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The International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures



# IASIL 2024

## *Tokyo, Japan*



*Aftermaths*

Book of Abstracts

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## Keynote Lectures

Michael Cronin

### **Continental Aftermaths?: Ireland in the More-than-Human World**

The French philosopher Gilles Deleuze, in the title text of a posthumous collection of essays *Desert Islands* (2004), makes a distinction between two kinds of islands, continental islands and oceanic islands. Continental islands are islands that break off from a continental landmass, the result of a rupture or dislocation which separates them from a larger landmass – the signature note here is separation. Oceanic islands, on the other hand are *sui generis*, the result of coral formations or an undersea volcano eruption. These are the originary, essential islands, islands placed under the sign of creation or recreation. What these two island types posit is two ways of imagining islands. On the one hand, the notion of island as separate, elsewhere, disjunctive, broken off. On the other, the island as the place of radical origin, where you begin all over again, where new worlds are imagined and ushered into being. So where do we situate the island of Ireland in the post-Brexit world, is it more continental or oceanic? In the context of the climate emergency (rising sea levels, increased flooding, coastal erosion) and the advent of Brexit, this lecture will argue for the urgent necessity to place this question of islandness at the heart of our cultural and political thinking. Thinking about islands has traditionally been displaced on to Ireland's offshore islands, often in the frame of nostalgic forms of salvage archaeology. However, the environmental crisis has brought to the fore the physical materiality of the island of Ireland and its increasing ecological vulnerability. So how can we use an island imaginary to reimagine our future? What difference does it make to shift the central organising principle of Irish life from land to sea? What is the importance of other island imaginaries, in the Caribbean and elsewhere, for the development of a positive version of island-being in Ireland? If utopias (Hy-Brazil) like prisons (Alcatraz) are typically located on islands, we need to decide what kind of island future we want, the island as a place of cultural and political possibility or as an outpost of environmental degradation and cognitive confinement.

**Michael Cronin** is 1776 Professor of French (Chair) at Trinity College Dublin. He is an elected Member of the Royal Irish Academy and the Academia Europaea, an Officer in the Ordre des Palmes Académiques and a Senior Researcher in the Trinity Centre for Literary and Cultural Translation. Among his published works are *Across the Lines: Travel, Language, Translation* (2000), *Translation and Globalization* (2006), *Translation and Identity* (2006), *The Expanding World: Towards a Politics of Microspeciation* (2012), *Translation in the Digital Age* (2013), *Eco-Translation: Translation and Ecology in the Age of the Anthropocene* (2017) and *Eco-Travel: Journeying in the Anthropocene* (2022). His research interests are in the areas of eco-criticism, travel writing, translation theory and history, Franco-Irish cultural relationships and Quebec and Acadian Studies.

Mitsuko Ohno

## **The Multifaceted Aftermath of Japan's Close Encounters with Irish Literature: A Hindsight of Forty-years of IASAIL/IASIL JAPAN**

IASIL JAPAN's development since its inaugural conference as IASAIL-Japan, with its membership number overshadowing other parts of the world, seems to require reflection and insight into the past as we look to its future at its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. As one of the original and surviving members from the first conference in 1984 and a former Executive Committee and Editorial Board member, as well as Secretary and President, I feel privileged to share some of my observations on the history of Irish Studies in Japan, and hope they may offer new perspectives for exploration to younger generations.

My brief historical review of Japanese readers' close encounters with Irish literature will cover nearly 180 years divided into 4 periods: (1) the Meiji era and after (the beginning of modern Japan), (2) the post-Pacific War era, divided in two by the establishment of IASAIL-Japan, (3) the post-IASAIL Kyoto Conference era, which coincided with Ireland's Celtic Tiger years, when encounters became more direct through other genres of arts, and finally (4) the contemporary era when encounters became reciprocal and diverse. The correlation of societal changes, the similarities and differences between Ireland and Japan, will be referenced from such perspectives as colonialism, equality, gender and diversity.

It is hoped that the examination of these encounters and their aftermaths will illuminate Irish literature's appeal to Japanese scholars and the roles translations have played; an example, perhaps, to be shared by emerging scholars in the changing world of today.

**Mitsuko Ohno** is Professor Emerita of Aichi Shukutoku University. She is the author of *Yeats and the Tradition of Anglo-Irish Literature* (1999) and *Women's Ireland* (1998), both in Japanese. Her *Pharaoh's Daughter: Selected Poems of Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill* (2001), a bilingual edition of the original Irish and Japanese translation with CD was published in Tokyo, while her English translations include *On Two Shores, New and Selected Poems, Mutsuo Takahashi* (Dedalus, 2006, 2019) and *Sky Navigation Homeward: New and Selected Poems, Mikiro Sasaki* (Dedalus, 2019). She is a founding member of IASIL Japan and served as its President in 2006-2008, and has frequently lectured at the Yeats International Summer School in Sligo. She was recognised with the honour of the Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad in 2020.

Tina O'Toole

## **Art and Affiliation: Tracing Twentieth-century Irish Countercultures**

In the aftermath of devastating wars and social upheaval, while grappling with the threat of economic collapse, twentieth-century Irish governments jettisoned the radical promise held out by the

revolutionary generation. As two states came into being on the island of Ireland, both proved repressive and socially conservative; the new futures imagined by activists and artists who strove for sovereign independence *and* a redefinition of the social contract were sidelined.

During the decade of centenaries, scholars began to reevaluate the generative power of those diverse countercultural groups and activist formations available to early twentieth-century revolutionaries. Extending this, my research opens up the character and importance of radical affiliation in the period. In a small country, the lives and experience of key figures involved in Irish arts and activism are closely intertwined but the concept of community in creating dissident art is often ignored. I show that affiliation to countercultural groupings enabled creatives to survive the dominant culture in twentieth-century Ireland. By redefining the circle surrounding Mainie Jellett and Evie Hone, for instance, I enliven a mutually supportive network creating capacity for artistic production and ideological intervention. Moreover, for those revolutionaries who now found themselves living and working in a theocratic Irish state, the development of counterpublics provided a collective space within which to move freely and to separate out (however briefly) from dominant modes of domestic and national identities.

Turning to the literature, I trace such radical affiliation across the writing of three Irish women artists, Rosamond Jacob, Elizabeth Bowen, and Kate O'Brien. Their fiction and personal writing redrafts the social contract, focusing on sexual dissidence and returning insistently to question how intimate, familial, and national bonds are forged, and why. I contend that the challenge to conventional modes of love and domesticity, in their personal and literary writing, underlines the crucial importance of lateral support networks in the period. The alternatives they propose to hierarchical family and state structures, I argue, unsettle fixities of family and national affinity in the aftermath of the revolution.

**Tina O'Toole** is an associate professor at the School of English, Irish, and Communication, University of Limerick. Her scholarship focuses on British and Irish Literature; she is an expert on Irish women's writing of the late nineteenth / early twentieth centuries, and on gender and sexuality studies. She has published two monographs and four edited collections including *The Irish New Woman* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) and *Reading Gender and Space: Essays for Patricia Coughlan* (Cork University Press, 2023; co-edited with Anne Fogarty). As guest editor, she has produced three journal special issues including one on Elizabeth Bowen (*Irish University Review* 2021, co-edited with Anna Teekell) and a multidisciplinary issue of *Éire-Ireland* on 'New Approaches to Irish Migration' (2012, co-edited with Piaras Mac Éinrí). She served as an elected board member of the Royal Irish Academy Committee for Literatures in English (2009-2013) and as an executive member of the IASIL (2013-2017); she was IASIL Treasurer for four years, and served as an editorial board member of the *Irish University Review* during the same period.



Moynagh Sullivan

## **Strong Motherlines: Aftermath in the Visual and Written Art of Eithne and Sarah Strong**

'Aftermath' is a freighted word and encapsulates not only trauma but the perseveration of the repercussions of that injury, suggesting the lingering impact of damage, and orienting us towards a trauma-informed historical perspective. In this talk, I explore how 'Aftermath' serves as both a facilitating and complicating concept to examine the intertwined yet distinct careers of the writer Eithne Strong (1923-1999) and her daughter, the artist Sarah Strong (1949-). Eithne Strong, despite her prolific and consistent output spanning five decades, has largely faded from the annals of 20th century literature. Unlike her contemporary Patrick Kavanagh who holds a prominent position in mid-century Irish letters, Eithne Strong remains overlooked, despite A.A. Kelly's insightful comparison of Strong's book length poem, *Flesh ... The Greatest Sin* (1980) to Patrick Kavanagh's *The Great Hunger* (1942). Kelly observed that in Kavanagh's poem, 'man was tied to the soil', while in Strong's poem, woman is 'tied to her fertile womb', shedding light on why Eithne's contributions have yet to be fully incorporated into a national literary tradition that relies too heavily on a public/male, private/female dichotomy.

The work of her daughter, Sarah Strong, an Irish visual artist residing in England, confronts this historical exclusion through her diverse artistic expressions, including mixed media and poetry. Sarah's work represents both a profound reclamation of her mother's legacy as an unconventional woman and writer from the shadows of literary history, as well as her own artistic process of recovery from the overshadowing aftermath of an era that not only pathologized female creativity but also paradoxically idolized and punished mothers. Specifically, I examine how Sarah's poignant 2014 Film, *I Hear Fish Drowning*, and her powerful 2023 exhibition, *Washing Soot off Stained Glass* (staged to coincide with the centenary of her mother's birth) cast new light on Eithne's work while asserting Sarah's own artistic trajectory. Through these works, Sarah seeks to embody a multi-faceted revival of Eithne's oeuvre and simultaneously seeks to confront and transcend the aftermath of being Eithne's daughter in the context of these times.

**Moynagh Sullivan** is a Professor of English at Maynooth University, with specialties in Gender, Intersectionality, Motherhood, and Irish Studies. She edited (with Anne Mulhall and Wanda Balzano) *Irish Postmodernisms and Popular Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007) and (with Borbola Farago Ed.) *Facing the Other: Interdisciplinary Studies in Race, Gender and Social Justice in Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishers 2009). Her study *Mama/L: Maternal Imaginaries in Contemporary Irish Culture* is forthcoming. Her work has focused on diversifying culture by examining cultural gender gaps, ableism, and by mapping the overlooked and unseen maternal imaginaries, and has examined intersections of these areas in the fields of Irish writing, as well as contemporary poetry, fiction, art, and popular culture. She has been Visiting Fellow in Irish Studies at the Centre for Irish Studies/Moore Institute at NUIG, and Visiting

Professor in Irish Studies at the Centre for Irish Studies at Boston College.

Clair Wills

## **Making Sense of the Missing: The Family, the Church and ‘the Home’ in Twentieth-Century Irish Society**

How do we approach the aftermath of the scandals of institutional abuse in Ireland? What questions should we be asking about guilt, blame and responsibility?

**Clair Wills** is the King Edward VII Professor of English Literature at University of Cambridge. She previously taught at Queen Mary University of London, and at Princeton in the United States. She was elected an Honorary Member of the Royal Irish Academy in 2016. She writes about the social, cultural and literary history of Britain and Ireland in the twentieth century. She is particularly interested in migration in post-war Europe and the ways in which it gets represented, by migrants and by others; literature and culture in Northern Ireland; contemporary British fiction; feminism and women’s writing; and the history and experiences of coercive confinement in institutions (including psychiatric institutions) in Britain and Ireland in the twentieth century. Her monographs include: *Lovers and Strangers: An Immigrant History of Post-War Britain* (2017), *The Best Are Leaving: Emigration and Post-War Irish Culture* (2015), *Dublin 1916: The Siege of the GPO* (2009) and *That Neutral Island: A History of Ireland during the Second World War* (2007).

N.B. Prof. Wills will be attending remotely, and her lecture will be online.

## Panel/Roundtable Discussions

Claire Brophy, Katie Mishler and Tina Morin

### **Spectral Aftermaths: Transnationalism and Migration in Irish Writing**

Paper 1 Katie Mishler: **'Migration and Metro-Coloniality: Transnationalizing the Irish Gothic'**

This paper will establish a transnational framework for reading nineteenth-century Irish gothic fiction, which has traditionally been conceived of as an inward-looking, isolationist phenomenon. By expanding definitions of the Irish gothic to include new geographies, contexts, and writers, this paper will focus on the contributions of a precariously employed class of Irish writers living in London and writing short ghost fiction primarily for a British public, such as Charlotte Riddell, Elizabeth Owens Blackburne Casey, and AM Stein. This reading will be aided by Curatr, a text analysis platform developed as part of the ERC-funded project VICTEUR, to develop an understanding of how Irishness is constructed and perceived in global contexts. Through this reading, the migration of writers abroad emerges as a defining but overlooked feature of Irish gothic literature.

Paper 2 Claire Brophy: **'Dead and gone: using digital humanities to invoke spectres of Irish women in the British Library 19th Century digitised fiction collection'**

This paper will develop research on the presence of working class Irish migrant women using the identifier "poor Bridget" throughout fiction between 1848-1899 as an allegory for class and national identity. In particular, this paper will examine the sudden shift in representation of this character between 1893-1896 from a distinctly lively and embodied girl or woman to a spectre, memory, or ghost. Using Curatr software developed as part of the VICTEUR project, this paper will draw on Carlyle Petersilea's *Mary Anne Carew: wife, mother, spirit, angel. A spiritualistic romance* (1893), Edna Lyall's *Doreen. The story of a singer* (1894) and Frances Frederica Montresor's *The One who Looked On - a novel* (1895) to examine the representation of a strikingly different character from a persistently embodied working class archetype to a spectral presence during this period, and ask what insights this shift might elicit about the changing perception of Irish female migrant working class identity to a transnational readership.

Paper 3: Christina Morin: **'Irish Gothic and Global Reading Cultures of the Long Nineteenth Century'**

This paper analyses the circulation and dissemination of Irish gothic fictions in the nineteenth-century British-controlled southern hemisphere, with a focus on the movements of one particular novel - Regina Maria Roche's *The Children of the Abbey* (1796) - across Australia. By exploring *The Children of the Abbey's* availability to Australian readers and audiences via various digital sources that

help us reconstruct the reading communities of the long nineteenth century, this paper argues for the novel's clear, if now overlooked, significance to the literary cultures of early colonial Australia.

**Claire Brophy** is a postdoctoral researcher on Project VICTEUR: European Migrants in the British Imagination: Victorian and neo-Victorian culture, an ERC funded project using literary criticism and cultural analytics to trace attitudes towards migrants into Britain, based in UCD. Research interests include intersectional feminist theory and Irish women's writing.

**Katie Mishler** is a postdoctoral researcher on the ERC-funded Project VICTEUR: European Migrants in the British Imagination: Victorian and neo-Victorian culture, at University College Dublin. She has previously held NEH and IRC fellowships. She has curated exhibitions for the Museum of Literature Ireland and is currently working on a monograph on Irish urban gothic writing.

**Tina Morin** lectures at the University of Limerick, where she is currently the Assistant Dean of Research in the Faculty of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. She is the author of *The Gothic Novel in Ireland, c. 1760-1829* (2018) and *Charles Robert Maturin and the Haunting of Irish Romantic Fiction* (2011). Currently, she serves as Chair of IASIL.

Deirdre Canavan, A. Haziz-Ginsberg and George Legg

## **The Public and Private Afterlives of Northern Irish Security**

This panel will present three papers all focused on the afterlives of the Northern Irish Troubles. Examining a range of mediums (poetry, state advertising, film footage, and photomontages), each paper proposes a fresh reading of the legacies and aftermaths of violence in Northern Ireland. While individually unique, each of these papers gains further coherence through a shared interrogation of the private and public boundaries traversed by Northern Ireland's security apparatus.

In Deirdre Canavan's paper, **"Say the thing that isn't / death": Gail McConnell's *The Sun is Open as post-conflict elegy***, she offers an intimate investigation of elegiac poetry as it negotiates the traumatic fallout following the doorstep murder of an Assistant Governor at the Maze Prison. Canavan's research explores how poetic traditions are reworked by Gail McConnell as she translates public reports of a security service fatality into the private sphere of familial grief. Dr. A Haziz-Ginsberg's paper, **'Missed Connections: anxiety, desire, and the colonial politics of the confidential telephone in Northern Ireland'**, then deepens this complex intersection between domestic life and public security, through a sophisticated, and original, examination of Northern Ireland's Confidential Telephone Service. Close reading previously classified materials, Dr. Haziz-Ginsberg considers the advertisement of security apparatuses as they usher in new proximities between citizen and state.

Building upon these two presentations, the final paper from Dr. George Legg, **'Security Experiments: Re-Viewing London's Ring of Steel'**, continues this exploration of what Hannah

Arendt would call the 'boomerang' effect of security experiments in Northern Ireland. Examining both street photographs and photomontages, Legg plots how Belfast's Ring of Steel was imported into the City of London in ways that distanced Britain from the Troubles, while also establishing a discrete surveillance architecture that continues to penetrate the private lives of citizens to this day.

Across all four papers is a concerted re-examination of both the role and function of security during the Troubles and, more importantly, its evolving reverberations into the present. The diverse genres at work in these papers are all given focus through a shared methodology of close reading and a sustained examination of literary theory. In sum, the panel seeks to illustrate the rich tapestry of materials necessary for the study of Northern Ireland's literature, culture, and society.

**Deirdre Canavan** is a third-year PhD student in English Research at King's College London. Her research project is funded by the UK Arts & Humanities Research Council and examines how methods of feminist storytelling in contemporary women's cultural production from the North of Ireland offer a productive re-reading of the North's complex past and present. She is a council member for the British Association of Irish Studies.

**A. Haziz-Ginsberg** is a Lecturer in Liberal Arts at King's College London. Their work considers the politics of security and counterterrorism in the United Kingdom through the archive of British empire.

**George Legg** is a Senior Lecturer in Liberal Arts at King's College London. He is author of the monograph, *Northern Ireland and the Politics of Boredom: Conflict, Capital and Culture* (Manchester University Press, 2018). He has published widely on Irish literature and Urban Terrorism.

Andrew Fitzsimons, Akiko Manabe, Masaya Shimokusu and Yuri Yoshino

## **The Reception of Irish Literature in Japan from the Meiji Period to the Showa Period**

This roundtable will be a preliminary discussion for a research project that will offer a comprehensive account in English of the history, extent and depth of Japanese engagement with Irish literature in the period up to 1939. The eventual aim is to publish an anthology of essays, articles related to Irish literature published in Japan and by Japanese scholars in this period, as well as a book of contextualising essays examining the history of this initial reception of Irish literature in Japan: the major figures, Yeats and Joyce, and the key conduit for Irish writings in Japan, Lafcadio Hearn.

The roundtable will provide a general account of the Japanese historical context within which early engagement with Irish literature took place, and look at how this engagement developed in the aftermath of the creation of the Irish state, and in the period leading up to World War II. There will be discussion of Lafcadio Hearn and his role in first introducing Irish literature into Japan in his lectures at Tokyo Imperial University, and how his initial emphasis, on mythology and on ideas of

the 'Celtic', have played out in subsequent readings of Irish literature.

Topic covered will include the history of translations of *Ulysses* in Japan, and the importance of translation in influencing Japanese writers and novelists; Hearn's influence on the initial Japanese reception of Irish literature, his introduction of Yeats and the 'Celtic Twilight,' and recent Noh and Kyogen theatrical productions which follow in this tradition; the reception of Maria Edgeworth during the Meiji Period, particularly Kōyō Ozaki's adaptation of 'The Grateful Negro', Kyōkokuji (1893), with its implications concerning gender, and Japanese and Irish national identity.

**Andrew Fitzsimons**, Professor at Gakushuin University, Tokyo, is the author of *The Sea of Disappointment: Thomas Kinsella's Pursuit of the Real*, and the editor of *Thomas Kinsella: Prose Occasions. Bashō: The Complete Haiku of Matsuo Bashō* was published by the University of California Press in 2022.

**Akiko Manabe**, Professor at Shiga University, specializes in American and Irish Modernism. Recently focusing on the Japanese influence on European and American modernism, with relation to the traditional theatre of Noh and *kyogen*. Recent publications are in *Yeats and Asia* (2020), *International Yeats Studies* (2021), and *The Oxford Handbook of W.B. Yeats* (2022).

**Masaya Shimokusu**, Professor at Doshisha University, Kyoto, is the translator of the works of Ian McDonald, James Joyce and other English-language writers. His article on the reception and transformations of Western vampires in Japan may be found in *Vampiric: Tales of Blood and Roses from Japan* (Kurodahan Press, 2018).

**Yuri Yoshino**, Professor at Gakushuin University, is the current Secretary of IASIL Japan. Her main research interests include the novel and empire, gender studies and ecocriticism. She has recently published a comparative study of Jane Austen and Soseki Natsume in *Johnson in Japan* (Bucknell UP) and "Edgeworthstown House" for the European Romanticisms in Association's online exhibition RÊVE.

Naomi Charlotte Fukuzawa, Ji Hyea Hwang and Simone O'Malley-Sutton

### **Modern Literary Affinities in Ireland and East Asia**

This panel aims to explore modern literary and cultural intersections between Irish and East Asian writers. Each speaker will highlight specific instances of affinity, emphasizing the importance of recognizing and mapping out such connections. The speakers will engage in a discussion leading to a deepened understanding of how modern Irish literature intersects with East Asian perspectives, broadening and challenging the parameters of postcolonial studies. Dr. Ji Hyea Hwang will be presenting "Dispossession and Displacement in Thomas Cornelius Murray's 'Birthright' and Lee Gwang-rae's 'The Village Teacher'", a study on how Korean writers of the 1930s discussed the right to the Korean homeland through the newly established theatre tradition, which was heavily

influenced by the Irish Abbey Theatre. She will specifically compare Thomas Cornelius Murray's 1911 play "Birthright" and Lee Gwang-rae's 1936 play "The Village Teacher", discussing how they weave in topics such as land ownership – both physical and emotional – and national identity. Dr. Hwang's research is dedicated to exploring how colonial Irish and colonial Korean dramatists interweave foreign modes and methods of staging nationhood into their narratives. Her research provides an alternative to understanding colonial literatures via the vertical relationship between colonizer-colonized, by mapping out networks of transnational and trans-imperial literary influence established laterally amongst writers of colonized nations.

Dr. Simone O'Malley-Sutton will be presenting "Writers and Fighters - How the Chinese May Fourth Generation reread the aftermath of Ireland's 1916 Easter Rising". This paper compares how competing colonial and anti-colonial voices during China's May Fourth generation re-tooled narratives in the aftermath of the events of Ireland's 1916 Easter Rising. Dr O'Malley Sutton's doctoral research in primary sources from Chinese-language databases, was recently published as a book with Palgrave MacMillan entitled: *The Chinese May Fourth Generation and the Irish Literary Revival: Writers and Fighters*. How did the Chinese May Fourth generation translate the Irish 1916 Easter Rising and the Irish Literary Revival? What innovative Postcolonial, Modernist and Gendered readings does this open up? She concludes that Irish Revivalism and Easter 1916 provided an alternative anticolonial unconventional route to modernity for writers in China, Japan and Korea - thus bypassing racialised assumptions inherent to Colonial and Capitalist Modernity that saturated literatures produced in the imperial centre.

Dr. Naomi Charlotte Fukuzawa will be presenting on the 'postcolonial' analogy between Ireland and Japan that were both either colonized by England or threatened by Anglo-American colonialism in the modern age. The surprisingly shared fate has provoked a rich literary-cultural treasure that has seldom been put into philological comparison. While Oscar Wilde and William Butler Yeats both wrote japonist literary passages, Lafcadio Hearn was the only Irishman who physically traveled through America to Japan to bring to light marketable japonist literary works about the evanescent old Japanese culture in the age of Anglo-American industrialization. His English-language work *Kwaidan* from 1904 in particular reveals a fusion of the Irish ghost story with Japanese folklore, legends and myths that was realized with the help of his Japanese wife Setsu Koizumi and that exported ancient East Asian culture to Anglophone and European readers.

**Dr Naomi Charlotte Fukuzawa** participated as a postdoctoral fellow in modern Japanese literature in the ERC-research project NonWestLit at the University of Bologna in Italy in 2022/23. She obtained her PhD in Comparative literature from UCL University College London in association to Japanese Studies SOAS in the United Kingdom in 2019. Her monograph on Japonisme is forthcoming with Routledge in 2024.

**Dr. Ji Hyea Hwang** is a lecturer in Comparative Literature and Culture at Yonsei University. She received her PhD in Comparative Literature with a minor in Translation Studies at the University of Illinois,

Urbana-Champaign. Her research is focused on transcultural and transcolonial influences on Irish and Korean drama and theatre.

**Dr. Simone O'Malley-Sutton** gave lectures for Asian Studies at UCC (2014-2016), lived for six years in Beijing, and was the Murphy Irish Fellow at Notre Dame University, Indiana (2016-18). Her interests include Post-colonialism, Modernism and Gender. Simone recently turned her PhD into a book with Palgrave Macmillan entitled *The Chinese May Fourth Generation and the Irish Literary Revival: Writers and Fighters*.

Chih-hsien Hsieh, Wei H. Kao and Yi-Peng Lai

### **Irish Studies in Taiwan: Receptions and Perspectives**

Irish Studies in Taiwan presents a dynamic intersection of cultural exchange, academic inquiry, and translational engagement. Irish literature and history greatly inspire modern scholars, writers, and language enthusiasts in Taiwan. This panel seeks to illuminate the multifaceted dimensions of Irish Studies in Taiwan, examining its historical roots, contemporary relevance, and future trajectories. The panelists will delve into various aspects of Irish Studies on the island, including the reception of Irish literature and its translation in Taiwan; the issue of masculinity in the monologue plays by Owen McCafferty; and the feminine space under the shadow of the pandemic in Emma Donoghue's *The Pull of the Stars*.

The first paper presented in this panel is **"Irish Studies in Taiwan: From the 1970s Onwards"**, which, by focusing on the Irish literary studies in Taiwan, shall briefly introduce how Ireland has become a prevailing inspiration to the modern literature and native language movements in Taiwan since the mid-20th century. It shall also review the development since the 1970s and address the challenges and opportunities inherent in the study and promotion of Irish Studies in Taiwan. The second paper is **"Problematizing Masculinities in Owen McCafferty's Three Irish Monologue Plays"**. This paper aims to examine how Owen McCafferty (1961-), an Irish playwright from Belfast, explores the experiences of males as abject in domestic and public spheres. It reveals how political sectarianism produces a dehumanizing impact of hegemonic masculinity validated in mainstream society. To demonstrate how masculinist culture is questionable and always in a process of "becoming," the three monologue plays to be discussed include *I Won't Dance, Don't Ask Me* (1993), *The Waiting List* (1994), and *Cold Comfort* (2004). The last paper of this panel is **"'Maternity/Fever': Gender, Politics and the Pandemic in *The Pull of the Stars*"**. The paper hopes to posit *The Pull of the Stars* within an interwoven framework of memory theories and trauma studies to consider the way Donoghue uses an exclusively feminine space to counteract such forces of cultural oblivion under the shadow of the pandemic.

By examining these themes, the panel aims to show not only how Irish literature has been received



in a Chinese/Taiwanese-speaking island two continents away from its origin, but also how Taiwanese scholars have endeavoured to overtake contemporary Irish studies. Furthermore, this panel will address the challenges and opportunities inherent in the study and promotion of Irish Studies in Taiwan, such as cultural barriers, institutional support, and the cultivation of academic networks. By critically assessing these factors, the panelists will offer insights into how the field of Irish Studies in Taiwan can continue to evolve and thrive. Overall, this panel invites scholars from a younger generation to engage in a dialogue that transcends geographical boundaries, celebrating the enduring significance of Irish culture in the global arena while exploring its unique manifestations within the Taiwanese context. Through collaborative exploration and exchange, the panel endeavors to contribute to the enrichment of both Irish Studies and cross-cultural understanding in Taiwan and beyond.

**Chih-hsien Hsieh** is currently the President of the Irish Studies Association Taiwan. He has translated several Irish fictional works and plays into either Chinese or Taiwanese. His latest translation is *Inventing Ireland* by Declan Kiberd, which is going to be published in late 2024.

**Wei H. Kao** is a professor of Irish literature at National Taiwan University. He is the author of *The Formation of an Irish Literary Canon in the Mid-Twentieth Century* (ibidem-Verlag, 2007), *Contemporary Irish Theatre: Transnational Practices* (Peter Lang, 2015), and *Irish Drama and Wars in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge Scholars, 2022).

**Yi-Peng Lai** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature at National Sun Yat-sen University. Her research interests range from James Joyce, ecocriticism, to contemporary Irish fictions.

Yuta Imazeki, Mariko Nishitani and Teppei Suzuki

## **Irish Modernism in the Hegemony of Modernist Studies**

The expansion of modernist studies since around 1990 has become increasingly vigorous today, incorporating the texts and archives of various periods, places and genres, while some scholars have criticized the imperialist and hegemonic aspects of this critical movement. As has sometimes been pointed out, although most modernist scholars have enthusiastically sought to uncover heterogeneous values and cultural diversities of the modern world by exploring transnational, transcultural and trans-linguistic connections between literatures of different times and spaces – any text that is more or less conscious of modernity has been categorized as “modernist” –, these heterogeneities have generally been subsumed within the monolingual norms and practices of Anglophone academia, which are underpinned by the economic, political and technological powers of the publishing industry and higher education institutions in Europe and North America. Against

this backdrop, we aim to illuminate and interrogate some of the ideologies and arbitrariness of recent modernist studies, focusing in particular on the relatively fluctuating status of several “modernists” in and around 1930s Ireland. Building on Imazeki’s general introduction, Nishitani pins down W. B. Yeats’s questionable status as a modernist, and Suzuki re-examines the relationship between Irish modernist poetry after Yeats and French avant-gardists.

As scholars often recognize, Yeats’s status as a modernist has been less established than that of other modernist poets, such as Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot. Recent criticism has bridged the gap between modernism and Irishness and situated Yeats’s work within the widely encompassing definition of modernism, but often with some caveats. An alternative approach which has been proposed is to avoid defining his poetry by the term “modernism” in the sense that it has been closely associated with the practice and theory of Pound and Eliot, and to instead regard Yeats as a poet who established a value distinct from that of other modernists. Taking this perspective into consideration, Nishitani first reviews how Yeats has been fluidly categorized as a modernist; she then examines his own criticism in the 1930s and its reception, thereby identifying several critical issues concerning the canonization of Yeats as a modernist.

Symbolism and Surrealism were two of the most important French poetic movements that had decisive impact on modern Anglo-Irish literature: George Moore, Wilde and Yeats were keenly interested in and greatly influenced by Symbolism around the turn of the century, and Surrealism came as a shock to the modernist poets of the 1930s, such as MacGreevy, Beckett, Devlin and Coffey, all of whom had been familiar with French language and literature since their youth. These crosslinguistic connections between French and Anglo-Irish poetry have increasingly attracted the attention of Anglophone scholars of modernism, who generally consider French Symbolism, Surrealism and other avant-garde movements to be part of “modernism(s)”, while the term is rarely used in Francophone literary studies today. Recognizing this discrepancy, Suzuki re-examines how and to what extent these French movements – especially Surrealism – were intertwined with Irish modernism, thereby illuminating some of the scholarly deflections in recent modernist studies.

**Yuta IMAZEKI** is a Junior Associate Professor at Edogawa University. He has contributed a chapter to *Flann O’Brien & the Nonhuman: Animals, Environments, Machines* (Cork University Press, forthcoming), and is completing his doctoral dissertation, “Noise and Silence of Irish Modernism.”

**Dr. Mariko NISHITANI** is an Associate Professor at Kyoto Prefectural University. Her research interest is in W. B. Yeats and modern Irish poetry after Yeats. She has contributed a chapter about John Montague to *Irish Literature in the British Context and Beyond: New Perspectives from Kyoto* (Peter Lang, 2020).

**Dr. Teppei SUZUKI** is a Professor at Edogawa University. His interest focuses on the influence of French poetry on Samuel Beckett and his contemporary poets in Ireland (Thomas MacGreevy, Denis Devlin and Brian Coffey), from the perspective of comparative literature and translation studies.

## Online Presentations

Sarah Bennett

### **Maeve Brennan's Civil War: Genre, Style and Distance in the Dublin Stories**

In the 1950s, as Maeve Brennan was developing the anonymously cosmopolitan 'Long-Winded Lady' persona for a *New Yorker* column, and the affluent, insulated fictional world of Herbert's Retreat on the Hudson River, a series of stories about her Dublin childhood emerged. Brennan was 'a true daughter of the Rising', as Anne Enright has shrewdly observed, born of two committed nationalists, 37 weeks after the Easter insurrection. Her father Robert Brennan was an anti-treaty Republican who went into hiding after the declaration of the Free State in 1922, while her mother Una gave sanctuary to escaped prisoners. In 'The Day We Got Our Own Back', published three decades later, Brennan recounts two armed raids on the family's Ranelagh home, experienced by a 5-year old Maeve, in an arrestingly plain style. The Dublin stories are hard to place, poised somewhere between autobiographical fragments and crafted vignette. The childhood home itself, 48 Cherryfield Avenue, grows into a fictional existence in the later stories that show two different families, the Bagots and the Derdons, occupying the same space. This paper examines the significance of *The New Yorker*, and its American audience, to the shifting sense of genre in Brennan's Dublin stories. It also addresses the importance of distance from Ireland, and a native Irish discourse of literary style and memory, in Brennan's fragmented account of a childhood in the revolution.

**Sarah Bennett** is Teaching Fellow in Modern Literature in the Department of English Studies at Durham University. Her publications and research are concerned with transatlantic influence, Irish modernism, and literary culture in new Irish Free State. She is the editor of *The Letters of Denis Deolin* (Cork UP, 2020).

Carolin Böttcher

### **Hauntings of Environmental Disaster in Jan Carson's *The Raptures* (2022)**

In Jan Carson's *The Raptures* (2022) combines several aftermaths and hauntings within its plot. Most obviously, the narrative is set in the early 1990s and follows Hannah Adger. Brought up in an evangelical family in Ballylack in Northern Ireland, she soon is haunted by her classmates who die one by one during the summer. The cause for the deaths is ultimately revealed to be dumped toxic chemicals near a fairy tree. In this paper, I argue that the hauntings of *The Raptures* reflect contemporary and contemporaneous concerns in Northern Ireland. On the one hand, the lasting impact of the Troubles provides the undercurrent of the narrative; the families in Ballylack have to

come together in the face of shared trauma. On the other hand, environmental disaster, incidentally caused by one of the children's parents, destroys the future of Hannah's class at school. She is ultimately the only survivor at the end of the novel. Concerned with an unimaginable future, Hannah's outlook on life is halted by the tension between her family's strict beliefs and the death that follows the environmental crisis of the small town. My concern in this paper lies in making visible the connections between social, political, religious, and environmental matters that haunt Hannah throughout the novel. In the face of children's deaths, the families of Ballylack have to overcome their basic differences and think about the mutual effects on each other of humans and environment.

**Carolin Böttcher** is currently a lecturer in English literature at Friedrich-Schiller-Universität in Jena. Her research has appeared in *ABO: Interactive Journal Women in the Arts, 1640-1830* and in *European Romantic Review*. Her current project engages with Irish women's writing and the coast in the literary imagination based on ecocritical and spatial understandings of the world around us.

Joanne Chia

### **W.B. Yeats, James Clarence Mangan, and Derek Mahon: The speech of an Irish man**

W.B. Yeats addressed nationalistic propaganda by highlighting the Gaelic consciousness found in the Irish oral tradition. He had argued for the duty of the Irish poet by distinguishing national "vanity" and national "pride" (Foster, *On Seamus Heaney*). He also greatly admired the poet James Clarence Mangan who underscored an aesthetic of "tragic beauty" in the Irish lyric for his contemporaries without breaking away from the mystical origins of Irish folklore. This paper will study the "indescribable beauty" Yeats described in relation to Mangan's verses (*The Bookman*, 1895) as both a mode and a theme in the 21st century, through Derek Mahon, especially in his mature work: "For even beauty is not enough", a saying from Mahon's "The Widow of Kinsale".

John Montague's critique of Northern Irish poetry in "The Impact of International Modern Poetry on Irish Writing" (1973) was that musical experimentation was all but missing in its poets. Montague could be read as responding retrospectively to Thomas Davis, the poet almost single-handedly responsible for bringing Irish music to the attention of the masses. Davis, himself shy of the public, had famously argued that "A great national teacher would assuredly devise to make the highest poetry familiar to the minds and habits of his people" (*The Ballad Poetry of Ireland*, 1869). His objective was not poetry of the "highest" quality necessarily but that of an imagination described according to the "habits" of consciousness.

The image of the individual poet in Irish folklore and nationalism alike is indebted to a deliberate re-investment of the concept of music inserted into Irish rhetoric through Thomas MacDonagh's *Literature in Ireland*, published in the same year as the Easter Rising of 1916. This paper explores how both literary and public consciousness are intertwined through a sublimation of poetic speech as a

sign of formal inventiveness in the respective work of Mangan and Mahon, *poète maudits* separated by decades but united with a similar vision for Irish poetry.

Joanne Chia teaches academic writing at NTU, Singapore.

Gerard Dineen

### **A Literary Challenge to Irish Unionism: The Presentation of the Church of Ireland in *Hyacinth* by George A. Birmingham**

This paper will show that *Hyacinth* (1906) by George A. Birmingham (1865-1950) may be read as a literary challenge by a nationalist Church of Ireland clergyman (the Rev. Canon James Owen Hannay) to the traditional Unionism of a church in the aftermath of disestablishment. After outlining the relative paucity of scholarly work on Birmingham's fiction, this paper will explore the novel's presentation of Trinity College Dublin, which has chosen a type of institutional ghettoization at the beginning of the twentieth century in Ireland. In particular, emphasis will be placed on the novel's description of the architecture and politics of Trinity College, with some discussion of the character of the divinity professor, Dr Henry, based on the Rev. George Salmon. The paper will then show that the eponymous protagonist's eventual rejection of the fervent nationalism of his undergraduate days reflects the Church of Ireland's aloofness from the growing Irish nationalism of the time. A historicist reading of the end of the novel will demonstrate that the novel's various allusions to *Cathleen ni Houlihan* by W.B. Yeats – first performed in Dublin in 1902 – serve as one of the novel's ways of castigating Hyacinth's withdrawal from Irish nationalism and even from the country itself. The above allusions, in addition to the attempt by Father Moran to persuade Hyacinth to return from England to Ireland at the end of the novel, may all be read as the novel's attempt to challenge the Church of Ireland's instinctive reluctance to engage with the nationalist zeitgeist of Edwardian Ireland.

Gerard Dineen is an Assistant Professor of Literature at Sultan Qaboos University in Muscat, where he teaches courses on Yeats, Shakespeare and modern poetry. In addition to his ongoing research on the fiction of George A. Birmingham, he has just started a collaborative research project on Omani folktales.

Ming Zhou Du

### **Voicing Trauma: How *The Gathering's* Publication Timing Ensured its Popularity**

Discussions surrounding the social-political commentary in Anne Enright's *The Gathering's* depictions of Ireland are founded on the overt hints that Veronica expresses in her narration. The narrator claims that she would have been unable to register the traumatic memories of her childhood if there had

been no external discourse intimating her of “what went on in schools and churches and in people’s homes” (Enright 173). The emergence of reports exposing widespread child sexual abuse, it is implied, provided a voice to survivors and witnesses, breaking the long-held silence that shielded the Irish Catholic Churches and the government. However, initial efforts to unmask the Catholic Church in Ireland were slow and arduous, for it required, as Keelan Harkin argues, a certain disregard for “the moral authority of a state that was complicit in the silence surrounding child abuse” (70). Literary attempts to bring to light the blatant continuance of child abuse in both domestic and church settings have been mostly unsuccessful until the 1990s. Enright’s novel, which garnered significant attention in Ireland, allowing her to claim the Booker Prize in 2007, was published at arguably the right moment as the rapid dissolution of the Catholic Church bolstered discourse surrounding its considerable failings. This essay intends to discuss *The Gathering’s* great success by examining the transformation of discourse on child abuse in Ireland over the past 50 years, particularly with the advent of the modern internet, and to contrast Enright’s novel against a work with a similar theme that was published 25 years earlier - *In Night’s City* by Dorothy Nelson - for which the social context was arguably not yet ready.

**Ming Zhou Du** is a current postgraduate student at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, majoring in English Literary Studies. Prior to this, Ming Zhou obtained a BA in English Studies from the University of Macau in 2023. The main area of research is centred around contemporary literature and narrative.

Hyesun Jang

### **Belfast Girls in the ‘90s: Archiving the Narratives of Girlhood in Lucy Caldwell’s *Three Sisters* and *Leaves***

Amidst the enduring fascination with the meta-narrative of Northern Ireland’s Troubles, Lucy Caldwell’s dramas provide a poignant reflection on the complexities of growing up in a society transitioning from conflict to peace in the 1990s. In her plays *Leaves* (2007) and *Three Sisters* (2016), Caldwell offers powerful portraits of coming-of-age teenage girls in Belfast, shedding light on their struggles amidst societal upheaval. This paper aims to contextualize Caldwell’s works as “archival palimpsests” within the landscape of post-agreement Northern Irish drama, elucidating how she engages with the historical terrain of the region. Employing the metaphor of an “archival palimpsest,” the paper explores how Caldwell’s deliberate process of revisiting, reconfiguration, and rewriting past narratives is informed by a broader temporal perspective enriched by the hindsight of a fully grown woman. At the heart of Caldwell’s exploration lies the liminality of girlhood transitioning into womanhood, resonating deeply with the complex configuration of Northern Irish identity. The plays delve into the intersection of personal and societal identity, symbolizing a journey that navigates the past while reaching towards an uncertain future. Through nuanced portrayals of girlhood and its

liminal nature, Caldwell's works offer profound insights into the intricate tapestry of Northern Irish identity, challenging meta-narratives and sparking new dialogues about the recent past and its aspirations for the future.

**Hyesun Jang** is a research assistant professor at Hanyang University, Seoul, Korea. Her current lead research project, entitled 'Women in Liminal Space in Contemporary Dramas of Northern Irish Women Playwrights,' explores the ways violence have been staged in the 21st century Post-Troubles Northern Ireland and is funded by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea and the National Research Foundation of Korea.

Nadia O. Khallaf

### **Cross-Cultural Encounters: A Study of Famine and its Aftermaths in *A Modest Proposal* (1729) by J. Swift**

One of the most serious discourses in literature, on Famine and its aftermaths, can be found in *A Modest Proposal* (1729) written by the Irish nationalist J. Swift who became distinguished as the foremost prose satirist in English Letters. This striking figure remains in our memory indelibly, for he reveals himself to be one of the earliest harbingers of disastrous aftermaths such as famine, and more, still to come, if some action is not sought to prevent the inevitable. With a wake-up call in the eighteenth century, Swift uses Juvenal satire which embodies a scathing attack of the cruelty and injustice meted out to a people. Due to his employment of Juvenal satire as an innovative, hyperbolic, outrageous device, Swift in Irish culture has been deemed as a significant voice and precursor for denouncing Imperialism. In *A Modest Proposal* written in the form of an essay as a whole, Swift delivers a grisly, grotesque account. At first, in the introduction, he offers his subtly deceptive, mordant ironic 'Modest' suggestion, then follows up with a detailed, horrific solution for edible dishes to be made of the Irish poor children for sale, to relieve the national economic distress. Swift was profoundly influenced by D.J. Juvenalis (55-60 CE) who was not 'relished by soft hearts' yet, was known in the Silver Age to promote respect for the humanist criterion, as well as the cult for 'sensibility'. From a New Historicism point of view, Swift's essay necessitates an intertextual exchange of theoretical precepts combined with a close reading of the text to ascertain the milieu and viewpoints over the years, not least of all, by the author himself, which disclose unexpected multifaceted insights on the Irish plight. Thus, Swift's satiric essay *A Modest Proposal* points the way, to envisage a better existence achieved for colonial victims, through strong protest and resistance.

**Nadia O. Khallaf** is Professor Emeritus at Department of English, Faculty of Humanities, Al Azhar University, Cairo. Egypt.

Yifan Kong

## **The Ageing of the Artist's Ego: From James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young man* (1916) to John Banville's *The Blue Guitar* (2015)**

Susan Sontag writes in "The artist as an exemplary sufferer" (1962): "The writer is the exemplary sufferer because he has found both the deepest level of suffering and also a professional means to sublimate his suffering. As a man, he suffers; as a writer, he transforms his suffering into art." This paper explores the difficulties encountered by two fictional Irish artists – Joyce's Stephen Dedalus and Banville's Oliver Otway Orme – as they employ "professional means" to transform their spiritual sufferings, living experiences, and sense perceptions of the world to ordered aesthetic expressions. In particular, the paper argues that Joyce presents Stephen's bildungsroman in the form of a narrative crescendo, with both an overarching narrative featuring the gradual and inevitable movements towards Stephen's triumphant independence as an artist, and a similar rising pattern within each of the five chapters which opens with his humility and ends with him triumphant. In contrast, Banville presents, in the form of a narrative decrescendo, Oliver's frustration with transforming phenomenal reality into paintings, accompanied by two other echoing anticlimactic narratives, namely, his "thieving" and his "love affair", wherein the stolen objects and the stolen woman gradually lose their allure for the possessor. This paper suggests these two additional interrelated narratives metaphorically elucidate the draining of the artistic libido to absorb and transform the materialistic reality into artworks. The evolution of certain thematic concerns shared by the two novels will also be historicized, especially given that they are published almost one hundred years apart and moreover, Joyce's novel finishes with the young Stephen leaving his home country to forge the "conscience of his race" with his art, while Banville's novel opens with the senior painter Oliver approaching fifty, returns home, and paints no more. The paper traces the development from Irish modernism to contemporary writing of certain motifs such as the tension between art and religion, and the relationship between the creative endeavour and the formation and the dissolution of the artist's own ego.

**Yifan Kong** is a postgraduate student in literary studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She received her Juris Doctor degree at the University of Hong Kong, and her Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Mathematics at the University of Sydney. Her research interests include contemporary fiction, Irish literature, narrative, critical theory, and interdisciplinary humanities.



Sinéad Catherine McCooile

## **Our Enemies are Brothers - Kit MacSwiney & the family legacy**

Japan and Irish Literature: The search for Katherine MacSwiney, (1874-1954) a nun in Japan for 47 years, an almost unknown member of a famous Irish family. She was the author of an untraced Irish history published in Japan, this paper will address the search for her story. Examining the question – in the absence of a personal archive can she have a legacy – with access with material from the private MacSwiney-Brugha family archive this paper will explore Sr Francis Xavier's and wider MacSwiney's family's legacy. Katherine's brother Terry's death by hunger-strike in 1920, the Lord Mayor of Cork, a poet and playwright influenced how his siblings lived in the years that followed. How did his siblings articulate his sacrifice? Kit gave interviews to the press in Japan, Mary lectured across the United States. Kit's sisters Mary and Annie also went on hunger-strike during the Irish Civil War. The sisters were all teachers, Kit in a female seminary in Tokyo, Annie and Mary had their own independent school in Cork, unable to work in a state school as they opposed the Irish Free State. I will examine why their memory has been distorted, using the gendered lens and exploring the long shadow of the Irish civil war. Kit was imprisoned in Japan, a shared experience for many of the MacSwiney siblings – I will explore commonalities between their experiences in Japan, Ireland, England and the US.

**Dr. Sinéad McCooile** has a BA, MA and DLitt by Publication from University College Dublin. She is currently Head of Exhibitions, Learning and Programming at the National Library of Ireland. She led on the Women's Strand of the Decade of Centenaries Programme (2012-2023) and a member of the Irish Government's Expert Advisory Group on the Decade of Centenaries (2012-2023). She has published extensively in the area of Modern Irish History. Her publications include *No Ordinary Women* (2003, 2016) and *Easter Widows* (2014). She has curated award-winning exhibitions and created content for films, documentaries, print and online platforms. For the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media she curated the online platform [www.mna100.ie](http://www.mna100.ie) (2021-2023). She has created scripts on historical topics and written a play *Leaving the Ladies*, (2019) based on actual events, which has been performed in Ireland and in Europe. Her film on the MacSwiney can be found here, a film which examines the MacSwineys' in the US in 1920: <https://www.mna100.ie/centenary-moments/toward-america/>. This will form part of her illustrated presentation on this topic.

Dara McWade

## **Accommodation in the Irish Student Novel**

Accommodation is one of the great challenges of the 21st century. The question of property; who owns what, who can rent what, and how much that rent is. Renters compete for properties demolished with damp and mould. This stratification of class, dividing those with capital and those

without, inflames class anxieties, especially within Ireland's professional class. Nowhere is this 'housing crisis' anxiety, more apparent in Ireland than in Dublin, the capital. This anxiety is deeply present in the contemporary Irish Student Novel, within members or aspirants of that professional class. How does accommodation – where a person lives, it's conditions, and how they can afford it – affects every aspect of the Student Plot? In this paper, I'll examine this aspect of accommodation across a series of recent student novels, each featuring Dublin students, examining how their relationship to class is depicted through where they live. Sally Rooney's *Conversations with Friends* and *Normal People*, Louise Nealon's *Snowflake*, and Clare Kilroy's *All Names Have Been Changed*. Rooney's preoccupation with housing is clear. She writes in the *Irish Times*: 'Consider the psychological hardship of trying to make a life for yourself and your family in what is ultimately someone else's spare house. Your home – your place in the world, your refuge, the stage for all the private dramas of your intimate life – can be taken away from you at any time, through no fault of your own, for the financial benefit of someone wealthier than you are.' These novels unpack that psychological hardship.

**Dara McWade** is a first-year DFE funded PHD Student and writer at Queen's University Belfast. His Creative Writing PhD surrounds the Irish Campus Novel, through critical and creative practice. He graduated from Trinity with a BA Film with Theatre Studies in 2019, and from his MA in English - Creative Writing at QUB in 2021. He is the editor of the literary magazine *The Apiary*, and his work has been broadcast on the BBC Storyteller's Programme. This year he taught two special undergraduate classes at Villanova University.

Hitomi Nakamura

## **Poetry Translation and Irish Literary Periodicals in the Mid-Twentieth Century**

This paper examines the practices and discourses surrounding poetry translation (including versions and renderings) in Irish literary periodicals from the 1930s to the 1950s. Alongside *The Dublin Magazine*, new periodicals such as *The Bell*, *Poetry Ireland* (which became a supplement to *Irish Writing* in 1953) and *Envoy* emerged in Ireland during this period, while *Lagan* and *Rann* were published in Northern Ireland. Each of these journals, though varying in quantity and frequency, presented poems translated from other languages to introduce poets of various nationalities.

By listing the contributions of translators and their translated poems, the first section of this presentation discusses how these periodicals served as platforms for poetry from abroad. It will also illuminate some notable examples of translation endeavours featured in their pages. The second section shifts focus to the issue of translating Irish-language poetry into English, addressing special issues of *Poetry Ireland* and the indirect yet important dialogue between David Marcus and Seán

O'Faoláin in 1949. Regarding the translation of Irish-language literature, it is also worth incorporating discussions from the proceedings of the Twenty-fifth International Congress of the PEN held in Dublin in 1953, along with some articles published in literary periodicals in the mid-twentieth century. This presentation illustrates how contributions of poetry translation reflect the sustained interest in international poetry in Irish literary periodicals and also highlights the vibrant conversations on translation practices fostered at that time.

**Hitomi Nakamura** is Associate Professor at College of Letters, Ritsumeikan University. Her research interests cover 20th-century Irish literature and culture. Her recent English-language publications include an article published in *ABEI Journal* (2021), and a contribution in *Irish Literature in the British Context and Beyond* (Peter Lang, 2020).

Zengxin Ni

### **Aftermath of Traumatic Events: Surfeit of Affect and Surplus Memory in John Banville's *The Sea***

In John Banville's *The Sea* (2005), a Beckettian Booker prize-winner lauded by John Sutherland as a "masterly study of grief, memory, and love recollected," the narrator Max is besieged by surplus memories associated with grief and love. This essay argues that while Max's memory writing is replete with affect, as the aftermath of traumatic events experienced, it elicits not so much empathy as aesthetic delight in readers due to its experimental narrative style. To this end, this essay first examines the affective registers in Max's memories and explores how the surfeit of affect, mainly associated with Max's trauma and nostalgia, contributes to his surplus memories – a state of hypermnnesia – which in turn serves as a defensive mechanism against psychological trauma. However, his nostalgic yearning fails to fully counterbalance the trauma, leading to a "creative sorrow" that fuels the novel's artistic innovation. Thereafter, the essay shifts to how Max's affective memories and the experimental strategies employed elicit readers' affective responses. I propose that an "empathy gap" arises from the narrative's impersonal tone, steering readers away from sympathy towards aesthetic engagement. This engagement is heightened through narrative ekphrasis of sensory imagery, artistic images, and material objects, alongside a sense of self-estrangement spawned by formal experimentation. Ultimately, the distinct affects elicited in readers, as opposed to those conveyed by Max, are crucial in interpreting and constructing the novel's multilayered meanings. This divergence also underscores the importance of formal experimentation in enhancing the affective experience of contemporary Irish fiction, as exemplified in *The Sea*.

**Ni Zengxin** is a PhD candidate in English literature at the School of Humanities, Nanyang Technological University. Her research interests lie mainly in memory, affect, and narrative in contemporary Irish

literature, intersecting with narratology, materialist theory, and trauma studies.

Charlotte Remes

## **The Evolution of Postmodern Futility: Examining Postmodern Techniques Within Contemporary Irish Short Stories**

This paper intends to explicate the significance of postmodern futility within contemporary Irish short stories. The stories that will be focussed on include the works of Samuel Beckett (“First Love”) and Flann O’Brien (“John Duffy’s Brother”, “Scenes in a Novel”) and pairing them respectively against the works of Kevin Barry (“Wifey Redux”), Cathy Sweeney (“Blue”) and Yan Ge (“How I Fell in Love with the Well-Documented Life of Alexander Whelan”).

Through the lens of these short stories, I will trace the way in which postmodern futility has evolved. By examining the shifts in narrative treatment of futility between the blurred transition from postmodernism to the contemporary, I establish that the genre of Irish short stories is essential in reflecting the impact and effect of the socio-economic periods the writers’ lived through.

While much research has been conducted on Beckett’s works, there have been no recent examinations (at least to my knowledge) of analyses conducted specifically in relation to the developments of his writings and contemporary texts post-2010 to reflect upon the developments and ruptures of postmodernism in the contemporary. Considering this, I trace the development of postmodern futility by observing the ways contemporary Irish writers have sought to innovate and develop ‘traditional’ postmodern techniques namely self-reflexivity, absurdism and metafiction when drawing attention to modern day themes like mental illness, loneliness amidst connectivity, and diasporic identities.

**Charlotte Remes** is currently pursuing her postgraduate studies at NTU Singapore, with particular interest in Contemporary Irish Literature. She recently graduated from NTU with her Bachelor of Arts in English. Her final year paper focuses heavily on the development of postmodern techniques within the contemporary landscape of Ireland.

Tomoaki Suwa

## **Clashing Visions: Sean O'Casey, W.B. Yeats, and the Struggle for Anglo-Irish Literary Expressions of the Impact of World War I**

This presentation seeks to explore the Anglo-Irish writer's response to the First World War's influences, particularly through W.B. Yeats’s notable rejection of Sean O’Casey’s play *The Silver Tassie* (1929). The rejection by Yeats, a figure emblematic of the Irish Literary Revival, serves as a pivotal moment for examining the divergent paths of Irish literary expression in the face of the socio-political

turmoil of the early 20th century, especially the impact of the war.

By comparing the thematic and stylistic elements of O'Casey's and Yeats's works, this study aims to shed light on the broader discourse of Anglo-Irishness, a term fraught with contradictions and intersections of Irish cultural identities. O'Casey's *The Silver Tassie*, with its stark depiction of war and its effects, contrasts sharply with Yeats's more symbolic approach to war, thus highlighting the tensions between realism and idealism in the Irish literary landscape.

The rejection of *The Silver Tassie* depicts not only a personal conflict between two literary personas but also mirrors the broader ideological clashes over the representation of Anglo-Irishness. This presentation will employ a comparative literary analysis to understand how O'Casey's work challenges and expands the notion of Anglo-Irishness, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the term within the context of Irish literature and culture.

**Tomoaki Suwa** is Associate Professor at Jissen Women's University (2024.04-), Visiting Fellow at Trinity Centre for Literary and Cultural Translation (2024.04-2025.03), with an M.A. from University College Dublin. He explores the relationship between Yeats, Europe and Fascism, and contributes as an Adjunct Researcher at Waseda's Institute for Irish Studies.

Pim Verhulst

### **Jewish-Irishness in Leslie Daiken's Radio Play *The Circular Road* (1960) and the Cultural Politics of the BBC**

This paper explores Irish-Jewish author Leslie Daiken's radio play *The Circular Road* (1960) as an engagement with two seemingly unrelated aftermaths: the Jewish diaspora in Dublin's 'Little Jerusalem' and the tensions between 'Republicans' and 'Free Staters' during the final stages of the Irish Civil War in 1921 and 1922, after the Easter Rising of 1916. They violently clash when Samuel Wassky, on his way home a few minutes after curfew, is accidentally shot dead in the street by snipers. Through a mixture of childhood memory and adult reflection, his son, Yankel Wassky, looks back on this tragic event, bringing into dialogue Judaic, Catholic and Protestant faiths. Having gone through four heavily revised drafts before the BBC finally accepted it, *The Circular Road* was put on hold a few days before its scheduled transmission, when the radio play had already been recorded and advertised in the 'Radio Times' magazine. After an in-house listening session by BBC officials, the broadcast was postponed by several months and moved from the mainstream Home Service to the more niche Third Programme network, without a repeat. Using material at the BBC Written Archives, the Daiken papers at the Harry Ransom Center in Austin, Texas, and the National Library of Ireland in Dublin, my paper shows that the reason for this change was both aesthetic and political. Slightly reframed, the final recording shifts the attention away from the sensitive historical and religious

context to Yankel's personal experiences, which in turn sheds light on the BBC's cultural politics.

**Pim Verhulst** is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Oxford and a teaching assistant at the University of Antwerp. He has written widely on radio and intermediality in postwar literature from the British Isles. His most recent publications include *Beckett's Afterlives* (Manchester UP 2023) and *Word, Sound and Music in Radio Drama* (Brill 2023).

## Individual Papers

Noémie Beck

### **Stories and Histories of Caledonians of Irish Ancestry (New Caledonia, France): Legacy, Revitalisation and Creation**

Complex diasporic factors brought successive waves of migrants from Ireland to Australia and New Zealand in the 19th century. After the annexation of New Caledonia by France in 1853, some Irish decided to try their luck in this new territory. Their history has been very little studied and remains largely unknown. Because of their adoption of the French language and their inevitable acculturation into French culture, many Caledonians of Irish ancestry have lost track and knowledge of their Irish history, culture and traditions. Others have inherited the stories and histories of their families transmitted from one generation to another. The majority of them have never set foot in Ireland and have been completely disconnected from their Irish origins. And yet, they are proud to be partly Irish and revive their “Irishness” through societies, gatherings, celebrations, and storytelling. This paper will present our ethnographic research consisting of interviews with the descendants of the first Irish settlers in New Caledonia. Their stories, may they be inherited from their ancestors, revived or even (re)created, will shed light on the roots and routes of their families, and will raise the question of an Irish-Caledonian identity – in other terms, how they define themselves as Irish-Caledonians.

**Noémie Beck** is Head of the School of Anglophone Studies and Senior Lecturer at the University of New Caledonia. She carries out research on the Irish who settled in New Caledonia in the 19th century and who have many descendants in the various Caledonian communities. Relying on written and oral history, her research focuses on cultural and identity stories and histories.

Esther Borges

### **Question mark in a sea of full stops: Ireland and Otherness in the aftermath of colonisation**

Ireland is no stranger to the concept of Otherness, due to its long history under British colonisation and economic instability leading to a large history of emigration. In both society and literature, the aftermath of this manifests through the Irish assertion of their identities and remarking themselves – defiantly, vengefully or tragically – as the Other, while simultaneously establishing a strong sense of what is to be Irish, to be a part of Ireland. This national self-image seems to maintain itself even as things change and Ireland starts to receive a larger amount of immigrants, especially non-white, non-catholic immigrants, where stress is laid upon this identity against a backdrop of bigotry and the experiences of other Others. This paper analyses three main characters by the Bangladeshi-author

Adiba Jaigirdar to understand Ireland's reception to the non-Irish Other, represented by racialized south asian non-catholic immigrants.

**Esther Borges** is a PhD candidate at the university of São Paulo. Their dissertation focuses on Queer Diaspora in Irish literature, and is financed by the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP). She is an associate member of the Brazilian association of Irish Studies, (ABEI), the International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures (IASIL) and the Asociacion Espanola de Estudios Irlandeses (AEDEI).

David Burleigh

## **Shelley in Ireland**

The English Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) travelled to Ireland in 1812 to promote the cause of Catholic emancipation, a short-lived venture that left no permanent mark in its aftermath, except that he returned to England with an Irish servant. However a different 'Shelley', this time from China, visited Ireland at the beginning of 1938, seeking to garner support for the people of his country in a time of war. This was the Chinese poet Wang Lixi (1901-1939), who took the moniker 'Shelley' from the English Romantic poet, and who was one of a group of Chinese intellectual exiles resident in London in the 1930s, and who have recently been gaining some renewed attention. In this paper I would like to review the details of what is already known about Wang's time in Belfast and Dublin, the people whom he visited or met and what he did there, while adding some new information from Chinese sources, including a long farewell poem dedicated to his hosts in Belfast not previously translated. Indeed Wang's personal presence and example, which has already been evoked in the autobiography of John Hewitt (1907-1987), seems to have had a lingering effect on Hewitt's poetry and his way of thinking. Wang's travels and activities following his departure from Britain in 1938, and then his tragic death the next year following his return to China, where he is still known and remembered, will also be given some consideration.

**David Burleigh** is former professor in the Faculty of Letters at Ferris University in Yokohama; former adjunct lecturer in the School of International Liberal Studies at Waseda University. He holds degrees from the Universities of Ulster and Sussex, and published poetry in journals such as the *HU* and 'New Irish Writing' (*The Irish Press*) as a student. He researched and then edited *Helen Waddell's Writings from Japan* (2005), and has also collaborated on translations of modern Japanese poetry and haiku, most recently with Kōko Katō on *The Earth Afloat* (2021). He contributes to three English haiku journals (one each in Japan, Ireland and the United States)..



Maria Butler

### **Marian Keyes' *The Mystery of Mercy Close* and “writing/righting wrong”**

In January 2010, the popular Irish author Marian Keyes announced that she was suffering from a severe depressive episode via a fan newsletter. Excepting an update in the Spring of 2012, she then went silent until the publication of her cookbook *Saved by Cake* and novel *The Mystery of Mercy Close* in 2012. The foreword in *Saved by Cake* includes Keyes' most comprehensive public account of her depression whereas *Mercy Close* is a detective story in which private investigator Helen Walsh tries to solve a missing person's case whilst managing the reoccurrence of her depression. As such, both texts recount the lived experience of mental illness in post-Celtic Tiger Ireland and illustrate Keyes' journey towards recovery. *Mercy Close* is a fictional text however, there is a significant overlap between Keyes' non-fiction account of her depression in *Saved by Cake* and Helen's experiences in *Mercy Close*. Consequently, *Mercy Close* can be read as a semi-autobiographical account of Keyes' depression. Although Keyes attempted to reduce the shame and stigma of mental illness before 2010, her writings take on a different tenor after her depression arising from her need to detoxify her own shame to reconcile her old self with her new identity. Therefore, this paper draws upon the work of Arthur Frank and Jeffrey Berman to argue that both texts function as an act of “writing/righting wrong” wherein Keyes attempts to negotiate her depression and the corresponding societal stigma whilst also regaining and affirming her health in the aftermath of her diagnosis.

**Maria Butler** is a PhD candidate in the School of English, University College Cork. She is an IRC Government of Ireland Scholar and a UCC CACSSS Excellence Scholar. She has presented at conferences in Ireland and abroad and has been featured on RTE Brainstorm and RTE Drivetime.

Thomas Caffrey

### ***Kaiju* on O'Connell Street: Potentialities & Aftermaths of Destruction in James Joyce and Japanese *Kaiju* Film**

James Joyce once stated the *raison d'être* for *Ulysses* (1922); "to create an image of Dublin so complete that if the city suddenly disappears from the ground, it could be rebuilt from my book in its entirety". Joyce here raises the spectre of destruction as a spur to writing, creating a space where fictional architecture compensates for the erasure of lived architecture. I adopt Joyce's methodology as a prototype for later imaginings of urban catastrophe, with particular focus on Japan, with reference to Ishiro Honda's original *Gojira* (1954), alongside Shusuke Kaneko's *Gamera* trilogy (1995-1999). Sontag's "The Imagination of Disaster" (1965) is used to query what is permissible for destruction in these texts, what must endure, and subsequently how the city is formulated in the aftermath of

violence.

Uniting *Gojira* and *Ulysses* is an application of Deleuze & Guattari's "What is a Minor Literature?" (1983), through which I examine the chronotopic specificities of these texts and how contemporary understandings of the texts move away from minor specificities toward major generalities. Hegemonic understandings of these texts are general and superficial; I move toward a more specific and relational-islands-geographical understanding of the texts at hand.

Finally, I will venture that the character Gojira represents a Joycean Omphaloses, standing in (and symbolizing) the heart of the city. Marjorie Fitzgibbon's statue of Joyce stands just off O'Connell St, Dublin's busiest street. Meanwhile, an enormous Gojira sculpture towers over Central Road, Shinjuku, Tokyo's busiest neighborhood. In 1984's *Gojira* reboot, Gojira trampled Shinjuku, reducing the busy commercial district to ruin. In 2023, rioters devastated vast areas of O'Connell Street in anti-immigration violence. At the heart of destruction, both *Gojira* and Joyce allow us to mediate both real and imagined destruction.

**Thomas Caffrey** is a PhD student at the School of English, DCU. His research examines formations of the self in Haruki Murakami. Thomas is the recipient of a School of English research scholarship. He works at the intersection of the myth and the modern and is interested in representations of the monster in media.

Conor Carville

## **Beckett and Black Aesthetics**

In an early catalogue essay Stan Douglas, widely acknowledged as one of the foremost black artists working today, mounts an impassioned attack on Adorno, and on Adorno's reading of Beckett's *Endgame*, accusing him of 'modernist nostalgia'. More than this, he suggests that Adorno's reading of Beckett sponsors a 'heroic if melancholic identity [which] is always gendered male, classed bourgeois, and of European descent'. Finally, Douglas suggests: 'The suspicion with which Beckett regards closures such as this modernist nostalgia provides a content of an obligation to express that paradoxically coincides with having nothing to express'. This is to understand the obligation to express and its failure in a very specific way. Rather than situating Beckett's statement in its context, as a meditation on aesthetics, Douglas effectively turns it into a question of subjectivity and subalternity. This might be the first sighting of a postcolonial reading of Beckett, where his work is understood by Douglas as an undoing of the white male subject, and the problem of expression one which centres on power. In my paper I want to build on Douglas' prescient essay by drawing on Tina Post's groundbreaking *Deadpan: The Aesthetics of Black Inexpression* (2023), a book which mentions neither Douglas nor Beckett, but that has a chapter on Buster Keaton, with whom Beckett collaborated, and ends with an examination of the work of Steve McQueen, a black British artist who has often cited Beckett as an influence. I will also examine the recent work of Simon Okotie, a Black British

writer who has similarly acknowledged Beckett's work as a major influence on his own 'inexpressive' fiction.

**Conor Carville** is Professor of English Literature and Creative Writing at the University of Reading, UK. His most recent book is *Absorption and Theatricality: On Ghost Trio* (Cambridge UP).

Hawk Chang

### **“All changed, changed utterly”: Easter 1916 from Yeats to Iris Murdoch**

The 1916 Easter Rising is one of the most impactful campaigns in Irish history. This rebellion, in conjunction with subsequent revolutionary efforts, created an independent Irish republic. Yeats's "Easter 1916" is arguably the most well-known poem associated with this historic event in Ireland. In addition, Dublin-born Irish Murdoch also worked on Easter Rising-related issues in her only historical novel, *The Red and the Green* (1965). This novel demonstrates harsh criticism of Britain's colonial policy in Ireland, insinuating Murdoch's opposition to British imperialism in the early 1910s. However, as critics such as Margaret Moan Rowe contend, this Dublin-born writer with the backgrounds of Anglo-Irish ascendancy and Protestant religion had a much more complex relationship with Irish history. Murdoch's attitude towards Irish nationalism significantly changed after the political turmoil rampant in Northern Ireland around the 1970s, a phenomenon similar to Yeats's remorse over his having written "Easter 1916" and instigated more Irish nationalists to be engaged in revolutions. By reading *The Red and the Green*, this paper examines Murdoch's changing conceptions of the 1916 Easter Rising and her reflection on the aftermath of this monumental uprising in Irish history.

**Dr Hawk Chang** is Assistant Professor at the Department of Literature and Cultural Studies, The Education University of Hong Kong. His research has appeared in journals such as *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, *English Studies*, *Children's Literature in Education*, *The Explicator*, *ANQ*, *Neohelicon*, the *CEA Critic*, *Partial Answers*, and *CLCWeb*.

Li Chen

### **The Affective Turn in Contemporary Women Writing of the Northern Ireland Troubles—with *Milkman* as an example**

Women writers play a major role in reviving contemporary literary interest in the Troubles, as evidenced by Anna Burns' *Milkman* (2018), Jan Carson's *The Fire Starters* (2019) and Louise Kennedy's *Trespasses* (2022). Different from previous decades of male-dominated Troubles narratives, those new

texts show strong tendency to (re-)imagine the Troubles from body-related emotions and feelings, which points to an affective turn as is summarized by the feminist affect theories. This paper intends to focus on *Milkman*, winner of the 2018 Booker Prize, as a key text to showcase this new trend, to explore how female experience is employed to complicate literary representations of violence and political conflicts. The emotional aftermaths of violence, instead of violence itself, become a new focus in violence representation, to explore the lingering traumatic impact of visible or invisible violence on individual lives. On the other hand, embodied emotions and feelings, with the feeling of shock particularly emphasized, are portrayed as possible routes to restore disrupted intimate relationship and everyday life to functional patterns. Though the vision remains dark throughout the book, the possibility to reconstruct new routines of everyday life implies a silver lining for breaking down the vicious circle of historical violence and trauma.

**Li Chen** is professor of English and director of the Irish Studies Centre at Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU), China, and winner of the 2022 Presidential Distinguished Service Award for the Irish Abroad. She focuses her academic researches mainly on contemporary Irish and British literature. Her recent publications in English include “Irish Literature in China” in *Eire-Ireland: A Journal of Irish Studies* (vol. 53, 2018, pp.268-291) and “War, Espionage, and Masculine Anxiety in Graham Greene’s *The Heart of the Matter*”, a chapter of *War, Espionage, and Masculinity in British Fiction* (Susan L. Austin, ed. Vernon Press, 2023).

Adel Cheong

### **The Translation of Experience: Doireann Ní Ghríofa’s *A Ghost in the Throat***

Translation is not just thematically explored in Doireann Ní Ghríofa’s *A Ghost in the Throat* (2020), it is an undertaking central to its structure and at heart of the book. Ní Ghríofa’s translation of the Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire begins while pregnant with her third child; its unfolding taking place alongside the crisis of her fourth pregnancy, several moves and archival research trips that take her to libraries and places like the Derrynane House where Eibhlin Dubh was born into, and Kilcrea Abbey where three generations of Dubh’s male relatives are buried. *A Ghost in the Throat* is thus a book about Ní Ghríofa’s experiences as much as it is a creative reconstruction of experiences Eibhlin Dubh may have had. As a work of autofiction, it brings together poetry, memoir, fiction, essay, and criticism, making it very much about formal experimentation as it is about translation. For Andre Lefevere, “[t]ranslation is, of course, a rewriting of an original text”, whereby “[r]ewritings can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices, and the history of translation is the history also of literary innovation, of the shaping power of one culture upon another” (ix). Translation forms not only the impetus but the means to make sense or contextualise contemporary existence, an endeavor

undertaken by Ní Ghríofa as a female poet, writer, and reader. Taking all this into consideration, this paper focuses on how translation gives voice to one's experiences and the experiences of another in *A Ghost in the Throat*.

**Adel Cheong** received her PhD in English Literature at Dublin City University. Her interests are broadly in contemporary literature, aesthetics and affect. Researching predominantly on twenty-first century Irish and British fiction, she has written on authors such as John Banville.

Mike Cronin

### **From Pre Celtic Tiger to Crash in Dermot Bolger's *In High Germany* and *The Parting Glass***

In 1999 Dermot Bolger published *In High Germany*, which he followed with a companion piece, *The Parting Glass* in 2011. The first work was set at the European Championships in Germany in 1988 while the latter is set around the France versus Ireland World Cup play off game in Paris in 2009. While the Irish national football team forms the backdrop to the plays, they are both centred around the character of Eoin. In *In High Germany* Eoin has travelled to Germany with his friends to follow the Irish team, but at the close of the play he does not return to Ireland but stays in Germany with his pregnant girlfriend. During the play Eoin reflects on his upbringing, the ways in which nationalism and Catholicism blighted his upbringing and how Ireland, as a failed economic state, had forced him and his friends to emigrate. In all his negative thinking about his life Eoin explores the ways in which the Irish football team is the sole thing in his life that makes him feel Irish and proud, and gives him something he can cheer. By the time of *The Parting Glass* Eoin had returned to live in Ireland with his wife. Arriving initially at a time of economic boom, Eoin then endures the crash of 2008. His going to France with his German son to watch Ireland play France allows him once more to analyse his life and the fortunes of the Irish state. The play is a critique of the Celtic Tiger boom and how it left many Irish emigrants of the 1980s behind. Together the two plays offer the perfect way to explore multiple aftermaths - the aftermath of Irish national history through to the aftermath of the Celtic Tiger and the impact of the downturn.

**Professor Mike Cronin** is the Academic Director of Boston College Ireland. He has worked extensively on the political and cultural history of 20th and 21st century Ireland, and has published widely on the history of Irish identity. His recent publications include (with Renee Fox and Brian O Conchubhair) *The Routledge International Handbook of Irish Studies*. He was the lead on the major digital project during the Decade of Centenaries, [www.rte.ie/centuryireland](http://www.rte.ie/centuryireland).

Beverley Curran

## **Lucy Caldwell's Short Stories as Departure Texts**

This presentation examines the short stories of Lucy Caldwell, particularly those in her collections *Mementoes* (2016) and *Intimacies* (2021) in order to examine them as departure texts. By using the term 'departure text', I counter the idea that the short story is a starting point for narratives that are developed and refined in later longer works of fiction by showing through comparative textual attention that these writings succinctly articulate concerns -- resistance to and complicity with cultural constraints on their lives and how they are remembered; local and 'global' language acquired online; and the geography and mental maps that trace our days and lives -- that Caldwell returns to repeatedly in her dramatic works and novels. In the mementoes and intimate encounters in her short stories, Caldwell is tracing how and where we look to find ourselves and our communities and the connections between different times and places that are far from linear.

**Beverley Curran** is Professor by Special Appointment at International Christian University, Japan. Her main interests are contemporary women's writing and the circulation and cultural effects of translation. She is a former editor of IASIL Japan's *Journal of Irish Studies*.

Joan FitzPatrick Dean

## **Against the Tide: Daisy Bannard Cogley 1945-65**

Madame Desiree (Daisy) Bannard Cogley, known as Toto, was among the most experienced and prolific of women theatre practitioners in Ireland. Her work has recently been the subject of reclamation by Melissa Sihra, Elaine Sisson, Nicholas Allen, and others. Toto Cogley is distinctive if not unique not only for the duration of her engagement (from the 1910s until the 1960s) but also for the range of her theatre practice, which includes cabaret performer, producer (director), founder, seamstress, impresaria, dancer, and singer. This paper examines her theatre-making in Dublin during the contentious decades after World War Two.

After the death of her husband, Fred, Toto Cogley returned to Ireland in the 1940s and founded the last of her several theatres, the Studio Theatre Club. As at the Dublin Gate Theatre, which she co-founded, she offered Ireland an expansive view of theatre and its dramaturgical possibilities. Between its founding in 1949 and 1965, the Studio Theatre Club produced new plays by Irish playwrights as well as works by August Strindberg, Jean Cocteau, Thornton Wilder, and Clare Booth Luce. It cultivated controversy in its production of Jean-Paul Sartre's *Crime Passionel* (Kitty Black's translation of *Les Mains Sales*) and brought international drama to Dublin at a time when the Gate was at its most vulnerable and the Abbey at its most conservative.

**Joan FitzPatrick Dean's** books include *Pageant* (2021), *All Dressed Up: Modern Irish Historical Pageantry*

(2014); *Riot and Great Anger: Twentieth Century Stage Censorship in Ireland* (2004); *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Cork UP/Irish Institute of Film, 2003). She was Fulbright Scholar at UCG and Fulbright Lecturer at Université de Nancy.

Sarah d'Episcopo

## **“In Ruins/But Not/Beyond Salvation”: Aftermaths in Ciaran Carson’s Post-Troubles Poetry**

“Back then you wouldn’t know from one day to the next/What might/happen next”

The effects of the Troubles and Peace Process linger like ghosts in Ciaran Carson's writing. Like many other Northern Irish artists, art provides a medium for Carson to reflect on and navigate the changed - and still changing - political and cultural landscape of Northern Ireland at the turn of the 21st century. What can be observed in Carson's writing during this period is an increased focus on the transitional elements of life. This is combined with an emerging emphasis on poetry as an act of sense-making.

While “the unresolved questions of the past ” continue to linger throughout the author’s oeuvre, Carson refuses to let the aftermath imply a conclusion of any sort. Instead, it becomes vital for poetic contemplation and, furthermore, an intrinsic part of his idea of continuity and progress. Considering selected examples from collections such as *On the Night Watch* (2009) and *Still Life* (2019), this paper presents what lies between the traditional binaries of absence and presence, silence and voice, or life and death, as well as the process of translation and intermediality, and illuminates his understanding of the transformative affordance of the transitional space.

This paper examines how Ciaran Carson's post-agreement poetry explores the transformative potential of the aftermath space in post-Troubles Northern Ireland. By focusing on selected examples from collections such as *On the Night Watch* (2009) and *Still Life* (2019), the paper highlights Carson's unique perspective on memory, temporality, and the in-between spaces, embracing the potential for growth and transformation in transitional moments. Through his reflections on remembrance and the experience of existence in transition, Carson's poetry becomes a vehicle for navigating the complex aftermath of political and cultural change in Northern Ireland.

**Sarah d'Episcopo** is a PhD student at the University of Zurich, Switzerland. Her research focuses on Northern Irish writer Ciaran Carson, whose post-Troubles poetry and translations she studies with regards to a poetics of in-betweenness. Her interests lie with folklore and popular culture, intertextuality, and phenomenology.

Stephen John Dilks

### ***Ulysses*: Censorship and Civil Rights in Episode Seven**

Episode seven of *Ulysses* demonstrates Joyce's understanding of the importance of the Freeman's Journal as an instrument in the Long Irish Revolution, 1763-1922. Critics who have taken the setting of the episode seriously, including Cheryl Herr, Margot Backus, Fritz Senn and Felix Larkin, have tended to focus on the influence of newspapers on form and style OR the demise of the newspaper in the period between 1880 and 1910. In "*Ulysses*: Censorship and Civil Rights," I argue that Joyce deliberately channels the relationship between journalism and censorship, illustrating how Irish journalism since the days of Charles Lucas, Henry Grattan, and Henry Flood has participated in the struggle for civil rights, expressing the urge to freedom in the context of oppressive policies and policing by the Castle Authorities. The presentation highlights Joyce's commitment to uncensored publication as an expression of his commitment to the Emancipation of Ireland and the Irish.

With degrees from the University of Stirling and Rutgers Graduate School, **Stephen Dilks** is Professor of Irish and British Literature at UMKC and has published articles in well-placed journals on James Joyce and Samuel Beckett (including the *James Joyce Quarterly* and *Modern Language Studies*), plus a book on Beckett that changed how scholars read his life as an author. Dilks is currently using archival material from KU's O'Hegarty collection, the National Library of Ireland, and the Irish Newspaper Archives to write *\*The Long Irish Revolution, 1763-1922,\** a book that illustrates how six generations of Irish soldiers, politicians, and authors defined and achieved the terms of Ireland's movement towards independence.

Jun Du

### **Postmemory and the Aesthetic of Vulnerability in Contemporary Irish Women's Life Writing**

Life writing has always been a significant component of Irish literature. In recent years, along with the booming progress of Irish women's literature and ongoing feminist movements, life writing by women has also experienced a notable surge in Ireland, with many works, exemplified by Emilie Pine's *Notes to Self* (2018) and Sinéad Gleeson's *The Constellations* (2019), winning awards and garnering widespread acclaim. Through narrating personal stories, these works engage with and reflect on various societal issues, blurring the boundary between personal narrative and collective history and memory, further highlighting the interplay between individual identity and communal belonging. In these works, authors expose and scrutinise emotions such as pain, grief and shame, offering alternative narratives about strength and resilience. Focusing on award-winning Irish life writings by women, namely Sinéad Gleeson's *The Constellations*, Rosaleen McDonagh's *Unsettled* (2020) and Katriona O'Sullivan's *Poor* (2023), this essay explores how these authors' narratives extend beyond mere autobiographical recounting, functioning as a way to engage with and interrogate



collective memories. Drawing on theories of postmemory, which describes how subsequent generations are profoundly influenced by their predecessors' traumas and experiences, this essay also illuminates how these authors construct their identities amidst familial and societal traumas. Their affective narratives manifest that postmemory, despite its weight, can also serve as a source for resilience.

**Jun Du** currently works as a lecturer in Guangdong University of Foreign Studies, China. She received her PhD on Post-2010 Irish Women's Writing from University College Dublin in 2023. Jun has published articles on Paula Meehan's poetry and Edna O'Brien's novels.

Porscha Fermanis

## **Indigenous Australians, Irish Witnesses, and the Aftermaths of Colonial Violence**

In a landmark address to the Western Australian parliament in 2017, President Michael D. Higgins noted that it is important to acknowledge that injustices were inflicted upon Australian First Nations peoples by Irish immigrants, including during the infamous Myall Creek Massacre of 10 June 1838 (*Irish Times*, 18 October 2017). This paper considers Irish literary responses to Indigenous suffering in the wake of colonial frontier violence, from Eliza Hamilton Dunlop's poem of witness 'The Aboriginal Mother' (1838), to the Irish-Australian journalist and self-styled 'salvage' ethnographer Daisy Bates's *The Passing of the Aborigines* (1944). In each case, it focuses on the complex and ambivalent act of witnessing, in particular on what Jonathan Dunk (via Michel de Certeau) has identified as a form of textual heterology in which inheres both 'a representation of the other and the fabrication and accreditation of the text as witness of the other'. The paper argues that sentimental representations of Indigenous suffering—and the creation of virtual or textual communities of shared witnessing—must be situated within what Jane Lydon has called 'the racial limits of imaginative identification'. More specifically, it suggests that the sentimental apparatus of 'mothering' fostered by middle-class women such as Dunlop and Bates ultimately encouraged institutions of assimilation and disciplinary intimacy in the settler colonies, institutions that had profound intergenerational consequences for Indigenous Australians.

**Porscha Fermanis** is professor of nineteenth-century literature at University College Dublin. Her current work focuses on settler colonialism in the southern hemisphere, particularly on nineteenth-century settler fiction from Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. Her latest book, *Settler Fiction from the Southern Hemisphere, 1820-1890*, is forthcoming from Oxford University Press.

Deirdre Flynn

## **‘Where are you from Originally?’ Aftermaths of the 2004 Citizenship Referendum**

This paper will discuss a collaborative project with Unapologetic Magazine, where we reflected and responded to the 20-year anniversary of the 2004 citizenship Referendum. The special issue of Unapologetic edited by Sandrine Ndario and Fiona O Kearney, and featured artistic responses to the legacy and impact of when those born in the state are not considered part of the state. This collaboration offered a forum to engage with the ethical considerations of the legislation. The special issue will be launched in May 2024.

Unapologetic is a multidisciplinary, literary, cultural, and artistic response to the social issues and creative opportunities of contemporary Ireland, offering a reboot and upheaval. The forms which such an upheaval might take are not always authorised by orthodox ideas on what constitutes ‘culture’. The magazine gives people from minority and diverse backgrounds a space to be unapologetically themselves while simultaneously highlighting the social issues we see and experience in Irish society today. Based in Limerick, Unapologetic offers new understanding of contemporary Ireland.

This paper will build on notions of citizenship in Melatu Uche Okorie’s ‘Under the Awning’, and Denise Chaila’s ‘Duel Citizenship’ using the work selected for the special issue to reflect on the 20 year legacy of the referendum.

**Dr Deirdre Flynn** is a lecturer in 21st-century literature at MIC Limerick. She is a member of the inaugural Young Academy of Ireland. She has published widely on Precarity, Contemporary literature, Irish Studies, Haruki Murakami, Migration, and Literary Urban Studies. Her co-edited collection, *Austerity and Irish women's writing and culture 1980-2020* with Dr Ciara Murphy was published with Routledge in 2022. She co-edited two collections on Irish Literature with Palgrave Macmillan: *Irish Urban Fictions* and *Representations of Loss in Irish Literature*. She is currently working on *The Routledge Handbook of Motherhood on Screen* (2024) with Dr Susan Liddy. Deirdre is the secretary of the International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures (IASIL) and edits the blog, [www.irishwomenswritingnetwork.com](http://www.irishwomenswritingnetwork.com). She has worked in NUI Galway, UL and UCD.

Brian Fox

## **Writing and the Aftermath in John McGahern's *The Leavetaking***

John McGahern’s *The Leavetaking* is profoundly concerned with the concept of the aftermath. In personal terms, it explores the impact on the protagonist of the early and traumatic death of his mother. It also explores the wider social and cultural consequences of the Catholic Church’s rise to ‘almost total power’ (McGahern, ‘The Church and the Spire’) in the aftermath of Irish independence.

Indeed, the events and their aftermaths mentioned here are subjects that McGahern constantly revisits and revises in his writing. These aspects of McGahern's work are by now well understood. By contrast, the mechanics of his writing methods and, crucially, the interrelation between the methods and McGahern's thematic and philosophical concerns are much less well understood. Accordingly, this paper will focus on this interrelation, tracing important lines of connection between the writing methods and the events the writing describes. Taking the earliest rough drafts as a starting point, it will analyse key features of McGahern's writing process across the many textual iterations of *The Leavetaking* at both pre- and post-publication stages, a distinction that is slightly complicated by the presence of two published versions of the novel: the original 1974 version and the second, substantially revised version of 1984 that followed McGahern's collaboration with Alain Delahaye on the French translation in 1983. It will discuss McGahern as a writer intensely committed to a process and indeed a philosophy of revision, at draft level and even in the aftermath of publication.

**Brian Fox** is an Associate Professor of English at Okayama University, Japan. Publications include *James Joyce's America* (Oxford University Press, 2019). He has recently edited the new Penguin edition of *Finnegans Wake* (2024) and is currently the editor of the *Journal of Irish Studies*, the journal of IASIL Japan.

Alison Garden

### **'Afterlives of unions and partitions in the northern National Tale'**

The Irish National Tale – which frequently featured a marriage between an Irish woman and a British, or Anglo-Irish man, as an allegory for the relationship between Britain and Ireland – arose in the aftermath of the Act of Union (1801). But this form was itself a permutation of a motif with a much longer cultural history and its central conceit, the reconciliatory romance, has its own afterlife. After partition took effect in the 1920s, an unsettling refashioning of this metaphor appears in Irish literature with the 'birth' of the new northern statelet envisaged and depicted in numerous violent ways. This paper will trace how the afterlife of partition is given literary life through new paradigms of union across a number of cultural forms. In teasing out how the trope both mutates and persists, this paper argues for the centrality of the narrative to Irish cultural and political life.

**Dr Alison Garden** is a Senior Lecturer and UKRI Future Leaders Fellow at Queen's University Belfast. She is the author of *The Literary Afterlives of Roger Casement, 1899-2016* (Liverpool 2020) and is currently writing *Love Across the Divide: desire and colonial culture in Northern Ireland, 1970-present*.

Katie Hallinan

## **From Tyrone to Tokyo: Neurodivergent perspectives on late capitalism in Michelle Gallen's *Big Girl Small Town* and Sayaka Murata's *Convenience Store Woman***

In the wake of the Celtic Tiger and the subsequent crash there has been a boom in Irish women's writing, Anne Enright became the inaugural Laureate for Irish Fiction (2015-2018) and independent publishers such as Banshee and Stinging Fly are leading the way publishing exciting new voices including the hugely successful Sally Rooney.

This paper will examine Michelle Gallen's work, which is largely based on her experiences growing up during the Troubles in Northern Ireland, it will situate this in a global context by comparing her confident debut novel *Big Girl Small Town* (2020) with Japanese author Sayaka Murata's *Convenience Store Woman*.

Both Majella and Keiko are undiagnosed autistic women whose lives center around their place of work. Keiko cannot function without the stability of the industrial nature of her society, putting her role as a worker above her romantic, platonic, and familial relationships. Similarly, Majella's life is centered around her work, it tethers her to her community and is the foundation of some of her longest relationships. It is also where she learns the most about her community and the people in it. In both novels, the protagonist's identity is compounded by the gendered constructs of late capitalism, framed by their unflinching sincerity and astute observations on the societies they endure. In Majella's case this is further impacted by the legacy of sectarian violence.

This paper will explore the autistic perspective in both novels and examine the importance of including neurodivergent voices in Japanese and Irish women's literature, and how this can help to further refute femininity as the sight of blame in which Irish recessionary and Japanese economic culture has historically existed.

**Katie Hallinan** is a 1st year PhD student with research interests in contemporary fiction, Irish women's writing, disability studies, Irish studies, social media use in fiction and neurodiversity studies.

Maho Hidaka

## **Reciprocal Influences between Irish Literature and the Japanese Arts: Centering on Oscar Wilde, Aubrey Beardsley, Junichiro Tanizaki and Yukio Mishima**

This paper explores the theme of 'Japan and Irish literatures' by examining reciprocal influences between Irish literature and the Japanese arts. A particular focus will be on Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), Aubrey Beardsley (1872-1898), Junichiro Tanizaki (1886-1965), Yukio Mishima (1925-1970), and

adaptations of their works.

Japonisme will be a focal point in approaching the subject with an investigation into the role that it has played in connecting different Japanese art forms such as literature and visual and performing arts with Irish literature. The paper will trace how variations on elements from the Japanese arts were imported back and applied to a range of genres of fiction and plays as well as visual arts related to Irish literature such as illustrations for literary works and set designs of theatre productions.

Tanizaki and Mishima made a significant contribution to the introduction and reception of Wilde in Japan, and Beardsley was received as an inseparable component from Wilde's work. This paper will examine the significance of the impact that the incorporation of Japonisme in Beardsley's artwork including his work for *Salome* made on the Japanese arts. Tanizaki made a notable contribution to Wilde's reception through his work both as a writer and a translator, and Mishima as a writer and a director. Both of their works have been staged and cinematised, as well; hence the inclusion of both in this paper will lead to a deeper appreciation of the extent of the legacy they left.

**Dr Maho Hidaka** is a theatre director and professor of dramatic arts at Kyoto Women's University. She received her master's from WAAPA@ECU, and doctorate from Kyoto University. Her publications include a chapter in *Wilde's Other Worlds* (Routledge, 2018) and *Oscar Wilde Reappraised: Fiction and Plays* (subsidised by Kyoto University, 2016).

Kaori Hirashige

### **Negotiating with the Popular: Lady Gregory's Early Abbey Plays**

Though there is no doubt that events such as the so-called Playboy riot contributed to wide publicity, it was Lady Gregory's one-act plays that sustained the Abbey enterprise in its nascent years. The immense popularity of her plays, attested to by the sheer number of their production, could, of course, be attributed to Gregory's talent as a playwright, particularly her ability to write witty conversations on familiar subjects that found a common ground in audience members coming from different backgrounds. Another factor, however, lies in Gregory's astute use of popular theatrical traditions, particularly her understanding of ballads as a means to establish rapport between those present in the theatre. This paper will explore the ways in which Lady Gregory incorporated ballads in her early plays including *The Rising of the Moon* and *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* (the latter of which was co-authored with W. B. Yeats), in a manner contrary to the Abbey's proclaimed role as a "literary" institution. It will argue that Gregory did so based on both strategic planning and personal preferences as she negotiated her position as an Anglo-Irish writer in the Irish Revival. Often viewed as a relief to Yeats's verse plays, Gregory's plays catered to and were lauded by audience members who were trained by the casual atmosphere of the halls. By re-reading these well-known plays, I hope to suggest a stronger connection between the national theatre in its early years and what the directors decried as

'commercial' theatre.

**Kaori Hirashige** is an Assistant Professor at Chuo University in Tokyo. She received her PhD from University College Dublin, where her research examined the literary representation of various forms of musical gatherings and how such meetings were indispensable in forming a rich network of people that sustained the Irish Revival.

İncihan Hotaman

### **“We Have Been Sisters in the Crime”: An Exploration of the Aftermath of Literary Exclusion in Eavan Boland’s Poetry**

Eavan Boland's poetry serves as a powerful confrontation of the aftermath of literary exclusion of women, particularly through her evocative use of the image of the muses. This study explores how Boland navigates the aftermath of the exclusion of female realities within literature, focusing on her three poems: "Tirade for the Mimic Muse," "Tirade for the Epic Muse," and "Tirade for the Lyric Muse". Boland's tirades serve as poignant reflections on the aftermath of literary exclusion, where she confronts the marginalization of female voices and experiences within the literary canon. Through her poetic lens, the tirades not only underline the long-time exclusion of female realities from literature but also challenge the restrictive representations of women and advocate for the recognition of female perspectives. Furthermore, the poet's scrutiny of historical portrayals of women in literature, used to justify atrocities and discrimination, challenges the glorification of male heroism and the erasure of female agency. Likewise, her emphasis on the artificial constraints imposed by patriarchal literary aesthetics contributes to discussions on the authenticity and autonomy of female expression within traditional poetic structures. Through her perspective that embraces female realities with literary principles, Boland aims to carve a clear path for female poetry within the aftermath of literary exclusion, offering a vision of empowerment and visibility while challenging traditional narratives and paving the way for the inclusion of female perspectives within the literary landscape.

**İncihan Hotaman**, completed her undergraduate studies in English Language and Literature with a minor in Psychology at Hacettepe University, Turkey, before earning her MA in Literary and Cultural Studies at Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, Spain. She received PhD at Ege University, and her research interests include Irish poetry, literary theory, and the effects of contemporary technology on literature.

Ellen Howley

### **“The sea swarms me ... The sea wants me”: Gothic Horror and the Sea in Sophie White’s *Where I End* (2022) and Sinéad Gleeson’s *Hagstone* (2024)**

Irish women writers are increasingly turning to the sea in fiction. From Elaine Feeny (*How to Build a Boat*) to Nuala O’Connor (*Seabourne*), novelists have become interested in how the Irish interact with the sea. Two recent additions to this genre, Sophie White’s *Where I End* and Sinéad Gleeson’s *Hagstone*, not only share a fascination with the waters that surround Ireland but can also be read alongside ideas of the coastal gothic. Thus, this paper examines how each novel understands the relationship between horror and the sea, drawing on the work of scholars such as Emily Alder and Jimmy Packham.

In White’s book, the sea contributes to an atmosphere of fear and isolation at the same time that it becomes central to some of the story’s darkest moments. Gleeson likewise sets her story on a remote island, whereby the coastal environment enhances the book’s sense of eeriness. Both novels, centring on female protagonists, also demonstrate the particular ways in which women interact with the sea’s gothic features.

As Irish literary studies moves towards more sustained engagement with environmental and ecocritical concerns, the place of the sea should be central to analyses. By exploring how the traditionally gothic features of both works are sometimes enhanced, sometimes complicated by the presence of the sea, a unique reading of *Where I End* and *Hagstone* emerges. Thus, the work of this paper not only makes an important intervention in Irish ecocritical work but also draws the Irish coast into discussion of the coastal gothic.

**Dr Ellen Howley** is Assistant Professor at the DCU School of English. She examines Irish and Caribbean poetry through a Blue Humanities lens and her monograph, *Oceanic Connections: The Sea in Irish and Caribbean Poetry* is forthcoming from Syracuse University Press. She recently co-edited *Seamus Heaney’s Mythmaking* (Routledge, 2023) with Ian Hickey and has published work in *Irish Studies Review*, the *Journal of Commonwealth Literature and Comparative Literature*.

Shan-Yun Huang

### **Not Your Normal People: Ironic Normality in Sara Baume’s *A Line Made by Walking***

In Sara Baume’s *A Line Made by Walking* (2017), the protagonist Frankie, a young artist wrestling with her sense of place in the world, embarks on a solitary retreat to her deceased grandmother’s rural home. Frankie’s journey, marked by her interaction with nature, her art, and introspections on life

and death, serves as a vehicle for Baume to delve into the contradictions of seeking normality in an inherently chaotic existence. This paper aims to analyze *A Line Made by Walking* as a critique of contemporary societal norms and the quest for meaning amid existential disquiet. The novel, structured around Frankie's encounters with dead animals and reflections on various artworks, employs these motifs as metaphors for examining life's disconnections and the individual's struggle for authenticity. As Frankie navigates her confusion about life's direction, questioning her own normalcy, an irony unfolds: her experiences, deemed problematic, may in fact be emblematic of a broader, shared normality. This notion of ironic normality becomes the focal point of the paper, aiming to shed light on Baume's narrative techniques as they reveal the young generation's predicament in post-economic crash Ireland. The novel transcends a mere tale of personal discovery to offer a reflective critique on the struggle to find one's place in a world where internal chaos and external pressures converge, and where individuals find themselves in a perpetual oscillation between eccentricity and conformity. Adopting a metamodern perspective to dissect the layers of ironic normality depicted in the novel, this paper will illustrate how Baume navigates the complex terrain between despair and hope, detachment and engagement, thereby capturing the essence of the contemporary human condition. This will elucidate Baume's portrayal of a generation marked by uncertainty, yet persistently seeking a semblance of stability amidst the turbulence of modern life.

**Shan-Yun Huang** is Associate Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, National Taiwan University. His recent publications include a chapter in *The Edinburgh Companion to Irish Modernism*, titled "Modernism against/for the Nation: Joycean Echoes in Post-War Taiwan," and another article titled "Nostalgia and Post-Crash Irish Identity in Donal Ryan's *The Spinning Heart* and Mike McCormack's *Solar Bones*." His current research focuses on Irish novels published after the crash of the Celtic Tiger.

Hiroko Ikeda

### **Paula Meehan's Dialogue with W.B. Yeats**

The impact of W. B. Yeats's legacy on today's Irish women poets requires a deeper and more comprehensive investigation than what has been done so far. The present study focuses on the way Paula Meehan reimagines and recreates some of Yeats's poems. Her conscious attempt to imaginatively interact with Yeats culminates in the recent poem 'The Celtic Cross Spread Dictated to Paula Meehan by Yeats from the Other Side'. Behind the poem may lie their shared interest in Great Memory, which connects the minds of both the living and the dead, allowing Meehan to communicate with Yeats at a deep level. Meehan's favourite poems by Yeats, such as 'The Cat and the Moon' and 'Easter, 1916' indicate why she acquires a sense of affinity with Yeats despite considerable differences between the two. It is worth paying close attention to their perspectives on the Easter Rising. They



share a keen interest in the occult, ghosts, astronomy, eastern philosophy, and the cycle of the moon. Of note is that they are equally fascinated by both magic and science. This paper will explore and illuminate the complex and intriguing features found in Meehan's creative dialogue with Yeats, the outcome of which is epitomized in the echoes of 'Leda and the Swan' in 'Mrs Sweeney', 'Sailing to Byzantium' in 'Old Biddy Talk', and 'Among School Children' in 'Meanwhile Back to the Rath'.

**Hiroko Ikeda** obtained an M.A. from University College, Dublin (1999) and a Ph.D. from Kyoto University (2005). Her recent publications include 'Beyond being Irish or Celtic: The Double Vision of Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill's "Cailleach/Hag" in *Feis*' in *The British Context and Beyond: New Perspectives from Kyoto*.

Eishiro Ito

### **An Aftermath of the Canonization of John Henry Newman: The UCD Line of Newman, Hopkins and Joyce**

This paper aims to discuss an aftermath of the canonization of John Henry Newman in 2019. He greatly influenced two Jesuit writers, James Joyce and Gerard Manley Hopkins. Newman was requested by the Irish Catholic bishops to become the first president of the Catholic University of Ireland, now University College Dublin, Joyce's alma mater. In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Stephen Dedalus tells that Newman is the greatest writer of prose (82). Joyce was a member of the Literary and Historical Society founded by Newman and presented his paper "Drama and Life" in 1900.

Joyce was only six when Hopkins, the UCD chair of Greek Literature between 1884 and 1889, died of typhoid fever in 1889 at the age of 44. Joyce mentioned Newman in his novels several times, but Hopkins is just alluded in *Finnegans Wake*. Both Newman and Hopkins were born in rich families in England but despaired of the Church of England and converted to Catholicism. Newman influenced Hopkins' conversion in the Oxford Movement. Hopkins even became a Jesuit priest, which made him decentered from the conventional English society with very little hope of career advancement in England. Joyce, as described in *A Portrait*, was once summoned to become a priest but declined it. In the late 1880s, Hopkins met an Irish Jesuit and poet Matthew Russell, who introduced him to Katharine Tynan and William Butler Yeats. Joyce and Hopkins are very contrastive in many points.

**Eishiro Ito** is Professor of English at Iwate Prefectural University, Japan. His field of research is modern Irish literature, particularly James Joyce, W. B. Yeats, Samuel Beckett and Seamus Heaney. His most recent article is "'But I say: Let my country die for me' (U 15.4473): Postnationalism and the Jesuit Adaptation of Joyce and Vico" (*James Joyce Journal*, vol. 29, no. 2, 107-30).

Miki Iwata

### **W. B. Yeats's 'Late Style' in *The Death of Cuchulain***

Literary gerontology is becoming increasingly important in the 21st century, when societies in both Asia and Europe are ageing rapidly. Heather Ingram, in her *Ageing in Irish Writing* (2018), argues that the significance of literary gerontology lies in its ability to provide the individual complexities of old age, replacing the abstract images presented by theoretical gerontology. According to her, the characteristics of Yeats's later poetry are against the idea of old age as a time of maturity and integrity. In other words, the poet is 'not aiming for a final resolution, totality or gerontranscendence' (40).

Although Ingram deals with Yeats only in terms of poetry, the same tendency could be said of his later plays. Especially, his last play, *The Death of Cuchulain* (1939)—with its awkward juxtaposition of overtly different styles from a provocative prologue through psychological realism, poetic lyricism and a bitter irony to a ritualistic dance—seems particularly well suited to the features noted by Ingram, as well as what Edward Said called 'late style'.

Said maintains that the late works of great artists tend to deviate from what is popular at the time, while at the same time ushering in what is to come. *The Death of Cuchulain* is deliberately out of step with the times, as the Old Man in the prologue calls the present age 'this vile age' and spits on it. This paper will examine what Yeats's last play tries to say about old age in the aftermath of the Irish Civil War and the founding of the Irish Free State, and what it may mean in the 21st century.

**Miki Iwata** is a professor of English literature at Rikkyo University, Japan. She received her PhD from Tohoku University (2001) for her study of W. B. Yeats's drama. Her recent publications include 'Migrating Souls and Witnessing Travellers in the Dramaturgy of Nō Theatre' (2023).

Yiling Jiang

### **On Wilde's Body Aesthetics in *The Picture of Dorian Gray* from Zhuangzi's Philosophy of the Body**

In *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, the soul within the portrait incarnates as the bearer of all sins while Gray's body becomes the home of all sensory experiences in the world. This game between soul and body is Wilde's subversion and play with the binary opposition of spirit and flesh deeply rooted in Western philosophy. However, Wilde does not just deride the creed of valuing soul over body by swapping positions, but tries to cure the soul by senses and the soul will be sublimated when the senses are satisfied. Through emphasizing the unity of body and soul, Wilde dispels the duality between the two. This unity of opposites of spirit and flesh coincides with Zhuangzi's body philosophy like "the undifferentiated whole of mind and body, of senses and reason", and "all equals one". Wilde once acclaimed Zhuangzi as the "master of masters", and his identification with some key concepts of Daoism can be glimpsed in his several reviews of Zhuangzi's philosophy. Previous

studies on the comparison between Wilde and Zhuangzi mostly focus on their understanding of social governance and pay little attention to the issue of body. This paper attempts to explore Wilde's body aesthetics and its interactive relationship with Zhuangzi's philosophy of the body through a reading of body writings in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

**Yiling Jiang** is a first-year doctoral student at Beijing Foreign Studies University specializing in Irish literature with an interest in modern Irish novels and plays of the Irish Literary Revival. Yiling's current research centers on the interaction between Oscar Wilde's aestheticism and Zhuangzi's philosophy.

Barbara Kavanagh

### **Brave New Words: How John McGahern's work paved the way for a new generation**

In an essay collection edited by Derek Hand and Eamon Maher, *Assessing a Literary Legacy: Collected Essays on John McGahern* (2019), Donal Ryan speaking in the context of John McGahern's writing says, "That fiction serves a noble purpose, to oust secrecy, to obliterate shame, to stand as mirror to the soul of man and reflect him back to himself; to delineate his terrible propensity for violence and abuse and to use narrative as a blessed valve to relieve the awful pressure of the ignored, pent-up, unspoken pain of existence." (pg 198). This paper will consider the importance and bravery of McGahern's writing in tackling unpopular and taboo issues. It will, using McGahern's own words and the work of McGahern scholars, look at the aftermath of the banning of his book *The Dark* and McGahern's refusal to engage publicly in a campaign to restore his good name. It will demonstrate the power of McGahern's writing and explore the ways in which his example may have paved the way for future writers.

**Barbara's** PhD, supported by a scholarship from the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, TU Dublin is "Narratives of Place: Reflections on the Writing of John McGahern (1934-2006)". She holds a BA, English and Drama from University College Dublin and an MA in Creative Writing from the University of Limerick.

Valerie Catherine Kennedy

### **"Dropped from Heaven": 'Illegitimacy' and the Maternal Ideal in the Fiction of Maura Laverty**

On January the 12th 2021, the Irish government published the *Final Report of the Commission of Investigation into the Mother and Baby Homes*. Addressing the nation, the then Taoiseach, Micheal Martin, stated that "[t]he regime described in the report wasn't imposed on us by any foreign power.

We did this to ourselves as a society. We treated women exceptionally badly, we treated children exceptionally badly” (Martin, 2021). Included in the report is Gerardine Meaney’s thought provoking study, “Irish Cultural Representations of Single Mothers and Their Children, 1890-1960”. Facing controversy and the threat of censorship, Meaney’s document illustrates “a sustained effort by women writers beginning in the early 1940s to change social attitudes, employing popular genres, gothic, satire, pathos and humour” (Meaney, 2). Meaney cites Maura Laverty as a writer who “portrayed single mothers and their children as part of rural Irish society, vulnerable and subjected to prejudice, but surviving and in most cases capable of making decent lives for themselves against the odds” (13). Building on Meaney’s research, this paper will focus on Laverty’s realist approach to depictions of unmarried motherhood in her novels published in the 1940s, described by social historian, Caitriona Clear, as “probably one of the most valuable portraits we have of the everyday details of small town and country life in the years 1910-24” (Clear, ‘Red Ink of Emotion’, 91). I will be examining Laverty’s portrayal of the single mother and her child(ren) as a now neglected but historically significant and revealing cultural intervention.

**Valerie Kennedy** is an Irish Research Council funded Ph.D. candidate at University College Dublin. Valerie’s Ph.D. aims to advance critical understanding of literary representations of the ‘unmarried-mother’ figure and establish previously overlooked connections with socio-political values, commencing the first extensive research into Irish literary discourses surrounding the historically stigmatised figure.

Eva Kerski

## **Interacting and Colliding Forms: Dramatic Challenges to the Family Ideal in the Post-Independence Period**

It is a well-established assumption that the aftermath of the founding of the Irish Republic saw a shift towards conservative ideals culminating in the ideology of the De Valera family as the “natural primary and fundamental unit group of Society”. Irish drama from that period, especially plays performed on the state-subsidised Abbey stage, has been accused of confirming De Valera’s agenda and has therefore suffered severe neglect regarding scholarly interest. However, a number of almost forgotten plays and playwrights implement interesting forms of contesting the family ideal such as Anne Daly’s *The Window on the Square* (1951) and Gerard Healy’s *Thy Dear Father* (1943).

In my paper, I will employ Caroline Levine’s new formalist theory focusing on her notion of hierarchies and networks. Drawing on her intriguing thesis that “no form, however seemingly powerful, causes, dominates, or organizes all others” (16). I will demonstrate that the plays by Daly and Healy challenge dominant conceptions of family in mid-twentieth century Ireland: I will examine how the hierarchical form of the de Valera family interacts with and constrains the individual to the point of compromising their sanity. Moreover, the de Valera ideal is presented as colliding with forms

such as the networks and hierarchies at work in the marriage and labour market or the class system. In their plays, Daly and Healy employ theatrical and represented space as a means to display these interactions and collisions.

**Eva Kerski** is a PhD candidate and research assistant at the University of Wuppertal. She investigates family concepts in post-independence Irish drama. Her research interests include gender studies, representations of space and archival work, which she applies in her publication on Irish identity and the 'tinker' trope in Walter Macken's unpublished play *Merchant's Road*.

Patricia Kieran

### **Post-Catholic Ireland: New Emerging models of identity in Ireland's educational landscape**

After Irish independence from Britain in 1922, the Catholic Church inherited the mantle of neo-coloniser in key aspects of Irish life. However, in recent decades the rise of a more secular population in what has been termed a post-Catholic Ireland has clearly indicated that a process of de-linking is underway. No longer can 'Catholic' be seen as a defining feature of Irish identity. In this changing cultural landscape new models of educational provision have challenged the former homogeneity of the educational system where 89% of schools at primary level are Catholic. This paper outlines some of the complex emerging models of identity resulting from the ongoing delinking of Catholicism from Ireland's post-colonial identity. The paper outlines key moments of colonisation and de-linking. The decolonising process (Tiffin 1987) questions former orthodoxies and attempts to de-link (Mignolo 2007) the place and potency religion within the Irish educational system (DES 2022, O'Connell 2018) through challenging the manner in which the purpose and identity of religion (Hession 2015; Renehan 2014) is perceived. Distinct patterns in what the presenter identifies as 'waves' in Ireland's colonial and post-colonial history are outlined. As Ireland passes a century of independence, this delinking is arguably as radical a cultural transformation as the consequences of colonisation in the 19th and 20th century. This paper argues that through de-linking, traditional markers of identity, connecting nationalism and Catholicism, are challenged by heterogenous notions of hybrid identities (Bhabha 1990).

Associate Professor **Patricia Kieran** is Senior Lecturer in Religious Education in the Department of Learning, Society and Religious Education in Mary Immaculate College. She is Director of the Irish Institute for Catholic Studies as well as a British Foreign and Commonwealth Chevening Scholar. She has co-written and edited books, chapters and articles on a range of topics including Catholic theology, Religious Education in an Intercultural Europe, Children and Catholicism & Trends and Challenges in Education.

Sukla Kisku

## **"Memory as a building or a city": Revisiting Heaney's Past through Poetry**

Being one of the most celebrated poets of Ireland, Seamus Heaney (1939-2013) has made enumerable attempts to revive the human past through his poetic voice. In his wide range of versescape, Heaney's memory of sequential experiences has become one of his fortes among his contemporary authors. This revival of the past through poetry made his current history more perceivable to the present. He made it clear that the present of Ireland, as well as the present of Heaney, can only be recognised through its association with the past, which he, as a poet, attempted to confront throughout his poetry career. Heaney tried to become the voice of a bygone era, a memory distinguished by its clear involvement with family, geographical environment, and peers. His advocacy for memory has no equivalent in his contemporary time. With reference to his selected poems, this paper will attempt to reconstruct that voyage of recollection in which his memory played a key part.

**Dr. Sukla Kisku** is teaching in the Department of English as Assistant Professor at Bhairab Ganguly College, affiliated with West Bengal State University, West Bengal, India. She has completed her Ph.D. research on "The Redress of Poetry: Heaney's Use of Mythology and its Social and Political Dimension"; her published articles and seminar-conference papers chiefly focus on modern poetry and mythology.

Peter Kuch

## **Staging Irishness in early Australian Colonial Theatre 1838-1844**

This paper will analyse the performance of Irish characters and Irish plays at The Royal Victoria Theatre from its opening in Sydney, Australia, on 26 March 1838 to the retirement of its founding manager, Joseph Wyatt, on Monday, 1 April 1844. Seating 1800 patrons, furnished in the Regency Style, and lit by argand and then gas lighting, it was Australia's largest and at that time, principal theatre for the performance of the 'legitimate drama'. Consideration will be given to the performances of works by Macready, Butler, Buckstone, Bernard, Bayley, Lover, Power, Hall, Knowles, and Sheridan. The paper forms part of a cultural and political history of the performance of Irishness in the Australian theatre from 1789 to 1930 that opens the field and challenges present scholarship on Irish-Australian colonial history.

**Peter Kuch** (Emeritus Professor University of Otago; Visiting Professor, UNSW) has worked at Newcastle University; Universite de Caen; University of New South Wales, and University of Otago. Best known for *Irish Divorce/Joyce's Ulysses* (Palgrave), he has more than 60 publications on Yeats, Joyce, Eliot, Irish theatre, Irish literature, Irish and Australian literature and film, and Irish/Australian cultural history.

Jenny Kwok

### **Innovating the Tradition: Exploring the Post-Crash Irish Literary Landscape through Colin Barrett's *Young Skins* (2013)**

This presentation examines Colin Barrett's debut short story collection, *Young Skins* (2013), within the context of post-crash Irish literature. It argues that the new wave of Irish literature represents a renewal of the existing tradition rather than a complete departure. By looking at George Moore's *The Untilled Field* (1903), James Joyce's concept of "epiphany," Frank O'Connor's exploration of loneliness, and the familiar setting of the pub and home, this study unveils the interplay between tradition and innovation in the post-crash Irish literary landscape.

Barrett's *Young Skins* exemplifies the originality and boldness of the emerging generation of Irish writers. Yet, it also maintains a profound connection to earlier modes of Irish modern fiction. The collection's realistic aspect can be traced back to Moore's work as Barrett portrays an imaginary yet recognizable setting, capturing the complexities of the post-crash Irish experience.

The influence of Joyce's "epiphany" and O'Connor's exploration of loneliness is also evident in Barrett's storytelling. He skillfully employs moments of crisis and change, reflecting the aftermath of the economic downturn and the emotional struggles of his characters. Furthermore, Barrett disrupts conventional portrayals of Irish pubs, presenting a sense of alienation and detachment, challenging established notions of social interaction and community.

In conclusion, the new wave of Irish literature, exemplified by *Young Skins*, revitalizes the existing literary tradition in the post-crash era. This presentation provides valuable insights into the evolving Irish cultural landscape, showcasing the succession of the Irish literary tradition through literary innovation within post-crash Irish literature.

**Jenny KWOK** is a Postdoctoral Fellow in Digital Humanities and an Honorary Assistant Professor at the School of English, University of Hong Kong. Her research interests encompass Seamus Heaney, C.S. Lewis, literary pilgrimage, 19th century Irish literature, digital humanities (textual analysis), and the history of liberal education and the English School.

José Lanthers

### **State of Denial: The Irish Civil War and Its Aftermath in Martin McDonagh's *The Banshees of Inisherin***

My presentation considers Martin McDonagh's film *The Banshees of Inisherin* as a fable about the culture of silence that was prevalent in Ireland after independence. The film takes place in April 1923, towards the end of the Irish Civil War, and focuses on the conflict that develops between two former friends, Padraic and Colm, who live on the fictional island of Inisherin, which resembles one of the

Aran Islands but also stands in for 'Erin' as a whole. The Civil War concerned the partition of the island of Ireland, but both Padraic and Colm are unwilling to think about the larger conflict while they are also blind to the issue of borders, boundaries, and territorial violations in their own lives and the lives of others on the island (most notably Dominic, who is abused by his father, the island's policeman). After the Civil War had ended, its brutal realities were suppressed, and the Irish State that emerged was similarly a place of evasion and denial, where scandals were hushed up and invisible borders separated what people knew privately (about child abuse, for example) from what they could acknowledge publicly. The death messenger in John Todhunter's 1888 poem 'The Banshee' is 'the spectre Erin' herself, the mother of many children 'exiled and dead', who sometimes flies 'around her shuddering isle ... the spectre of hope forlorn'. McDonagh's banshees are silent. While his film is superficially a fable about the border created by the Treaty that led to the Civil War, less obviously it addresses the borders of silence that protected abusers and made 'Erin' an island of 'hope forlorn' for so long and for so many.

**José Lanters** is emerita professor of English at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She has published extensively on Irish drama and fiction, including several articles on the plays and films of Martin McDonagh. Her books include *The 'Tinkers' in Irish Literature: Unsettled Subjects and the Construction of Difference* (2008), and *The Theatre of Thomas Kilroy: No Absolutes* (2018). She is the vice chair for North America on the IASIL executive committee.

Chengjian Li and Chengrui Yuan

### **Chinaman and the Empty Bowl: Taoist Aesthetics in Claire Keegan's *Walk the Blue Fields***

Claire Keegan, winner of the 2008 Edge Hill Prize, is a highly regarded contemporary Irish novelist. In the titular narrative of her second collection of short stories, *Walk the Blue Fields*, published in 2007, she skillfully weaves several significant Chinese elements into the tale, featuring a Chinaman, and an image of an empty bowl. This paper conducts a close reading of this story through the perspective of Sino-Irish literary relations, employing the methods of comparative and historical-cultural studies. It centers on the aesthetic representation of Taoism in the story, and Keegan's distinctive interpretation of Taoism in dialogues. The Taoist concept of "emptiness" is embodied in the Chinese elements, whose essence "nothingness" relieves the priest in his "dialogical self." Moreover, Keegan not only embraces Taoism in Irish literature post-Wilde and Yeats but also offers a distinctive interpretation, aesthetically incorporating Taoist themes of "transcendence" and "transformation" within the globalized context. Overall, the story prompts readers to analyze resolution techniques for dramatic conflicts in Keegan's short stories, providing a noteworthy example for discussing the cross-regional reception of traditional Chinese cultural influences.



**Chengjian Li** is Professor of English literature at the School of Foreign Languages, Southwest Jiaotong University, specializing in contemporary Irish literature and Sino-Irish literary relations. Her notable publications encompass the monograph *Contemporary Irish Drama* (Sichuan People's Press, 2015) and insightful articles such as "Li Po's Embrace of the Moon in Denis Johnston's 'The Moon in the Yellow River'" (*Foreign Literature Studies*, 2022) and "The Image of Confucius in George Bernard Shaw's 'Back to Methuselah'" (*Cultural Studies and Literary Theory*, 2023).

**Chengrui Yuan** is a graduate student from the English Department of Southwest Jiaotong University, about to enter the School of English Studies, Shanghai International Studies University, for postgraduate study, majoring in Comparative Literature.

Junxuan Li

### **A Study on the Spatial Writing of Colm Tóibín's Novels**

Colm Tóibín is one of the most widely read authors in contemporary Irish literature. He is a regular guest at the Booker Prize and has frequently been nominated on many International awards. As a writer who appeals to voice for minority group, Tóibín has always adhered to the creation of identity. His novels combine the content of Irish background, history, culture and its peoples, paying great attention to the phenomenon of diaspora and cultural hybridity on a global scale, which contributes to his spatial narratives. Besides, Tóibín also adds many metaphorical architectural and geographic Spaces to his novels, which contains his understanding toward philosophical meditation, cultural significance, power relations and current dilemma amongst fringe people group. The Spaces Tóibín presented to us not only reveal the profound inquiry, but also show the conflicts and blends faced by characters in multicultural Spaces in the nowadays discussion of diasporic situation. Hence this paper will focus on spatial writing in Tóibín's representative novels, undertake a detailed and delicate analysis of his works referring to the multicultural space theory of Homi Bhabha, and analyze the cultural identity within these diaspora. The author discusses the construction and deconstruction of the image of Irish peoples from the perspective of geographical space, analyzes criticism of cultural relations from the perspective of power space, and discusses the personal identity in the post-modern era from the perspective of multicultural space, so as to probe into the metaphorical meaning of space and its relations with identity under the global background.

**Junxuan Li** is a postgraduate from Dalian University of Technology, Master of Tianjin Normal University.

Lianghui Li

### **History and Time in Kevin Barry's *Beatlebone***

With over two decades behind us in the twenty-first century, we are eager to cast a retrospective look upon postmodernism and define the current practices and their associated values in creative and critical realms. However, the enduring impact of postmodernism remains palpable. A pertinent perspective on this can be found in the contested territory of history, which has been problematized by postmodern studies for its underplay of the minority and unprivileged voices. As Linda Hutcheon compellingly argues, postmodern poetics are characterized by the rise of historiographical metafiction, empowering the underrepresented to voice up. Moving into the new century, narrative scholars, notably Mark Currie, emphasize a “temporal logic” as immanent in narrative and question the term history as reductive in narrative conceptualization of the past and time. How do the contemporary writers navigate between the historiographic metafiction and the temporal logic in narrative? How has postmodern legacy been inherited and revitalized? This study seeks to address these questions through a textual analysis of Kevin Barry’s *Beatlebone*.

Despite a widely acknowledged resonance with modernist aesthetics in *Beatlebone* and a challenge of labeling its main character as a historic figure, I argue that the decisive insertion of the writer’s writing process invites a historiographical interpretation. Additionally, the highly parallel experiences between the writer and the character blur and warp the time frames in the novel. By exploring the narrative reconfiguration of history and time in *Beatlebone*, this study also intends to map the development of the novel genre in the aftermath of postmodernism.

**Lianghui Li** is assistant professor at Beijing Jiaotong University. She received her Ph.D. from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, and has contributed to the *ABEI Journal*, *Orbis Litterarum*, *Modern Language Review*, and *Companion to Contemporary Irish Literature* (Syracuse, forthcoming). She is completing a monograph *Time in the Contemporary Irish Novel* (Bloomsbury).

Ping Li

### **“Madness” through Ironies in Tom Murphy’s *A Whistle in the Dark* (1961)**

*A Whistle in the Dark* (1961) is a play born to arouse unrest and controversy for its brutal and bold portrait of Irishmen in the U.K., its blunt display of the tribal and social violence, and its honest presentation of Irish low-class immigrants’ family breakdown. In the play, “daft” and “wild” are very often uttered by characters and justified by their scimmages, and ironies are constantly employed to reveal the nature of “madness”. The play presents the Carneys as the ones who bear the conflicting consequences of Lemass’ post-colonialism and capitalist modernity, serving as an effort to record the difficult time of those who stayed in or moved out of Ireland in the 1950s. As Rene Wellek and Austin Warren argue, “the novel is fictitious history” (215), the play is consciously editing the life and conditions of the 1950s Irish immigrants into a sense of ambiguity and anxiety, aiming at a

retrospection into its historical, cultural and social context in the mid-20th century. In *We Don't Know Ourselves*, Fintan O'Toole coins the term of "the unknown known" (491) to be an important aspect of modern Irish culture: "(O) ours was a society that had developed an extraordinary capacity for cognitive disjunction, a genius for knowing and not knowing at the same" (491). Accordingly, the "madness" in this paper refers to this self-deceptive "unknown known", which is amply illustrated through the use of ironies in the play, constructing the Carneys' pathetic destiny as low-class immigrants in the U.K., who are trapped between dilemmas, and demonstrating how deep it pierces into the 1950s' Irish society and culture.

**Ping Li** is a lecturer in Guangdong University of Foreign Studies (China) and a PhD candidate in English Literature. Present research interests cover contemporary Irish literature and narrative studies.

Ye Li

### **Metafictional Artists and Self-reflexive Theatricality in Dermot Healy's *A Goat's Song***

In an interview with the novelist Timothy O'Grady, Dermot Healy articulates the profound influence of Samuel Beckett's works on his own, "especially *Waiting for Godot*, which I directed at the end of the seventies and it ended up in the Abbey for a week" (O'Grady, "Healy" 27). This influence is clearly manifested in Healy's second novel *A Goat's Song* (1994), which begins with a distinctively Beckettian scene: the playwright Jack Ferris waits for the return of his actress girlfriend Catherine Adams. His futile waiting infuses Part I of this novel with the same existential crisis present in *Waiting for Godot* (1953). However, unlike Beckett, who stops after revealing Didi and Gogo's repetitive existential dilemma, Healy incorporates the playwright-protagonist endowed with intense self-awareness and creative impulses to further probe how to cope with Godot's absence. As he waits for Catherine, Jack progressively grows conscious of his double ontologies that he is not only a dominant playwright possessing world-making power but also a subordinate actor yielding to the Beckettian script. In Parts II-IV, to relieve himself from anxiety about knowing and being, Jack self-consciously utilizes his writing and acting ability to reinvent a nested reality, where his waiting can be cunningly fulfilled. It is worth noting that Jack's act of reinventing the past is not only his way of breaking from the Beckettian prison and questing for self-knowledge but also plays a significant role for him as an artist, marking the transformation of his creative style from realism to anti-realism.

**Ye Li** (liye0011@e.ntu.edu.sg) is a Ph.D. candidate at Nanyang Technological University (Singapore), funded by an NTU Research Scholarship, and currently a visiting PhD student at Dublin City University. Her research interests are Irish literature and art forms in modern and postmodern fiction. Her current research is to investigate the aesthetic and formal function of artist-characters in recent experimental Irish novels.

Yixuan Lin

## **Ongoing Challenges After the Northern Ireland Peace Process: An Analysis of Owen McCafferty's *Quietly* (2016)**

As one of the most important post-conflict playwrights in Northern Ireland, Owen McCafferty keeps addressing the political conflicts through theatre. He inherits the tradition of Irish theatre, for example, the tradition of "pub theatre" and "two-hander play", and focuses on the complexities of life in post-conflict Northern Ireland rather than on the Troubles itself.

His play *Quietly* (2016) tells the story of Jimmy and Ian, two men of the same age from different sectarian camps, who take turns recounting the impact of the Troubles on their life in a pub during the 2009 World Cup, while the barman, Robert, an immigrant from Poland, occasionally joins their conversations. Their conversation not only revisits the darkest moments of the Northern Irish crisis but also reveals the social divisions and spiritual paralysis lurking beneath the facade of peace and prosperity in Northern Ireland today, as well as the resulting violence among youth and the survival struggles of women.

Owen McCafferty expresses his reflections on rebuilding interpersonal relationships in post-conflict Northern Ireland by providing equal opportunity for both opposing sides to speak out.

**Yixuan Lin** is a PhD student in Irish literature and culture, currently doing a project on the Irish playwright J. M. Synge.

Sarah Joy Link

## **“That which is done is that which shall be done”: Dissonant Temporality in Paul Lynch’s *Prophet Song***

The title of Paul Lynch’s Booker Prize-winning novel *Prophet Song* simultaneously points to the future and references back to past traditions, in which the bards of ancient Irish courts were heralded as tellers of prophetic truths. The novel calls into question the idea that clear boundaries can be drawn between past, present, and future, and that time progresses linearly from event to aftermath: On the one hand, the dystopian future painted by *Prophet Song* is depicted as a repetition of mistakes made in the past, on the other hand the text anchors characters and readers alike so strongly in the present moment that they can only ever grasp the significance of incisive events in retrospect. In his 2023 monograph on turning points in contemporary history, Martin Sabrow describes such a retrospective relation between perception of time and attribution of significance as caesura of interpretation [“Deutungszasur”].

This paper will draw on concepts introduced by Sabrow to examine how *Prophet Song* confronts

its readers with dissonant temporal structures in order to challenge linear notions of time and their frequent association with equally linear progress narratives. Through its use of present tense narration, continuous and passive forms, and the frequent omission of temporal and spatial reference points, the novel creates deliberate ruptures and repetitions that both disconnect the characters' experiences from a continuous past or an imaginable future and distort the reader's perception of time.

**Sarah Joy Link** is a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Wuppertal's Center for Narrative Research. She is the author of *A Narratological Approach to Lists in Detective Fiction* (Palgrave, 2023). Her research interests include Irish literature, narratology, representations of time and temporality, popular culture, sensation and detective fiction, and cognitive literary studies.

Yuval Lubin

### **Delineating De Selby: Epistemological Failure in *The Third Policeman***

Flann O'Brien's *The Third Policeman* is a novel grounded in the aftermath of scientific upheaval. As a result scientific subjects, from Einstein's special relativity to industrialization, pervade the novel. By inspecting these modern themes through the lens of Irish folklore mode of thinking, the text explores the way empirical knowledge destabilized former models of thought that permeated Ireland in the first half of the 20th century. This paper will argue that O'Brien humorously represents empirical methods of knowledge through colloquial interpretations to convey how methodological epistemology fails to structure an understandable reality for the contemporary individual. This is presented in the way the text utilizes images of science and language. Science is often shown in the text as a means to achieve absolute knowledge. However this same knowledge fails to be practical, becoming self-referential and meaningless. In a similar manner the language used in the novel comically employs scientific register to create an obstructive text. The language of the text is often opaque. It uses abundance of information to convey the futility of defining reality through speech. By utilizing these themes the author creates a text that is ultimately a parody of encyclopedia. *The Third Policeman* depicts a world that revolves around the character of De Selby and his theories. But this world does not coalesce into the understandable whole De Selby proposes; the parish is an illogical landscape that rebuffs attempts at classification. As such, the novel represents the endeavor to unify reality into a single conceivable object and thus conveys the absurd limitations of such attempts following the scientific revolution of the 20th century.

**Yuval Lubin** is a Bachelor of English at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Master's student. His interests include comedy in modernist literature. His research focuses on *Moby Dick* and *The Third Policeman*. Yuval has presented many papers, including at the 2023 Annual Eliot Meeting at Harvard.

Yuval currently works as the Historical Archivist for the JNF.

Aiko Matsuura

## **Aftermaths of a Transatlantic Theatre Fire: Dion Boucicault's Impact on 19th Century Theatre and Cultural Symbiosis**

Recent debates surrounding transatlantic relations have renewed interest in the cultural interplay related to the hybridity in the formation of national identities. This paper examines the aftermath of a theatre fire in the US that proved to vindicate the prophetic views of Dion Boucicault on the future of British theatre. While the cultural implication of British theatre in the mid-Victorian period remains largely unexplored, Boucicault's struggles with contemporary theatrical authorities in the management of theatre as a social space offer a unique perspective from which to reassess this era.

In this presentation I will delve into Boucicault's experimental theatre in London in 1863, following a theatre fire, followed by a fire in New York that led to significant changes in theatre regulations in London. By tracing the evolution of Crown intervention in London theatres as a form of cultural surveillance, the paper will analyze the emergence of the concept "citizen" in contemporary discussions on theatre safety regulations.

Ultimately, this paper argues that Boucicault, as a quintessential postcolonial Irish figure, played a pivotal role in fostering cultural symbiosis between Britain in the Victorian era and the United States. His contributions to theatre and cultural exchange serve as a compelling case study in the complex dynamics of transatlantic cultural interaction.

**Aiko Matsuura** is an associate professor at Meijyo University in Japan. Her research interests mainly focus on Dion Boucicault. She received her PhD from the University of Manchester in the UK. Her past IASIL paper appeared in the *Journal of Irish Studies* in 2013, entitled "Dion Boucicault as a Builder of New Theatres in the Mid-Victorian Period."

John McDonagh

## **'The Jerusalem-Tokyo Fault Line' – Paul Durcan's Globe**

Travel, in all its guises, has been an important feature of virtually every poetry collection of Paul Durcan. In 2004's *The Art of Life*, he travels around County Mayo, travelling east to Dublin, and hence to Italy, Poland and Japan. En route, he reflects on the profound and the mundane in equal measure, eventually returning to his 'cave' in Dublin after a series of readings in Japan. His experiences there are recalled in ten poems at the end of the collection and this paper will explore the profound effect his time in Japan had upon him. In the final poem of the collection, 'Facing Extinction', dedicated to Masazumi Toraiwa, he morphs into an image of one of the brown bears of northern Hokkaido, having

to face the truth about his and the bear's imminent extinction. Their mutual plight imbues Durcan with a strangely contented melancholy, a familiar perspective adopted by the poet. Durcan's philosophy is akin to the Japanese idea of *Shou ga nai*, a stoic acceptance of the vicissitudes of life and necessity of moving on.

**Dr. John Mc Donagh** is an Associate Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, Ireland. He has published monographs on the poetry of Brendan Kennelly and Paul Durcan, as well as an edited book on the poetry of Michael Hartnett.

Ronan McDonald

### **Tracing Irishness in the Australian Literary Archive**

One 'aftermath' of Irish diasporic settlement around the world is its impact on the imaginary of host countries. No major country has, proportionately speaking, as sizeable a settler Irish population as Australia, with up to a third of early migrants born in Ireland. This paper will introduce our Australian Research Council project 'Close Relations: Irishness in Australian Literature' (2023-25). Many iconic Australian characters have strong Irish associations, and many Australian authors either claim an Irish-Australian identity or write an 'Irish work'. Yet Irishness frequently disappears in Australia as it is folded into the categories of 'British' or 'Anglo-Celtic'. Our project offers a new account of the complex and fissile nature of white Australian literary identity in relation to class, gender, race and religion by looking through the lens of Irishness. Attentive to the entangled forces by which literature, and the story of Australia, emerges, we seek to develop a new critical practice and method of 'relational literary history' to explore this diasporic literature within print cultural and digital systems. Our archive extends beyond the received canon: recent computer-enabled modes of enquiry reveal a previously lost archive of Irish works, including in 19th and early 20th century Australian periodicals. By exploring through computational techniques the deployment of tropes and cognates of Irishness in this archive, we will offer a new account of the development of Australian identity and its relation to Irishness. We hope that the methodological innovations of our work can be taken up by other investigations of transnational Irishness.

**Ronan McDonald** holds the Gerry Higgins Chair of Irish Studies at the University of Melbourne. He has research interests in Irish and Irish-Australian literature, the history of criticism and the value of the humanities. He is the series editor for *Cambridge Themes in Irish Literature and Culture*.

Saeko Nagashima

## **Exploring Bisexual Narrative in Elizabeth Bowen's Early Short Stories**

This paper will examine the possibility of bisexual narrative in Elizabeth Bowen's early short stories, namely "Ann Lee's" and "The Secession" (1926). Paula Rodriguez Rust, in her conceptualization of bisexuality, points out the paradoxical recognition of bisexuality for women in history. According to Rust, in the late nineteenth century when the concepts of heterosexuality and lesbianism developed, the possibility of bisexuality for women also emerged as their combination. At the same time, however, those opposite sexual attractions were not considered to coexist simultaneously, and therefore bisexuality could not claim its existence in the cultural space. Rust's argument is sociological in nature, but a similar paradox seems to apply in the exploration of bisexuality in fiction. Intimacy between women in Bowen's fiction, as well as the dynamics of triangular desire in her works, has often been discussed, but bisexuality in her narrative itself is elusive and difficult to pin down. This paper will attempt to clarify the structure of bisexual desire that exists in Bowen's fiction from these early short stories through to later novels. Referring to David Trotter's discussion of "The Secession", with dis-enablement and dis-affirmation as key concepts, I will describe and connect the significance of narrative rupture in the stories to bisexual desire that permeates and controls the narrative mechanism. This, I hope, will also offer an approach to read the narrative significance of duality in relation to the historical conceptualization of sexuality in Bowen's later works.

**Saeko Nagashima** is a professor in the Law Faculty of Chuo University, Tokyo, Japan. Her research explores early 20th century British and Irish fiction, cultural representations of intimacy between women in history, and bisexual visibility in literature and cinema.

Tetsuko Nakamura

## **The Famine and Its Aftermath in the West: Representations in Travel Books and Famine Narratives in the Early 1850s**

The early 1850s saw the publication of post-Famine travel guides and narratives along with Famine fiction. The accounts and representations of the devastating impact of the Famine in these texts vary in intensity according to the context in which they were produced. Travel guides primarily provide useful and positive information for tourists, although they cannot ignore mentioning the outcomes of the Famine. Travel writers can convey the harsh reality of the afflicted areas as well as their observations about this tragic event and their perspectives on the future of the country. These narratives, recounting the aftermath of the Famine, differ from those written during its peak years, in which horrifying scenes are often depicted. Since the Famine severely affected Connacht, post-Famine



travellers directed their attention to the West to disseminate updated information about the region through their publications. These writers include those heading for Connemara, Digby Neave and Francis Bond Head, and those who eventually reached Erris, Harriet Martineau and John Hervey Ashworth. The views expressed by these colonial travellers are discussed with particular reference to William Wilde's observations on Connacht in *Irish Popular Superstitions* (1852) and Mrs Mary Anne Hoare's short stories. This presentation explores different perspectives on the west of Ireland in the immediate post-famine period after the implementation of the 1849 Encumbered Estate Act, which partly contributed to the renewed interest in Connacht.

**Tetsuko Nakamura** is a Professor of English at Komazawa University, Tokyo. Her research interests mainly lie in the interrelationship between novels and travel writing from the middle of the eighteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century.

Clíona Ní Riordáin

### **After History in the Long Poems of Martina Evans**

This paper will examine the work of Martina Evans, in particular her long poems, such as *The Coming Thing* (Carcanet 2023), where contemporary history is explored through the character of Imelda. It will address the question of form and interrogate the notion of performativity as being central to Evans' oeuvre. It will also address the central question of history and story and how narrative is a necessary ingredient in Evans' poetry of aftermaths. This poetry of aftermaths is characterised by an exploration of events that can be described as traumatic (civil war, unplanned pregnancy, abortion). Evans approaches these difficult questions through narrative poems that give voice to the women involved in these predicaments, thus giving agency to women in difficult situations.

**Cliona Ni Riordain** is a critic and translator. She holds the O'Donnell Chair of Irish Studies at the University of Notre Dame.

Jonathan O'Brien

### **What Is the Doxa of Screenwriting in Ireland?**

While Irish film is widely researched; see (Brereton, 2009) (Barton, 2004) (O'Connell, 2010) (Macdougall, 2009) (Crosson and Schreiber) (Tracy and Flynn, 2019) (Ging, 2006) (O'Connor, 2012) (McLoone, 1994) (Rockett, 1994). The focus in Irish research has been on the finished text of the film, while, the practice (doxa) of Irish screenwriting is forgotten and taken for granted.

The concept of doxa emerges from the work of Pierre Bourdieu. In his 1972 work *Outline of a Theory of Practice* he used the concept of doxa to describe a community's assumed and unquestioned rules or

paradigms (Bourdieu, 1977). According to (Macdonald, 2013) in screenwriting practice, the doxa is the received wisdom from an experienced mentor, the right and wrong way to do things, the written and unwritten rules, the myths and wise sayings, the conventions of the craft.

One of the national paradigms of filmmaking in Ireland is that a script is 'just a blueprint' and that the true author of a film is the director. However, this paper will show that this idea is contested within the screenwriting doxa. Based on 19 semi-structured interviews with a range of Irish film industry professionals, this paper examines this forgotten Irish literature: screenwriting, and argues that the author of a film is not just the director. There is a ghost in the machine, a hidden author, one who shapes the finished text of the film and is then discarded. But screenwriters are raising their voices and staking their claim for authorship of the films they write and a place in the Irish literary canon.

**Jonathan O'Brien** is teacher of Philosophy, Media Analysis, and Scriptwriting, currently pursuing a part-time Ph.D. student in Media Studies at Maynooth University. His research focuses on screenwriting in Ireland, inspired by his experience as a screenwriter and educator, exploring its application in an Irish context.

Soichiro Onose

### **Joyce and Akutagawa: A Dantean Perspective**

This paper will examine the influence of James Joyce on Ryūnosuke Akutagawa (1892-1927), who is regarded as a seminal figure in the development of modern Japanese literature. Akutagawa was one of the earliest Japanese writers to discern the innovative qualities of Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, singling out his use of free indirect speech for particular praise, and even translating passages from the work. As far as Joyce's influence on Akutagawa is concerned, the dominant view is that it was rather slight and fleeting compared to other contemporary writers such as Yasunari Kawabata or Sei Ito, who have publicly acknowledged Joyce as their model at one time or another. Yet, some critics such as Akiyo Suzuki have challenged this critical consensus, arguing that Akutagawa's debt to Joyce was substantial and abiding, showing how his late works bear a strong imprint of the Irish writer. I would like to pursue this line of inquiry further and explore Joycean themes in Akutagawa's posthumously-published novel *Cogwheels [Haguruma]* (1927) and other works, focusing in particular on the motif of hell that echoes Joyce's Dantean formulation of it in his fiction including *A Portrait*.

**Soichiro Onose** is Lecturer in the English Department at Japan Women's University. He has earned a PhD from University College Dublin in 2023 with his thesis on James Joyce. He has published articles on Joyce in various journals including *James Joyce Quarterly*, *Joyce Studies Annual*, and *European Joyce Studies*.

Ellen Orchard

### **“Between here and there”: The Politics of Pre-Birth in Sinéad Morrissey’s Japanese Poems**

In the same year that Northern Irish abortion laws were formally challenged by the Family Planning Association for their lack of transparency, Sinéad Morrissey publishes *Between Here and There* (2002). This collection is set across four continents, but the most obvious juxtaposition of “here” and “there” is Belfast and Japan. Considering this juxtaposition through the lens of the unborn child, this paper close-reads two poems about the politics of pre-birth: “Stitches” and “Between Here and There”. The latter concerns the Japanese Buddhist ceremony of mourning for stillborn or aborted fetuses, *mizuko kuyō* (水子供養) or “water child memorial service”. Morrissey’s poetic attention to “a graveyard for miscarriages” explores the subtle ways in which these services might capitalise on an overwrought sense of familial duty: the mother shamed for being unable to bear a healthy child, and the child saved from damnation for its inability to carry out filial duty. “Stitches”, written post-Japan, similarly probes the fine line between something and nothing in the politics of pre-birth, charting the growth of an “imaginary baby” that is never born. Here, aftermath collides with pre-history: how can we commemorate that which arguably did not quite yet exist? How do terminated pregnancies complicate conceptions of motherhood and what can Japanese commemorative culture for unborn children reveal about a tension at the heart of the abortion debate in Ireland: how to respect the life of an unborn child, but not at the expense of its mother.

Ellen holds an MA in Poetry from Queens University Belfast and is an Irish Research Council Postgraduate Scholar at Trinity College Dublin. Her project “The Child in Irish Poetry: From Yeats to the Present” reads constructions of childhood in modern Irish poetry, spotlighting the endangered child. She regularly contributes to *Poetry Ireland Review*.

Danielle O’Sullivan

### **Portrayals of trauma in contemporary Irish fiction of Eimear McBride and Louise O’Neill.**

This paper will look at the impact of trauma on individual characters and the broader societal response to traumas in the novels *A Girl is a Half-Formed Thing* (2013), by Eimear McBride, *Asking For It* (2015), by Louise O’Neill, and, briefly, *The Gathering* (2007), by Anne Enright. These novels illustrate the aftermaths of individual and cultural trauma, allowing an insight into the differing trauma responses felt by female protagonists in post-Celtic Tiger Ireland.

Both the Girl and Emma experience sexual assault in *A Girl* and *Asking For It*, respectively. They struggle with navigating their own feelings about their assault, as well as the response from their

friends and family. Meanwhile, Veronica's brother Liam in *The Gathering* experience sexual assault from a family member, further complicating their response to the trauma. The events of *The Gathering* take place years before the novel is set, bringing up the importance of testimony and trauma. The paper will pay special attention to the response of the victim's closer circle to their trauma, and how this illustrates 'the inhospitality of our culture to the articulation of the young girl', as each victim in the three novels feel isolation in the aftermath of their assaults (Cahill 2017, pp 160-161).

The paper will include themes of shame and trauma, as I use close readings from the novels to break down the aftermaths of each individual experience of trauma within a broader cultural context. The works of Cathy Caruth, Gerardine Meaney, Susan Cahill, and Renee Spencer will be used in this analysis. This is part of a wider study of relationships with unhealthy characteristics in contemporary Irish women's writing.

**Danielle O'Sullivan** is a second year PhD student in Mary Immaculate College, beginning in September 2022. She completed an MA in Modern English Literature in 2021, and a BA in English and History in 2020, both in Mary Immaculate College. Her research interests are contemporary Irish women's writing, trauma theory, and feminist theory.

Yu Piao

### **Approaching the trauma writing of urban homeless in Colum McCann's *This Side of Brightness***

Column McCann (1965-), the acclaimed Irish writer of six novels and three collections of short stories, has consistently delved into the living conditions and mental state of marginalized groups in his works. In *This Side of Brightness* (1998), McCann represents the experiences of a homeless individual named Treefrog, who lives in underground tunnels for four years after enduring a series of mental blows such as losing loved ones and being abandoned by family. While academia has primarily examined the themes of dispersion in the work from the perspectives of liminal space, nomadic identity, and transnational diaspora, it tends to overlook McCann's deep concern for the mental crisis among urban homeless individuals today. In the novel, McCann tactfully uses literary imagination to intricately depict the innermost feelings of characters, meticulously illustrating the protagonist's mental and social hurdles following a series of setbacks. Additionally, he delves into the literary exploration of personal memories in historical narrative construction by tracing his family's immigrant history, exploring the complex historical facets of the mental trauma experienced by urban homeless individuals, and revealing the link between family trauma and urban development. The work advocates for urban wanderers to clarify their memories and establish connections with history through the creation of cognitive maps and communication with others, thereby determining their identity, overcoming mental imbalance. It is argued that that the poignant narrative in the novel

transcends mere storytelling devices, serving as McCann's introspective exploration of the writer's role in addressing the spiritual crisis of ordinary individuals in contemporary society.

**Dr. PIAO Yu** is professor of literature at Jilin University (JLU). She has also served as a visiting scholar at Harvard University (2010-2011) and George Washington University (2017). Her research mainly focuses on contemporary transnational English literature, and cultural studies. In recent years, she has published more than 30 research papers.

Wit Pietrzak

### **Searching Silence: Derek Mahon and the Voices of Nature**

The presentation will focus on Derek Mahon's twenty-first century poetry to explore its evocations of silence. While criticism has pointed to Mahon's visual imagination, his penchant for ekphrasis and a painterly quality of his descriptions, in his work, he consistently attends to the non-human world through the faculty of hearing. I will show that in attending to the seemingly 'mute phenomena', as he calls it in one of his earlier poems, he seeks to withdraw from the hustle and bustle of late modernity and enter the domain of ruminative engagement with the non-human world. In this sense, his commitment to such marginal beings as mushrooms, abandoned garages as well as sheds and uninhabited landscapes represents Mahon's desire to attune himself to the nearly inaudible voices of leaves, flies and vanishing icebergs. If one legacy of modernity, one of its aftermaths, is the environmental degradation, Mahon offers no simple solutions for modifying our ways but rather tries to instill in us an increased mindfulness of the surrounding environment, whose complexity cannot be grasped in simple slogans and loud-mouthed political platforms.

**Wit Pietrzak** specialises in modern and contemporary Irish and British poetry. His recent publications include 'The Critical Thought of W. B. Yeats' (2017), 'Constitutions of Self in Contemporary Irish Poetry' (2022) and "'All Will Be Swept Away": Dimensions of Elegy in the Poetry of Paul Muldoon' (2023).

Aurora Piñeiro

### **The Aftermath of a Literary Life: *The Singularities* by John Banville**

*The Singularities* (2022) is a novel by John Banville that may be read as a follow-up to *The Infinities* (2009), but also as a mischievous oeuvre which allows the Irish author to bring together some of the most memorable characters of his previous fiction. In this sense, it is the aftermath of a literary life, a novel that intensifies the complex web of inter- and intratextual relationships that has characterized Banville's writings and invites us to take part in games of mutual guessing where the blurring of the borderlines between reader, implicit author and even an extratextual authorial figure are set to work

in varied ways and at different levels of the literary fabric. The purpose of this paper is to analyse *The Singularities* as one of the most recent contributions to Banville's authorial labyrinth, and I will focus on the figure of the biographer in the novel, as he is one of the characters that represent Banville's capacity to recreate figures from his past fiction, to articulate authorial representations within the creative discourse and even an authorial figure that may go beyond the limits of his own textual universe.

**Aurora Piñeiro** is author of *Gothic Literature and Its Legacy in Terror* (UNAM, 2017) and editor of *Rewriting Traditions. Contemporary Irish Fiction* (UNAM, 2021). One of her recent articles is "The Language of Cartography in Enright's Writings" in *ABEI Journal* (2022). She is head of the Boland-Enright Irish Studies Chair, UNAM.

Katharina Rennhak

## **The Death of a Parent and its Aftermath in Contemporary Irish Family Fiction**

Helen Cullen's *The Truth Must Dazzle Gradually* (2020) and Donal Ryan's *The Queen of Dirt Island* (2022) both begin with the death of a parent and continue by imagining the familial aftermath of this catastrophic event. In my paper, I will show how Cullen's and Ryan's multigenerational family novels use the trope of the 'dead parent' to reflect (on) and reimagine traditional notions of motherhood and fatherhood.

As I will demonstrate, both novels create a familial microcosm located in a rather confined space, both experiment unobtrusively with the distribution of information and the temporal structure of their stories/plots, and both build up rather complex situations of narrative communication, -- all with the aim of reflecting (on) and reorganising traditional processes of the construction of personal and communal identities. Thematically and structurally, *The Truth Must Dazzle Gradually* and *The Queen of Dirt Island* have much in common, and as such are representative of a larger corpus of 21st-century Irish family fiction. My paper will also argue that they nonetheless approach similar topics differently and that they set different thematic and ideological priorities. Decidedly writing against the influential Irish narrative of 'motherhood trauma', Helen Cullen explores and experiments with various aspects of 'trauma (fiction)' and also focuses on constructions of Irish masculinities. Donal Ryan's *The Queen of Dirt Island* creates a microcosm of exceptionally independent and self-confident Irish mothers and daughters and explores various socio-cultural strategies that contribute, more or less successfully, to the transformation of the patriarchal structures and discourses that dominate his characters' world.

**Katharina Rennhak** is professor of English Literature at the University of Wuppertal. She has published on British and Irish Romanticism and contemporary fiction and is the author of two monographs and

numerous articles. Her most recent (co-)edited volume is *Walter Macken: Critical Perspectives* (2022). She is president of EFACIS, a member of the IASIL Executive, and of the Centre for Narrative Research, Wuppertal.

Julie-Ann Robson

## **Nocturnes, symphonies, and a pot of flying paint: Oscar Wilde's entry into the field of Criticism**

When the young Oscar Wilde, fresh from Oxford, decided to enter the public fray he did so at a particular moment in the world of criticism, particularly in London. His review of the 1877 opening of an exhibition of art at London's Grosvenor Gallery for the *Dublin University Magazine* was monumentally overshadowed by the review by John Ruskin of James Whistler's works at the Grosvenor – particularly his 'Nocturne in Black and Gold, The Falling Rocket' (1875). John Ruskin said of the painting "I have seen, and heard, much of Cockney impudence before now; but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face." The ensuing libel suit saw Whistler nearly ruined: the painter won the case, but was awarded a farthing in damages. It was in the wake of this extraordinary case that Oscar Wilde sought to establish his career as writer, critic, and 'professor of aesthetics'. This paper will examine how Wilde navigated the personalities, challenges, and satire of the moment to become a household name.

**Julie-Ann Robson** is an Honorary Associate in Philosophy (School of Humanities) at the University of Sydney. She has taught Australian, Irish, English and American literature and drama, and literary criticism. Her research interest is in the relationship between literature and aesthetics. She has a particular interest in this relationship in the works of Oscar Wilde, with a focus on his critical writings.

Virginie Roche-Tiengo

## **In the Aftermath of 1916: Irish Theatre and Women Change-makers**

Women playwrights, actresses and female characters from the 1916 onwards in Ireland have proved that walls, mental and physical needed to be challenged and that the fight for human rights was embedded within the idea of challenging the notion of space, psyche and body saturated with Irish history. Irish theatre and human rights crack open the hard shell of modern Irish plays canon to reveal the rich variety of a dynamic and sometimes conflicting tradition led by women change-makers. So many plays by women must be explored and compared, bridges must be created between the female voices of the past often erased and the women artists or female characters of today and examined in terms of cultural rights and human rights more broadly. Alice Millingan's play *The Last Feast of the Fianna* (1900), staged by the literary Theatre has barely been acknowledged nor has the work of the

prolific Abbey playwright, Teresa Deevy, who lost her hearing in her late teens due to Ménière's disease. Her plays *The Reapers* (1930, now lost), *A Disciple* (1931), *Temporal Powers* (1932) or *The King of Spain's Daughters* (1935) have been forgotten and even *Katie Roche* (1936), staged by Catherine Byrne in 2017 went from "masterpiece" to "worthy but forgotten".

From Lady Gregory to Marina Carr, we will first explore how the female voice in Irish theatre has been mythologized and subjectivized. Then we will analyze how this female voice defines Ireland today on the stage of the Abbey Theatre. And finally, we will attempt to demonstrate how the female voice is still haunted by human rights denials, locked in the claustal invisibility of the male and auctorial psyche.

**Virginie Roche-Tiengo**, is an Associate Professor in Irish Studies at the University d'Artois. Following her Ph.D. at the Sorbonne University, she has published on Irish drama, in particular the work of Brian Friel, Thomas Kilroy, Frank McGuinness, Lady Gregory, James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, and Charles Macklin.

Aileen Rose Ruane

### **Aftermaths of an (un)Quiet Revolution: Translating *Les Belles-sœurs* as *The Unmanageable Sisters***

Quebec's "Quiet Revolution" of the late 1960s and early 1970s set in motion major social and linguistic changes over a relatively short timeframe. Rapid secularization, the valorisation of Québécois-French, and increased economic opportunities for the majority francophone population were ushered in with rise of Jean Lesage's Liberal government, and occurred with little resistance. The sociopolitical consciousness that resulted from reforms enacted during this period were cristallised in Michel Tremblay's landmark 1968 play, *Les Belles-sœurs*, which staged fifteen women in Montreal's Saint-Henri neighbourhood. Tremblay composed his play entirely in joul, a working-class sociolect that courted controversy in the wake of linguistic revitalisation efforts on the part Québécois intellectuals and artists due to its "slangy" nature. Reformers feared that a grammatically impoverished form of French would reflect poorly upon Quebec's artistic and intellectual potential. Happily, this proved to be untrue, and *Les Belles-sœurs* transformed Quebec's theatrical landscape and beyond, encouraging similarly marginalised cultures via translation of Tremblay's work. Such is the case for Deirdre Kinahan's 2018 adaptation of the play, entitled *The Unmanageable Sisters*, which reterritorialised the action to Dublin's Ballymun estates. However, even though Kinahan's reterritorialisation is set in a similar time period, its twenty-first century audience was aware that the social changes and reforms undergirding the source text were absent in 1970s Ireland. Indeed, while LBS is contemporaneous with the time period in which it was written, TUS looks back on a very different Ireland, especially in terms of religious authority and abortion laws. In the aftermath of major social changes in both societies, translation and adaptation serve to illuminate hidden worlds and to correct past and present



injustices.

**Aileen R. Ruane** is an Assistant Professor of French and Francophone literature at Grove City College in Pennsylvania. Her published research is featured in *Tangence, SHAW: The Journal of Bernard Shaw Studies*, and *Ilha Do Desterro: A Journal of English Language, Literature in English and Cultural Studies*, as well as the anthologies *Bernard Shaw and the Making of Modern Ireland* and 'I Love Craft. I Love the Word.' *The Theatre of Deirdre Kinahan*.

Brian Sayers

### **The Gaelic Scholarship of John O'Mahony**

John O'Mahony's monumental translation of Seathrun Ceitinn's *Foras feasa ar Eirinn* was completed in New York City on 18 July 1857. Concomitant with his work of translation, O'Mahony would play a pioneering role in the revitalization of Irish as a living tongue among the Irish diaspora in the United States. The publication of his book was followed one week later, on 25 July 1857, by the launching of the Gaelic column 'Our Gaelic Department' in the *Irish American*. This was the first and, in its time, the only weekly periodical in the world with such a feature. Irish print culture in the United States, initiated by O'Mahony in the *Irish American*, stimulated the Dublin Nation to institute its own Gaelic column on 20 March 1858.

Inspired by the parent Ossianic Society in Dublin, in 1859 O'Mahony, together with fellow Gaelic scholar David O'Keefe and others, founded the New York Branch of the Ossianic Society (NYOS) for the promotion of the Irish language in the United States. Significantly, the NYOS would take the lead in conducting Irish language classes in America. On 26 January 1861, they announced the 'Formation of an Irish class.' This would appear to have been the first such venture in North America. The NYOS would prove to be a forerunner of the Gaelic League, the genesis of which can be seen in O'Mahony's Irish language activities. This paper shows the far-reaching impact of the Irish language movement in America spearheaded by O'Mahony and others in the 1850s.

A native of Killarney, County Kerry, **Brian Sayers** holds a PhD in Modern Irish History from Maynooth University. Dr Sayers has published extensively on nineteenth century Irish and Irish American nationalism. He currently teaches classes in History and Culture at Hosei University and various other universities in the Tokyo area.

Hedwig Schwall

## **Lucy Caldwell's Stories about Motherhood: towards a more nuanced humanity?**

When Lucy Caldwell starts writing her short stories on relations between mothers and children in the aftermath of the Good Friday Agreement she does so because these relations have hardly been represented in literature. Throughout her three volumes of short stories she grows in the art of storytelling and therein develops an entirely new sense of motherhood. From *Multitudes* (2016) and *Intimacies* (2021) to *Openings* (2024) we find that the so-called individual does not exist: all protagonists are primarily relational, oscillating constantly between the poles of self and other, unconscious and conscious, life and death drives, past and present, material and immaterial worlds, inside and outside worlds.

After a short introduction to Caldwell's work we show how the oscillation between the abovementioned categories is realized in two short stories from *Openings*, "Something's Coming" and "Mother's Day". We conclude with the question whether Caldwell's type of "the good-enough mother" may offer a new epistemology of unknowing, with a new metaphysical model, one that finds echoes in Lucy Jones' *Matrescence* (2023), Claire Kilroy's *Soldier, Sailor* (2023) and Alice Kinsella's *Milk* (2023).

**Hedwig Schwall** is emerita professor with formal duties at KU Leuven. She publishes on contemporary Irish fiction and on psychoanalytic interpretations of European art.

Stephanie Schwerter

## **Translation and Circulation of Northern Irish Literature in the Aftermath of the Troubles**

The Northern Irish conflict has generated a specific kind of literature dealing with the impact of political violence on society, culture and politics. A certain number of so-called "Troubles novels" has been translated into other languages in order to render the experience of a violent conflict accessible to a foreign readership. Using different examples, this paper concentrates on the translation of Northern Irish prose into German and French. Translators are confronted with the difficulty of transposing specific terms, perceptions and worldviews into very different cultural environments in which many Northern Irish concepts might not mean anything at all. Furthermore, they face the typically dark Northern Irish humor, which even people from the Republic of Ireland might find incomprehensible. Turning into cultural mediators, translators have to communicate a particular

local reality to a German and French speaking audience. Apart from the linguistic choices made by the translators, I shall concentrate on the different ways in which Northern Irish novels enter the German and French book market. While in Germany, the Goethe Institut and the Deutscher Übersetzungsfonds provide financial support, in France, the Centre national du livre plays an important part in subsidizing translations. As not every translator has the occasion of living in Northern Ireland, a lack of local knowledge sometimes shines through the translated texts. In my paper, I shall explain why a certain German or French cultural background might generate misinterpretations of the Northern Irish situation.

**Stephanie Schwerter** is professor of translation studies at the Université Polytechnique Hauts-de-France. Before moving to France, she spent six years in Northern Ireland, working at the University of Ulster and at Queen's University Belfast. Her current research interest lies in the translation and circulation of Northern Irish literature.

Anfeng Sheng

### **A Study of Samuel Beckett from the Perspective of Cosmopolitanism**

Samuel Beckett's literary work exhibits a rooted cosmopolitanism, a tendency that stems from his Anglo-Irish identity at odds with the Celtic nationalist political milieu. Within the constraints of harsh literary censorship, Beckett traveled to Paris to write. This diasporic background prompted Beckett to criticize narrow nationalism and move towards cosmopolitanism under the influence of Dante, Joyce and others. Beckett's literature is both Irish and hyper-Irish. The Irishness of the work is reflected in the Irish language and the reference to the historical background of Ireland. The hyper-Irishness of Beckett's works is reflected in the universality of the plots, so that even readers who do not know the Irish background can still empathize with the characters. The reason for this is that Beckett employs the experimental writing technique of minimalist settings, where the background of the work and the identity of the characters are doubly blurred. It is precisely because Beckett's works are characterized by super-Irish cosmopolitanism in both form and content that they have been widely disseminated all over the world.

**Anfeng Sheng** is a tenured professor of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures of Tsinghua University and the chief expert of major project of the National Social Science Foundation. He is President of the Committee of World Literatures and Literary Theories of China Comparative Literature Association (CCLA).

Haruko Takakuwa

### ***Tour in Connemara: Maria Edgeworth's Other Ireland***

Surprisingly, it was not until the autumn of 1833 that Maria Edgeworth visited Connemara for the first time, long after the most prolific period as a writer. During her writing days, Edgeworth wrote Irish experiences in her novels, *Castle Rackrent* (1800), *Ennui* (1809), *The Absentee* (1812) and *Ormond* (1817), from an Anglo-Irish perspective. In them, she envisions an enlightened, progressive Ireland within the framework of the UK under the Act of Union. However, originally a series of letters to her brother Michael Pakenham Edgeworth in India, *Tour in Connemara* offers the 68-year-old Edgeworth's first-hand experience of the "wild West" of Ireland that is different from the vision she presented in her Irish novels. As a travelogue, Edgeworth predictably and understandably employs civilization vs. savagery dichotomy in depicting the west of Ireland, and also uses the trope of national tale in her description of her encounter with the Martins of Ballinahinch, particularly the daughter Mary Martin, who later became an iconic figure of the Famine period that features in Charles Lever's *The Martins of Cro'Martin* (1856).

In this paper, I would like to look at *Tour in Connemara* as Edgeworth's more immediate, private and "unofficial" narrative of her later years, and see how she captures and/or fails to capture an unfamiliar Ireland. How far does her national vision and imagination about Ireland allow her to understand Connemara or Mary Martin? I would like to reexamine Edgeworth's post-Union, progressive outlook from her private accounts in her post-writing days.

**Haruko Takakuwa** is Professor at Ochanomizu University, Japan. Her main interests are in early-nineteenth-century domestic novels and national tales. She has published articles on Maria Edgeworth, Sydney Owenson, and Susan Ferrier. Her article on Jane Austen adaptation in Japanese theatre was published in *Persuasions On-Line* 36.1 (2015). She serves as secretary to the IASIL 2024 Conference Organising Committee.

Giovanna Tallone

### ***Mary O'Donnell's Steps into Aftermaths***

Mary O'Donnell's focus on aftermaths involves both her poetry and her fiction. Over the years she has shed light on the consequences of personal experiences, but also of historical events. In the poem "State Pathologist" the aftermath of domestic violence is revealed in the examination of a dead woman's body. In her collection *Massacre of the Birds* the consequences of violence against nature intermingle with brutality in everyday life. Personal aftermaths underlie her 1999 novel *The Elysium Testament*, a first-person account of Nina's inability to come to terms with the death of her own child. In a similar way, the short story "Afrodite Pauses, Mid-Life" takes into account the aftermath of menopause.

However, Mary O'Donnell's writing also revolves around more public and/or historical areas. Poems like "Legacy", "Border Town" or "Derry Nocturne" shed light on the legacy of the Troubles, while her fiction ranges from the historical context of the Troubles in 1974 in the short story "Border Crossing" to the aftermath of the Troubles and the issue of the "Disappeared" in Northern Ireland in her 2014 novel *Where They Lie*. O'Donnell goes back to the First World War and the Easter Rising and their aftermath in her 2018 collection *Empire*, and deals with the aftermath of the Nice attack in 2016 in the short story "La Mer".

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the ways in which Mary O'Donnell deals with aftermaths in an extended sense in poetry and fiction, with particular attention to the textual analysis of some specific poems and stories and of the novel *Where They Lie*.

**Giovanna Tallone** has a degree in Modern Languages from Università Cattolica, Milan and a PhD in English Studies from the University of Florence. An independent researcher, she has published essays and critical reviews on Irish women writers and contemporary Irish drama. She is a member of the editorial board of *Studi Irlandesi*.

Fuyuji Tanigawa

### **Reading "The Wanderings of Usheen" in *Poems* (1895)**

I would like to read "The Wanderings of Usheen" in *Poems* (1895) from a political and historical perspective, and ask people about the results.

As for Irish literature, at the beginning of the 20th century, *The Cabinet of Irish Literature*, 2nd ed. by K. Tynan was a typical example. However, through the Aftermath and the Troubles, its meaning has changed mainly due to political and cultural changes within and outside Ireland. It was during this process that the name of our society itself was changed in 1997.

This change is deeply related to changes in the readership, sometimes called interpretive communities. I take up "Usheen" because I am interested in the question of what kind of an interpretive community the young Yeats imagined when he wrote it. This issue is very important because it can form part of the larger issue of Anglo-Irish contributions to Irish culture.

However, in order to proceed with my reading within the limited presentation time, I will begin my presentation with picking up the forms and structures closely, and also adopting the orthodox motif comparison since Aarne-Thompson and mythological image analysis. It may also be possible to cite another version of this narrative poem, which was revised through repeated prints.

As a feature of Yeats's 1895 collection of poems, I draw attention to the glossary at the end of the volume. What kind of readership needed this? This is the starting point for my reading.

**Fuyuji Tanigawa** received his MA degree from Doshisha University, Kyoto, and later a Ph.D. from Osaka City University. After one year starting in the spring of 2015 as a visiting professor at the James Joyce

Research Centre, University College Dublin, he is again a professor at Konan Women's University, Kobe.

Melania Terrazas

## **The Aftermath of Affirmative Action: The Posthuman Documentary**

Ireland has experienced numerous historical events that have left a lasting legacy on Irish land, society and culture, which has been explored in Irish literature and film. Current transformations related to the environment, new technologies, and culture have contested existing assumptions about the relationship between the human and the existence of a greater environment and nature that develops and survives around people and humanity. This paper addresses some examples of film documentaries set in Ireland and the posthuman as a means of exploring this development. Through a close analysis of these documentaries, the posthuman on screen crosses filmic genres and national contexts. In the process, these examples of twenty-first posthuman cinema set in Ireland emphasize humanity's entanglement in broader technological and social worlds and exposes new models of subjectivity and community. In exploring these arguments, this posthuman investigation draws on work by Rosi Bradiotti (2013, 2017, 2023) discussing how these film documentaries call for a debate about the excitements and anxieties of posthuman experience as well as the aftermath of affirmative action in Ireland.

**Melania Terrazas** is Senior Lecturer in English and Irish Studies at the University of La Rioja (Spain) and Head of the Centre of Irish Studies Banna/Bond (EFACIS). Currently, she is a member of the Research Project: 'Posthuman Intersections in Irish and Galician Literatures' (MCI and ERDF, ref. PID2022-136251NB-I00). Visit: <https://investigacion.unirioja.es/investigadores/209/detalle>.

Iain Twiddy

## **Immanent Hydraulics: The Role of Water in Seamus Heaney's Early Work**

Looking back to his early twenties, Seamus Heaney described how he began to write poetry when his roots were crossed with his reading. The poems produced from this initial intermingling were as much grounding and consolidating as uplifting and free-flowing: significantly, *Death of a Naturalist* is bookended by 'Digging' and 'Personal Helicon'. Much critical attention has been given to earth work in this early material – excavation, ploughing, and the actuality of soil, mud and turf – but water is equally vital to the poems and the poetics. As a source of beauty and fear, energy and delight, and as a force that the poet both guides and is guided by, few poets have written as fluently as Heaney on the physical qualities and metaphysical valency of water. This paper will examine the variety and use of this element in Heaney's early poems, tracing the directions in which he channels early poetic

influences line by line into his own prosodic control. It will also follow this imagery into its aftermath, observing how Heaney draws again and again on this founding principle on occasions of personal and poetic renewal. The link between water and poetic inspiration is sunk deep, but I hope to show how in these early works Heaney refreshes an ancient trope with a level of formal adeptness that conducts a clarifying novitiate joy.

**Iain Twiddy** is an associate professor of English Literature at Kyushu University. He is the author of the studies *Pastoral Elegy in Contemporary British and Irish Poetry* and *Cancer Poetry*.

Zhanpeng Wang

### **Decade of Centenaries, Contemporary Challenges, and Irish Studies in China**

Resurgence of area studies at the beginning of the 21st century has created new momentum for the flowering of Irish Studies, as a dozen Irish studies centres or postgraduate programmes have emerged in China. The centenary commemorations and aftermath of a series of events (e.g. financial crisis, Brexit, lockdowns and Ukraine crises) have become two eminent themes in Irish Studies in China, which are mutually complemented and strengthened. Studies in Irish literature and cultural studies continue to be inspiring and dynamic. Irish writers' role in the making of the nation has been re-examined under the themes of Irish Cultural revival, historical revisionism and classic writers. Growing studies on more contemporary writers provide new insights on the changing Irishness in the aftermath of crises (e.g. border and emigration). Historical studies has become another home discipline. The commemorative activities and responses to the recent events impact the writings on modern and contemporary Ireland in China. The third strand is reflected in rapidly growing academic interest in Ireland's global role as well as its economic and political life. The new developments have strengthened the interdisciplinary turn of Irish studies. They link historical memory and contemporary events to enhance the understanding of the complexities of the evolving Irish identities in the past, present and future. It also creates reflexive opportunities to expand, even challenge by the contrast, the Irish and Chinese perceptions about themselves. This will greatly contribute to the efforts to construct a distinctive academic identity of Irish Studies in China.

**Wang Zhanpeng** is Professor and the Associate Dean of School of English and International Studies at Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU). He received Presidential Distinguished Service Award of Ireland in 2022 as the founding director of the Irish Studies Centre at BFSU.

Wei Wang

## **Returning Ireland: Historical Events and Transnational Aftermaths in Colum McCann's *TransAtlantic***

Concerning “transnational turns” within the field of world literature, Colum McCann, as one of many immigrant Irish writers who brought views of cosmopolitanism upon their migration experiences and imported their Irish ideas and values into their works for world literature, depicts several transnational movements in his novel *TransAtlantic*, which, in turn, innovates alternative “aftermaths” of Irishness. This paper engages in transnational perspectives on historical events in this novel, such as the Great Famine, the first flight across the Atlantic, Frederick Douglass’ visiting trip to Ireland, to name just a few, attending to interpret McCann’s longing for returning “home”, that is, Ireland, to represent his unforgettable cultural memory of Ireland. Therefore, this paper restates the idea that through the embodiment of homeward longing, McCann aims to show the “aftermaths”, as an exile, to long for the general fate of people on both sides of the Atlantic, and particularly homesick awareness for his fictional Ireland.

**Dr. WANG Wei**, professor of literature at School of Foreign Languages, Qingdao University, China. She holds a PhD degree from Central China Normal University and BA & MA from Qingdao University. Her research mainly focuses on contemporary American literature, and cultural studies. She has hosted three projects on post-9/11 fiction, two funded by China’s Ministry of education and one funded by China’s National Social Science Foundation. She has published over 20 academic papers.

Michelle Witen

## **The Culture of Material: Fabric and Fashion in L. T. Meade’s Serialized Fiction**

Well-known for her fiction about rebellious young women – such as, naming only a few, *Wild Kitty: A School Story* (1897), *A Very Naughty Girl* (1901), *Willful Cousin Kate* (1904), and *A Girl of High Adventure* (1914) – L. T. Meade (Elizabeth Thomasina Meade Smith) has been described as the woman who pioneered girls’ school tales and who demarcated the associated benchmarks of the boarding school genre. Her transgressive (often Irish) schoolgirls were known for pushing the boundaries of the austere English boarding schools that housed them. Her work for *The Strand Magazine*, especially the serialization of the medical mystery *Stories from the Diary of a Doctor* was similarly (sub)genre-defining. While acknowledging what made her famous in terms of genres, this paper focuses on the ways in which Meade engages with material culture in her serialized fiction by looking at the relationship between fashion, commodities, and the magazines that housed her stories.

Examining Meade’s serialized fiction in Victorian periodicals – specifically *The Strand Magazine*,



*The Woman at Home*, and *Cassell's Family Magazine* – this paper explores the narrative of fabric, fashion, and labour in serializations such as *Stories from the Diary of a Court Dressmaker*, *The Mystery of Susanna Tankerville*, *The Sorceress of the Strand*, and *Out of the Fashion*. It will demonstrate the dialogue between nineteenth-century magazine advertisements and these stories, while showing how the use of fabrics such as linen and damask in the stories can provide a subtext regarding Irish material culture, Irish feminism, and Meade's critique of British colonialism.

**Michelle Witen** is Junior Professor of British and Irish Literature at the Europa-Universität Flensburg, where she is also the Director of the EUF Centre for Irish Studies. She is the author of *James Joyce and Absolute Music* (Bloomsbury 2018) and co-editor of the *James Joyce Quarterly* Special Issue 'James Joyce and the Non-Human' (with Katherine Ebury 2020/21) and *Modernism in Wonderland* (with John Morgenstern, Bloomsbury 2024).

Yexuan Xing

### **Paul Lynch: Reconnecting Trauma and the Post-Pandemic Era in *Beyond the Sea***

Paul Lynch's *Beyond the Sea* (2019), the winner of 2022 Prix Gens de Mers is a sophisticated exploration of human trauma in the plight of isolation and changes in self-consciousness. Lynch's novel has been hailed as "a breathless existential quest" (Ariane Singer) and "a powerful, heart-breaking story of friendship forged in the most extreme conditions" (Mary Costello). However, these observations do not adequately address the impact of the characters' inner dynamic on the reader, especially the relation with their post-pandemic status. This paper will argue that *Beyond the Sea* is not only concerned with philosophical questions and demonstration of human will as many have observed but it also has a restorative impact on readers in the post-pandemic era, demonstrating the universality and adaptability of human emotions in solitude and personal trauma. Lynch's novel will be considered in the context of Bolivar's physical and psychological trauma, investigating how he confronts despair through his imagination, and how his inner activities resonate with readers' experiences in the aftermath of Covid-19. Many people experienced loneliness, fear, and helplessness in isolation during the epidemic, just as Bolivar does, and Lynch's novel's universal significance has the capacity to evoke memories for global readers via its complex demonstration of the protagonist's. In conclusion, this paper will reinterpret Bolivar's trauma in the post-pandemic era, and will emphasize an imaginative connection between reader and the character via the imaginative transferability of Lynch's novel.

**Kate (Yexuan XING)** is a postgraduate student at The Chinese University of Hong Kong with research interests in Irish writing, contemporary fiction and memory. She is passionate about topics of human spirit and excels at connecting literary insights on human condition to reality.

Zihong Xu

## **New Development of Northern Ireland Issues and Its Implications**

The Windsor Framework has ended the disputes over the Northern Ireland Protocol between the EU and the UK and improved their relationship. However, the effect of this framework will be negated by regulatory divergence arising from the rules on the movement of goods and the UK's plan to scrap EU laws. Furthermore, the Windsor Framework has failed to reassure the unionists and the Democratic Unionist Party still refuses to return to the Executive. The resulting political impasse has reshaped Northern Ireland politics into a three-party system as the centrist bloc grows, behind which the local politics has become more polarised. In the aftermath of Brexit, the Irish border issue has reemerged as both a historical problem and a realistic predicament. In this context, the cultural, legal, political, and literary issues on this theme coalesce towards an interdisciplinary interaction and mixture. The political deadlock has prompted a rethink on not only Northern Ireland's place in the Union but also the long-term cultural impact of Brexit on Northern Ireland and its identity. This essay engages with literary work, political papers and pamphlets, Hansard, and other writings prompted by Brexit and the Northern Ireland Issues. The aim is to reveal that the Northern Ireland Issues expose the problematic nature of the Brexit narrative, paying particular attention to the development of the Northern Ireland Issues during Brexit and its implications in the post-Brexit era.

**Xu Zihong**, a Ph.D. student in European Studies at Beijing Foreign Studies University. Her research interest is in British and Irish politics. She has contributed two reports on Northern Ireland Issues to the book "Annual Report on Development of the UK" respectively in 2022 and 2023.

Jincai Yang

## **Approaching visual acuity of visions and remembrances in John Banville's *The Sea***

John Banville's *The Sea* simultaneously tells about growing up and growing old. Its protagonist Max Morden, already in his sixties, is revisiting the Irish coastal resort where, as a child, he encountered the Grace family, who mysteriously changed his life. Banville seamlessly juxtaposes Max's youth and age, and each scene is rendered with the intense visual acuity of a photograph. Like the strange high tide that figures into Max's visions and remembrances, this novel sweeps the reader into the inexorable waxing and waning of life. Concerned with rites of passage: coming-of-age and coming of old age; awakening and dying, Max Morden retrieves his childhood in flight from bereavement and the smell of mortality. His voice resonates with fluent literary allusions and references to artists and their works. Interweaving traumatic episodes from his remote and recent past, Banville brilliantly dramatizes the unpredictability of life and the incomprehensibility of death. His interest in forms of representation stands out and it is worthwhile to investigate his use of paintings as metaphors. In

order to assess the complex interplay between word and image in *The Sea* on a metatextual level, ekphrasis can serve as a useful critical tool. Denoting a “verbal representation of a visual representation” including literary and non-literary writing on art, the term can help explore Max's cruelly capricious complicity in the sad history that unfolds as well as the facts kept hidden from the reader.

**Professor Yang Jincai** is the director of the Institute of Foreign Literature at Nanjing University, and the chief editor of the *Journal of Contemporary Foreign Literature*. He specializes in British and American literature and comparative literary studies, and has contributed to various journals a huge range of essays and articles.

Yi-ling Yang

### ***Rethinking the Troubles: Genre Defiance in Edna O'Brien's House of Splendid Isolation and Colin Bateman's Mohammed Maguire***

The Troubles thriller aims to explain and commemorate the violent past of Northern Ireland. However, as the genre develops, it risks stereotyping paramilitaries and oversimplifying the complexities of the Troubles into binary oppositions. This paper explores the genre defiance of Edna O'Brien's *House of Splendid Isolation* and Colin Bateman's *Mohammed Maguire*, examining how they challenge thriller conventions and, in doing so, reshape the perception of the Troubles. It focuses on the two novels' break with the traditional Troubles thriller in form and content. In form, their non-linear narratives resist the post-conflict endeavor to construct a singular narrative of the chaotic period within the frameworks of Irish nationalism or Unionism. Framed by an aborted child's voice at the beginning and end, O'Brien's work delves into the life of the widow Josie and her encounter with a Northern fugitive. Bateman interlaces Mohammed's adult life in Belfast with his wanderings across countries during adolescence. In content, while O'Brien places the Catholic paramilitary from the North in the Southern countryside, Bateman puts his protagonist in the interplay between domestic and international politics. Mohammed, born to an Irish Republican mother and a Libyan terrorist father, gets involved in Northern Irish politics but later seeks refuge in the United States. The local and global dimensions expand the scope of Troubles thrillers that are often set in urban areas, with Belfast being a common backdrop. Examining the narratives and local/global dimensions of the two novels, the study illustrates how these works open up possibilities for understanding the Troubles and its representation.

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Tzu-Ching Yeh

## **The Aftermath of Having No Alternatives: Interpreting Laughter in Samuel Beckett's *All That Fall***

The work of Samuel Beckett is fraught with dark humor, skillfully negotiating the cruelty of circumstances by infusing a comedic touch. While existing discussions on comedy and humor abound, the inquiry into understanding why Beckett's characters laugh remains unsatisfying and incomplete. Furthermore, it is crucial to differentiate and study the distinct aspects of comedy or humor from the actual laughter produced by the characters. This paper, therefore, examines laughter independently of humor, aiming to initiate a freestanding discussion apart from those centered on comedy. The characters' bursts of laughter in his dramatic plays, which sever any discernible contextual meaning, remain enigmatic and fascinating. This paper focuses on Beckett's first radio play *All That Fall* to delve into the peculiar occurrences of dianoetic laughter exhibited by the spousal protagonists, Dan and Maddy Rooney, both individually and collectively. I argue that three important contexts induce laughter in this play. First, it results from the protagonists' revelation of sympathy for other characters, resonating with their own plight. Second, they grapple with the inescapable process of aging, physical deterioration, and chronic illnesses. Third, despite that religion shapes the Irish population, it becomes the shackles and the cause of continuous suffering for this elderly couple. Due to these contextual factors, the protagonists laugh violently as a restrained revolt against their conditions, given the absence of any viable escape.

**Tzu-Ching Yeh** received her Ph.D. in English literature from Lancaster University, U.K. She is currently Assistant Professor in the Department of Applied Languages at R.O.C. Naval Academy. Her research has consistently focuses on the study of Samuel Beckett.

Akemi Yoshida

## **From George Moore and George Egerton to James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922)**

The formative influence of George Moore upon James Joyce has already been well researched. *The Untilled Field* (1903) by Moore, a precursor in the genre of short fiction is known to have inspired Joyce's *Dubliners*. Affinities between their autobiographical novels; Moore's *Confessions of a Young Man* (1888) and Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) have also been pointed out.

This paper of mine, then, would mainly speculate on the possible influence of Moore's *The Brook Kerith* (1916) on Joyce's composition of *Ulysses*, focusing on the similarities in the general structures of these two novels: in both works characterized by multiple perspectives, the narrative first centres upon one focal character for a substantial length, to make it seem, for a while, as if this character

would dominate the whole work as its protagonist, but then replaces him with a second focal character, and finally concludes the work with the third one.

While the resemblance which Moore's "melodic line" narrative, in which the characters' dictions are introduced without using any quotation marks, bears to Molly's dialogue put at the end of *Ulysses* is worth noting, Joyce's stylistic assimilation of George Egerton in the "Penelope" episode will also be pointed out and explored, citing passages from *Keynotes* (1893) for illustration.

**Akemi Yoshida** majored in English Literature at the University of Tokyo (B.A. and M.A.) and the University of Sussex (M.A.) and now teaches at the Faculty of Letters, Kyoto Prefectural University.

Guie Zeng

### **Redemption and Reconciliation: Personal Narratives and Historical Representation in William Trevor's *The Story of Lucy Gault***

In *The Story of Lucy Gault*, William Trevor places individuals within the aftermaths of historical events of the 20th century, depicting the conflicts between the native Catholic Irish and the Protestant Anglo-Irish Ascendancy, as well as showcasing the impact of historical events, such as the two World Wars outside Ireland. The novel seems to dwell on the consequences of historical contingency, imposing the unpredictable power of fate. Nevertheless, Trevor disavows escapism or forgetfulness of history, and affirms the role of friendship and emotion when facing the aftermaths of history. It is found that repentance and forgiveness may facilitate reconciliation among individuals, which is an important mechanism to redemption. By emphasizing the significance of redemption and reconciliation of individuals in the flows of the historical events, the novel exhibits characteristics distinct from the traditional 20th century Irish Big-House novel and weaves Lucy's personal story into the grand histories of 20th-century Ireland and Europe, reflecting the human agency against the floods of contingent history.

**Guie ZENG**, Professor of English, Director of UCC-SHU Irish Studies Center, Shanghai University. She mainly focuses on American and Irish literature and Utopian studies. She currently works on Colum McCann and other contemporary Irish novelists. Funded by China Scholarship Council, she visited UCLA in 2010-2011 and Cardiff University in 2016.