

VIOLENCE

Repercussion, Resistance and Representation
in Irish Society and Culture

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PLENARY SPEAKERS

Lisa Fitzpatrick



Lisa Fitzpatrick is Senior Lecturer in Drama at Ulster University in Derry, where she teaches critical theory and Irish theatre, and supervises research in staging violence and post-conflict theatre. She is the author of *Rape on the Contemporary Stage* (2018), and her recent edited books include *The Theatre of Deirdre Kinahan* (with Maria Kurdi; Lang, 2022) and *Plays by Women in Ireland 1926-1933: Feminist Theatres of Freedom and Resistance* (with Shonagh Hill; Methuen, 2022). Her current work on gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict societies includes a collaboration with Kabosh Theatre Company, Belfast. She is co-convenor of the Feminist Working Group at the International Federation for Theatre Research, and associate editor of *Theatre Research International*.

Eamon Maher



Eamon Maher is Director of the National Centre for Franco-Irish Studies in TU Dublin. He is General Editor of two book series with Peter Lang Oxford, *Studies in Franco-Irish Relations*

and *Reimagining Ireland*, the latter series having over 120 books in print. Recent publications include (with Brian Lucey and Eugene O'Brien), *Reimagining the Celtic Tiger* (2019), (with Eugene O'Brien), *Reimagining Irish Studies for the Twenty-First Century* (2021), and (with Sarah Balen), *Sounding the Margins: Literary Examples from France and Ireland* (2022). He has written two monographs and one edited collection on the Irish writer John McGahern (1934-2006), on whom he is a renowned expert. His primary research interests are representations of Catholicism in French and Irish fiction, comparative literature, and Franco-Irish links. He is currently working on two monographs, one dealing with the French priest-writer Jean Sullivan (1913-1980) and the other on the Catholic Novel in the twentieth century.

INVITED WRITERS

Marina Carr



Marina Carr's plays are *Ullaloo*, 1989; *Low in the Dark*, 1991; *The Mai*, 1994; *Portia Coughlan*, 1996; *By the Bog of Cats*, 1998; *On Raftery's Hill*, 1999; *Ariel*, 2000; *Woman and Scarecrow*, 2004; *The Cordelia Dream*, 2006; *Marble*, 2007; *16 Possible Glimpses*, 2009; *Hecuba*, 2015, *The Boy*, 2021, *iGirl*, 2021; *Girl on an Altar*, 2022. Adaptations are *Anna Karenina*, 2016; *Blood Wedding*, 2019; and *To the Lighthouse*. Plays for children are *Meat and Salt*, 2003 and *The Giant Blue Hand*, 2007.

Her work has been produced by The Abbey Theatre, The Gate, Druid, Landmark, The Royal Court, Wyndhams Theatre, The RSC, The Tricycle, The MacCarter Theatre, San Diego Rep, Milwaukee rep.

She is a member of AOSDANA.

Currently she lectures in the English department at Dublin City University.

Rosemary Jenkinson



Rosemary Jenkinson is a playwright and short story writer from Belfast. She was artist-in-residence at the Lyric Theatre in 2017, writer-in-residence at the Leuven College of Irish Studies in 2019 and is an Arts Council of Northern Ireland Major Artist. She has had six short story collections published, the latest of which is *Love in the Time of Chaos* (Arlen House 2023). Her plays have been performed in London, Dublin, Belfast, Edinburgh, Brussels, Washington DC and New York.

She fervently believes that life is too short for long literature.

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

PLENARY SPEAKERS

Those Greek Women

Marina Carr
Writer

PLENARY SESSION 2, THURSDAY JUNE 1ST 11:30-12:30

SALÓ D'ACTES

Women, Democracy, and Performance in Northern Ireland

Lisa Fitzpatrick (Ulster University)
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PLENARY SESSION 3, THURSDAY JUNE 1ST 16:00-17:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

Women's political activism in Northern Ireland has frequently required them to engage with a hostile state in a struggle for their civil rights. Historically, this has been a sectarian struggle focusing on access to housing and employment; but post-conflict, women's civil rights in relation to reproduction, health, and security continue to be precarious. Recent research shows that female university students report high levels of unwanted sexual experiences; Northern Ireland has the second highest rate of female homicide by intimate partner in Western Europe, and Northern Ireland has no government policy in place to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls. As one recent report points out, gender-based violence has been consistently deprioritized because the main focus of government and policing has been on political instability and paramilitary, anti-state violence.

This paper explores a selection of plays and performances that seek to capture women's experiences of various kinds of violence, and that aim to break the silence that has shamed the victims and enabled the situation to continue unchanged. Recent work includes Rosemary Jenkinson's *Silent Trade* about human trafficking; Louise Moore's *Not On Our Watch* about grassroots activism in support of victims of domestic abuse; the community performance *Don't Shoot My Wane* by Felicity McCall, which challenges paramilitarism, and Helen Cammock's video installation *The Long Note* examining women's Civil Rights activism. These productions are only a few of the many works in theatres and art galleries during the past five years that have centred on women's stories of the conflict and the development of Northern Irish society since the Peace Process.

I aim to explore how these performances and art works document and perform women's resistance, activism, and assertion of their civil rights. Women's activism in Northern Ireland frequently makes use of traditional roles and concepts of appropriate feminine behaviour to claim a space from which to speak and be heard. The paper draws on Schechner's theories of the relationship between aesthetic and social drama, the concept of maternalism, and the analysis of citizenship as a gendered performance of belonging to a nation or state.

Troubles Writing – Culture or Cult? – and the Battle to Tell New Stories

Rosemary Jenkinson
Writer

PLENARY SESSION 4, FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 16:00-17:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

Catholicism, Violence and Trauma: Some Examples from Contemporary Irish Women Fiction Writers

Eamon Maher (Technological University Dublin)
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PLENARY SESSION 1, WEDNESDAY MAY 31ST 12:30-13:30

SALÓ D'ACTES

The days of Ireland being controlled by the Catholic Church are well behind us, but the negative legacy of that period is strongly associated with the incarceration of women in Magdalene Laundries or Mother and Baby Homes as a result of becoming pregnant outside of wedlock, or being perceived as promiscuous, and is still very much a live issue. In addition, the taboos surrounding sexuality a few short decades ago in Ireland, particularly in relation to the female body, cause many writers to reflect on the violence and trauma caused to generations of Irish people because of religious intolerance and an unhealthy alliance between Church and State.

This paper will treat of 4 contemporary women fiction writers – Anne Enright, Eimear McBride, Emer Martin and Claire Keegan – in an attempt to elucidate how they portray Catholicism in their work. We will see that certain tropes recur: the healing power of ritual; the body as a site of sin; hypocrisy among certain representatives of Catholicism; the abuse inflicted on young people and kept silent under the protective shield of religion; the search for the transcendent. The interesting thing is that, although all the writers would be, at best, ambivalent towards the religion in which they were raised, Catholicism is nonetheless a core element of their creative process, in that it informs the decisions of the characters or dictates the situations in which they find themselves. So, although many describe Ireland as a 'post-Catholic' society, this does not in any way indicate that Catholicism has receded from the public consciousness altogether – far from it, in fact.

PAPERS

A reflection on the Irish involvement in the American Indian Wars in *Days Without End* by Sebastian Barry

Elisa Lima Abrantes (Rural Federal University of Rio de Janeiro)
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PANEL 6C FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 12:30-14:00

SALA DE JUNTAS

Thomas McNulty, protagonist of Sebastian Barry's *Days Without End* (2016), crossed the Atlantic to build a life after the trauma of losing his family in Sligo, dead from famine. He gets to the US in 1850, a period of expansionist violence and development of the American West as a space of conquest and opportunity for some and tragedy for others. As hundreds of thousands of Irishmen in the nineteenth century, Thomas served in the U.S. military and engaged in fighting Native Americans. The Irish participation in the Indian Wars brings shame in modern Irish memory and does not sit well within a broader narrative of Irish people struggling against oppression. It is out of place that these Irish could be both victims (as in the case of Famine emigrants) and aggressors. Thomas McNulty, however, had little choice but to seek a new life in America and to earn a living as best he could. Being himself a victim, it is ironical his involvement in the Indian Wars, or as Barry defines his protagonist's role "dispossessing people like his own people" (LEA, 2017). This dark story is intertwined with an intimate love relationship between Thomas and his lover, the American John Cole. This paper aims at exploring the novel's investigation of racial and gendered identity through the bloody conflicts Thomas and his lover go through, articulating the notions of national identity and self-discovery, loss, love and compassion.

Ecocritical readings of contemporary Irish poetry: Myth, landscape and place awareness in Paddy Bushe's poetry

José Miguel Alonso-Giráldez (Universidade da Coruña)
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PANEL 2B WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 15:30-17:30

SALÓ DE GRAUS

This paper aims to analyze the relevance of ecocritical discourse in the poetry of the poet Paddy Bushe and its connections around the environment, landscape and awareness of place with other contemporary Irish poets. From a deep presence of myth, Bushe has constructed a literary universe in which poetic language contributes decisively to delimit places to be preserved, in which history accumulates, several layers of history that serve to explain the present, but, beyond the cultural aspects, they are also protected spaces for biodiversity (such as the Skellig). In Bushe the awareness of place is deeply linked to ecocritical awareness, often referring to local communities such as the Iveragh peninsula. As Afric McGlinchey has noted, referring to Bushe's 'My Lord Buddha of Carraig Éanna' collection, "Taken as a whole, the unifying themes in this collection offer a greater awareness of the natural world and birdlife in particular, and deliver the reader to a more conscious state of being-in-the-world." Bushe, like other current Irish poets, reflects in his work the importance of the Oriental influence, as McGlinchey also points out "his sensibilities have also been influenced by his travels, particularly to Asia. In this, (...) there is an awareness of the transient nature of human life and of geological erosion too". Paddy Bushe, through a historical interpretation of landscape, in which myth constitutes a decisive force, manages to construct a poetics of identity, in which landscape, the preservation of the natural environment, projects us towards a cosmic vision of existence in which language has a healing power that attempts to overcome Michael Longley's environmental elegies or Mahon's cultural pessimism.

Negotiating Second-Generation Transcultural Irishness: Susan Ryan's *The King of Lavender Square*

Asier Altuna-García de Salazar (Universidad de Deusto)
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PANEL 7B FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 17:00-18:30

SALÓ DE GRAUS

This paper analyses Susan Ryan's debut novel, *The King of Lavender Square* (2017) in order to show how second-generation Irish negotiate transcultural realities in contemporary Ireland. Drawing on theoretical approaches to the transcultural by Wolfgang Welsch, especially his take on the macro and micro levels of societies and individuals respectively, and more Irish focused theoretical frameworks by Gavan Titley, Gerard Delanty, Michale Cronin and Anne Mulhall, among others, the analysis offered approaches Susan Ryan's representation of second-generation Irishness with the character of young Patrick Kimba. Ryan sets the novel's story in an anonymous neighbourhood in Dublin, Lavender Square, which reproduces as a microcosm the many social interactions of those living in it. The asylum seeker and later refugee Mrs. Tessa Kimba, escaping persecution and death in her native Congo, moved in still pregnant with Patrick, who will be born in Dublin and become native Irish by birth. Susan Ryan centres the development of her novel in Patrick's growing process between his host/native country and that of his mother. As a black Irish, he will have to negotiate his transcultural identity as opposed to what has been traditionally regarded as the "Irish/White only". But, his negotiation with identity transcends colour and Patrick has to come to terms with religion, language, tradition and everyday interactions with his classmates and neighbours. At the same time, his and his mother's past hangs heavily still, as some secrets hide an ominous

former story in Congo. This paper proves that Susan Ryan's novel approaches transcultural Irishness represented as a synergy, an interaction and an evolutionary process within the social, the political, the cultural and the identitarian macro and micro discourses of contemporary Ireland. Her take on second-generation transcultural Irishness questions the ideology of the Irish nation-state and advocates the reformulation of identity, culture and a new social order through a transcultural prism.

"Won't you ask the about my baby?": The Hidden Violence of the Magdalene Laundry in Claire Keegan's *Small Things Like These* (2020)

Katie Barnes (University of Salford)

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PANEL 1B WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 10:30-12:00

SALÓ DE GRAUS

Following the 2013 McAleese report into Magdalene laundries in Ireland, Taoiseach Enda Kenny described the laundries as "the nation's shame". Claire Keegan's 2020 novel *Small Things Like These* is vital in portraying and addressing local attitudes towards Magdalene laundries whilst also exploring the idea of a hidden shame. This paper considers the complex position of the Magdalene laundries, focusing on the idea of hiding shame in plain sight. This paper will also address both the naivety and unspoken attitudes towards the Magdalene laundry shown by Furlong's family and members of the wider community who live around or provide a service to the nuns. The paper will explore atmosphere and aesthetics of institutional violence in the text. It will also explore how the threat of confinement and violence is used as a method of control over young women, examining in particular the language of coercive control in the description of Furlong's own daughters and the implication of them being described as "young witches" (Keegan, 2020). This paper ultimately analyses the perceived role of the Magdalene laundry in society, examining how the threat of violence and shame was utilised as a form of control over Irish women until the late 20th Century.

Youth Struggle and Post-Celtic Ireland in Sally Rooney's Novels

María Amor Barros-del Río (Universidad de Burgos)

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PANEL 5D THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 17:30-19:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

Sally Rooney's novels have been praised for their ability to represent the complexity of identity formation, that is, the interplay between an individual's 'self-identity' and their 'social-identity' (Beech 2011). Her work epitomizes the arduous process of transition from youth into adulthood in a "polycrisis" scenario (Murphy and Brennan, 2019), which is entangled with particular forms of physical and social violence. In this context, Rooney constructs certain typologies of masculinities and femininities forced to navigate neoliberal values and her protagonists live in permanent distress caused by "externalities" (Clark, 2018) such as mental illness, domestic abuse, and economic crises, which ultimately affect their emancipatory process. This study analyses Rooney's uses of domestic and social violence as intrinsic to contemporary existence, and classifies them with the purpose to evince their role in the identity construction of her characters in post-Celtic Irish culture.

Mother and Baby Homes institutions: Thinking Violence from an ideological perspective

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PANEL 6A FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 12:30-14:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

The 2021 “Mother and Baby Homes” report that followed the governmental enquiry found an “appalling mortality rate” of illegitimate children in Ireland throughout a large part of the 20th century, and, in the same vein, acknowledges that the vast majority of children in the institutions because of “illegitimacy”, suffered discrimination for most of their lives. Although the commission of investigation has not found “evidence of gross abuse”, the report highlights that “politicians and the public were not particularly concerned about these children”, a statement which at first glance, seems to minimize, or even dismiss the degree of abuse suffered.

As a matter of fact, the analysis of specific practices and counter-narratives which contrast the commission's view of abuse invites us to examine the issue and its long-lasting effects more closely. Indeed, whether it was perpetrated on bodies, or more insidiously in the social space, violence has been ubiquitous in the lives of illegitimate children. In this regard, one important question can be raised: can violence be related only to the harsh cold environment, as defined in the report; or, can it be integrated into an ideological framework?

Drawing on key concepts such as cultural violence, structural violence and symbolic violence, the paper will explore the processes of domination and abuse (physical, emotional, social, political, economical etc...) in relation to the treatment of illegitimate children, and thus, will show how the spiral of violence has shaped the lives of children born to unmarried mothers. The main objective is to discuss the interconnection between the three forms of violence, and subsequently to question the existence of an ideology which determines the social value of individuals, more specifically social eugenics.

The Balloon and the Bullet. Children and Young People in Irish early Paramilitarism. Na Fianna Eireann and the Young Citizen Volunteers.

Luca Bertolani Zerardo (Scuola Superiore Meridionale)
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PANEL 1C WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 10:30-12:00

SALA DE JUNTES

Early XX century Europe saw the establishment of paramilitary bodies as a reaction to what were considered modern social problems such as strikes, individualism, and the loss of physical culture.

In Great Britain, Robert Baden-Powell decided to establish a body of scouts. His idea – in reaction to the imperial and military crisis of the Boer War – was to raise and drill a new stronger generation of citizens, loyal imperial soldiers for the forthcoming European war.

In reaction and in extension to this body, Ireland witnessed the establishment of two young paramilitary bodies: the nationalist Na Fianna Eireann, and the conservative Young Citizen Volunteers.

Na Fianna were founded in 1909 in Dublin as a counterreaction to the imperial Boy Scouts to shape the revolutionary generation, rise up, and establish a free Ireland. They managed to expand beyond Dublin, enlisting some thousands of members.

The Young Citizen Volunteers were formed in 1912 in Belfast to continue Baden-Powell's ideals with the older boys, giving them a sense of discipline and municipal nationalism. They failed to expand and were later incorporated into the Ulster Volunteer Force.

This paper will analyse and compare the two movements, considering which role religion, social status, and different backgrounds had in shaping the young Irish generations. It will also be considered their establishment, the propaganda and culture production, the members'

social backgrounds, the relationship with the later adult paramilitary bodies, and their participation in the Irish Revolution and in the Great War.

Reconciliation and/or Reunification? The Irish republican movement and the Brexit test

Yann Bévant (Université Rennes 2)

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PANEL 7C FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 17:00-18:30

SALA DE JUNTES

The northern Irish question stems from conflict between diverging interests between communities, antagonistic perceptions of national identities, and it is as a result the product of competing and conflicting interpretations of History, and more particularly of the history of Anglo-Irish relations.

Contemporary Irish republicanism is from an ideological point of view one of these interpretations. It has long been characterised by numerous and bloody splits as its ideological corpus was not negotiable, any major concession –as it was the case with the 1921 Treaty establishing the Free State- being considered as treason of the messianic ideal. Yet the hunger strikes and a changing international environment progressively led Sinn Féin and the Provisional IRA to sketch out and then assert a new strategy and approach culminating in the Good Friday Agreement. This approach substituting inclusive politics to the “armed struggle” has proved successful as Sinn Féin is now the major party in Ireland as a whole in terms of electoral weight.

The process of normalisation undergone by the republican movement remains questioned by a number of its political opponents, though their line of argument has been undermined by Sinn Féin’s participation in the institutions and its exercise of power in the North. Whether this process reflects a deep change in the ideological corpus or a mere strategy to reach out to the ultimate goal of reunification will be put to the test by the outcome of Brexit.

Practically Unspeakable: Women's Information Network, Censorship, and the Omitted Histories of Women's Rights in Ireland

Susan Birmingham (Universitat Pompeu Fabra) and Cara Brophy-Browne (University of Bologna)

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PANEL 4D THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 12:30-14:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

This presentation examines the private archive of an underground Irish women’s collective. It uses this archive in order to engage with a specific period in Irish history to understand the direct and indirect violence done to women through censorship and lack of access to information regarding reproductive healthcare. The archival research is enriched and augmented by interviews carried out with WIN members by the authors of this paper in 2016.

Women’s Information Network (WIN), functioned from 1987 to 1993 as an illegal, underground collective providing support and information to women as to how to travel abroad to procure an abortion. Between 1983 and 1992 providing such information was illegal, as was travelling abroad to procure an abortion.

The campaign surrounding the repeal of the 8th amendment in 2018 saw the unearthing and retelling of many histories of constitutional and religious domination over Irish women’s bodies. However, some stories were left untold. Due to the practical, radical, and illegal nature of WIN, their work has remained omitted from most mainstream as well as academic narratives. The collective’s awareness of their “fringe” status even during their years of

operation necessitated they keep a history of themselves, itself constituting a resistance to the violence of state censorship and self-censorship they faced within social movements.

With record of support given to 1,495 women between 1987 - 1991 (WIN Archive, 1992), these documents provide a unique window for understanding this period of censorship in Ireland. They shed light on how a specific intersection of criminality, misogyny, and respectability politics created the conditions for the doubled-censorship placed on these activists, by both the Irish state and the broader abortion rights movement. This paper explores the history and legacy of this censorship through WIN's own far-sighted self-documentation.

Vulnerability, Resistance and Affective Relationality in Sebastian Barry's *The Secret Scripture* (2018)

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PANEL 7A FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 17:00-18:30

SALÓ D'ACTES

This paper addresses the transformative power of literature as a fundamental tool for learning about the experiences suffered by others. Literature decisively configures a palimpsest of veiled stories, affections and ways of life that allow us to better understand our history and to be able to exercise a political function of resistance and resilience, as in the case of Roseanne Clare in *The Secret Scripture* (2008). Based on her account of violence exerted on her by the State, the Church and the Magdalene institutions, this paper will focus on how Roseanne's disclosure of vulnerability becomes the first step to reclaim her humanity. A necessary approach to this text will take into consideration gender issues from an Irish-centered perspective that expands Irish women's visibility. On the other hand, I will rely on Judith Butler's conceptualization of precarious lives and dispossession (2004) and Sara Ahmed's concept of communicative ethics (2000), for both thoroughly describe Roseanne's situation as well as her endurance mechanism. Drawing from these ideas, I postulate that Barry defends an ethical sensibility shaped by affects and relationality, as well as the need to reinforce a culture of memory so that experiences and testimonies such as Roseanne's are not lost. In this sense, this fictional work by Barry not only builds a bridge between feminist studies and vulnerability studies, but also confirms the urgent necessity of reading critical studies of Irish literature through the lens of the specific Irish context in order for these theoretical frames to be applicable.

Double marginalization and Queer Diaspora in contemporary Irish Literature

Esther Borges (Universidade de São Paulo)

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PANEL 3A THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

Through the past few decades, through globalization and social development, many borders have been either forgotten or have lost their importance and effect. As a result, there has been a new focus on Queer and immigrant issues, and with that Queer diaspora. As defined by Fortier (2002), Queer Diaspora is "the condition of exile and estrangement experienced by Queer subjects, which locates them outside the confines of 'home': the heterosexual family, the nation, the homeland." (8). By this, all Queer subjects are placed into some type of diaspora as they are inherently rejected by the social structures that should be representative of home, due to their Queerness. Furthermore, Queer subjects that are within diaspora, are doubly (dis)placed and therefore never fully belonging to one

space or another, possibly being ostracized by both their culture of origin and the culture of their newfound community, due to their sexuality and immigrant status.

This paper analyzes two novels by Adiba Jaigirdar, *Hani and Ishu's guide to fake dating* (2021) and *The Henna Wars* (2020), that although through different angles, explore the diasporic experience of sapphic characters in Irish contexts, and the feeling of living in between two cultures. The goal is to have a further understanding on how the characters are placed within both their culture of origin and the culture that they currently live in, how they face the struggles proposed by living in this in between, and how these struggles are created by their Queer and immigrant identities.

How Marian Keyes' *Last Chance Saloon* (1999) uses cancer to confront homophobia

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PANEL 3A THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

Last Chance Saloon is often overlooked in Keyes' oeuvre however, this ostensibly "chick lit" novel explores abortion, AIDS, homophobia, cancer and emotional abuse. In the novel, co-protagonist Fintan, who is a gay Irish man living in London, is diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma- a form of cancer. This paper will explore how Fintan's cancer diagnosis is used as a jumping-off point to explore contemporary attitudes towards homosexuality, particularly in relation to the AIDS epidemic. In doing so it will highlight how subliminal homophobia – even among friends and family members of homosexuals, can constitute a violent act.

Walking and the weight of the invisible hand: articulating gendered violence in Anna Burns' *Milkman*

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PANEL 2A WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 15:30-17:30

SALÓ D'ACTES

Emotional life during and after conflict cannot be examined without an understanding of the matrices of power at play in constructing relations of feeling, including those at work within as well as between separate and distinct communities. The way these structures of feeling are socially and culturally constituted, not only along sectarian lines but also in terms of gender, deviancy and morality, reveals a socially maintained 'hierarchy of suffering' and the emotional control it can exert. Anna Burns' *Milkman* is a story of social and emotional control in a tightly wound culture. It is the testimony of how methods of community defence and protection can turn to face inwards, and it reveals how power is exerted to cloak these stories in darkness and to deny them historical space.

While the trauma of sexual predation that takes place in *Milkman* cannot be codified by the community-enforced 'hierarchy of suffering', middle sister is able to articulate to the reader what happened to her by describing how it felt, and she most successfully does this by chronicling her growing incapacity for movement. In other words, how her characteristic walking and running is slowed, shepherded, and ultimately stilled. In a place where 'shiny was bad, and "too sad" was bad, and "too joyous" was bad', affective knowledge is troubled and confused by the persistence of fear as an emotional economy. Movement is the mechanism through which middle sister is able to describe her traumatic experience and demonstrate how power can be communicated through feeling, when language and emotions are tightly regulated and deeply political.

Remembering the Forgotten Stories of Disposable Lives: Ethics and Vulnerability in Evelyn Conlon's *Not the Same Sky*

Teresa Caneda Cabrera (Universidade de Vigo)

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PANEL 2D WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 15:30-17:30

ESPAI CULTURAL

Trauma and memory have often been invoked as relevant and productive concepts in critical and artistic works which are originated as a response to forms of historical violence. Specifically, in their rewritings of a national trauma like the Great Famine, Irish writers have unearthed forgotten stories which are remembered and commemorated through their creations. Memory, though, is unstable and often ambiguous, fraught with gaps and confusion and, thus, as has been remarked, whereas the convergence between memory and trauma has helped identify forgotten or disposable lives and stories, like the ones of the Famine, the question remains how the retrospective glance of trauma might be mobilized in the present for a different future (Hirsch 2016). The paper contends that this is precisely what Evelyn Conlon addresses in her latest novel, *Not the Same Sky* (2013). As will be discussed, through her imaginative retrieval of the untold stories of the Irish Famine Orphan Girls, Conlon intriguingly inquiries into the ethical debate on how to remember the atrocities of the past in the present: "I don't know what memorials are for now" (Conlon 2013). The paper draws on Marianne Hirsch's considerations on the relevance of vulnerability for the study of memory and trauma and takes as point of departure her concern with the way in which, before the traumas of the past, the humanities, and particularly literature, may elicit forms of responsiveness fostered by an "aesthetics of vulnerability" and "an ethics of open-endedness" (Hirsch 2016). In the light of all the above, the paper argues that Conlon's novel functions, not only as a memory site that corrects the silenced violence of "what has been" but, more importantly, as a text that invites readers to confront the contradictions of "what will be" (Hirsch 2016).

"He'd think of it again": Analysing the representation of violence within patriarchal societies in Donal Ryan's *The Spinning Heart*

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PANEL 5D THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 17:30-19:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

The existing correlation between masculinity and violence is a topic that has been extensively analysed by researchers in several fields within academia (Martin, 2021; Loveland & Raghavan, 2017; Katz, 2006). The present paper discusses the representation of such connection in literature and how it allows for a deeper exploration of the reasons behind violence in male-dominated societies. Considering previous research on masculinities in the specific Irish context (Barr, 2019; Darcy, 2019; Ging, 2005), the aim of this paper is to explore how masculinity and its relationship with violence is portrayed in Irish fiction through a close-reading analysis of Donal Ryan's debut novel *The Spinning Heart* (2012). The smalltown community created by Ryan in his first novel embodies a world that is, undoubtedly, dominated by men. Eighteen out of twenty-one narrators in the novel are men; their voices shape and structure the society they live in, and it is a society deeply marked by violence in different forms. The analysis carried out in this paper will highlight the extent to which literature works not only as a reflection of real life but also as a place to explore and emphasise real-life issues; moreover, it will show the extent to which this novel brings attention to violence and the sociocultural elements that support it.

"If you weren't my friend, I wouldn't know who I was": Care, Ethics and the Relational Self in Sally Rooney's *Beautiful World, Where are you*

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PANEL 2C WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 15:30-17:30

SALA DE JUNTAS

As in her previous novels, in Rooney's *Beautiful World, Where Are You* (2021) much of the story concerns the relationship dynamics between characters who struggle with emotional intimacy and human connection, against the backdrop of the possessive individualism and sense of alienation induced by our current neoliberal systems. *Beautiful World* revolves around the distancing, crisis and eventual reconciliation between two close friends, Alice –a secluded celebrity novelist– and Eileen –a precarious literary magazine editor–, and how their respective romantic relationships with Felix and Simon revive self-injurious sentiments of inadequacy and lack of control upon themselves and others. Drawing on research on care ethics, vulnerability and relationality (Mackenzie, 2009; Dodds, 2014; Brison, 2017), which conceptualise the self as intersubjective and embedded in social relations, my analysis of *Beautiful World* will pay attention to the ways in which, in the course of the story, Alice and Eileen reconfigure, for good, their previous notions of autonomy and intimacy in connection with their significant others. To do so, I shall follow Khader's taxonomy of care virtues (2011), which include "loving attention" –a willingness to appreciate and accommodate the particular nature of the other within the relationship–, "the transparent self" –an awareness of how our self-interests can easily block our recognition of the other's needs and vulnerabilities–, and "narrative understanding", a desire to engage with the other's personal history so as to make decisions that promote his/her well-being.

"The forfeited streets": Violence, Waste and the City in Alan Gillis

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PANEL 3D THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

In the work of poets from Northern Ireland, the bond between self and emplacement has long been challenged by a sense of malaise and dysfunction. For those who emerged as authors in the 1960s and early '70s, the urgency and brutalities of the Troubles, played out against a global background of libertarian causes, gave such discomfort a formative significance. For poets who have fashioned their writerly identities already under the conditions proper to post-Troubles Northern Ireland, uncertainty over the rapport between territory and identity has remained structural – though often verbalised through provocatively different tropes.

In this paper I will discuss the tension between emplacement and disaffection in the defining environment of the prevalent urban persona in recent poems by Alan Gillis, with a particular emphasis on his recent collection *The Readiness* (2020). Gillis has consistently addressed cityscapes, in their materiality as also in their potential for troping other dimensions of experience, including those that concern writing itself. His urban settings are characteristically tainted - by traits of endemic violence, by the waste generated by the people who inhabit them, and by the dehumanising impact of the technologies that ostensibly enable mobility and communication. Such features define the harsh environments of the two sequences this paper will be privileging: 'Lament for a Long Day in the Lonely Estates' and 'Metropolis'.

Cultural conflicts and encounters in Colum McCann's *Zoli* and *Apeiogon*

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PANEL 3C THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

SALA DE JUNTAS

Applying cultural concepts to his fiction, McCann retells the story of two fathers who lost their little daughters due to the violence in the Palestine. *Apeiogon* (2020) is based on a true story. The characters, one Arabic and one Israeli live in the occupied territory of West Bank and joined The Parents Circle initiative which aims to help other people who has been through the same and to stop the violence in the region by telling the world their own stories. In *Zoli* (2006), McCann depicts elements of a multiculturalist view of culture through the violence and persecution suffered by the Roma people during the World War II, in Europe, focusing on one character, a female poet. In that novel, Zoli manages to flee the Hlinka Guard in Slovakia. In both stories McCann depicts characters aligned with cultural concepts such as Wolfgang Welsch's transculturality which sees cultures as interconnected and entangled with each other; Paul Jay's transnationalism which claims that the borders of modern nation-states became porous; Kwame Appiah's cosmopolitanism which claims we have a sense of obligation to others not only to family and friends, but to the ones who are connected with us by a shared citizenship, and multiculturalism which works with the concept of separate cultures. What I propose in this paper is through the lens of these cultural concepts go deep into the novels and find out how McCann used them reflecting his political views and educational message.

"Memories lying inside her like landmines": Gender violence in recent Irish crime fiction

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PANEL 5C THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 17:30-19:00

SALA DE JUNTAS

The dramatic rise, both quantitative and qualitative, in Irish crime writing over the last twenty-five years has seen the genre explore a number of avenues which reveal the depth and plurality of criminal activity throughout the island. While the first years of the twenty-first century highlighted the rise of white collar crime perpetrated under the umbrella of the Celtic Tiger economic boom and subsequent recession, Irish crime fiction has also highlighted the conditions of migrant workers, the spread of sundry drugs and the violence that surrounds their distribution and consumption, the abuse carried out in public institutions such as children's homes and asylums, that carried out by the clergy among other types of crime. Although violence against women has also figured – Roddy Doyle's *The Woman Who Walked into Doors* (1996) and its sequel *Paula Spencer* (2006) provide excellent examples, the years since 2020 have seen the publication of at least a dozen crime novels in which gender violence plays a substantial role, perhaps reflecting concerns which are at last finding a voice in Ireland. Laura Joyce and Henry Sutton in their perhaps unfortunately titled *Domestic Noir* (2018) have identified gender violence as one of the key features of contemporary crime writing, and a number of Irish writers have examined this scourge, highlighting cases of physical attacks as well as ghosting, gas-lighting and other methods of psychological violence. This paper will discuss four novels within this context, *After the Silence* (2020) and *Idol* (2022) by Louise O'Neill, and *The Estate* (2021) and *Crookedwood* (2022) by Liza Costello.

"Where Bad News is No Longer News": Seamus Heaney, Michael Longley and Conflict Reporting

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PANEL 1D WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 10:30-12:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

In the early 1970s, as the Troubles escalated to new and violent extremes, Northern Ireland's poets sought to distinguish themselves from the news reporters flocking to the region. The writer 'is not some sort of superjournalist', Michael Longley wrote in 1971, 'commenting with unfaltering spontaneity on events immediately after they have happened'. That year, Seamus Heaney complained of Belfast as a place 'where bad news is no longer news, / Where media-men and stringers sniff and point'. In these accounts, news is shallow and opportunistic, while poetry emerges from what Longley calls 'imaginative depth'. Helen Vendler reiterates this distinction in her influential study of Heaney's *North* (1975), insisting that the collection's mythic and atavistic interpretations of political violence 'go below or beyond journalistic explanations of the Troubles.' This paper argues that such readings risk oversimplification. Presenting new archival research into contemporary news coverage and analysing Heaney and Longley's poetic output between 1969 and 1975, it shows the extent to which both poets engage productively with journalism. *North*, for instance, is deeply conversant with the accounts of 'tribal' and 'savage' violence that populated newspaper front pages; poems like Longley's 'The Linen Workers', meanwhile, absorb the strangeness and allusiveness of television reports on sectarian murder. At the centre of the paper are close-readings of Heaney's 'Offerings' and Longley's 'Kindertotenlieder', both of which respond to the RUC's killing of nine-year-old Patrick Rooney in 1969. Throughout, the paper suggests that the borders between Northern Irish poetry and journalism are more permeable than is often supposed.

***The Pages* by Hugo Hamilton and the recurrence of violence**

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PANEL 3C THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

SALA DE JUNTES

This paper aims to investigate the role of violence in Hugo Hamilton's 2021 novel entitled *The Pages*. The narrator of Hamilton's work is itself a novel – *Rebellion* – written by the Jewish author Joseph Roth, and published in Berlin in 1924, where it narrowly escaped the Nazi fire of books in May 1933. The narration intertwines the story of the novel *Rebellion* and its own story of survival, as well as the story of its author and his wife, with the stories of contemporary people around Lena, a young American woman of German and Irish descent.

Hamilton's novel is about escape and survival, about people who were forced to leave their homes in the past, like Joseph Roth, and people who have been forced to leave home in the recent past, like Armin and Madina, who fled Chechnya as children after becoming orphans when Groznyj was severely bombed, and who carry the marks of that violence in their maimed bodies. *The Pages* shows refugees of the past and refugees of the present, people who managed to survive and people who were and still are put down by violence. It also subtly reworks recurrent themes in Hamilton's oeuvre: homelessness and belonging, nationalism and identity, as well as the power of language and stories.

Brother in arms? The Spectre of IRA-ETA Violence in British and Irish State Papers

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PANEL 5A THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 17:30-19:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

Throughout the 1970s, a drip feed of news stories published in the Spanish, British and Irish press conjured up a popular image of advanced cooperation between ETA and the IRA. Although "no operational links" between the two groups were ever found by security services, state papers reveal that the spectre of a coordinated ETA-IRA terrorist threat was taken seriously, particularly in Madrid.

This paper reflects on the spectre of transnational violence in the Basque-Irish dynamic, how it shaped British-Spanish counter-terrorist responses, and how it served to embed popular comparisons between the (Northern) Irish and Basque cases. Finally, it considers some of the effects of popular case association on the political cultures of radical Basque nationalism and Irish republicanism, including the gradual emergence of a transnational "imagined community" at the shared intersection of both movements.

The Truth that Lacks Credibility: The Social Narrative of Violence in Erskine's *Sweet Home* and McLaverty's *Blank Pages and Other Stories*

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PANEL 7A FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 17:00-18:30

SALÓ D'ACTES

This paper aims to explore the current Irish narrative of violence and its repercussions through the short stories of Wendy Erskine and Bernard McLaverty. The parallel universes of the ideal and the real that comprise Irish society find in these stories that borderline space that almost seems empty, unreal and neglected. Erskine's stories disclose the contradictions that shape Irish society through the everyday life of ordinary people who mostly feel tired and lost. In the same light, those blank pages without a clear or defined future represent for McLaverty the waiting in silence. In both narratives, the dark currents of violence that remain latent surface through stories where the past is read between the lines, in an uncertain and fragmented present. A present still reminiscent of a traditional and religious system that not only affects the family and its domestic sphere, but also reveals itself against it. Framed within Fintan O'Toole's work, *We Don't Know Ourselves*, Ireland is represented among "different types of unfixity". Thus, Erskine and McLaverty recreate stories that mix sadness and happiness, silence and denunciation, in the hope of reconstructing an emotional reality that shapes contemporary Ireland.

At the edge of a larger darkness. Ephemeral bodies in poetry of Eavan Boland and Sinéad Morrison

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PANEL 2C WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 15:30-17:30

SALA DE JUNTES

Feminine embodiments in poetic tradition still spark dialogue in contemporary Irish literary practice and scholarship. Such concerns over inherited motifs have certainly not been neglected by twentieth- and twenty-first century women poets, who have often expressed how Irish literature urges for renewed lyrical formulae that surpass a silent body-as-Nation. This debate over the canon has frequently operated through traumatic historical loci and

their symbols of physical hardship, such as laundresses, seamstresses, young mothers, and famine-stricken women. Yet, it is urgent to consider whether these emerging models necessarily carry a sense of healing through language. In the words of the poet Eavan Boland, the cumulative effect of history may not allow «speech to heal».

A brief commentary on poets Eavan Boland and Sinéad Morrissey, this paper intends to sketch some considerations on how the feminine body can express a repository for creative energy, while also undergoing violent biological processes that continually displace straightforward semiotic connections — a discussion prompted by the typology of bodies in pain proposed by Donna Coffey (2011), namely the fourth category of generative force. Furthermore, it specifically aims to reflect on how their poetics may unveil an intrinsic figurative ambivalence in motherhood and ageing, a permanent anxiety over «the moment all nature fears and tends towards: / the stealing of the light».

Not just little has been narrated: Creative Women in Graphic Novels

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PANEL 3B THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

SALÓ DE GRAUS

Reading images and texts is a powerful teaching tool. The act of connecting graphic novels and history lessons has flourished and graphic texts are now a popular classroom tool. Williams (2008) underlines how comics and graphic novels are powerful teaching tools since they may allow students to engage with a topic and overcome historic, social, class, gender distance. As stated on their website, led by the Nerve Centre, the Creative Centenaries project brings together resources and information about the “Decade of Centenaries”, and the work of Northern Ireland’s creative sector in commemorating these past events and conflicts that shaped the island.

As part of this project, from digital storytelling to educational resources, some comics or graphic novels were produced with an fresh visual/textual approach to some events (partition, battles of Somme and Messines) and to some male prominent figures (Michael Collins, James Craig, Francis Ledwidge and Éoin MacNeill). As stated on the graphic novel dedicated to Alice Mulligan ““little has been written” about some of these women, and, these graphic novels present a revealing insight.

This paper aims to look at the depiction of Lady Londonderry, Kathleen Lynn, Countess Markievicz, Alice Milligan and Lady Lilian Spender in these graphic novels that try to go beyond the break away from that “little has been written...”; highlighting their role with images and text. These women are portrayed as active beings, bringing a fresh narrative, approach and central space to the study and memory of this defining period in the history of Ireland.

“I am his mother, and I do not grudge him”: Violence in Patrick Pearse's Later Literary Canon

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PANEL 2D WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 15:30-17:30

ESPAI CULTURAL

The gendered representation of Ireland as a woman, whether as a young, beautiful maid or a grotesque cailleach, is well-established in the Irish literary canon. In early modern poetry, she looks to her poets for help in preventing further violence and violent acts committed against her body (as the land). Colonial violence against her extends into the early 20th

century, something that culminates in the 1916 Easter Rising, during which an unprecedented level of violence is used to combat violence.

One of the most visible figures of the Rising is Patrick Pearse. He expresses his belief in his February 1916 tract, 'The Spiritual Nation', that the representations of Ireland as woman go beyond mere allegory and that she is a living and breathing woman. When it became clear to Pearse that supporting Home Rule was going nowhere fast and he became a militant nationalist, his literary canon is something that reflects this shift in his politics. This paper aims to demonstrate that his later fiction, such as his final play, *The Singer* (1916), a piece considered so incendiary that it was pulled from its scheduled production at the Abbey just prior to the Rising, extols the use of physical force violence as a means of both protection and liberation for Ireland as a woman.

Violence in the fiction of Banville and Black

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PANEL 5C THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 17:30-19:00

SALA DE JUNTES

In 2022, the publication of Banville's latest novel, *The Singularities*, made very explicit what faithful Banville readers had long known: for the past 50 years, Banville has been creating not just novels, or even novel series, but rather a large, encompassing fictional universe, with recurring themes and plots, returning character types as well as characters, recurring images, phrases and intertextual hints. Since 2006, moreover, Banville has also been constructing yet another fictional universe, initially under the pseudonym of Benjamin Black, through the crime novels around Quirke, and later Strafford, set in 1950s Dublin. Although the world of the Black novels seemed initially rather different from that of the Banville novels – much darker, more violent, and more determined by time and place – it has increasingly become apparent that these universes overlap in many ways – a fact which was further confirmed by Banville publishing his last two crime novels under his own name. In my paper, I will compare the two fictional universes through the prism of violence: How does violence figure in the Banville and Black novels? Who are the victims of this violence and how are violent deeds represented? And finally, does the violence in both universes reveal a unified take on the notion of 'evil', which has been one of Banville's central preoccupations ever since the publication of *Long Lankin* in 1970?

Perceptual salience of NIrE features as represented in telecinematic fiction

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PANEL 4B THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 12:30-14:00

SALÓ DE GRAUS

'Salience' is defined by Kerswill and Williams (2002) as a "property of a linguistic item or feature that makes it in some way perceptually or cognitively prominent" (p. 81). In other words, in the context of language perception, salience is about language awareness and therefore a linguistic variable is salient if lay people are conscious of it. While most researchers have investigated the perceptual salience of one or two individual features (Campbell-Kibler, 2006; Levon & Fox, 2014; Pharao et al., 2014), this paper aims to explore what features of Northern Irish English (NIrE) are salient for Northern Irish lay people. The speech samples used for this study are taken from Northern Irish telecinematic fiction, that is, from several films and TV shows locally produced in NI, and they all contain some of the NIrE features recorded in academic literature. Results endorse Hickey's (2000, p. 58) claim that lay people are more aware of dialectal lexis than of dialectal pronunciation since words like *youse*, *wee*, *lads* and *craic* are among the most frequently noticed by Northern Irish

informants. Despite that, there are some pronunciation features that respondents highlight consistently throughout the different speech samples. They are the NlrE realisations of the diphthongs /eɪ/, /aɪ/ and /aʊ/; and of the single vowel sound /u/. The results presented in this paper are part of a broader project which examines the representation of the NlrE accent in fiction and how it is perceived by people in NI.

Crisis and mental Health in Sara Baume's *A Line Made by Walking* (2017)

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PANEL 3B THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

SALÓ DE GRAUS

Sara Baume has expressed in interviews how crucial the economic crash was for her writing, since, as she explains, when the crash hit, she had to negotiate the expectations she had built around her own future during prosperous times: “I was a teenager and then a college student during the Celtic Tiger, and that gave me high expectations for the future”. In *A Line Made by Walking* (2017), Baume follows a troubled protagonist, Frankie, who goes through a similar process of acceptance of her own future - or lack of - as an aspiring artist. After failing in her attempts to make it into the art world in Dublin and falling into a depression, Frankie isolates herself in a cottage in rural Ireland, where she tries to find her footing again in her life and her art. It is my intention in this paper, then, to highlight the violence the socioeconomic background can inflict on mental health, understanding that Frankie’s story functions as an “adjustment narrative” to a “crisis in life-building” (Berlant 3). Drawing upon Lauren Berlant’s ideas in *Cruel Optimism* (2011), I will examine how Baume’s character negotiates “the dissolution of optimistic objects/scenarios that had once held the space open for the good-life fantasy” (Berlant 3), veering her attention from solipsistic introspection to the natural world, and ultimately reconfiguring her subjectivity as one more connected to her surroundings.

Sara Baume's Move from the Violent Anthropocene to a World of Posthumanist Affects

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PANEL 6D FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 12:30-14:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

A very young generation of Irish women writers are deploying an earnest effort to deal in fiction with new topics related to the most pressing concerns of our contemporary society, such as disillusionment, depression, disability, ageing, the threats to the environment and the relationship between the human and the non-human animal and material world. These new topics demand a renewed aesthetics that these authors are illustrating in what can be considered as highly experimental texts that defy genre classification. It is in this context that the present contribution identifies a series of authors whose works are revitalising the Irish literary scene, such as Claire-Louise Bennett, Lynn Buckle, or Sara Baume, among others.

This paper focuses on the particular case of Sara Baume, and studies the evolution detected in her fiction, from her first novels *spill simmer falter wither* (2015) and *A Line Made by Walking* (2017) till the recently published *Seven Steeples* (2022). These three texts offer highly lyrical narratives in which the human protagonists have become alienated from society and have established alternative communities of life in which they are intimately affected by the vitality of nature, non-human animals and the material world. Notwithstanding, our analysis contends that Baume seems to be carefully delineating in her narratives a progressive move from the violent Anthropocene, whose remains are still detected in the

first two novels, towards what can be considered the illustration of a Posthuman world of affects in *Seven Steeples*.

Our analysis of the previously mentioned texts considers Rosi Braidotti's description rather than definition of "the Posthuman" as the exploration of alternative ways of engaging with the world (*The Posthuman* 5), "a generative tool to help to re-think" (5), and an opportunity to "empower the pursuit of alternative schemes of thought, knowledge and representation" (12). Therefore, combining the insights of Posthumanist and Affect theories we study Baume's attempt at decentering or questioning anthropocentric humanism as well as her illustration of the limits of human language when dealing with the vitality of forces and materialities, such as non-human animals, nature and matter, that defy representation despite their being intrinsic to our corporeal existence.

"Unsex Me": The She-Terrorist

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PANEL 7C FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 17:00-18:30

SALA DE JUNTES

In recent years we have witnessed a move from the emphasis on women as victims towards explorations of the complexities of the gender politics of conflict. Traditionally, radical nationalist rhetoric has defined woman's primary role as the reproduction and support of national culture and male nationalist activists, most concretely as mothers. As with Irish Republicanism grounded in a strong tradition of Catholicism and Marian worship, in the radical Basque nationalist worldview the roles of mother and warrior have not been considered historically compatible. In fact, women's armed activism has historically been directly linked to sexual deviance, either promiscuity or implied lesbianism, both regarded as a perversion of women's destiny as mothers. Yet, women's experience in Northern Ireland and the Basque Country exemplify the long history of women's involvement in perpetrating political violence and countering extremism. In this paper we intend to prove that women who commit violence are neither naïve victims of circumstance nor dangerous deviants from the natural order. In order to do so we will mainly look into the works of Arantxa Urretabizkaia, *El Cuaderno Rojo*, and Flynn Berry, *Northern Spy*.

Gender, Power, and Decay in Elizabeth Griffith's *The History of Lady Barton* (1771)

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PANEL 5B THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 17:30-19:00

SALÓ DE GRAUS

The aim of this paper is to delve into the various forms of physical and mental deterioration experienced by the female characters in Elizabeth Griffith's epistolary novel *The History of Lady Barton* (1771). The central argument is that these forms of decay are a result of the power that male figures wield on female characters. To support this argument, the paper will draw first on Griffith's proto-feminist reputation for addressing gender issues in her writing, to eventually move on to a close analysis of the two main female protagonists, Fanny and Louisa Cleveland, and how they experience male dominance. This study will explore the power dynamics in which these women are involved, focusing on the distinct behavioral patterns contrasting, on the one hand, Fanny's forgiving and empathetic nature—driven by her desire for a happy marriage to Lord Hume—and, on the other hand, Louisa's more resolute personality—shaped by her troubled marriage to Sir William. This will expose the constraints that matrimony imposed on women at the time, and the negative effects they have on the heroines of this novel in particular. Related to this issue

it is noteworthy to see how Louisa Cleveland's self-awareness eventually contributes to her death. In short, this paper aims to offer a feminist reading of *The History of Lady Barton* highlighting the themes of gender, power, and deterioration in this novel that has been largely disregarded by critics so far.

Medbh McGuckian's Fabricated Gardens: Making the Scar Visible

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PANEL 3D THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

Medbh McGuckian's gardens have assumed different shapes but are often difficult to identify as such. Since she published *The Flower Master* (1982) and up until her most recent collection, *The Thankless Path to Freedom* (2022), McGuckian's gardens have rarely appeared in their traditional form, the garden rather becoming atomised and present only through allusions to plants, flowers, but also touches of colours reminiscent of natural elements. Though this approach is quite conceptual, the garden sometimes re-materialises and this paper will specifically explore McGuckian's fabricated gardens, in other words poems where floral and other natural motifs are transposed onto or grow into fabrics that exist in close contact with the female body.

McGuckian's fabricated gardens explore the potential of the atomised garden in order to address a range of traumas, personal and communal, and some transmitted from generation to generations. In these poems, McGuckian examines the close relationship between women and garden and emphasize the importance of this relationship: while women's minute description of organic elements is suggestive of strong (and ecofeminist) ethics of care, gardens act as safe spaces for women and allow them to voice their grief or other affective responses. The growth of plants and flowers, appearing on fabrics as the narration progresses, turns these new types of gardens into both witnesses to and testimonies of women's traumatic experiences or are, in Sara Ahmed's terms, "good scars" that expose otherwise invisible injuries that have shaped women's bodies.

Revivalist influence on Counter-Revivalist Writings

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PANEL 2D WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 15:30-17:30

ESPAI CULTURAL

In the semi-autobiographical novel *Tarry Flynn*, Patrick Kavanagh attempts to recreate a rural community similar to the one he grew up in, while at the same time rejecting the tropes that had been established by the Irish Literary Revival, such as the pious peasant, the virginal female population, and the mysticism tied to Ireland. Through the application of postcolonial theory (Bhabha, 1994; Spivak, 1988; Fanon, 1952; Ward, 2013), Irish Studies (Meaney, 2010; Cullingford, 1997; Hirsch, 1991; Inglis; Whelan, 2004; Kiberd, 1996 and 2005), and literary criticism of the period, this MA Thesis aims to analyse the connections between colonialism, Revivalism, and Counter-Revivalism in Kavanagh's work. This study is facilitated by the new tendency in Irish Studies that considers the Irish Literary Revival as a heterogeneous movement, which allows us to establish connections between this movement and the Counter-Revival, which had not been considered before. A close-reading of *Tarry Flynn* from the aforementioned perspective, reveals Kavanagh's use of Revivalist tropes, such as the female national allegory of the Motherland, and the idea of the peasant as deeply attached to a pagan-like spirituality. This will open the way to further

studies concerning the heterogeneous qualities of the Irish Revival and the connections between this movement and fervent Counter-Revivalists such as Kavanagh.

Numbers and Tormenters: Violent Mathematics in Samuel Beckett's Late Prose Works

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PANEL 3B THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

SALÓ DE GRAUS

This paper argues that the mathematical calculations, permutations, geometrical abstraction and counting in Samuel Beckett's late prose works follow a pattern of master and servant, instruction and torture, or tormentor and tormented. Beckett's 1953 novel *Watt* highlights an oppressive narrative of calculative process where the character Watt becomes a servant to literary representation as well as to his master Mr Knott. This continuous calculation, which is exhausting for the novel's servants because it is not exhaustive, is violent not only because of the tiring labour involved, but also because of the novel's specific context of a colonial Anglo-Irish Big House. This paper shows how the dynamic of servitude in *Watt* becomes one of instruction and torture for the bodies in Beckett's later texts such as *Imagination Dead Imagine* (1965) and *The Lost Ones* (1970), often referred to as Beckett's 'rotunda' pieces, and their preoccupation with spatial enclosure and measurement. It concludes by focusing on *How It Is* (1964), a text which takes place in total darkness where mostly coordinates and numbers provide relational context and where bodies are tormented with violent acts such as thumping and stabbing. The paper explores what happens to the nascent political context of Beckett's violent narratives when their location is shifted from a historically specific and politically significant environment – such as the Anglo-Irish Big House – to a seemingly sparse and neutral shape such as a cylinder, or, in the case of *How It Is*, darkness and mud.

"You can't grab anything with a closed fist": Reflections on Ulster Protestant identity in Derek Lundy's memoir *Men that God Made mad: A Journey Through Truth, Myth and Terror in Northern Ireland*

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PANEL 1B WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 10:30-12:00

SALÓ DE GRAUS

In Ireland and within Irish studies itself, considerable effort has been expended in the attempt to disclose the complex interaction between past conflicts and contemporary attempts to recoup their significance in the present. Given that the interpretation of historical events has often been at the heart of national conflict, there have frequently been fierce clashes between rival versions of a common past. Derek Lundy's *Men that God Made Mad: A Journey Through Truth, Myth and Terror in Northern Ireland*, a work of non-fiction published in 2006, is an invaluable and timely contribution to our understanding of the selectivity of national memory and the indelible link that exists between familial remembrance and its communal counterpart. As a work of historical investigation, it sheds light on the interaction between repressed cultural memories, communal and national amnesia, the evasion of the past and the endemic violence affecting the State of N.Ireland. A generically hybrid work, part historical investigation, part memoir, Lundy's text combines a blend of meticulous research with autobiographical snapshots, interspersed with an exploration of the connection between personal and collective identities. Claiming that 'the lives of my ancestors resonate in the very core of Ulster history' Lundy uses the lives of three such ancestors as a prism through which

to examine the standard, received stories of myth and history so prominent within the Ulster Protestant tradition and which frequently legitimise their violent responses to prospective change. In doing so, Lundy's narrative provides support for Jean Braham's view that 'We see the past in something of the same way as we see a Henry Moore sculpture. The 'holes' define the shape'. What is left repressed or what cannot be uttered, is often as significant...as what is said'. Moreover Lundy, through an engagement with his own personal background as a member of an Ulster Protestant family, positions himself in a metaphorical space where individual memory, cultural allegiance and concepts of the self merge. My paper will seek to show how Lundy's text, in attempting to investigate the past with 'thoughts of salvage,' can be viewed as an attempt at achieving a renegotiation of selfhood.

Haunted Terrain: Narrative Representation in Trauma in pre- and post- Agreement Fiction

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PANEL 4D THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 12:30-14:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

Preconditioned by the Northern Ireland peace progress, along with the vigorous revisionist debate evolving alongside the Troubles, and the rise of trauma studies, Northern fiction undergoes the so-called 'Northern (Re)naissance' (Kennedy-Andrews) in the 1990s, and opens up new artistic and political perspectives on engagement with the violent realities of post-partition and post-1969 Northern Ireland. Profoundly influenced by post-structuralist aesthetics and equipped with a range of postmodernist writing techniques, a new generation of writers attempts to challenge the received conception of the North. Consequently, the novel grew increasingly possessed by narrative representation of multilayered effects of intergenerational trauma (Crawford) both in terms of plot and form.

Suggesting 'fresh start' (Lehner), the 1998 Good Friday Agreement was believed to facilitate reconciliation with the past, fostering thus the completion and recovery processes (Swan, Hirschberger). However, Northern Ireland's past is still very much its present. Triggered by Brexit and its potential consequences, ghosts of the suppressed violent past hover over the haunted terrain of the North with renewed vigour, hence shaping contemporary cross-community Northern Irish identity. This paper challenges the assumption mentioned above by examining narrative representation of intergenerational trauma in pre- and post-Agreement fiction by example of Seamus Deane's *Reading in the Dark* (1996) and Anna Burn's *Milkman* (2018). More than two decades lying between the novels, the latter still conforms to the traditional model of traumatic experience, and demonstrates post-traumatic worldview of the divided society, struggling to (re)construct the sense of its shattered identity and coherence.

"[T]he money has a price, /the abuse is free": Structural Violence and Working-Class Survival Strategies in Rita and Higgins' Poetry

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PANEL 6D FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 12:30-14:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

Drawing from her experiences of unemployment, Rita Ann Higgins' poems express the "felt" reality of the discrimination faced by Ireland's underclass. This paper focuses on "God-Of-The-Hatch-Man" (1986) and "Some People" (1988), both of which document the effects of

structural violence and poverty. The bureaucratic social-welfare system is addressed, reflecting how

[I]ndividuals can [...] harm [...] other human beings without ever intending to, merely by performing their regular duties as defined by the prevailing social, political, and economic structures. Structural violence is a process that works slowly through general misery, diminishing the dignity of human beings [...], sometimes without anyone being aware that it is happening (Bandy X. Lee).

"God-Of-The-Hatch-Man" paints an unflattering portrait of a social-welfare bureaucrat whom the speaker encounters weekly; he administers "money and abuse, / the money has a price, / the abuse is free". Higgins' humorous description of the malevolent welfare official succeeds by "putting-a-finger-to-the-nose at authority by deflating it, by guying it", as Richard Hoggart puts it. "Some People" addresses the microaggressions – that is, "brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to certain [marginalized] individuals" – that class-based structural violence imposes upon Ireland's welfare class (Bandy X. Lee). The poem begins with Higgins' assertion that "Some people know what it's like," followed by a long series of problems created by financial deprivation and social exclusion, before concluding with the line "and other people don't." The speaker decries a system that condemns the welfare class "to be looked down on", "walked on", "pissed on", and "shat on". The poem employs literal and figurative expressions of working-class "grit" as the speaker expresses class-based injustice. This grittiness, combined with Higgins' characteristic use of dark humour, gives poetic expression to recognisable working-class values in response to class antagonisms, thereby functioning as working-class survival strategies.

Irish Republicans and the Contested Past: Memoir-writing and the Legacies of Violence in 'Post-Conflict' Northern Ireland

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PANEL 7C FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 17:00-18:30

SALA DE JUNTES

This paper will analyse the politics of contested memories of violence in relation to the post-Good Friday Agreement trajectory of the Irish Republican 'family' (primarily the Provisional incarnation of Sinn Féin and the IRA, but also some so-called 'dissidents'). This will involve an examination of published memoirs and life histories, with particular emphasis upon the complex ways in which erstwhile republican paramilitaries represent their engagement with violence during the 'Troubles'. The paper critically analyses recent memoir literature produced by a range of significant individuals, both in leadership positions but also 'foot soldiers' of the movement. Republican memoirs by figures such as Gerry Bradley and Eamonn Collins, as well as more recent books by Laurence McKeown, Jake MacSiacais and John Crawley have grappled with the legacies of violence, both inflicted by IRA Volunteers and endured by them (particularly with regard to the prison experience of many). It will be argued that these memoirs are important resources for researchers interested in the contemporary debates and the 'memory struggles' which characterise the 'post-conflict' period in Northern Ireland.

Politics of women's repression and punishment in Ireland and Spain during the twentieth century

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Extensive research has been carried out about the Magdalene Laundries in Ireland. Their correctional violence has been denounced, through the media, literature, art, documentaries, serials and films. Justice for Magdalenes Research investigation and political incidence obliged the Irish State to apologise and implement a redress scheme in 2013. Control and critical analysis of the scheme application as well as action about similar abuses in other institutions, such as the Mother and Baby Homes and Northern Ireland Magdalene Laundries, has not stopped since.

This paper shows the parallelism between the Magdalene Laundries and the Spanish Patronage for the Protection of Women (Patronato de Protección a la Mujer), created by Decree dated 6th November 1941, under Franco's dictatorship, in operation until 1985. It also analyses the three systems of power which underlie this institutional violence: the patriarchal androcentric system and its sexual politics and misogynistic conception of women; the power of the State and the power of the Catholic Church.

In both countries, girls were arrested, imprisoned in institutions run by Catholic nuns, deprived of their identity, isolated, punished and humiliated, obliged to perform slave labour and assist religious activities, without having committed any crime, for reasons, related to sexual morals, which never supposed prosecution and detention for boys and men. Many children were robbed from their mothers and sold in illegal adoption procedures.

No public investigation has been carried out up to now in Spain, but some academic studies and evidence gathered by independent researchers have been published quite recently.

Beyond Sectarian Violence: the *Communitas* through a Situated Gaze in *Bad Day for the Cut* (Chris Baugh 2017)

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Sectarian violence has marked the *communitas* (Roberto Esposito's term) of Northern Ireland throughout its history and it is that location where filmmaker Chris Baugh sets the scene for his first feature film. The main protagonist, Donal, portrayed as a mild-mannered, middle-aged farmer, is trapped in a violent turmoil and will become some sort of reluctant lone avenger –only accompanied by a young Polish immigrant, Bartosz – on a quest to find who has murdered his mother, in a film where nothing is what it seems and the silences of the past haunt the present of the main characters.

Baugh's situated gaze plays constantly with our expectations about our shared fictions about Northern Ireland. In addition to the violent acts in the film, I will focus on some other less explicit forms of violence worth considering, as the fact that the only women with dramatic weight conform to stereotypical figures (the mother, the lady in distress or the brutal she-monster abject), or the way in which all the violence is problematically related, if only indirectly, to the IRA, as if the armed organization were the only responsible for the conflicts in Northern Ireland, obviating the actions of Protestant paramilitary groups and centuries of colonial rule. It is my contention that both violence and vulnerability are gendered concepts and *Bad Day for the Cut* tackles with these issues away from binarist classifications, with male characters represented as vulnerable and a female leading role close to the sovereign subjectivity traditionally portrayed as male.

Representation of Systemic Violence in *The Spinning Heart* by Ronald Ryan

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PANEL 2C WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 15:30-17:30

SALA DE JUNTAS

This paper aims at examining how systemic violence is represented in the social novel *The Spinning Heart*, which was published by the Irish writer Donal Ryan in 2012. This highly awarded work describes the collapse of the Celtic Tiger and its devastating effects in a small rural town in Ireland from multiple viewpoints. Although there are 21 narrators, one per chapter, Bobby Mahon stands out. In fact, the story of this good-hearted construction foreman connects with those presented by the other characters.

Through this novel, readers can discover the practices and procedures that powerful and privileged institutions, groups and individuals may resort to in contemporary Ireland in order to assert control or authority over other less favoured, thus fostering a climate of violence. Focal attention will be drawn in this paper to the nature of the patterns of aggression and hostility developed by the main characters in the novel (which are a product of dysfunctional lives, stereotypical prejudices, discriminatory cultural traditions and/or unfair socio-economic structures), but also to the adverse impact these unjust, oppressive and damaging patterns have on vulnerable subjects by burdening them physically, psychologically, culturally and economically.

The Easter Rising: Celtism as a Justification for Violence and Martyrdom

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PANEL 1C WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 10:30-12:00

SALA DE JUNTAS

Historians largely agree that the Easter Rising was an absolute disaster in military terms. Due to misunderstandings and disputes, there were far fewer armed participants than expected. Nevertheless, the 1916 Rising is seen as a key moment on the road to an independent Ireland. This is essentially because of its symbolic nature. Its leaders, especially Patrick Pearse, linked the struggle for Ireland's freedom with mystic elements and placed themselves in the tradition of historical role models such as the Celtic hero Cuchulain. By referring to the martial conflicts in the mystical Celtic past and heroism, the use of violence was justified. Cuchulain's willingness to sacrifice became the model for the blood sacrifice Pearse and his followers were prepared to make for Ireland's independence. Much has already been written about the role that Christianity and the Catholic faith played in the ideology of the Irish independence movement. In contrast, Celticism as a central aspect of the Irish national movement has been little studied. Celticism was an important source of inspiration for the insurgents. Another example of the close connection of military zeal and Celticism is the Fianna, the youth group that Constance Markiewicz founded to inspire and militarily train boys for the Irish cause. It was named after the Celtic Fianna, a band of warriors who play a major role in the popular literary material of the Finn cycle. The aim of this paper is to show how Celticism was used as a justification for violence and inspiration for martyrdom.

The Evil Stepmother at the Time of Trouble: The Terrible Mother Figure in Charles Martin's *Fatal Revenge* (1807)

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PANEL 5B THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 17:30-19:00

SALÓ DE GRAUS

The topic on figures and symbols surrounding the Feminine, and with her the archetype of the Great Mother, is deeply embedded in today's politics of gender, culture and art. Its Demonic Aspect –the one possessing the negative qualities of every archetype and symbol– often takes form in the figure of the Terrible Mother, whose attributes revolve around ruin and destruction. That is why it is during troubling times that the Terrible Mother is full of significance, becoming a recurrent motif. In this archetype we will recognise figures from myths, both Irish and from abroad, such as The Morrigan, or evil stepmothers in folktales and literature, such as canonical Gothic villainesses.

In this paper, I will focus on the Countess Montorio, the alleged mother, soon to be discovered stepmother, of the heroes Ippolito and Annibal, in *Fatal Revenge* (1807), written by Charles Maturin barely a few years after the Act of Union had been passed in Ireland. Analysing this character, we will see that she shares the features that belong to the archetype where her “stepmotherhood” belongs: the Terrible Mother, as she will bring destruction and ruin to her family and stepchildren. We will also see how this evil figure makes its appearance at a traumatic moment for Ireland, enclosing two violent rebellions and the Act of Union, which would shape Ireland’s history and destiny forever, and how Maturin foresaw the terrible consequences it would have for his beloved nation.

Agrarian Revolts and Public Spaces: Resisting the Travelling Englishman in Bram Stoker's "The Man from Shorrox" (1894)

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PANEL 6C FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 12:30-14:00

SALA DE JUNTAS

The Irish nation has been moulded by the long-standing experience of colonial domination, which permeated and disrupted all strata of Irish society. Illustrative of this is Bram Stoker’s life-long preoccupation with the Land Question and its ensuing violence, present at the core of his story “The Man from Shorrox” (1894). Using physical spaces as decolonising tools (Boehmer 2005; Innes 2007) allows Stoker to reconstruct the disrupted relationship between Irish colonised subjects and their land derived from colonial occupation. Bram Stoker’s representations of Irish rural settings are embedded in a decolonising narrative technique which draws inspiration from pastoral portrayals to abrogate colonial concepts of the other as savage and uncivilised. Key to an understanding of this story is the hotel/home, which acts as an allegory of the Irish nation—a “symbolic national home” (Rees 2013, 132)—in its (often violent) endurance against English invasion and dominance.

This paper analyses the narrative technique employed in depicting Irish rural spaces in “The Man from Shorrox” (1894). Resorting to postcolonial approximations to setting deployment, the analysis considers Bram Stoker’s geographic representations through the lens of the Irish Gothic tradition. As the analysis reveals, Bram Stoker’s settings act as a liminal space where colonial representations of the other are overturned, revealing colonisers as a menacing force and exposing the civilising mission as a corrupting enterprise. “The Man from Shorrox” (1894) can be interpreted as an allegory for resistance against the invader who—disguised under the pretext of progress—aims to dispossess the native while profiting themselves.

Poetry as Resistance in Northern Ireland and Romania in the 1980's

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PANEL 3D THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

In a panel at the 2021 Belfast Book Festival, Romanian poet Maria Stadnicka described Northern Ireland and Romania as existing on the 'extreme sides of Europe', in 'cultural blind spots', often overlooked or subsumed by the cultures around them, and noted the underexplored relationship between them. In the same way that past generations of Irish writers have looked to Poland or Russia, many contemporary poets on the island have sought connections and kinship with Romania, especially with the coinciding timelines of the Troubles in Northern Ireland and the rise and fall of the Ceaușescu regime in Romania. These affinities between Northern Ireland and Romania are a salient lesson in the importance of cross-cultural poetic solidarity and the power of poetry in resisting political violence.

This paper explores the poetic connection in the 1980s and beyond between Northern Irish writers including Ciaran Carson and Medbh McGuckian and Romanian writers, particularly Marin Sorescu and Ana Blandiana, to note the effects of censorship and political trauma on poetry and to emphasise the consolatory power of forging cultural bridges. Poetic analysis will demonstrate the ways in which poetry of the 1980s in Northern Ireland and Romania responded to and resisted violence and censorship, and will be interwoven with a brief background of the political atmosphere in both places.

From Anamnesis to Amnesty? Sounds of Violence (and Reconciliation) in Post-Conflict Northern Irish Theatre

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PANEL 4A THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 12:30-14:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

This paper explores the effect of intrusive sounds in two post-Agreement theatre productions: (1) Tinderbox's 2019 adaption of Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi* as *Ubu the King*, and (2) Theatreofpluck's 2018 performative verbatim audio walk, *So I Can Breathe This Air*, written by Shannon Yee and based on interviews with the Rainbow Project's Gay Ethnic Group (GEG). In very different yet comparable ways, sound in both the Tinderbox and the Theatreofpluck production has a powerful transformative effect, which is experienced as both distressing and potentially empowering. If *Ubu the King* immerses us into the soundings of war and violence, *So I Can Breathe This Air* concludes by creating a sound space for amnesty and reconciliation. I argue that the theatrical experience of belliphonic sounds can (re)trigger lingering sonic ghosts, what Augoyard and Torgue (2005) describe as *anamnesis*: 'the physical recollection – literally the re-mem-bering – of sound through the body' (Brown 2010: 215). Such violent sounds literally intrude and have the capacity to (re)trigger traumatic (sound-)memories. Yet, as Daughtry (2015: 276), importantly, recognises, intrusive sounds can be also used to create counter-memories to violence by the creative act of 'intentionally "mishearing"'. This paper develops this notion by suggesting that intrusive theatre noises can have the capacity to alert onstage characters and off stage audiences to possibilities of transforming *anamnesic* noise wounds to counter-sounds that can potentially provide or evoke amnesty.

The trouble with Trouble: activating memory in post-conflict theatre

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PANEL 7D FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 17:00-18:30

ESPAI CULTURAL

On May 9th, 1997, a young gay man was shot dead outside the Parliament gay nightclub in Belfast. Darren Bradshaw was 24. He was also an off-duty policeman, and his death traumatised the LGBTQ+ community. Until Darren Bradshaw's murder, the Belfast queer scene had been a safe space for men and women, straight, gay, bi trans, protestant and

catholic. On the 9th May 1997 it became just another site of violence in the so-called Irish 'Troubles'.

The murder features in the 2015 play *Trouble*, written by Shannon Yee and produced by northern Ireland's only funded queer theatre company, Theatreofpluck. This paper examines the ways in which the dramaturgy of this play replicates the shock and revulsion that the murder elicited in the Belfast queer community, and how the structure of Yee's play embeds the event in the history of northern Ireland's queer scene, and its former status as a uniquely safe space from the ongoing ethnonationalist conflict. It places the murder of Darren Bradshaw in its historical, cultural, and social context through autoethnographic analysis, and the activation of personal memory by the presenter, Dónall Mac Cathmhaoill, who was present at the Parliament nightclub on the night of the killing.

In exploring the nature of conflict-related trauma in the context of the dramaturgy of Yee's play, the paper proposes that theatre has a unique capacity to provoke personal memory and to elicit powerful emotions in relation to historic acts of violence, and that while it is often cited as a means by which the legacies of violent conflicts might be addressed, it is also capable of serving as a site of violence itself. As such can be both an effective tool for transforming violent societies, but also a powerful means by which violent histories are reified, and traumatic memories retained.

Writing the Killjoy: Resisting Motherhood in the North of Ireland

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PANEL 4A THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 12:30-14:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

In *Living a Feminist Life*, Sara Ahmed states that 'It can be rebellious to be happy when you are not supposed to be happy, to follow the paths happily that are presumed to lead to unhappiness: not marrying, not having children, now. She is called by some childless; she calls herself childfree. She multiplies the objects upon which she bestows her affections.' This paper will take as its starting point these generative assumptions – that children are not the only 'happy objects' (Ahmed, Berlant) but also that being childless/free can produce disturbed and disturbing affects in others, and that can manifest itself through literature and culture. This paper will draw on a variety of literary and cultural sources from the North to explore how these tensions manifest themselves specifically in the Irish context, exploring how the legacy of ethno-nationalist conflict embeds itself on the bodies of those who do not wish to reproduce the nation-state. Rather than focus on the Irish childless/free woman as a merely a source of misery and state opprobrium, it will explore those moments where she embodies a more hopeful future for herself and her community. In an age of threat to reproductive freedoms internationally, we have seen women lose control of their bodies and be subject to violent repression by the state. Drawing on the rich legacy of Irish feminist criticism, this paper is a call to know our history and appreciate our bodily autonomy in an Irish context.

Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Invisible Violence within Magdalene Laundries in Claire Keegan's *Small Things Like This*

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PANEL 6A FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 12:30-14:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

As late as 1996, Magdalene institutions operated freely throughout the country. In them, fallen women who did not conform to the Catholic female ideal –unmarried pregnant women or prostitutes, among others– were incarcerated, forced to atone for their shameful

behaviour through unpaid labour, and subjected to physical and psychological –even sexual– abuse as punishment. In Claire Keegan’s *Small Things Like These* (2021), when Bill Furlong shares his discomfort about the local convent –where it is rumoured that women work from dawn until night in its laundry–, his wife replies: “If you want to get on in life, there’s things you have to ignore, so you can keep on” (45). This attitude seems to be widely spread in their little town, where the convent has a significant economic and social authority. After meeting a young girl in desperate need of help, Furlong feels divided between remaining complicit in the laundry’s contrivances or confronting the *statu quo* in actively recognising and acting against what is happening behind closed doors. Based on a theoretical framework informed by trauma and identity theories, and framed within the long-standing historical research on the role and influence of Magdalene Laundries in Ireland, the aim of this paper is to analyse the way the violence exerted upon the victims inside these institutions is portrayed in Keegan’s novella. Moreover, I shall explore how, in communities ruled by a culture of silence and shame, these women were pushed to the margins of society, hidden away and secluded, becoming invisible.

Staging Sexual Violence as Metaphor in Derry Frontline's *Threshold* (1992)

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PANEL 1C WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 10:30-12:00

SALA DE JUNTES

Community theatre in Northern Ireland had a powerful role to play in challenging stereotypes of the working class during the ‘Troubles’ and representing the voices of marginalised communities. Under the direction of Dan Baron Cohen, Derry Frontline was perhaps the most radical and provocative community theatre group to emerge in the later years of the conflict, tackling controversial issues of importance to their participants, drawn mainly from the Republican community. Their 1992 play, *Threshold*, had initially aimed to critically commemorate the 1981 Hunger Strikes, a particularly androcentric period of the ‘Troubles’ in which the self-sacrifice of men was foregrounded, but through the devising process it was transformed into a play that is primarily centred on rape culture and the role of the Catholic Church. As in earlier plays, the Republican struggle for autonomy from Britain is paralleled in *Threshold* with a woman’s right to bodily autonomy, but the metaphor is taken further here as the rape of a young woman, her resultant pregnancy and subsequent hunger strike come to stand for the intersecting forms of oppression subordinating the working class in Derry: patriarchy, capitalism, imperialism, and religion. This paper will examine the problematics and ethical limitations of using sexual violence as a metaphor on stage, while assessing the extent to which *Threshold* can still be considered an act of resistance for working-class women.

Structural violence and forced forgetting: representing social injustice on the streets of Belfast

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PANEL 1A WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 10:30-12:00

SALÓ D’ACTES

Belfast been made and remade through cycles of violence in its 400-year ‘history’. The most recent manifestation of violent conflict associated with the city was a low-level civil war euphemistically known as “The Troubles” (c1968-c1998) but the re/making of the city in times of peace has not been a politically neutral endeavour. The ‘road to normalization’ has largely focused on the removal of monumental state security infrastructure while materialized segregation in working class areas remains largely hidden and in situ. Alongside the enduring

markers of bombings, civil unrest and attempts to police and disrupt them, material-focused approaches can reveal the structural violence of road-building schemes and “slum clearances” that dismantled and dispersed long-term working class communities. Creating material absences and presences are political acts and must be viewed alongside British government attempts to force top down amnesties and closures on the least investigated violence of the Troubles: that of the British state. One particularly interesting phenomenon has been attempts to disrupt attempted erasures of conflict – by reinserting them back into place - when associated with social injustices. This paper will examine a mural site associated with the bombing of McGurk's Bar in 1971 to reveal its role in disrupting attempts to disappear social injustice as a form of activism in the contemporary.

Question Me Again: Troubles' Violence and Poetic Form

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PANEL 1D WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 10:30-12:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

‘Northern Irish literary criticism’, writes Gail McConnell, has ‘yet to come to terms with its [own] traumatic history’ because its scholars are ‘unable to *remember* and *articulate* the *specific violent acts* that make up [...] a prolonged [...] political and religious conflict’.¹ Yet the same can be said of Northern poetry itself. Notwithstanding the reaffirmation of the tenets of precision and wroughtness in interview and adjunct prose, poets from the North have largely evaded direct reference to ‘Troubles’ violence. This paper will investigate the ethics and efficacy of the small corpus of work – by Longley, Heaney, McConnell and others – which *does* address ‘specific violent acts’.

If the poet is to be a society’s ‘critical faculty’, they must either attempt to conciliate all citizens (a logistical impossibility) or speak to, or for, a few.² Here, the question of *who* exactly poets speak for, *how* they speak for them, and to what end, becomes itself a formal challenge. Every poem (possibly every piece of art) which responds to violence does so through a combination of formal mediations – elegiacal, rhetorical, historical, mythical, analogical, allegorical, peripheral and spectral. For instance, in Michael Longley’s ‘The Butchers’ (1991) graphic images of sectarian torture (they ‘cut off his [...] cock and balls’) are mediated through Hellenic myth.³ This paper explores how such *anaesthetic* techniques, employed to numb the affectivity of violent imagery, can simultaneously jeopardize the empiricism on which public poems rely and enhance a poem’s universality.

Two Varieties of Violence in Seamus Heaney's "Bog Poems"

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PANEL 3D THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

The so-called “bog poems” which appear in Seamus Heaney’s two collections of poetry *Wintering Out* (1972) and *North* (1975) are routinely interpreted by commentators of his work as sombre and melancholy meditations on the persistence of violence in history. By juxtaposing the Bronze Age rituals which demanded human sacrifice for the (putative) greater good of the whole community and a series of horrid crimes perpetrated during the Troubles, the poet – at least according to the prevalent critical consensus – reminds us that all epochs and ages are pervaded by violence.

My objective in this article is to argue that instead of lamenting the persistence of violence in both human history in general and the history of Ireland in particular, the poet contrasts a meaningful variety of violence of the bog people with the wanton violence of the Troubles. Heaney seems to imply that even though the use of violence is always regrettable, at times it can be at least partly redeemed by being infused with meaning. In other words, I will try to demonstrate that some of the “bog poems”, for instance “The Tollund Man”, speak about the all-important difference between meaningful sacrifice and gratuitous crime.

Othering reality: Magical realism in Jan Carson's novels

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PANEL 3C THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

SALA DE JUNTES

Though magic realism is a surprisingly recent phenomenon in Ireland, considering the country's history of appropriation and resistance and the cultural weight of magic, legend, myth and folklore, in the last few years, more and more writers have adopted this mode to tackle harsh realities and unresolved conflicts. Such is the case of Northern Irish writer Jan Carson, whose novels *Malcolm Orange Disappears* (2014) and *The Fire Starters* (2019) engage in different forms of vulnerability, deprivation and violence and articulate a blending of the magical and the real by means of fantasy, humour, defamiliarization, exaggeration and the grotesque. Considering that literature is instrumental in bringing up socio-political concerns that invite to be scrutinized, and that narratives have a potential for transformation, the present proposal probes into Carson's adoption of magical realism as a subversive indirect approach with which to address problematic subjects. I will contend that by means of the blurring of all kinds of boundaries, magic realism opens an alternative space where irreconcilable positions can be dissolved and where the Others of society might find a means to transgress and subvert dominant hierarchical orders.

Antigone in the Cities

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PANEL 1A WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 10:30-12:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

Antigone, the character, is a shapeshifter, forever folding herself into the contours of political upheaval; always different and always the same. *Antigone*, the play, is a virus, attaching itself to a host city—Belfast, Derry, Soweto, Paris, Ferguson, Berlin—mutating across the ages in miraculous ways to fit the catastrophe of specific time, place, and political context. Although it presents a binary in the characters of Antigone and Creon, this paper approaches the play not as a drama with characters of dialectical polarisation, but as one of civic crisis—and of a plurality of binaries that keep redefining themselves against the city. Antigone problematises the city, and the limits of civic discourse, by codifying both state violence *and* resistance—perhaps explaining the plethora of versions from playwrights of Ulster. Is the way the statelet is perceived by Westminster analogous to the way Athens perceived Thebes?

Is Antigone driven by a pluralistic desire to speak truth to power, or by a selfish impulse to honour family above the needs of the city? Looking at three versions of the play by Ulster playwrights—Owen McCafferty's, Tom Paulin's, and Seamus Heaney's—which codify the violence of a state upon itself, and my own version, *X'ntigone*, produced at the MAC in Belfast and the Abbey in Dublin, which internalises that violence during lockdown, I ask if individual action can be alchemised into popular but nihilistic collective will, then what exactly is Antigone's legacy? Can she reject it? This, for me, is the conundrum the play offered during the atomising effects of lockdown.

Reading Endemic Ecocides: Eamon Grennan's "After Violence" & Other Poems

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PANEL 2B WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 15:30-17:30

SALÓ DE GRAUS

It is common ground to think that the violence exerted upon human communities (by reasons of war, dissidence or any type of conflict) goes hand in hand with the one affecting the destruction of the territory they inhabit. It could be then said that the more deteriorated the milieus, the more precarious existence can become. Therefore, resolving environmental violence proves seminal in the pursuit of better lives and ultimate happiness for human animals, in spite of any economic, political and social turmoil provoked by specific events. The recent history of Ireland has suffered all of these, in successive waves, and writers have necessarily tackled the issues from several viewpoints that are mostly ideological. Not assuming spatial decay in our surroundings, in favour of the resolution of more urgent "human" problems, seems to be the perfect alibi to look aside and neglect the environment. This fact is the cause of many ecocidal stances around the world and the patent proof that nature has, and still is, treated as a subaltern Other: relegated, unvoiced and invisibilized in our daily priorities. Irish poet, Eamon Grennan (Dublin, 1941-), however, is an exception to the rule. In "After Violence," for instance, he is capable of linking post-war devastation to physical reconstruction; giving agency, therefore, to the ineffable messages delivered in the human and more-than-human dialogue: i.e. a polysemy of "green" and "snow" vs "smoke" and "blood." This paper will study the subtle intertwining of Grennan's voices to palliate intrinsic violence imposed on all of us by the human deafness towards nature.

"Of Course I'm Panicking...!" Humour as a Coping Mechanism for Trauma in Lisa McGee's *Derry Girls*

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PANEL 7D FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 17:00-18:30

ESPAI CULTURAL

Throughout its three seasons (2018-2022), the Channel 4 comedy *Derry Girls* by Lisa McGee explores the representation of violence in Northern Ireland during the late moments of what has been coined "The Troubles," a period of civil unrest and war. On the surface level, the show's premise mirrors that of most sitcoms. The "Derry Girls"—and James—find themselves in hilarious situations. Unlike most sitcoms, however, there is a very dark undertone of war, death and violence. Each episode is framed with real news footage from this period and there is often a reference to actual events that occurred. These real-life events not only set the background for the show but also structure the plot.

More interesting—and less frequently spoken about—is how the world of the girls mirrors these events in often quite subtle ways. These demonstrate how moments of violence in *Derry Girls* reflect the barbarity of the actual world the characters live in. In the words of Maggie Long, "laughter serves an important purpose: survival in debilitating social conditions, but it comes at a grave cost when we consider the anguish and pain of repressed trauma" (10). In close connection with this idea, this paper will explore the meanings behind violence as it is represented in *Derry Girls* and other coetaneous TV series, such as *Love/Hate* (2010), and the acclaimed *Normal People* by Sally Rooney (2020). Meanwhile, special emphasis will be put on how humour is used as a coping mechanism by the Irish throughout moments of extreme violence and social convulsion.

"I thought I'd be safe with women": The racialized violence in Emma Donoghue's short story "The Welcome"

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PANEL 7B FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 17:00-18:30

SALÓ DE GRAUS

This presentation aims to discuss the scene of violence represented in Emma Donoghue's short story "The Welcome" and how it poses an issue to the intersection of race, gender, and sexual identities. The story portrays Luce's sexual awakening for JJ, the new resident of the women-only cooperative living The Welcome. Although JJ and Luce get along well, the apparent receptivity to the new resident is collapsed when one of the housemates teases JJ and opens the character's dressing gown, making JJ hit her in the eye. After the incident, JJ decides to leave The Welcome, but not after revealing in a letter to Luce that she is transgender. By having a scene of violence as its climax, the short story fails to represent JJ as a complete subject because the narration articulates racial regimes of representation (Hall et al 1997) on blackness and transsexuality, placing both terms as abjection (Kristeva 1988, Butler 1999, Scott 2010, Jackson 2020). Thus the centralization of Luce's desire and the representation of JJ as an abject character through the scene of violence exemplifies the impossibility of intimacy for the black queer body within the homonormative parameters of gender, sexuality, and race.

Coercive Control and Affective Encounters in Catherine Dunne's *A Name for Himself*

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PANEL 2D WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 15:30-17:30

ESPAI CULTURAL

Originally published in 1998, Catherine Dunne's second novel, *A Name for Himself*, was reissued in 2022 by Arlen House. Set in Dublin in the mid 1990s, it tells the story of Farrell, a middle aged survivor of an abusive and fractured childhood who is searching for love and security during the years of rapid economic growth of the Celtic Tiger. A skilled carpenter, he is in high demand for the town's building industry, where he meets Grace, his employer's daughter. Through their love story, burdened by the effects of his emotional trauma and their class distinction, the writer tackles a social phenomenon that was not fully part of the public discourse in that period, at least not in the same way it is at present: men's coercive control over women. In this paper, I will explore the terms whereby Farrell's love gradually turns into obsession with Grace and the complex imaginary underlying his progressively violent behaviour, despite his own past suffering. It is my argument that psychological violence is articulated in the novel as a subtle and invisible practice performed by perpetrators we even sympathise with. With this paradoxical affective encounter, Dunne problematises, then, the patriarchal social order that roots not only these reactions to abuse, but also the unwillingness to correct them. A critical reading of the novel 25 years after its first publication prompts an interrogation about how its context and ideological background persist nowadays in Ireland and in many other countries.

Containing drunkenness: Punitive approaches to alcoholism in Victorian Ireland, 1830-1898

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The year 1830 marked two different milestones in the history of drink in the British Isles: in Britain, the passing of the Beer Act, which tried to discourage the consumption of spirits by liberalising the opening of beerhouses; in Ireland, the foundation of the Hibernian Temperance Society, the first nationwide Temperance organisation in the United Kingdom. Both were attempts to curb what was perceived as rampant working-class alcoholism, with all its attendant social, economic and moral evils. By 1834, however, the Beer Act had backfired and the British Parliament was launching a committee of enquiry into drunkenness in order to find more appropriate legal remedies.

One such remedy was William IV's 1836 'Act to amend the Laws relating to ... the Sale of Wine, Spirits, Beer, and Cider by Retail, in Ireland' (6 & 7 W. IV, c. 38). The act established restrictions on licences and opening hours, but it also punished public drunkenness with fines of up to five shillings, or detention for up to 48 hours. The 'drunkard' was effectively incorporated into the penal system, overwhelming police resources and forcing prison administrators to adapt spaces and discipline regimes to a non-criminal class of offenders. By the 1870s, as the 'disease model' of alcoholism gained currency, retreats and reformatories began to emerge as medical alternatives to the prison system.

This paper will analyse these and other instances of institutional violence against the (primarily working-class) alcoholic, placed in the context of contemporary views about alcohol addiction.

"Stinking of Chlorine": The Violence of Industry on the Economic, Social and Natural Landscape in the Poetry of Louis MacNeice

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In Louis MacNeice's poem, 'Carrickfergus', published in his collection, *The Earth Compels* (1938), he recalls a childhood memory of the brook that babbled alongside the mill near the family home 'yellow from the factory stinking of chlorine', the yarn-mill 'calling its funeral cry at noon'. This is perhaps the earliest line of industrial poetry written within the Northern Irish context. Indeed, the poem is notable for its urban and industrial imagery, represented also by the mention of war. Industrial imagery, as well as violence, was impressed on MacNeice's imagination from a very young age. In his unfinished autobiography, *The Strings are False*, he states:

"[...] the yarn mill, the mill where I could see through the windows the savage champing machines which would hunger and wait for me at night."

The possibility of violence was conflated and intermingled with the factory in his young mind, the 'savagery' of the monotonous machines and the booming of the mill-siren like a banshee wail. However, present in MacNeice's poetry throughout his oeuvre is the reality of social and economic inequality, as well as the impact such industrial circumstances have on the earth itself, the land on which these inequalities exist. This paper will examine the notion of violence in the industrial, economic, social and natural world, arguing for MacNeice as Northern Ireland's earliest 'industrial poet'.

Violence and Women's Experience of Confinement in Brian Friel's Theatre

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PANEL 2A WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 15:30-17:30

SALÓ D'ACTES

The confinement of Irish women in Brian Friel's theatre is the result of a dual oppression, both colonial and patriarchal, and this experience is expressed in different forms: domestic isolation in *Dancing at Lughnasa* (1990), *Aristocrats* (1980), *Philadelphia, Here I come!* (1965), and *The Freedom of the City* (1974), violent and stifling in hospital and asylums in *Give me Your Answer, Do!* (1997) or *The Loves of Cass McGuire* (1967), psychic in *Faith Healer* (1980), *Molly Sweeney* (1994) and *Translations* (1990) or metatheatrical with the use of the Rimbaldian poetic notion of otherness in *Living Quarters* (1978). Most women in Friel's plays speak to us from the afterlife, they are offstage. They are the deafening silence of voices from beyond the grave, from the margins.

First, we will attempt to demonstrate how in Brian Friel's theatre, Irish women, to paraphrase Nicholas de Cues (1401-1464), are a circle whose centre is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere. Because if the circle is narrow and encloses women in domestic bondage, it is also a power of expansion. We will then analyze the psychic and sometimes hospital or asylum confinement of Irish women in Friel's work and ponder over the issue of female confinement as a catalyst for creative energy and mythologized rewriting of the past. Cass in *The Loves of Cass McGuire* is the epitome of this rewriting of a traumatic past, because to quote Simone Weil, "Time's violence rends the soul; by the rent eternity enters" and turns this ordeal into a Yeatsian swan song. Finally, we will demonstrate how Friel's metatheatrical devices unveil in a synecdochical and kaleidoscopic pattern the violent clausturation of Irish women.

Witches' Trials in Ireland: exploring the myth of the witch in Deirdre Sullivan's fairy tales

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PANEL 4C THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 12:30-14:00

SALA DE JUNTES

Ireland has never been internationally known for its witch trials because there were very few sensational recorded cases. In fact, research on witches in Ireland mostly revolves around the cases of Dame Kyteler, the Witch of Youghal, the Island Magee and the Clommel witch burning, which are some of the few recorded cases of witchcraft in Ireland. Recent studies such as Andrew Sneddon's *Witchcraft and Magic in Ireland* (2015) suggest that not only gender roles in Ireland played an important part to be accused of witchcraft, but religious differences between Catholics and Protestants were also cause for this type of violence. Deirdre Sullivan, an award-winning YA Irish author, reimagines the classic tale of "The Frog King" from a dark feminist point of view in "Doing Well", the ninth story in her collection of fairy tales *Tangleweed and Brine* (2017). In this retelling, Sullivan spins a tale around a witch trial that will determine the destiny of a young woman and the Frog King.

The Exploration of Postcolonial Violence in Audrey Magee's *The Colony*

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PANEL 5D THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 17:30-19:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

Audrey Magee's *The Colony* (2022), longlisted for the Booker Prize and shortlisted for the Orwell Prize for Political Fiction, begins with the arrival of an English artist and a French linguist to a remote Irish island. Their presence in such a quaint and largely Irish-speaking community raises a number of topics that will become central to the novel, such as the lasting impacts of the British colonization of Ireland, and the way linguistic politics are still very much mediated by the use of the English language; the Troubles are also presented throughout the novel as a direct, tangible consequence of the violence exerted by the colonizing agents, embodied throughout the course of the story by the two foreigners who slowly creep into the islanders' everyday life.

The aim of this proposal is to investigate the way postcolonial politics and violence, both direct and indirect, interact through Magee's novel, offering a broader picture of the ways in which Ireland's cultural and linguistic heritage is still under the colonizing yoke of Great Britain. The text will be analyzed through its use of interior monologue and dialogue as a means of reflecting on the use of language and the legacy of linguistic colonialism, as well as in its depiction of the violence exerted by paramilitary groups as a result of the symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1998) exerted on the Irish people both during the occupation of Ireland and throughout the process of decolonization.

The Ethics and Aesthetics of Spectrality in Jan Carson's *The Last Resort*

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PANEL 1B WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 10:30-12:00

SALÓ DE GRAUS

Jan Carson's *The Last Resort* (2021) is a brief book made up of ten interlaced stories/chapters that unfold during a February mid-term break in Seacliff, a fictional caravan park located on a cliff edge in County Antrim (Northern Ireland). Each story focuses on how one of its residents copes with their traumas, emotional insecurities and feelings of guilt while connecting them through coincidental encounters. The last one is the most compelling and thought-provoking of the entire book, as it concerns the events recounted by the living autodiegetic narrators as seen from the perspective of the ghost of Lynette, the fifteen-year-old daughter of a Royal Ulster Constabulary officer who was killed in a car bomb explosion during the Troubles. Drawing upon narratology, trauma theory and ethics, I intend, firstly, to demonstrate that Lynette's narration, emerging in the spectral borderland between life and death, assigns a complex and encompassing meaning to the lives of Seacliff's residents, especially of her melancholic father; and, secondly, to explore how her attentiveness to the living culminates in a spectral performance that proves fundamental for them to let go of their past through a collective act of care. Following Seamus Deane's contention that ghosts in Ireland are political, the final aim of the paper is to show how *The Last Resort* illustrates that the pathological attachment to loss in general and, more concretely, to that inflicted during The Troubles, can negatively affect the process of mourning and the healing of trauma both individually and collectively.

"Have you seen the Clintons knocking about around here?" *Derry Girls*, the United States, and the Good Friday Agreement at 25

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PANEL 5A THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 17:30-19:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

The concluding episode of the second season of the hit sitcom “Derry Girls” depicted the 1995 visit of President Bill Clinton to Northern Ireland. In it, the four main characters stake out a spot at Derry’s iconic Guildhall Square to be as close as possible to the visiting United States Presidential delegation during their visit in late November 1995. Chelsea Clinton, the daughter of President and Secretary Clinton, guest starred at the end of the third season in an episode which depicted the main characters voting in the Good Friday Agreement referendum in 1998. Throughout the three seasons of the show, the sense of hope and anticipation for an end to the two-plus decades of conflict in Northern Ireland runs within each episode. That the concluding episode of the show should air shortly after the collapse of devolved power-sharing governance, an integral aspect of post-conflict Northern Ireland, was a bitter coincidence and one that demands scrutiny, as noted by cast members in media interviews.

Northern Ireland marks a quarter-century since the historic peace agreement with a political vacuum. Internal political discord has been exacerbated by the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union which has brought a host of concerns over the constitutional arrangements for Northern Ireland. This paper seeks to utilise contemporary popular culture and political rhetoric to offer commentary on the current status of the Northern Ireland peace process and to offer an assessment of how the past continues to influence the present.

Negotiating the Troubles and Brexit: Rosemary Jenkinson's *Love in the Time of Chaos*

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PANEL 1A WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 10:30-12:00

SALÓ D’ACTES

In *Love in the Time of Chaos* (2023) Rosemary Jenkinson illustrates how the short story is an apt genre to represent the complex tangles left in people’s minds by the Troubles, a quarter-century after the GFA. Greater Belfast is represented here by a rich range of protagonists: Catholic members of the police, a former Protestant paramilitary, customs officials hampered in their jobs by mobs. As transgenerational trauma, drugs and Brexit, along with the war in Ukraine create tragic developments these are often met with resilience. Jenkinson’s style mixes empathy with striking similes and dry humour. Not only are the individual stories cleverly constructed with parallel images, the whole collection is densely interwoven with repeat motifs, especially the first and last stories which echo each other in multiple ways. This paper will focus on how complex guilt patterns form on three levels: in bodies, in families, in value systems. They are often semi-articulated in several languages: that of verbal messages, gestures, clothes, objects, images and spatial elements.

Violence from a Juvenile Perspective: The Troubles in *Belfast* and *Mickybo and Me*

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PANEL 6B FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 12:30-14:00

SALÓ DE GRAUS

Even if children and young adults were collateral victims of the Northern Irish conflict, the depiction of their particular experience of the Troubles in contemporary film is rare. This can be attributed to the fact that they are not seen as the main actors of political violence. In this paper, I shall concentrate on Terry Loan’s *Mickybo and Me* (2003) and *Belfast* (2021) by Kenneth Branagh. Set in the 1970ies, both films address the topic of sectarianism and

political tensions through the unconventional point of view of children. The protagonists of *Mickybo and Me* are the 8-year old Mickybo and the 9-year old Jonjo. The boys do not only belong to opposite communities but also stem from different social backgrounds. The story is told in form of a Western-comedy set in the North and the South of Ireland. *Belfast*, on the contrary, is coming-of-age drama illustrating the life of Buddy, a 9-year old Protestant working class boy, who is confronted with barricades and riots as well as attacks of local homes and businesses. Through an alternative depiction of the city of Belfast, the two films challenge conservative power structures shaped by the British army, the RUC and the paramilitaries from both sides. Focussing on *Mickybo and Me* and *Belfast*, I set out to analyse the contrasting cinematographic approaches followed by the two directors in order to subvert political and moral value systems ingrained in Northern Irish society.

Symbolic Violence in Rosaleen McDonagh's *Walls and Windows*

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PANEL 7B FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 17:00-18:30

SALÓ DE GRAUS

[T]he essentialist versions of Irish history and identity promulgated upon independence meant that reductionist views of the Irish people under colonialism were frequently transferred to the principle visible 'Other within' i.e Irish Travellers, subsequent to Irish independence. That an intimate link exists between the category definitions or representations of a particular group and societal attitudes and behaviours with respect to that group is widely acknowledged. (Mícheál O' hAodha in 'Insubordinae Irish'. Travellers in the Text 2011: x).

Taking as a starting point O'hAodha's study on Irish Travellers, the aim of this paper is to consider Rosaleen McDonagh's play *Walls and Windows* (Abbey 2021) as a text that exposes the symbolic violence of representations of this minority group. Set in contemporary Ireland and focusing on a Traveller couple and family's attempts to come to terms with settled society, the play is an example of a yet small body of Traveller literature challenging not merely stereotyping, but also the mainstream discourse of Ireland having been an ethnically homogenous society until the Celtic Tiger. Thus, *Walls and Windows* exposes the violence of imposing discourses which ostracized and make invisible those who, for ideological reasons, do not comply with the norm.

A History of Violence within Ireland's Architecture of Containment in Moira Fowley-Doyle's *All the Bad Apples*

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PANEL 7A FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 17:00-18:30

SALÓ D'ACTES

Until the late twentieth-century, institutions known as Magdalene laundries and mother and baby homes were in operation in Ireland. While perhaps established with the intention of helping women who got pregnant out of wedlock and unmarried mothers, they turned into carceral places that punished women for their alleged transgression of Ireland's morality standards of purity and sexual respectability. Together with other institutions – including industrial and reformatory schools – these constituted what has been termed Ireland's

architecture of containment (Smith 2007), a punitive system enforced by Church and State built on a culture of secrecy, silence and shame. Today, reports have been published denouncing the abuse inflicted on residents of these institutions, yet Church authorities and religious sisters continue to refuse access to their records and remain silent regarding what went on behind the walls of these places. In recent years, Irish young adult literature has begun to address those topics that had often been considered taboo for young readers, including institutional abuse in Irish society. An example is Moira Fowley-Doyle's *All the Bad Apples* (2019), in which protagonist Deena Rys begins a journey through her family – and subsequently Irish – history, particularly emphasising the injustices endured by Irish women through the centuries. This paper aims to analyse the representation of the different forms of violence suffered by women and children within Ireland's architecture of containment in Moira Fowley-Doyle's novel and to illustrate how this text contributes to denounce such violence by breaking the secrecy surrounding these crimes that still have consequences today.

Transgenerational Trauma and the Inheritance of Violence in Jan Carson's *The Fire Starters*

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PANEL 7D FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 17:00-18:30

ESPAI CULTURAL

Northern Irish writer's award-winning novel *The Fire Starters* (2019) depicts a fictitious Belfast 16 years after the signing of the peace treaty. The story is comprised of parallel accounts of two fathers, both concerned, though in different ways, about the inheritance of past trauma and violence. Sammy's son is the notorious 'Firestarter', calling on the youths of Belfast to wreak havoc on the city, whilst Jonathon's new-born daughter is born to a siren that emerged from the river Lagan. The two stories are regularly interrupted by those of the so-called 'unfortunate children' of Belfast - a girl with wings, a boy with wheels for feet, another who sees the future in every liquid surface. This paper approaches the spectres in novel from the perspective of Derridean hauntology, as outlined *Specters of Marx*. The spectre, according to Derrida, is a deconstructive force which, by moving across borders, disrupts any sense of certainty, both within and beyond the text itself. It is described as the absolute Other, which looms somewhere between life and death, being and non-being. Moreover, we are reminded how "this being-with specters would also be . . . a politics of memory, of inheritance, and of generations" (xviii) and further that "there is no inheritance without a call to responsibility" (114). This paper proposes that an analysis of *The Fire Starters* from the perspective of hauntology reveals the productive potentialities of the literary imagination not to silence spectres, but to converse with them, blurring the preconceived boundaries between the 'living past' and the 'living future', and thus uncovering the entanglement of inheritance and responsibility.

The Management of Linguistic Violence in Historical Irish English: An analysis of (Im)politeness in reproaches and apologies in CORIECOR

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PANEL 4B THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 12:30-14:00

SALÓ DE GRAUS

In recent years, the strong connection between violence and (im)politeness has raised more and more interest among scholars after Culpeper's widely cited volume *Impoliteness: Using Language to Cause Offence* (2011). In today's academic world, these links are being further explored in relation to identity (Conejos Blitvich & Sifianou 2017; Locher M. 2008) ideology (Kienpointe & Stopfen 2017) and gender (Cheung & Sung 2022), among others. This paper aims at contributing to this growing line of research by analyzing (im)politeness patterns in

historical Irish English in order to outline the connections between the management of verbal violence and the construction of a linguistic identity among Irish migrants. To do so, it performs an initial analysis of two face-threatening speech acts (reproaches and apologies) within a subsection of CORIECOR which comprises letters written by Irish migrants that settled in the United States. It uses a dual theoretical framework proposed by Sotoca-Fernández and Ávila Ledesma (Forthcoming) which combines Terkourafi's framework-based approach (2005) and Archer's facework scale (2017) to obtain a synoptic view of the linguistic phenomena at stake. Initial results point towards the idea that, though Marked Politeness is used predominantly to achieve a positive impact on the other interactant, speakers of Irish English in this context made use of both Marked Politeness and Impoliteness to achieve either effect. This versatility in the encoding of these speech acts points towards the existence of complex mechanisms to manage linguistic violence that could shed light on the formation of the Irish identity in contrast to that of speakers of other varieties of English.

Violence, Conflict and Resistance in Mary O'Donnell's *Empire*

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PANEL 5A THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 17:30-19:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

Mary O'Donnell's short story collection *Empire* (2018) is set within the historical framework of WW1 and the Easter Rising. Such choice in terms of background implicitly leads to violence as a storytelling motif, and different types of violence develop in the six stories: physical, cultural and emotional. Conflict and resistance result in violence, and in O'Donnell's collection the three issues interlace, in the same way as different forms of violence interlace.

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the way in which O'Donnell deals with violence, conflict and resistance in *Empire*, shedding light on graphic description and emotional suffering. The imposition of culture and lifestyle in the title story marks imperialistic dominance. The conflict that develops between William and his direct superior leads to a brutal reaction resulting in physical assault. In "Fortune on a Fair Day" an internal struggle of identity underlies the young man's decision to enrol in the British Army at the time of the Easter Rising. The Rising is openly present in "The Black Church" and "The Unchosen". In the former story in particular the violence of the rebellion is seen through the eyes of a little girl traumatically witnessing the riots.

In this collection O'Donnell's use of violence seems to be rooted in the etymology of the word, from the Latin "vis", strength, in that in the various stories physical, personal, institutional strength and its exploitation characterize the narrative.

Silenced victims of the Irish Famine in Anthony Trollope's *Castle Richmond*

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PANEL 6C FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 12:30-14:00

SALA DE JUNTES

Resulting in the death of approximately one million people and the departure of two million people from their homeland to live in exile across the world, mainly in US and Australia, the Irish Famine is a great national disaster that has affected the majority of the population in Ireland between 1845 and 1852. Ireland was a part of the English Empire at the time, but the effectiveness of the English government's aid policy is still being debated.

This paper aims to examine how the famine has been mapped out in *Castle Richmond*, a contemporary novel written by the English novelist Anthony Trollope, who lived in Ireland from 1841 to 1850, and at intervals after 1850s till 1859. Written in 1859, on the eve of Trollope's departure from Ireland, the novel is set in south-west Ireland and covers what Trollope calls "the famine year," 1846-7. While my primary goal is to discuss how the famine geography is displayed, controlled and contained within the structure of a Victorian novel, I would also like to pay attention to how the novelistic space offers a potential outlet to contest the English famine policy. Although the narrator's providentialist view of the famine supports the official discourse, brief scenes/sections in the novel seem to question the official policy, and undermine the reliability of the narrator. I would like to conclude by juxtaposing these self-deconstructive moments in the novel to Trollope's personal views on the famine, which are expressed in the six letters he wrote to be published in the *Examiner* in 1849-1850.

Blurring Spatial and Geographical Boundaries: Lucy Caldwell's *Intimacies* (2021)

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PANEL 2C WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 15:30-17:30

SALA DE JUNTES

Intimacies (2021) is the latest short story collection of Lucy Caldwell, who belongs to the young generation of Irish writers of the 2000s. In the introduction of *Being Various* (2019), a short story collection edited by her, Caldwell notes the immense literary significance of the Good Friday Agreement in April 1998 to officially end The Troubles between the South and the North of the Irish Republic as follows: "psychologically, we were free to experiment with and to embrace pluralities – contradictory ways of being. The milestones in contemporary Irish literature come thick and fast from then". This paper aims to discuss the connection of (the geographically divided) past and the present that *Intimacies* offers in order to evidence positive social shifts in terms of overcoming many limiting perspectives with regard to human relations in the Irish context.

My intention is to show that Caldwell's short fiction glimpses at a more inclusive population in which various limits of the past blur. Another goal of the present study is to discuss the time lapses and that the connection between the past and the present often function as organic and evolving unities in the stories. By invoking the transmodern paradigm that has been put forward by some scholars (i.e. Irena Ateljevic, Marc Luyckx Ghisi, and Rosa María Rodríguez Magda), this paper aims to show how human interconnectedness is reinforced through focusing on love and the endlessness of time as a concept to readdress human life as a fluid experience in Caldwell's latest collection.

"You Know, [...] you are such a *fucking* sucker": A longitudinal analysis of taboo language in the *Ross O'Carroll-Kelly* series

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PANEL 4B THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 12:30-14:00

SALÓ DE GRAUS

Perhaps because of its forbidden nature, taboo language remains a largely under-researched topic among academics, despite it being one of the most common features in natural interaction that is capable of communicating a level of emotionality other cannot transmit (Jay 1990). In the context of Ireland, there are a few studies that examine the use of taboo language (Murphy 2009, 2010; Clancy 2016). However, and with the exception of Terrazas-Calero (2022), there are no studies that investigate intensifying fucking in contemporary Irish literature.

Fictional dialogues by nature mirror naturally-occurring language and function as way to make the characters (in the fictional world) sound more authentic to the readers (in the real world). Given the salience of taboo language in every-day discourse and its emotional value, and taking Paul Howard's best-selling *Ross O'Carroll-Kelly* (RO'CK) series as representative of contemporary Dublin English orality, this paper longitudinally studies the use of intensifying *fucking* in five of RO'CK novels which comprise 553,095 words and span a period of 9 years. Using corpus stylistics techniques, the paper examines at length the form, use, pragmatic functionality and identity indexation of intensifying *fucking*. These comprise 553, 095 words and span a period of 9 years. In doing so, this paper will determine the type of sociopragmatic values this pragmatic item conveys in the context of Dublin according to Howard's rendition.

Social Violence and Economic Inequality in Sally Rooney's Fiction

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PANEL 5B THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 17:30-19:00

SALÓ DE GRAUS

This paper is intended for readers to reconsider the connections between violence, trauma, Irish culture, identity, gender and literature. It reflects on how women characters' express psychological trauma in Sally Rooney's fiction and how pedagogical theory can be useful when interrogating strengths and consequences of including her texts in university courses. In tune with recent research on teaching trauma narratives and healing, this paper explores the historical context of what psychological trauma has meant to women and how they have recreated it. To this end, this essay examines the sources of trauma for women characters in Rooney's fiction. By using her work questions are asked about how psychological trauma is represented through Rooney's fiction, and what this means for the female protagonists of her texts, Rooney herself, readers and the culture and society out of which her novels originate. The discussion will make violence against women visible and create structured sets of ideas that encourage trauma healing in the university classroom context.

An Unnameable Feeling: Resistance and Representation of LGBTQ+ Activism in *A Day In May* (2022) by Colin Murphy

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PANEL 3A THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

A Day In May (2022) is a play about the campaign for marriage equality in Ireland. Colin Murphy adapts Charlie Bird's 2016 book of the same name and *Ireland Says Yes* (2015) by Grainne Healy, Brian Sheehan and Noel Whelan – three key figures of the Yes Equality campaign. Colin Murphy, fictionalizing real activists and the leaders of the movement, delves into the complexities of the referendum tackling legislation, government politics, identity, and activism. The central component of *A Day In May* is the telling of personal stories, as it was with the Yes Equality campaign, resulting in a simplification of the story enough for a wider audience to experience the unnamable feeling that the Irish LGBTQ+ community felt the day that Ireland voted for marriage equality on May 15th, 2015.

Through these personal stories of rejection and marginalization, arguably testimonial, Murphy connects to our humanity providing the show's real heart. Ultimately these stories bring forward the question of resistance, representation and activism towards healing trauma, gaining agency, and claiming acceptance. *A Day In May*, while stirring this overwhelming feeling once more, also pays tribute to the people who fought for equality against violence and the systematic stigmatization of the LGBTQ+ community. Murphy does this not only by

telling the story of these activists but also by looking at stories from ordinary people. Understood as an example of testimonial theatre, *A Day In May* brings laughter, tears, and that unnamable collective feeling to the audience while serving a double social purpose: educating society on queer matters and representing the violence suffered by this group.

Folkloric Resonances in Contemporary Irish Fiction: Marginalised Voices in a “Post-Nationalist” State

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PANEL 4C THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 12:30-14:00

SALA DE JUNTES

There has been a recent surge in the popularity of Irish folkloric writing as a means of exploring marginalisation, systemic oppression, and historical trauma. This embodies a shift in popular approaches to folklore. Most twentieth-century iterations of Irish folklore have been engaged with, and interpreted through, race, ethnicity, state and nation. However, contemporary writing speaks to an interest in imagining community and identity from a perspective that is critical of, or outside of, these frameworks, and imagines community beyond nation. Folklore in post-2010 Ireland identifies with subaltern experience, highlights conflicts with national identity, and imagines community beyond nation.

This research has identified several ways that folklore is approached from this perspective. Firstly, the utilising of uncanny and supernatural folklore in young adult fantasy is seen in explorations of adolescence, gender, sexuality and male violence, in writing from Dierdre Sullivan and Sarah Maria Griffin. Secondly, it has identified both historical and literary fiction – such as Niamh Boyce and Molly Aitken – that explore folklore tradition and storytelling in the lives experience of individuals who, through cultural marginalisation, social conflict, or violent oppression, have been silenced or traumatised. Finally, it identified folklore collections, translations and adaptations of popular stories – such as Oein DeBhairduin and Sullivan – that have centred on the representation of minority experience.

These approaches are characterised by an interest in re-imagining Irish identity and history through the perspective of marginalised groups. They can be seen as dismantling of nation, utilising folklore as a tradition of subaltern expression and counter-hegemonic experience.

Quirke goes Europe: International conflict, violence and trauma in John Banville's crime novel *April in Spain*

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PANEL 5C THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 17:30-19:00

SALA DE JUNTES

Far from being distinctly different writerly universes, Benjamin Black's story worlds are deeply connected to John Banville's fiction. The erstwhile familiar distinction between Banville as high art and Black as a writer of crime pulp (a view originally reinforced by Banville himself) has been, perhaps from its beginning, a rather reductive assessment and is, since the publication of *Snow* and the abandonment of his pseudonym in 2020, obsolete at last. Irish history, in particular that of the 19th and 20th centuries, is one rife with violent conflict, instability, misogyny and suffering. Colonial oppression, famine, wars, rebellions, hunger strikes, terrorism and clerical abuse are among the historical atrocities that haunt Irish memory, and that irrevocably damaged “the tissues of community and cultural identity” (Berry, 2016). John Banville alias Benjamin Black's (crime) novels reflect on the legacy and repercussions of Irish history and represent Irish collective trauma. Indeed, the author's personal memories of post-war Ireland serve as a powerful influence on his work – notably

the 'Quirke novels' set in 1950s Ireland. With his more recent crime novel *April in Spain* (2021) Banville's enigmatic hero, state pathologist Dr Quirke, leaves the limits of Ireland in more than in a geographical sense. By extending the notion of Irish collective and personal trauma, this study examines linkages to other international conflicts as substantial to the storylines and literary personnel in *April in Spain*. It argues that a 'European trauma at large' lies at the core of Banville's narrative(s), which raises his work beyond national boundaries.

On War Veterans: Comparing Simon Armitage's "Remains" and Sinéad Morrissey's "V is for Veteran"

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PANEL 1D WEDNESDAY, MAY 31ST 10:30-12:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

Academic research is concerned about how Contemporary Literature is reflecting our past, in order to preserve our historical memory. In a time of national and international crisis, where poetry is growing in its popularity, it is of utmost importance to approach different poetic dialogues, from Laureate Poets in different contexts –Britain and Northern Ireland.

Therefore, the present article is comparing two poems, such as: Simon Armitage's 'Remains' (Armitage, 2008), and, Sinéad Morrissey's 'V is for Veteran' (Morrissey, 2013), which are inevitably linked by the topic of war, or even, by what remains of it. My main aim, is to engage in a productive and meaningful dialogue about what the poets' perspectives of war are. Since they are both, not only poets of formidable popularity, but also sharing critical perspectives accordingly.

Consequently, my theoretical framework is based on the *split discourse-world* (Gavins, 2020), within the *Text World Theory* (Gavins, 2007). Since Morrissey and Armitage draw their comprehension of the world, based on their cultural and experiential knowledge (Solas Nua, 2021) in order to produce their own work. Furthermore, the time they write from, and, their different contexts have an impact on such discourses.

The question of what steps do poets such as Morrissey, or Armitage, follow to underpin the foundations of the Contemporary Poetry's understanding of past war veterans is answered, by an analysis of poetic aspects such as: time and space; intertextuality; absence; performance; and metaphors.

In other words, the analysis of such language helps defining aspects of poetic voices interpreting their past, while creating our own contemporary narrative.

In/visible Boundaries and the Power of Secrecy in Collette Bryce's Poetry

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PANEL 6D FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 12:30-14:00

ESPAI CULTURAL

This paper examines the motifs of secrecy, miracles and magic tricks in the poetry of Northern Irish writer Collette Bryce. Her work is well known for addressing the turbulent political climate in Northern Ireland during the period of the Troubles and the often invisible boundaries which condition and censure same-sex relationships. Her poetry has been rightly praised for her playful approach towards all sorts of arbitrarily-defined spaces, a stance which allows her to disrupt the normative political, sexual expectations and move beyond the boundaries that often define discussions of religion, nationality, and gender. My analysis particularly focuses on one aspect of Bryce's work, which is its inclination to draw on the power of mystery and magic, delusion and appearance, and the interplay between illusion and reality, artifice and

truth. As I intend to show, the opacity of much of her work calls for a defense of privacy which is necessary to counteract the alleged 'transparency' of current socio-political spheres. My analysis is anchored in the field of what has come to be known as 'secrecy studies' (Birchall 2016), which examines the role exerted by secrets in public life, political structures and, in this case, cultural representations. As I intend to show, Bryce defends the value of secrecy, privacy and the mysterious as ways to guarantee the preservation of singularity and challenge the hegemonic discourse of transparency which characterizes public life and neo-political liberalism (Han 2015).

Hard Facts of Traditional Irish Tales

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PANEL 4C THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 12:30-14:00

SALA DE JUNTES

Traditional Irish stories abound in violent actions and aggressions exerted on human beings, animals or objects.

The first part of the exposition is devoted to present historical and psychological hypothesis to explain the significant charge of aggression and violence of traditional stories in general. From a more specific Irish perspective, the exposition presents the theories of scholars like Angela Bourke and Diarmuid O'Giollain, who try to find an explanation for the violent character of the supernatural creatures who appear in traditional Irish stories, like for example fairies.

The last part of the exposition explores a specific kind of violence, the one that Jenkins calls "supernatural aggression", and how it appears in traditional Irish stories. Because of the central position of women in the family, and as violence and aggression were often an explanation to some misfortune within the limits of the household, violent conflicts were strongly related to women. It is not strange then, that a definite type of violence, that exerted through sorcery, also remained associated with the female figure.

The exposition is interspersed with some ancient stories in order to exemplify the issues presented. These stories are presented as they were originally recorded and collected.

Towards the New *Atlantis*: Mahon's Early Politics

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PANEL 4A THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 12:30-14:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

Derek Mahon's poems have been described by John Redmond as 'not so much a-historical as anti-historical'. Hugh Haughton sees Mahon's poetic response to the outbreak of conflict in Northern Ireland as characterized by indirection, estrangement and displacement. This displacement was itself memorably foregrounded in Mahon's poem 'Afterlives', which opens the collection *The Snow Party* (1975): 'Perhaps if I'd stayed behind / And lived it bomb by bomb / I might have grown up at last / And learnt what is meant by home'. Such poetic self-dramatization, however, elides Mahon's earlier engagement with history, politics and violence in North America, Belfast and Dublin in the mid-to-late 1960s, a period which also overlapped with the inception of the Troubles. This paper will recover something of this early period of Mahon's career, through considering his involvement as a founding co-editor with the magazine *Atlantis* (1970-4). Its opening editorial casts the magazine as looking to connect literature to a critical examination of contemporary society and its politics, not least against the backdrop of recent events in the 'rancid North' and the need for 'radical change' in Ireland

that it had exposed. Such aspirations and the broader intellectual currents they drew on, both internationally and amid the Dublin milieu in which they arose, will be used to reframe Mahon's poetry of the period, including several poems which appeared in the magazine before being collected in *Lives* (1972) and *The Snow Party* (1975).

"Burning but flourishing": Violence and Care in Jan Carson's *The Fire Starters*

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PANEL 3C THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

SALA DE JUNTES

As one of the most exciting new writers to emerge in Northern Ireland in the 2000s, Jan Carson's work has begun to gather some well-deserved critical attention. A self-declared magical realist, Carson writes of the North in ways that combine the familiar and the fantastical to produce, as Fiona McCann has argued, radically dissensual perspectives. Magical realism's aesthetics of temporal and ontological displacement has long been valued for its political resonances, and these seem particularly well fitted to the disjunctures and contradictions of contemporary Northern Irish experience, as recent work by Dawn Miranda Sherratt-Bado and Caroline Magennis attests. Taking on board these appreciations of Carson's fiction, this paper will analyse *The Fire Starters* (2019), a narrative permeated with violence and acutely observant of corporeal irrealities. The novel interleaves the stories of two men, differentiated by class and age, who find themselves in the swelter of a Belfast marching season, confronted by fatherhood and their own precarity. The paper will explore the ways an ecology of violence is rendered in the narrative to argue that Carson's magical realism opens a tantalizing possibility of an ethics of care performed by means of what Jacques Rancière describes "a division inserted in 'common sense'".

Graphic Violence: The Northern Ireland Conflict in American Superhero Comics

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PANEL 6B FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND 12:30-14:00

SALÓ DE GRAUS

The conflict that raged in Northern Ireland between 1969 and 1998 has featured regularly in popular culture, serving as the backdrop for numerous films and TV series. In addition to appearing in those media, the "Troubles" have also played a prominent role in comic books, particularly as the setting for storylines in which American superheroes travel to Ireland and find themselves embroiled in violence. These fish-out-of-water storylines typically require the heroes (and the uninitiated reader) to be brought up to speed on the causes of the conflict, a situation which offers those engaged in violence a platform to explain their motives. Unlike many Hollywood films which depoliticize violence in Northern Ireland and reduce the atrocities committed by paramilitary groups to acts of personal vengeance rather than ideologically motivated ones, the comics tend to frame republican paramilitaries as freedom fighters who are striking "a blow for independence" (*Web of Spider-Man* 19) and "fighting for Ireland's freedom" (*Action Comics* 633). The framing of the conflict in these terms, coupled with the portrayal of real-life injustices towards the Catholic community, offers a justification for IRA violence. However, rather than going so far as to actually condone violence, the comics ensure that some sort of despicable act – usually the killing or maiming of a child – means that the IRA are ultimately seen as villains. Thus, by evoking sympathy for "the cause", whilst at the same time fulfilling the "condemnation imperative" (Hage 2003: 68), the comics succeed in having their cake and eating it too.

The violence of silence in Colm Tóibín's fiction

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PANEL 3A THURSDAY, JUNE 1ST 9:00-11:00

SALÓ D'ACTES

Colm Tóibín has proved to be a master of silence and silences throughout his literary production. Some critics have related his treatment of silence to the Irishness of his writing, both contained and accurate. This paper addresses how violence is simultaneously voiced and silenced in Tóibín's *The Blackwater Lightship* (1999) and his collection of short stories *Mothers and Sons* (2006). In the first case, Declan, a gay man, comes back home in rural Ireland from Dublin when he is very ill of AIDS. On the other hand, the short stories delve into the complex, inarticulate relations between different men and their mothers. To analyse these texts and their management of silence and violence, this paper makes use of Judith Butler's concept of ungrievability.

For Butler, the ungrievable other is the one "that cannot be mourned because it has never lived, that is, it has never counted as a life at all" (Butler 2016, 38). In being refused proper mourning, the ungrievable is invisibilised and silenced and, indirectly, the object of violence. Declan and many of the young male characters of *Mothers and Sons* are confronted with death, either in literal or metaphoric terms, as the ultimate sign of silence as violence. This is especially relevant in *The Blackwater Lightship* where Declan, on behalf of the community of AIDS victims, symbolises how homophobia renders victims ungrievable. In sum, this paper proves how Tóibín's fiction addresses the dangers of silence and exclusion in general when it comes to representing the Other.