

Justin Carville (ed.)

VISUALIZING DUBLIN

VISUAL CULTURE, MODERNITY AND THE
REPRESENTATION OF URBAN SPACE



Dublin has held an important place throughout Ireland's cultural history. The shifting configurations of the city's streetscapes have been marked by the ideological frameworks of imperialism, its architecture embedded within the cultural politics of the nation, and its monuments and sculptures mobilized to envision the economic ambitions of the state. This book examines the relationship of Dublin to Ireland's social history through the city's visual culture. Through specific case studies of Dublin's streetscapes, architecture and sculpture and its depiction in literature, photography and cinema, the contributors discuss the significance of visual experiences and representations of the city to our understanding of Irish cultural life, both past and present.

Drawing together scholars from across the arts, humanities and social sciences, the collection addresses two emerging themes in Irish studies: the intersection of the city with cultural politics, and the role of the visual in projecting Irish cultural identity. The essays not only ask new questions of existing cultural histories but also identify previously unexplored visual representations of the city. The book's interdisciplinary approach seeks to broaden established understandings of visual culture within Irish studies to incorporate not only visual artefacts, but also textual descriptions and ocular experiences that contribute to how we come to look at, see and experience both Dublin and Ireland.

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Visualizing Dublin

Reimagining Ireland

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Acknowledgments

This book grew out of a series of conversations with colleagues on the increasing emergence over the last three decades of Dublin as a subject of analysis within the humanities and social sciences. Foremost amongst these discussions was that although many scholarly monographs on the cultural history of Dublin included illustrations of the architecture, monuments, street-views and sculpture of the city, few paid any attention to the aesthetics or signifying effects of the types of visual imagery reproduced in their pages, or of the images material codifications of Dublin as either an Imperial, colonial or post-colonial city. The book has thus developed out of the shared interest of the contributors in the relationship between the visual and the broader cultural history of the city; the connections between the aesthetics and politics of the image and the representation of Dublin through specific media in particular historical contexts. That these fledgling conversations and shared interests have made it into print in the pages that follow is very much due to the belief, patience, professionalism and good-will of a select group of people.

I am eternally grateful to the editor of the *Reimagining Ireland* series Eamon Maher for his enthusiasm and support of the project since its inception and for agreeing to include the book alongside such an exciting collection of Irish Studies scholarship. In the face of numerous delays and missed deadlines Commissioning Editor Christabel Scaife has been both patient and polite throughout the process of completing the book. Together with the rest of the team at Peter Lang, Christabel has overseen the publication of the collection with great professionalism which is much appreciated by myself and the contributors.

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JUSTIN CARVILLE

Introduction: Visual Culture and the Making of Modern Dublin

In 1929 Dublin Corporation published *A Book of Dublin*. The aim of the publication was to bring together writers and artists within the covers of a single book in a civic commemoration of the history, antiquities and commerce of the post-independence and post-civil war capital city. In keeping with the civic tone of the publication, the book was conveyed as entirely a product of the city; its paper made by a Dublin mill, its pages filled by the words of Dublin writers, its printing and graphic illustrations ‘the work of Dublin hands.’¹ This present book of Dublin is somewhat more international in terms of its range of contributors and significantly more globalized in the geographic scope of its production. Yet like *The Book of Dublin* – which attempted to reconcile the heritage of the city with its emerging modernization – the authors of the essays in the following pages are all concerned with the cultural history of Dublin. They are particularly concerned with how the cultural history of the city as it intersects with a visual culture that attempts to project a unitary geographical representation of Dublin in colonial, post-colonial and global contexts. The contributors to *Visualizing Dublin* all take as their main subject of analysis the visual representation and visualizing effects of the city through an exploration of its architectural forms and spatial configurations, as well as the role of graphic imagery, sculpture, photography and cinema in the mediated expressions and shaping of ocular experiences of Dublin from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. Although writing from different disciplinary perspectives with their own established methods and

1 *A Book of Dublin* (Dublin: Dublin Corporation, 1929), p. 6.

methodologies for analysing visual practices and representations, the essays share a concern with the connections between representations of Dublin and cultural politics in the expression of place. They look intently at that which is frequently overlooked in much of the discussions of Irish culture; the relationship between the visual and cultural history.

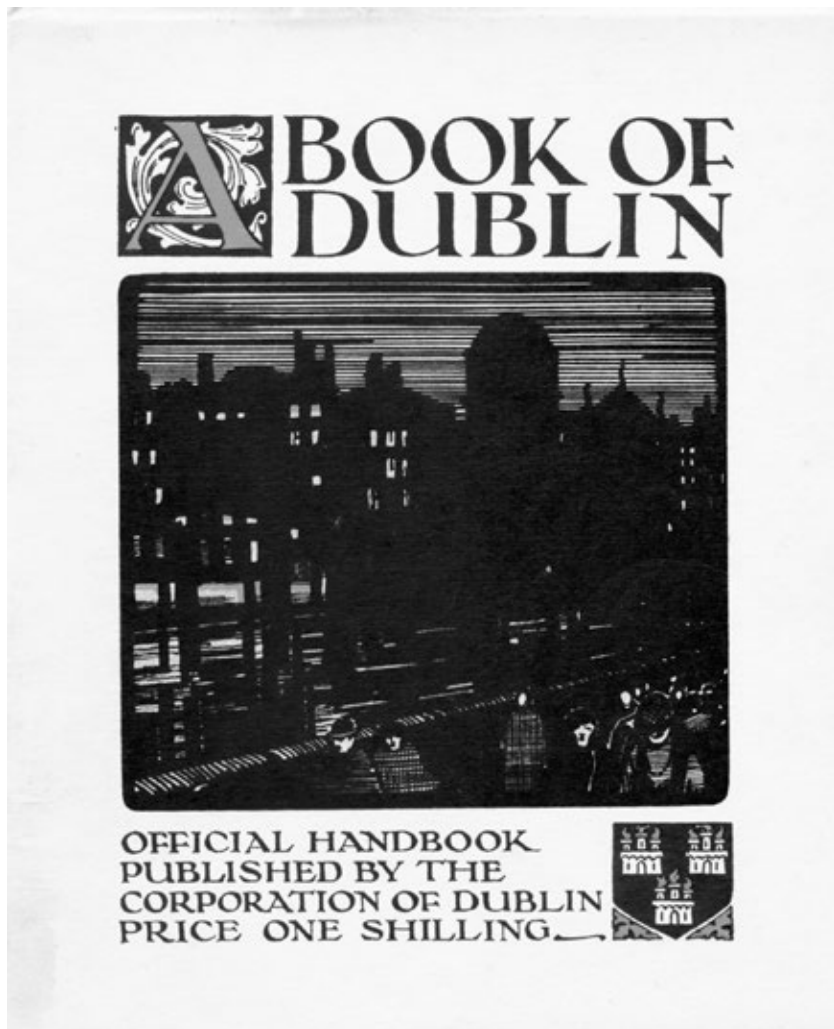


Figure 1 Maurice McGonigal, cover illustration, *A Book of Dublin*, 1929.

This relationship of the cultural and the visual fields was glaringly obvious in a publication such as *A Book of Dublin* yet was made to appear transparent. Although the publication included essays on the heritage of the city with graphic depictions of its architecture and monuments, *A Book of Dublin* largely overlooked the relationship between the cultural history of the built environment and the production, circulation and distribution of imagery of the city. Illustrated with drawings, linocuts, etchings and charcoal sketches by artists such as Paul Henry, Harry Kernoff, Maurice McGonigal and Estella F. Solomons, amongst others, the publication comprised a series of textual vignettes on the heritage and commercial modernity of the city accompanied by the visual depiction of Dublin's historic and modern built environment. Like the text which proposed to convey to the reader a coherent representation of Dublin's heritage as it combined with its industrial development and economic commercialization, the illustrations attempted to ameliorate the tensions of tradition and modernity through the aesthetic softening of the urban fabric of the city. The charcoal drawings of Henry in particular rendered the rectilinear lines of concrete and stone, and the towering chimney stacks of industrial energy production with a hazy monochromaticity. Less a depiction of the Dublin cityscape and more of an impression of its texture, Henry's illustrations combined the city's meteorological atmosphere with its physical environment to create a sensation of the city as mystifying yet unthreatening. Such illustrations thus offered perceptions of Dublin which contributed as much to the shaping of ocular experiences of the city as they provided pictorial depictions of its historic and contemporary landmarks. Yet in the introductory remarks to *A Book of Dublin*, the editor Bulmer Hobson clearly identified the textual as the most significant form for creating impressions of Dublin. Proclaiming authoritatively its writers and thinkers to be the city's most significant cultural attribute, he asks rhetorically; 'How many cities can claim sons who have exercised so profound an influence upon literature?' His response is to advise the reader that; 'While other places may boast their antiquity, their giant industries, or their round of pleasures, let it be Dublin's boast that she has contributed to advance the bounds of human thought, and added a little to the intellectual stature of mankind.'²

2 Bulmer Hobson, *A Book of Dublin*, p. 6.

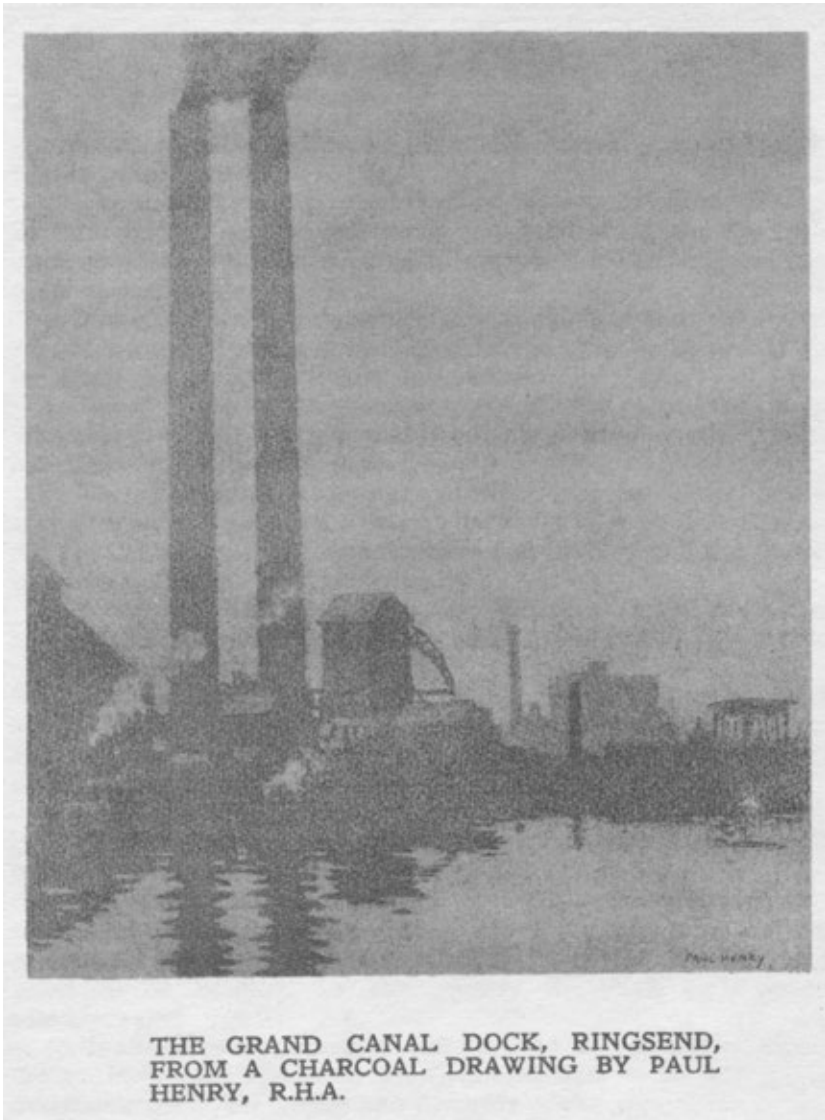


Figure 2 Paul Henry, *The Grand Canal Dock, Ringsend*, reproduction from charcoal drawing, from *A Book of Dublin*, 1929.

Hobson's remarks, brief as they are, would no doubt resonate with a contemporary political culture that preaches the virtues of a 'smart' or knowledge economy as the answer to unshackle Ireland from the grip of its current financial crisis. However, more significantly to the discussion that follows, the identification of the literary and intellectual achievements of Dublin's writers demonstrates an unwavering emphasis towards the textual as the dominant form for the creative perceptions that establish cultural impressions of the city. For Hobson, Dublin was not just a text to be read and deciphered as the reader navigated their way through its historical topographies and along its streetscapes, more importantly Dublin's architecture and civic spaces provided a spatial backdrop against which Hobson's list of great men of science and letters – and their literary and intellectual achievements – could be geographically situated. In a provocative intervention into both literary Irish studies and the cultural politics of Dublin's architecture and urban design, Andrew Kincaid remarks that 'one of the pitfalls that literary approaches of Dublin has led us into is that the textual city has come to take on a greater degree of reality and importance than the physical city', concluding that 'a city is more than language, more than pages of a book'.³ The aim of this publication is to begin to move out of the shadows cast by the literary tradition that dominates perceptions of Dublin explored in Irish studies scholarship, and to posit instead an expanded approach that is attuned to the pictorial and the textual as forms of visualizing the city. It is concerned with Dublin as an ocular experience that is both the subject of the viewers gaze and an instrument that shapes how the viewer looks at the spatial configurations of the city's streets, architecture, and monuments. In addition the book aims to explore how such cultural practices in turn shape the viewers experiences of the visualization of Dublin's historical memory.

Visualizing Dublin takes its place amongst a growing body of literature on urban Ireland in general and of Dublin in particular. In the introduction to a special issue of *Eire-Ireland* on Irish urban culture, Joseph Valente

3 Andrew Kincaid, *Postcolonial Dublin: Imperial Legacies and the Built Environment* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), pp. xix–xv.

notes that the city and its cultural effects 'has been seen to bear something of privative existence: it is a part of the country that is not of "the land" and as such detracts in some measure from the higher truth of the nation.'⁴ The apparent alien-ness of Dublin to the nation, for example, has even been commented upon by foreign travellers to the city. Writing to Karl Marx in 1856, Frederick Engels commented of the cultural distinctiveness of the city from the rest of the country by noting that it had 'quite the character of a small one-time capital, all English built too.'⁵ Despite the paucity of scholarly analysis of urban Ireland from the field of Irish studies there has been an increased interest in the cultural history of Dublin through studies of the city's architecture, urban planning and cultural geography. Survey histories such as Maurice Craig's classic *Dublin 1660–1860*, Siobhán Kilfeather's *Dublin: A Cultural and Literary History* and recently Padraig Yeates's more concentrated history *A City in Wartime: Dublin 1914–18*, have been joined by an increasing number of focused cultural histories in the form of monographs and edited volumes exploring the architecture, sculpture and cultural geography of the city.⁶ Yvonne Whelan's *Reinventing Modern Dublin*, and the 'Making of Dublin City' series have all provided ground-breaking insights into the links between the built environment and cultural politics, and the recent edited volume *Portraits of the City* has brought an added dimension to the study of Dublin's urban landscapes.⁷

4 Joseph Valente, 'Editor's Introduction' *Éire-Ireland* Vol. 45 No. 1&2 (2010), p. 6.

5 Frederick Engels, 'Engels to Marx', 23 May 1856 in *Marx-Engels: Ireland and the Irish Question* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971), p. 93.

6 Maurice Craig, *Dublin 1660–1860: The Shaping of a City* (Dublin: Liberties Press, 2006); Siobhán Kilfeather, *Dublin: A Cultural and Literary History* (Dublin: The Liffey Press, 2005); Padraig Yeates, *A City in Wartime: Dublin 1914–1918* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan).

7 Yvonne Whelan, *Reinventing Modern Dublin: Streetscape, Iconography and the Politics of Identity* (Dublin: UCD Press, 2003); J. Brady and A. Simms (eds), *Dublin Through Space & Time c. 900–1900* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001); Ruth McManus, *Dublin, 1910–1940: Shaping the City and Suburbs* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2002); Gary A. Boyd, *Dublin 1745–1922: Hospitals, Spectacle & Vice* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2005); Niamh Moore, *Dublin Docklands Reinvented: The Post-industrial Regeneration of a European Quarter* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2008).

With the exception of Kincaid's study of post-colonialism and urban planning, there has been less sustained analysis of Dublin from literary and cultural Irish studies. The aim of this collection of essays is to bring Irish studies together with a diverse range of disciplinary approaches to the study of Dublin, through an exploration of the city's visual culture. As an inter-disciplinary field visual culture studies provides a productive meeting point between the disciplines of architectural history, media studies, art history, cultural geography, sociology and literary Irish studies. It provides a space not only for comparison and dialogue between the different epistemological concerns of the humanities and social sciences, but also one of friction between theoretical models and conceptions of visual texts and experiences. Thus *Visualizing Dublin* further develops the potential for avenues of inquiry into the study of the city through its inter-disciplinary approach to the visual culture of Dublin by drawing together established and emerging scholars across the fields of literary Irish studies, art history, architecture, film studies, sociology and visual studies. In addition to exploring an alternative cultural history of Dublin, the book's contributors all bring distinctive historical methods, methodologies and analytical frameworks to the representation and everyday visual experiences of the city.

Visual Culture and Modern Dublin

Despite the profuse use of graphic imagery and illustrations throughout *A Book of Dublin* little commentary is offered on the role of the *visual* in forging historical and contemporary experiences of the city. Even when discussing the importance of the Irish Parliament's passing of the Act to establish the Commissioners for the Making of Wide and Convenient Streets and Passages in 1757 – an initiative that led to the reorientation of the geography of the city which subsequently established the foundations for the emergence of modern Dublin – the role of the planning and

architectural design of the built environment toward radically altering visual experiences of the streetscape are overlooked. As Edel Sheridan has observed, the 'eighteenth-century streetscapes of Dublin are a monument to the aesthetic ideals of the upper classes of that time, ideals that sprang from Ireland's openness to European influences and trends'.⁸ The forging of modern Dublin through the application of aesthetic philosophy to the built environment not only introduced new vistas to the streetscape through the opening up of urban space, but also ensured the interweaving of the visual and the political as Dublin was re-wrought as a representation of the political aspirations and ideologies of those who had the power to reconstruct the city's streetscape. As early as the previous century a speech made at the Tholsel declared 'Corporations are the creatures of the monarchy, and therefore, they have a particular obligation beyond other subjects at large to depend upon the monarchy and to uphold it,' suggesting that ultimately; 'this city may be an example to the greatest cities of the world, of a most submissive and implicit loyalty'.⁹ This civic loyalty, materialized in the visualized and visualizing effects of colonial urbanization, ensured that colonial rule was not just represented in the architecture and monarchical statuary dispersed across Dublin's streetscapes, but was also reproduced through the ocular experiences formed through the reorganization of the city's historical and mnemonic topographies. The opening up of urban space and the construction of vistas and streetscapes orientated the viewers gaze toward the monarchical statuary, monuments and buildings that expressed Dublin's position as a colonial city. Urban planning and vision became strategically coalesced around the ideology of colonialism to the extent that practices of looking at the cityscape, and the perspectives adopted through its pictorial representation, became increasingly inflected with the cultural politics of imperialism.

8 E. Sheridan, 'Designing the Capital City: Dublin c.1660–1810' in J. Brady and A. Simms (eds), *Dublin Through Space & Time* (Dublin: Four Courts Press), p. 71.

9 Sheridan, p. 72.



Figure 3 Frederick Holland Mares, *Sackville Street*, albumen print from *Photographs of Dublin with Descriptive Letterpress*, 1867.

The significance of the links between the architectural and visual restructuring of Dublin with the cultural politics of imperialism would surely not have been lost on the books editors and contributors, yet it received little acknowledgment. The publication of *A Book of Dublin* was itself bound to the shifting political terrain of the city and of the nation as a whole. The year of its publication, 1929, marked the reopening of the GPO on O'Connell Street after its destruction during the 1916 Easter Rising. The city also hosted a Civic Week in 1929 which included seven episodic performances of Micheál Mac Liammóir's *The Ford of the Hurdles: A Masque of Dublin* which as Joan Fitzpatrick Dean has observed brought 'history much closer to the present day,' while acknowledging 'the English colonial presence in Ireland'.¹⁰ A lavish spectacle of historical pageantry that combined modernist scenography with nationalist history in a public performance of nation building, *The Ford of the Hurdles* projected a distinctly Irish history told through the backdrop of the city. In addition Dublin Corporation was itself only recently re-established as an elected body after its suspension during the midst of the destruction of parts of the city due to the Civil War. At the time of its publication therefore, *A Book of Dublin* portrayed a city which was in its infancy in attempting to establish itself as the capital of a sovereign nation. The urban vistas and monarchical statuary that had been established by the Wide Street Commissioners to project Dublin as the second city of the Empire had been overlaid by the discourse of political nationalism, and the cultural myths of colonial resistance and revolution. Just beginning to become secreted into the urban fabric of Dublin's streetscapes, the narratives of rebellion, martyrdom and nationalism shifted the mnemonic significance of the city's dominant architectural buildings, monuments and thoroughfares. If the city is a text, then the syntax of Dublin was beginning to be re-written and read in a different way. Yet the urban geography of the colonial project was still present, not just in the built form of its architectural facades and grand monuments but also in the points of view, perspectives and vantage points that envisioned how the city was to be visually experienced.

10 Joan Fitzpatrick Dean, 'Rewriting the Past: Historical Pageantry in the Dublin Civic Weeks of 1927 and 1929', *New Hibernia Review* 13. 1. (2009), p. 36.

The imaginative urban geographies of colonialism such as that evidenced by the policies and tactics of the Wide Street Commissioners are at their core exercises in visual imperialism, not just reaching out to spatialize ideology but also extending the temporal reach of colonial history. Leaving its traces not only in the grandiose constructions of buildings and monuments but also in its rationalization of urban space, the colonial urban vision marks the historical topographies of cities through the 'scopic regimes' – to borrow Martin Jay's famous term – that established how the city was to be visually experienced.¹¹ The scopic regime of colonial urban vision – the effects of which could be found in the discursive depictions of the city in literary texts, prose and travelogues, and the material image objects of prints, drawings, paintings and later photographs and film, – might best be described as established structures of feeling, ocular experiences and modes of perception, communication and production of representations of urban space. Like ideology vision is all pervasive yet is not visible to the eye. Vision as such cannot be pictorially represented. All that can be identified are its affects. While Dublin may have been politically established as the capital city of the fledgling Irish Free state when *A Book of Dublin* was published, the affects of colonial urbanization stubbornly lingered across the cityscape and its representations. This spectre of colonial urbanization exists not just as inscriptions upon the Dublin streetscape, in bricks and mortar as it were, but more persistently in the ocular practices of looking and technologies of pictorial representation mobilized to structure a unified geographic representation of the city.

Yvonne Whelan has charted the contested practices of meaning making of the urban fabric of Dublin's streetscapes. For Whelan such contestation can be charted in everything from the politics of public statuary and civic urban design, to street naming within the project of nation building. Through what she identifies as the contested iconography of identity, Whelan has demonstrated how colonial urban design has clashed with the pursuit of national identity through architecture, monumental statuary and

11 M. Jay, 'Scopic Regimes of Modernity' in H. Foster (ed.), *Vision and Visuality* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1988), pp. 3–23.

city planning.¹² The effect of visual culture within this contestation of the politics of place is more than just the treatment of the city as palimpsest, more complex than Dublin's urban spaces as layered with the physical and discursive traces of conflicting histories. It also involves what Joan Ramon Resina has termed the 'after-image' of the city, the lingering image of urban space that continues to fill the ocular perception of the city after the pictorial or transient optical experience that stimulates the eye has vanished from view. For Resina, the concept of after-image 'denotes a visual sensation that lingers after the stimulus that provoked it has disappeared, and opens the idea of "image" to a cluster of theoretical possibilities based on temporal displacement, sequentiality, suppression and engagement'.¹³ The concept of after-image crucially accounts for those moments when cultural transformations which shift perceptions of the city are still inflected by the image of what political, architectural and violent transformation of urban space has sought to replace.

Ramon's concept of the city's after-image demonstrates how significant visual culture is to understanding how ocular perceptions, pictorial representations and visual experiences are to shaping understandings of Dublin's cultural history. Through such a theoretical paradigm it becomes significantly more possible to imagine how a publication such as *A Book of Dublin* in its role as forging new perceptions of the nation's capital city was still culturally inflected with the spectral imagery of colonialism and urban revolution. Even as late as 1967, the year following the fifty-year anniversary of the Easter Rising, V. S. Pritchett, writing in *Dublin: A Portrait* – a publication illustrated with photographs by the German photographer Evelyn Hofer – would remark; 'This city that looks more like London than any other in the British Isles is also the most foreign,' further exclaiming; 'If not foreign, Dublin is haunted by foreignness'. Pritchett was initially writing of the social relations of the city's inhabitants yet expressed similar

12 Yvonne Whelan, *Reinventing Modern Dublin: Streetscape, Iconography and the Politics of Identity* (Dublin: UCD Press, 2003).

13 Joan Ramon Resina, 'The Concept of After-Image and the Scopic Apprehension of the City' in Joan Ramon Resina and Dieter Ingenschay (eds), *After-Images of the City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 1.

sentiments when commenting on the appearance of the city's built environment; 'Dublin is a capital city and looks like one. It is the capital of what is now the Irish Republic, but the independent and republican phases are so short – forty years compared with, say 900 years of first clan or tribal and then colonial history – that the place is both less and more than it seems. One is confused by double vision and half-shades'.¹⁴ This oscillation between deficit and excess, and the unevenness of the cultural politics of place refracted through the city's architecture, urban planning and visual representation suggests an experience of Dublin not as a unitary geographical representation but as a vast visual montage of contending images that overlap, obscure and blend into each others' visualizing affects. Thus *A Book of Dublin*, despite its attempts to mask the city's urban space as configured by colonialism, or the spectacular rupture of the second city of the empire's main commercial thoroughfares and civic spaces by the destruction wrought on its architectural fabric by rebellion and later civil war, was nevertheless infused with the imagery and visualizing effects of the cultural history of Dublin as they bled through to a more politically ambiguous representation of the city. It is through such lingering traces of the after-image of Dublin, either in its spatial configuration in the image of those who have governed it, or the city's representation in literary texts, tourist travelogues, graphic imagery, cinema and photography, that the spectator is confronted time and again with the image of the past in the present. This image of the past which seeps through into the spectators' contemporary visual experience of the city is not simply a visual representation, such as an image bounded by the pictorial organization of space. Through its visual stimulus below the conscious threshold of retinal perception, the image of the past is secreted away in the material conditions of the city's shaping of optical perception itself. Walter Benjamin was to refer to this as architecture's ability to conform habit upon optical reception of the built environment, a sort of training of visual perception under the forces urban modernity.¹⁵ The continued impact of colonial urbanization is thus

14 V. S. Pritchett, *Dublin: A Portrait* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), pp. 21, 27.

15 Walter Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' in *Illuminations*, Trans. Harry Zohn (London: Fontana, 1992), p. 233.

not just through the visible traces and signs of colonialism marked upon the cityscape by statuary and architectural design, or indeed its pictorial representation, but more pervasively it is through the city's discursive reorganization of visual perception, its ordering and regulating of practices of looking at urban space that the after-image of Dublin's past continually confronts the contemporary spectator.

The essays collected in this book discuss the cultural history and visual representation of the city that frequently emerges as an after-image in the temporally displaced visual culture of Dublin. As much as they illuminate the cultural and visual history of Dublin through its architecture, planning, graphic illustration, sculpture, photography, cinema and graffiti in the discussion of individual case studies, they also question the role of visual culture in projecting a unified geographic representation of the city through publications such as *A Book of Dublin*. Collectively the essays instead portray a Dublin that exists as a set of overlapping representations; a collection of conceptual frameworks, built environments, image objects, and flickering imagery across screens that shape perceptions of the city. Since the mid-eighteenth century the cityscape – at least those parts of it that may be identified with modern Dublin – existed in the pictorial form of architectural drawings and plans before being built. Buildings and monuments became representations of the cultural aspirations, economic success and political ideologies of those who lived and governed the city. Drawings, paintings, photographs, television and cinema represented the city in ways that not so much reflected but shaped how the city would be visually perceived in colonial, post-colonial and national contexts. The existence of Dublin in these series of representations does not present itself as a chronological trajectory of pictorial image objects but as a sort of visual montage, an overlapping of ocular experiences and imagery that continually act as a form of friction with both existing and emerging visual representations and experiences. The essays collected in the pages that follow illuminate some of the histories of the visual culture of Dublin that are frequently overlaid or grate against contemporary visual experiences of the city.

This Book of Dublin

This particular book of Dublin is organized into four sections each comprising three essays. The opening section, *Architecture, Identity, Place* consists of a series of explorations of Dublin loosely orientated around the relationship between architecture, representation and the politics of identity. In the context of this section, representation does not only refer to the pictorial depiction of Dublin architecture but also to the city's architecture itself as a representation of established and emerging political identities. In the opening chapter, Jeffrey A. Cohen discusses Henry Shaw's *New City Pictorial Directory* published in 1850. Frequently cited in histories of Dublin and its illustrations reproduced to graphically depict commercial buildings of historical interest, *Shaw's Directory* has its own particular history within the visual culture of Dublin. As Cohen demonstrates, the graphic depiction of the Dublin streetscape as a commercial enterprise was linked to the phenomenon of publishing illustrated street directories that appeared in cities across Europe and North America from the mid-nineteenth century. Commenting on Shaw's promotion of the venture in mercantile and nationalistic terms, Cohen explores how the graphic representation of the frontal views of commercial buildings were anchored by the elaborate depiction of more public buildings, thus ensuring that *Shaw's Directory* contributed to forging an image of commercial streetscapes linked to the urban space and visual memory of Dublin.

Ian Morley's detailed account of the politics of design and planning of the Royal College of Science and Government Buildings in the early twentieth century, charts the relations between civic design and cultural identity. Discussing the relationship of architectural planning and building materials to the cultural politics of imperialism and an emerging nationalism, Morley's essay identifies how the debates of civic design reflected the tensions between Dublin's colonial administrators and the growing influence of nationalism within city planning. In contrast to the large public edifices of Edwardian Dublin discussed by Morley, Gary A. Boyd's contribution to the relations of architecture and cultural politics identifies ephemeral

architecture as a salient feature of Dublin's cultural history. For Boyd, ephemeral architecture is closely aligned with temporary appropriations of urban space that mobilize transient architectural forms in expressions of political idealism, religious devotion and cultural identity. Discussing a range of such practices from the eighteenth century to the twenty-first, he argues that such accelerated architectural practices can respond immediately to emerging political and economic shifts within urban culture.

The essays in the next section, *Modernity, Cinema, Cityscape*, explore issues of technological modernity, popular culture and cinema through specific case studies associated with the Dublin cityscape. Amongst the advertisements in *A Book of Dublin* is a promotion endorsing a visit to 'The Electricity House' on Grafton Street.¹⁶ Sean Mannion's essay on the culture of electrification and street lighting explores this emerging phenomenon of technological modernity on Dublin's cityscape in the early twentieth century. Beginning with a discussion of the peripheral place of the city within Revivalist culture, he traces the spectacle of the electrification of Edwardian Dublin's streetscapes and events such as the Irish International Exhibition of 1907. Through these examples, Mannion identifies urban electrification as characteristic of the uneven modernization of colonial Dublin.

The following two essays examine the different effects of cinema on the cityscape. The first discusses the emergence of cinemas on Dublin's streetscape during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Denis Condon's essay on early cinema in the city begins by distinguishing the nomenclature of the 'picture house' as denoting the actual building that accommodated cinemagoers, from 'cinema' which designated the cultural institution that exhibited film. Condon's essay traces how the exhibition spaces that eventually came to be described generically as 'cinemas' transformed the geography of popular entertainment not only in the city centre but also in Dublin's suburbs as cinemas began to cater for specific audiences in different parts of the city. Paula Gilligan's essay on the French set designer Alexandre Trauner's role in the production of Yves Allégret's *La Jeune Folle* explores issues of inter-culturalism, scenography and the construction of

Dublin as cinematic space. Discussing Trauner's 1952 visit to the city in preparation for designing the scenography for Allégret's film of Civil War Dublin, Gilligan examines the influence of post-war French photography and cinema on the filmic cityscape created for the French cinemagoer.

The section *Art, Politics, Imaginative Geographies* includes three essays addressed to issues of the representation of politics and the politics of representation as they relate to how Dublin is perceived as place in the context of colonialism and nationalism. Justin Carville's essay on photography and the representation of the city's slums, examines the role of photography within discourses of urban poverty in late Victorian through to post Edwardian Dublin. Discussing debates about the photograph as evidence which emerged in two judicial reports into the social conditions of the city's working classes in 1913, Carville's essay explores how photography contributed to the spatializing of urban poverty in colonial Dublin. Identifying the intersection of aesthetics, religion and social reform within photographic discourse he proposes that photographs of Dublin's slums contributed to geographical imaginings of the city that transgressed conceptions of colonial Dublin formed through the mobilization of urban planning by the Wide Street Commissioners.

The following two essays examine different expressions of nationalism through the Dublin's streetscapes. Síghle Bhreathnach-Lynch's essay discusses the ideological issues surrounding political sculpture on Dublin's streetscapes throughout the tumultuous period which ushered in the formation of the Irish Republic. Examining specific monuments erected from the early twentieth century, she explores the tensions surrounding the emergence of political sculpture before and after independence to examine questions around the expression of political ideologies through the erection of sculpture and monuments in public space. Through a careful analysis of the cultural politics that contextualized the erection of political monuments, Bhreathnach-Lynch's essay demonstrates how debates of nationalism and art in one historical period continue to have a salient effect on contemporary political discourse. Jennifer Way's essay on the role of the generic photographic depiction of O'Connell Street from the 1950s through to the early 1960s as projecting an image of Ireland's economic and commercial modernization, explores the significance of the period prior

to Lemass's economic rationalization of urban space. Beginning with the wide circulation of the stock photo of O'Connell Street in tourist publications and the wider print media, Way relates such visual expressions of the nation's modernity to the artist Sean Hillen's post-modern series of photo-montages *Irelantis* to expose the myths surrounding the nation's modernity as a radical rupture with the historical pastoralism it seemingly discards.

The aim of *Visualizing Dublin* is not only to explore the cultural history of Dublin through its pictorial representation and spatial configurations as a way of addressing questions of Irishness through alternative paradigms of cultural analysis. The book is also concerned with opening up the disciplinary scope of visual culture studies within the broader field of Irish studies. The inter-disciplinary framework of visual culture has left it open to easy appropriation by competing areas within the arts, humanities and social sciences to the extent that there are distinct disciplinary emphases of visual culture ranging from art-historical perspectives to cultural geography. Just as there are contending definitions of 'culture' between the arts and humanities and the social sciences, so too are there competing designations of visual culture. These are frequently manifested not only in differing methodologies but also in how visual materials are analysed as cultural forms. What has frequently been overlooked in Irish studies approaches to visual culture is that the field has been hugely influenced by the social sciences through what is usually referred to as 'visual studies'. In keeping with the inter-disciplinary ethos taken in this book, the final section *History, Aestheticization, Globalization* comprises essays by authors who employ sociological and ethnographic approaches to the visual culture of Dublin. The opening essay by Christopher Lowe discusses contemporary responses to architectural preservation of Georgian Dublin through the discussion forum of the online Irish architecture magazine *Archiseek*. Through an examination of online debates regarding the exclusion of 'Dutch Billies' from an official state proposal to have Georgian Dublin declared a UNESCO World Heritage site, Lowe draws on the writings of Theodor Adorno to explore how online respondents framed their postings within discourses of authenticity when debating the significance of Georgian architectural heritage.

Eamonn Slater's essay on a suburban housing estate in Ballybrack, provides a sociological analysis of how photography visualizes antiquity within the spatial construction of suburban development during the Celtic Tiger. Beginning with an analysis of the dialectical process of the photographic visualization of antiquity, Slater exposes the reification of history through its carefully crafted aestheticization in the process of speculative housing development. Writing on modernity's spatial configurations of history Sigfried Kracauer was to exclaim; 'it is as if the world itself has taken on a photographic face', as Slater's essay suggests, housing construction during the Celtic Tiger involved complex processes of aestheticizing history as part of the visualizing effects of suburban development.¹⁷ Speculative development was bound up with the suburban estates 'photographability'. The final essay by Silvia Loeffler employs a different sociological approach to Lowe and Slater in that she embarks in what might be described as sociology of visual culture inflected with *flânerie* in the exploration of what she terms the blind spaces of Dublin's visual culture. As Chris Jenks has noted sociology is no longer caught up with the empiricism of observation. The strategies of the urban *flâneur* have provided a methodological structure for sociological observation; 'as an artful and interested encounter with the play of signifiers that make up the various semantic outcomes of epistemological engagement'.¹⁸ Loeffler's essay traces what Tim Creswell has identified as those spaces of transgression that are out of place with established senses of belonging to urban place, those public spaces marked by graffiti and stencilling.¹⁹ She maps Dublin's blind spots in a process of subjective critical reflection on the city's visual culture, exploring the significance of sensory experiences of desire and belonging in public space.

17 Sigfried Kracauer 'Photography' in *The Mass Ornament: Weimar Essays*, trans. Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 58.

18 Chris Jenks, 'Watching Your Step: The History and Practice of the *Flâneur*' in Chris Jenks (ed.), *Visual Culture* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 145.

19 Tim Cresswell, *In Place/Out of Place: Geography, Ideology and Transgression* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

Conclusion

Commenting on the National Lottery's 2010 advertising campaign in an online article for *Antenna*, Diane Negra observes that:

The Dublin represented by the ad is notable for two particular features – its heavy visual concentration on the corporate city centre (privileging locations like the newly-opened Convention Centre and the Samuel Beckett Bridge in particular and the International Services Centre and Docklands districts in general) and its careful multiculturalism – two elements that were central to Ireland's economic transformation and self-imaging during the Celtic Tiger years. Thus, the ad's transfixing effect on audiences is rooted partly in its symbolic reinstatement of the social and economic conditions of the boom.²⁰

At the moment the state was in the midst of economic collapse the visualization of Dublin was re-orientated towards the configurations of corporate urbanization. The colonial streetscape that dominated visual perceptions of the city since the eighteenth century has been replaced by a new visual perspective, an alternative vantage point which seeks to excise the past. National Lottery advertisements, intros to RTE and TV₃ broadcasts of televisual tabloid journalism and dramas, political party broadcasts and corporate advertising have all incorporated the view from the south across the Samuel Beckett Bridge as recurring visual trope in the depiction of Dublin. This re-orientation of the mediated vista of the cityscape is more than a shift in pictorial organization of urban space. As Negra's analysis suggests, it marks a new phase of investment in visual culture within the ideology of nation. Seemingly devoid of architectural markers of the past it projects an image of Dublin as a modern, globalized and globalizing city. Even the inscription of the city's 'Irishness' through the avant-garde literary figure of Beckett does not gesture towards history but rather a liberal conception of the creative industries that rests more easily with the

20 Diane Negra, 'Over the Rainbow: Selling the National Lottery in Post Celtic Tiger Ireland', *Antenna*, <<http://blog.com.martins.wisc.edu/2010/10/08/over-the-rainbow-selling-the-national-lottery-in-post-celtic-tiger-ireland>>. Accessed 25 October 2012.

myth of a knowledge economy. But, as Negra notes, this too is an image of a more recent past, a trauma that such recent visualizations of the city attempt to mask. Dublin's visual culture needs to be explored not only for what is revealed in the city's pictorial representations and their ideological effects but also for what is hidden by them. Analysis of the cultural history of Dublin requires attention to those visual phenomena of the urban fabric that remain outside the perceptual field that is established by visualizations of the city. A few hundred yards down river from the National Convention Centre on the North side of the river, a space that is outside the frame of the corporate Dublin projected through advertisements such as the National Lottery campaign, is the relic of the once proposed headquarters of the Anglo Irish Bank. A monument to the myth of the Celtic Tiger, it is reminder that the past will always have the potential to bleed through emerging configurations of Dublin's visual culture.

