

Ar Seachrán sa Lios: Reterritorialising Narratives of Fairy Abductions in Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill's Bean an Leasa Poems

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Abstract: This article analyses the motif of fairy abduction in the works of contemporary Irish-language poet Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill. It draws particular attention to Ní Dhomhnaill's series of Bean an Leasa poems, from her collections *Féar Suaithinseach* (1984) and *Feis* (1991). The fairy woman who gives her name to the two series of poems abducts humans and takes the narrator hostage, depriving them of their free will. Ní Dhomhnaill depicts characters crossing the threshold of worlds, in-between the real and the Other- worlds, in-between fiction and reality, in-between the Irish and English languages. This study examines the significance of liminality in the Bean an Leasa poems. Whether it be the characters, straddling the border between two worlds, the language, or the poems themselves, partaking of the folk tradition while being a contemporary piece of literature, the Bean an Leasa poems are inherently liminal. This articulates the liminality of moving between languages, places and cultures, which is inherent to her whole oeuvre. Ní Dhomhnaill's reuse of Irish folk tradition is studied under the light of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of de/reterritorialisation, and thus the main contention is that her rewritings of Bean an Leasa are a reterritorialisation of Irish folklore as well as a means of articulating the poet's own experience of linguistic liminality and of reterritorialisation.

Keywords: Irish-language poetry, Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, fairy abduction, liminality, deterritorialisation.