



Editorial

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“How does one revive a journal?” and “what does it entail to run a peer-reviewed online postgraduate journal?”—questions that the new *Aigne* Editorial Team had to deconstruct and explore when we decided to bring the journal back to life in 2017. *Aigne*, which was founded in 2010, had not published an issue since 2014 when we came on board. In April that year, an initial group of twelve PhD students from different departments at University College Cork met to discuss what this process of reviving, running and redefining a journal could look like and how we could realise it.

As part of this process, we thought about changes that we could make as part of its relaunch. One of these was to move the journal platform from the UCC website to the universally-used Open Journal System (OJS) platform in order to streamline the process of producing the journal through the use of this one portal, which now houses archived issues of *Aigne* along with this current issue. While there were some technical difficulties in the process of transferring over to OJS, we are happy to have everything easily accessible to readers now on our website. Another new development was the decision to publish one yearly issue that incorporated articles stemming from the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences (CACSSS) Annual Postgraduate Conference here at UCC as well as those received from our themed Call for Papers. This allowed us to expand upon our chosen theme with the addition of new sections (“Creative Pieces” and “In Conversation”) that offer a departure from the traditional sections of academic articles, book reviews and event reports. Moreover, we celebrated *Aigne*’s relaunch with a photo competition, the winner of which was to grace the cover of the 2018 issue. Participants were asked to engage with the 2018 theme and the Editorial Board were sent a variety of spectacular images which explored this theme through diverse means. In the end, Grace Claro’s “Dark Leaves” was selected by the committee as the winner. Grace's image, which evokes ideas of nature, mathematical fractals and psychological ink-blot tests, was chosen for its distinct engagement with multifarious aspects the theme of Issue 7, and was judged by the editors as housing deceptively complex ideas in a strikingly

simple form. We hope that the addition of the photography competition and our two new sections makes *Aigne* more dynamic and engaging for a wider audience.

Once we had learned about and adhered to all the formalities and formal procedures, the creative part of being an editor soon traded places with administrative and organisational matters: brainstorming sessions to find a fitting theme for the first issue, drafting Call for Papers and redesigning the *Aigne* website and logo were among the next steps we had to take as a team. Inspired by the fast-paced, ever-changing times and the political roller coasters we live in, it felt only natural that the first theme-based issue after *Aigne*'s hiatus since 2014 would be about change and soon we settled on "Environments of Change". In every regard, we felt that our world is undergoing a period of accelerated change which can be attributed to a number of different developments such as technological advances, the ubiquity of social media and smartphones, the acceleration of global warming, with its resultant environmental disasters, as well as the major political upheavals such as Brexit and the growth of white nationalist movements across the globe. We were anticipating that contributions to this first issue of *Aigne* would engage with these and other changes that create constantly shifting and unstable contemporary environments. Thus, we asked academic and creative authors to reflect on this climate of economic, political and environmental uncertainty, and to address the impact on and outcomes of these and other major changes in our contemporary world. The aim of this issue, then, is to offer a series of academic and creative pieces which engage with "Environments of Change" in challenging and diverse ways.

In the first section of this issue, we are happy to publish three articles by scholars from different departments within CACSSS. First, Estefanía Muñoz Gómez, in "Language teaching and translation training: A case of (ir)reconcilable differences?" suggests that while the debates surrounding the relationship between language teaching and translation are by no means new, they remain topical, given the global nature of current social, political and economic networks. Muñoz Gómez argues that the value of translation in the language classroom continues to be commonly framed as a tool to assist the language learning process. Her article presents an overview of the traditional divide between these two assumed forms of translating and encourages reassessing the assumptions underlying the theoretical concepts of communicative and translation competence. Commenting on the specific context of Ireland as an example of skill supply and demand imbalance, Muñoz Gómez calls for a greater focus to be placed on the translational nature of multilingual communication as the needs for cultural and linguistic mediation continue to grow and evolve in an increasingly technologically driven market.

Next, Anne Mahler, in her article entitled “‘In an orgy of violence’: Deconstructing hypermasculine identity in Todd Strasser’s *Give a Boy a Gun*”, focuses on the construction and performance of masculine identity in American high schools, extending existing discussions surrounding the motives of high school mass shooters. She puts toxic, hegemonic, masculine gender performances and their potential to traumatise subordinate masculinities at the centre of her article’s analysis. The basis for Mahler’s analysis is Todd Strasser’s young adult novel *Give a Boy a Gun* (2000) which was inspired by Columbine and the first school shooting book to be published after Harris’ and Klebold’s rampage. Mahler argues that in *Give a Boy a Gun*, in the context of school shooting fictions, the performance of toxic, hegemonic masculinity is a key component of the shooter’s motivations in literature, which has the potential to cause chronic trauma that manifests itself in a hyperviolent and hypermasculine school shooting.

Third, Shelbi Macken’s article, “Identity in protracted displacement: Exploring identity of Palestinian and Syrian refugees living in Lebanon”, explores how changes in environment influence identity construction. Macken compares the fragmented and layered identity performances of displaced Palestinian and Syrian refugees, particularly in terms of their relationship with their national identities and the political, religious and gendered dynamics of this. This article suggests differences in the levels of social cohesion amongst Palestinian and Syrian refugees, offers further avenues for research and provides a framework for understanding and evaluating the complexity of displaced identity development.

The second section of this issue of *Aigne* is dedicated to a variety of creative pieces which all respond to the theme “Environments of Change” in different ways. “Creative Pieces” opens the journal up to practice-based fields within the Arts, including creative writing, photography and video works and invites contributors to engage with our theme through these media. The addition of this section sees the inclusion of a short story by Lucy Creedon entitled “At Once”, two photos by Grace Claro, one of which also is the cover image for this issue, and a poem, “Munster landscape”, by PhD candidate Yairen Jerez Columbié. It is our hope that these pieces will invite additional, diverse reflections on this theme and that readers might be inspired to consider their own creative responses.

The third section of this issue is “In Conversation”, which includes two interviews. Dr Graham Allen (School of English) and Dr Martín Veiga (School of Languages) took some time to talk to us about our chosen theme for this issue, elaborating on how “Environments of Change” affects their work and how they hope their work will impact our changing environment. Allen, who discusses both his teaching and poetry, reminds the reader that “the opposition between nature and the human, that has been such a foundational one throughout

human history, has collapsed. This has huge implications and it is the job of the artist and the poet to describe them and address them”. Veiga, discussing his work as a poet, affirms that “the poetry of meditation, a reflective attitude towards the world, helps [him] counteract these hurried processes of transformation [i.e. technological and economic] of the past 30 or 40 years”. The full interviews of Allen and Veiga, found in this section, allow for a broader conversation and reflection on topics emerging from the theme “Environments of Change”.

In the fourth section, a wide range of Irish and international scholars present their book reviews of a variety of new academic literature that was published in 2017 and 2018. Marina Durnin from the Department of German at UCC reviews *Nazism and Neo-Nazism in Film and Media* by Jason Lee. Andrew Kettler from the Department of History, University of Toronto, discusses the *Digital Resistance in the Middle East: New Media Activism in Everyday Life* by Deborah Wheeler while UCC alumni Pádraig Collins, now an active member of the Royal Town Planning Institute in London, reviews *The Barcelona Reader: Cultural Readings of a City* by Enric Bou and Jaume Subirana (eds.). In Issue 7, we have also included a book review in Irish, written by Malachy Ó Néill from the Department of Modern Irish, Ulster University, discussing *An Underground Theatre: Major Playwrights in the Irish Language 1930-80* by Philip O’Leary. Ó Néill’s piece is followed by a review from Marija Laugalyte, Department of German/Department of Digital Humanities at UCC, who engages with *Hysterical! Women in American Comedy* by L. Mizejewski and V. Sturtevant (eds.). Next, Creative Writing PhD candidate Niamh Prior, School of English at UCC, reviews *The Kick* by Richard Murphy, while Nataliya Shpylova, Slavic and Eastern Languages, Indiana University, analyses *Flann O’Brien: Problems with Authority* by Ruben Borg, Paul Fagan and John McCourt (eds.). Finally, Ian Kennedy, Department of English at NUIG, takes a look at Sorcha O’Brien’s new book entitled *Powering the Nation: Images of the Shannon Scheme and the Electrification of Ireland*.

The final section of this issue of *Aigne* includes three academic event reports by Craig Neville, Niamh Murphy and Yen-Chi Wu, all PhD candidates at UCC, on different academic events (conferences and symposiums) that were held in 2017–2018. These events, which took place across Europe, incorporated several disciplines: Irish Studies, Literatures, Galician Studies, Languages and Social Sciences. The reports featured here draw attention to the highlights of these events, discussing innovative and interdisciplinary research within each area.

Issue 7 of *Aigne* offers a diverse range of responses to “Environments of Change”—in format, discipline and focus—and sheds light on an array of recent publications and academic events. Several international voices feature in this issue of *Aigne*, something we hope to

expand further in future issues of the journal, broadening its scope. For now, we would like to thank *Aigne*'s Editorial Board, all of the contributors and the peer reviewers for this issue, as well as the College of Arts, Celtic Studies and Social Sciences at University College Cork, for bringing this issue to fruition.