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EDITORIAL

If migration alters the concept of home, return migration is equally disruptive of established patterns, complicating any holistic sense of home and homeland, as two recent novels by Irish writers evince. In Colm Tóibín's novel, *Brooklyn* (2009), the process of migration and return migration leads to a crisis of the heart as Eilis Lacey is caught between her American husband and the ignition of an Irish love story upon her return to Enniscorthy. As her sojourn in America develops, indeed, the concept of home transmutes. Alienated and dislocated she initially senses that 'She was nobody here. It was not just that she had no friends and family; it was rather that she was a ghost in this room, in the streets on the way to work, on the shop floor. Nothing meant anything... Nothing here was part of her. It was false, empty, she thought.'¹ This perception, however, slowly gives way, as she finds new things to engage her energies. Faced with the prospect of meeting with Tony, her new beau, 'She thought it was strange that the mere sensation of savouring the prospect of something could make her think for a while that it must be the prospect of home'.² And so it becomes for she falls in love and eventually marries him on the eve of her departure to Ireland, to deal with the fallout of the sudden death of her sister. There she finds her old home altered, itself now a shade of its presence in sepia-tinted memory: 'she had longed so much for the familiarity of these rooms that she had presumed she would be happy and relieved to step back into them, but instead, on this first morning, all she could do was count the days before she went back.'³ As she settles back in however, America increasingly becomes itself 'a sort of fantasy, something she could not match with the time she was spending at home. It made her feel strangely as though she were two people.'⁴ Ultimately news of her marriage percolates back to Enniscorthy, and Eilis is forced to admit she has indeed migrated, and that, as her mother plainly states 'Eily, if you are married, you should be with

¹ Colm Tóibín, *Brooklyn* (London, 2009), 67.

² *Ibid.*, 131.

³ *Ibid.*, 204–5.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 217.

your husband.⁵ Migration has relocated her homeland, and when she finally departs she notices how ‘it would be pointless to now ask for her [mother’s] blessing or whatever it was she wanted from her before she left this house.’⁶ Returning to Ireland was no longer a homecoming: going back to Brooklyn now was.

Similar in its concern with the effect of return migration is Eoin MacNamee’s *Orchid Blue* (2010). A fictionalised account of the last murder case in Northern Ireland to result in a judicial hanging, of Robert McGladdery for the murder of Pearl Gamble in 1961, his reimagining hinges around the effect McGladdery’s time in London has on the imaginations of those investigating the incident. Repeatedly reference is made to the gap in his locally-known biography consequent on a brief removal to London, where his appetite for flashy clothing and, more sinisterly, for sex is located by those who remained. While his mother ‘wished with all her might that when he went to London he had stayed there and not come back to a town of decay’, in fact the locals were corroded with the jealousy the police projected onto his suspected accomplice, Copeland:

Brown cross-examined Copeland. He asked him again whether he had borrowed any clothes from Robert. He asked him if it was true that he often borrowed clothes from Robert. The King’s Road shirts and crêpe-soled shows, the fancy London duds. Robert strutting about Merchants Quay with that out-of-town look to him. Suggested that Will was jealous of Robert, the big-city mannerisms and the fancy talk he came out with, the West End patois picked up in Dean Street and Berwick Street.⁷

This toxic parochialism culminates in McGladdery’s identification by the police as the central suspect in the case. And throughout the story parallels that of the central character the returning detective Eddie McCrink, who ‘could not escape the feeling that the murder of Pearl Gamble shared a quality with the Nude Murders he had investigated in London’.⁸ His own tale of rejection by the Ulster town mimics that of the suspect, something made stark in the warning proffered to him that “‘You and McGladdery’s got something

⁵ Ibid., 248.

⁶ Ibid., 250.

⁷ Eoin MacNamee, *Orchid Blue* (London, 2011), 246, 237.

⁸ Ibid., 128.

in common, you know that?” Johnston said, “You come back here in your fancy London duds and act the big shot. We took McGladdery down and we’ll take you down too.””⁹

*

What these novels make plain is how return migration is deceptive. It seems on face value to re-establish pre-existing norms. It restarts the story, revives old connections and rejects the novel relations that the expediency of movement had necessitated. However, far from always leading to a renaissance of the old status quo, the decision of the migrant to resurface strains the patience of those who never left, disrupts the web of connections they had woven when the migrant left, and raises new questions about the nature of the location to which the migrant has been drawn back. This issue of the *Journal of Irish and Scottish Studies* is concerned with the concept of home and the impact of migration of homelands—new and old.

2009 was designated by the Scottish government to be the Year of Homecoming. While this was certainly an attempt to woo the Scottish diaspora into spending tourist money in the country, it equally prompted reflection on the intricate nature of homelands, old and adoptive. This issue of the *Journal of Irish and Scottish Studies* inflects this meditation by asking further what occurs after the homecoming has occurred—either after the migrant has settled in the new location and the gloss of novelty has worn thin, or when the celebrations surrounding the return of a loved one become memories and the mundane chores of daily life have to be re-established, albeit with someone whose episode away from home shapes both themselves and the understanding of them entertained by others. The process of migration in other words does not end with homecomings, in a sense it is only after the homecoming that the meaning of migration becomes apparent.

Home designates a place of course, so this issue is rightly bookended by two examinations of how the land itself is understood, in Finola O’Kane’s exploration of the role of Irish and Scottish vistas in the eighteenth-century creation of the category of the picturesque, and in Jennifer Way study of the imaginative re-workings of twentieth-century tourist images of Ireland in the work of Sean Hillen. There is also three essays, by Benjamin Bankhurst,

⁹ Ibid., 256.

Jonathan O'Neill and Elizabeth Winkler concerned with the repercussions of migration for the imagination: examining such contested dominions as the racial imagery pushed forward by arguments along uncertain frontiers, and with the double narratives of history enunciated by ex-patriots who are anxious to romanticise or debunk their original homeland in encountering their new one. The construction of a new home and the contribution to maintaining the old one provides the subject of the twinned essays by Sandra Barney—with her concern for the cultural enclave of Nova Scotia—and Sarah Roddy in her analysis of the role of remittances in financing the devotional revolution in nineteenth-century Ireland. Contemporary contributions to both the economy and politics concern the essay by Nina Ray and Gary McCain and that of David Valone. Identifying the prominent part played by migration in the tourism strategies of modern Scotland complements the concern to articulate the experience of diaspora as a political gesture in the adoptive state.

Yet migration is at its heart an intensely personal experience: destabilising, exciting, isolating and empowering. This is then the subject of the essays by Christina Morin and Mayy Elhayawi, who in examining the differing responses of Regina Maria Roche and Tom Paulin, bring to the fore how the processes of migration and resettlement can be at once imaginatively enriching and psychologically traumatic. In engaging with individual creative responses to mass migrations, these essays anchor our understandings in the consequences for people and places: the reimagining of possibilities and the renovation of the old practices. The story is never entirely without cost or consequence, but understanding the character, form and content of the Irish and Scottish diasporas remains an integral part of any attempt to comprehend these mobile, transitory, migratory societies.

This number of the *Journal of Irish and Scottish Studies* brings to a close a sequence of issues which are the product of an AHRC funded project on Irish and Scottish Diasporas since 1600. In this, it stands alongside previous collections concerned with 'Gallic Connections: Irish and Scottish Encounters with France'; 'Exceptional Peoples? Irish and Scots on the Frontier'; and 'Migrating Minds'. I wish on this occasion to thank all those who have contributed to the conferences, seminars and colloquia that constituted much of the working life of the project. So too, I wish to acknowledge the extensive assistance I have received from Drs Rosalyn Trigger and Paul Shanks, without whose cheer and imaginative commitment to the cycle of events it would have been substantially poorer in content and less efficient in completion. Similarly, I want to note the energy and enthusiasm of Dr Jonathan Cameron and

Professor Cairns Craig, whose hard work and skill have made the Research Institute a focal point for critical debate across the disciplinary and geographic divides.

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