In 2011, I edited *The Bee-Loud Glade*, which has a CD of a rock band setting some of the poems to music; but even that is old technology now. Nobody wants the hassle of taking out the CD and putting it in a CD player. It has to be all downloadable; it has to be immediate. That's great. I don't fear it at all. The only place that becomes difficult is when it comes to figuring out how to reward the people who make the work. That is the only question. But there will be solutions to it. So I don't see the Internet as a threat. What I love about it is that I think it has provoked a new interest in the sound, in the performative, communicative qualities of the poetry. In Dublin, for instance, there is now a whole new generation of performance poets who read, with or without musicians, at gigs. Some of them are fantastic; some others are really good in print. Their inspirations are various but they are all interested in the bigger subject of poetry, whatever medium it piggybacks on to travel through the world.

So, going back to your question, these two worlds – the Internet and poetry – are not in opposition to each other. When we go to the ecology of

publishing and all of that, why make lots of books and then have the problem of how to distribute them? When this thing is already there and is a way of communicating to groups which may not be physically joined with each other? The Internet also allows the reader to establish all sorts of literary connections. When the work of, let's say, an Irish poet turns up on the net and possibly when it is in translation, does the reader always know the culture which is producing this poem? Is it always on the surface? Is it always immediate? Not really, you know. It can certainly add a new colour; it can bring new depths. But in some ways the poem has a chance of being read outside of the immediate culture that spawned it. And, whatever else that does, it can sometimes allow the writer (and the reader) to see new things in the poem, to encounter it without the "frame" of cultural expectation.

Of course the big difficulty as a publisher is getting things *seen* online, but that is just a problem, and problems are what keep you young, in the sense that it keeps you thinking. You should never avoid problems. It is a very difficult time to be a publisher, a poet publisher, because it is changing every minute, but that's why I am a poet-publisher. I wouldn't do it if it were easy, because if it were easy it would be boring.

PVA: In a 2011 interview (Dempsey 2011), you claimed on the good state of affairs of Irish poetry at a difficult moment of economic recession and political corruption. In which way can poetry (or the arts) illuminate political life? Do poets have the credibility which politicians at time seem to be missing?

PB: It's not so much that I agree with Shelley's assertion that "poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world" – in fact it seems to me that there's a real danger in imagining that a group as diverse and uncoordinated as a group of poets (an infestation of poets, perhaps!) should be capable of providing any kind of coherent direction to a society, at least in group form. Rather I think at least some part of the authority of poetry comes from the lack of rewards due to those who make it. The world of poetry may be as ego-infested as any other area of human activity (perhaps more so), but that lack of rewards at least drives away those who are focused on material gains and the usual benefits of power. As a foil to the self-importance of many of the political class, as a reminder of the fundamental importance of imagination, expression, communication, as a caution against the excesses and distortions of so much of public speech, I think poetry has a real role in speaking to power and acting as a check against political ambition. It's no coincidence that Plato's *Republic* saw no place for poets, which is, in its own way, an acknowledgement of its potential to speak a more profound kind of truth that we encounter in most political dialogue.

PVA: How can you combine writing poetry with such an incessant activity as broadcaster, editor and publisher?

PB: I'm inclined to think that editing and publishing, and the other various activities I've been involved in over the years (festival programmer, interviewer, workshop coordinator) all in some way feed the same conscience and experience as writes the poems. Of course, as one grows older, and as one has children, there is never enough free time and it's a temptation to think that all of these "external" activities are getting in the way of the more creative work. But the truth is that in sweeping the floor, or washing the dishes or in whatever other way putting bread on the table, some of the niggling concerns and technical problems of making a poem tend to unravel and solve themselves. Sometimes it is useful, even necessary, to be doing something else in order to give the poem time enough to work itself out. A poet simply cannot be writing poems all day (and, I would argue, should not). Poems have to make their way in the world and, in one way or another, reflect aspects of that world. The hermetic life will produce only hermetic poems and that frankly doesn't interest me. And it's also the case that every time someone who does other things in the world commits to the making of a poem, there's a real potential for expanding, if only slightly, the range of poetry itself, of taking it out of the drawing rooms and libraries and performance spaces where it enjoys a small but appreciate audience and exposing it to other energies and opportunities. For my part, I've mostly made my living in recent decades by working in poetry-related areas such as publishing and broadcasting, and, of course, that's not for everybody. But it has suited me fine, up to now at least. I have that sort of personality; when I'm involved in something I want to immerse myself in it. So having to edit someone else's book when I've spent the day working on my own has not, up to now, been a problem. But, as I say, things change as one grows older. And certainly if I continue to spend time on longer forms of writing (short or long fiction, for instance) I think I'll have to get more selfish with my time or to at least spend what energy I have for writing more exclusively on my own.

PVA: As editor, you have carefully considered, over the years, the work of Irish women poets, granting space to already consolidated voices, such as Paula Meehan, and other innovative, young voices such as Catherine Ann Cullen, Enda Coyle-Greene or Katherine Duffy. Would you say there is something distinctive in Irish women's poetry? In which way does poetry by women in Ireland differ from poetry by male writers?

PB: This is a big question and one I'm not sure I'm really qualified to answer. But if I had to come up with some kind of answer, I might say that, even looked at from a purely autobiographical perspective, the lack of rep-

resentation of women's poetry in 20th century Irish publishing represents a closing of one eye when it comes to a representation of the evolving independent Irish state and a vision for its future. Simplistic as that response clearly is, even so it is a damning indictment of how state support for the arts, and much else besides, has been misused, of how the experiences of one half of the population were demoted or dismissed as less important than that of the other. But these were not, we have to remember, "market forces" at work. Since I became a publisher, some 12 years ago, and before that as a literary festival programmer, and before that again as a creative writing workshop coordinator, the vast majority of those new writers I came into contact with were women: often women who had raised their families and now wanted to return to the early passion of writing; women who were inspired by a "new wave" of female poets then publishing and being anthologized in the UK, etc. It was never something I questioned. I held two residencies in libraries in the late '80s/early '90s (one in Dublin in the south, one in Fermanagh in the north) and I saw, as did everybody, that most of the library staff, most of their readers' groups and their writers' groups, very many if not most of their borrowers, were women. When I edited small literary magazines from time to time or attended "open mic" poetry sessions, there was no shortage of submissions from women. And when, in due course, I took over the running of the Dedalus Press, it certainly didn't strike me as odd to find I was receiving large numbers of submissions from women poets. In fact the only thing that did surprise me was how under-represented those poets were on the lists of many Irish poetry publishers at the time (with the glowing exception of Jessie Lendennie's Salmon Publishing, long since a champion of women poets in Ireland).

When it comes to writing about things outside of one's immediate experience, I think many writers will ask themselves something like, "Do I have the right to explore this particular topic?" (For instance, poets from the south certainly encountered a similar inner voice when it came to writing about The Troubles in the north, for instance). To imagine that any all-male group of writers (however talented) might represent more than a part of the experiences of our population seems absurd now, and yet, apparently that is what many publishers and their funders believed. At Dedalus, when deciding whether or not to publish a particular manuscript, the truth is I don't have to make any particular effort to reach a rough gender balance: once might say that the gods in their wisdom provide that balance for me. There is no shortage of very fine women writers, younger as well as "mid-career". So it is not so much that Dedalus is a particularly enlightened publisher as that some other publishers might be accused of living in the Stone Age.

PVA: You have previously recognized the influence of the Eastern European poet Miroslav Holub in your work, and this is indeed observed in the scientific ob-

jectivity of your poetry, and your ability to adopt a detached perspective from the lyrical voice. Which other writers have influenced you and why? Are you influenced in any way by your literary predecessors in Ireland? (One moving poem included in your latest collection, The Next Life*, "The Princess of Sorrows" (115-116) is written in memoriam of Michael Hartnett, whom you describe as a " 'homeless poet' in every language known" and you have recently written a beautiful tribute in the* Irish Times *in honour of the poet Philip Casey, who has recently died…)*

PB: One of the big attractions of the work of poets like Miroslav Holub and the Romanian Marin Sorescu, among others, was their ability to approach their subject matter at an angle rather than "head-on". Under Romania's Ceaușescu regime, for instance, poets were risking their lives if they addressed issues directly, so instead they had to trust in metaphor, analogy, the power of the reflecting image to make their poems. Under oppressive governments, this kind of indirect saying is one of the only ways poetry can survive (certainly in a public sphere). And there are many more such regimes today where poets have to be very careful of what they say and how they say it. And though my own work is made in a much more tolerant society, and my ambitions move therefore in very different directions, I think there is a great deal to be learned from this poetry that is born under pressure, that learns, from necessity, the art of compression, clarity, suggestion and inference. It is never enough for a poem or poet to have "good intentions": in the worst part of Ireland's economic downturn there seemed a good deal of pressure on especially the young generation of poets to perform as "national poets", to voice the national disquiet and frustration that so many felt. However, from what I saw, few of the poems that came out of this laudable effort had any power or relevance beyond the moment that prompted them into being. It was as if, injured and angry, the poems were mere paraphrases of that anger, that sense of injury. It was as if the poets had never read the Eastern European poets, the Turkish poets, the Russian poets who each in their turn had to find a way to concentrate their feelings, to hone their skills, to trust their language and their images. For me, the most interesting Irish poets of recent decades have almost all read and borrowed from other approaches to and "schools" of poetry, refreshing the national pool, as it were, expanding the range and techniques of Irish verse.

Michael Hartnett is a great example in point, steeped in Lorca, dazzled by the Tao Te Ching, wrestling with the two languages of his childhood (English and Irish), and making out of all this clamour of riches something distinct and new but, at the same time, as firmly rooted in the Irish experience as anything that had come before him. Philip Casey, similarly, was distinctly Irish because, paradoxically, he looked outward rather than inward at the Irish experience, borrowing from his time in Spain, his connections in Germany, his rich and varied reading that had him spend years, imaginatively, on famine boats and slave plantations for a work that may never now see the light of day. The poets

I admire are perhaps those who trust in the longer term view, who invest in the process of making poems but are in no desperate hurry for acknowledgement or reward, knowing that the journey is its own reward.

Writings

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The Echo of an Echo: Translating Hopkins ... Cautiously

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The Leaden Echo and The Golden Echo was to be part of a projected drama on St. Winifred, which Hopkins began in 1879 but never completed. The two companion poems were designed as a choral song for two groups of girls to mark and celebrate the difference between mortal and spiritual beauty. Hopkins mentions the poem, still a work in progress, already in a letter to Bridges in 1880: "You shall also see *The Leaden Echo* when finished […] it is dramatic and meant to be popular" (Hopkins [1935] 1955, 106). A month later, still in a letter to Bridges dated 5th September 1880: he could announce that he had completed the poem and was quite pleased with it. The manuscript bears the date 13 October 1882. Only a month later, however, in November, his optimism had faded away and doubts as to the quality of the poem were coming to the surface, particularly as regards the first line of the first of the two companion poems, which was re-written as we read it today.

Like so many of his poems, *The Leaden Echo and The Golden Echo* is concerned with beauty and its significance in human life. Here material beauty, which is connected with time and, as a consequence, is corruptible, is compared with spiritual beauty, which is not tied to time, comes directly from God and never decays. The theme itself is obvious, almost banal. What makes it relevant is the way it is conveyed through a musical pattern, which involves both the structure of the poem and its linguistic complexity. What I have defined as two companion poems may be also considered as two sections of the same poem, like two faces of a medal or a coin: one cannot exist without the other. The difference between material beauty and spiritual beauty, then, is made clear by the very distribution of rhythm and sounds in the poem: strained, restless, conveying a sense of urgency when mortal beauty is shown to be bound to decay; unhurried, gentler when the subject is spiritual beauty; falling down towards despair in the first part, soaring high towards heavenly fulfilment in the second.

Because of the complexity of its sound and rhythmic patterns, this poem is certainly challenging for a translator. As is well known, Hopkins was an expert in prosody and metrics, particularly Latin and Greek, which he even

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taught at Stonyhurst College when in Wales and University College, Dublin, Ireland, from 1884 until his death in 1889, but he had applied himself also to the study of Welsh and its literature, so he had a pretty good knowledge of its complicated prosody, not to mention the influence Anglo-Saxon poetry had on his own. Besides, Hopkins himself declared that "Poetry is speech framed for contemplation of the mind by the way of hearing or speech framed to be heard for its own sake and interest even over and above its interest of meaning" (1959, 289a). This just seems to be the case with the *Echo* poems: Hopkins is certainly interested in comparing two different kinds of beauty, but he wants this idea to be conveyed through the music of verse and the fine balance between the two sections, a line and the lines surrounding it and even between individual words – their sounds, their meanings – within the same line, well aware that "there [must] be a relation between the parts of the thing to each other and again of the parts to the whole" (*ibidem*, 98). *The Leaden Echo and The Golden Echo* emphasizes Hopkins's dialogic technique, which – as evidenced by Donatella Badin in a 1992 essay[1] – characterizes as many as thirty of the forty-nine poems in the canon. In this particular poem, Hopkins was confronted with the need to reproduce the sound effects of an echo while holding fast to the moral-spiritual message he wanted to impart upon his readers, or rather listeners, as a good deal of its emotional effects would be lost in a written text.

Who is speaking in the poem, to whom? If you shout, say, in a valley with an echo, your voice comes back with exactly the same sound and intonation, yet in most cases you do not recognize your voice as your own: it is as if somebody else were calling you from the other side of the valley and you were trying to decode his/her message. If you read the poem from this perspective, the message seems to come from a voice from above, a ghost, an angel, perhaps God himself; or it might be the voice of your conscience warning you of the danger to value mortal beauty too much and reminding of the bliss that spiritual beauty, immortal beauty, can guarantee. But the dialogue may also occur between the two sections of the poem, that is between the leaden echo and the golden echo, despair and hope, producing the effect not just of two different points of view, but of two contrasting personalities. The frequent repetition of phrases, words, sound clusters and individual consonant and vowel sounds reproduces the effects of an echo, which conveys different states of mind depending on who is speaking, his mood and the development of that mood; for example, in the first section the sense of bewilderment of the speaker before a distressing question in the first couple of lines becomes anguish and despair in the final line of the section:

[1] Badin 1992, 55-72: "[…] moreover, his poems also present to an eminent degree an 'internal dialogicality' ".

1. How to kéep—is there ány any, is there none such, nowhere
known some, bow or brooch or braid or brace, láce,
latch or catch or key to keep
2. Back beauty, keep it, beauty, beauty, beauty, … from vanishing away?

As can be seen from the example, there is practically no word or sound which has not its mirror effect. The speaking voice seems to be breathing fast, driven by the internal urgency to receive a quick response to the painful question of whether it be possible to keep beauty as it is today for ever. But when the same voice comes to the final four lines, the problem posed at the beginning has not received a satisfactory answer and despair has taken the place of expectation:

13. So be beginning, be beginning to despair.
14. O there's none; no no no there's none:
15. Be beginning to despair, to despair,
16. Despair, despair, despair, despair.

Nothing but despair is left, and the repetition practically of all the sounds in the four lines indicates that the kathabasis of the quest has reached its lowest point.

The same device, in the second section, acquires quite a different meaning, firstly it is made to sound as an encouragement to leave all worldly cares for something which is due to decay and disappearance:

15. Winning ways, airs innocent, maiden manners, sweet looks,
loose locks, long locks, lovelocks, gaygear, going gallant, girlgrace—
16. Resign them, sign them, seal them, send them, motion them with breath,
17. And with sighs soaring, soaring síghs deliver
18. Them

then in the wake of an ever growing enthusiasm for God's gifts, it points the way towards higher, safer and lovelier goals:

27. When the thing we freely fórfeit is kept with fonder a care,
28. Fonder a care kept than we could have kept it, kept
29. Far with fonder a care (and we, we should have lost it) finer, fonder
30. A care kept.
31. Yonder.—What high as that! We follow, now we follow.—
Yonder, yes yonder, yonder,
32. Yonder.

Practically every device in the poem, besides evoking some feeling or reinforcing some idea, seems to have been introduced as if the piece had

been devised as a musical composition: from repetition of single words and phrases to incremental repetition (*whatever's prized and passes of us, everything that's / fresh and fast flying of us, seems to us sweet of us; sweet looks, / loose locks, long locks, lovelocks* with the additional effects of alliteration) to hyperbaton *(sighs soaring, soaring sighs; kept with fonder a care, / Fonder a care kept);* from enjambement *(to keep / Back beauty*, conveying the desperate feeling of some value which cannot be kept, whatever the efforts, or *Ó is there no frowning of these wrinkles, rankéd wrinkles deep, /Dówn?* where the sense of a fall, implicit in the adverb "down" is further reinforced by its position at the beginning of the line); to the interruption of a sentence to insert another, suggesting a sudden thought or afterthought: *Nor can you long be, what you now are, called fair*; *every hair / Is, hair of the head, numbered*; *kept / Far with fonder a care (and we, we should have lost it) finer, fonder / A care kept*.

In *The Leaden Echo and The Golden Echo*, he was particularly interested in creating an emotional effect comparable to the wonder produced by a sound reflected and repeated by someone or something invisible, but apparently perceptive and ready to reply. An echo could be such a device and in fact all the poem resounds of echo effects. In fact, what Hopkins was doing in this poem was not a mere reproduction of echo effects. Scientifically, an echo does not simply reproduce a sequence of sounds exactly as they are pronounced: unstressed syllables, for example, are likely to disappear or be distorted; also, the quality of the sound itself has its effects on its echoic reproduction according to its pitch, timbre and duration. Echo, then, is rather a metaphor of the inner conflict of a troubled mind, which keeps repeating the same words or phrases over and over again under the pressure of some unsolved psychological or moral conflict[2]. For example, an echo would not reproduce the first syllable of "beginning" (line 13 and 16, *The Leaden Echo*), which is unstressed, but rather the last two syllables, which justifies "principia-ncìpia" in my translation.

[2] I wish to thank Francesca Romana Paci for our conversations on Hopkins and translation, which encouraged me to go back to this translation which I had begun years ago and left unfinished.

Hopkins relies on the musical quality of language to express the whole variety of his feelings and ideas concerning his response to nature, life, religion practically in all of his poems, but here his purpose is, explicitly, to produce not just a poem, but a musical piece, "a song for [his] play" to be performed by two choirs. "I must invent a notation […] as in music", he wrote to Bridges in a letter dated October 13 1882). He "marked the stronger stresses", but "the degree of stress perpetually varying" made him aware that no marking could be satisfactory, so he thought that maybe it could be better to leave it to the reader.[3] This explains why Hopkins did not use his usual amount of stress marks and metrical marks as in many poems of his artistic maturity. Only a few have been preserved and appear in the original text. In my translation I have decided not to use them, except in the first line of *The Leaden Echo*, as the two languages are completely different as regards the average number of syllables which make up the Italian language, compared with the monosyllabic, iambic rhythm of English.

In general, I have tried to preserve the musical quality of the two poems by keeping as many as possible of their stylistic, rhetorical and euphonious features, particularly alliteration, hyperbaton and enjambement. Also, I have tried to preserve the word order and the number of lines as much as possible. There are things I am not pleased with, but I will not reveal them: I am sure you will be able to discover them, and more than I could point out myself.

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[3] In the autograph dated Stonyhurst, October 13, 1882.

The Leaden Echo and the Golden Echo

Gerard Manley Hopkins

"The Leaden Echo"

1. How to kéep – is there ány any, is there none such, nowhere
   known some, bow or brooch or braid or brace, láce,
   latch or catch or key to keep
2. Back beauty, keep it, beauty, beauty, beauty, ... from vanishing away?
3. Ó is there no frowning of these wrinkles, rankèd wrinkles deep,
4. Dówn? no waving off of these most mournful messengers,
   still messengers, sad and stealing messengers of grey?
5. No there's none, there's none, O no there's none,
6. Nor can you long be, what you now are, called fair,
7. Do what you may do, what, do what you may,
8. And wisdom is early to despair:
9. Be beginning; since, no, nothing can be done
10. To keep at bay
11. Age and age's evils, hoar hair,
12. Ruck and wrinkle, drooping, dying, death's worst, winding
    sheets, tombs and worms and tumbling to decay;
13. So be beginning, be beginning to despair.
14. O there's none; no no no there's none:
15. Be beginning to despair, to despair,
16. Despair, despair, despair, despair.

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L'eco di piombo e l'eco d'oro

Gerard Manley Hopkins

"L'eco di piombo"

1. Come tenere – c'è quàlche qualche, non c'è cosa che, in nessun dove
   si sappia, o fiocco o spilla, o treccia o intreccio, laccio o
   chiavaccio, chiave o serrame, per trattenere
2. Qui la bellezza, trattenere bellezza la bella bellezza … dallo svanire?
3. Ah e queste rughe profonde rughe là tutte in schiera, non c'è chi
4. Spiani? questi dolenti messaggeri che spazzi via,
   silenti tristi furtivi messaggeri di grigio colore?
5. No che non c'è, non c'è, no che non c'è,
6. Né mai potrai, qual ora sei, essere a lungo chiamata bella,
7. Per quanto faccia, tu, faccia quanto puoi fare,
8. Ed è saggezza per tempo disperare
9. Principia adesso, ché no, nulla puoi fare
10. per tenere a bada
11. Vecchiezza e mali di vecchiezza, capo canuto
12. Grinze e rughe, decadenza, morte, e il peggio della morte
    sudari avvolti e tombe e vermi, verso veloce dissoluzione;
13. Perciò princpia-ncìpia adesso principia-ncìpia adesso a disperare.
14. Ah che non c'è, no no non c'è:
15. Principia-ncìpia adesso a disperare, a disperare,
16. Disperare, disperare, disperare disperare.

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"The Golden Echo"

1. Spare!
2. There ís one, yes I have one (Hush there!);
3. Only not within seeing of the sun,
4. Not within the singeing of the strong sun,
5. Tall sun's tingeing, or treacherous the tainting of the earth's air,
6. Somewhere elsewhere there is ah well where! one,
7. One. Yes I cán tell such a key, I dó know such a place,
8. Where whatever's prizèd and passes of us, everything that 's
   fresh and fast flying of us, seems to us sweet of us and
   swiftly away with, done away with, undone,
9. Undone, done with, soon done with, and yet dearly and dangerously sweet
10. Of us, the wimpled-water-dimpled, not-by-morning-matchèd face,
11. The flower of beauty, fleece of beauty, too too apt to, ah! to fleet,
12. Never fleets móre, fastened with the tenderest truth
13. To its own best being and its loveliness of youth: it is an ever
    lastingness of, O it is an all youth!
14. Come then, your ways and airs and looks, locks, maiden gear,
    gallantry and gaiety and grace,
15. Winning ways, airs innocent, maiden manners, sweet looks,
    loose locks, long locks, lovelocks, gaygear, going gallant, girlgrace –
16. Resign them, sign them, seal them, send them, motion them with breath,
17. And with sighs soaring, soaring síghs deliver
18. Them; beauty-in-the-ghost, deliver it, early now, long before death
19. Give beauty back, beauty, beauty, beauty, back to God,
    beauty's self and beauty's giver.
20. See; not a hair is, not an eyelash, not the least lash lost;
    every hair
21. Is, hair of the head, numbered.
22. Nay, what we had lighthanded left in surly the mere mould
23. Will have waked and have waxed and have walked with
    the wind what while we slept,
24. This side, that side hurling a heavyheaded hundredfold
25. What while we, while we slumbered.
26. O then, weary then whý should we tread? O why are we so
    haggard at the heart, so care-coiled, care-killed, so fagged,
    so fashed,* so cogged **, so cumbered,
27. When the thing we freely fórfeit is kept with fonder a care,
28. Fonder a care kept than we could have kept it, kept
29. Far with fonder a care (and we, we should have lost it)
    finer, fonder
30. A care kept. – Where kept? Do but tell us where kept, where. –
31. Yonder. – What high as that! We follow, now we follow. – Yonder, yes
    yonder, yonder,
32. Yonder.

* troubled (from Scots)
** loaded

"L'eco d'oro"

1. Sperare!
2. Una c'è, sì, una ce l'ho (su, su, coraggio!);
3. Però non del sole entro lo sguardo
4. Né nei bruciori del sole ardente,
5. O nelle tinte dell'alto sole, nell'aria infida, contaminante, di questa terra,
6. In qualche dove in un altrove c'è ah sì dove, una c'è,
7. Una. Sì, che ho la chiave, conosco un posto,
8. Dove ogni cosa che valutiamo, e ci abbandona, e quanto
   è fresco e in fretta fugge, che dolce pare e rapido
   svanisce, finisce ed è disfatto,
9. Disfatto, sfatto, subito sfatto, eppure tanto a noi
10. Rischiosamente dolce, il volto, screziato velo d'acqua, ineguagliato dal mattino
11. Fior di bellezza, di bellezza vello, troppo ah troppo atto a fuggire,
12. Non fugge più, avvinto, con tenerissima veracità,
13. Al suo miglior se stesso, alla sua grazia di gioventù: che dura eterna
    Oh una perfetta gioventù!
14. E dunque – su! – dei vezzi vostri, e arie e sguardi, di boccoli, e monili di fanciulla,
    dei gesti civettuoli, della grazia e gaiezza,
15. Dei modi accattivanti, delle vostre arie innocenti, di gesti di fanciulle, dolci sguardi,
    riccioli sciolti, lunghi, riccid'amore, fronzoli gioiosi, passo galante, grazia di fanciulle –
16. Fate rinuncia, mettete segno e sigillo, fateli partire, col vostro fiato fateli volare,
17. E con sospiri alti, altisospiri, dateli in consegna
18. Alla bellezza spirituale, subito adesso, ben prima della morte
19. Restituite quella bellezza, bellezza, bellezza a Dio,
    che è Lui bellezza, che dà bellezza.
20. Vedete; non un capello, e non un ciglio, neppure l'ombra di un solo ciglio
    è stato perso, ogni capello
21. È, capello del vostro capo, stato contato.
22. Anzi, ciò che a man leggera lasciammo in mera ottusa terra
23. Si desterà, sarà cresciuto e con il vento avrà ondeggiato,
    ecco, durante il sonno,
24. Qua e là scuotendo un greve centuplicato capo
25. Mentre noi sì, mentre noi dormivamo.
26. Oh perché allora, allora stanchi dovremmo camminare? Ah perché tanto
    torpidi di cuore, tanto avvinti da cure, da cure uccisi, così spossati
    turbati, oppressi, così impacciati
27. Quando ciò che noi stessi abbiam lasciato con tenera cura è custodito,
28. Con cura più tenera che da noi custodito, custodito
29. Con molta più tenera cura (e noi, noi perso lo avremmo) custodito con più
    intensa, più
30. Tenera cura – Dove custodito? Ditecelo dunque dove custodito, dove –
31. Lassù – Come, così in alto! Noi seguiamo, ora noi seguiamo
    Lassù, sì lassù, lassù,
32. Lassù.

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An Experiment in Life Writing: Evelyn Conlon's "Imagine them …"

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Irish novelist and short story writer Evelyn Conlon was born in Co. Monaghan and lives in Dublin. Conlon has been a writer in residence at University College Dublin and in colleges around the world. She has a deep interest in Australia, where she lived from 1972 to 1975. She is an elected member of Aosdána, the Irish artists' association which honours distinguished work.

Conlon has published three collections of short stories, *My Head is Opening* (1987), *Taking Scarlet as a Real Colour* (1993) and *Telling: New and Selected Short Stories* (2000), and four novels. Her short stories have been widely anthologized and translated. Conlon's novels deal with social and political dilemmas. *Stars in the Daytime* (1989) and *A Glassful of Letters* (1998) relate the lives, loves and hates of women and girls of the Irish diaspora. *Skin of Dreams* (2003) deals with the story of Harry Gleeson, sentenced to death for the murder of a woman, a crime he did not commit. Gleeson recently received a posthumous pardon. Conlon's most recent novel *Not the Same Sky* (2013) focuses on Irish Famine orphans in the 1840s and earned her the title of Australia's newest Irish novelist. Conlon is currently working on a new collection of short stories. Her work is adept with humour and originality and she is brilliant at deploying rhetoric of inquiry, irony and wit.

The short story presents the narrative voice of a historical figure, Mary Lee, an Irish woman born in Monaghan in 1821 who married George Lee in 1844. One of her sons, Ben, was living in Adelaide at that time George died, and as he was ill, she decided to emigrate to Australia with her daughter Evelyn. Conlon's story narrates how Mary's son died a year later and, from this point on she decided to use her time tackling women's issues, first as an active member of the Social Purity Society committee, which advocated changes to the law relating to the social and legal status of young women, for example, demanding an end to child labour. The story evolves and hints that the group also succeeded in raising the age of consent from 13 to 16. At

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the end of the story, Mary Lee is presented as a suffragette, the co-honorary secretary of the South Australian Women's Suffrage League, who fought non-stop for the women's vote from 1888 to December 1894, when the Australian colony granted this right[1].

Yet Conlon's "Imagine them …" does not just offer the reader the opportunity to enjoy her always witty and thoughtful fictionalisation of historical women figures like Mary Lee and her life experiences, but also those of many other suffragettes who fought to elevate women. "Imagine them …" also exhibits Conlon's fascination with recording these women's stories through unique formal experimentation in intertextuality and life-writing[2].

Regarding the interrelationship between Conlon's texts, "Imagine them …" recalls, for example, the life experiences of some of the female characters who inhabit her most recent novel, *Not the Same Sky*, a book which draws on her Australian experience and narrates the moving story of some of the over 4,000 Irish girls aged 14 to 20, victims of the Famine, who were shipped to Sydney to work as domestic servants. These are stories of emigration as a displacement marked by pain that must be forgotten. Like Mary, who hoped that "she could depart the livid sorrow too, leave it behind as if it was an animate thing" and that "Maybe the sea would swallow up the ghostly pain that was wracking her small enough frame" (Conlon 2019, 593), Honora, one of these orphan girls, "had to try to cure herself of the journey. She didn't want to remember any of it, particularly the leaving – the part before the journey started […] The first part of forgetting was to think of this new place as home" (Conlon 2013, 140-141). As Conlon acknowledges in an interview I conducted with her, these women had little choice[3] but to depart to Australia and, when they "got to a certain point, where they could organize their lives in some way, they had to leave their pasts absolutely behind, because there was no possibility of them ever being able to recollect at ease" (Terrazas 2017, 213). Again, like Mary, who "had never seen a boat before" (2), the orphans of *Not the Same Sky* landed in Port Adelaide, coped and survived, though

[1] In 1994, many events were co-ordinated by the Women's Suffrage Centenary Steering Committee to celebrate the centenary of women's suffrage in South Australia. A bust of Mary Lee made by sculptor Patricia Moseley was chosen to be erected on North Terrace in Adelaide, to coincide with the centenary of the passing of the Constitution Amendment Act. The bronze bust of Mary Lee was unveiled in December that year in North Terrace. A plaque beneath the bust quotes Mary Lee: "My aim is to leave the world better for women than I found it".

[2] For more on experimentation in life-writing, see Boldrini and Novak (2017). For further discussion of Conlon's life-writing, see her reflection on gender issues in her work in Terrazas (2018, 141-145).

[3] These Famine orphan girls had only "SOME choice" (Conlon 2013, 118) to go to Australia. For further discussion of this crucial passage in the book, see Terrazas (2017a; 2017b).

not always admirably. Had they stayed in Ireland, they would probably have died or lived in the worst of conditions. All these intertextual references to Conlon's novel *Not the Same Sky* not only reveal Mary's stance and life experiences, but also many recurrent topics in Conlon's fiction. However, most interestingly, several details of "Imagine them …" are linked to Conlon's past experiences in Australia and her view of women in Ireland. Following Julia Novak's understanding of " 'life-writing,' as a loose umbrella term, [which] explicitly encompasses auto/biographical fiction" (Novak 2017, 2), this very brief introduction to Conlon's previously unpublished "Imagine them …" will show that it is an example of what the chapter by Novak alone (2017, 25) defines, in her volume on experiments in life-writing with Boldrini, as an ever-evolving experimenting with, reflecting on, and intertwining of "auto", "bio", "fiction", and "graphy".

With regard to Conlon's experiment in life-writing, like Mary, she was born in Monaghan. Just as Mary finds her husband's recent death to be the best reason to tend her ill son and, to her neighbours' amazement, start a new life (Conlon 2019, 594), Conlon decided to go to Australia because this place had always been in her imagination, a pastime referenced by the title of the short story which is the object of analysis here. "Imagine them …" shows how Mary "put the folded papers", that is, her marriage certificate and her husband's death certificate, "in an envelope and packed them in the midst of her clothes", while her daughter Evelyn – the real name of Mary Lee's daughter and Conlon's own first name – tells her mother, "Maybe you should put them in your bag" (593) to which, Mary answers: "They'll be alright here in the trunk, one less thing to have in mind, until we get there" (*ibidem*). Like Mary, who decided to start again in Australia, though things were not easy for a woman like her at the time, Conlon also went to Sydney by ship, and did all sort of jobs as she travelled around the country[4].

Mary settled in Australia, where the words "terra firma" meant "something only to those who know different" (594)[5], and managed to break all the moulds to elevate women. Conlon developed similar interests in tackling women's issues in her work.

Life was not smooth for Mary in Australia but, as "Imagine them …" shows, in an empowering exercise of women's self-assertion through repetition of the same sentence at two tragic moments in Mary's life, "Not one to like the idea of lying down with the horrors of grief, the thought had come to

[4] For more on Conlon's life experiences in Australia, see Pelan (1995).

[5] The significance of terra firma and its association with Australia is very relevant here, since "the words" refers to terra firma, i.e. their legs were shaky after their voyage and they appreciated the meaning of these words because they had been deprived of solid ground.

her very soon after George, her husband, had died" (*ibidem*) and then, "Not one to like the idea of lying down with the horrors of this new grief [her son Ben's death], Mary turned her head to public things" (595). Both Mary and Conlon "needed to move and do" (*ibidem*), and that same response to turmoil affected very positively the former's suffragette vision of the world and activism as well as Conlon's drive to write about women in Ireland and to become involved in the Irish "sexual revolution" through Irishwomen United, a radical activist group with a charter of demands.

Conlon's "Imagine them…" is a very intimate exercise in experimentation with formal and aesthetic possibilities of rendering female subjects' lives in new ways. Her short story is intended to both pay tribute to all the South Australian suffragettes like Mary Lee, who came from very different backgrounds, with unique personal and social circumstances, and needs, and to make the reader imagine how these suffragettes mobilised a huge petition which culminated in the Adult Suffrage Bill (1894), a very important historical moment referred to by the narrator in very evocative terms: "The petition grew in length, the pages began to stack up. Not one signature looked like another. Mary wrote pamphlets as well as letters […] Unlike others, she could sign her own name, no fears. There had to be some advantages to being a widow she thought" (596).

Conlon's recreation of biographies of Mary Lee and her daughter Evelyn in "Imagine them …" breathes life into a singular idea: the relevance of women's drive and dialogue in order to accomplish feminist revolutions that may provide wide-reaching and radical change in their situations, lifestyles, beliefs, and attitudes and, thus, improve their social circumstances and prospects. "Imagine them…" is Conlon's experimental and creative example of how women of any era can stay true to themselves. As a writer she has an informed view of this, having been involved with Irishwomen United, which published the feminist magazine *Banshee*. Many of their goals have since been achieved, including the removal of legatl and bureaucratic obstacles to equality, the legalization of contraception and divorce in the 1990s, and abortion in 2018.

In an interview conducted by Rebecca Pelan (1995), Conlon rejects the suggestion that she has been described "as the new Edna O'Brien", yet she acknowledges that she and O'Brien have something in common as writers: that they certainly did change or challenge what was being written at the time by Irish women (62). The short story "Imagine them …" is an excellent example of this, because it is not only a unique story, highly evocative, and a brilliant example of experimentation in life-writing, but also a tribute to the Irish-Australian suffragettes, to their letters, to their birth and marriage certificates, to their photographs, and to their life experiences. All these "folded […] documents" (Conlon 2019, 593) which are now kept either in public archives or private homes for us to open up, examine in detail, and

research, demand of us that we stay true to them and their aims, to take a pause in the frantic world we live in now and put aside the "more immediate concerns that have to be bedded", as Conlon puts it (*ibidem*). "Imagine them …" is not a short story to read quickly, but one to digest and consider all the events fictionalised therein, because they have left a huge mark on our present. Perhaps such an engaged reading would enable us to imagine what these women felt, what was happening, and who they were.

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"Imagine them ..."

Evelyn Conlon

Mary Lee took a look over the big days in her life as she folded her documents carefully. It was hard to believe that such a short glance, such a minor intake, and almost unnoticeable holding, of breath could cover all of a lifetime so far. It scanned birth, Mary Walsh, 1821, marriage and seven givings of birth as if they were any old dates. The bits in between and after weren't on the papers. Nor indeed were they in her head at this precise moment, due to the more immediate concerns that had to be bedded. She tucked her husband's death certificate in the middle, it would be safe there.

"I was born on St. Valentine's day. You know they put him in place of Lupercalia of Fertility"

She thought they might have done that because love seemed a cleaner thing than passion. Mary had read poetry all her life. It had fitted with the hills around her. They folded on top of each other in a vague sort of way, defying absolute definition. Sometimes it was better to be uncertain. When she married George she hadn't minded taking the name Lee, which was a sideways translation for a working poet.

She put the folded papers in an envelope and packed them in the midst of her clothes.

"Maybe you should put them in your bag" her daughter Evelyn said, "we'll be able to keep our handbags with us won't we?"

Evelyn was nineteen years old and hadn't had enough time to imagine how far away Australia was, never mind what a ship journey there would be like.

"They'll be alright here in the trunk, one less thing to have to mind, until we get there".

They were nearly ready to go, waiting on the horseman. Evelyn walked about so as not to fidget. There was a tone to the day, Mary thought, but that was because her recently dead husband had been an organist, so words like that came to mind easily. Well, she was leaving the music now. And maybe she could depart the livid sorrow too, leave it behind as if it was an animate thing. Maybe the sea would swallow up the ghostly pain that was wracking her small enough frame.

"We're all set then", she said, as the carriage drew up to take them to the ship. No-one thinks of what it was like for her to close the door. But she

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had done it before, when leaving Monaghan to go to England, and in its own way that had been every bit as hard and as easy. It had taken a full day to get from Monaghan to Drogheda port for the boat across the Irish Sea. She wasn't sure how long it would take to-day but thought that their heads would be around their long journey ahead by the time they got to London. Surely.

It was only a week since Mary had told her neighbours that she had decided to go to Australia, Adelaide to be exact. Her son, Ben, who had gone there three years ago, had got ill. It was a good excuse.

"I'll go to mind him, get him better, and Evelyn will come too."

Not one to like the idea of lying down with the horrors of grief, the thought had come to her very soon after George, her husband, had died. She said the word husband a lot, more often than she'd ever done when he was alive.

"You're thinking of going where?"

They couldn't wait to get home to toss that one about.

"She is not. She couldn't be. Not at her age."

At the other end of the world they were waiting for her to match her history with theirs.

That first time, when they got to the Drogheda quay, Bertie Chambers had put their belongings side by side. Mary had stared in wonder, she had never seen a boat before. They stood for some time, listening to horses snorting at the ferocious noise of it all. A boy walked over, checked the name on the trunk, and hoisted it on to his shoulder.

"You can take the rest with you", he said, looking at the two other bags which looked small out here in the open.

"Well, I'll leave you to it now. Go néirí an bóthar libh", Bertie said with fake heartiness, peering suspiciously at the boat, glad he was turning the horses for home. He looked back once but couldn't make out the shapes of Mary and George.

Along with the other journeyers Mary and Evelyn were getting the gist of travel by the time they got to the boarding point in London. If Bertie had been there he would have had some right words. With one foot on the brand new Orient and one still on land they suspended belief in time, that would be the best way to be. And they did manage the journey well enough, give or take a few nights best forgotten. When they put the same foot off the boat in Port Adelaide, only thirty seven days and twenty two hours later, they both squinted as if they might see the place better by doing so. They would need new hats for sure to keep this light at bay. They made their way to Ben's house, legs a bit shaky, as they felt the thud of their feet on terra firma, the words meaning something only to those who know different.

Mary set to diligent caring but neither that, nor praying, nor hoping, nor her coming this far made her son better. They buried him out under the trees in Walkerville, Mary wrote to the others.

"Will we go home now?" Evelyn asked, not saying what she wanted, simply waiting to hear what was going to happen next.

"I'm afraid we can't, the money is gone, but for now we'll say that we love it here."

Not one to like the idea of lying down with the horrors of this new grief Mary turned her head to public things. She needed to move and do. Firstly she put on her coat and set out to be a volunteer worker in the Female Refuge, a place for distressed women and children they told her. It took her some days to know who was there.

"Former prostitutes and unmarried mothers, that's who", she told Evelyn. She absorbed the truth of it and began to see the world another way. The women here were not bad, unlucky yes, as if God had spilt salt on their lives. She had had some of that herself.

Evelyn settled into her job, being a flume for telegraphs, words travelling by sound on wire, words about all sorts of things, ships arriving, gold being found, children being born, miners revolting. The messages sizzled through with their Morse overcoat and she converted them into sentences long enough to be understood. She didn't write home much, she saw little point in exchanging notes about things that could not be known so far away, and less in trying to explain what the task of looking after their mother now included. She tried once to write what Mary had become, the speeches, the letters, the travelling to wild towns, her love of the notion of women with votes. But it looked flat on the page, it couldn't lift into what it was, it couldn't paint the fight. Evelyn was watching a revolt, a fit of fury working itself into reasonable language. It was like nothing she had ever imagined.

Mary joined the Women's Committee of the Social Purity Society. It fitted well with thoughts she had about making life better for girls, raising the age of consent for one thing. A passerby, looking at the notice of their meetings, would not have guessed what was being said inside. And when that talk grew into other things as talk will, looking for the vote seemed not such an outlandish thing, seemed natural really, a small something to upgrade women.

"It's not too much to ask. We had that in the Brehon laws, a long time ago," Mary said.

"What are they?"

"Old Irish. It doesn't matter. Not here anyway."

They wrote The Suffrage League on a piece of paper and liked the look of it.

"Fair play is a jewel", she said when she came home.

"Why do you say that?" Evelyn asked, fiddling with her brooch, as she thought about what it might mean.

"I saw famine and what happened. I saw women making their minds up. They sometimes had to decide who would die. If they can do that they should be able to vote."

"But some of them don't want the vote", Evelyn said.

"Ah yes, it has taken centuries to make us the fools we are – it will take time to wade out of our slough".

Mary still read poetry, when there was time. It gave her the backbone to answer the deluge that sometimes threatened to swamp her after one of her letters. She wrote about a man, one in a righteous rage, who claimed the gospels on his side.

"Will he hold up his hands in holy horror if I tell him that though St. Paul's learning is unquestioned, and his inspired doctrine unassailable, his social rules are decidedly behind the age! Who cares whether I had my bonnet on or off while I spoke on Friday? Where was the 'shame' if my hair were long or short any more than if it were black or brown or grey?"

"Do you think that reply is alright?", Mary asked.

Evelyn wasn't sure, but thought that by now her mother knew what she doing. Wasn't she already on the road, going to faraway places, getting names written on paper sheets, a petition that would show it wasn't just a few mad women who wanted the vote. She spoke in all sorts of places, Port Augusta, Port Pirie and Quorn.

"That's a funny name Evelyn, isn't it? Quorn. It's a railway place. There were 500 at Port Pirie, imagine that. ".???

Sometimes on her journeys she would see a turn in the road that looked like home, a dead ringer for the road to Ballybay, and she would shake her head and wonder where she was and what she was doing shouting from the back of trailers. It didn't happen often, which was just as well, and coming out of the bend she would see a bleached shade and perhaps an extravagant bird, things that could only be in her new place.

The petition grew in length, the pages began to stack up. Not one signature looked like another. Mary wrote pamphlets as well as letters, which were sent to more and more newspapers, again and again, and to members of parliament and whoever else might do with having their minds changed. She learned the patience for repetition. Unlike others she could sign her own name, no fears. There had to be some advantages to being a widow she thought.

"I'll talk to the Temperance people too, although I don't trust total abstinence," she said, getting tired at the idea of it.

The women poured a glass on the night they stuck together the pages of eleven thousand six hundred penned names, then rolled the four hundred foot long scroll and tied it with gold ribbon.

Mary dated her letter December 1894 and wrote home that on last Tuesday morning the triumphant cry had gone up from the packed gallery. After years of work, only six in the end, South Australian women had won the right to vote by 31 votes to 14.

"And it was such a margin too, we're made even more joyous by that," she said.

"One operator thought to add the right to sit in parliament, thinking that would get the whole shebang scuppered, oh how we laughed and cried with joy when it didn't work. Not this time."

"I wonder what they'll make of that," Evelyn said, wondering herself what her mother would do now.

One son had no intentions of telling anyone what his mother was at; he had always been like that, had let her voice go over his head like a kite disappearing. He looked up a lot. And he'd married a fool of a girl who knew next to nothing. At least not the things Mary knew. The other son was proud enough and knew some people whom he would tell.

"I remember when you were a small boy, you told me your dream one morning but stopped half way and said, oh, no need, you were in it. I had to tell you that your dreams were your own. Only you knew what happened in them. Stay well."

On the morning of the first vote they turned out in droves, dressed in many shades as well as black. Mary Lee wore her best frock, a crimson shade with familiar ruffles and puffs on the shoulder. Evelyn's dress had a bell-like flow to it. She had bought it thinking that it would suit the new drop frame bicycle, if she could ever get one. After they'd marked their papers they gathered outside and talked excitedly. Some men snorted as they passed them, others pretended not to see them, and yet more doffed their hats and said enthusiastic things like Good Morning Ladies.

On their way home Mary said, "You go ahead" and Evelyn did, wanting to walk a bit on her own to think what history is.

Mary Lee found a spot in off the path and lay down under the everlasting sky; no-one would find her here. She sighed with gratitude, and imagined all the roads she had taken. The shouting from hall stages might have been easier if she had known that it would indeed succeed. She spoke to her George, as she often did. There was nothing helpless about this, she did it most days. She told him that without his fate she would have been at home,

with nothing to do with all this, but that she couldn't stay where she had lost him. And that as long as she was here in this bigger place with this bigger thing to do she could sometimes forget the long missing of him. She told him of the trees in the back yard, lemons, oranges and the like, not just Armagh apples. She got up and dusted herself off.

And Evelyn was right to wonder what she would do next. The fritillaries would have been coming out in her Irish garden on the morning she got ready for Broken Hill. There weren't the same ones here but there was one called Snake's Head, well that would make sense, not so much at home of course. Mary had become a campaign sort of soul. At the age of seventy three she set out, in searing heat, to see what she could do for miners on strike, miners and their families not coated in gold. She would use what she had now learned for another good, there was no reason yet to sleep the day away. The poverty shocked her, there was much to do. She would need to lie down under that sky again, looking up into it to shut out the grime.

Evelyn did eventually write the long letter home, when it was necessary to do so. She told them that their mother was buried with Ben, to the left of some lush trees. She would now try to let them know about the last years of her life. She didn't say anything about the lack of money, they would have been surprised by that. She told them about Mary writing in support of children being able to swim naked together. In reply to the outrage she had written "I don't believe that Eve ever had petticoats and if Adam had britches they left us no pattern – and they were both naked and not ashamed. Does not half the moral dirt of the world spring from dirty suggestion?" Evelyn wondered if her siblings would understand the notion of how heat could cause you to throw your clothes off. She told them about the Unions asking Mary to stand for Parliament, an astonishing thing to happen so soon after the vote was achieved. She called her Mary when she wrote these things, not Mother. She explained that Mary declined the request on the grounds that she wanted to work undeterred by allegiance to any party. She explained that when she died people were surprised at her age, they thought her much younger surely. Mary herself hadn't dwelt much on her age but one day she had remarked that she had spent almost the same number of years in Monaghan and here, and neither place knew what she did in the other. Evelyn wrote that she knew then Mary was dying, she had returned to her youth.

"You may find it hard to imagine her, all that dedication, you may not remember any of that from before. Our mother was a great woman, you know."

Evelyn posted it on her way to work. When the letter dropped into the box she wondered about writing the last sentence, maybe she should have left it out. It was hard to know what to say really, in the circumstances. And hard to know what road to take herself now. She got back on her new bicycle and pedaled up Wakefield Street, enjoying the breeze that the speed created around her face.

Portrait of Mary Lee (1884), State Library of South Australia,
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Recensioni / Reviews

Liam Chambers, Thomas O'Connor, eds, *College Communities Abroad. Education, Migration, and Catholicism in Early Modern Europe*, Manchester, Manchester UP, 2018, pp. ix+238. £ 75.00. ISBN 978 1 7849 9514 0.

The topics of the Irish Colleges which were founded by the Irish exiled clerics on continental Europe between the last decades of the sixteenth century and the seventeenth century can by now boast a well developed scholarship. The recent collection of essays edited by Thomas O'Connor and Liam Chambers on the collegial communities abroad is a significant contribution to this subject which sheds new light on these institutions which, from the sixteenth century, began to dot the map of the main Catholic countries of Europe. One of the strengths of this volume is that it gathers a series of groundbreaking essays written by the leading historians in the field, and which do not limit to focus on the institutions founded by the exiled clergy of the British Isles during the early-modern period.

The editors have wisely decided to include investigations which focus on the German College and the Maronite Colleges of Rome as well as on the seminaries founded to train the Dutch Catholic priests in exile. This choice greatly enriches the volume because it helps to demonstrate how the process of founding the structures which had to form an educated clergy according to the Tridentine norms followed, to a certain extent, the same path. Indeed the lack of adequate funding, the constant struggle between the student-body and the rectors, and the low-quality of some seminarians are but few of the common problems which beset the activity of the collegial Catholic communities on continental Europe during the early-modern period. Another strength of this volume is that all the essays are fitted both in a national and in transnational frameworks which provide a groundbreaking platform to understand the establishment and the development of the colleges in their host countries, but also their contribution to the local church at home. A further feature which strongly enhance this volume is that all the essays unveil the existence of many different networks - clerical, cultural, and political - which the colleges succeeded to establish on continental Europe and the British Isles.

In conclusion this collection of essays is a meticulous and extremely well organized analysis which provide a new understanding of the collegial com-

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munities in exile. The fact that the contributors come from different countries is a further demonstration of the editors' capacity to have gathered a group of leading historians who adopted a transnational perspective to investigate a transnational phenomenon.

Matteo Binasco

Carole Nelson Trio, *One Day in Winter*, CD Blackstairs Records (689232111922), 2017. $ 15,00/ € 13,40.

One Day in Winter (Blackstairs Records, 2017) is an album by Irish composer, pianist, and saxophonist Carole Nelson, a concept album directly inspired by the landscapes of Carlow, the land-locked county in South East Ireland where the composer lives. It is an accomplished album, evocative and introspective, in a way that manages to be compelling. As a lyrical jazz concept album from Ireland, *One Day in Winter* is a unique proposition. Beyond its strictly musical merit, the album also has significance as an artwork which places itself in a tradition of engagement in, and development of, Irish cultural specificity.

One Day in Winter is the first venture of the Carol Nelson Trio, which sees Nelson on piano (and soprano saxophone in one track), supported by Cormac O'Brien on bass and Dominic Mullen on drums. The album is largely instrumental, with lyrics in two tracks, spoken by Nelson. The Trio is a tight ensemble, but in fact the musicians originally came together for a once-off performance for the Trio Trio Trio Piano Festival in Dublin in 2015, and the idea of the band slowly grew from there. Carole Nelson is best known as one half of Irish jazz-pop duo Zrazy, and her involvement with the band she created with vocalist and composer Maria Walsh in 1991 has continued without a break. In fact, Zrazy released their sixth album, *The Art of Happy Accidents* (Alfi Records), in early 2017, while Nelson's own *One Day in Winter* was released in November of the same year, on the back of the promotional tour with Zrazy.

While the Carole Nelson Trio has a remarkably different musical character from that of Zrazy, there are important points of contact between these overlapping albums. Zrazy is described in its official website as "a unique amalgamation of pop, jazz and celtic influences"[1]. Their take on jazz, while generally upbeat, is also associated with politically committed lyrics which do not shy away from controversial issues; one of Zrazy's most memorable feminist interventions was the recording and performing of a song consisting entirely of the repetition of an actual phone number to access informa-

[1] *Zrazy* official website, <http://www.zrazy.com/about.html> (05/2019).

tion on abortion, at a time when to publicise such a number was illegal in Ireland. By contrast to the outward-directed high energy of Zrazy, the Carole Nelson Trio's sound is lower and slower, the feel introverted, the rhythms more fluent, the politics muted, and Zrazy's pop buoyancy and electronic fluency have been dropped here in favour of a gentle detached contemplation.

Nelson and Walsh have composed for Zrazy separately and together, with Nelson's interest in expansive, lyrically heavier songs being apparent in *The Art of Happy Accidents*, which, remarkably for a music album, was in fact launched by an acclaimed Irish writer, Frank McGuinness. Nelson sang her own lyrics for the first time in that album, in the autobiographical "Night Crossing". The song opens with: "I grew up in London in the same house where / we looked after my father until he was taken. / The house is still standing, someone else lives there. / I took the night crossing back home to Ireland". This interest in narrativity is carried into the very structure of *One Day in Winter*, which is set in one unfolding day. One song is shared by the two albums: the Trio's "Snow is Falling" is a reworking of Nelson's "Snow" for Zrazy.

The more introspective songs in *The Art of Happy Accidents*, and those concerned with memory, were penned by Carole Nelson. Anticipating *One Day in Winter* in its setting, the Zrazy song "Teampall na mBó", about a burial ground for unbaptised babies –a rather unlikely topic for a jazz song–, was inspired by a ruined church in Carlow. "Song for Jim" (co-written with Walsh), dedicated to Nelson's father, is about the precious moments spent with someone waiting for death, and ends with an open question: "I know you think there's nothing else, / we fade away ... / But I have never been that sure". That query is fully investigated in *One Day in Winter*.

The tracks

In devoting itself to a seldom publicly celebrated part of rural Ireland, Carole Nelson Trio's *One Day in Winter* makes a fresh contribution to the Irish jazz tradition, which has tended to prioritise disengagement with Irish themes and with the Irish musical canon. There are important exceptions, such as Irish-inflected work by guitarist Louis Stewart and bassist Ronan Guilfoile, or vocalist Melanie O'Reilly's intersection of lilting and scat. In addition, we have vocalists Dorothy Murphy and Christine Toibín's work with Irish literature (Joyce, Yeats, Muldoon), the *sean-nós* imprint on saxophonist Michael Buckley or vocalist Sue Rynhart, or blues singer Mary Coughlan's taking the pulse of Irish affairs in song commissions, but it has been more common to find once-off trad raids or Irish-content versions.

One Day in Winter is also a rarity as a concept album, a format long ago blasted to bits by single track downloads. As the press release explained, the album "traces the course of one winter's day, from before dawn to moonrise" – rather than sunset, a significant decision as we will see. Further, this one day stands for a lifetime, from the development of consciousness in infancy

to its fading in old age and death. In a remarkable coincidence, Ronan Guilfoyle's jazz suite *Life Cycle*, to premiere in November 2018, will also offer a concentrated vision of a lifetime, an autobiographical account prompted by Guilfoyle's sixtieth birthday. Such a concept may be a rarity in music, but not so in literature, where an allegory of the journey of life is a classical theme in both secular and religious writing. *One Day in Winter*'s parallel structure is thus similar, for example, to that of Woolf's novel *The Waves*, where the unfolding lives of a group of friends mirror the trail of the sun raising and sinking above the sea on a single day.

One Day in Winter begins just before sunrise, with "Beata Viscera" (trans. "Blessed Flesh"), as the landscape is astir with anticipation. It is a striking opening, because the tune is a reworking of a song of the same name for single voice, written around 1200 by the French composer Pérotin. Pérotin is crucial to the development of Western music, because he created a system of notation for rhythm, which allowed different speeds and rhythms to coexist in ever more complex compositions, and he was among the first to compose using chords (as opposed to two lines of plainchant, or "Gregorian" chant), thus opening the way for a "decentering" of the melodic line, and for a new sophistication of harmonies and "commentaries". It makes sense for a jazz album to pay homage to this moment in the history of music, and even to reclaim it. It is also worth noting that composers and aficionados of minimalist and serialist Western music often feel an aesthetic affinity with early music from the medieval period, that is from 500 to 1400. Nelson's version of "Beata Viscera" is in fact reminiscent of the treatment of the song by the Estonian group Vox Clamantis (in their album *Filia Sion*, ECM 2012), an ensemble which specialises on plainchant, early polyphony, *and* contemporary classical music, and is associated with the style-bridging work of Arvo Pärt. Not coincidentally, Irish modernists working in the first half of the twentieth century often hailed medieval Celtic art and monasticism, partly no doubt as a strategy to sidestep the Reformation.

As unexpected as medieval music is in a jazz album, the choice of song also comes as a surprise. The lyrics of Pérotin's "Beata Viscera", omitted from Nelson's rendition, are a Latin text reworking Psalm 45 to honour the Christian figure of the mother of Jesus, seen here as a miraculous virgin mother who, after the physical upheaval of giving birth, retains her "completeness" (*integritas*, often translated as "purity" to signify a body "unsullied" by sexual intercourse, according to Christian teachings). This religious context is perplexing at first. Historically, there are links between jazz, West African religions, and American gospel, but with "Beata Viscera" as a presentation card, Nelson's album is declaring its kinship to European religious music. *Viscera* can be translated as entrails, womb, or offspring, and at one point in the original's lyrics we learn that "the sun, freed, rises pure", so that the metaphorical sun of Jesus can be equated to the day emerging from the womb of

mother nature. The Christian – here Catholic – tradition can thus be transmuted into a form of pantheism, where Nature (as Gaia, as White Goddess, or as interrelationship in deep ecology) generates and extinguishes, while retaining her "completeness". With this conceptual ablution and praise, the album readies itself for the eternal renewal or resurrection of each new day. A tinkling of bells is heard in the background, but rather than church summons they evoke the bells of sheep or cattle moving to pasture, and are suitably grounding.

The second track in *One Day in Winter*, "Sun Rising over the Blackstair", is another instrumental piece. It starts with a gentle slow movement, which metamorphoses into a cascade of light, settling on the piano while the bass comes in – like shadows forming all at once –, and the melody steadies itself, punctured by controlled flickers. The title refers to Blackstairs mountain (732m.). With a distinctive black and grey top, and overlooking vast flatlands, the mountain gives its name to the Blackstairs range, marking the border between county Carlow and county Wexford. Here is where the album, already swerving away from an accepted international language of jazz by invoking early medieval music, situates itself, in a dramatic closeup after "Beata Viscera", on a very specific location. The press release for the album gave the coordenates: "Living between the River Barrow and the Blackstairs Mountains in Carlow gave Carole both the physical and mental landscape for composition". Reviewers have linked Carole Nelson's style to jazz pianists Keith Jarrett and Paul Bley[2], and we may hear too the gentle confidence and self-absorption of Bill Evans, who is often described as the epitome of the European jazz tradition.

With strict temporal logic, the third track is titled "Low Light through bare Trees". It opens with a gently marching drum: the noun, adjectivated by the piano. With several breaks and a rhythm change, the tune perfectly evokes the unexpected shapes, the playful strangeness, of objects whose profile seems to be shifting.

Since the album's story arc stands for a lifetime, this section would seem to correspond to the rise of consciousness and the sketching of individuality, as some kind of uniform voice tentatively emerges in spurts and starts and silences, to then collect itself. It does so by picking up the opening, and moving to a higher note, a higher plane. In track four, "Snow is Falling", we arrive at childhood. With a subject tentatively in place, a predicate begins to be drafted. A curved melody scoops up the mind of a child. Neatly corresponding with the delight in language, this song introduces the spoken word

[2] See Daniel Rorke, "Carole Nelson Trio – *One Day in Winter* – Album Review", *Jazz Ireland*, 16 January 2018, <https://www.jazzireland.ie/blog/album-reviews/168-carole-nelson-trio-one-day-in-winter-album-review.html> (05/2019).

into the album. Carole Nelson's commentary is poised between the poetic and the documental. She says: "You wake up and feel / the cold air take your breath away / And all is new and beautiful / like when you were a child". In a game of perspectives, the speaker is an adult communicating with her adult self, as it recalls itself as a child, when "you make the first footprint / in the perfect snow". After, "[y]ou feel the drift of the land east to west"; that is, you feel, and inaugurate, *time*.

Track five, "Cold Rushing River", also begins in uncertainty with a stretch of undefined sounds, from which gently springs a reprise of the opening "Beata Viscera" with a faster rhythm, followed by variations, as if the same basic substance (rather than just the same basic melody) could reshape itself into a multitude of morphologies, when life literally rushes forward. After evoking the lack of a course, a trickle emerges, and a direction is pursued, but with currents overlapping. The next track, "The World is Full of Love", is firmly delineated. Another instrumental piece, it is driven by a bolero-like pulsing, reminiscent of the popular song "Besame mucho" (trans. "Kiss me a Lot"), an international hit in 1941 and a popular tune with jazz singers and musicians ever since. In the original, the core lyrics demand: "Kiss me, kiss me, kiss me / as if tonight was the last time. / Kiss me, kiss me, kiss me / 'cause I am afraid to lose you again". Composed by the Mexican Consuelo Velázquez when she was a young woman, she later explained that she had written the song before she had ever kissed anyone, simultaneously attracted and repelled by the sinfulness she associated with lust and romance. In Carol Nelson's day-as-life narrative, "The World is Full of Love" may thus remit us to erotic awakening.

In track seven, "The Sky Darkens", the speaker's voice returns. The album's sleeve notes explain that the text is "an adaptation of the Buddhist meditation on ageing and death". Invoking Buddhism in an Irish artwork is, beliefs aside, as effective in bypassing the catholic-protestant divide, as the medievophilia of Irish Revivalists and early modernists once was. The opening words declare that "[a]ll that I hold dear I will leave behind", and remind us that "it is the nature of all things to fade away". The melody meets this with an impassible surface, and unexpectedly incorporates a warmth and frisson perhaps intended as a counterweight, in a joyous treatment of the *tempus fugit* theme. The repeated coupling of "A crow flies / The sky darkens", calls upon us to focus on the present – regardless of its ostensible irrelevance –, and it also serves to relocate this Buddhist idea to Ireland, where the crow is a symbol of the Morrigan, goddess of war (and by way of carrion, associated with crones). "The Silence in Between", the eighth track, is the quietest in the album, and the one where the separate components of the Trio become most conspicuous. Here we fully appreciate the imaginative and rather self-sufficient percussion of Dominic Mullen, and the bass of Cormac O'Brien, who has been described as a "perfect juggler of risk-taking and foundation"

(*ibidem*), and whose contribution is perhaps excessively muted in the album, by contrast to the live performance. A good many songs in *One Day in Winter* start in slowness and lack of definition – here, the tentativeness is sustained, with the deliberate discretion of a spider's web, more emptiness than thread.

Again, there is a remarkable contrast with the tune that follows, "Stories by the Fire", which has the familiarity of a standard Hollywood film score, and the reassuring rhythm one may find on a meditation track or an Irish ballad, where the melody is a means rather than an end. All the preceding gliding and rushing seems to give way to sauntering here – somewhat unjazzily steady. "Stories by the Fire" sounds as if it was meant to accompany lyrics but, alas, there are none. The title's reference to storytelling places the album in a tradition of not merely oral, but aural storytelling, where music also has a place. The title also reminds us that the album is structured as a parable, with the concentration and complexity of a Dickinson poem, but written in the free and easy lexicon of a Whitman. The *One Day in Winter* story comes to an end with the track "Moon Rising over the Blackstair", which takes up some of the preceding threads and moods, with some aural affinity to the sun rising (in track two) and to the safe progression of a story by the fire (in track nine). The track and the album close with two lines on the piano, one grounding and assuring, and another featuring a slight rush of anticipation rising to an unfinished point. The moon is up, and the silence stands before us with a certain majesty. It is an honourable end.

Irish references

The specifically Irish locatedness of *One Day in Winter* has yet to be mentioned by commentators, while, remarkably, Carole Nelson's English background is regularly noted by them. As strikingly, reviews make no mention of the album's concept, which is one of its greatest strengths. Nor are the lyrics commented upon, suggesting a discomfort with autobiography, with poetry, or both. Also remarkably, reviews have characterised Nelson's music by a "lack of complexity", which clearly makes the reviewers a little anxious, and which is as clearly gendered. Consider this, from Cormak Larkin: "The London-born pianist and composer may not have all the flashy chops of some of her male colleagues, but the directness and honesty of her playing – spacious, meditative and open-hearted – more than makes up for it"[3]. With similar double-edginess, reviewer Daniel Rorke declared that: "The compositions are always interesting, yet avoid overt complexity – no small feat indeed for Nelson as composer"[4].

[3] Cormak Larkin, "The Best Jazz This Week: Carole Nelson Trio and GoGo Penguin", *The Irish Times*, 13 January 2018, <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/music/the-best-jazz-this-week-carole-nelson-trio-and-gogo-penguin-1.3349652> (05/2019).

[4] See Rorke, "Carole Nelson", n.p.

One Day in Winter is firmly planted in rural Ireland, and crucially produced by a resident rather than a visitor. Irish connections are further invoked twice, once on each of the tracks with lyrics. In "The World is Full of Love", the speaker refers to her companion as *mo chroí*, a gaelic term of endearment meaning "my heart", or beloved. The Irish language is often used to signal authenticity in a self-conscious manner, in literature, art, and the media. This particular intervention is unobtrusive, but it signals allegiance, not just to the beloved but to the culture, who become fused by this simple spell. Some years ago in a brief conversation with the composer, she retold an incident when someone had referred to her as the epitome of Irishness, and Nelson ended the anecdote by saying: "Me! A *sassenach*!". A gaelic term for the English, normally used as a term of abuse, *sassenach* is rare enough in Anglophone Dublin, where the conversation took place, and rarer still in self-deprecating mode. There is the same sense of knowing appropriation in this song's use of *mo chroí*, more self-aware than tokenistic.

"Snow is Falling" alludes to the work of Joyce. The speaker describes waking up after a restless night caused by "the stupid debris of life". At the window, delighted by the visitation of snow, she is pulled back in time to the infinitely vast and luminous days of childhood, "[t]he big freeze" of a time without responsibility: "Nobody's going to work today / We're all going out to play". The speaker chuckles, and the melody gently tumbles up, and then stands and slips and slumps – getting up again. Naturally, music has a special relationship with time; it is "made of" time, we may say, and it is perceived as a sequence. "Snow is Falling" leaves the Joycean quote for the end: "Sleep lies heavy, a blanket of snow / on all the blessed dreamers. / And you remember a story you once read / [where] snow was falling 'on all the living and the dead' ". Again, the unobtrusive literary intertextuality (like the cultural intertextuality of *mo chroí*) hits the right note. Joyce's short story "The Dead" (1914), where the quote comes from, is set in Dublin on a winter's day, and it deals with memory, and the thawing of certainties. The ending of the story, like the song's intimation of snow-as-death, also rewrites all that went before.

Modernism and jazz

It is not just in terms of an Irish connection that the invocation of Joyce in *One Day in Winter* is relevant, but also as a nod to the stylistic tradition that he represents. We could see Nelson's intertextual aside as a declaration of affinity with modernism. It is rarely acknowledged that jazz is a key development in the movement. The improvisation and syncopation associated with jazz in fact have made a greater impact within, and beyond, its own medium, than cubism or stream of consciousness have made in theirs, to give two iconic examples of modernist innovation. There is a tendency in Modernist Studies (which is exacerbated in Ireland) to focus on literature, despite the awareness that modernism was an attack on traditional styles and themes in all fronts, from painting

and architecture to dance and design. Music has tended to be studied separately, with Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* (1913) almost invariably cited as the eye of the storm, with the occasional addenda of Schoenberg's atonality. The links between popular music and modernism have only begun to be investigated in earnest in the last few years[5]. In classical music in an Irish context, Mark Fitzgerald has recently discussed the "belated arrival" of modernism, suggesting Rhoda Coghill's *Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking* (1923), which sets to music a Whitman poem, as a kind of proto-modernist Irish composition on account of its "harmonic ambiguity" and "unresolved ending"[6]. Those descriptors could as easily be applied to *One Day in Winter*. Fitzgerald goes on to review other composers' "mildly modernist tendencies" and to suggest a belated peak of postwar modernism in Ireland in Seóirse Bodley's *Meditations on Lines from Patrick Kavanagh* (1971)[7].

One way of defining the styles of modernism, in every medium, is as a series of reconfigurations of rhythm, and with those, a rethinking of the human conversation with time. It is well established that theorists of time such as Bergson or James were influential on the first modernist wave. Their work highlights a special relationship between time and consciousness. Consider the sliding thought patterns in Dorothy Richardson's *Pointed Roofs* (1915) or, in a concentrated form, Woolf's "The Mark on the Wall" (1917). In film editing, a syncopated rhythm matches a psychopathic strain in *The Seashell and the Clergyman* (Dir. Germaine Dulac, 1928) or in *Borderline* (Dir. Kenneth Macpherson, 1930). The mobile furniture by designers such as Eileen Gray may be seen as a reconfiguration of once-static matter to accommodate the fluid needs of the modern mind. The wave-based dance style developed by the choreographer (and theorist of movement) Isadora Duncan, sought to reproduce an organic, eternal continuity. In painting, we can see cubist and surrealist imagery as exercises in simultaneity. And so on. If we make the modest and uncontroversial claim that Time and the perception of Time play a role in modernism, then jazz, which consists of a reorganisation of time patterns in music, is in a privileged position to showcase that role.

One of the interesting aspects of considering Jazz an exemplar of modernism in the West, is that it has carried on unabated from its beginnings at the turn of the twentieth century, as a powerful force in the "roaring twenties", with a second peak of influence in the Swing era in the early and mid 1940s, to the development of Bebop, Acid Jazz, and beyond onto the pre-

[5] For example, Carol J. Oja's *Modernism and the Jazz Age* (2000), or Alfred Appel's *Jazz Modernism* (2005).

[6] Mark Fitzgerald (2018), "A Belated Arrival: The Delayed Acceptance of Musical Modernity in Irish Composition", *Irish Studies Review* 26, 3, 349.

[7] Fitzgerald used "mildly modernist" to describe Frederick May's *String Quartet* (1936, 352). For Bodley, see *ibidem*, 354.

sent day. Within an evolving form, there has been an unbroken continuity throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty first century. The end of Western modernism has been subject to debate; it is generally given in literature as no later than WWII, but the post-war years saw a flourishing of a second wave of modernism in classical music, architecture, and film, and an overall closing line tends to be drawn in the 1970s, when the movement is superseded by postmodernism. However, a neomodernist wave of stylistic and conceptual experimentation has been identified in current work in fields as diverse as architecture, design, and literature. Contemporary Irish composers of classical music such as Gráinne Mulvey or Ann Cleare, for example, have been associated with modernism (356). This neomodernist wave, which "prolongs and surpasses modernist innovations"[8], may be explained by the fact that postmodernism has "nowhere to go"[9], or as an exercise in nostalgia. But either explanation presupposes a break – jazz is proof, if proof is needed, that modernism never went away. I see Carole Nelson Trio's *One Day in Winter* as an example of Irish neomodernism.

Ireland and jazz

1934 saw the culmination of an "anti-jazz" movement in Ireland in a demonstration in Mohill town, county Leitrim, with thousands in attendance and the explicit support of the then Taoiseach Eamon de Valera. The event was commemorated by Zrazy in *The Art of Happy Accidents*, with the cheerful track "Down with Jazz!" The instigator of the campaign, the Gaelic League activist Peter Conefrey, a priest in the village of Cloone, declared at the demonstration's rally that jazz "is borrowed from the language of the savages of Africa, and its object is to destroy virtue in the human soul"[10]. It is easy to caricature this manifestation of rural conservatism, but its effects have been lasting. Informed by the campaign, the Public Dance Halls Act of 1935, which made it illegal to hold public dances in Ireland without a license, is still in force, though its application has softened. Jazz had reached all corners of Ireland through the wireless, and it would be in the 1970s that a wave of jazz musicianship would coalesce influenced by Chas Meredith's jazz programmes on Irish national radio.

Carole Nelson is one of a number of Irish artists with an international vocation who has resisted the lure of the city and is rewriting the association

[8] Monica Latham (2015), *A Poetics of Postmodernism and Neomodernism: Re-Writing* Mrs Dalloway, London, Palgrave, 8.

[9] Anne Fogarty (2018), "After Modernism? Joycean Traces in Contemporary Irish Fiction", Unpublished paper, *Joyce Studies Symposium*, Bizkaia Aretoa, Bilbao, University of the Basque Country.

[10] Quoted in Cahal Brenan (2011), "The Anti-Jazz Campaign", *The Irish Story,* <http://www.theirishstory.com/2011/07/01/the-anti-jazz-campaign/#.W5KlsEZKjIU> (05/2019).

of rural Ireland with stagnation. Online projection and marketing have allowed a freedom that would have been inconceivable twenty years ago. Some of the most successful and respected creative Irish enterprises have chosen rural Ireland as their base: Cartoon Saloon, the animation film company based in Kilkenny, or Guth Gafa, the international documentary film festival based in Kells, are two examples. Despite Father Conefrey's racist evocation of savagery, jazz has of course been traditionally associated with urban modernity and eclecticism.

Interestingly, the Irish jazz scene is somewhat at odds with that assumption. To begin with, the Irish capital's jazz profile is not as cohesive or as stable as one may expect. In 2008, Dublin, Cork and Belfast may have formed a "dependable circuit" for visiting and local jazz musicians[11], but with the closure of J.J. Smyth's in April 2017, after thirty years in operation, the Dublin jazz scene suffered a blow, although Arthur's Upstairs is slowly establishing itself as a blues and jazz venue, and a number of pubs and cafés regularly host live jazz. The majority of dedicated Irish jazz musicians and performers must still consider relocating in order to have a viable career. If they stay in Ireland, compromise is inevitable – non-specialised private tuition in instrument or voice is the main earner for many jazz musicians in the country, while most others resign themselves to separate their professional lives from their musicianship.

There are a number of important jazz festivals in the main cities in the island, however. Led by Cork, which has hosted an annual jazz festival since 1978 (thus celebrating forty years in 2018), there are well established festivals in Limerick and in Belfast (both nine years old in 2019), and a host of other, newer festivals. Most of them were originally set up by jazz fans or jazz musicians rather than by promoters, and often grew from smaller events. One of the exceptions is the City of Derry Jazz & Big Band Festival, created by the City Council in 2001 after identifying "a gap in the market for a music festival to fit within the Council's existing events diary", as the council explained in the depressingly mercantilised language now generally used to refer to cultural events[12].

Most remarkably, in the last two decades a series of successful international jazz festivals has been created away from the main Irish cities. Some of them in towns such as Bray in county Wicklow (celebrating twenty years in 2019), Kinsale, or Sligo. And annual jazz festivals are also taking place in small villages. For example, in the villages of Doonbeg in county Clare (also

[11] Kevin Stevens (2008), "Now's the Time: The State of Irish Jazz", *The Journal of Music*, <http://journalofmusic.com/focus/nows-time-state-irish-jazz> (05/2019).

[12] City of Derry Jazz Festival website, <http://www.cityofderryjazzfestival.com/started> (05/2019).

celebrating twenty years in 2019), Ballydehob in county Cork (since 2007), Cloughjordan in Tipperary (since 2011), or Ramelton in Donegal. The official website from the Ballydehob Jazz Festival anticipates its potential audiences' surprise at such a location, in "this improbable corner of the world", presenting the anomaly as an asset, by offering "world class talent couched in a pretty little country village"[13]. A similar marketing ploy is used by the only festival in Ireland dedicated to a single musician, gipsy jazz king Django Reinhardt; the "Django Sur Lenon" Festival, the official website declares, takes place "in the picturesque village of Ramelton"[14].

Clearly this phenomenon is part of a reaction to the boom in massive outdoor music festivals (generally focusing on pop and pop-rock), with smaller festivals offering a less impersonal or more "authentic" experience, while retaining all the inherent contradictions of boutique hotels, glamping, and bespoke tours. The rural jazz trend is also tuned to the Irish Tourism Board's strategy of branding Ireland as the "green island", but there is something jarring about this juxtaposition of village life, picturesqueness, and jazz. Writing in 1924, music historian Paul Stefan praised jazz as "[a] reflection of the times: chaos, machines, noise, the highest peak of intensity"[15]. Hardly a slogan for arcadian reverie. In another way, the very remoteness of those rural settings is an imaging of the commitment and connoisseurship nowadays associated with jazz practitioners and audiences.

Yet in Ireland, "the rural" is a complex proposition. The colonial imprint of "big house" landlordism, followed post-independence by a "cultural affiliation between the state and the rural", and the population's widespread aspiration to individual land ownership, have translated into a permissive rural housing policy facilitating internal migration towards rural areas and away from cities[16]. It has been claimed by human geographers that this context has resulted in the last few years in a kind of "spatial anarchy" in the Irish countryside, "allowing rural communities to grow and diversify" in unexpected ways, for example by encouraging a "broader" social mix than in rural England (64, 67). Thus, the sprouting of rural jazz festivals across the island, and the very existence of an album such as *One Day in Winter*, may actually signal a socially fertile soil for a diversity of aesthetic choices.

[13] Ballydehob Jazz Festival website, <http://www.ballydehobjazzfestival.org/about/> (05/2019).

[14] Django sur Lennon Festival website, <http://djangosurlennon.com/> (05/2019).

[15] Quoted in James Donald (2010), "Sounds Like Hell: Beyond Dystopian Noise", in G. Prakash (ed.), *Noir Urbanisms: Dystopic Images of the Modern City*, Princeton, Princeton UP, 45.

[16] Menelaos Gkartzios, Mark Shucksmith (2015), " 'Spatial Anarchy' versus 'Spatial Apartheid': Rural Housing Ironies in Ireland and England", *Town Planning Review* 86, 1 56.

Musicologist Mark Fitzgerald has suggested that "[p]erhaps a new history of Irish modernism will be constructed around an examination of how modernism, abandoned by practitioners in literature, migrated instead at a later junction to other art forms" (Fitzgerald 2018, 356). Jazz and rural Ireland, in a syncopated tune by the Carole Nelson Trio, will have to be part of that new history.

Aintzane Legarreta Mentxaka

Giulia Bruna, *J. M. Synge and Travel Writing of the Irish Revival*, Syracuse, Syracuse UP, 2017, pp. 256. GBP £29.59 (paperback). ISBN 978 0 8156 3533 8.

Readers and scholars familiar with the works of John Millington Synge will be aware of the controversy surrounding *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907). Following the opening performance of *Playboy*, Arthur Griffith infamously described the play as "a vile and inhuman story told in the foulest language we have ever listened to from a public platform". In 1926, with reference to *Playboy*, William Butler Yeats declared to rioters protesting Sean O'Casey's *The Plough and the Stars* (1926), "You have disgraced yourself again. Is this to be the recurring celebration of the arrival of Irish genius?" It is such controversies and praise for *Playboy* that have contributed to the popularity of this play, as well as Synge's other dramas. As Giulia Bruna notes:

> Synge traditionally sits among the pantheon of Ireland's greatest playwrights and founding figures of the Irish national theater. His plays, from *Riders to the Sea* to the controversial *The Playboy of the Western World*, have been praised by critics for their unflinching portrayal of rural Ireland and for their bravura in the use of Hiberno-English. (2)

Yet, while Bruna acknowledges that Synge's nonfiction "has been analyzed primarily as a kind of rough work for his plays" (3), central to her study is the contention that Synge was among the pre-eminent travel writers of the Revival period.

Bruna declares her study aims to adopt a new approach; "Provid[ing] a new context in which Synge's travel writing can be read and sheds light on a critically overlooked genre: travel writing compiled by Irish artists and activities affiliated with Revival networks" (4). In broad terms, Bruna historicises Synge's travel writing and does so with ease as she places Synge's writings on Aran, Kerry, the Congested Districts and Wicklow in the wider contexts of Travel Writing, Journalism and Revivalism. More importantly, Bruna argues Synge refused to Romanticise the West like Yeats and Augusta Gregory (to name a few) and refutes the generalisations written by Patrick Pearse and Desmond Ryan. Bruna is keen to demonstrate that her study does not seek to reproduce the efforts of Tony Roche, John Wilson Foster and Nicolas

Grene in tracing the literary influences on, and of, Synge's works. Instead, she draws upon their restoration of "the historical contingency in which Synge's [works] were produced" (5). This is emphasised by her nuanced and sensitive exploration of Synge's works, as well as contemporaries such as Mary Banim, William Bulfin, Emily Lawless and Robert Lynd. However, Bruna's decision to borrow from "various theoretical frameworks" (14), notably Postcolonialism, Ecocriticism, Travel Writing, Literary Journalism and Mary Louise Pratt's "contact perspective" (33) is jarring and distracting. Rather than employing different theoretical frameworks in each chapter, this study would have benefited from the adoption of a more concrete model.

Accompanied by a discerning "Introduction" and brief "Epilogue", Bruna's study is divided into four chapters, each of which highlights "Synge's potential as a nonfiction writer" (14). Chapter one, "The Cuckoo with Its Pipit", is devoted to a discussion of Synge's most well-known example of travel writing, *The Aran Islands*. Bruna argues, Synge depicted island communities embedded in modernity; his Aran Islands are peopled by gramophones and residents with a strong awareness of the outside world. Significantly, Bruna confidently demonstrates that in Synge's writing, as in reality, the Aran Islands were not the pristine spaces of other Revivalists' imaginations. Instead, the Aran Islands were a "contact zone", "a site where different encounters were taking place not only in a colonial sense but also in a nationalist and revivalist sense" (20). In stressing this point, Bruna further refutes the over romanticised and fictional attitudes of the Aran Islands and their inhabitants as an example of the authentic Teutonic Ireland. In a similar vein, Chapter Two "Reimagining Travel and Popular Entertainment", draws attention to relations of travel and displacement in the area, "challenging one-dimensional representation[s] of the anthropological field as characterised primarily by dwelling communities" (14). Sensitively arguing that an anthropological and polyphonic approach is at the forefront of Synge's *Kerry Essays*, the voices of the Kerry people take centre stage. This is evident, as the question of "national" spaces, spaces embedded in transnational cultural and economic currents, are challenged" (74). Moreover, and lending more support to her assertions, is Bruna's comparative exploration and analysis of Synge's *Kerry Essays* with Lynd's *Rambles in Ireland* (1912), throughout which she speculates that Lynd's book owed much to Synge's demythologisation "as it depicts the harsher reality" (68) of Kerry life.

In Chapter three, "Traveling Journalist", Bruna focuses on Synge's trip to Connemara and Mayo, which was sponsored by *The Manchester Guardian* in 1905. Drawing on visual materials, notably Jack B. Yeats's pen-and-ink illustrations and sketches, journalistic sources such as magazines and periodicals, Bruna accentuates that Synge's unpatronizing and empathetic understanding of the "history from below" provides a damning critique of colonial structures like the Congested Districts Board. Quoting Declan

Kiberd comparison of Synge's Contested Districts to George Orwell's *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937), Bruna points out that Synge "investigates in a subversive way this differential of marginal and dominant forms – the persistence of backwardness and poverty within the framework of modernizing agents such as the CDB" (87). In the final chapter, "J. M. Synge in the Garden of Ireland", Bruna turns her attention to Synge's complex representation of Wicklow's physical and human-built environment (15). Focusing on Synge's interest in the landscape of the coercive institutes, Bruna effortlessly shows that Synge's style of travel writing embraced modernity as well as tradition; as not only were natural sites of beauty explored but so are "human-built sites of coercion and hegemony, such as workhouses and mental institutions, where cultural loss and disconnect emanate more strongly" (146).

There are some issues which detract from the impact and insightfully nature of Bruna's study. Notably, the decision to employ a variety of theoretical frameworks is distracting and reduces the coherence of Bruna's overall argument. Bruna's suggestion that Synge's accounts of the Congested Districts may draw from the same works by Marx, Engels, and Kropotkin that inform contemporary "socioecological theories and that Synge read while in Paris", (114-115) is somewhat tenuous. However, this study is written in a clear and concise manner that avoids theoretical and technical jargon. As such, it will appeal to general readers, students and scholars with limited knowledge of this subject. One particular strength of this study is the exploration of Synge's contribution to literary magazines such as *the Gael* and the *Shanachie*, and in its contextualisation of Synge's photographic work in the west of Ireland. Moreover, Bruna offers readers a concrete position from which to expand and further consider Synge's non-fiction, Irish Travel Writing and journalism during the Revival period. Therefore, students and scholars from a number of disciplines will find this study an engaging, stimulating and valuable addition to the body of criticism on Synge.

Robert Finnigan

Melania Terrazas, ed., *Estudios Irlandeses,* special issue, *Gender Issues in Contemporary Irish Literature*, 13, 2, 2018, pp. 145. ISSN 1699-311X.

2018 marked hundred years since women achieved the vote in the United Kingdom (also in what is today the Republic of Ireland). Furthermore, the 25th May 2018, saw the vote of the referendum to repeal the 8th Amendment of the Constitution in Ireland, finally giving Irish women full control over themselves. It could not have been a better year then, for the prestigious Spanish journal of Irish studies, *Estudios Irlandeses*, to publish a special issue focused on gender studies.

The editor for this issue, Dr. Melania Terrazas, from Univesidad de la Rioja, counts with a magnificent career on her back both in Irish and gender studies, which shows in the delicacy and exquisiteness in which this issue is edited. Born also from her own academic interests about why have women artists and the question of gender in Irish studies achieved more focus and relevance in recent years, *Gender Issues in Contemporary Irish Literature* counts with top academics in the area and writers, which accompanied Dr. Terrazas in her search for answers about the lives of women in relation to Irish literature through nine brilliant essays and two personal critical commentaries.

The first article that can be encountered is José Lanters's "Groping towards Morality: Feminism, AIDS, and the Spectre of Article 41 in Thomas Kilroy's *Ghosts*", which opens a section of the issue dealing with men writers. This paper focuses on the reasons behind the changes in Thomas Kilroy's adaptation of Ibsen's *Ghosts*. It is brilliantly explained the ways into which Kilroy decided to transpose the context of the Ireland of the time, the 1980's, into Ibsen's classic play by including the AIDS crisis, the power of the Catholic Church in society and even some social change that was starting to emerge in Ireland.

After this, Maureen O'Connor presents part of her research examining Tim Robinson's writing in " 'Informed Love': Human and Non-Human Bodies in Tim Robinson's Ethical Aesthetic". O'Connor sets ground in her article making obvious the relation between gender and the environment. Her expertise in eco-criticism opens new doors and windows in meaning from the work of Tim Robinson, establishing important critical debates and the legacy of Robinson as an environmentally conscious writer.

The third and fourth papers in the issue deal with the work of John Banville from two different perspectives. First, "The 'Woman' as a Frame for the Self: Femininity, Ekphrasis, and Aesthetic Selfhood in John Banville's *Eclipse*, *Shroud*, and *Ancient Light*" by Mehdi Ghassemi, approaches Banville's latest trilogy *Eclipse*, *Shroud*, and *Ancient Light* through its main characters. Ghassemi explores throughout this paper concepts such as the self, following some of Nietzsche's and Paul de Man's theories, in relation with the depiction of women as an enigma in the three books, bridging up the question of alterity and the unfinished self.

Then, Mar Asensio Aróstegui examines in "The Role of Female Characters in the Narrator's Quest for Identity in John Banville's *Eclipse*" to which extent male gaze and objects of desire play a role in the novel *Eclipse*, regarding female characters and their part as erotic objects in a male story. Subject to the male gaze, whether as mundane objects of desire or idealized *objets d'art*, this article aims at showing that women in *Eclipse* refuse to be mere erotic or artistic objects.

The last essay in the male fiction section, José Díaz Cuesta's "Representations of Masculinities in John Michael McDonagh's Satirical Film Text *The Guard*" introduces a discussion in audio-visual media through satire. The

role of the gender perspective in this article brings to the table masculinity issues and an unique insight of McDonagh's work.

The second half of the issue opens up with "Thematic Transgressions and Formal Innovations in Edna O'Brien's *The Country Girls Trilogy* and *Epilogue*" by María Amor Barros del Río, which explores O'Brien's narration as a female Bildungsroman, the censorship issue behind the story and its implications for political and social issues in Ireland both at the time of publication and nowadays.

Then Alicia Muro Llorente discusses in her essay, "The Modernization of William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: Identity and Gender in Iris Murdoch's *The Black Prince*", the concept of Irishness through a careful and in-depth reading of Iris Murdoch's *The Black Prince*. Muro Llorente explains the juxtaposition of male and female views as key for the story and draws a parallelism between Julian in Murdoch's story and Shakespeare's Ophelia.

Continuing with the theatre, Edurne Goñi Alsúa looks at Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion* in "Translating Characters: Eliza Doolittle 'Rendered' into Spanish". Goñi Alsúa explains that Shaw's play has been translated into Spanish four more times in the last century, and argues that all these translations were not able to successfully express the meaning behind the complexity of the characters. She focuses on the character of Eliza in order to analyse the changes in the different versions and how this affects how the character is perceived by an audience in such different manners.

Closing the academic essays, Ekaterina Muraveva's essay, "Exploring Advertising Discourse Critique and Female Identity Problem in The Dystopian World of Louis O'Neill's *Only Ever Yours*", focuses on gender issues from a multidisciplinary perspective. Muraveva aims to question media discourses regarding femininity using an issue of *Cosmopolitan* and also Louise O'Neill's novel *Only Even Yours* (2014). She deals with problematic issues such as female identity in contemporary Ireland, commodification, ageism and the popular culture images that are rooted in everybody's subconscious.

Finally, the issue concludes with two brilliant critical pieces by Rob Doyle and Evelyn Conlon. First, Rob Doyle reflect on gender issues and the role of men in Irish literature, giving his unapologetic view on modern masculinities. Then Evelyn Conlon thinks about the role of literature in society, paying special attention to how it helps to shape one's mind regarding gender issues and the different roles of women in Ireland for centuries.

Overall, *Gender Issues in Contemporary Irish Literature* explores Irish artistic production from new and thought-provoking perspectives. Dr. Terrazas achieves her goal by bringing together a team of experts and way-pavers, which together set the basis of future research in gender and representation in Irish studies. This issue introduces as well basic bibliography which will allow any young scholar, delving into the fantastic area of Irish studies, a point of departure in this up-to-date topic along with new approaches and themes being raised and questioned thoroughly.

Jorge Rodríguez Durán

Carmen Concilio, ed., *Imagining Ageing. Representations of Age and Ageing in Anglophone Literatures*, Bielefeld, Transcript Verlag, 2018, pp. 212. € 29,99. ISBN 978-3-8376-4426-5.

Chi ha paura della vecchiezza? Credo che non ci siano altre esperienze che abbiano prodotto tanti luoghi comuni e tante circonlocuzioni eufemistiche per descriverla e esorcizzarla. Del resto, c'è poco da metaforizzare: "vecchiezza e i mali di vecchiezza" – "age, and age's evils" per dirla con G.M. Hopkins – si basano anche su dati oggettivi, che la psiche provvede successivamente a caricare di valori simbolici. Di dati oggettivi offre un'ampia panoramica "Ageing and Neurological Disease", l'ultimo degli undici saggi di cui si compone il volume. Enrica Favaro, ricercatrice presso il Dipartimento di Scienze Mediche dell'Università di Torino, con la fredda lucidità dello scienziato, offre un quadro desolante dei limiti e dei mali indotti dall'accumulo degli anni: sarcopenia, malnutrizione, demenza, Alzheimer, Parkinson, depressione. Le parole più frequenti che ne descrivono la condizione sono *decrease*, *degeneration*, *reduction*, *weakening* (180-182): tutti termini, come si vede, che sottolineano la perdita di qualcosa. Compare, certo, anche un vocabolo che sembrerebbe segnalare il contrario, *increase*. Finalmente qualcosa che cresce invece di diminuire! Come no? La pressione arteriosa, il rischio vascolare, il volume della prostata. Non c'è da stare allegri! Vero è che la studiosa dedica l'ultima parte del saggio a quegli interventi che possono ridurre gli aspetti degenerativi della tarda età, che consistono prevalentemente nella prevenzione attraverso un controllo della dieta e la modificazione di abitudini o condizioni particolarmente nefaste, quali l'obesità, l'inattività fisica, il fumo. Il riavvolgersi degli anni e la scomparsa di quei segni che il tempo e le esperienze hanno lasciato sul corpo appartengono al mito e all'utopia, che semmai infine si configura piuttosto come distopia e assume i colori dell'incubo, come per esempio in *And Again?*, un romanzo del 1979 di Seán O'Faolain, neppure il migliore della sua produzione letteraria: nel testo viene data ad un uomo la possibilità di ricominciare una nuova vita a sessantacinque anni, ma percorrendola all'indietro fino ai primi vagiti di neonato: un *jeu d'esprit*, come lo definì il critico del tempo del *Sunday Telegraph*; a me parve più una fantasia grottesca, e credo che ne avesse consapevolezza lo stesso O'Faolain.

Questo di Enrica Favaro è peraltro l'unico saggio che si interessi prevalentemente degli aspetti fisiologici della vecchiaia. Tutti gli altri, con l'eccezione del primo, "Ageing in a Faraway Land" di Licia Canton, scrittrice canadese di origine italiana, che si potrebbe leggere più come una memoria che come un saggio, riflettono sulla vecchiezza attraverso il filtro della letteratura, che di questa condizione dello spirito, piuttosto che fenomeno puramente biologico, si è immediatamente impossessata, dai poemi omerici e dai lirici greci fino ai giorni nostri, e presumibilmente continuerà a sondarne i sensi profondi finché ci sarà un uomo che invecchia sulla terra. Licia Canton

racconta, più che descriverla, la vita degli anziani emigrati di prima generazione in Canada. È un racconto gentile, sfumato di tenerezza, soffuso della malinconia che nasce dalla consapevolezza della solitudine di quanti, dopo una lunga vita di impegno e assunzione di responsabilità, vedono conclusa la loro funzione sociale e vivono nell'attesa di una visita da parte dei figli, perché "They are lonely. They need to talk" (16).

"Solitudine": ecco una delle variabili sulle quali si sono innestati nel tempo i molti luoghi comuni sulla vecchiezza e stereotipi sulla figura del vecchio. Naturalmente, come avverte Carmen Concilio nell'introduzione generale, "ageing processes vary according to innumerable variables, depending on genetics, geography, social status, income, gender and education" (12), ma ci sono delle costanti che comunque sembrano inevitabili, almeno nelle culture occidentali, riferibili a questo periodo conclusivo della vita umana: lo sconforto per la decadenza del proprio corpo, la tristezza, la smemoratezza, il senso di rincrescimento per quanto non si è potuto realizzare nel corso della propria vita, il pensiero della morte imminente, la solitudine appunto, e un diffuso senso di fallimento. Tali costanti compaiono pressoché in tutti i saggi raccolti nel volume con maggiore o minore enfasi, in gran parte determinata dai testi letterari presi in considerazione, perché – non dimentichiamolo – si tratta pur sempre di esplorazioni, come ricorda Carmen Concilio nell'introduzione di "Literary Representations of Ageing in British and Anglophone Literature" (4). Come avviene per le riflessioni e le rappresentazioni della morte, la mente si rifiuta di cedere alla violenza dell'inevitabile e costruisce strutture e percorsi alternativi, che la esorcizzino o ne rendano meno penoso l'impatto: la saggezza, la bonomia, l'equilibrio, la solidarietà, l'immaginazione creativa, ma anche l'accettazione o alternativamente la sfida contro "la detestata soglia" leopardiana. Così il saggio di Paolo Bertinetti, "Shakespeare's Grandiose Old Men", che si sofferma soprattutto sulle disgrazie di Lear, Gloucester e Falstaff, si conclude con tre magnifici versi di Dylan Thomas per il vecchio padre morente: "Do not go gentle in to that good night. / Old age should burn and rave at close of day; / Rage, rage against the dying of the light" (23), versi che riportano alla mente tante poesie di W.B. Yeats in cui compaiono figure di vecchi che urlano e combattono contro l'insulto della vecchiezza. Il vecchio in Yeats è figura ossimorica e, com'è nella natura stessa dell'ossimoro, contiene in sé una forza esplosiva, che gli deriva dalla qualità stessa di possedere in sé forze contraddittorie, che ne fanno una figura dialettica. Il vecchio può avere un corpo decrepito, ma il giovane che è al suo interno spinge con forza su quella carne, dandole luminescenza e una forza che può configurarsi come violenza, ossia una violenza che si oppone alla violenza degli anni che trascorrono e alla morte che attende dietro l'angolo.

Proprio con una riflessione sulla duplicità della figura del vecchio in Yeats si apre il bel saggio di Lucia Folena "Ageing and the Attainment of Form in *Robinson Crusoe*", che ne risolve l'apparente dissociazione in una superiore

sintesi di esperienza artistica, per la quale vita e arte, solitamente in insanabile opposizione, trovano nel vecchio, consumato nella sua veste mortale dal "sacro fuoco di Dio" ("God's holy fire"), il loro momento di congiunzione, espresso nell'artificio dell'eternità ("Sailing to Byzantium"). Nonostante l'apertura, illuminante, sull'opera di Yeats, il saggio di Folena si concentra sul *Robinson* di Defoe, individuando nella vicenda umana del personaggio, dalla giovinezza alla età avanzata, la sequenza temporale che procede teleologicamente verso l'acquisizione di quel distacco e quella prospettiva, che permette di ordinare gli innumerevoli frammenti del passato secondo una sequenza logica che dia loro un senso, che non necessariamente avevano quando si verificavano o venivano prodotti. Anche nel saggio di Pier Paolo Piciucco sul romanzo di Julian Barnes, *The Sense of an Ending*, si presenta il dilemma di una personalità in cui convivono due nature, ma questa volta tutto si svolge in una dimensione narratologica: il narratore e il protagonista sono la stessa persona? E quanto c'è di affidabilità nell'uno o nell'altro? Il contrasto fra un "older self" (40) e il presente del narratore, in cui si riconosce solo in parte, si configura ancora una volta come dialettica fra gioventù e vecchiaia. Quest'ultima vorrebbe dare senso ad un passato disordinato e colpevole attraverso una confessione ad un agente esterno, a un'autorità, che potrebbe essere il lettore stesso, ma che in realtà dialoga con il proprio super-io, o finge di farlo. Insomma tutto un grande inganno, e non, come vorrebbe apparire, "confessional fiction", quanto piuttosto una sua parodia.

La ricerca di senso per ciò che rischierebbe di non averne è anche il tema centrale del saggio che segue, " 'Making Sense or No Sense of Existence': The 'Plot' of Thomas Kinsella's *Late Poems* in the Light of Norberto Bobbio's *De Senectute*" di Donatella Badin, che torna a uno dei suoi soggetti favoriti, ossia Thomas Kinsella, di cui può dirsi sia diventata la maggiore esperta in Italia, e di cui esamina i "Late Poems". Anche per Kinsella il dilemma è sempre quello di integrare i frammenti di una lunga esperienza di vita in un insieme, in un tutto, che giustifichi l'uno e gli altri. Ciò avviene attraverso un sondaggio nella memoria individuale alla ricerca di un "bene", che giustifichi non solo la propria vita, ma la vita così come ci si presenta, che potrebbe non significare nulla senza una forma di compensazione che ne giustifichi l'insensatezza. La ricerca del bene nell'esperienza potrebbe condurre all'accettazione – ecco una qualità alla quale faranno riferimento altri saggi contenuti in questo corposo e solido volume e le opere che vi vengono esaminate e discusse – alla pace, all'intuizione che ci sia un ordine nell'universo. Ma responsabilità del poeta, per Kinsella, non è solo di trovare una struttura, un'armonia superiore alla quale fare riferimento, ma di trasmettere quanto ha scoperto alle generazioni future. Tuttavia, per quanto Kinsella cerchi di non cedere ai pensieri di distruzione e di morte, che l'età molto avanzata continua comunque a riproporgli, il suo costante riferimento allo spreco (*waste*), alla desolazione, indica che la sua ricerca è lungi dall'aver trovato un punto di stabilità, e che in

fondo la vecchiaia, per il fatto stesso di non contemplare il futuro, non viene consolata dal rivolgersi alla memoria delle cose buone del passato. Una risposta potrebbe essere quella dell'accettazione di una circolarità dell'esistenza – "Everything will happen again and again" – o, per dirla con T.S. Eliot in "East Coker", uno dei *Quattro Quartetti*, "in my beginning is my end", ma anche "in my end is my beginning". In questo potrebbe trovarsi il senso della vita, e sono l'arte – la musica e la poesia in particolare – e la contemplazione della natura che possono comunicarlo. Una conclusione quasi mistica, che mi ricorda l'escalmazione gioiosa di Juliana di Norwich: "All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well".

Non sono sempre gli anni e gli acciacchi prodotti dall'età a produrre le condizioni psicologiche che si è soliti attribuire alla vecchiezza; spesso un incidente, una malattia degenerativa, un profondo disagio esistenziale possono indurre il senso di una fine imminente e nello stesso tempo, per reazione o illuminazione, determinare svolte esistenziali radicali, produrre quella che potremmo definire una palingenesi, una rigenerazione, un percorso alternativo verso quella ricerca di senso, che dia un ordine unitario ai frammenti sparsi dell'esistenza. Nel saggio di Irene De Angelis sulla raccolta poetica *Human Chain* (2010) di Seamus Heaney, la studiosa si sofferma, più che sulla vecchiezza, sulla condizione di impotenza e paralisi indotte da un improvviso attacco cardiaco, che colpì il poeta nel 2006. Nel ricordo di quei momenti drammatici, più che il dolore e l'angoscia sono l'amore, la solidarietà, la gratitudine e l'accettazione a emergere e affermarsi. Questi sentimenti colorano di nuova spiritualità anche le riflessioni sul senso da dare agli anni che trascorrono verso l'inevitabile fine, che non si configura come caduta nel nulla, come nella terribile poesia di Philip Larkin, "Aubade", ma nella celebrazione di quanti – amici, intellettuali, familiari, gente comune – hanno illuminato la sua vita e reso la morte "a liberation, a passage to a higher state of being" (97).

Anche i due saggi di Carmen Concilio, uno su un racconto di Alice Munro e sulla sua trasposizione filmica della regista canadese Sarah Polley, l'altro su un'analisi comparata di un romanzo di J.M. Coetzee, *Age of Iron*e e di *Mrs Dalloway* di Virginia Woolf, presentano situazioni e personaggi in cui l'età anagrafica ha minore importanza degli effetti indotti sul corpo e sulla mente da patologie come il morbo di Alzheimer, nel primo caso, e quell' "existential malaise" (142), come la definisce la stessa Concilio, di cui è permeata la vita di Mrs Dalloway e che tormenta, seppure per altre cause, quella della protagonista del romanzo di Coetzee. Sono condizioni di impedimento mentale e psicologico che rinforzano – se ce ne fosse bisogno – l'idea della vecchiezza come riduzione della propria autonomia, fisica e mentale. Sia nel primo che nel secondo saggio, peraltro, Carmen Concilio evidenzia possibilità di riscatto, di superamento di una condizione, che se tende a distruggere l'identità personale di chi ne è affetto, ha anche effetti devastanti sulla socialità, inducendo isolamento e solitudine, due dei mali tradizionalmente associati all'età

avanzata: il racconto di Alice Munro crea un personaggio femminile, quello di Fiona, che si avvia volontariamente e serenamente verso la clinica privata che l'accoglierà per gli ultimi giorni della sua vita, nel momento in cui viene a sapere di essere affetta dall'Alzheimer. Nella gratitudine per chi le è stato vicino e nella comprensione per chi, dopo la sua scomparsa, potrà ricostruire quella vita che a lei è stata negata, il narratore intravede una risposta di dignità a quella condizione – figlia di una malattia a torto o a ragione associata alla vecchiezza – che sembra avergliela negata. Nel secondo saggio, i due romanzi ci pongono di fronte ad altrettanti protagonisti, capaci di scelte in grado di smentire l'equivalenza automatica fra degenerazione fisica e declino morale.

Due saggi, quelli di Blossom Fondo, che insegna *postcolonial studies* all'Università di Maroua in Camerun, e quello di Paola Della Valle, ricercatrice specializzata anche lei in studi postcoloniali particolarmente per quanto riguarda la letteratura Maori in Nuova Zelanda, rovesciano completamente la prospettiva "Western centric" (169) da cui di solito si legge la vicenda della tarda età. L'invecchiamento e i suoi problemi, come osserva Fondo, sono il "missing theme" (124) degli studi post-coloniali ovvero vi è assente l'ottica che contrappone vecchiaia/negatività a giovinezza/positività. Il romanzo di Coetzee, *Iron Age*, già oggetto di analisi in un saggio di Carmen Concilio, è letto dalla studiosa camerunense da un punto di vista diverso, ossia da quello della sua struttura formale, che affidando gli stati psicologici cangianti di una persona alla fine della sua vita allo stile epistolare, non vi sovraimpone quella prospettiva "occidentale" che inevitabilmente finirebbe per emergere attraverso il tramite di un narratore. Lo stile epistolare permette al lettore di seguire il percorso psicologico che conduce la protagonista a riconsiderare i valori, ovvero disvalori, che hanno orientato le sue scelte di vita nel paese sudafricano afflitto da razzismo e apartheid, per giungere alla condanna della società coloniale e al riconoscimento di una comune umanità, in cui ogni individuo ha diritto al rispetto della propria dignità indipendentemente da categorie discriminanti come il sesso e il colore della pelle.

Nella minoranza indigena Maori di Aotearoa, Nuova Zelanda, vecchiaia e invecchiamento sono considerati in modo totalmente diverso. Per gli scrittori Maori gli anziani sono spesso considerati come i tesori (*taonga*) della comunità. Esiste uno scambio costante e produttivo fra il vecchio – che continua a fornire aiuti anche concreti alla famiglia, sia quella nucleare, sia quella allargata, oltre che essere custode dei valori culturali sui quali la comunità si regge – e la comunità stessa, che garantisce al vecchio protezione e cure, affetto e considerazione.

"A truly civilized society", scrive Della Valle citando Martha Nussbaum, "is one that guarantees the rights of the 'weaker' categories" (175), una riflessione che richiama le parole con cui Licia Canton conclude il suo saggio-narrazione: "When I think of the elderly, I think of their vulnerability. But I also think of their wisdom and experience, and how much we could learn

from them if we took the time to do so" (14). Già, perché non lo troviamo questo tempo?

Giuseppe Serpillo

Michela Marroni, *Dialoghi traduttologici. Il testo letterario e la lingua inglese*, Chieti, Solfanelli, 2018, pp. 203. € 15. ISBN 978-88-3305-056-0.

Il discorso sulla traduzione ha una lunga storia, in quanto l'attività del tradurre è parte integrante della necessità umana di comunicare e conoscere, ma allo stesso tempo è anche una storia ancora tutta da scrivere, poiché si tratta di un campo in cui teoria e pratica sempre s'incontrano, favorendo la riflessione e la ricerca. Partendo da un'idea di traduzione come interdisciplina, per l'ampiezza delle tematiche affrontate e per il numero di discipline coinvolte, *Dialoghi traduttologici* di Michela Marroni s'inserisce nel dibattito critico considerando approcci teorici diversi e numerosi esempi che mettono in luce sia l'importanza cruciale della traduzione letteraria nelle dinamiche culturali, sia il ruolo del traduttore come figura fondamentale in quella che Lotman chiama "semiosfera".

La monografia presenta un articolato capitolo introduttivo seguito da quattro saggi, due incentrati su Sarah Austin e George Eliot traduttrici e due sullo studio comparativo di diverse versioni italiane di *Mansfield Park* e *Ulysses.* Muovendosi tra riflessioni teoriche e metodologiche, *Dialoghi Traduttologici* è un libro ricco di stimoli, non solo per lo specialista della materia. L'autrice pone al centro della sua indagine la traduzione dei classici, in quanto essa sfrutta pienamente tutta la ricchezza del linguaggio letterario: una peculiare complessità che chiama in causa le competenze del traduttore, fornendo così l'occasione per ridiscuterne il ruolo, il suo rapporto con il mercato editoriale, la sua visibilità e dignità.

È la complessità a caratterizzare in primo luogo il lavoro traduttologico, come appare evidente nel primo capitolo del libro, dedicato appunto alle traduzioni e ai traduttori. La polisemia e la multilivellarità del testo letterario pongono il traduttore di fronte ad una vera e propria sfida, che concretamente si configura nei termini di un percorso decisionale non privo di rischi, nel quale bisognerà considerare "una oggettiva impossibilità di transcodificazione" (19) o l'eventualità di perdere qualcosa. Un esempio è dato dal romanzo *Mary Barton* di Elizabeth Gaskell, in cui la variante dialettale del Lancashire, che distingue i personaggi appartenenti alla classe operaia, impone un inevitabile addomesticamento. Talora la perdita semantica dal punto di vista filologico e storico-culturale si realizza sin dallo stesso titolo dell'opera, come nel caso dell'eliotiano *Middlemarch* o di *Almayer's Folly* di Conrad.

Da un'altra prospettiva, se si mette da parte quello che Susan Bassnett definisce "the language of 'loss' ", i grandi capolavori della letteratura offrono

al traduttore l'occasione di dispiegare le sue competenze e la sua creatività. Ciò è tanto più evidente in testi densi di rimandi letterari come quelli joyciani, in cui il traduttore non potrà esimersi in una certa misura dal re-inventare la lingua. Un caso esemplare è quello dalla traduzione di *Finnegans Wake*, per la quale, scrivono Enrico Terrinoni e Fabio Pedone nella "Nota dei traduttori", si rende necessaria una vera e propria "riesecuzione musicale", che dà luogo a significati nuovi e imprevisti, o *bonus meanings* (25) nel testo di arrivo.

Il dialogo tra testo di partenza e testi di arrivo costituisce il principale filo conduttore che percorre i vari saggi raccolti nel volume: Marroni sottolinea l'importanza della traduzione in senso dialogico, in quanto essa stabilisce un confronto non soltanto tra autore, traduttore e rispettive culture, ma anche tra traduzioni di un medesimo testo, in senso diacronico. Per il traduttore letterario si prospetta pertanto una duplice sfida, poiché alla complessità retorico-linguistica e storico-filologica dell'originale si aggiunge una genealogia traduttiva con la quale non potrà non fare i conti: una "dialettica diacronica che – dal punto di vista della ricerca letteraria – non può non significare un arricchimento della cultura di arrivo e, nel contempo, una crescita della prospettiva critico-filologica intorno a un autore, e comunque un movimento intorno al canone letterario " (36).

Ogni nuova traduzione in qualche modo riscrive l'originale, espandendone i significati, in un processo che non è mai concluso, ma che piuttosto appare come una cristallizzazione momentanea, secondo l'efficace immagine di Friedmar Apel richiamata da Marroni per evocare le idee di incompletezza e imperfezione come cifre caratterizzanti la traduzione. Non esiste una versione perfetta, né una che possa pretendere di aver esaurito tutte le potenzialità dell'originale; anzi, esso si disvela in un certo senso solo attraverso le sue traduzioni, come ben sottolinea l'autrice citando Christian Kohlross: "Something of what and how the original signifiesis first revealed in the moment of translation and not a single moment before" (47).

Particolarmente significativo da questa angolazione è il caso delle traduzioni italiane di *Ulysses*, cui è dedicato interamente il capitolo quinto. Partendo da un noto brano del romanzo *The Hours* di Michael Cunningham, in cui è evidente il richiamo all'incipit joyciano, l'autrice mostra come l'intertestualità possa andare del tutto perduta in un'altra lingua per la disattenzione del traduttore al quale sembrano sfuggire tanto le risonanze letterarie quanto le tensioni fondamentali che strutturano il testo, con una conseguente "riduzione dell'impatto espressivo dell'intero episodio" (152). Si passa quindi ad analizzare l'incipit di *Ulysses,* mettendo a confronto tre versioni italiane del romanzo: quella mondadoriana a cura di Giulio De Angelis (1988), l'edizione Newton-Compton con la traduzione di Enrico Terrinoni (2012) e l'edizione Einaudi a firma di Gianni Celati (2013). L'autrice dà risalto ai diversi approcci traduttologici attraverso un'analisi attenta delle scelte dei traduttori, dai singoli lessemi e sintagmi ai richiami letterari. Scelte che, benché talora

possano apparire discutibili, nel contempo rivelano la "magica operosità"(171) dell'originale e il ruolo cruciale delle traduzioni nell'alimentare il dibattito attorno all'opera joyciana.

L'esempio delle prime parole dell'incipit, "stately, plump" è illuminante: se Terrinoni coglie il rimando shakespeariano e dà conto della scelta compiuta nella sua traduzione ("statuario, il pingue"), l'allusività scompare nella versione di Celati, che peraltro, come Marroni non manca di osservare, lascia perplessi anche sotto altri punti di vista. Il traduttore di Einaudi, nel complesso, sembra evitare di confrontarsi con "il rompicapo ermeneutico" (164) creato da Joyce, preferendo piuttosto un confronto con l'antecedente mondadoriano di De Angelis. Ad ogni modo, tutte le traduzioni contribuiscono, in un'ottica dialogica, alla vitalità dell'originale che si esprime proprio nel dialogo con le molteplici riscritture. In tale prospettiva, il confronto tra le diverse versioni del famoso monologo di Molly Bloom proposto dall'autrice è estremamente significativo. "Penelope" costituisce un episodio chiave del libro, che in Italia è apparso anche in una pubblicazione a sé stante, nel 1978 nella collana Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli, a cura di Giulio De Angelis. Si tratta di "una vera e propria sfida", scrive Marroni, "per qualsiasi joycista" (164), nella quale il traduttore mette in gioco la sua inventiva e un insieme di competenze filologico-letterarie, come ben spiega Enrico Terrinoni nell'apparato critico del suo *Ulisse*, illustrando puntualmente le scelte operate nella resa del monologo, nel tentativo di "rincorrere la velocità non scritta del pensiero"(169).

Molte volte nel corso del libro Marroni fa riferimento alle "Note del Traduttore": esse chiariscono il *modus operandi* del traduttore, mostrandone il ruolo di mediatore e la dignità di scrittore che ri-crea il testo, senza temere la sfida della complessità. In particolare, affrontando la complessità del testo poetico, di fronte al quale ogni traduzione, come già notava George Eliot, pare inadeguata, il traduttore è chiamato a superare l'idea di sacralità dell'originale o, nei termini di Mario Praz, "la pretesa di mettersi alla pari con la cetra dell'autore imitato" (18). Nel confronto con la poesia, e più in generale con i classici della letteratura, si misura lo spessore culturale del traduttore, da intendersi non soltanto come conoscenze filologico-linguistiche, ma anche un "intreccio di passione e vocazione, di piacere e impegno totalizzante" (69). Tutto ciò si scontra con le leggi del mercato editoriale, in cui il ruolo del traduttore non è sempre debitamente riconosciuto e in cui il lettore è considerato anzitutto un potenziale acquirente. Di qui, la tendenza a privilegiare la scorrevolezza e la linearità del testo o, detto diversamente, l'addomesticamento dell'originale ai fini di una maggiore fruibilità commerciale. A tale forzata *domestication*, che in alcuni casi diventa manipolazione del testo di partenza, si oppongono le scelte di tanti traduttori che si dedicano con grande competenza al proprio lavoro, mettendo al primo posto la fedeltà all'originale senza facili semplificazioni e senza timore di correre rischi, poiché inevita-

bilmente "Tradurre è un azzardo", come scrive in una *Nota* Dario Calimani, traduttore di W.B. Yeats.

Pur confermando che il traduttore, di fatto, non ha bisogno di porsi questioni epistemologiche per svolgere correttamente il proprio compito – e spesso per esigenze contrattuali non ne avrebbe neppure il tempo –, Marroni molto opportunamente ricorda che la connessione tra teoria e prassi nella traduzione risulta inevitabile e si dimostra un'esigenza sentita dagli stessi traduttori. Se è vero che alcuni sembrano del tutto disinteressati alla teoria, è anche vero che tanti adottano "un approccio più consapevole e impegnato, anche sul versante della ricerca linguistico-filologica e culturologica" (30). In risposta alla provocatoria soluzione di Stefano Manferlotti, ovvero l'invito a fare a meno delle traduzioni per apprezzare l'autentico valore dei classici, l'autrice ribadisce invece che un mondo senza traduttori sarebbe impossibile, giacché essi paradossalmente sono nati prima dei testi da tradurre e restano figure cardine nel grande palcoscenico della cultura.

Dopo la complessità, un altro paradigma ricorrente riferito alla traduzione letteraria è il paradosso. Tra i gradi di "paradossalità" Marroni colloca anche l'auto-traduzione, ricordando tra gli altri l'esempio di Samuel Beckett che traduce *En attendant Godot* e *Fin de Partie* dal francese, rendendosi conto dell'impossibilità di rendere parola per parola il suo stesso testo, soprattutto per questioni di ordine culturale (35). Il paradosso si evidenzia in maniera particolare nello status del traduttore autore e non-autore, nei termini posti con chiarezza da Tim Parks nel suo articolo "I traduttori sono autori?" (*Il Sole 24 Ore*, 17 dicembre 2017); vale a dire, il traduttore possiede o no una creatività autoriale? La risposta del critico emerge dal confronto tra tre diverse versioni italiane di *Memorie dal Sottosuolo* di Dostoevskij, che mostrano, ciascuna con le sue sfumature, lo stile dell'autore. Conclude perciò Parks che più traduzioni si hanno e meglio conosciamo Dostoevskij.

Sulla stessa linea si pone lo studio comparativo proposto nel secondo capitolo, incentrato sulle traduzioni di *Mansfield Park*. L'autrice si sofferma su una serie di segmenti testuali tratti dal romanzo austeniano, considerando quattro versioni italiane – oltre ad una recente versione online – analizzate secondo il binomio *overtranslation* vs. *undertranslation*. Analogamente a quanto visto per *Ulysses*, le traduzioni di Jane Austen testimoniano le potenzialità inesauribili dell'originale, ricordando che è impossibile approdare ad una traduzione definitiva di un grande classico e che l'enigma del tradurre sta proprio "nella differenza che mai si lascia colmare" (49).

Pur non adottando una prospettiva esplicitamente di *gender*, Marroni dà ampio risalto alle donne, soffermandosi sulle figure di due intellettuali dell'Ottocento nella loro veste di traduttrici, Sarah Austin e George Eliot, per concludere con il personaggio di Molly Bloom, "che tutte le donne sussume" (182). La scelta di un'ottica femminile non è certamente casuale, come la stessa studiosa conferma al termine della monografia: "il contributo delle

donne è stato insostituibile, non solo perché come traduttrici hanno configurato un punto di vista altro […], ma anche perché il loro portato trasgressivo conteneva in sé un valore progressivo: un valore di cambiamento. Le donne traduttrici hanno aperto nuovi orizzonti" (*ibidem*).

D'altro canto, proprio il cambiamento e l'apertura di nuovi orizzonti sono gli aspetti caratterizzanti del dialogo traduttologico e l'imperfezione è l'orizzonte in cui opera il traduttore. Nell'insidioso viaggio della traduzione letteraria, mai definitivamente concluso, il volume di Marroni suggerisce nuovi spunti di riflessione e ricerca, offrendo un contributo utile e interessante non solo per gli specialisti del settore.

Maria Luigia Di Nisio

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Bisi Adigun, *An Other Playboy; Home, Sweet Home!; The Butcher Babes (Plays)*, Leeds, Universal Books UK, 2018, pp. 308. GBP 15. ISBN 978-1-910609-15.6.

Chris Arthur, *Hummingbirds Between the Pages*, Columbus, Mad Creek Books, 2018, pp. 254. USD 23.95. ISBN 978-0-8142-5484-4.

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Martin Andrew (<benedictandrew@gmail.com>) researches and lectures teacher education, creative practices and language learning. Transdisciplinary in focus, his wide-ranging interests include identity and writing, authentic assessment, international education and research supervision. Involved in Transnational Education, he has lectured at Australian, Vietnamese and New Zealand universities. Also a drama and literary studies scholar, he places his current focus as an educator on doctoral education and mentoring within Professional Practice frameworks.

Rosangela Barone (<rbarone0@gmail.com>) Ph.D. (Dublin City University), h.c. (N.U.I. Galway), literary critic, translator into Italian from English and Irish; retired professor of English at Bari University, Cultural Attaché to the Italian Embassy/Director of the Italian Cultural Institute, Dublin. She has published on/translated from: Beckett, Friel, Hardy, Heaney, Hutchinson, Kavanagh, Lady Gregory, Mangan, Martyn, Tom Murphy, Ní Dhomhnaill, O'Casey, Ó Snodaigh, Titley, Woolf, Yeats. Among her editions/translations: Eva Gore-Booth (*The Oak Tree and the Olive Tree*/*La quercia e l'ulivo*, 1991), Eoghain Ó Tuairisc (*Aifreann na Marbh*/*Messa dei defunti*, 2004), and three books in collaboration with Melita Cataldi: *Dán is Scór*/*Venti e una poesia* (1998), Lady Gregory (*La mela d'oro*, 2005), *Il teatro 'povero' di Lady Gregory* (2011).

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Trinity College Dublin. From 2014 to 2018, he taught Gender Studies at Wayne State University (Detroit) and now works at the Honors College of the University of Pittsburgh. His first book, *Masculinity and Power in Irish Nationalism, 1884-1938*, was published in 2016 and was awarded the James S. Donnelly Sr. Prize for Books in History and Social Science by the American Conference for Irish Studies. His co-edited book, *Irish Questions and Jewish Questions: Crossovers in Culture*, is recently published with Syracuse University Press, and he also has papers coming out this year with *Irish Historical Studies* and the *Journal of Modern History*.

Pat Boran (<author@patboran.com>) was born in Portlaoise in 1963 and has long since lived in Dublin where he works as a poetry editor and publisher. He is the author of more than a dozen books of poetry and prose, most recently the poetry collections *Then Again* (2019), *A Man Is Only As Good: A Pocket Selected Poems* (2017) and *Waveforms: Bull Island Haiku* (2015). He is also the author of the humorous memoir *The Invisible Prison: Scenes from an Irish Childhood* (2009). Awards include the Patrick Kavanagh Award and the US-based Lawrence O'Shaughnessy Award for Poetry. He is a former presenter of "The Poetry Programme" on RTÉ Radio, a former editor of *Poetry Ireland Review*, and former Programme Director of the Dublin Writers Festival. He was elected to Aosdána in 2007.

Jason Matthew Buchanan (<jbuchanan@hostos.cuny.edu>) is an Assistant Professor of English at The City University of New York—Hostos. His work focuses on how contemporary literature critiques the impact of globalization. Of particular interest to his scholarship is how economic and political decisions shape the way authors understand everyday spaces and routines. His work has been published in *Modern Drama*, *Studies in the Humanities*, and *Modern Fiction Studies*.

Patrick Callan (<patcallan1@gmail.com>)'s early career historical research focused on the recruiting campaigns for the British Army in Ireland during the First World War, cultural aspects of Irish education, as well as Irish literary and journalistic figures such as O'Casey. Recently, he has focused on the representation of Dublin in *Ulysses*, and the broadcasting of Joyce's work on the BBC. He has had articles on Joycean themes accepted by the *James Joyce Quarterly* and the *Dublin James Joyce Journal*. The *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* has recently published his article on the broadcasting of Joyce on BBC radio, 1931 to 1956. He is a visiting research fellow in the Centre for Contemporary Irish History at Trinity College Dublin, and an occasional lecturer in education at Maynooth University.

Ann Wan-lih Chang (<chang.wanlih@gmail.com>) is currently the assistant professor of English at Shih-chien University, Kaohsiung Campus, Taiwan.

She completed a PhD in contemporary Irish women's literature from the University of Ulster in 2006. Her major fields of research interests cover gender issues, archetypes and folktales in modern and contemporary Irish women's writing including Edna O'Brien, Clare Boylan, Éilís Ní Dhuibhne, Nuala Ní Chonchúir and Emma Donoghue. She is the author of *Liam O'Flaherty: the Unromantic Seanchaí* (2009) and several journal articles on women's issues in contemporary Irish women's short fiction.

Anna Charczun (<Anna.Charczun@brunel.ac.uk>) researches the development of Irish lesbian narrative between the 1800s and 2000s, investigates how the narrative evolved over time, and examines thoroughly the near-entirety of the works that were included in this emergent canon.

Evelyn Conlon (<www.evelynconlon.com>) is a novelist and short story writer, widely translated, most recently into Tamil and Chinese. Conlon is the editor/co-editor of four anthologies including *Cutting the Night in Two* (2001) and *Later On* (2004), and has been writer-in-residence at UCD and teaches on the Carlow College, Pittsburgh MFA. Conlon has given a series of talks titled *Corridors of Truth, what Fiction adds to History* developed from her research on *Skin of Dreams* (2003), and *Not the Same Sky* (2013, 2015), novels that deal with Capital Punishment and Irish Famine orphan girls, shipped to Australia. "Dear You", a story about Violet Gibson, the Irish woman who attempted to assassinate Mussolini, has been published by *Tratti* in English and Italian. Evelyn is a member of Aosdána.

Carla de Petris (<depetrisc@hotmail.com>), Senior Professor of English at Roma Tre University. During her academic career she has introduced many Irish writers to the Italian reading public with essays, interviews, translations and theatre productions. She has co-edited two collections of essays, *The Cracked Looking- Glass* (1999) and *Continente Irlanda* (2001). Her research on Joyce's stay in Rome and the significant reference to it in his only play is at the root of her translation of Joyce's Exiles for Mondadori. *'Traduzioni' e altri drammi* (1996) is the first Italian translation of Brian Friel's major works with a long general introduction. At present, she is involved in Cultural Studies with focus on gender and education. She has introduced the first Italian translation of Maria Edgeworth's *Harrington* (2012).

Celine Kearney (<Celine.Kearney@wintec.ac.nz>) has a background in journalism and had a series of her interviews about women's spirituality published as *Faces of the Goddess* (1998). Her PhD inquiry (2010- 2016) used narrative as method and text. She has taught English as an Additional Language (EAL) at universities and institutions of technology in Aotearoa New Zealand, and in Vietnam, and currently teaches academic literacies to undergraduate and

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Emer Lyons (<emerlyonsbandon@gmail.com>) is a creative/critical PhD student in the English department at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand and originally from Cork. She was the inaugural recipient of the UNESCO City of Literature PhD scholarship in 2017. Her poetry, fiction and reviews have appeared in journals such as *Poetry Ireland Review*, *The Tangerine*, *Headland*, *Turbine*, *Mimicry*, *takahē*, *Southword*, *The Cardiff Review*, *London Grip*, and *Queen Mob's Tea House*.

Fiona Lyons (<fiona.lyons@ucd.ie>) is a second year PhD student in University College Dublin, Ireland. Her thesis *'Thall is Abhus' Irish Language Revival, Media and the Transatlantic Influence, 1857-1897 (40 years)*, examines the revival of the Irish language as a transatlantic venture with a new focus on print media and cultural organisations. She is currently a tutor and occasional lecturer in the School of Irish, Celtic Studies, and Folklore. She recently digitised Douglas Hyde's collection of postcards and his 1918/19 memoir, housed in the National Folklore Collection UCD, as part of the Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme "An Teanga Bheo". Her research is funded by the Irish Research Council under the Government of Ireland Postgraduate Programme.

Kay McCarthy (<kayceolceol@gmail.com>) Irish by birth, Italian by adoption, is a musician, teacher and translator. She received an honours degree in English, Italian and History from the National University of Ireland, University College, Galway, in 1968/1969, which the Academic Senate of Rome's Sapienza University recognised as equivalent to an Italian "Laurea" in foreign languages and literature in June 1973. A lover of sounds and languages she gives concerts all over Italy and is passionate about the transposition of texts from one language to another.

Andrew Maguire (<af.maguire@ulster.ac.uk>) holds a BA Hons and PG Diploma in Irish History & Politics, a Masters in Research (History) and a PhD in Irish History/Diaspora Politics (UU, Magee). He currently works in educational support at North West Regional College (Derry) and is an Associate Lecturer at Ulster University. His specialist area is concerned with Irish migration and settlement in the county of Yorkshire and Irish diaspora nationalist politics in the region.

James Mc Elroy (<jpmcelroy@ucdavis.edu>) teaches at The University of California. His articles and reviews have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The American Poetry Review*, and a number of other publications.

Verónica Membrive (<v.membrive@ual.es>) studied English and earned a Master's Degree in English Studies in 2011 She completed her Ph.D. at the University of Almería (2017) on Irish travel writers in Spain during the twentieth-century. She has delivered papers on Walter Starkie, Kate O'Brien and Pearse Hutchison and their travels in Spain. She is currently teaching English at the University of Almería. Her field of research is Irish Literature, with a special focus on the relationships between Ireland and Spain. She has been awarded the International George Campbell Award for her research on Hiberno-Spanish cultural relations (University of Málaga, 2018).

Carlos Menéndez-Otero (<menendezocarlos@uniovi.es>) holds a PhD in English Studies from the University of Oviedo, and in Communication and Journalism from the University of Santiago de Compostela. He currently lectures at the Faculties of Education and Commerce, Tourism and Social Sciences at the University of Oviedo. His main research interests are Irish cinema and the representation of Ireland and the Irish in Irish-themed films from Hollywood's golden era, on which he has published over twenty papers and the book *Irlanda y los irlandeses en el cine popular (1910-1970)* (2017). Other research interests include contemporary Irish history, dubbing, television shows, regional television and English for specific purposes.

Grainne O'Keeffe-Vigneron (<grainne.o-keeffe@univ-rennes2.fr>) is a lecturer at the Université Rennes 2, France. She completed her PhD on the Irish in England and their fight for recognition as an ethnicity minority in the 2001 British Census. She is currently working on the Irish diaspora in France and is co-directing, "Les diasporas irlandaises: enjeux économiques, migrations, integration" as part of a national research project in Irish studies in France (Groupement d'Intérêt Scientifique, G.I.S EIRE). She has recently completed a report on the Irish in France for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Dublin.

Emily Pausa (<pausae@xavier.edu>), a native of Trieste, was a student and teaching assistant at Xavier University. The research in the current issue is based on a grant she received in 2017 to research the role of the Irish-American diaspora in the Northern Ireland peace process. She recently graduated Summa Cum Laude from Xavier University with majors in Communication Studies and International studies, a concentration in International Business and a minor in Public Relations. She will be beginning her working experience in Tampa, Florida, at Aetna, a CVS Health Company, where she will be working in General Management.

Loredana Salis (<lsalis@uniss.it>) is Associate Professor of English Literature at the University of Sassari. Her research interests include exile and gender(ed) narratives and adaptations of the canon. She has published monographs on uses of myth (2009) and stage representations of the migrant other (2010) in contemporary Irish literature, and articles on Gaskell, H. Martineau, Dickens, G. Eliot, E. O'Brien, Carr, F. McGuinness, Morrissy, and Heaney. She has translated Dickens' theatre (2013) and Yeats' prose (2015), and edited Constance Markievicz's *Lettere dal carcere* (2017). Currently she is working on Markievicz's political writings. She is a Board member of ANDA (Associazione nazionale dei docenti di anglistica) and EFACIS (European Federation of Associations and Centres of Irish Studies).

Giuseppe Serpillo (<pserpillo978@gmail.com>), retired professor of English at the University of Sassari, has translated poems by Yeats, Kavanagh, Egan, O'Grady and others, and published essays on contemporary Irish poetry. Desmond Egan's *Poesie scelte*, which he edited with Francesco Marroni, was awarded the Bologna Poetry Prize in 1998. He has also published articles on Irish playwrights and prose writers: Synge, O'Casey, Behan, Frank O'Connor, Joyce, O'Faolain and others. In 1994 he was the convenor, with Donatella Badin, of an international conference of Irish studies at Sassari and Alghero. In 2002 he was awarded the O'Connor Cup by the Gerard Manley Hopkins Society for his contributions to the International Summer School in Monasterevin and his critical contribution to Irish studies.

Gerry Smyth (<G.A.Smyth@ljmu.ac.uk>) is Professor of Irish Cultural History at Liverpool John Moores University. He has published widely on different aspects of Irish cultural history, including *The Judas Kiss: Treason and Betrayal in Six Modern Irish Novels* (2015) and *Celtic Tiger Blues: Music and Irish Identity* (2016). He is currently working on a monograph on the subject of music in the work of James Joyce. Professor Smyth is also a musician, an actor and playwright. He has produced a full musical version of James Joyce's *Chamber Music*, a new album of songs based on the lyrics of W.B. Yeats will be launched in the autumn of 2019. His play *Nora & Jim* premiered at the

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Thomas Tormey (<tormeyt@tcd.ie>) is a fourth-year PhD student at the Centre for Contemporary Irish History, Trinity College, Dublin, under the supervision of Professor Eunan O'Halpin, and holds an MA in Military History and Strategic Studies from Maynooth University. His research focuses on guerrilla warfare and the dynamics of violence in the Irish War of Independence. Thomas contributed to the 2016 edition of the *Defence Forces Review* and has reviewed books for a number of peer reviewed publications including the *Irish Studies Review* and *Twentieth Century British History*. He received a Grace Lawless Lee travel grant in 2017-18 to pursue research in archives across England and has presented at the AGMs of both the American Conference for Irish Studies and the Society for Military History.

Pilar Villar-Argáiz (<pvillar@ugr.es>) is a Senior Lecturer of British and Irish Literatures at the University of Granada and the General Editor of the major series "Studies in Irish Literature, Cinema and Culture" in Edward Everett Root Publishers. She is the author of the books *Eavan Boland's Evolution as an Irish Woman Poet: An Outsider within an Outsider's Culture* (2007) and *The Poetry of Eavan Boland: A Postcolonial Reading* (2008). She has published extensively on contemporary Irish poetry and fiction, in relation to questions of gender, race, migration and interculturality. Her edited collections include *Literary Visions of Multicultural Ireland: The Immigrant in Contemporary Irish Literature* (2014), and *Irishness on the Margins: Minority and Dissident Identities* (2018).

Timothy J. White (<white@xavier.edu>) is Professor of Political Science at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio and has previously held research positions at the National University of Ireland-Galway. His most recent edited collection, Theories of International Relations and Northern Ireland, was publishef by Manchester University Press. His recent research on the Irish-American diaspora has also focused on the changing nature of Irish emigration to the United States in the 1950s based on demographic data and the play and film, Brooklyn. This research with Josette Smyth was presented at the Annual Meeting of Franco-Irish Studies Association in Lille on May 25, 2019. White's research on American Foreign Policy in the Northern Ireland peace process was published in The Open Library of the Humanities in 2018.

Victoria Yee Wei Wen (<vict0017@e.ntu.edu.sg>) completed her M.A. in English Literature at Nanyang Technological University (Singapore) in 2018. Her research interests include contemporary literature, feminist studies, and new media. Her thesis on Neil Gaiman's graphic novel *The Sandman* addresses

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Published Works

The works listed below were submitted to Firenze University Press by the Advisory Board of the Department and set up for publication by its Open Access Publishing Workshop

Open Access Volumes
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Stefania Pavan, *Lezioni di poesia. Iosif Brodskij e la cultura classica: il mito, la letteratura, la filosofia*, 2006 (Biblioteca di Studi di Filologia Moderna; 1)

Rita Svandrlik (a cura di), *Elfriede Jelinek. Una prosa altra, un altro teatro*, 2008 (Biblioteca di Studi di Filologia Moderna; 2)

Ornella De Zordo (a cura di), *Saggi di anglistica e americanistica. Temi e prospettive di ricerca*, 2008 (Strumenti per la didattica e la ricerca; 66)

Fiorenzo Fantaccini, *W. B. Yeats e la cultura italiana*, 2009 (Biblioteca di Studi di Filologia Moderna; 3)

Arianna Antonielli, *William Blake e William Butler Yeats. Sistemi simbolici e costruzioni poetiche*, 2009 (Biblioteca di Studi di Filologia Moderna; 4)

Marco Di Manno, *Tra sensi e spirito. La concezione della musica e la rappresentazione del musicista nella letteratura tedesca alle soglie del Romanticismo*, 2009 (Biblioteca di Studi di Filologia Moderna; 5)

Maria Chiara Mocali, *Testo. Dialogo. Traduzione. Per una analisi del tedesco tra codici e varietà*, 2009 (Biblioteca di Studi di Filologia Moderna; 6)

Ornella De Zordo (a cura di), *Saggi di anglistica e americanistica. Ricerche in corso*, 2009 (Strumenti per la didattica e la ricerca; 95)

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Roberta Carnevale, *Il corpo nell'opera di Georg Büchner. Büchner e i filosofi materialisti dell'Illuminismo francese*, 2009 (Biblioteca di Studi di Filologia Moderna; 8)

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