

## Editor's Introduction

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The thematic section of this issue concerns some real and fictional Irish women and their links to Mexico, Argentina, and Chile. It also includes a legendary Mexican female. Originally, the call was for a gender issue. However, the focus is clearly on women. While the articles published here are commendable, no articles were submitted on the theme of gender, or on the relatively new topics of masculinities and sexualities. Perhaps enough groundwork has not been carried out in the field of Irish Latin America Studies to get to this point. Perhaps gender will be the subject of a future issue under a future editor, when there is a wider scholarly base of publications to construct this area. Certainly in past issues there have been numerous articles on men and women; however, gender “as a useful category of analysis” (to use Joan Scott’s phrase<sup>1</sup>) may reveal further insights and provide new perspectives not explored before in Irish Latin American studies.

In the meantime, some very interesting articles are published here, which should provide a foundation for future work by their authors and other scholars. Irish women who went to Mexico, Argentina and Chile are discussed in two of the articles. Indeed, the women in question wrote about their experiences at the time, or recounted their experiences to others later on. Andrea Anderson’s article discusses Rosalie Hart Priour and Annie Fagan Teal, women who went to Mexico in the early 1830s. Anderson draws attention to the interesting dilemma they faced, as they went to Texas when it was part of Mexico. When it broke away and later became part of the United States, they had to decide where their loyalties lay. Interestingly, and not surprisingly, self-interest played a large role in defining identity and determining loyalty of Irish Texans. A few decades later, Annie Finlay did not have to contend with such decisions as she travelled, and wrote about her experiences in Argentina and Chile. Her previously unpublished reflections are presented here for the first time and have been well annotated and put into historical context by Edward Walsh.

A woman (albeit fictional) who had to contend with the decision to go to Buenos Aires, or to remain in her dull life in Dublin, is James Joyce’s “Eveline” from his short story collection *Dubliners* (1914). In her article, Laura Barberán Reinares examines the broader historical context of female trafficking to Argentina in the early twentieth century and what Joyce may have known about it when he was writing the story. Two other

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<sup>1</sup> Joan W. Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Analysis”, *American Historical Review*, Vol. 91, No. 5, December 1986, pp1053-1075

women rooted in their homelands, Ireland and Mexico, are discussed in Domino Torres' comparative article on Mexico's legendary *La Llorona* and the Irish Hester from Marina Carr's play *By the Bog of Cats*. Both were grief struck, haunted and tragic. Their stories have inspired the artwork of a young artist Sabrina Clemenceau from Argentina which appears on the cover of this issue.

In the non-thematic section, Moisés Hasson Camhi writes about the Blest brothers in his second article on their life in Chile (the first one appeared in the March, 2010 issue of this journal). Another Irish emigrant Father Anthony Dominic Fahy is discussed by John Emery whose tenacious archival work has resulted in a very interesting article on the Irish Hospital in Argentina. It was set up at first to care for Irish Potato Famine emigrants in Buenos Aires in the 1840s, and its history later on was overshadowed by the British Hospital. Lastly, Gabriela McEvoy's review of Silvia Miguén's novel *Eliza Brown la hija del Almirante* (2012) links us back to the opening theme of this journal, Irish women and Latin America.

The next issue will focus on the challenges of, and sources for, the growth of the field of Irish Latin American Studies. It is hoped articles will discuss available archival, literary and other sources, which aid scholars in diverse geographical and historical categories of the discipline. The issue will be jointly edited by this editor and guest-editor Dr Margaret Brehony.