

Symposium
July 1, 2022
JMU, Würzburg, Germany

**History in Stories:
The Irish Past and the Challenges of the Present**

PROGRAM

9.00-9.15 am: **Conference Warming**

9.15-9.45 am: **Symposium Opening**

Ina Bergmann & Maria Eisenmann (JMU/ISWÜ): Introduction: Literature, History & TEFL

9.45-11.00 am: **Panel 1**

Chair: Matthias Fleckenstein (DIG/ISWÜ)

Damian Bracken (UCC): "The western regions of the earth's farthest strand": Ireland and the unfolding of history

Helmut Flachenecker (JMU/ISWÜ): History in Stories – The Irish Benedictines in Ratisbon and their attempts to interest the new environment on Ireland (12th century)

11.00-11.30 am: **COFFEE BREAK**

11.30-12.45 am/pm: **Panel 2**

Chair: Lena Pfeifer (JMU/ISWÜ)

Beatrix Färber (UCC): Carl Gottlob Küttner: In search of an older Ireland

Hedwig Schwall (LCIS/KU Leuven): Caldwell's resilient Women and the Belfast Blitz in *These Days*

12.45-1.45 pm: **LUNCH**

1.45-3.00 pm: **Panel 3**

Chair: Jochen Achilles (JMU/ISWÜ)

Franca Leitner (JMU/ISWÜ): Houses with Histories – The Significance of the House and its Past in Post-Celtic Tiger Crime Fiction

Elke D'hoker (LCIS/KU Leuven): Telling history through linked stories

3.00-4.15 pm: **Panel 4**

Chair: Aimée Waha (JMU/ISWÜ)

Raphaël Ingelbien (LCIS/KU Leuven): Journeying into outsiders' pasts: Patrick McGuinness's imaginings of Irish and European identities in post-Brexit England

Miriam Wallraven (JMU/ISWÜ): "Brexit, borders, barriers, identity": Connected forms of liminality in Irish life-writing: Kerri ní Dochartaigh's "thin places" (2021)

4.15-4.45 pm: **COFFEE BREAK**

4.45-5.25 pm: **Panel 5**

Chair: Cornelia Savelsberg (JMU/ISWÜ)

Manfred Schewe (UCC): The Irish Past and Present: A performative perspective

5.25-5.30 pm: **SHORT BREAK**

5.30-6.00 pm: **Concluding Discussion**

Moderator: Jennifer Meier (JMU/ISWÜ)

7.30 pm: **DINNER**

Symposium Opening

Ina Bergmann & Maria Eisenmann (JMU/ISWÜ)

Introduction: Literature, History & TEFL

The twenty-first century has increased an awareness of and brought on a variety of trials and catastrophes, such as the climate crisis, the challenges of digitalization, a worldwide pandemic, the rise of totalitarianism, renewed racism and sexism, the drawbacks of globalization, and more. Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the Irish diaspora as well as their friends and partners in Europe furthermore have to deal with the effects of Brexit. Due to its history the consequences of Brexit on the island of Ireland are uniquely politically charged. In fact, the economic effects of the UK leaving the EU are hitting people and their lives equally hard across the whole confederation. However, the Irish situation can be seen as a key example of a specific European and maybe even more of a general global phenomenon.

Which strategies, approaches, and attitudes can be helpful when dealing with these not only European but transatlantic challenges? Is it possible to learn for the future by trying to learn from the past? Can a backward glance provide much needed guidance in this time of turmoil and offer blueprints for the shaping of the present? And how can the younger generation, provided with the knowledge about the past, create a better future?

The past can only be presented and received in narrative form. Texts are repositories of cultural and historical knowledge. Fictional texts and historical documents both provide histories. Thus, the aim of this symposium will be to draw on texts from and about the Irish past for their cultural knowledge and historical lesson.

Scholars from three disciplines – literary studies, TEFL methodology, and history – from three universities – University College Cork, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven/Leuven Centre for Irish Studies, and Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg/Irish Studies Würzburg – in three European countries – Ireland, Belgium, and Germany – will approach Irish 'history in stories' from the vantage point of their national and disciplinary contexts.

From the perspective of **literary studies**, genres such as the historical novel, historiographic metafiction, and life writing, among others, provide the reader not simply with nostalgia for a past time. Historical fiction is furthermore a critique of the present, transferred into a past setting. This means that literary texts can be salvaged for cultural and historical knowledge and even for a historical lesson. They can help to avoid the repetition of mistakes of the past and they can assist to shape ideas for the future.

And precisely here is the interface between literary studies and **EFL methodology** because literary learning includes elements of intercultural learning in abstract or concrete terms, be it in an oblique or in a direct manner. Thus, literature can contribute to the goal of intercultural or transcultural learning in the EFL classroom. Literary texts always present the other culture in fictionalized form and provoke culture-bound responses. In particular contemporary literary texts offer privileged insights into target cultures because they present an insider's perspective and thus provide a sort of surrogate experience of encounters with another culture which is not easily accessible first hand.

The New Historicism questions the notion of a 'canonical' narrative of the past, rejecting the idea of *histoire totale*. By emphasizing **history writing** as literature, it draws attention to the creative, and subjective, nature of historical narratives. As much as any writer, the historian is shaped by the values of the society and times they inhabit, and their histories, as rationalizations of the past, reflect these contemporary cultural preoccupations. Exploring History as text, and identifying the changes and challenges of 'history in stories' in the twenty-first century, reveals how written History oder histories can lead to an understanding of its present.

The reimagining and rewriting of the past in textual form is as old as historiography and literature itself, and to explore and identify the changes and challenges of 'history in stories' in the twenty-first century and to teach them can open up paths to a better European and transatlantic future.

Ina Bergmann is an Associate Professor of American Studies at the University of Würzburg, Germany. She is the co-founder of Irish Studies Würzburg (ISWÜ), a member of the international research network Pathologies of Solitude (Queen Mary University of London), a board member of the European Network for Short Fiction Research (ENSFR), and a peer reviewer for the international journals *AmLit: American Literatures*, *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, *Green Letters: Studies in Ecocriticism*, *Journal of Short Fiction in Theory and Practice*, and *Journal of the Short Story in English* (JSSE). She has held fellowships with the Rothermere American Institute (RAI) at the University of Oxford, the Trinity Long Room Hub Arts & Humanities Research Institute (TLRH) at Trinity College Dublin, and the Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens at San Marino, CA, USA. She is the author of two monographs, *And Then the Child Becomes a Woman: Weibliche Initiation in der amerikanischen Kurzgeschichte 1865-1970* (Winter 2003) and *The Nineteenth Century Revis(it)ed: The New Historical Fiction* (Routledge 2021), the (co-)editor of nine volumes of essays and special issues of journals, among them *Liminality and the Short Story: Boundary Crossings in American, Canadian, and British Writing* (Routledge 2015), *Cultures of Solitude: Loneliness – Limitation – Liberation* (Lang 2017), and *Intermediality, Life Writing, and American Studies: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (de Gruyter 2018), as well as a frequent contributor to peer-reviewed journals and international book projects.

Maria Eisenmann is Professor of EFL Teaching at the Julius-Maximilians-University of Würzburg and the co-founder of Irish Studies Würzburg (ISWÜ). She studied the subjects English, German and Pedagogy at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne/England and at the University of Würzburg, where she completed her M.A. degree and state examination. After finishing her PhD and working as a teacher in school, she taught at the University of Education in Freiburg, held a deputy professorship for EFL Teaching at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg and held the chair for EFL Teaching at the University of Duisburg-Essen. Her primary research interests lie in the field of teaching literature, media literacy and inter-/transcultural learning with a focus on Irish Studies. She has edited and co-edited numerous books and published widely in the field of foreign language education, literary literacy and teaching literature in the ELT. She is the writer of *Ireland – Changes and Challenges*, published

in 2009, as well as *Teaching English: Differentiation and Individualisation*, published in 2019. She edited *Teaching the Bard Today – Shakespeare-Didaktik in Forschung und Lehre*, published in 2019, and co-edited *Queer Beats – Gender and Literature in the EFL Classroom* as well as *Teaching Multimodality and Multiliteracy. Theme Issue of Anglistik 1*, both published in 2018.

Panel 1

Damian Bracken (UCC)

“The western regions of the earth’s farthest strand”: Ireland and the unfolding of history

‘Histories are written by the victors’, and in most the Irish appear as the losers. Early accounts of Ireland and its past by historians and ethnographers are shaped by the values and systems of late antique geographic determinism, and by taxonomies of the civilised and the barbarian. When judged against these values, the Irish as a limitrophe people are presented as backward, and their conquest as justified and inevitable. This paper explores the works of the earliest Irish writers who challenged and subverted these perceptions, and who, in response to such chauvinism, argued that Ireland’s geographic remoteness led it to occupy a central place in the unfolding of salvation history.

Damian Bracken examined Latin and Latin influenced elements of early Irish vernacular law in his PhD, completed in 1994, and his research has focused on Hiberno-Latin literature, especially on the works of St Columbanus, the earliest Irish writer to leave an identifiable corpus of writings, and the first to explore Irish identity. He is interested particularly in exploring Columbanus’s works in the context of late antique and early medieval ideals of authority and concepts of orthodoxy. He has taught in the School of History, UCC, and spent periods teaching in the Department of History, Boston University, and in the Department of History, Boston College, where he held the Brian P. Burns Chair in Irish Studies. He jointly edited *Ireland and Europe in the Twelfth Century: Reform and Renewal* (Dublin 2006) and the commentary volume that accompanies the facsimile of the Schaffhausen Adomnán, recently published as the first volume in the series *Irish Manuscripts in Facsimile*.

Helmut Flachenecker (JMU/ISWÜ)

History in Stories – The Irish Benedictines in Ratisbon and their attempts to interest the new environment on Ireland (12th century)

Pro cruciando corpore salvandaque anima – (‘for tormenting the body and for the salvation of the soul’) with this ideal began the last phase of the presence of Irish monks on the Continent in the late 11th century. In the 1170s it was Muiredaac Trog Macc Robartaig, in Latin Marianus, who together with his companions on their pilgrimage to Rome brought about the foundation of a number of monasteries in Southern Germany. The main focus of this paper will be the question, how these foreign monks communicate with their new neighbors, who had no ideas about Ireland, Irish Church and Irish Saints. They did it with the help of hagiographic texts.

Already the anonymous author of the *Vita Mariani* - which was written in Regensburg after 1180 – emphasizes the ideal of a lifelong pilgrimage by regarding Marianus as a successor of the many important Irish missionaries who had worked on the Continent since the apocryphal Irish nobleman Mansuetus. The Irish self confidence voiced here was repeated by Marianus

and his companions and connected with the tradition of Regensburg in order to be better understood in their new home.¹

The Irish monks of St. James in Regensburg succeeded only partly in making their new surroundings aware of their presence with the help of these and other works. To inform the inhabitants of Regensburg about their own, distant, history seemed to suggest itself for those who had to get established there. The *Visio Tnugdali* influenced the mystic thinking of the following centuries. The specific information on Ireland contained in the *Visio*, however, got lost in the late Middle Ages. The fantastic description of hell, of purgatory and of paradise in the text preoccupied people's imagination and made it, in connection with the *Devotio moderna* and the Benedictine efforts for reform in the late Middle Ages, a bestseller. This changed the *Visio Tnugdali's* contextual structure, however, as the text - in its major parts translated into the vernacular language - was now written for a new audience that was not interested in the text's original purpose (to convey information about Ireland).²

The *Vita Albarti* - also written in the Schottenkloster in Regensburg in the 12th century³ - had at least some influence on the worship of local saints. However, its circulation cannot be compared with that of the *Visio*. The *Vita* connected Saint Erhard from Regensburg with the apocryphal archbishop of Cashel, Albert. The two friends, who had been separated on their pilgrimage to the Holy Land, met again in adjoining graves: Posterity has handed down this connection in a strange manner. While a second grave next to that of Saint Erhard in the Niedermünster (Lower Minster) was attributed to Albert by the locals, Albert became the patron of the Irish diocese of Cashel during early modern times. Apart from the *Vita*, there is no further historic proof for either view.

In *Libellus de fundacione Consecrati Petri* (written between 1250 and 1261) the appearance of the Irish is connected with Charlemagne, who had conquered the town that had been pagan before and missioned it with the help of the Irish.⁴ Pilgrimage and mission are topics repeated again and again with which the Irish legitimated their presence in a foreign country. The story of Charlemagne became connected to a tradition that Regensburg was an imperial city, a tradition that continued to have an effect until the late 18th century.

Helmut Flachenecker, born 1958, studied Germanic Studies, Geography and History at the Universities of Erlangen-Nuremberg and Eichstaett, Ph.D. at the Department of History at Eichstaett in 1987: "Eine geistliche Stadt. Eichstätt vom 13. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert" (published 1988), the 'Habilitation', also in Eichstaett in 1992: "Schottenklöster. Irische Benediktinerkonvente im hochmittelalterlichen Deutschland" (published 1995). 1997-2002 Max-Planck-Institute for History, responsible for the long-term project "Germania Sacra", since 2002 Chair for Medieval Regional History at the University of Wuerzburg, since 2014 Director of the Research center for the History of the Teutonic Order

¹ *Vita Mariani* cap. I,1 and I,4, 365.

² Helmut Flachenecker, *Hagiographische Werke als Kommunikationshilfen für Fremde*, in Dieter R. Bauer & Klaus Herbers (ed.), *Hagiographie im Kontext* (Stuttgart 2000) 96-116.

³ MGH SS rer. Merov. 6 (1913); 21-23; John Hennig, *St. Albert, Patron of Cashel. A Study in the History of Diocesan Episcopacy in Ireland*, *Medieval Studies* 7 (1945) 21-39.

⁴ *Libellus* (ed. Breatnach) cap. 4.

at Würzburg. Visiting professor at Kent State University, OH, and Flagler College St. Augustine, FL. The author of over 250 scientific articles, (Co-)Editor of 34 anthologies, Co-editor of „Biuletyn Polskiej Misji Historycznej. Bulletin der Polnischen Historischen Mission” and „Concilium Medii Aevi”.

Chair – Matthias Fleckenstein has been a founding member and since 2012 Chairman of Deutsch-Irische Gesellschaft Würzburg (DIG/German-Irish Association of Würzburg). He is also a member of Irish Studies Würzburg (ISWÜ), the Irish-German Society of County Wicklow, and a board member of the German-Irish Council. Having studied English and Philosophy at the University of Würzburg (JMU) he studied public administration and has been working for the City of Würzburg since the mid-eighties. He has been actively involved in the twinning between Würzburg, Bray and Co. Wicklow from its start in 1999 and also in the long established contacts with Mullagh, birthplace of St. Kilian, and Co. Cavan. He was awarded the Ambassador of Ireland – St. Patrick’s Day Award recently in recognition of the significant role he has played over a long number of years in promoting Irish-German relations.

Panel 2

Beatrix Färber (UCC)

Carl Gottlob Küttner: In search of an older Ireland

Carl Gottlob Küttner's *Briefe aus Irland an seinen Freund*, den Herausgeber (Leipzig 1785), written 1783-85, contain the first German eyewitness account of early modern Ireland published by a German. Küttner was a Hofmeister, or travelling tutor, employed by the Earl of Tyrone in 1782, and in the family's service for nearly ten years.

He corresponded with his friend Christian Gottlieb Schenk in Leipzig, at first describing his experiences and insights and later agreeing to Schenk's suggestion to publish the edited letters in book form. As very little was known about Ireland in Germany that was not seen through English eyes, he eagerly added a compilation of Irish history and contemporary knowledge for his compatriots.

This paper will follow in this educator and later private scholar's footsteps to find out what may be learnt from his insights.

Beatrix Färber is Managing Editor of the Corpus of Electronic Texts (CELT) at UCC. After studying Celtic Philology, Historical Linguistics and Romance Languages in Bonn University, she worked from 1993 to 1999 in technical and games software localisation, from office software localisation to simulator games, focusing on non-technical language for users, machine-aided translation, creating and customizing terminology sets and glossaries. In 2000 she joined CELT, a TEI-XML encoded multilingual text corpus with Irish of all periods, English, Latin, German, and other languages. She encodes documents, managing and guiding contributions by students, interns and volunteers, has administered research projects, workshops, and guided postgraduates in internships and work placements for the UCC Medieval Studies MA.

She was awarded an MPhil by Independent Research in History about Keating's historiographical work *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* (c.1634). Her doctoral research in UCC's School of Irish Learning examines early modern Irish medical translations from Latin, especially works by Montpellier University Professor of medicine, Bernardus de Gordonio.

She translated the letters from Ireland (1832) by Ansbach native Magdalena von Dobeneck to her father, Paul Johann Anselm von Feuerbach for CELT.

Hedwig Schwall (KU Leuven)

Caldwell's resilient Women and the Belfast Blitz in *These Days*

In *These Days* (2022), a historical novel about the Belfast Blitz, Lucy Caldwell elaborates many of the topics she touched upon in her previous work. While the two volumes of short stories, *Multitudes* (2016) and *Intimacies* (2021) used the material of her own life in Belfast to show how women are not treated kindly by the cultures that be, this novel draws on extensive archival sources from the second World War. Caldwell's historiography counteracts the usual approach of "megalography" which "exalts the exceptional event ... and raises existence to the level of the gods. Against that ... rhopography finds the truth of human life in those things which greatness overlooks, the ordinariness of daily routine" (Norman Bryson *Looking at the Overlooked*, 178). As usual the author does not

focus on male heroes (if mentioned, it is in a negative way, like Churchill) but on the nuanced views, the courage and resilience of the women in a middle-class family, their servants and their aristocratic friends.

As Caldwell said in an interview, the Belfast Blitz has not had its fictional expression yet. This paper wants to illustrate how the author's capacity for empathy and her sense of significant detail helps to immerse the reader in the affects, emotions and values of this period. Further the paper will indicate how Caldwell purposefully depicts a Belfast which offers an alternative to its reputation as a city of the Troubles: instead, it is the solidarity between the different groups which prevails. This interpretation will highlight how this historical novel can show a way forward in a Brexit-ridden part of the UK, as the protagonists cope with energy shortages and pandemonium. While it is the aggressor's aim to squash a people's spirit, the picture this novel shows the opposite: together, people take things in hand.

Hedwig Schwall publishes on Irish Studies, psychoanalysis and art. In 2018 she edited *Boundaries, Passages, Transitions* and "Irish Textiles: (t)issues in communities and their representation in art and literature" Vol 2 No 1 | Review of Irish Studies in Europe (risejournal.eu). In 2019 she edited *The Danger and the Glory* (Arlen House 2019), an anthology of 60 contributions from Irish fiction writers about the art of writing, which is also available online (<https://kaleidoscope.efacis.eu/>); this was followed by a second instalment *About Europe in Ireland | Kaleidoscope II* (efacis.eu). In 2020 she co-edited a special issue of the Brazilian Journal of Irish Studies on John Banville <https://www.revistas.usp.br/abei/issue/view/11819>. Now she is heading the translation project on Anne Enright <https://enright.efacis.eu/>. She was the director of the Leuven Centre for Irish Studies (2010-21) and is now working on parent-child relations in contemporary Irish fiction.

Chair – Lena Pfeifer is a PhD candidate and research assistant at the department for American Studies and the Graduate School of the Humanities at the University of Würzburg, Germany. Before coming to Würzburg, she majored in Anglophone literature and culture with a minor in philosophy at Heidelberg University, where she received her M.A. in 2019. She also studied at the University of Siegen and University College Cork, Ireland, and was a short-term visiting researcher at King's College, Cambridge. Her dissertation project, tentatively titled "The Ethics of 'Nature' and 'Environment' in the Discourse of the Anthropocene Since the 1980s," is located at the intersection of American Studies and the Environmental Humanities and tends to explore the ethical and political implications of the discourse of the Anthropocene. Her research interests are rooted in the Environmental Humanities and include fictional and non-fictional environmental writing of the 20th and 21st centuries, narratives of the Anthropocene, political theory, and environmental ethics, as well as Irish literatures of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Panel 3

Franca Leitner (JMU/ISWÜ)

Houses with Histories – The Significance of the House and its Past in Post-Celtic Tiger Crime Fiction

Houses with histories are abundant in Irish crime fiction: from abandoned Famine cottages to the notorious ‘Big House’ to derelict buildings in the centre of Dublin – buildings with a past feature prominently in post-Celtic Tiger crime fiction, be it as the scene of crime or as the uncanny background setting in which the story unfolds. Examining Tana French’s *The Likeness*, Dervla McTiernan’s *The Ruin*, and Stuart Neville’s *The House of Ashes*, this paper will argue that houses with a past take on a threefold role: first, they function as repositories of secrets of the past on the level of the crime story, often hiding the clue to the mystery within their walls. Second, in line with the neo-Gothic formula so frequently employed in contemporary Irish crime novels, the houses are often haunted by the traumatic events of the past, events that are closely intertwined with the traumatic past of the Irish nation as a whole. The house becomes thus what Pierre Nora has called a “lieu de mémoire”, a site of memory for national trauma. Last, the houses, often derelict or abandoned, can be read as emblematic for the state of Ireland after the end of the Celtic Tiger boom: a country both figuratively and literally ‘in ruins’.

Franca Leitner, M.A. candidate in British and North American Cultural Studies at the University of Freiburg. B.Sc. (Psychology, Düsseldorf) and B.A. (English and History, Freiburg). Currently researching for a potential PhD project in Irish Studies on the significance of houses in contemporary Irish literature.

Elke D’hoker (KU Leuven)

Teaching literature, language and culture through (Irish) short stories

In recent years, the importance of integrating literary texts in foreign language teaching has been acknowledged by many scholars. Also the 2018 companion volume to the Common European Framework of reference for languages (CEFR) recognizes the importance of reading for enjoyment in FL and adds descriptors for mediating literary texts to all attainment levels. Nevertheless, secondary school teachers (in Belgium at least) are often very wary about using literary texts in the language classroom, fearing it takes valuable time and energy away from the communicative language skills that are prioritized in FL teaching. As part of an ERASMUS+ project, we have developed a concrete didactic module (a five-step plan) for teaching linguistic skills as well as literary and intercultural competences in FL teaching through the use of short stories. As they present complete literary texts, while also being manageable in terms of length and complexity, short stories are a valuable (but underutilized) tool in FL teaching. In this paper, I will first present this didactic module and the didactic theories that underpin it. In a second part, I will make the module concrete by applying it to recent Irish short stories (by Lucy Caldwell, Danielle McLaughlin and Colin Barrett). Bearing in mind the intercultural competences that are an essential part of FL learning, I will show how these stories can be used to gain insight into aspects of Irish culture and recent Irish history.

Elke D'hoker is professor of English literature at the University of Leuven and director of the Leuven Centre for Irish Studies. She is the author of a critical study on John Banville (Rodopi, 2004) and of *Irish Women Writers and the Modern Short Story* (Palgrave, 2016). She has also (co-)edited several essay collections, including *Unreliable Narration* (De Gruyter, 2008), *Irish Women Writers* (Lang, 2011), *Mary Lavin* (IAP, 2013), *The Irish Short Story* (Lang, 2015), *The Modern Short Story and Magazine Culture* (EUP, 2021), and *Ethel Colburn Mayne. Selected Stories* (EER, 2021). She is vice-president of EFACIS and an editor of *RISE*.

Chair – Jochen Achilles is an Emeritus Professor of American Studies at the University of Würzburg and an Adjunct Professor at the University of Mainz. His books include studies of Sean O'Casey as well as Sheridan Le Fanu and the Gothic tradition. He is the coeditor of several essay collections, among them *Representations of Evil in Fiction and Film*, *Liminale Anthropologien*, and *Liminality and the Short Story*. His research interests cover cultural identities, the American short story, American and Irish drama.

Panel 4

Raphaël Ingelbien (KU Leuven)

Journeying into outsiders' pasts: Patrick McGuinness's imaginings of Irish and European identities in post-Brexit England

If it seems evident that Irish fiction can be used for “intercultural or transcultural learning” in the EFL classroom, the suggestion that “contemporary literary texts ... present an insider’s perspective” comes up against the fact that much modern literary fiction focuses on outsiders’ experiences. Whether a narrator’s or focalizer’s outsider status is linked to gender, language, religion, cultural background, or more idiosyncratic forms of alienation, such novels resist or at least complicate their potential use as gateways into a country’s ‘mainstream’ culture. This paper will explore the portrayal of different forms of outsiders in Patrick McGuinness’s *Throw Me to the Wolves* (2019). Set in post-Brexit England, this novel by a British descendant of Irish migrants who partly grew up in Belgium articulates a multiple sense of alienation triggered by the referendum and its aftermath by charting the fates of various characters: Wolphram, an eccentric English teacher who is held as a suspect in a murder inquiry, a police detective (and former pupil of Wolphram’s) with a Dutch background, who is also the novel’s narrator, and a former classmate of the latter with Irish roots. As the murder inquiry develops, the narrator ruminatively delves into the fraught past shared by all three characters, and his memories are shadowed by the re-emergence of old anti-Irish and anti-European strains in English culture. The paper will ask to what extent an ‘instrumental’ use of Irish/British fiction for EFL purposes can accommodate so-called ‘third-culture’ writing like McGuinness’s, especially when it stages overlapping forms of cultural alienation.

Raphaël Ingelbien holds degrees from the universities of Brussels (ULB), Oxford, and Hull. He has lectured at KU Leuven since 2003. His research deals with literature and identity in the British Isles, cultural transfers involving Britain, Ireland and continental Europe, the transnational contexts of Irish writing, and the reception of Shakespeare’s works. He is the author of *Irish Cultures of Travel. Writing on the Continent, 1829-1914* (Palgrave Macmillan 2016), and has co-edited *Irish Women Writers. New Critical Perspectives* (Peter Lang 2011), an Irish special issue of *Studies in Travel Writing* (2016), and *Figures of Authority in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Liverpool UP, 2020). He was the lead investigator of an FWO-funded project on ‘Shakespeare and Irish Romanticism’ (2012-2015), and was a Long Room Hub visiting research fellow at Trinity College Dublin in the spring of 2014.

Miriam Wallraven (JMU/ISWÜ)

"Brexit, borders, barriers, identity": Connected forms of liminality in Irish life-writing: Kerri ní Dochartaigh's "thin places" (2021)

In "thin places" (2021), Kerri ní Dochartaigh combines a memoir of the Troubles with reflections of current political events affecting Ireland, such as Brexit, while at the same time she draws on nature writing, Celtic mythology, and explores the after effect of trauma in an Irish context. This hybrid piece of life-writing, I argue, depends on what I want to call an aesthetics and politics of

interconnection based on a negotiation of liminality in different forms that the author conceives of as a crucial characteristic of Ireland. Hence, the different connections that structure the text will be explored by drawing on theories of interconnection and connectivity (Faivre, Spretnak, Moraru). Thus, the text foregrounds not only the connections between personal and political, material and mythological but particularly highlights the connection between the past and the present. With different textual strategies, the author utilises the Irish past (she looks back to the Troubles but also draws on pre-Christian Celtic mythology) to challenge current political and environmental crises and to transform the present. Her aesthetics and politics of interconnection is based on an exploration of interconnected forms of liminality, as will be shown, which she presents as particularly rooted not only in Celtic mythology, but in landscape and in politics. Hence, liminal spaces are not only the mythological "thin places" of the novel's title but are especially manifest in various forms of borders that have to be presented in narrative form in order to shape the present.

Miriam Wallraven is Associate Professor at the Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg, Germany, where she teaches English Literature and Cultural Studies. Her research interests include spirituality, the occult, and religious cultures in literature, gender studies and feminism, genre theories, as well as literatures of migration and displacement in a globalised world (particularly with a focus on the Balkans). She studied English and German Literature (M.A.) at Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen and at the University of Edinburgh. She received her PhD from Tübingen (published by Königshausen & Neumann as *A Writing Halfway between Theory and Fiction: Mediating Feminism from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century*). She held a Postdoc scholarship at the International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture (GCSC), Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen, and worked as an Assistant Professor at Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen where she completed her second book *Women Writers and the Occult in Literature and Culture: Female Lucifers, Priestesses, and Witches* (Routledge).

Chair – Aimée Waha is an adjunct lecturer at Irish Studies Würzburg (ISWÜ). She studied at the University of Eichstätt, NUI Galway and Boston College and holds an M.A. in Irish Studies. She teaches English and German at the Regiomontanus Gymnasium in Haßfurt and serves as Head of the English Department there.

Panel 5

Manfred Schewe (UCC)

The Irish Past and Present: A performative perspective

This presentation will focus on the interface between literary studies and Foreign Language methodology (EFL/GFL). Initially reference will be made to *Theatre in Education* (TiE) projects, initiated by the presenter when he took up his first lecturing position at University College Cork (UCC), back in the early 1980s. These TiE-projects aimed at introducing German secondary school and university students to aspects of Ireland's past and present through the medium of theatre. They were based on the premise, that "literature can contribute to the goal of intercultural learning in the EFL classroom" (quoted from CfP for this symposium).

In the first project, *The Hidden Journey*, performances were based on extracts from the following well-known Irish plays: George Bernard Shaw: *John Bull's Other Island*; Brian Friel: *Translations*; Brian Friel: *Philadelphia, Here I come*; Thomas Murphy: *Famine*. The presenter will revisit and critically analyse these projects and also make reference to other drama-based examples from his 30 year pedagogical practice at University College Cork; in doing so he will illustrate that performative approaches to language, literature and culture can facilitate deep learning about Ireland's past and present. He will conclude by presenting his theoretical framework of a *Performative Fremdsprachendidaktik* (Performative Foreign Language Didactics) and by inviting the symposium participants to enter into a discussion about going performative not only in the field of modern languages, but also in other disciplines, including history.

References:

John Crutchfield & Manfred Schewe (eds) (2017): *Going Performative in Intercultural Education. International Contexts, Theoretical Perspectives and Models of Practice*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters

Susanne Even & Manfred Schewe (eds) (2016): *Performatives Lehren, Lernen, Forschen – Performative Teaching, Learning, Research*. Berlin: Schibri

Manfred Schewe is Professor Emeritus at University College Cork (UCC) where he served as Head of a Language Department (German) and also as Head of Theatre. He holds the title *UCC Teaching Fellow* in recognition of his significant contribution to the scholarship of teaching and learning through the *Scenario Project* which encompasses a journal, a book series and a forum for international conferences, symposia and colloquia. His teaching and interdisciplinary research activities focus on Applied Drama and Theatre, especially on performative approaches to Language, Literature and Culture. He continues to examine research theses, give lectures and lead workshops for institutions and professional associations in different parts of the world. He recently edited Volume 5 in the Scenario Book Series entitled: *81 Sprüche zur Enthärtung unserer Welt – On the Softening of our World: 81 Sayings*.

Chair – Cornelia Savelsberg is a teaching and research assistant at the Chair of TEFL at the Julius-Maximilians-University of Würzburg as well as a research assistant within a project on counseling in educational settings at the Otto-Friedrich-University of Bamberg. She holds the degree of the first state exam

for secondary education in the subjects English, Spanish and Biology of the Friedrich-Alexander-University of Erlangen-Nürnberg as well as a master's degree in pedagogy in the fields of inclusion and school development. She is currently working on her doctoral thesis, in which she examines various possibilities to deal with behavioral disorders in the foreign language classroom caused by students with social and emotional impairments. By analyzing the multiple ways to deal with such disturbances Cornelia Savelsberg hopes to draw conclusions for the improvement of teacher education in general. Her overall research topics are inclusion, differentiation, individualization and educational counseling.

Concluding Discussion

Moderator – Jennifer Meier is a research assistant and lecturer at the JuliusMaximilians-University Würzburg focusing on the research of inter- and transcultural learning, cultural studies, textbook research, and historical methodology in the EFL classroom. She graduated with state exams in English, Spanish and Philosophy. She is currently writing her doctoral thesis on the subject "Typically British? A diachronic-imagological analysis of British national Stereotypes in English textbooks in the 20th and 21st century." She examines the extent to which national stereotypes have developed over the last two centuries and the extent to which they are still used in modern English teaching. The intention is to improve the cultural content of foreign language teaching and to further implement modern cultural concepts that reflect global tendencies.