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# IRISH STUDIES

turmoil of Syrians fleeing their war-torn homeland—  
an anticipation of his forthcoming novel, *From a*

nationally through the current round of the Recordings at Risk program, administered by the Council on Library and Information Resources with funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Entitled Sounds of Mid-20th Century Irish America: Preserving Historic Music Field Recordings for Research Access, the project focuses on two internationally known collections supporting the study of Irish traditional

by Vera Kreilkamp (Boston College), *Éire-Ireland* has been a leader in expanding the literary-historical axis on which Irish Studies has developed.

### John Hume: His Vision and Legacy for Ireland, a Day-long Symposium

In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement and the 20th anniversary of the historic Good Friday Agreement, the Center for Irish Programs at Boston College will host a day-long symposium on April 28 titled *John Hume: His Vision and Legacy for Ireland*.

For more than three decades, Hume played a crucial role in upholding the constitutional tradition of Irish nationalism. His persistence in advocating dialogue and engagement as a means of resolving complicated issues and differences dividing the Catholic/Nationalist community and the Protestant/Unionist community was central to shaping and advancing the peace process, from the landmark Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985 to the historic Good Friday Agreement of 1998. Hume's intellectual analysis of relationships at the heart of the Northern Irish problem provided much of the framework that enabled Irish, Northern Irish, and British politicians and diplomats to reach agreement in 1998 and, subsequently, form the power-sharing Assembly at Stormont in 2007.

Panels will address Hume's role in the initial civil rights campaign of the late 1960s, how his three-strand analysis was applied to healing fractured relationships within Northern Ireland (between the North of Ireland and the Republic of Ireland), and between Dublin and London. One panel will explore Hume's role in marshaling Irish-American political, moral, and economic support in pursuit of peace and justice in Ireland. Panelists will include political activists and commentators from Northern Ireland as well as Bostonians who played positive, if distant, roles in advancing the Irish peace process.

The proceedings will include the American launch of *John Hume: In His Own Words*, edited by Sean Farren,

Hume's long-time colleague in the Social Democratic and Labour Party. This volume includes excerpts from Hume's speeches, articles, and essays along with contextual commentary by Sean Farren. Copies of this book as well as *John Hume: Irish Peacemaker*, a collection of essays edited by Sean Farren and Dennis Haughey, will also be available for purchase.

The event is sponsored by the Center for Irish Programs at Boston College with additional support from the Global Leadership Institute at Boston College, the Irish American Partnership, the Eire Society of Boston, and the Charitable Irish Society.



Professor Chen Li

## Irish Studies in China

Professor Chen Li, Irish Studies Center at Beijing Foreign Studies University Fulbright Scholar, Boston College Irish Studies, 2017-18

Irish Studies is a budding academic field in China. Though it has been acknowledged as a distinctive field only in the past decade, it grown fast, with impressive achievements in institutional development and scholarly research.

Currently, there are Irish Studies centers at Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU), Nanjing University,

In 2007, the Irish Studies Centre at BFSU was officially established, making it the first, and so far only, multidisciplinary research institution in Irish Studies in China. Thanks to the joint efforts of several important forces—BFSU, the Irish government, NUI Maynooth, University College Dublin, University College Cork, and Trinity College Dublin—the centre has achieved rapid growth in recent years.

It now offers graduate programs and enrolls students on a biennial basis, who pursue their MA degrees either in Irish Literature and Culture or Irish Politics and Economics. One-year Irish-language teaching courses were introduced in 2010, open to both undergraduates and MA students. In March 2014, partially funded by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Irish Studies centers in China jointly set up “the Irish Studies Network in China (ISNC)” to promote academic exchanges and cooperation across the country.

Furthermore, major Irish writers such as Swift, Shaw, Wilde, Yeats, Beckett, and Joyce are routinely taught in the English departments of most Chinese universities, though sometimes as English or British literature.

Yeats, Shaw, Beckett, Wilde, Joyce, Sean O’Casey, Brian Friel, Seamus Heaney, and Frank O’Connor all claim more than one translated version of their major works. Recent achievements include the translations of Joyce’s *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, and some less-read novels by Beckett. Another trend that is worth mentioning is the introduction of contemporary Irish literature to Chinese readers. Writers like William Trevor, John Banville, Sebastian Berry, Colm Tóibín, Colum McCann, Anne Enright, Martin McDonagh, and Marina Carr are well translated and well read in China. McDonagh’s plays *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* and *The Pillowman* are part of the core repertoire of several art theatres in Beijing and Shanghai.

As for research publication, Yeats, Joyce, and Beckett are the three most researched Irish writers in China. Some recent examples are Wang Yu’s *The Dramatic Narrative in Yeats’s Lyrics of the Middle Period* (2014), Shi Qingjing’s *Samuel Beckett on Chinese Stage: 1964-2011* (2015), Cao Bo’s *A Study of S. Beckett’s Novels of “Failure”* (2015) and Dai Congrong’s *Book of Freedom: A Reading of Joyce’s Finnegans Wake* (2007). However, research



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