



Centre for Irish-German Studies

Ionad an Léinn Gaeilge-Ghearmánaigh



# Centre *news*

May 2021 No. 23



## WELCOME TO OUR 2021 EDITION OF THE CENTRE FOR IRISH-GERMAN STUDIES NEWSLETTER!

It has been a while since our last newsletter appeared. As with so many other institutions and organisations, the Centre for Irish-German Studies was affected considerably by the outbreak of the Coronavirus. Many of the activities planned for spring and autumn 2020 had to be cancelled or were postponed and research projects have been delayed or paused. However, we have still managed quite a substantial range of exciting events which met with unprecedented interest and we have begun and finished publications and started new initiatives as you will see in this newsletter. We are also delighted to welcome a number of new members who are introduced below.

Another positive development is the first placing of a *DAAD Sprachassistent* at the Centre who will spend half of her time teaching German for the German section and the other half supporting the work of the Centre. This is the first time we have had an officially appointed (part-time) support assistant. Up to now all the work of the Centre has been done by the members due to their enthusiasm for the subject matter and our hope to contribute to a better understanding of all things Irish and German and to further Irish-German & -Austrian and -Swiss relations. In this endeavour we have been time and again assisted by the embassies and cultural institutions, and we have been successful with funding applications. We also gratefully acknowledge the wonderful support of individuals.

Thanks to you all – and we hope you enjoy reading our news.

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## NEW MEMBERS

**Dr Sonja Heppner** (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/sonja-heppner/>)



is a Trainee Solicitor at WILLIAM FRY and an Adjunct Assistant Professor at the School of Law, Trinity College Dublin, with a specialisation in theoretical and comparative aspects of international investment arbitration and sports arbitration. She teaches the LLM module on International Dispute Resolution at Trinity College Dublin. Sonja is also the GILBA Spokesperson in Ireland. GILBA stands for the

German-Irish Lawyers and Business Association, a bilateral professional association that fosters and promotes personal and professional links between Ireland and Germany.

**Dr Axel Klein** is an independent musicologist based in Frankfurt



am Main. Since his studies at Trinity College Dublin in the late 1980s he is specialised in the history and present of Irish art music. He studied at Hildesheim and Dublin, 1984–90 and received his PhD from Hildesheim in 1995. His published thesis, *Die Musik Irlands im 20. Jahrhundert* (Hildesheim, 1996) has been the sole study of 20th-century Irish "classical" music in any language for 20 years. He has published three further monographs with American and German

publishers (2001, 2014, 2019) and co-edited two volumes with Irish publishers (2003, 2004). He was the "Irish" advisor for the 29-volume encyclopaedia *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Kassel, 1994–2008), an advisory editor and author of 80 articles for the *Encyclopaedia of Music in Ireland* (Dublin, 2013) and has contributed to several other reference works in Ireland, Britain, Germany and the United States. In 2015, he became a Research Associate at the Research Foundation for Music in Ireland, Dublin, and was elected Corresponding Member by the Society for Musicology in Ireland (SMI). He is currently working on a popular history of Irish classical music. For more information, see [www.axelklein.de](http://www.axelklein.de).

**Dr Sorcha de Brún** is a Lecturer in modern Irish in the University of Limerick with an expertise in masculinities, translation studies and gothic studies in the Irish language. An award-winning writer of creative fiction in Irish, she has poems and stories in Irish on the curriculum for Gaeltacht and all-Irish schools. In 2007 she commenced her PhD funded by the John and Pat Hume Scholarship in Maynooth University. In 2016 she completed her PhD in the University of Ulster on masculinities in the fiction of Pádraig Ó Cíobháin, Joe Steve Ó Neachtain and Micheál Ó Conghaile. Before commencing in the University of Limerick, she held lectureships and research supervisor positions in St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra (Dublin City University), the University of Ulster, Hibernia College and Maynooth University.



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Sorcha has extensive experience of teaching Irish to the public service sector, including Enterprise Ireland, the IDA and the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. She has taught Irish in France, the United States and Hungary, as well as having worked with all the major Irish language and Gaeltacht organizations in Ireland, was the President for the European Prize for Literature in 2009 and Jury member for the European Prize for Literature in 2019. Her monograph on Masculinities, funded by Fochoise na bhFoilseachán and the Royal Irish Academy, will be published by Arlen House in 2021.

**Anna Fattori** is Professor of German Literature at the Faculty of



of the Humanities of the University of Rome ‘Tor Vergata’. She has studied German Literature and English Literature at the Universities of Perugia, Zürich and Pavia. She has published on a variety of themes in Swiss-German Literature, focusing in particular on Robert Walser. Her areas of special interest include the German novel of the 18th century, Anglo-German Studies and literary stylistics. She has published widely in Irish-German relations, including “Ireland as a ‘better elsewhere’ in Heinrich Böll’s *Irishes Tagebuch* and in Margrit Baur’s *Alle Herrlichkeit*”, in *Irish-German Studies* 5; 2010; “A Genuinely Funny German Farce’ Turns into a Very Irish play: ‘The Broken Jug’ (1994), John Banville’s Adaptation of Heinrich von Kleist’s’ *Der zerbrochene Krug* (1807)”, in *ANGERMION. Yearbook for Anglo-German Literary Criticism*, 2011; “The oldest Chair of German in the world”, in *Studi*

*Germanici*, 2012 and (with Fiorenzo Fantaccini) “Irish Literature in Italy and in German speaking countries”, in *Ireland in the European Eye*, ed. by Bettina Migge and Gisela Holfter, Dublin, Royal Irish Academy 2019.

### **Our first (part-time) DAAD Sprachassistent**

**Alberta Tagliacozzo** is German Language Assistant on behalf of



DAAD at the University of Limerick for the A.Y. 2021/2022. She will be supporting the work of the Centre and will also be teaching as part of the German section.

She completed her bachelor's degree in German and English Studies at the University of Naples “L’Orientale” and a master's degree in comparative literature at Freie Universität Berlin. As a passionate literature student, Alberta concerned herself with female authors of contemporary German and Italian literature and never missed the chance to meet them in seminars. She is currently focusing on German teaching and

interested in the role of Literature in Language education. Besides teaching Alberta is an amateur translator from Italian to German and vice versa. In her free time she enjoys hiking, doing yoga and listening to irreverent German rap. Alberta greatly looks forward to coming to Limerick and to learning about Irish-German literary relations. She is fascinated by the Irish-German Studies and awaits eagerly to support the Centre in its research and cultural activities.

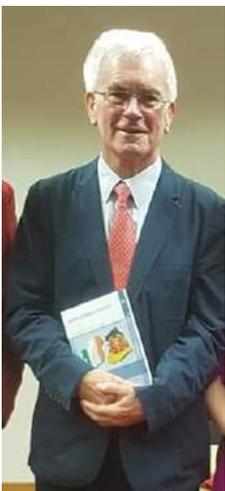
## PEOPLE AND AWARDS

We welcome the director of the Goethe Institute Dublin, **Ulrike Gasser**, and the director of the German-Irish Chamber of Commerce, **Ralf Lissek**, as new members of the Advisory Board of the Centre. They join the ambassadors of Austria, Germany and Switzerland in Dublin and the Irish ambassador in Berlin, as well as long-time mentors, former ambassadors David Donoghue and Seán Ó hUiginn, Prof Emer O’Sullivan and Dr Beate Schuler.

The Centre also welcomes new interns via the Erasmus+ programme. From late May to early August, **Maren Geib** will join us, she is currently on exchange in UL and studying for a teaching degree at Universität des Saarlandes. In September **Nikolaj Olesen**, an MA student in History at the HU Berlin will join us for the autumn semester.

We wish our colleague Prof. **Anthony McElligott** a happy retirement. Tony has moved to Berlin and will continue his research into German history and the Holocaust.

Congratulations to **Birte Schulz** who successfully defended her PhD thesis at her viva in November. Birte’s thesis is entitled “Overcoming Boundaries? Questions of Identity in the Experience of German-speaking Exiles in Ireland 1933–45” and was funded by the Irish Research Council. Birte was placed in the “A” category – an exceptional achievement. Well done!



Her external examiner was our dear friend **Prof Ian Wallace**, who was many years ago also the external examiner of the MA in Irish-German Studies. It was a terrible shock to hear of Ian’s sudden death earlier this year. Ian was an outstanding academic, extremely knowledgeable and inspiring, a leading scholar in GDR

and Exile studies, as well as a gentle, enthusiastic and incredibly supportive colleague. He is sadly missed and will always be remembered as a wonderful mentor and friend. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

Three of our UL students were awarded prizes from the German Irish Law and Business Association (GILBA): **Muireann Murphy** received the award in recognition for her MA thesis in Irish-German Studies on Operation Shamrock and **Niamh Garry** and **Sarah Fitzgerald** were awarded GILBA *Sprachstipendien*.

Lastly, Centre director **Gisela Holfter** has had a number of things to celebrate recently – she was promoted to Associate Professor in German and was appointed Fellow of the Centre for British Studies at the Humboldt Universität Berlin. The Centre is especially pleased that she was awarded the *Bundesverdienstkreuz* for her work in Irish-German relations.

## PAST READINGS AND LECTURES

### Limericker Literaturgespräche & Lectures



**Tom Lodge** – Dean AHSS, UL, lecture on 24 February 2020

Tom Lodge, Professor of Peace and Conflict Studies in the Department of Politics and Public Administration, looked at political reasons, impact, significance and effects of the East German support for the struggle against apartheid, 1955-1989. The GDR was the first administration to offer support to South African political organisations opposing Apartheid.



**Liam Ryan** – CEO of SAP Ireland (Galway),  
lecture on 27 February 2020

Liam Ryan is Labs Ireland managing director and winner of Great Places to Work's Most Trusted Leader of 2016. SAP was founded in Germany in 1972 and came to Ireland over 20 years ago. It has offices in Dublin and Galway and employs close to 1,700 people. It was no surprise therefore that his talk about his firm and the importance of learning German was well attended with many UL Business German students in the audience, interested to learn more about Irish-German economic links and specifically SAP.



**Michael Braun** (Cologne/Berlin) – lecture on 27  
February 2020

Prof Dr Michael Braun, Head of the Literature Department of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Berlin, talked about Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck's latest movie, *Werk ohne Autor* (Never Look Away) and its novel approach to dramatizing memory. The lecture was organised in coordination with the Department of German Studies at Mary Immaculate College.

**Renate Ahrens** – reading on 2 March 2020

German writer Renate Ahrens lived in Dublin for over 25 years. She has recently returned to Hamburg. Given her long stay in Ireland it is not surprising that many of her novels and children's books contain Irish-German elements. On her visit this time however she read from her latest novel *Der andere Himmel* (Knaur, 2019) which focuses on Germany's history. The reading, attended by the German ambassador and UL's president Kerstin Mey, was followed by a discussion and a workshop with the students.



**H.E. Deike Potzel** (German Ambassador to Ireland) and **Ralf Lissek** (Director of the German-Irish Chamber of Commerce), Online seminar on 14 December 2020



The eminent speakers discussed Irish-German economic and political relations at a lively event especially targeted at final year students.

## PAST LECTURES & EVENTS WITH CENTRE MEMBERS

Joachim Fischer and Gisela Holfter participated in a Roundtable event on “Irish-language literature in Europe: a survey of translations and reception patterns in continental countries”, organised by the Royal Irish Academy Dublin. It was a joint event of the RIA committee for Languages, Literature, Culture and Communication and the Irish Language, Literature and Celtic Cultures Committee, 8 November 2019.



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Sabine Egger, Zur Deterritorialisierung von Gedächtnisorten in Katja Petrowskajas *Vielleicht Esther* (2014) und Anna Burns' *Milkman* (2018). Invited paper at the conference *Shared Heritage – Gemeinsames Erbe. Kulturelle Interferenzräume im östlichen Europa als Sujet der Gegenwartsliteratur*. Literaturhaus Berlin, 19-20 November 2020. Funded by the BKM.

## Colloquia, Conferences, Lecture series



### International Colloquium “90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations – 1929 – 2019” Part 2: On the Role of Bilateral Diplomatic Relations, UL, 14 November 2019

This was the second of two events commemorating 90 years of officially established diplomatic relations between Ireland and Germany. Part 1, which took place at the Irish Embassy in Berlin in June 2019, was organised by the Centre for Irish-German Studies in collaboration with the Irish Embassy and focussed on the historical developments of Irish-German diplomatic relations, featuring contributions from Irish and German academics.

Part 2 concentrated on diplomatic experiences past and present and featured talks by practitioners. But before that, all participants were invited to the Special Collections in UL's Glucksman Library where the recently donated Gottschalk collection has found a temporary home while it is being catalogued (and where any precious and rare volumes will stay). Gisela Holfter gave some background to the collection and the generous donor Jürgen Gottschalk who (together with his wife Traute) had

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been scheduled to attend the event but sadly passed away only a few weeks before. This was followed by short speeches from German ambassador H.E. Deike Potzel and UL library director Gbnait O’Riordan as well as Ken Bergin, Head of the Special Collections, who emphasised the uniqueness of the collection.



From left: H.E. Deike Potzel, Elmar Conrad-Hassels (GILBA), Dr Eckhard Lübckemeier, Prof Eda Sagarra, Prof Gisela Holfter, Mayor of Limerick Michael Sheahan, CIGS member and Head of German section Dr Marieke Krajenbrink, David Donoghue, H.E. Dr Nicholas O’Brien, Michael Collins, Seán Ó hUiginn.

After a welcome by Centre director Gisela Holfter and the official opening of the conference by the then UL Vice-President (now President) Prof Kerstin Mey the first panel focussed on “Reflections on diplomatic experiences in Germany and Ireland”. It was expertly chaired by Prof Eda Sagarra who was exceedingly qualified for her role not only as someone who shaped German

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Studies in Ireland over several decades but also as the biographer of Ireland's first diplomat sent to Washington, Professor Smiddy of Cork (and, in fact, his granddaughter). The panel comprised Seán Ó hUiginn (Irish Ambassador to Germany 2002-2006), David Donoghue (Irish Ambassador to Germany 2006-2009), Dr Eckhard Lübke (German Ambassador to Ireland 2011-2014), Michael Collins (Irish Ambassador to Germany 2013-2019) and H.E. Deike Potzel (German Ambassador to Ireland since 2017). Each speaker gave fascinating insights into a very special relationship which was not without challenges (especially during and after the fallout of the banking crisis) but which was based on very strong and friendly ties. The close relations and mutual interest also contributed considerably to a good and nuanced understanding with difficult tasks such as dealing with Brexit.

The next panel on current and future developments in bilateral diplomacy, chaired by Prof. Joachim Fischer, included current German and Irish diplomats Deike Potzel and Dr Nicholas O'Brien, and their Austrian and Swiss colleagues, Dr Helmut Freudenschuss and Louis-José Tournon, as well as Niall Burgess, the Secretary General of the Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade. They all engaged specifically with the role of bilateral diplomatic relations within the EU in times of Brexit as a key topic and challenge at present, presenting fascinating insights into the diplomatic world, including poignant anecdotes, illustrating the huge importance of interpersonal skills.

The conference was accompanied by the exhibition about Operation Shamrock, part of the Irish relief programme after WWII and something that has left indelible traces in the German children who were taken in and which had a lasting impact on the Irish host families, too. It reminded all participants that bilateral

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relations are not only shaped at the diplomatic level but consist of a multitude of individual exchanges. The event concluded with a wonderful reception sponsored by the UL School of Law.



From left: Gisela Holfter, Joachim Fischer, Secretary General Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade Niall Burgess, CIGS member Orla Prendergast, Eda Sagarra in UL in November 2019.

### **Conference: Lives and Legacies: Lesser-known Figures in Irish-German Relations, UCC, 12 March 2020**

Taking place on March 12, 2020 at University College Cork, this symposium, initiated and organised by **Dr Claire O'Reilly**, had a two-fold aim in mind: firstly it set out to mark the year 2020 as the 75th anniversary of the end of World War Two in general terms, and secondly to note a number of figures who were decisive in shaping the history between Ireland and Germany particularly around this time – in the 1930s and 1940s – and thereafter. The focus thereby was on lesser well-known biographies across many walks of life, from academia, to those involved in the Arts, and

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others with industrial and commercial interests – even notable Nazi perpetrators who came to find refuge in far-away shores were included in the daylong event. The aim all the while was to (re-)examine these unique life-stories and to unpack their legacies. Two keynotes shaped the day-long proceedings: the first, **Gisela Holfter**, focused on 7 biographies in her paper “(Lesser-known) Lives and legacies: Irish-German relations over the last 100 years”, who were, arguably, not well known in the public domain. Holfter demonstrated how hidden some of these lives were, but worthy to be remembered for the positive contributions they made to Irish life. The second keynote speaker, **Clodagh Finn**, illuminated the life of Cork-native Mary Elmes, who was born in Ballintemple in 1908 and died in the South of France in 2002 in her paper, “Europe in the 1940s: The Circles Drawn by Cork-born Mary Elmes and the German connection”. It was in fact Finn’s biography on Elmes *A Time to Risk All* (2018) and how Elmes and her colleagues saved 427 young children from deportation to Auschwitz extermination camp, which provided the inspiration behind the idea of the event focusing on lesser-known lives.

Although news of the impending lockdown reached our ears during the lunchbreak, the stalwart presenters in the afternoon persevered onwards, bringing new and ongoing research to light. **Joachim Fischer**, opening the afternoon session, took the audience on a literary excursion as he unfolded the little-known link between Ireland and Germany in the shape of a novel by Reinhold Zickel on the Shannon Scheme in Co. Clare. While almost all papers spoke to the positive contributions and lasting legacies of the era, the next contribution showcased SS-man Otto Skorzeny’s stay in Co. Kildare in the 1950s, as researched and

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related by **Hermann Rasche**. In **Rachel Magshamhráin's** paper, "Irish Eyes on Nuremberg", the audience was brought into the immediate post-war era of the Nuremberg trials, which two unlikely and relatively unknown Irish figures, T. Desmond Williams (Professor of History in UCD) and Frances Moran (Regius Professor of Law in Trinity), both Irish academics, attended as observers, reporting on these events in the Irish media at the time (1946). **Jérôme aan de Wiel** spoke on "Ireland's forgotten or unknown humanitarian aid to the Soviet-Occupied Zone of Germany and Berlin, 1945-1949" based on his forthcoming book, *Ireland's Helping Hand to Europe, 1945-1950*. Last but not least, in **Monica Brandis'** paper, "The lives and legacies of German Children following their Stay in Ireland with Operation Shamrock post WWII" the audience learnt of the wider circles drawn and the influence of "Operation Shamrock". Tracing a number of the German children's biographies, she found that participation in Operation Shamrock indelibly formed the children's identity constructions and their sense of belonging, and shaped other such major life-events for decades to come. The event was sponsored and supported by the Department of German, CACSSS Conference Support Fund and CASiLAC (UCC). *Claire O'Reilly*

**Lecture series of the Centre for British Studies (HU Berlin) on "A Decade of Centenaries: Ireland and Northern Ireland" 7 December 2020 – 8 February 2021 (online)**

The lecture series, jointly organised with the Centre for Irish-German Studies and Ulster University, started on 7 December with Dr Ruth Dudley Edwards, with Professor Paul Carmichael (Ulster University) chairing and introducing the lively, if at times

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controversial first lecture of the series, “Nationalists and Unionists: Two Irreconcilable Tribes?”. It continued with Dr Michael Kennedy on 18 January 2021. In his lecture “Amongst the Nations of the World: Commemorating and Reimagining the Formation of an Irish Foreign Policy” he examined the commemoration of Casement’s execution in 1916 in a wider context and discussing how Casement’s legacy was explained and commemorated in 2016. He also looked at how the hopes of Ireland’s first generation of revolutionary diplomats from 1919 dovetail into the key themes of today’s Irish foreign policy. The last lecture in the winter semester 2020/2021 series, ‘A Decade of Centenaries: Ireland and Northern Ireland’ took place on the 8th of February. ‘The future of Northern Ireland’ was the title of Professor Jonathan Tonge’s contribution where he commented on the current situation in Northern Ireland and its ‘power sharing government’ in the Northern Ireland Assembly. He looked at the impact of Brexit and whether it would re-align Northern Ireland more with the rest of Ireland and the EU than currently and speculated about the possible weakening of the link with the UK.

#### **Colloquium: Irish-German diplomatic relations – towards the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, February 2021 (online)**

Initially planned as a book launch for *Irish-German Diplomatic Relations (1929-2019)* (IGS 13, WVT 2020) but mindful of Covid19 restrictions, the decision was taken to organise instead something more forward looking – a colloquium on ‘Irish-German diplomatic relations – towards the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary’ which was held online on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February 2021. It was wonderful to have such a great audience at this event on Irish-German diplomatic relations

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– over 300 participants joined in and the feedback afterwards was very positive indeed.

Professor Gisela Holfter, Director of the Centre of Irish-German Studies welcomed the guest speakers. Professor Kerstin Mey, President of the University of Limerick, in the opening speech outlined the importance of the German-Irish relationship for UL, mentioning that Germany is the most important collaboration partner for European research ventures for UL. She also recorded that UL welcomes 120 German students annually and most of these students are part of the Erasmus programme.

Niall Burgess, Secretary General of the Department of Foreign Affairs on the relationship between Ireland and Germany stated that there are many opportunities for the relationship to grow. Niall spoke about a strategy the two countries have for Irish-German relations, ‘Ireland and Germany: A Wider and Deeper Footprint’ which included a ‘joint plan of action’ and which has already led to ‘a larger better resourced embassy in Berlin, a new Consulate in Frankfurt’ and ‘an Irish-German language network in Dublin.’ He also mentioned a second plan of action for Irish-German relations which will bring people together, focus more on EU policy matters and expand their collaboration in foreign policy.

Miguel Berger, German minister of State for Europe, in his contribution, stated that nowadays Ireland and Germany understand each other better. He stressed the importance of the reopening of the Goethe Institute in Dublin in 2018. He felt that the Goethe Institute ‘will continue to bring our people closer and link up all parts of society’, and that the German and Irish economies will be more interconnected.

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H.E. Deike Potzel, the German Ambassador, said that she was delighted to be in Ireland ‘at a time of very close and friendly relations of two prosperous and highly developed democratic countries.’ She stressed there were many more possibilities for Irish-German relations but each country needs to become more aware of each other’s current affairs.

The Irish Ambassador to Germany, Dr Nicolas O’Brien told the seminar that he was honoured to be part of the connection between Germany and Ireland. He said that the next phase in improving relations will be focusing on ‘the officials in middle management’ and will work on ‘strengthening the links of both Parliaments, the Oireachtas and the Bundestag German-Irish friendship committees.’

After the speakers, there was a video collage ‘My vision for 100 years of Irish-German diplomatic relations – in 100 seconds’, which included experts in Irish-German relations providing their insights in the future relationship between the two countries.

There was also a competition of student videos for a prize sponsored by both the German and Irish embassies. The UL students who participated in the videos were Bella Lysaght, Jennifer Ruffini, Kate Hall, Sinead Sheehan, Ali Hobbs, James Stapleton, Neisha Keane-Butler, Patricia Buckley, Saoirse Jenkinson, Rebecca McEneaney and Laura Whelan. The videos were all imaginative and well produced.

Following the student videos, an open audience discussion on Irish-German relations took place with H.E. Deike Potzel and H.E. Dr Nicholas O’Brien. The winners of the video competition and the GILBA award were announced.

Many aspects of the diplomatic relations were discussed, the strategies that were in place and how they have improved

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relations between the two countries. It is evident that the relationship between Ireland and Germany has much potential to prosper even beyond the many developments of the last few years. Overall, the future relationship between the two countries looks bright.

For anyone who missed it, recordings of the first two parts are now available on Centre website under “Past Events” - <https://ulsites.ul.ie/irishgerman/past-events>, including: Welcome & Opening; Niall Burgess, Secretary General Dept of Foreign Affairs; Miguel Berger, State Secretary of the German Federal Foreign Office; H.E. Deike Potzel, and H.E. Dr Nicholas O’Brien. The second part, the collage of short videos of experts in Irish-German relations and key stakeholders with their visions of 100 years of Irish-German diplomatic relations is also available. Thanks again to all contributors, CIGS member Natascha Gugli for her technical support and to Jakob Lemme, who put together the 100 second videos.

*Katie Walsh*

## CURRENT PROJECTS

Centre member **Fergal Lenehan** from the University of Jena, and colleagues Luisa Conti, Roman Lietz and Milene Mendes de Oliveira from Jena, Mainz and Potsdam, have been awarded four years of funding from the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF). This will finance the establishment of a dedicated research group, entitled “ReDICO: Researching Digital Interculturality Co-operatively”. The group’s work will centre upon the research and analysis of intercultural practises and discourses within digital spaces, and will investigate diverse areas such as digital Europeanism, online neo-nationalisms and Intercultural

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Competence in Internet settings. The research group will organise three hybrid E-Co-Conferences, one also in conjunction with the Centre of Irish-German Studies in Limerick, as well as establishing a sustainable open-access online platform upon which researchers may share publications, calls-for-papers and other relevant information concerning the study of Digital Interculturality.

Alongside Hedwig Schwall (Leuven) and Anne Fogarty (UCD), Joachim Fischer, is one the editors of the online project *Kaleidoscope 2: Europe in Ireland* (<http://kaleidoscope2.efacis.eu/>) under the auspices of Efacis, the European Federation of Associations and Centres of Irish Studies. In regular intervals, *Kaleidoscope 2* publishes short texts by Irish writers on their experiences of Europe and the European Union. Some of the texts, such as those by Anne Devlin and Sinéad Morrissey, also offer interesting insights into Irish-German relations. The project is supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Jean Monnet programme.

### Book collection

There have been further donations which we have been fortunate to receive last year. Firstly, Monica Schefold (the daughter of John Hennig (1911-1986), ‘the father of Irish-German Studies’) sent us off-prints of his publications as well as postcards and original letters from luminaries such as Erwin Schrödinger, Jack B. Yeats and Ernst Lewy, the first professor for Finno-Ugric languages in Berlin and teacher of Walter Benjamin, an exile in Ireland who later became a professor at the RIA. Also, a fascinating travel account of Connemara from the year 1949. Secondly, Eva Bourke, the widow of our former Adjunct Professor Eoin Bourke (who is still much missed), very generously donated his collection of 19th century German travelogues on Ireland to us, including treasures such as

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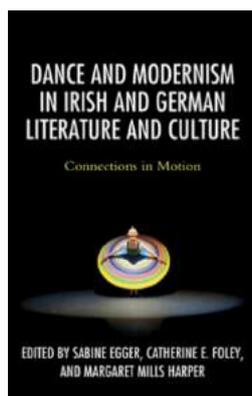
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the first editions of Karl von Hailbronner's *Cartons aus der Reisemappe eines deutschen Reisenden* (1837), Magdalena von Dobeneck's *Briefe und Tagebuch-Blätter aus Frankreich, Irland und Italien* (1843) and Julius Rodenberg's *Die Myrthe von Killarney* (1867) as well as other very useful material. These donations will enhance even further our Irish-German book collection (which last year already got a great boost thanks to the addition of the Gottschalk Collection), housed in the Glucksman Library (with all precious and fragile material taken care of in the Special Collection).

We hope to start occasional blogs and possibly podcasts over the summer to showcase the treasures available in our Irish-German Studies collection and – once fully open again – we welcome visits of researchers and the interested public.

## UPCOMING EVENTS & PROJECTS



The book launch of *Dance and Modernism in Irish and German Literature and Culture. Connections in Motion*, to be hosted by the Goethe Institute Ireland as part of the Dublin Dance Festival on 20 May 2021, will be postponed due to COVID restrictions. Watch this space for further updates on the event.

## Exhibition of German-born artists at Limerick City Gallery of Art, July – September 2021

“The Loneliness of being German” is the title of an upcoming double exhibition by German-born artists Vera Klute (<http://veraklute.net/cv.html>) and Thomas Brezing

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(<http://thomasbrezing.weebly.com/>). An event to mark the opening is planned with the Centre on 8 July, more information will be available on our website and the website of the Limerick City Gallery of Art (<http://gallery.limerick.ie/>) in June.

### **Dännerstag**

Dännerstag is a new and innovative poetry project by the Centre for Irish-German Studies and introduces German language poetry and its Irish (and English) language translations to a local, national, and international audience. Following in a long tradition of cultural and linguistic exchange between the German and Irish languages, we believe the project is aptly named: dán in "Dännerstag" means poem in Irish, and Donnerstag means Thursday in German. So, in a unique and contemporary Irish-German mix, these poems and their translations will be showcased in the academic year 2021/22 on the first Thursday of every month on the Centre for Irish-German Studies website and will be distributed via social media. The translations are undertaken by a range of enthusiastic translators ranging from academics to prize-winning translators to students of the University of Limerick. We are excited and honoured to present new contemporary poems by a selection of prize-winning and wonderful German, Austrian and Swiss poets in a multi-media format, and to hear the voices of the poets themselves who bring their work to life on the screen. On the third Thursday of every month we will present much loved classics in the German original and Irish (and English) translations. Project leaders are Gisela Holfter and Sorcha de Brún. We gratefully acknowledge support of the German, Austrian and Swiss Embassies and the DAAD for this project. Go raibh míle maith agaibh. Enjoy! Viel Vergnügen! Bainigí taitneamh as! The launch is planned for the first Thursday in September in the Goethe-Institut Dublin.

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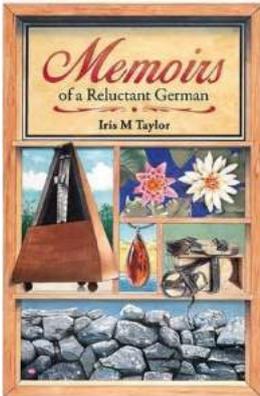
## **Physical Movement, Body Cultures and Identity in Europe – on and off the Screen**

This international symposium of the Irish Centre of Transnational Studies (MIC), in co-operation with the Centre for European Studies (UL), is to take place at Mary Immaculate College (MIC), Limerick, on Friday, 24 September 2021. Participants are welcome to attend online or in person. The event, co-organised by CIGS member Dr Sabine Egger (German Studies, MIC) and Dr Marcus Free (Media Studies, MIC), has a strong Irish-German dimension, with panels on “Sport and Questions of Identity in European Film and TV” – discussing the role of Irish and German sports personalities in Anglophone media –, “Dance, Media and Embodied Identities”, and “Lola Montez: Spanish Dancer from Ireland, European Femme Fatale, 19th Century Media Celebrity?” Prof. Dr. Marita Krauss (University of Augsburg) will present a keynote lecture on Lola Montez, an international media celebrity of the time, born in Ireland in 1821. Montez’ performance on and off stage was regarded as scandalous, including her love affair with King Ludwig I of Bavaria, and allowed her to play a political role. Krauss’s fascinating new book on Montez has been published by Beck earlier this year. The panel will also include a paper by Prof Joachim Fischer (UL) on “Lola Montez: The Irish Dimension” to be followed by the screening of the recently restored film *Lola Montez* (1955) by Max Ophüls, with an introduction by Dr Christiane Schönfeld. (The programme will be posted on [www.ictstudies.eu](http://www.ictstudies.eu) and @ICTS01)

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## Reading and discussion with Iris Taylor, October 2021

Iris Taylor, author of *Memoirs of a Reluctant German* (Clifden, Little Gull Publications 2020) will read from her fascinating autobiographical account. She moved to Ireland in 1963, studied in Trinity College and later taught for many years in DCU.

## 18<sup>th</sup> Conference in Irish-German Studies “Unions, Break-ups and Special Relationships – Aspects of the Irish-German-UK Relationships After Brexit”, University of Limerick, 4-5 November 2021

This Centre conference, organised in coordination with Faculty of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences, Ulster University, the Centre for European Studies, UL, and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), Dublin/London, will focus on three aspects:

1) A discussion of the initial impact and ongoing repercussions of Brexit for British-German Relations and British Studies in Germany/German Studies in the UK as well as Irish-German relations and German Studies in Ireland and Irish Studies in Germany.

2) “With the benefit of hindsight ...” – Reflecting on German unification from a cultural, political, legal and economic perspective. Focussing on reunification itself, this part will ask what lessons can be learned from the German experience? Aspects that have been of particular relevance in Germany included the question whether accession or unification was/would have been the best course of action. Keeping in mind the vastly different situation in Ireland North and South, are there aspects that could of interest in the ‘Shared Ireland, Shared Island’ discussions?

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3) Engagement with Europe and the European Union in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland after Brexit. This part will analyse the situation north and south of the Irish border vis-a-vis the EU and the European context of economic, legal, policy and cultural questions.

A full programme will be available on the Centre website in June 2021 under upcoming events. A follow-up conference is to take place in spring 2022 in Belfast, organised by the University of Ulster.

### **2021/22 Video competition for 3<sup>rd</sup> level students on Irish-German relations**

The example of the excellent videos produced by this year's 4th year UL students on Irish-German relations (in German) that were showcased at the February diplomatic relations event will now serve as a blueprint for a video competition for students studying German at all 3<sup>rd</sup> level institutions in Ireland. Thanks to the generosity of the German-Irish Chamber of Commerce (special thanks to Ralf Lissek for his efforts), prizes of €1,000 for the winning group, €500 for the runner-up and €300 for the video in third place will be available. We already have a selection committee in place, including Dr Gillian Martin, Associate Professor in German at Trinity College Dublin, Dr Hermann Rasche (NUI Galway) and Derek Scally (Irish Times) will have the difficult task to select a short list. The winning group videos will be chosen in a virtual public event next spring and the prizes presented by the German ambassador in Dublin and the Irish ambassador in Berlin.

### **Upcoming Association of Franco-Irish Studies (AFIS) conference**

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The National Centre for Franco-Irish Studies (NCFIS) is organising “New Beginnings from a Franco-Irish Perspective”, the 14<sup>th</sup> AFIS conference in collaboration with the Centre for European Studies at the University of Limerick, at the Technological University Dublin (28-29 October, 2021). This will include panels such as “New beginnings in Irish-German/German-French relations”. Both Centres welcome this opportunity to foster closer relations with each other and would like to see German-French-Irish angles explored in some papers. A joint panel discussion on this topic is planned. See <https://www.it-tallaght.ie/ncfis>.

## PUBLICATIONS

Joachim Fischer, Richard Bermann in Ballina, in: *Tipperary Historical Journal* 2019, pp. 124-131

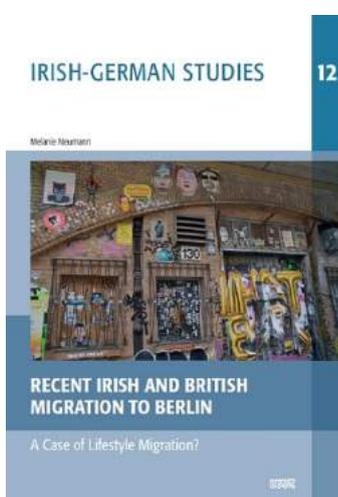
Gisela Holfter, Eine kontextualisierte Bestandsaufnahme der German Studies in Irland, in: N. Colin et al (eds), *Germanistik – eine interkulturelle Wissenschaft?* Heidelberg: Synchron 2020, pp. 99-112.

Gisela Holfter and DAAD London, “DAAD-Bildungssystemanalyse Irland 2020, Daten & Analysen zum Hochschul- und Wissenschaftsstandort”, <https://www2.daad.de/der-daad/analysen-und-studien/daad-regionalinformationen/de/49956-bildungssystemanalysen-im-ueberblick/>. The Centre will also contribute to the 2021 update and the 2021 Laendersachstand Irland.

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Christiane Schönfeld published a short piece in German about Ernst Toller's planned visit to Dublin in January 1935 and his connection to Ireland on the website of the Ernst Toller Gesellschaft: <https://www.ernst-toller.de/dublin-rathmines-town-hall/>. In an essay to be published with *German Life & Letters* about Ernst Toller's film projects and his time in Hollywood as an exile from Nazi Germany, she sheds light on his scenario 'Betsy James' (later entitled 'Lola Montez' and, finally, 'Heavenly Sinner'). Based on surviving manuscripts, newspaper articles and Toller's correspondence with other exiles in the USA and friends abroad (such as the leader of the Indian independence movement Jawaharlal Nehru and the Irish writer Denis Johnston), her article pieces together Toller's engagement with the medium and the industry, and highlights the significance of 'Lola Montez', 'that peculiar Irish girl' and 'mouthpiece of freedom at the time of European reaction' as he writes in a letter to Nehru.

## Book Publications



ISG 12, a 2020 monograph by Melanie Neumann, offers a detailed insight into the Irish and British communities in Berlin. It examines the causes and effects of these migration flows: What motivates the Irish and British to come to Berlin? How do they contribute to the city's cultural life and labour market? To what extent do the migrants feel they belong in the host society? In what way do they contribute to inequality and exclusion and

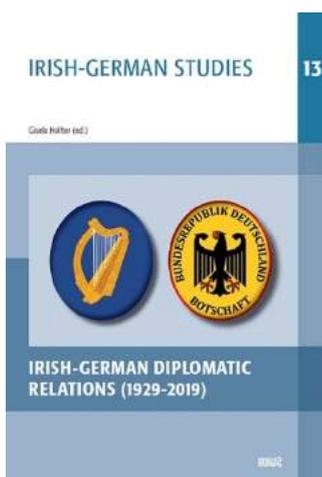
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to what extent are they themselves caught up in it? What role does language play – can English be seen as a form of cultural capital or does it lead to discrimination? What is the significance of German? Additionally, the impact of Brexit on Britons in the sample as well as the recovery of the Irish economy on the Irish respondents is highlighted. The presented research furthermore tests whether the recent increase in these two migration flows can be connected to lifestyle migration. At the same time, the lifestyle migration concept itself is subjected to critical scrutiny regarding its general value to migration research.

Therefore, this monograph does not only contribute to the development of both lifestyle migration and migration research in general, but further gives a practical insight into a sample group of privileged migrants in a European capital.



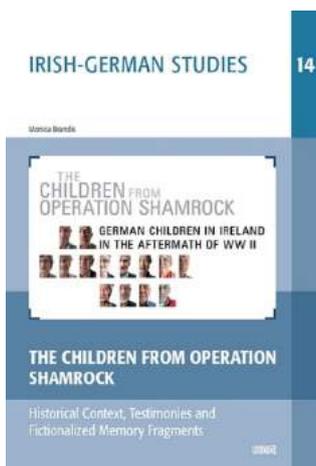
This volume, edited by Gisela Holfter, deals with the establishment, evolution and current state of diplomatic relations between Ireland and Germany, the hurdles that have had to be overcome, the importance of individuals, and circumstances which at times went beyond the sphere of influence for either country. Contributions are included from politicians and academics as well as practitioners such as former and present ambassadors. All reflect on the multifaceted nature of Irish-German relations and often bring personal experiences into the fore, bringing together a fascinating and insightful collection. Contributors include Busso von Alvensleben, Michael Collins, Simon Coveney, David Donoghue,

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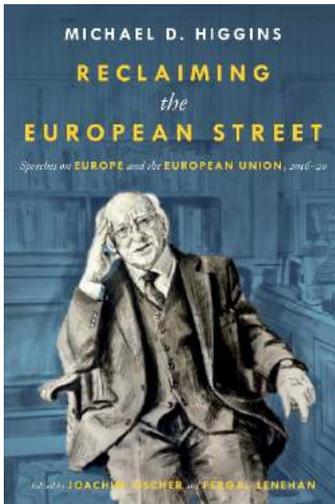
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Joachim Fischer, Róisín Healy, Matthias Höpfner, Gisela Holfter, Michael Kennedy, Eckhard Lübke, Heiko Maas, Daniel Mulhall, Nicholas O'Brien, Mervyn O'Driscoll, Seán Ó hUiginn, Deike Potzel and Eda Sagarra.



Monica Brandis tells the story of a cornerstone of Irish-German relations. Operation Shamrock was a humanitarian initiative that placed more than 400 German children in the care of Irish families in the aftermath of the Second World War. For most participants, the roughly three-year stay in Ireland was a positive, in some cases even life-saving experience. Some children, however, suffered strongly from the separation from their families or were mistreated by their foster parents. Based on the author's exhibition *The Children from Operation Shamrock*, which has travelled extensively across Germany and Ireland since 2015, this book consists of interviews with eighteen participants as well as an historical analysis of the origins, circumstances and participants of Operation Shamrock. In addition, short stories based on real incidents yet creatively transformed add an emotional dimension to the participants' early childhood experiences of separation and loss but also affection and healing. In-depth research, interviews and short stories combined facilitate a deeper understanding of an important part of Irish-German relations and the European war and post-war experience.

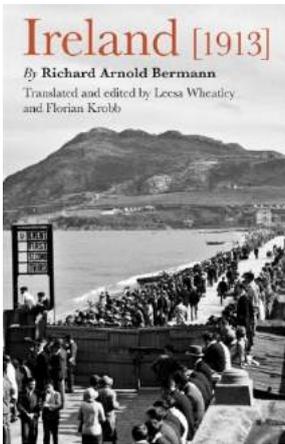


Centre members Joachim Fischer and Fergal Lenehan recently edited the collected European speeches of Irish President Michael D. Higgins, *Reclaiming the European Street: Speeches on Europe and the EU, 2016-2020*, published in April 2021 by Lilliput Press. This is the first gathering of the President's Europe-themed speeches, which deal with wide-ranging contemporary issues, from the 1916 Centenary celebrations to the Brexit decision of June 2016 and the Covid-19 pandemic. As well as translations into Irish, French and German, a comprehensive introduction by the editors, both long-standing scholars and teachers in the field of European Studies as well as Irish-German Studies, contextualises the speeches within wider Irish and European intellectual history. Stamped by President Higgins' inimitable intellectual rigour and empathy, these documents also express fundamental concerns on behalf of the Irish people.



*Ireland's Helping Hand to Europe, 1945-1950; Combatting Hunger from Normandy to Tirana* by CIGS member Dr Jérôme aan de Wiel will be published in the coming weeks/months by Central European University Press (CEUP) in Budapest. It contains one chapter on Irish aid in the American, British and French occupation zones of Germany and another one on Irish aid in Berlin and the Soviet-Occupation Zone. Irish supplies were the first non-Allied foreign supplies to be distributed in the four sectors of Berlin and the Soviet Zone. This book details

Ireland's post-war humanitarian efforts, an aspect that has been totally neglected by historiography. And yet, Ireland's efforts were considerable from Saint-Lô to the Greek islands by way of Mönchengladbach and Dresden. One third of the Hungarian population tasted Irish sugar, a fact recognised by the Stalinist-controlled Ministry of Welfare. Freiburg im Breisgau was the first area in Germany to receive Irish supplies, a fact very much appreciated by one of the city's inhabitants, the granddaughter of Leopold von Ranke.



This volume (published by Cork University Press in April 2021) contains the first English translation of Richard Bermann's *Irland* (Berlin, 1914), produced by Leesa Wheatley and Florian Krobb. The translation is complemented by comprehensive notes and explanations, an introduction and a list of further reading. The volume constitutes a unique source on Ireland immediately before World War I; it places Irish

conflicts in international Imperialist scenarios, displays the sensitivities of an Austrian Jew working from Berlin on nationhood, federalism, diversity of (religious and political) cultures; it affords an insight into Irish culture and society that is astute, entertaining, diverse, informed and independent. Many of the author's impressions on political movements, cultural displays and national characters resonate still today, in a truly astounding way.