

## Revisiting Ballybogoin – lines, traces and tidemarks in the Irish borderlands

By Dorte Jagetic Andersen

The paper takes as its point of departure the book *The Troubles in Ballybogoin* from 2003 where the American anthropologist William F. Kelleher examined ethnographically the everyday practice of borderlands inhabitants in Northern Ireland; what they do, who they interact with and where they move. He found that these social practices were over-determined by the social memory (Assmann 2003) of division and political identity narrating around two periods of time: the Troubles and the Island's British Imperial Past. In dialogue with Kelleher, thus also relying on Kelleher's use of de Certeau's understanding of spatial cultural practices (1985), and with the inclusion of Sarah Green's seminal work on lines, traces, and tidemarks (2018), I revisit the Irish borderland twenty years after Kelleher and more than twenty years after the Good Friday Agreement. I show how these borderlands are still deeply influenced by the memory of conflicts dividing populations, places, and artifacts. The social memory informing everyday practice have today been collectively stabilized, also materially in the landscape as well as in the cityscapes with an ever-present rearticulation of physical divisions by walls and fences and related symbolism. In these borderlands, not only popular storytelling about the conflicts survives, but also a multiplicity of practices associated with them, turning the landscape ghostlike and making supposedly past conflicts continue to haunt the everyday life of people living there.

Assmann, A. (2006) 'Memory, Individual and Collective'. In: Robert E. Goodin & Charles Tilly (ed.): *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis*. Oxford 2006, 210-224.

de Certeau, M (1985) *The Practices of Everyday Life*. University of California Press.

Green, S. (2018) 'Lines, traces and tidemarks'. In: O. Demetriou and R. Dimova, eds. *The political materialities of borders: new theoretical directions*, Manchester University Press, 67–83.

Kelleher, W.F. (2003) *The Troubles in Ballybogoin. Memory and Identity in Northern Ireland*. University of Michigan Press.

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