

Pilar Villar-Argáiz (ed.), *Irishness on the margins: minority and dissident identities*, New York and London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, 290 pages.

Ireland has always been a hot spot for social, cultural, and political turmoil not only because of its history full of struggles against the Anglo-Saxon dominance; but also, because of its recurrent quest for a definition (or re-definitions) of Irishness. A recent publication, *Irishness on the Margins: Minority and Dissident Identities*, gathers insightful analysis on minority and dissident identities that have not been sufficiently addressed in Ireland. Edited by Pilar Villar-Argáiz, this collection of twelve essays bring together, as Bryan Fanning underlines in the book's forward, «older and new hidden Irelands» (p. x). These essays reflect insightful perspectives to Irish past and present dissident voices as each study observes these marginalised identities from a distinct angle. The collection also offers a broad critical spectrum since it discusses activist minority movements; political protests against sexual discrimination and dissidence; and their artistic representations within the Irish literary and cinematic scene.

The primary aim of the collection is to trace how Irish and Northern Irish minorities are represented (and/or silenced) in several mediums such as public, political and virtual discourses. The collection also highlights the fallacy how concepts like minority and dissident are exposed to the single-sided definitions by normative structures. The contents have been classified in four interlinking sections: «Unearthing Dissidence in the Irish Past», «Sexual Minorities and Dissident Gendered Subjects», «Minority Voices in Irish Public Discourse»; and lastly, «The Dissident of Minority Voices in Art».

The first section «Unearthing Dissidence in the Irish Past» focuses on the conventional forms of dissident identities in Irish past. This section introduces three essays by Jeannine Woods, John Keating and Katarzyna Ojrzynska. Woods focuses on the subversion on gender roles in the contemporary drag performances in relation to the traditional wake rituals. According to Woods, both performative acts share a common political strategy which is to tackle with the mainstream discourses on sexuality, gender and identity in its broadest sense. The author also underlines the efforts by Panti Bliss (drag queen and gay activist) for the recognition and the equality for LGBT community in Ireland. Woods underlines that these efforts can be read as a crucial contribution for the «Yes» campaign for same-sex marriage referendum in Ireland. This section's second study by John Keating explores *The Wasted Land (1919)*, an autobiographical novel by Eimar O'Duffy, from an epistemic framework. The author notes how O'Duffy has been criticized and long neglected due to his critical approach against the Easter Rising. Keating's contribution offers a valuable approach to see how O'Duffy's work traditionally reflect various discourses and representations of dissident voices of the past. «Unearthing Dissidence in the Irish Past» closes with Katarzyna Ojrzynska's essay. The author examines Ken Loach's film *Jimmy's Hall (2014)*, a cinematic portrayal of an eminent leftist figure (Jimmy Gralton) that challenged the prevailing nationalist Catholic ideology in 1930s Ireland. Focusing on the analysis of Jimmy's dance hall, Ojrzynska also notes how traditional Irish step dance has been perceived as a form of national manifest against the oppressor. Ojrzynska interestingly concludes her chapter by underlying that *Jimmy's Hall* romanticizes the conventional forms of Irish dissident identities to advertise the Irish past.

The second section «Sexual Minorities and Dissident Gendered Subjects» includes essays that focus on the debated issues around the gender and sexually

dissident identities in Ireland. It opens with a testimony by Katherine O'Donnell, one of the activists and academics that took part in the Justice for Magdalenes (JFM) group. O'Donnell explains the details about their dedicated campaign for a state apology to the Magdalene Laundries' victims and survivors, who were condemned to work in laundries run by the religious institutions in Ireland until the late 1990s. The author's personal tone reflects the psychological, social, and political challenges she experienced during the campaign. The second chapter is dedicated to the diligent study by Miguel-Ángel Benítez-Castro and Encarnación Hidalgo-Tenorio. In the light of critical discourse analysis, the authors examine the oral testimonies of the Magdalene Laundries survivors. Benítez-Castro and Hidalgo-Tenorio unveil the dreadful experiences in these laundries by analysing metaphors that the survivors use during their testimonies. Being exposed to several psychological and physical torments by the religious orders, these survivors «conceive of themselves as containers ready to explode or easily broken, as well as fragile animals lacking in freedom and intelligence» (p. 120). The last contribution of this section is Edwige Nault's essay. Nault's chapter focuses on the diminishing supremacy of the Church regarding the issues such as divorce, contraception, abortion among others like homosexuality, and same-sex marriage. The author also explores the shifting social and political attitudes that regard these concepts finally as humanistic and legal demands and not as taboos or marginal appeals.

The third part entitled «Minority Voices in Irish Public Discourse» introduces three essays that deal with the representations of Irish minorities in various public mediums such as journals, political organizations, and cyber world. Written by Aidan O'Malley, the first chapter offers an in-depth examination of the position of minority voices in the Irish press. O'Malley particularly focuses on the minorities in an acknowledged Irish journal called *The Crane Bag*. The author examines how socially, culturally, or politically marginalised individuals or groups are accommodated through this journal's perspective; and how this journal helped «the development of a more enlightened discourse in Ireland» (p. 168). Following O'Malley's contribution, the collection dedicates two interesting chapters to the representations of Muslim community in Ireland. The first essay related to Muslim community in the country is by Marie-Violaine Louvet. The author illustrates the image of Muslim minority as well as its public voice gained with the support of the Islamic organisations and centres. Louvet addresses that these institutions function as the spokesperson of Muslim minority however, they cannot fully prevent the extremist reactions within this community. According to the author, a wider public support of the Irish State is necessary to fully integrate Muslim people in the country. The last chapter of this section closes with a study by Abdul-Halik Azeez and Carmen Aguilera-Carnerero. The authors observe a recent phenomenon called Cyber-Islamophobia and how Islam and Muslim minority are perceived in Ireland and Northern Ireland. Using corpus linguistics as well as critical discourse analysis throughout their study, Azeez and Aguilera-Carnerero examine Irish cyber discourse on Twitter focusing particularly on a period of four years (between 2010-2014). The authors conclude Muslims or Islamic elements are employed in tweets to create a solidarity between Catholics and Protestants; and Muslim image is used as a common enemy among the cyber discourses by Catholics and Protestants to create a sense of religious fraternity.

The collection's last section «The Dissident of Minority Voices in Art» provides three inspiring chapters that discuss the artistic representations of minority and dissidence in Ireland. The first contribution by H  l  ne Alfaro-Hamayon explores artistic practices which are dedicated to (or performed by) the minority groups in Northern Ireland. The author focuses on three artistic organisations in the North: a drama

company related to Indian community (Tinderbox); an ethnic arts and cultural organisation (Arts Ekta); and, a professional theatre company (Terra Nova Productions). Alfaro-Hamayon underlines that these vibrant artistic formations not only provide an effective resistance against racism; but also, build a bridge between people from distinct ethnic and religious backgrounds. The second chapter turns its face to the screen. In this chapter, Rosa Gonzalez-Casademont analyses the cinematic representations of cultural and ethnic minorities in Ireland. The author discusses how the images related to inward social mobility are extensively employed in the films specifically during the years 1998-2014. Gonzalez-Casademont particularly examines a short musical movie *Moore Street Masala* (2009) by David O’Sullivan as this film provides a keen awareness to transcultural dialogue. As the author concludes, O’Sullivan’s work serves as a multi-layered production as it demonstrates intercultural harmony and equality through its employment of interesting cinematographic details such as Indian accents, dance and music. The collection closes with an essay by Sara Martín-Ruiz. The author provides a comprehensive analysis of the works by Melatu Okorie and Ifedinma Dimbo, who are Nigerian-born former asylum-seekers in Ireland. Martín-Ruiz draws our attention to the critical approach in these writings against the corrupt system of Direct Provision that encapsulates minorities in deserted territories far from the public. The author appraises these innovative literary works as they challenge (and resist to) the State’s neglectful attitude against the asylum-seekers.

Irishness has always been a fluid and instable term to define concretely. In this globalised era where any limiting boundary blurs, it has become a more complex task to describe this term with a single sentence. This collection offers thought-provoking ideas from social, cultural, and political angles related to Ireland. It thoroughly examines the position of minority and dissident voices that are often marginalised or neglected, but deserve to be regarded as an indispensable part of a multicultural society in 21st century Ireland.

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