

## Onderzoeksberichten

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*Performing the Past, Staging the Future:  
Memory, Modernity, and (Inter)nationalist  
Identities at the Dublin Gate Theatre, 1928-  
1957*

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In October 1928, Hilton Edwards (1903-1982) and Micheál MacLiammóir (1899-1978) founded the Dublin Gate Theatre, which mostly produced Continental modernist plays in a uniquely avant-garde setting. Although perceived as a 'director's theatre' with an imported repertoire, the Gate not only remedied the nationalist insularity of the early twentieth-century Irish stage, which was dominated by the politically sponsored Abbey Theatre, but also produced the works of several new Irish playwrights. Engaging with Ireland's conflicted history, memory, and identity, these writers sought to break the strictures of conservative drama and explore alternatives to the sociocultural conservatism of their Celtic Revivalist predecessors as well as the Abbey Theatre's – and the censorious government's – equally contestable notions of Irishness.

Drawing on recent developments in postcolonial memory theory, my project explores how this revolutionary theatre endeavoured to perform Ire-

land's troubled cultural memory on-stage, acknowledging the tension between modernist poetics and traditionalist politics that mostly fostered repression of the nation's past and anxiety about its future. In so doing, I will also be scrutinising *Motley*, the Theatre's house journal, which offers valuable insights in the Gate's attempts at self-fashioning its cultural and (inter)nationalist stance. *Motley* was edited by journalist and Gate playwright Mary Manning and appeared from March 1932 until May 1934 in nineteen roughly bi-monthly issues; in addition to local theatrical news and editorials, *Motley* also boasted contributions by such writers as John Betjeman, Cyril Cusack, and Francis Stuart. The magazine's title refers to the (pseudo-)fool Jaques's request in *As You Like It* to '[i]nvest me in my motley. Give me leave / To speak my mind', suggesting the creation of an open forum for theatrical discussion.

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*When Language Runs Dry: Self Expression  
and Personal Zines*

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The aim of my PhD research within the project Back to the Book is to examine self expression in personal zines, and to look specifically at the proliferation of zines in these digital times. Zines are hand-made, non-professionally, non-commercially produced and distributed personal manuscripts. Distributed on street corners or through regular mail, personal zines are paper-based modes of networked self-expression with their own matter, infrastructure, and modes of distribution. Zines constitute a verbal-visual medium in which the style and formatting of text (original or appropriated) is an integral narrative device, with such techniques as cut-and-paste, handwriting, and innovative font layouts that mediate the experiences of a subject.

During the course of my research I became struck by the number of zines I found which sought to describe the inexpressible: zines like *When Language Runs Dry* which describes experiences of chronic pain, and *This Frantic Silence* which describes experiences of depression are just two examples of a proliferation of perzines that express experiences of pain and disability. The titles of those zines allude to silence, but their existence is an expression of communication. To understand how zines might be able to express experiences for which there are no words would lead I think to a complex investigation into the page as a bearer of visual text, and the zine as a sculptural 'text object'.

Taking the framing metaphor of the paper trail as a starting point for this research, I aim to examine zines as paper

trails in two senses: firstly as an object that calls attention to its 'paper-ness' everywhere it goes it illuminates a very contemporary preoccupation with the endurance of the analog in relation to the digital. This trail that the zine leads us on is a one which traverses questions and debates of materiality, and the changing significance of paper-based literature in the digital age.

Another sense that I consider the zine to act as a paper trail is that through its migratory, nomadic nature, it leads us into many community constellations such as memory projects, festivals and archives. An understanding of the changing cultural significance of zines as a medium of personal expression would also entail an understanding of these constellations.

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*De historische Republiek*


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Tot nu toe worden de geschiedenis van het politieke denken en de geschiedenis van de geschiedschrijving zelden systematisch verbonden in studies naar de laat-achttiende-eeuwse Republiek. Toch zijn het denken over politiek, tijd en geschiedenis in een turbulente overgangperiode als het einde van de achttiende eeuw onlosmakelijk verbonden. Zo maken conservatieven en revolutionairen gebruik van rivaliserende interpretaties van het verleden bij het legitimeren dan wel bekritisieren van de bestaande politieke orde. In het NWO-project *The Historical Republic* staat deze verwevenheid van politiek en historisch denken centraal.

Het belang van de periodieke pers in de laatste twee decennia van de achttiende eeuw is onomstreden. De vele periodieken boden in de Patriottentijd zowel een podium voor de ontwikkeling en verspreiding van patriotse ideeën als voor orangistische reacties hierop. Hoewel de Bataafse Republiek wordt gekenmerkt door constitutiedebatten in het eerste Nederlandse parlement, spelen periodieken ook in deze periode een belangrijke rol. Niet op de laatste plaats doordat veel publicisten eveneens politiek actief waren.

Politiek georiënteerde tijdschriften als *De Democraten*, *De Republikein* en *Janus Verrezen* vormen dan ook een belangrijk onderdeel van mijn bronnen-corpus. In deze periodieken worden uiteenlopende tijdsconcepties en verschillende visies op het Nederlandse verleden, de Klassieke Oudheid en de natuurlijke ontwikkeling van samenlevingen verbonden aan specifieke politieke

debatten. Vanwege al deze verbanden, en de vanzelfsprekende wijze waarop ze worden gelegd, vormen tijdschriften een uitstekende bron om de historische en temporele dimensie van het politieke denken in de laat-achttiende-eeuwse Republiek te bestuderen.

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