
IRISH STUDIES AROUND THE WORLD – 2022

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Introduction

When I started doing this book-review editing job in 2020, the serious health risks of the COVID-19 pandemic were understood, and care was being taken to curb its spread. Ironic might not be the precise word for it, but it was easier to follow international events in Irish Studies when protections against infection were still in place, and events were almost exclusively held virtually. Now that the world has decided that we are no longer in danger, even though the virus refuses to cooperate with this version of reality, nearly everything from plays to conferences to concerts was back to in-person attendance by the end of 2022. Some of the consequences of this change of policy could not be hidden. Folk-rock music group Clannad had to cancel their farewell tour of Ireland in March, due to the virus. In June, a much-anticipated appearance in Cork of The Chemical Brothers was cancelled (the English duo withdrew from the Glastonbury Festival as well). Also in June, ten performances of an Abbey Theatre production of Brian Friel's *Translations* were cancelled, due to COVID-19, which also led to cancellations of Irish National Symphony Orchestra concerts in the same month and a screening of the 1961 film, *Saoirse?* which was to be accompanied by a live performance of the Seán Ó Riada score. In June 2022 there were reports of an outbreak amongst Joyce scholars who attended one of the many academic events in Dublin marking the centenary of the publication of *Ulysses*. The Cork Midsummer Festival had to completely cancel one of its main theatrical events, also due to COVID, *The Wakefires*, a Louise Lowe play about the long-unacknowledged violence experienced by Irish women during the revolutionary period.

The beginning of the year saw some varied online Irish culture, such as January's live-streamed performance of an adaptation of Eimear McBride's novel, *A Girl is a Half-Formed Thing*, by the Irish Repertory Theatre of New York. The adaptation was by Annie Ryan, directed by Nicola Murphy. Also in January, the Royal Geographical society held a hybrid event, "Critical Geographies of Confinement in Britain, Ireland, and elsewhere", which they promoted as a "flipped format" event, comprising two elements: pre-recorded sessions, available online from January to June, and a one-day in-person gathering in February. Presentations were on topics ranging from settler colonialism and genocide to Ireland's Direct Provision system. January 2022 was the 50th anniversary of the Bloody Sunday massacre, and to commemorate it, the Abbey Theatre presented a reading of *Bloody Sunday: Scenes from the*

Saville Inquiry, edited by journalist Richard Norton-Taylor. There was a one-day performance at the Peacock Theatre, open to the public, and a recording of the performance on 30 January was made available online for forty-eight hours.

And that brings us to February, the beginning of spring in the Celtic calendar! The wonderful international virtual celebration of St Brigid, hosted by Irish embassies and consulates around the globe, continued to mark the contributions of Irish women in the arts and sciences. The virtual festival was attended by over thirty countries. According to the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs website, there were contributions “from Washington to Warsaw, Sydney to Santiago, London to Lilongwe.” Because Brigid’s feast day of 1 February was due to be an official public holiday in 2023, the county associated with her, Kildare, elevated the annual celebrations in 2022. Beginning with St Brigid’s Cathedral and the Hill of Allen in Kildare, landmarks around the country were illuminated to mark not only St Brigid’s Day, but also Imbolc, the traditional first day of spring. Another kind of light shone in the dark first weeks of Celtic spring, when the World Champion Irish dancer, Elliot Kwelele, posted onto YouTube a video of himself, (traditional) dancing to the Dua Lipa song, “Levitating”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=yreDrozCfG4>. Douglass Week, which commemorates the formerly enslaved abolitionist’s visit to Ireland in 1845, was celebrated in February, largely via virtual performances and talks that linked the United States with Ireland. The Tyneside Irish Cultural Society and British Association of Irish Studies (in Newcastle-on-Tyne, UK), launched its series of online talks in February, in association with the British Association of Irish Studies. One of the speakers was Síofra Aiken, an author whose recent book is reviewed in this issue. The beginning of 2022 is also when events marking the centenary of Joyce’s *Ulysses* began to appear, such as the James Joyce Italian Foundations conference, “One, No One, and One Hundred (Thousand?) *Ulysses*”, held in Rome. (While in Italy, I will note that 2022 was the year that saw the launch of CISIRL, the first Italian Interdepartmental Centre for Irish Studies). Back in Ireland, exploiting the Joyce family’s Cork connections, the Crawford Gallery in Cork mounted an exhibit, “*Odysseys*”, curated by Flicka Small (a reviewer in this issue) and Michael Waldron, both PhD holders from University College Cork. The exhibit ran through June, which is of course, Joyce’s month. During this special centenary year for Joyceans, events online and in-person were organized around the country and around the world, including “*Ulysses Journey 2022*”, at the Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris, which featured film screenings, musical performances, talks, and roundtable discussions. This journey brought the event to the Budapest Music Center, as well.

Spring and early summer are academic conference seasons. Despite my hopes that the experience of extended and inclusive participation necessitated by the early years of the pandemic might have a positive impact on the practice of conference organization, most Irish Studies conferences returned to fully in-person meetings. Very few conferences opted for the hybrid model that briefly held out hope for wider attendance among not only the public, but also under-resourced PhD students and ECRs, as well as those for whom mobility presents a challenge. There were two North American exceptions: the national meeting of the American Conference for Irish Studies was convened virtually (though most regional ACIS meetings were in-person), as was the Celtic Studies Association of North America Conference. The year 2022 also marked the last year of the Decade of Centenaries, and some Decade of Commemoration events in Ireland did continue to offer online options, such as The Dublin Festival of History that featured online talks on the Civil War. The Irish Civil War National Conference in University College Cork, held in June, was organized as part of the government’s programme of commemoration events. The proceedings were live-streamed and recorded in cooperation with RTÉ, Irish television.

The commemoration period culminated last year with the centenary of the Civil War (though there appear to be plans to extend the commemoration period for another year or two).

Around the country there were too many exciting events to make note of, but some of the most interesting government initiatives include television documentaries, such as *Forgotten Widows of the Revolution*, continuing investment in Mná 100, which I discussed last year, and a “Poetry as Commemoration” project, which hosted poetry and creative writing projects around the country. The Irish Poetry Reading Archive in University College Dublin was the leader in that initiative (Lucy Collins, a reviewer in this issue, is a co-founder of the archive). Irish archives were really having their moment in 2022, even as it was announced that The Long Room and the Old Library in Trinity would be closed in late 2023 for restoration. In the meantime, Trinity Library have continued their “Virtual Library” project, most recently by releasing over a hundred images of Cuala Press prints, the press founded and run by the Yeats sisters, Lily and Lolly (Elizabeth). “Beyond 2020: Virtual Creating the Virtual Record Treasury of Ireland”, an international, collaborative project, was launched in June. The intention of the project is to virtually reconstruct the Public Records Office destroyed in the Civil War. As the website explains: “Many millions of words from destroyed documents will be linked and reassembled from copies, transcripts and other records scattered among the collections of our archival partners. We will bring together this rich array of replacement items within an immersive 3-D reconstruction of the destroyed building”.

Autumn tends to be a lively season for the Irish stage. The Dublin Theatre Festival began in September. One of the main events was the return to the stage, after twenty years, of award-winning Irish choreographer, Michael Keegan-Dolan, with his show, *How to be a Dancer in Seventy-Two Thousand Easy Lessons*. The year was one in which a number of literary adaptations appeared onstage. I have already mentioned the adaptation of Eimear McBride’s novel, and in the autumn, there were also Irish productions of stage adaptations of Mike McCormack’s *Solar Bones*, Colm Tóibín’s *The Blackwater Lightship*, and Frank O’Connor’s short story, “Guests of the Nation”. This is a place to deliver sad news to those who have not heard it: Corcadorca Theatre Company, which produced the all-female adaptation “Guests of the Nation” as part of the Cork Midsummer Festival in June, ceased operations in 2022, after thirty years of pioneering, experimental, memorable theatrical productions in Cork. Canonical stage plays were updated and adapted in 2022 as well. Frank McGuinness wrote a new version of the seventeenth-century classic *Tartuffe* for the Abbey Theatre, while, more controversially, the Abbey also mounted *An Octoroon*, promoted as “a radical reboot” of Dion Boucicault’s nineteenth-century play *The Octoroon*, re-written by black American playwright, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins. Featuring black actors in white face, this subversive and entertaining reimagining of a problematic play set in a slave plantation received universally enthusiastic reviews. It was galling, then, when the Irish Times Theatre Awards were announced in 2023, and no black actors from the production were nominated, only white performers.

Another literary adaptation that appeared in 2023 was the film version of Emma Donoghue’s novel, *The Wonder*. Surprisingly, it did not seem to be successful, certainly not compared to the many other extremely successful Irish films that appeared in the same year. No one needs to be told about the phenomenon of *The Banshees of Inisherin* (itself another adaptation, in this instance of a play Martin McDonagh wrote in the 1990s), but other important cinematic work was produced in 2022, such as *Aisha*, a film about Direct Provision. Irish-language cinema has come into its own, with *An Cailín Ciúin* (another literary adaptation, this time of Claire Keegan’s novella, *Foster*), nominated for an Academy Award, and the award-less but delightful and popular *Róise and Frank*, in which a widow believes she has discovered her late husband in the form of a dog. All of Ireland will be glued to their televisions for the 2023 Oscars when an unprecedented fourteen nominees will be Irish, including Paul Mescal for *Aftersun* and *An Irish Goodbye*, a Northern Irish film, directed and written by Ross White and Tom Berkeley, nominated in the category of Best Live Action Short Film.

If there were awards for book reviewers, the reviewers in this issue would all have gold

statuettes. The last year has been unprecedentedly stressful for us all, and I am enormously grateful to those who managed to write their insightful and graceful reviews and to put up patiently with me! The last two years I have concluded this piece with a report on the Newgrange winter solstice in December, but I would rather close this time with the most fascinating Irish Studies cultural exchange of the year, held in November - December of 2022: the German-Irish Vampire Festival, presented by the Irish Embassy in Germany. It culminated in Berlin with a screening of the silent film *Nosferatu* on its centenary, with an accompanying musical score by Irish and German musicians, Linda and Irene Buckley and Gudrun Gut. Rather than linger over the brief winter light and its promise of spring at the solstice, I will conclude by revelling in the sunny, whimsical gesture of “détente” between Ireland and Germany, with Ireland “forgiving” Germany for *Nosferatu*’s copyright infringement of Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* a century ago. Vampires are often read as figures for contagion and disease. How pleasant to be distracted by fictional threats that can be vanquished by sunshine and faith.

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***The Poets of Rapallo: How Mussolini’s Italy Shaped British, Irish and US Writers* (Lauren Arrington, 2021)**

Lloyd (Meadhbh) Houston

Decidedly timely, but refreshingly free from presentism, Lauren Arrington’s *The Poets of Rapallo* offers a thoughtful, thorough, and highly readable account of late Modernism’s engagement with right-wing politics and culture as they took shape in a north-western corner of Mussolini’s Italy. It takes as its focus the small town of Rapallo, where, between 1924 and the beginning of the Second World War, a heterogeneous coterie of writers, artists, and thinkers from the United States, Ireland, and Britain clustered to collaborate, experiment, and debate the forms poetry should take and the civic functions it should serve at what was felt to be a refreshing remove from the more conventional literary scenes of Paris, London, and New York. The centre of gravity for this circle was, of course, Ezra Pound – “the one poet who went to Italy for the politics” (vii), as Arrington pithily puts it – who sought in Rapallo “to ‘make it new’ again” (ibid). This effort to reboot Modernism prompted Pound to surround himself with a cluster of figures whom he hoped would join him in his characteristically grandiose ambition

of “restarting civilization” and devising “a new modus for making art and lit[erature] possible” in a post-war world.¹ These included the newly minted Nobel laureate, W.B. Yeats, whom a young Pound had served as a secretary (and querulous interlocutor) in the previous decade, who set up house in Rapallo for several years following a bout of illness in 1927, and who would compose and revise some of his most significant late verse and accompanying paratexts there; two veterans of the Great War: Richard Aldington, whose caustic first novel *Death of a Hero* (1929) was completed amid sojourns in Rapallo in 1928 and 1929, and Thomas MacGreevy, who also sought (ultimately unsuccessfully) to compose a war novel during his time in Italy, and (with greater felicity) cultivated his nascent poetic craft in conversation with those who gathered there; and a pair of young left-wingers: the self-proclaimed Northumbrian poet Basil Bunting, and the New Yorker Louis Zukofsky, the son of Russian Jewish immigrants, who were to prove an incongruous recurring presence in Rapallo throughout the 1930s. Pound set out to rescue these figures from what he saw as the compromised and compromising conditions of their native milieux and install them in what he considered to be “the best governed state in Europe where the goddam shits least bother one,” so that they might profit by what he felt to be the energy and dynamism of Mussolini’s emergent fascist regime, and, in the process, provide Il Duce with a “*corte liteteraria*” in-waiting.²

As Arrington’s study valuably emphasizes, these men were joined in, and, in some cases, led to Rapallo by a group of women whose contributions to this Poundian coterie (and to late Modernism at large) have been consistently overlooked by literary historians. In the vanguard of this somewhat diffuse sorority was the draughtswoman and painter Dorothy Pound (née Shakespear), Ezra’s wife and the daughter of W.B. Yeats’s former paramour, Olivia Shakespear, who, as Arrington demonstrates, encountered Italian Futurism independently (and in advance of) her future husband and his circle. Confronted with the ancient architectural sites being excavated and restored by the fascist regime, Arrington shows, Dorothy abandoned Vorticist abstraction in favour of a *pittura metafisica* (metaphysical painting) approach, cultivating an aesthetic approach that would palpably shape her husband’s writing and thought. At Dorothy’s side – when not caring for her ailing husband or offering MacGreevy feedback and encouragement – was George Yeats (née Bertha Hyde-Lees), whose automatic writing, as Arrington persuasively illustrates, not only facilitated the composition of *A Vision* (1925, rev. 1937), but decisively influenced its engagement with right-wing philosophy and poetics. Supplementing this core duo were the author and memoirist Brigit Patmore (née Ethel Elizabeth Morrison-Scott) – Aldington’s lover and the wife of Coventry Patmore’s philandering grandson, who, though unmoved by the archaeological excavations that so enthused the Pounds, and palpably disquieted by the authoritarian regime which undertook them, struck up an intellectually bracing friendship with W.B. Yeats – and Marion Bunting (née Culver), whose experiences of Rapallo appear to have proven more difficult to recover than her peers’. With the acknowledged exception of Bunting, these women – particularly Dorothy Pound and George Yeats – are admirably given their due in *The Poets of Rapallo*, which pays close and rewarding attention to their intellectual achievements and administrative and organizational abilities, both in relation to, and independently from, their more widely canvassed spouses.³ Arrington’s approach to this feminist historiographical work is commendable in both its dedication and its intellectual honesty, demonstrating the significance and influence of each

¹ Ezra Pound to Richard Aldington (May ?16, [1924], Harry Ransom Humanities Research Centre, quoted (21).

² Ezra Pound to William Bird (Apr. 1, 1924), in D.D. Paige, ed. *The Letters of Ezra Pound, 1907–1941* (London: Faber, 1950), 258 (quoted, 20); Anthony David Moody, *Ezra Pound: Poet, Vol. II: The Epic Years* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 55 (quoted, 12).

³ For a free-to-access sample of Arrington’s work on these women, see Lauren Arrington, “Ezra Pound’s Unrepentant Ties with Fascist Italy,” *Lit Hub* (27 September 2021), <https://lithub.com/ezra-pounds-unrepentant-ties-with-fascist-italy/>.

woman's critical and creative endeavours, while, at the same time, refusing to sanitize or exalt the figures involved: as Arrington makes clear, the women of Rapallo could be just as enamoured of fascism's most malign features as the men in their lives, and *The Poets of Rapallo* is stronger for acknowledging this so forthrightly.

Arrington tells the story of Pound's Rapallo circle in six thematically clustered, broadly chronological chapters: "The Roads to Rapallo," which catalogues the various factors, personal, political, and aesthetic, that drew the text's dramatis personae to the small Italian town and into Pound's orbit; "Shell-Shocked Walt Whitmans," which explores the titular poets' varied responses to the Great War and the debates over poetic form to which it gave rise; "Primavera 1928," which analyzes the format, contents, and intellectual legacy of Pound's short-lived little magazine, *The Exile*, and charts his increasingly "totalitarian" critical and editorial approach; "Singing School," which examines the Rapallo poets' efforts to cultivate a "demotic" (but, in several cases, far from democratic) voice in their verse, and documents their experiments with the ballad form; "Making Living History," which situates the work of the Rapallo circle in relation to Italian fascist aesthetic and political philosophy, with a particular emphasis on the hitherto under-examined impact of Dorothy Pound's engagement with fascist architecture and painting on her art and her husband's writing; and "Accounting for Rapallo," which takes stock of the significance of Rapallo as an incubator of late modernism and interrogates the often highly selective ways in which those who joined Pound there retrospectively discussed its impact on their life and work.

In the process, Arrington unravels the (often rather thin) self-exculpatory obfuscations through which left-leaning figures such as Aldington, Bunting, and Zukofsky retrospectively sought to distance themselves, politically, aesthetically, and, at times, geographically, from Pound and Rapallo, and charts the conversations, collaborations, and disagreements that continued to shape their politics and poetics long after the Second World War. As Arrington acknowledges, the historiographical "impulse to sequester Pound" – the critical correlative to his post-war psychiatric confinement – that has structured much that has been written by and about those who lived, conversed, and collaborated with him in the 1920s and beyond, is undoubtedly born of the desire to "protect some of the most masterful poetry in English from the twentieth century's most toxic politics" (viii). But, as Arrington rightly emphasizes, and *The Poets of Rapallo* bears out, this "cloistered" approach to literary history "obscures difficult questions' about 'poets' civic responsibility," about the "relationship of literature to the contexts that produce it," and about "ways of mapping the complexities of literary exchange" (ibid). In her efforts to answer these questions and map these complexities, Arrington surveys a rich archive of literary, historical, and biographical material, patiently teasing out lines of influence and inspiration, and situating them within both the macrocosm of Anglo-American and European political culture and the microcosm of the Rapallo circle and their social and professional networks. Arrington's approach, which attends to politics and poetics in equal measure, allows her to trace the origins and circulation of certain images and phrases between and among the Rapallo poets, such as the veritable smorgasbord of "eaten hearts" surveyed in Chapter Two, or the references to "plasticity" (a somewhat nebulous buzz-word favoured by Mussolini and his acolytes, denoting a paradoxically robust mode of aesthetic flexibility rooted in a fluid fusion of past and present) which recur throughout Yeats's and Pound's critical writing and personal correspondence in the 1920s and '30s, explored in Chapter Five. While, as Arrington acknowledges, the literary genealogy of these images and allusions has often been traced before, her synthetic and contextualizing approach compellingly roots them in the intellectual terrain and built environment of Mussolini's Italy, in revealing and often disquieting ways. In one particularly rewarding instance, Arrington uses a selection of postcards the Pounds collected, annotated, and sent to friends and family during a tour of South Tuscany and Umbria to link Pound's celebration of the fascist regime's architectural "reconquest of ancient skill" in

Jefferson and/or Mussolini (1935) to his wife's woodcuts for *A Draft of XXX Cantos* (1930), and the work of the fascist Novecento Group with which her 1930s output strongly resonates.⁴ This assiduous archival work yields not only new and nuanced readings of well-surveyed texts, such as Yeats's "Parnell's Funeral," the "Crazy Jane" poems, and *Fighting the Waves* (1929), the latter of which Arrington compellingly reassesses in light of the decidedly authoritarian (and seldom discussed) "Introduction" its author provided for it in a 1932 issue of the *Dublin Magazine*, but unearths entirely new texts, such as the six hitherto unidentified poems by MacGreevy Arrington uncovered amid Yeats's papers at the National Library of Ireland.⁵ As these examples suggest, Arrington's scholarship is sure to be generative and influential in both domains.

If Arrington's brisk and accessible study has a shortcoming, it is its tendency to presuppose that the reader will have a relatively well-developed pre-existing sense of what fascism was, what it stood for, and how it functioned in Mussolini's Italy. While this lends a commendable economy to Arrington's account – the focus is seldom far from the study's key players and the texts they produced – it occasionally risks muddying or blunting some of her broader claims regarding the hitherto under-acknowledged ways in which right-wing political and aesthetic philosophy shaped what Arrington, drawing on (and valuably extending) the work of Thomas S. Davis, characterizes as late Modernism's "outward turn."⁶ This is an issue not least because fascism was, as one of its Italian architects, Giovanni Gentile, asserted (in a remark cited by Arrington), decidedly unwilling to "waste time constructing abstract theories about itself."⁷ The question of whether fascism constituted (and constitutes) a coherent set of ideological positions, a governmental structure, a mode of political practice, or a set of aesthetic tropes, remains open and hotly debated, and, in its reflections on what distinguished Pound's more party-political fascism from Yeats's fluctuating investment in what Mary Ann Frese Witt has termed "aesthetic fascism," *The Poets of Rapallo* undoubtedly represents a valuable contribution to that conversation.⁸ However, it might have gone further in using the work of these figures and their peers to illuminate some of the underlying structures (and internal contradictions) of fascist ideology, aesthetic theory, and political praxis in this period. While I am certainly not suggesting that Arrington should have periodically interrupted her fluent and engagingly paced narrative to assess whether, at a given moment, the work of Pound, Yeats, et al. crossed the threshold of some sort of literary "fascist minimum," I do think that it might have been advantageous to take a moment early in the study to offer a slightly more explicitly theorized and schematized sense of how *The Poets of Rapallo* was going to understand and use

⁴ Ezra Pound, *Jefferson and/or Mussolini: L'idea Statale: Fascism As I Have Seen It* (London: Stanley Nott, 1935), 85.

⁵ For more on these poems and the circumstances of their composition, see Lauren Arrington, "Finding his voice: Newly discovered poems by Thomas MacGreevy," *Times Literary Supplement*, 6199 (21 January 2022), <https://www.the-tls.co.uk/articles/newly-discovered-poems-by-thomas-macgreevy-essay-lauren-arrington/>.

⁶ Davis identifies this "outward turn" as the "form of attention [late modernism] gives to the temporalities, spaces, surface appearances, textures, and rhythms of everyday life" in Britain in the 1930s and 40s. Where his study focusses on left-leaning British authors and projects, such as Christopher Isherwood and *Mass Observation*, and their relationship to the "British world-system", Arrington turns her attention to how this "outward turn" manifested itself among right-leaning figures, through their engagement with an emerging European fascist milieu. Thomas S. Davis, *The Extinct Scene: Late Modernism and Everyday Life* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), 2.

⁷ Giovanni Gentile, "The Philosophic Basis of Fascism," *Foreign Affairs*, 6.2 (January 1928): 290–304, 300, quoted (112).

⁸ Scholarship on this topic is legion, with major contributions from figures ranging from Hannah Arendt to Stanley G. Payne. For a useful overview of this material, see the "Bibliographical Essay" which concludes Robert O. Paxton, *The Anatomy of Fascism* (London: Penguin, 2005), 221–49. For "aesthetic fascism" see, Mary Ann Frese Witt, *The Search for Modern Tragedy: Aesthetic Fascism in Italy and France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), which is discussed by Arrington in Chapter Five of her study.

the term “fascist”, and to sign-post most clearly which specific elements of fascism (“syncretism,” “irrationalism,” “action for action’s sake,” “fear of difference,” for example) were operative in a particular Rapallo poet’s work and its relevant contexts.⁹ As it stands, my advice to first-time readers keen to engage with this aspect of Arrington’s study would be to turn, upon completing the book’s first chapter, to the chapters on “Making Living History” and “Accounting for Rapallo” (which do a commendable job of situating the work of Pound and Yeats in relation to key proto-fascist thinkers such as Gentile and D’Annunzio and major fascist cultural events such as the 1934 Volta Conference on theatre), before returning to a sequential reading.

Such considerations notwithstanding, like the best work of Roy Foster and A. David Moody, whose scholarship it valuably complements, *The Poets of Rapallo* is a triumph of diligent, nuanced, and entertaining literary historiography, deftly weaving cultural history, biographical criticism, and formalist close reading to offer a serious-minded account of the right-wing influences that informed late modernism’s “outward turn” in the 1920s and ’30s. At once rigorous and accessible, it will be a valuable resource for researchers in Modernist Studies and Fascist Studies, especially those working on Pound and Yeats, for whom it is essential reading, those working on Bunting and Zukofsky, for whom it will be uncomfortable reading, and for those seeking to introduce undergraduate and postgraduate students to the tense and complex relationship between poetry and politics in the 1920s and ’30s. In an Irish Studies context, it will be of particular interest to those working on Irish modernism, who will find in it a significant contribution to the emerging body of scholarship concerned with late Modernism in Ireland (and what may have distinguished it from its more widely canvassed British and American counterparts), and those interested in exploring the history of fascist and right-wing culture in the young nation. In all cases, it is a work to be both commended and recommended.

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⁹ I derive the concept of the “fascist minimum” from Roger Eatwell’s hugely influential essay on the topic. Umberto Eco famously identified “syncretism”, “irrationalism”, “action for action’s sake”, “fear of difference”, an “appeal to a frustrated middle class”, an “obsession with a plot”, a continually shifting “rhetorical focus” on enemies who are “at the same time too strong and too weak”, an investment in “life” as “permanent warfare”, “popular elitism”, a culture in which “everybody is educated to be a hero”, “machismo”, “selective populism”, a professed positioning “against ‘rotten’ parliamentary governments”, and an embrace of “Newspeak” as the most significant constituent elements of fascism. Roger Eatwell, “On Defining the ‘Fascist Minimum’: The Centrality of Ideology,” *Journal of Political Ideologies* 1, no. 3 (October 1996): 303–19; Umberto Eco, “Ur-Fascism,” *The New York Review of Books*, 42 (1995), <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1995/06/22/ur-fascism/>.

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***Broken Irelands: Literary Form in Post-Crash Irish Fiction* (Mary M. McGlynn, 2022)**

Jane E. Dougherty

Much of the literary criticism of Irish texts situates itself within the discipline of Irish Studies, an interdisciplinary field in which literary criticism often intersects with Irish historiography. Critical approaches to Irish literature have thus largely been historicist in focus, and studies of Irish literature which focus on literary form or take narratological approaches are still relatively rare. The obvious exceptions to this claim are studies of Yeats, Joyce, and Beckett, which originate, at least, from the perspective of Modernist Studies, a field, and a concomitant set of approaches, which predates the foundation of Irish Studies. In contrast to Irish Studies, Modernist Studies is a field in which studies of literary form are commonplace, in large part because Modernism, as an international literary movement, revised so many of the classic formal conventions. By contrast, within Irish Studies there has been a particular emphasis on the *content* of Irish literature, as if the main purpose of an Irish work of literary art is to express Irish identity, or to explain changes in Irish society, politics, and history.

Mary M. McGlynn's monograph is a welcome and indeed overdue exception to this critical tendency. While her research does indeed illuminate changes in Irish society and politics, it does so primarily by examining literary form rather than content. The crash of the Celtic Tiger economy in 2007-2008 disrupted the tidy, triumphalist narrative that the Republic of Ireland had written for itself. In response, McGlynn argues, Irish literary works published immediately after the crash and during the austerity regime that followed are themselves disrupted narratives. These texts evince many of the features of irrealism, which is characterized by "anti-linear plot lines, meta-narratorial devices, un-rounded characters, unreliable narrators...and contradictory points of view" (8). The irrealism of these post-Tiger texts, as McGlynn argues, exists at the level of "genre, image, narrative choices, and even sentence structure" (10). What McGlynn defines as irrealistic "ungrammaticality" includes "sentence fragments, run-on sentences, irreconcilable verb tenses...[and] present tense narration" (12). According to *Broken Irelands*, these formal, narratological, and grammatical disruptions reflect the bitter end of the Celtic Tiger economy, as if the Republic of Ireland were a car that had crashed, and Irish contemporary writers were trying to rebuild that car out of its broken pieces.

In making her argument about post-crash literary form, McGlynn looks at recent fictions by Joseph O'Connor (*Redemption Falls*), Colum McCann (*Let the Great World Spin* and *TransAtlantic*), Paul Lynch (*Red Sky in the Morning*), Sebastian Barry (*On Canaan's Side*), Kevin Barry (*City of Bohane*), Mike McCormack (*Solar Bones*), Claire Kilroy (*The Devil I Know*), Anne Enright (*The Green Road*), Alan Glynn (*Winterland*), Declan Hughes (*The Wrong Kind of Blood*), Paul Murray (*The Mark and The Void*), Christine Dwyer Hickey (*The Lives of Women*), Lisa McInerney (*The Glorious Heresies*), Sarah Baume (*Spill Simmer Falter Wither*),

and Melatu Uche Okorie (“Under the Awning”). All of these fictions address, or at least reflect, the boom, the crash, and the “recovery,” and all are characterized by formal and narratological experimentation. McGlynn argues that the Celtic Tiger economy imposed a neoliberal economic regime on the Republic of Ireland and that these fictions “reflect, overtly or obliquely, on the Irish social and economic conditions of their production” (16). As she reiterates in her study, literary forms have ideological implications.

For McGlynn, then, neoliberalism is the ideology that produces the boom, the crash, and the recovery, as well as the literary forms generated in the wake of these economic shifts. This neoliberalism she associates with “globalization” which, as she suggests, is a disguised form of “Americanization.” Globalization is a euphemism, selling itself not only as inexorable but indeed as utopian or at least cosmopolitan, as characterized by advances in technology and the coming together of peoples, when it is more accurately characterized as American economic hegemony. In Chapter Two, McGlynn thus examines contemporary Irish fictions set in or referring to “America,” such as McCann’s *Let the Great World Spin*, to argue that their ostensible cosmopolitanism papers over the inequalities they narrate—and their unequal narrations. She writes that “Boom-era novels by Colum McCann and Joseph O’Connor give voice to marginalized groups via textual heterogeneity”—that is, through “globalist” narrations—“but in each case, this platform is summarily retracted by novel’s end” (66) as the hierarchies produced by extreme capitalism reassert themselves. In these two novels these hierarchies are race- as well as class-based. Despite the gestures of interracial solidarity made early in, and indeed by, McCann’s and O’Connor’s novels, these gestures, McGlynn argues, are ultimately retracted. It could be, and I believe should be, argued that in the Celtic Tiger years the Irish really did become white, and post-post-colonial.

Certainly, Okorie’s story, which McGlynn explores in Chapter Five, makes this implicit argument, narrating the anti-Blackness that her protagonist, a migrant African girl, encounters in Ireland itself. The story is told through a complex set of narrative choices, and McGlynn’s formal approach to textual interpretation shows how the story’s form mirrors the content. As she writes of one such formal choice, “Okorie’s use of the same phrase multiple times emphasizes the monotony and inescapability of the racist attention the protagonist receives” (241). McGlynn’s close attention to the formal and narratological features of the fictions studied in *Broken Irelands* will be her volume’s greatest attraction for readers.

McGlynn’s theoretical frame, which I would characterize as Marxist, certainly makes sense, and her use of this frame is an effective one in illuminating the “brokenness” of the fictions she is studying. As a feminist scholar of Irish literature, I do have some trouble with her wholesale condemnation of “neoliberalism,” which she concedes is a mushy term but which she partially defines as privileging the individual over the group and the private over the public. While the Celtic Tiger years increased economic inequality, they were also characterized by increased social equity, at least for white Irish women and LGBT+ citizens. Fundamental to this shift was a social embrace of individual rights for women and queer people, whose individual needs and desires had been subsumed by the collective since the founding of the Irish republic. McGlynn deals with this issue by writing that the effort to leave behind the collectivities of Church and sect created an Irish “myopia about the dangers of neoliberal capitalism” (32n). This is almost certainly true, but it does raise questions about what the proper balance of Irish individual and collective might be, and which collective(s) might replace the old repressive ones. It is clear that more work, both activist and scholarly, is needed in thinking through whether and how economic neoliberalism, at least when it is defined as individualistic in nature, can be decoupled from social changes in the status of Irish women and LGBT+ citizens.

Likewise, McGlynn’s Marxist theoretical frame at times interferes with the effectiveness of her literary criticism. One unfortunate tendency in what I will call “radical

literary criticisms,” such as Marxist and feminist criticism, is the condemnation of invented literary characters for being insufficiently radical. As a scholar of Edna O’Brien, I have seen this in critiques of her work, which has sometimes been characterized as insufficiently feminist because her characters do not enact complete feminist awakenings. McGlynn is not immune to this tendency, writing of one character that “the dingy ribbon belonging to his daughter that Coll carries throughout [*Red Sky in the Morning*] [is] a clunky bit of sentiment that Lynch might better have avoided” (85) and of another that “Lilly unquestionably accepts and naturalizes the difference in scale between their lives and hers” (101). Of the latter character’s unquestioned acceptance of inequality and hierarchy, McGlynn argues that it proves that Sebastian Barry “venerates the plutocracy” (101). A character is not a text, and a text is not an author; a literary work can be feminist, or Marxist, without each character in it, or even its main character, joining a political movement to dismantle heteronormative capitalist patriarchy.

These are mere quibbles, though, in my review of McGlynn’s study. *Broken Irelands* is an important belated intervention in the field of Irish Studies and a smart examination of contemporary Irish fiction, including some work already recognized as important and some she brings to her readers’ attention as worthy of study. McGlynn’s close readings of the primary texts are deep, interesting, and clear. As a scholar of contemporary Irish fictions myself, I expect that I will be referring to *Broken Irelands* in much of my own scholarship. All scholars of Irish fiction, postmodern literature, and narrative theory should read it.

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***Masculinities and Manhood in Contemporary Irish Drama: Acting the Man*
(Cormac O’Brien, 2021)**

Valerie Kennedy

Reflecting on work of Irish playwrights from the 1960s to 2020, Cormac O’Brien’s monograph, *Masculinities and Manhood in Contemporary Irish Drama: Acting the Man*, presents a central critical focus on the gradual transition from nationalism to neoliberalism in Irish dramatic representations of hegemonic masculine identity. A fundamental question throughout O’Brien’s study asks “how men perceive themselves *as men* and the ways in which these perceptions are performed” (19). Over six chapters, and through the work of writers such as Tom Murphy, Brian Friel, Conor McPherson, Frank McGuinness, Nancy Harris, and Deirdre Kinahan, O’Brien considers how shifts in gender coding relate to major socio-cultural and political transformations experienced in the transition to a more secular, diverse, and globalised society in the twenty-first century. Within that transition, *Acting the Man* effectively questions the relationship between neoliberalism and Irish masculinity and how it is reflected in contemporary Irish theatre.

O’Brien’s introductory chapter clearly outlines *Acting the Man*’s argument and provides a robust contextual background for the non-Irish or non-specialist reader. His observations regarding the impact of neoliberalism and its relationship to Irish masculinity as reflected in Irish drama point to a combination of neoliberalism and monumental shifts towards secularity as key factors in the challenges faced by the dominant heteronormative patriarchal hegemony.

Ireland's willingness for change was evident in the introduction of marriage equality and the campaign for women's autonomy in repealing the Eighth Amendment: O'Brien's book investigates the impact of such a shift in the collective consciousness and how it disrupted hegemonic perceptions of manhood. By scrutinizing how influential patriarchal systems of power and Irish hegemonic masculinity work to shape cultural representation and dramatic performances, *Acting the Man* offers a parallax view of Irish masculinities and weighs up the impact of economic and social change on those performances both on and off stage. To do this, O'Brien draws from an extensive corpus of post-colonial criticism in Irish theatre studies. Building on existing research, he acknowledges the contribution of Brian Singleton's *Masculinities and the Irish Theatre* (2011) and Fintan Walsh's *Male Trouble: Masculinity and the Performance of Crisis* (2010) to the field of Irish theatre studies. O'Brien also engages with arguments of prominent voices in sociology, gender and sexuality theory including Lauren Berlant, Judith Butler, and Raewyn Connell. In each chapter, O'Brien creates a convincing fluidity in his analyses as he explores the nuances of a process of change.

Building on a strong introductory foundation, Chapter 2, "The Fantasy of Manhood," explores homosocial environments as spaces where Irish masculine identity is both formed and on which that identity is dependent. Drawing from Lauren Berlant's theory of gender coding as "cruel optimism," a fantasy of ideals which become reified within the homosocial group to perpetuate perceptions of "real" masculinity, O'Brien begins by unpacking dramatic representations from 1959, locating Irish masculinity in the era of the Sean Lemass government and the First Programme for Economic Expansion. Various correlations between hegemonic masculine identities and the socio-economic realities of unemployment and emigration in mid-century Ireland are discussed through disturbances in homosocial group dynamics and how Irish playwrights execute depictions of masculinity and manhood on the nation's stages.

In his third chapter, O'Brien probes the dramatic expression of Irish societal attitudes to gender equality, persuasively challenging the claim of "masculinity in crisis." This chapter examines Irish patriarchal systems' response as the nation adapted to socio-cultural change and economic growth. He argues that "the primary pathology of patriarchy in Irish theatre has been a mutation from transparent into euphemistic performances" (122), defining "pathology" as the "nature, causes, development, and consequences" of this dominant power structure (85). With an eye focused on the Celtic Tiger era when most in Irish society saw improvements in their personal circumstances, particularly women and the LGBTQ+ community, O'Brien's examination details how traditional male-dominated systems of power experienced a loss of control over these cohorts resulting in the impression of "masculinity in crisis." Neoliberalism, he argues, was a stealth-like remedy administered discretely for the benefit of maintaining the existing patriarchal hegemonic power in both society and Irish theatre.

O'Brien's monograph acknowledges the lack of a chapter dedicated to issues of race and ethnicity in Ireland's growing multi-cultured population. One hopes that the author's sophisticated thoughts and analyses of this topic will appear in future writing on this subject. However, in chapter 4, "Men of the North," he does address the subject from the perspective of masculinity in Northern Ireland, historically a place of complex identity issues. O'Brien reveals layers in performativity of "tribal masculine identities" and how they are "brought into being by doing" in a shared environment of violence and aggression built on difference (131). He suggests a persistence in the mobilisation of the male body "to serve the ideological agendas of outside forces" (164), whether political, paramilitary, religious, or criminal, as a perpetual consequence of masculine identity for Northern Irish men. Returning to masculine subjectivity, O'Brien presents a considered perspective of modern challenges emerging with the growth of neoliberal capitalism as the province recovers from decades of conflict and begins rebuilding itself.

Acting the Man's final two chapters, "Masculinity Without Men" and "Acting Queer," bring a fresh critical perspective to both theatre and gender studies. Each of the subjects shares distinct perspectives of the lived experience as an anathema to Ireland's heteronormative patriarchal hegemony. O'Brien's criticism highlights state legislation of sexuality and gender where political action severely impacts on the lives of women and society's LGBTQ+ community leaving them "contained and controlled" (174). More specifically, "Masculinity Without Men" generates a powerful perspective of "presence-through-absence of patriarchy" (176), detailing various and often conflicting roles expected of women and femininity. A thoughtful selection of plays illustrates explicit and implicit methods patriarchal structures employ to maintain dominance over women and the ways in which women interact with those powers to gain a place within the structure.

In "Acting Queer" O'Brien interrogates a pattern of tropes and stereotypes often used to signify homosexuality as "Other." The essay borrows from Michel Foucault's theory of biopolitics and state control of queer bodies while also challenging neoliberal ideology that works to commodify queerness. He advances this analysis through engaging the work of queer theorists Sara Ahmed, Lisa Duggan, and Michael Warner, and identifies a shift in Irish socio-culture that promotes "homonormativity" as a "form of neoliberal respectability" in which society accepts gay men who assimilate into models of heteronormativity (216). Here O'Brien valuably highlights a refusal in both queer theatre and queer lives to conform to hetero- and homonormative expectations, provoking a new approach to queer dramaturgy and performance of queerness while dispelling myths and stereotypes around gay and queer lives.

Overall, *Acting the Man* demonstrates the tensions between conventions in a globalised Irish modernity and a static and sometimes rigid patriarchal system of heteronormative hegemonic masculinity predetermined by dominant Catholic infused conservative nationalism. O'Brien's monograph is a fascinating investigation which presents a powerful and illuminatingly fresh account of the contributions made by Irish playwrights to modern Irish drama. While this book is a welcome contribution to the field of Irish theatre studies, it will also appeal to those interested in the developing body of research in the field of Irish gender and queer studies.

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Haunted Heaney: Spectres and the Poetry (Ian Hickey 2022)

Eugene O'Brien

When anyone is writing on the work of Seamus Heaney, it is by now a necessity to state the need for another work in this very crowded area. To date there are some sixty to seventy books on Heaney's work, or containing sustained reference to that work, so another new text really needs to state its case and define the gap in the research which it hopes to fill. Ian Hickey's book does precisely that by setting out from an early stage what it is going to do, why this is important within the field, the theoretical hermeneutic that will be used, and then the areas of Heaney's work that will be addressed. The admirable clarity of this is mirrored in the logical sequencing of the argument, and in its careful and quite nuanced development, and the application of the theoretical lens. So, initially, does it justify its existence? I would say yes it does as it addresses areas that have not really seen a sustained focus of research in the Heaney canon.

At this stage I must state a certain partiality here as I directed the initial research from which this book developed, but it has gone through a rigorous peer review and has changed significantly since then, so I feel justified in reviewing it. From the outset, Hickey is very clear about where he is going, how he is getting there and why this is important:

The only way to start this book on Seamus Heaney's poetry is to outline and point out how it can justify its place among the vast and wide-ranging attention that his work has attracted, to justify what it offers in illuminating new readings of the poetry.

A vital part of my approach and thinking is from a philosophical standpoint and is allied to hauntology, a term coined by Jacques Derrida in *Specters of Marx*. The sense of inheritance from the past that carries across Heaney's many collections of poetry and the ability of those inheritances to power the present and shape the future of his writing is intrinsic to my angle in this book. In framing my reading of the poetry around Jacques Derrida's thinking on the ghostly a nuanced interpretation of spectrality in the poetry can be found. (1-2)

If this level of clarity of intention were the norm in academia, we would all be a lot wiser, and Hickey's structure enables his aims, setting out the argument in clearly defined chapters. The opening chapter sets out his theoretical framework, citing Derrida's notion of the hauntological as a mode of reading that will allow spectral themes to be traced through Heaney's work. Derrida's notion of hauntology is a homophone of *ontologie* (ontology) in French, which at the level of sound makes ontology and hauntology similar, thereby complicating the seeming facts of presence with the haunting traces or differences, to use Derrida's own terminology, that hover around it in the paradigmatic chain of meaning.

To find connections between this quite arcane level of metaphysical thinking and Heaney, conventionally seen as very much a poet of the concrete, would seem to be stretching credibility, but this is not the case. Hickey's version of Heaney is nuanced, thoughtful, seeing him as quite a metaphysician in his own right, ranging across cultural and temporal borders to fill his contemporary present with ghosts, spectres, and memories of his own. Hickey is absolutely correct here, and his view of Heaney as such a thoughtful and nuanced writer is an accurate one. The contrasts with Derrida allow Hickey to probe this pluralisation of the present with traces of a complex past, reading "ghostliness in the poetry anew", and recontextualising the spectrality at work within the "hauntedness in the canon" (4). Hickey suggests, citing Colin Davis, that spectrality "holds open the possibility of an unconditional encounter with otherness"

(76), and given that notions of otherness are so often at the root of violence and conflict, a way of seeing otherness as less threatening and perhaps closer to us than we would like to admit, can only be of value.

Beginning with his own home place, both the garden in “Digging” and the pump in his “Mossbawn” prose essay, Heaney moves out in a spatial and temporal trajectory across his books, writing about Iron Age bog bodies, *Buile Shuibhne*, Ancient Greece, Virgil, and Dante. For Hickey these are less themes than spectral sites which allow him to look at aspects of selfhood from the imagined perspective of the other. He quotes Derrida’s point in *Spectres of Marx* that the present can be seen to be made up purely of traces whose return “comes to disjoin or dis-adjust the identity of itself” (Derrida xx). Hickey suggests that it is this power of the ghost to disrupt certainty by its return that is of such sustaining value for Heaney, whose own work he persuasively argues is a cosmopolitan, aesthetic force. In this sense, “the haunted nature of the poem does not suggest that Virgil’s work controls each movement and turn that Heaney makes, but rather Virgilian ghosts can be seen to raise their heads and have a place in this poem that deals with issues of the contemporary moment” (104).

Derrida has also clearly linked the nature of the spectre with the trace in terms of memory and hauntology, and Hickey again notes Derrida’s comments in *Memoires for Paul de Man* that everything that we relate to or see in the present always carries “the signature of *memoirs-from-beyond-the-grave*” (qtd. in Hickey 134). Hickey’s effective use of Derrida, a notoriously difficult thinker, engages with specific aspects of his thought which he then teases out before making the connections with Heaney’s work. It is not a simple didactic application of Derrida, nor is it Derrida dumbed down: in this reading, Derrida and Heaney can be seen to inform aspects of the other’s thought, and this is due to the careful sequencing of quotation and argumentation.

Hickey then looks at the different and quite cosmopolitan spectres used by Heaney, all the more interesting when the very first spectre in his work is the familial and patriarchal grandfather in “Digging”, a trope which located Heaney as a poet of the local in the minds of many readers. Hickey traces Norse and British spectres of a more cosmopolitan colonialism than has been the norm in Irish cultural history and looks at how Heaney has used hauntings to help to manage the difficult political relationship that has existed between Ireland and England. He sees Heaney’s ability to “engage with British poetry and the many ghostly traits of culture and language inherited from the past develop a more pluralised and heterogeneous identity which adds strength to that fluid identity” (56). Such fluidity provides the focus of this chapter, looking at both British and Norse spectres of colonisation, and seeing one as haunted by the other in different ways. It is interesting to see the way Heaney uses both spectres to bounce off each other, and never quite asking the question as to why two such colonial processes have had such violently different results but allowing that question to remain to haunt us.

Heaney’s “bog poems” have been extensively discussed, so saying something new about them can be challenging. Hickey sees these poems as blending the material and the spectral in a demonstration of how ontologically present objects have their haunting traces about them: “‘Bog Oak’ probes the cultural heritage of Ireland through the shared heritage symbolised by the bog oak itself; it has been buried in the bog until it returns to haunt Heaney’s imagination and brings with it the ghosts of the Elizabethan past. It is not solely a symbol of Irishness or Britishness but rather a symbol of both” (51). Again, at a crucial point of the argument, Derrida is enlisted to good effect to provide a conceptual parallel for this practice. In this regard, the bog operates in line with Derrida’s thinking on the spectre: “everything begins before it begins” (Derrida, *Spectres* 202), in that “both the bog and the spectre can lay beneath the surface of conscious awareness until they return to haunt and influence the present once more” (67). It is an interesting reading of the bog poems, typical of Hickey’s ability to refresh existing readings of canonical poems.

Moving on to Heaney's turn to the classics, Hickey looks at the centrality of Dante and *The Divine Comedy* across Heaney's work, and notes that there is a double haunting going on here, as, just as Heaney is haunted by Dante, so both are haunted by Virgil. This chapter is very satisfying, especially as it leads into the final chapter which looks at "Route 110." In this poem, the genesis of Heaney's hauntings by the classical world are set out as Venus's doves have their local material equivalent in McNicholl's pigeons. The reading is sensitive and even foundational as this poem has not yet been the topic of much critical attention. Hickey's work will set some of the tone for future readings. Heaney has always, from "Personal Helicon" and "Blacksmith," in *Death of a Naturalist* and in the first paragraph of his *Selected Prose Preoccupations*, where he speaks about the sound of the "*omphalos*," been obsessed – haunted – by the energies, sounds and symbols of the classical world of the past through European culture and classical mythology in poems like "Bann Valley Eclogue" and "Virgil: Eclogue IX." The treatment of the influence of Virgil and Dante, and of their haunting the imagination, as well as the sound and shape of the writing is captured here. The casual and easy way Heaney manages the connections is effectively evoked:

The spectre cannot be cast away and when Heaney imagines Bellaghy as being like the Elysian Fields then it puts the sequence in touch with the eternal, it places his world in touch with the classical. The spectres of Heaney's world and past blend and fuse with those of canonical literature as Heaney is translating his experiences into certain aspects of *Aeneid VI*: we could say that he is also haunting Virgil's text. (167)

Hickey is correct in that influences flow across time and space, and that to read Virgil or Dante in the wake of Heaney is to read them anew, while being haunted by the Heaney reading. Finally, of course, the classical world and classical literature established many of our notions about life after death and in a period when violent death has been the topic, or at least the backdrop, of so much of Heaney's life and writing, then such a structure must be comforting: "much of the poetry is steeped in the violence and images of the dead and strives towards a way out of the violence, it is a journey towards transcendental peace" (157).

In summation, this is a book focused on specific thematic connections between Derrida and Heaney in terms of haunting. It is well-written, well-constructed and it is scholarly, as are all of the major figures in Heaney Studies consulted here, but Hickey's own voice is not drowned out by them. He clearly has something to say as he joins that conversation, and we will be hearing that voice for quite some time.

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Irish Lesbian Writing Across Time: A New Framework for Rethinking Love Between Women (Anna Charczun, 2021)

Tracy McAvinue

Irish Lesbian Writing Across Time makes a salient contribution not just to lesbian studies internationally, but also to the field of Irish women's writing. This exhaustive work documents the development of Irish lesbian fiction and how this corresponds with Irish history and lesbian politics, drawing on two centuries of textual sources ranging from novels, short stories, and drama from women writers from the Republic and Northern Ireland. Anna Charczun conducts this analysis through her timely reconceptualization of Vivienne Cass's 1979 theoretical model of "Homosexual Identity Formation." The model proposes five stages of the contextual and corresponding narrative development of lesbian visibility and desire and its concomitant societal perception. As such, Charczun conceptualizes an innovative theoretical approach to analyzing not just lesbian and gay narratives, but, as she says, bisexual and transgender identities also. This theoretical framework works well for the purposes of this study as it tracks the development of lesbian narratives against a documentation of their contexts, whilst also effectively organising the vast amount of historical, textual, and additional scholarly and theoretical sources used throughout this study.

This book takes as its contextual starting point the publication of "Ladies of Llangollen," in the *General Evening Post* in 1790, considered the first literary example of lesbian desire in Ireland. The relationship between the "Ladies," Eleanor Charlotte Butler (1739–1829) and Sarah Ponsonby (1755–1831), is given as an example of a "romantic friendship" (5), viewed as an entirely socially acceptable relationship between women in the eighteenth century. Their relationship, in addition to the cross-dressing and transgender characteristics evident in the lives of the Ladies, is interestingly termed "pre-lesbianism" here and is read through New Woman writing with a focus on Maria Edgeworth's *Belinda* (1801), Edith Somerville and Martin Ross's *The Real Charlotte* (1894), in addition to the fin-de-siècle writing of George Egerton, Sarah Grand, Rosa Mulholland, and Katherine Cecil Thurston. Charczun usefully incorporates a classification of first- and second-generation New Woman writers into her analysis of fictional lesbian sexuality; the former are defined as largely asexual, while the latter challenge all gendered restrictions including phallogocentric ideas about women's sexuality. Drawing on Cass, the textual analysis is read through the first stage in the developmental model of Irish lesbian narrative: hesitation. There are two phases in this stage: a suggestion but not a definite representation of lesbian desire; and then an implicit reference with direct challenges to gendered hierarchies, clearly aligned with the historical context of first-wave feminism and the New Woman and mapped out with meticulous textual detail in the selected texts. This framework allows Charczun to weave the complexities of theory, historical context, and multiple textual examples with a convincing clarity and poignantly establishes the significant contribution of New Woman writers to the representation of lesbian desire in Irish women's writing.

With same-sex desire now finding its place on the page in Irish writing, chapters two and three focus on texts and writers in post-independence and post-war Irish contexts. Both chapters explore the theoretical stages of comparison and exploration with chapter three being situated in an advanced phase of this stage. Contextually, chapter two draws on the influence of lesbian writings from outside of Ireland—largely England and France—and focuses its close analysis on the writing of Elizabeth Bowen, Molly Keane, and Kate O’Brien from 1927 to 1934. Reference is made to historical events of significance in terms of lesbians in Irish society and narrative, including the Oscar Wilde trials, the revolutionary period, and women’s feminist, political, and nationalist activism; however, the main focus is on the impact of Modernism and the experimental literary tools used to incorporate the subject of female same-sex passion in their fiction. As is so often the case with Irish women writers in this period, departures from dominant patriarchal—or in this case heterosexual—convention are necessarily encoded; these writers place lesbian attachments on the margins of heterosexual-centred narratives. Same-sex desire is thus successfully interwoven through the plots but simultaneously adequately concealed from the prevailing Catholic mores and draconian censorship laws. The chapter analyses several narrational techniques to reveal the presence of lesbian desire, such as lesbian panic, lesbian continuum, and lesbian presence. Charczun’s exploration of Bowen’s adolescent lesbian characters, viewed here as bracketing heterosexually-dominant narratives, is particularly absorbing. Charczun acknowledges the scholarly tendency towards putting Bowen in the “Big House” category, and her analysis here contributes greatly towards recent efforts to address this injustice to Bowen’s legacy. Scholarly inquiries into lesbian desire in Bowen is of course not new, but this text does very well to acknowledge existing scholarship while situating it firmly in the development of lesbian desire in fiction.

Chapter three follows on from a Modernist to a Postmodernist reading, elucidating a distinct shift due to second-wave feminism, when more overt homosexual references are made, specifically in works by Elizabeth Bowen, Kate O’Brien, and Edna O’Brien, from 1949 to 1988. Noting the absence of any same-sex narrative examples from 1934 to 1949, Charczun offers a thorough contextual explanation, drawing on events in Ireland including censorship and Catholic dominance, and, internationally, the rise of far-right ideologies and their concomitant persecution of homosexuality. The representation of lesbian desire remains at the same stage as in chapter two but has developed to a phase of “lesbian existence” (67), a term borrowed from Adrienne Rich referring to both the historical and evolving lesbian presence. The application of this theoretical stage to Bowen’s women characters is particularly insightful due to the connections made with the previous chapter and as such is worthy of mention again here. Bowen’s experimentation with style, form, intertextuality, and structure is often referenced, but the argument here is that it is within those stylistic perplexities that Bowen inserts her lesbian narratives. Moreover, the development of lesbian narratives outlined by Charczun is exemplified by Bowen’s many protagonists who begin as adolescents experimenting with their lesbian desire, but who in later novels do “not develop into heterosexuality in their adulthood, but [are] transformed into the conscious self-realisation of lesbian desire” (66). The repeated use of Bowen therefore ideally demonstrates the efficacy of the developmental approach used. Although Bowen is the first Irish writer to enter the word “lesbian” into fictional narrative, with Dinah asking: “Mumbo, are you a Lesbian?” (197) in her 1964 novel *The Little Girls*, lesbian fiction is still largely considered to be on the fringes at the close of this period. However, the representations of lesbian sexuality become much more overt in the latter phase, and Charczun pays tribute to the achievements of the writers who paved the way for the next stage of development.

Chapters four and five cover a similar time frame around the turn of the twentieth century, but the latter broadens the analysis significantly by considering the role of diaspora transnationalism/culturalism in lesbian representation in narrative discourse. Chapter four

covers Irish fiction from 1889 to 2007 and takes as its contextual backdrop the immense advancement of lesbian politics towards the close of the 1990s. During this period, writers start to bring lesbian characters and plots from the margins right to the centre of the story, and same-sex desire is rendered explicit on the pages of Irish fiction. Deftly traced through these chapters is a rapid movement between the theoretical stages of development. In the eight years in focus here the stages of tolerance/acceptance, following the decriminalization of homosexual acts in 1993, and then pride/synthesis in the Celtic Tiger era, are all achieved. Tolerance and acceptance appear in literature as an overt coming out and a sense of being a part of the LGBTQI+ community, but what Charczun notes is that a feeling of alienation from the heteronormative population persists, while pride/synthesis appears as a sense of equality with heteronormative counterparts. These stages are analysed through an illuminating close reading of Mary Dorsey's short story collection, *A Noise from the Woodshed*, and Emma Donoghue's story, "Going Back", and her novels *Stir-Fry* (1994) and *Hood* (1996). Donoghue's works signal a transition to the pride/synthesis stage, a period Charczun defines as "post-decriminalisation," which also includes the final text, Dorsey's 1997 novel *Biography of Desire*.

While each of the previous chapters necessarily delves deep inward to the folds and edges of the selected stories to find evidence of lesbian desire in Irish literature, chapter five broadens the perspective outwards, with a very welcome analysis of the diaspora writing of Anna Livia and Shani Mootoo. Existing scholarship attests to the predominance of the open expression of the homosexual experience being situated away from home, but Charczun posits a clear distinction between the development of lesbian fiction from Ireland to that from diasporic sources. Writing from outside of Ireland created a sense of freedom in terms of lesbian desire. As chapter four notes, there was a rapid progression in the development of lesbian writing following the advancements in legislation, and the contention here is that this, in turn, prompted a push for lesbian writers globally to work towards updating, in a sense, the Irish literary tradition. The difference found in diasporic writing, and highlighted specifically through Charczun's model, is that the openness about lesbian experiences gained from a distanced perspective also includes direct references to the ongoing issues and struggles facing lesbian communities. This points to the notion that though there is a clear trajectory in terms of improved representation of lesbian relationships and identities in narrative, this change is complex and not always linear.

The final chapter exemplifies the comprehensive breadth of analysis conducted in this work; the focus here is on Northern Irish lesbian narrative in drama and theatre and looks at writing by Stacey Gregg, Jaki McCarrick, Hilary McCollum, and Shannon Yee. This section opens with the position of women during the Troubles and therefore requires an adaptation of the developmental model used for the study thus far. The explanation for this is worth noting: themes of sexual desire were ousted in favour of nationalism and masculinist violence; women during this period were largely confined to traditional gendered roles and any expression of sexuality—heteronormative or other—was considered highly transgressive and non-patriotic. While the justification for the narrowed timeframe, scope, and adapted model is well-argued and the focus of this chapter highly needed, one wonders whether a deeper exploration of Northern Irish narrative from earlier than this time frame or indeed a comparative analysis of drama and theatre might be an area ripe for further research. Testament to the adaptability of Charczun's developmental model is that all stages could be fluidly applied to the much shorter timeframe in the case of Northern Irish playwrights and work perfectly in outlining the rapid shift from a considerably stunted feminist/lesbian movement to what Charczun describes as "an explicit queer theatre, with room for representations of all genders, sexualities, religions and cultural differences" (227).

An astoundingly thorough exploration has been conducted in *Irish Lesbian Writing Across Time* that truly enriches the field of lesbian writing and indeed Irish women's writing in general, due in large part to the outstanding close textual analysis throughout. To endeavour to cover the development of lesbian lives in Irish writing over two centuries is an aspirational undertaking. This is not least because it takes into account the historical context, politics, gender and class hierarchies, religion, nationalism, emigration and feminist and lesbian activism and explores these through perspectives including psychology, sociology, cultural, and queer studies. This is a mountainous task that has been masterfully handled here, due to the chronological order but largely because of the developmental structure that has been deployed. Charczun's skill in correlating this must be commended.

The theoretical framework provides a vital mode of analysing the position of lesbian experience and identity. Charczun highlights the point that though there is a clear line of development in this regard, lesbian identity and the expression of same-sex desire is in flux. In this sense, the model outlined in this text is one that can be reapplied in an ever-changing society where social, cultural, and/or political turns can and will impact lesbian lives on the ground and then the page. In a similar vein, this developmental model can also be applied to interrogations of lesbian narratives from other countries. The model may well not align as neatly but this would only benefit comparative analyses and our understanding of the evolution of lesbian experience globally.

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Revolutionary Bodies: Homoeroticism and the Political Imagination in Irish Writing
(Michael G. Cronin, 2022)

Heather Laird

The front cover of *Revolutionary Bodies: Homoeroticism and the Political Imagination in Irish Writing* features a black and white photograph of the National Gallery of Ireland's new courtyard. An art exhibit, the image of a man in a seated position suspended in air, is balanced over the book title and author's name, most of the words rendered in a shade of yellow normally associated with reflective garments worn in high risk or emergency situations. The man is wearing only trousers, and we can see his strong upper torso. His muscular arms are, however, crossed protectively over his body, denoting its vulnerability, with each hand grasping the opposing knee, fingers splayed. He faces downwards, his head gently cradled on his in-turned left shoulder. The outer framing of *Revolutionary Bodies* is both beautifully executed and indicative of the book's content; this is one of those instances when you can and, in fact, should judge a book by its cover.

Revolutionary Bodies explores Irish literary depictions of homoeroticism and of gay men within a wider Marxist analysis of sexual freedom and how it is imagined for queer people under late capitalism. The writers discussed include Oscar Wilde, Brendan Behan, John

Broderick, Jamie O'Neill, and Colm Tóibín. In the Introduction, Michael G. Cronin anticipates one of the main critiques likely to be directed towards this book: its predominantly male focus. One of the ways he attempts to offset this critique is by pointing to the extent to which the book is attuned to (Marxist) feminist concerns, such as the complex and contradictory relationship between capitalism and the family. Another is by acknowledging ways that the book would have been “enriched and variegated” by the inclusion of an exploration of the depiction of same-sex desire between women by female authors like Kate O'Brien, while nonetheless insisting on the usefulness of a study solely concerned with “how images of gay men circulate in the political imaginary” (12, 13). Cronin then makes a good case for the distinctiveness of discourses of male homosexuality in late capitalism, drawing attention, for example, to the association between contemporary gay men and vapid consumerism. That said, the book makes broader interventions that are not necessarily reliant on this narrow focus and are at least as significant as the insights gained from it.

One of these interventions has to do with the false opposition that has been established by a number of influential Irish queer theorists and feminist scholars, and, in the public domain, by writers like Colm Tóibín, between Irish anti-colonial/nationalist thinking and activism on the one hand and sexual transgression and freedom on the other, a false opposition that has become an unexplored truism. Cronin's discussion of Oscar Wilde and his scholarly reception in the book's introduction is key to this particular intervention. A second and more significant intervention concerns politics and political mobilization. As Cronin acknowledges, perhaps the easiest way to establish oneself as political or radical in contemporary Irish society is to express outrage towards institutions and norms that are now safely discredited. John Boyne's *The Heart's Invisible Furies* (2017), a novel that opens with a young pregnant woman being publicly condemned by a hypocritical priest, is cited in *Revolutionary Bodies* in this regard. There is also a politics that organizes itself around inclusion, identity, and injury. Cronin draws on the writings of the American theorists Wendy Brown and Judith Butler in his exploration of both why this form of politics can sometimes be necessary, and why it is limited. To seek “inclusion,” he reminds us, is to “implicitly value and endorse that from which one is ‘excluded’” (29). Further, to structure a struggle around inclusion is to accept that others will remain on the outside, and that, in fact, your inclusion may function to validate or legitimate their exclusion. And this is something that Cronin explores in greater depth in *Sexual/Liberation*, his forthcoming publication for the Síreacht series, published by Cork University Press. Interdependency and vulnerability, particularly “vulnerability intrinsic to the human body,” are important to Brown's and Butler's critical analysis of politicised identity, and to Cronin's re-working of this analysis in the Irish context (29). “To mobilise politically around human interdependence”, Cronin tells us, is to challenge the ideology of bourgeois individualism as it requires “conceptualising our consciousness and sense of self as relational rather than separative” (30). Vulnerability is also political in that the distribution of corporeal vulnerability in the capitalist world-system is starkly inequitable, he reminds us. To quote at length from *Revolutionary Bodies*, “for those of us living in the prosperous West, the psychic experience of late capitalism is not unlike having a decomposing portrait hidden in the attic; our suppressed knowledge about that enormity of human suffering and exploitation, and the unfolding ecological catastrophe, which enables our consumerist lifestyles” (17). This macro view of how the privilege of some under capitalism is always reliant upon the often-unacknowledged exploitation of others is reinforced at a micro level in the book's Acknowledgements in which Cronin includes mention of the doctoral students and occasional teaching staff in his home institution upon whose “grossly undervalued” labour the research time of permanent lecturing staff is reliant (vii).

A number of key distinctions – injury versus vulnerability, identity versus body, identity politics versus a politics comprised of the collective opposition of all of capitalism's

disenfranchised subjects – shape the book’s analysis of Irish writings about the homoerotic male body. And Cronin, in his discussion of these works, challenges another truism: that all literary writings which could be loosely categorized as works of Irish gay male fiction are by definition dissident. A particularly potent variant of modernization discourse in Ireland that forms a link between economic protectionism and sexual repression, and between further integration into global capitalism and sexual liberation ensures that while some of these writings are indeed “radical, disruptive and utopian,” others are “in comfortable alignment” with the social, economic and political norms of neoliberal Ireland (27). And, in a number of cases, it is considerably more complex than that. Form and style are to the fore of Cronin’s analysis of these literary works. His close reading of Tóibín’s fiction is worth drawing particular attention to. The Tóibín chapter centres on a trio of gay-themed novels: *The Story of the Night* (1996), *The Blackwater Lightship* (1999) and *The Master* (2004). In these literary works, Cronin points out, Tóibín uses “the conventions of realism to construct gay male characters, and to incorporate those characters into inherited genres and plot types” – such as the *bildungsroman* or generational narrative – intrinsically linked to the developmental historicism that underpins the bourgeois social order (91). Moreover, the “modern gay men in Tóibín’s fiction embody, and experience as liberating, the political rationality and ‘realist’ ‘common sense’ characteristic of neoliberal subjectivity” (25-6). But combined with frank depictions of the lives of autonomous gay men “embedded in identifiable historical conditions” is the sublimation into the texts of “erotic, specifically homoerotic, energies” to generate “powerful affects and symbolic resonances” (91). And these affects are particularly condensed, Cronin claims, in the parts of the novels where the male body is portrayed as a location of pleasure and pain that “exists only and always in relation to other bodies” (104). Thus, politically these novels pull in two directions, Cronin argues. Ironically, it is when they are most closely in alignment with a progressive sexual politics – through the creation of compelling and recognisable stories about these male characters – that they are most fully in conformity with the values of late capitalism. And, conversely, it is when Tóibín’s fiction seems furthest removed from progressive sexual politics that it is potentially most radical and disruptive of hegemonic norms. Cronin’s focus, in the latter case, is on Tóibín’s aforementioned writing of the male body in pleasure and pain; an aspect of his work that draws our attention to “the vulnerability and porousness of the self” (112).

Revolutionary Bodies concludes with a discussion of Joe Caslin’s murals, visual depictions, and indeed celebrations of vulnerability and interdependency. These include a mural erected on the wall of the National Museum of Ireland at Collins Barracks as part of “The Volunteers” project in which two young men face each other in a crouched position. The men depicted are a twenty-year-old GAA athlete and volunteer and a twenty-eight-year-old man who has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder. One of them is looking at the viewer – “his unflinching gaze indexing the physical and emotion strength he can impart” – whilst supporting the head of the other on his chest (199). We assume that he is the “volunteer”, but as Cronin points out, the “awkward physical position in which they are posed means that the two men are literally supporting each other to stay upright” (199-200). Literature and art, Cronin tells us in the concluding lines of the book, are not “roadmaps for the political future,” but can provide “guiding images prompting us towards imagining less alienated, more humane and sustainable ways of being human” – “‘ironic points of light’ to guide us hopefully in dark and hopeless times” (211). *Revolutionary Bodies* is an important and timely publication that provides a strong critique of the forces that have resulted in these dark and hopeless times, whilst also seeking, like some of the works it discusses, to guide us hopefully.

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***Austerity and Irish Women's Writing and Culture, 1980–2020* (Deirdre Flynn and Ciara L. Murphy, eds., 2022)**

Nathalie Lamprecht

Ireland has been through several cycles of boom and bust in the last four decades, none as significant as the boom of the Celtic Tiger years (ca.1994-2008) and the following recession, both of which changed the socio-cultural landscape of the island for ever. Even now, following Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic, amidst the current cost of living crisis, it is unclear whether austerity measures will once again come into play. Thus, the collection *Austerity and Irish Women's Writing and Culture, 1980-2020*, edited by Deirdre Flynn and Ciara L. Murphy, is a timely and important contribution to Irish studies. It is an exploration of the interconnections between the Irish economy, resulting and repeated austerity measures, and the situation of women in Ireland. It delves into how these connections are reflected upon in a variety of contemporary literature, while also giving space to discussions of the social repercussions of austerity and the difficulties women face in the field of cultural production. Indeed, *Austerity and Irish Women's Writing and Culture, 1980-2020* manages to include a wide range of topics all of which combine to show that despite popular discourses of “masculinity in crisis,” it is in fact women who bear the brunt of recession and austerity measures. The collection brings together authors from different backgrounds – be it literary criticism, theatre, or poetry – to provide an overview of how austerity has affected both women in general as well as women's writing and cultural production at different times over the last forty years. It thus achieves what it sets out to do: namely to show how in almost any area of life austerity functions as violence, leading to societal regression and lingering trauma in those most affected.

In fact, as Flynn and Murphy's introduction indicates, not only are already meagre state supports cut in times of crisis, but any attempts at improving the social standing of marginalized groups are abandoned too. Throughout the collection, contributors note that while women's rights were gaining traction in the Celtic Tiger years, in the recession following, a return to a more conservative family model became apparent. Flynn and Murphy observe that overall social progress tends to take place in times of economic prowess, while in times of crisis, these movements often reverse; thus, the collection is dedicated to “seeking out stories of the domestic, unseen labour, and the struggle faced by many women intensified by austerity measures” (10). The collection further notes that Irish women's writing has tendentially been perceived by canon-making institutions as ‘domestic’ and too limited, not fit to compete with the ostensibly more universal, masculine topics of nation and selfhood. Touching upon all of these issues and more, the collection attempts to answer the questions of “what sort of literature and theatre does austerity produce? And if the effects of austerity are gendered, then what are the gender-specific responses to austerity?” (2).

Poetry scholar Laura Loftus uses her chapter, “Two Opposing Narratives? The Field Day and LIP Pamphlets,” to show how Ireland's cultural landscape in the 1980s was not ready

to welcome feminist approaches. LIP's collaborative approach challenged the idea of the lone male genius Irish writer, and it was decidedly underfunded, leading to claims of it being an "amateur endeavour" compared to the more established all-male Field Day company's pamphlets. Loftus shows how those who have money are on the deciding end of who gets forgotten and who gets anthologized, thus offering a belated explanation for how the *Field Day Anthology's* exclusion of women writers could happen, despite the already ongoing discussion of feminist literary criticism in Ireland at the time.

In her chapter, "Austerity, Conflict, and Second-Wave Feminism in the North of Ireland," Ciara L. Murphy discusses the work of Charabanc Theatre Company in the 1980s, concluding that in many ways, Charabanc was actually ahead of its time. The company played with an all-female cast and brought working-class women's real lived experiences to the stage. Murphy convincingly argues that although Charabanc refused the label "feminist," as they thought it to be alienating for their audience in the North, they did in fact employ second-wave feminist approaches in their theatre practice. In fact, they could even be considered intersectional feminists due to their focus on the connection between conflict, class, and gender.

The next chapter is "#WakeUpIrishPoetry: Austerity and Activism in Contemporary Irish Poetry – A personal reflection." In it, poet and academic Kathy D'Arcy uses her poetic craft to convey the struggles of working in Irish poetry today: "In the famed San Francisco City Lights bookshop for the first time, I find the Irish anthology section and ask the manager to remove the books from the shelves. I show him the contents pages. He agrees" (58). An interesting mixture of poetry and extensive data, this chapter becomes an action plan for bringing about positive change, not only to unequal funding, but also hostile work environments in the Irish arts sector.

Claire Keogh, in her chapter, "Kermit, Cows, and Headless Chickens: Women's Comedy Monologues after the Tiger," argues that laughter, and moreover grotesque laughter, are the natural response to the paradoxical demands of participating in the workplace, taking care of homes and children and all the while keeping up to date on your beauty routine. This was the situation for many women during and after the Celtic Tiger, and, combined with the lack of funding in theatre, it opened the stage to so-called femologues, i.e., monologue plays featuring women. These plays would often be humorous in the face of adversity and Keogh succeeds in her argument that post-crash theatre is a lived example of Meidhbh McHugh's concept of "fifth-wave funny feminism."

In chapter six, "Balancing Acts: From Survival to Sustainability in Contemporary Irish Theatre and Performance," Miriam Haughton and Maria Tivnan discuss how theatre funding and women's involvement bear an inverse correlation. They give an almost overwhelming amount of statistics on Irish arts funding distribution, using Galway-based theatre group Theatre57 as an example of an underfunded group working towards change. Theatre57 aims to bring more funding to Galway to make working and living in the west of Ireland more achievable, especially for female theatre-makers who may not be able to travel due to care duties and lack of personal funds, as they are paid significantly less than their male counterparts.

In her chapter, "Intersectionality in Contemporary Melodrama: *Normal People* (McDonald/Abrahamson, 2020) and *Kissing Candice* (McArdle, 2018)," Zélie Asava points out that melodrama, although often disregarded in academic circles, is not only the most popular form of mass media, but also uniquely equipped to capture rapid cultural change. This change is visible in both, *Kissing Candice* and *Normal People*; however, the multicultural, multiracial Ireland portrayed in the latter especially occludes discussions of racism. The white main characters talk about racism, but only amongst their white peers. Class issues seem to take prevalence over racism and the effect is one of colour-blind storytelling. On Irish screens, racialized characters rarely feature as part of conversations about their own lives and experiences in Ireland.

“Austerity and the Precarity of Whiteness: Polish Characters in Stacey Gregg’s *Shibboleth* (2015) and Rosemary Jenkinson’s *Here Comes the Night* (2016)” is Justine Nakase’s chapter on levels of whiteness in Northern Ireland. In it she argues that Ireland’s belonging to Europe is precarious and so is the whiteness associated with being European. In Northern Ireland the situation becomes even more complicated due to the construction of Catholic and Protestant as two distinct ethnicities. Nakase eloquently explains how, based on this background, some may consider themselves to be whiter than others. She finally concludes that both plays analysed seem to argue that in Northern Ireland, it may be easier to integrate new communities than to reconcile old ones.

In chapter nine, Sandrine Uwase Ndahiro gives an overview of “Black Irish Culture” and the issues facing Irish people of colour. A partly personal appeal to take racism in Ireland seriously, the chapter asks the question: “Who gets to be Irish?” (157), and this is not easily answered. Seemingly, though, Blackness is only represented in Irish media in a positive light when it benefits Ireland by, for example, making it seem progressive and open to the world. However, when the ethnic landscape of Ireland started to change with the arrival of the Celtic Tiger, the response was a heightened desire to cling to traditional identity constructions, in turn leading to racism.

In his chapter, “Austerity, Irish Literary Tropes, and Claire Keegan’s Fiction,” Yen-Chi Wu counters arguments that Claire Keegan’s writing is anachronistic due to her use of a sense of entrapment typical of mid-century Irish writing, which is out of step with the rapidly modernising Ireland of her early career. Wu indeed argues that the reappropriation of familiar tropes becomes a way to comment on and criticize literature and culture. Austerity in Keegan’s stories is configured “not just as material wanting but spiritual emptiness” (185). As she celebrates the development of the nation by counteracting the anti-development plot of the Irish bildungsroman, Keegan is also wary of the capitalist system that brings about positive improvements in terms of gender equality.

Chapter eleven, written by Margaret O’Neill, is entitled “Celtic Tiger Saga Fiction: Patricia Scanlan’s *City Girls* and Marian Keyes’ *Walsh Family*” and shows how Patricia Scanlan and Marian Keyes recognised a lack of writing for and about women in their own times and set out to create literature that was relatable to the women of Ireland because it dealt with issues facing them in their everyday lives. This meant that they depicted not only consumerism and new lifestyle opportunities, but also the dark underbelly of the economic boom, touching upon, for example, domestic violence, drug use, divorce, and abortion. The financial crisis here is depicted as a renewed move towards traditional gender roles, in which women take over caring duties and cannot leave broken marriages due to financial concerns.

In her chapter “‘Just the Way It Is’; Portraits of Austerity in Short Fiction by Women from the North of Ireland” Orlaith Darling discusses traces of austerity visible in short story collections by Louise Kennedy, Lucy Caldwell and Wendy Erskine. In their short stories the writers focus on those most affected by austerity, namely mothers and young people. They thus allow readers to understand the effects of austerity on a personal level, highlighting how no amount of personal responsibility can make up for a lack of state support. Darling closes her chapter with a concise argument about the short story form in Northern Ireland, namely that it “captures the fragmentation of individual lives apropos of the collapse of a larger system” (220).

In the final chapter of the collection, “Motherhood, Referendums and Austerity in Contemporary Irish Women’s Writing,” Deirdre Flynn examines the situation of women in Ireland with the help of three referendums – the 1995 divorce referendum, the 2004 citizenship referendum and the eight amendment of 1983 – and several works of fiction reflecting on those referendums. Flynn concludes her chapter and thereby the collection by once again emphasizing how the lingering religious influence on state institutions, the Irish constitution, and the lack of state support work together to keep women in place and to leave them to carry the burden of

austerity.

Overall, the collection eloquently points out that it is women who have to deal with the social fallout of austerity. It shows that there is much still to be done until equality, safe and secure working conditions in the arts and acceptance of diverse Irish identities can be achieved. The editing errors that appear throughout the volume are perhaps a perfect allegory for what many of the essays observe: the culture of overwork, overextension, and underpayment so prevalent not only in domestic labour, but also in the arts and in academia. Flynn and Murphy created a valuable contribution to the study of Irish women's writing and culture, while also taking care of numerous other responsibilities. The content of the various essays more than makes up for the occasional slip in grammar, spelling or editing.

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***Law and Literature: The Irish Case* (Adam Hanna and Eugene McNulty, eds., 2022)**

Róisín Á Costello

This edited volume commences with a prologue or “proem” by Julie Morrissey in which the poet erases portions of section 18 of the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act 2013 to create a vision of law's *de facto* impacts when its words are pared back. While section 18, read in full, prohibits the State from restraining a woman's freedom to travel outside the country to seek a termination of her pregnancy, Morrissey's selective erasure subverts this meaning and exposes the *result* of the section for the women it is directed towards. The proem thus announces, “the State shall make miscellaneous person travel to another state during pregnancy to obtain information of services ... the State shall by law restrict any person limit freedom during pregnancy ...” (xiii).

The opening is apt, highlighting literature's capacity to expose and interrogate the inconsistency between the restrictions imposed by law's form, as words on a page, and its function as a practical force ordering individual lives, beyond the page. It is a theme that runs through this volume which is concerned not only with locating “the specificities of Irish writing within ... the interdisciplinary field known as Law and Literature” (2), but also with bringing these “foundational fabrics upon which we make, and re-make, our political, social and ethical existence” into dialogue with each other in a specifically Irish setting (2).

The introduction offers an incisive, if concise, literature review which offers a jumping off point for those less familiar with the field of law and literature, and is complemented by the “Opening Argument” authored by Tom Hickey and David Kenny who unpack the connections between literary and legal interpretation and the main schools (and scholars) that have competed to offer the defining articulation of how meaning is made, by who, and to what end, in these fields.

This opening contribution is as close as the volume comes to engaging with “law *as* literature” in a collection which is otherwise concerned with depictions and uses of law and

courtrooms in literature, and to a lesser extent the power of legal experience to shape literary style. Part One “Alternative Jurisdictions” begins with Adam Geary’s chapter “Saying Unsaid: Law Transformed in Annemarie Ní Churreáin’s *Bloodroot* (2017).” Geary’s contribution reads the poetry of Ní Churreáin as a commentary on female disappearance and disappearing in Irish history and the complicity of the law in this process – if only through its silence. Geary presents Ní Churreáin’s work as a meditation on the potential for this silence to provoke transformation (45), re-imagining an alternative future for the law, and its subjects, by leaning on the concealed possibilities of the law and allowing the said to echo off the unsaid (46).

The alternative figures Ní Churreáin imagines presiding over the alternative jurisdictions of her work (55) appear throughout Irish literature which has, often, superimposed an alternative adjudicator on dilemmas to articulate in literature a model of justice which the law cannot, or will not, provide in life. This is a theme which Heather Laird examines in her chapter “Writing Law(lessness): Legal Pluralism and Narrative Structure in *Hurrish* (1886).” Laird examines *Hurrish*, as both a realist account of the Land Wars in nineteenth-century Ireland, and as an effort to expose the failures of the law, and lawlessness, to resolve the iniquities at the heart of the disputes. Laird’s analysis is contextualized by the idea of legal pluralism as part of which *Hurrish* not only demonstrates the extent to which official law and “unwritten law” compete to define the norms of the novel’s community but also exposes the failures of both systems to exert an order, highlighting the failure of law, whether official or unofficial, when uncoupled from legitimacy.

In the following chapter, “Laughter before the Law: Censorship, Caricature and Hunger Strike in Modern Irish Literature and Art,” Barry Sheils charts the power of laughter as an act of performative resistance to the law, which requires a compliant body through and over which to exercise its power. In Sheils’s account, laughter and satire trouble this relationship by making the body a place of tension, and a space resistant to the authority of law. In contrast to Sheils, Adam Hanna’s contribution, “Citizenship and Connection in Doireann Ní Ghríofa’s *Clasp* (2015),” examines how law’s power is internalized rather than shaken loose. Hanna is concerned with the images of webs and threads that appear and reappear in Ní Ghríofa’s work and which, he argues, are suggestive of an imagination that seeks to connect Ní Ghríofa’s readers to hidden or forgotten histories. Unlike Sheils’s depiction of law’s power as displaced, Ní Ghríofa’s poems are mediations on experiences contained, and erased by law, events officially erased which can nevertheless be traced through lines of connection which “not only cross over but pull against one another” (82). In many ways the picture of law which emerges from Hanna’s analysis of Ní Ghríofa’s work is of an institution which presents a coherent façade even as it trembles from the tension of containing its own contradictory and competing histories.

Two of the chapters in Part Two, “The Writer in Court,” both Noreen Doody’s “Imagination v. The Law: Oscar Wilde” and Gearóid O’Flaherty’s “Fiat Justitia Ruat Caelum – Revisiting the Wildes on Trial” are concerned with the experiences of the Wilde family as defendants. O’Flaherty’s examination of Speranza’s, and later William Wilde’s, experiences are informative in as much as they offer a tempting insight into a family that cultivated “an aura of unverifiable legend” (127) and, to some extent, wove narratives which could be neither contained – nor condemned - by law. Doody’s chapter is more engaged with the impacts of appearing as a defendant on the literature of Oscar. In particular, she argues that Oscar rejected the rule of law (in its strictest sense) in favour of a state of pure imagination where facts and rules were subsumed by narrative force. When this hierarchy of value failed, and the law was brought to bear upon Wilde; the result, Doody argues, was that Wilde’s faith in pure, creative imagination was shaken and his work assumed an edge of realism which sat uncomfortably with its author’s own tastes and talents, but which he seemed unable to ignore.

Wilde’s position as an Irishman is touched on only briefly by Doody, while the interaction of citizenship and loyalty to English law is unpacked further by Katherine Ebury

whose contribution explores the legal charges of treason and treachery as inflected through the trial of William Joyce (Lord Haw Haw) in “World War II Treason Trials and the Legacy of Irish Rebellion in Rebeca West’s *The Meaning of Treason* (1947).” Drawing on West’s 1947 study, Ebury contends that West’s focus on Joyce’s Irishness and her foregrounding of the trial of Roger Casement in her work act as devices that at once humanize and other Joyce and allow her to query the intersections of Irish experience and the colonial and postcolonial legal order.

This tension between law and the identity of colonial subjects also rises to the fore in Colum Kenny’s “Legible Letters: The Cases of Patrick Pearse and the ‘English’ Alphabet,” which examines Pearse’s appearance as a barrister in the case of *McBride v McGovern*. The case concerned the capacity of English law to recognise the Irish language (and its script) as “legible” for the purposes of complying with certain statutory requirements (169-170). Long before he became a revolutionary, Kenny shows Pearse as a writer and lawyer, attuned to the performative nature of the courtroom and to the law’s function as an ideological stage in which resistance is acted out.

The disjuncture between English lauding of the common law as a source of justice and right and the reality of the common law as dismissive of Irish experience is unpicked by James Kelly in his contribution to Part Three, “Pleading My Cause: Literature and the Law in Irish Romanticism.” In examining the fractured politics of late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century Ireland’s legal system, Kelly argues that shifts towards a more sceptical, and censorial literary style in the work of Irish authors during the period were the inevitable result of the gulf between the English promotion of the common law tradition as zenith of justice and right and the experience of legislation in Ireland. Max Barrett’s “Through a Legal Looking-Glass: Maria Edgeworth’s *Castle Rackrent* (1800)” touches on the same unhappy divergence, examining the uses and abuses to which the law is put by the Rackrent baronets as part of a text which unpicks the alignment of law, class, and power in a novel replete with ideas of who was entitled to appeal to the law as a source of succour or self-advancement (183).

In Chapter Ten, “Rape Narratives, Women’s Testimony, and Irish Law in *Asking for It* and *Dark Chapter*,” Rebecca Anne Barr relates two novels about sexual assault, and the law’s apportionment of guilt and responsibility for sexual offences, to a high-profile rape trial which took place in Belfast in 2018. Barr argues that both novels reflect sceptically on the adequacy of both legal proceedings and fiction as forms of accountability for rape while noting that, if legal trials tend towards a devolution into adversarial processes and exclusive truths, literature at least offers a means of recomplicating the narratives the law presents (215).

In the penultimate chapter of the volume, “The Judge and the Human Hansard in Brian Friel’s Theatre,” Virgine Roche-Tiengo examines how Friel seeks to revive and preserve transcendent standards of truth and justice by positioning the courtroom and the judge as theatrical devices which can be examined and tested for adequacy. What is striking in Roche-Tiengo’s analysis is the way Friel exposes the potential for sanctioned violence which rests, dormant, in the framing of law as the imposition of order (in particular in *The Freedom of the City*) and Friel’s capacity both to recognise this, and to refuse to yield to it. This internal struggle between law’s poetic ideal, and the prosaic reality of its deployment are given full flight in the volume’s final chapter. In “Moral Legibility: Dion Boucicault and the Melodramatic Legal Scene” Eugene McNulty examines how law’s failure to connect with a moral universe is crucial to understanding Boucicault’s work – and his capacity to court and please British-Irish audiences. It is a fitting note on which to end the volume and one which speaks to the uneasy relationship between law, identity, and justice that successive generations of Irish authors have documented, and which the field of law and literature, in the Irish case, is tasked with interrogating.

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***Northern Irish Writing After the Troubles. Intimacies, Affects, Pleasures* (Caroline Magennis, 2021)**

Fiona McCann

Twenty-four years after the Good Friday Agreement, the North of Ireland is still in numerous ways a place marked by instability, not only in the seemingly unending accumulation of political crises which have been greatly exacerbated by Brexit, but also in economic, social, and psychological terms. As research has shown, “[p]sychiatric morbidity in Northern Ireland is 25% higher than in the UK” (O’Neill and Rooney),¹⁰ a statistic which is perhaps unsurprising given the longevity of the “Troubles” and the transgenerational transmission of pain, hurt, and trauma they engendered. Despite this bleak observation, however, the arts, and in particular literature and theatre, have increasingly become a counter-space where innovation, imagination, and creativity have perhaps never been greater. An astonishing number of publications over the past decade testify to the richness of culture in the North and to its attempts to put something else on the literary map beyond the trauma and horror, brutality and betrayal which have, understandably, long been omnipresent. Caroline Magennis’s book investigates this “something else” and does justice to a burgeoning field of novels, short stories and plays which veer away from the expected tropes and delve into the question of intimacy, and the related questions of affect and pleasure.

This is, above all, a meticulously situated critique of contemporary Northern Irish writing, and not just in terms of the temporal framework (the texts under scrutiny were written and published between 2015 and 2020). From the outset, Magennis takes care to critically situate herself not only within an academic field (of Northern Irish studies and of feminist critique), but also as a Northern Irish woman who “claim[s] solidarity and kinship with writing on Northern Ireland that attends to intimate configurations” and who has the lived experience of having grown up there towards the end of the conflict (5). As a result of this close contact with context, Magennis avoids the pitfalls she has observed in certain critical quarters where the inhabitants of the North sometimes become mere “fodder for a case study” (6), and where certain (redundant) scripts are rehearsed over and over again. She also weaves into her academic investigation of these works her own intimate connections to both the writing itself, along with a context which she “feels”, and to the very particular context in which this book was finalized, that is to say the global pandemic of 2020-2021 (still ongoing as I write this review). As Magennis notes on several occasions, thinking about this literature and the question of intimacy

¹⁰ Siobhan O’Neill and Nichola Rooney. “Mental health in Northern Ireland: an urgent situation”. *The Lancet*. 5(12), 2018. DOI:[https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366\(18\)30392-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366(18)30392-4)

at a time when, for many, intimate connections were put on hold due to the restrictions in place, heightened her awareness and appreciation of the issues at stake, particularly haptic interactions, and her awareness of the unpredictability of the trajectory of future literary productions in Ireland and beyond. This book offers a wide-ranging yet clear snapshot of ultra-contemporary writing in the North and the new preoccupations it is privileging.

The book is constituted of four parts: a chapter on each of the three key issues explored, intimacy, pleasure, skin, and a final chapter entirely devoted to Anna Burns's *Milkman* (2018) which, Magennis shows, resonates with all of the former questions in a highly innovative manner. Each section benefits from a robust critical introduction which sets the scene, as it were, before then delving into the intricacies of the texts themselves and the themes they explore. The scope of writing examined is impressively vast and balanced, several writers having been selected for study, among whom are Anna Burns, Lucy Caldwell, Jan Carson, Billy Cowan, Wendy Erskine, Phil Harrison, Rosemary Jenkinson, Michael Hughes, Roisín O'Donnell, Bernie McGill, David Park, Glenn Patterson. The explosion in Northern Irish writing over the past decade absolutely justifies such a wide spectrum and the only downside of this is that it is, consequently, impossible to provide close textual analyses of all these texts. This is not to take away from the excellent work Magennis is doing in this book, closely observing various representations of intimacy and discussing the (often feminist) agendas which subtend them. However, now that Magennis, through this book, has done all the necessary groundwork, other scholars may want to build on her important work and her incontestable claim that intimacy matters in Northern Irish writing.

The first section deals with intimacy and the politics of representation, and it is fitting that Magennis begins with a discussion of a neo-Troubles fiction text, Michael Hughes's *Country* (2018), as this enables her to engage with the tropes of old and the manner in which Hughes's novel reinvents certain hackneyed conventions and themes (the honeytrap, hyper-masculinity and heteronormativity within paramilitary movements), re-imbuing them with meaning and creating space for both women's agency and the re-negotiation of intimate relations politically and domestically through the macro-structure and hypotext of Homer's *Iliad*. The other texts explored in this section, while never completely free of the shadow of the conflict, are more contemporary in their setting and there are some delightful readings of often unacknowledged forms of intimacy: the space of the beauty salon in Wendy Erskine's short story "To All Their Dues," and the negotiation of faith in both Jan Carson's *The Fire Starters* and Phil Harrison's *The First Day*. This section also pays a good deal of attention to the stylistic innovation of a writer like Jan Carson, whose experiments with fantastic elements as they co-exist with the domestic in her novel *The Fire Starters* (and, indeed, in her writing more generally) expand the contours of Northern Irish writing, breaking firmly away from the realist mould. The ways in which both Harrison and Carson deal with violence, rendering it not incompatible with tenderness, is in marked contrast to what the playwright David Ireland has done in his play *Cypress Avenue* (2016), where the same old violent sensationalism so typical of the Troubles-era is foregrounded. Finally, in this section there is a stimulating discussion of the ways in which Lucy Caldwell engages with the notion of "digital intimacy" in her short story collection *Intimacies*, foregrounding and suspending judgement on the rapid social changes at work in the realm of the intimate in the age of social media and the immediacy provided by short messaging services.

The second section turns more specifically to pleasure and Magennis explains how, for so many years, the burden to represent (or search for representations of) the conflict was so heavy that pleasure was often overlooked. Her work seeks to redress this imbalance and succeeds in doing so, concentrating in this section on forms of pleasure in works by Lucy Caldwell, Billy Cowan, Rosemary Jenkinson, and Glenn Patterson. The introduction to this section might have benefitted from a more sustained definition of the way "pleasure" is to be

understood here (physical, psychological, emotional, political, all of these?) but Magennis cites, and renders relevant to her discussion, Roland Barthes, Hélène Cixous, and Julia Kristeva and satisfactorily defines the key term through them. Again, there are some wonderful readings here: the analysis of Patterson's ironic use of the song "Shot by Both Sides," or that of the way Rosemary Jenkinson revisits the stereotypical theme of Northern Irish women and their forbearance by transforming this into sexual stamina and voracious appetite. I wondered if more might have been made of Billy Cowan's dramatic intent in the discussion of his play *Still Ill*, since one might question whether the politics of representation are the same in a play as in a novel or short story, but overall, this section offers compelling readings of the ways in which these Northern Irish writers strive to escape what Magennis calls "the past's limiting paradigms" (87).

Chapter three then turns to "skin" and, like the previous chapters, opens with a strong theoretical and contextual introduction which lays the foundations of the subsequent analysis. Once again, we are treated to some thought-provoking readings here, including those on scabs and scars, and on the fine line which sometimes separates vulnerability and aggressivity. The dominant genre studied in this section is, with the exception of David Park's *Gods and Angels*, the short story and three collections have been selected for scrutiny, Rosemary Jenkinson's *Aphrodite's Kiss*, Bernie McGill's *Sleepwalkers*, and Roisín O'Donnell's *Wild Quiet*. In a laudable effort to do justice to these writers, Magennis covers a very broad range of stories, and the overall approach is one of tantalizing readings of several stories, rather than a few in-depth close readings. This speaks, however, to Magennis's generosity in writing about current Northern Irish fiction and, to a lesser extent, drama: this is a book which quite literally invites an extensive number of innovative and original texts to become part of an academic conversation and it would therefore be impossible to be exhaustive in the details of literary analysis.

In any case, the final chapter, devoted entirely to Anna Burns's prizewinning *Milkman* allows Magennis all the necessary liberty to unpack the complexity of this novel unlike any other. There are some highly engaging readings here of rhythmic or kinetic language and the notion of shame, and a brilliantly executed incorporation of Sara Ahmed's writing on the "feminist killjoy" and "affect aliens" in relation to Middle Sister and the ways in which she endures and responds to the daily oppressions she experiences. Magennis shows how Burns masterfully rejects the "assigned scripts" (144), developing an aesthetics which contests the rigid emotional landscape of this fictional Ardoyne (Belfast), and she also demonstrates how Burns reveals the dangers of transgressing "a homogenous affective climate" (161), and embraces the possibility of breaking free. Magennis's analyses of Burns's engagement with the fraught possibility of solidarity among women and with mental health issues are also excellent.

Magennis, rightly I think, invites us to accept "open endings" in lieu of a conclusion, gesturing to the ever-increasing number of novels and short stories being published by writers from the North, and providing us with one final insight into a novel for which she received the proof copy just as she was terminating her manuscript, Susannah Hickey's *Tennis Lessons* (2020). Throughout this book, rather than renegeing on or pushing to the background her own personal engagement with the issues raised and with the fraught political context, she situates it and relies upon it to "feel" her way intuitively through these texts, and this is precisely what makes this academic book such a refreshing and important read. The appendix is a lovely surprise, with reflections on writing and intimacy by twelve of the writers featured in the book. The incorporation of these reflective pieces underlines Magennis's close consideration of writers' agendas, and indeed the strong relationship she has built up with many of them, but it also reflects a certain humility as she, in a sense, leaves the final word with them. There is no doubt that these reflections will be useful to scholars and readers of Northern Irish writing, just as there is no doubt that Caroline Magennis's book as a whole opens up exciting and significant

new vistas in research on intimacy, affect, and pleasure in the often heavily charged context of the North.

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***The Study of Religions in Ireland: Past, Present and Future* (Brendan McNamara and Hazel O’Brien, eds., 2022)**

Bradford A. Anderson

Given the significant role which “religion” has played in Ireland through the centuries, and its place in popular reconstructions of the island (past and present), one might expect that the study of religions as an academic enterprise would be well established in Ireland. However, for a variety of reasons, this has not been the case, and the academic study of religions – described as an objective approach to the topic, often juxtaposed with theology – is a relatively new arrival in Ireland. This volume, edited by Brendan McNamara and Hazel O’Brien, seeks to give snapshots of this emerging discourse on the island, giving readers a glimpse of the way in which the study of religions is taking shape in this context.

The volume begins with an introductory chapter from Alexandra Grieser and Brian Bocking entitled “The Study of Religions in Ireland: An Entangled History.” Along with introducing the various chapters in the volume, Grieser and Bocking helpfully guide the reader through a number of important context-setting issues, from the complex geographical, political, and religious history of the island, to the wide-ranging terminology used for the study of religions in Ireland. The authors also usefully map out some of the work that has been done to date on the island (and beyond), and in doing so paint a helpful picture of how both institutions and individuals are contributing to the academic study of religions in Ireland.

Amy Heath-Carpentier’s chapter explores the complex interrelationship of religious and political perspectives of women who played key roles in the Irish nationalist movement in the revolutionary period, including Ella Young, Maud Gonne, Constance Markievicz, and Eva Gore-Booth, among others. Noting how these women drew from and engaged with traditions that went beyond their own Catholic and Anglican backgrounds – including esotericism, spiritualism, and theosophy – Heath-Carpentier suggests this was a “renegotiation” of their identity which served as a way of giving these women space to navigate the androcentric contexts of both religion and politics during this period. Such a perspective is also important

for pushing back against reductionist understandings of this period which conflate nationalism with Catholicism, and a narrowly defined Catholicism at that.

Síle de Cléir's contribution offers "Reflections on Irish Folklore and Religion." Following a discussion of terminology related to "folk religion", de Cléir explores the way in which folk traditions in many contexts are seen as "unofficial," inferior to "official" religious traditions. However, this is not the case in Ireland, where the interplay of language and nationalist traditions has meant that vernacular traditions are understood as significant and are afforded a place of privilege. Drawing on examples of "lived experience" from antiquity to the modern period, de Cléir elucidates the important and ongoing role of religious folk traditions on the island, with variations in the way these traditions relate to either Christianity or "otherworld" themes and beliefs.

Patricia Kieran's chapter unpacks the academic discipline of Religious Education (RE) at primary level in Ireland. Kieran helpfully situates the current state of RE in Ireland in historical perspective, while also guiding the reader through the ever-expanding terminology used in relation to this field. The various types of RE currently offered in Ireland are next explored, both in terms of disciplinary perspectives as well as school ethos and patronage. Kieran's essay rightfully points to the lack of cohesion and clarity around RE in Ireland at the moment, while also noting a number of positive developments in terms of collaboration, curricular developments, and the growing field of third level research on RE on the island.

Gladys Ganiel turns our attention to "Understanding the Sociology of Religion in Contemporary Ireland." This chapter explores both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland and focuses primarily on Christianity. Beginning with the Republic, Ganiel outlines the way in which sociological studies have helped make sense of the changing place (and in particular the decline) of the Catholic Church in recent decades. Issues highlighted include the changing role of women in Ireland, the role of the media in the late-twentieth century in holding the church to account, and the series of referendums that have marked a shift in the social and cultural landscape of Ireland. Moving to Northern Ireland, Ganiel discusses the literature which has explored the role of religion in relation to conflict and peacebuilding. The essay ends with a snapshot of the ways in which the sociology of religion in Ireland is beginning to flower and diversify, even if there is much work still to be done.

Jenny Butler's chapter investigates "Esotericism, Romantic Nationalism and the Birth of the Irish State." Moving beyond reductionist ideas that conflate Irish nationalism and Catholic identity, Butler argues that both esotericism and romantic nationalism (which drew on Celtic mythology and traditions) played a vital role in the push for independence in the period under discussion. Important figures in this regard include Maud Gonne, Ella Young, Eva Gore-Booth, W.B. Yeats, J.M. Synge, George William Russell (*Æ*), and James Cousins, all of whom can be seen as drawing on the themes of esotericism and romanticism, thus challenging conceptions of conventional religious identities and their hegemony in this period.

Deirdre Nuttall and Tony Walsh explore Irish Protestant identity in the post-independence Free State. The history of Protestants in Ireland is shaped by the colonial history which saw the Reformation "planted" in Ireland during British imperial rule. New forms of Irish identity which emerged following the establishment of the Free State would become intimately tied to Catholicism, so that Protestants, who had formerly held power and prestige, now found themselves a small and increasingly marginalized minority. Drawing on Foucault's work on power dynamics, Nuttall and Walsh suggest that a number of pillars would become central to Irish Protestant identity, as the community responded and adapted to its new situation in this era. These include a focus on community, a tendency toward silence in socio-cultural contexts, and an embrace of liminality. The authors note that the broader landscape of Ireland has changed so dramatically in recent decades – simultaneously more secular and more

inclusive – that old notions of “Irish Protestant” identity will of necessity continue to evolve beyond those pillars that were so foundational in the previous century.

Vesna Malešević’s contribution, “Situating New Religious Movements in Contemporary Ireland,” highlights the fact that while there has been a clear move toward secularization in contemporary Ireland, alternative forms of religious expression and alternative religions have also seen significant growth in recent decades. Malešević outlines contemporary research on New Religious Movements (NRMs), as well as their emergence and growth in Ireland, taking the reader through developments such as folk religion, the devotional revolution, and the subsequent emergence of non-Catholic Christian traditions and indeed other religious communities on the island, from Mormons and Pentecostals and New Age movements. Thus, while post-Catholic Ireland is increasingly secular and institutional religions have lost influence, the culture is also infused with various and increasingly diverse forms of spirituality and religious practice.

Abel Ugba explores “Migrant Religions and the Irish State.” Following a broad discussion of the complex relationship of religion and migration in both historical and contemporary perspectives, Ugba moves to the Irish context, focusing primarily on African Pentecostalism in post-Celtic Tiger Ireland. He outlines the complex set of factors that have impacted the way African Pentecostals have established themselves in the cultural and religious milieu of Ireland, while also noting how the Irish state (and indeed broader society) has failed to put in place effective structures that would have allowed for a “less complicated” integration of these migrants and migrant communities. African Pentecostals thus offer an example of how a migrant community has contributed to the growing diversity of contemporary Ireland, even if they continue to be understood and framed as the religious and cultural “other.”

Brian Conway tackles the question of Irish Catholicism’s past and present, utilizing the theory of religious-secular competition to grapple with this question, looking at the ways in which tension between religious and secular opportunities can be found in individual, organizational, and societal levels in the Irish context. At the individual level, this can be seen in the various secular alternatives to the Church now available, such as the move away from consulting the priest for familial or personal counselling, and instead seeking out secular alternatives such as psychotherapists. The fall in religious vocations can be seen as an example of tension at an organizational level, as the priesthood no longer holds the cultural currency it once did, and other fields (including social work) offer opportunities that were once dominated by the Church in Ireland. At the broader social level, the church’s various scandals and a liberalizing of social views on a number of issues have meant that people turn elsewhere – including the media – for input and direction on moral and others matters. The Catholic Church in Ireland thus faces another inflection point, and it remains to be seen if it can (re)present itself as a viable alternative for individuals or society at large.

Laurence Cox and Brian Bocking offer reflections on “Thinking Beyond the Island: Buddhism, Ireland and Method in the Study of Religions.” While we do not often think about “Irish” and “Buddhist” as belonging in the same sentence, the authors highlight the complex relationship between these two terms, and what this might mean for the broader study of religions in Ireland. Drawing on previous research done by the authors and others, Cox and Bocking explore how Ireland’s relationship to Buddhism has historically exhibited both imperial and reductionist tendencies, as well as solidarity with religious dissenters. The chapter concludes with some reflections on how Buddhism can help us think about the study of religions in Ireland today, including the need to grapple with a growing Buddhist demographic on the island that is comprised of both immigrant communities from Asia and Western converts.

The volume concludes with a “Postface” from Tom Inglis, reflecting on and responding to the contributions in the collection. Inglis is a fitting interlocutor for the volume, given his

important sociological work in mapping the rise and fall of the Catholic church in Ireland (*Moral Monopoly*, 1987/1998).

Several important themes and issues recur in the volume, pointing both to the vibrant state of the field, as well as to avenues for further exploration. First, the geographical, political, cultural, and religious diversity of the island of Ireland is present throughout the volume. Whether in comparison of the Republic and Northern Ireland (Ganiel), discussion of Protestant and migrant Pentecostal identities (Nuttall and Walsh, Ugba), or reconstruction of the impact of traditions such as esotericism and Buddhism (Heath-Carpentier, Cox and Bocking), the volume gives a robust account of the study of religions in Ireland, and in doing so challenges simplistic or reductionist understandings of historical and contemporary Ireland. A number of the studies also give important nuance and texture to ideas that have become too simplistic in popular contexts, whether it is the equation of nationalism with Catholicism (Butler), or the assumption of a clear and linear growth of secularization over the past few decades (Malešević, Conway). In highlighting such rich possibilities, these essays point the way for further research on the complex, multifaceted study of religions in Ireland, past and present. Indeed, this reader hopes that subsequent collections will highlight further topics such as Islam, Orthodoxy, evangelicalism, “Nones,” and other traditions and demographics that are growing and incredibly diverse across the island.

A second interesting feature is the recurring attention given to terminology and definitions of various subjects. For those involved in the study of religion, this is familiar territory. However, for a broader audience this sort of genealogical and lexical work is vitally important, as it again points to the complex and multi-layeredness of so many of the topics covered in the volume – from the idea of the study of ‘religion’ itself (Grieser and Bocking), to religious education (Kieran), folklore and vernacular religion (de Cléir), and New Religious Movements (Malešević). Indeed, educators, journalists, and other stakeholders will benefit from this aspect of the volume, and this points to an area where those involved in the study of religions have an opportunity to make a significant contribution.

Finally, the essays in this volume draw on a number of different fields, disciplines, and approaches: history, folklore, gender, sociology, politics, and migration studies are just a few important conversation partners used in this collection. While multi-disciplinarity of this kind is common in religious studies (and indeed the humanities in general), this sort of wide-ranging and collaborative research would seem to be particularly important in the academic study of religions on the island, given both the small group engaged in the enterprise and the relative youth of the study of religions as a discipline in Ireland. The ability to draw from work done in other fields and to collaborate with colleagues in cognate disciplines will need to be a vital part of the study of religions in Ireland moving forward if it is to have both breadth and depth.

McNamara and O’Brien are to be applauded for bringing together a rich and thought-provoking collection of essays from diverse perspectives, reflecting the interesting and important work that is being done on the study of religions in (and about) Ireland. The volume was launched in June 2022 at University College Cork, as part of the European Association for the Study of Religions conference (EASR), a momentous occasion as it was the first time that this important conference was held in Ireland. The publication of this book and the simultaneous hosting of the EASR conference together point to the growing significance of the study of religions in Ireland, as well as Ireland’s emerging place in this field, both of which are welcome developments.

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***Spiritual Wounds: Trauma, Testimony and The Irish Civil War* (Síobhra Aiken, 2022)**

Gabrielle Kathleen Machnik-Kekesi

Borrowing for its title Desmond Ryan’s words that “the deepest wounds of the Civil War were spiritual wounds,” Síobhra Aiken’s monograph study contemplates “how disparate literary and non-fictional narratives by veterans of the Irish [R]evolution can be read as testimony” (4, 13). An exercise in reading against the grain of a history cultivated by the “architects of official memory,” *Spiritual Wounds* sets out to create an “alternative archive” of Civil War experience by carving out space for those who bore witness to their own experiences, as well as those of others (1, 2). Aiken is quick to state, however, that her work does not “dispute the many children and grandchildren of revolutionaries who can testify to the reticence of the revolutionary generation” (18). While challenging the notion of silence surrounding the Civil War, Aiken also maps silences through her examination of myth construction, canon formation, censorship, self-censorship and excommunication (18). The implications of this book’s release in 2022—in conversation with scholars including Guy Beiner, Gavin Foster, Ailbhe McDaid, and Linda Connolly— at the tail end of the Decade of Commemorations/Centenaries, will not be lost on much of this book’s readership.

With respect to method and sources, Aiken compiled “a list of writings by civil war veterans produced in the decades immediately after the conflict. Over time, the list expanded into a catalogue of accounts and books, many of which were published before there was any talk of setting up the Bureau of Military History in 1947” (1). Varied as these texts are, they share the trait of being widely overlooked in historical scholarship. These texts all also employ “self-protective strategies” while navigating the “simultaneous desire to forget and the inability to stop remembering” (19). Aiken suggests that previous scholarly neglect of these sources may be related to “scepticism towards popular ‘mythology’ long associated with the ‘scientific’ approach in modern Irish historiography” as well as the “‘history wars’ between nationalist and revisionist approaches to Irish history” (4).

The text is organized into five chapters (and an afterword) that are thematic and roughly chronological, and that are dedicated to different “silence-breaking projects” (16). Chapter One interrogates contemporary psychoanalytical ideas/approaches regarding “the therapeutic benefits of reading and writing testimony,” further exploring the “subterfuge of fiction[’s]” testimonial potential (16). Aiken argues that the “therapeutic aims” that motivated testimonies written by Peadar O’Donnell, Francis Carty, and Patrick Mulloy were “self-acknowledged” (21). She supports this argument through her analysis of modes including, but not limited to, modernist/avant-garde forms (27), intertextual dialogue (34), black humour (35), the generative nature of love triangle (48), and the myriad possibilities offered by the perceived distance between text and author in the fictional novel form.

Chapter Two “uncodes” the default of testimony as a male act and “addresses the particular challenges faced by female revolutionaries in writing, producing[,] and sharing testimony in commemorative culture that privileged men’s stories” (16). Crucially, the “liminal space between fiction and non-fiction” became the fertile creative place in which women could negotiate both their wartime experience and the “dismissal, objectification[,] and even commercialisation of women’s pain,” the latter often used as a device, a proxy, for male-centred narrative developments (70-71). Aiken hones in on the literary production of authors including

Annie M.P. Smithson, Dorothy Macardle, and Máiréad Ní Ghráda. Of special interest in this chapter is Aiken's textured commentary on women who were receiving treatment for the affliction of "nerves"; not only were women's experiences of trauma understood through the perceived limitations of their feminine sensibilities (with the obvious exception of the "Furies" or "unsexed Amazons" (137) who were subject to different, but by no means better, patriarchal violence), but also the routine treatment of "rest cure" for trauma facilitated their removal from public life and thus political debates.

Chapter Three explores testimonies of "sexual relations," which encompasses both "consensual and non-consensual intimacy" and covers topics ranging from homosexuality and prostitution to sexual violence against both men and women (17). Aiken argues that previously articulated contentions surrounding silences with respect to sexual violence occludes "earlier underappreciated material," including texts by Eithne Coyle, Jim Phelan, and Seán Óg Ó Caomhánaigh (117). Although this thematic, organizational choice is somewhat awkward ("non consensual intimacy" is not anchored in a specific definition which, thus, introduces questions about the possibility of intimacy without consent), the chapter's analysis culminates in a key question: does narrative "also perpetuate a culture of sexual violence and, through graphic depiction, even enact a further (sexual) violation" (118)? I would argue that this is not just pertinent to Aiken's selected authors but that it is also worth considering by those engaging with violations of consent, and trauma more broadly, in their own scholarship.

Chapter Four nuances the range of ways that veterans experienced exile, particularly the "spiritual" or "inner" exile of those disillusioned by the "new political order," with particular focus on the writings of Pádraig O'Horan, Eily Dolan, and Kathleen Hoagland (17, 159). Aiken provides essential insight into how gender informed these experiences, pointing out that the "exile [trope]" so often deployed by male authors is much more complicated for women, to whom "emigration offered an escape and an alternative to inner exile," the latter term referring to "social isolation, containment[,] or institutionalisation" (17, 182). Aiken also unpacks the testimonial potential of the "returned exile."

Lastly, Chapter Five covers the much-understudied topic of "perpetrator testimonies," and challenges "the idea that veterans were silent regarding their role in committing violence during the revolution and particularly during the civil war" (17); Aiken cautions readers against conflating trauma with victimhood (195). In her analysis of Frank O'Connor, George Lennon, and Anthony's O'Connor's work, Aiken identifies two "distinct features" of perpetrator testimonies: "excessive telling about violence and the foregrounding of empathy between foes" (196).

Aiken points to a few examples of authors engaging with drafts of their own work, as with Mulloy's never-to-be-published preface to *Jackets Green* (55). Consequently, how self-editorializing, or co-editing, for a broader readership impacts on testimony is a topic which Aiken does address, but it remains open for future research that can only serve to build on *Spiritual Wounds'* contributions, particularly since Aiken so eloquently points to the "difficulties for combat veterans in negotiating their wartime experience with the social expectations of civilian life" (64). Additionally, by way of understanding any cultural transfer between authors and readers, further insights on text reception would have been welcome, especially considering Aiken's words about IRA veteran Mike Quill, for whom "reading the accounts of other may have functioned as a means to remember his own revolutionary days vicariously" (236). In other words, do we have any sense whether readers' bearing witness to the events described in testimonial writing influenced how authors in turn conceptualized their own testimonies? Did it impact on later text-based articulations of events that authors were both desperate to remember and anxious to forget? Lastly, "alternative archive" is a term that is often used in the humanities without an engagement with debates in archival studies as separate (but indelibly tied to) the concept hegemonic state memory. There is a vibrant field of scholarship

dedicated to theorising and activating the alternative archive and the “anarchival” – again, in relation to, but still distinct from, memory studies and other related fields – that could have illuminated additional discussions about intertextual relationships, the materiality of testimonial documents, and “archives of feelings” (per Ann Cvetkovich’s work on trauma) in Aiken’s selected corpus.

Of central importance in Aiken’s text are questions related to the cultural and gendered availability of vocabularies, modes, and genres in testimonial writing. What struck me most upon completing *Spiritual Wounds* was how Aiken generously offers up her own lexicon and approaches to Irish Studies as an interdisciplinary field more broadly. Her study provides a bilingual model for researchers, at any stage of their career, to query truisms, destabilise silos, and infuse a deep ethic of care towards both the practices that create, and the subjects of, academic investigation. Are the “silences” in your field of study really just “unlistened-to stor[ies]” (229)? Finally, and appropriately for a monograph that delves into analyses of paratext, Aiken’s afterword and acknowledgements are essential reading. She confronts readers with the possibility that she, too, is an active witness in her capacity as a researcher (237). Aiken provides her own testimony to personal notes in the National Library in writing this lockdown, “pandemic book,” and details her own “affective investment” in the subject of her book through family and community connections, as the great-granddaughter of former Tánaiste and Minister of External Affairs Frank Aiken (240, 333). Finally, as an extension of her self-aware relationship to the realities of scholarly production, the placement of Aiken’s acknowledgments at the end of her book is consistent with her observations on the feminist impulses in testimony; the acknowledgments’ placement and register allow us to bear witness to the countless people and institutions that cumulatively supported Aiken in her creation of this transformative text.

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***Forging Identities in the Irish World: Melbourne and Chicago, c. 1830 – 1922* (Sophie Cooper, 2022)**

William Mulligan

There are numerous studies of Irish emigrants in a variety of cities across the diaspora; in fact a number of cities have been the subject of multiple studies that deal with different time periods and different aspects of development of that particular Irish community. Each of these, of course, is a contribution to our knowledge and cumulatively have been successful in filling out a rich picture of the Irish diaspora communities around the globe. There are also studies that look at the experience of Irish immigrants in various countries. Less common are truly comparative studies that look at distinct Irish communities in different nations to compare their

development and the lives of the Irish in those individual places. Sophie Cooper in her study of Melbourne in Australia, and Chicago in the United States makes an important contribution to our understanding of the diaspora by allowing us to see side-by-side the unfolding experience of Irish emigrants in different nations at roughly the same time.

A major strength offered by moving to comparative studies is to begin to understand more accurately both the diversity of the experience of Irish immigrants in various diaspora destinations and those things that were common across national borders. There are many variables in studying the diaspora on both the emigration and immigration sides. Neither Ireland nor any of the host countries were static; all were a developing culturally, economically, and politically across a wide range of areas. So, the Irish emigrants who left the north of Ireland in the early 1700s did not bring the same cultural baggage that Irish emigrants would have brought during the great famine or in the last half of the nineteenth century. And that experience would differ markedly from the 1970s or '80s emigrants. No one study can deal with all of this, but Cooper suggests a model that covers a fairly broad period of time, nearly 100 years from 1830 until Irish independence, applied to countries that clearly had strong Irish influence in their development. In that way what she offers is a template that future researchers can look at and benefit from, as well as from her empirical findings. The book has many strengths. It approaches the topic with a clear research plan that is carefully explicated in the introduction and, when relevant, later in the text. The two cities are described in some detail to demonstrate their appropriateness as the subjects for comparison. While this may seem a bit mechanical, in the case of comparative studies, it is useful to orient the reader to what they are going to be immersed in. The succeeding chapters focus on specific themes such as club life and community associations, the Church, education, and politics to track how each city developed. Similarities and differences are effectively noted and discussed. There are no meaningful gaps where, for example, something in the development of Melbourne is discussed, when what happened in Melbourne was not what happened in Chicago, or vice-versa. This allows real comparison, and it is a sophisticated comparison to be sure. Cooper identifies some very subtle ways in which the communities varied or, in some cases, subtle ways in which their experience was more similar than would initially appear. In part, this is Cooper's sensitivity to the difference between the Australian experience when for much of the time of the analysis Australia was a colony and then a dominion within the British Empire, while Chicago was part of a fully independent state throughout the period studied. Equally important, as the notes and bibliography show, the research base for the book is extensive. Cooper delved deeply into both the contemporary sources and the historiography of both cities.

One of the common characteristics of the two cities that greatly enhances their value for comparative study is their relative newness. They were created by European settlers during the formative period of their regions: Melbourne when Victoria began to develop; Chicago when the American Midwest was first "settled." Neither had an old, established urban elite or traditions that encrusted many aspects of life for white settlers. In both cases, to a significant degree, the Irish came into a new community where they could help shape the development of that community from its earliest days. That of course is not true for all the communities where the Irish settled in the diaspora, especially in England and Scotland and on the East Coast of the United States. That would be a topic for an interesting comparison in the future. Cooper is aware of both the limits and opportunities these cities offer and that is a strength of the book.

One area in which the comparison is especially fruitful is the area of the role of the Catholic Church and particularly the role played by church schools, which leads to a discussion of the position and influence of religious women. The two cities were in very different environments. As part of the British Empire, Melbourne had an established church. Also, those Catholics who came to Australia in the period of the study tended to be Irish, and so the Australian Catholic Church was overwhelmingly Irish. The state school versus church school

issue was less complicated than in Chicago. While there was no formally established church in Chicago, public schools had a heavy Protestant influence. Catholic schools were proposed and developed early on, but unlike Melbourne, the church was not almost completely Irish. As part of a multi-ethnic society, the Irish in Chicago were just one of several ethnic groups that were drawn to the city from the beginning and throughout its development. Cooper persuasively demonstrates how this difference affected the way in which the Catholic Church developed and the way in which parochial school systems developed in each city. In both Melbourne and Chicago, the Catholic parish was very important, and the school related to that parish was an important part of parish life, fundamental parts of the Irish experience and of identity formation. However, they operated in subtly different ways. One of the keys was a decision by the founding Bishop, Irish-born William Quarter in Chicago, to organize the city's Catholic parishes along ethnic lines. In Chicago the Roman Catholic parishes were heavily dominated by specific ethnic groups, including Polish, Italian, and Irish. This facilitates comparison with Melbourne, although the reasons why the parishes the Irish lived in were heavily Irish have entirely different origins. This is an example of the extent to which Cooper has gotten into the very subtle differences between the two cities while never losing for a focus on the comparative.

This will be a useful book for those interested in the Irish diaspora and how the nature of Irishness developed in two of the major destination for Irish, Catholic emigrants.

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***Arming the Irish Revolution: Gunrunning and Arms Smuggling, 1911-1922* (W.H. Kautt., 2021)**

Augustine Meaher

In the Irish nationalist folksong, *Me Old Howth Gun* the singer praises a rifle that was smuggled into the port of Howth near Dublin past British customs prior to the 1916 Easter Rising with "you proved a friend indeed when you made the bullet speed" ("Me Old Howth Gun." *There Is Sorrow in My Heart / Me Old Howth Gun*, <https://www.musicanet.org/robokopp/eire/howthgun.htm>.) The smuggling of guns into Ireland prior to the Easter Rising and during the War of Independence was crucial to the success of the Irish Nationalists in the South and the Unionists in the North. "Gun running" remains intricately linked in the popular imagination of the IRA both during the Irish War of Independence and in the Troubles having provided the plot for novels, television series, and movies. Yet, as W.H. Kautt correctly identifies in *Arming the Irish Revolution: Gunrunning and Arms Smuggling, 1911-1922*, the supply of weapons to Ireland from 1911-1922 is largely unstudied and the key figures unknown. This is surprising, as Kautt reveals that the Irish Republican Army (IRA)'s arms acquisition program is an engaging story with interesting figures worthy of retelling and in-depth exploration. Furthermore, "gun-running" remained a key part of the IRA's post-independence campaigns and continues to be romanticized.

Although the Decade of Centenaries commemorating the century of Ireland's independence and partition has largely focused on Ireland and the United Kingdom, Kautt begins *Arming the Irish Revolution* by placing the Irish Revolution into the wider European historical context. This is extremely helpful as it provides a better understanding of the ideological influences on both sides of the conflict as well as possible sources of weapons. It is only with this background information that one can understand how so many weapons could be acquired so easily: Europe was literally awash with weapons. Kautt's *Arming the Irish Revolution* is an engaging operational history. He focuses on the planning and execution of major logistical operations. Kautt devotes chapters to the functioning of the Irish Volunteers' Quartermaster's Corp, the arms centres which were created to produce armaments, the foreign arms trade; and concludes with a description of how these logistical operations continued during the truce and into the Irish Civil War. That the IRA had a well-developed and functioning armaments procurement system is conclusively demonstrated by Kautt.

Kautt's detailed accounts of smuggling and explosive manufacturing are riveting and detail a complex ever-changing military operation. The previously unstudied manufacturing of weapons is particularly interesting, and Kautt's detailed explanation of how civilian industries were used to support the Irish campaign for independence is a valuable new addition to the historiography. It also provides further evidence of the vast support required by the nationalists in the War of Independence. Kautt's evidence demonstrates how difficult it was for the British authorities to stem the flow of munitions and explosives, a problem that would bedevil anti-IRA operations in the Troubles half a century later. This problem was because Ireland's status as part of the United Kingdom precluded standard military practices being undertaken for fear of further alienating the Irish whom the British hoped would remain in the United Kingdom.

Furthermore, Kautt demonstrates that the IRA was a learning organization. An insurgent must learn and adapt to counter measures adopted by the counter insurgency forces. The IRA's ability to change and adapt its logistical system was crucial to its eventual success. Every time the British developed a new method to intercept or disrupt the flow of arms, the IRA developed a new tactic for obtaining weapons which ensured that the war became ever larger and IRA logistics more complex. The IRA's procurement and production of weapons continually evolved throughout the conflict. This allows Kautt to conclusively demonstrate that the IRA was not forced to accept the treaty because it lacked weapons as has been commonly argued. The IRA was not a defeated force and used the ceasefire prior to the reaching of the Anglo-Irish Treaty to rearm and reequip. This is a valuable addition to the historical debate that will force historians to reconsider the reasons for Irish acceptance of the treaty ending the war and granting the Irish Free State Dominion status while Northern Ireland remained separate.

The general and the academic reader will enjoy *Arming the Irish Revolution* with its detailed biographical sketches of the individuals involved. These provide a human face to an aspect of war that is often anonymous. The biographies are crucial as gun running was dependent on the persons involved, who were not professionals, but volunteers serving a movement, a trend that continued throughout the troubles. Indeed, the arming of the Irish Revolution was personality-driven and in this the logistics of the IRA resembles many elements of the Irish Revolution. These individuals having been brought out of obscurity provide us with a deeper and better understanding of how the IRA functioned. Future historians will be able to use *Arming the Irish Revolution* to explore how the logistics efforts intersected with other aspects of the Irish Revolution and subsequent Civil War.

Kautt's penultimate chapter "Assessment of Republican Arms-Procurement Campaigns, 1918-1921" is unquestionably the best chapter in *Arming the Irish Revolution*. Kautt lays out his criteria for assessing the gun-running and gunrunners and shows how they succeeded and failed at the tactical and operational levels. This methodological approach will be useful to historians exploring other revolutions and insurgencies as it establishes a formula

that can be used to evaluate the success of other logistical efforts. The statistical charts included elevate *Arming the Irish Revolution* from good to great. They allow the reader to step back and gain a deeper understanding of the scale of the IRA's logistical effort and why the British were unable, given London's unwillingness to treat Ireland as a war situation, to stem the tide.

Despite the impressive research that supports *Arming the Irish Revolution*—there are almost 100 pages of notes—and the engaging stories that support Kautt's argument, *Arming the Irish Revolution* is not perfect. Each chapter is extremely insightful, but the chapters abruptly end and do not naturally lead into the subsequent chapter. An individual chapter could easily be assigned as a course reading, but the general reader may be jarred by this approach. As an operational history *Arming the Irish Revolution* is excellent, but a reader not well versed in Irish history may at times be unable to place events into the wider Irish and British historical context. Indeed, how the various units Kautt discusses fit into the wider IRA is sometimes not entirely clear. A reader without a solid background in the War of Independence may be confused. Nevertheless, *Arming the Irish Revolution* is an excellent book that will be consulted by historians for years to come. It has greatly enhanced our knowledge of the war and IRA operations while also placing the war and the IRA in a global context.

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The views in the above review are Dr. Meaher's personal views and do not reflect those of the USAF, Department of Defense, or US Government.

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***The Beat Cop: Chicago's Chief O'Neill and the Creation of Irish Music* (Michael O'Malley, 2022)**

Méabh Ní Fhuartháin

In the context of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century American emigrant and social histories, O'Malley's *The Beat Cop: Chicago's Chief O'Neill and the Creation of Irish Music* is an important intervention. The grand claim of the subtitle (resonant with a previous monograph title in the general field, *The Making of Irish Traditional Music* by O'Shea) binds Francis O'Neill (1848-1936) to the genesis of Irish music as a modern, nationalized concept. That assertion is argued by O'Malley through an interpretation of the life and work of O'Neill, a figure that looms large in the practice and discourse of Irish traditional music. As "the consummate Irish music collector/author" (Dillane 66), O'Neill is remembered, refracted, and mythologized through his work of collecting and publishing Irish traditional music dance repertoire, to the extent that "he and his works have become musical monuments" (Dillane 66). Though there were several strings to O'Neill's publications' bow (*Irish Minstrels and Musicians* (1913), *Irish Folk Music a Fascinating Hobby* (1910) and other tune collections among them), it is his 1907 compendium, *The Dance Music of Ireland 1001 Gems*, which garners and sustains most attention within the Irish traditional music community. Typically, O'Neill's life is understood as the foil for *1001 Gems*, rather than being the focus of critical attention. Well documented, O'Neill's life story from his strong farmer origins in Tralibane, County Cork, to emigrant sailor, to labourer and finally, to superintendent of police in Chicago,

is by any measure an extraordinary one, but it also reflects “a general pattern of Irish-American upward mobility, particularly for post-Famine immigrants” (Nicholsen 126). Carolan’s *A Harvest Saved: Francis O’Neill and Irish Music in Chicago* and a life story account largely based on O’Neill’s unpublished memoir (Skerrett and Lesch) are the key biographical texts available to date. However, expanding Aileen Dillane’s foundational work, *The Beat Cop* is the first lengthy study which explores O’Neill’s life and work not primarily from musical start and end points, but from the perspective of social and cultural history in Ireland and Chicago during the period.

What distinguishes O’Neill from many (though not all) earlier collectors is his insider cultural status, complicated as that may be by his position as chief of police in Chicago as he collected tunes from his emigrant community (Nicholsen). Taken with the fact that his ambitious works were published during his lifetime, O’Neill is singular. Prior to O’Neill, the work of the “trio of what may be styled the antiquarian school of Irish music” (Breathnach 111), Edward Bunting, George Petrie and Patrick Weston Joyce, approached the traditional music repertoire from an outsider perspective. James Goodman, also a musician-collector in the nineteenth century, occupied a particular positionality as he perched between cultural outsider and insider during his life, but is distinct from O’Neill as his substantial collection remained unpublished until the late-twentieth century. Traditional music scholar-priest Richard Henebry was a contemporary of O’Neill’s and a cultural insider but did not produce a tune collection. O’Neill’s publications therefore are among the earliest examples of a particular kind of collecting by a traditional musician and cultural insider considered “genuine and authentic” (7). In an Irish emigrant community in the United States, where musicians from Donegal to Kerry were sources, the nationalizing consequences of his work as a “particular expression of modernity as an organizing principle” redrew the map of traditional music knowledge “distribution” and created an Irish music framework of understanding (Dillane 65).

Rich in primary historical detail, using O’Neill’s own archive traces and a wide array of sources, the structure of *The Beat Cop* follows the chronology of O’Neill’s life, beginning in Tralibane. The societal infrastructure supporting traditional musicians (travelling, artisan and others) was embedded in the post-Famine years through house dances taking place in homes just like O’Neill’s. Reg Hall identifies these early decades as beginning the “hey-day” of traditional music and dance practice in Ireland (79); O’Neill’s own recollections at the distance of a lifetime and an ocean echo that. This practice was not simply, as suggested, an “artifact of both British colonial rule and the poverty and colonial status of Irish people” (42). Rather, the altered soundscape resonated with and in a changed rural social landscape and drew on a much longer historical practice of *scoraíocht* or *cuartaíocht* (visiting). The description of “patrons” by O’Neill, which O’Malley reports, is a vernacular of patterns, the celebration of saints’ feast days, with attached socializing, dancing, and music making (28). Confirming this rural experience, O’Malley provides interesting comparative detail between O’Neill’s own life story and those of the Fenian Patrick O’Brien who, like O’Neill, “also attended the National School at Dromore and also emigrated at seventeen” and published a memoir of the same period (39).

A key argument interwoven throughout the biographical arc is that O’Neill experienced and participated in colonizing systems on both sides of the Atlantic. Born during the Famine, that O’Neill was a colonized person in that site is indisputable, nuanced by the fact that his was a strong-farmer household (“colonialism’s middlemen”), a social group protected to some degree from the horrors of the Famine and its aftermath (16). As “the youngest son of a prosperous farm family” he had some “limited class privilege” in Ireland (62). Structures of politics and class in the United States were “complicated by different understandings,” in particular of race (62). As a mariner, before he settled in the windy city, O’Neill worked side-by-side with (at times “likely an assistant” to) African Americans (62). O’Neill’s own words recall those interactions, “the memory of which...never failed to react favourably,” in his

encounters with African Americans in the new world (61). However, the *terra firma* of American society “offered O’Neill advantages it would never offer to his [sailor] co-worker” (62). O’Malley compares Irish music to yoga in the United States, both imports from colonial sites “representing a kind of displacement” (6), but of a non-threatening ethnic kind. Likewise, O’Malley’s discussion of O’Neill’s time in Hawaii (the result of a shipwreck), draws a comparison between two island nations where the colonized “were shunted to marginal land and poverty, finding work on the colonizer’s ships, required to speak English” (76). Further, both places had in common the “outsized influence” their “music had on the rest of the world” (77), both examples of musics engaged in and propelled by commerce in modernizing settings of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (77).

O’Malley proposes that O’Neill experienced colonialism of a different order, “by industrial life and the multitude of new ideas and technologies it offered” in the United States (4). It was a colonizing process in which O’Neill held a distinct vantage as he “patrolled Chicago as an agent of the state, part of the apparatus that organized and administered the city” (4). To survive and thrive in Chicago in the gilded age and progressive era routinely demanded of the “nostalgic scholar” that he choose to align himself with the civic administration (4). The context of a wider information revolution (125) and expanding systems of order (“in 1883, Chicago adopted central standard time, one of four standard time zones introduced that year”) benefitted O’Neill, a “bright and precocious learner”, nicknamed “Philosopher O’Neill” as a child in Tralibane (19). Before Chicago, his experience on ships and the high seas consolidated his commitment to order in the face of chaos, or worse. As chief of police (from 1901 to 1905) in a city of more than two million people, among his many bureaucratic tasks he “wrangled statistics into reports,” while as music collector he “tracked down fugitive tunes . . . [and] formally organised them” (4). (It’s hard to resist the question raised by this analogy: are some tunes criminal?). O’Neill’s administrative and detective work in the police force was the perfect apprenticeship to his collecting of tunes.

1001 Gems was consciously distilled to exclude material which O’Neill adjudicated as having non-Irish associations (98). O’Malley correctly concludes this is part of creating a national music identity, a wider process in which O’Neill is a key figure. The “idea of a national music . . . arises not from isolation but from its opposite, from contact with the larger world” (98). For O’Malley, O’Neill started to “police” the music “precisely because of the blurring of lines and the merger of traditions, the portability of citizenship and identity” (99). O’Malley notes a particular repertoire that O’Neill omitted from his canonical collection in an effort to create a taxonomy of authentic Irish music. Material that “had too much of the American stage” did not make the grade for O’Neill, which Henry Chapman Mercer discovered when in a response to the possible inclusion of “Kitty O’Neill’s Jig,” O’Neill demurred on the basis that it was “modern” (64). His wished to “fix the tune’s citizenship”, notwithstanding the blurry edges of origins that are part and parcel of that. Collecting these tunes, which he heard “face-to-face” or “while on duty”, was not “unorganized” (155), despite what O’Malley suggests; rather, it was a different kind of organization, based on “personal circulation and local community” (155), reflecting historical transmission practices, albeit in a different environment. The intersubjective context of oral music transmission is never static, but in the teeming city of Chicago and other diasporic spaces, Irish traditional music was responding to its new context; O’Neill’s modernising impulse, to organise and standardise repertoire is part of that response. Collecting and publishing of Irish traditional repertoire “offered immigrants an apolitical way to retain or recover Irishness without hindering one’s American prosperity” (5) and offered O’Neill and his emigrant fellowship the opportunity to reconsider the relationship between the old world and new” (62).

While O’Neill saw himself as a reformer, dedicated to the principle of a meritorious system of public administration, he nonetheless was also subject to that favour system to join

and advance to the top of the police force ladder and people the ranks of the force under his management (110). O'Neill's life in Chicago was inextricably bound with the "favor market" (69), where municipal jobs (including in the police force) were in the gift of aldermen (ward bosses). Chicago, in O'Malley's words, "wore police reformers out" (115). There was a complex set of contradictions for O'Neill and others of a reforming stripe (120). Their efforts to control crime and social disorder in the rapidly expanding city collided with "patronage favoritism" (112). Jobs in the police force were in the gift of aldermen who often themselves had interests in shadowy economic and social worlds. Within the force, the number of Irish police officers that filled the ranks of Chicago police under O'Neill's stewardship is frequently noted as a demonstration of the favour politics which O'Neill himself participated in, the piper Barney Delaney's recruitment being a prime example (162). Not just a member of the police force family, Delaney became O'Neill's brother-in-law, but the relationship soured when Delaney no longer felt obliged to O'Neill. O'Neill supported fiddle player James O'Neill's bid to join up because he could read and transcribe music, skills which O'Neill needed (but did not have) for his tune collection aspirations. Significantly, O'Malley concludes that while "the Irish cop became a stereotype" the broader process "allied them with an idea of civic authority rather than simply ethnic tribalism," as they became "agent[s] of the state" (112). Complicating contexts arose when politics, ethnic loyalties, and civic duties intersected, such as in the murder of Henry Patrick Cronin who was a member of the Irish republican organization, Clan na Gael. Irish police officers were removed from the investigation for fear of prejudice, but notwithstanding the fact one among their own ranks was also one of the accused perpetrators a "platoon of Chicago police marched" in the funeral procession (168).

O'Malley reflects on the concept of tune ownership, noting that O'Neill sometimes needed to persuade musicians to play tunes for him. O'Neill's own words "I have about 1800 tunes of music" (211) reveal less about ideas of propriety as it is understood in the English language (as O'Malley concludes) but more about the phrase's linguistic origins in the Irish language. To know something in Irish, "*tá sé agam*," literally translates to "I have it" and remains the phrasing in Hiberno-English. Separately, there is a long historical practice of songs or tunes having association with (and a resulting propriety attached to) individual singers or instrumental musicians in Irish traditional music. The assertion that O'Neill's work would "alienate" tunes from individuals that he collected from, that he was somehow hoarding repertoire, fails to acknowledge a parallel consequence, that his tune collections were not an end point but rather another stage of deformation and motion in the cultural world of Irish traditional music. O'Neill the policeman "viewed himself as the protector and defender of property" and his work as collector in the same way (217). The comparison of O'Neill as collector of Irish tunes to rogue collectors of Native American religious artifacts is an unfair one. While O'Neill was in a privileged position as chief of police with leveraging potential, he was not outside this community of practice, simply raiding tunes as artifacts. Critically, while O'Neill collated, nationalized, and concretized repertoire in *1001 Gems*, following publication the afterlives of those tunes were again animated and reanimated in face-to-face, intersubjective encounters in communities of practice, from Chicago to Cahersiveen.

This monograph adds significantly to the cultural history of emigrant lives in early twentieth-century America. Though O'Neill is the guiding story throughout, contextualizing discussions in *The Beat Cop* shed light much further afield, on other lives and stories providing a fresh and expanded interpretation of the lived experience of Chief O'Neill and his emigrant peers.

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***Irish Modernisms: Gaps, Conjectures, Possibilities* (Paul Fagan, John Greaney, Tamara Radak, eds., 2021)**

Lauren Arrington

Straightaway, Paul Fagan, John Greaney, and Tamara Radak make the bold and astute claim that the theorization of Irish Modernism remains "caught up with the politics, ideologies, and ethics of canon formation and narrow definitions of 'Irishness' and 'the nation'" (3-4) They suggest that Ezra Pound's defence of Joyce, a 1915 article in the *New Age* titled "The Non-Existence of Ireland," severed Ireland and Modernism, and Irish critics have been quarrelling with Pound ever since.

Pound wrote, "a nation's claim to a man depends not upon the locality of his birth, but upon their ability to receive him," and Irish hospitality up to this point, the editors show, has been found wanting. Rewriting the rules of engagement, this book goes back to first principles: What is Irish Modernism? What was Irish Modernism? When, where, and whose was it? The contributors turn the critical frameworks on themselves, asking whether Irish Modernism has colonized adjacent literatures, disciplines, writers, and subjects. Eoin Byrne's essay "The Languages of Irish Modernism" considers the coloniality of Irish criticism that marginalizes – when it does not entirely exclude – Irish-language literature and the sophistication of discourses

that occur within criticism written in Irish. Elsewhere in the book, we see this idea applied practically in Catherine Flynn's essay on Flann O'Brien, where she offers a means of redressing this omission in her inclusion of the original Irish as well as a translation of Myles na gCopalleen's writing. Byrne uses Beckett's corpus to show the multi-lingualism of Irish modernism, allowing us to see where Beckett's Francophone work and reception have been so much more readily received than his Irish-language contemporaries, indicting the biases of critics that have propagated the exclusion.

The book plays with Pound's idea of nationality throughout, showing that Irish Modernism's connections to Europe are real, textual, and imaginary. Ellke D'Hoker's essay "A Forgotten Irish Modernist" quotes Ford Madox Ford, in an echo of Pound, describing Ethel Colburn Mayne and George Moore as "trained by the French." We can recognize these as aesthetic claims, but they are also rhetorical political bypasses, moving across the Irish Sea and north Atlantic without traversing England—a route that is perhaps even more perceptible in our own post-Brexit conceptions of Europe. D'Hoker shows how Irish Modernism itself can be an evasion in order to claim writers like Mayne in a way that makes them relevant to Irish Modernism's discourses but in the process of co-opting them excludes important aspects of their work that don't fit the paradigm. Cleo Hanaway Oakley's essay on Joyce and Beckett's vision (and this essay is full of wonderful riffs on that concept) brings these capital Modernists down off their pedestals and into closer proximity to not only popular culture but their contemporary "intermediary" modernists like Thomas MacGreevy. In doing so, Hanaway Oakley's essay forges an important link of continuity in literary history that we see expanded in other essays, such as Daniel Curran's "The Funeral of One's Past" where MacGreevy is not just a Modernist arising out of the First World War but is a poet deeply connected to Imagist aesthetics.

In "Irish Skin: The Epidermiology of Modernism," Barry Sheils issues a stern and necessary reprimand: "The word 'Irish' in 'Irish modernism' might be considered as more than simply descriptive but may also designate a self-referential enactment that moves to collapse historical discourse into the material and affective realities of the present" (99) So, how *useful* is Irish Modernism as a term? The essays in this book are concerned with identifying the multiplicities and dynamism of Irish Modernism as a mode of critical inquiry in a way that is unrestrictive. What I loved about this book is that these are not competing but overlaying frames, giving us what Hanaway Oakley describes as, borrowing from Joyce, "a collideorscape" (162) where we have intellectual atomic fusion rather than the mushroom clouds that have too often obscured collaborative thinking in the field.

The book's first section, "Testing Limits", shows in incontrovertible terms how a central task of current scholarship is to diversify the canon, not only in terms of gender and sexuality but also aesthetics, language, social class, and social milieu – key distinctions in challenging the limits of Irish hospitality. John Brannigan's "Explaining Ourselves" shows how Irish Modernism has functioned in a proprietorial way that is coterminous with acts of exclusion, and how the redress of exclusion and the expansion of the theoretical category runs the equally problematic risk of appropriation. He gives this specific resonance through a study of Hannah Berman's work. Berman, an Irish Jew, was dually excluded from Irish cultural and Jewish diasporic identities.

How can we move beyond the "always" re-discovering mode of critical inquiry, which reinforces categories of marginality? Lucy Collins shows us one possibility in "Melancholy Modernism," an analysis of how modernist Irish women poets addressed the dissolution of women's subjectivity through their choice of subject and form. Rather than thinking about acts of erasure, Collins shows how these poems can be read as deliberate critiques of public opinion about women's visibility and audibility in the public sphere.

“Corporeal Texts, Discursive Bodies: Biopolitical Irish Modernisms,” the book’s second section, moves more deeply into this self-interrogation, asking “whether the potential for true innovation in Irish modernist studies lies less with reframing and refining perennial questions of the nation state and the individual... than with a concern for the productive tension between the corporeal text and discursive body” (81), where modernist attention is focused on material processes, embodied emotions, and bodily functions. The latter we know is a preoccupation of some of modernism’s most favoured writers, but Maureen O’Connor pushes the boundary further. In “Death and the Nonhuman in Elizabeth Bowen’s Fiction” she reveals how new materialist attention to Bowen calls into question Irish Modernism’s own reliance on “anthropocentric historiography.”

The editors and contributors are to be commended on the nuances of the volume and the individual essays, where nothing is taken for granted. Seán Hewitt’s chapter exemplifies how to read “queer modernism” beyond writers’ sexualities, illuminating an Irish queerness that is antagonistic to nationalism. Reading this book, it is invigorating to think about how the nationalisms that were drivers in the discipline of Irish Studies are now being overturned from within. Lloyd Maedbh Houston writes about the “gendered rhetoric of health rooted in degeneration theory” (119) that was espoused by Irish Ireland. The arguments of their chapter “Survival of the Unfittest” indicates an important move away from critical representations of Irish Ireland as centrist and separate to the fascism that we see spring up in the 1930s. Katherine Ebury’s chapter “Rhetorics of Sacrifice” about the death penalty poses an important challenge to the historical record in its discussion of anxieties about female sexuality and state-sanctioned archives. Laura Lovejoy in “The Ranks of Respectability” shows how Liam O’Flaherty uses the figure of the prostitute not only to critique the culture of censorship and social hygiene, but also as a challenge to the social stratification of the city. Lovejoy’s methodology draws from new theories from the history of art where political commitment is no longer a marker of exclusion from the aesthetic avant-garde.

Intermedial and transmedial methodologies are the focus of the essays in “Minor/Major Modes,” the book’s final section. Exciting work from Maedbh Long reads letters as modernist texts in “Letters and Weak Theory.” There is thrilling genre-bending in Jack Fennell’s “The Machine in the (Holy) Ghost,” a reappraisal of science fiction’s cultural and formal entanglements. Michael Connerty’s “Mechanical Animals, Flying Men and Educated Monkeys” presents a fascinating inversion of the modernist aesthetic in Jack Yeats’s plays; where so much is invisible or abstract in the playtexts, Connerty’s reading of Yeats’s comic strips gives us an unmistakable “popular modernism.”

The cumulative effect of this book’s nuanced organization and careful framing in the interchapters is a major intervention in Irish Modernism that will drive further self-critique in Modernist Studies more widely.

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***Cambridge Centenary Ulysses* (Catherine Flynn, ed., 2022)**

Flicka Small

Some people have one copy of James Joyce's *Ulysses* which they've never read, and some people have five or six different copies, all of which they *have* read. The latter surprising occurrence being because over the course of time that Joyce spent writing, editing, and publishing *Ulysses*, there were many changes and corrections to the text, not to mention misinterpretations, edits, serializations, and therefore several editions. Catherine Flynn and Ronan Crowley expand on this in the "Errata" where they describe the unique challenge for the printers that Sylvia Beach engaged for her publication of the first full edition of *Ulysses*, which Joyce was adding to up to two days before final publication, which he insisted should be on his fortieth birthday, 2 February 1922. Hence the Cambridge Centenary edition, edited by Catherine Flynn.

Catherine Flynn's *Centenary Ulysses* addresses many of these textual changes in a most accessible and attractive way. This book is literally a tome, running to 963 pages and weighing in at three kilos, but at €36.00 it must be one of the most accessible and informative *Ulysses* readers on the market. Eighteen authors have been commissioned to write original essays to intersperse the eighteen episodes of *Ulysses*. In addition, there are illustrations, maps, a chronology of Joyce's life, and an index of characters. The layout is composed of facsimile pages from the original Shakespeare and Co. edition at the centre of each page, with page numbers and lines in the margins and footnotes at the bottom, and more detailed information in the glossaries at the back of the book. The footnotes are to assist but not to overwhelm, says Flynn, and indeed they are easy to navigate and read, incorporating Hans Gabler's line numbers and his 1986 interventions.

The essays, explaining the parallels to Homer's *Odyssey*, augmented by the Linati and Gilbert Schema that Joyce himself provided for future readers, add an extra dimension, and are written by scholars drawing on their own particular fields of interest. The essays also describe the location and geography of Dublin in each episode, referencing the historical and literary symbolism. User-friendly maps for each episode have been prepared by David Cox, based on the 1912 Ordnance Survey Map. The essays also act as a history lesson of Dublin in 1904 and include black and white photos of the time. Although the essays stand alone, each one of them helps to link the episodes of *Ulysses* and explain where one can look forward and backward to understand allusions to apparently insignificant details – not that anything is ever insignificant for Joyce.

Karen Lawrence, Robert Spoo, and Sam Slote cover the first three episodes or the Telemachia. For many, this section is the stumbling block to reading *Ulysses*, but as Maud Ellmann points out in another essay, it is the most casual details that provide serendipitous associations, and similarly we need this section on history, colonialism, and character, to give us a preparatory lesson on how to read *Ulysses*.

From the fourth chapter things can only get easier, as Margaret Norris introduces us to Bloom, and his gut, in "Calypso". We meet Molly too, but the first oral word is from the cat, "Mkgnao!". Settling into the language of Bloom, reading his thoughts and discovering his idiosyncrasies we move onto "Lotus Eaters" where Maud Ellmann leads us into drugged euphoria and abstraction. It is sometimes overlooked that this episode is happening at the same time as "Nestor", says Ellmann, due to its insouciant mood, but it is in parallel to Stephen, who is also trying to forget, forget the nightmare of history.

In “Hades” Barry Devine draws attention to the significance of popular culture in *Ulysses*. He identifies the songs and literature that had become part of the social fabric of Dublin life. Devine gives us details to notice, particularly when they are the ghosts that haunt Bloom. This theme is expanded on in the next episode, in which Terence Killeen, journalist and Joyce scholar, contributes an essay on “Aeolus” – set in a Newspaper office – and paints a picture of the wider Dublin male social world in which Bloom and Stephen are embedded, pointing out that Dublin is itself a character, perhaps the most important one, and how its vices and textures are conveyed with rhetorical force throughout the episode.

Whilst explaining the function of food language in “Lestrygonians,” Matthew Hayward himself gets caught up in the mood: “Joyce has other characters ladle on the food expression,” he quips. He also points out that Bloom’s interior monologue requires a certain kind of reader, one who willingly invests in previous scenes which inform Bloom’s present thoughts. Joyce’s extended use of food imagery, Hayward explains, binds the chapter’s various elements: plot, theme, setting, characterization, and Homeric correspondence – which in some way all focus on food.

“Scylla and Charybdis,” the episode that takes place in the National Library, and where Stephen is expounding his theory on Shakespeare, is deciphered by Matthew Creasy. This is the ninth and middle episode of *Ulysses* and set right in the centre of Dublin. Creasy points out how the preceding chapters have focused on the experiences of the individual but from now on begin to open up a broader social spectrum of expression.

But perhaps “Wandering Rocks” is the half-way chapter, writes Scarlett Baron, metaphorically alluding to which route the reader should take to avoid the “hostile milieu,” as listed in the Linati schema. The streets set the scene, and a large cast of Dubliners people the pages, whilst their activities and progress through the city are meticulously charted, and Stephen and Bloom make only brief appearances. This is the episode where Dublin is celebrated and minutely mapped out and traversed. However, it is a *colonial* city, which according to Len Platt, Baron tells us, is marked by a history of seizure, repression, and rebellion. Indeed, the vice-regal cavalcade snakes its way through the sections linking the cast of multitudinous characters therein and bookended by the church and the state. The use of the interpolation or interruption, which is the insertion in each fragment of one or more excerpts from other fragments, is a method evocative of montage. But, Barron warns us, do not take anything for granted; a good memory for repetitions and parallels is crucial, alongside puzzle-solving abilities. However, she reassures us, the leitmotifs of the next episode, “Sirens,” are listed ahead in the “Overture.” Indeed, “Sirens” is assiduously annotated by Katherine O’Callaghan, an authority on music in *Ulysses*. She shows us how so many incidents in this book are heard and not seen, and reminds us that in the schema, the organ of this chapter is the ear. She also draws our attention to where these sounds might have been heard in previous episodes.

Vincent J. Cheng, in his essay on “Cyclops,” suggests that not a lot has changed since the one-eyed, antisemitic Citizen held forth from his perch at the counter of Barney Kiernan’s public house, castigating Bloom as a foreigner even though he was born in Ireland. Cheng argues that the details of Robert Emmet’s hanging are “an exploration of the dynamics of patriotic martyrdom,” before turning his attention to the “post-colonial turn” of the mid-1990s, when Joyce scholarship shifted towards a debate on colonial and Irish nationalist politics and history. There is an additional *amuse-bouche* regarding a heated exchange of words between Terry Eagleton and himself at the 1993 Bloomsday Symposium at the University of California at Irvine.

Vicki Mahaffey, interpreting the triptych of Virgin, Mother, and Whore in “Nausicaa,” places her emphasis on a contemporary novel called *The Lamplighter* by Maria Cummins, a book referenced by Gerty MacDowell in the chapter, but also, more crucially, the symbol of illumination that pervades the episode, linking it to the schematic organ of the eye. Mahaffey

finishes her essay by concluding that the two views of each of its characters in “Nausicaa,” give a “twi-light” that the reader is asked to accommodate.

In “Oxen of the Sun,” which Sarah Davison considers one of the most “dastardly” of the episodes, she carefully guides us through what Joyce described as “a parody of English prose styles, from past to present, linking it to nine months of human gestation.” Thereafter, Ronan Crowley navigates the “madcap pile up” that is the hallmark of “Circe” by dividing it into six broad sections; Tim Conley describes the sleepy prose of “Eumaeus”; while Fritz Senn laments that “Ithaca” is disappointingly not a climax but a catalogue, filling gaps and maintaining order; before we finally come to “Penelope.” Catherine Flynn engagingly and succinctly takes us through the “eight long almost entirely unpunctuated sentences” that have become known as Molly’s Soliloquy.

This is a massive copy of *Ulysses* – impossible to fit in your shoulder bag or even take on a weekend break. However, the essays, with their historical and geographical context, expanding into erudite discussion of the relevant chapter, are not to be missed. If I were asked whether I recommend buying this edition of *Ulysses*, I would definitely say: Yes!

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***Great Hatred: The Assassination of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson MP* (Ronan McGreevy, 2022)**

Timothy D. Hoyt

Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson is generally acknowledged as one of the most significant and controversial military figures in early twentieth-century Britain. His work as a staff officer and planner, both before the First World War and as Chief of the Imperial General Staff from 1918-1922, was widely acknowledged as brilliant, and earned him a promotion to Field Marshal at a very young age, despite a lacklustre operational career. He was often outspoken on political matters, and his increasing alignment with extreme Unionist positions on the Irish question delayed his promotion early in the First World War. His irascible criticism of post-war policy and strategy tarnished his reputation, which was further muddied by imprudent attacks on the government after his post-retirement election as the MP from North Down. His assassination on 22 June 1922, at the hands of two former British soldiers who were now members of the Irish Republican Army, shocked the British Cabinet and the world.

Ronan McGreevy's new book, *Great Hatred: The Assassination of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson, MP*, is a fascinating study of Wilson, the circumstances surrounding his assassination, and Ireland's independence struggle. This is an ambitious book – at almost 400 pages, it covers a great deal of ground - but McGreevy's journalistic background stands him in good stead, and he creates a compelling, if sometimes confusing, narrative.

One of the key themes of the book is the examination of Wilson and his two killers (Reginald Dunne and Joseph O'Sullivan). The story revolves around the irony that one of Britain's most famous officers, born in Ireland, was killed by two decorated veterans of the British Army, in London (where they lived), on behalf of the Irish Republic. Dunne and O'Sullivan were former British soldiers who had joined the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and were connected with the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB). The President of the latter, Michael Collins, a famous figure in the IRA, also became the leader of the new (southern) Provisional Government of Ireland, and his connection to the assassination is another theme of the book. As McGreevy demonstrates, there was utter confusion after the assassination. The captured killers used false names and there was no clear evidence trail linking them to outside groups or support. The trial was pro forma, and the executions hasty, but by that time conditions had changed in Ireland so dramatically that the fates of Dunne and O'Sullivan went almost unnoticed.

McGreevy's examination of Dunne and O'Sullivan paints a fairly non-controversial picture: young men of Irish descent, living in London, serving in the British Army during the Great War (as hundreds of thousands of Irish did). Both seized on Irish nationalism as a social outlet and identity, and both freely joined the IRA in London despite suffering debilitating war wounds. Dunne, an IRA officer and IRB member, expressed some regrets about recruiting the one-legged O'Sullivan for a short-notice risky assassination attempt in broad daylight. Both thought it an appropriate soldierly action, justified by ongoing violence in Northern Ireland that they connected with Wilson and Britain. The question of whether Dunne and O'Sullivan were acting under orders or simply out of opportunity has never been fully resolved (see below).

The author's portrayal of Wilson may be a bit more controversial. Wilson's reputation has been fixed for a century: an arch-Imperialist, devout Unionist, possibly brilliant military strategist, and aggravatingly obnoxious political figure. McGreevy carefully examines some of the most inflammatory accusations – Wilson's reported involvement with the Ulster Volunteer Force in 1914, his purported leadership role creating the sectarian "Special" police forces in Northern Ireland and the drafting of the Special Powers Act – and claims that he was a paid military advisor to the Northern Irish government. The author also points out important differences, particularly in 1922, between his harsh public support of Northern Ireland policy and his somewhat more prudent advice to Northern Irish leaders. In so doing, Wilson appears as slightly less of a proto-Fascist, an image that is easily conjured, and clearly a part of nationalist and Republican dogma beginning even before his death. Not all readers will be happy with this modest reinterpretation, but it does appear to be supported by the author's research.

The chapter on Wilson's early years condenses his war experience into a very short passage. Wilson made his reputation as a strategist, as a "political general," and as a skillful planner of combined operations with coalition partners. A historical comparison might be Dwight Eisenhower, an officer known not for operational expertise but for his skillful handling of the Coalition war effort from 1943-1945. Eisenhower, too, went into politics after retirement, but is remembered as an admirable figure of restraint, compromise, and effectiveness. Such a comparison might highlight both the intellectual strengths and the temperamental flaws of Wilson. As a staff officer, Wilson was deemed brilliant by his contemporaries. As a leader, however, he was clearly flawed, opinionated, outspoken, choleric, and sometimes imprudent. In the words of his biographer Keith Jeffrey, "... Wilson's judgment of a political situation [was

often] skewed by a narrow military vision, reinforced, moreover, by an element of wishful thinking.”¹¹ In essence, he demonstrated some of the political-military strengths of Eisenhower and the flaws of Montgomery.

McGreevy’s study also raises an interesting question about loyalties and judgment. Wilson’s diaries make clear his often-vitriolic disagreement with the Cabinet over strategy in Ireland, on issues including unofficial retaliation, use of British ex-soldiers in the police force, negotiations with the IRA and Sinn Fein leadership, and the Treaty itself and granting of Dominion status to the new Irish Free State. In each instance, Wilson argued for tougher action, using military forces rather than police or paramilitaries, backed by new laws or martial law to brutally crush the rebellion. In the case of Northern Ireland, however, he appears to have privately counselled Northern Irish leaders to moderate their policies, even while vocally supporting them and condemning the government as part of the Die-Hard faction. While Wilson was clearly a loud and imprudent politician (for a former military leader) in the months after his retirement, is this an indicator of a moderation in temperament as he left his military career behind? Or of a stronger loyalty, demanding greater prudence, for the new Unionist state than he held for the Empire?

The story of the assassination attempt and trial could be told in about 200 pages. McGreevy, to his credit, writes a much longer book, providing context and evidence for his eventual conclusions. These include a useful synopsis of IRA efforts in Great Britain from 1919-1922 (Chapter Seven), a careful examination of the national and international response to the killing (Chapter Eight), and a list of IRA escape attempts in both Ireland and Great Britain from 1916-1922 (Chapter Nine). He also discusses the efforts to rescue Dunne and O’Sullivan by both pro- and anti-Treaty IRA elements, and an abortive attempt to kidnap the Prince of Wales as a hostage. These are of great interest and contribute significantly to the value of the book for the general reader.

Another critical theme in the book is the idea that Wilson’s assassination was Ireland’s “Sarajevo moment” (the title of the concluding chapter). This important argument is somewhat muted by the length and detail of the supporting chapters, but richly deserves emphasis and examination, well beyond the obvious metaphor of an assassination leading to a bloody war.

Wilson’s assassination occurred at an extraordinarily sensitive time in Irish politics. A covert campaign by the IRA to destabilize Northern Ireland had failed dismally. Disaffected IRA factions, claiming to represent 60-80% of the IRA membership, had seized control of judicial buildings in Dublin. The new Constitution of the Irish Free State, revealed on the day of an election in mid-June, confirmed fears that a Republican constitutional option had been rejected by the British. That election demonstrated that opposition to the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 was much smaller than expected: only 22% of the electorate voted for the anti-Treaty candidates. On 18 June 1922, a vote by the anti-Treaty IRA faction resulted in a split in the movement, as more than 50% of the representatives rejected the proposal to resume war with Britain. A strengthened government, a weakened anti-Treaty IRA Executive, and the opportunity for anti-Treaty political leaders to take their place as a formal opposition party offered opportunities for Ireland to move forward while avoiding a civil war that most wanted desperately to avoid.

The assassination sent the British government into a frenzy, demanding an immediate attack by British forces in Dublin on the Four Courts, blaming Rory O’Connor (with no evidence) for the assassination. General Neville Macready wisely delayed an assault that might have reignited Anglo-Irish hostilities. The arrest of Leo Henderson, and the kidnapping of General J.J. “Ginger” O’Connell heightened the crisis. British leaders pushed the new Irish government to act against the Four Courts. Pressured by escalating tensions and based (perhaps)

¹¹ Keith Jeffery, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson: A Political Soldier* (Oxford, 2006), 187.

on a flawed estimate of the divisions between the Lynch and O'Connor anti-Treaty factions, the new government ordered an assault on the Four Courts, and initiated Ireland's bloody Civil War.

Chapter Eleven discusses events in the Civil War, focused mostly on the early months. The inclusion of a section on the burning of Wilson's family home (and other great houses) breaks the narrative flow in this chapter, and the final months of the conflict in 1923 are dealt with in a page and a half (328-329). There may be a missed opportunity here to compare the war Wilson wanted to fight in Ireland and the war that the Provisional (later Free State) government actually fought. For all the horrors of that conflict, and there were many, the diaries of Wilson, General Sir Neville Macready (commander of troops in Ireland) and Winston Churchill's memoirs of the period suggest that the British were prepared to go much further.¹² Examining the use of artillery by the British army at Belleek during the truce period, and the more limited use by the Free State during the Civil War, might be one fruitful area of comparison.

McGreevy's writing style is engaging. His story is often gripping, and mixes in popular culture (*Michael Collins* and *Peaky Blinders*), interesting historical connections (one of the killers went to school with Alfred Hitchcock and may have been a model for one of Hitchcock's early protagonists), and historical comparisons (likening the impact of the assassination to the killing of Lord Mountbatten almost sixty years later). The story skips back and forth chronologically, which leads to some repetition and possible confusion, but generally the narrative maintains momentum and reader interest. There's a certain level of irreverence (I don't recall seeing the term "cack-handed" recently, but it emerges on p. 323 in reference to the Provisional Government's handling of the death of Michael Collins), but that contributes to the overall readability.

In the conclusion, McGreevy lays out the four plausible explanations for the assassination: that Dunne and O'Sullivan acted alone, that the anti-Treaty leadership had something to do with it, that they acted on pre-Treaty orders still in place from 1921, or that Collins/GHQ (or IRB) tasked the London units to carry out the assassination in 1922. His conclusion is that the first two explanations fail, based on witness testimony and other evidence. He immediately (and probably prematurely) dismisses the third: his opening sentence begins with the words, "This canard has been repeated many times..." (373). Nevertheless, it is a prevailing explanation that does fit much of the available evidence. If the assassination had been ordered by the IRB, as opposed to the IRA, it would not have been cancelled by the Truce (along with other IRA operations).

This puts the onus on the author to *prove* his fourth explanation. He makes a good case for it, but there is no "smoking gun," in part because both the IRB and previous assassination efforts planned by the IRA did not generate a lot of (potentially dangerous) paperwork. McGreevy culls witness statements and personal testimonies, including those of Dunne and O'Sullivan, and makes a good if circumstantial case that Collins *might*, in the context of the ongoing violence in Belfast, have made a post-Treaty order for Wilson's assassination. The pages discussing Collins's rationale for ordering an assassination, which could (and did) put the Provisional Government under enormous British pressure, are studded with the phrase "might have." The reader will have to make their own judgments.

Ultimately the question of whether the order was "leftover" from before the Truce, a deliberate post-Treaty plan originating in London or Dublin, or the result of an explosion of bad temper from Collins (P.S. O'Hegarty's hypothesis) is unlikely to be resolved. The release of first-person testimonies at the Military Archive in Dublin and recent more even-handed studies

¹² General Sir Neville Macready, *Annals of an Active Life* vol. 2, (London, 1924); Sir Charles Callwell, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson: His Life and Diaries* vol. 2, (London, 1927); Winston S. Churchill, *The World Crisis: Aftermath* (London: 1929).

of the mythic figure of Michael Collins contribute new evidence for a re-examination of these questions. McGreevy provides an enormous service to historians and scholars in putting the assassination in context, accessing new sources, and making the strongest case possible for a deliberate post-Treaty assassination order.

The “Sarajevo Moment” of Wilson’s assassination is inarguable. After the June 1922 election, the future was quite uncertain; both factions of the anti-Treaty IRA were unprepared for the result. Neither pro- nor anti-Treaty forces were prepared to fight one another. Leaders on both sides continued to try to find ways to compromise, and both attempted to work together on the issue of the border, partition, and the fate of nationalists in the North. Once the Four Courts were attacked, and the war escalated, both pro- and anti-Treaty forces stopped supporting nationalists in the North as they concentrated on one another. Ironically, after years of supporting the Union, it may have been Wilson’s death that indirectly ensured, for a century, the survival of partition.

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Poetry, Politics and the Law in Modern Ireland (Adam Hanna, 2022)

Lucy Collins

Attention to the relationship between literature and the law is growing in importance within literary studies. This scholarship enables us to think in new ways about how textual meaning is constituted, but also highlights the subtle ways in which poetic practice is shaped by political and legal concerns. Adam Hanna is at the forefront of this work in Ireland, both as the author of the monograph under review here and as co-editor – with Eugene McNulty – of a collection of essays, *Law and Literature: The Irish Case*, also reviewed in this issue of *Estudios Irlandeses*. Fictions of legal entanglement and court procedure are only one part of the story – to these can be added an array of texts from different genres and historical periods that handle legislative issues obliquely. In particular, the rise of documentary poetry in Ireland has created new ways of reading the relationship between legislative and poetic texts and yielded a keener appreciation of the formal implications of this process.

Poetry, Politics and the Law in Modern Ireland is at once ambitious in scope and economical in scale. It addresses a wide range of poets (eleven in detail) from W. B. Yeats to Julie Morrissy, tracing the significant intersection between poetic and legal processes from the foundation of the state to the present day. Hanna opens with reference to a manuscript poem by Seamus Heaney, and his skill in drawing out significant, and often occluded, detail as a prelude to a broader conceptual discussion is vital to the success of this study, which retains the evident pleasure of close reading without losing sight of the larger debates. The importance of women's experience is acknowledged at the outset of the book, and the author situates the recent campaign to repeal the Eighth Amendment as an important instance of artistic intervention in legislative space, and one that provides an apt starting point for consideration of the place of the poet in Ireland's public life. We are encouraged to see the relationship between law and literature not in simple linear fashion, but as a complex interweaving of representational forms and political contexts. Early on, the fundamental question of what literary language can offer legislators is addressed: the notion that judicious use of words can transform thought itself advocates attention to the nuances of language as the means to create a more just society.

This suggestion is immediately counterbalanced by an acknowledgment of the complexity of Ireland's legal history. A deeper consideration of the contested relationship between law and justice in colonial contexts would have been interesting here, especially in foregrounding the idea that poetry functions not as an analogue for the operation of law but as its alternative. These dynamics highlight the succinct character of this book, and the author's decision to juxtapose different contexts and considerations, rather than to privilege the smooth presentation of extended arguments. While these transitions may be at first disconcerting, they signal Hanna's capacity to move deftly between insights and also function to keep a variety of factors constantly in play, which is especially useful in unifying diverse and multi-layered chapters. The book begins with Yeats's role as senator, placing his speeches alongside the poetry he composed during this period and drawing attention to the stimulus that underpinned both expressive processes. The extent to which Yeats wished to unify artistic, religious, and political concerns in his work is explored from a number of perspectives here. Especially interesting is the treatment of the monumental, combining Yeats's commitment to the preservation of Ireland's material history and his complex engagement with the idea of the monument in his poetry. It is when Hanna is moving between conceptual argument and close textual analysis that this work really shines: his reading of "Sailing to Byzantium" with its "combination of a time-honored form and wandering, wavering rhythms [creating] a whole in which qualities of grandeur and haphazard fleetness are mixed" (31) shows the rich potential of this approach.

In turning to the poetry of Austin Clarke, Hanna productively explores a very different poetic sensibility, one that is both acutely sensitive to Ireland's ecclesiastical heritage, yet deeply alienated by the role of the Catholic Church in his own time. Clarke's representation of the lives of women is especially significant in framing the later biopolitical exploration with which this study concludes. The poet's attention to Ireland's monastic heritage and to the role of the scriptorium in capturing and recording the medieval past is at the core of this chapter and reveals the ways in which legal considerations can incorporate diverse themes within their scope. Clarke's struggle to evolve poetic forms adequate to his deeply felt religious dilemmas finds a secular counterpart in the treatment of Thomas Kinsella here. Kinsella's career as a civil servant gave expression to the ordered continuity of the Free State years. Whether independent Ireland took on – in the words of poet Theo Dorgan – "the burden of the Common Law as it had evolved in Britain, with all its precedents and preconceptions, never once asking if this was an appropriate tradition for our people" (88) is a question that shadows much of this book.

Between Clarke and Kinsella, both formally innovative in their approach to thought and image, comes Rhoda Coghill – a woman whose work sits somewhat uneasily within the larger

argument of this book. Coghill here represents a generation of mid-century women poets who struggled to secure their place within the larger cultural narrative of their time. Hanna writes sensitively about Coghill's understated work, paying particular attention to her poetic soundscapes and her alertness to details from the natural world, both of which contribute to her subtle engagement with questions of personal freedom. The extent to which she occupies a dissenting position (in all senses of the word) in an Ireland still governed by Catholic doctrine is important here, though it is hard to see why her work – rather than that of another of her mid-century peers – has been chosen. With Heaney Hanna is on surer ground, and the chapter on his work broaches the important act of bearing witness to difficult truths, reflecting on the dilemma Heaney faced in deciding when to speak and when to remain silent. It also addresses the process of writing – as much as the production of a finished poem – as a vital aspect of political engagement.

The book concludes with a welcome examination of the place of the contemporary woman poet in the struggle for legislative change. In reflecting on the work of four women in this chapter, Hanna acknowledges the collective power of these interventions, as well as briefly exploring the varied aesthetic choices of these poets. The material is covered with some haste, inevitable when addressing poetry and social conditions of such weight and complexity in a single chapter. This is offset, however, by the exploration of Paula Meehan and Paul Durcan that immediately precedes it. In opening that chapter with reference to “The Statue of the Virgin at Granard Speaks,” Hanna reaffirms the affective power of this poem and the importance of Meehan's uncompromising art both for her own generation and those that followed her. It is a reminder too that legislative change – and its accompanying artistic interventions – is not the work of a moment, but often the result of impassioned engagement over generations. The poems analyzed in the final chapter implicitly reveal these legacies, but there is more to be said about the connections between generations in this book, and the subtle ways in which legal and literary histories are re-examined to powerful effect. Julie Morrissy's poetry is a case in point: her experimental work explicitly recasts legal texts, breaking their assured surfaces to reveal lasting human pain, a striking achievement that would benefit from extended engagement here. There are other instances where slower progress through the poetry would afford the reader time to reflect and make connections. Yet it is a tribute to the rich insights to be found in this book, and the astute – and often moving – treatment of its poems that we can only wish for more.

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