

Cambridge University Press
0521841631 - The Irish Writer and the World
Declan Kiberd
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

THE IRISH WRITER AND THE WORLD

The Irish Writer and the World is a major new book by one of Ireland's most prominent scholars and cultural commentators. Declan Kiberd, author of the award-winning *Irish Classics* and *Inventing Ireland*, here synthesises the themes that have occupied him throughout his career as a leading critic of Irish literature and culture. Kiberd argues that political conflict between Ireland and England ultimately resulted in cultural confluence and that writing in the Irish language was hugely influenced by the English literary tradition. He continues his exploration of the role of Irish politics and culture in a decolonising world, and covers Anglo-Irish literature, the fate of the Irish language and the Celtic Tiger. This fascinating collection of Kiberd's work over twenty-five years demonstrates the extraordinary range, astuteness and wit that have made him a defining voice in Irish Studies and beyond, and will bring his work to new audiences across the world.

DECLAN KIBERD is Professor of Anglo-Irish Literature at University College, Dublin. He is the author of *Inventing Ireland*, which won the *Irish Times* Literature Prize for 1997, and of *Irish Classics*, which won the Truman Capote Award for the best work of literary criticism published in 2002. He was Parnell Visiting Fellow at Magdalene College, Cambridge, for 2003 and Visiting Professor of Irish Studies at Duke University in 2004.

Cambridge University Press
0521841631 - The Irish Writer and the World
Declan Kiberd
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

THE IRISH WRITER AND THE WORLD

DECLAN KIBERD



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
0521841631 - The Irish Writer and the World
Declan Kiberd
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo
Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge, CB2 2RU, UK
Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521602570

© Declan Kiberd 2005

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2005

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN-13 978-0-521-84163-4 hardback
ISBN-10 0-521-84163-1 hardback
ISBN-13 978-0-521-60257-0 paperback
ISBN-10 0-521-60257-2 paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external
or third-party internet websites referred to in this book, and does not guarantee that any
content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press
0521841631 - The Irish Writer and the World
Declan Kiberd
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

In memory of Robert Law (1949–2002)

Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>A note on the text</i>	xi
1 Introduction	1
2 The fall of the Stage Irishman (1979)	21
3 Storytelling: the Gaelic tradition (1978)	42
4 Writers in quarantine? The case for Irish Studies (1979)	52
5 Synge, Yeats and bardic poetry (2002)	70
6 George Moore's Gaelic lawn party (1979)	91
7 The flowering tree: modern poetry in Irish (1989)	105
8 On national culture (2001)	127
9 White skins, black masks: Celticism and <i>Négritude</i> (1996)	133
10 From nationalism to liberation (1997)	146
11 The war against the past (1988)	158
12 The Elephant of Revolutionary Forgetfulness (1991)	191
13 Reinventing England (1999)	208
14 Museums and learning (2003)	219
15 Joyce's Ellmann, Ellmann's Joyce (1999)	235
16 Multiculturalism and artistic freedom: the strange death of Liberal Europe (1993)	250
17 The Celtic Tiger: a cultural history (2003)	269

Cambridge University Press
0521841631 - The Irish Writer and the World
Declan Kiberd
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

viii	<i>Contents</i>	
18	The city in Irish culture (2002)	289
19	Strangers in their own country: multiculturalism in Ireland (2001)	303
	<i>Index</i>	321

Acknowledgements

Grateful acknowledgement is made to editors and publishers for permission to reprint material: Ronald Schleifer and Wolfhound Press for 'The Fall of the Stage Irishman' from *The Genres of the Irish Revival*, first printed in *Genre* magazine xll, winter 1979, 451–72; Terence Brown, the late Patrick Rafroidi and Université de Lille for 'Storytelling: the Gaelic Tradition' in *The Irish Short Story*, Lille, 1978, 13–27; Richard Kearney, Mark Hederman and *The Crane Bag* for 'Writers in Quarantine', vol. 2, no. 1, Summer 1979, 9–21; Richard Finneran and *Yeats Studies* for 'Yeats, Synge and Bardic Poetry', 2002, 37–57; Robert Welch and Wolfhound Press for 'George Moore's Gaelic Lawn Party' from *The Way Back*, 1979, 13–27; Wolfhound Press for the introduction to *An Crann faoi Bhláth: The Flowering Tree*, 1989, xi–xliii; the Irish–American foundation, Vera Kreilkamp, Phillip O'Leary and *Éire–Ireland* magazine for 'White Skins, Black Masks: Celticism and *Négritude*', Vol. xxxl, Nos. 1 and 2, Spring–Summer 1996, 163–75; Dele Layaiola and University of Ibadan for 'On National Culture' from *Understanding Post-Colonial Studies: Ireland, Africa and the Pacific*, 2001, pp. 44–50; Susan Shaw Sailer and Regents of the University Press of Florida for 'From Nationalism to Liberation' from *Representing Ireland*, 1997, pp. 17–28; Audrey S. Eyler, Robert F. Garratt and Regents of the University of Delaware Press for 'The War Against the Past' from *The Uses of the Past*, Newark, 1988, pp. 24–53; Damien Kiberd and *The Sunday Business Post* and the Directors of Field Day for 'The Elephant of Revolutionary Forgetfulness' from *Revising the Rising*, Derry, 1991, pp. 1–19; the Raymond Williams Memorial Trust Society for 'Reinventing England' in *Keywords* 2, Nottingham, 1999, 47–57; Cork University Press for 'Multiculturalism: the Strange Death of Liberal Europe', Occasional Pamphlet in Irish and World Development, 1993; Cork University Press and Centre for Border Studies, Armagh, for 'Strangers in their Own Country' in *Multiculturalism: The View from the Two Irelands* (with Edna Longley), pamphlet,

2001, pp. 45–74; the President and Fellows of Magdalene College, Cambridge, for ‘The Celtic Tiger: a Cultural History’, Parnell Fellowship Lecture, 2003; Stuart Murray, Fiona Becket and the editors for ‘Museums and Learning’ in *Moving Worlds*, Leeds, vol. 3, no. 1, 2003, 3–17; Franca Ruggeri and Bulzoni editore for ‘Joyce’s Ellmann’ from *Classic Joyce: Joyce Studies in Italy* 6 Rome 1999, 53–68.

The author and publishers also wish to thank the following: Gallery Press and the estate of Beatrice Behan for permission to quote from *Poems and a Play in Irish*, 1978; the Samuel Beckett Estate and Grove Atlantic for permission to quote from *Murphy*; Eiléan ní Chuilleanáin and the Estate of Katherine B. Kavanagh, Caomh and Peter Kavanagh for permission to quote from ‘Memory of Brother Michael’ and ‘Who Killed James Joyce?’; A. P. Watt Limited and Michael Yeats for permission to quote from *Collected Poems* and *Collected Plays*; the trustees of the estate of Lilo Stephens and J. M. Synge and the Board of Trinity College, Dublin, for permission to quote from Synge manuscripts in the College Library; Oxford University Press and the estate of J. M. Synge for permission to quote from *Collected Works*; Colin Smythe and the Society of Authors for permission to quote from *Hail and Farewell*; Wolfhound Press, Gabriel Fitzmaurice for permission to quote lines and translations from *An Crann faoi Bhláth: The Flowering Tree*; Random House and the Estate of James Joyce for permission to quote from *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses*; Oxford University Press and the estate of Richard Ellmann for permission to quote from *Along the Riverrun*; Seamus Heaney and Faber & Faber for permission to quote from ‘Bog Queen’; Salman Rushdie and Jonathan Cape for permission to quote from *Midnight’s Children*; the Estate of John Osborne and Faber & Faber for permission to quote from *Look Back in Anger* and *A Better Class of Person*.

I wish to acknowledge a Senior Fellowship from the Irish Research Council of the Humanities and Social Sciences which made the preparation of this volume possible and to thank Dr Noreen Doody, who took my place in the classroom with marvellous success during the period of leave in which this book was prepared.

Finally, I would like to thank Professors John Kerrigan, Maud Ellmann and Eamon Duffy for much kindness during my stint as Parnell Visiting Fellow at Cambridge; Professor John Hobbs of Oberlin College for sound advice on the project; and Dr Ray Ryan, Annie Lovett and Margaret Berrill of Cambridge University Press for their generous encouragement and suggestive commentaries.

A note on the text

I have retained the original referencing system for each of the articles, in keeping with the very varied backgrounds in which they originally appeared. Some are rather heavily annotated, others less fully underpinned, and some had no apparatus at all. In the latter cases, I have added a short bibliography which might help those in search of further reading.

Apart from some deletions in cases of repetition, I have left the work unrevised, even though there are passages in some of the earliest essays which I wish I hadn't written. But since every work is produced at the mercy of its immediate occasion, even the blind-spots may have some exemplary value in tracing the history of cultural debate. Not *every* pub in the 1970s had a resident bard performing nightly, as I seemed to imply in 'Storytelling: the Gaelic Tradition'; nor would I now, as a veteran of too many long nights, refer to the 'fake glamour of the summer schools'. My remarks in the same essay on schoolmasters devoted to extolling folk pieties were wildly in excess of any offences committed: and in subsequent years I came to a different valuation. This was due in great part to friendships with Bryan MacMahon and Gabriel Fitzmaurice, who through the 1980s documented the lore of Kerry villages with the sort of understanding that can only come from love. The high esteem in which both men held W. B. Yeats as an interpreter of Irish culture led me in time to revise the rather harsh assessment offered in 'The War against the Past'. While that essay offers some insights into Yeats's ideas about tradition, it takes no account of the dialectical nature of an imagination which was even more attuned to the future. Denis Donoghue was quite correct in predicting that my generation, soured by the cultural and economic setbacks of the 1980s, would eventually return to Yeats as the inspirational figure of modern Irish culture. I trust that the treatment accorded to Yeats through *Inventing Ireland* and *Irish Classics* does something more like justice to the great writer.