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Applying a Food Studies Perspective to Irish Studies

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Food studies and Irish Studies stem from the same ‘studies’ phenomena and share many similarities in their journeys from the margins to becoming established academic disciplines. A common feature of the new academic studies movement, whether French, gender, postcolonial, cinematic, African, Irish or food is their interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary nature. They become more than any one discipline and scholars within these new fields continuously investigate from various angles, often adopting ‘self-reflexivity’ as an approach.¹ Stereotypical postcolonial notions of the drunken² or ‘stage Irishman’, or food’s association with the quotidian domestic, and therefore, feminine, led some academics up until relatively recently to dismiss either as worthy of any form of serious study.³ However, with the advent of the cultural turn in the 1970s, whether you were interested in medicine, literature, poverty or religion, each could be studied by applying either an Irish or a food lens. Moreover, recent research has argued that a food studies lens could be insightful to the field of Irish Studies and that a ‘gastrocritical’⁴ reading of canonical writers such as Seamus Heaney⁵ or Maria Edgeworth⁶ might prove revelatory.

¹ Liam Harte, ‘Introduction’, in Liam Harte and Yvonne Whelan (eds), *Ireland Beyond Boundaries: Mapping Irish Studies in the Twenty-First Century* (London/Dublin/ Anne Arbor, MI: Pluto, 2007), 2.

² For examples of this anti-Irish prejudice in academia, mentioned in Eamon Maher’s Introduction to this volume, see Cheryl Herr, “Re-imagining Ireland,” “Rethinking” Irish Studies’, *New Hibernia Review* (January 2003) 7 (4), 123-135, 123.

³ For food studies examples of this phenomenon, see Warren Belasco, *Food: The Key Concepts* (New York: Berg, 2008), 1. Also mentioned in Brian Murphy’s chapter in this volume.

⁴ Anke Klitzing, “My Palate Hung with Starlight” – A Gastrocritical Reading of Seamus Heaney’s Poetry’, *East-West Cultural Passage* (2019), 19(2) <https://doi.org/10.2478/ewcp-2019-0010> [accessed October 4, 2020.]

⁵ Eugene O’Brien, “‘Sunk past its gleam in the meal bin’: The Kitchen as *Locus Amoenus* in the Poetry of Seamus Heaney”, *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* (2018) 41, 270-289.

⁶ Dorothy Cashman, “‘That delicate sweetmeat, the Irish plum’: The Culinary World of Maria Edgeworth (1768–1849)”, in Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire and Eamon Maher (eds), *‘Tickling the Palate’: Gastronomy in Irish Literature and Culture* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2014), 15-34.

This chapter will compare the journey by Irish Studies and food studies to becoming established disciplines, discussing the key figures, journals, courses, conferences, and encyclopaedias associated with both. It will identify early outliers of food themes within the Irish Studies canon in addition to traditional sources, track the growth of food studies in Ireland, particularly in the last decade, and make suggestions where future Irish Studies scholars might adopt a food studies lens. One early crossover between the two disciplines was an exploration of food related placenames in Ireland⁷ which melded gastro-topography and *dinnseanchas*⁸, with Brian Friel's play *Translations*, the staging of which was the origin of Field Day⁹ in 1980. Two terms are used interchangeably in this chapter, 'gastronomy'¹⁰ and 'food studies'¹¹, the former being a more European concept which incorporates food history, while the latter stems from the United States and is firmly influenced by the 'studies' phenomenon.¹² Both terms were employed when the MA in Gastronomy and Food Studies, the first postgraduate Masters programme in Ireland concerning food in its broader sociocultural and historic contexts, was developed at the Dublin Institute of Technology in 2017.

When Liam Harte and Yvonne Whelan mapped Irish Studies in the twenty-first century in their 2007 *Ireland Beyond Boundaries* (2007), they included chapters on intellectual

⁷ Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, 'Gastro-Topography: Exploring Food-Related Placenames in Ireland', *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, (2014) 38(1/2), 127-158.

⁸ Dinnseanchas is a class of onomastic text in early Irish literature, recounting the origins of placenames.

⁹ The importance of Field Day to Irish Studies and its subsequent debates and controversies is covered by Eamon Maher's Introduction to this volume.

¹⁰ Gastronomy stems from the Greek word 'gastro' (stomach) and 'nomos' (law). The French philosopher, Brillat-Savarin, noted that gastronomy is the 'reasoned knowledge of everything connected with the nourishment of man'. Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson expanded on this to include texts, defining gastronomy as 'a set of structured culinary practices and texts uniting producer and consumer.' Noting the subtitle of Brillat-Savarin's book, 'Meditations on Transcendental Gastronomy – an Up-to-Date Theoretical and Historical Work', Ferguson argues that gastronomy is both comprehensive and foundational, as it draws on the natural sciences (physics, chemistry and physiology) and on every sort of learning including cuisine, commerce, politics, literature and medicine. Cf. Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *Physiology of Taste*. Translated by Ann Drayton (London: Penguin, 1994); Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, 'A Cultural Field in the Making: Gastronomy in 19th Century France', *American Journal of Sociology*, 104, no. 3 (1998), 597-641, 603.

¹¹ Marion Nestle and William A. McIntosh, 'Writing the Food Studies Movement', *Food, Culture and Society* 13, no. 2 (2010), 159-179.

¹² However, it is the broader definition of gastronomy as 'the study of food and beverages and their impact on culture and society,' coined by Joseph Hegarty, that was embraced on gastronomy and culinary programmes in the Dublin Institute of Technology from the late 1990s.

criticism, historiography, religion, gender, media, geography, music, sports and Irish culture, but made no mention of food. In 2014, this lacuna began to be filled with the publication of *'Tickling the Palate': Gastronomy in Irish Literature and Culture*, Volume 57 of the *Reimagining Ireland* series which we are celebrating in this publication. Further food-related chapters appeared in a number of other edited volumes within this series (cf. volumes 55, 66, 68 and 93), and in volumes 9 and 14 of the *Studies in Franco-Irish Relations* (SFIR) series, also published by Peter Lang.¹³ A notable sign of food history's acceptance as a discipline in Ireland was the *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy Section C* special issue on food and drink in Ireland, published in 2015.¹⁴ The special 'Food Issue'¹⁵ of the *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* in 2018 further championed the importance of food in Irish scholarship, bringing it towards the mainstream. In 2018, *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Food* married aspects of the two disciplines and Ireland was suitably represented.¹⁶ A further omen of the gradual awareness and appreciation of food studies within the Irish Studies arena is Field Day Podcast No. 31, recorded during the COVID lockdown in Spring 2020, titled Irish Culinary History with Dorothy Cashman.¹⁷ When the next milestone review of Irish Studies appears in future years, it is hoped that food will be considered an obvious lens through which to interrogate developments within Irish society both at home and abroad.

¹³ Frank Healy and Brigitte Bastiat (eds), *Voyages between France and Ireland: Culture, Tourism and Sport* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2017); Eamon Maher and Eugene O'Brien (eds.), *Patrimoine/Cultural Heritage in France and Ireland* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2019).

¹⁴ Elizabeth FitzPatrick and James Kelly (eds), *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, Section C* (Special Issue, Food and Drink in Ireland), 115, (2015). This special issue was later published as a book in 2016.

¹⁵ Rhona Richman Kenneally and Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire (eds), *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* (The Food Issue) 41 (2018).

¹⁶ Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, 'The Food Trope in Literature, Poetry, and Songs from the Irish Tradition', In Lorna Piatti-Farnell, Donna Lee Brien (eds), *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Food* (New York: Routledge, 2018) 364-378.

¹⁷ <https://fieldday.ie/field-day-podcast/> In Podcast no. 31 Dorothy Cashman reads the long-forgotten recipe books of Irish country houses, and inserts them into the history of the country and the world. In her analysis of one recipe book from Kilkenny, she gives a fascinating portrait of a network of women and food culture, just as Ireland transitioned from the Georgian era to the Victorian; in Podcast no. 26, Cooperative movements and political changes in Ireland, historian Patrick Doyle opens his account of the Irish cooperatives with a description of a simple but revolutionary machine – the cream separator – and shows how it connected the butter-producing Irish farm to the grand technological enterprises of British imperialism and international trade.

The Studies phenomenon

As Eamon Maher notes in the introduction to this volume, Irish Studies emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, influenced by the 'area studies' movement. Area studies was a post-World War II, principally American, phenomenon which was strongly tied to the Cold War and the need for a better understanding of Russia and China, not to mention the fallout from the decolonisation of Africa and Asia. From a food perspective also, courses on domestic economy, nutrition or culinary arts precede the later emergence of food studies. However, it is the interdisciplinarity of the post-war studies movement which marks the paradigm shift in this new form of scholarship.

Food studies

Gastronomy and food studies are described as being interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary and even transdisciplinary. The reason for this is that many of the early scholars came from the disciplines of anthropology (Sidney Mintz, Claude Levi-Strauss, Mary Douglas, Jack Goody), sociology (Fernand Braudel, Norbert Elias, Stephen Mennell, Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson), history (Jean-Louis Flandrin, Massimo Montinari, Hans J. Teuteberg, Reay Tannahill), art history (Roy Strong, Barbara Ketchum Wheaton, Claudia Roden), philosophy (Carolyn Krosmeyer, Elizabeth Telfer), psychology (Paul Rozin) and English literature (Harold McGee). Gastronomy and food history are terms more associated with European countries, whereas the term 'food studies' is predominantly an American phenomenon.

One of the earliest programmes in food studies in the United States was the Master of Liberal Arts (MLA) in Gastronomy at Boston University in the early 1990s. The fact that it was called 'Gastronomy' no doubt reflects the French background of its two collaborative founders, Jacques Pépin and Julia Child. However, when Marion Nestle launched her Masters in Food Studies in 1996 at New York University, she was drawing firmly from the similar

‘studies’ programmes already in NYU (Africana, cinema, French, gender, etc.), although she conceived food studies to include foodways, gastronomy, and culinary history as well as critical approaches to studying other food-related issues in society.¹⁸ In 2000, a Master of Arts in Gastronomy was established at the University of Adelaide in conjunction with their Research Centre for the History of Food and Drink and *Le Cordon Bleu*. One of the first Irish students to complete this programme, by distance learning, was John Mulcahy – his Masters’ dissertation¹⁹ subsequently formed the basis of the food tourism policy so successfully pursued by Fáilte Ireland, where he worked for many years.²⁰

In Europe, there were a number of organisations involved in studying European food history such as the *Institut Européen d’Histoire et des Cultures de l’Alimentation* (IEHCA), and the International Commission for Research into European Food History (ICREFH). Key individuals included Peter Scholliers, Hans J. Teuteberg, Marc Jacobs, Claude Fischler, Massimo Montanari, Jean-Louis Flandrin, and Fabio Parasecoli. Established in 2004 and inspired by the Slow Food Movement, the University of Gastronomic Sciences opened in Pollenzo, Italy and provided several Masters programmes in the gastronomy field. In Britain, a Masters in the Anthropology of Food is offered in the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London: one of its former course leaders, Harry West, has recently set up a Masters in Food Studies at the University of Exeter. In Scotland, a Masters in Gastronomy was established in Queen Margaret’s University in Edinburgh.²¹

¹⁸ Nestle and McIntosh, ‘Writing the Food Studies Movement’.

¹⁹ John D. Mulcahy, ‘*Making the Case for a Viable, Sustainable Gastronomic Tourism Industry in Ireland.*’ (Unpublished Masters Dissertation: University of Adelaide, 2009).

²⁰ For an exploratory review of food tourism policy in Ireland see Ketty Quigley, Margaret Connolly, Elaine Mahon and Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, ‘Insight from Insiders: A Phenomenological Study for Exploring Food Tourism Policy in Ireland 2009-2019’, *Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 7, no. 2(2019) <https://doi.org/10.30519/ahtr.574519>; also see John Mulcahy, ‘A Nexus of Food, Tourism, and Education in Ireland – at the Margins or the Centre? An Autoethnographic Perspective,’ in Catherine Maignant, Sylvain Tondour and Déborah Vandewoude (eds), *Margins and Marginalities in Ireland and France: A Socio-cultural Perspective* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2021), 155-172.

²¹ It is interesting to note the origin of Queen Margaret’s University was the Edinburgh School of Cookery and Domestic Economy, Atholl Crescent.

Gastronomy has been gaining attention in European circles for a number of decades. In 2005, *An Post*, the Irish postal service, issued two stamps designed by Ross Lewis, Chef Patron of Chapter One Restaurant, to celebrate European Gastronomy. The stamps depicted oysters and a modern interpretation of Irish stew. That same year, a book entitled the *Culinary Cultures of Europe: Identity, diversity and dialogue* was published by the Council of Europe, with chapters written on every member state, including Ireland.²² Gastronomy moved into the postgraduate realm in Ireland as a module on the M.Sc. in Culinary Innovation and New Product Development at the Dublin Institute of Technology in 2007 and with the graduation of the first PhD in Food History in 2009.²³ Other doctoral candidates have since successfully completed their Irish-themed food studies-related dissertations, both in Ireland and abroad, on subjects ranging from wine and beverages,²⁴ Irish ‘foodies’,²⁵ the impact of Italian foodways on Irish food habits,²⁶ Irish culinary manuscripts,²⁷ Guinness advertising,²⁸ Irish diplomatic dining,²⁹ the meaning of food and foodways in Ireland 1922-1973,³⁰ gender inequality in

²² Regina Sexton, ‘Ireland: Simplicity and Integration, Continuity and Change’, in *Culinary Cultures of Europe: Identity, Diversity and Dialogue*, edited by Darra Goldstein, Kathrin Merkle, Fabio Parasecoli, and Stephen Mennell (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2005), 227-240.

²³ Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, *The Emergence, Development and Influence of French Haute Cuisine on Public Dining in Dublin Restaurants 1900-2000: an Oral History* (PhD thesis: DIT, 2009).
<https://doi.org/10.21427/D79K7H>

²⁴ Brian Murphy, *Changing identities in a homogenised world: The role of ‘Place and Story’ in modern perceptions of French wine culture* (PhD Thesis, QQI/Institute of Technology Tallaght, 2013).

²⁵ Marjorie Deleuze, *La Dimension Identitaire des Pratiques, des Habitudes et des Symboliques Alimentaires de l’Irlande Contemporaine*. (PhD thesis, Université de Lille III, 2015).

²⁶ Déirdre D’Auria, *The Impact of Italian Foodways on Irish Food Habits in the Twentieth Century*. (PhD diss., UCD, 2012).

²⁷ Dorothy Cashman, *An Investigation of Irish Culinary History Through Manuscript Cookbooks, with Particular Reference to the Gentry of County Kilkenny (1714-1830)*. (PhD Thesis, TU Dublin, 2016).

²⁸ Patricia Medcalf, *Advertising the Black Stuff in Ireland 1959-1999: Increments of Change* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2020).

²⁹ Elaine Mahon, *Irish Diplomatic Dining 1922-1963*. (PhD Thesis, TU Dublin, 2019).

³⁰ Marzena Keating, ‘Bain Sult as do Bhéile: In Search of Irish Culinary Culture. The Meaning of Food and Foodways in Ireland in 1922–1973’. (PhD Thesis, SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Warsaw, 2019).

professional kitchens,³¹ Irish food tourism policy³² and the social meaning of claret in Georgian Ireland.³³

A key event bringing gastronomy and food studies into the mainstream in Ireland was the establishment of the inaugural biennial Dublin Gastronomy Symposium (DGS) in May 2012, a collaborative project between the Dublin Institute of Technology and the Institute of Technology Tallaght. This event connected interested stakeholders from Ireland's catering colleges and universities with international scholars and enthusiasts. It was also one of the first collaborative projects that foresaw and predated the merger of the two institutes to become Ireland's first Technological University. The first keynote address was given by Professor Darra Goldstein, editor of *Gastronomica: The Journal of Critical Food Studies*. The DGS received sponsorship from Fáilte Ireland who, as previously mentioned, was developing a Food Tourism team and policy strategy under the stewardship of John Mulcahy. Relationships and trust established in 2012 led to the first gastronomy-themed parallel session at the Association of Franco-Irish Studies (AFIS) conference in Limerick in 2013, which resulted in the inclusion of three gastronomy-related chapters in Volume 55 of the REIR series.³⁴ Brian Murphy has highlighted the importance of the Dublin Gastronomy Symposium to his research in his chapter in this volume. Despite the success of the DGS,³⁵ it would take another five years to witness the commencement in 2017 of the first Master of Arts Degree in Gastronomy and Food Studies

³¹ Mary Farrell, *A Critical Analysis of Gender Inequality in the Chef Profession in Ireland*. (PhD Thesis, TU Dublin, 2020).

³² John Mulcahy, *Recognising the place of food tourism in Ireland: An autoethnographic perspective*. (PhD Thesis, TU Dublin, 2020).

³³ Tara McConnell, *The Social Meaning of Claret in the lives of Georgian Ireland's Elite*. (PhD Thesis, TU Dublin, 2021).

³⁴ Dorothy Cashman, 'French Boobys and Good English Cooks: The Relationship with French Culinary Influence in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Ireland', in Benjamin Keatinge and Mary Pierse (eds), *France and Ireland in the Public Imagination* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2014), 207-222; Tara McConnell, 'Ireland in the Georgian Era: Was There Any Kingdom in Europe So Good a Customer at Bordeaux?', in Keatinge and Pierse, 223-240; Brian Murphy, 'Exporting a 'Sense of Place': Establishment of Regional Gastronomic Identity Beyond National Borders', in Keatinge and Pierse, 241-257.

³⁵ For more information, see: <https://arrow.tudublin.ie/dgs/> [accessed 28 October, 2020.]

in Ireland.³⁶ The wait, however, was serendipitous, as fresh energy and new blood had by then joined the Masters' teaching team with qualifications from both Irish and European universities.

Food scholarship in Ireland

Culinary history, food history, gastronomy and food studies are relatively new disciplines, with the core texts emerging within the last half century. One of the drivers towards moving food, domesticity, and the history of everyday life to the fore in academia was the French concept, '*histoire des mentalités*', which described a particular way of researching and writing history principally associated with the Annales School. Although the French have long studied '*histoire des mentalités*', Irish historians have concentrated more on high politics, focusing on archival documents left by the 'winners of conflicts.' In Ireland, 'tradition' – how ordinary people remember things (including language, food, and much of our heritage) – has been left to the folklorists³⁷, and is often disseminated via the oral tradition.³⁸ The ground-breaking work of folklorists in Ireland on food must therefore be acknowledged.³⁹

The establishment of a new liberal / vocational paradigm with the inauguration of the BA (Hons) in Culinary Arts in the Dublin Institute of Technology in the 1999/2000 academic

³⁶ Information on MA Gastronomy and Food Studies is available online at:

<https://www.tudublin.ie/study/postgraduate/courses/gastronomy-and-food-studies/> [accessed 26 October, 2020].

³⁷ In volume 80 of the REIR series, *New Crops, Old Fields: Reimagining Irish Folklore*, edited by Conor Caldwell and Eamon Byers, focus is placed on the second life of folklore, the variety of ways in which traditions have been reused and recycled in other contexts by politicians, poets, visual artists, sportsmen, tourism officers, museum curators, writers and musicians.

³⁸ Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, 'Recognizing Food as part of Ireland's Intangible Cultural Heritage', *Folk Life* 56, no. 2(2018), 93-115.

³⁹ Henry H. Glassie, *Passing the Time in Ballymenone: Culture and History of an Ulster Community* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982); Kevin Danaher, *Hearth and Stool and All!: Irish Rural Households* (Dublin: Mercier Press, 1985). The Irish Folklore Collection at University College Dublin has comprehensive holdings of Danaher's work. Brid Mahon, *Land of Milk and Honey: The Story of Traditional Irish Food & Drink* (Dublin: Poolbeg Press, 1991); Patricia Lysaght, 'Bealtaine: Women, Milk, and Magic at the Boundary Festival of May', in *Milk and Milk Products from Medieval to Modern Times*, edited by Patricia Lysaght (Edinburgh: Canongate Academic, 1994), 208–29; Patricia Lysaght, 'Food-Provision Strategies on the Great Blasket Island: Sea-Bird Fowling', in *Food from Nature: Attitudes, Strategies and Culinary Practices*, edited by Patricia Lysaght (Uppsala: Royal Gustavus Adolphus Academy for Swedish Folk Culture, 2000), 333–63; Patricia Lysaght, 'Seabirds and their Eggs', in *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture*, edited by S. H. Katz (New York: Scribner, 2003), 3, 243–45.

year is suggested to have played a pivotal role in moving gastronomy and food studies into the spotlight in Ireland.⁴⁰ For over a decade now, scholars in Ireland have been studying gastronomy and food history at both Masters and Doctoral level, which has provided a more nuanced perspective on Ireland's culinary heritage.⁴¹ An argument has been made for recognising food as part of Ireland's intangible cultural heritage, and for the importance of researchers engaging with primary sources in the Irish language to gain a more complete picture of the country's gastronomic heritage.⁴² In bolstering this call, recent scholarship has adopted the concepts of Arjun Appadurai and Igor Kopytoff⁴³ to the iconic dish 'Irish stew'⁴⁴ to present a biography of a recipe, tracing the origins of the dish from archaeological potsherds, oral sources, through manuscript sources to printed cookbooks. The Food Cult⁴⁵ project, funded by the European Union, brings together history, archaeology, science and information technology to explore the diet and foodways of diverse communities in early modern Ireland, which might serve as a model for future comparative and interdisciplinary work in the field of historical food studies. Each of the individual research projects⁴⁶, both completed and currently under study, reveal tesserae in the larger mosaic of Irish food culture. A broader understanding of this particular aspect of Irish culture can possibly illuminate other elements of Irish Studies scholarship for a clearer understanding of our shared cultural past and present. It is evident that

⁴⁰ For a detailed overview of the development of gastronomy, food studies and culinary education in Ireland, see Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, 'From the Dark Margins to the Spotlight: The Evolution of Gastronomy and Food Studies in Ireland', in Catherine Maignant, Sylvain Tondour and Déborah Vandewoude (eds), *Margins and Marginalities in Ireland and France: A Socio-cultural Perspective* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2021), 129-153.

⁴¹ For examples of this scholarship, see Kenneally and Mac Con Iomaire, *Canadian Journal*; and Mac Con Iomaire and Maher, 'Tickling the Palate'.

⁴² Mac Con Iomaire, 'Recognizing food'.

⁴³ Arjun Appadurai, 'The Social Life of Things', in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, edited by Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 3-63; Igor Kopytoff, 'The cultural biography of things', in *The Social Life of Things*, 64-91.

⁴⁴ Dorothy Cashman and John Farrelly, "'Is Irish stew the only kind of stew we can afford to make, mother?'" The history of a recipe'. *Folk Life* 59, no. 1, (2021). Forthcoming.

⁴⁵ The Principal Investigator on this project is Dr Susan Flavin: <https://foodcult.eu/>

⁴⁶ This includes beverage projects outlined in Brian Murphy's chapter in this volume.

we are standing on the shoulders of giants, but who then, were the early researchers who paved the way for the current generation of Irish food studies scholars?

Elements of a Discipline

Whether Irish Studies or food studies, there are certain elements required to establish an academic discipline. First come the trailblazers, who clear the ground, often unaware of the influence their labours will have on the future field. Then come the seminal texts⁴⁷ which enrich the ground upon which the seeds for modules or courses can be sown. With time, and a number of successful harvests (graduates), come the encyclopaedias / companions which (attempt to) codify the discipline. The conferences / symposia may be conceptualised as hiring fairs or agricultural shows, where ideas and best practices are disseminated, debated and networks are built. In the Introduction to this book, Eamon Maher has charted the trajectory that Irish Studies has taken from early beginnings to its current global reach as a discipline, charting the journals, conferences, national bodies, and canonical publications which underpin the discipline. Arguably, *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, the Jesuit journal founded in 1912, pre-imagined the discipline in both name and interdisciplinary scope. Other publications that predate the establishment of Irish Studies as a discipline include *The Bell* (1940-54),⁴⁸ and *The Capuchin Annual* (1930-1977),⁴⁹ both of which had a seminal influence on a generation of Irish intellectuals, with the latter having an international circulation.

⁴⁷ Maher notes authors such as Declan Kiberd, Colin Graham, Angela Bourke, Patricia Coughlan, Joe Cleary, Seamus Deane, Luke Gibbons, David Lloyd and Claire Connolly among the ‘first wave’ of Irish Studies scholars. Seminal texts by Joe Lee and Terence Browne could be added to the list, as could the scholarship of the late Margaret McCurtain, who chose to focus on the previously neglected area of women’s history.

⁴⁸ From a food historian’s perspective, the first comprehensive description of eating out in Dublin during the Emergency comes from an article in *The Bell*, ranging from dock workers’ cafés, chophouses, an Indian restaurant on Baggot Street, to the Unicorn and Jammet’s, and back down the social scale to fish and chip shops where the vinegar bottles were chained to the tables. See Micheal Burke, ‘Eating in Dublin’, *The Bell* 2(3) (1941), 12-20.

⁴⁹ The complete collection of *The Capuchin Annual* is now freely available online to scholars: <http://www.capuchinfranciscans.ie/capuchin-annual-1930-1977/>

Within food studies, the influence of the Annales school⁵⁰ has previously been noted. The oldest and longest running conference is the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery⁵¹ (1979-present), founded and co-chaired by Alan Davidson, retired diplomat, food historian and editor of *The Oxford Companion to Food*⁵², and social historian Dr Theodore Zeldin.⁵³ The journal *Petits Propos Culinaires* and the publishing house Prospect Books emerged from the Davidson and the Oxford Symposium network. In the United States, the Association for the Study of Food in Society⁵⁴ (ASFS) was founded in 1985, with the goal of promoting the interdisciplinary study of food and society. The Association's annual meetings, which commenced in 1987, have since 1992 been held jointly with the Agriculture, Food and Human Values Society. The ASFS publishes the journal *Food, Culture and Society: An International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*.⁵⁵ Despite Warren Belasco's reservations⁵⁶ in 2008 regarding the lack of seriousness attributed to the discipline,⁵⁷ food studies, by 2020, has its own canon,⁵⁸ edited collections,⁵⁹ thematic readers, guiding authors,⁶⁰ peer-reviewed

⁵⁰ Robert Forster and Orest Ranum (eds), *Food and Drink in History: Selections from the Annales, Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, Volume 5 (Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press, 1979).

⁵¹ <https://www.oxfordsymposium.org.uk/0-how-we-began/> [accessed 28 October, 2020.]

⁵² Alan Davidson, *The Oxford Companion to Food* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1999).

⁵³ Theodore Zeldin, *Eating and Drinking in France 1848-1845, Volume 2. Intellect, Taste and Anxiety* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977).

⁵⁴ <https://www.food-culture.org/> [accessed 28 October, 2020.]

⁵⁵ <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rffc20/current> [accessed 28 October, 2020.]

⁵⁶ Belasco's statement is available in Brian Murphy's chapter of this volume.

⁵⁷ See Footnote 2

⁵⁸ Examples include: Kenneth Kipple and Kriemhild Coneè Ornelas, *The Cambridge World History of Food, Volumes 1 & 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Jean-Louis Flandrin and Massimo Montanari, *Food: A Cultural History from Antiquity to the Present* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); Stephen Mennell, *All Manners of Food: Eating and Taste in England and France from the Middle Ages to the Present*. 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996).

⁵⁹ Examples include: Ken Albala, *Routledge International Handbook of Food Studies* (New York: Routledge, 2013); Fabio Parasecoli and Peter Scholliers, *A Cultural History of Food, Vols. 1-6* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).

⁶⁰ Examples include: Rachel Laudan, *Cuisine and Empire: Cooking in World History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013); Massimo Montanari, *Food is Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006); Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson, *Accounting for Taste: The Triumph of French Cuisine* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006); Sidney Mintz, *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture, and the Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986); Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1985); Barbara Ketchum Wheaton, *Savouring the Past: The French Kitchen and Table from 1300-1789* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1983).

journals,⁶¹ symposia and postgraduate degrees available for those who wish to pursue the topic at an academic level. Christopher Kissane recently observed that, ‘we are long past the days when food was not given serious attention by historians. But that does not mean we have figured out how to approach such a vast subject.’⁶²

Food Studies in Ireland Past, Present and Future

Doctoral research within the food studies field in Ireland is growing steadily, albeit from a low base. Dorothy Cashman⁶³ describes various appellations, noting that food history is seen as encompassing culinary history, somewhat in the manner of Russian dolls, both further falling under the umbrella term of food studies. With Brian Murphy’s chapter⁶⁴ on beverage research in this volume, the further Russian doll of beverage studies is comprehensively charted and championed. The most comprehensive overview of Irish food history sources to date is provided by Cashman’s dissertation with McConnell filling any gaps from the perspective of the history of wine from the pre-Christian era through to the Georgian period.

An early seminal text⁶⁵ of Irish food studies is Anthony Lucas’s 1960 paper, ‘Irish food before the potato’, which noted that Irish food displayed a remarkable continuity of tradition, ‘from the time of the earliest documentary evidence down to the widespread adoption of the potato in the late 17th century.’⁶⁶ Lucas’s scholarship was re-assessed in 2013 by Liam Downey and Ingelise Stuijts in light of new archaeological findings and found to be relatively accurate,

⁶¹ Examples include: *Food & History*, edited by Francis Chevrier, Brepols, 2007-present; *Food and Foodways, Explorations in the History and Culture of Human Nourishment*, edited by Carole Counihan, Routledge, 1985-present; *Food Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, edited by Courtney Thomas, Common Ground Research Network, 2011-present.

⁶² Christopher Kissane, *Food, Religion and Communities in Early Modern Europe* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 9.

⁶³ Cashman, ‘An Investigation of Irish Culinary History Through Manuscript Cookbooks,’ op. cit.

⁶⁴ Brian Murphy, chapter in this volume.

⁶⁵ Very early trailblazers might include Eugene O’Curry for his series of lectures on the manners and customs of the Ancient Irish, or Kuno Meyer, whose works on the 12th Century food odyssey *Aisling Meic Con Glinne* is seminal. Also, of note is Fergus Kelly, *Early Irish Farming*. (Dublin: DIAS, 1997).

⁶⁶ Anthony T. Lucas, ‘Irish Food Before The Potato’, in *Gwerin: A half yearly journal of folk life* 3(2) (1960-2) <https://doi.org/10.1179/gwr.1960.009> [Accessed 28 October, 2020.]

apart from the claim that consumption of beef was rare in ancient Ireland.⁶⁷ Another early text of note to food studies scholars is Katherine Simms, ‘Guesting and Feasting in Gaelic Society’, which outlines the various obligations of hospitality contained within the Brehon Laws.⁶⁸ The first modern history book to allocate two chapters to food was Louis Cullen’s⁶⁹ *The Emergence of Modern Ireland*.⁷⁰ Leslie Clarkson and Margaret Crawford’s history of food and nutrition in Ireland is comprehensive, although they are at pains to point out that their book, ‘is not a history of cooking in Ireland.’⁷¹ The folklorists’ contribution to preserving Irish food traditions has been acknowledged earlier in this chapter and Bríd Mahon’s *The Land of Milk and Honey*⁷² is particularly worth noting. Other key figures in charting Irish food ways in the mid-twentieth century include Florence Irwin and Maura Laverty. For a few years prior to the dawn of the twenty-first century, and influenced by Alan Davidson, Regina Sexton⁷³ appeared to be the sole researcher exploring food history in Ireland although Patricia Lysaght⁷⁴ was publishing on food contemporaneously in the folklore field. Increased levels of research in the new millennium into Ireland’s culinary heritage, culture and food history has assisted in revealing a more balanced and nuanced story about our ancestors’ dining habits and foodways,⁷⁵ negating

⁶⁷ Liam Downey and Ingelise Stuijts, ‘Overview of historical Irish food products-A.T. Lucas (1960–2) revisited’, *The Journal of Irish Archaeology*. XXII (2013), 111–126.

⁶⁸ Katharine Simms, ‘Guesting and Feasting in Gaelic Society’, in *Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 108 (1978): 67-100.

⁶⁹ Louis Cullen’s contribution to Irish food studies was marked in 2016 with the inaugural Dublin Gastronomy Symposium Fellowship Award.

⁷⁰ Louis Michael Cullen, *The Emergence of Modern Ireland 1600-1900* (London: Batsford Academic and Educational Ltd., 1981). Cullen also researched the Irish wine trade with Bordeaux.

⁷¹ Leslie A. Clarkson and Margaret E. Crawford, *Feast and Famine: Food and Nutrition in Ireland 1500-1900* (Oxford, 2001), 8.

⁷² Mahon, *The Land of Milk and Honey*.

⁷³ Regina Sexton, ‘‘I’d ate it like chocolate!’: The Disappearing Offal Food Traditions of Cork City’, in Harlan Walker (ed.), *Disappearing Foods: Studies in Foods and Dishes at Risk: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 1994* (Totnes, Devon, Prospect Books, 1995), 172-188; *A Little History of Irish Food* (Dublin, 1998); ‘Porridges, Gruels and Breads: The Cereal Foodstuffs of Early Medieval Ireland’, in Mick Monk and J. Sheehan (eds), *Early Medieval Munster: Archaeology, History and Society* (Cork, Cork University Press, 1998), 76-86; ‘Irish Food, Thirteenth to Seventeenth Centuries,’ in Brian Lalor (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Ireland* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2003).

⁷⁴ Patricia Lysaght’s contribution to Irish food studies was marked in 2020 with the Dublin Gastronomy Symposium Fellowship Award. For the citation, see: https://arrow.tudublin.ie/dgs/dgs_fellowships.pdf

⁷⁵ Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire and Pádraic Óg Gallagher, ‘The Potato in Irish Cuisine and Culture,’ *Journal of Culinary Science and Technology*. 7, No.2-3 (2009), 152-167; Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire and Pádraic Óg Gallagher, ‘Irish Corned Beef: A Culinary History,’ *Journal of Culinary Science & Technology* 9, No. 1(2011),

some postcolonial impressions of barbarity and uncivilised ‘otherness’ represented by some foreign visitors and diarists. Toby Barnard observed a particular phenomenon in relation to commentary on Ireland, ‘scrupulous observers told what they had seen, but saw what they had been told to expect.’⁷⁶ Sources familiar to Irish studies scholars, such as the diary of Humphrey O’Sullivan, the letters of Bishop Syngé, Dorothea Herbert’s ‘Retrospections’, or the writings of John Gamble reveal the level of sophistication among the upper and middling sorts in pre-Famine Ireland.⁷⁷

More recent research, that may be of interest to Irish Studies scholars, has explored various food studies topics, such as the influence of Italian foodways on Irish food habits,⁷⁸ the influence of the court at Dublin Castle,⁷⁹ food and fellowship among Franciscan friars,⁸⁰ food

27-43; Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, ‘The Changing Geography and Fortunes of Dublin’s Haute Cuisine Restaurants 1958-2008’, *Food Culture & Society* 14, No. 4 (2011), 525-545; Helen O’Connell, ‘“A Raking Pot of Tea”: Consumption and Excess in Early Nineteenth-Century Ireland’, in *Literature & History*, 21, No. 2(2012); Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, ‘Public Dining in Dublin: The History and Evolution of Gastronomy and Commercial Dining 1700-1900’, in *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 25, No. 2(2013), 227-246; Susan Flavin, *Consumption and Culture in Sixteenth-Century Ireland* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2014); Madeline Shanahan, *Manuscript Recipe Books as Archeological Objects: Food and Text in the Early Modern World* (Maryland: Lexington Books, 2014); Rhona Richman-Kenneally, ‘Tastes of Home in Mid-Twentieth-Century Ireland: Food, Design, and the Refrigerator’, in *Food and Foodways*, 23, No. 1-2(2015): 80-103; Dorothy Cashman, ‘An Investigation of Irish Culinary History through Manuscript Cookbooks’; Elizabeth FitzPatrick and James Kelly (eds), *Food and Drink in Ireland*; James Kelly, *Food Rioting in Ireland in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: The “Moral Economy” and the Irish Crowd* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2017); *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* (The Food Issue) 41 (2018); See also the work of Caitríona Clear, for example, Caitríona Clear, *Women of the House: Women’s Household Work in Ireland, 1922–1961: Discourses, Experiences, Memories* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2000); ‘“We Will Again, Please God”: Maura Laverty, Irish Tradition, and Optimism,’ in *The Past in the Present: A Multidisciplinary Approach*, edited by Fabio Mugnaini, Pdraig O Healai, and Tok Freeland Thompson (Esch-sur-Alzette, LU: editpress, 2006), 41–52.

⁷⁶ Toby Barnard, ‘The Gentrification of Eighteenth-Century Ireland’, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland/Iris an dá chultúr*, Vol. 12 (1997), 137-155, 141.

⁷⁷ c.f. Tomás de Bhaldraithe, *Cín Lae Amhlaoibh* (Baile Átha Cliath: An Clóchomhar Tta., 1970); Marie-Louise Legge (ed) *The Diary of Nicholas Peacock 1740–1751*. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005); Marie-Louise Legge (ed), *Syngé Letters: Bishop Edward Syngé to His Daughter Alicia. Roscommon to Dublin 1746–1752* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1996); Dorothea Herbert, *Retrospections* (Dublin: Town House, 2004 [1929]); John Gamble, *Society and Manners in Early Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Field Day, 2011).

⁷⁸ Déirdre D’Auria, ‘The impact of Italian foodways on Irish food habits in the twentieth century.’

⁷⁹ Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, and Tara Kellaghan, ‘Royal Pomp: viceregal celebrations in Georgian Dublin’ in Helen Saberi (ed.), *Celebrations* (Devon: Prospect Books, 2012).

⁸⁰ Dorothy Cashman, ‘“To a little girl for keeping the poultry last year’: Food and Fellowship in a Franciscan Community in Georgian Ireland’, *Dublin Gastronomy Symposium 2018*: <https://arrow.tudublin.ie/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1134&context=dgs>

representation in Irish women's magazines,⁸¹ restaurant criticism in Irish newspapers,⁸² Polish migrants foodways in Cork,⁸³ cuisine and culinary heritage in Seamus Heaney's poetry,⁸⁴ the food trope in Irish literature,⁸⁵ to Irish women making home in Coventry.⁸⁶ So, as previously mentioned, whether researching aspects of medicine, literature, poverty or religion, each can be studied by applying either an Irish or a food lens.

Conclusions

From place-names to mythology, storytelling to poetry and songs, food and hospitality is a vibrant theme that runs through Ireland's past.⁸⁷ However, when the topic of food is discussed within the historiography of Ireland, the focus tends to be on the consequences of the Great Irish Famine (1845–52). Darra Goldstein points out that Ireland has suffered twice for its famines and food shortages: 'first due to very real deprivations; and second because these deprivations present an obstacle to the exploration of Irish food. All too often the story begins and ends with potatoes or famine.'⁸⁸ There has also been a tendency among commentators (particularly travellers' accounts) to present discussions about food in Ireland before the Famine in a binary fashion (wealthy or poor).⁸⁹ Against this, Tomás de Bhaldraithe in his

⁸¹ Marzena Keating and Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, 'Tradition and Novelty: Food Representations in Irish Women's Magazines 1922-1973, in' *Food, Culture and Society* 21, No.4 (2018), 488-504.

⁸² Claire O'Mahony, '*The Development of Newspaper Restaurant Criticism in Ireland, 1988–2008*' (MA thesis, TU Dublin, 2018). <https://arrow.tudublin.ie/tfschcafdis/4/>

⁸³ Linda Coakley, 'Polish Encounters with the Irish Foodscape: An Examination of the Losses and Gains of Migrant Foodways', in *Food and Foodways*, 20:3-4, (2012):307-325, DOI: 10.1080/07409710.2012.715968

⁸⁴ Anke Klitzing, "'Gilded Gravel in the Bowl": Ireland's Cuisine and Culinary Heritage in the Poetry of Seamus Heaney', *Folk Life*. Forthcoming.

⁸⁵ Mac Con Iomaire, 'The Food Trope', op. cit.

⁸⁶ Moya Kneafsey and Rosie Cox, 'Food, Gender and Irishness – How Irish Women in Coventry Make Home', in *Irish Geography*, 35(1), (2002): 6-15.

⁸⁷ Hospitality is a theme that underpinned Gaelic society, and stemming from as early as Aisling Meic Con Glinne, satire is a trope used by poets to call out skinflints who refused traditional hospitality. See Mac Con Iomaire, 'The Food Trope'; Discussing Séamus Dall Mac Cuarta's *Tithe Chonn an Chait*, Declan Kiberd noted: 'The Protestant ethic now taking hold brought with it the spirit of capitalism to the detriment of the poets who suffered due to their ambiguous class position.' See Kiberd, *Irish Classics* (London: Granta Books, 2000), 57.

⁸⁸ Darra Goldstein, 'Foreword' to *Tickling the Palate*, xii. xii.

⁸⁹ For such claims see Daniel Corkery, *The Hidden Ireland* (Dublin: M.H. Gill and Son, 1956), 10; Vincent Morley, in *The Popular Mind in Eighteenth-century Ireland* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2017), highlights that 'there is no factual basis for Corkery's claims that a middle class did not exist in eighteenth-century Munster,' 2.

introduction to *Cín Lae Amhlaoibh* notes the vivid descriptions in Humphrey O’Sullivan’s diary of the fine meals of the middle classes that disproves claims that the Irish speaking natives did not have a varied diet or were not proficient in the art of cookery.⁹⁰ Scholars from diverse disciplines (archaeology, history, sociology, folklore, linguistics, literature, architecture, drama, business, art and design) are currently engaging in research on Ireland’s food heritage, culture and history, which highlights the transdisciplinary nature of gastronomy and food studies.

This chapter celebrates the role Eamon Maher, as series editor of both the REIR and SFIR series, and as past president of AFIS, has played in championing gastronomy and food studies within the Irish Studies field in Ireland and abroad. It identifies the *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* under the editorship of Rhona Richman Kenneally as playing a pivotal role in mainstreaming food in Irish Studies. Significantly also, in 2019, the *Irish University Review* had a special issue on Food, Energy, Climate: Irish Culture and World Ecology.⁹¹ Now that food studies in Ireland has its own canon, edited collections, symposia, postgraduate programmes, and with the launch in 2020 of the first volume of the *European Journal of Food, Drink and Society*,⁹² its own journal, Irish Studies scholars may well be inspired to adopt the food lens and collectively interrogate this rich harvest.

⁹⁰ de Bhaldraithe, *Cín Lae Amhlaoibh*, xxx. He writes: ‘Tá cuntas inti ar bhéilí breátha an duine mheándeisiúil a bhréagníonn an té a deir nach raibh éagsúlacht beatha is oiliúnt in ealaín na cócaireachta ag na Gaeilgeoirí.’

⁹¹ S. Deckard, ‘Introduction: Reading Ireland’s Food, Energy and Climate,’ *Irish University Review*, 49.1, Special Issue - Food, Energy, Climate: Irish Culture and World Ecology (2019).

⁹² <https://arrow.tudublin.ie/ejfds/>