Hooleygan: Music, Mayhem and Good Vibrations

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in, or haunted by, ancient Ireland », Mangan doit, selon Joseph Lennon, être situé dans le contexte culturel plus vaste d'une véritable vision, « *distinguishing an Irish past to create an Irish future* ». Allant encore plus loin, Cóilin Parsons écoute une voix qui, à l'instar de Goethe et de la *Weltliteratur*, certes avec des différences, vise à saisir la totalité du monde « *in all its glorious and gruesome reality* ». Dans *Ulysses* Stephen Dedalus est peint « *in the gothic shadow of Mangan's restless ghost* », écrit John McCourt : Mangan est un « *internal exile* », à la fois emblème et victime de son pays, écrivain si novateur que même Joyce « *struggled to keep up with him* ». Au sein des débats contemporains sur les pouvoirs respectifs de la science et du spiritualisme, Anne Jamison étudie la « *spiritualist vastation* » d'un homme fasciné par figure du magicien et par le surnaturel, pour qui la réalité n'est sans doute qu'une illusion. Vu la complexité déroutante d'une œuvre qui échappe à toute orthodoxie, Sean Ryder (« *Unauthorized Mangan* ») conclut : « *Every edition is a construct... The fantasy of getting back to the original is absurd in a fundamental sense* » : à chacun son Mangan. Dans « *Mangan in England* », Matthew Campbell dresse un parallèle convaincant entre Browning et Mangan, « *writing a contorted art in terrible times* », pour révéler, dans le contexte victorien, le sens profond de la marginalité d'un poète qui, sous le masque de « *Selber* » dans « *Twenty Golden Years ago* », se disait « *tortured torturer of reluctant rhymes* ».

Rappelant les acquis et ouvrant en même temps de nouvelles perspectives, ce recueil d'essais fait honneur à Sinéad Sturgeon et aux auteur(e)s. Bibliographie, index et notes le complètent pour constituer un remarquable outil de travail. Sur la couverture d'une élégante reliure, verte bien sûr, se détache l'énigmatique silhouette noire de « *l'homme à la cape* », comme une invitation à s'aventurer plus loin, en sa compagnie, dans un territoire où beaucoup reste à découvrir.

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Terri HOOLEY, Richard SULLIVAN, *Hooleygan: Music, Mayhem and Good Vibrations*, Belfast, Blackstaff, 2010, 234 p. ISBN 978 0 85640 851 9

First published in 2010, two years before the release of the film *Good Vibrations* film which was based on Terry Hooley's life and which renewed interest in Northern Ireland's 1970s punk scene, *Hooleygan: Music, Mayhem, Good Vibrations* is a biography written by journalist Richard Sullivan and is based on his conversations with Terri Hooley and his entourage. The book begins with an account of how Hooley acquired his glass eye: when he was six years old, a stray toy arrow

shot by a neighbour blinded him in his left eye, and as the young boy climbed into the ambulance, the Hank Williams song “I Saw the Light” played in his mind. The tale of the accident brings together the two factors that would define Hooley’s life: his status as an outsider and a passion for popular music. As the son of a church-going Methodist and an English socialist, the one-eyed eccentric never identified with the sectarian politics of the loyalist East Belfast street he grew up in or with that of Northern society at large. While the first chapters of the book deal with Hooley’s life before the onset of the Troubles – his first sexual encounters, his involvement with various 1960s counter-culture groups and the drugs and sex parties where he acted as DJ – the central chapters are devoted to the 1970s and 1980s, by which time hippie optimism had given way to a climate of increased sectarianism. Hooley, who identified fully with neither side of the Northern Ireland conflict, concentrated on his passion for music. In 1977, despite the volatility of inner Belfast, he opened up a record shop, Good Vibrations, in the centre of the city. It soon became one of the focal points of the North’s burgeoning punk scene, which helped bring young people together regardless of their religious or class background. Hooley also started a record label on which the singles of some of the scene’s most important bands were released and which came to the attention of the wider world of punk music, but failed to attract the commercial success that the bands had hoped for – the Undertones being the notable exception. The rest of the book charts the flagging fortunes of his various record shops and music projects while stressing his continuing love of music and unfaltering embrace of the rock’n’roll lifestyle.

In the introduction to *Hooleygan*, Glen Patterson writes that “the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth only applies in a court of law. The unlikely, the improbable, the frankly incredible, are acceptable if the punch line is good enough”. This may make for a compelling story, but recourse to such literary license is problematic, especially when applied to the highly collaborative punk scene. The back cover states that Hooley is the “undisputed Godfather of Punk” in Northern Ireland, and the biography, along with the 2012 *Good Vibrations* film, give credence to that narrative. The focus on Hooley’s involvement in the world of music occasionally runs the risk of diverting from the contribution of other key facilitators and of playing down the agency of the young punks themselves. However, there is no denying that Terry Hooley played a crucial role by championing the Northern punk scene and by putting his energy, his contacts, and his material and financial resources at the disposal of young bands, often with the awareness that it was not in the interest of business. Besides, the book’s tendency to overplay the part played by its antihero as well as its colourful tales of drug- and alcohol-fuelled parties, encounters with rock icons and fisticuffs are well-established within the genre of rock biography. What sets *Hooleygan* apart is

the way in which the realities of the Troubles and of the North's peripheral nature are shown to intersect with and complicate the usual challenges faced by actors of the music world: efforts such as organizing a festival, finding a venue, managing a band, going on tour or dealing with the barons of the music industry become significantly more difficult when one has to deal with sectarian tensions, hostile local authorities, security forces and paramilitaries. But this is no grim account of the Northern conflict: on the whole, Richard Sullivan has managed to capture Terri Hooley's buoyancy and charisma – no easy feat when considering his idiosyncratic speech pattern and the fact that his anecdotes are best told in person – but what truly brings Hooley to life are the short interstitial testimonies written by a range of people associated with the North's music scene, which act as a chorus and as a counterweight to the larger-than-life voice that sometimes threatens to become overpowering, and which remind the reader that *Hooleygan* is at its heart a love letter to music and to Belfast.

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Jennifer BIRKETT, *Undoing Time: The Life and Work of Samuel Beckett*, Sallins, Irish Academic Press, 2015, XII + 226 p., ISBN: 978 0 7165 3290 3.

This new monograph by Jennifer Birkett, Emeritus Professor of French Studies at the University of Birmingham, explores the paradox inherent in the concept of “undoing time” in Beckett's work. While “doing one's time” initially refers to jail slang to describe prisoners waiting for the moment when they are released, with Beckett, every man has to *do* his time on Earth, oscillating between tedium and suffering, waiting more or less eagerly or consciously for the liberation that is death, like Krapp's “intense longing for death: ‘drowned in dreams and burning to be gone’” in *Krapp's Last Tape*, (132). Birkett though is not satisfied with this univocal claustrophobic dark reading of Beckett. She highlights the converse process of *undoing* time in his writings. To do so, she looks chronologically, in seven chapters, at Beckett's poetry, novels, shorter prose, theatrical works and then again shorter dramatic works to identify a refining process in Beckett's treatment of time and failure. Her book investigates Beckett's collaboration with the BBC Radio and Television – in chapter 7 – as well as his bash at cinema with Alan Schneider in *Film* in 1967.

Negation, substraction, alongside a fierce lucid sense of humour – as in *Molloy* or *Endgame* – are Beckett's best known weapons. These, Birkett posits, allow