



Canadian Association for Irish Studies

Association canadienne d'études irlandaises

Newsletter

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Spring 2019

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Happy Spring to all our CAIS Members! As I write this, we're about to get a lovely dose of sunshine, sleet, snow, and freezing rain all before night falls. It must be March.

CAIS has much to look forward to in 2019, beginning with the annual conference. This year's theme is "Irish Bodies and Irish Worlds", emphasising the important cultural turns that have happened in Ireland and the Irish Diaspora in recent years, while also

exploring more traditional themes within the 'worlds' of history, literature, anthropology, music, visual and material culture, performance, food studies, geography, and political science. The dates are set for May 29<sup>th</sup> to June 1<sup>st</sup> and **registration is now open** for presenters and all attendees.

We have over 80 presenters this year, which will make this a very robust and highly interdisciplinary gathering of Irish Studies scholars. Graduate students will once again be competing for their respective prizes for the best graduate research papers presented at the conference: the Joseph McGann Award (MA) and the Rhona Richman Kenneally Award (PhD). Highlights for this year's conference include key note addresses from Professor Joanna Bourke (Birkbeck, University of London) and Professor Rhona Richman Kenneally (Concordia), as well as a reading from award-winning author Kevin Barry, an exclusive preview screening of *Lost Children of the Carricks*, and a banquet in Old Montreal at the Auberge St-Gabriel, which was founded in New France in 1688.

Spaces for the evening events are limited, so we urge you to register soon in order to guarantee your place.

Please go to the following site to register for CAIS 2019:

<https://sites.events.concordia.ca/sites/concordia/en/cais2019>

While you're online, please be sure to visit the **new CAIS website** and update your bookmarks: [www.canadianirishstudies.org](http://www.canadianirishstudies.org). Past-President Michele Holmgren has done fantastic work in migrating material from our old site and creating a more impressive and user-friendly interface. This is where you can find out more information about the 2019 conference, our latest news and announcements, past newsletters, and renew your membership for the coming year. We continue to offer the handy 3-year subscription, which saves you the headache of trying to remember if you have renewed every year.

This is going to be a very interesting spring (slight understatement) given the ongoing complexities of Brexit and the Irish border issue. On a more local front, we are in the thick of Green Season celebrations, leading up to St Patrick's Day parades across the country. This is a time of year when Irish Studies in Canada is in the spotlight, and we look forward to the conversations, the debates, and the *craic* that we'll have when we all gather together this May.

Until then, stay warm, enjoy the sunshine (and the Vitamin D) when you can get it, and I'll see you in Montreal.

## CONFERENCE 2019

"Irish Bodies & Irish Worlds"

29 May – 1 June

Concordia University, Montreal

Bodies – the human body, textual bodies, bodies of knowledge, bodies of water – are central to the numerous disciplines that form Irish Studies. Knowledge about Irish identities has been embodied through physical performance, articulated through literary and

cultural bodies of work, and imagined as watery avenues of migration, exile, and diaspora. In turn, these bodies operate in, are influenced by, and also influence in their own right the world around them. The built environment, the natural world, fictional literary worlds, the transatlantic diaspora – all become ways to deconstruct and add nuance to multiple meanings of Irishness in a globalized society.

Confirmed keynote speakers for CAIS 2019:



**Joanna Bourke** is Professor of History in the Department of History, Classics and Archaeology at Birkbeck College, where she has taught since 1992. She is a Fellow of the British Academy.

Over the years, her books have ranged from the social and economic history of Ireland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to social histories of the British working classes between 1860 and 1960s, to cultural histories of military conflict between the Anglo-Boer war and the present. She has worked on the history of the emotions, particularly fear and hatred, and the history of sexual violence. In the past few years, her research has focussed on questions of humanity, militarisation, and pain. She wrote a book entitled *What It Means to Be Human*. In 2014, she published two books: *Wounding the World. How Military Violence and War Games Invade Our World* and *The Story of Pain: From Prayer to Painkillers*.



**Kevin Barry** is the author of the novels *Beatlebone* and *City of Bohane* and two short story collections, *Dark Lies the Island* and *There Are Little Kingdoms*.

**Olivia Smith** is co-editor (with Kevin Barry) of Winter Pages “a deluxe but adventurous adornment to the scene” of literary journals (*Irish Times*).



**Professor Rhona Richman Kenneally**  
(Concordia University) – see below, p. 10

The conference programme features a “Jews in Irish Literature” exhibition at the Jewish Public Library, musical performances, public readings, and a gala banquet in Old Montreal.

## Memberships

As always, your membership will elapse on July 1 of this year. If you have not yet renewed, please do so, either on the CAIS website ([www.irishstudies.ca](http://www.irishstudies.ca)) or through the membership form at the back of the newsletter. Reminder letters will be sent out over the next few weeks to those who might not be aware of their current membership status. Once again, I urge people to opt for the three-year membership, as it is a very convenient way of joining and then not having to worry about nagging reminders for the next 36 months. Membership for each year includes two issues of the *CJIS/RCÉI*, as well as bi-annual newsletters and electronic updates about forthcoming publications, book launches, conferences, and Irish-themed events around the country.

Also, please recommend CAIS to friends, family, and **anyone** you know who has an interest in Irish-related research, but who might not yet be part of our organization. While our social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter are very popular (thank you, Pamela McKane!!!), word of mouth recommendations are invaluable for increasing our membership, which facilitates the running of our annual conference and publication of the *CJIS/RCÉI*. We strongly welcome students and interested members of the public to join us, as well as musicians, actors, novelists, poets, dancers, athletes, academics, and anyone else I might have forgotten to mention here. **We need your support**, so please renew, recommend, and then come have a bit of craic with us in Montreal.

## CJIS/RCÉI Editor

As most of the membership is aware, Professor Rhona Richman Kenneally will be stepping down as editor of the *CJIS/RCÉI* beyond completion of

the next issue of the journal. Due to personal circumstances, Dr. Susan Cahill will not be able to continue in her current position as editor. Therefore, the CAIS Executive is holding an open call for a new editor of the CJIS/RCÉI.

As the journal of record for Irish Studies in Canada, as well as for cutting-edge Irish studies internationally, the CJIS/RCÉI publishes articles, reviews, and other forms of text-based, visual and material expression ranging from poetry and interviews, to drawings and photography, to menus, maps, and research-creation works. Each issue of the journal can itself be considered as a designed work, specific to the contents and/or theme of that collection.

CJIS/RCÉI features transdisciplinary engagement with key issues of interest to Irish Studies researchers. Its contributors, both Canadian and international, employ a range of critical and methodological perspectives to promote an understanding and appreciation of Irish culture and everyday life, past and present, in the broadest terms.

If you are interested in becoming the new editor of the CJIS/RCÉI please contact Dr. Jane McGaughey by ([jane.mcgaughey@concordia.ca](mailto:jane.mcgaughey@concordia.ca)) no later than Friday, March 1st, 2019. Please include your c.v. and a brief statement regarding your ideas for the direction of the journal going forward. As funding for the CJIS is an important ongoing consideration, it is imperative that candidates provide information about how they will supplement the funding provided by CAIS and through subscriptions and other reader revenues, through institutional or other means.

All applications put forward will be assessed and evaluated by the CAIS Executive, in

accordance with our constitution's by-laws, and a decision will be made prior to our annual conference this spring.

[While this appears after the deadline, the issue is important enough to merit this reminder. Ed.]

## Announcement / Obituary

*Pádraig Ó Siadhail writes:*

You likely remember Brendan O'Grady from UPEI who died at the weekend. Brendan was a long-time member of CAIS and the author of *Exiles and Islanders. The Irish Settlers of Prince Edward Island* (MQUP, 2004), the first comprehensive study of the Island Irish. Tom, Brendan's son, was at the CAIS conference at Laval this past summer.

Brendan was Cyril Byrne's former professor, life-long friend, and mentor at St. Dunstan's University — now UPEI — in Charlottetown.

Brendan's death is a big loss to the Irish community in Prince Edward Island. He was extremely active teaching courses and giving lectures until two or three years ago, most notably at the Benevolent Irish Society's annual lecture series in Charlottetown. Even after that, he would attend the BIS's lectures and — as I know only too well — sit and listen carefully, taking notes all the time. Brendan was a scholar, a teacher and a gentleman. He will be missed.

## SPECIAL SUMMER COURSE

### **THE IRISH ECONOMY AND THE EUROPEAN UNION**

IRST 398 / ECON 379 GA

May 14 – June 18, 2018

Tuesday, Thursday 8:45 – 12:00



Dr. Paul Gorecki

This course has a dual objective: to examine economic developments and recent growth in the Irish economy, and to examine the structure and importance of Ireland's participation in the European Union in a global and European context. Particular issues addressed are: high growth in developed economies, migration, taxation policy, integration and trade, currency areas and capital mobility.

Dr. Gorecki lectures in industrial economics at Trinity College Dublin, is a Research Affiliate at the Economic and Social Research Institute and provides

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competition advice to, among others, the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission. He recently co-authored, with two lawyers, *Modern Irish Competition Law*.

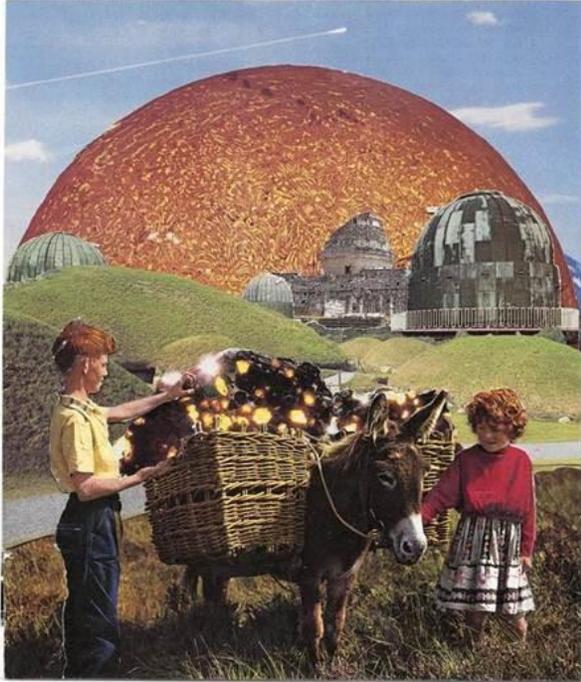
## SPECIAL SUMMER COURSE

### **CONTEMPORARY IRISH LANDSCAPES, LITERATURES AND CULTURES**

IRST 398 / ENGL 398 / GEOG 398 LEC GB  
**Dr. Nessa Cronin (NUI Galway)**

What roles do the concepts of space and place play in the construction of identity? How has the sense of place and the environmental imagination shaped Irish culture and literature?

This interdisciplinary course will explore the sense of place as a defining element in Irish culture through a close reading of selected texts in English and in Irish (studied through translation). It will also look at the ways in which Irish writers in both languages deal with the sense of dwelling and displacement which are characteristics of the Irish experience in the contemporary moment.



Seán Hillen, "Collecting Meteorites at Knowth", *Irelantis*. 15 x 17.5cm, 1996. Reproduced with kind permission of the artist.

The course will critically examine the writings of key Irish writers and explore themes such as language, politics, gender, ethnicity, and the environment. It will also engage with ecocritical texts and materials relating to recent international work in the Environmental Humanities and Climate Change research.

**Weekly discussion themes include:**

Landscape, Literature and Language in Irish Culture

Divided Kingdoms? The Planter and the Gael, John Montague and John Hewitt

Bog Lands / Bog Bodies: Seamus Heaney's Lived and Learned Landscapes

Flood! Three Ways of Looking at Flood Histories in Ireland, and Globally

Rewriting Irish Domestic Space: Eavan Boland and Gendering the 'National' Tradition

Western Landscapes: Moya Cannon & Tim Robinson

Translating Ireland: Brian Friel's *Translations*

Death of a Field: Urban spaces in Paula Meehan and Gerard Donovan



**IRELAND-CANADA UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION (ICUF) IRISH LANGUAGE SCHOLARSHIPS**

We are delighted to announce that four of our students have been awarded ICUF Scholarships to study the Irish language in immersive courses in Connemara, Co Galway this summer. The recipients from the first level class are Miles Murphy (winner of the Gus O'Gorman Scholarship) and Karley McIlwaine will attend a 3-week immersion course in June on a full scholarship. Erin Hynes and Chelsea Lacasse-Gobeille, who are in their second year studying the language, will attend a 4-week course in July. Comhghairdeas leo!



## Appointment in Irish Literature

School of Irish Studies,  
Faculty of Arts and Science  
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY, MONTREAL  
Deadline: April 15, 2019

The School of Irish Studies at Concordia of University, Montreal, Quebec, invites applications for a Limited-Term Appointment in Irish Literature and Theatre for the 2019/2020 academic year. The successful applicant will be required to teach several undergraduate courses across a spectrum of Irish literary topics in the Fall and Winter semesters. This position will run from August 1, 2019 to May 14, 2020. The School of Irish Studies offers a degree program in Irish Studies at the undergraduate level, as well as a Minor and Certificate in Irish Studies. Annually, twenty or more courses are offered in twelve disciplines, attracting a total enrolment of more than a thousand students. For more information on the School, go to [www.concordia.ca/irishstudies](http://www.concordia.ca/irishstudies).

### QUALIFICATIONS

All applicants must possess a PhD in Irish literature. Preference will be given to candidates who can demonstrate evidence of teaching effectiveness.

### APPLICATIONS

Applications should consist of the following items, in the given order, as a single PDF:

- a cover letter;
- a current curriculum vitae;
- a statement of teaching philosophy / interests;
- evidence of teaching effectiveness (teaching evaluations; syllabi; samples of student work).

The PDF should be sent to Matina Skalkogiannis, Assistant to the Principal at the School of Irish Studies ([irishstudies@concordia.ca](mailto:irishstudies@concordia.ca)) with the subject heading Irish Studies LTA position.

**Important:** In addition, applicants must arrange for three letters of reference to be sent directly to the same email address (Subject: Reference for [Candidate's Name]) or mailed to the department to arrive by April 15, 2019 and addressed to:  
Dr. Michael Kenneally,  
Principal, School of Irish Studies  
Concordia University  
1455 de Maisonneuve West, H 001  
Montreal, Quebec H3G1M8 Canada  
Inquiries can be directed to Dr. Michael Kenneally ([michael.kenneally@concordia.ca](mailto:michael.kenneally@concordia.ca)).  
Review of applications will begin as they are received and will continue until the required positions have been filled. All applications should reach the department no later than April 15, 2019. Unfortunately, we are not able to consider incomplete applications.

### Employment equity

Concordia University is strongly committed to employment equity within its community, and to recruiting a diverse faculty and staff. The University encourages applications from all qualified individuals, including women, members of visible minorities, Indigenous persons, members of sexual minorities, persons with disabilities, and others who may contribute to diversification; candidates are invited to self-identify in their applications. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadian and Permanent Residents will be given priority. To comply with the Government of Canada's reporting requirements, the University is obliged to gather information about applicants' status as either Permanent Residents of Canada or Canadian citizens. While applicants need not

identify their country of origin or current citizenship, all applications must include one of the following statements: Yes, I am a citizen or permanent resident of Canada or No, I am not a citizen or permanent resident of Canada.



## Reminders

### The Peter M. Toner Research Publication Award

Prof. Toner hopes that historians continue to pursue a better understanding of Irish society at home and in the various locations to which they were dispersed. As an incentive for researchers to pursue studies in this area, he created and endowed the Peter M. Toner Research Publication Award.

This award supports the publication of scholarly works in Irish Canadian history by scholars worldwide, including current and retired faculty members, adjunct professors, honorary research associates, post-doctoral candidates and graduate students.

Monographs are eligible to receive the full value of the award, anthologies 75% of the value of the award, and journal articles or

chapters in anthologies will be eligible to receive 50% of the value of the award.

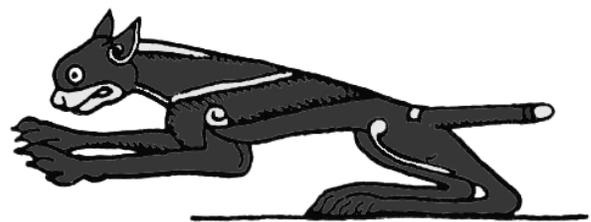
### Application process

To apply for the award, please contact [Professor Greg Marquis](#) at UNB Saint John. Once applications are received, the awarding committee will choose and notify the recipient.

### How to make a donation

Any additional funds received in support of the Peter M. Toner Award will be added to the endowment. As the endowment grows, so too will the value of the award. You may support this award by [donating online](#) or by mailing a [contribution](#) to our offices in Saint John or Fredericton. Thank you for your support.

We encourage you to share this page with family, friends and colleagues who may have known Peter Toner, and to help honour his academic legacy by making a gift in support of this fund at [UNB online](#) or [by mail](#).



## Irish Immigrants' Memoirs: An Appeal for Information

In 1979, Czech dissident Milan Kundera wrote, "The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting."

Irish immigrants struggled, oftentimes successfully, sometimes not, amidst the powerful forces that caused them to leave Ireland and that shaped their lives in North America. What was memory's role in their struggles? What would they remember and transmit to their descendants? What would they forget? or suppress?

These are among the fascinating questions that longtime CAIS member and historian, Kerby Miller of the University of Missouri, with Breandán Mac Suibhne of Centenary University [*see below, p. 21. Ed.*] and the Moore Institute, NUI-Galway, and Sarah O'Brien of Trinity College Dublin, propose to address in a new study of Irish immigrant memory.



**Memoirist Alice McGuinness & her family, early 1900s**

Kerby, Breandan, and Sarah are collaborating on an interdisciplinary study of memoirs and other autobiographical writings and oral histories by Irish immigrants, of all classes

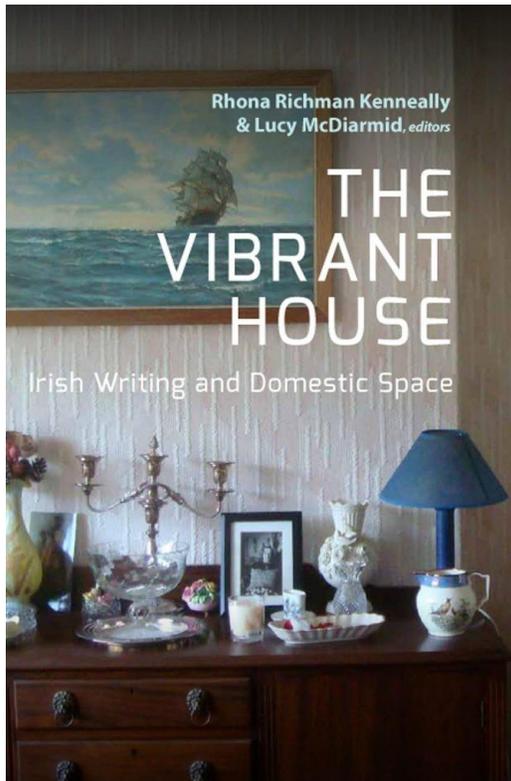
and religious faiths, who came to North America from the seventeenth century through the mid-twentieth century.

Their first task is to identify and locate such memoirs, some of which were published, although often very obscurely, but the majority of which remain in manuscript or typescript forms in libraries, archives, and private family collections.

Kerby and his colleagues are particularly interested in finding unpublished memoirs, but they will be very grateful for information about the whereabouts of all Irish immigrant memoirs and similar testaments, published or unpublished. Please contact Kerby at: [MillerK@missouri.edu](mailto:MillerK@missouri.edu)



## Book Review & Interview



*Page Turner / Edited by Peter McDermott  
/ Irish Echo (New York)*

“The Long-winded Lady” contributed sketches to the New Yorker’s “Talk of the Town” column that are celebrated for their “keen-eyed observation of the minutiae of New York life,” in the words of a critic in more recent times. The staffer, though, who wrote under that by-line also produced fiction for the publication that often had a somewhat different setting – Dublin or, more specifically, 48 Cherryfield Ave., Ranelagh, the house she lived in as a child.

In the essay “The house that never blew up: Maeve Brennan’s Dublin home,” biographer Angela Bourke writes: “Her many

depictions of this house recall Gaston Bachelard’s meditation on the ways a childhood home becomes a lifelong reference point for the human imagination, his insistence that the ‘house is one of the greatest powers of integration for the thoughts, memories and dreams of mankind.’”

Brennan is particularly interesting in this regard because in 1934, not long before her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, she left Cherryfield Avenue for Washington DC, where her father had been posted by the Irish government and would remain a U.S. resident until her death in New York in 1993.

In the essay, her contribution to “The Vibrant House: Irish writing and domestic space,” Bourke quotes novelist John McGahern saying that a “writer writes out of his private world, and that is more or less shaped by the time one is 20, 21 or 22. Everything that happens to you changes you, but that private world is essentially shaped and one always works on that.”

And so, Adam Hanna has written “The vibrancy of first houses in the poetry of Seamus Heaney and Derek Mahon,” while Maureen O’Connor’s essay is “Melancholy ornaments in the house of Edna O’Brien’s fiction.”

Co-editor Lucy McDiarmid returns to the theme of her 2015 book about women in the Easter Rising with her essay “Hairpins among the rifles: the domestic site in women’s accounts of 1916.”

In a striking standalone visual essay, containing at least one image for each of the 14 pieces in “The Vibrant House”, McDiarmid discusses in her caption a famous July 1914 photo from the “Asgard,” a vessel belonging to Erskine and Molly Childers: “A box containing some of the rifles is clearly visible. Spring Rice kept a log of the voyage that records the challenge of housekeeping in the tight quarters on the yacht. So much of the log’s attention is devoted to cooking, the positioning of the mattresses and the quality of sleep that it is almost possible to forget the military object of the voyage.”

Several of the essays are first-person accounts, such as poet and scholar Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin's "A moving house." In 1949, when Ní Chuilleanáin was 7, her father, a professor of Irish, was appointed warden of the Honan Hostel, a Catholic men's residence attached to University College Cork, and the family moved into the warden's house. "My sister lamented the change," she writes, "but I remember no regrets. I had always wanted a house with stairs and this had three impressive flights."

McDiarmid's fellow editor Rhona Richman Kenneally told the *Echo*: "'The Vibrant House' is an exciting foray into selected Irish homes, which are explored as 'vibrant' spaces whose physical characteristics have a significant effect on the lived experience of the people who occupy them.

"The essays in the book," she added, "were inspired by the idea that walls, doors, staircases, furniture, etc., are more than mere backdrops to the actions of everyday life: these material elements play key roles—much more than most of us realize—in how we as members of a household relate to each other in our daily environment, in our sense of security, indeed, in how we define and project our identity."

Richman Kenneally said of her own work generally: "I wear multiple hats, as a professor of the Department of Design and Computation Arts and co-founder and fellow of the School of Irish Studies—both at Concordia University in Montreal—and as the proud mother of Gavin Kenneally.

"I'm the editor of the *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, and have published on domestic space in Ireland, the Irish Countrywomen's Association, Irish food culture and Irish Famine commemoration, as well as design and sustainability, and Montreal's Expo 67."

She continued: "My interest in Ireland and many things Irish began when I met my

husband Michael, discovered James Joyce, and fell in love with both of them at more or less the same time. My first degree was, hence, literature, and even though I subsequently changed disciplines, first to study history and then to complete a professional degree followed by a PhD in architecture, the inspiration of each was sustained.

"My graduating project for the professional architecture degree was the design of hypothetical spaces for the main characters of 'Ulysses' — a boudoir for Molly and cabman's shelter for Leopold Bloom, and a library for Stephen Dedalus," Richman Kenneally said. "I situated these, in my fictional design, on the site of Mycenae which figures in Homer's original 'Odyssey.' Indeed, my whole career has been a cross-fertilization of architecture, design, and literature, all of which helped comprise the backdrop to 'The Vibrant House.'"

### **What advice do you have for aspiring writers?**

Everything you've experienced in life is relevant to what you're writing. Whereas the ostensible task is to focus on the subject at hand, that effort must not suppress relational thinking, across potentially relevant broader fields that you already know or are curious about. Keep imagination wide open!

### **Name three books that are memorable in terms of your reading pleasure.**

*Dorothea Lange's Ireland*, an astonishing collection of photographs by an exceptional artist. The cookbooks of Irish author and media personality Maura Laverty, which have fueled my research and publications on Irish food and culture. In her recipes and stories, with expertise, wit, and subversion, she reveals much about women's lives during mid-twentieth century Ireland.

The distinguished Henry Glassie's *Passing the time in Ballymenone*. An enthralling study of one town in Fermanagh, it's informative, entertaining, and emotionally powerful.

### **What book are you currently reading?**

Two collections of Kevin Barry's short stories, *There are little kingdoms* and *Dark lies the island*. I am supervising a student in our Masters of Design program who is studying the landscapes depicted in these works, and will create a photographic-design research project as a means to contextualize them.

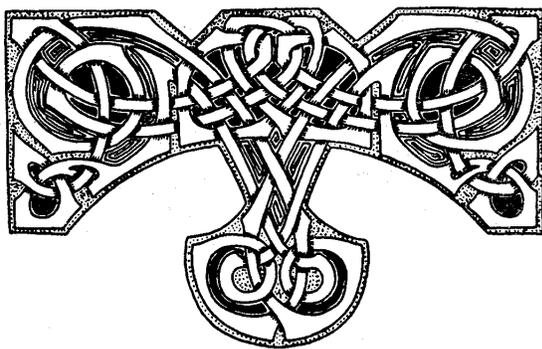
**What book changed your life?**

"Ulysses." Nothing was the same afterward.

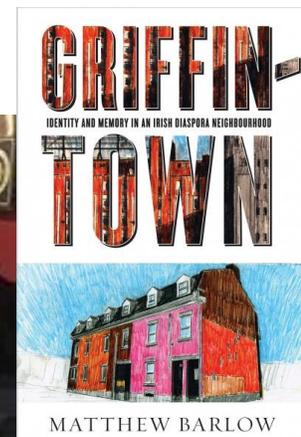
**What is your favorite spot in Ireland?**

I can't answer that question on the grounds that it might incriminate me, due to competing family geographic affiliations!

**You're Irish if ...** being Irish is a meaningful concept for you. My father is a Holocaust survivor, my mother's family escaped a pogrom, and they found a haven in Canada. So I carry the DNA of my ancestors but I'm also Irish, because for the past 40 years I've had the privilege to be a member of an Irish family of nine siblings and beyond, living in Youghal, Cork, Kilkenny, the North, the UK, Barcelona, America, Australia and Canada. I'm also a firm believer in Taiye Selasi's motto: don't ask me where I'm from, ask me where I'm a local. Forty years of visiting Ireland for personal and professional reasons have given me a sense of that kind of belonging.



## Book notice



Congratulations to Dr. Matthew Barlow, Concordia PhD History graduate has won the **Canadian Historical Association's Clio Award** (Québec region) for his book, *Griffintown: Identity and Memory in an Irish Diaspora Neighbourhood* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2017).

These annual awards are given for meritorious publications or for exceptional contributions by individuals or organizations to regional history.

**Matthew Barlow.** *Griffintown: Identity and Memory in an Irish Diaspora Neighbourhood.* Vancouver: UBC Press, 2017.

This unique book focuses not only on the history of Montreal's Griffintown working-class neighborhood - from its birth in the mid-19th century to its reconfiguration at the dawn of the 21st century, to its virtual disappearance after the Second World War world, but especially to the memory that was built by the Irish people who inhabited it. While using a wide variety of sources, both written and oral, and using several levels of analysis, Matthew Barlow shows that the close association of the Irish with this neighborhood, in spite of the fact that they have always been a minority there, illustrates a

memory work that has been undertaken since the beginning of the twentieth century and has continued to this day and even intensified over time, according to the events that have marked the sociopolitical history of Ireland, but also that of Quebec. This fascinating study allows us to see how this memory emerged, how it has survived and how and why this memory continues to feed Griffintown's almost mythical vision. In doing so, Barlow's work offers a truly unique portrait of the life of this neighborhood and of its long-term residents, and in many respects reintroduces the history of the working class and it will certainly make its mark.

## Obituary



The world of Irish music lost one of its most prominent leaders on November 7, 2018 in the death of pianist, composer, and academic Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin. A champion of the serious study of traditional music who merged elements of classical and traditional musics in his own compositional work, he was the Emeritus Professor of Music at the University of Limerick. He was 67 years old.

President Higgins, an old friend, attended the funeral with hundreds of others on Monday at St. Senan's Church, Kilrush, Co. Clare.

Ó Súilleabháin came from an impressive academic background. He earned both his B.Mus (1972) and his MA (1973) from University College Cork, where he studied with Aloys Fleischmann and Seán Ó Riada, major figures both. Upon graduating he became a lecturer at UCC, where he first invested intellectual energy into the elevation of traditional music in the academy by incorporating it into the curriculum for BA and BMus degrees.

In addition to his groundbreaking academic work at this time, Ó Súilleabháin began to distinguish himself as a performer and composer, through the albums "Ceolta Eireann" (1976), "Óró Damhnaigh (1977), and "Cry Of The Mountain" (1981), and as a producer, most notably through the albums his wife Nóirín Ní Riain made with the Monks of Glenstal Abbey.

Ó Súilleabháin completed his Ph.D. in 1987 at Queens University Belfast, where he studied with John Blacking, an ethnomusicologist and social anthropologist who worked among the Venda people of the Northern Transvaal, South Africa and who embraced an anthropological approach to the study of music; and John Bailey, an ethnomusicologist who specialized in the music of Afghanistan and who, among other things, wrote about performance as a research technique in ethnomusicology. Ó Súilleabháin's dissertation was a stylistic analysis of the playing of fiddler Tommie Potts and is highly regarded in the field.

The late 1980s and '90s yielded additional notable works, including "The Dolphin's Way" (1987) and "Oileán" (1989), and included an appearance on Van Morrison's "Enlightenment" album (1990). In 1990, Ó Súilleabháin began a stint at Boston College as a visiting scholar, where he and Séamus Connolly organized an Irish fiddle festival called "My Love is in America." Its success not only led to an album, but, at Ó Súilleabháin urging, to BC's Irish Music

Center, an archive patterned after the Irish Traditional Music Archive in Dublin. (He also started similar Irish music archives at UCC and UL and was chair of the ITMA's board 1993-1999.)

Ó Súilleabháin's vision for Irish music became more concentrated in 1994, when he became the Chair of Music at the University of Limerick and founded its Irish World Music Center, which later became known as the Irish World Academy of Music & Dance. Then, in 1995, he developed "A River of Sound: The Changing Course of Irish Traditional Music" a seven part TV documentary/lecture series broadcast on RTÉ and BBC that (alongside 1994's "Riverdance") raised questions about innovation and the meaning of tradition that ultimately changed the way many looked at traditional music and dance.

More recently, Ó Súilleabháin's compositional work included "Maranatha" for the Cork International Choral Festival (2000), the music for the DVD reissue of the silent film "Irish Destiny" (2004), "Elver Gleams" (2010), and "Phoenix Rising" with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra (2015). He also served as the assistant editor of Aloys Fleischmann's important "Sources of Traditional Music" (1999). In addition, he was the chair of Culture Ireland, from its establishment in 2005 until 2014. His substantial and benevolent influence on the world of Irish music was not only seen through his seemingly innumerable good works (most of which aren't included here), but through the recognition of his peers, as evidenced by honorary doctorates and awards from institutions like UCC, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Boston College, Notre Dame, and Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann.

A gifted performer, composer, academic, and leader, Ó Súilleabháin changed the course of Irish music. His passing is a staggering

loss. Although he will be missed, his legacy is substantial and will most certainly continue to influence music and musicians for generations to come.

*By Daniel Neely, Irish Echo*

## Verse

On a Wednesday morning early I took the road to Derry  
Along Glenshane and Foreglen and the cold woods of Hillhead:  
A wet wind in the hedges and a dark cloud on the mountain  
And flags like black frost mourning that the thirteen men were dead.

*Seamus Heaney*

*On the day the Director of Public Prosecutions could only find enough evidence to charge ONE of the paras for the Bloody Sunday killings.*

**Northern Ireland Civil Rights  
ASSOCIATION**

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**A CIVIL RIGHTS  
MARCH**

**WILL BE HELD IN DERRY**

**ON SATURDAY, 5<sup>TH</sup> OCT.**

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**COMMENCING AT 3-30 p.m.**

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**ASSEMBLY POINT: WATERSIDE RAILWAY STATION**  
**MARCH TO THE DIAMOND**  
Where a **PUBLIC MEETING** will take place

## Remembering Jer O'Leary An ordinary bloke with many talents

Actor, activist, artist, raconteur, orator, and trade unionist Jer O'Leary (73), who died in Dublin on St Stephen's Day, had a favourite quotation: "If you have not been involved in the passions of your time you have not lived." So his sister Margaret recalled at a crowded St Agatha's church on North William Street on Thursday morning at the end of the funeral Mass. "Jer followed through on that belief and the presence of so many colleagues and friends here today is a testament to that. Our Jer was just an ordinary bloke, to whom nature gave many talents and those talents and his commitment were made available to the benefit of all who asked."



Best known for his portrayal of trade unionist Jim Larkin, O'Leary appeared in 42 films, making his debut in Jim Sheridan's *My Left Foot*. Other roles included the Neil Jordan film *Michael Collins*, where he played Thomas Clarke, and as the King of the Tinkers in Jim Sheridan's *The Field*. A renowned balladeer, artist and a folklorist he was also a skilled tapestry banner maker which he made for trade union marches.

A committed trade unionist himself, he left school at 13, became a political activist and joined Official Sinn Féin before moving to the Communist Party. Over six feet tall, his first acting role on the Dublin stage was as Big Jim Larkin in *The Non-Stop Connolly Show* co-directed by Jim Sheridan, John Arden, and Margaretta D'Arcy in 1975.

He came to wider public prominence as Jim Larkin in James Plunkett's *The Risen People*, directed by Jim and Peter Sheridan. In 1977 he appeared in Donald Taylor Black's production of the Bertolt Brecht classic *The Mother* at the Project theatre on Dublin's Essex St.

His politically related activities with the Official Republican Movement led to him receiving a sentence of three years in Mountjoy. It was a huge turning point in his life and led indirectly to the commencement of his career as a Banner Artist. He would later admit "how proud he was to see the Banners 'on active service' in many marches and demonstrations."



*Jer O'Leary and Robert Ballagh at the Repudiate the Debt protest in 2011*

The large attendance at his funeral included people from the trade union movement, theatre,

politics, and media, led by Lord Mayor of Dublin Cllr Niall Ring. Also in attendance were Sinn Féin President Mary Lou McDonald, her predecessor Gerry Adams TD, Louise O'Reilly, Cllr Micheál Mac Donncha, Lucilita Bhreatnach, former Labour TD Joe Costello, former Labour Cllr Nicky Kelly, former SIPTU president Jack O'Connor, Independent Dublin Cllrs Mannix Flynn and Christy Burke, and Independent Sligo Cllr Declan Bree.

## Conferences



John D. Reigh 1890. National Library of Ireland

Ireland's Great Hunger Institute at Quinnipiac University invites you to their biennial Conference, **12-15 June 2019**.

*Famines in Ireland before 1845 and after 1852*

The Great Hunger of 1845 to 1852 has cast a long shadow over the subsequent history of Ireland and its diaspora. Since 1995, there has been a renewed interest in studying this event, by scholars, students, archeologists, artists,

musicians, folklorists etc. This interest shows no sign of abating. New research, methodologies and approaches have greatly added to our understanding of the causes, impact and legacies of this tragedy.

The focus on the Great Hunger has overshadowed other periods of famine and food shortages in Ireland and their influences on a society in which poverty, hunger, emigration and even death, were part of the life-cycle and not unique to the 1840s. 'Famines before 1845 and after 1852' will explore the impact of these intermittent crises on the people of Ireland.

### Confirmed keynote speakers:



**Dr. Ciarán Reilly, of Maynooth University, will speak about the famine of 1831**



**Dr. Gerard Moran, Social Science Research Centre, NUI Galway, will speak about 'The Forgotten Famine of 1879-1882'.**

The programme will include visits to the exhibition, 'James Hack Tuke: Quaker philanthropist and friend to Ireland's poor', to Ireland's Great Hunger Museum, the

Knights of Columbus Museum, Yale University and downtown New Haven.

Convenors: Professor Christine Kinealy, Quinnipiac University and Dr Jason King, Irish Heritage Trust. In partnership with the Irish

Heritage Trust and the National Famine Museum at Strokestown.



### **Third Galway Conference of Irish Studies: "What is it to dwell?": Home(s) in Irish Studies**

Where: Centre for Irish Studies, National University of Ireland, Galway

When: June 7-8, 2019

More info: [gcis2019@gmail.com](mailto:gcis2019@gmail.com)

*[Unfortunately, due to technical issues beyond our control, further details are unavailable. Ed.]*



## **CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **IRELAND UKRAINE AND EMPIRE Colonialism Dependence Conflict 1800-2017 (KYIV 14-17 NOVEMBER 2019)**

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Vladimir Putin's 2014 invasion of Ukraine started a war at Europe's eastern extreme, 15 years after a war at its western extreme, in Ireland, had ended. The Irish and Ukrainians were ruled by two of the world's biggest empires. By 1922 both had only qualified success in their bids for independence. Neither the Ukrainian nor Irish Republics were recognized by the Treaty of Versailles..

After independence both peoples had to deal with the demographic, economic, social, cultural and psychological legacies of imperial rule. The Ukrainians, unlike the Irish, not only must deal with decolonization but also with de-communization. Although each country had a foreign minority that originated as settler-colonists rather than immigrants, and thus formed a dominant urban minority, both countries figure only marginally in scholarship on imperialism and colonialism, which assumes these phenomenon must involve race and long oceanic distances. Both countries have large diasporas that had significant impact on their respective countries of origin.

The Conference examines five issues:

The first is a tradition of anti-colonialism and interpretation of their pasts as a colonized country that existed alongside romantic-nationalist interpretations.

The second, the applicability of colonial/imperial paradigms to modern Ireland and Ukraine, countries whose peoples had a self-image as exceptionally oppressed.

The third, violence liberation and domination.

The fourth are mass famines for which there exists considerable evidence pointing to the culpability of the ruling imperial elites.

The fifth is the presence of extremist empire loyalists, the product of imperial settlement and industrialization, and their role in maintaining imperial rule.

#### **PANEL PROPOSALS**

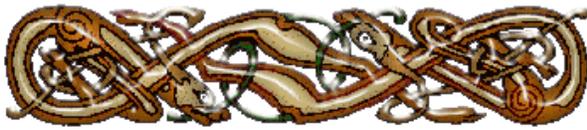
The organizers will accept full panels devoted to the examined issues if they do not conflict with already accepted panels. Possible topics yet not covered might include:

Ukraine and Ireland 1919-1923 --Ukraine and Ireland at Versailles--Imperial images of Irish and Ukrainians--Language Identity and Politics--Nationalism and Revisionism in historiography -- Michael Collins and Evhen Konovalts -- role of émigrés/diasporas in Irish and Ukrainian history. We expect first drafts of papers by OCT. 1. 2018. Presentations and final versions can be in Ukrainian or English. Address all enquiries about and panel submissions to, Stephen Velychenko and Volodymyr Kravchenko. The proceedings will be

published as a book by CIUS Press (University of Alberta).

**ORGANIZERS:**

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## Editor's Brexit Picks

[couldn't be helped, really]

First, the serious one:

### Brexit can't save Unionism. Prosperity just might

DAVID MCWILLIAMS, *IRISH TIMES*

Being best man is always a tricky business; being best man at a North-South Co Down marriage, in July 1994 came with a whole new set of challenges.

The speech was a minefield. When you are involved in a ceremony officiated by the moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, you are alert to the cultural fault lines between the North and the Republic, not so much the well-signposted differences, as the disguised incendiary devices primed to go off even when you think you are on safe ground.

On the morning of the wedding, the groom and I met the minister in the austere surroundings of a small Presbyterian church outside Bangor. My Catholicism is so lapsed

as to be totally useless in situations like this; the groom had not even been baptised. There was a bit of "a lapsed Catholic and an atheist walk into a bar" feel to it all.

It had also been a bit of a big night as loads of us, southern and Northern friends, had converged in Belfast in advance of the big day. Nothing triggers the hungover heebie-jeebies as much as the sight of a minister with Bible in hand.

At three on the dot, the guilty pair of us stood at the altar waiting for the bride. The entire right side of the church was full: punctual northern Presbyterians, Anglicans, Methodists and the odd bonneted Plymouth Brethren great-aunt, sitting erect, expectantly. There wasn't much smiling going on but, as I've learned, that's their way in God's house.

It is universally acknowledged that brides are usually late, but congregations are supposed to turn up on time. As we looked down from the altar, almost every pew on the left side, the Dubliners' side, was empty. The southerners had, almost to a man and woman, observed the great Irish ritual of the swift one before the big do.

This was in the days before mobile phones. Abandoning the pagan at the altar, I had to barrel down the road in the minister's shiny red Vauxhall to shoo these Dublin reprobates out of the boozier and into the church.

The bride's Presbyterian father advised their driver to keep circumnavigating. It was going to be a long day, and it would take more than champagne, confetti and the trickiest speech of my life to break the cultural ice.

The bridesmaid couldn't stop laughing at these ridiculous Dubliners, their casual attitudes to ritual and their rather pathetic best man, who was trying to keep the whole chaotic show on the road, one off-the-cuff remark away from catastrophe.

Then, reader, she married me.

That bridesmaid and I have been a couple now for 25 years, an ongoing education for me in the intricacies of Northern Ireland. It's been a long matriculation. Just when you think you are ahead, you are pulled back to earth.

Our children are the Belfast Agreement incarnate; born in east Belfast, brought up in south Dublin. The fact that I was the only

expectant father at the hospital's antenatal classes not in a full Rangers tracksuit tells you all you need to know about the ethnicity at the Ulster Hospital in Dundonald.

Although it may be unrepresentative of Ireland right now, our type of family might well be the functioning model for the future Ireland, a new shared island.

Until Brexit, we never really argued about politics. The Belfast Agreement had settled things. But Brexit has changed everything: not only did it split the northern family – with some voting to leave the EU and others to remain – but it changed the conversation.

We are more aware of the stakes and the fact that my teenage children and their cousins up North are now on a different trajectory to the one we had imagined.

Even before Brexit, the ground was shifting. The 2011 census in the North shows that Protestants and Catholics are almost evenly split.

Digging deeper, the data reveals profound variation in the proportion of Catholics and Protestants in various age groups. Of the people over the age of 90 in the North, 64 per cent are Protestant and 25 per cent are Catholic (9 per cent had no declared religion). This division reflects the religious status quo when these people were born, in the 1920s, and more or less reflects the realities of partition.

The numbers underscore the sectarian buffer that was supposed to ensure Northern Ireland remains Protestant and unionist. However, that didn't envisage the dramatic flight of middle-class Protestants to universities in Scotland and England. Few come back. Today, that sectarian buffer is wafer-thin and getting thinner.

The increasingly neurotic public displays of fanatical loyalism in Protestant areas of Northern Ireland could be evidence of a heightened sense that massive constitutional change is a looming possibility.

I've been travelling around Ulster recently, taking in the views from rural Markethill in south Armagh to the prosperous King's Road, Belmont and Stormont suburbs of east Belfast, and from coastal fishing villages of

the Ards Peninsula to the council estates of Cookstown in Tyrone.

I have seen Union Jacks and even UVF flags where I never saw them before. The anxiety of Unionism about the ticking demographic clock is captured by this "backs-to-the-wall" display of extravagant loyalist pageantry on the streets.

On present trends, Catholics will be in the majority in Northern Ireland by the end of the next decade. Of course, being Catholic doesn't mean you are a nationalist but it's a fairly good proxy. In a taste of what is to come, unionist parties lost their majority in Stormont for the first time in 2017.

The demographic reality in the future is that unionists will have to persuade nationalists to vote unionist to preserve the Union. This is a big ask. In contrast nationalists have to do nothing, just wait.

Therefore, in terms of political strategy, the massive challenge is upon the shoulders of unionism, not nationalism.

Unionism has one last chance to make Northern Ireland work for everyone. Prosperity rather than Protestantism will protect the Union. And of course, Brexit makes prosperity less, not more likely.

The present DUP leadership is therefore undermining rather than enhancing unionism.

Will a unionist de Klerk emerge to plot a course for the Protestant people of Northern Ireland? Today they have power in numbers, but in a New Ireland, dictated by demographics, the unionist population of Northern Ireland constitutes only 18 per cent of the population of the island of Ireland.

To underscore just how much modern Ireland has changed, there are more overseas-born people on the island of Ireland than there are unionists.

The ball is now in unionism's court. Maybe for the last time.



Second, the satirical one:  
[a reply to Donald Tusk, *Dublin Review of Books*]

## Tenth Circle of Hell

This new and exciting circle of hell – under construction and expected to come in below budget - will be a very special place adjacent to the sullen waters of the river Styx. It has been designed to punish a particularly obnoxious subset of fools: those who took steps of massive consequence, without even the semblance of a plan.

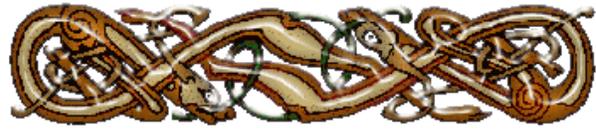
Boris Johnson will be there, as will Michael Gove, Nigel Farage, David Davis and many many more. Some previously housed in other circles will be moved to the new region.

At the rickety English table, the damned will sit around all day eating slices of spam spread thickly with out-of-date Marmite and soaked in lukewarm milky tea drawn from a vast and sooty urn. Beneath the table the owner of Weatherspoons and other business supporters of Brexit will be crawling about gobbling up the bits of pap that fall from the mouths of the squawking former public school boys.

At the top of the table Jacob Rees-Mogg will be complaining bitterly over his consignment to hell. Boris Johnson will be telling him to shut the f—k up. And each day of the week these inmates of hell will rail at the absence from their company of others they regard as equally poor planners.

Why isn't John Lennon here? Where is Lady Diana, they will wail on a Monday, and why is Robert Emmet not here they will demand on the following day as they are obliged to permanently stuff their mouths with the unending vile slop served by prancing black devils with swishing tails who, eventually and as night falls, will answer the pleading questions with a squeal of – naturally enough

- hellish laughter: “ Because this place is for fools.”



Third, the psychoanalytical one:  
[Fintan O'Toole, *Irish Times*]

In the English reactionary imagination, dystopian fantasy was and is indistinguishable from reality. Rhetorically, it was commonplace among British anti-Europeans that the EU was a continuation in another, more insidious form, of previous attempts at domination from the continent. In 1989, for example, the Bruges Group of anti-European Tories heard Prof Kenneth Minogue of the London School of Economics tell them that “the European institutions were attempting to create a European Union, in the tradition of the mediaeval popes, Charlemagne, Napoleon, the Kaiser and Adolf Hitler”.

The sleight of hand was not subtle: Hitler tried to unite Europe, so does the EU, therefore the EU is a Hitlerian project. But the lack of subtlety did not stop the trope from being used in the Brexit campaign: “Napoleon, Hitler, various people tried this [unifying Europe], and it ends tragically. The EU is an attempt to do this by different methods,” Boris Johnson told the Telegraph on 14 May 2016, a month before the referendum. In 1990, Nicholas Ridley, the British secretary of state for trade and industry, a close friend and ally of the prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, told the Spectator that the European monetary system being introduced by the EU was “all a German racket designed to take over the whole of Europe ... I'm not against giving up sovereignty in principle, but not to this lot. You might as well give it to Adolf Hitler, frankly ... I'm not sure I wouldn't rather have the shelters and the chance

to fight back than simply being taken over by economics.”

What’s striking is that we can begin to see in this hysterical rhetoric the outlines of two notions that would become crucial to Brexit discourse. One is the comparison of pro-European Brits to quislings, collaborators, appeasers and traitors. The leave campaign in 1975 likened the treaty of accession to the Munich agreement of 1938, remembered as a shameful act of surrender to the Germans. But the other idea is the fever-dream of an English Resistance, and its weird corollary: a desire to have actually been invaded so that one could – gloriously – resist. And not just resist but, in the ultimate apotheosis of masochism, die. Part of the allure of romantic anti-imperial nationalism is martyrdom. The executed leaders of the Easter Rising in Dublin in 1916, for example, stand as resonant examples of the potency of the myth of blood sacrifice. But in the ironic reversal of zombie imperialism, the appropriation of the imagery of resistance to a former colonising power, this romance of martyrdom is mobilized as defiance of the EU.

Britain was genuinely in a topsy-turvy situation, the winner that had been surpassed by the losers. Why not draw a topsy-turvy conclusion: in a dark stratum of the reactionary mind, we must think of ourselves as a defeated nation? And if Britain was to be defeated, the EU must be its invasive oppressor. Must be, because there was no other possible candidate. The very absurdity of this notion was its strength. The paranoiac must at some stage ask himself: but why are they out to get me? Since there was no actual evidence of any western European hostility, the answer must lie in some deeply hidden motivation. How could they hate us when we saved them in the war? The proto-Brexiters came up with a counter-factual truth that was

at the same time highly satisfying: they hate us because we saved them.

Since the English mood in relation to joining Europe was largely one of surrendering to necessity, it was not so hard to think of the act as surrender full stop. As Peter Shore MP, the most persistent Labour party critic of Europe, said during the 1975 referendum: “What the advocates of membership are saying ... is that we are finished as a country; that the long and famous story of the British nation and people has ended; that we are now so weak and powerless that we must accept terms and conditions, penalties and limitations almost as though we had suffered defeat in a war.” It was a masochistic rhetoric that would return in full force as the Brexit negotiations failed to produce the promised miracles.



Finally, the heartfelt one:

*[from @borderirish – the indispensable twitter feed]*

Our Father, who art in Cavan, Caledon be thy name; thy Cullaville come, thy will be Down, in Strabane as it is in Lifford. Give us this day our Derry bread and forgive us Dundalk, as we forgive those who Dundalk against us, and lead us not into Brexit but deliver us from eejits, Amen

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