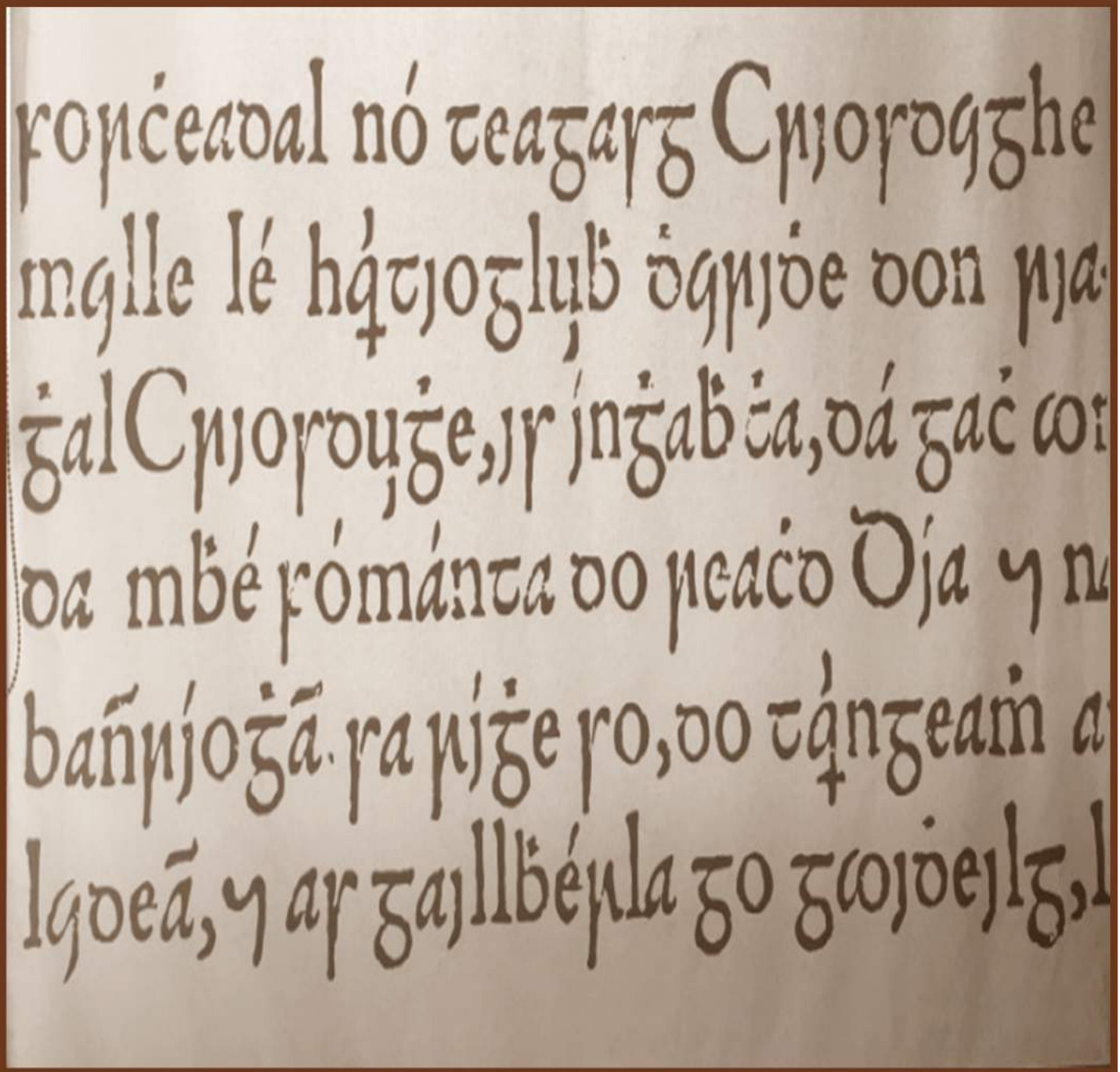
ABEI Journal

The Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies



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Projeto de Diagramação
Selma Consoli – MTb n. 28.839

Diagramação
Victor A. C. Pacheco

Revisão
Laura P. Z. Izarra / Munira H. Mutran

Contents

Introduction

We are pleased to announce that, with effect from the present issue, the *ABEI Journal* will now be published biannually. This has been made possible by the significant increase in the number of contributions received from scholars both in Brazil and abroad.

In keeping with this important step in the evolution of our journal, innovation is very much the keynote of *ABEI Journal 20.1*. In addition to a stimulating range of critical texts we are honoured to present two previously unpublished works of creative writing, Mary O'Donnell's short story, “Stolen”, and, in "Voices from Brazil", the late Milla Ragusa's autobiographical reflections, "The Difficulty of Being Human".

Although previously published, we are also grateful to the Chilean poet Maria Inés Zaldívar Ovalle for the inclusion of a poem from her *Artes e oficios* (1996), which she will be reading at the forthcoming XIII Symposium of Irish Studies in South America, in Santiago de Chile. The Symposium, sponsored jointly by the Brazilian Association of Irish Studies (ABEI) and the Asociación de Estudios Irlandeses del Sur (AEIS), will celebrate the bicentenary of Chilean Independence, paying tribute to the revolutionary Bernardo O'Higgins. Another contemporary writer highlighted in this issue of the Journal is Celia de Fréine, in an interview with Gisele Wolkoff.

In "The Author and the Critic" section, Gabriela McEvoy writes about her recent book, *La experiencia invisible / The invisible experience*, which, as José Manuel Carrasco Weston points out in his dialogue with the writer, is the first book on Irish immigration in Peru. The Irish diaspora in South America is also the theme of Laura Hosiasson’s groundbreaking study on the legacy of an Irishman in Chile and Douglas Glynn’s article on the representation of the Irish in Argentina.

The cover of *ABEI Journal 20.1* depicts Gaelic typefaces studied by Eduardo Boheme Kumamoto while he was at Trinity College Dublin as a beneficiary of the ABEI-HADDAD Fellowship 2017-18. His article is followed by contributions by Eda Nagayama and from Maria Yolanda Fernándes Suárez, who reflects upon her translation into Spanish of Brian Friel’s *Translations* for which she was awarded the 2016 María Martínez Sierra Prize for Theatre Translation.

The Editors

"A patriotic scene" (Chile) by Johan Moritz Rugendas (1802-1858)

The Writer

Stolen

Mary O'Donnell

The blackthorn hedges on the fairy fort have finally bloomed, curbed by a mean spring that refuses warmth, despite lengthening days. But winds have calmed, sky is clear. Every morning after waking, he watches first light seeping through a dense weave of thin branches in the next field, the dew-gripped stems, haloed in mist. There is something oddly arousing about that view, Karl finds, as he touches himself beneath the sheets.

He has already experienced eight months of horizontal winds roaring across the fields from Galway bay. He has rented this place, some ten miles distant, partly to avoid the proximity of constant celebration and the diddle-di-dye sounds that rise permanently within the city and pervade student life at Galway University.

He gets along fine with the others in his writing group on the MA programme, and likes most of the tutors too, although he wonders about the blonde—the 'multi-genre writer' according to the biog on her website—who keeps foisting some of her own library titles on him, books she believes will stretch him *in new reading directions*. Right so. Whatever you say.

It's true he's not widely read. Even so, he was accepted onto the course as a mature student on the creative writing course. The tutor's face had held its expression in a polite but frozen way when he announced in class that he hadn't read many women writers apart from a few pages of his ex-wife's Anne Tyler (which brought stifled titters in the group), informing her that his favourite writers told solid stories with a beginning, a middle and an end. They were all men, he shrugged, not realising that nowadays this is a faux pas in the world of lit crit. He apologised for the omission in his reading, and the tutor smiled grimly and said *sure we'll get you into the loop Karl, no worries, I'll have you reading all kinds of material before the year's out*. Then, a slight toss of her head and the merest, disquieting, hint of a wink.

Apart from the course, being in the rented house is another new pleasure. Anyone in ordinary life can avail of pleasure, something he'd forgotten. He loves returning in the evening with his groceries: fish, lentils, spinach, eggs, milk, spuds. He's trying out a life that involves a foray towards vegetarianism (but he allows himself the fish), and feels the better for it. That, and walking miles around the streets of Galway after the seminars, along the banks of the raging Corrib, and later on, venturing out into the vast space and beckoning of the fields and narrow roads around his new home. The house is set in its own wilderness, on a road off a road off the M6.

Whether his sense of expansion derives from simply being away from Leinster for a year, feeling uncommitted and by himself, or whether it's because of the change of diet, remains to be seen. He doesn't believe in lifestyle solutions. At forty-nine, he has incipient man-breasts, thin legs and no buttocks to speak of. He's not one of those guys who drift around with a sheaf of poems sticking out of the jacket pocket, or who carries a Boxer pup as a babe magnet. At least, he consoles himself, he has hair. Abundantly.

The sense of renewal might also be due to the stimulation of the course, and the constant anxiety about turning in new fiction every single week to Blondie. The thing that

bothers him is the struggle to write out of what she calls the *in-between spaces of experience, or 'liminality'*, another word that's bandied around a lot.

One of the other tutors is renowned for his verbal public flayings of students whose non-fiction memoir isn't up to scratch, and creates a terrifying presence in the classroom. A broad-shouldered, brown-haired, long-eared chap whose essays appear frequently in a big-wig journal called Granta, nothing the students write can meet a standard so high Karl thinks it must give the tutor altitude sickness. Karl, who hasn't read Granta before, doesn't know what all the fuss is about, or even if Granta is any bloody good. Unlike Blondie, Long Ears doesn't believe in praising the positive and not over-emphasising the negative. They are all eejits and incompetents, with no hope of making it in the world of writing. Apparently that means prizes. Recognition. Publishing wars. In the presence of Long Ears, some of the younger guys sweat. The women seem more able for him. He's pretty free with his language too. *Wanker. That fuck. Oh for fuck's sake*. Dropped from his mouth as a matter of course, although Karl too has begun to use similar language as he moves around the house, sometimes knocking into things when he's drunk too much, even more so when he has to re-draft his work.

Even so, he has discovered oxygen blowing into him after ten years in the planning offices. There was safety, yes. Collegiality yes. Regular salary. Chats around the water cooler. Green plants shivering beneath the AC system in summer as he and the others worked through the applications, assessing, budgeting, meeting. Some planning applications made the cut, it went without saying. But even so, the magisterial nature of decision-making had begun to drain him and he felt the ancient pull of wanting distance. Urgently. He knows that as a 7th century man, he'd have taken off from the community, the village, and joined up with a new tribe to fight in their battles. Or back further, in Stone Age subsistence, he'd head off to find a few Neanderthals to hunt down, but only after mating with their women. It has been a quest for great plains, something new to pit himself against, especially since the break-up.

If in crisis, do a post-graduate degree.

The rental house with its pastiche half door is so far removed from everything he'd known before. The one he lived in before his marriage went pear-shaped and Anna announced that she was bisexual and had met someone else was very different. *You mean you're gay*, was his bald, stunned response. *No, I mean I'm bisexual, Karl. Bisexual? If you can take that on board*. That really raised his hackles, apart from the shock of it. Splitting hairs, trying to have it every way. She was leaving him for another woman, so how the fuck did that make her bisexual? Was she leaving the door open, in case she changed her mind and wanted to get back with him, or be with another man?

Their home had been neat and modern. Dining-room linking to sitting-room on the left. Small office to the right. Downstairs loo he could hardly stand up in while he pissed. Three bedrooms, another bathroom. En suite off their room. White walls everywhere and neutral furnishings with the odd flash of a tangerine or turquoise cushion, 'jewel' colours from interiors magazines. The usual kitchen island—that oversized lump of granite, a prerequisite in every Irish kitchen when someone decided that food preparation could no longer occur on worktops facing a wall, but must be performed on a space perched at a measured ratio to cooker and sink. A postage-stamp sized back garden with a wooden shed for tools and lawn-mower, none of which he cared very much to use. He'd always wanted to move away from Leinster, with its Dublin-defined attitudes, its constant aspiring and *garden-trimming-coordinated-fucking-furniture-leaving-cert-child-buggering-dinner-party-ambition*, have a

larger house, live more cheaply. But Anna wouldn't budge from her commuter route to the city. And then she met Henni, from Finland.

It wasn't like the old days when you stuck it out and put up with one another until the man died and the wife entered a new phase of coming and going as she pleased, of bridge, *hiking* (that made him laugh, thinking of all the under-exercised flesh trailing up and down the Sugar Loaf), evening courses and weekend breaks to Kerry with 'the girls'. Neither of them was into endurance. Even so, the stomach-sickening, pile-driving shock of discovering that she loves—absolutely *loves*—a woman, pretty much in the way she'd once loved him, took some digesting. He developed irritable bowel syndrome, his doctor suggested, found himself dashing desperately to the bathroom to shit his guts out, all because of heartbreak. Now he was truly emptied, and that heart was just—just—beginning to grow numb, scab over. To *heal*, in therapy-speak. Since taking up with Henni, and implicit in this, while recovering from life with *him*, Anna has been having monthly therapy, adding that he should try it too.

But for now, a house in the west. This is his therapy. A refurbished two-hundred-year old cottage extended to three times its original length, the original thatch replaced by a cobalt slate roof, catching every loop of light when clouds break and sunlight flashes through. The sash windows are small, with bright red frames. On the kitchen window-ledge, an ornamental cock perches, comb bright, black and white tail-feathers curling high. The owner of the house, Patrick Tuomey, has set the bird's feet on a base of concrete, to protect it from the gales. He keeps specimen hens and cocks himself, he tells Karl, bringing him one evening to see them. They cross the yard from Tuomey's house, a mile away. The white outbuildings which house the fowl are low-lying, with metal grills running from top to bottom.

We have to watch out for our old friend Reynard, Patrick had said. When Karl looked blank, he added *An sionnach?* Still no response. Finally, exasperated, *the friggin' fox?*

Karl leant to inspect the huge, fluff-legged ruddy-feathered cocks with trembling red combs and fierce eyes that burned at him in an apparently irritated way. Patrick said strangers upset them, and it was true, judging by the rumpus and squawking up and down the separate coops. A giant black and white fellow paused, one leg drawn up hesitantly beneath, and eyed Karl before dropping a generous shite. His favourite was the massive red-feathered specimen with loosely bobbing blue-green plumes on its tail. It strutted around, ignoring both him and the owner, comb wobbling in a way he found slightly repulsive. The bird also reminded him of a judge entering court, disregarding the minions, certain of his position. *If he was mine I'd call him Judge*, Karl said absently. *His name is Seamus*, Patrick replied softly, opening the pen and reaching in to fondle the bird. Karl marvelled at the life of a man who could choose to dote on such fowl, who owned a second home for renting out, and who was over two hundred miles from Dublin.

*

Karl's long bedroom is at the west wing of the cottage, and from the bed he can watch the evening light and the fairy fort in the field. It is ringed by wind-bent, gnomish blackthorn trees that claw perpetually eastwards, and in the middle, an ancient oak-tree thrusts gnarled branches over the blackthorn. Patrick had warned him the previous autumn that he might see people coming and going to the fairy fort. *They won't ever set foot on it*, he said, *they're just leaving offerings*. There were two reasons, he went on. Stillborn babies, buried long ago, their souls stolen by the fairies before birth, but also the presence of the Little

People themselves, the *Sidhe*, or fairies. *Arra, it's a local thing. No man will plough that fort*. It isn't done. Occasionally he brought a few folklorists to the site.

Some evenings as he sits at the kitchen table, laptop open, struggling to grasp Julia Kristeva's theories on identity politics—which he can make neither head nor tail of, and Roland Barthes—whom he does understand, especially that essay called "Steak", and who doesn't use that cussed word *liminality*—he raises his head only to see two or three people walk past the house. Women, mostly, though not entirely. They bear bunches of daffodils. He finds it incredible, this carapace that resists modernity, the laying of votive items, scraps of ribbon on branches, licking tongues of colour in the breeze, all for the sake of maintaining diplomatic relations with the fairies. *The fairies. For fuck's sake.*

He never treads on the fort. Whether it's instinct, or respect for Patrick Tuomey, he strides along the periphery of the field from time to time, sticks to the hawthorn and ash surrounds. Occasionally he approaches the mound. It reminds him of one in a book his sister had when they were children, which showed the Little People trooping back inside their special kingdom. Another picture illustrated marvellous times within the fort, with handsome, adult fairies dancing together in an eternal state of joyous youth, while their pretty child fairies pranced in circles of their own. The place is beautiful, he admits; he feels mostly safe and warm, but occasionally uneasy, and his imagination roams sufficiently to consider that perhaps there are fairies looking over him. Laughable. He scoffs out loud. Suddenly, a face-drenching wave of self-pity sweeps through him as he recalls the trials of the past two years, knowing himself to have been abandoned by his wife.

But it's the final week of semester. There are poems to hand in—twelve, to be exact, no more and no less, together with a critical essay—and twenty-five pages of non-fiction memoir. Kiki, a Greek lesbian in the memoir group has taken him in hand—lesbians! Everywhere!—and advised him to focus on one primary incident, such as his feelings about his wife leaving him (she knew about that, because it had tumbled out in an awkward moment of sweat-inducing revelation during one seminar, the theme of which was female identity, which garnered him unasked-for sympathy, empathy and all shades of feeling in between). He has taken her advice, and written freely. His vocabulary might not be the most scholarly, but by now he is sick of the challenge to heteronormative values, and has something to say.

It hasn't been easy. Truth-telling. Remembering one particular party, an after-work thing of Anna's which he'd been invited to back in Dublin. To think he'd been there, on the very night she'd met this Henni girl. (Reminder to self: *Woman*. He must call her a woman, not a girl). And that is what he writes about. Blindness (his). Unknowingness (his). The sounds of a Harcourt Street summer evening, of trams rumbling along outside, and within the pub, the voices of Anna's female office colleagues. Writing this piece of personal revelation causes him to weep again, but in the end, he submits the essay, Student ID at the top of the document. Times New Roman. 12 point. Double-line spacing or else that tyrant Long Ears won't so much as read it.

After submitting two of his three papers, relief flows. Kiki has just completed hers, so has a student called Paolo, from Brazil. They retreat for a coffee to the student café, *Bialann* in Irish, fling their bags to the floor, relax. He has adjusted to this seething world of youthful bodies, the huge restaurant with its bright vegetarian section, and understands the relative ease of being largely invisible. There's freedom in that. And Kiki and Paolo, and an Irish girl with a speech impediment, are gentle, good-humoured company. The Irish girl writes sensitive lyric

poetry which, when she reads it, emerges from her mouth in a rock-fall of strangulated language. She too is alone, he senses, disenchanted, if her poetry is anything to go by. He wouldn't mind making a play for her but knows she would consider him a fatherly fossil.

He sips his coffee and lets the chit-chat wash softly over him. Occasionally, he chips in with a riposte or a comment. Paolo is dismissing various theories about gender, flinging his arms in the air. *What about male identity*, he demands in comic tones, which sets Kiki off and an argument ensues.

That afternoon, he drives home slowly. With a month to work on his final manuscript, he has already half-assembled three short stories. A month gives enough time to invent and draw another down from the clouds.

He drops the car keys on the kitchen table and decides to have a lie-down. At forty-nine, he's not exactly old, but even so, the luxury of acting on occasional tiredness is new. The afternoon is warm, the sun flings light across the unmade bed, where he lies down on the tangled duvet, legs spread-eagled, arms akimbo. He scrabbles on the floor with one hand, then drapes an old sock across his eyes to block out the light. His last thought is to wonder what Anna would think if she could see him now. Would she be happy to see him like this, towards the end of the course? Would she give a damn?

He awakens about half an hour later, judging by the passage of the sun across the bed. His right leg is now in shade, while his left, with its dark denim, absorbs the heat. Something is amiss. A sound when there should be none. Has he left the radio on? He hardly listens to radio outside the morning news headlines on his phone. It sounds like a party in full swing, right in the house, or perhaps the garden. Has Patrick Tuomey walked in with a group of curious folklorists? He doesn't think so. It's one of those conversation parties, where people aren't drunk, with music in the background. Very merry music too. Music you could dance to, jig to, whirl around to. Heart thudding with anxiety, he jumps from the bed and flings the door wide, racing down the hall to the front door. He slips back the latch and listens. But there is no sound beyond chirping sparrows and a lone blackbird on the telegraph pole out on the road. The wind has dropped too.

On the way through the kitchen, all is equally silent. He rips open the back door. Silence. This is a waking dream, he thinks, returning to the bedroom. Even before he has shut the door, waves of sound return, like a radio being turned up. He leaves the room again. The sound disappears. He re-enters it, and it returns.

He realises he is now out of his fucking mind. He has gone native, or entered some bizarre cultural time-space warp. At the same time, he feels no fear. He wouldn't mind being at this party, wherever it is, where everybody is enjoying themselves and nobody, male or female, is trying to leave a marriage or make off with another man's wife. And the music! Wild, it is. Benign too. It beckons him. Once more, to be certain, he opens the bedroom door and places a foot in the hallway. Already, the music is dying. He re-enters the room. There. He's caught it again, a party in full flow. He can no longer restrain himself. Now, in the centre of the room, he raises arms above head, finger-tips almost touching. He takes a step, then another to the side, keeping to the rhythm while staring out the window at the fort, which is sun-dappled, its dandelions still, bluebells scarcely nodding. He shuts his eyes, follows the elemental fiddles that have played their way into this room, and moves, roused now, with an ease and grace he never knew he had, towards what he cannot see but only hears. It's the ease and grace which Anna and Henni found after Henni stole Anna, but even in his aloneness, it has come to him also. A gift.

Happily he dances, turning again towards the fairy fort, wanting to be witnessed, himself and him alone, to be taken at last, wanted, ravished perhaps, and returning it. He unbuckles his belt, drops his trousers, steps out of his underpants and rips off his t-shirt. His erection is a red bolt that quivers as he dances. He has been invited and included in something, after all, finally understanding what that word means. And he is taking part. He is among the shades of the earth, dancing, touching, willingly stolen, brought within, the blood dancing in his cock.

La Viajera
The Traveler

Mané Zaldívar
Translation by Dave Oliphant

Tengo que hacer las maletas.
Tengo que hacer estas maletas
de viaje, mis maletas
de viaje.
Lo intento,
lo vuelvo a intentar,
las miro, las toco, las huelo,
las abro, las cierro,
no puedo.

Voy a hacer mis maletas.
Yo quiero hacer mis maletas,
me siento, me paro,
lo intento,
lo siento,
no puedo.

¿Qué ropa llevo, qué zapatos?
¿Qué libros, qué accesorios?
¿Qué certificados, qué papeles?
¿Qué fotografías, qué recuerdos?

¿Cómo embalar esta incertidumbre
pegoteada a la piel,
esta sensación inconclusa y
este suspiro entrecortado
por la tos?
¿Dónde, en qué bolsillo estas dudas filosas
que cortan y manchan de rojo
todo el equipaje?

¿Cómo empacar esta soledad maciza y pesada
que se da aires de sólido mármol blanco
sin que aplaste y pulverice los pétalos de estas flores secas
que guardo entre mis poemas más queridos?

¿Y qué hago con este silencio cabrón que a gritos
me delata cuando intento embalarme en secreto?

I have to prepare my luggage.
I have to make these suitcases,
my travel bags.
I try to,
and I try again,
I look at them, I touch them, I smell them,
I open them, I close them,
I can't.

I'm going to make my bags.
I want to make my bags.
I sit down, I stand up,
I try,
I sit back down,
I can't.

What clothes will I take, which shoes?
Which books, what accessories?
What certificates, what papers?
What photographs, what souvenirs?

How pack this uncertainty
stuck to my sin,
this inconclusive sensation and
this sigh broken
by a sudden cough?
Where, in which pocket these sharp doubts
that cut and stain with red
all my luggage?

How include this loneliness so bulky and heavy
that appears like solid white marble
without its crushing and pulverizing the petals of these dried flowers
that I keep among my best-loved poems?

And what do I do with this cursed silence that yells out
denouncing me when I try to pack in secret?

Para qué tanta maleta, digo yo,
si después de todo
o antes que nada
a donde quiera que vaya
como siempre que viajo y
no viajo
me cobrarán sobrepeso
no tendré dinero para pagarlo
me pondrán problemas en la salida
y como siempre
de nuevo
por último
no las recibirán
a la llegada

Y, ¿dígame usted?
¿qué haré otra vez en medio de la sala de
salida o de entrada
sentada sobre ellas, mis maletas,
(pobrecitas)
esperando que nos regresen o
que por fin las acepten
con su peso excesivo de pena
saliéndose la soledad mal estibada y
este destino borroso que aparece escrito
en la identificación?

Why so many bags, I tell myself,
if after all
or before it all
where do I want to go
as ever when I travel and
I don't travel
they will charge me for being overweight
I won't have the money to pay
they will give me trouble at the gate
and as ever
once again
finally
they won't be there
whenever I land.

And tell me,
what will I do once more in the middle of the
waiting
room or at the terminal
seated on top of them, my bags
(poor little things),
waiting for them to return or
when at last they'll be accepted
with their excessive pain over the limit,
coming out badly handled,
and this smeared destination that appears written
on their identification tags?

Interview

Interviewing Celia de Fréine

Gisele G. Wolkoff

Abstract*: Celia De Fréine is a poet, translator, playwright and short story, non-fiction and screenplay writer. Célia has published extensively and won several awards, among them the Patrick Kavanagh Award (1994), Best screenplay at the New York International Film Festival, (2009) and Arts Council of Ireland Grants (2013).*

Keywords*: Celia de Fréine; translation; poetry; drama; fiction.*

The final outcome of an interview that had initially happened back in 2010 and got finished only in 2018 made me go back to the first time I had the great privilege of meeting the poet, writer, screenplay writer and great woman Celia De Fréine. It was in Galícia, 2008. It was October and our friend in common, Manuela Palacios, had organized a very innovative and thought-provoking seminar called Creation, Publishing and Criticism: Galician and Irish Women Poets, held in beautiful Santiago de Compostela, by some of the most welcoming guests ever! I remember arriving just right on time for the event and at lunch time, so I entered the picturesque restaurant where some of the participants and writers were happily having one of those very delightful and many-course Spanish lunches. As I walked in, I glimpse at this very smart, elegantly made-up face, smiling lady who was introduced to me as Celia De Fréine! My reaction was to think to myself "- is this real or am I still dreaming over the Ocean, as I did some days ago, before reaching Oporto?". Yet, the very natural manners with which the whole group acted and the kind smiles accompanied by smooth, gentle talks made me realize that was the great time of my life (as many to follow that one, fortunately!): I could talk to the writers I had long admired and, in particular, the outstanding Celia De Fréine! The afternoon walk with her, and some of the other folks participating in the seminar such as Sean Hardie (poet Kerry Hardie´s husband), José Francisco Fernandes (from the University of Almería) and others around the splendid cathedral in Santiago de Compostela and the local monuments and landscapes proved to the effectiveness of diverse environments in learning. Once we could talk to the writers as we moved around the gorgeous landscapes, we could fully integrate in the activity of reflecting upon writing/reading and creating amongst other themes. I had left determined to continue my own research about women poets comparatively, translate them and think of the relevance of all that in our era…

The following year, I was contemplated with a research grant from the Foundation for Science and Technology in Portugal for studying the women poets comparatively and in 2010, as part of this project, I became a rolling stone in Ireland, crossing the country by train after the poets, interviewing them, trying to understand their motivations, their contingencies, their creative modes, their aesthetics…. I still try all that…but I have got lost on the ways of trying to do that and so many other life´s opportunities… So when I had the chance of going back to this particular interview that occurred in July, 2010, in a café in Dublin, I could only accept the challenge!

Once again, I found the comforting smile of a generous poet who took her time to spend a whole hour in a vivid, sunny morning with me talking about her vast and enticing works that range from poetry (written bilingually and already prized) to historical and comic plays, novels and films.

Eight years have elapsed since 2010, which was when De Fréine kindly met me in Dublin. Computers have caused us to change and revise most questions and answers. Ideas have flown. The power of De Fréine´s writing has grown amongst scholars and communities. Yet, the joy of reading a multifaceted lady that translates multiculturalism in her writings is unique! Not to mention the complex webs of thought that De Fréine´s works have caused in her audience/reading public.

After all, the ten years have helped consolidate not only friendship but human understanding around the production of art and the dialogue that various types of literary art establish with belonging, namely, Irish belonging.

I hope you enjoy De Fréine´s sheer wisdom and, like me, appreciate meeting the poet. You´ll make the most extraordinary literary journey into the universe of a culturally rich lady who is always ready to share and far from afraid of expressing her thoughts and feelings!

G.W.: Which can be considered the most powerful events in your personal life? Moving to other places, getting married, travelling...?

C.F.: The effects of travel and relocation are much in evidence in my writing. As a child and young adult relocation came about as a result of change in family circumstances. More recently, I have travelled to read at international literary festivals or to avail of writing residencies.

During the first two decades of this century I have spent time in Koper (Slovenia), Monsanto and Coimbra (Portugal), Paris and New London (USA). These residencies, along with trips to my son's farm in La Balestra (Sardinia) have impacted on my life as a writer and have resulted in four bilingual books of poetry *imram : odyssey,*[1] *Aibítir Aoise : Alphabet of an Age,*[2] *cuir amach seo dom : riddle me this*[3] and the as yet unpublished *I bhFreagairt ar Rilke : In Response to Rilke*.

When I was six months old I moved with my parents from Northern Ireland to Dublin. When the Irish Free State had been established in 1922 a border was created between the six counties in Northern Ireland, which remained in the United Kingdom, and the twenty-six counties in the South. As both my grandfathers were employees of the British Crown at the time – one a soldier, the other in the Coastguard Service – both were obliged to move to Northern Ireland with their families. My parents were both born in NI but economic circumstances forced them to move south.

G.W.: How have such events influenced your attitude as a writer?

C.F.: The border, manned for years, by customs officials and at times by soldiers, has contributed to making me the writer that I am. I have spent my life travelling back and forth across this imaginary line from Dublin, where I grew up and still live, to the seaside town of Donaghadee where my extended family were based. I write in an effort to make sense of my ongoing journey between two jurisdictions on one small island.

When I married in the early seventies I moved with my husband from the city to the suburbs in West County Dublin. There were two reasons for this: we couldn't afford to buy a

house in the city and because the move meant we were close to my husband's work. I had been forced to resign my job in the Civil Service on marriage. In 1985, after thirteen years in the suburbs we moved back to an area in Dublin close to where I grew up. Although I had started to write before this time, it was then that I began to write in earnest.

G.W.: What is the meaning of writing to you? What makes you write?

C.F.: As mentioned, I write to make sense of my life. Also to clear my head of thoughts and ideas. Where subject matter is concerned, I have always written about the lives of women whom history has forgotten or side-lined. For instance, *Fiacha Fola*[4] (Blood Debts, its translation to English)[5] is a book of poetry which gives an account of the Anti-D Scandal in Ireland in which over 1,600 women contracted Hepatitis C. Another book of poetry *A lesson in Can't*[6] is inspired by the seven years I spent teaching members of the Travelling Community.

G.W.: Can you tell us about your writing rituals or are they secret?

C.F.: Generally speaking, I write in the morning and edit in the afternoon or evening. Sometimes I write in the early hours if some burning issue is on my mind and I have to jot it down before I can fall asleep. Both *Fiacha Fola* and *A lesson in Can't* are unusual in that I wrote each of them over the course of one day. I had obviously given them much thought in advance and they emerged fully-formed, as it were.

The first draft is of the utmost importance. It doesn't matter how awful it is – once it's down on paper it can be reworked. I find that I write the first draft of most of my work when I'm in Connemara in the West of Ireland, where we now have a second home, or when I'm abroad. Dublin, with all its distractions is better suited to editing.

G.W.: Which would you say are the writers that inhabit your creative universe?

C.F.: Shakespeare and the Bible are huge forces to be reckoned with, though it might be difficult to say to what extent I am influenced by them. When it comes to drama I'm drawn to absurdists such as Brecht, Ionesco, and Beckett. Máiréad Ní Ghráda, author of *An Triail*[7] is an on-going presence in Irish-language drama. Where poetry is concerned I enjoy the work of Wislawa Szymborska, Adam Zagajeski and Charles Simic. I also return regularly to Brian Merriman's *Cúirt an Mheán Oíche*[8] / The Midnight Court[9].

G.W.: What is your relationship with tradition?

C.F.: Because I have been fortunate enough to travel widely, I draw on many traditions in my work. One example is *I bhFreagairt ar Rilke : In response to Rilke*, my collection of poetry in which I engage with some of the poetry written in French by Rainer Maria Rilke. Another example is the poem *Máthairtheanga*[10] *Mother tongue*[11], a poem on the idea of what happens when a language is proscribed. I had Harold Pinter's play *Mountain Language*[12] in mind when I wrote this.

I have written a full length play *Slán : Safe*[13] in response to *An Triail*, probably the most popular play ever written in Irish, which tells the story of a young single mother who, rejected by society, takes the life of her child and then her own life. I wrote my play fifty years after the premiere of *An Triail* in an effort to explore Irish society and its changed attitudes to the issues dealt with in Ní Ghráda's play.

The biggest example of tradition / influence on my work is probably Merriman's 1,000 line poem *The Midnight Court* written in 1780. *The Midnight Court* tells of a court convened at midnight and presided over by a fairy queen in which the plaintiff, a young unmarried woman presents her case: she cannot find a husband. Many young men are reluctant to marry, others marry an older woman who owns land. *The Midnight Court* is also a terrific social document in which the clothing and dwelling places of the day are described and the sexual mores of the country discussed and debated. It is inspired by the eighteenth century Irish form the *aisling*. My first literary venture in 1982 was to translate and dramatize the poem. Since then I have written two plays in response to it: *Desire : Meanmarc*[14] and *Plight : Cruachás*[15].

While I'm open to any influence / tradition / form, it is worth mentioning also that *imram : odyssey*[16] draws on the Imram, a traditional Irish form; *Aibítir Aoise : Alphabet of an Age*[17] is inspired by the Polish alphabet genre; *cuir amach seo dom : riddle me this*[18] takes its cue from the riddle, a traditional Slovene form.

G.W.: Being a woman makes you a different writer? If so, how? Would you say this is no longer an issue in contemporary Ireland?

C.F.: Being a woman and writer is still an issue in contemporary Ireland. It takes only a glance at publications / literary journals / theatre productions / recitals of music composed by women / art exhibitions to see that women are under-representated in the Arts.

Waking the Feminists[19], an assembly of over five hundred women who came together to challenge the Abbey Theatre on its lack of plays by women kick-started a movement in theatre which seeks to change the status quo. More recently on 9th July 2018 ten prominent Irish theatres, supported by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, came together to commit to introducing policies to ensure gender equality in theatre. A banner proclaimed 50 / 50 in 5 years. We live in hope.

G.W.: Having in mind the great drama you have written, as well as the poetry, how do you view the different genres in literature?

C.F.: Poetry is my first love. It is the genre in which my voice is clearest and loudest. Next comes dialogue for stage and for screen. Lately I have been developing the art of the ten minute play and have had many of these short plays produced[20].

Prose has always been a challenge – I tend to baulk at the number of words. However, I have just completed the biography of Louise Gavan Duffy[21]. With over 80,000 words this has been somewhat of a challenge and has taken a huge chunk of my time to complete. However, I now no longer baulk at the prospect of writing in prose. At present I am writing a thriller but cannot wait to get back to editing the many poems that await me. A couple of plays beckon also.

G.W.: In your opinion, what is the role of the writer today, since technology has changed the world in unexpected ways?

C.F.: There is no doubt that the **role of the writer has changed but we are versatile creatures**. While it remains a challenge to have books published and plays produced onstage, we can adapt. Our books can be read on kindle and our plays and films can be viewed on YouTube.

As writer I am also actively involved in organizations that lobby for the rights of writers. This can be challenging work also.

Notes

1 *imram : odyssey*. Celia de Fréine. Arlen House. 2010.
2 *Aibítir Aoise : Alphabet of an Age*. Celia de Fréine. Arlen House. 2011.
3 *cuir amach seo dom : riddle me this*. Celia de Fréine. Arlen House. 2014.
4 *Fiacha Fola*. Celia de Fréine. Cló Iar-Chonnacht. 2004.
5 *Blood Debts*. Celia de Fréine. Scotus Press. 2014.
6 *A lesson in Can't*. Celia de Fréine. Scotus Press. 2014.
7 *An Triail. Mairéad Ní Ghráda*. First performed 22nd September 1964. Damer Theatre.
8 *Cúirt an Mheán Oíche*. Brian Merriman. (leagan drámata le Celia de Fréine). LeabhairCOMHAR. 2017
9 *The Midnight Court*. Brian Merriman. (translated & dramatized by Celia de Fréine). Arlen House. 2012.
10 *Máthairtheanga. Faoi Chabáistí is Ríonacha*. Celia de Fréine. Cló Iar-Chonnacht. 2001. Page 74.
11 *Mother tongue*. Scarecrows at Newtownards. Celia de Fréine. Scotus Press. 2005. Page 73.
12 *Mountain Language*. Harold Pinter. TLS. 7-13 October 1988.
13 *Mountain Language*. Harold Pinter. TLS. 7-13 October 1988.
14 *Desire : Meanmarc*. Celia de Fréine. Arlen House. 2012.
15 *Plight : Cruachás*. Celia de Fréine. Arlen House. 2012.
16 *imram : odyssey*. Celia de Fréine. Arlen House. 2010.
17 *Aibítir Aoise : Alphabet of an Age*. Celia de Fréine. Arlen House. 2011.
18 *cuir amach seo dom : riddle me this*. Celia de Fréine. Arlen House. 2014.
19 *Waking the Feminists*. First meeting. 14 November 2016. The Abbey Theatre. Dublin.
20 The ten-minute play *Seamstress* was presented in the National Gallery of Ireland as part of an 8x10 production by Umbrella Theatre Company in 2014 and 2015, as was *Beholden. Seamstress* was subsequently developed to thirty minutes, renamed *Beth* and produced as part of *Katie & Beth* (*Katie* by Lia Mills) during the Two Cities One Book Festival, 2016 and also during the Dalkey Book Festival and at the Mill Studio Dundrum, the same year;
A Summer's Tale was produced as part of the *Eight of Hearts* by Umbrella Theatre Company in 2015, as was *On the Bull Wall*;
Aoife Rua and *Rose* were produced in the National Gallery of Ireland as part of *From Patrick to Pearse* by Umbrella Theatre Company in 2016, *Rose* was produced as part of the show Forgotten in Rathfarnham Castle as part of the Red Line Festival, 2017;
Laurels, Veronica, Pearl of Great Price and *What Only the Blind Can See* formed part of the group show *The Meeting* based on the life and work of Frederic William Burton and produced by Umbrella Theatre Company at the National Gallery of Ireland in November & December, 2017 and at the Lexicon Studio, Dún Laoghaire in November, 2017. All of the above shows, produced at the National Gallery of Ireland, were commissioned by the Gallery.
21 *Ceannródaí*. Celia de Fréine. LeabhairCOMHAR. 2018.

The Critic and the Author

GABRIELA MC EVOY

LA EXPERIENCIA INVISIBLE

INMIGRANTES IRLANDESES EN EL PERÚ

Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos
Universidad del Perú. Decana de América
Fondo Editorial

Appraising Gabriela McEvoy's La experiencia invisible

José Manuel Carrasco Weston

Abstract: *This is an appraisal of Gabriela McEvoy's groundbreaking study on the Irish immigration in Peru.*

Keywords*: Irish migration; Peru.*

In Peruvian historiography, the issue of foreign immigration and its different contributions to Peruvian society has been one of the research topics that has had remarkable attention in academic and governmental environments. Thus, since the end of the nineteenth century we have monographic works on how propitious the arrival of European immigrants has been for our country such as the works of Aurelio Denegrí (1876), Felipe Paz Soldán (1891), H Sources (1892), A. Padilla (1971), M. del Río (1929), among others. The government's interest in the "immigration question" has been present since the first years of the Republic. In this sense, throughout the nineteenth century there was a series of legal arrangements by the various governments in turn that sought the massive arrival of Europeans to our country. However, the various laws advocating the arrival of European citizens occurred in the "paper" because, in practice, the political and economic crisis of the first years of the Republic did not allow the government to achieve its aims. In spite of this interest, there are few studies on the Irish community and its different contributions to the Peruvian society.

Gabriela McEvoy's book *La experiencia invisible. Inmigrantes irlandeses en el Perú*,[1] fills this historiographical void, in which readers are presented with a general vision of the Irish presence in Peru during the nineteeth century. The main objective of her study is to re-evaluate the contributions of Irish citizens to Peruvian society. That is to say, playing with the title of the book, McEvoy makes visible a colony of immigrants that due to their little quantitative presence has not been the focus of interest of the researchers.

With a clear (and rigorous) language and without falling into the mere anecdotal narrative, the author reveals, throughout the five chapters, the historical evolution of the bonds of Irish immigrants and Peruvian society during the nineteenth century. This analysis has also been framed in a global context where it is not only limited to the Peruvian temporal space, but also to the geographic and social context of immigrants in their native land, which allows the reader to understand the reasons which led them to emmigrate.

McEvoy has also managed to combine the collective analysis of the workers, housewives and peasants who make up the invisible bulk of the Irish immigrants with well-known characters like Gallagher, Grace and Dowling among others. Personal and collective stories are part of the the analysed sources showing what happened in Peru during the nineteenth century. She links the micro story to the macro history. Another aspect to stand out from other texts on immigration, is the immigrant woman, who had an identity of her own, though she was migrating with her husband or father.

A very important aspect to highlight as another of the great contribution of the book, is the excellent study of unpublished primary sources that have not been taken into account by

other scholars. Throughout the text we find references to letters and family archives. These family archives that have been kept by the descendants of the emigrants, compose a very rich documentary collection. They portray their every day life, personal experiences and various economic, social and political events that happened in the new land. For example, the earthquake that occurred in 1868 is the tragic episode narrated by Patrick Dowling.

Finally I must point out that McEvoys's book is a seminal work for new research on immigration, due to the wealth of information and the methodology used to reconstruct the historical account of social actors that have not yet been taken into account in the Peruvian historiography.

Note

1 McEvoy, Gabriela. *La experiencia invisible. Inmigrantes irlandeses en el Perú.* Lima: Fondo Editorial de la Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, 2018.

Reflections on The Invisible Experience. Irish Immigrants in Peru

Gabriela McEvoy

Abstract: *Through the study of a variety of primary sources such as letters, wills, birth, marriage, and death certificates, the author examines Irish immigration to Peru in mid nineteenth century. In this sense, McEvoy focuses on some of the most representative examples of Irish immigrants. That is, both workers and peasants who were part of one of the first migration projects to Peru and to successful immigrants such as John Patrick Gallagher O'Connor and William Russell Grace, who shortly after reaching Peru, became businessmen and prestigious professionals. By recovering Irish immigrant voices, this book reconstructs part of the story of men and women that printed their culture in Peru and contributed with the construction of modern Peru.*

Keywords: *Irish diaspora; immigration projects; mobilized and proletariat diaspora; assimilation; transnationalism.*

The Invisible Experience. Irish Immigrants in Peru was published by the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos Fondo Editorial (Lima, Peru) and launched on Monday, July 23, 2018 at the International Book Fair held in Lima. After many years of work, this book has reached the end of a long research process, and it can at last begin the work of bringing greater attention to the history of Irish immigrants in Peru, a group that has been invisible for many years, as the title suggests. Though this book gives this group of immigrants more visibility, many questions remain about their integration into Peruvian society. For this reason, I consider this work as the beginning of a broader investigation of an immigration process that is still largely uncharted.

This work would not have been possible without the valuable collaboration of the many people who provided me with information, documents, and sites essential for my research. My task for this project was to analyze various primary documents in order to assemble a narrative that reflects the Irish experience in Peru. In what follows, I would like to talk about three points central to it: firstly, I will briefly discuss the motivation behind and the origins of my research; I will then cover the main themes of the book as well as its structure; finally, I will address the representation of Irish immigration within the socio-cultural context of Peruvian studies.

The topic of immigration is of great interest to me. Most of us are products of migrations, and I, particularly, have thought extensively about why my ancestors left their country of origin for Peru, which, to them, was a distant and unknown country. As a child, I listened to somewhat idealized stories about my paternal ancestors' arrival in Peru. Later on, in my capacity as an immigrant and as a PhD student at the University of California, San Diego, I pursued my interest on this topic at an academic level. Unfortunately, there is very little work on this topic; I remember my thesis adviser telling me that I would have to conduct many years of research in order to finish my dissertation. For this reason, I focused on literary analysis (which is my area of expertise) and more specifically on the nineteeth-century

immigrant novel from the Southern Cone: Argentina, Chile and Paraguay. After completing my dissertation, I became more interested in sociological questions pertaining to the study of Irish immigration in Peru. In other words, I shifted from fiction to reality and from literature to lived narrative and primary sources.

Later, I joined the Society for Irish Latin American Studies (SILAS), and as part of this research institution, I published a couple of articles in the Irish Migration Studies in Latin America (IMSLA), SILAS electronic magazine. I also presented my research at various international conferences, which gave me a channel through which I could continue working on this project. The articles published in that journal connected me with scholars and other important contacts from all over the world who kindly offered their assistance. I remember, Dr. Robert Keeler, Professor of Clackamas Community College in Oregon (United States), suggesting that I visit the Indiana Historical Society since it contained letters written by Irish immigrants with connections to Peru. Without thinking twice about it, I got on a plane, and shortly after arriving at this research institution, I was thrilled by the letter contents of the archive, which would become key for the assembling of one of my chapters.

The main focus of my book is on the characteristics that define the Irish presence in Peru. Migration is a social, often traumatic, phenomenon that involves a dimension of human displacement due to economic, political, religious and/or other forces. In this process, the immigrant experiences family separation, nostalgia and, in many cases, disappointment after being able to contrast the previously idealized world with the lived reality of the host society. It also involves living between "two worlds" ranging from cultural resistance to full assimilation. If immigration is, in many cases, a personal decision, certain expulsion factors (hunger, poverty, and wars) and attraction factors (work or land) are vital to the study of the Irish diaspora.

This book is organized thematically and divided into five chapters: The first chapter consists of a brief historical review of the Irish during major epochs of Peruvian history, including the times of Spanish rule, Peruvian independence, and the modern state. Additionally, this chapter examines the intrinsic relationship between diaspora, transnationalism, and identity. Because immigration leads to identity reconstruction, various customs, traditions, and characteristics of the culture of origin are mixed with those of the host society's. In brief, new identities are born and incorporated into the national collective memory.

The second chapter is based on the study of traditional and non-traditional archives. The intention of this chapter is to recount the lives of anonymous Irish immigrants. Birth, marriage, and death records as well as personal letters are among the documents that allow for the reconstruction of the history of the Irish immigrant. The study of these sources suggests that the invisibility of these immigrants in Peruvian society is due mainly to a lack of representation; many Irish immigrants did not become "prominent historical figures" and were instead ordinary citizens who were positioned in the middle and lower classes of Peruvian society. To demonstrate this aspect of their stratification, this section examines aspects of the daily lives of Irish immigrants in the different contexts of Peruvian national life.

The next chapter focuses primarily on the study of the Irish working class. Following the line of thought of John A. Armstrong (1976), I argue that the group of Irish immigrants who arrived in Peru between 1849 and 1853 corresponds with the "proletarian diaspora" (or diaspora of the working class, in a broader sense), since many immigrants were incorporated into the Peruvian working class as many began from the bottom of the social ladder.

Furthermore, in the absence of agricultural projects, immigrants were incorporated into domestic and industrial trade work. In addition, the archives indicate that there was, in fact, a group of Irish immigrants who left their native land during the historical period known as the Great Famine. As such, both adventurous immigrants as well as individuals seeking alternative forms of survival make up the Irish diaspora.

The fourth chapter explores the life of John Patrick Gallagher O'Connor (1801-1871), that of some of his descendants and that of William Russell Grace (1832-1904). John Patrick Gallagher O'Connor was an Irish doctor who stood out both in the field of medicine and business and who become a major landowner. William R. Grace arrived in Peru in 1851 jointly with a group of fellow nationals. These immigrants forged a successful future in Peru; however, they followed different paths: Gallagher O'Connor became well established in Peru, and both he and his future descendants participated in the construction and consolidation of the main financial and commercial institutions in the country. Meanwhile, Grace built an integrated business structure that included the commercialization of guano, sugar, cotton, and oil. His most controversial commercial and financial projects took place as negotiations on the bonds of the Peruvian state as a way of rescuing the country, which was experiencing an economic crisis exacerbated by the effects of the Pacific War (1879-1883).

The last chapter focuses on the epistolary discourse as the structural core of the narrative on the part of Irish immigrants. Letter writing was a popular discursive practice in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; it was a form of evidencing daily life in the host society. Today these letters serve as a fundamental tool for preserving family connections and for exploring of the everyday life of the Irish immigrant. This chapter suggests that the communication triangulated between John Dowling, his brother Patrick, and his son James Edward provides personal stories that demonstrate familial solidarity as well as the socio-economic status of immigrants. The letters reflect emotions that are usually not expressed in person, a fact that allows the reader to have a better understanding of the immigrant's subjective experience. In this case, the letters show the progression of middle class immigrants who endeavored to improve their lives and achieve upward mobility through various business possibilities (first generation) and through their own professionalization (second generation).

Then, the book highlights the importance of Irish participation in various sectors of Peruvian society. From the construction of the railway, to the development of financial and social institutions of high society, and through the evolution of artistic and literary appreciation, immigrants and their descendants have amply contributed in the construction of modern Peru. Many have worked as servants, butlers, coachmen, and carpenters, while others with better education and social connections entered the high strata of society to become part of the Peruvian bourgeoisie and oligarchy.

Although many Irish immigrants in Peru did not achieve the equivalent of the "American dream," they laid the groundwork for subsequent generations to participate in the construction of modern Peru. For this reason, it is imperative to reexamine the historical processes and socio-economic structures of Peruvian society. In addition, I examine the ideologies in conflict with personal progress (main feature of capitalism), the failed modernization of the Peruvian state, and the use of cheap labor through the import of foreign labor force. Through this study, it can be noted that there was no "tragic end" since over the years spaces were created where the descendants of the Irish began to participate in the economic, political and cultural spheres, therefore contributing in the reconfiguration of new

political and economic identities.

Many had considered Irish immigration to be a historical tragedy; however, as time has progressed, this migration has begun to take on new meanings. Indeed, notions of victimization were supplanted by themes of adventure and courage; moreover, after arriving in the host country, Irish immigrants achieved full assimilation through a series of private daily practices, and many experienced horizontal and vertical intergenerational mobility. In this sense, I posit that the Irish presence in Peru is akin to a game of perceptions since its revaluation shows that many unforeseen factors were involved in the time of departure, arrival and final settlement in Peruvian society. There is a strong emotional charge (i.e. nostalgia, the feeling of loss and the lack of belonging) involved in immigration; in contrast, Irish immigrants instituted families that initiated their gradual integration into Peruvian society through different modes of membership.

In conclusion, this book creates a bridge between the past and present by incorporating the Irish immigrant narrative into the Peruvian national imaginary. By recovering the voices of Irish immigrants, it writes part of the history of men and women who, with their choices and actions, made their mark on Peruvian society.

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The Irish in South America

Alberto Blest Gana and Clotario Blest. Literary and Political Legacy of an Irishman in Chile *

Laura Janina Hosiasson

Abstract: *A panorama of Chilean history is framed by three generations of the Blest family. The three characters of the saga were pioneers in their respective occupations: the first was the founder of medicine in Chile; the second was the initiator of the Chilean novel and the third was the creator of the Central Única de Trabajadores (CUT), the tenacious defenders of labour wrights in the twentieth century. Father, son and grandson describe their life stories as a sinuous and complex journey, as it generally is when history is observed in detail.*

Keywords: *Alberto Blest Gana; Clotario Blest; the Irish in Chile.*

The grandfather. William Cunningham Blest Maiben (1800-1884)

Much of the available information about the Irish immigrant William Cunningham Blest Maiben comes from the same source: the fascinating book, *Los médicos de antaño en el reino de Chile* [Doctors of ancient times in the kingdom of Chile], published in 1877, not by a doctor, but by Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna, a close friend of the Blest Gana family. In its third part, the book devotes several pages to the Irish physician and the importance of his role in the history of modern medicine in Chile. Dr Cunningham Blest established a new paradigm in relation to the Spanish model of *protomedicato*, a type of controlling Inquisition of the profession. Through Vicuña Mackenna's detailed account of divergences with the local doctors who commanded the so-called T*ribunal del Protomedicato*, it is clear that, thanks to the work of the persistent Irish physician, the practice of medicine in Chile moved away from colonial archaism founded on medieval concepts to a scientific and modern stage.

Blest's management also extended to reforms in the teaching of medicine, introducing the idea that the subject was not an anathema, but a liberal and dignified career. In the first decades of the nineteenth century, the medical profession was so disparaged that a story circulated about a young woman of society whose family refused to accept her marriage because the suitor was merely an aspiring doctor (Ferrer 322).

Born in Sligo, the son of Albert Blest and Anna Maiben, William Cunningham Blest

attended Trinity College Dublin. In 1821, he received a PhD from the University of Edinburgh with a specialism in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and he became a member of the Royal College of Surgeons in London.

The young doctor arrived in Valparaiso in 1823-24. He followed two of his many brothers, Andrew and John, who had already settled in Chile. The first had been working for a brewery since 1814; the second, John, also a doctor, alternated between Chile and Peru. Without having previously planned it, circumstances led William to settle in Chile permanently (Vicuña Mackenna 269).

In 1826, just two years after his arrival, Dr Cunningham Blest published an eighteen page study, *Observaciones sobre el estado de la medicina en Chile, con la propuesta de un plan para su mejora* [Observations on the State of medicine in Chile, with a proposed plan for its improvement] (Santiago IMP. Independiente, 1826), in which he judged sanitary conditions to be deplorable, denounced the lack of interest of the authorities in medical science and detailed a reform plan. The impact of the booklet was immediate and led to the creation of the medical society which would surpass the archaic system of Protomedicato which prevailed at that time.

His next study, *Ensayo sobre las causas más comunes de las enfermedades que se padecen en Chile; con indicaciones de los mejores medios para evitar su destructora influencia* [Essay on the most common causes of diseases that are suffered in Chile; with indications of the best ways to avoid their destructive influence] (Santiago, IMP. Renjifo, 1828)[1], revealed him to be an acute observer who studied the climate, habits, diseases, epidemics and endemic diseases that formed a pathological map of the Chilean society of the time. He wrote articles in the newspaper *El Araucano* about health, pharmacology, vaccines and the use of mineral waters, and others which remained unpublished (Ferrer 381). As the leader of the medical society, he exercised strong powers of arbitration in the award of licenses to practice medicine in the country. There were several immigrants to whom he denied professional rights, citing their lack of training and experience. There were many resulting controversies (Silva Castro 44), sustained through articles in the press with local doctors, such as that on the use of *secale cornutum* (ergot[2]) in obstetrics and gynaecology (Vicuña Mackenna 258).

In 1832, Blest also participated in the creation of a Central Board of charities and public health, which influenced the improvement of cemeteries and hospitals. His culminating work was the creation of the first course of medical sciences, in 1833, which was established in the San Juan de Dios Hospital, under the academic direction and financial administration of the National Institute. On this course he was professor of pathology and internal clinician until 1853, and director between 1865 and 1867. Three successive generations of students were shaped by him. His words at the inauguration of the school show his deep pride in his achievement:

> Gentlemen, students: the constant and ardent desire of my life has been to help the beneficent tendency, dignity, importance and respect of the profession to which I belong, and since I am the first to have the honour to open the majestic doors of medicine to the Chilean people, an illustrious science which enables me to be useful to the country, my spirit is moved by a sentiment of gratitude to the Government which has provided the means to fulfil my wish, and ensures that my name may be found in its future history.3 (In Ferrer 336)

In addition to his professional activity William Cunningham Blest also featured on the national political stage. In 1831, he was elected Deputy for Rancagua, and held the position of Senator of the Republic for three years. He arrived in Chile during the decades of political anarchy following the departure of Bernardo O'Higgins which were characterised by the dizzying succession of Presidents. However, Blest was asserting himself as the great authority of the period in the field of medicine. Later, when Diego Portales came to power, Blest continued to be influential, partly due to his friendship with the Prime Minister. Raúl Silva Castro, the great critic of Alberto Blest Gana's work, has noted some contradiction in the support provided to conservative governments by the doctor and his extreme liberalism manifested throughout his life. In 1844, for example, when Francisco Bilbao was sentenced for the publication of his anarchist libel, *La sociabilidad chilena* (Chilean sociability), Cunningham Blest was among those who celebrated the verdict, which had adverse repercussions for him and led him to be sanctioned by the University Council.

In general, however, he was a man who kept a low profile. It is possible to glimpse in his conciliatory spirit and non-partisanship, characteristics which would be shared by his son Alberto. His grandson, Clotario, although never shying away from controversial attitudes in his trade union activities, also revealed conciliatory virtues, defending the fight for the word, and against armed conflict... But I am getting ahead of myself.

The sketch drawn of Cunningham Blest by Dr Augusto Orrego Luco[4], who met him at the premises of the San Juan de Dios Hospital and was a student of his disciples is touching:

> When I look back at my memories of my old-school times the figure of a tall, slim, slender, man of a haughty and elegant bearing often appears... His clear eyes and his blond hair accentuated his distinguished Irish type. But what most attracted our attention when we saw him go through the hospital aisles and rooms, was both his imposing figure, and the veneration with which everyone was looking at him. Our teachers, nuns, nurses, everybody, greeted him with respect and came close to his way. ... He never walked alone, some of the doctors always surrounded him [...] I heard him speaking in a rare Spanish with a strong British pronunciation, which made his language singularly expressive.[5] (Orrego Luco 125/132)

Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna, who knew the family and was a friend of Cunningham Blest's children, drew this portrait: "His arrogant figure could not pass unnoticed; he attracted attention from the time he visited the sick in his early years on horseback, protected in the summers by a colourful sunshade, in his elegant carriage."[6] (In Silva Castro 24).

Dr Cunningham Blest married twice. His first marriage was in 1827, to María de la Luz Gana, who belonged to a powerful family of Basque descendancy, with influence in politics and the military. They lived in the Alameda de las Delicias, in the larger of two houses in front of the headquarters of the artillery, next to San Juan de Dios Hospital where Blest worked. The owners lived in the more modest house at the back, and the Blest Gana family rented the larger one facing the street.[7] After the early death of his wife, in 1851, he went to live with his children in the mansion of the Gana López family, located on the Mall opposite the convent of the Poor Clares, which is now the site of the National Library, next to Santa Lucia Hill, which in those days was arid and rocky.

According to Silva Castro, the marriage gave him "the best friends that Chile could

provide in the first half of the nineteenth century. Don Diego Portales, Don Andrés Bello, Don Diego Antonio Barros (Diego Barros Arana's father), Don Antonio Jacobo Vial, Don José Manuel Valdés, Don Juan de la Cruz Gandarillas and Don Juan de Dios Correa de Saa are among those who were his friends." (Silva Castro 20).

Of the eleven children he had with María de la Luz, seven reached adulthood and three stood out as men of letters and politics: Guillermo, Alberto and Joaquin. The first was a diplomat and a romantic poet of great prestige in the mid-nineteenth century; the second was Chile's greatest nineteenth-century novelist and also a diplomat; and the third distinguished himself as a lawyer, journalist and politician.

In 1879, the widower married a second time to María del Carmen Ugarte de los Reyes, mother of his three youngest children: two boys and a daughter. The only one who reached the age of maturity was Ricardo Blest Ugarte, future father of Clotario Blest.

Until the end of his life William Cunningham Blest lived in a house on Eighteenth Street which he acquired at auction. He alternated between his modest residence and his property in San Bernardo, where he died on 7 February 1884, at the age of 84. Despite the titles and fame that he enjoyed during his golden years, he was not a man attached to money and social glamour. With the passage of time and as he aged, he moved away from public life, devoting himself to the practice of medicine and philanthropic activities. His son Joaquín had died and his novelist son had not been living in Chile since 1867. There are no traces of correspondence with his son in the vast collection of Alberto Blest Gana's letters, so little is known about those last years. After his death, in spite of his funeral and several obituaries in the local press, there was no memorial homage in the annals of the Universidad de Chile that year. The following year, there was a benefit on behalf of his children, the result of his second marriage, whose economic situation was always difficult (Silva Castro 26).

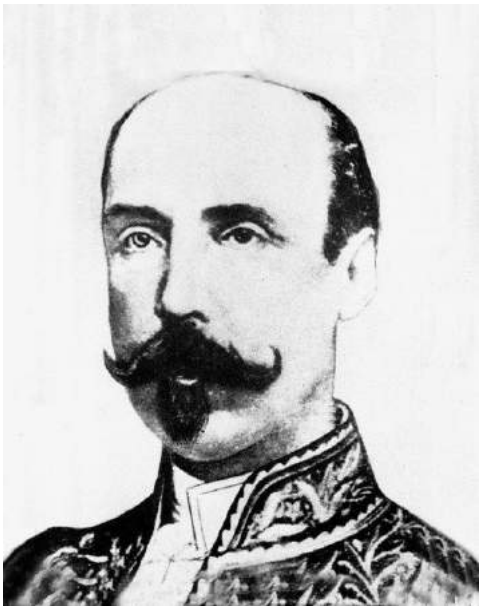
In 1955, Don Raúl Silva Castro noted that there was no street in Santiago named after Guillermo C. Blest. Today we find some two or three on the map of the Chilean Capital with the names of his sons William and Alberto, and his grandson Clotario; however, to the best of my knowledge, there is still no street that carries Blest's name.

In fact, as recently as September 2017, Dr Alejandro Goic, of the National Academy of Medicine, published the following statement in the newspaper, El Mercurio:

> Despite his inestimable trajectory, until the twentieth century there was no hospital, clinic or street to celebrate his name. Aware of this omission, in 1993 we inaugurated the Plaza Blest in the precinct of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Chile. Unfortunately, it was recently dismantled due to the requirements of the future subway Line 3. Perhaps, an initial step of recognition would be to name the station next to the Faculty as "Doctor Blest". Furthermore, an expression of citizen's gratitude demands a sculpture that would incorporate into the daily collective gaze the figure of such an illustrious character in the history of nineteenth-century Chile.[8] ("El doctor Blest", El Mercurio, 15 de septiembre de 2017)

2. The son. Alberto Blest Gana (1830-1920)

Alberto was the third child of Blest's first marriage. His childhood at Alameda House, in front of the headquarters of the artillery, was marked by an austere education, which, despite the games played in the garden during the day, included readings by candlelight of books from his father's library: Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, Miguel de Cervantes and other writers in English and Spanish.



At the age of 15, Alberto showed an interest in pursuing a military career, inspired by several of his maternal uncles. He was sent to Paris, at the end of 1847, to attend the military school in Versailles, where he was caught up in the events of the revolution in February 1848. In France, he also studied topographical engineering, but after his rich experience in what was then considered the "city of cities", in 1851, he returned to Chile, saddened by the death of his mother during his absence. He was also convinced that his future lay not in arms but letters.

Before becoming a novelist destined to enter Chilean history, Alberto started writing poetry, like his brother Guillermo, until, after "reading Balzac one day"[9], he threw his verses into the fire, determined to imitate the prose of the great French role model. During the first two years after his return, the young lieutenant served as teacher of Mathematics at the Military Academy, and he was commissioned by the Ministry of War to produce a topographical chart of Santiago. Then in 1853, at the age of twenty-three, he left the ranks of the army to enter the civil service. He married Carmen Bascuñán and published his first novel, *Una escena social* (A Social Sketch), in six instalments in the periodical *El Museo*, edited by his friend Diego Barros Arana.

In addition, that same year, he began his career as a local newspaper reporter, a career that lasted eleven years. In his chronicles (using pseudonyms including Abege and Nadie), he wrote about the Santiago bourgeoisie from different angles, criticizing its abulia: "what lasts long here are yawns - he said - because nobody makes them short"[10]. He noted with irony the social gestures (dances, family reunions, the street life, national festivities), providing a stark study of the situation of women in that context. He commented on the internal disagreements that marked the relations between *pipiolos* (liberals) and *pelucones* (conservatives) on the political scene. He also registered episodes such as the arrival of a delegation of eighty Araucano chieftains in Santiago, in 1862 with the impact this event caused in the conservative and reactionary local society. He provided early observations on the task of writing Literature, "the mania of writing", describing it almost like a vice, an obsession that disqualified writers like himself, without sufficient means for their subsistence, from society. He had to support a growing family. The problem of money, or rather the lack of it, was a recurrent subject for Blest Gana, as many of his letters attest in various stages of his life.

In the young chronicler we find a melancholic, disillusioned and ironic tone that is less evident in the narrator of his novels. Nonetheless, a detailed study of the rich material contained in his chronicles would relativise too narrow and triumphalist readings of his

fiction.

However, it was as a novelist that Alberto Blest Gana was to be immortalised in the history of Chilean literature. He brought a reality and dynamism to the form that was lacking in the novels produced by his contemporaries, such as *La vida de un amigo* (1846), by Wenceslao Vial, *Don Guillermo* (1860), by José Victorino Lastarria, and *El pirata de Guayas* (1865), by Manuel Bilbao.

He persevered in the craft of writing, although he never devoted himself exclusively to literature. He received his salary as head of a section at the Ministry of War, meanwhile publishing one novel after another, testing forms of narration, bringing focus to reality, building worlds with an autonomous life of their own and developing a singular language. After *Una escena social*, he published *Engaños y desengaños* (1855), *Los desposados* (1855), *El primer amor* (1858), *Juan de Aria* (1858), *La fascinación* (1858), *Un día de campo* (1859), *La aritmética en el amor* (1860) and *El pago de las deudas* (1861).

In 1861, he received the national prize for literature with *La aritmética en el amor.* It was the first edition of the prize, inaugurated by José Victorino Lastarria to promote national literature. This was the only public recognition he received in his long life apart from his appointment as a member of the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Chile, on which occasion he gave the famous speech, "Chilean literature: some considerations on it", in which he set out his artistic manifesto and principles.

By 1861, Blest Gana had already published nine novels, but the award gave him the recognition and awareness of his status as writer. Proof of this is that, in the following year, he published fourteen chronicles and three novels that differed considerably from one another: *La venganza*, *Martín Rivas* and *Mariluán*. Unlike the two other novels, which soon fell into the darkness of oblivion, the success of *Martín Rivas* was immediate while it was still being published as a newspaper serial in the daily newspaper, *La voz de Chile*. The letters of protest from readers when there was some delay in delivery and the various manifestations of acclaim filled him with pride, as can be seen in one of the few letters in which he reveals his feelings to a friend, exclaiming proudly that "everything rains over the author like a rain of flowers"[11]. As if that were not enough, Don Andrés Bello, then rector of the University, claimed that "the author of Martín Rivas was predestined to compose great novels" (In Alone 165).

It is not possible, in the short span of this paper, to analyse that novel, which has become a classic in Chile. What should be emphasised is that it combines a romantic treatment of the characters with a realistic approach to situations, all within a romance scheme that is clearly linked to its newspaper serial (*feuilleton*) origin. It must have contributed strongly to its success at that time, the fact that it portrayed the class of its readers, who identified themselves with it as though it were a mirror, a new experience for Chilean readers. An experience that modern novel as a new genre came to proportion.

This model was expanded and perfected in some of his five subsequent novels. Two of these – *El ideal de un calavera* (1863) and *La flor de la higuera* (1864) – were published prior to the mysterious interval of nearly thirty years (1864-97) that Blest Gana imposed on himself until his monumental historical novel, *Durante la Reconquista*, was published in France.

Over more than twenty years, in fact, Alberto Blest Gana transformed himself, like a chameleon, into a pre-eminent Chilean diplomat, leaving literature completely aside. Certainly, the promise of a more attractive salary than what he was receiving in Colchagua as

mayor in his last years in Chile, was pivotal in his decision to accept the offer of service abroad. What remains a mystery is why he did not continue to write, as many writers have done before and after him, alternating their diplomatic activities with their literary life.

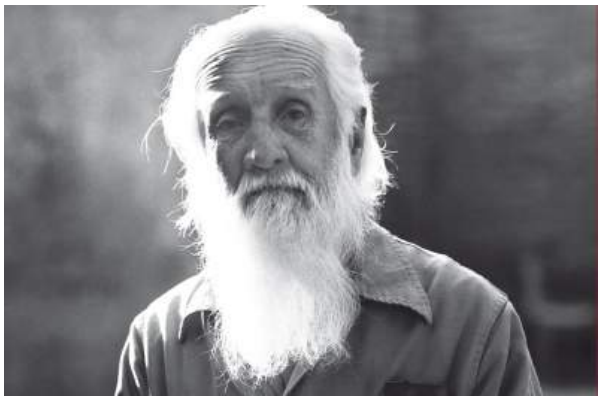
His experience abroad began with a brief stay in Washington, followed by a year in London. In 1870, he settled in Paris, never to return to Chile, not even for a visit, the beginning of fifty years of voluntary exile until his death in 1920.

During those two decades of literary silence, he devoted himself body and soul to Chilean Foreign Affairs, most notably his active and decisive management during the Pacific War from 1879 to 1883. Blest Gana safeguarded the image of Chile in Europe during the conflict, as well as purchasing ships, uniforms for soldiers, weapons and ammunition.

It was only when he left the diplomatic service that he took up his pen once more and devoted himself to rewriting the outline of his historical novel about the Spanish reconquest. This was followed by *Los trasplantados*, published in 1904, about the pathetic experience of a Hispanic American family exiled in Paris, and *El loco Estero* (1909), the beautiful novel reminiscing about the years of his childhood. The last of his eighteen novels Gladys Fairfield (1912) is based on his family history.

In addition to his novels, Blest wrote a comedy, *El jefe de la familia* (1858), which was never staged, and two beautiful travel narratives about the hot springs of Chillán (1860) and Niagara Falls (1867). His body of work marks the beginning of realism in nineteenth-century Chile with a type of novel which, without discarding touches of romanticism, points to a concrete and factual observation of reality. Blest Gana, although not a social critic, was an observer whose writings were perhaps more audacious than he himself intended. Today it is important to reread him.

3. The grandson. Clotario Blest Riffo (1899-1990)



Clotario Blest Riffo was the son of Leopoldina Riffo Bustos and Ricardo Blest Ugarte, descendants of Dr Blest's second family. According to the testimony of Blest's grandson, the Gana family never admitted any relationship with this branch of the family, which they considered illegitimate. In fact, no mention of them can be found in letters or other documents related to Alberto Blest Gana and his family.

The father, an army officer, died after seven years of marriage, leaving his wife in poverty. She and her three children lived on the miserable salary she received as a primary teacher; she frequently had to resort to loans to survive. In an interview with Mónica Echeverría in 1978, Clotario Blest recalls: "I will never forget a few very strong knocks on our door indicating the presence of a collector eager for an overdue account. I approached the door and bolted it to make sure that they could not enter. These collectors were the 'bogeymen' of my childhood. How I hated them!" (Echeverría 44).

Clotario's brother and sister died young, so he stayed with his mother and dedicated his life, body and soul, to the cause of the workers. He neither married nor had children, and

he always lived in conditions of extreme poverty which, towards the end of his life, led to destitution; the friars of the convent of San Francisco welcomed him and looked after him until his death, at the age of ninety, in 1990.

His intellectual training was largely self-taught. In 1918, after primary and secondary education in Catholic seminaries, he wanted to study law at the University of Chile, but, as he had a job in the General Treasury of the State, and a law was enacted in those years preventing tax employees from following courses at public universities, he saw his dream of becoming a lawyer frustrated. Even so, he continued his studies in an unsystematic way, attending courses in philosophy, law and chemistry at the Catholic University.

At the same time, he joined groups and popular organisations where he came into contact with historical trade unionists like Emilio Recabarren and Father Antonio Vives Solar, who would deeply influence his career. Around 1938, he was already a militant trade unionist and decided to organise his coworkers from the General Treasury. An official decree banned public servants from joining unions, so he created an ostensibly apolitical group, the Sports Association of the Public Institutions, which would be the direct antecedent of the National Association of Tax Collectors (ANEF), founded in 1943.

Clotario Blest was President of the Chilean Workers Central (CUT) between 1953 and 1960, the strongest and most influential years of the organisation in the history of national politics. Not affiliated to any party, Clotario was always an arbitrator between antagonistic sides within the movement; he managed to unite forces for basic achievements of trade unionism. During the Allende Government, he strongly resisted the appointment of the CUT President as Minister of Labour. It seemed to him an intolerable contradiction. In the years of the dictatorship, he became a fierce critic of the regime and a protective angel of refugees and relatives of missing persons. He transformed his home into a shelter for every fugitive from the military regime. Throughout a life dedicated to the proletarian struggle, he was arrested more than twenty times.

In addition to promoting and establishing social organisations throughout the country, Blest participated in different international associations: in the 1950s he joined the National Committee of supporters of peace together with figures such as Volodia Teitelboim, Pablo Neruda and Gabriela Mistral. In 1955, he was appointed member of the World Council for Peace by the World Assembly, and he was nominated by that same international entity for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1980 - the same year that it was awarded to the Polish proletarian leader Lech Walesa.

Clotario mentioned his grandfather, Guillermo Cunningham Blest, with love and admiration. He was proud of him, of sharing his blood, and he thanked him for his surname. Clotario felt that he was linked to him in the spirit of struggle, his detachment from money, and in his concern for the welfare of his fellows (Echeverria 30). He preserved a photograph that he displayed with pride, and he kept a collection of the prestigious journal *The Lancet*, the world's oldest medical journal, which had been part of his grandfather's library (Silva Castro 23). Of his uncle Alberto, whom he never met, he recognised his work, particularly the novel *Los trasplantados*, which, according to Clotario, offered a critical view of his own class.

There is a beautiful 1992 documentary[12] in which he emerges with a very fragile physical appearance, but with a spiritual strength that is captured through his energetic tone and calm voice. We see an old man with an impressively long white beard looking back on his life. He clearly remembers the times when he accompanied his widowed mother to withdraw

her monthly stipend from his paternal family at the back door of the Palace of the Gana López. The contempt that the family felt for him fed a deep resentment, which was transformed into contempt for the oligarchy and became a dogma. His point of view was always that of the working class. His objective was always social justice, in which there was little progress throughout his life. His speech reveals the religious training he received when he was very young, which helped him to formulate his utopian beliefs.

Against all forms of oppression and contempt of the oligarchies and the "wealthy families with prestigious surnames that underestimate the rest of the people" (his own words), and against all forms of injustice, Clotario built an image of himself. Those around him admired his stoic morality and ethical rigour.

4. Two houses, two doors, two measures.

In conclusion, I would like to concentrate on an episode in the life of the labor leader, narrated by himself on several occasions. When he was very young, at the primary school of La Moneda, some two hundred students were gathered one morning in the large schoolyard, when the director called him by name and surname in front of everyone and asked him to step forward. There, in front of all his companions, he asked him directly: "Why are you wearing worn-out shoes?" Clotario panicked, and responded with the purest truth: "Sir, it is because I am poor." For Clotario, that experience of deliberate humiliation marked him for life and forged his destiny.

The episode brings to mind one of the first scenes of Blest Gana's most famous novel. Martín Rivas has just arrived at Santiago, from Copiapó. As a poor country boy, he feels humiliated when he compares his old-fashioned garb with the clothes worn by the residents of the elegant mansion of Don Dámaso Encina, where he is hosted. The glances of disapproval from the servants confirm the imbalance and increase his sense of humiliation. In his first excursion downtown, he reaches the Plaza de Armas, where a peddler shows him a pair of shiny leather ankle boots. The possibility of exchanging his old boots for new ones seduces him and he tries them on. But then he remembers that he does not have a penny in his pocket and rises, promising to return the next day. Recognising his fragility and surrounding him, the sellers challenge him, calling him a "poor ragged man". Martin feels insulted and other vendors reply that being poor is no insult since all of them are. Then they fight and end up in jail, where Rivas surrenders to a "sad reflection" that leads him to curse his fate: "…and he asked Heaven to justify the poverty of some and the wealth of others. No sooner had his thoughts turned to the inequities of fate when he felt in his heart a sudden, obscure rage against Fortune´s favorites" (2000. 33).

But, unlike Clotario, who transformed his experience of humiliation and exclusion into a driving element of struggle, Blest Gana's protagonist decides to integrate into the world that spurned him, very soon forgetting the "obscure rage" that had disturbed him in the barracks. In the first scene of the novel, Martin accesses the main door of the Encina palace, shy and scared, carrying an envelope containing a letter written by his late father to facilitate his entrance to the opulent family; in real life, Clotario had to go to the back door of the Gana López mansion to receive the envelope with money to help his family.

In the former, fictional, case, the envelope accompanies Martin to the mansion to shed light on the spurious past of the Encina fortune. In the latter case, from real life, the envelope emerges from inside the mansion to neutralise the uncomfortable, socially

inconvenient past linking the wealthy Blest Gana with the poor Blest Ugarte. The two scenes complement each other and speak of the fundamental power of capital and its social implications. The truth of Chilean history, a history of profound injustices, with its contradictions and paradoxes, appears in both situations: the real and the fictional, with overwhelming force.

Notes

* Text revised by Peter James Harris.

1 This work contains many observations on the general hygiene of Chilean society at its different levels, which is a valuable source for the historical study of customs. (Silva Castro 16).

2 Ergot is a fungal parasite of rye and other cereals. It contains numerous compounds, especially lipids, sterols, glycosides and amines, but especially the alkaloids of ergot: ergocristine, ergocryptine, ergotamine and ergometrine. In the past, ergot (*cornezuelo de centeno*) was used during childbirth for its uterotonic properties. Nowadays it is preferred to use oxytocin or a similar synthetic of this hormone. However, metilergometrine (a semi-synthetic derivative of ergomatine) is used to reduce uterine haemorrhages after childbirth or a scraping.

3 Señores, alumnos: El constante y ardiente deseo de mi vida ha sido el coadyuvar a la benéfica tendencia, dignidad, importancia y respeto de la profesión a que pertenezco, y siendo yo el primero que tiene la honra de abrir las majestuosas puertas de la medicina al pueblo chileno, ciencia ilustre que me pone en circunstancias de poder ser útil al país, mi pecho se conmueve por un sentimiento de gratitud hacia el gobierno que me ha proporcionado los medios de llenar mis anhelos, y de que mi nombre se encuentre en su futura historia.

4 Older brother of Luis Orrego Luco, author of the novel *Casa grande* (1908).

5 Cuando vuelvo la vista hacia los tiempos lejanos de la vieja escuela suele a veces asomar entre mis recuerdos la figura de un hombre alto, delgado, esbelto, de un porte altivo y elegante… Sus ojos muy claros y sus cabellos rubios acentuaban el tipo de los irlandeses-distinguidos. Pero lo que más nos llamaba la atención cuando lo veíamos pasar por los corredores o las salas de hospital, no era tanto su figura imponente, como la veneración con que todos lo miraban. Nuestros profesores, las monjas, los enfermeros, todo el mundo, lo saludaba con respeto y se inclinaba a su paso… Nunca iba solo, siempre lo rodeaban algunos de los médicos [...] lo oí hablar un español de rara corrección y de una pronunciación británica cerrada, que hacía singularmente expresivo su lenguaje. (Orrego Luco, 125/132)

6 Su arrogante figura no podía pasar inadvertida, llamaba la atención desde el tiempo en que visitaba a los enfermos en sus primeros años a caballo, protegido en los veranos por un ancho plumero de colores a guisa de quitasol, en su elegante birlocho. (In Silva Castro).

7 Alberto Blest Gana evokes this residence in his later novel, *El loco Estero*, 1904.

8 Pese a su inestimable trayectoria, hasta avanzado el siglo XX no había ningún hospital, consultorio o calle que lo recordara. Conscientes de esta omisión inauguramos en 1993 la Plaza Blest en los recintos de la Facultad de Medicina de la Universidad de Chile. Por desgracia, fue recientemente desmantelada por los requerimientos de la futura Línea 3 del Metro. Tal vez, un paso inicial de reconocimiento sería nominar "Doctor Blest" a la estación aledaña a la Facultad. Sin perjuicio de ello, una expresión de gratitud ciudadana demanda una escultura que incorpore a la mirada colectiva cotidiana la figura de un personaje ilustre de la historia de Chile del siglo XIX.

9 Letter to Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna.

10 “Los placeres de Santiago. Estudios de constumbres”, in La Semana, 16 June 1859.

11 Letter to Antonio José Donoso, 1 September 1862, in Epistolario de ABG. Vol. 1. Santiago: DIBAM. 2011. 28.

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Disruptive Community: The Irish in Argentina. Readings of Rodolfo Walsh and Juan José Delaney

Douglas M. Glynn

Abstract: *A community is principally characterized by the collectivity of its members and is defined spatially in terms of arbitrary boundaries that consistently separate its inhabitants from 'Others' and the "otherness" of the external world. For a number of centuries the diasporic Irish community has been able to forge communal spaces in Caribbean and Latin American nations, most prominently in Argentina. Nonetheless, these Irish communities in Argentine literature are often represented as insular and, therefore, disruptive to the monolithic national discourse of the host country. The portrayal of the diasporic Irish figure, which deviates from patterns of social normativity, constitutes an important facet of these individuals that permits an analysis of the ways in which their presence interrupts the Argentine literary imaginary. As Hellen Kelly observes, "'deviancy' in its variant forms has become, therefore, the most accessible and fruitful approach to assessing levels of integration amongst Irish immigrant communities" (128). In order to examine and comment on the various forms of deviations and, at the same time, the levels of integration of the immigrant Irish community, I offer my readings of the three short stories which comprise the "Irish series" by Rodolfo Walsh and Juan José Delaney's novel* Moira Sullivan. *I look to interrogate the elements of the diasporic Irish experience which have informed and given shape to representations of diasporic Irish individuals and the spaces they occupy. I also seek to problematize previous readings of the selected texts that have, in general, omitted any critical consideration of and reflection upon their imbued 'Irishness' within the context of Argentine literary imaginaries.*

Keywords: *Rodolfo Walsh; Juan José Delaney; Irishness; Irish immigration.*

As Irish immigration reached an historical peak during the 1830s, continuing through the Great Famine and into the twentieth century, the United States did not always represent a land of opportunity for numerous Irish sojourners. Having been subjected to centuries English imperialism, justified by established "hostile depictions of the Gaelic Irish as uncivilized" (Garner 72) with an "unruly, violent nature," many diasporic Irish sought to allude the same pseudo-racialized discourse and subsequent oppression they had endured under British rule. Regrettably vast amounts of Irish emigrants to the United States found that, "America was an English derivative society, and to the Irish it appeared that the traditional Anglo bias and hatred against the Irish was simply carried over into the United States" (Hogan 103). Edmundo Murray, author of *Becoming Gauchos Ingleses*, writes that "during most of the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth century, encouraged by their families and community leaders, and favored by their condition of British subjects, nearly 45,000 Irish immigrants contributed

to build a community [in Argentina] that was atypical within the Irish Diaspora" (9). In Buenos Aires the "favorable" aspect of British subjugation to which Murray refers was the fact that the Irish were "nativized" speakers of English and, consequently, able to assume the role of "Ingleses" within a Spanish-speaking society. This ethnic and social (mis)categorization allowed many diasporic Irish to ascend in Argentine society as landowners and achieve economic stability and prosperity.

This phenomena was noted by James Joyce, in his short story "Eveline" In it he tells the tale of Frank, a "kind, manly, open-hearted" Irishman who has returned on holiday to the old country from Buenos Aires where has emigrated and "fallen on his feet" (32). During his brief visit Frank falls in love with the young Dubliner Eveline who he plans to marry and whisk away to Argentina where "he had a home waiting for her" (31). Nonetheless, at the moment when she is to board the "night-boat" (31) bound for South America with Frank, "a bell clanged upon her heart," (34) and Eveline proves to be incapable of abandoning her family and homeland. Thus, Frank returns to Buenos Aires alone. The story that Joyce does not tell is that of the experiences of Frank, and the many diasporic Irish like him, as they sought to establish a new Irish diaspora community in Argentina. In *Global Diasporas*, Robin Cohen lists the nine qualities he believes individuals of diaspora communities share, the three most relevant of which are, "a dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically, to two or more foreign regions", "a strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time and based on a sense of distinctiveness," and "the possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in host countries with a tolerance for pluralism" (26). Though Cohen categorizes the Irish diaspora with the preceding adjective "victim," the aforementioned motivators play a more important role than does "victimization" in literary representations of the Irish diaspora in Argentina. As diasporic subjects, the spaces they inhabit, "the lush and boundless land between the city of Buenos Aires and Southern Santa Fe" (Murray, 2), can be viewed as what Avtar Brah and Laura Zuntini de Izarra call "diaspora space" which "is the intersectional location of three immanent elements — diaspora, frontiers and (dis)location, and it is inhabited not only by diasporic subjects but equally by those who are constructed and represented as "indigenous" (139). The fictional diasporic Irish characters under study here, as I argue, are represented as "(dis)located" diasporic subjects in that their identity is in a state of reconstruction and reaffirmation caused by new "(dis)locations" and mottled attempts at enmeshing themselves with "indigenous Others." In this case the Argentines are those represented as perhaps more "legitimate" but often segregate. As Peter Childs observes, "diasporic identities work at other levels than those marked by national boundaries" (52), and, even more so here as these boundaries are dictated and defended by a deviant diaspora community rather than a set of state sanctioned interactions. Just as Jennifer Slivka warns, "The foreigner or exile is ambiguous—his selfhood is fluid as a result of his constant wanderings—and so she/he disrupts the native citizens" (117).

Now, who is to tell us the "disruptive" stories of the Irish diaspora community in Argentina that Joyce did not? David Spurr in his forward to *Becoming Gauchos Ingleses* believes that Murray does so "with clarity, historical mastery, an eye for detail and an ear for anecdote…[by having] written the definitive account of Irish-Argentine literature" (ix). Although Murray's work is quite comprehensive and eloquent, it is, in his own words, "a discussion about the literature in Argentina" (xi), unlike *Dubliners* which is a masterpiece of creative fiction. Therefore, it may be more congruent and fruitful to explore texts written by other fiction authors in order to discover the stories they have imaginatively penned about the

diasporic Irish in Argentina. For these narratives I look to Rodolfo Walsh's collection of three short stories posthumously titled *Los irlandeses* (or la *serie/el ciclo de Los irlandeses*) and Juan José Delaney's novel *Moira Sullivan*. Both are Argentine-born authors of Irish heritage who tooks from personal experiences and intimate images to portray the Irish diaspora community in Argentina through their fiction. Yet, how do we read these narratives? Or more immediately, how have these narratives been read thus far by critical scholars? Worryingly, as Zuntini de Izarra notes, "Irish immigration to South America [and the Caribbean] has been studied from few historical perspectives and very little has been done to trace contemporary Irish literary diasporic voices in these geographical locations" (137). More worrying, as I contend, academic readership and criticism has offered, for the most part, few insights or textually entrenched reflections while approaching these "Argentine" texts so permeated by "Irishness" and profoundly representative of this distinctive diaspora community.

Much scholarship on Walsh to date has been plagued by lackluster criticism when addressing his "Irish texts." For instance, Horacio Verbitsky in the prologue to *Cuentos*, the first collection specifically featuring the "serie de los Irlandeses" in complete form, comments on almost every other work written by Walsh except the short stories at hand and concludes that, "*Operación Masacre* brings him to another region, to a summit that only texts of national stature inhabit. It is our *Facundo* and a solitary incursion into the future"[1] (12). Similarly, great Mexican writer José Emilio Pacheco in his *Nota preliminar: Rodolfo J. Walsh desde México*, which prefaces Walsh's *Obra literaria completa*, feels that "the Irish collection probably constitutes the nucleus of a work that, for lack of a better term, we can call 'imaginative'" and that "this intimate literature…is no less social nor political than *Operación Masacre*"[2] (6). Pacheco, like Verbitsky, appears equally awed by Walsh's paramount novel and misconstrues the intimate and autobiographical underpinnings which motivate these stories as being simply "imaginative". More recently, the 2007 El Aleph edition of *Los irlandeses*, forwarded by Ricardo Piglia's succinct interview with Walsh, was printed with "Los oficios terrestres" ("Earthly chores") first, inexplicably confusing the original narrative and intertextual coherence of the series that begins with "Irlandeses detrás de un gato" ("Irish boys after a cat"), followed by the aforementioned story and closing with "Un oscuro día de justicia" ("A dark day of justice"). Finally, the title of Eleonora Bertranou's 2006 study *Rodolfo Walsh: argentino, escritor, militante*[3] plainly summarizes the prevailing type of uniform readings given to Walsh's work. Although Bertranou generally addresses the Irish presence in Argentina, her consideration of Walsh's Irish series is only in relation to his genealogy and she fails to offer substantive literary reflection on the series, concluding inferentially that "we have seen in this study how the estrangement from his Irish ancestors influenced Walsh's life"[4] (170). With all of the above, it would appear then that the Irish series" presents an inaccessibility for many critical scholars because of evident "misreadings" of the inextricable "Irishness" Walsh so skillfully weaves into his writings.

The case of Juan José Delaney is much simpler than that of Walsh; Delaney remains a severely under-read author to present. The only serious scholar to give a measure of attention to his body of work thus far has been Zuntini de Izarra who writes, "Delaney transcends the theme of geographic dislocations and explores the inner human conflicts that arise not only out of the duality of the self but mainly out of the encounter of two cultures producing an art of his own or "cross-border writing" where reality, diaspora history and fiction are in constant tension" (1). Delaney, like Walsh, has produced texts which detail simultaneously the inner and outer tensions of a community caught in the interstice between two cultures; the Argentine

and the Irish. In order to approach the selected works by Walsh and Delaney it is crucial to keep at the forefront of my readings theorizations of communities and their relevance to the Irish diaspora. Benedict Anderson in his study *Imagined Communities* proposes that "communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (6). For Anderson, a community (or a nation which he claims is an imagined political community) is always imagined as "'*limited*' because it has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other communities" (7). Inherent in his theory there is a dynamic contrast of members in one group to those of another, or an entire group in contrast to the whole of another, though not necessarily an active opposition of one to the other. As such Anderson argues that, "no nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind" (7). A nation or a community recognizes its sovereignty yet must simultaneously compare and measure itself against "others" in order to affirm and reaffirm its unique identity and place in the world. Nevertheless, although Anderson does not imply conflict between two distinct imagined communities he does state that members of a particular nation or community do not envision a day when all members of the human race will join them, forming one all-encompassing global community sharing the same outlooks and values (7). In the case of the Irish community in Argentina we shall observe that the "others" occupy the spaces on either side. For author Hellen Kelly, however, it is "'deviancy' in its variant forms [which] has become the most accessible and fruitful approach to assessing levels of integration amongst Irish immigrant communities" (128). Indeed, the difference indicators most commonly used in racialized assessments of the Irish are language, behavior, or their "bad habits", like laziness and drunkenness. In the Argentine context it then becomes their shared "lifestyle", meaning poverty and "mischievous [or deviant] practices" (Bahri 61), which dominates in analytical discourse.

The way in which Walsh imagines and represents the Irish community in his fiction is via the Instituto Fahy, an isolated Catholic school for poor Irish boys outside Buenos Aires. The protagonist in this bubble world is "the boy who they later called *el Gato*"[5] (87), son of Argentine father Bugnicourt, and Irish mother O'Hara. Upon arriving to the Fahy, el Gato suddenly finds himself "on the edge of the enumerated patio, immense, deep like a well, surrounded on its four sides by immense walls that high above cut a metal sheet in the dark sky"[6] (89). While el Gato observes "the one hundred and thirty Irish boys that were playing"[7] the insularity of the Fahy is reinforced by "those terrible walls, rambling and vertiginous"[8] (89) that separate it and its inhabitants from the external world. As the new arrival, el Gato is forced to measure himself against the other Irish boys in fist-fights in order to place him in their ranking, the established hierarchy of combative prowess. This confrontation he desperately attempts to avoid but is inevitably cornered and outnumbered and must then engage in the violent initiation process through which his membership in the community is consummated. Walsh employs the terror of ever-immanent violence, not only from without but also from within, to intensify the claustrophobic sensation of this communal diaspora space informing the reader that "[el Gato] was intensely frightened [of the other boys], just as he was frightened of himself, of those hidden parts of his being which until then had only manifested themselves in fleeting forms, like in his dreams or his unusual fits of rage"[9] (90).

Having endured his trial by fisticuffs in the episode of the series, in the next, "Los oficios terrestres", we find el Gato settled into his position among the ranks of orphaned and poor Irish boys for whom the outside world remains grey and impalpable. His "oficio

terrestre" is, quite simply, to take out the trash with the help of el pequeño Dashwood. In doing so Dashwood, who longs for a life outside Fahy, abruptly leaves, despite the fact that "there was no path in sight, but he knew that he was leaving forever"[10] (33). Dashwood, in an act of self-exile, disappears "among the late visiting fog"[11] (33) as he has crossed beyond the imagined limits of the community. In the final story, "Un oscuro día de justicia", Walsh demonstrates that individuals who reside outside Fahy may seem as part of an extended Irish diaspora community, however, we soon see this is not so. At the top of the social hierarchy in the Fahy is "el celador Geilty," an imposing bully who organizes disproportionate battles, ironically referred to as "el Ejercicio," among the younger boys to satisfy his own sadistic pleasures. Sylvia Lago believes that Walsh utilizes Geilty to transform "the world inside the school into the first ring which trains them, relentlessly, for the subsequent aggression that each one will have to face"[12] (62). Shifting focus from el Gato who is "strong now, sure of himself"[13] (25), Walsh now brings el pequeño Collins forward in the narrative, a smaller boy that calls for the help of his "tío Malcolm" to come to his defense, and that of other boys like him, and defeat Geilty in his own vicious game. With the odds stacked in his favor, uncle Malcolm arrives to the Fahy only to be brutally bested by Geilty and at that moment, "the people learned that they were alone, and that they would have to fight for themselves...and that within their own conscience they would find the means, the silence, the ingenuity and the strength"[14] (52). It is here that Walsh demonstrates the impenetrable insularity of the Fahy because those outside its closed walls are powerless to correct the aberrant structures within.

For Delaney's protagonist and title character, Moira Sullivan, her integration to the Irish diaspora community is multifaceted. The author begins her story in the U.S. after her family's immigration from Ireland to Pennsylvania. Later, Moira as a young adult with the aspirations of a singer/actress, moves to New York where, "…she had insisted on clarifying to her New Yorker friends that her family had never been a part of the secret society of the Molly Maguires, an Irish mafia that since illegality got control over the mining business in Pennsylvania"[15] (13). Distinguishing her family and herself from the most deviant of Irish diaspora societies, Moira instead inserts herself into the Irish art community in New York, which meets at the Irish pub Mulligan's Place. Here she also meets her one true love and first husband Konrad Storm. Unluckily Konrad abruptly dies and Moira, a short time later, finds herself in the arms of her future second husband Cornelius Geraghty who carries her away to Buenos Aires. Now she becomes, "Mrs. Moira Sullivan de Geraghty, North American of Irish origin, recently arrived to a remote country of equally remote language and culture, a two-time immigrant, maybe three"[16] (104) and must navigate an unknown diaspora space with her skewed sense of 'Irishness' as her only compass. Delaney's novel, which combines omniscient narration, transcribed sheet music and the epistolary, prefers the latter to give testimonial credence to Moira's criticisms of the Irish community in Buenos Aires, one that she evaluates with unbridled subjectivity. In a letter dated "18 March, 1932"[17] to her friend Allison back in the U.S. she writes at length:

> I know it will be hard for you to understand but to this remote place in the southern cone arrived thousands of Irish from the second half of the last century and into the beginnings of this one, pursued by the Famine and seduced by the myth that the streets were paved with gold. Gold? Golden piss! Cornelius' new friends make fun in precarious Spanish, although it is quite evident that they feel grateful towards a country that has received them with generosity and sympathy. Moreover, just as it happens there, it is difficult for a person who has the desire and will not to find

> possibilities here to develop their talents. I am talking about the Irish, but in reality there are many foreign peoples who have congregated in Argentina. I should say that the sons of Erin boast about having integrated with the rest of the population, the truth isn't exactly so. They have their own schools, their own temples and their club...they isolate themselves or are slowly but relentlessly segregated. In truth this happens with almost all the foreign communities that reside here: Arabs, Armenians, Ukrainians and, quite particularly, the Jews. Not to mention the British for whom they add a certain ancestral cynicism to their unjustified disdain. On the other hand I know colleagues of Cornelius, of Irish origin, that pass themselves off as English to get ahead in their jobs. It makes them feel more distinguished! Can you believe that? That all seems disgraceful to me.[18]

Moira's disillusionment with the Irish community in Argentina is not unwarranted as she condemns their xenophobic and dubious practices. Declan Kiberd in his extensive work, *Inventing Ireland*, deduces that the intent of English colonial policy in Ireland was straightforward: "to create a new England called Ireland" (15). Delaney represents the diasporic Irish as a post-colonial product intrinsically tied to England and Anglo-Saxon culture and underscores their appropriation of the language and tactics of their former colonizers. The Irish diaspora community that Delaney portrays could be viewed as beholden to English colonial policy in their attempts to "create a new Ireland called Argentina."

Joyce ends his short story "Eveline" with the image of Frank as he leaves Ireland and Eveline's eyes, like the eyes of a cold and stagnant Irish nation, "gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition" (34). For Joyce, the vacancy of emotion in her stare represents the irreparable rupture diaspora has created between the diasporic Irish and the Irish in Ireland. Thus, neither Walsh nor Delaney uses their fictional characters to evoke nostalgia for the homeland. At the other extreme, while Argentina "grappled with forging a sense of nation state," the Irish diaspora community "struggled equally to reconcile its own internal conflict in reasserting an Irish identity" (Kelly 157) and subsequently disrupted the formation of a monolithic Argentine nation state. Walsh and Delaney, when read against each other and through a lens of 'Irishness', elucidate the inner-workings of a disruptive community, a community in an unresolved conflict with its own insular in-betweeness.

Notes

1 "*Operación Masacre* lo eleva a otra región, a una cumbre que sólo habitan los libros nacionales. Es nuestro *Facundo*, y una incursión solitaria al futuro". Please note that the translations in English are mine.

2 "el ciclo de los irlandeses constituye probablemente el núcleo de la obra que, a falta de mejor término, podemos llamar 'imaginativa' de Walsh" y que "esta literatura íntima…no es menos social ni menos política que *Operación Masacre*".

3 Argentine, writer, militant.

4 "hemos visto en este trabajo como influyó en la vida de Walsh el desarraigo de sus antepasados irlandeses".

5 "el chico que más tarde llamaron el Gato".

6 "al borde del patio enumerado, inmerso, hondo como un pozo, rodeado en sus cuatro costados por las inmensas paredes que allá arriba cortaban una chapa metálica de cielo oscureciente".

7 "los ciento treinta irlandeses que jugaban".

8 "esas paredes terribles, trepadoras y vertiginosas".

9 "[el Gato] les temía [a los otros chicos irlandeses] intensamente, como se temía a sí mismo, a estas partes ocultas de su ser que hasta entonces solo se manifestaban en formas fugitivas, como sus sueños o sus insólitos ataques de cólera".

10 “no había camino a la vista, pero sabía que se estaba yendo para siempre".
11 “entre los tardíos visitantes de la niebla".
12 “el mundo dentro del colegio [en] el primer ring que los adiestra, inexorablemente, para la agresividad posterior que cada uno deberá enfrentar”.
13 “fuerte ahora, seguro de sí mismo".
14 “el pueblo aprendió que estaba solo, y que debía pelear por sí mismo...y que de su propia entraña sacaría los medios, el silencio, la astucia y la fuerza".
15 “…se había empeñado en aclarar a sus amigos neoyorquinos que su familia jamás había integrado la sociedad secreta de los Molly Maguires, mafia irlandesa que desde la ilegalidad procuró controlar el negocio minero en Pennsylvania".
16 “la señora Moira Sullivan de Geraghty, norteamericana de origen irlandés, recién llegada a un país remoto de lengua y cultura también remotas, dos veces inmigrante, quizá tres".
17 “18 de marzo de 1932".
18 “Sé que te costará entenderlo pero a este remoto punto del cono sur se llegaron desde la segunda mitad del siglo pasado y hasta principios de éste, miles de irlandeses perseguidos por la Hambruna y seducidos por el mito según el cual aquí las calles estaban pavimentadas con oro. “¿Oro? ¡Orín!”, se burlan en precario castellano los recientes amigos de Cornelius, aunque es muy evidente que sienten gratitud hacia un país que los ha recibido con generosidad y simpatía. Además, tal como ocurre allá, es difícil que quien tenga deseos y voluntad de progreso no encuentre aquí posibilidades de desarrollar sus talentos. Hablo de los irlandeses, pero en realidad son muchos los pueblos que se han congregado en la Argentina. Debo decir que los hijos de Erín se jactan de haberse integrado con el resto de la población, la verdad no es exactamente así. Tienen sus propios colegios, sus propios templos y su club…se aíslan o son lenta pero inexorablemente segregados. En verdad esto ocurre con casi todas las comunidades extranjeras que se han radicado acá: árabes, armenios, ucranios y, muy especialmente, judíos. Para no hablar de los británicos que a su injustificado desdén agregan cierto cinismo ancestral…Por otro lado sé de colegas de Cornelius que, siendo de origen irlandés, se hacen pasar por ingleses para progresar en sus empleos. ¡Les parece más distinguido! ¿Puedes creer eso? A mí todo esto me resulta indigno".

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Voices from Brazil

The Difficulty of Being Human *

Milla Ragusa

Abstract: *The following essays contain the author's autobiographical reflections on fear, love, hatred, loss, happiness, and failures.*

Keywords: *Milla Ragusa; essays; autobiographical thoughts.*

Fear: The imprisonment of a soul

So you discover how meaningless your suffering is and how senseless your life. You realize that there is no way out, no matter how much you keep on hoping that a miracle will happen, even though you know they are so rare, nowadays.

You continue to be the prisoner of your own misery, much like the inmate of a concentration camp or the unfortunate soldier held as a prisoner of war… Their principal pain is not the daily tortures imposed by their tormentors, but the vain hope of another future, of another time, and of another life…

Despite every plan you make, and build dreamingly deep within your mind, you know perfectly well that you will never attain the only one thing you have been looking for: the dignity of freedom. The barbed wire fence is still there for most people, and it serves to put an end to all your wishes… It holds you in modern captivity, using fear, and moral abuse as the weapons to torment your soul further. That same fence puts an end to all your secret wishes and hopes. And you asked for so little!

Being aware of this all-powerful dominion, as well as your own cowardice and permanent fear, you never build up enough courage to break through the invisible walls of fear and finally escape the confines of your moral misery… How many times do you ask yourself how it is possible for a human being to be so subject to fear?

You know what the outside world will require from you: hard work, the strength to survive and the faith to keep on fighting, something your imprisonment has almost taken away from you, along with the passageway to freedom, normality and self-respect.

Although you long for these very things every hour, each day of your life, you know deep in your broken and dispirited soul that freedom from such unbearable pressure will never come to you, unless it comes as the final liberation from all human maladies…

If such a miracle comes to pass, you will release the deep sigh you have been holding back for years on end, and, without even glancing back at the cause of your sufferings, you will welcome the peace that has come to you, wholeheartedly.

Some people see death as the ultimate horror or punishment, when what it actually grants to prisoners of fear, pressure, intolerance and dominion is freedom to inhale fresh air, and liberation from all torments.

But there are no miracles any more, are there? It seems nothing but the abduction of

your captors can release your imprisoned soul to soar high from its captivity…

"Where is the Lord, our shepherd who will lead us through the darkness and on to still waters?"

Love: Flimsy as silk yet dense as satin

Perhaps the most used word throughout the centuries? But so few know its real meaning … and the many definitions you can give to it …

Certainly, it is full of colors like the silk veils of a sensuous Oriental dancer, and also vibrant like the sound of thunder. In this definition alone, a delirious and fleeting passion plays the major role. Not love. Thus, it does not last; it is easily torn apart, looking like silk shreds scattered around, the colors fading rapidly into a bleak gray, and the sounds formerly so vivid and thrilling dying down to the sadness of unwelcome solitude.

And yet, it can be as dense as thick, shining satin. Strong, yet smooth; heavy, yet welcome; massive in its fibers, but flexible enough to be shaped to any contour… In this definition, a mature and lasting passion plays the major role. It is too strong feeling to be destroyed easily, and nor can it be torn to shreds, for it has matured, endlessly.

You can think of love as being the ultimate sharing of previous moments from which the cherished memories will be your everyday nourishment. Or you can think of love as being the slow learning process of give and take, the lessons which will guide your life.

There is also the so-called love that possesses you in such a way as to annihilate your very self, which virtually casts you to the bottom of the pit, completely spent, exhausted and empty… And, of course, there is the other kind of love – which permits you to be yourself; which respects you as a human being; which fulfills your soul without robbing you of your identity; which makes you feel complete, alive and realized in the most intimate way.

Regrettably, there is still one other kind of love: that between a man and a woman in which there is nothing to give and nothing to receive; in which the man must impose himself for his own exclusive lusty pleasure, and also to prove his manliness to himself. In such a union, this man makes his female counterpart the scapegoat for all the frustrations and sickness in his mind. To her alone, he pretends to be what his cowardice and timidity prevent him from being: a real man.

However, the beauty of passion lies not in the glow of a wintery campfire, nor in the explosion of fire in a wheat field, but rather in the quietness and depth of a glance, and in the warm flow of a soft touch. Love is far, far more than the consummated union of two bodies. It goes beyond that, and it can only be called love if it contains all those tiny shared affinities…

Actually, it must be something that, no matter what the circumstances may be, will be able to surpass any difficulty, and moreover, even during separation, will have the strength to last, survive and thrive, with no more than a little word here, a small message there, and maybe a mute stare when the tricks of destiny allow…

That can be called love.

Hatred: Powerful and lasting as the cedar

The other side of love, but so much more powerful and lasting! So easily kept alive when love can be so easily hurt, and a step further, forgotten. Not hatred though. Its constraints are strong ingredients like hate itself: anger, envy, vengeance, contempt, despair, wrath, bitterness and intolerance, among others. The mixture proves to be highly poisoning and intoxicating.

Hatred is the product of a sour harvest; its seed germinates in bitterness, and it has all the strength it needs to grow and develop its vitality out of the resentment contained in its roots. Its fruits are of a hideous green and the sweetness of them gone forever. The seedbeds cannot kill the fast-growing weeds of hatred. The whole field can produce nothing but the evil planted by this farmer whose soul is commanded by hate.

The power one finds in hating surpasses any other feeling. Courage, whether born out of chivalry or of love for one's native soil, has not half the strength which is born with hatred. It can make one kill without a blink, and it is the trigger to make evil erupt from one's soul.

Nevertheless, hatred is the stronghold for the greatest single weapon against tyranny and brute force: dreams of vengeance. It is a slow gestation where the dreamer plots, imagines and sees himself achieving his goal completely. And, as in all vengeance, "the longer it takes, the sweeter it tastes". No matter how long it may take, hatred is the continuous feeding that nourishes the sought-after vengeance. And because it counts anger, contempt, deep wounds and rebellion among its many nutrients, its power is always overwhelming.

Inflamed and passionate is the one who hates, for sometimes hatred is the only way to survive, while love is too soft and liable to perish, to be smothered by the very same hate which gives rise to vicious rule and lack of respect towards one's fellow. A soul nourished by hatred is often overwhelmed by such a violent emotion.

Of all human feelings, hatred is the strongest power and longest lasting. It is constantly revived by the living presence of its cause or the mere mention of it. It is enhanced if provoked, and almost never forgotten. Forgiveness is absent from hatred, which explains why it is so everlasting.

The other facet of hatred is the way it turns a man's soul into a dark alley with no place for merriness, faith or hope. Here blow the tempestuous winds, destroying all other feelings. The price of hatred is one's own life, health and faith in mankind. Once it takes root it will only die with one's last breath…

Loss: The dispossession mankind has to live with

The red soil, eroded and parched by the merciless sun, showed cracks and deep ditches everywhere in the desolate landscape, where the long drought had put an end to all forms of life and the dried bones of the farm animals were the proof of its destruction. The bones and the dried river bed were mute witnesses, watching the man and his family abandon the place, once the source of their daily life, their daily survival… Silence filled the air, and the man's loss was complete. One more loss to be counted while taking up the road of the dispossessed…

The large, heavy boat moved with some effort, pushing forward at no more than ten knots, carrying the destitute, those poor immigrants who could no longer live their lives in

their own homelands. For one reason or another they had been denied their right to stay, thus losing all they had learned to love and keep, as the large vessel took them away from it all. A few wretched ones on deck looked bitterly at the land they were leaving behind; each one's loss was too great to be put into words; they simply stared at the vanishing land until it disappeared completely. Turning their backs forever, they sadly joined the rest of the dispossessed…

The war raged in all its fury, brutality and insanity. Those engaged in the fighting were quite aware of their personal losses, and those who watched it helplessly knew well enough that there is little a mother can say to a son who comes from the battlefield blind forever. There is little a field doctor can say to a soldier who wakes up only to discover his legs have been blown off. There is little an officer can say to a wife whose husband has been killed in action. Their losses were greater than anyone can assess, and their feelings too deep to be reached. Their destitution rested heavily upon their shoulders…

But personal losses are part of mankind. They have been part of it since its creation. One can only imagine the sadness that overtook Moses upon reaching the threshold of the Promised Land, and then not being allowed to step on it… It was an immense loss he had to bear, alone. Napoleon confided his thoughts to no-one when he was deprived of everything that held meaning for him, held captive on the cliffs of the forsaken island of St Helena, until death came for him … How much at a loss he must have felt, then!

The deep sorrow faced by everyone was also Lincoln's bitterness regarding the poverty and loneliness of his own childhood and youth, and then later, seeing his country so divided, as well as the agony of his soul at the loss of human life – the true testimony of Gettysburg's painful memories…

When his own life was requested, and there was no way out but to kill himself, Rommel knew full well what his losses were. However, to lose his dignity, and that of his family, would be a far greater loss, one he could never have endured…

The folly of mankind has not gone from the earth, but has rather become its daily shadow; for one reason or another, all our losses have come to pass, united by the dispossession mankind has been living with throughout the centuries…

Happiness: The peaceful quietness of your Being

Apart from the luxuries money can buy, putting aside the sophistication of a superficial life, where the major concern is that of showing off to people who care only for the superfluous, happiness is indeed the peaceful quietness of your being. It means being at peace with oneself. In other words, it means having found a Shangri-La, within oneself.

We find happiness when we accept life as we find it and try to make the best of it. Happiness is the result of a conscience clear of somber ghosts and guilty feelings; happiness is a part of us, if we're not greedy for more than life has offered us.

To find a purpose in life is to find happiness. The fulfillment of one's life through work and the readiness to fight one's own battles also provides this feeling. The realization that fills a man's soul when he sees his work through, when he has had the chance of accomplishing something he considers important, is all he needs to attain complete happiness.

This is doubly gratifying when there's mutual understanding in one's relationship, when everyday routine events are shared, and rare eventful occasions, too. To give happiness

is a most satisfying feeling, as well as receiving it through love, respect, understanding, dialogue and deep sharing.

The colorful rainbow makes one feel a part of nature in all its grandeur. The rainbow means peace, and peace means happiness. The very wonder of knowing that the sun will always rise takes away any bleakness one may feel. And watching the sun setting day after day brings the quietness and wisdom of another day lived in the vastness of this planet. Happiness is the magic power of being able to see all these miracles of nature, and enjoy them infinitely…

When much time has passed, there are the memories of the happiness felt at the crying of a first child being born; or at the winning of a great struggle; or at the opportunity of being truly loved; or at the sight of the first snowflakes, or the lights of a Christmas tree seen through a window misty with condensation; or the ecstasy of seeing the huge sea and its engulfing waves for the first time; or the incredulous expression in a child's eyes when discovering the metamorphosis of a butterfly; but most of all of yourself when looking at the mirror of your life and realizing you had so much to live for…

That is real happiness!

Failures – A reflection on old age

Old age is the result of one's entire life, and within this life, the countless events that took place. But it is not a mathematical equation in which the results are presented in an objective and conclusive way.

It takes one's whole life to live all the experiences and events allotted to us; to endure all the ordeals one has to go through, and to learn how to pull through every crisis.

However, although time has been part of mankind, it has never been on his side. On the contrary, it has always been his enemy, since mankind is always running after time, terrified it may cease its ticking, paralyzing all our vital functions and the world itself. Time makes children so eager to grow up fast, fearing there won't be enough time left. Youngsters want to grow into adults to discover what life is all about; and here the cycle stops, for the middle-aged want to slow time down so they can do what they failed to do earlier or enjoy life as it is presented to them. The old wish time would not pass so quickly, depriving them of the chance to try again, to erase their failures and to relive their past experiences.

Only a few realize how fast life is for us all! It is only when old age has caught up with us that we have the time to look back and see what we have done with this treasured gift: life. Only then can we try to analyze it, not in terms of what might have been, but of how we have spent it.

A few of us see the failures of mankind in our old age when we look back, and only then realize how much time we have wasted. We may have been a foolishly jealous mother, full of malice; or an all-powerful father, refusing dialogue and the exchange of ideas, believing himself to be the center of the universe, someone who refused to accompany the evolution of civilization, but rather set himself aside, making his life and that of those around him miserable. Or we may have been a spoilt child, and later a grown-up who was never satisfied with life, with those trying to help him, and those trying to be friendly. We may have wasted our life forgetting to cultivate those around us, and, upon realizing this great mistake, we realize life has just passed us by.

Old age is welcomed by those who still desire to carry on and straighten out the mistakes of the past, and by those who, regardless of time, place and age, continue to dedicate themselves to concluding work they believe in.

Failures? All of us have them, at one time or another. But knowing in our old age that we have tried to improve and to succeed is at least of some comfort. Pity those who are so intoxicated by their own power! Not even in their old age will they be able to look back and be aware of their follies, cruelty and needless dominance! And what can we say of those who struggled throughout their lives, and never even realized that all they ever wanted was right there, within their reach? They failed to see, to understand and to grasp whatever was being offered to them, which represented their own long-dreamed future. For these, life has nothing more to offer…

But the greatest of all failures is that of a selfish life, at the end of which, looking back, one knows that there is no return, no time for atonement, because, fleeting as it was, time is finally up!

*Giuliana Ragusa deeply thanks Peter Harris for revising her mother's text in English.

Articles

Irish Letters: Sacred and Secular Usage *

Eduardo Boheme Kumamoto

Abstract: *The objective of this article is to discuss the lettering styles that can be found in signs around Dublin, and which are used to convey some kind of Irishness and tradition. The first section discusses the story of insular scripts that flourished in medieval Ireland, being the* Book of Kells *their most conspicuous representative. After that, the rise of Gaelic typefaces is examined and, finally, examples are used to show the multiplicity of lettering styles in Dublin which are based on insular scripts. It is demonstrated that such letters often fail in their intention to display tradition and nationalism.*

Keywords: *Medieval Ireland; Gaelic typefaces; lettering styles.*

The exhibition of the *Book of Kells* is wisely constructed, allowing visitors to familiarize themselves with the process of codex-making and giving key-information on every aspect of the book before actually leading them into the dim chamber where it resides alongside the more modest, yet also admirable *Book of Armagh* and the *Garland of Howth*. After that, the Long Room is an apotheosis of space and light and only a few steps then separate the visitors from a deluge of products that replicate the millenary script. Of course, the preservation of such magnificent works of art depends partially on these products, but the fact that objects so coveted in the Middle Ages, often treated as relics, coexist so closely with artefacts less historically valuable invites us to think about how the letters of *Kells* became so widespread. The purpose of this study is to investigate the history lying behind Insular medieval scripts, such as the ones found in *Kells* and *Armagh*, and Gaelic typefaces, which originated some of the lettering styles often seen in official and commercial establishments, in signs and objects, in Irish or English. In Dublin, one is never a long walk away from inscriptions that, consciously or not, pay tribute to the medieval letters.

The first section will talk about the Irish branch of Insular scripts, paying attention to their history and formal peculiarities and, after that, the development of some Gaelic typefaces will be addressed in the light of Dermot McGuinne's book on the subject. This will lead to the examples of inscriptions collected in Dublin. Rather than including all the numerous and often similar findings, preference was given to those best illustrating the category discussed. The first is a group showing the use of American typefaces to convey Irishness, and how it relates to the neutralization of the half-uncial *G*. The second category shows how uncial-based letters, which were not part of the scribal repertoire in Ireland, are to be found on the streets. The third group addresses the divergence of forms adopted in a same place, while the last group explains the occurrence of the Tironean 'et' and the roman ampersand. Some reflections are then woven to wrap up the exposition.

1. Insular scripts in Ireland

Christianity was not new to Ireland when, in the fifth century, missionaries started a systematic process of conversion in the island. In fact, the very existence of a Christian community in the country, maybe since the fourth century, might have prompted Pope Celestine to send, in 431, Bishop Palladius to foster 'the Irish believing in Christ' (Meehan 2012: 19). The missionaries probably brought with them a script that would have been uncomplicated and close to the Italian half-uncial script (Bischoff 1990: 83-84). It gradually became more rounded, culminating in the grandiose "Insular half-uncial", the majuscule that was later employed in the *Book of Kells*, possibly around the year 800.

A formal and very slow style of writing, the majuscule could not cater to everyday necessities, and this was one of the reasons why a minuscule variant developed during the 7th century (Bischoff 1990: 84). It was much used for secular writing, though not exclusively, as some religious texts survive that employed such script. One example is the *Book of Armagh*, neighbour of *Kells*, but the latter codex itself contains both religious and profane writing in Insular minuscule, notably on the exuberant folio 25v and the less impressive folio 7r, a late addition to the codex.

The term 'Insular' is an umbrella word first used by Ludwig Traube (Brown 1993: 99) to comprise the family of scripts that flourished not only in the Celtic world, but also in the Anglo-Saxon one and, later, in the continent. The Irish were responsible for taking their script to Great Britain (Bischoff 1990: 90), something done under the influence of St Colum Cille, or Columba, the Irish monk who tradition says founded the Scottish monastery of Iona in 563. It was from there that Aidan, another Irish monk, set out to Northumbria to found the monastery of Lindisfarne in the 7th century, according to Bischoff (ibid.: 90).

Aidan's missionary activity not only restored Christianity in the area but also bequeathed to the Anglo-Saxons the scriptural lore acquired in the Columban milieu, thus starting the blurry distinction between Irish and Anglo-Saxon scripts, a confusion better expressed by Julian Brown (1993: 183):

> Where the line should be drawn between "pure Irish script" and "Irish script as developed in Northumbria" is a difficult question: a book decorated in Northumbria in a definably Anglo-Saxon way may still be in script which is essentially Irish, even if the scribe himself was the Anglo-Saxon pupil of an Irish master.

The two styles would not be entirely distinguishable until the late 9th century (Rumble 2009: 42).

The majuscule used in *Kells* is situated at the zenith of Insular scripts, being the youngest sibling of the similarly accomplished *Book of Durrow* and the magnificent *Lindisfarne Gospels*. It is a very rounded, airy script, showing some peculiarities. Letter *A* displays a characteristic shape of *O* and *C* merged, hence its name "OC-a", which Morison perhaps more justly calls "cc" (1972: 81). *G* and *T* are also distinguishing, the former with a flat top and the latter with a curved shaft. Also, Insular half-uncial freely uses some letters, notably *D* and *N*, from the older uncial inventory without apparent reason, sometimes in the same word INGENERATIONE in folio 12r from *Kells*, shows the two different kinds of *N*, the "OC-a", and the characteristic *G* and *T*.

Figure 1 - reproduction of a word in Insular half-uncial.

Figure 2 - Quadrilinear *l*, *r* and *s*.

Most importantly, scholars dealing with Insular scripts widely mention the triangular-shaped serif in vertical strokes (Duncan 2016: 214; Bischoff 1990: 86 and Morison 1972: 153-159). Its presence is conspicuous enough to prompt Morison to write extensively about it, offering two explanations for the appearance of this odd serif. Given its heavily artificial nature, he suggests that it could have been a means to prevent the deterioration of the script into a scrawl, because 'a carefully wrought serif does correct slothfulness in writing' (1972: 154). Or, perhaps, the wedged shape was inspired by coins of Imperial provenance that display the same feature (ibid.: 157).

The less formal and more compressed Insular script, the minuscule, was confined within four lines, instead of two, as shown by the ascender of *l* and descenders of r and s in Figure 2. Brown (1993: 201) divided it in four subcategories in decreasing order of formality, starting from the *Hybrid*, which kept some of the majuscule roundness; the Set, accelerated, but still showing pen-lifts; and the *Cursive* and *Current* minuscule, very slanted and rapid, the latter abounding in ligatures and abbreviations, which contributed even more to the economy of the minuscule (Bischoff 1990: 86). The most important of these was the Tironian 'et', ⁊, which would later appear in Gaelic typefaces.

However informal, or rather because of its informality, the minuscule was destined to endure. For Morison (1972: 47), when two scripts of different speeds are practised side by side, they engage in a competition that either gives rise to a syncretic form or is won by the swiftest. Suffice to say that the minuscule survived well into the twentieth century (O'Neill 2014: 8), and was the one to inspire most Gaelic typefaces that came to light much later.

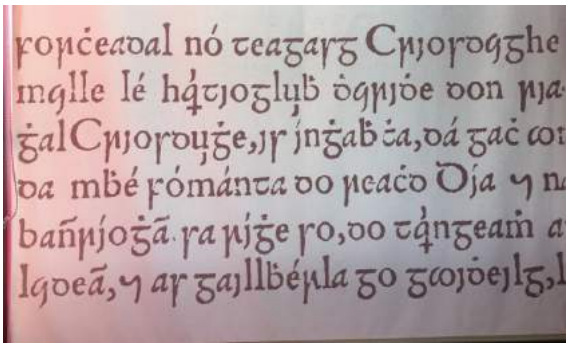

Figure 3 - Queen Elizabeth Type, Trinity College Long Room

2. Gaelic typefaces

Unlike the Insular scripts, which appeared first in Ireland and were carried over the sea, the first Irish typeface came after its Anglo-Saxon counterpart. Indeed, Dermot McGuinne (2010: 8) points out that this earliest typeface was independently created, owing nothing to its English predecessor, despite their similarities. *The Queen Elizabeth Type*, named after its commissioner, was first used in 1571 in a doctrinal book called *Aibidil Gaoidheilge agus Caiticiosma* (McGuinne 2010: 9). A fragment of its title page now decorates the blinds on the staircase that leads to the Long Room at Trinity College Dublin (Fig.3). Being an amalgam, it is possible to see the coexistence of many roman letters, like *C* and *n*, and newly cut Irish ones, such as the flat-topped *g*, and *t*

with its curved shaft. Lowercase *r* and *s* are also quite similar to their scriptural forefathers, and the Tironean 'et' is visible in lines four and six.

Figure 4 - Royal Irish Academy, Dawson Street

While *a* was snatched from an italic typeface (McGuinne 2010: 8), it does resemble the one used in the *Book of Armagh*. This letter would suffer a dramatic change with the arrival of the second Irish type, the 1611 Louvain *Type*, named after the place of its creation. Based on the handwriting of a certain Franciscan called Bonaventure O'Hussey, McGuinne calls it the 'first truly Irish type' (2010: 23). It is probably not counted among the most beautiful, with a generally uneven appearance, an uppercase *A* resembling a debased form of Fraktur, and particularly unsightly *M* and *N*. These oddities were to remain in several subsequent typefaces which either retained them or attempted unsuccessful amendments. The sign on the door of the Royal Irish Academy (Fig.4), with its FNG – standing for *Foclóir na Nua-Ghaeilge* – could be inscribed in this tradition, although the staff were unable to confirm it.

However, the *Louvain Type* is curious inasmuch as its lowercase a initiates a trend that survived in most later Gaelic typefaces: it was modelled on a three, not two-stroke minuscule a (Fig.5). This is a late characteristic of Irish script that Timothy O'Neill (2014: 88) observes to initiate in the 11th century *Annals of Inisfallen*.


Figure 5 - Two and three-stroke minuscule a.

In 1835, more than two hundred years after the *Louvain Type*, the long line of Irish typefaces with progressively more bizarre *A*, *M* and *N* was at last broken by the Irish artist George Petrie. Staunton (2007: 9) sees his creation as a 'bold move': while all the preceding typefaces had been based on the Insular minuscule, his was modelled on the half-uncial majuscule. Subsequent alterations were made to the *Petrie Type* in 1850 and 1856, so that it became progressively more Kells-like. In the latest version, for instance, it is possible to notice the "OC-a" more clearly than in the first. It was Petrie again who, in 1857, designed the type that McGuinne (2010: 3) decided to call *Newman Type*, after its commissioner. It had successive variations and, according to the author (ibid.: 126) many typefaces that appeared in the late 19th and 20th centuries derived from it. Letters probably based on this type are ubiquitous, for example in street signs (Fig.6) and elsewhere (Fig.15).

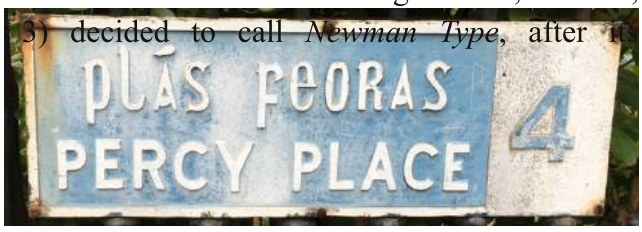

Figure 6 - Letters possibly based on the *Newman Type*.

Also worthy of mention is the *Baoithín Type* (McGuinne 2010: 138-143). Created by Colm Ó Lochlainn in the 1930s, it derived from a 1921 type called *Hammerschrift* after its creator, Victor Hammer. In fact, what Ó Lochlainn did was add variants to Hammer's letters, notably *A, B, D, G* and *T*, all of them designed to recall the half-uncial. However, the triangular serifs, perceived as the most peculiar characteristic of Insular scripts, were absent in these additions, maybe to conform to Hammer's letters. *A*, *B* and *D* regained some of their original roundness, the flat-topped *G* was rediscovered, and the protruding shaft of T was reduced. Both typefaces will reappear in this discussion.

Ó Lochlainn would later get involved in the production of another type called *Colum Cille*, so named because St Colum Cille 'is, par excellence, the patron of Irish scribes' (cited in McGuinne 2010: 151). If this indicates an attempt to return to the origins, the actual result of the type upon completion does not live up to the name, showing a mixture of roman capital, uncial and half-uncial forms that was not present in the federation of scripts that prospered under Colum Cille's influence. The Irish typefaces had been devised to serve the purposes of the vernacular Gaelic language, but in the early 20th century nationalistic forces promoted the use of Gaelic typefaces as the *only* proper way of writing Irish, thus kindling a patriotic feeling (Staunton, 2012, "Gaelicizing the Scriptal Environment", para. 5 of 7). The discontinuation of Gaelic types in favour of roman letters, which occurred in the 1960s, is described by the Staunton (2007: 14) as a symptom of modernization, so that Ireland could engage in a world that had adopted the roman alphabet as its *littera franca*. But the Irish letters survived in their homeland and, in the next section, the contemporary embodiment of Gaelic lettering styles is addressed.

3. Irish letters in contemporary use

Not much effort is needed to reveal the pervasiveness of Gaelic lettering styles in the landscape of Dublin, but closer attention shows that although a common atmosphere surrounds these inscriptions they are varied in shape and function. Originally conceived as the visual incarnation of the Irish language, this purportedly symbiotic relationship is seen now mainly on inscriptions often commemorative or official. Most are based on the types that arose from the minuscule, but variation is constant, as evidenced by Figure 7.

Letters modelled after the half-uncial are also to be found. Collected in the Garden of Remembrance, the example in Figure 8 is careful enough to include the peculiar triangular serif.

The next paragraphs are dedicated to commenting on some remarkable aspects of Insular-modelled letters. They are a tiny fraction of the immense variety available even to inattentive eyes.

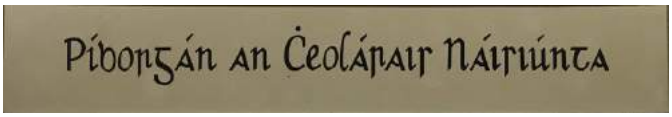

Figure 7 - Minuscule National Concert Hall and General Post Office.

Figure 8 - Majuscule Garden of Remembrance.

3.1. Hammer's typefaces and the G-neutralization

Victor Hammer continued for many years designing typefaces based on his original *Hammerschrift*. Most important are the 1943 *American Uncial* and the 1953 *Neue Hammer Unziale*, available on the Linotype website. While the American Uncial makes no distinction between upper and lowercase, the *Neue Unziale* uses roman uppercase letters. Whether or not Hammer was inspired by the Baoithín Type is difficult to say, but some letters, particularly a, bear close similarity to Ó Lochlainn's. Their historical background as given on the website ends identically, stating that both are 'often seen in Ireland and elsewhere for things that should look "Irish" or "Celtic"' (Linotype [n.d.] 'Background Story' section, para. 4 of 4). These letters are thought to evidence a residual touch of the Irish half-uncial, something culturally constructed by the long-lasting association of traditional Ireland with roundish letters. Uncontrolled replication perpetrated this vague sensation, even when people are unaware of how it came to be. Thus, typefaces bearing a loose connection with Insular scripts, created in the USA by an Austrian designer, are deliberately adopted to convey Irishness mainly, but not exclusively, in souvenirs, pubs, restaurants and accommodations. They are also favoured by the residents of Glasnevin Cemetery, where they coexist with a third typeface of Hammer's uncials called simply *Uncial Regular* on the Linotype website, which affirms it to be derived from the *American Uncial*. Its most distinguishing letter is the rounded y, evidenced by comparison with the word "Memory" in both gravestones below (Fig.9). Curiously, the *Uncial Regular* was also chosen by the University of Uppsala, Sweden, for the explanatory notice at the entrance of the Gothic *Silver Bible* exhibition, most certainly not in celebration of Irish letters. A fragment of it is exceptionally included in Figure 9 below.

Only one example collected in Dublin bears the *Regular Uncial*, and three of them employ the *American Uncial* as a model: the Douglas Hyde Gallery, above, the Bridge Tavern (Fig.15) and the Irish Gifts & Luggage (Fig.19). All the others prefer the *Neue Unziale*, as evidenced by the uppercase roman letters and/or lowercase *b*, *d* and *l*.

Figure 9 - Hammer's uncial letters.
From left to right, Glasnevin Cemetery, Suffolk Strret, Townsend Street, Talbot Street, Trinity College Dublin and the Carolina Rediviva Library, Uppsala, Sweden.

Figure 10 - *G* neutralization. Church Street, Merion Row and Marine Road (Dún Laoghaire).

What is most intriguing about the three typefaces is that, while trying to give an idea of tradition, of plain Irish provenance, one typical letter is absent from their palette: the flat-topped *G*, which Ó Lochlainn had included in the *Baoithín Type*, but Hammer did not keep in later typefaces. Intentionally or not, the neutralization of this odd-looking *G* proved convenient for those who elected Hammer's letters as a tourist pheromone. It gives away the right amount of Irishness to attract the eye, and simultaneously sanitizes a letter that borders mere exoticism and obtrusive unintelligibility.

G-neutralization is not exclusive to the family of Hammer's uncials. In Figure 10, the first image shows the letter as it appears in the *Colum Cille Type*. In the second, the g in "Lounge" approaches the shape of a Merovingian half-uncial (Morison 1972: 148). As for the motto of Dún Laoghaire, the letter ends up matching the roundness of its peers.

3.2. Uncial letters

One issue that could be pointed out in Hammer's creations is that, despite their names, they are in fact more half-uncial than uncial and, in this sole respect, more Irish. Contrary to what its name suggests, the half-uncial was not an offspring of the uncial script, even if it appeared later. They both originated from the cursive roman capitals in the fourtth and fifth centuries (Brown 1993: 61), and, while the uncials reached England as far as Northumbria, they were not practised in Ireland (Bischoff 1990: 71). Uncial script ramifies into various shapes which often overlap, at a first glance, with Insular half-uncials, particularly because, as mentioned previously, the latter does employ a few uncials as alternatives. The complexities of this script are many, but some differences, very simply put, can be seen in Figure 11. These dissimilarities notwithstanding, the general rounded aspect, reminiscent of the half-uncial, made popular some lettering styles that, though clearly uncial-based, are also employed to

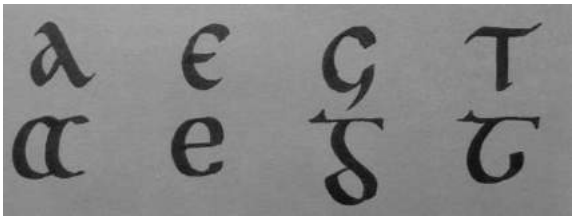

Figure 11 - Uncial (above) Half-uncial (below)

convey Irishness, even if strictly speaking they are more English. One of them, in 'The Brendan Behan' (Fig.12), is the *Omnia Roman*, created in 1990 by Karlgeorg Hoefer (Linotype [n.d.] 'Background Story' section, para. 3 of 3). 'Fitzgeralds' also displays an uncial style, distinguishable in *A*, *E*, *G* and *T*.

The variations in Figure 13 are very common as well. Again, one notes the characteristic *A*, *E* and *G* mixed with the half-uncial *T*.

Figure 12 - Uncial-style letters.
Abovre: Summerhill.
Below: Aston Quay.

Figure 13 - Uncial-style letters.
Above left: Temple Bar. Below left: van on Dorset Street.
Right: Great Denmark Street.

3.3. Competing forms

Figure 14 - Claddagh Jewellers. Nassau Street.

The existence of majuscule and minuscule-inspired forms of typefaces has already been mentioned, and some establishments chose both to signal their presence. The motivation is unknown: G-neutralization is a hypothesis, but a mere whim is also a possibility. The case of Claddagh Jewellers (Fig.14) might relate to the language shift, as the Irish version uses the more "authentic" *G* and *A*, based on minuscule models, while the English one appropriately betrays an uncial basis. As for the Bridge Tavern (Fig.15), it is noteworthy that two different majuscule styles were chosen, including Hammer's *American Uncial*, not to mention the minuscule, probably of *Newman Type* lineage.

Figure 15 - Bridge Tavern, Summerhill.

Figure 16 - The Long Stone, Townsend Street.

The Long Stone Pub chose four different styles. One of them (Fig.16, below), based on the minuscule, displays an uncharacteristic *S* and the flat topped *g*. The painting on the brick wall shows uncial features in *G*, while we are faced with two styles in Figure 19 (next section), including Hammer's uncial. The g with a single storey is possibly derived from the widespread normalized version of Carolingian ancestry.

3.4. The Tironean 'et' and the ampersand

Figure 17 - P 7 T
Gardiner Street Lower.

It was mentioned earlier that a large inventory of abbreviations was used to enhance the speed of the minuscule. The only one that survived in Gaelic typefaces was the Tironean 'et', 7, in opposition to the roman ampersand, &. The Tironean sign is discreet but common in post boxes and manholes displaying the Irish logo of the abolished Department of Posts and Telegraphs, where it appears alongside the rounded P and T (Fig.17). Less usual – indeed this is the only example found – is the English version using the roman type and ampersand (Fig.18). Staunton (2007: 12) affirms that the modernization process that affected the use of roman typefaces in the 1960s created a typographic instability in the Post Office, demonstrated by the commemorative stamps of the period. Further research could elucidate whether both styles are related to this instability.

Figure 18 - P.& T.
Dalkey Avenue.

The other example (Fig.19) belongs to a common sign in parking spaces. The remarkable aspect is that the Tironean 'et' is being used not because of an Irish typeface, but because of Irish language, as a means to counterbalance the ampersand in "PAY & DISPLAY". Being a translation calque, it failed to reproduce the rhyme. On the right, the person responsible for the painting chose neither character, preferring the ligature 'et' as it appears in the Hammer's uncial typefaces, something that we do not see in the red sign. Predominantly *American Uncial*, the ampersand cannot be defined as such.

Figure 19 - Above, left: Princess Street South. Above, right: Townsend Street. Below: Earl Street North.

4. Remaining issues

Staunton shares with the readers his critical view on the fact that, in the twentieth century, Gaelic typefaces fuelled nationalist movements, serving as a sort of bridge to the Irish civilization that had created the *Book of Kells* (2012, "Gaelicizing the Scriptal Environment", para. 7 of 7). If we accept that as true, we might say that the nationalists could well have chosen a less problematic source for their typographic ideology. Being such a beautiful artefact, and having such a border-crossing story, it comes as no surprise that scholars have engaged in a palaeographic tug-of-war in their attempt to pinpoint the book's provenance.

Julian Brown, an expert in Insular scripts, dedicated a whole article to explain the 'Northumbrian symptoms' in *Kells* (1993: 107). More than that, the implied message is that the book was written in Lindisfarne *after* the Irish and their influence had departed, allowing the Anglo-Saxons to develop their own style. On the other hand, the calligrapher Timothy O'Neill (2014: 22) and the scholar Bernhard Meehan (2012: 21) do not even mention the possibility of a Northumbrian origin, preferring, as most do, Iona as a likelier candidate. A Scottish monastery, indeed, but at least Celtic enough and closer to Columban influence. Wherever it is that the book was written, it has been in Ireland for so long, and is so often associated to the country that opposing voices are easily muffled. Thus, the rounded letters can continue playing their ancillary role in nationalistic feelings, which are not a past trend.

A Facebook page called "Irish Voice" (Fig.20) is one example of contemporary attempt to dress up ideology with letters, though falling short of the mark in selecting a typeface somewhat uncial. Directing unkind comments against Muslims and Brazilians, the managers of the page curiously tried to reach a higher level of Irishness by adding to the logo the most globalized element of the country, the shamrock. It would be dismaying to discover that English schools in Brazil store great amounts of green paper so that kids can cut their own shamrocks every March while listening to a very corrupted version of St Patrick's story.

Figure 20 - "Irish Voice" logo on Facebook.

While some use Celtic-resembling lettering to shun foreigners from Ireland, others try to attract them with a similar strategy, imparting to their letters a vestigial sense of tradition, as previously shown. See Figure 21 as a further example: the Irishness of the pub is enhanced by combining the name, the lettering style, the hanging flowers and the very feeble attempt of interlace in the uppercase roman letters.

Of course, one brilliant aspect of Insular letters is that they are an inexhaustible source of inspiration to which a creative mind can always turn. The logo of the National Trust for Ireland (Fig.22), a cultural organization, shows the characteristic T in a rustic way, suggesting an ancient carving, maybe. Also, many artists make good use of Irish half-uncials by reviving them in a contemporary context and removing the layers of varnish deposited through years of abuse, for want of a better word.

Figure 21 - Talbot Street

Figure 22 - An Taisce, Morehampton Road Wildlife Sanctuary.

This paper has elucidated important aspects of Irish letters, from their most sacred function to their wide use in daily, secular life. Jacqueline Svaren once affirmed that it is ‘a mistake to believe that any one letter form or style can possibly do all the work required of letters’ (1980: 33). But the Insular scripts and their descendants have been constantly required to play multiple roles, in churches and pubs, in gravestones and souvenirs, in millenary codices and adult colouring books. Pushed to the limit, a day might come when they will cease to be fully perceived as a source of Irishness. But despite any diminishing or distortion imposed on their former dignity, when we realize the amount of history behind the simplest Gaelic letter, it is still possible to catch a glimpse of their ancient majesty.

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Malinski*: Fictional Narrative Between Affiliative Postmemory and the Effacement of the Holocaust*

Eda Nagayama

Abstract: *This article proposes a fictional narrative as a postmemory representation as a conjunction of imaginary, appropriation of a position of alterity and the repertoire of Holocaust as a global reference event.* Malinski *(2000), by the Irish Síofra O'Donovan, will be seen as an articulation between resonance and effacement of the Holocaust. Albeit unintentionally, the novel may also support the historical revision that takes place contemporarily in Poland which intends to assure Poles strictly as Holocaust victims and impotent bystanders denying any effective participation in the genocide.*

Keywords: *Postmemory; holocaust; affiliative postmemory; Irish literature; bystanding.*

Malinski: Writing from a vision

Síofra O'Donovan was born in Dublin in 1971 and *Malinski* (2000) is her first book to be published. It narrates the life of two Polish brothers differently affected by traumatic experiences during the Second World War. The first of the three parts is dedicated to Stanislav, the older sibling unintentionally separated from his mother and brother. The boy is raised by his Catholic aunt in Krakow, by that time occupied by the Nazis and later on by the Soviets. The second part is focused on Henry that became a prisoner along with his mother when returning to the family home in Lvov, unaware that it had already become the residence of the Nazi *kapo*, Hilbig. By the end of the war, Henry and his mother leave Stanislav behind and flee to Ireland; she marries again and her son grows hiding his Polish identity and the war past. As an adult, Henry is disturbed by his ambiguous affection towards his perpetrator and by his conflicting choice of taking German culture and language as a professional career. The third and final part of the book narrates the meeting of the two brothers in Krakow after their mother's death and forty-nine years of separation when Henryk Malinski, now Henry Foley, returns to his homeland.

The narrative takes place in 1991, two years after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Poland is on the transition from communism to capitalism and the lingering liberation from the Soviet influence to become a member of the European Union in the future. The Irish writer proposes a double articulation of space and time: Poland and Ireland, past and present, along with two different reasons for the past separation of the brothers. Who was to blame? Mother or Henry? By the end of the novel, there is no single truth, redemption or healing for the siblings' wounds. They return to the childhood home in Lvov, the place of trauma for Henry, to find neither catharsis nor liberation, just an indication of the continuity of life – perhaps a banal

irrelevant life.

O'Donovan wrote *Malinski* after a period living in Krakow, Poland, in 1990s. She followed an interest fed along the years: her first love of Polish origin and the stories of a Polish college colleague – when together they were "like the oldest kindred spirits." The author has also lived in India and Tibet, experiences that led her to write two other books: *Pema and the Yak - A Journey into Exile* (2007) and *Lost in Shambhala* (2015).

For the Irish writer, Buddhist belief and philosophy are a fundamental personal axis for writing that manifests itself through significant visions and dreams, following a premise of coexistence between different spheres and logics of reality:

> Malinski came to me in a vision, while I was living on St. Bronislaw's Street in Krakow. I saw an old man at the top of a tower block, remembering the war. It was Stanislav. *His spirit had visited me* and I now had a duty to tell his story, and Henry's. *That is how I always begin a book, with a dream or vision*.
> (…)
> And when I go into a project, I am taken over by it completely... *I inhabited that time period for the time particularly of the first draft*... I dreamed of it, thought of it, and *felt like I was there, through Stanislav particularly.* (O'Donovan 2018, my emphasis) [1]

According to the writer, rather than identification with the character or empathic approximation, writing would be an immersion of subjective and temporal displacement. She works as a kind of instrument of mediation between different worlds and is able to bring histories that would be already there, just waiting to be discovered. To this perspective it is also added quite different propositions that see writing as a "continuous dream, a creation flow:

> Writing is inextricably linked to dreaming. Writing is allowing yourself to dream and to create, as John Gardner says, *'the continuous dream'. Seamless prose*. Wonders. Jewels. Horrors. *All delivered as if they were already there, in that other world, waiting to be discovered*. Or, as Stephen King puts it, excavated. *Stories are already intact, waiting to be discovered*.[2] (idem, my emphasis)

Despite being Stanislav who appeared in a vision in Krakow as if claiming that his story must be told, it is on Henryk/Henry that O'Donovan places the most problematic issues of the plot: guilt over the separation of the family and the ensuing suffering; abuse and mutilation by the Nazi kapo; the ambiguous feelings towards his perpetrator and the German culture. From a biographical perspective, Henry's life trajectory and character reflect and exacerbate the author's father's obsession about Germany that is perceived as uncomfortable and inappropriate by her:

> In my family, there were connections with Germany. My father's first wife was from Eisenach, Germany (east), and my sister was half German (half sister). *My father was obsessed with Germany, from the time his father, a prominent IRA man, Jim O'Donovan* (Director of Chemicals in the War of Independence)... *had masterminded a plot with the German Abwehr,[3] to have them parachuted in to plot against Britain in the 1930s*. Herman Goertz the German spy stayed in my father's orchard for weeks or months, and before he left, he gave him his rifle an knife, which my father kept for years. This spy eventually in 1947 took his cyanide

> capsule and was then buried in the German cemetery in Wicklow. *My father visited the grave frequently. I always thought it was so strange. And I disliked being dragged along to Germany as a child with my parents. I didn't like the atmosphere of the place, the strictness of people...*
> (...)
> *I think the Jews show up in the book like ghosts*... and though Henry's guilt... that he lived with a man who was all up for the exterminations... and yet he actually loved Hilbig as a father because he had no other father any more... (*this echoes my father's strange love for the German Spy in his garden as a child, for sure*.) (idem, my emphasis)

In spite of this conception of literary writing permeated by a mystical trait with visions, spirits and characters that may 'inhabit' the author, O'Donovan adopts a distinct approach in relation to the Jews that is determined by a fundamental separation due to her ethnic-religious non-affiliation: "Actually, I wanted to write about the Holocaust, but it did not feel qualified to do so because I'm not Jewish" (idem).

Affiliative postmemory and testimony

This article proposes that *Malinski* may be seen as a fictional work of postmemory representation, in a correlation of affiliative memory to the so called "second generation" – the descendants of survivors and victims of the Holocaust. The use of the term "second" implies a fundamental continuity in which the following generation is recipient of their parental trauma. Just as the event is not determinant for the development of traumatic symptoms by the victim, offspring would not necessarily inherit the trauma experienced by their parents. Van Alphen (2006) differently proposes that the deep connection with the past presented by the descendants could result of displacement of the relation with the parents and mediation. According to Hirsch, mediation constitutes a fundamental feature for understanding postmemory as an inter- and transgenerational structure of transmission that includes continuity and rupture as result of a traumatic experience:

> Postmemory describes the relationship that the generation after those who witnessed cultural or collective trauma bears to the experiences of those who came before, experiences that they "remember" only by means of the stories, images, and behaviors among which they grew up. But these experiences were transmitted to them so deeply and affectively as to seem to constitute memories in their own right. Postmemory's connection to the past is thus not actually mediated by recall but by imaginative investment, projection, and creation. (Hirsch 2008. 106-7)

The parents' traumatic experience as survivors and victims could thus be adopted as own by the offspring in a process involving imaginative investment, projection, and creation, as well as identification, not necessarily a family bond. Instead of an identity position, Hirsch (2001) proposes postmemory as an intersubjective transgenerational space of remembrance specifically related to cultural or collective trauma in which the witness by adoption could thus "remember" the suffering of others. Such appropriation could also be established by a web of transmission in the social sphere, capable of sharing the traumatic legacy at different levels thus constituting an " affiliative postmemory":

> Affiliative postmemory would thus be the result of contemporaneity and generational connection with the literal second generation combined with structures of mediation that would be broadly appropriable, available, and indeed, compelling enough to encompass a larger collective in an organic web of transmission. (Hirsch 2008. 115)

O'Donovan talks about her own organic web of transmission: the German half-sister, daughter of the father's first wife; the conspiracy between her grandfather and the German pilot in 1930s; her father's obsession with Germany; the period living in Poland; the stories told by Polish Jews and non-Jews. The Second War experience was thus available to be adopted and recreated as fiction through research, affiliative postmemory, and imagination, and narrated from a more legitimate and familiar identity position - as non-Jewish.

This perception of illegitimacy to narrate the Holocaust results from the assumption of testimony as the most reliable truth of the events: only the one who lived can narrate what actually happened. The testimony acquires this prominence during the process of establishing a narrative and culture of legality for an unprecedented crime[4] that involved the long Nuremberg Trials (1946) and the Adolf Eichmann Trial (1961). The wide press coverage of the 1961 trial, including television broadcasting, contributed to the massification of the subject through books, films, documentaries, and TV shows[5]. According to Shoshana Felman, two works can be called "conceptual breakdowns" in the apprehension of the Holocaust: *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (1963), book by Hannah Arendt, and the 566-min-long documentary film, *Shoah* (1985), by Claude Lanzmann. Despite the different proposals and the two decades of separation, both works controversially modified the vocabulary of collective memory by adding a “new idiom” to the discourse on the Holocaust, which did not remain the same as it had been before them. Felman proposes that today the accessibility to the Holocaust occurs in the space “of slippage” between law and art:

> Historically, we needed law to totalize the evidence, to *totalize* the Holocaust and, through totalization, to start to apprehend its contours and its magnitude. Historically, we needed art to start to apprehend and to retrieve what the totalization has left out. Between too much proximity and too much distance, the Holocaust becomes today accessible, I will propose, in this space of *slippage between law and art*. But it is also in this space of slippage that its full grasp continues to elude us. (Felman 107, original emphasis)

Felman remarks the inherent characteristic related to trauma and the Holocaust: something will always escape; understanding and totalization will always be an attempt, an effort doomed to a partial failure, as well as the testimony of victims and survivors in relation to full efficiency and communicability. This ambivalent tension between urgency and impossibility to narrate is at the core of psychic trauma, according to Caruth:

> (…) trauma seems to be much more than a pathology, or the simple illness of a wounded psyche: it is always the story of a wound that cries out, that addresses us in the attempt to tell us of a reality or truth that it is not available. This truth, in its delayed appearance and its belated address, cannot be linked only to what is known, but also to what remains unknown in our very actions and our language. (Caruth 1996. 4)

Like Felman's "space of slippage", trauma becomes accessible in an intermediate space, in the passage from wound to narrative, marked by a hybrid temporality of belatedness and repeated re-presentification of the past. For Caruth, the experience and reception of trauma dynamics determine a kind of "possession" that imposes a hierarchical subjugation relationship with the trauma to the individual:

> The pathology consists, rather, solely in the *structure of its experience* or reception: the event is not assimilated or experienced fully at the time, but only belatedly, in its repeated *possession* of the one who experiences it. To be traumatized is precisely to be possessed by an image or event. (Caruth 1995. 4-5, original emphasis)

As an impact that demands voice and narration, Caruth's traumatic possession may be related to O'Donovan's vision of Stanislav, and especially to the idea that the character can "inhabit" her. Thus, the effective elaboration of a literary narrative may offer a double therapeutic and liberating effect in relation to both possession and need to tell other's story: in a diegetic level, for the characters and events of the plot, and for the author that would be released from been "inhabited", freed to follow other interests and themes.

In *Malinski*, alterity manifests itself in the interplay between different instances: the author's place occupied by other, the appropriation of the experience of the Second World War as affiliative postmemory, and fictional narration as subjectivity. Diminishing identity differences, the other – Polish and Catholic – constitutes a place to be occupied and taken as memory by both author and reader. To remember with the memory of the other is a variation of the recurrent theme of the double, easily extended to the relation between author and narrator, author and protagonist. Piglia (2004) precisely sees the possibility of remembering with the memory of others as the perfect metaphor of the literary experience in which reading would be the "art of building a personal memory from experiences and memories of others".

The non-place of the Jews in *Malinski*

In *Malinski*, the proposition that the place of the other can be occupied and become a narrative, cannot be applied to the Jews. The author chooses a different approach by making Jews more like phantasmagoria, anonymous victims of Nazi brutality that appear briefly and sporadically. These 'apparitions' present a metonymical character in relation to the Holocaust by referring to a reality that is not objectively portrayed but find resonance in the reader due to the collective repertoire of images and information: the squalid survivors of the concentration camps liberation, naked corpses piled up and pushed by bulldozers. For Huyssen, the Holocaust turned out into a globalized reference, a "cipher" that can be displaced and applied to other posterior events of widespread organized violence such as the genocide in Rwanda or the ethnic conflicts in the former Yugoslavia.

> [The Holocaust became] a cipher for the twentieth century as a whole and for the bankruptcy of the Enlightenment project. It serves as evidence of the inability of Western civilization to practice anamnesis, to reflect upon its constitutive inability to live in peace with differences and alterities, and to draw the consequences of the insidious relations between Enlightenment modernity, rational oppression, and organized violence.*[6] (Huyssen 2000.12-13)

Bauman pointed out that rationality and organization at the service of violence is part of understanding the Holocaust as a characteristically modern phenomenon that cannot be analyzed outside the context of cultural tendencies and technical achievements of modernity, as a clash of factors rather common and ordinary themselves. The effort of understanding the past must make us reflect on our current way of life,

> (...) the quality of the institutions in which we trust for our safety, the validity of the criteria with which we measure the adequacy of our conduct and the models of interaction that we consider and accept as normal.* (Bauman 14)

The extermination on a massive and industrial scale could only be realized and justified by the characteristics of modernity in a politically emancipated German state of audacious manipulative ambitions which detained the monopoly of the means of violence: rationality and scientific knowledge for an ethnic and racial improvement; bureaucracy and segmentation of processes aiming to an increasing efficiency production. This combination of elements enabled not only the causal detachment of the perpetrators, but mainly the moral invisibility of the victims in a high-civilized society. According to Bauman, there is a "parochial and marginalizing effect" in accepting that the only legitimate guardians and beneficiaries of the Holocaust are Jews and/or that the exceptional guilt is exclusively Germanic. We must emphasize its universality as an issue of the modern human condition and alert to the danger presented by the moral comfort of self-sacrifice, and the moral and political disarmament7.

The contemporary strength of the Holocaust is related to Bauman's warning, to the threatening shadow that still may reach us if lacks surveillance. It is especially worrisome in the context of the strengthening of conservative political forces in countries like Italy, Sweden and Denmark, of the leadership in Austrian government and seats in the German parliament for the first time since World War II[8]. Although published in 2000, *Malinski* is symptomatic of the effacement of the Holocaust memory as a historical event, mainly in the generation of millennials, as attested by the survey conducted in the United States by Schoen Consulting commissioned by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference), which results were released in April 2018[9]:

> 70% of American adults believe that fewer people care about the Holocaust today than they used to
> 58% of Americans believe that the Holocaust could happen again
> 31% of Americans, and 41% of millennials, believe that two million or fewer Jews were killed in the Holocaust (the actual number is around six million)
> 41% of Americans, and 66% of millennials, cannot say what Auschwitz was
> 52% of Americans wrongly think Hitler came to power through force

It is not about Holocaust denial (96% believe it actually happened) or not considering it a relevant subject (93% think the Holocaust should be taught at school), but an effective loss of information and relevance, mostly derived from the distance from the original event.

In Malinski, the terms "Holocaust" and "genocide" are never used and the Jews are encapsulated in a single significant figure: the "Schveetheart Tailor". Devoid of a proper name and known fate, the character only appears in Henry's delusions and dreams, except for one childhood memory when mother and children visit the tailor's in Krakow's Jewish quarter.

Even before entering, Henry sees the tailor through the window, sewing with wide gestures as an orchestra conductor:

> As he sewed he made wide, sweeping movements with his long arm and his absurdly long thread. He was more like an orchestral conductor than a little Jewish tailor in Lvov. Her played music on a gramophone that had a large horn. *Für Elise*. I remember that. (O'Donovan 2000. 98)

The tailor is presented with the positive singularity of his gestures, the musical atmosphere, the "sumptuous" and "divine" sweets made by his generous kind wife:

> Our mother would scold us for eating too many pastries. He would always say: 'Ach… leave the boys. I am fast eater. I was all der time. I was when vas yung boy at home I vas fast, fast, fast. I vork fast, but now I slow down. Eat, boys, eat!'
> His wife would fuss about us, ruffling our hair as we gulped down pastry after divine pastry.
> 'Ach, schveetheart, Mamushka, leave the boys, day jus fast eaters like me.' (id.ibid.)

The figure of "Mr Schveetheart Tailor" is ambivalent: it is synthetically built with positivity and sympathy but on the other hand, it lacks depth and nuance. He is the only character who has his accent inscribed in his lines, reinforcing the stereotyped image of an old Jew. With no name or individuality, the Jew has neither interiority nor voice that may manifest opinion or thought. Silenced and absent, Jews and the Holocaust constitute a phantasmagoria, a traumatic resonance of denial and repetition:

> I wonder was he shot or gassed. If he was gassed, was it with Zyklon B or the fumes of an old diesel tank? Ach, I don't know. The man *is gone*, his wife *is gone*, their children *are gone*, their parents *are gone*, every kin they ever had and every neighbor they ever had is gone. Maybe one of his *needles* survived in the slit between his wooden floorboards. If it did, it was a lucky needle. Goodbye Mr Schveetheart Tailor, Goodbye Mrs Schveetheart Tailor! Goodbye all of you who left the world through the chimneys of crematoria. Ollie, you thought you suffered. As the wise old Jew said, it's all relative. I praise what is truly alive, what longs to be burnt to death. Goethe. Goodnight. (id.ibid., my emphasis)

In the excerpt above, a "lucky needle" is humanized and may perhaps escape, hidden among the planks of the wooden floor. Following the same logic of an identity mirroring, the tailor is thus reified as one of his work tools. He is equally unimportant as a pin among others, to be lost as a needle in the haystack, just one corpse more among the millions of exterminated Jews.

This ghostly configuration of the Jews in the narrative results from the overlapping of several instances: identification, transgenerational transmission, memory of adoption, globalized reference, empathic imagination – and the author's emotional commitment:

> (…) that passage about the old "schweetheart" tailor in Lviv is where I put my heart and soul into how I felt about the loss and extermination of the Jews in Poland... they were decimated, and I always felt from the beginning of my time in Krakow, their ghosts were around me. (O'Donovan 2018)

"Schveetheart Tailor" thus constitutes a synthetic representation of all missing or dead Jews due to the Holocaust, in a kind of compassionate reverence for the catastrophe that struck the other – non-Irish, non-Catholic. This option for this encapsulated Jewish character even unintentionally ends up at the service of not only the effacement of the Holocaust but also of the borders between victims, perpetrators and bystanders, an issue controversially debated in contemporary Poland with a nationalist and conservative political-ideological bias[10].

After being separated from his mother and brother, Stanislav is sent to Krakow to stay with his fervent Catholic aunt. Aunt Magdalena is a bystander who, instead of Nazis, curses Jews, Gypsies and Communists, guilty for the exceptionally unfavorable situation, according to her own judgement. Despite not being an active anti-Semite, supporter of the persecution and extermination of the Jews, the character is very defensive and insensitive. When asked by the Nazi soldier about being a client of the Jewish antique shop, the aunt replies: "'I had business with the Jew in question. But I was not on friendly terms. I am a Catholic and do not mix with that sort.'" (O'Donovan 2000. 34) Soon afterwards, shots are heard and a Jewess is thrown out the window; the Nazi soldier screams at her: "That old Jew bitch was thrown out of a window on a wheelchair! I told you there were Jews in the building – did you not know?! Are you happy now, you Polish Catholic vermin – happy now the Jew is dead? Ja?" (id.ibid.)

The episode combines the transgression of moral conventions – age, gender and physical disability, with the absurdity and violence of the situation. The aunt has neither reaction nor reflection about what happened, the soldier cursing her, the Jewess' or the antique shop's owner's fate. Silence attests to the normalization of something that it was previously unacceptable and that it should still be exceptional. On this switch from normalization to normality, bystanders are released from moral dilemmas and the inertia of victimization is stimulated. Even as a complex process with many variants and constraints, bystanding behavior is by no means unexpected or surprising:

> There may not be many who, in principle, would refuse to perform a bystanding behavior when harm is inflicted upon a victim by a perpetrator. The majority of us would exhibit bystanding behavior while victimization is taking place. It may well be that the Holocaust forced many of us to reflect on this issue for the first time, because of the massive extent of the atrocities involved and the length of time over which it persisted. Perhaps it was only after the fact that we recognized it as a massive failure of human society and individuals to imagine its extent and to perform acts of rescuing and resistance. (Bar-On 133)

Conclusion

A final reflection is proposed here in which *Malinski* is approximated to other fictional works[11] that also "adopt" the Second World War as narrative context but do not present the biographical testimonial trace that marked the generation of victims and survivors. Affected by the force of the Holocaust, the protagonism in the narratives is performed by an alterity – a non-Jewish. The characters may thus be children or adults, German or Polish Christians, but always bystanders who are also struck by circumstances, whether in the present of threat and survival or retroactively and permanently, as in *The Reader* and *Malinski*.

This approach can simultaneously reflect and also contribute to a contemporary social inertia and analgesia as bystanders. In a positive society, as proposed by Byung-Chul Han, the negativity of the Holocaust would no longer fit, thus becoming only a backdrop or an adjuvant event - shallow and flat, faded.

> The positive society does not admit any negative feelings, thereby, we forget how to deal with suffering and pain, we forget how to give them *form*. For Nietzsche, the human soul owes its depth, greatness, and strength precisely by dwelling on the negative.* (Han 18-19, original emphasis)

In an ambivalent way, *Malinski* reflects this contemporary tension between positivity and negativity. The characters are predominantly negative – unhappy and hopeless losers – , but considering the formal perspective, the work fades the negativity of the Holocaust, causing all Jews to be symbolically encapsulated in the superficial and sympathetic figure of the tailor who only reappears in nightmares and hallucinations. From the ideological point of view, especially the figure of Aunt Magdalena supports the allegation that the Poles were mostly victims[12], contributing to weakening the discourse of collaboration and active involvement of the common population, as evidenced by the books by Jan T. Gross and Jan Gabrowski[13].

In opposition to Bauman's warning of necessary vigilance of institutions and parameters of conduct and interaction considered normal in a democratic society, contemporaneity is been constantly and disturbingly caught between normality and normalization, whereby asylum-seekers are deported back to their countries of origin, migrants rescued at open sea are denied their request to land in European countries, children are detained and separated from their parents, illegal migrants in the United States. Considering this outlook and that 58% of Americans of the above-mentioned survey commissioned by the Claims Conference believe that the Holocaust can happen again, it is urgent to reflect on the passage from normality to normalization that despite taking place through laws and procedures, it is absolutely indissociable from the sphere of morality and ethics that rules our contemporary society.

Notes

1 Answers to my questions sent by e-mail by the author. Received on Jan 12th 2018.

2 “About me”, author’s website. In: http://siofraodonovan.com/. Access on Jul 16th 2018.

3 The Abwehr was the German military intelligence service for the Reichswehr and Wehrmacht from 1920 to 1945.

4 In the face of an event without prior comparative references, the need for framing and differentiation made it possible to create new law concepts such as "crime against humanity" and the neologism "genocide".Philippe Sands, Professor of Law at University College London, worked as a lawyer on the cases of crimes against humanity that took place in Rwanda, Yugoslavia, Libya, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Iran, Syria and Lebanon. He has historically reconstructed the two concepts from the trajectory of his own family of Jewish origin in *East West Street*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2016.

5 One of the programs that raised the public's awareness to the subject was the dramatic TV mini-series *Holocaust*, directed by Marvin J. Chomsky, produced and aired on the US network NBC, with Meryl Streep and James Woods.

6 This excerpt and all the following marked by (*) are my translated versions from the Brazilian editions.

7 Such reflection on 'normality' and the acceptance of governmental criteria and decisions is now particularly relevant in the face of the right-wing and far-right political increasing around the

world, especially in the wake of the migration crisis. In Italy, the new populist government vetoed landing of 600-people from a Médecins Sans Frontières NGO ship. (Jun. 11th 2018). In https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/11/world/europe/italy-migrant-boat-aquarius.html

Roberto Saviano, author of Gomorrah, book on the Italian mafia, comments:

And if Europe fails in its mission to host and integrate migrants, those European leaders who can't measure up to the situation would do better to hold their tongues, rather than go in for calculated insults. It is Italy's duty to battle for change for the better, not to descend into the most boorish nativism. Human lives are at stake. In https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jun/19/italy-war-migrants-fear-civil-rights. Access on Jul. 23rd 2018.

In May and June 2018, more than 2,000 children were separated from their parents, illegal immigrants detained in the USA. In https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-44503318. Access on Jul. 23rd 2018.

8 In http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/politics/german-election-results-exit-poll-2017-live-latest-afd-mps-merkel-alternative-a7964796.html Access on Dec 8th 2017.

9 In http://www.claimscon.org/study. Access on Jul 27th 2018. "Holocaust Is Fading From Memory, Survey Finds", New York Times, Apr 12th 2018. In https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/12/us/holocaust-education.html Access on Jul 28th 2018.

10 In February 2018 it was approved by the Senate and the Sejm, the Polish Lower House, with the sanction of the president Andrzej Duda, a law that criminalizes the use of the expression "Polish concentration camps" and prohibits any accusation to the Poles of collaboration in the perpetration of the Holocaust. The criminal sentence is up to three years in prison applicable to citizens of any nationality. Following the polarized national discourse of victims and heroes, the law aims to shield the Poles, strengthening victimization as part of the national identity. "We, the Poles, were victims, as were Jews" declared the former Prime Minister Beata Szydło of PiS - Prawo i Sprawiedliwość (Law and Justice), the right-wing party ruling Poland since 2016. In https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/01/poland-holocaust-speech-law-senate-israel-us Access on Feb 6th 2018.

11 *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, by John Boyne (2006), *The Book Thief*, by Markus Zusak (2005), *The Reader*, by Bernhard Schlink (Der Vorleser, 1995) and *The Kommandant's Girl*, by Pam Jenoff (2007).

12 Jonathan Freedland, *The Guardian* columnist: "Polish nationalists want Poles to have been the untainted victims of Nazism: it's hard to admit that too many were willing assistants to genocide. Like almost every nation occupied by the Nazis, and unlike Germany itself, Poland has not yet made a clear-eyed reckoning with its past." In https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/02/poland-holocaust-free-speech-nazi. Access in Jul 28th 2018.

13 The Polish US-based historian Jan T. Gross wrote about the Jedwabne massacre in 1941 (Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, New York: Arrow Books, Random House, 2003) and the pogrom in Kielce in 1946 (Fear: Anti-Semitism in Poland after Auschwitz, New York: Random House, 2007), both very violent incidents that counted with the direct participation of the local population. Controversial, Gross was investigated by stating that the Poles killed more Jews than Nazis during World War II. In https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/feb/14/academics-defend-historian-over-polish-jew-killings-claims. Access on Nov 13th 2017.

Jan Gabrowski, a Polish Canada-based historian, published *Hunt for the Jews* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013) on the persecution of Jews in the region of Dabrowa Tarnowska, Poland.

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From Translations *to* Traducciones*:* *Challenges and Strategies*

María Yolanda Fernández Suárez

Abstract*: When researching how hedge schools were represented in literary sources, I realized Brian Friel's depiction in* Translations *had become the most iconic. Even though he is regarded as a major Irish playwright, whose work has been translated into several languages, hardly any of his plays could be found in Spanish. Therefore, bringing together my interests in Irish and translation studies, I took the opportunity to render this seminal play into the Spanish language with the purpose of making Friel more widely available.*
When contemplating the work ahead, I was not unaware of the challenges posed by the linguistically complex nature of Translations*, shown in its very title. However, soon other less obvious difficulties emerged, like the translation of some Irish cultural elements. Last but not least, some features of orality, related to the intrinsic nature of drama translation, were also challenging. While addressing these issues, I aimed at giving readership the impression that the text had originally been written in Spanish.*

Keywords*: Brian Friel;* Translations*;* Traducciones*; Literary Translation.*

Why translating this play?

This work was born because of my personal interest in translation and, above all, in this play that captured my imagination since I first saw it onstage over twenty years ago. Like Friel himself, 'I think I am a sort of peasant at heart. [...] and I'm much more at ease in a rural setting' (Murray 14). Therefore, I felt a special connection with the Baile Beag community and their misadventures to the extent of choosing the hedge school system of education as the topic for my PhD.

In my thesis, apart from researching the origins and development of these schools, I devoted a section to a short anthology of their representation in literature and the arts (Fernández-Suárez 2006: 255-367). Among numerous depictions of hedge schoolmasters and their schools only Friel had taken them to the stage. A few years later, when discussing possible outlets for Irish studies in Spain – AEDEI had been founded some years before-, the translation of Irish authors was mentioned. I realised that, being an independent scholar, a translation work suited me perfectly as it is usually more of a solitary job.

I adopted a hands-on approach starting with a rough draft of the translation while researching all the different fields concerned with the task, such as academic papers on this play, translations into other languages, Friel's works in Spain, the specific peculiarities of drama translation, etc.

The play in the Spanish theatre scene

Translations made Friel a subject of academic study while becoming a regular play of the repertoire of theatre companies worldwide. It has been recognized as a masterpiece and as such it has been acknowledged as the most significant Irish play of the second half of the twentieth century (Boltwood 151). I wondered how it had fared in Spain.

I found that the staging of Friel's plays has been quite erratic. In the late 1980s we find an adaptation of *Translations* in the Basque Country in two versions, one totally in Spanish –translated by one of the actresses, Teresa Calo Fontán -and the other in Basque for Gaelic and Spanish for English. They were directed by Pere Planella and based in an unpublished translation into Catalan dating from 1984 by Josep M. Balanyà. The title was *Agur, Eire, Agur* (*Goodbye, Eire, Goodbye*) and it was. This particular play was chosen because the company considered its theme was meaningful within the Basque context of the time: the historical reality and the conditions of Euskadi were identified with those of The Troubles in Northern Ireland (Gaviña Costero 364). Thus, it became a truly political play and could not be staged anywhere else outside the Basque region.

Only in the twenty first century will Friel's plays be produced more often on the Spanish theatre stage. Curiously, the same plays, namely *Dancing at Lughnasa*, *Molly Sweeney*, *Faith Healer* (under the title *Francis Hardy*), *Afterplay* and *The Yalta Gam*e, turned up repeatedly from time to time in different regions and in different languages.

As for *Translations*, it did not seem to receive any attention until the Abbey Theatre brought it to Barcelona in 2001, in English with Catalan subtitles. More recently, in 2013-14, it was staged again in Catalan around Catalonia. The translation for this latest production was made by Joan Sellent in 2013 but was not published (Alsina Keith & Giugliano 184). Therefore, there were no translations in Spanish available in the market, so I resolved to embark on this task and offer Spanish readers the chance other major languages already enjoyed: the play can be found in French, German, Portuguese, Italian, etc.

Challenges and strategies

I was not really aware of all the challenges I would face during the translation process although, just by looking at the title, I knew the matter of languages would be an issue.

Languages

Friel is one of the Northern Irish writers that grew up in a state where the speaking of Irish was a political act (Kiberd 616) and he wrote the play during the most turbulent period of Irish history since Partition. He belonged to a generation of intellectuals who worked in order to find an imaginative solution to The Troubles. They set up Field Day with the ambition of reconstructing reality (Peacock 29), and *Translations* was the first play in which Friel put their ideals into practice.

At first sight, *Translations* seems a simple play with a conventional three-act structure and naturalistic dialogue. Friel wanted to focus on the death of the Irish language and the acceptance of English, and the profound effect that this change would have on the people, as we can see in his diary entries:

> 1st June 1979: …the play has to do with language and only language. And if it becomes overwhelmed by that political element, it is lost. (Murray 75)
>
> 6th of July 1979: The play must concern itself only with the exploration of the dark and private places of individual souls. (*ibidem* 77)

In order to immerse the audience in the nineteenth-century historical and cultural climate Friel resorts to language but incorporating his preoccupation with form: "*Translations* is rooted in the varying nuances inherent in the same language on different tongues" (*ibidem* 82). How can he make this innovation work? He was aware that Irish identity was inextricably bound to the languages of Ireland -Gaelic, English, and Irish English, the new English unique to the island, the solution Irish people found to the demise of their native tongue (Worthen 24). Therefore, he resorted to using Standard English and Hiberno-English as if they were two completely different languages, mirroring two antagonistic cultures. He also adds specific characteristics of his native Ulster English in order to create the impression of a completely different language onstage.

Through differences in diction, syntax, and colloquial expression, HE helps the illusion that the characters are speaking their native tongue; it also contributes to the otherness of an alien culture showed by the British soldiers on hearing it. Finally, it gives the audience a feel of the confusion and frustration the natives must have felt when the cultural shift took place.

Here lies the challenge not only for the audience, but also for the translator, who has to keep this trick in a third language. Actually, we can say that the play is not only 'about' translation but it 'is' a translation, as the audience is demanded a polyglot tolerance while engaged in a translation game when they hear quotations from Homer in Greek or when the characters use some Latin to communicate (Peacock 121).

What could I do to transfer all these meanings into the Spanish translation? I certainly wanted to achieve a translation without resorting to any marked regional dialects. Looking closer into the matter, I noticed that the types of English used by Friel were generally associated to different registers. The Standard English used by the soldiers often indicates a more formal register, especially in the case of Captain Lancey, while HE marks a more informal, colloquial way of speaking. Therefore, on a lexical-semantic level, I chose Standard Spanish for the British soldiers, neutral at times but with more formal expressions when needed, while opting for a more colloquial Spanish that would give some local colour to the peasants' language.

Another issue regarding register was distinguishing well the two degrees of politeness/formality conveyed by the personal pronoun "You" in Spanish. Considering the plot takes place in the nineteenth century, I opted for "*usted*" not only when the speaker was addressing someone they were meeting for the first time (the soldiers when they arrive at the school) or someone with authority (the students to the teacher) but also when Manus and Owen were speaking to their father; in the rest of the conversations I used "*tú*": dialogues between Owen and Yolland, as they are friendly colleagues; Yolland and Maire when they get intimate; Jimmy and Hugh as they are peers, etc. I wondered whether the schoolmaster could have treated his pupils with the more respectful "*usted*". Probably that was the case, but it would have been confusing hearing Hugh addressing Jimmy Jack formally during lessons but informally in other private conversations.

From a socio-linguistic point of view, Friel portrays and colours his characters from the beginning through the language each of them speaks. This is a way of compensating for not really using English and Irish as two distinct languages. For instance, Captain Lancey speaks in an impersonal manner, brief and to the point, which fits his description in the stage directions: "He is uneasy with people –especially civilians, especially these foreign civilians" (29). [3]

> Lancey: Lieutenant Yolland is missing. We are searching for him. If we don't find him, or if we receive no information as to where he is to be found, I will pursue the following course of action […] If that doesn't bear results, commencing forty-eight hours from now we will embark on a series of evictions and levelling of every abode in the following selected areas […] (61).
>
> *Lancey: El Teniente Yolland ha desaparecido. Lo estamos buscando.* ***Caso de que*** *no lo encontremos,* ***o caso de que*** *no recibamos información sobre su paradero, tomaré las siguientes medidas. […] Si ello* ***no conlleva resultados****, transcurridas cuarenta y ocho horas desde este momento,* ***emprenderemos una serie de desahucios y derribo*** *de todas y cada una de las viviendas en las zonas designadas a continuación [...]* (181-182).

However, it is Hugh's speech the most interesting for a translator because of its uniqueness, as it cannot be categorized as Standard English or HE. He is a polyglot who teaches Greek and Latin through Irish. As a true representative of hedge-schoolmasters, he uses a bookish, pedantic manner of speaking peppered with Latinate words, defined by Oliver Goldsmith in his famous poem "The Deserted Village" as "words of learned length, and thundering sound" (Joyce 78). This happens both when he addresses Captain Lancey in English:

> Perhaps modest refreshment? A little sampling of our aqua vitae? (30).
>
> *¿Un modesto refrigerio, quizás? ¿Una degustación de nuestra aqua vitae?* (120).

Or when he addresses his students with his vesperal salutations / "*saludos vespertinos*" (105) or describes Lancey as "suitably verecund"/ "*apropiadamente verecundo*" (108) for not knowing any Classical languages or explains what happened during a wake:

> There I was, appropriately dispositioned to proffer my condolences to the bereaved mother… and about to enter the ***domus lugubris*** (64).
>
> *Allí estaba yo, apropiadamente dispuesto a proferir mis condolencias a la afligida madre… y a punto de entrar en la* ***domus lugubris*** (187).

We can see that the translation here follows nearly word by word the English version. The drawback in this occasion is that Spanish vocabulary is per se more polysyllabic than English and most of our words have a Latin etymology so that pompous and ridiculous effect is somehow lost. However, in spite of our Latin background, sometimes I could not maintain Friel's Latin choice of words in the etymological game Hugh plays with his pupils because those precise words do not exist in Spanish:

> On my perambulations today – ***perambulare*** (24) / *Hoy durante mi deambular –**deambulare*** (108).
>
> We have been diverted –***diverto*** – ***divertere***- (26) / *Han desviado nuestra atención –**devio** –**deviare*** (111).

In the first example, both verbs are compounds of "*ambulare*" – "to walk" but Friel's choice means "to make the round, to tour" while mine means "to go for a walk". In the second one, "*diverto*" means "separate, divert, digress" but "*devio*" "detour, stray, depart".

Another marked feature of Hugh's speech is his response to everything – "indeed", a translation of "*mossa*", a sort of assertive particle used at the opening of a sentence in Irish (Joyce 297). There are over ten examples and I have tried to be consistent in their translation using "exacto", as it certainly marks his characterisation. However, there is one instance in which this word was not appropriate, so I had to opt for "*seguro*", instead:

> Manus: You're hungry then (28). / Entonces tendrás hambre (115).
> Hugh: Indeed –get him food –get him a drink / *Seguro – tráele algo de comer – tráele una copa*.

Finally, those dialogues in which he becomes a philosopher conveying Steiner's ideas also contribute to make him sound grandiloquent:

> We like to think we endure around truths immemorially posited (42).
>
> *Nos gusta pensar que sobrevivimos gracias a verdades postuladas desde tiempo inmemoria*l (144).

Cultures

Apart from these language downsides, considering I was translating to a third language, my main concern was how to "relocate" the text to facilitate its understanding to prospective Spanish readers. I soon realised that I would be facing new dilemmas on every page. With every choice of words I made, some relevant meaning seemed to get lost, which made me aware of the fact that my translation might not be self-sufficient. Moreover, my purpose was to do a philological translation, critical and with notes for a didactic use. Therefore, using appendixes seemed a good option. Indeed, Friel himself had organized his endnotes in an appendix for the Latin and Greek phrases with their translations into English. So following his example, Appendix I is related to Classical culture (Friel 2016: 197-204).

Apart from the phrases in Latin, I added other cultural concepts that the new generations might be less familiarized with, such as Classical authors and mythology. On top of that, I wanted to highlight the intertextual references Friel subtly makes with the quotations he chose from ancient Greek and Roman authors as all of them contribute to the plot. For instance, the headline Hugh sets for homework is an ironic allusion to the loss of identity, language and culture when Baile Beag becomes Ballybeg:

> Tacitus' "It's easier to stamp out learning than to recall it" (20).
>
> "*Es más fácil borrar el saber que recordarlo*" (98).

Or his lamentation on finding out he will be displaced from his position as schoolmaster by a bacon-curer, following Ovidius' line: "***Barbarus hic ego sum quia non intelligor ulli***"

> "I am a barbarian in this place because I am not understood by anyone" (64).
>
> "Soy extranjero en este lugar porque nadie me entiende" (188).

Friel uses the classical languages to emphasize how cultured some of the Irish population was compared to the English, a kind of homage he pays to the historically important role Irish scholars performed in the Dark Ages in the transmission of Classical culture (Peacock 123-124).

Appendix II (Friel 2016: 205-219) was meant to bridge the gap in Gaelic culture. Friel does not only emphasize the cultural shift with his language trick but also with the traditional Irish background he chooses for the action: the hedge school and a typical day in it. At first, however, he was convinced that the play would be a financial loss because "here is a play set in 1833, set in a hedge-school –you have to explain the terminology to people outside the island, indeed to people inside the island too" (Murray 108). I cannot but agree with him and confess the term "hedge school" was one of the pitfalls that tormented me all throughout the translation stage because it was hard to find a satisfying name in Spanish.

The hedge school played a crucial role in the history of Irish education. It received this name from the Penal Law times when the Catholic population were not allowed to be educated but they found hidden places outdoors –under the sunny side of a hedge- where the master met their pupils for classes (Fernández Suárez 2006:119). In spite of their many flaws, they educated the lower classes on a national scale, they were supported by the peasants without interference from the government and, although with a majority of Catholic students, they catered for different denominations in a time of a religiously-divided society (*ibidem*, 372). Therefore, "hedge school" is a concept deeply rooted in the Irish collective unconscious, full of expressive and evocative power –thanks mainly to the success of *Translations*, which certainly helped to canonize it.

In Spanish, the literal translation "*escuela del seto*" was out of the question but there were several different options taken from other names the hedge school received in English. Unfortunately, none of them was perfect: a hedge school was not necessarily a rural school, which seems to be the most common choice in the translations I had looked up (Catalan, Portuguese and Italian); logically, the new school would also be "rural" as it would be in the same setting; escuela privada (private school) or escuela de pago (pay school) are perceived in Spanish as elitist, which is a far cry from the reality.

It was a difficult choice. In the introduction I opted for a descriptive name: "*escuela nativa independiente*" (independent native school) to highlight its key characteristic –the fact that it was supported by the local community and that they had to pay for their lessons. In the play I have chosen the shorter "*escuela independiente*" and turns of phrase like "*una escuela de este tipo*" / "this type of school" or "*una escuela como ésta*" / "a school like this" in those lines in which it is compared to its rival, "la nueva escuela nacional" / the new state-run national school, an off-stage presence but acting as a looming threat that will eventually displace hedge schools. It is in these extracts in which these cultural terms are highly ideologically charged: hedge schools representing the Gaelic culture and way of life -a form

of rebellion against English colonial rule- and the National School evoking the substitution of the Irish language for English.

Another drawback was dealing with some personal names, especially those that resemble specific words in English, like Doalty, which reminds us of "dolt"/ "*bobalicón*", causing a comical effect; or Yolland that sounds similar to "your land" / "*tu tierra*", or Lancey that seems related to "lance"/ "lanza", and which so effectively help in the description of these characters. I am aware that something is lost by not fully understanding these "hidden" meanings.

The same applies to place names. *Dinnseanchas* was a significant part of Irish culture, a legendary guide to the landscape that tried to explain how and why features came to be named. Therefore, Gaelic place names contained some significance as we can see in *Bun na hAbhann*, which means "River's Mouth"/ "*Desembocadura del Río*" or *Druim Dubh*, which is "Black Ridge"/ "*Cresta Negra*" However, with the Anglicizing of Gaelic names, Irish culture and traditions are uprooted: the first example becomes Burnfoot, which sounds similar to "*Pie quemado*" (130-131) while the second one is replaced by Drimduff (135-136), in which the first part is meaningless but the second is informal for "*chungo, malo*" / "useless, worthless". These new names are trivial, even comical, which devalues and mocks the Gaelic culture.

I decided translating the Gaelic names was beyond the scope of my work. However, I determined to acknowledge this distinctive feature in the play with a section in Appendix II on Gaelic personal and place names. As for the new names in English, I felt that keeping English as the theme of the play but changing the medium (the Spanish language) would help maintain the original setting. Again, this was a middle way, a compromise.

Regarding Appendix III (Friel 2016: 221-228), George Steiner's philosophical ideas were major intellectual inputs for the play so it seemed crucial to give the readership some hints about the intertextual connections between the play and Steiner's works - *After Babel. Aspects of Language and Translation* (1975) and *In Bluebeard's Castle* (1971), following Pine who had shown the parallels between both authors (359-363).

Orality[4]

The double nature of drama (written to be performed) as well as its peculiar structure (dialogue versus prose) implies that orality will make its presence felt in translation decisions (Hurtado Albir 66-67). The problems posed for the translator are not only the prosodic and paralinguistic features of speech, conversational mechanisms, etc., but also those arising from the use of social or geographical dialects that serve for the depiction of characters, in our case, the HE of the peasants' speech. Apart from a different lexis and accent from Standard English it also differs in grammar and syntax. In general, the most marked features of orality are found in Bridget's and Doalty's utterances but in translation some of their singularity gets lost. As a perfect correspondence cannot always be achieved, the challenge is to find the best solution even by compensating on different levels. I will just focus on a few examples.

On the phonetic-prosodic level, we find occurrences of relaxed phonetic articulation, examples of assimilations like "*yella* (yellow) meal", weakenings like "*aul*" (old) and elision of sounds such as "*d'you*", "*g'way*" but most often than not in the translation we can only reflect them in the lexical choice of a more colloquial language:

Doalty: Nellie Ruadh's aul fella's looking for you (18).
El viejo de Nellie Ruadh te anda buscando (95).

Bridget: D'you hear the whistles of this aul slate? (20).
¿Oís cómo raya esta pizarra vieja? (98).

Doalty: Cripes, he'll make yella meal out of me… (22).
Caramba, me va a hacer papilla… (103).

Only in one instance have I found a possible translation into Spanish that features a similar characteristic to the one found in the text: the mispronunciation made by Maire when she renders the one sentence she knows in English, albeit with a small change as in Spanish she mispronounces a consonant. I chose the distinction between "mayo" (maypole) and "*mallo*" (a farming tool) although nowadays not many Spanish speakers could pronounce them differently:

"In Norfolk we besport ourselves around the maypoll" (15).
"*En Norfolk nos divertimos bailando alrededor del mallo*" (89).

On the morphological level, we find a redundant use of pronouns, associated with emphatic and emotional language as shown by the exclamation marks that usually accompany these examples. In Spanish, however, grammatical subjects are not compulsory as they are marked morphologically (Briz 1996: 56) so the emphasis has to rest on the interjection itself supported by the choice of vocabulary:

Doalty: Will you shut up, you aul eejit you! (17).
¡Quieres callarte, viejo idiota! (93).

Bridget: You clown you! (19) / *¡Pero qué payaso eres!* (96).

Doalty: You hoors you! Get out of my corn, you hoors you! (57).
¡Cabrones! Fuera de mi maizal ¡malditos cabrones! (176).

On the syntactic level, in HE specific elements are emphasized through fronting devices. The two most common methods are clefting and topicalization (Hickey 266ff). In clefting, the highlighted part of the utterance is placed at the front of the sentence introduced by a dummy subject "it" as in

Maire: It's £56 a year you're throwing away (70).
Lo que estás echando por la borda son 56 libras al año (100).

Topicalization (via fronting) is every other type of focusing, apart from clefting, as in:

Maire: The best harvest in living memory, they say (62).
La mayor cosecha que se recuerda, eso dicen (88).

In this case, as the order of clause elements in Spanish is far more flexible than in English this effect is somehow lost in my translation.

As for cohesive devices, the discourse marker "sure" is often used to emphasize the

inevitability of the situation (Hickey 375). In *Translations* it is omnipresent in clause initial position so it would have sound very repetitive translating it with the same word(s). Therefore, I opted for a variety of markers: "*seguro*", "*claro*", "*desde luego*", "*la verdad es que*", "*por supuesto*", etc., as exemplified in:

Jimmy: Sure you know I have only Irish like yourself (16).
Bien sabes que solo sé irlandés como tú (89).

Doalty: Sure the bugger's hardly fit to walk (23).
Seguro que al capullo le cuesta trabajo caminar (105).

Maire: Sure it's better you have it than that black calf (59).
Desde luego, mejor que la tengáis vosotros que no ese ternero negro (178).

Finally, on the lexical and semantic level, HE speakers make ample use of sacred names and pious phrases mixed with their ordinary conversation (Joyce 194ff.). These religious expressions, although still existing in Spanish, are perceived as old-fashioned and restricted to older generations, especially those in a rural environment, which gives the translation a quaint tone that fits the play. In this case I have chosen numerous Spanish equivalents depending on the situation: "God!" - "*¡Dios Santo!*", "Be God!" – "*¡Por Dios!*", "Be Jasus!" – "*¡válgame Dios!*", "Sweet God!" – "*¡Dios mío!*", "For God's sake!" – "*¡Por amor de Dios!*", "Mother of God!" – "*¡Virgen María!*", etc.

Swear words are also a common occurrence. Luckily, again there is a wide variety of terms in Spanish. The challenge was finding the correct amount of intensity to translate the English word "bloody", depending on the context it appeared:

Manus: It's a bloody military operation, Owen! (32).
¡Es una jodida operación militar! (126).

Yolland: And bloody marvellous staff it is, too […] Bloody, bloody, bloody marvellous! (49).
Y además es una bebida cojonuda […] Es cojonuda, cojonuda, cojonuda! (158).

Manus: Bloody, bloody, bloody hell! (54).
¡Joder!, ¡Joder!, ¡Maldita sea! (168).

Doalty: Bloody, bloody fool! (61)
¡Maldito, maldito imbécil! (180).

Another offensive word like "bastard" is somehow toned down in

Owen: I was afraid some of you bastards would laugh (33).
Temía que algún cabrón de vosotros se fuese a reír (126).

But it sounds stronger in

Manus: "You are a bastard, Yolland." (55)
"Yolland, eres un hijo de puta." (170)

As for Doalty, he repeatedly uses the mild swear word "Cripes" (Christ), which I have generally translated with a similar old-fashioned, euphemistic interjection *Caramba* (*Carajo*). However, in Act III there is an occasion in which he shows his over excitement with the situation uttering it three times. I felt I had to show the in crescendo degree of emotion by changing the word:

> Doalty: Cripes, they are crawling all over the place! Cripes, there's millions of them Cripes, they're levelling the whole land! (59).
>
> *¡Caray! Poco a poco avanzan por todas partes. ¡Atiza! Hay millones de ellos. ¡Toma! Arrasan todo el terreno a su paso.* (177)

Finally, there were some Irish terms whose appropriate translation eluded me so I adapted them through different translation techniques (Hurtado Albir 269): with amplification in the case of "poteen" as "orujo casero" (homemade spirit), although it doesn't carry the illicit connotations it has in Irish; adapting the concept like in "soda bread" and replacing it for "*pan negro*" (brown bread); generalizing by using a broader meaning like in "*completamente sobrio*" for "as sober as a judge", "*Registro de la Propiedad*" for "List of Freeholders" or "*una noche por las Ánimas*" for "a night at Hallowe'en"; or "*una danza nuestra/ otra danza*" for "Hornpipe"/ "Reel", respectively, etc.

There also features that promote lexical creativity as with some colloquial expressions like "Till rabbits grow an extra lug" (22)/ "*hasta que las ranas críen pelo*" (102), where I opted for a well known idiom in Spanish; or "as full as a pig" (17) that became "*borracho como una cuba*" (92); or "He has been on the batter since this morning" (17) and "*Lleva dándole a la botella desde por la mañana*" (92).

Final stage

Once I had most of the play in Spanish, I started working in the critical edition, which meant a thorough and laborious research task as demanding as the translation itself. This was due to the ever-growing amount of academic research on this play. It was impossible to summarize all the different approaches so I focused on explaining how Friel had planned the play and the historical background to his writing process as well as to the plot. My personal contribution to *Traducciones* is an analysis from the hedge school perspective (Friel 2016: 61-66), the one I know best.

The process of translation plus the critical edition took me several years as I could only devote it my holiday time. Although originally a handicap, I would realize later that it gave me the opportunity to stand back, reflect on what I had done and retake the task with renewed energy. At this stage, I was also wondering about the title of the play. It is obvious that *Translations* is a household name in English drama heavily loaded with connotations. However, it is not meaningful enough in Spanish. To my relief I discovered that my concerns had troubled other translators. As commented before, the Basque stage production was called *Agur, Eire, Agur* and when it was recently staged in Barcelona one of the reviewers stated that Translations as a title sounded really dull and did not give this compelling story due consideration.[5] I also found out that the French translation was, in fact, entitled *La Dernière Classe* (*The Last Lesson*). [6]

My option was not so radical as to change Friel's title; however, an appropriate title is of vital importance in influencing the readership's response, even more in this particular case because the play would serve as an introduction of the playwright's work to new prospective readers. Therefore, I was considering adding a subtitle, something that could catch the readers' attention while maintaining Friel's statement of intent. My option would have been *Traducciones*. *Babel en Baile Beag/Ballybeg*, evocative and somehow enigmatic. It also contains alliteration with a prebabelian universal sound so I thought it would have been ideal. Unfortunately, for copyright reasons, permission to alter the title was not granted.

Last but not least, there was the issue of finding a publisher for the book. None of the companies I contacted showed any interest until I met Denis Rafter, an Irish actor, stage director and acting teacher who has lived in Spain for many years. He put me in touch with ADE the Spanish Association for Stage Directors, who eventually published the book. Denis also helped me revise my draft. Having trained in the Abbey Theatre and being an Irish speaker, he was the perfect person to check my work. As a translator, Friel wondered how possible translation is and agreed that the notion of being faithful to the spirit of the original text is a complex one (Seven Notes for a Festival Programme, Murray 179). Nevertheless, in our consensual revision we tried to respect Friel's style, his fine Irish humor and his poetic sensitivity with the aim of making readers feel that what they are reading is not actually a translation.

All things considered, in spite of the challenges, risks and tensions, I can say that this translation has given me the opportunity of exploring and diving into multiple new facets of Irish culture. It has as well been a voyage of discovery on a personal level. I have made the text my own by putting my heart and soul in Traducciones, so apart from a reproduction, to a certain extent it is also a creation. However, this does not give me any sense of ownership, rather a sense of serving as the connection between the different cultures in the book and my own culture. As a classic, Friel's play can hold a message to any reader and I encourage you to discover the meaning it has for you. I really do hope that the merits of the play have not been lost in translation!

Notes

1 Some changes in the depiction of Friel's characters were changed –Manus is not lame, Sarah communicates playing the accordion, Hugh's book is not mentioned, etc. (Gaviña 362-364)

2 For a discussion on the terminology see Hickey 3ff. He considers Irish English a more neutral term than Anglo-Irish (used by Joyce, among other authors) and parallel to labels like Canadian English or Australian English. I have opted for Hiberno-English because it is the most common name in academic circles. Henceforward, I will use the acronym HE to refer to it.

3 All page references to the play in English are to the Faber & Faber edition 1981; all the page references in Spanish are to the ADE edition 2016.

4 I follow Briz on his classification of orality features according to the traditional structuralist language levels: phonetic-prosodic, morphological, syntactic and lexical-semantic.

5 Ordoñez, Marcos. "El viento que arrasó la cebada". El País, 15 Febrero 2014.

6 Published by L'avant scène theatre n°756, 1984.

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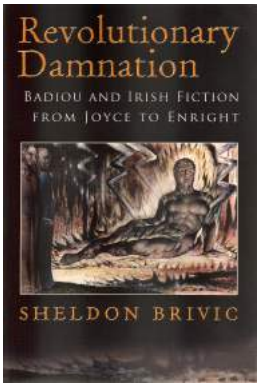

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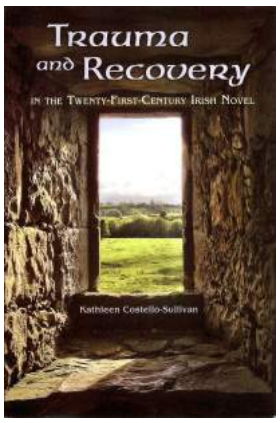

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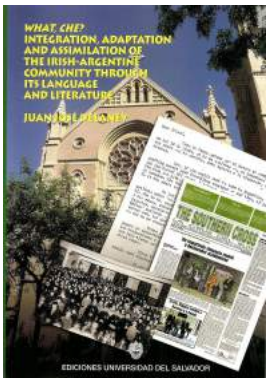

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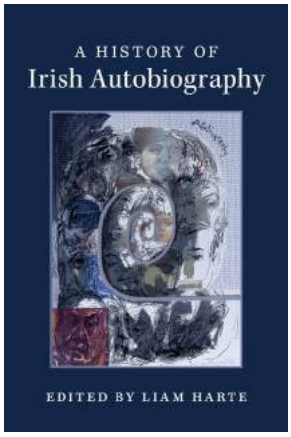

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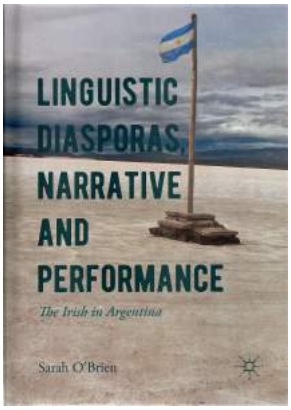

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