

Editorial — Memory

Niamh McNamara and Marie-Luise Theuerkauf

The second issue of *Aigne* brings together an edition that is at once international and universal in scope. From Spain's civil war, to the ruins embedded in Irish landscape and identity, to the American South, each article grapples with aspects of remembrance and recuperation that inform personal and collective identities.

Kajsa Larson's work investigates the novel "*Martina, la rosa número trece: the family experience as national tragedy*". The narrative is named after the Thirteen Roses, a group of thirteen women, seven of whom were minors, killed just after the conclusion of the Spanish civil war. The novel is intertextual in scope, constructed around the interviews and archival work conducted by Paloma, a descendant of one of the Thirteen Roses, Martina. Larson situates the novel within the rubric of silence and memory, drawing from Derrida's *hauntology* and theories of meta-history she skillfully connects Paloma's personal desire to uncover the truth about Martina's past but who is forced to search outside the family for information about her relative due to the silence she faces from within, and the national silence that continues in post civil war Spain in relation to the atrocities that occurred during the Franco era, even among family members.

Kieran McCarthy's compelling article on ruins, memorialization and identity in the Irish landscape discusses Gougane Barra in County Cork. His article insists on the importance of place in the construction of collective and personal memory and details the affects of shifting political, social and artistic trends on portrayals of the ruins through time. He outlines the influences of pictorial references, from the scenic pictures from the Victorian era 'tour' to present day tourism and photography, and the resulting connection between image and memory, and experience of place. Ruins, he argues, as part of the landscape then also become an active engagement with collective memory.

Linda McKeown's article acknowledges the inherent problems faced when investigating autobiographies, and the difficulties of distinguishing truth within a narrative constructed by memories — are they real? Are they the memories of the author or stories they heard and have made their own? Is their present situation colouring their recollection? McKeown deals decisively with these issues in her discussion of three memoirs by a minority group from the American South. Harry Crews, Tim McLaurin and Rick Bragg, as poor white men from the South, provide a significant contribution to literature in their unique descriptions of the geographical, cultural and social aspects of the South, depictions which had previously been the privilege of middle class authors from outside the area. Although questions are raised as to the validity of all the assertions made in their respective memoirs, as McKeown elucidates, the analysis of their work as products of a minority group provides a far richer discourse.

Although distinct in their content and context, there are references throughout all articles to the fragmentary nature of memory and recollection. The desire to situate oneself in the present through the recovery of an individual or collective past is echoed throughout this edition. Memory Studies has become recognized as interdisciplinary in scope, and the present edition of *Aighe* reflects this idea: drawing on history, geography, archaeology and autobiography in the analyses presented.