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Ambasáid na hÉireann  
Embassy of Ireland



The Greek Connection:  
Irish Poets and Contemporary Greece

## LIVING / WRITING INNER AND OUTER LANDSCAPES OF IRISH AND GREEK POETS poetry symposium

organised by  
University of Athens, Greece & University of Lodz, Poland

**4-5 December 2015**

co-organisers and venues:

British School of Athens  
Irish Institute of Hellenic Studies at Athens

This celebration of poetry's creation of landscapes provides an opportunity for a meeting of Irish and Greek poets, scholars, and international visitors. Situated at two extremes of Europe, Ireland and Greece share some character-making traits of their landscapes: a largely insular structure, an intimate relation with the sea, and historical parallels up to the present day.

Traditionally, landscapes of poetry, environment and the soul influence one another, and today more than ever this influence has become international. Some of the invited Irish poets have been inspired to create the landscapes of their writing by their Greek experience, just as their Greek counterparts have been inspired by Ireland.

Tourism and travel offers an opportunity for such (self-)discovery but the same, or even more so, holds about reading, writing, or translation as spiritual travel into different places and into one's own inner world. Cases of intercultural translation, exploration of other cultures through language, the meeting with the Other all complement and expand the notion of space provided by poetry. As opposed to prose including

travel writing, poetry disposes of more concise means of landscape representation, and yet often performs in a more convincing and memorable way.

Poets create acts of environmental imagination that “potentially register and energise engagement with the world,” for instance by sending readers to places “where they would otherwise never physically go” or “affecting one’s caring for the physical world” (Lawrence Buell, *Writing for an Endangered World 2*).

This poetry symposium (meaning both an academic discussion and a convivial meeting) encourages the expansion of our landscapes, both inner and outer, Irish and Greek.

This invited event is open to the general public.

The event is held in the framework of the project IRELLAS (*The Greek Connection: Irish Poets and Contemporary Greece*), a Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowship run by Dr. Joanna Kruczkowska (University of Lodz, Poland) in cooperation with Prof. Evangelia Sakelliou (Head of the English Language and Literature Department, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece).

**With special thanks to the H.E. The Ambassador of Ireland to the Hellenic Republic, Noel Kilkenny.**

#### ORGANISING COMMITTEE:

Prof. Evangelia Sakelliou (University of Athens)  
Prof. Jerzy Jarniewicz (University of Lodz)  
Dr. Joanna Kruczkowska (University of Athens / University of Lodz, MC IEF)  
Prof. William Schultz (University of Athens)

#### GUESTS:

##### Irish and Greek poets

Harry Clifton  
Theo Dorgan  
Leontia Flynn  
Paula Meehan  
Caitriona O’Reilly

Yiorgos Chouliaras  
Anna Griva  
Liana Sakelliou  
Nasos Vayenas  
Haris Vlavianos

##### Scholars and poets

Dr. Rowena Fowler (independent scholar, formerly University of Bristol) – comparative literature (Modern Greek / Irish)  
Prof. Jerzy Jarniewicz (University of Lodz) – Irish literature  
Prof. David Ricks (King's College, London) – Modern Greek literature  
Prof. William Schultz (University of Athens) – Creative Writing theory  
Dr. Joanna Kruczkowska (University of Athens / Lodz) – comparative literature (Modern Greek / Irish)

## PROGRAMME

Friday, 4 Dec 2015

### 9:00-14:00 : academic session (British School at Athens)

9:00 – welcoming addresses:

H.E. The Ambassador of Ireland to the Hellenic Republic, Noel Kilkenny  
Rector of the University of Athens, Prof. Meletios A. Dimopoulos  
Director of the British School at Athens, Prof. John Bennet

9:15-10:00

**Harry Clifton (poet, former Ireland Professor of Poetry)**

“Reacting to Yeats”

(lecture marking the Yeats Year)

10:00-10:30

**Prof. William Schultz (University of Athens)**

“Heaney’s Re-coloring of Wordsworth’s Imagination”

10:30-11:00

**Prof. David Ricks (King's College London)**

“*Rus in urbe?* The Poetry of Tellos Agras”

11:00-11:30

**Caitriona O’Reilly (poet, former editor of *Poetry Ireland Review*)**

“Poetry and the Wilderness”

11:30-12:00

Coffee break

12:00-12:30

**Dr. Leontia Flynn (poet, Queen’s University Belfast)**

“Poetry and Technology”

12:30-13:00

**Prof. Jerzy Jarniewicz (poet, University of Lodz)**

“‘A green leaf of language’. Female speakers in the Poetry of Eilean ni Chuilleanain and Nuala ni Dhomhnaill”

13:00-13:30

**Dr. Rowena Fowler (independent scholar, formerly University of Bristol)**

“Starlight and Electric Light: Seamus Heaney’s Greece”

13:30-14:00

**Dr. Joanna Kruczkowska (University of Athens / University of Lodz)**

“Irish poets on Paros: Desmond O’Grady, Derek Mahon and Michael Longley”

14:00-14:30

**Yiorgos Chouliaras (poet, diplomat)**

“Greece, Ireland, Poetry: A Single Topic in Three Words?”

### 18:00-21:00 : Greek poetry reading (British School at Athens)

**Yiorgos Chouliaras**  
**Anna Griva**  
**Liana Sakelliou**  
**Nasos Vayenas**  
**Haris Vlavianos**

English translations of the Greek poems

[wine and small buffet]

**Saturday, 5 Dec 2015**

**10:00-11:30 : round table discussion (IIHSA)**

**In memoriam Spyros Iliopoulos**

(the first Greek translator of W. B. Yeats)

“Ireland and Greece: Landscape, Poetry, History”

**Symposium participants:**

**Irish, Greek, Polish and American poets and scholars, the public**

**12:00-15:00 : poetry workshops (IIHSA)**

12:00-13:00

**Paula Meehan**

13:00-14:00

**Theo Dorgan**

14:00-15:00

**Haris Vlavianos**

**18:00-21:00 : Irish poetry reading and music (British School at Athens)**

Attended by

H.E. The Ambassador of Ireland to the Hellenic Republic, Noel Kilkenny

Poetry:

**Harry Clifton** (former Ireland Professor of Poetry)

**Theo Dorgan**

**Leontia Flynn**

**Paula Meehan** (Ireland Professor of Poetry)

**Caitriona O'Reilly**

Socrates Kabouropoulos: Greek translations of the Irish poems

Music:

**Prof. Fran O'Rourke (University College Dublin)**

guitar

Traditional songs associated with the work of W. B. Yeats and James Joyce

[wine and small buffet]