

Introduction

Research Projects – An Overview

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The current issue of *ABEI Journal* is dedicated to the presentation of a snapshot of twenty-first-century research in the area of Irish Studies in Brazil. Eighteen researchers responded to the Call for Papers and have provided an account of their projects whether ongoing or concluded. It is an impressive array and gives a useful insight into the wide range of interests and approaches that are motivating Irish Studies researchers in Brazil at the present time. Given the voluntary nature of the contributions it is inevitable that the accounts published here are only a sample of the total extent of the work being carried out, so the reader should certainly not imagine that what follows is a complete and detailed map of the terrain.

To a certain extent the papers published here serve as a partial updating of the survey included in *Irish Studies in Brazil* (Humanitas, 2005), edited by Munira Mutran and Laura Izarra, which gave a comprehensive introduction to the fundamental importance of USP (University of São Paulo) in the development of the field over the quarter of a century prior to the volume's publication. Of particular importance is the section containing the abstracts of the eleven MAs, eleven PhDs and one Postdoctorate that had been produced in Irish Studies at USP in that period. The first of those abstracts was that of Professor Mutran's own 1977 doctorate on the characters in Sean O'Faolain's short stories. In the four decades that have elapsed since then almost all of the authors of those dissertations and theses have gone on to achieve distinction in their own academic careers and it is, to a large extent, the work of their supervisees that is represented here.

As one of those USP alumni myself I would have welcomed the opportunity in the present selection to have been able to trace that genealogy with considerably more precision than the information volunteered by the writers makes possible. In their Biodata most of the authors have not seen fit to mention the name of their supervisor nor even, in some cases, the institution where they are conducting their research. Incomplete though this information is one notes that research in Irish Studies has long since escaped the confines of USP to colonise the wider world of Brazilian academia at large. Indeed, one notes that three of the Brazilian researchers included

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here give an account of their research in Ireland itself, at the Waterford Institute of Technology and Trinity College Dublin. In the latter case, Thalita Serra do Castro and Maria Clara Mendes are beneficiaries of the ABEI Fellowship, generously set up by my own postdoctoral supervisee, Rosalie Rahal Haddad, and her husband Claudio to enable a Brazilian student to study for his/her MPhil at TCD every year. Apart from USP itself, other Brazilian institutions mentioned by the researchers in their Biodata are PUCRS, a private university in the southernmost state of Rio Grande do Sul; UFRS, a federal university in the same state; UFF, a federal university in Volta Redonda in the state of Rio de Janeiro; and UNICAMP and UNESP, two of the three state-run universities in the state of São Paulo.

In terms of the literary genres chosen by the researchers it comes as no surprise that one third of the projects described here are related to Drama: Alessandra Cristina Rigonato's "A Comic Portrayal of the Troubles in Contemporary Drama"; my own supervisee Claudia Parra's "Building Empowerment Through Drama: The Characterisation Process of Irish Women in Three Plays by Sean O'Casey"; Mariana Lessa de Oliveira's "Philosophy and Literature: Brian Friel's Three Language Plays"; Rosalie Rahal Haddad's "Shaw's *Mrs Warren's Profession* on the Brazilian Stage"; and Thalita Serra do Castro's "Linguistic Fluidity and Unrealized Territories in Brian Friel's Translations".

A similar number of studies is devoted to Prose, but the focus is more diverse, including studies of novels, short stories and prose works in translation. The five projects relating to this genre are: Camila Franco Batista's "The Contemporary Irish Historical Novel, 2000-2016"; Claudia Santana Martins postdoctoral research, "Creative Hyperfidelity and Finnegans Wake: Reflections on the Translation of Joyce's Criticism of Racist and Nazi Discourse"; Daniela Nicoletti Fávero's "Between Tradition and Renewal: the Representation of Identity in the Contemporary Irish Short Story"; an interesting study of the interface between Science and Literature, José A. O. Huguenin and Gisele G. Wolkoff's "A Transdisciplinary Approach: The Picture of Dorian Gray from the Viewpoint of Physics"; and Patricia de Queiroz Carvalho Zimbres' innovative MA research, "Commented Translation of Short Stories by Desmond Hogan".

Of the remaining eight research projects, two are devoted to Poetry, two to the Cinema, one to History, one to Travel Writing, one to the Irish Language and one to Irish Studies in South America. Poetry is the focus of Julia Gomes de Alencar's "Translation and Alterity: A Study of *In This Life*, by Michael O'Loughlin" and Viviane Carvalho da Annuniação's "Poetry's Travel-Worthiness: South America and Brazil Through the Eyes of English Language Poets". The two Cinema projects are "Filmic Portraits of Contemporary Ireland: 2003-2018", by Cecília Adolpho Martins, and Stephanie Schwerter's "Belfast after 1994: Narrating the Troubles in Post-Ceasefire Film". The history of the Troubles is revisited by 3 in "From Grieving to Peace: the Cross Community Response in the Aftermath of the Remembrance Day Bombing in Enniskillen". Finally, Travel Writing of a certain kind is examined by Mariana Bolfarine in "Roger Casement in

the Belgian Congo: Translation, Travel Writing and Fiction”, while the Irish Language is researched jointly by Pilar Luz Rodrigues and James Cuffe in “The 20-year Strategy for the Irish Language and the Irish Speaking Communities: An Ethnographic Investigation”. In the case of Irish Studies in South America the research by Maria Graciela Eliggi, Graciela Obert, Norma L. Alfonso and Enrique A. Basabe brings the perspective of an on-going project, “Contemporary Literatures in Dialogue” that is being developed at the Universidad de La Pampa, Argentina.

The eighteen research projects introduced here by their progenitors give a very encouraging impression of the rich and dynamic work being undertaken in the area of Irish Studies by researchers both within Brazilian universities themselves and also at institutions outside the country. Given that the overview represented here is only a partial glimpse of the research being carried out at the present time one can but admire the extraordinary careers of Munira Mutran and Laura Izarra, and all their fellow academic supervisors at universities throughout Brazil, who continue to stimulate, structure and develop such an important contribution to this most fascinating of fields.



São Paulo's Theatro Municipal was inaugurated on 12th September 1911.