Glocal Ireland

Glocal Ireland:
Current Perspectives on Literature and the Visual Arts

Edited by

Marisol Morales Ladrón and Juan F. Elices Agudo

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INTRODUCTION: THE POLITICS OF GLOCALITY

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"In a globalising world, 'the local' matters most!"
(Bradley and Kennelly 2008, ix)

The present study, *Glocal Ireland: Current Perspectives on Literature and the Visual Arts*, stems from the premise that in the last decades huge changes have kept Ireland (pre)occupied with an unprecedented and extremely rapid economic growth, the so-called Celtic Tiger, which has been followed by a sharp and dramatic downfall. The well-known construction of a rural Ireland, whose image of the pastoral ideal was spread worldwide for centuries, has given way to its recognition as one of the most globalised nations in the western world (Fagan 2003: 110, Friedman 2005; Kearney 2006, 77; O'Sullivan 2006, 36; Kuhling and Keohane 2007; Inglis 2007, 111; Bradley and Kennelly 2008, 2). Modernised societal demands, alternative ways of earning a living, intense cultural cross currents and the forging of renewed interests in the arts have changed both the way Ireland envisions the world and the position it holds within worldly affairs. Consequently, the cultural and artistic productivity of this nation has also definitely moved away from the topical insularity that had exhibited in the past and has adopted more transnational and universal subjects, at the same time that it has struggled to retain its genuine values and its own signs of identity.

While it is true to affirm that Ireland is undergoing a "post"-times, through which the post-national, the post-revolutionary, the post-rural, the post-colonial, the post-feminist, the post-Catholic, the post-Celtic Tiger, the post-modern and even the post-Troubles have found their own liberating and particular forms of expression, the sudden shuttering of its unstable economy has been interpreted as a prophetic conjecture of the inescapable effects of a global location of multifarious exchanges, whose

artistic consequences remain to be narrated. At a time when territorial borders have blurred their limits to accommodate more meaningful spaces that better suit global demands, the local has become more significant than ever. As an umbrella term, globalisation aims at breaking with the idea of cultural difference. However, its all-embracing implication becomes both useful and deceitful. For, in Ireland, the more this global progress has grown to be unavoidable, the more evocative the local has befallen. Bearing these aspects in mind, this volume contends that the global and the local should be understood not as opposed concepts but as two ends of a continuum of interaction. Thus, we argue that the construction of the global does not necessarily involve a rejection of the local. In fact, Ireland's aesthetic production has retained both the interests in the particulars of a local identity and the concerns for a growing multicultural society, as most articles included in this book will also try to demonstrate.

Within such framework, the portmanteau word "glocal" used in the title of this book seems to us a most suitable term since it encompasses the dynamics of the search for one's identity and the cross-current need to open up new boundaries. We therefore conceive the expression "glocal" as the site of negotiation of two forces, one centripetal and one centrifugal—to echo Bakhtin's terminology. Whereas centripetal forces that move around to attain homogeneity establish its essentials on a central identity, centrifugal forces gravitate around it in a need to expand to the margins, searching for difference in heterogeneity.[1] At a time when the global and the local can often become interchangeable concepts, the glocal emerges as the dialogic point where the two can meet. For this reason, this book aims at deconstructing the limits that surround the expression of these notions as they have been applied to describe the current aesthetic and culture production in Ireland during the last decades.

Once labelled as a land of legendary heroes, storytellers, druids, myths and fairies, Ireland's capital has conspicuously become the location for international literary recognition when Dublin was nominated "City of literature" by UNESCO last August 2010.[2] If at the beginning of the 20th century James Joyce had abandoned Ireland in search of a less parochial way of dealing with art, at the beginning of the 21st century Ireland is not pictured any more as a marginal culture in the margins of Europe, but as a mainstream centre of concocting ideas that are imported and exported elsewhere. Although historically Ireland has figured as a site of opposite encounters that have paradoxically complemented each other, binary concepts such as rural vs. countryside, East vs. West, Irish vs. British, north vs. south, home vs. exile, emigration vs. immigration, local vs. global, nationalism vs. transnationalism, tradition vs. modernity,

underdevelopment vs. modernisation, or multiculturalism vs. monoculturalism have finally triggered the definite establishment of what Ireland is and has always been, a hybrid culture both—and at the same time—local and global. In fact, as Bradley and Kennelly maintain: "Globalisation was not unknown to the ancient Irish" (2008, 15).

Within this state of affairs, the present monograph aims at describing Ireland's own movement from the local to the global and back again to its origins. The book opens with two articles on the state of the art in literature and film, and then addresses three main issues: "The paradoxes of locality", "The movement to the global" and "The turn to the glocal" as a site of eventual interactions. Each of these topics will constitute a section that will be scrutinised by five scholars, who will use a variety of theoretical frameworks to discuss matters related to the subjects involved. The book closes with two interviews to writers Deirdre Madden and Mary O'Donnell that were publicly conveyed during the celebration of the VIII International Conference of the Spanish Association for Irish Studies (AEDEI), held at the University of Alcalá in May 2009. Some of the articles included here are revised and expanded versions of previous papers that were discussed during the Conference, although others were commissioned by the editors in our attempt to offer a wider and more comprehensive panorama of current perspectives on Irish literature and the visual arts.

Hence, the present book initiates with Margaret Kelleher's contribution, "From the Anthology to the Database: Old and New Irish Studies", in which she analyses the impact of the new technologies on Irish studies and considers how decisive this step forward is being to provide renewed optimistic possibilities to all those interested in this field. Kelleher revolves around two main instances that exemplify the evolution of the anthology from the traditional written artifact to the current digitalised databases. As a profound *connoisseur* of both materials, Kelleher traces an illuminating and thought-provoking dissection on how Irish studies have gone through a process of adaptation to a gradually globalised and technological context in which the digitisation of the Humanities turns out to be a more than satisfactory means, first, to maintain its status within third-level contexts and, secondly, to enhance a more interdisciplinary spirit. This proposal is followed by Ruth Barton's "The Ghost of the Celtic Tiger", which elaborates on the filmic production originated in Ireland in the shadow of the so-called Celtic Tiger era. Her study anatomises the aesthetic, thematic and artistic evolution of Irish cinema and its difficulties to transcend more stagnant and perhaps obsolete visions of the country. Barton contends that Irish cinema has been incidentally pushed to respond

to many events that the author embeds in what she calls "a history of brutality". For this, she explores some of the most recognisable Irish filmic products such as *Angela's Ashes*, *The Magdalene Sisters* or *The Wind that Shakes the Barley* to appropriately prove that the globalisation of Irish cinema—determined and conditioned by the presence of foreign directors and external financial sources—has run the risk of perpetuating and somehow legitimising long-standing stereotypes related to the Irish identity.

Under the first section that will be discussed in this book, "The paradoxes of locality", five contributions have been included. Mª Jesús Lorenzo Modia, in "Eighteenth-Century Irish Authors as *New and Elegant Amusements for the Ladies of Great Britain*", deepens in the ways literature was recurrently conceived as a tool for the education and even reformation of women. Lorenzo Modia refers to a number of Irish or Anglo-Irish authors such as Oliver Goldsmith, Thomas Sheridan, Jonathan Swift or Elizabeth Griffith who were set as literary examples for women and considered the most appropriate to enlighten them and to widen their knowledge. The author suggests that, through these writings, women managed to have access to an activity—reading—that had been so far limited and even banned, a fact that benefitted not only women but also society as a whole. In the same temporal context, Begoña Lasa Álvarez's "Regina Maria Roche, an Eighteenth-Century Irish Writer on the Continent and Overseas" focuses on the relatively unknown figure of Regina Maria Roche, an eighteenth-century novelist whose work *The Children of the Abbey* achieved a notable impact especially in the Spanish-speaking countries. Lasa Álvarez's study centres particularly on the circulation of the novel in Spain from the year 1807 when it was first translated. Lasa Álvarez also points to the difficulties that the novel had to go through as it had to face a double process of censorship, both from the government and the Inquisition. Although the Spanish translation of *The Children of the Abbey* was banned due to its excessive use of Gallicisms—a fact that, according to the censor, might eventually contaminate the language—, it enjoyed a great success in the country.

Locality is further explored by Esther Rey Torrijos in "Everything is moving: speed and sense of place in Elizabeth Bowen's novels", which centres on the complex relationship of the author with the surrounding environment in a period of time determined by the two World Wars and the incipient Irish turmoil at the turn of the twentieth century. However, the socio-political, economic and moral disintegration Bowen perceived did not lead her to glorify the past and to criticise the modern days. She consciously avoids this tone of nostalgia that prevailed in most of her

coetaneous writers to produce a type of narrative that also sought to explore the new and the unknown. Rey Torrijos's article, therefore, analyses how Bowen dealt with these innovations, focusing particularly on the way travel and movement interact in her works, and how this technological progress ends up alienating her characters. In this like vein, the author suggests that Bowen's conception of movement ultimately brings about a sense of rootlessness and dislocation. It is no wonder, Rey Torrijos explains, that Bowen's novels explore speed and velocity as two intrinsic components of the modern lifestyle of planes, cars and trains, which she inevitably associates with the placelessness experienced by the twentieth-century individual.

Munira H. Mutran's contribution, "Hugh O'Neill's Splintered Identity", focuses on the key figure of sixteenth-century Irish leader Hugh O'Neill and the way Brian Friel and Thomas Kilroy drew on Sean O'Faolain's biography for their plays *Making History* (1988) and *The O'Neill* (1969), respectively. Mutran points out that both plays, although inspired by O'Faolain's work, approach the figure of the leader from very different lights. Kilroy aimed at presenting O'Neill as a deeply complex human being, disposed of any mythical or heroic connotation and as the only capable of putting the Celtic world together. Friel, on the other hand, selected only six characters to represent O'Neill's life, trying to bring to the fore figures like Mabel that had been previously ostracised by both history and literature. Finally, Juan Ignacio Oliva Cruz, in "Gendered Re-readings of the Irish Canon in Jamie O'Neill's *At Swim, Two Boys*" examines how, from Flann O'Brien's classic *At Swim, Two Birds*, O'Neill approaches, deconstructs and demystifies some key events in the course of Irish history. With the inclusion of a topic such as homosexuality not so long considered taboo in Ireland, Oliva Cruz suggests that the sexuality of characters in O'Neill's novel come to represent another Ireland, that which has been overshadowed and marginalised due to religious, political or moral questions.

The second section, devoted to the exploration of the move to the global, starts with an assessment of Paula Meehan's poetic output, in Pilar Villar Argáiz's article entitled "'A global regionalist': Paula Meehan's Transnational Poetics of Globalisation". Villar Argáiz explores the counteracting relationship with the process of globalisation that her country is currently undergoing, paying special attention to the aftermath of the Celtic Tiger period. As Villar Argáiz demonstrates, Meehan's realisation of the effects of the Celtic Tiger enables her to reveal the pernicious effects of globalisation in economic, ecological or cultural terms. Her analysis also centres upon the connections that Meehan

establishes between the Tiger phenomenon and the new expressions of imperialism, which she mostly attributes to the capitalistic practices empowered by so-called "First-World" nations. As a counterpoint to Meehan's critique towards the excesses of globalisation, her poetry also vindicates the spirituality of Buddhism as a means of reaction and protest against the ruling neo-imperialist and capitalistic scenarios. This is followed by Mª José Claros Morales's "Seamus Heaney's 'District and Circle': from the Omphalos to the Universal". In her article, Claros Morales argues that the global component of Seamus Heaney's poetry is deeply rooted in the local, as he evinces in most of his collections, from *Death of a Naturalist* (1966) to his latest *District and Circle* (2006). Claros Morales's paper traces the evolution of a writer whose work has been strongly determined by the appalling circumstances of Northern Ireland and by how he has managed to reconcile this reality with his own poetic self. In this respect, Heaney's poetry, Claros Morales states, cannot be solely circumscribed to the Troubles and their aftermath, but, generally speaking, to any outburst of violence. His constant return to his origins marks, therefore, a necessary counterpoint to the scenarios he most recurrently depicts in his poetry.

José Francisco Fernández Sánchez's "Samuel Beckett and Aidan Higgins. No Intrusion Involved" deepens into the way Samuel Beckett and Aidan Higgins' close relationship gave way to a mutual understanding of their production and how their literary conception transcends the limits of so-called Irish literature. As Fernández Sánchez assuredly points out, their transnational, even transcontinental, exchange of letters proves the extent to which Irish literature was becoming internationally relevant. Fernández Sánchez's study is sustained upon the profound analysis of the letters that are kept in the archives of the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin. This paper not only explores the literary connections of both authors but also Beckett's emotional involvement when dealing with Higgins' work, a fact that inevitably led to personal tensions between the two authors. Fernandez concludes that, even though Higgins' works scarcely echoed Beckett's more obscure style, the presence of the Irish master was indelibly present in the life of Aidan Higgins. Also, Stephanie Schwerter's contribution "'Looking East'": Medbh McGuckian's Intercultural Poetics" gravitates around the elements that intersect her poetry with some of the most pre-eminent Russian figures and how she manages to draw upon events in Russian history to dissect the Troubles through consciously cryptic subtexts. In her study, Schwerter analyses three of McGuckian's most representative poems, in which she approaches the complexities of the Northern Irish conflict

through images, themes and characters borrowed mainly from the Russian Revolution, as in the case of "Shaferi" and "The Man with Two Women", or from the period of Stalin's dictatorship, as brilliantly captured in "Balakhana". Schwerter's illuminating paper touches upon topics and questions that align Russian and Northern Irish realities within a common framework of suffering and trauma which McGuckian masterfully portrays in her poetry.

Finally, María Losada Friend focuses on the interconnections between the XVIIIth and the XXth century, in her article "Washington Irving and the cult of local Ireland in *Oliver Goldsmith. A Biography*". Her study approaches the figure of Washington Irving in terms of his often unexplored relationship with Ireland, which he made explicit with the publication of Oliver Goldsmith's biography in 1849. Irving's work represents how "glocality" is intertwined as a way to present Ireland both from within and abroad. In this particular case, Losada Friend points out, Irving's appreciation of the country was not sustained on the author's direct knowledge of the country, since he never visited it, but primarily on other fictional and non-fictional accounts. This fact explains why the picture of Ireland that is presented in the biography is usually inaccurate and based on an almost mythologised vision of the country. Losada Friend asserts that Irving's intention was not to provide a modernised or rushing image of Ireland but rather to perpetuate a more picturesque and stereotyped vision so as to suit it to the more easy-going and tranquil personality of Oliver Goldsmith.

The third section concerns the turn to the glocal and opens with Asier Altuna García de Salazar's "Glocalising, Globalising: Emer Martin's Fiction", a study on acclaimed Dublin novelist Emer Martin that seeks to present the paradoxes that underlie the idea of Ireland as a multicultural and globalised country, in which an array of different cultures, races, voices and expressions came together thanks to the island's economic boom. Altuna García de Salazar rightfully asserts that Martin's narratives exemplify very accurately the moves from the local to the global and how she also embeds both contexts within traditionally Irish themes such as migration. Martin's narratives, Altuna García de Salazar suggests, approach globalisation as a factor that undermines the specificity of any country, endangering, thus, the distinctiveness of the local. The dislocation produced by the global and the glocal find in Martin's fiction a perfect arena for discussion as she intermingles both concepts with the effects of both immigration and emigration.

Rosa González Casademont, in "Global Irishness Meets Global Culture Via *The Simpsons*", presents a thorough analysis of how Irishness

has been presented in various screen representations, focusing particularly on *The Simpsons* as a worldwide television referent. González Casademont founds her study on the idea that, in spite of the transformation experienced by the country, the image of Ireland that appears in most TV series—especially North American—is still blatantly stereotyped. However, González Casademont states that, rather than uplifting these clichés historically associated with the Irish, what *The Simpsons* aim at is basically to deconstruct them and show them as anchored to a past that does no longer represent the current state of the country.

Continuing with filmic studies, Guillermo Iglesias Díaz, in "Beyond the Reality/Fiction Game: an/Other Way of Exploring Contemporary Ireland in Film" problematises upon a dichotomy that has sustained many critical debates and which points to the persuasiveness of fiction as a mechanism to reconstruct a faithful portrait of reality in the filmic realm. Iglesias Díaz revolves around those postulates that emerged in the 1970s and which strengthened the impossibility of objectively capturing reality in a film. These theories pointed to questions such as "ideology" or "framing" as to explain why reality cannot be apprehended but only represented and, ultimately, fictionalised. Bearing these assumptions in mind, Iglesias Díaz concentrates on film-makers Paul Greengrass and his most acclaimed work *Bloody Sunday*—a film that epitomises quite accurately the way reality and fiction intersect and how the director manages to create the impression of realism—and John Carney, whose film *Once* also flouts the boundaries between fact and fiction. In a similar vein, Abigail Keating's "Locating the City: Dublin and the Consumerist Journey in Recent Irish Cinema" focuses on the filmic realm. Keating's study concentrates on how contemporary Irish cinema has succeeded in introducing the urban element as opposed to the rural context that prevailed some decades ago and how this transition has also led filmmakers to question current notions of identity. Keating approaches the cinematic city as a place that has witnessed the enormous socio-economic changes that the country has undergone and which have turned Ireland into a multicultural and multiracial country. To exemplify this new perspective, Keating selects two films, namely Leonard Abrahamson's *Adam and Paul* (2004) and Lance Daly's *Kisses* (2008), to illustrate the way Dublin personifies the effects of the Celtic Tiger and how decomposed and lifeless it appears to the eyes of the characters. Unrestrained materialism and the voracious need to consume underlie the two films, representing, as Keating suggests, the vilification of the modern cities and its pragmatic downturns.

Focusing now on art, Aída Rosende Pérez's article "Beyond the Local and the Global: 'Bodies that Matter' in Amanda Coogan's Visual Practice" revolves around the exploration of the female body as one of the most current and debated issues in contemporary Irish art and on how women have struggled to regain the control over their own autonomy. Among the many Irish female artists whose work is devoted to this question, Rosende Pérez concentrates on Amanda Coogan, a Dublin-based photographer and visual perfomer, whose ironic recreation of traditional female imagery has become the most distinctive trait in her production. Rosende Pérez points to Christianity as one of the main sources of Coogan's re-workings and suggests how the artist draws on traditional symbols to redefine and readjust them. Coogan also approaches patriarchy and the control it has exercised over the female body as an interesting source to understand the transgressive spirit of her work.

The book closes with two interviews. In Marisol Morales Ladrón's "'My loyalties would always be with the local': A conversation with Deirdre Madden", the author captures the thought-provoking reflections of one of the most outstanding and consolidated Irish novelist of the time. Madden explores questions related to her own identity as a writer, marked by her birth and growth in Northern Ireland—although she now lives in the Republic—, her personal approach to fiction and the most recurrent elements of her stories. Most questions in the interview revolve around the profound connections with art and nature that can be found in her writings and also with the unavoidable, although sometimes subtle, presence of the Northern Irish "Troubles". Through her words, Madden evinces that these issues respond to her own experience as a novelist who has managed to evolve and to always abide by her own and personal literary dictates. The final interview, "'Dealing with Themes as They Arrive': A Conversation with Mary O'Donnell", was conducted by Luz Mar González Arias and shows O'Donnell as one of the most talented poets and fiction writers in the Irish literary panorama, whose work is being the object of a very profound and noteworthy critical attention. In this interview, the questions that González Arias insightfully poses to the author seek to explore how poetry, in first instance, and now fiction have enabled her to deal with autobiographical dilemmas, with the state of Ireland in the past decades or with the creative process itself. As a writer born in County Monaghan, her work has been definitely influenced by that liminality between the North and the Republic and some of her collections of poetry and short stories convey this sense of in-betweeness that is so characteristic of her style. The interview also explores the writer's interest in themes related to mental disorders and psychological dislocations, which O'Donnell situates

as a preeminent topic in collections such as *The Ark Builders*. In the final section of the interview, González Arias focuses on the gender issues that are visibly present in O'Donnell's work and on how her own activism has been a recurrent element in all the stages of her literary career.

Notes

[1] For a definition of the centripetal and centrifugal forces as they were conceived by the Russian critic, see the final glossary, included in his well-known *The Dialogic Imagination* (425).

[2] Dublin figures as the fourth UNESCO City of literature, following Edinburgh, Iowa and Melbourne. As the official web portal of UNESCO underlines, in order to become the recipient of such recognition, a city would need to prove: "Quality, quantity and diversity of editorial initiatives and publishing houses", among a few other requirements (http://portal.unesco.org).

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LITERARY AND CINEMATIC ADDRESSES ON GLOCAL IRELAND

FROM THE ANTHOLOGY TO THE DATABASE: OLD AND NEW IRISH STUDIES

MARGARET KELLEHER
NUI MAYNOOTH

To date, the debates surrounding how to define Irish studies have proceeded largely in ideological or conceptual terms, while important epistemological questions concerning the discipline remain unexplored. For instance, we have yet to examine fully the role of material objects (texts, compilations, compendia) in structuring our access to information and knowledge, and their changing role in light of the new possibilities offered by the digital and the virtual. The recent movement "from the anthology to the database" is one of the most remarkable changes in how literary scholarship is circulated. This striking proliferation of electronic resources invites us to investigate the implications and opportunities which new media affords to Irish studies.

Historical antecedents offer telling insights into the geopolitics underlying literary compilations: this essay will begin with one historical example, the ten-volume *Irish Literature* published in 1904. The production of this anthology in early twentieth-century Irish America was the site on which significant emergent cultural affiliations were staged, making it an especially interesting case study. Moving to early twenty-first century compendia, the second section will examine new and emerging digital resources in Irish studies and investigate the affiliations and alignments inherent within these processes including their consequences for what we currently define as "Irish studies".

Old Knowledges: Irish Literature and Anthologies

The publication and dissemination of large-scale printed collections mark critical and at times definitive points in the evolution of Irish studies. The more influential anthologies themselves emerge at telling historical moments: the first three volumes of *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing* in 1991, in the early stages of the Irish peace process; the fourth

and fifth *Women's Writings* volumes in the context of the beginning of an economic slowdown; the *Cabinet of Irish Literature* published in London in 1879 as the Irish Parliamentary Party consolidated its role in Westminster. Across the Atlantic, Irish anthologies similarly reflected historical events: the ten-volume *Irish Literature* published in the United States in 1904 as the political and economic power of the American Irish vis-à-vis Irish politics grew in strength. Such anthologies are constituted by and themselves attest to wider contests regarding genre, language, gender, and audience—to name only a few.

In a review of Henry Louis Gates and Nellie McKay's landmark *Norton Anthology of African American Literature*, entitled "Mapping the Territory, Taking the National Census, Building the Museum", Theodore Mason deploys Benedict Anderson's classification of the census, the map and the museum as key cultural institutions that facilitate an emerging sense of nation (Mason 1998). The anthology, Mason argues, may be viewed as a potentially oppositional version of all three institutions: mapping existing and previously occluded terrains, identifying new forms of literary citizenship ("who counts" in the cultural census of the anthology), and preserving or retrieving literary heritage. Such metaphors for the anthology, however, may reinforce an evaluation of its significance only as "a backward look". Mason's review suggestively counteracts this by highlighting the position of the anthology "at the beginning rather than the end of literary history making" (1998, 187); in other words, the anthology constructs, as much as it represents, a tradition or cultural history to which readers may gain easy access and which in turn serves to underwrite contemporary arguments of "cultural integrity" (1998, 197).

During the period of the Irish Revival, many anthologies—large and smaller scale—were produced. The question of their relationship, and indebtedness, to tradition was especially contestable given, as Colin Graham has argued, the deep ambivalence with which the Revivalists regarded previous literary history:

> The patchy literary historiography undertaken during the Revival was never entirely able to fill in, for itself, the narrative of Irish literature that led to the founding moments of the Revival.… The Revival had to be its own point of origin. In being a revival it had not quite done away with literary history, but it had started from the assumption that almost nothing was in place. (2006, 568)

Conversely, rather than objecting to the anthology's acknowledged or unacknowledged "backward look", some reviewers have argued that the anthology is most problematic in its representation of the contemporary

scene. Writing in 1992, in a review of *The Field Day Anthology*, poet and critic Eileán Ní Chuilleanáin provided the following memorable indictment:

> It is not the wrong choices or the predominance of pressure groups over individual talents, or the sexism—all of which are so evident—but the turning away of attention from the ground where the action is happening to the figures of the international talent-spotters half-visible behind their glassed-in gallery. (52)

For better or worse, the anthology powerfully articulates the biases and possibilities of its publishing moment. In his study of black transnational culture in the 1920s and 1930s, Brent Hayes Edwards offers a more positive, even tantalising alternative:

> What if the anthology enables the articulation of a *mood* rather than conducting a census, drawing a map, or founding a museum? Neither a "final thing" (a framing of the past) nor a "prophecy" (a prediction of the future), but a space of "new creation" in the performance of reading that takes place in the subjunctive, in a condition of probability. (2003)

Such a space of "new creation" in turn-of-the century Irish America produced the ten-volume anthology *Irish Literature*, published in 1904. The scale of publication was highly ambitious: the chief publisher was John Morris in Philadelphia, with a number of simultaneous co-editions by publishers De Bower Elliott in Chicago, Bigelow-Smith in New York, and Collier and Son in New York; special editions were also produced for the American National Library and University Society. The original volumes are lavishly illustrated, with expensive bookplates; *editions de luxe* featured more ornate bindings and a highly ornamental title page. The subscription price to the volumes was $37.50, with 3/4 morocco at $45 or full morocco at $60; clearly the very ownership of volumes was intended to denote gentility and socio-economic achievement especially for those of Irish ancestry. To put the publication price in context, in 1904 paperback editions of Conrad's *Nostromo* or London's *Sea Wolf* cost $1.50. According to Justin McCarthy, cited as general editor to the project, the volumes constituted a "library" of Irish literature (some 350 authors excerpted in 10 volumes), which would "give to the readers of all countries what I may describe as an illustrated catalogue of Ireland's literary contributions to mankind's intellectual stores" (1904, xiv). His preface also constructed a clear evolutionary narrative for Irish cultural and literary progress: "this library may well help the intelligent reader to appreciate the spirit of Irish nationality and to follow the course of

Ireland's literary stream from the dim regions of the prehistoric day to the broad and broadening civilization of the present" (1904, xiv).

In spite of this grand ambition, the anthology was never published in Ireland and the publishers seem to have heeded the admonition delivered by Yeats that the anthology would not have any sale in Ireland since "the country is too poor" (Yeats to Quinn, 29 January 1905; reproduced in Kelly 1986, 29). Yeats' comments may have been less selfless than they appear—possibly motivated by the desire to avoid a home competitor to his own publishing projects (see Kelleher 2006). The project was the brainchild of English-born publisher and editor Charles Welsh, who became its managing editor. Welsh was based in the United States since 1895 and his personal correspondence, held in the Providence College archives in Rhode Island, provides some fascinating insights into the various and at times competing constituencies which the anthology editors sought to satisfy and affirm.[1] Much of the impetus from the project came from the newly founded Irish Literary Society in New York, of which John Quinn was secretary, and its members were a key target audience for subscriptions. In addition, Welsh drew heavily from links with the London Irish Literary Society, whose members included Stephen Gwynn, as Secretary, and Eleanor Hull.

The editorial board and advisory committee is a veritable "who's who" of the time; a mark of the anthology's importance being the inclusion of politicians such as John Redmond, academics such as Maurice Egan of the Catholic University Washington, F.N. Robinson of Harvard University and W.P. Trent of Columbia University, James Jeffrey Roche (editor of *The Pilot*), Augusta Gregory, Douglas Hyde, Standish O'Grady and Stephen Gwynn. The four associate editors were Egan, Hyde, Gregory and Roche; Justin McCarthy, though termed as "editor in chief", was more a symbolic figurehead for the project—by 1904 he had retired from his long parliamentary career in London due to ill health and also suffered difficulties with his sight. While the archival evidence proves that Welsh did almost all of the editorial work, it also reveals the active role played by some members of the board and advisory committee whereby lists of proposed authors and writings were forwarded to each member, the results of their "independent recensions" brought together and the final list examined by McCarthy with Stephen Gwynn in "personal conference" (see box 1 folders 57-62, Charles Welsh papers).

The loudest objections and most substantial threat to the viability of the project came, interestingly, from Ireland. In October 1903, Douglas Hyde complained bitterly to John Quinn as to the proposed contents of the anthology, based on a long list of 21 large folio pages, which he had

encountered "by accident" from John Redmond. Hyde's comments were uncompromising: "It is beyond our remotest dreams in its utter rottenness … Every wretched little minnow you could think of for the last 300 years is there!" (Hyde to Quinn, 19 October 1903, New York Public Library). Hyde was further enraged by the omissions of Gregory, Yeats, Russell, Edward Martyn and "myself"—in short "the ground where the action was happening". Irish-language writers, he noted furiously, were not "represented at all, except in a few mawkish translations". In such a form, the anthology would, in his view, "do more harm than good if published" to the cause of "Irish Ireland, of which this wretched book-compiler has probably never even heard". Publisher George Bryan, on a visit to Ireland in Autumn 1903, seems to have initially ignored both Hyde and Gregory, turning to them for advice only under strong pressure from Quinn and following a letter from Hyde, in which he threatened to ensure that all the branches of the Gaelic Leagues, in Ireland and the United States, would denounce the forthcoming books (Hyde to Quinn, 12 December 1903, New York Public Library).

Douglas Hyde would ultimately exert a large influence on the anthology: in January 1904 Hyde and Gregory spent a week together in Coole making selections from folktales, legend and saga material which were to appear in translation and dispersed throughout volumes 1-9.[2] Volume X, edited almost entirely by Hyde, was a bilingual volume, with Irish-language originals in Gaelic font and their English translations appearing on facing pages; it included samples of "folk tales and folk songs", prose, poetry and a play by modern Irish authors (very often by Hyde himself), and biographies of both "ancient Celtic writers" and of "modern Celtic writers". In production terms, it was a mammoth task and immense achievement, with typesetting and platemaking done in Dublin; the volume also featured a sizeable index to the ten volumes with highly detailed subject classifications which would embarrass our current standards of indices.

Particular controversy surrounded the contents of the tenth volume. Fred Robinson, founder of the department of Celtic languages and literature at Harvard, vehemently objected to the poor representation of "literature of the older period" and to the failure to include any examples of the older languages of Old and Middle Irish (see box 2 folders 157-9, Charles Welsh papers). Hyde vigorously defended his choice, arguing that "only a scholar could negotiate" the older texts and that "they would terrify students". The significance of the "Irish book" was to show "the people we have a language and literature of our own", and its intended readers were "the many thousands who are now studying Irish". In the

short term at least Hyde's profile appears to have been significantly enhanced by his involvement in the anthology: this was put to profitable effect the following year when on his lecture tour of 1905 and 1906 to the USA he garnered some 60,000 dollars to further the work of the Gaelic League in Ireland. However the anthology would remain scarcely known in Ireland and appears to have been little used by League members.

Curiously, and unusually among anthologies, the volumes are alphabetically rather than chronologically or thematically arranged. According to Welsh, the decision took much thought and consideration, and may be at least partly accounted for by the difficulties of editorial consensus described above. An important consequence of the structure is that the excerpts are made in a sense "timeless", and overall issues of historical chronology are downplayed throughout the volumes. According to Barbara Benedict, such a dehistoricising effect is an inevitable feature of anthology making: "chosen and prepared by authorities", the texts excerpted in anthologies "appear as immaculate vessels of cultural value, not works in context or transition" (1996, 7). However what the reader makes of an anthology is inevitably more partial and deeply inflected by historical context; in the case of *Irish Literature*, viewed from a century or more's remove, intriguing geo-political dimensions arise from its Irish-American provenance.

While geo-cultural differences plagued the anthology's creation, the Irish-American identity of the anthology's main audience is elided by both Welsh and McCarthy in their introductory material. This is in sharp contrast to earlier Irish literary anthologies produced in the United States in the late nineteenth century, by Joseph O'Kane Murray, Daniel Connolly and Denis Crowley, for example. On the other hand, individual entries betray their specifically American context in telling ways: Fanny Parnell "died in this country" for example (McCarthy 1904, vol. 7, 2870). Much of the chosen content also suggests the particular imperatives of what one might call the anthology's "American Ireland" (rather than Irish-American) constituency. Of the 340 entries, approximately 30 (10%) are by Irish-American authors or on Irish-American themes. Many of the authors chosen are political exiles from United Irishman James Orr to Young Irelanders Joseph Brenan, Michael Doheny, Charles Graham Halpine, Thomas Francis Meagher through to American Fenians John Boyle O'Reilly and Joseph Clarke, and unsurprisingly, given their contemporary cultural capital, Irish-American newspaper editors and journalists are heavily represented. Tellingly, on the publication of the volumes, Yeats praised what he termed the anthology's "careful selections" but expressed reservations regarding "a slightly less exclusive

temper when it comes to American-Irish writers" (Yeats to Quinn, 29 January 1905; reproduced in Kelly 1986, 29).

Between the lines of the anthology, one can trace some of the continuing tensions between physical-force republicanism and constitutional nationalism, made more pressing by the foundation of the United Irish League in America by Redmond in a visit to the US in 1901, and its opposition by Clan na Gael in the pages of Devoy's *Gaelic American.* These tensions clearly shape editorial decisions such as the brief representation of O'Donovan Rossa as poet, rather than excerpts from his autobiographical memoirs, then readily available and popular among later anthologists. John Devoy, John Mahony and Terence Bellew MacManus are conspicuously absent, as is the wider context of Irish and American Fenianism.

Most noticeable, however, are the many anthologised texts concerning the American Civil War or, more accurately, Union writings, with the careful detailing of the allegiances of authors such as Meagher, Halpine, Fitz James O'Brien. Excerpts are provided from Meagher's famous St. Patrick's Day address of 1866, the Union writings of John Boyle O'Reilly including a poem about the Battle of Fredericksburg, December 1862, and from Halpine's poems. On the other hand, the writings of the "priest poet" Abram Ryan, subject of a long entry in the anthologies of both Connolly and Crowley, are omitted and the Civil War loyalties and pro-slavery beliefs of John Mitchel studiously ignored (in marked contrast to the *Cabinet of Irish Literature* in 1879-1880 where this issue is directly addressed). The fullest reference to Irish involvement in the Southern brigades comes in John Francis Maguire's essay on the the Irish in the Civil War which functions mostly as apology. Through the reproduction of the familiar or the commonplace—in this case specific Civil War selections—anthologies play a key role in the transfer of social memory; in Leah Price's words, "in the process of recognizing commonplaces", anthology readers "learn to recognize themselves within a common culture" (Price 2000, 104). The charter myth of Irish-American identity, reproduced in detail by this anthology, is the American Civil War and the deaths of Irish soldiers, with a clear privileging of Union allegiances; past assurances of Irish loyalty within the United States are thus restaged, while the future direction to which the financial power and political weight of the contemporary American Irish may be marshaled, remains an uneasy question behind the anthology's pages.

No later anthology of Irish literature would replicate this extended interest in an American past. Irish America is formidably visible in the list of sponsors which prefaces volumes 1 to 3 of *The Field Day Anthology* but

much less evident in relation to selected content; in contrast, volumes 4 and 5, which for many reasons lacked this dimension of corporate sponsorship, include an acknowledgement in their introductory material of an unease regarding the exclusion of diasporic material, though this concern is phrased as a current rather than historical imperative.

The reception-history of this 1904 compilation can only be glimpsed from the occasional copies still in circulation: resold after their owners' deaths or bequeathed to libraries, their pages are usually in a disappointingly pristine condition. The 1970 reprint by Johnson Corporation in America made copies quite readily available but in Ireland the anthology remains scarcely known and the scale and complexities of its production almost forgotten. Still, viewed from a distance, the *Irish Literature* anthology represents a formidable ambition to assemble a household library in (relatively) accessible form and to circulate it extensively. While the stated ambition to reach "readers of all countries" is belied by the particular geopolitics of Irish America described above, this renders the anthology an especially illuminating record of the shifting cultural loyalties and realignments of "Irishness" in this period.

New Knowledges: Irish Studies and Digital Humanities

The large-scale editorial works produced in the late twentieth century can now be seen to occupy a curious "interspace" between traditional printed forms and new electronic media. Writing of the first three volumes of *Field Day*, in her 2001 "Theorizing Ireland" essay, Claire Connolly remarks:

> Looking back, the anthology seems a curiously nineteenth-century idea: three handsome, well-bound volumes, containing choice selections of prose and verse, destined to settle comfortably onto the shelves of libraries and middle-class homes. Published in 1991, it was oddly out of touch with emerging technologies for arranging and retrieving data, and even more radically estranged from the feminist sensibilities of many of its readers. (2001, 303)

Two years later, Anne Fogarty's review of volumes 4 and 5 highlighted their quality as "far less an anthology, in even the modified current understanding of that term, than a database that assembles a vast quantity of material and affords the possibility of multiple cross-connections" (2003, 3).

In the new electronic resources enabled by digital humanities, the anthology (with its predecessors, the "cabinet" or "library") has given way

to the database, the portal, the repository or the platform. The past decade has also seen the beginning of a theoretical discourse concerning new modes of organisation, storage and retrieval of information, along with some investigation of new relational models.

In 1992, in an article entitled "Rethinking Romanticism" published just prior to the launch of his anthology *New Oxford Book of Romantic Period Verse* (1993) Jerome McGann—a future leader in digital humanities—defined the anthology in terms that already anticipated the potential of its successor, the database:

> An anthology of this kind necessarily constructs a literary history, but the historical synthesis is subordinated in the formalities of the collection. The anthology focuses one's attention on local units of order—individual poems and groups of poems. As a consequence, these units tend to splinter the synthetic inertia of the work-as-a-whole into an interactive and dialogical scene. Possibilities of order appear at different scalar levels because the center of the work is not so much a totalized form as a dynamically emergent set of constructible hypotheses of historical relations. (1992, 745)

More recently, some proponents of digital humanities have gone further to propose that the database is the "new genre", replacing narrative as the key form of cultural expression of the modern age:

> After the novel, and subsequently cinema, privileged narrative as the key form of cultural expression of the modern age, the computer age introduces its correlate—the database.... As a cultural form, the database represents the world as a list of items, and it refuses to order this list. In contrast, a narrative creates a cause-and-effect trajectory of seemingly unordered items (events). Therefore, database and narrative are natural enemies. Competing for the same territory of human culture, each claims an exclusive right to make meaning out of the world. (Manovitch 2001, qtd. by Folsom 2007, 1574)

For Wai Chee Dimock, the appeal of the database lies not only in the restructuring of information but in its overflow: "unlike prepackaged printed texts, the database spills over by design", its "*flood* of information … open to endless streams of researchers" mand "multiple use its lifeblood" (2007, 1378).

Such exuberance notwithstanding, the volume and indeed "flood" of information enabled by digital media can be overwhelming—a problem which has also afflicted traditional large-scale printed compendia. Paradoxically, and perpetually, the larger the scale of information

provided, the greater the reliance by readers/users on the editorial and organisational functions—aspects of which may be all the more invisible and less transparent in electronic media. In contrast to Manovitch's world without order—or Hayes Edwards' invocation of a "space of 'new creation'"—premature assumptions of probable "users" and predetermined relational models can foreclose the full possibilities of electronic media and of genuinely productive research questions. On the other hand, the power of the database form is the variety of modes of organisation made possible, with often enlightening results.

The Drapier project, produced by the Digital Humanities Observatory, is an interactive database of digital humanities projects created by Irish third-level institutions (http://dho.ie/drapier). Current database and textbase projects range from early modern travel "ars apodemica" literature to nineteenth-century Irish illustrated periodicals, from the documentation of parish confraternities and sodalities to a bibliography of Irish women's writings between 1800 and 2005. The multilingual dimensions of current projects are particularly heartening, as evidenced by the Irish Script on Screen and CELT projects. An Foras Feasa's Alcalá Project (marking a humanities collaboration between the University of Alcalá in Spain, and the National University of Ireland, Maynooth) has provided an online, interactive, full-text, searchable version of the manuscript original, along with its transcription (Spanish), translation (English) and preservation quality images.

Digital resources have proven especially hospitable to cultural retrieval projects, most notably in the areas of women's writings; in some cases, and with the significant exception of the Field Day volumes, the historical inventory and evaluation of writings has moved directly to the electronic medium in which detailed biobibliographical research can proceed alongside interpretative and theoretical analysis (e.g. the Directory of Sources for the History of Women in Ireland http://www.national archives.ie/wh/). In this area, relational modelling can yield rich new questions concerning spheres of influence and literary interrelations: to cite just one example from the "Women in Modern Irish Culture Bibliographic Database, 1800-2005", a search under Anne Enright reveals her authorship of an introduction to the 2005 re-edition of Kate O'Brien's *As Music and Splendour*, while a Kate O'Brien as author search results in over 80 entries, including her various writings on De Gaulle, Ivan Turgenev and "Irish Writers and Europe". (http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/history/irishwomenwriters, accessed 9 April 2010).

In a development parallel with the emergence of digital humanities comes an impetus by some practitioners of Irish studies to look at

transnational, comparative frameworks, moving beyond the pervasiveness of the national paradigm. "World literature" as influentially defined by David Damrosch is "not a thing" but "an outcome", "not congenitally given but circumstantially derived" (2003, 4); or, in Dimock's rephrasing, "world literature is virtual, which is to say, less a class of substantive objects than a conjectural effect" (2007, 1379). The power, and challenge, of this formulation is to undo an inevitable linkage between "territorial jurisdiction" and "literary casuality": "What assumptions enable us to take an adjective derived from a territorial jurisdiction and turn it into a mode of literary causality, making the latter reflexive of and indeed coincidental with the former?" (Dimock 2006, 3).[3]

While, to some, such theorisations might spell the beginning of the end of Irish studies as we know it, for others its future is more assured. In *Field Day Review*, James Chandler mounts what at first appears a rather old-fashioned defence of "why we need Irish studies", arguing for its continuing significance as "a distinctive intellectual intervention—and as a case of the larger disciplinary transformation of our age" (2006, 19-20). With vivid examples drawn from his teaching of Irish material, Chandler constructs a tripartite model for the achievements of the discipline. Firstly, "Irish studies supplies an elevation of perspective, a shift of scale that allows one to extend a horizon and thus to bring parallel histories into relation with one another" (2006, 21), his example being the case of 1798 and the expansion of canon and genre made possible by a reading of its significance for Ireland. The second model "is not so much that of an elevation of perspective as it is that of a *reversal* of perspective" (24), the exemplar being an re-investigation of Cromwell's "absence" from England in the 1640s in relation to his "presence" and role in Ireland: "the addition of the Irish side of the question is less the recognition of a parallel set of historical developments … than the revelation of a suppressed dimension of a larger complex story" (24). Finally, Chandler moves from "objects of study" towards new "models" and "methods of study": the cases of Edmund Burke and Maria Edgeworth, newly and productively read as "Irish" by recent critics, serve to complicate "not only the question of what the 'Irishing' of an author might mean, but also that of how to locate an 'Irish author' on a larger cultural map" (31).

Chandler's model provides a useful means to evaluate some of the recent trends in digital methodologies and their implications for Irish studies. An "elevation of perspective" and "shift of scale" are certainly enabled by the new volume of information, and by the opening out of source material and genre. As discussed earlier, the greater research opportunities extended by electronic resources to previously excluded