



Universitat de les Illes Balears

#SOM UIB



XVIII International Conference of the Spanish Association of Irish Studies AEDEI

# “Difference and Indifference in Irish Studies.”



29 th-31 st May 2019

"Club Pollentia Resort", Alcúdia  
and Can Oleo building, Palma

<http://aedei2019.uib.eu/>

Vicerektorat de Campus, Cooperació i Universitat Saludable

Oficina de Cooperació al Desenvolupament i Solidaritat OCDS

Vicerektorat d'Investigació i Internacionalització

Oficina de Suport a la Recerca OSR



AEDEI  
Asociación Española de Estudios Irlandeses



Ambasáid na hÉireann  
Embassy of Ireland

Research project:  
"Bodies in Transit: Difference and Indifference"  
FFI2017-82555-C2-2-P

Vicerektorat de Projectió Cultural, Universitat Oberta i Seus Universitàries

Servei d'Activitats Culturals

#UIB\_5segles\_40anys



G CONSELLERIA  
O SERVEIS SOCIALS  
I COOPERACIÓ  
B PORTADORA CENTRAL  
COOPERACIÓ





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE .....	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	5
Sponsors.....	5
PROGRAMME SUMMARY.....	6
PLENARY SESSIONS.....	8
WRITERS.....	9
ABSTRACTS.....	10
USEFUL INFORMATION .....	35
Conference venue.....	35
Meals.....	35
Trip to Palma.....	35
Gala dinner .....	35
How to get to the conference venue.....	36
Medical assistance .....	36

## **ORGANIZING COMMITTEE**

Aida Rosende Pérez (Chair)  
Rubén Jarazo Álvarez  
Paloma Fresno Calleja  
Eva María Pérez Rodríguez  
Miquel Pomar Amer  
Astrid Schwegler Castañer

### **Technical secretariat**

Marina Caldés Contreras  
Cristina Cruz Gutierrez  
Margalida Pizarro Sirera  
Mariana Ripoll Fonollar  
Cristina Sánchez Moll

### **Scientific committee**

Asier Altuna García de Salazar (Universidad de Deusto), Carolina Amador Moreno (Universidad de Extremadura), Teresa Caneda Cabrera (Universidade de Vigo), Rui Carvalho Homem (Universidade do Porto), David Clark Mitchell (Universidade da Coruña), Linda Connolly (Maynooth University), Séan Crosson (National University of Ireland, Galway), Raúl de Toro Santos (Universidade da Coruña), José Francisco Fernández Sánchez (Universidad de Almería), Libe García Zarranz (Norgewian University of Science and Technology), Luz Mar González Arias (Universidad de Oviedo), Rosa González Casademont (Universidad de Barcelona), Sorcha Gunne (National University of Ireland, Galway), María Elena Jaime de Pablos (Universidad de Almería), Séan Kennedy (Saint Mary’s University, Halifax), Caroline Magennis (University of Salford), Belén Martín Lucas (Universidade de Vigo), Gerardine Meaney (University College Dublin), Marisol Morales Ladrón (Universidad de Alcalá), Munira Mutran (Universidade de Sao Paulo), Maureen O’Connor (University College Cork), Juan Ignacio Oliva Cruz (Universidad de La Laguna), María Auxiliadora Pérez Vides (Universidad de Huelva), Inés Praga Terente (Universidad de Burgos), Igor Prieto Arranz (Universitat de les Illes Balears), Constanza del Río Álvaro (Universidad de Zaragoza), Hedwig Schwall (KU Leuven), Melania Terrazas Gallego (Universidad de la Rioja), Pilar Villar Argáiz (Universidad de Granada)



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The organizing committee would like to express their gratitude for the generosity of Vukasin Nedeljkovic, who has allowed us to use the pictures of his series “Balloons”, integrated in his project Asylum Archive. This project’s objective is to collaborate with asylum seekers, artists, academics and activists, amongst others, with a view to creating an interactive documentary cross-platform online resource, critically foregrounding accounts of exile, displacement, trauma and memory. It is an act of solidarity to bring a different perspective on the life of people who came to Ireland to seek protection. His recent book *Asylum Archive*, a unique and essential publication in making the reality of Ireland’s Direct Provision system public, can be accessed here: <http://www.asylumarchive.com/publication.html>

## Sponsors



G CONSELLERIA  
O SERVEIS SOCIALS  
I I COOPERACIÓ  
B DIRECCIÓ GENERAL  
/ COOPERACIÓ



Ambasáid na hÉireann  
Embassy of Ireland

Research project “Bodies in Transit: Difference and Indifference” FFI2017-84555-C2-2-P



## PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2019

7.30-10.00	<b>Breakfast</b>		
8.30-10.00	<b>Conference Registration (Club Pollentia Resort Lobby)</b>		
9.00-11.00	<b>PANEL SESSIONS 1</b>		
	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> <b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b>  <i>Narrating In/difference (1)</i>                      (Chair: Auxiliadora Pérez Vides)                 </td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> <b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b>  <i>Narrating In/difference (2)</i>                      (Chair: Aida Diaz Bild)                 </td> </tr> </table>	<b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Narrating In/difference (1)</i> (Chair: Auxiliadora Pérez Vides)	<b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Narrating In/difference (2)</i> (Chair: Aida Diaz Bild)
<b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Narrating In/difference (1)</i> (Chair: Auxiliadora Pérez Vides)	<b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Narrating In/difference (2)</i> (Chair: Aida Diaz Bild)		
11.00-11.30	<b>Break</b>		
11.30-13.00	<b>PANEL SESSIONS 2</b>		
	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> <b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b>  <b>Round table:</b>  <i>Affects and Affinities in Recent Northern Irish Literature and Culture</i>                      (Chair: Caroline Magennis)                 </td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> <b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b>  <i>Poetic voices (1)</i>                      (Chair: Cristina Cruz Gutiérrez)                 </td> </tr> </table>	<b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <b>Round table:</b> <i>Affects and Affinities in Recent Northern Irish Literature and Culture</i> (Chair: Caroline Magennis)	<b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Poetic voices (1)</i> (Chair: Cristina Cruz Gutiérrez)
<b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <b>Round table:</b> <i>Affects and Affinities in Recent Northern Irish Literature and Culture</i> (Chair: Caroline Magennis)	<b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Poetic voices (1)</i> (Chair: Cristina Cruz Gutiérrez)		
13.00-14.30	<b>Lunch Break</b>		
15.00-15.30	<b>Official Opening (Pollentia Room)</b>		
15.30-17.00	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PLENARY SESSION (Pollentia Room)</b>  <b>Ailbhe Smyth: “Post-Repeal Ireland: a New Dawn?”</b>                      (Chair: Aida Rosende Pérez)</p>		
17.00-17.30	<b>Break</b>		
17.30-19.30	<b>PANEL SESSIONS 3</b>		
	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> <b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b>  <i>Film and Television</i>                      (Chair: Rubén Jarazo Álvarez)                 </td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> <b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b>  <i>Humour, Comedy, and Satire</i>                      (Chair: Constanza del Río Álvarez)                 </td> </tr> </table>	<b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Film and Television</i> (Chair: Rubén Jarazo Álvarez)	<b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Humour, Comedy, and Satire</i> (Chair: Constanza del Río Álvarez)
<b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Film and Television</i> (Chair: Rubén Jarazo Álvarez)	<b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Humour, Comedy, and Satire</i> (Chair: Constanza del Río Álvarez)		
18.30-21.30	<b>Dinner</b>		

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2019

7.30-10.00	<b>Breakfast</b>		
9.00-11.00	<b>PANEL SESSIONS 4</b>		
	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> <b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b>  <i>Narrating In/Difference (3)</i>                      (Chair: Marisol Morales Ladrón)                 </td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;"> <b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b>  <i>Childhood and Youth</i>                      (Chair: Belén Martín Lucas)                 </td> </tr> </table>	<b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Narrating In/Difference (3)</i> (Chair: Marisol Morales Ladrón)	<b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Childhood and Youth</i> (Chair: Belén Martín Lucas)
<b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Narrating In/Difference (3)</i> (Chair: Marisol Morales Ladrón)	<b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Childhood and Youth</i> (Chair: Belén Martín Lucas)		
11.00-11.30	<b>Break</b>		
11.30-13.00	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>PLENARY SESSION (Pollentia Room)</b>  <b>Anne Mulhall: “Beyond the Missionary Position: Decentering Whiteness in Irish Literary ‘Multiculturalism’”</b>                      (Chair: Paloma Fresno Calleja)</p>		
13.00-14.30	<b>Lunch Break</b>		
15.00	<b>Trip to Can Oleo Sessions (Palma). The bus will pick up conference delegates in front of the Hotel Lobby at 15.00.</b>		

16.30-17.30	<b>ROUND TABLE (Can Oleo, Palma)</b> <b>“Irish Studies in Spain”</b> (Chair: Asier Altuna García de Salazar)
17.30-18.45	<b>PUBLIC READING AND INTERVIEW (Can Oleo, Palma)</b> <b>Melatu Uche Okorie</b> (Chairs: Sara Martín Ruiz & Aida Rosende Pérez)
18.45-19.00	<b>Break</b>
19.00-20.30	<b>Reception sponsored by the Embassy of Ireland in Spain (Can Oleo, Palma)</b>
21.00	<b>The bus will pick up conference delegates in front Can Oleo main entrance at 21.00.</b>

### Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019

7.30-10.00	<b>Breakfast</b>		
9.00-11.00	<b>PANEL SESSIONS 5</b>		
	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; text-align: center;"><b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Bio-/Necro-politics</i> (Chair: Auxiliadora Pérez Vides)</td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; text-align: center;"><b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Gender and Violence in Transitional Times</i> (Chair: Pilar Villar Árgaiz)</td> </tr> </table>	<b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Bio-/Necro-politics</i> (Chair: Auxiliadora Pérez Vides)	<b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Gender and Violence in Transitional Times</i> (Chair: Pilar Villar Árgaiz)
<b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Bio-/Necro-politics</i> (Chair: Auxiliadora Pérez Vides)	<b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Gender and Violence in Transitional Times</i> (Chair: Pilar Villar Árgaiz)		
11.00-11.30	<b>Break</b>		
11.30-13.00	<b>PUBLIC READING AND INTERVIEW (Pollentia Room)</b> <b>Lisa McInerney</b> (Chair: Hedwig Schwall, KU Leuven)		
13.00-14.30	<b>Lunch Break</b>		
15.00-16.30	<b>PANEL SESSIONS 6</b>		
	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; text-align: center;"><b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Poetic Voices (2)</i> (Chair: Juan Ignacio Oliva)</td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; text-align: center;"><b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Post/Colonial Relations</i> (Chair: Melania Terrazas Gallego)</td> </tr> </table>	<b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Poetic Voices (2)</i> (Chair: Juan Ignacio Oliva)	<b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Post/Colonial Relations</i> (Chair: Melania Terrazas Gallego)
<b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Poetic Voices (2)</i> (Chair: Juan Ignacio Oliva)	<b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Post/Colonial Relations</i> (Chair: Melania Terrazas Gallego)		
16.30-17.30	<b>PANEL SESSIONS 7</b>		
	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; text-align: center;"><b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Voicing Silences in Contemporary Fiction</i> (Chair: Eva Pérez Rodríguez)</td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none; text-align: center;"><b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Transnational Connections</i> (Chair: Miquel Pomar Amer)</td> </tr> </table>	<b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Voicing Silences in Contemporary Fiction</i> (Chair: Eva Pérez Rodríguez)	<b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Transnational Connections</i> (Chair: Miquel Pomar Amer)
<b>PANEL 1. Pollentia Room</b> <i>Voicing Silences in Contemporary Fiction</i> (Chair: Eva Pérez Rodríguez)	<b>PANEL 2. Sophia Room</b> <i>Transnational Connections</i> (Chair: Miquel Pomar Amer)		
17.30-18.00	<b>Closing Ceremony (Pollentia Room)</b>		
18.00-19.00	<b>AEDEI General Assembly</b>		
19.45	<b>The bus will pick up conference delegates for the Gala Dinner in front of the Hotel Lobby at 19.45.</b>		
20.00-22.30	<b>Gala Dinner (Es Figueret Restaurant, Playa de Muro)</b>		
22.30	<b>Cava toast (Club Pollentia Resort Front Yard)</b>		
22.30-24.00	<b>Music Karaoke and Bar (Club Pollentia Resort)</b>		

## PLENARY SESSIONS

### **“Beyond the Missionary Position: Decentering Whiteness in Irish Literary ‘Multiculturalism’”**

Anne Mulhall

University College Dublin (Ireland)

Anne Mulhall is a lecturer in the School of English, Drama, Film and Creative Writing at University College Dublin. She is co-director of UCD Centre for Gender, Feminisms and Sexualities and course director of the MA in Gender, Sexuality and Culture. Anne has published widely at the intersections between 20th century and contemporary Irish literature and culture, feminist, gender and queer theory, and critical migration studies.

### **“Post-Repeal Ireland: A New Dawn?”**

Ailbhe Smyth

Independent Scholar

Ailbhe Smyth is the former head of Women’s Studies (WERRC) at University College Dublin, and has published widely on feminism, politics and culture. A long-time campaigner on feminist, LGBT and other social issues, she was centrally involved in the marriage equality referendum campaign in 2015, and was Co-Director of the “Together for Yes” national campaign in 2018. She co-founded and convenes the Coalition to Repeal the Eighth Amendment.

### **“Irish Studies in Spain”**

Round table

David Clark Mitchell (UI Amergin, University of A Coruña)

Marisol Morales Ladrón (University of Alcalá)

Pilar Villar Argaiz (University of Granada)

Asier Altuna García de Salazar (University of Deusto)





## WRITERS

### Melatu-Uche Okorie

Melatu-Uche Okorie was born in Enugu, (Nigeria) and has been living in Ireland since she arrived there in 2006 as an asylum seeker. Once in Ireland, Melatu-Uche Okorie entered the Direct Provision system, where she spent eight and a half years before her claim was accepted. With a BA in English from the University of Port Harcourt (Nigeria), she started writing while still being institutionalized, and in 2009 she won the Metro Éireann Writing Award with her short story “Gathering Thoughts”.

In addition, she has a MPhil in creative writing from Trinity College, Dublin. Her work has been published in *Dublin: Ten Journeys One Destination*, *Alms on the Highway* (New Writing from the Oscar Wilde Centre), *LIT Journal*, *College Green Magazine*. Her debut collection, *This Hostel Life*, was published in May 2018. She is currently working on a novel.

### Lisa McInerney

Lisa McInerney’s Twitter persona @swearylady became a household name in Ireland around 2006, given the popularity of her award-winning blog “Arse End of Ireland,” where she offered a cynical and darkly comical take on underclass life in a Galway council state, during the Celtic Tiger and after its demise. At that time, *The Irish Times* named McInerney as “arguably the most talented writer at work today in Ireland”. Since then Lisa McInerney’s work has featured in *Winter Papers*, *The Stinging Fly*, *Granta*, *The Guardian*, *BBC Radio 4* and various anthologies. Her story ‘Navigation’ was longlisted for the 2017 Sunday Times EFG Short Story Award. Her debut novel *The Glorious Heresies* won the 2016 Baileys Women’s Prize for Fiction, the 2016 Desmond Elliott Prize, the 2018 Francophonie Ambassadors’ Literary Award and the 2018 Primo Edoardo Kihlgren for European literature. Her second novel, *The Blood Miracles*, won the 2018 RSL Encore Award.

Read Lisa McInerney’s reflections on the life of a writer and the writing of fiction on the Kaleidoscope website, a brilliant EFACIS project on what writing means for Irish writers: <http://kaleidoscope.efacis.com/writer/lisa-mcinerney>



## ABSTRACTS

### “Irish Fiction and Cosmopolitanism: The Work of Colum McCann”

Alsahira Alkhayer (University of Leicester)

For a sensitive issue such as human identity, there is rarely as problematic an example as the Irish. Having, for centuries, undergone different kinds of tension and conflict in trying to form a generally accepted national identity, adapting the concept of Irishness to the needs of transnational times has reflected genuine challenge. In this paper, I examine the fiction of Colum McCann, an Irish writer living in New York and known for a career identified by extensive mobility. In both his short stories and novels, I look at motifs that generate cosmopolitan belonging. Often seen as a negative notion associated with people with no home or roots, cosmopolitanism has recently come to the front of the identity debate with a few contemporary thinkers, such as Beck and Cheah. My starting point is McCann’s mythological allusions that correspond to a utopian alternative for a bitter reality. I argue that McCann’s references to Celtic mythology in his Irish and New York-set work evoke the concept of the world-axis, a belief which suggests unity between the local and the global. Then I show the way in which McCann’s continental novels support the idea of cosmic expansion through the nomadic open-air home of the Roma ethnicity in central Europe. I conclude with a look at the portrayal of the cosmic dancer in McCann’s semi-biographical account of Rudolf Nureyev, the Russian ballet dancer. Cosmopolitanism is McCann’s statement against religious, national, class and ethnic boundaries that lead to animosity between diverse communities.

---

### “Ageing and Migrant Home Care in Ireland: Insights into Difference, Indifference and Silence in Oona Frawley’s *Flight* (2014)”

Asier Altuna García de Salazar (University of Deusto)

Oona Frawley’s debut novel, *Flight*, represents the embrace of the outsider and the different by Irish society. Her novel approaches the silence, indifference and at times racism, with which immigration is still received socially after the Celtic Tiger period, the economy-crash and the recession in Ireland. However, Frawley’s debut novel also offers the fictional approach to stories of ageing and dementia in today’s Ireland. These phenomena present social, economic and political issues that question how Irish society is responding to these topics in terms of visibility, inclusion and care. This paper deals with the analysis of the representation of a young black African woman from Zimbabwe who ends up working as a home carer to an Irish elderly couple who suffer from dementia. In her novel Frawley develops a set of narratives and characters which are used to discuss not only identity and racism with the arrival of the New Irish, but also, how ageing tests Irish responses to new social needs. Migration, race, gender, multiculturalism, integration, ethnicity, class, feminism and *m/others* are analytical frameworks that intertwine in the case of this Zimbabwean woman in her new country. On the other hand, Frawley’s depiction of ageing and dementia allows for the adoption of a critical literary gerontological lens. *Flight* becomes a site of representation and interrogation of contexts within the Irish discourse that address indifference to ageing and those “out of place”. The latter depicted through the exclusion of the female migrant other. Ultimately, this analysis questions silence and the politics of in/difference in recent Irish literature.

**“From Dream to Mud: Assessing the Change in the Treatment of Gender Between Samuel Beckett’s *Dream of Fair to Middling Women* and *How It Is*.”**

Manuel Barberá (University of Valencia)

This study compares the treatment of gender in Samuel Beckett’s first novel, *Dream of Fair to Middling Women* (1932) and in the last one, *How It Is* (1961). Beckett’s style has been referred to as a feminization of writing, in the sense of making the Other visible: silence, failure, old people, impaired people, outcasts, etc.

In this context, we analyze Mary Bryden’s statement that towards the end of Samuel Beckett’s novelistic production, “sexual difference [becomes] sexual indifference”, understanding the concept of *indifference* as a mechanism of ‘alignment’ with these characters, rather than one of rejection. When Beckett accepts failure as the only, inescapable ending, the representation of his main themes becomes universal and abstract, and he progressively abandons an earthly representation of conflicts, and therefore avoids the irrelevant aspects that belong to such representation, including gender.

We will comment upon the main motivations and aspects of this shift in style by focusing on the alleged misogyny in *Dream* and how Beckett advances in his treatment to woman in order to equate it to his treatment to man, in a particular way that eventually leads to a so-called misanthropic, general depiction of characters, whom the author ultimately stands by.

---

**“Sally Rooney’s *Normal People*: Gender and Identity in Times of Recession”**

María Amor Barros del Río (University of Burgos)

Sally Rooney’s second novel, *Normal People* (2018), tells the story of two teenagers who get involved in a complicated sexual and affective relationship that lasts from their school days in a small town into their dynamic and worldly lives at university in Dublin. Contextualized in post-Celtic Tiger Ireland, this novel aligns with other recessionary texts (Bracken and Harney-Mahajan 2017; Cahill 2017) and delves into the problematic articulation of identity within the neoliberal ideologies. Thus, Rooney’s critical gaze of the post-boom era explores the impact of recession upon two teenagers: as cultural representations of the liberal discourse line up with success with consumerism and liberated sexuality (Lettow 2015), *Normal People* concentrates on two individuals who strive for emancipation by means of a suffocating relation of domination. The novel, embedded with power and loss, displays emotional suffering and self-harm to render the damaging effects of individuation and commodification.

---

**“‘Empathy, morality, compassion, maybe even life after death’: John Connolly, the Irish Gothic and a Different Look at Crime Fiction”**

David Clark Mitchell (UI Amergin, University of A Coruña)

“I’m interested in using the structures of crime fiction as a springboard to explore other themes: empathy, morality, compassion, maybe even life after death. And I’m also interested in mixing genres, creating hybrids. Not everybody is going to like that, but it’s still legitimate to try to do it.”  
John Connolly, interview.

According to Jarlath Killeen, “Ireland as a whole is readily identifiable as a Gothic space in popular culture”. The relationship between Ireland and the Gothic goes back to the early days of the genre, when the Sublime, as identified by the Irish philosopher Edmund Burke, became central to the aesthetic concepts which would abound in the articulation of the Gothic as a literary form. The “dark, desolate and stormy grandeur” of the perception of Ireland which was held by the English reading public in the late eighteenth century was readily adaptable for the use of the island as a kind of pre-Enlightenment wilderness which, when combined with its linguistic, religious and cultural ‘otherness’, provided a fertile territory for the growth of a literature which favoured the supernatural, the uncanny and the numerous features which unite to make up the genre. It is Le Fanu who, arguably, was the first writer to merge the Gothic with crime fiction. Le Fanu’s influence was, of course, international, but the paths he trod were also followed by numerous Irish writers. One of the most successful of these is John Connolly who, since the introduction of Charlie Parker with the publication of *Every Dead Thing* in 1999 has, in the eighteen novels which have appeared to date, successfully revised the concepts and tropes which make up the Irish Gothic, albeit in an American context. Connolly’s crime writing is ‘different’ not only in that he avoids explicit references to Ireland – while commenting with great subtlety on Irish matters – but in that he rejects the rational models around which most contemporary crime writing, both from Ireland and elsewhere, has been structured.

---

### **“Towards a Further Understanding of the Violence Experienced by Women in the Irish Revolution”**

Linda Connolly (Maynooth University)

During armed conflicts, women’s bodies become battlefields. Did this apply in the period covering the War of Independence and Civil War or was Ireland’s revolution an exception? The impulse to airbrush, dismiss, minimize and suppress women’s historical experience is painfully evident when we examine the impact of violence and terror on women in Ireland up to the end of the Civil War in 1923. Peter Burke has stated that anthropologists became aware of the problem of “collective amnesia”: ...in investigating oral traditions, while historians encountered it in the course of studying events such as the Holocaust or civil wars of the twentieth century in Finland, Ireland, Russia, Spain and elsewhere. The problem is not a loss of memory at the individual level but the disappearance from public discourse of certain events...These events are in a sense ‘repressed’ not necessarily because they were traumatic, though many of them were but because it has become politically inconvenient to refer to them.

This paper argues that mainstream analysis of the Irish Revolution 1919-23 needs to take women’s experience of violence further into account. The masculinist, militaristic frame at the heart

of Irish historiography needs to be transformed in order to arrive at a more complex view of the dynamics of violence as a whole and more inclusively understood, throughout this period.

More work remains to be done on valuable new sources from this period now available – including the Bureau of Military History Witness Statements and other less known sources, such as Church records and institutional records. Such sources contain detailed information on the widespread use of forced hair shorning, in particular, as a form of sexual policing and gender-specific punishment meted out by both sides in the conflict (crown forces and Republicans), throughout this period. New cases of sexual violence that have recently come to light are also addressed. The question of whether sexual violence was rare in Ireland’s revolution or more common than has been presumed to-date is explored.

---

### “A Voice Fit for Winter: Seamus Heaney’s Poetry on Ageing in *Human Chain*”

Irene De Angelis (University of Turin)

The collection *Human Chain*, which was published in 2010, is Seamus Heaney’s last creative response to illness and old age. The book opens with ‘Had I Not Been Awake’, a meditation on the stroke that caught the poet off-guard, leaving him both shaken and at the same time deeply aware of having been miraculously offered a second chance in life. Heaney’s brush with death led his imagination to linger on the figures of his loved ones, both relatives and friends, in a collection which is also and above all a celebration of human bonds and solidarity. This essay takes into consideration a selection of poems that are spoken in the voice of someone ‘fit for winter’ (Luke Smith 2011), in a book ‘of shadows and shades’ (Colm Toibin 2013), which, as will be shown, is characterized by hope, spiritual buoyancy, and a subtle and reassuring joy.

---

### “‘What makes for a grievable life?’: *Nothing on Earth* by Conor O’Callaghan”

Constanza Del Río Álvarez (University of Zaragoza)

In an article in *The Guardian* signed by Justine Jordan, entitled “A new Irish literary boom: the post-crash stars of fiction” (17 Oct, 2015), the author states that the Celtic Tiger’s downfall, together with the current dynamism of the Irish publishing scene, has propitiated the rise of a new wave of writers (Paul Murray, Kevin Barry, Donal Ryan, Eimear McBride, Sara Baume, Lisa McInerney or Colin Barret) who deal with contemporary Ireland and are unafraid of narrative experimentation. One such writer is poet Conor O’Callaghan, whose first novel, *Nothing on Earth* (2016), will be approached in this presentation. *Nothing on Earth* resonates with the outburst of the property bubble, migration, environmental threats or child sexual abuse, depicting a post-apocalyptic yet quotidian scenario where objects and people disappear and any sense of family ties or community life have been annihilated. Among other issues, the novel touches upon the precariousness and dispensability of human identity and lives in Ireland, and elsewhere for that matter, in our menacing contemporary world, and it is precisely this facet that I will be considering here while trying to answer Judith Butler’s question “what makes for a grievable life?”

**“‘Good girl’: Society’s Indifference and Abuse towards Girls in Louise O’Neill’s *Asking for It*”**

Sara del Río del Río (University of Vigo)

This paper aims to explore how the expectations society places on women and especially young girls because of their gender can leave them vulnerable to abuse. It will do so through the methodological lens of feminism, by analyzing Louise O’Neill’s novel *Asking for it* (2015). It will argue that gender stereotypes are harmful for young girls through the analysis of different scenes which deal with other people’s treatment of Emma, the protagonist. The fact that female sexual desire is a taboo in Irish society contributes to Emma believing that girls should not report their rapes. This paper will also explore how society’s pressure and indifference toward the suffering and abuse of girls, and its siding with the rapists is the main cause that Emma eventually withdraws her accusation. Emma is drugged and does not remember her rape, so she reconstructs the night with what other people say about it. It is never her own story, and no-one believes her: her own family and friends, her community and the media all side with her rapists because she was sexually active and therefore they believe that she could not have been assaulted. This project will also attempt to explain how the media at large is responsible for spreading harmful ideas and judgements about girls’ bodies and behaviours. Finally, it will aim to explore how narratives like O’Neill’s can be helpful to shape readers’ views about gender issues.

---

**“*The Guts*: Celebrating the Gift of Life”**

Aida Díaz Bild (University of La Laguna)

Scholars coming from the most different fields have rejected the characterization of comedy as hostile, scornful and aggressive and have defended its positive, regenerating and creative qualities. Laughter liberates man from everything that oppresses and terrifies him: the sacred, death, divine and human power, etc. Comedy does not ignore suffering or sadness, but makes them more bearable. Comedy does not lead to despair over the tensions and problems of our lives, but to the celebration of life and renewal of hope and faith. Humour creates a comic perspective that allows us to keep a distance and thus transcend a menacing reality. Roddy Doyle is one of the authors that has best understood that human existence is an interplay between comedy and tragedy. He has shown that it is possible to deal with the most difficult and harsh situations in a comic way without trivializing them. In *The Guts* (2013) Jimmy Rabbitte, the hero of Doyle’s 1987 novel *The Commitments*, is diagnosed with bowel cancer. He has part of his colon removed and has to go to chemotherapy sessions. Despite the side effects of cancer – nausea, weakness, diarrhoea, memory loss – Jimmy is capable of coping with his illness by making jokes and laughing at it. He recognizes that he can only transcend his pain and his fear by exploiting his sense of humour. Jimmy’s capacity to laugh in the face of suffering allows him to celebrate life and affirm that the air is “full of wet hope”.

---

**“‘Unmanly and Un-Irish’: Otherness in Irish Political Cartoons, 1922-1939”**

Timothy Ellis (Teesside University)

This paper will explore how and why politicians were depicted as ‘others’ in Irish political cartoons between 1922-39. Whilst L. P. Curtis (1971) has explored how political cartoons depicted Irish nationalists as ‘others’ in the nineteenth century, scholars have devoted little attention to the discourses of political cartoons in independent Ireland. Nonetheless, Irish cartoonists consistently utilized symbols of ‘otherness’ to de-legitimize politicians, between 1922-39.

In 1922, Éamon de Valera appeared in political cartoons as emaciated and effeminate, at a time when the political rhetoric of the Civil War was strongly gendered. In the late 1920s, de Valera’s opponents used the racialized visual symbolism of physiognomy to construct him as irrational, un-manly and un-Irish. During the 1930s, in the *Irish Press*, William Cosgrave appeared in upper-class, British *seonín* clothing, making him appear out of step with contemporary Irish social mores.

Cartoons could potentially delegitimize politicians, because, as Anthea Callen (1998) argues, visual images can potentially signify ‘otherness.’ Those who did not conform to Irish nationalist conceptions of race and gender faced delegitimization. Mairead Carew (2018) argues that, in the inter-war period, constructions of Irishness entailed being a white European. Similarly, Aidan Beatty (2016), argues that Irish nationalism has long privileged masculinity over femininity. Rather than mere humorous illustrations of current affairs, political cartoons thus potentially embodied the socio-political discourses that structured the society of the Irish Free State.

---

### “Echoes of Terrorism in Basque and Irish Literature”

Olga Fernández Vicente (Nebrija University)

Over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, various official bodies have attempted to come up with a universal definition of terrorism. There is general agreement that something called terrorism has long been a major shaping force in the world, and that terrorism today constitutes a major shaping force in both politics and culture. Such notable Irish writers as Brian Friel, Paul Muldoon, Eoin McNamee, and Seamus Heaney engaged with the Troubles in Northern Ireland and beyond. Literary scholars, however, have been surprisingly reluctant to deal with the topic.

As the political rhythm speeded up in the process of Irish emancipation, so other minority nations in similar situations all over Europe were forced to sit up and take notice. It is common knowledge that a frequent effect of any process of de-colonialization is that links of influence, communication and solidarity form between peoples immersed in such a movement, united as they are by shared interests and aims. This effect was particularly remarkable in relation to the Irish and the Basques during the period between the wars, due to a search, carried out by a group of dissident Basque nationalists, for affinities on either side.

In spite of the fact that circumstances experienced throughout the historic process of the evolution of Irish independence cannot find exact parallels in the Basque case, it is impossible to deny evidence present in both scenarios which, though for different causes, eventually had the same effect — the accelerated loss of national identity, language and secular traditions.

---

### **“Rational Skivers or Desperate Strivers? The Problematization of Fraud in the Irish Social Protection System”**

Stephen Gaffney (National University of Ireland, Galway)

Economic crisis, international intervention by the Troika, and increases in the unemployment rate – all formed a prelude to a series of substantial reforms to the Irish social protection system in 2011. Much recent research has focused on how these changes within the system have brought Ireland closer to the workfarist model found in other Anglophone countries. Concurrently, ‘welfare fraud’ emerged as a contentious political issue, leading some commentators to argue that certain groups of welfare claimants have become ‘scapegoats’ for widely experienced financial hardship. This paper brings these two points of inquiry together for the first time by critically engaging with two antifraud strategy policy documents, from 2011 and 2014 respectively, using a Foucauldian inspired policy analysis methodology called ‘What’s the Problem represented to be?’. I find the practices outlined in these documents predominantly problematize fraud as an act carried out by entrepreneurial ‘rational actors’ — silencing alternative problematizations of abuse and error and showing indifference to the lived effects of such an approach. Furthermore, welfare claimants are constituted as subjects under constant surveillance, reinforcing the workfarist turn, but also potentially serving to undermine the legitimacy of the welfare system in the eyes of both claimants and wider society.

---

### **“Archetypal Sibling Rivalry in Charles Maturin’s *Fatal Revenge*”**

Charlie Jorge (University of the Basque Country)

Assumed to be loyal to each other, brothers and sisters often become arch-enemies in myth, legend, religion and secular literature, plotting against one another for a place in their parents’ hearts and love. The Bible shows the stormy relationship of Cain against Abel, with its dramatic outcome, and Irish myth provides the story of the fight between Míl Espáine’s son Eber and Eremon for the control of Ireland. All these come to portray the archetypal sibling rivalry with a kingdom or an inheritance as the fought-over prize.

Charles Robert Maturin lived in Ireland during a troublesome time of rebellions, struggle and the Act of Union. A time in which the Irish heavily felt their Parliament, and entire nation, had been usurped by a neighbouring “sibling”: England. A lover of his native land and its rich culture, Maturin saw how his native Ireland was abused by its closest neighbour, with the dire consequences of rebellion and war. This paper examines the relationship of two brothers, Count Montorio and Father Schemoli, in Maturin’s *Fatal Revenge* (1807) and how it mirrors the archetypal sibling rivalry in which the usurper takes over the place of a usurped, who seeks vengeance for such an evil deed. By analyzing the relationship between both brothers, and the result of their actions, the fraternal rivalry between Ireland and England, and the fatal consequences of usurpation and revenge will be seen in a new light.

---

### **“Ruinous (E)States: Colonial Dispossession in the Writings of James Clarence Mangan and Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu”**



Richard Jorge (University of Santiago de Compostela)

Writers’ representations of a given physical space always bespeak of a certain mood, a certain atmosphere, helping create the fictions that shape a literary canon. A given setting — be it transposed or immediate — is always a representation of a particular context, of a particular time and its complexities, being embedded in the more abstract concepts a writer, whether consciously or unconsciously so, paints in their fictional landscape. Created fictions thus parallel a writer’s reality, transcending the immediate and epitomizing the abstract. Colonial interventions disrupt the natural relation between a given land and its people, complicating, twisting and disturbing the harmony established between the landscape and its original inhabitants, distorting — as Ashcroft phrases it in *Post-Colonial Transformation* — “a people’s sense of place” (125). Nowhere is this more evident than in the context of nineteenth-century Ireland, in which the Anglo-Irish and the native Gaelic population coexisted, in a rather inharmonious manner, in their native soil.

Being the product of colonialism, the Anglo-Irish display a series of anxieties and traumas which are reflected in the writings of their descendants, entrapped in their manor houses and not daring to venture “beyond the Pale.” Meanwhile, the native Irish population had to contend with poverty, lack of resources and conflict which left them, very often, homeless, and victims to an ever-increasing colonial process. This paper will explore how both James Clarence Mangan and J.S. Le Fanu used their settings to epitomize the Irish colonial process and their consequences to both the Anglo-Irish and their Gaelic counterparts.

---

### “Abortive Citizens: Direct Provision in Catholic Limbo”

Sean Kennedy (Saint Mary’s University)

“Abortive Citizens: Direct Provision in Catholic Limbo”, examines how the trope of ‘direct provision’ operates in Catholic teachings about the unbaptized child as well as in the discourses that structure “the asylum seeker” in an Irish context. Drawing on work by Eithne Luibhéid, Ronit Lentin and Anne Mulhall, the paper will trace how children, born and unborn, baptized and not, are constructed discursively in ways that set a precedent for the discursive framing of asylum seekers under Direct Provision (DP). Looking at the recent case of a woman who was force-fed as part of an overall strategy to deliver her of her “unwanted child”, the aim is to analyze what “direct provision” can come to mean in a biopolitical regime that is overdetermined by Catholic legislation on reproductive rights.

---

### ROUND TABLE: Affects and Affinities in Recent Northern Irish Literature and Culture

#### “Northern Ireland and the Politics of Boredom”

George Legg (King’s College London)

This paper provides a new interpretation of the Northern Irish Troubles by drawing on literary, cultural and economic theory. Displacing traditionally hyper-local historiographies that interpret the Troubles as a self-contained conflict (cf. Richard English, Simon Prince and Geoffrey Warner), this

paper frames the politics of Northern Ireland through the global perspectives offered by post-war capitalism. Specifically, it uses diverse cultural texts (photography and literature, urban planning and film) to examine the affective energies produced by capitalism’s persistent attempt to resolve Northern Ireland’s ethnic-national divisions: a process I call the politics of boredom. Such an approach warrants a reconceptualization of boredom as much as cultural production. In close readings of town planning, the work of Victor Sloan and the writing of Mary Beckett, I argue that cultural texts can delineate a more democratic - less philosophical - conception of ennui. Critics of the Northern Irish Peace Process have begun to apprehend some of these tensions. But an analysis of Northern Ireland’s post-Troubles condition cannot account for the protracted and enervating impact of capitalism’s attempts to pacify the North. Consequently, this paper returns to the origins of the Troubles and use influential theories of capital accumulation to illustrate how a politicized sense of boredom persists throughout, and after, the years of conflict.

---

### **“(In)Differences?: The Politics of Friendship in post-Troubles Literature”**

Stefanie Lehner (Queen’s University Belfast)

For Hannah Arendt, friendship constitutes a political space which respects the irreducible difference of the other-as-friend yet, in so doing, facilitates an understanding of the other’s perspective. For the political theorist Andrew Schaap, Arendt’s conception provides the basis for a “political reconciliation”, which presupposes “a plurality of potentially incommensurable perspectives” but entails “striving for a sense of commonness” (Schaap 2005, 4). Political and ideological differences become here the basis for envisaging a community that is “not yet” – but can these differences be retained, or are they ultimately subsumed in sameness or indifference to the other’s politics and concerns?

This paper explores the politics of friendship in post-Troubles fiction from Northern Ireland, considering if they may offer an alternative model for a political reconciliation than suggested by the peace process and outlined by the 1998 Agreement. Drawing on both Arendt and Schaap, I suggest a distinction between a *filiative* and an *affiliative* politics of reconciliation: between one based on sameness and indifference and one that respects and embraces difference. Focusing on Robert McLiam Wilson’s *Eureka Street* (1996), Glenn Patterson’s *The Rest Just Follows* (2014) and Mary O’Donnell’s *Where They Lie* (2014), this paper suggests that all three novels consider friendship as a political principle that can give rise to an *affiliative* reconciliation in invoking a not yet community beyond ethno-national lines.

---

### **“‘Heat and time and touch can fix anything’: Tracing Skin Networks in Northern Irish Short Fiction”**

Caroline Magennis (University of Salford)

This paper will offer an overview of the depiction of Northern Irish skin in recent short story collections, particularly Bernie McGill’s *Sleepwalkers* (2013) and Roisin O’Donnell’s *Wild Quiet* (2016). Drawing on work by Laura Marks, Abbie Garrington, Virginia Woolf, Sara Ahmed and

others, this paper seeks to examine how we might engage with this new representation of the body and the potential of the haptic to be a mode of both self-knowledge and transmission. In these short stories, moments of connection through touch are lingered on and memories of touch past are pivotal. White Northern Irish skin is not valorized or celebrated, but often cast as something fragile and permeable that absorbs the toxic quality of the atmosphere. Scars are everywhere, and language is a fleshy mechanism involving lips, tongues and teeth. This paper will argue that recent short stories continue to move the Northern Irish body away from its representational dead end as overdeterministic symbol of the conflict. Rather than just the body in pain, skin is revealed to be a complex medium that yields no easy symbolic answers.

---

**“A Long History of Globalization: the Necropolitics of Abjection in Emma Donoghue’s  
‘Counting the Days’”**

Belén Martín-Lucas (University of Vigo)

Reading Emma Donoghue’s short story “Counting the Days” as a text that inscribes the Irish passage in TransCanadian literature (Kamboureli and Miki 2007, García Zarranz 2017), this paper will focus on the cross-border transit from Ireland to Canada depicted in the story as responding to forces operating in the long history of globalization. Mobility forced by financial debt and the risk of starvation in the mid-19th century Irish context is a form of necropolitics: the bodies crossing the pathogeographic (Feel Tank Chicago) space of the Atlantic face physical and emotional risks, and economic refugees remain perilously marginalized upon arrival in their new society. With recourse to affect theories, this paper will examine how Donoghue brings to the forefront the necropolitics of both old and current biocapitalism (Lettow 2018), how abjection produces anger, and how this anger materializes in cholera and ultimately in death.

Feel Tank Chicago. *Pathogeographies*. <http://www.pathogeographies.net/>

García Zarranz, Libe. *TransCanadian Feminist Fictions: New Cross-Border Ethics*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s UP, 2017.

Kamboureli, Smaro and Roy Miki, eds. *Trans.Can.Lit. Resituating the Study of Canadian Literature*. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier UP, 2007.

Lettow, Susanne. “Biocapitalism”. *Marx from the Margins: A Collective Project, from A to Z. Krisis. Journal for Contemporary Philosophy*. 2 (2018). <http://krisis.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Krisis-2018-2-Susanne-Lettow-Biocapitalism.pdf>

---

**“A Different Past in Marsha Mehran’s Novels”**

Sara Martín-Ruiz (University of the Balearic Islands)

Various activist and cultural platforms and products, such as MASI (Movement of Asylum Seekers in Ireland), ARN (Anti-Racism Network Ireland), ADI (Anti-Deportation Ireland), Vukasin Nedeljkovic’s *Asylum Archive* (2018), or Melatu Okorie’s *This Hostel Life* (2018), have recently highlighted the social exclusion to which asylum seekers are subjected in Ireland. Still, the system

of Direct Provision and Dispersal, established in 2000, should be understood not as an isolated case in 21<sup>st</sup> century Ireland, but rather as part of a longer Irish history of exclusion of “the other”. In the aftermath of the 2004 Citizenship Referendum, an epitome of Ireland’s indifference toward its immigrants, Marsha Mehran (Iran 1977-Ireland 2014) published *Pomegranate Soup* (2005), followed by *Rosewater and Soda Bread* (2008). Set in the fictional Irish village of Ballinacroagh in the 1980s, Mehran’s novels follow the story of the Aminpour sisters, three Iranian refugees who open a Persian café in the small village. In this paper, drawing on scholars such as Sara Ahmed, Ronit Lentin, or Judith Butler, I propose to situate Mehran’s magical realist novels in the context of isolation and exclusion of asylum seekers and refugees in Direct Provision, post-2004 Citizenship Referendum. A politicized and contextualized reading of Mehran’s works elucidates an alternative re-writing of an Irish present of exclusion for racialized immigrants through the inscription of these “othered bodies” in an imaginary past of solidarity with others deemed as different, such as Travellers, Second World War refugees, and single mothers in pre-Celtic Tiger Ireland.

---

### **“Girls and Women in Rosaleen McDonagh’s *Mainstream*: Resisting In/difference”**

Ekaterina Mavlikaeva (University of Vigo)

This paper examines literary representations of girls and women in the play *Mainstream* (2016) by Irish Traveller author Rosaleen McDonagh. They are analyzed at the intersection of Traveller ethnicity, gender, disability and age. McDonagh, the author of six plays and a member of Aosdána, is also actively involved in Traveller politics and community work. In her work as playwright, activist and scholar, she explores the issues of institutional racism and discrimination experienced by the Traveller community, as well as those of gender and disability equality, among others.

*Mainstream* explores the experiences of Traveller characters during and following their institutionalization by the Irish State as children and adolescents. They are juxtaposed to those of a settled woman with a disability, whose expectations and view of Traveller ethnicity, dis/ability status and gender constructions often collide with the experiences of Travellers in the play. One of the main characters who, as a girl, experienced abuse while institutionalized in a boarding school for children with disabilities, negotiates her gender, disability, Traveller ethnicity and age in a variety of ways. Throughout the play she resists hegemonic constructions of gendered and disabled bodies, the ‘triple’ oppression and marginalization of Traveller girls and women with disabilities and their constructions as negatively different by a largely indifferent state. These hegemonic constructions are challenged through her activism and solidarity with those similarly affected, as well as her performance of gender, ethnicity and disability on her own terms.

---

### **“A Girl is a Half-formed Thing: Reading and Writing Trauma”**

Paula McGrath (University of Limerick)

My research project on representations of trauma in prose fiction has its origins in my novel writing practice, when the strategy I was using to describe a rape scene, of fracturing the narrative to

represent my protagonist’s fracturing consciousness, suddenly seemed hackneyed, a default means of representing trauma.

Traditional trauma studies, based on Cathy Caruth’s reading of Freud within the context of PTSD, saw trauma as necessarily belated, unspeakable, and therefore unrepresentable (Caruth, Whitehead). Aligning literature with this model, the novelist resorts to strategies associated with literary modernism such as stream of consciousness and fractured syntax. However, with changing psychological definitions of trauma, and new approaches to semiotic, rhetorical, and social concerns, literary trauma theory necessarily evolved beyond its psychoanalytic origins towards a more pluralistic approach (Balaev).

My project contrasts modernist strategies used by Eimear McBride to represent trauma in her novel, *A Girl is a Half-formed Thing* with those used in Annie Ryan’s stage adaptation of the text, and analyzes both approaches within the context of current literary trauma theory. Although Ryan’s adaptation uses McBride’s words, the space of the stage requires the embodiment of interior thought and, uttered aloud, syntactical and other modernist strategies are effectively neutralized. Using a combination of methods, including textual analysis, interview, field-work and practice-based research, my findings show that the contemporary Irish novel has trauma options beyond Modernism, and reveal that the intersection between theatre and the novel is fertile ground for the novelist.

---

### “The Woman Between: Gender, Liminality and Violence in *The Fall and The Bridge*”

Gerardine Meaney (University College Dublin)

This paper offers a comparative analysis of the figure of the female detective in 2 television crime dramas, one set in Belfast, another on the border between Sweden and Denmark. Stella in *The Fall* (Acorn productions for BBC 2 UK and RTE Ireland, 2013) and Saga in *The Bridge (Bron/ Broen)* (Sveriges Television Sweden and Danmarks Radio Denmark, 2011) are central protagonists in collaborative cross country productions. Both series have distinctive noir characteristics and both use crime narratives to explore places and space on edge, characterized by uncertain identities in the present and long, destructive shadows from the past. Social network analysis offers a rich interpretative framework for analysis of how long form crime drama works and in particular, the ambiguities and tensions implicit in noir’s engagement with social realism. This paper will explore how Stella is connected to other women in the narrative and how Saga operates within a complex supportive framework, using the techniques of social network analysis. Both detectives embody an in-between space where anxieties about national and gender identities are investigated. The preoccupation with liminality is repeated and reflected in both series in relation to gender and sexual violence. Both women detectives occupy and negotiate spaces outside of traditional gender roles, but comparison with a key text of Nordic Noir illuminates the very different narrative, generic, political and social frameworks which structure contemporary Irish crime narrative.

---

## **“Bridging Differences or Burning Bridges: Contemporary Irish Transformations of Greek Tragedy”**

Marit Meinhold (University of Konstanz)

This paper is based on the observation of a striking occurrence of new and transformed versions of Greek tragedy by Irish authors in the last four decades. The connections between Ireland and ancient Greek authors and texts go back many centuries and they remained culturally relevant up to the present. Greek tragedy, particularly, has been used since the 1980s as a formal framework for discussions about different approaches to identity, be it national or individual.

The paper addresses difference in these Irish transformations of the ancient texts on two levels. First, it identifies formal strategies to bridge the difference between the original cultural form of Greek tragedy and contemporary viewing and staging conventions, focusing on the attempt to keep enough of this difference noticeable to distance the audience from the action. These cases are contrasted with instances where the adaptations deliberately break with the established form, thus changing the meaning and potentially the accessibility of the tragedy.

The second relevant aspect is the difference between conflicting social roles that is put centre-stage in the Irish adaptations. While the original conflicts remain valid, they are re-imagined as internal struggles between irreconcilable roles the characters have to play within the staged world. This tension is resolved differently but always with tragic outcome, therefore highlighting the risk of pushing individuals towards desperate choices in environments that do not tolerate difference.

---

## **“Silence as an Architectural Form of Containment in Anna Burns’ *Milkman*”**

Marisol Morales Ladrón (University of Alcalá)

Throughout the last few months, from the moment the Booker prize was publicly announced, Anna Burns’ awarded novel *Milkman* (2018) has stirred the minds of critics, reviewers and scholars alike. Set in Northern Ireland, at a time when the Troubles were at its peak, the narrative defiantly targets at what appears to be sexual harassment, to further disclose layers and layers of more subtle meanings related to sociopolitical (self) control and surveillance, within an atmosphere of pathological silence. Connecting Michel Foucault’s theories, developed in his studies *Discipline and Punish* and *History of Sexuality*, among others, the purpose of this proposal is to explore Burns’ novel in light of Foucault’s model of bio-power, within which the panopticon, understood as “a type of location of bodies in space”, will be the main focus of attention. Silence, consequently, surfaces as both the voluntary alternative and the inevitable consequence of the imposition of regulatory practices on docile bodies, on a disempowered microstructure that eventually facilitates the success of such technology of power.

---

## **“Spanish Dimensions of the Irish Diaspora”**

William H. Mulligan, Jr. (Murray State University)

In looking at areas where significant numbers of Irish people migrated Latin America can seem an anomaly. The largest number migrated within the Anglophone world and British Empire/Commonwealth, (with the understanding that the United States was part of the Empire until 1783). After Irish Independence this pattern became more pronounced at least in part due to changes in US immigration laws. However, the Diaspora is much more complex. Irish connections with Spain were a significant part of the Diaspora from the Irish colleges through the nineteenth century at least. Spain was an important, if secondary part of the Diaspora/ By looking at each destination country within the larger context of the overall Diaspora the focus shifts and allows new perspectives to emerge. Ireland has not been static and the culture and sense of Irish identity people brought with them has been dynamic and as it has developed has affected both how migrants were received and how they adapted to their new homes, for example. Similarly, host nations’ culture and identity has been dynamic as well. That has also affected both how they Irish were received and their adaptation. I refer to this as “time of arrival” as a shorthand term. My paper will look at two things primarily. First, Irish involvement in the Spanish military and colonial service in comparison to Irish service in the comparable British services and second, Irish migration to South America in the context of the “time of arrival” of the Irish and how it affected the development of their communities.

---

**“‘At the back of my mind’: Unreliability and Guilt in John Boyne’s *A History of Loneliness*”**

Alicia Muro Llorente (University of La Rioja)

John Boyne presents in *A History of Loneliness* (2014) a protagonist and narrator eaten by his own guilt. Set in Ireland from the 1960s to 2013, the novel tackles the issue of sexual abuse of young boys by Irish priests and the cover-up of the scandal by the Catholic Church. Father Odran Yates is a guilty soul not for his actions but for his inaction – it takes him the whole novel to admit that he had enough proof of the sexual abuse being committed by priests around him, including his own best friend, but still did not report them, contributing to their crime. As a narrator, Odran is unreliable by omission, for he is not able to admit some events or to his holding of certain information. There is some knowledge Odran directly withholds from the reader, whilst there is also some hidden information that he is not ready to admit to an audience or even to himself. Besides, his playing with time, memory, trauma, and guilt makes him unable to be fully trustworthy when recounting his past, and therefore these issues will also be taken into consideration. Following the revealing methodology established by James Phelan, Mary Patricia Martin and other literary scholars, I will identify Odran as an unreliable narrator under their classification depending on the axis in which unreliability occurs.

---

**“Decolonizing Irish ‘Post’-colonial Studies? Resistance to and Appropriation of (De)coloniality in English-language ‘Post’-colonial Studies on Ireland”**

Eóin Ó Cuinneagáin (Linnaeus University)

This paper aims at articulating a transdisciplinary and pluriversal Gaelic-centred method to facilitate moves towards epistemic delinking from modernity/coloniality. By considering the visual and literary productions of George Petrie (1790-1866) and their connection to the colonial project in Ireland, it offers a discussion of the contributions of English-language “post”-colonial scholarship on Ireland, including the work of Luke Gibbons, Gerry Smyth, Declan Kiberd, Linda Connolly and Eóin Flannery, put into dialogue with English and Spanish language decolonial scholarship, including that of Ramón Grosfoguel, Catherine Walsh, Sabelo Ndlovu Gatsheni, Lewis Gordon, Madina Tlostanova, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, Walter Mignolo and María Lugones.

Mindful of Irish post-colonial scholarship’s close ties to Indian subaltern studies, it considers the reasons that may explain why scholarship on coloniality in Ireland has appeared to circumvent the contributions of the modernity/coloniality group and (de)coloniality as an attitude. It imagines “post”-colonial scholarship as a reformulation of imperialism and asks to what extent, in Ireland, it was built on what Nikita Dhawan has called affirmative sabotage of the master’s tools in terms of how it affirms disciplinary boundaries, English letters and Eurocentric/Anglocentric knowledge as the entry points into perceiving the Gaelic experience of modernity/coloniality. It suggests that (de)coloniality can open up the space for Gaelic-derived ways of knowing to enter into institutional domains which beforehand have not known (via exclusion of and extraction from) Gaelic sensibilities.

The paper is not a question of whether decoloniality debunks postcolonial studies – to believe it as such would be to think in terms of modern competitiveness and disciplinary boundaries; rather, it is – while highlighting ‘Irish’ “post”-colonial studies as an elite, Anglocentric form of thinking – to invoke decoloniality as an auxiliary attitude that centers Gaelic perception and enables the terms of the conversation to be altered concerning Gaelic modes of being and knowing. To do this it suggests bridging Gaelic language scholarship, decolonial thought and Gaelic-derived cosmology/epistemology to generate a perspective on modernity from a position where it can be disbelieved or believed.

---

### **“The Ungrammatical Sublime: Edna O’Brien’s Linguistic Difference”**

Maureen O’Connor (University College Cork)

Edna O’Brien’s prose can be flamboyant and lush, a linguistic excess that pushes her texts into unconventional shapes. Her intertextual rhetorical strategies partake of an aesthetics of citation, a parabola of referentiality that gathers the author’s own texts in its sweep and puts its heterogeneous sources to original uses. She has regularly been accused of grammatical irregularity, but these formal deficiencies can register as defiance of formal authority and its determinate structures. The kind of textual dissonance that distinguishes O’Brien’s literary practice provokes self-consciousness in the reader, brings a text’s textuality to our attention, potentially destabilizing the normative dynamic and distance “proper” to the relationship between author, character, and reader.

In post-independence Ireland one channel through which ideological hegemony is maintained is the hegemony of normative representational structures. O’Brien regularly betrays ideals of chaste and proper womanliness, a state of moral disorder critics once claimed to find reflected in the writer’s



very diction and syntax. One of O’Brien’s distinctive formal experimentations has been the use of second person to narrate texts, such as *Mother Ireland* and the novel *A Pagan Place* (1970), a diffuse and disorientating representational mode that lays bare the fictive metaphor of narrative “person.” O’Brien undermines the textual conceit’s strategy of what Dennis Shofield describes as its “naturalization and anthropomorphism which acts to maintain particular normative ideological/discursive structures,” just one example of the novelist’s interrogation of “natural” structures of dominance even as they occur at the level of language itself.

---

### **“In Her Shoes: Writing In/different Irelands”**

Tina O’Toole (University of Limerick)

From Stephen Dedalus to Francie Brady by way of “Rattrap”, Irish culture has had an enduring love affair with alienated young men; significant contemporary writers continue to cite Holden Caulfield as their literary lodestone. These boys offer a model of archetypal dissidence with evident attractions for Irish writers and readers alike. However, the recent wave of award-winning novels by relative literary newcomers, including Anna Burns (2018), Sally Rooney (2017; 2018), Kit de Waal (2018), Paula McGrath (2017), Lisa McInerney (2015), and Eimear McBride (2013), stage a new anti-hero, just as self-destructive as her literary brothers but equally determined to explode the pieties of the Irish social order. This fiction evokes the rapid social changes experienced in contemporary Ireland but rather than offering up a shiny new hero, busily “leaning-in” to contribute to Ireland 2.0, the feminist protagonists we encounter here are frequently traumatized, still fighting old battles while tackling new ones. In her important 2004 essay on postmodern fiction, Patricia Coughlan indicts “new forms of regulation where individualism is the dominant mode of selfhood” in Irish culture. Coughlan argues that women, targeted by “the rationalizing language of the modern, with its emphasis on personal freedom and autonomy of subjects, [which] ignores personal ties and emotional connectedness”, are consequently rendered “increasingly isolated” by social expectations demanding “style, affluence, success, and a guise of self-sufficiency” (2004, 177–8). The emotional and physiological damage caused by such regulation on top of the psychic wounds resulting from a history of emotional continence, not to mention the historic and contemporary incarceration of women and children in state-run institutions, all surface in this fiction. Focusing in particular on Anna Burns *Milkman* (2018) and Eimear MacBride’s *A Girl is a Half-Formed Thing* (2013), this paper explores the survival mechanisms adopted by their protagonists in the face of in/difference in the recent Irish past and present.

---

### **“Locus Amoenus? Epiphanies of (In)Visibility Towards (In)Difference in Irish Spatial Poetry”**

Juan Ignacio Oliva Cruz (University of La Laguna)

James Joyce described most appropriately in his writings the way in which exiling ourselves from the cultural centers of our identity can open the mind to new horizons in terms of recognition of our moral virtues and flows –thus, erasing indifference to the locus we inhabit and highlighting the

difference that exists with the many several others we cohabit. Through the revealing image of the moth flying around a blinding light, the writer traced a panorama of revelations about the condition of Ireland as a country of dichotomies and contrasts: an exuberant green haven and a historically deprived land, a beatific milieu and a poignant environment, a strong cohesive society in terms of religion, class and race and an oppressed and claustrophobic nation, a caring mother island and a cannibalistic sow eating her own lineage. The purpose of this paper is therefore to explore all these elements in the works of Irish poets, such as Seamus Heaney, Eavan Boland, Eamon Grennan or Paul Muldoon, as epitomes of the tormented relationship between displaced personalities with dysfunctional educations and behaviors and the milieu they inhabit, in terms of environmental justice and toxic discourse as well as ecotonal variety and subtlety. Especially relevant information will be given by the series of misunderstandings shown whenever there is coexistence among humans and more-than-humans, or the ecophilias and phobias produced by the hegemonic spatial treatment of buildings, residences, parks and public places, among other cultural loci.

---

### **“Human-Animal Relatedness in Sinéad Morrissey’s Poetry”**

Manuela Palacios González (University of Santiago de Compostela)

From the fields of philosophy and anthropology, proposals ranging from Merleau-Ponty’s ecophenomenology in the middle of the twentieth century to, more recently, Derrida (2006), De Fontenay (2008), Horta (2016), Velasco (2017) and others have focused, whether from standpoints of identity, difference or indistinction, on the notion of human as animal. This debate about human-animal relatedness is inscribed in a broader ecological discussion about the relationship between human and nonhuman nature which questions anthropocentrism. Along similar lines, feminism has denounced the androcentric animalization of women aimed at depriving them of rationality and dignity and reducing them to an object of consumption (Adams 1990, Seeber 2002). However, the “animal” and “ecological” turn of the last few decades (Huggan & Tiffin 2015) has also allowed us to detect a woman-centred vindication of animality that seeks to recuperate our repressed animal nature and rebel against oppressive masculinist conventions (Puleo 2011, Wells 2018). On the basis of these contemporary debates, the present paper will analyze the ways in which the Northern-Irish poet Sinéad Morrissey explores the ties of continuity between human and nonhuman nature, as well as her denunciation of the exploitation, degradation, spectacularization and repression of women and animals.

---

### **“Systemic Crime and Trans-historical Indifference in Benjamin Black’s *Quirke Series*”**

Auxiliadora Pérez Vides (University of Huelva)

Under the pen name of Benjamin Black, the acclaimed Irish writer John Banville has published seven crime fiction novels, known as “the Quirke series”, set against the backdrop of 1950s Dublin and featuring Quirke, a middle-aged pathologist who works at the Holy Family Hospital. Taken together, the books tackle some of the crimes that stemmed from the strict religious repression prevalent in mid-twentieth century Ireland, like illegal adoption (*Christine Falls* and *Even the*

*Dead*), sexual exploitation and drug dealing (*The Silver Swan*), incest (*Elegy for April*), paedophilia (*A Death in Summer*) or clerical abuse (*Holy Orders*). It is my contention in this paper that the existence of systemic crime is suggested along the series, as the stories portray the interconnection of the different agents of hegemonic power that controlled the social order of Ireland’s capital city. Similarly, I will attempt to demonstrate that Black’s narrative articulation of atrocities that had been absent from public discourse for a long time reveals his critique of the trans-historical indifference to socio-structural victimization that has dominated the Irish milieu. Thus, these crime novels, whose publication coincides with the wave of academic studies, survivor memoirs and artistic productions that have made public some of the hidden intricacies of that era in the island, can be said to demand urgent action over the ongoing effects of such ethos of dominance, as accountability has not been sufficiently purged in the present yet.

---

### “Non-Human Perspective in the Poetry of Paula Meehan”

Wit Pietrzak (University of Łódź)

Paula Meehan has observed that “the big loser [of the Tiger-period boom on Ireland] has been the environment. There are ecosystems and marginal zones that will never recover.” While the field of ecocriticism has made serious headway over the last decade in the critical approaches to Irish literature, the reckless exploitation of the natural environment that Meehan stresses has been given less attention from the Irish ecocritics. And attention it deserves, as the 2018 IPCC report reveals a grim future for our planet, in which Ireland has played a less than positive role. As Ireland seeks to endorse, for example, stricter controls over its carbon footprint, it is up to the writers and poets, as Lawrence Buell and many others have long argued, to open new avenues of understanding of our relationship with the environment. The presentation argues that what is needed for the reconceptualization of this relationship is an extension of the notion of empathy to cover non-human life. It is my contention that where facts alone fail to incite action and understanding, sensibility needs to be incorporated into the debate. Meehan’s recent poetry, particularly *Painting Rain* and *Geomantic*, is here shown to create a language of empathic openness towards the environment, which shifts the focus from the human-oriented perspective to a non-human-oriented perspective-taking, thus furthering the insight offered by Amy Coplan, who has recently claimed that Other-oriented perspective-taking represents the actual empathic stance. It is by re-orienting the focus of poetic investigation onto the fauna and flora that Meehan stands to establish a non-hierarchical and non-exploitative perception of nature.

---

### “A Different American West: Sebastian Barry’s *Days Without End*”

David Rio (University of the Basque Country)

The present paper will examine Sebastian Barry’s transnational reading of the American West in his novel *Days Without End* (2016), emphasizing his exploration of new cultural constructions of western experiences and his revision of traditional western geographies, motifs, and themes. It is argued that Barry’s embracing of a different reality from the archetypal western rhetoric of conquest,

masculinity, and white power allows him to complicate classical constructions of a place and a space too often tied to archetypal frontier mythology. The novel, with its focus on a poor homosexual Irish émigré who flees to America to escape the Great Famine, challenges traditional cowboy mythology revealing the existence of other neglected western identities. The novel renders the West differently, questioning romanticized versions of the American West and drawing interesting parallels between the Irish immigrants in this region and the Native Americans. Survival often becomes the main priority of Barry’s characters, particularly of those who depart from the West’s expectations of masculinity, ethnocentrism, economic success, and individualism. In fact, the main characters’ national and personal identity with its emphasis on class, sexual, and ethnic divergence dispute the truth of reductionist interpretations of this territory and its cultural iconography. Overall, *Days Without End* may be regarded as an insightful approach to a different imagery of the American West, proving the ability of the Western to move beyond its mythic frameworks and to travel across global spaces.

---

**“When the Others Have Gone: An Approach to Love and Shame in Irish Women’s Poetry”**

Aranca Rodríguez Fernández (University of Santiago de Compostela)

The aim of this paper is to analyze the relationship between the act of falling in love and the feeling of shame in a number of works of poetry written by women authors, such as Vona Groarke, Eavan Boland and Kerrie O’Brien. Taking into account the excessive rationality in which our society is structured, even when it comes to feelings, as Eva Illouz asserts (2014), falling in love, often a synonym of breaking the rules, may produce feelings of shame when shared, or a sentiment of freedom when experienced.

This paper will focus its theoretical view on gender studies to explore the relationship between women and the long for rebellion, that falling in love may provide, but also the critical gaze that comes from outside, exploring as well the relationship between the poetic subjects and the “others”. It will also take into account the many different ways in which the act of falling in love and its actions are described in poetry, to try and understand how looking at love from outside (even the poetic voices themselves) may produce certain shame, because of what is socially acceptable or unacceptable.

At the same time, this paper will try and establish connections between different generations of women poets in Ireland to observe how certain views on emotions and women have continued to be present in society.

---

**“Transformations in Parent-child Relations: Lisa McInerney’s *The Blood Miracles* and Kevin Barry’s *Beatlebone*”**

Hedwig Schwall (KU Leuven)

Lisa McInerney’s work is often compared to Kevin Barry’s – at the end of *The Blood Miracles*, the author even credits him with repeated thanks. In this paper we will analyze one novel by each of these writers to trace how identity is represented. In both *The Blood Miracles* (2017) and *Beatlebone*

(2015) identity is a ‘matter’ mainly constituted by transgenerational material and childhood experiences. In both cases the city of the protagonist’s childhood (respectively Cork and Liverpool) is another formative factor in the process. The difficulties in the parental relations of both protagonists’ dysfunctional families are compounded by drugs. This leads to a crisis which allows us to rethink the ‘self’ from the ground up. In order to map what is happening to the protagonists (John Lennon and Ryan Cusack) we will follow René Anzieu’s theory of The Skin-Ego and from there see how the relations between inside and outside world build up a new self. The interactions between subconscious and social world will be central in the realignment of the senses, which are vital to the representation of identity-as-a-process in both novels.

---

### **“Overcoming Difference in *Mickybo and Me*”**

Stephanie Schwerter (University of Valenciennes)

This paper concentrates on Terry Loan’s film *Mickybo and Me* (2004), a cinematographic adaptation of Owen McCafferty’s play *Mojo Mickybo* (1998). The film is set in Belfast at the beginning of the Troubles during the summer of 1970. In the centre of the action is the friendship between Jonjo, a nine-year-old boy from the Protestant community, and Mickybo, an 8-year-old Catholic. The two protagonists are not only separated from each other by ethno-religious boundaries but also by class differences. While Mickybo’s family belongs to West-Belfast’s working class, Jonjo lives with his parents in a middle class area of South-West Belfast. Sharing a passion for George Roy Hill’s western *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (1969), the two boys escape from Belfast in order to re-enact the lives of their cinema heroes in the countryside. Mickybo and Jonjo create their own imaginary world in which difference and otherness do not exist by taking on the roles of Butch Cassidy (Paul Newman) and the Sundance Kid (Robert Redford). On their return to Belfast, they are caught by the reality of the Troubles. Terry Loan attempts to shed a new light on the Northern Irish conflict by employing the perspective of children. In this paper, I explore the different ways in which the director of the film uses humour and irony, as well as intertextual references, in order to explore the tensions between the Northern Irish Catholic and Protestant communities from an innovative angle.

---

### **“‘And the world has become a travesty’: In/Difference in David Ireland’s *Cyprus Avenue*”**

María Isabel Seguro (University of Barcelona)

*Cyprus Avenue*, first produced at the Abbey Theatre’s Peacock Stage in February 2016 and later transferred to The Royal Court Theatre in London, is a dark, humorous reflection on the identity crisis undergone by Eric Miller, a middle-aged loyalist in post-Good-Friday-Agreement Belfast. Convinced that the outcome of the peace process irremediably leads to the eradication of ‘Ulster loyalist culture’ (Ireland 44), Eric’s ultimate proof of his fears is the fact that he sees his newly-born granddaughter as the reincarnation of Gerry Adams. His belief that Republicanism has infiltrated his home – and probably other Protestant families too – ‘as part of a long-term strategy to destabilize the Union’ (52) is the play’s starting point for analyzing the persistent need of the ‘Other’ for

constructing the ‘I’ – the need to establish difference with the Other via indifference to this Other’s conditions. For Eric, now the tables have been turned and his sense of vulnerability heightens his discourse of ‘us’ versus ‘them’ – instead of providing an opportunity for reflecting on the general vulnerability of humankind. From this perspective, this paper explores how *Cyprus Avenue* criticizes the inability to recognize, in Judith Butler’s words, “the precarious life of the Other” (2004: xviii), since, to be or feel injured “means that one has the chance to reflect upon injury, to find out the mechanism of its distribution, to find out who else suffers from permeable borders, unexpected violence, dispossession, and fear, and in what ways” (xii).

---

### **“Truth Friction in Northern Ireland: Caught Between Apologia and Humiliation”**

Peter Shirlow (University of Liverpool)

The Belfast Agreement ended the bulk of paramilitary and state violence, underlined majority consent, acknowledged the desire for Irish unification, reformed policing, de-militarized security and embedded ethno-sectarian power-sharing. However, the past remains unhealed and without an adequate vocabulary and behaviour required to structure conflict transformation. This article argues that the responsibility of politicians and other agents of victimhood should be to question the utility of harsh and one-sided assertions regarding the past and to conclude that denial is unpalatable when tied to amplified demand. The agency of that contestation is performance centred and rhetorically driven and reproduces alternative interpretations that evoke profound and divisive emotional states. The friction over truth recovery is abstraction-laden due to the agency of victimhood and its variant constructions.

---

### **“Stereotype Blasting: Alan McMonagle as Satirist and Visionary”**

Melania Terrazas (University of La Rioja)

Irish writer Alan McMonagle is the author of two collections of short stories *Liar, Liar* (2008) and *Psychotic Episodes* (2013), and a novel *Ithaca* (2018). Here, McMonagle echoes the narrator of Patrick McCabe’s *The Butcher Boy* by recreating the life of another vulnerable member of society, a child called Jason, who meets another society’s scapegoat, a girl, at a swamp, and in keeping each other company both manage to reduce their sense of misery in the bog hole they live in. McMonagle uses Homer’s novel *Odysee* as a starting point to explore these two children’s ideas of the self, sexuality, romantic relationships, parenthood, friendship, social relationships, work, drugs, religion and politics, but also to call urgently for their right to grow up as normal children.

This paper examines McMonagle’s use of the satirical mode, which reflects his sense that the Irish writer has the power to catalyze cultural change. This defensive attitude finds external expression in his satirical blasting of social constructions associated with traditional Irish literature. His engagement with the absurd sometimes takes the form of humorous and ribald satire, while at other times it lends his work tones of existential tragedy. But the interactions of his main characters with the absurd is a consistent motif through much of *Ithaca*, and lend his satirical depictions a strong

metaphysical quality. The purpose of this essay is to highlight his mediating role as a satirical and visionary writer who holds a mirror up to politics.

---

**“‘New energies’ on ‘the threshold of an old art’: Democratic Sparkles in Contemporary Irish Poetry”**

Pilar Villar Argáiz (University of Granada)

The Irish Constitution has undergone a radical transformation in recent years, in light of the referendums legalizing same-sex marriages and overturning the abortion ban. We seem to be witnessing a more open, tolerating period in the country, as old attitudes in relation to sexual and racial minorities gradually change. This challenging moment is also reflected through the increasing role of activism and the big sector of Irish citizens who are rising for different causes (e.g. the rights of refugees and asylum seekers, or movements such as Health Care, Repeal, Stand for Truth or Take Back the City). Nevertheless, there are also well known fears resurrecting in the political context of Brexit, as old wounds and divisions which seemed to be sealed suddenly reappear. This paper reflects on how contemporary poetry in Ireland enables a transformative conversation about politics by reflecting on this moment of political unrest and sudden transformation. In particular, I will concentrate on some poetic texts taken from consolidated authors such as Colette Bryce and Theo Dorgan. I will also consider a new generation of spoken word performers who have become quite popular in recent times, as they reach vast audiences through their performances on stage, TV and other forms of social media. In the 2018 Editorial Introduction to the 126 issue of *Poetry Ireland Review*, Eavan Boland enthusiastically welcomes this new poetic trend in Ireland, claiming that “New energies have come to the threshold of an old art”, enriching the artistic scene with “The democratic sparkle of spoken word platforms, the intensity of interdisciplinary collaborations where music and language meet”, and “the power of performance”. I will precisely focus on what Boland calls the “democratic sparkle” appreciated in such poetry, by analyzing the political dissidence and articulated anger of artists such as Stephen James Smith.

---

**“‘Residents against Evil’: National Fragmentation and Internal Otherness in Contemporary Irish Zombie Film”**

Alexandra von Thuemmler (Leipzig University)

Irish cinema “inhabits a complex cultural space” (McLoone 121) that is not only contested externally by Ireland’s multifarious post-colonial and diasporic relationships with Great Britain and the USA, but also internally by the British/unionist debate and the continuing struggle between essentialist and revisionist understandings of Irishness. Thus, it is no wonder that numerous studies address the role of cinematic representations of Ireland in the (de)-construction of hegemonic Irishness. These studies often limit their scope to prominent directors such as Neil Jordan and “a small group of serious drama” (2), while other filmic texts, especially those categorized as ‘genre’ cinema, are overlooked. This indifference is especially unfortunate in the case of horror film, as the genre due to its allegorical and non-mimetic nature has repeatedly proven to be highly capable of

addressing issues of identity and society. Along these lines, it can be argued that Irish zombie films such as *The Cured* (2017) and *Portrait of a Zombie* (2013) highlight the inner fragmentation of Irish society and identity through an innovative approach to the categories of human and non-human. In doing so, as a close reading of the filmic texts reveals, they dismiss the portrayal of an external, non-human and thus ‘killable’ zombie horde prevailing in genre milestone’s such as *World War Z* (2013) and *The Walking Dead* series (2010- 2018) in favour of a nationally specific ‘Emerald spin’ on the genre that shows the zombies not only as an internal ‘Other’ but also as traumatized victims, inherently human and worthy of protection.

---

### “Difference-Indifference: Folk Belief and Liminality in Two Contemporary Irish Novels”

Catalina Wajs Tauscher (University of Zaragoza)

This paper analyzes the situation of two fictional characters, girls who, for dissimilar reasons, represent the *different* in their social environment. Although both are in extreme danger, even on the verge of death, they are surrounded by the general ‘indifference’ of both their family and community. These characters belong to the novels *The Naming of Eliza Quinn*, by Carol Birch (2005), and to Emma Donoghue’s *The Wonder* (2016). Regarding *The Naming of Eliza Quinn*, my presentation will focus on the chapter which takes place during the Great Famine; the action of *The Wonder* develops some years later on, when recollections of the deprivation, suffering, loss and death resulting from the Great Famine are still fresh in the community’s minds and evident in the people’s gradual transformation of traditional practices and beliefs.

As opposed to the general ‘indifference,’ in each novel there is a female character who evidences strong feelings towards the ‘different’ girl, and this is as far as the similitudes between both novels go, as in *The Naming of Eliza Quinn* that feeling is of repulsion, even horror, while in *The Wonder* the feeling develops from initial skeptical mistrust to empathy and love.

The doctoral thesis I am working on at present analyzes the presence and possible functions of folklore in four contemporary Irish novels by filtering the interactions and tensions between tradition and modernity through the concepts of hybridity and liminality. My paper will then consider the hybrid combination of folk belief and official religion in both novels, as well as the liminal transit between stages that the main characters do – or do not undergo- as determinant features in the ‘difference-indifference’ issue in both novels.

---

### “¡UPTHEREPUBLIC!: Samuel Beckett’s Political (In)Difference”

Feargal Whelan (Trinity College Dublin)

The question as to whether Samuel Beckett can be regarded as a politically engaged author, or a politically indifferent one, has been foregrounded with the recent publication of two major critical works on the subject: Emilie Morin’s *Beckett’s Political Imagination* (CUP 2017) and James McNaughton’s *Beckett and the Politics of Aftermath* (OUP 2018). When asked for a contribution to a publication supporting the elected government’s struggle during the Spanish Civil war, Beckett provided the minimalist, gnomic reply ¡UPTHEREPUBLIC!. In a certain reading, this intervention



might be seen as a declaration of direct engagement and support on the side of the republicans in this particular fight, yet the brevity of the line, and its echoing of the political sloganeering in early Free State Ireland may suggest that Beckett was actually qualifying his support and tempering any perception of being fully committed.

This paper will assess Beckett’s direct satiric commentary on the developing Irish state in the 1930s through an analysis of his depiction of the Irish nation in the short story *Echo’s Bones*, arguing that, contrary to frequent portrayals, the author was fully immersed in the politics of time although feeling removed from them through the nature of his social background. It will argue that the sense of difference felt by Beckett both in Ireland and later in Paris led to a complicated sense of engagement with the political which is characterized by, at one and the same time, a studied indifference and a need for commitment.

---

### “Acting the Big Fella: Masculinities and Hegemony in Patrick Kavanagh’s *Tarry Flynn*”

Loic Wright (University College Dublin)

In the years leading up to the foundation of the Irish Republic and the Irish Constitution in 1937, a series of legislations were passed leading to separatist gender dynamics between men and women. Many of the ideals promoted and culturally-inculcated by de Valera through legislature presented paradoxical concepts of Irish manhood, of men as virile but chaste, and financially independent in an increasingly impoverished landscape. Patrick Kavanagh’s novel *Tarry Flynn*, published in 1948 and consequently banned until the 1960s for its obscenity, presents the realities of these state-sanctioned ideals of manhood. Kavanagh depicts the rural landscape of men perpetually striving to achieve these ideals and the consequences of these unattainable values.

This paper will interrogate Kavanagh’s depiction of manhood in Cavan in the 1930s and demonstrate to what extent, if any, these performances of manhood are moulded and shaped by attempts to conform to the state-sanctioned ideals of masculinity promulgated by Éamon de Valera and Archbishop John McQuaid. Drawing on R.W Connell’s *Masculinities* and Michel Foucault’s *The History of Sexuality*, I will investigate the hegemonic masculinities of the men in Cavan in the 1930s as well the relationship between Tarry and these ideas of manhood. By investigating Tarry’s perception of hegemonic masculinities, I will be analyzing the correlation between the series of legislature passed in the preceding decade and the consequent cultures of rigid patriarchal dominance and in many cases, state-sanctioned misogyny.



## **USEFUL INFORMATION**

### **Conference venue**

The venue of the AEDEI conference will be the Portblue Club Pollentia Hotel Resort & Spa ([www.clubpollentia.com](http://www.clubpollentia.com)). This four-star hotel is located in the North of Majorca, between Alcúdia and Pollença, at this address:

Carretera Alcúdia-Port de Pollença, Km 2  
07400 Alcúdia, Mallorca, Spain

### **Meals**

Most delegates staying at the hotel have been offered accommodation on an all-inclusive basis. If this is your case, this includes lunch and dinner during the conference.

For those delegates who have requested a different hotel board type or who are staying elsewhere, lunch and dinner vouchers are available from the hotel reception. Please note that the price of the vouchers does not cover drinks, which need to be paid for separately.

### **Conference room equipment**

A laptop (PC) will be available at each of the conference rooms, which will also have projection and audio equipment. Internet access will also be available.

Please note that only the laptops provided by the Organizing Committee can be used for presentations. Delegates (especially Mac users) are therefore kindly requested to take this into account and make sure the files they need to use are PC-friendly

### **Trip to Palma**

The conference programme includes a trip to Palma on Thursday afternoon, where we will be having a Round Table on “Irish Studies in Spain;” and the public reading and interview to one of our guest writers, Melatu Uche Okorie. This will be followed by the Official Reception sponsored by the Irish Embassy in Spain.

A bus will pick up delegates at the venue (Portblue Club Pollentia Resort). The trip is also open to non-registered companions, who will be asked to register in advance and purchase a bus voucher (please write to [esperanza@diplomatic-services.com](mailto:esperanza@diplomatic-services.com) in case your companion/s would like to take this bus to Palma and back to the venue). Once the Official Reception is over, the bus will return to the conference venue.

### **Gala dinner**

On Friday evening (19.45), a bus will pick up delegates who have registered for the Gala dinner at the Venue (Portblue Club Pollentia Resort) and take them to the Restaurant Es Figueret. After the dinner, the bus will return to the conference venue for us to close the conference together with a Cava toast at the hotel’s front yard. This will be followed by a karaoke night, which we hope you will all participate in and enjoy.

## **How to get to the conference venue**

### **By coach / bus**

From the airport take Bus Line A32 to Alcúdia, the stop is outside the Airport Arrivals' Hall. The price of a single ticket is 8.00 EUR. Tickets can be purchased from the bus driver (bank notes larger than 20 EUR are not accepted). Line 32 bus schedule and route can be found here: [www.tib.org/en/web/ctm/autobus/linia/a32](http://www.tib.org/en/web/ctm/autobus/linia/a32) (travel time is 1 hour 40 minutes). From Alcúdia to Pollentia Club Resort please take either a taxi or Bus L352. Buses run every 15 minutes.

### **By car (free parking is available at the hotel)**

Compared to mainland Europe, hiring a car is relatively inexpensive in Majorca. However, cars should be booked in advance.

### **By taxi**

Taxis can also be found outside the Airport's Arrivals Hall. The journey will take about 45 minutes and the taxi will cost 80-90 Euros (please note that supplements apply for luggage, night time and Sunday rides).

### **Medical assistance**

Although the Club Pollentia Resort can provide first aid and basic medical assistance services (please check availability at reception), the closest medical centre is PAC Alcúdia-Es Safrà.

**PAC Alcúdia-Es Safrà**  
Plaça Safrà, 07400 Alcúdia  
Tel. (+34) 971 54 97 77

**Opening times:**  
Mon to Thu from 8.00 to 20.00  
Fri from 8.00 to 15.00  
Sat and Sun: open 24h

In the event of emergency, please call 112.

### **Pharmacies**

The closest dispensing chemists can be found in the town of Alcúdia.

**Farmàcia M. A. Garcias Ribot**  
Plaça de la Constitució, 11  
Tel (+34) 971 54 81 72

**Farmàcia Catalina Mestre**  
Avinguda Príncep d'Espanya, 5  
Tel (+34) 971 54 85 58