

María Losada Friend, José María Tejedor Cabrera,
José Manuel Estévez-Saá, Werner Huber (eds.)

DREAMING THE FUTURE:
NEW HORIZONS / OLD BARRIERS IN 21ST-CENTURY IRELAND

Irish Studies in Europe

Edited by

Werner Huber, Catherine Mignant, Hedwig Schwall

Volume

3

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 **Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier**

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Trier: WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2011

(Irish Studies in Europe; vol. 3)

ISBN 978-3-86821-327-0

Umschlaggestaltung: Brigitta Disseldorf

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ISBN 978-3-86821-327-0

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WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier

Bergstraße 27, 54295 Trier

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CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | 7 |
| <i>María Losada Friend (Huelva), José María Tejedor Cabrera (Sevilla), José Manuel Estévez-Saá (A Coruña), Werner Huber (Vienna)</i> | |
| INTRODUCTION | 9 |
| <i>Declan Kiberd (Dublin/Notre Dame, IN)</i> | |
| OLD TESTAMENTS AND NEW: JOYCE AND MESSIANIC TIME | 13 |
| <i>Benigno del Río Molina (Sevilla)</i> | |
| GEOGRAPHY OF DESIRE AND GUILT: JOYCE'S "CIRCE" IN THE TRADITION OF <i>THE TEMPTATION OF SAINT ANTHONY</i> | 25 |
| <i>Anne MacCarthy† (Santiago de Compostela)</i> | |
| DENIS FLORENCE MACCARTHY'S TRANSLATIONS OF CALDERÓN DE LA BARCA | 33 |
| <i>Alberto Lázaro (Madrid)</i> | |
| READING OSCAR WILDE IN POST-WAR SPAIN: <i>THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY</i> UNDER THE MICROSCOPE | 43 |
| <i>Juan Ignacio Oliva (Tenerife)</i> | |
| REWRITING IRELAND THROUGH FRACTURED MALE SELVES IN THE WORKS OF JAMIE O'NEILL | 51 |
| <i>José Francisco Fernández (Almería)</i> | |
| SPANISH BECKETT | 63 |
| <i>Estelle Epinoux (Limoges)</i> | |
| IRISH CINEMA AND EUROPE THROUGHOUT THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: AN OVERVIEW | 75 |
| <i>Sophie Ollivier (Bordeaux)</i> | |
| CONNOLLY AND HIS LEGACY | 89 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| <i>Marie-Claire Considère-Charon (Strasbourg)</i> NEW HORIZONS FOR THE BORDER AREAS: FROM GOOD INTENTIONS TO GOOD PRACTICE IN CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION | 103 |
| <i>Rita Ann Higgins (Galway)</i> THREE POEMS | 115 |
| NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS | 119 |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The present volume is the third in the *Irish Studies in Europe* series. It is published under the aegis of *EFACIS: The European Federation of Associations and Centres of Irish Studies* and is meant to reflect something of the multi-disciplinary and international character unique to this organisation.

Network projects like EFACIS conferences and publications are not possible without the generous material support of institutions and individuals alike. In the present case the editors gratefully acknowledge the generous sponsorship of The Irish Embassies in Madrid and Vienna, The Spanish Association of Irish Studies (AEDEI), The University of Sevilla, The University of Huelva, and The University of Vienna. The editors are greatly indebted to Rita Ann Higgins and her publishers, Salmon Publishing and Bloodaxe Books, for granting permission to reprint samples of her recent work. We are much obliged to Paul Fagan, M.A., for his diligent work as subeditor for this volume, and special thanks for their help with the editorial work also go to the Vienna team of Dr. Julia Novak, M.A., and Sandra Mayer, M.A.

May 2011

María Losada Friend
José María Tejedor Cabrera
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INTRODUCTION

**María Losada Friend, José María Tejedor Cabrera,
José Manuel Estévez-Saá, Werner Huber**

This volume began its life during the course of a few busy days in December 2007 in the Spanish city of Sevilla. It was there that members of the Spanish Association of Irish Studies (AEDEI) combined efforts with the Organising Committees from the Universities of Sevilla and Huelva and the European Federation of Associations and Centres of Irish Studies (EFACIS) to pave the way for the Sixth International EFACIS Conference, a dynamic effort to promote Irish Studies in a broad European context.

In this conference's spirit of creating a Europe-wide forum for diverse and innovative explorations of classic and contemporary issues within Ireland's social, cultural, political, and economic realms, this third volume in the *Irish Studies in Europe* series includes articles and poems that ambitiously reveal the complex academic and artistic challenges of contemporary Irish Studies. The title of "Dreaming the Future: New Horizons/Old Barriers in 21st-Century Ireland," shared by both the conference and this volume, alludes to Walter Benjamin's assertion that "every epoch not only dreams the next but, while dreaming, it impels it toward wakefulness." Already the Irish panorama looks quite different than it did at the turn of the last century – a point ably demonstrated throughout this collection – as "New Horizons" continue to reveal themselves even as many "Old Barriers" stubbornly refuse erasure. As such, it is the challenge of Irish Studies in Europe to trace carefully and elucidate the many and great changes witnessed by both Northern Ireland and the Republic today, as traditional images of underdevelopment, isolationism, sectarianism, and violence are gradually overturned and replaced. This collection meets these challenges through a thoroughgoing and multifaceted recognition and revision of the movements, and figures that, dreaming the future, have led and shaped the island in its non-stop evolution. In this ever-evolving search for Ireland's identity (or identities), the articles selected represent individual and collective critiques of a single vision of Ireland. The fact that a slight dominance of Spanish perspectives and themes can be made out should be seen as a tribute to the genius loci of the conference and the occasion (and not as being in contradiction to the Europeanness of the enterprise as a whole).

Declan Kiberd opens the volume with an exposition of how James Joyce's modernist masterpiece *Ulysses* revitalises the past and makes the ancients

live on in modernity. In “Old Testaments and New: Joyce and Messianic Time,” Kiberd unravels the ways in which the Old Testament text was recycled in the New Testament to provide this new narrative with coherence and cohesion. Tracing phrases and instances from both texts in *Ulysses*, and following the “mythical method” perceived by T.S. Eliot as the basic strategy of Joyce’s Bloomsday book, Kiberd advances to the heart of the subtle and innovative mechanisms of Joyce’s dynamic modernity, which, by cannibalising and rewriting old texts, invests tradition with new meanings.

In “Geography Of Desire and Guilt: Joyce’s “Circe” in the Tradition of the Temptation of Saint Anthony,” Benigno Del Río similarly approaches Joyce within the European religious tradition. Tracing the imagery of seduction, his close reading of the “Circe” chapter of *Ulysses* reveals a sophisticated game of temptation and desire while evincing the chapter’s close relation with Flaubert’s *The Temptation of Saint Anthony* and with the pictorial tradition of Saint Anthony’s temptation in Hieronymus Bosch’s version of *The Garden of Earthly Delights*.

Anne MacCarthy¹ also traces the tradition of European influences in Irish writing through her thoughtful analysis of the influential Irish intellectual Denis Florence MacCarthy, whose translations of Calderón de la Barca’s *autos* and careful readings of the Spanish dramatist’s religious ideas reveal the existent fondness for Spanish classic literature in Ireland. Admirer of Mangan, translator of Spanish romances, and follower of Shelley’s nationalistic yearnings, Denis Florence MacCarthy is also shown to embody the Irish reception of German Romanticism, particularly in following its debates regarding the theoretical and practical techniques of translation.

Alberto Lázaro Lafuente’s contribution explores the reception of Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in post-war Spain, in the process uncovering the subtle political ideology that selected books for “untrained readers.” Documenting his case study with censorship files from Alcalá de Henares, Lázaro reveals how Spanish censors in the 1940s faced and resolved the moral ambiguity of the novel, freely manipulating paratextual information and censoring the text so as to offer a book that could be either banned as immoral or offered as an exemplary fable.

Juan Ignacio Oliva analyses the original and subversive means by which the work of Irish author Jamie O’Neill boldly challenges conventional narratives regarding masculinity and morality in Ireland. Cast as shadows of Oscar

1 The editors have the sad duty to report the passing away of our esteemed colleague Anne MacCarthy in February of 2011.