

8A. The Human and the Haunted

Sylvie Mikowski (Université de Reims Champagne-Ardenne), 'Dissolving the frontier between the human and the non-human in Sara Baume's *Seven Steeples* (2022): life experiment and narrative experiment'

Sara Baume is one of the most innovative novelists of her generation, and probably one of the most prominent practitioners of ecopoetics in Irish fiction at the moment. From her very first novel *Spill Simmer Falter Wither*, the story of a friendship between an man and a dog, she probed the relationship between the human and the non-human, and searched for the proper mode of representing this relationship through writing in a non-anthropocentric way. Throughout her writings she has sought to devise narrative and stylistic forms that would avoid and overcome the dualism between matter and mind, such as it has been challenged over the last decades by the theoreticians of the so-called "new materialism". As a visual artist employing different materials to produce her artwork, Baume has also experimented with different kinds of material through her writings, such as the novel form in *Spill Simmer Falter Wither*, inserting photographs and the description of works of art in the course of a traditional narrative in *A Line Made by Walking*, mixing autobiographical memories with reflections on her artistic practice in the form of an essay in *Handiwork*. In her latest book, *Seven Steeples*, Baume has stripped the narrative from most of its traditional components, such as plot, characterization, dialogue, etc, to concentrate exclusively on the description of the two characters' daily lives, which turn out to be precisely devoid of any significant event, psychological development or social interaction, as the couple chose to live alone in a derelict house not far from the seaside, cut off from friends and relatives. The narrative focuses entirely on the tiny changes in the couple's environment, whether they involve the house they live in, the objects that surround them, and other non-human elements such as the weather, the landscape, the vegetation, or animal life. The aim of this paper is to examine what literary devices Sara Baume has put in place to engross the reader's attention in this minute recording of the existence of the non-human surrounding us and which is generally left out of narrative fiction, because deemed irrelevant, whereas it makes up the very essence of our daily lives. In keeping with the theme of the conference, the paper will explore the dissolving of the frontier between human and non-human, but also between essay and fiction, prose and poem, in Sara Baume's experimental novel.

Bio: Sylvie Mikowski is Professor of Irish and English Studies at the University of Reims-Champagne-Ardenne. Her main interests are the contemporary Irish novel and popular culture. Her main publications include *Le Roman irlandais Contemporain*, *The Book in Ireland*, *Memory and History in France and Ireland*, *Irish Women Writers*, *Ireland and Popular Culture*, *Popular Culture Today*, *The Circulation of Popular Culture between Ireland and the USA*, *Ireland: Spectres and Chimeras*. She has also published numerous book chapters and articles on various contemporary Irish writers, such as John McGahern, William Trevor, Colum McCann, Patrick McCabe, Roddy Doyle, Deirdre Madden, Sebastian Barry, Anne Enright, etc. She served as literary editor of the French journal of Irish Studies *Études irlandaises* and is currently President of the SOFEIR, the French Society of Irish Studies. A member of the board of EFACIS, she is also review editor for RISE (Review of Irish Studies in Europe).

Galyna Hartischyn (Leipzig University), 'Haunted terrain: narrative representation of trauma in pre- and post-Agreement fiction'

Preconditioned by the Northern Ireland peace progress, along with the vigorous revisionist debate evolving alongside the Troubles, and the rise of trauma studies, Northern fiction undergoes the so-called 'Northern (Re)naissance' (Kennedy-Andrews) in the 1990s, and opens up new artistic and political perspectives on engagement with the violent realities of post-partition and post-1969 Northern Ireland. Profoundly influenced by post-structuralist aesthetics and equipped by a wide range of postmodernist writing techniques, a new generation of writers attempts to challenge the received

conception of the North and the inherited disabling legacies of the past (Harte, Parker). Consequently, the novel grew increasingly possessed by narrative representation of multilayered effects of intergenerational trauma (Crawford) both in terms of plot and form. Suggesting 'fresh start' (Lehner), the 1998 Good Friday Agreement was believed to facilitate reconciliation with the past, fostering thus the completion and recovery processes (Swan, Hirschberger). However, Northern Ireland's past is still very much its present and seems to be shaping contemporary cross-community Northern Irish identity. This paper challenges the assumption mentioned above by examining narrative representation of intergenerational trauma in pre- and post-Agreement fiction by example of Seamus Deane's *Reading in the Dark* and Anna Burn's *Milkman*. More than two decades lying between the novels, the latter still conforms to the traditional model of traumatic experience, and demonstrates post-traumatic worldview of the divided society, struggling to (re)construct the sense of its shattered identity and coherence.

Bio: My name is Galyna Hartischyn, I am a PhD candidate at Leipzig University, Germany (Institute of British Studies, headed by Prof. Dr. Ralf Haekel). Currently I am working on a project Narrative Representation of Trauma in Contemporary Irish Fiction, Northern Fiction being its inherent part. I would very much appreciate an opportunity to present and discuss the research findings during the upcoming EFACIS Conference in Belfast.

8B. Writing the Body

Fiona McCann (Université de Lille), 'Earth care and other unions in Kerri Ní Dochartaigh's *Thin Places* (2021) and *Cacophony of Bone* (2023)'

Thin Places and *Cacophony of Bone* are both pieces of work which defy categorization. The former is partly a memoir filled with traumatic personal events, partly a reflection on loss in all its manifest forms (physical, familial, linguistic, environmental), and partly an uplifting plea for allowing the exploration of our natural surroundings to function as a meaningful form of care. This is a text which deals with trauma in an innovative manner, far from the narrative forms which we now associate with trauma fiction. This writer uses the materiality of the sentient beings that surround us, and deep care for our ecosystem, as a means of recovery. Earth care as self-care. The most recent publication is set during the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown and it offers a reflection on stasis and flux, on the ceaseless rhythms of the non-human world, and on the tension between a form of imposed partition or isolation (lockdown) and intense union with the elements.

Ní Dochartaigh is concerned with both the materiality and the immateriality of objects of care and manages to incorporate both through her interest in "the liminal space between things" to borrow the title of an article by Timothy Morton (2014). The narrator foregrounds her mental health difficulties brought on by a violent and traumatic childhood in Northern Ireland yet also places the focus on the ways in which Ireland's natural habitat, its material reality and its immaterial Celtic portals, "hold us" (*TP*, 228) in unsuspected care relationships. In the process, "Art happens [...] in the liminal space(s) between things, in conversations between metal and sky, humans and metal, era and era, heaven and earth" (Morton, "The Liminal Space Between Things", 270-1). A poignant process of recovery is recounted, highlighting firstly the refusal of care before slowly moving towards co-constituted acts of care: as Ní Dochartaigh gradually recovers her lost mother tongue, and pays attention to the beauty of her natural surroundings, as she begins to care for both, she also starts to feel cared for. A similar trajectory is presented in *Cacophony of Bone*, where care and attention, to oneself and to every living organism, are again central. The sensory experience of loss, gain, and care in *Thin Places* and *Cacophony of Bone* is predicated upon several ecologies and resonates strongly with Joan Tronto's definition of care as ultimately "a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining

web” (*Moral Boundaries*, 103, italics in original). Kerri Ní Dochartaigh celebrates, in the most understated manner, the full complexity of this “life-sustaining web” and this article proposes to unpack all of the above elements to show how her very particular aesthetics breaks down all borders and privileges union.

Bio: Fiona McCann is Professor of Postcolonial Literatures at the Université de Lille, France and current director of the interdisciplinary research centre CECILLE. She has published numerous articles and book chapters on trauma and violence in contemporary Zimbabwean, South African, and Irish literature, a monograph on Northern Irish writing after the Troubles (Peter Lang, 2014) and has edited a collection of essays on the carceral regime in Ireland (Palgrave, 2020). Her current research projects involve a short book on decolonial pedagogies of care and a longer book on ecologies of care in twenty-first century Irish writing.

Caroline Magennis (University of Salford), ‘Writing the body and “body work” in Irish Studies’

This paper seeks to reflect on the physical work of writing in our discipline, and particularly in writing which borders on life writing and autoethnography, particularly that which comes from the North of Ireland. Irish feminist thought has, for decades, thought meticulously through the symbolic potential and representational lacunae that beset Irish 'body texts' - I want to claim kinship with this rich lineage and draw attention to the bright future of emerging scholars in this field. With this in mind, I want to think about the ways in which twenty-first century texts have offered a more expansive approach both to the representation of the body and also what it means to be a writing body, particularly in the age of the unequal academic workplace. For this, I want to draw on writerly bodies critical, creative and hybrid to consider the work of putting the self back into writing and the potentials and vulnerabilities of a complex, embodied ontology. It will reflect on my own relationship to this 'body work', following Judith Butler: 'I tell a story about the relations I choose, only to expose, somewhere along the way, the way I am gripped and undone by these very relations.' I will use recent life-writing alongside my own creative-critical practice to think through how we might bring our bodies with us instead of pretending they don't exist.

Bio: Caroline Magennis is Reader in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Literature at the University of Salford. Originally from Portadown, she has written various chapters and articles about Irish books and her latest publication is *Northern Irish Writing After The Troubles* (Bloomsbury, 2021).

8D. Early Modern Ireland

Collin Bonnell (Concordia University): ‘The Nugents of Westmeath: From Confederation to Ascendancy’

Historians have challenged the assumption that the Penal Laws completely destroyed Ireland’s Catholic gentry, noting that much of the ‘Protestantization’ of Irish land after the Williamite confiscations occurred through conversion rather than expropriation. Many of these former recusants were Old English, as that group was more likely to have retained significant lands during the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century confiscations despite their continued Catholicism. This paper will explore one such family, the Nugents of Westmeath, which made this transition, demonstrating how Catholic aristocrats crossed what is often portrayed as a rigid religious partition in order to join the ‘Protestant ascendancy.’ Sitting in the Irish House of Lords under each of the Stuart monarchs, as well as in the Catholic Confederation’s General Assembly, the Nugent Earls of Westmeath took part in the political shifts which characterized the Catholic Old English during the seventeenth century.

While the family lost nearly half their lands during the Cromwellian and Restoration Settlements, the Articles of Limerick spared them from the Williamite confiscations, and the openly Catholic Fourth Earl was still among the wealthiest and most powerful figures in Westmeath in the 1730s. The Sixth Earl conformed to Anglicanism upon inheriting the Earldom in 1755, enabling him to reclaim his family's seat in the House of Lords. Scholars have not tracked individual recusant dynasties' transformations into members of the 'Protestant ascendancy,' and by doing so this paper will complicate the assumed rigidity of eighteenth-century Ireland's religious divisions, and the notion that the 'ascendancy' was a foreign ruling class.

Bio: I am a PhD student studying early modern Ireland under Dr. Ted McCormick at Concordia University. My dissertation will explore experiences of Old English Catholics under the Protestant Ascendancy. I first studied Ireland with QUB's International Summer Program, and my Master's thesis, under Dr. Christopher Maginn, explored the Annaly's transformation into County Longford.

Hugo Bromley (University of Cambridge): 'Finding a unionist political economy; customs borders, internal markets and the Anglo-Irish Union of 1699'

In times of globalisation, how can separate systems of political economy exist within the British Isles? In the 1690s, England's newly empowered Parliament began to adopt a series of measures to support its vital woollen cloth industry. Simultaneously, a rival industry began to emerge around Cork in Ireland, driven partly by Huguenot refugees fleeing French persecution. The clash between these two political economies resulted in the Export of Wool Act in 1696 and the Irish Woollen Act of 1699, which prevented Ireland from exporting woollen cloth at all. The latter resulted in a constitutional crisis that resulted in Westminster being given the right to legislate over Irish overseas trade.

This paper draws on research in local archives across England, as well as Commons Journals, printed pamphlets and trade data, to explore how Ireland's manufacturing development, shaped and was shaped by its political relationship with England. The Irish wool acts have not been studied since the work of Patrick Kelly and Patrick Kearney in the mid- to late- 20th century. This article combines local, national and global approaches to tell the wider history of how manufacturing development drove closer political union between England and Ireland. As a result of the precedent set in 1699, Anglo-Irish manufacturers and politicians petitioned Westminster throughout the early eighteenth century on matters of global trade, and were able to meaningfully influence legislation, particularly regarding the linen industry. At a time when customs unions are central to our discourse, it is vital to recognise that they have long been at the heart of relations between England and Ireland.

Bio: Hugo Bromley is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Centre for Geopolitics at Cambridge, where he coordinates the UK Union Programme. He is also a Research Associate at Robinson College. He completed his PhD, on textile manufacturing and the development of British political economy, at Trinity Hall, Cambridge.

8F. Sport and Irish Identities

Ugo Ryckman (University of Pau): 'Sports and identities in a partitioned Ireland'

This paper will analyse the extent to which sports were affected by the Partition of Ireland. First, we will present the sporting landscape of Ireland with Gaelic games, rugby and football. The geographical organisation of sports will be studied, the affiliation to political and social identities will be explained and finally linked to the Partition of Ireland. Three cases will be studied - the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), the Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU) and the Irish Football Association (IFA) - from three complementary perspectives.

The paper will first focus on the reaction of those bodies to the Partition of Ireland and the consequent geographical re-organisation they underwent. This part will be centered on the 1920-1930 period.

With the representation of nations through sports in international competitions, Irish athletes were faced with the issue of representing a flag they were not necessarily willing to compete for. It was particularly true in the case of Olympic Games, from the early 1910s until the end of the 20th century. In the last part of the paper, we will study cases of athletes representing both sides of Partitioned Ireland in the Olympic Games. This will provide an international perspective to the Partition issue.

Bio: Ugo Ryckman is a doctoral student in Irish and British studies at the University of Pau. He is a member of the SOFEIR and of the AFIS. His work focuses on institutions in which nationalist identities evolve. This includes parliaments and sporting bodies. His thesis is about surfing in Ireland and in Great Britain (1940-1999).

Jennifer Arthur (QUB): 'Irish nationalist identity in transition: The GAA and Rule 21'

This paper analyses the evolution and meaning of Irish nationalist identity using the Gaelic Athletic Association's (GAA) controversial Rule 21 as a case study. Rule 21 banned members of the British security forces from playing in the GAA. This Rule was established in 1905 and remained in place until 2003 when it was finally rescinded due to the changing political landscape. This particular GAA rule was deeply linked to the politics of the island throughout its existence and is of particular significance throughout The Troubles in Northern Ireland. The changing political landscape throughout the twentieth century changed the meaning of Rule 21, where it maintained significant importance in the 6 counties north of the border, unlike the south where it had less importance over time, demonstrating the widening of the gap between Irish Nationalists north and south of the border. By predominantly using qualitative interviews and media coverage, this paper explores the debates and impacts around rescinding of Rule 21. This largely focused around the impact on Crossmaglen Rangers and the British Army occupation of Crossmaglen GAA grounds, which strengthened the necessity of keeping the Rule in place. Debate in national GAA Congress in the years leading up to the rule change achieved a national solidarity and an understanding of the difficulties faced by Irish nationalists in the North by their southern counterparts. The debates and opinions surrounding the rescinding of Rule 21 demonstrate the complexity and indeed diversity of Irish nationalist politics north and south of the border.

Bio: Jennifer Arthur is a PhD student at Queen's University Belfast. Her research is focused on Irish nationalism and identifying diversity in contemporary Irish Nationalism and Irish National Identity, using the framework of sport, and nationalism in sport, in particular the Gaelic Athletic Association.