Paul Fagan, Dieter Fuchs, Tamara Radak (eds.)

STAGE IRISH

PERFORMANCE, IDENTITY, CULTURAL CIRCULATION

Irish Studies in Europe

Volume

10

Irish Studies in Europe is a series of peer-reviewed publications in Irish Studies.

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The collection is offered in Werner Huber's memory.

June 2021

Paul Fagan
Dieter Fuchs
Tamara Radak

INTRODUCTION:
TRANSCULTURAL REFRACTIONS AND RECEPTIONS OF IRISHNESS ON PAGE, STAGE, AND SCREEN

Paul Fagan, Dieter Fuchs, Tamara Radak

The Stage Irishman, Maebh Long writes, "cast[s] a long shadow" (37). For evidence of the endurance of the stock stereotype, which critics have traced back as far as the sixteenth century, we need only note the online response to the 2020 trailer for *Wild Mountain Thyme*, John Patrick Shanley's film adaptation of his play *Outside Mullingar*. Nate Jones documents the fall-out to "the film's *bejaysus*-ly broad depiction of Ireland":

> When the film's trailer dropped in November, seemingly all of Ireland was united in savaging the project. "What in the name of holy bejaysus and all the suffering saints is this benighted cowpat?" asked one columnist. Said a YouTube commenter: "This is worse than the Famine." (n.p.)

Séamas O'Reilly coined the term "spudface" to describe Christopher Walken and Emily Blunt's "mangled Irish accents" in the film (n.p.), a term that both acknowledges a history of Irish oppression through representation and ironises that history from a twenty-first-century vantage. In interview with Jones, O'Reilly situates the trailer's reception within this complex legacy of the Stage Irish stereotype in contemporary Ireland:

> [T]here's a […] history of Irishness being portrayed in ways that are, I would say, objectively harmful. Thankfully, there's been an evolution in the standing of Irish people. I think we've become less of a bedraggled, loathed, vermin class of people that we were often portrayed as, in everything from *Punch* cartoons to British radio serials to American anti-Irish propaganda. Then in the '50s and '60s, it was more of a silly, simplistic, quite sentimental view of Ireland. Now it's kind of just a mishmash of weird stereotypes and odd touchstones, most of which were invented in America.
>
> Most of the time, it's actually just laughable, and I think […] *Wild Mountain Thyme* […] kind of transgressed being offensive. Irish people don't take themselves that seriously. We understand where we are in the pecking order of aggrieved peoples. […] [W]e are ruthlessly sarcastic and incredibly eager to engage with these myths about ourselves because we find them really entertaining. It brings people together. In the absence of having a right to be genuinely offended, we at least preserve the right to mercilessly take the piss. (Jones n.p.)

The contention that in contemporary Ireland, and especially in online discourse, such hetero-stereotypes have become fodder for community-building humour is evidenced in the positive response that met the 18 March 2019 episode of *This Time with Alan Partridge* (S1 E4), a spoof of current affairs programmes broadcast by BBC One. In the episode's last segment, Steve Coogan plays both Alan Partridge and Partridge's Irish double, Martin Brennan, a crooked-toothed and thickly accented Irish farmer

who ambushes the show by singing Irish rebel songs ("Oh my god, that was like an advert for the IRA," Partridge mutters on mic over the closing credits). The Irish broadcaster RTÉ declared it to be the "TV moment of the year" (Anon., "Watch" n.p.).

The distinction between the negative response to the romanticised, but ultimately timid, American 'Oirish' fantasy portrayed in *Wild Mountain Thyme*, and the positive response to the provocative portrayal of the cunning, rural, rebel-rousing Brennan for BBC One's primarily English audience, is worthy of note. In part, the discrepancy can be attributed to the knowledge that Coogan himself has Irish ancestry: "The decisions I make on comedy aren't made on a whim. That whole history between the British and the Irish runs through me," he tells Donald Clarke of *The Irish Times* (n.p.). More substantially, the difference lies in the fact that while *Wild Mountain Thyme* offers a fetishised, nostalgic simulation of an Ireland that was always a Hollywood construction to begin with, Coogan's Stage Irish performance carries a subversive political edge. Coogan's persona is distinguished from the wholly non-ironised performances of Shanley's film through an underlying satire, which creates an ironic double exposure to distinctly conceptualisable audiences: to an imagined English audience for whom Brennan might well be the butt of the joke in his fulfilment of long-circulated stereotypical representations of the Irish across media; to an idealised Irish audience, who discern an act of resistance in the visible discomfort that Brennan creates for his English host Partridge, and who can perceive the humour, and historical significance, of Coogan leveraging this Stage Irish conceit to sing "The Men Behind the Wire" and "Come Out Ye Black and Tans" on the BBC.

Rather than relics of Ireland's colonial past, the figures of the Stage Irishman and Stage Irishwoman retain their power in the twenty-first century to stereotype and Other Irish national identity in ways that can still provoke outrage. Yet, they also preserve a certain vibrant potential – in the tradition of Jonathan Swift's *A Modest Proposal*, Maria and Richard Edgeworth's *An Essay on Irish Bulls*, or G. B. Shaw's *John Bull's Other Island* – for resisting, ridiculing, or renegotiating such contemporary representations through ironic communal humour and sharp-edged political satire. Less a rigid, historicised stereotype of a previous phase of national identity formation, then, Stage Irishry remains central to contemporary attempts to perform, negotiate, and deconstruct 'Irishness' before diverse national and international gazes by engaging, earnestly or ironically, with prevalent myths about Irish selfhood.

Stage Irish: Performance, Identity, Cultural Circulation brings together chapters which revisit and reconsider these diverse modes of (mis)representing, performing, articulating, witnessing, constructing, and deconstructing 'Irishness' from a twenty-first-century vantage. The time is ripe for such an inquiry. The Celtic Tiger and Brexit, the Marriage Equality referendum and the #Repealthe8th and #WakingTheFeminists campaigns compel us to turn to history and representation (in literature, drama, art, music, film, television, non-fiction, popular and digital culture) to reassess how 'Irishness' has been shaped and reshaped through parochial, national, and international

performances and gazes as a variously class-coded, gendered, sexual, religious, national, and artistic identity. This focus on the cultural, societal, historical, and political interfaces between performance, performativity, spectatorship, and identity in diverse Irish and international contexts reveals tensions between self-image and Othering, innovation and cliché, cultural production and negotiated reception.

Our wager is that this collection's return to a critical commonplace of Irish Studies is warranted given the fact that while the Stage Irish trope is often referenced, it is, in fact, seldom interrogated in a sustained way. Of course, one need not read too widely to find informed histories and insightful applications of the specific stereotypes of Stage Irishry (as distinct from discussions of representations of Irish identity more broadly), particularly in studies of Irish drama and film.[1] And yet, there has not been a monograph dedicated exclusively to historicising and re-theorising the specific character type of the Stage Irishman for over a decade, and most of the major works on the topic are over half a century old.[2] Given the significant changes that Irish Studies broadly, and theorisations of national identity and its representation more specifically, have undergone over the last decades, we believe that it is now essential to re-evaluate one of the core concepts of the field from new historical vantages and theoretical perspectives.

The chapters gathered here relaunch and reframe key debates concerning Stage Irish representations through a number of interrelated strategies. First, they re-evaluate authors and texts that have been decanonised and neglected through an often superficial, dehistoricised evaluation of their Stage Irish figures and scenes (William Maginn, Francis Sylvester Mahony, Charles Lever, Dion Boucicault). What these chapters discover is that upon closer inspection, such authors' representations of 'Irishness' are often more nuanced, complex, and political than their legacies as purveyors of Paddywhackery permit. To give one relevant example, while he is often understood to be the origin of the modern sentimentalised, buffoonish Stage Irishman, in recent years critics such as Deirdre McFeely have shown us that Boucicault was a much more politically engaged writer than his critical standing allows. For instance, in *Arrah-na-Pogue* (1864), Boucicault has his Irish characters on stage sing "The Wearing of the Green," about the repression of supporters of the 1798 Irish Rebellion, as Fenian sentiments were rising in the world outside the theatre. Perhaps, then, de-

1 As a non-exhaustive sampling, we think of Kiberd, *The Irish Writer* (21-41), Hayton (1-24), Trotter (35-72), Long (34-53), Nowatzki (162-84), Cave (62-128), Graves (29-38), Flynn (121-47), Rogers (146-59). Other equally important examples are cited throughout the volume.

2 The main extended studies in the field were published in 1937 (G.C. Duggan's *The Stage Irishman: A History of the Irish Play and Stage Characters from the Earliest Times*), 1971 (L. Perry Curtis Jr's *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature*), 1976 (Annelise Truninger's *Paddy and the Paycock: A Study of the Stage Irishman from Shakespeare to O'Casey*) and most recently in 2009 (Kathleen Heininge's *Buffoonery in Irish Drama: Staging Twentieth-Century Post-Colonial Stereotypes*).

spite their reputations, Boucicault's Stage Irish characters are the progenitors not only of the Hollywood 'Oirish' tradition that would give us *Wild Mountain Thyme*, but also of a type of politically inflected Stage Irish performance that gives us Coogan's Martin Brennan.

Secondly, the chapters address the Stage Irish figure not as solely the product of a two-way power dynamic between coloniser and colonised, but rather a performance that is constantly shaped and re-shaped in a more complex network of performances and gazes through acts of transnational refraction and reception. This focus entails a more devolved view of the Atlantic Archipelago that moves beyond a reductive two-way relation between Ireland and Britain – with 'Britain,' as Richard Barlow points out, still too often used interchangeably with 'England' in an Irish Studies context (1-2) – to consider Stage Irish encounters with, and performances by, Scottish Whigs and Corkonian Tories, Derry Catholics and transatlantic tourists. The attention the volume pays to Northern Ireland (Lisa McGee, Stacey Gregg, David Ireland, Jez Butterworth) is crucial to this agenda. Elsewhere, contributors reflect on the transnational circulation of Irish literary representations of the local through material publishing networks (Jane Barlow, Seumás MacManus, Katharine Tynan, Emily Lawless, Frank James Mathew), alongside the reception of Irish dramatists and modernists in Vienna, Trieste, Ljubljana (Seán O'Casey, James Joyce), and American representations of the Irish (Hollywood Animation, Disney, St. Patrick's Day parades).

Thirdly, the chapters reinvestigate and theorise the Stage Irish trope's legacy to increasingly inclusive and diverse definitions of Irishness, by taking into account its intersections with representations of gender (in Ethel Colburn Mayne, Deirdre Kinahan, Edna O'Brien, Marina Carr, among others), race (Conall Morrison), and economic class (in Maginn, Lever, Colburn Mayne, Deirdre Kinahan, David Ireland, among others). Although often neglected in favour of her pipe-smoking male counterpart, the Stage Irishwoman also has a long and storied history, as M. Alison Kibler has shown (5-30), from the 'colleen' to the 'Irish servant girl.' At the same time, Irish Orientalist auto-stereotypes and simianised hetero-stereotypes of the 'wild Irish' demonstrate that the Stage Irish figure has always been an image of a racialised Other. As well as retracing these histories from new perspectives and through overlooked authors and texts, *Stage Irish* responds to, and means to advance, recent work on twenty-first-century renegotiations of Irish identity on stage, such as Marguérite Corporaal and Ruud van den Beuken's collection *A Stage of Emancipation: Change and Progress at the Dublin Gate Theatre* (2021). This component of the present volume's interrogation of 'Stage irishness' is crucial to gain a greater vantage on discourses of Irish identity today by relating them to the interwoven histories of representing, performing, mimicking, and stereotyping Irishness. This comparative reflection on present and past articulations of 'Irishness' also helps to move the discussion of Stage Irishry beyond previous conceptualisations of national identity as an essentialist category to more contemporary understandings of Irishness as a fluid discursive construction. This book aims to provide a sound basis, practical anchors, and guiding lights for this

ongoing critical conversation by retracing the legacy of the Stage Irish trope from new historical, critical, and theoretical perspectives.

Stage Irish Origins: From Wild Other to Comic Fool

Perhaps the most complete and enduring characterisation of the Stage Irishman is provided by Maurice Bourgeois in his 1913 study *John Millington Synge and the Irish Theatre*:

> The Stage Irishman habitually bears the generic name of Pat, Paddy, or Teague. He has an atrocious brogue [Irish dialect], makes perpetual jokes, blunders, and bulls in speaking, and never fails to utter, by way of Hibernian seasoning, some wild screech or oath of Gaelic origin at every third word; he has an unsurpassable gift of "blarney" and cadges for tips and free drinks. His hair is of a fiery red; he is rosy-cheeked, massive, and whisky-loving. His face is one of simian bestiality with an expression of diabolical archness written all over it. He wears a tall felt hat (billicock or wideawake), with a cutty-clay pipe stuck in front, an open shirt-collar, a three-caped coat, knee-breeches, worsted stockings, and cockaded brogue-shoes. In his right hand he brandishes a stout black-thorn, or a sprig of shillelagh, and threatens to belabour therewith the daring person who will "tread on the tails of his coat." For his main characteristics (if there is any such thing as psychology in the Stage Irishman) are his swagger, his boisterousness, and his pugnacity. He is always ready with a challenge, always anxious to pick a quarrel; and peerless for cracking skulls at Donnybrook Fair. (109-10)

While Bourgeois frames the Stage Irishman as "not altogether a fictitious convention," albeit "with the help of occasional touches of eccentricity" (110), the figure he presents is something of a Frankenstein's monster of different stereotypes of the Irish, produced under various historical, cultural, and discursive conditions and drawn together cumulatively from Tudor, Stuart, Jacobite, Augustan, Romantic, Melodramatic, Victorian, Revivalist, and early Modernist contexts of representation.

For many, the figure first comes to prominence in William Shakespeare's MacMorris, who declares memorably in *Henry V* (1599): "What ish my nation? Ish a villain, and a bastard, and a knave, and a rascal. What ish my nation? Who talks of my nation?" before threatening ("Chrish save me") to cut off the Stage Welshman Fluellen's head (132, 3.3.61-71). However, the earliest recorded example of a broad Hiberno-English accent on the stage is understood to have pre-dated the Bard by a few years, in the *Famous History of the Life and Death of Captaine Thomas Stukeley* (performed 1596, printed 1605). Still, as Duggan notes, at this point there is little precision and distinction in the Stage Irishman's pattern of speech, which often included lisping and other linguistic features that were applied indiscriminately also to Stage Welshmen and Stage Jews merely as markers of racialised Otherness (195). While appearing for the first time on the English stage, these representations had a history in the rhetoric of the "wild Irish," which had been current from at least the fourteenth century, particularly to describe those Irish who lived outside the Pale. The legacy of this representation of the Irish from the colonial perspective as animalistic, savage, and uncivilisable informs numerous sixteenth- and seventeenth-century works, from Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queen* (1590/1596) and *A View of the Present State of*

Ireland (1596) (which presents the Irish variously as cannibals and nonhuman quadrupeds grazing the fields and feeding on shamrocks) to Thomas Dekker's *The Honest Whore, Part 2* (1605/6), where it is claimed that the "wild" Irish "knave […] if hee were put to't, would fight more desperately then sixteene" men (138).

While the "wild" Irish are thus generally represented as an exotic and fearsome quasi-nonhuman Other, during this period we also start to see an increased use of the trope for comic purposes, such as in the bathos that undermines the Clown's initially fearful description of the wild Irish in Dekker's *The Welsh Embassador, or a Comedy of Disguises* (1623):

> EDMOND: And priddy now, tell me who is more terrible in batails [battles], de Irish or de Welsh?
>
> CLOWN: Oh, Irish, Irish; every Irishman with a dart looks like death; only death has not so much hair on's head. (377)

The most renowned instance of a sustained depiction of these Stage Irish tropes in the early stages of its theatrical development is Ben Jonson's *Irish Masque at Court* (1613), which opens with the uncouth footmen of the Irish "imbasheters" (ambassadors) to the court bursting onstage in a comical manner and declaring in a thick brogue:

> PATRICK: For chreeshes sayk, phair ish te King? phich ish he an't be? show me te shweet faish, quickly. By got, o' my conshence, tish ish he! Ant tou be King Yamish, me name is Dennish, I sherve ti Mayesties owne cashtermonger, be me trote; and cry peep'sh, and pomwater'sh i'th Mayesties shervice, tis five year now. Ant, tou vilt not trush me now, cal up ti clarke o' ti kitchin, be ant be, shall give hish wort, upon hish book, ish true.
>
> DONNELL: Ish it te fashion, to beate te imbasheters, here, and knocke 'hem o'te heads, phit te phoit stick? (709, 1.1.5-17)

As James M. Smith has shown, when these exaggerated characters and speech patterns are returned to their original political context, we also discern the ideological functions of the representation, as Jonson "fictionalises Ireland as a bifurcated colonial arena where inferior Native Irish traits are opposed by superior English cultural practice" (301), in order to legitimise "Ireland's incorporation into the nation state" (298).

In this period of the transformation and realisation of the modern Stage Irishman, the figure of the Teague – or Irish servant – began to emerge as a "popular" and "enduring" iteration of the character type, "a thoroughgoing stereotype" of an "exotic" Other which was nevertheless distinct in significant ways from his wilder forebears:

> [The Teagues] enter wearing their traditional mantles, saffron-colored shirts, and tight blue trousers and are portrayed as exotic from their thick, shaggy hair to their brogues [Irish shoes], literally from head to toe. They are much given to howling in the presence of the dead, long for a diet of shamrocks, bonny clabber, and watercress, and fight very bravely […]. But with their wildness also comes a simplicity of heart that manifests itself in extreme devotion and loyalty to their masters. (Trainor 27)

Charles Trainor notes that as he developed from the Elizabethan period to the eighteenth century, the Irish servant "was less often portrayed as exotic and more often mocked as absurd," with English playwright Robert Howard's *The Committee; or, the Faithful Irishman* (1662) serving as "[t]he play that more than any other established the comic stereotype" of the Stage Irish Teague (28). Through Howard's example, the Teague became renowned for "continually making mistakes": while he "is so loyal and true that he will do anything for his master, […] he is so confused and simple that the things he does are generally wrong" (Trainor 28). A notable instance is the character of Teague in George Farquhar's *The Twin Rivals* (1702). As the Stage Irish Teague "became ever more popular, he became ever more inept" (Trainor 29), appearing under a diversity of strikingly absurd names: Teague O'Divelly in Thomas Shadwell's *The Irish Priest* (1681); Captain O'Blunder in Thomas Sheridan's *The Brave Irishman* (1740); Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan in Charles Macklin's *Love à-la-Mode* (1759); Sir Lucius O'Trigger in Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The Rivals* (1775); Denis Blunder O'Whack in Frederick Reynolds's *Notoriety* (1792); Sally Shamrock in Samuel James Arnold's *The Shipwreck* (1796); O'Shatter in Arnold and Henry James Pye's *A Prior Claim* (1806). Across these productions, we see the figure's deterioration into a crude stereotype: the comic type of the fool.

In conversation with David Hayton's insightful chapter "From Barbarian to Burlesque: The Changing Stereotype of the Irish" (1-24), Maebh Long succinctly draws together the history of this transition from the 'wild' to the 'comic' Stage Irishman:

> As England's power in Ireland expanded [in the seventeenth century], the Irish stock character became correspondingly lampooned, moving gradually from a figure of perplexing otherness to a reassuringly familiar fool. During the seventeenth century, the stereotype was commonly featured "[d]rinking, bragging in his cups, nursing his pride and forever taking up arms in defence of his 'honour,' hunting fortunes, murdering logic and the English language" [Hayton 2]. The growing control of Ireland in the latter half of the eighteenth century saw the stage and cartoon Irishman portrayed as increasingly "contemptible […] a prime source of humour and a proverb for all that was inferior or ridiculous" [Hayton 22]. By the mid-nineteenth century, the figure was so ubiquitous on the English stage as to be worthy of immediate parody. (36)

Indeed the "Teague was still very much alive and thriving" well into the nineteenth century, as can be seen in John Maddison Morton's blundering *Irish Tiger* (1846), "who is heard off-stage breaking crockery before he enters" (Trainor 29).

Stage Irish Hetero-Stereotypes and Auto-Stereotypes

Walter Lippmann, who coined the term "stereotype" in his 1922 work *Public Opinion*, notes that "[i]ts hallmark is that it precedes the use of reason; is a form of perception, imposes a certain character on the data of our senses before the data reach the intelligence" (65). Clearly, such a definition captures the *a priori* prejudicial character of the colonial stage presentations of the Irish as variously wild, exotic, faithful, or buffoonish racialised Others. However, at this juncture in our potted history of Stage Irishry, it is worth pausing to draw finer distinctions between

1. the hetero-stereotype: “a group’s perception of another group’s members’ traits, characteristics, or values” in terms of “rigid ethnic characterisations and strong generalisations” about national or cultural “group membership” (Pastor and Fuentes 649);
2. the auto-stereotype: “a group’s views about the traits or characteristics of its own members” (Pastor and Fuentes 649).

In other words, hetero-stereotypes are preconceived views that others hold about a community, while auto-stereotypes are preconceived views that a community holds about itself. As Seamus Deane contends, “[a]lthough the stereotyping initiative, so to speak, is taken by the community that exercises power,” ultimately “stereotypes are mutually generative of each other, as in the case of the English and Irish” (“Introduction” 12). To appreciate the history of Stage Irish representation and performance, it is necessary to consider how the character type takes shape (and takes hold) not only through colonial representation, but also through the ways in which the Irish (however this term is constructed and whatever value is given to it across and between diverse cultural practices and national discourses) internalise these representations in their negotiations of a self-conceived and self-constructed identity.

In the aftermath of the 1800 Acts of Union, we observe a growing resistance to Stage Irishry, either through satire or attempts to refashion the Paddy and the Teague into more benign, affectionate figures. In the first category, stereotypical depictions of the Irish are mocked in Maria and Richard Edgeworth’s *An Essay on Irish Bulls* (1802), which feigns to demonstrate the Irish native’s innate propensity to blunder while ultimately proving that the Irish Bull is in fact an English invention. In one section, a discussion about the Union is presented between “an Irish, a Scotch, and an English gentleman,” in which the Englishman acknowledges his people’s continued ignorance of Ireland, despite their political union:

> To be sure we do not now, as in the times of Bacon and Spenser, believe that wild Irishmen have wings […]. [However, w]hen I first went over there, […] I imagined that I should have nothing to drink but whiskey, that I should have nothing to eat but potatoes, that I should sleep in mud-walled cabins; that I should, when awake, hear nothing but the Irish howl, the Irish brogue, Irish answers, and Irish bulls; and that if I smiled at any of these things, a hundred pistols would fly from their holsters […]. (153)

Yet, his direct experience thwarts and overturns these pre-conceived notions, and the Edgeworths warn “English retailers or inventors of Irish blunders” to “beware of such prefatory exclamations as – *‘By my shoul and St. Patrick! By Jasus! Arrah, honey!’*” as “all such phrases” are “absolutely out of date and fashion in Ireland” (113).

As English hetero-stereotypes of the Irish begin to be deconstructed critically in this period, and as the Union incentivises the formation of a distinct national and cultural identity, we observe the rise of Irish Romantic and melodramatic auto-stereotypes, from Thomas Moore’s *Irish Melodies* to Boucicault’s Irish melodramas *The Colleen Bawn* (1860), *Arrah-na-Pogue* (1864), and *The Shaughraun* (1874). For an example

of this Irish romantic self-fashioning, when Sydney Owenson, author of *The Wild Irish Girl: A National Tale* (1806), was "abroad in England as a young novelist," she "often performed her 'Irishness,' becoming an exotic lass from wild Gaelic country," as she "answered socially to the name Glorvina, wore a Gaelic mantle to society parties, and played the harp for her hosts" (Lennon 143). And while Boucicault "has often been misrepresented as purveying the worst kind of Irish stereotypes, his declared intention was to abolish Stage Irishry" (Deane, *Field Day* 234). Yet, it was exactly the Boucicauldian comic hero that Lady Gregory and W.B. Yeats had in mind when expressing their aversion towards "Stage Irishry," announcing at the foundation of the Irish Literary Theatre in 1897: "We will show that Ireland is not the home of buffoonery and of easy sentiment, as it has been represented, but the home of ancient idealism." The revivalist project inaugurated a new auto-stereotype: Ireland as "the home of ancient idealism" (Gregory 9). In turn, Frank Hugh O'Donnell, in "The Stage Irishman of Pseudo-Celtic Drama" (1904), dismissed the Revival as "constructing an impossible country" by performing a "Celtic Past [which] never existed anywhere outside [their] own productions" (13, 9). In Declan Kiberd's estimation, Shaw's 1904 play *John Bull's Other Island* warned that "the wrong kind of 'revivalism' might produce exactly what the British now wanted, a tourist's landscape of colourful, non-threatening characters, who mark off their 'interesting' cultural differences from the London visitor, even as they become ever more tractable to his economic designs" (*Inventing Ireland* 519). In his 1913 study of Synge, Bourgeois identifies the "so-called 'stage Irishman'" as "a type against which the present-day Irish dramatic movement stands in professed reaction, but which […] it has not perhaps quite succeeded in rooting out" (107).

Thus, the tension between hetero-stereotype and auto-stereotype is not only oppressive of the people being constructed through discourse, representation, and performance, but also productive, as the resistance to diverse versions of 'Irishness' at home and abroad drive innovations that are themselves destined to become the next movement's clichés. As Seamus Deane has explained:

> In the attempted discovery of its "true" identity, a community often begins with the demolition of the false stereotypes within which it has been entrapped. This is an intricate process, since the stereotypes are successful precisely because they have been interiorised. They are not merely impositions from the coloniser on the colonised. ("Introduction" 12)

Kiberd contends that this strategy of auto-stereotyping enabled the Irish to take "many images which were rejected by English society, occupy them, reclaim them, and make them their own" (*The Irish Writer* 32). Yet, as Long reflects, "[d]omestic and international gazes cannot unsee a long history of conventions of representation, and stereotypes inevitably haunt new attempts at independent identity, be they on the stage, page, or street" (38).

As Irish self-representation became more prominent, varied, and politically inflected in the second half of the nineteenth century, the Fenian Rising, the growth of the Irish

nationalist movement, and mass immigration in the aftermath of the Famine led, in turn, to a series of new hetero-stereotypes in British and American culture and media. To frame the perceived threats of the Irish as ill-tempered, unruly, drunken, violent rebels and uncivilisable, unassimilable immigrants, the "wild Irish" trope was revived and racialised through nineteenth-century discourses of race science. Hazel Rose Markus and Paula M.L. Moya have demonstrated that the discourse of race "always involves creating groups based on perceived physical and behavioural characteristics, associating differential power and privilege with these characteristics, and then justifying the resulting inequalities" (x). These three moves are traceable in the justification of colonial rule expressed in Charles Kingsley's letter to his wife from his 1860 visit to Sligo:

> I am haunted by the human chimpanzees I saw along that hundred miles of horrible country. I don't believe they are our fault. I believe […] that they are happier, better, more comfortably fed and lodged under our rule than they ever were. But to see white chimpanzees is dreadful; if they were black, one would not feel it so much, but their skins, except where tanned by exposure, are as white as ours. (107)

The categorisation of the Irish, alongside other racialised categories of people, as 'less-evolved primates' and inferior nonhuman creatures took hold in the popular imaginary through cartoons and illustrations in which they are represented, in pseudo-Darwinian terms, with simian or monstrous features,[3] and in lampooning vaudeville performances (see Mooney). The "resulting inequalities" in "power and privilege" are justified through pseudo-scientific discourses, as in Samuel R. Wells's *New Physiognomy, or, Signs of Character as Manifested through Temperament and External Forms* (1866), which contrasts an image of the 'pure' and 'cultivated' Florence Nightingale with a simian caricature of the Irish type "Brigid McBruiser," who is described as "rude, rough, unpolished, ignorant, and brutish" (537-38). Through the pseudo-scientific discourse of physiognomy, McBruiser's "appearance as a racial Other marks her, permanently, as ineligible for inclusion in the white middle class" (Black 64). A few decades later, *The Spectator*'s reviewer, weighing the evidence presented in H. Strickland Constable's *Ireland from One or Two Neglected Points of View* (1888),[4] is convinced that Constable has successfully proven that the Irish are a "low-type race […] quite incapable of governing themselves" (Anon., "Review" n.p.).

In America, these racist hetero-stereotypes were likewise disseminated through political cartoons and pseudo-scientific illustrations. In the notorious 1876 *Harper's Weekly* cartoon "The Ignorant Vote," freed slaves in the South and Irish Catholic immigrants in the North are equally weighed; elsewhere, a caricature from an 1899

3 Examples are legion, but famous instances include: "Two Forces: Britannia vs. Anarchy" in *Punch*, 1881; "The Irish Frankenstein" in *Punch*, 1882; "The King of A-Shantee" in *Puck*, 1882; "Gorilla Warfare" in *Punch* 1884. See Curtis Jr. and de Nie.

4 In this text, Constable argues, for instance, that "Irish miseries come from the degraded nature of the aboriginal natives, whether low-type Celts, Finns, Iberians, or descendants of savages from the Stone Age" (164).

Harper's Bazaar (conspicuously sub-titled *A Journal of Civilization*) applies phrenology to Irish and African skull types to argue that each "in consequence of isolation from the rest of the world, had […] made way, according to the laws of nature, for superior races."[5] As Robert Nowatzki demonstrates, this circulation and blurring of anti-Irish and anti-Black rhetoric is borne out in Stage Irish and blackface performances for American Minstrel Shows:

> Native white minstrels often ridiculed Irish-Americans as characters, partly because they often saw the Irish as racial Others in some ways similar to African-Americans (the main target of racist minstrel humour) […]. Later, however, Irish-American minstrel performers gradually became more 'white' and 'American' as a result of denigrating (or at least differentiating themselves) from African-Americans by performing their Irishness in ways that were less derogatory than the 'stage Irishman' stereotype and by asserting their American patriotism. (163)

This trajectory of Stage Irish minstrelsy bears out the thesis of Noel Ignatiev's 1996 study *How the Irish Became White* that whiteness (indeed, the category of race itself) is a historically contingent social construct that regulates who does and who does not have access to white privilege. Ignatiev traces how Irish Americans transitioned from being coded as 'non-white' by the dominant WASP population to being integrated as 'white' through their performed prejudice against free blacks and support of slavery (81, 94). With the assimilation of the third-generation Irish immigrants, Ireland is reconceived in the American cultural imaginary as a nostalgic counter-world of the past – a rural, idyllic, almost pre-lapsarian sphere. This partial transition is observable in the constructions of Ireland and the Irish in the American cinematic imaginary, from the Kalem Company's scenic Irish cinemascapes[6] to John Ford's Irish films[7] – which, according to Jack Morgan, "energised stereotypes which by the 1950s were otherwise largely on the wane" (34) – and the Disneyfication of Irish myth in *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*. Stars such as Bing Crosby and Spencer Tracy served as representatives of a new concept of the fully Americanised WASP Hollywood Stage Irishman, and yet, the figure's dark history is traceable in films such as *Holiday Inn* (1942), in which Crosby stars as Jim Hardy, a Blackface Minstrel performer.

Back in turn-of-the-century Ireland, a distinctly Irish critical discourse about the Stage Irishman emerged and was formalised in Lawrence (1903), O'Donnell (1904), and Grattan-Flood (1905).[8] The role of the Stage Irishman as a foil for the formation of the

5 The offending image and accompanying text are available to view on *Wikimedia Commons*: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Scientific_racism_irish.jpg> (15 May 2021).

6 From Blarney Castle and Glengarriff to the Gap of Dunloe and the Lakes of Killarney in *A Lad from Old Ireland* (1910), *The Irish Honeymoon* (1911), and their adaptation of Boucicault's *Colleen Bawn* (1911).

7 *The Tornado* (1916), *The Prince of Avenue A* (1920), *The Shamrock Handicap* (1926), *Mother Machree* (1927), *Hangman's House* (1928), *The Informer* (1935), *The Plough and the Stars* (1936), *The Quiet Man* (1952), *The Long Grey Line* (1955), *The Rising of the Moon* (1957), and *The Last Hurrah* (1958).

8 See also Anon., "Crusade" 145.

Irish artist in the early modernist period is reflected in conversations among the students in James Joyce's *Stephen Hero*, composed between 1903 and 1905 as the above pieces were appearing in print. In this early, abandoned work, the activist Madden chastises Stephen Dedalus for repeating a sentence he heard "in some 'stage-Irishman' play" and denounces the "old stale libels – the drunken Irishman, the baboon-faced Irishman that we see in *Punch*" as "a libel on our countrymen" (64-65). At the same time, Dublin comic weeklies such as *Pat*, *The Leprechaun*, *Zozimus*, and *The Jarvey* ridiculed and satirised vaudeville performances and periodical illustrations of the grotesque Irishman in its hetero-stereotypical and auto-stereotypical forms (see Curtis 68-88). These satirical sites of writing back at the Empire, which often assumed the mantel of the Stage Irishman so as to travesty him, laid the groundwork for any number of subsequent carnivalesque and modernist deflations of the figure; as in the fake Stage Irishman paraded by Mr Louit in Samuel Beckett's *Watt*, or *An Béal Bocht*, Brian O'Nolan's savage Irish-language satire of romanticisations of Irish rural poverty and starvation. Indeed, under his *Irish Times* persona 'Myles na gCopaleen' – a name taken, we note, from a Stage Irish figure in Boucicault's *The Colleen Bawn* – O'Nolan reflects, in 1945, that "[t]he Stage Irishman is most undead" (2).

Postmodern Legacies

In line with O'Reilly's characterisation of contemporary attitudes to Paddywhackery, cited at the outset of this introduction, and Myles na gCopaleen's image of the Stage Irishman as a zombified figure lumbering into the mid-twentieth century, today these competing legacies of the Stage Irish figure merge and blend together in something of a postmodern farrago of signifiers that are treated as often as subjects for irony as for offence. Irish entertainment websites petition for clicks with headlines such as "Begorrah! The Best and Worst of Oirish Movie Accents" (Corr n.p.; see also O'Riordan n.p.) – where offenders such as Tom Cruise in *Far and Away* or Gerard Butler in *PS I Love You* are made to account for their sins – and with catalogues of dodgy Irish representations in the television shows and cartoons of their readers' youths that appeal to a certain mix of nostalgia and superior comic ridicule.[9] In part,

9 In a non-exhaustive selection (which excludes Irish-themed shows such as *Mystic Knights of Tir Na Nog* (1998-99)), with help from friends on social media, we have gathered examples of 'special episodes' of the following TV shows set in Ireland or with stock Irish characters: *Fawlty Towers* (the great David Kelly as the notorious O'Reilly the builder), *Murder, She Wrote* (in episodes such as "A Killing in Cork" and "A Celtic Riddle"), *Moonlighting* ("Somewhere under the Rainbow"), *Magnum P.I.* ("Faith and Begorrah"), *Remington Steele* ("Steele Your Heart Away"), *Star Trek: Next Generation* (in which the crew visit a planet of Stage Irish people called the Bringloidi) and *Star Trek Voyager* (which features two episodes set in a holographic Irish village), *Inspector Gadget* ("Luck of the Irish"), *Captain Planet* ("'If It's Doomsday It Must Be Belfast," in which the Planeteer Wheeler manages to resolve the North's sectarian violence six years before the Good Friday Agreement), *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* ("The Irish Jig is Up," in which antagonists Krang and Shredder use Ireland as the base for their "Rainbow Trans-Charmer" device and April O'Neil is almost eaten by wild animals in Dublin

these re-evaluations of past representations of the Irish were consequences of Celtic Tiger-era attempts to re-articulate Ireland as a modern, cosmopolitan nation (and a way of processing the 'Irish cringe' that such a self-refashioning produces), and in part they are manifestations of genuinely affectionate and reflective self-parody that is evidenced in shows such as *Father Ted* and *Derry Girls*.

The contemporary Stage Irishman remains a prominent cultural figure, despite these processes of cultural repression and sublimation. For example, J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series (particularly the film adaptations) feature a character stereotypically named Seamus Finnigan, who, as his teacher puts it, has a "particular proclivity for pyrotechnics" (*Harry Potter*), is somewhat intellectually inferior to other characters, and is often the butt of jokes. In a gesture that echoes the simian Irish trope, Finnigan is forced to write the line "I am a wizard, not a baboon brandishing a stick" (Rowling 333) in detention, having been so excited at the prospect of learning how to apparate that he bumblingly knocked over his teacher. Elsewhere, Terry Eagleton's *The Truth About the Irish* (2001) claims that there is not just one Irish type: "The nation as a whole is made up of culchies and jackeens, yuppies and yokels, saints and Satanists, travellers and settled people, nationalists and anti-nationalists, heroin addicts and holy water addicts, mystical monks and atheistic intellectuals" (104). As ironic as this proliferation of binaries is meant to be, rather than 'breaking' the myth of the essentialist Stage Irishman, such a catalogue merely multiplies it, or at least shows that it has always been a multiform stereotype – real and imagined, hetero-stereotype and auto-stereotype – that is constantly being re-articulated through different historical discourses, refracting and cumulating along the way.

Performance, Identity, Cultural Circulation

The chapters collected in this volume address the gaps and reframe the commonplaces of the standard history of Stage Irishry outlined in this introduction in at least two ways. First, they turn to overlooked texts and neglected perspectives that complicate the critical narrative of Stage Irishness; secondly, they revisit staples of the critical tradition from new historical and theoretical perspectives. The contents are organised in a broadly chronological structure, moving from Victorian and modernist literature, through twentieth-century drama, film, television, and parades, culminating in a forum on renegotiations and diversifications of Irish identity in twenty-first-century theatre.

Zoo), *James Bond Jr* ("Goldie Finger at the End of the Rainbow," in which the teenage nephew of the MI6 agent fights an evil leprechaun), *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles* ("Ireland, April 1916," in which 'Old' Indiana Jones discloses that he was a first-hand witness to the Easter Rising, where he discussed Irish theatre with Seán O'Casey), *The Simpsons*, *Family Guy*. These and similar examples are regularly circulated in online articles of the type described above (see "Claire," n.p.).

The first section is titled “What ish my nation? Constructing Irishness from Romanticism to Modernism.” **Paul Fagan** begins the collection in the 1820s-1830s, as Irish unionist Tories and conservative wits battle with Irish romantic nationalists and O’Connellites over post-Union debates about redefining Irish identity, culture, and politics. Fagan focuses on the periodical ‘mock-hoaxes’ through which Corkonian Tory William Maginn and Catholic unionist Francis Sylvester Mahony self-ironically inhabit Stage Irish tropes both to settle scores with enemies such as Thomas Moore, and to perform a complicated liminal identity both inside and outside the political and cultural constructions of ‘Britain’ and ‘Ireland.’ **Marguérite Corporaal** contributes to debates about regional literature from the long nineteenth century by examining the branding of Irish local colour literature in transnational contexts of translation, republication, and reception. Corporaal’s analysis of the paratextual prefaces and visual/material aspects which reframed these texts when they were published abroad illuminates how Irish writers such as Jane Barlow, Seumás MacManus, Katharine Tynan, Emily Lawless, and Frank James Mathew were not just producing auto-stereotypes of Irish regional life but were also mediating “Irishness” towards communities abroad, in complex dynamics between regional, national, and transnational identity construction. **Elke D’hoker** focuses on national and gendered stereotypes in Ethel Colburn Mayne’s 1919 short story “The Happy Day.” D’hoker discusses the story’s engagement with the prevalent images of Irish national character in relation to both the establishment of an Irish tourist industry in the final decades of the nineteenth century and the constructions of Irish identity staged in the Celtic Literary Revival. In its juxtaposition of images of Irishness and womanhood, the chapter argues that Mayne’s fiction anticipates the more pervasive critique of national and gendered identity that would characterise Irish writing and criticism in the second half of the twentieth century. **Richard Barlow** studies the role of Stage Irishry in James Joyce’s experimental final work *Finnegans Wake* with specific reference to Dion Boucicault’s *Arrah-na-Pogue*. Barlow shows how, in typical Wakean fashion, Joyce explores Stage Irishness as a hybrid phenomenon, bound up with both the presence of English culture and traditions in Ireland and with rebellions against the British occupation of Ireland and with Celtic matters. In the process, the chapter makes a powerful case that, as the reductive and overly negative appraisals of Boucicault’s work are stripped away and the political resonances of his plays are revisited, his significance to Irish modernism needs to be re-evaluated.

The second section offers a special forum, co-edited with Igor Maver of the University of Ljubljana, that focuses on Staging Irishness in Vienna, Trieste, and Ljubljana. **Dieter Fuchs** introduces the forum and focuses on two Stage Austrian character types which may be considered the Viennese and the Tyrolean counterparts of the Irish Paddy. As Fuchs shows with regard to the critical reception of two productions of Seán O’Casey’s *Juno and the Paycock* staged in the Austrian capital in 1930 and 1934, Viennese theatre reviewers tended to stress the allegedly unbridgeable ‘otherness’ of Hibernian culture, despite the resonances between the Stage Irishman and

their own stock characters. **Elisabetta d'Erme** focuses on the 'Lost Victorian' Irish novelist Charles Lever to re-evaluate his unfair reputation as a purveyor of crude Stage Irishisms. Residing in Trieste, the major commercial seaport of the Austro-Hungarian Empire as an expatriate, Lever re-fashioned the Stage Irish cliché of the Paddy by applying it to the Hibernian pro-English landowning elite. As d'Erme shows, to satirise the 'English' lifestyle of the landed gentry rather than the Irish peasants, Lever's novels feature Stage Irishness in terms of 'Stage Ascendancy.' **Igor Maver** closes this special forum on Stage Irishness in the Austro-Hungarian Empire with an analysis of Joyce, the Slovenian community in Ljubljana and Trieste, and the cliché of the Orientalised 'Eastern Paddy' from the Balkan Peninsula colonised by the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The third section, "Popular Paddies: Parading Irishness on the Screen and in the Streets," opens with **Michael Connerty**'s detailed analysis of Ireland and Hollywood animation from 1947-1959. Connerty argues that the cartoons under analysis operate straightforwardly as fantasy, and that the presence of magic, supernatural creatures, and gothic settings function generically as a feature that chimes with cinematic characterisations of Ireland as the antithesis of modern industrialised society. These short films speak to the conception of Ireland as a fantasy, reflecting the experience of second and third generation Irish Americans, accessing, via a nostalgic silver screen imaginary, a place they had never known. While the 1959 Disney film *Darby O'Gill and the Little People* is commonly considered to epitomise stereotypical 'Oirishness' in its focus on leprechauns and pastoral landscapes, here **Michelle Witen** reads the film against the grain as a "site of resistance." Witen argues that while *Darby O'Gill* contains many Stage Irish elements that support an appraisal of the film as reductive in its presentation of Irishness, nevertheless its depictions of folkloric objects and animistic spirits leave the text open to a deconstructive reading that complicates and resists both Disney's attempted creation of a "stage folklore" and problematic tropes such as the "Paddy" or the "Stage Gael." **Eimer Murphy**, Prop Master at The Abbey Theatre, looks at the celebration of St. Patrick's Day as a 'material marker' designed to project specific ideas of Irishness, both on a national and on an international level. She focuses on the cultural and creative re-invention of the Dublin St. Patrick's Day Parade in 1996 as a reflection of an emerging cosmopolitan and increasingly confident Ireland in the beginnings of the 'Celtic Tiger' era. **Verónica Membrive** adds to the critical debate concerning the role of media in the process of renegotiating representations of the Troubles by analysing how Lisa McGee's 2018 sitcom *Derry Girls* uses humour and irony to deconstruct stereotyped notions not only of the Catholic and Protestant populations but also of other 'Others' in the city of Derry. The chapter explores how the legacies of Stage Irish hetero-stereotypes and auto-stereotypes are intermingled in *Derry Girls*, as it represents changing sectarian, gender, and religious identities of Northern Ireland in the years 1994-1995. The series, Membrive shows, both exploits and goes beyond "Stage Irishry" in exploring the possibility of challeng-

ing binary stereotypes about Irish Catholics and Protestants through humour and irony.

The fourth and final section of this collection focusses on contemporary political theatre, exploring the ways in which Irishness is re-negotiated on the twenty-first-century stage. **Anne Fogarty** examines "Reconfigurations of Gender in Contemporary Irish Stage Adaptations," focussing on four plays performed between June 2019 and August 2020: Deirdre Kinahan's *The Unmanageable Sisters*, Edna O'Brien's *The Country Girls*, Marina Carr's *Hecuba*, and Michael West's *Solar Bones*. The chapter investigates how the productions of these plays emanate from conjoint socio-political concerns and anxieties, and probes how their dramaturgy self-consciously tests the span and limits of character, embodiment, and voice and interrogates power structures and gender roles in the different worlds that they envisage. As Fogarty argues, these adaptations are uneasily poised between critical interrogation, possibilities of empowerment, and the desire for social change in the past and present. Drawing on Birte Heidemann's work on negative liminality and Sianne Ngai's reflections on the aesthetics of negative emotions, **Clare Wallace**'s paper investigates how the tangle of "dysphoric affects" (Ngai 3) that adhere to the North is expressed and complicated in three recent plays: Stacey Gregg's *Shibboleth* (2015), David Ireland's *Cyprus Avenue* (2016), and Jez Butterworth's *The Ferryman* (2017). Wallace argues that attention to the interplay between liminality and animatedness in these plays can illuminate how they reproduce or restructure the tropes associated with a Northern Irish imaginary. In "Regarding the Rights of Others: Spectres of the Middle East in Conall Morrison's *The Bacchae of Baghdad*," **Natasha Remoundou** closes the collection by analysing representations of the Middle Eastern 'other' in contemporary Irish theatre. Identifying the aesthetic and ideological dimensions involved in this process, Remoundou examines contemporary engagements with both an ethics of 'otherness' and the rights of 'others'/strangers as ciphers of the confrontation between East and West. The chapter draws on Susan Sontag's argument that "being a spectator of calamities taking place in another country is a quintessential modern experience" (16) in order to bring human rights issues in contemporary Irish theatre into sharper focus.

Postscript: Werner Huber

The present volume originates, in part, from talks given at two separate events: the Vienna Irish Studies and Cultural Theory Summer School *Stage Irish* at the Vienna Centre for Irish Studies, which was founded by Professor Werner Huber, and *Stage Irish: The Twelfth Conference of EFACIS*, which was graciously hosted by Igor Maver at the University of Ljubljana, 28-31 August 2019, in memory of Werner (1952-2016). It is not necessary here to restate Werner's significance to European Irish Studies, or his importance to EFACIS and the *Irish Studies in Europe* (ISE) series, or indeed his generosity as a colleague, teacher, and friend – these will all be well known to EFACIS members and ISE readers, and Hedwig Schwall's fantastic volume in this series dedicated to his memory has already made the case eloquently and at length (*Irish Studies*

in Europe, vol. 8: Boundaries, Passages, Transitions: Essays in Irish Literature, Culture and Politics in Honour of Werner Huber). However, we are pleased that the collection will mark the fifth anniversary of Werner's passing with a theme that was close to his heart, as known to those who recall his wonderful Irish studies lecture series at the University of Vienna titled "What ish my nation?."

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WHAT ISH MY NATION? CONSTRUCTING IRISHNESS FROM ROMANTICISM TO MODERNISM

GROVES OF BLARNEY:
FAKE SONGS, MOCK-HOAXES, AND STAGE IRISH IDENTITY IN WILLIAM MAGINN AND FRANCIS SYLVESTER MAHONY

Paul Fagan

In this chapter, I cast the Stage Irish tradition in a new light by demonstrating its interdependence with the history of the Irish literary hoax. At first blush, these representational discourses appear to be united through a certain rhetoric of the false or the fake: the hoax is a willed self-misrepresentation, while the stock figure of the Stage Irishman is, perhaps, an imposed and othering misrepresentation. However, my argument is that the connection between these literary traditions and their histories runs deeper and is more complex than such a characterisation allows. Indeed, I suggest that closer analysis of the Irish literary hoaxer and the Stage Irishman renders such clear-cut distinctions between agency and imposition untenable. These figures are, in important ways, co-emergent and track each other's developments closely. The Irish literary hoax interfaces with, and functions at times as a counter-discursive foil to, the dominant Stage Irish hetero-stereotype – particularly in instances in which Irish authors wilfully assume the stereotypes of Paddywhackery to deceive certain audiences and to deconstruct or ridicule certain discourses about national identity.

To demonstrate the co-implication of these cultural histories and literary modes, I focus here on the nineteenth century, a pivotal moment both for Stage Irish representation and for the Irish literary hoax. However, while most histories of the modern Irish stereotype begin with Dion Boucicault's late-century melodramas *The Colleen Bawn* (1860), *Arrah-na-Pogue* (1864), and *The Shaughraun* (1874), I wish to draw our attention to the negotiation of Stage Irish imagery in an earlier period and context: the Tory-Whig periodical wars between *Blackwood's Magazine*, *Fraser's Magazine*, and the *Edinburgh Review* in the 1820s-1830s. The decisive players on the Irish Tory side are two notorious Corkonians: William Maginn – a Protestant satirist, translator, and editor known to his contemporaries as "The Doctor" – and Francis Sylvester Mahony – a Jesuit conservative wit known to posterity as "Father Prout." Their key rivals are literary and cultural figures who contribute to Whig publications, Irish antiquarians and romantic nationalists, supporters of Catholic Emancipation, and science popularisers, such as Dionysius Lardner and Thomas Moore. These encounters take place in the context of post-Union debates about redefining Irish identity, culture, and politics; as such, they reflect a diversity of aesthetic, political, religious, and national positions in response to Daniel O'Connell's movements for Catholic Emancipation and the repeal of the Union. In their interventions into these disputes, Maginn and Mahony stake out a series of diverging but also at times overlapping coordinates and positions: Cork *vs.* Dublin; London *vs.* Edinburgh; Ireland *vs.* England; Protestant *vs.*

Catholic; unionist *vs.* nationalist; conservative wit *vs.* romantic idealist, and so on. Positioned simultaneously outside *and* within categories of Irishness and Britishness, Maginn and Mahony emerge as figures who both exemplify and complicate post-Union Ireland's situatedness outside *and* within the "administrative political" and cultural structures of Britain and the Empire (McCaw 4). What I wish to show is that Maginn and Mahony are particularly relevant to these intersecting histories of Stage Irish representation and Irish literary hoaxing as figures who engage with these political and cultural debates *both* by casting their rivals as stereotypical Irish dissemblers *and* by assimilating those same stereotypes in their own deceptive, mock-hoax performances of the cultural signifiers of Stage Irishness.

In his 2003 essay "'A Poet May Not Exist': Mock-Hoaxes and the Construction of National Identity," Brian McHale distinguishes between three different kinds of hoax:

1. *genuine hoaxes*, which are "perpetrated with no intention of their ever being exposed" (236)
2. *trap hoaxes*, in which "the intention […] is for the hoax to be exposed by the hoaxer […] when the time is right, to the discomfiture of the gullible" (236)
3. *mock-hoaxes*, in which "issues of authenticity and inauthenticity are elevated to the level of literary 'raw materials'" for "self-reflective art" (237).

Purposely adorned with signs of self-exposure, mock-hoaxes "typically refer in a more or less veiled manner to their own double nature" (McHale 237). Unlike genuine hoaxes, mock-hoaxes intend for certain readers to perceive the text's unreliability, often towards aesthetic, thematic, comic, satirical, political, or philosophical ends. Unlike trap hoaxes, however, mock-hoaxes involve no moment of authorial revelation and, therefore, no ulterior motive "to edify, remediate, or punish" (McHale 237). The Maginn and Mahony texts under analysis here are mock-hoaxes of this third kind.[1]

To narrow my focus, I concentrate on a series of periodical mock-hoaxes dedicated to Maginn and Mahony's *faux* discoveries and hoax translations of Irish songs. I show how these elaborate gags ridicule the nationalism of Moore's *Irish Melodies* specifically and the discursive constructions of authentic Irishness at play in Irish antiquarianism, Irish romanticism, and Irish Orientalism more broadly. I argue that Maginn and Mahony draw on Stage Irish imagery in their spurious translations and pseudo-antiquarian mock-hoaxes also to stage a parodic performance of their own liminal Irishness as unionist, conservative Corkonians writing in Scottish and English periodicals for diverse audiences both 'home' and 'abroad.'

To begin, I situate Maginn and Mahony in a trajectory of overlapping Stage Irish and Irish literary hoax histories, with an emphasis on the significance of fake translations and dissembling performances of national identity to each of these traditions, espe-

1 While a full overview of the recent 'fakelit' critical turn to historicise and theorise the literary hoax is beyond the scope of this chapter, my reading of Maginn and Mahony's mock-hoaxes takes place within the context of a broader critical conversation which comprises, among others, monographs by Haywood, Grafton, Stewart, Baines, Ruthven, and Groom (*Forger's Shadow*).

cially as they intersect in the aftermath of James Macpherson's *Ossian* 'forgery' (1761-1765). Then, I turn to the relevant test cases: first, Maginn's "Odoherty on Irish Songs" (1825) in *Blackwood*, then Mahony's "Father Prout's Plea for Pilgrimages" (1834) in *Fraser*. These examples are chosen to demonstrate how these conservative wits blend hoax translations with Stage Irish performance at once to ridicule their political enemies and to renegotiate nineteenth-century Protestant and Jesuit Irish unionist literary identity on their own satirical terms. In conclusion, I show how these conservative wits critique Irish Antiquarianism and Irish Orientalism, triggered off by the Ossian debate and other nationalist quasi-forgeries, through the creation of a disruptive anti-archive of faked traditional songs and spurious translations.

Irish Facts: Some Dissembling Required

The cultural construction of the Irish as essentially deceptive and prone to false self-presentations emerges as a key trope of the seventeenth-century Anglo-Irish novel. In his 1665 picaresque novel *The English Rogue Described*, Richard Head portrays how his titular rogue, Meriton Latroon, by virtue of "having been steeped for some years in an Irish bog," develops the ability, not shared by his Protestant English-born parents, to "dissemble" (Head vii, 7). The plot is a cautionary tale of how the English in Ireland are "degenerated into Irish affections and customs" (Head 11), told through the figure of Latroon who, "thanks to being born in Catholic Ireland […], excels in his capacity to 'deceive, revenge, equivocate' and proceeds to cheat his way around the British Isles and the Indies" (Loveman 41-42). This essentialist articulation of the Irish as inherent dissimulators cast a long shadow, informing diverse articulations of Irishness from the tricksy Stage Irish figure to Matthew Arnold's influential depiction of the Celt "chafing against the despotism of fact" (103), or Hugh Kenner's claim that Irish literature is distinguished by its creative exploitation of the "Irish Fact," which he defines as "anything they will tell you in Ireland, where you […] had best assume a demeanour of wary appreciation" (3).

The stereotype of the Irish dissembler abounds in nineteenth-century Stage Irish texts. Consider Samuel Lover's story "Paddy the Sport," in which Paddy is a typical Stage Irish drunken dissembler who is "fond of dealing in mystification" (107). Paddy's stereotypical Stage Irish characteristics are framed by the story's epigraph, a quote from Shakespeare's *All's Well that Ends Well*: "He will lie, sir, with such volubility, that you would think truth were a fool: Drunkenness is his best virtue" (Lover 107). In the story, Paddy the Sport fools the local peasants into thinking that his artist companion, the story's first-person narrator, is a tax collector, leading the locals to hang their dogs rather than owe money on them. Paddy reveals his arbitrarily cruel deception to the artist upon discovery of the hanged animals:

> "By gor, sir, I wouldn't like offindin' your honour; but you see, (since you must know, sir,) that whin *you tuk* that little green book out iv your pocket, *they tuk* you for […] – I beg your honour's pardon – but, by dad, they tuk you for a tax-gather." […]
> "Ha! Paddy," said I, "I see this is a piece of your knavery, to bewilder the poor people."

> "Is it me!" says Paddy, with a look of assumed innocence, that avowed, in the most provoking manner, the inward triumph of Paddy in his own hoax. (Lover 109)

The sport that the Stage Irishman derives from his hoax not only casts him as a conspiratorial dissembler, but also reveals a paranoid fear at the heart of the Stage Irish hetero-stereotype: namely, that the Paddy or Teague's buffoonery, blunders, bulls, and brogues may be the affectations of a wilfully deceptive performance designed to exploit their English audience's naiveté.

This suspicion that Stage Irishness might be less an inherent identity than a cunning performance is explicitly put on stage in George Bernard Shaw's *John Bull's Other Island* (1904). As Maebh Long notes, the "fawning, drinking and 'rollicking stage brogue'" of Shaw's Tim Haffigan deceives the Englishman Tom Broadbent, until he is disabused "of his self-satisfied, imperial indulgence" by the Irish expatriate Larry Doyle, who "argues that Haffigan's demeanour and dialect is no more than a useful mask that plays on English conventions of the Irish idiot" (35). Doyle explains to Broadbent that:

> No Irishman ever talks like that in Ireland, or ever did, or ever will. But when a thoroughly worthless Irishman comes to England, and finds the whole place full of romantic duffers like you, who will let him loaf and drink and sponge and brag as long as he flatters your sense of moral superiority by playing the fool and degrading himself and his country, he soon learns the antics that take you in. (Shaw 15)

Numerous Irish counter-discursive hoaxes assume such a dishonest posture and inhabit such a false voice – in mock tracts, proposals, essays, letters, lectures, translations, columns, and so on – to exploit their audience's naiveté and ridicule stereotypical attitudes towards Ireland and 'Irishness.' I am thinking here of Jonathan Swift's "A Modest Proposal" and *Drapier's Letters*, of Maria Edgeworth's *Essay on Irish Bulls* and James Clarence Mangan's spurious translations of invented poets, of Oscar Wilde's fascination with Thomas Chatterton and James Macpherson, of W.B. Yeats's poetics of the mask and Samuel Beckett's Trinity lecture on the invented poet du Chas, of the hoax aesthetics of Flann O'Brien and Medbh McGuckian, among others.[2] Key to the historical relationship between (a) the charge that dissembling is an essential Irish quality and (b) the hoaxes that perform and affirm this stereotype in bad faith in order to deconstruct and ridicule it, is the strange symbiosis we can observe in an Irish counter-discourse that plays satirically with modes of false appearance in order to critique a discourse that fixes the Irish, and Irishness itself, as always already a fake.

Nick Groom notes that the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century obsession with sorting 'authentic' national identities and cultural histories from 'spurious' ones arises out of "the heightened need for a sense of national identity engendered by" the 1707 and

2 For more on Swift's hoaxes, see Valerie Rumbold's collection of his Parodies, Hoaxes, Mock Treatises; on Mangan's hoaxes, see Lloyd; on Wilde, see Bristow and Mitchell; on Beckett's hoaxes, see Fagan, "Beckett's 'Le Concentrisme'" 161-77; on Flann O'Brien's hoaxes, see Fagan, "Expert Diagnosis" 12-41.

1800 Acts of Union ("Romanticism and Forgery" 1625). This tension is most notoriously borne out by the scandal of Macpherson's '*Ossian* hoax,' in which Irish and Scottish cultural histories are contested variously by English, Irish, and Scottish antiquarians as the products of nationalist conspiracy. The dominant critical narrative of the *Ossian* affair echoes the contemporary estimation of the English writer Samuel Johnson that the poems are outright forgeries and fabrications, which have been brought to prominence by the post-Union nationalist fervour of "Caledonian bigotry" rather than by virtue of their historical authenticity (274). There is no need here to revise the debate over whether Macpherson is "an imposter, and his work a fiction" (MacNeill 42), or if his *Ossian* poems are best considered "a 'collage' [of] reworked authentic material, together with a liberal admixture of pure Macpherson" with some genuine antiquarian significance (Thomson 10).[3] What is significant for my purposes is that the claims that Macpherson makes for Ossian's authenticity are inextricable from his attempts to reframe Irish literary antiquity – with its competing claim to "the most ancient and, consequently, most superior of songs" on the islands (Sorensen 80) – as a modern invention and hoax (the very charge that Johnson had levied at Macpherson himself).

> From internal proofs it sufficiently appears, that the poems published under the name of Ossian, are not of Irish composition. The favourite chimera, that Ireland is the mother country of the Scots, is totally subverted and ruined. The fictions concerning the antiquities of that country [i.e., Ireland] […] are found, at last, to be the spurious brood of modern and ignorant ages. […] I have just now, in my hands, all that remain, of those compositions; but, unluckily for the antiquities of Ireland, they appear to be the work of a very modern period. Every stanza, nay almost every line, affords striking proofs that they cannot be three centuries old. Their allusions to the manner and customs of the 15th century are so many, that it is [a] matter of wonder to me, how anyone could dream of their antiquity. (Macpherson xxvii)

The circulation of claims and counterclaims for 'authentic' or 'spurious' discoveries and translations of national ballads, poems, and songs in the aftermath of the Macpherson scandal was "instrumental in focusing the work of the already active literary nationalists on the *different*," rather than the united, "poetic and linguistic sources in the fragile cultural construct that was called Britain" (Kristmannsson 96).[4]

Maginn and Mahony enter this history in the 1820s and 30s, amid a rejuvenated cultural and political "debate on national origins" (Dunne 453) driven by the Catholic Emancipation movement and advanced by the nationalist inflections of popular antiquarian and romantic literary projects such as Thomas Crofton Croker's fieldwork translations and Moore's *Irish Melodies*. In the periodical pieces under analysis here, Maginn and Mahony each exploit the key coordinates and signifiers of these debates over 'authentic' and 'spurious' national cultures within the union – poems and songs of dubious national and temporal origin; faithful *vs.* forged translations; the dissem-

3 For more on this debate see Stafford, *passim*.

4 For an excellent analysis of the Irish response to Macpherson, see O'Halloran 69-95.

bling Celt *vs.* the honest Anglo-Saxon – in a series of pseudonymous mock-hoaxes. Across these pieces, they play up tropes and affectations of Stage Irishness both to ridicule Irish antiquarianism and Romantic nationalism, and to negotiate a position for themselves as simultaneously unionist Britons and distinctively Irish writers under these shifting cultural and political coordinates.

William Maginn: The Crystallised Paddy

Maginn was eulogised by Edward Kenealy for *Dublin University Magazine* in 1844 as "the leading periodical writer of his day" (72). Yet, Maginn's significance to the periodical culture and comic literature of the era – in particular, through his contributions to two major Tory publications, the Edinburgh-based *Blackwood's Magazine* and the London-based *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* – has been diminished and obscured by literary, biographical, and critical narratives that attribute to him unreflectively the clichés of Stage Irishness. In an 1835 letter to his brother John, Thomas Carlyle vents at the stage-Scottish caricature of his person that had been published by the "mad, rattling Irishman […] Paddy Maginn" in *Fraser's Magazine*, a publication which, despite having contributed to it himself, Carlyle disparages as a "'drunk man's vomit' of an (Irish) Magazine" (n.p.). In her 1897 biography *Annals of a Publishing House: William Blackwood and His Sons*, Margaret Oliphant derides Maginn as having emerged "out of the unknown" region of Cork, "a place more associated with pigs and salted provisions than with literature" (362). Oliphant describes Maginn as "one of the best specimens of the typical Irishman, the crystallised Paddy, ready to jest and sing, to speechify, to fight, to flatter, to make promises and to break them, with all the unstable charm of a being beyond rule" (364).

When we turn to Maginn's own life and writing, we find that this role of the drunken, dissembling Stage Irishman was a part he would readily and self-ironically perform. As Fergal Gaynor observes, the author's legacy has been defined by his ambivalent complicity with the clichés of Stage Irishness, as "Maginn was both fitted and fitted himself to the mould of the comic, good-natured Celtic eccentric" (313-14). An anecdote, supposedly told by the author himself, describes Maginn's first visit to the Edinburgh office of *Blackwood's Magazine*, which had spent the previous months sending checks to the fictitious figure of "Ralph Tuckett Scott, Cork" in recompense for Maginn's contributions. Maginn recalls that his deception had set "a clear stage for some sport" in his meeting with the editor William Blackwood:

> I made a rather formal bow, and giving him a touch of the Cork brogue, I said, "Ye'r Misther Blackwood I presume, sir." "Yes, sir," was the answer, "at your service." "Be gor, sir," said I, "If you were only at my service a week ago, you'd have saved me a journey […], there's some rascal in Cork – you know Cork, don't you? Well there's some blackguard there after making use of my name, in your old thrump of a Magazine, and I must know who he is." "Oh! sir," said Blackwood, "I deny your right to ask any such questions, and those requests cannot be granted without delay, and consideration." "Consideration, indeed," I cried, "aren't you after writing to one Scott there?" "I really cannot answer you, sir." "Maybe it's going to deny what you wrote you are,

> maybe you'll deny this, and this, and this," said I, throwing a bundle of his letters on the table before him. "Maybe you'll say they're not to the man that writes for you, and maybe you'll say that I'm not the man himself." (Maginn, *Vol. 5* xxxii)

The theatricalised language that Maginn employs ("stage," "bow") to describe his hoax is revealing, as part of his "sport" clearly stems from casting himself in the role of the Stage Irishman and aggressively confronting the Scottish Blackwood with an uncomfortable encounter with his Celtic other ("aren't you after writing to one Scott there?"; "you know Cork, don't you?"). Elsewhere, in his tongue-in-cheek pen portrait for *The Maclise Portrait Gallery of Illustrious Literary Characters with Memoirs*, Maginn characterises himself as "[a] randy, bandy, brandy, no Dandy, Rollicking jig of an Irishman!" (qtd. in Bates 38).

It is essential, then, to counter the hetero-stereotypical depictions of the Cork writer by situating Maginn's mediated, ironic, hoax-like auto-stereotypical performances of his Irishness – what might be termed his parodic or creative self-marginalisation – both within the history of the Irish literary hoax and against the nineteenth-century predominance of Stage Irish representations. Throughout his writing, Maginn satirises the Stage Irish figure to political ends (conservative, unionist, Tory) and to ridicule others (romantic nationalists, antiquarians, Catholics,[5] Whigs). Yet, these same performances also use the devices of the literary hoax to mockingly inhabit, perform, and satirise the image of *himself* as the dissembling, drunken, mad Irishman that is reflected back to him by his rivals and critics. Even as it provides ammunition to critics who would position him as a wild, debauched, and dissembling Stage Irish Other, Maginn's wilful double exposure articulates the fact that he is both a devout Protestant unionist, and still, to much of his Scottish and English audiences, a product of the "unknown" *terra incognita* of Cork. Thus, Maginn's taste for ironic self-fashioning and performative national simulation constitutes not only a satirical literary device designed to ridicule his Catholic and Whig rivals, but also a way of negotiating the complexities of his own Irish identity under the Union.

Odoherty On Irish Songs

Maginn's first publication for *Blackwood* was a forged back-translation of "The Ballad of Chevy Chase" into Latin and Greek, submitted to the editor under the "fictitious signature" of 'Olinthus Petre' (Mackenzie xxviii). The mock-hoax directly pokes fun at the scholarly authority that antiquarians attempt to foster by linguistically, temporally, materially, and culturally 'translating' oral ballads into the modern print idiom. More indirectly, it burlesques the romantic mythologising that draws on such revivalist discourse to authenticate a given nationalist project by tracing it back to a constructed

5 The Limerick-born editor Shelton Mackenzie, Maginn's contemporary and the first major scholar of his work, describes the Corkonian as an "extremely anti-Catholic" writer who was "steady all his life, in enforcing his convictions (in newspapers, magazines, and reviews) that [Catholics] were unworthy of being trusted […] even with political freedom" (xxvii-xxviii).

and always-already mythologised point of origin. The mock-Macphersonian hoax aesthetics of Maginn's *Blackwood* debut is localised in Maginn's outright fabrication of songs in the Irish tradition. Mackenzie relates anecdotally that

> one of [Maginn's] amusements was to compose *quasi*-Irish songs and narrative poems, and gravely pass them off on some of his enthusiastic countrymen as originals, which he had collected from the chanted recitations of old crones in country districts. As might be expected, any pilgrims who essayed to retrace his steps and emulate his labours, seldom found the exact locality which he described and never happened upon the aged ballad-reciters. (xiv-xv)

Beyond his own sport, it seems clear that Maginn's intention here is twofold: first, to mock the antiquarian nationalist project of 'filling in the gaps' in the fragmentary record of pre-Union Irish cultural history; second, to contaminate that project's archive with fakes that undermine its claims to authenticity and divert sincere scholarly efforts.

Stage Irish representation was already a commonplace of *Blackwood's Magazine* by the time Maginn's voice was introduced to the magazine with the faked "Chevy Chase" translations in November 1819. Maginn wrote to Blackwood following the March 1822 publication of "Rhapsodies over a Punch-Bowl," which is attributed to "Paddy from Cork" (actually, the Scottish novelist John Galt), to correct a giveaway error in its attempt to simulate a Corkonian:

> Paddy from Cork is a clever fellow – but not a Cork man – else he would never have headed his article "Rhapsodies over a punch-bowl" there not being one in this good city. Remedy it in the next "over a tumbler of punch" or "the tenth tumbler of punch" that being from time immemorial our average number – sometimes it true [*sic*] exceeded but seldom not reached. (qtd. in Wardle 720-21)

The letter is characteristic of Maginn's broader intervention into *Blackwood*, as he writes both to correct *and* to play up the magazine's misrepresentations of the Irish (here, in the form of the Stage Irish drunkard). This duality is most evident in the magazine's most famous representation of Irishness, 'Morgan Odoherty,' a byline and persona under which several contributors wrote, including, after he joined the roster of authors at *Blackwood*, Maginn himself.[6]

6 Maginn's dedication to concealing and diversifying his authorial personae under numerous pseudonyms is attested by the fact that so many of his contemporaries and subsequent scholars struggle to identify his contributions. Amid this confusion, the reflex of early critics was to attribute any pseudonymous or anonymous piece in *Blackwood* with an Irish theme to Maginn. Mackenzie details that George Moir "erroneously attributes many *Blackwood* articles to Maginn," including the piece "Daniel O'Rourke," which is credited to the doubly Irish personage "Fogarty O'Fogarty," although it had, in fact, been written by William Gosnell, the son of a Cork apothecary. Yet, Mackenzie's further assertion that the fact that Maginn *was* Odoherty "was generally known among the reading public" (lii) has, in turn, been overturned by Ralph M. Wardle (Odoherty is, in fact, the creation of Scottish author Captain Thomas Hamilton), even as this misapprehension endures in critical literature regarding the period (716).

In the introduction to his 1894 compendium of *The Humour of Ireland*, D.J. O'Donoghue specifies that to forge a definitive canon of Irish comic writing he will leave aside "the anonymous, the hybrid, the spurious" (xvii). O'Donoghue conscripts Maginn as an ally in this cause of scrubbing the Irish comic tradition of all that is fake and deceptive:

> Maginn's great service in exposing the true character of the wretched rubbish often palmed off on the English public as Irish songs deserves to be noticed here. He proved most conclusively that the stuff thus styled Irish, with its unutterable refrains of the "Whack Bubbaboo" kind, was of undoubted English origin, topography, phraseology, rhymes, and everything else being utterly un-Irish. The internal evidence alone convicts their authors. […] Any compiler who gives a place in a collection of Irish songs to such trash as "Looney Mactwolter," "Dennis Bulgruddery," or any other of the rather numerous of their kind, with their Gulliverian nomenclature and their burlesque of Irish manners, is an accomplice in the crime of their authors. (xvi)

O'Donoghue's reference is to the article "Odoherty On Irish Songs," published in the March 1825 edition of *Blackwood*. It seems likely that O'Donoghue attributes the article to Maginn owing to its inclusion in Mackenzie's collection of the *Odoherty Papers*. This is a potentially perilous assumption given how few of *Blackwood*'s Odoherty pieces Maginn penned; however, Wardle assures us that "On Irish Songs" is "undoubtedly by Maginn" (726-27). Yet, O'Donoghue *is* in error in evoking "Odoherty on Irish Songs" in support of his argument, as Odoherty's piece on the fakeness of Stage Irish songs also deceives in its apparent *anti*-anti-Irish agenda.

Odoherty opens his dissertation on Irish songs with a seemingly straightforward declaration of the "disinclination becoming very visible on the part of the English, to believe us Irish people, when we tell them that they know nothing about us" – a fact that Odoherty proposes to demonstrate by perusing a collection of popular Irish songs for evidence of what the English "put into our mouths when they think fit to write as Irish" (318). Odoherty protests how often the representation of supposed Irish speech in these songs fails to capture authentic local pronunciation and spelling and implies that the speech given to their Irish characters is a kind of bastardised Cockney passed off as an Irish brogue. Odoherty blasts the "immensity of blarney" evident in songs such as "The Sprig of Shillelagh;" and indeed, the song itself appears to offer the quintessential portrait of the Stage Irishman, who "drinks and […] fights […] With his sprig of shillelagh and shamrock so green" – although it does counter these tropes with references to Pat's "good-humoured […], honest and sound" heart (qtd. in Roe 279).

However, this seeming alliance with a pro-Irish or anti-English cause is deceptive, as Odoherty reveals that despite his claim to speak for "us Irish people," his view is partisan and partial. Odoherty, in fact, contends that "The Sprig of Shillelagh," with its praise in the second verse for the "glory" of the Donnybrook Fair, could not have been written by an Irishman as his own experiences with the Fair were of a "squalid misery" which "gathers the blackguard men and women of a metropolis, to indulge in

all kinds of filth" (318).[7] Odoherty's argument, then, tailored specifically for his predominantly Edinburgh and London audiences, that these songs could not be written by an authentic Irish composer, is based less on scholarly research or a resentment at the Stage Irishness of the representation than a disbelief that such positive odes could be written about a "disgusting" class of people engaged in "revolting" activities and "drunken riot" (318). Indeed, he avers that he "should rather see the magistracy of Dublin employed in suppressing [the Donnybrook Fair], than hear silly songwriters using their rhymes in its panegyric" (318).

The curious element of this derogatory commentary is that Odoherty focuses exclusively on the song's superficially positive representations of the Irish urban working class and completely glosses over the fact that the final verse reveals "The Sprig of Shillelagh" to be a pro-Union song:

> May the sons of the Thames, and the Tweed, and the Shannon,
> Drub the foe who dares plant on our confines a cannon;
> United and happy, at loyalty's shrine,
> May the Rose and Thistle long flourish and twine
> Round the sprig of shillelagh and shamrock so green. (qtd. in Roe 280)

There is a strange irony in the fact that Odoherty employs the term "us Irish" to establish a feigned sense of Irish unity in writing about a song that flatters the Irish so as to finally unite them with Scotland and England in defence of "our confines" against common foreign foes – even as this purported unity is undone by the article's subsequent anti-Irish (or at least, anti-urban working class and Catholic Irish) sentiments.[8] The article continues in this contradictory vein, with Odoherty chastising Irish songs as poor English fakes while surveying the country with a kind of Gulliverian squeamishness: Paddy MacShane's "Seven Ages," for instance, is unbelievable as an authentic Irish song given its neutral representation of Ballyporeen, which Odoherty describes as a "dirty village" (318).

Yet, the piece's ironic distance from even these propositional claims comes to the fore in its failure to stick to its own argument. Rather than moving towards a concluding *dénouement*, Odoherty's attention wanders and his argument unravels. He pursues a tangent concerning an article by English journalist John Black in the Whig paper *The Morning Chronicle* that had argued that Scotland's superiority over Ireland was due to its greater number of larger towns. Odoherty refutes this assertion by list-

7 The endurance of this stereotype can be seen in Maurice Bourgeois's 1913 description of the Stage Irishman as being "peerless for cracking skulls at Donnybrook Fair" (110).

8 Odoherty's appraisal of the song can be profitably contrasted with that of Owen Roe, who, in the 3 February 1877 issue of the pro-Irish Dublin journal *The Shamrock*, praises "The Sprig of Shillelagh" as a positive representation of "the lower-class Irish," but complains that they are "compelled to differ from our poet in his nauseating West-British professions of loyalty. We have no ambition, much less desire to drub any foreign soldiers, while an ally of such questionable faith as John Bull stands by our side. […] We fervently wish that the day may be far distant when the Shamrock will, in peaceful harmony, be entwined with either the English Rose, or the Scotch Thistle" (280).

ing Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Galway, Kilkenny, Belfast, Drogheda, Sligo, Carlow, Clonmell, Derry, Youghall, "and several others" (321). The internal contradiction that this assertion establishes with his argument against the "disgusting" and "dirty" urban spaces of Ireland is not addressed in the article; rather Odoherty turns to tease the representations of the Irish in the *Courier* by its editor William Mudford, who "is quite horror-struck at the notion of us" (322). (Note again Odoherty's use of "us" to describe the Irish as distinct from the British.) The Roman Catholic Association had brought a criminal charge, established in Cork, against Mudford for comments made in the paper about Maynooth College. Odoherty assumes that the English Mudford "looks on the Corkagians as no better than Ashantees, and, no doubt, anticipates […] the fate of poor Sir Charles M'Carthy" (322). The allusion is to the Cork-born soldier and British Governor Sir Charles McCarthy, who, in the First Ashanti War in 1824, "was taken and his skull made into a ceremonial drinking bowl for the Ashanti king" (Harrison 72). Maginn is likely not targeting the complicity of Irish subjects in British colonialism; rather, the reference trains its satire on the British representational tendency of aligning Irish and African races as savage Others,[9] and more specifically at the English ignorance of Maginn's native Cork, despite its place as a major city and port in the Union. Odoherty assures Mudford that Cork "is well munitioned with victual and drink, and he has but a small chance of being eaten alive there" – a point he develops with an absurdly lavish catalogue of the rich food and drink available across Ireland that extends across two columns (322). Again, this vision of the "peerless" riches of Ireland's land and waters – from Kinsale to Cobh, from Cork to Wicklow – and the superiority of its resources and delicacies when compared to those found in London strikingly contradicts the earlier image of "disgusting" and "dirty" villages and fairs.

Odoherty closes the dissertation with a sudden start: "But what is this I am about? Digressing from a disquisition on songs, pseudo-Irish, to the way in which a stranger, who knows how, could live in Cork. It can't be helped – I have lost the thread of my argument. So, I think I had better conclude" (322). This lack of closure betrays Odoherty's opening promise to "prove [his] assertion" (namely, that the English know nothing about Ireland and are disinclined to believe Irish people who tell them this) by "patiently examin[ing]" the "specimens of Irish wit" found in an Irish song book (318). Such a strategy of establishing an argument and methodology and then allowing it to unravel hints towards a hoax-like bad faith declaration of epistemological certainty that is established only to be ultimately withdrawn, undermined, or deflated through a willed or planned failure to follow through on its stated convictions. By thus ultimately pulling the rug out from under itself, the article reveals the seams of its own contradictions and inconsistencies. Maginn's Odoherty asserts that he will expose the Eng-

9 This association of the Irish and the Ashanti people can be seen to have endured in Frederick Burr Opper's notorious Stage Irish cartoon "The King of A-Shantee," published in *Puck* on 15 February 1882, which plays on the quasi-homophony between 'Ashanti' and 'a (Irish) shanty.'

lish imposition of *faux* Irish songs on Ireland, yet he categorises them as fakes because they are implausibly positive about Ireland's people, places and culture. At the same time, he takes issue with Black and Mudford's ignorance of Ireland, particularly his native Cork.

Thus, what appears to O'Donoghue at a cursory glance to be an article by an Irish native taking up a coherent stance about the misrepresentations of Stage Irish songs dissolves on closer reading into a farrago of contradictory views and self-defeating digressions and tangents, with distraction and drift as its organising principles. Yet, I contend that such a method also allows Maginn to express the complexities of his own Irish identity, in which the satirical double exposure granted by the form of the mock-hoax allows him, even paradoxically, at once to mock any Irish nationalist pride in the country's 'invented' histories, places, and cultures, and to mock any British stereotyping of Ireland's savage backwardness (or even, total ignorance of the island's people and politics) with a declaration of pride in these same histories, places and cultures. Maginn's Stage Irish performances – whether as "Ralph Tuckett Scott" for the editor Blackwood or as "Morgan Odoherty" in *Blackwood's Magazine* itself – distinguish themselves in so far as they are clearly intended both to mock the persona (and in some ways, 'Irishness' itself) and to unsettle or disarm the expectations of his Scottish or English audiences, rather than purely to entertain or beguile them.

Polyglot Editions: Father Prout, The Blarney Stone, and Irish Orientalism

In 1830, Maginn launched *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country*, a publication which offered a "riot of false logic, forged literary sources, fictional encounters and high learning" (Gaynor 313). On April Fool's Day 1834, *Fraser* became the home to the *Prout Papers*, a serially published collection of posthumous tracts and dissertations that had been authored, ostensibly, by the late parish priest of Watergrasshill, Cork, a learned cultural connoisseur by the name of 'Father Prout.' In truth, the gullible antiquarian was the *nom de plume* of Corkonian Francis Sylvester Mahony. Unlike Maginn, Mahony was a "failed Jesuit" and "pious right-wing Catholic" unionist (Eagleton 4). Like Maginn, Mahony employed a mixture of *faux* erudition and faked translations to lob barely concealed barbs at personal rivals, namely O'Connell, whose "democratising measures [Mahony] abhorred" (Campbell 49) and cultural avatars of Catholic Emancipation – in particular, Thomas Moore.

I should like to focus on a seldom studied instalment of the *Prout Papers*: "Father Prout's Plea for Pilgrimages, and Hospitable Reception of Sir Walter Scott When He Visited the Blarney Stone," published in the May 1834 edition of *Fraser*. This essay, the second in the series, describes the occasion upon which Prout supposedly accompanied the Scottish historical novelist on an excursion to the Blarney Stone while giving orations on the relic's Phoenician ancientness. The selection from the *Prout Papers* echoes Maginn's ironic handling of Stage Irishness and antiquarianism (combined here in the image of *ancient Blarney*) and the satire's propositional content is

soon revealed, as Prout praises the stone's gift of the gab as the source of the Irishman's ability to deceive:

> Without this resource, how could Castlereagh have managed to delude the English public, or Dan O'Connell to gull even his own countrymen? […] When the good fortune of the above-mentioned individuals can be traced to any other source, save and except the Blarney stone, I am ready to renounce my belief in it altogether. (Mahony, "Plea for Pilgrimages" 547)

As part of this gag, Prout attributes the success of the Dublin scientific writer and Whig Dionysius Lardner to kissing the Blarney Stone: "What else could have transmuted my old friend Pat Lardner into a man of letters?" (Mahony, "Plea for Pilgrimages" 547).

Prout's reference to Dionysius as "Pat" (reminiscent of Carlyle's derision of William Maginn as "Paddy Maginn") takes part in a common contemporary practice of denigrating the acclaimed doctor as an exemplar of the Stage Irishman.[10] William Makepeace Thackeray satirises him thus in a series of comic sketches titled "The History of Dionysus Diddler," in which Lardner is made to bear all the trademarks of the 'Teague,' replete with brogues and shillelagh:

Fig. 1. "Dionysus Diddler Sketch 1" (Thackeray 653)

Fig. 2. "Dionysus Diddler Sketch 2" (Thackeray 653)

In the first illustration (Fig. 1), Thackeray sketches the young Dionysus Diddler during his days as a student at "Ballybunion University in the hedge" (653); in the second (Fig. 2), he presents Diddler "after forty years of fame, [as] he thinks upon dear Ballybunion" in a thick Stage Irish brogue: "'I'm femous,' says he, 'all the world over: but what's the use of riputetion? Look at me with all me luggage at the end of me stick – all me money in me left-hand breeches pocket – and it's oh! but I'd give all me celeb-

10 Incidentally, this association with Stage Irishness would later acquire extra resonance, unknown then to Mahony or Thackery, as Lardner is widely believed to have been the unacknowledged father of Dion Boucicault.

rity for a bowl of butthermilk and potaties'" (655). In his Scott piece, Mahony engages in similar sport at an Irish Whig rival's expense, yet the direction of the satire is complicated by the fact that he himself assumes the mantle of Stage Irishness, however ironised, in his performance as his Father Prout persona.

After thus using it to double down on the stereotype of the deceptive Irish for some localised political score settling, Prout presents the Blarney Stone to Scott as evidence for Ireland's oriental origins: "This palladium of our country was brought hither originally by the Phoenician colony that peopled Ireland and is the best proof of our eastern parentage […]. Hence the origin of this wondrous talisman is of the remotest antiquity" (Mahony, "Plea for Pilgrimages" 547). As the final flourish that supposedly convinces Scott of this theory, Prout offers a cryptogrammatic reading of an equation he writes in the ground with his cane: "BaLeARes iNsulÆ = Blarnae" (Mahony, "Plea for Pilgrimages" 548). Mahony's tongue-in-cheek reference is to Baleares insulæ, "the ancient name of the islands of *Majorca* and *Minorca*" (the Balearic Islands), which, according to the 1830 edition of William Blackwood's *Edinburgh Encylopædia*, were believed to have been "peopled by a colony of Phœnicians" (Brewster 216-17).

The target of Mahony's satire here is Irish Orientalism, a contemporary discourse that goes further still than the Irish antiquarian responses to Macpherson by positing the origins of the Irish culture and language at the dawn of civilisation in the ancient East, in some accounts tracing it all the way back to the Tower of Babel. As Joseph Lennon details, the Oriental origin legends of Irish antiquarians (Charles Vallancey, Joseph Cooper Walker) and historians (Charles O'Conor, Sylvester O'Halloran) are "carried over into literary and popular culture" in Irish romantic texts such as Sydney Owenson's *The Missionary* and Moore's *Lallah Rookh*, and into post-Union political writing, when "nationalist political pamphleteers began to increasingly invoke the Oriental origins of the Celt" (116-17). By travestying these Orientalist discourses of Irish cultural ancientness and authenticity as just another form of 'blarney,' Mahony satirises a nationalist project that he sees as legitimising itself by tracing a direct lineage from nineteenth-century ideas of the Irish nation back to a constructed pre-colonial point of origin at the dawn of civilisation.

The upshot of all of this is Prout's anachronistic claim that "the 'Groves of Blarney' have been commemorated by the Greek poets many centuries before the Christian era" and that Richard Alfred Millikin, the "reputed author" of the contemporary ballad of that name was "but a simple translator from the Greek original" (Mahony, "Plea for Pilgrimages" 549). Mahony burlesques the antiquarian dependence on manuscript evidence (real or simulated) to construct its strident claims regarding the ancient roots of the national culture in oral tradition, as Prout claims to have discovered "in the library of Cardinal Mazarin, an old Greek manuscript, which, after diligent examination, [he is] convinced must be the oldest and 'princeps editio' of the song" (Mahony, "Plea for Pilgrimages" 549). Cementing the piece as a mock-hoax, this falsified archival record is fiendishly disruptive of official antiquarian and Orientalist Irish cul-

tural histories, as Prout produces a whole "Polyglot edition" of different versions of "The Groves of Blarney" that supposedly pre-date Milliken's. These include:

> a Latin version; a French-Norman version from the "Livre de Doomsdaye, A.D. 1069," extra stanzas written by Mahony; and a spoof "Fragment of a Celtic MS., from the King's Library Copenhagen." This latter presented a version of the most risqué of Milliken's stanzas in a print pastiche of the so-called Hardiman font, the type cast for the Gaelic poems in the *Irish Minstrelsy*.[11] (Campbell 49-50)

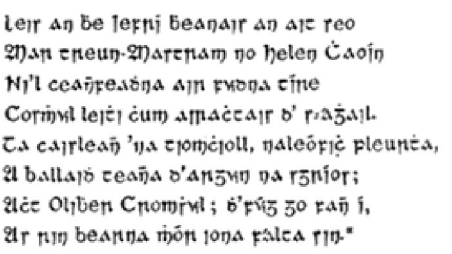

Fig. 3. The Fragment of a Celtic MS in Father Prout's "Polyglot Edition" of "The Groves of Blarney" (Prout 96)

For Matthew Campbell, Prout is "an embodiment of one sort of conservative rhetoric, where the best way to combat change is to suggest that the new thing is simply the old thing in new clothes" (52). I agree, of course, with Campbell in the main here, yet Mahony's choice of "The Groves of Blarney" – much like Maginn's choice of "The Sprig of Shillelagh" in the earlier piece – complicates a straightforward reading of the satire's direction, given that the song itself, despite giving off the impression of an authentically Irish romantic ballad (and often nowadays sung as such), is a parody of such Irish romantic airs. Millikin himself was a fellow Corkonian who, as well as being a trained lawyer, was a literary figure and editor somewhat in the Maginn and Mahony mould, writing many of his pieces "in burlesque on the doggerel flights of the hedge schoolmasters and local bards" (Read 129). Charles A. Read details the origins of "The Groves of Blarney" as a parody of "Sweet Castle-Hyde," composed when Milliken undertook to write another song "which for absurdity would far surpass" that "ludicrous" ballad (129). Patrick W. Joyce's 1909 volume of *Old Irish Folk Music and Songs* describes the parody as a "vile caricature," claiming such songs "did not in any sense represent the people – they represented nothing indeed but the depraved taste of the several writers" (qtd. in McDermott n.p.). Kevin McDermott draws our attention to the song's exploitation of the "self-contradictory form of humour known as an 'Irish bull'" in lines such as "All by the *murmuring* of sweet *silent* streams" which are "banked with posies that *spontaneous* grow there / *Planted in order* by the sweet Rockclose" (n.p.; emphasis added). Indeed, Milliken's parodic mode would fit right in with Maginn and Mahony's diverse takes on the 'fakeness' of Irish songs for *Black-*

11 The reference is to James Hardiman's two-volume *Irish Minstrelsy; or, Bardic Remains of Ireland* (1831), a collection intended to establish the antiquity of Irish verse.

wood and *Fraser*, especially in its implications of a faked or constructed Irish tradition and identity. As McDermott notes:

> [t]he central metaphor might be Blarney's "rock close," an early 18th-century assemblage of manufactured scenery given romantic names such as the "Fairy Glade," "Druid's Circle," and "Sacrificial Altar" – all of which were built around, and completely overwhelm, what is probably an actual prehistoric monument. The song, like the rock garden, offers a stark contrast between an artificial and whimsical fantasy of Ireland's past created by and for her conquerors and the genuine remnants of Ireland's high, indigenous culture – clad in beggar's robes and ridiculed by those who destroyed it. (n.p.)

This image of a form of Blarney that combines genuine elements of Irishness with shoddy simulations thereof mirrors the hybridised nature of Prout's own character – part classical scholar, part Stage Irishman – as captured in the description of him as:

> that rare combination of the Teian lyre and the Tipperary bagpipe, of the Ionian dialect blending harmoniously with the Cork brogue; an Irish potato seasoned with Attic salt, and the humours of Donnybrook wed to the glories of Marathon! (Mahony, "Prout's Carousal" 681)

As with Maginn's Irish writing, Mahony's blending of Stage Irish performance with a mock-hoax of post-Macpherson antiquarianism and romantic nationalism betrays an ambivalent attitude to the country. The *Prout Papers* provide a forum for anti-Irish sentiment – as when readers are informed that Prout "despised the vulgar herd of Corkonians with whom it was his lot to mingle" (Mahony, "Plea for Pilgrimages" 539) – even as they exhibit a deep, if often comic or satirically derisive, interest in Ireland's popular cultural ephemera.

Conclusion: Maginn and Mahony's Anti-Archive

Maginn and Mahony's mock-hoax aesthetic of bad faith evaluations and spurious translations of fake Stage Irish songs is advanced, and perhaps perfected, in the most famous instalment of the *Prout Papers*, "The Rogueries of Tom Moore" published in the August 1834 issue of *Fraser*. Prout 'reveals' that Moore also undertook frequent "pilgrimages" to the Blarney Stone as "an excuse to visit Prout's Watergrasshill home, where the national bard sought out foreign-language songs that might be surreptitiously smuggled into 'the melodious ballads of his country'" (Dunne 456). In an astounding display of mock erudition and specious back translation, Prout lays out the evidence that all of Moore's *Irish Melodies* are unacknowledged plagiarisms from previous, non-Irish sources.

> By translating a number of Moore's songs into French, Greek and Latin, backdating their period of composition, and attributing to each a fictitious original author, Mahony parodically misrepresented the *Irish Melodies* as a signal instance of literary theft. A series of derivative translations were thus portrayed as legitimate "originals," while Moore's authentic English-language ballads were retrospectively transformed into illegitimate poetic plagiarisms. (Dunne 454)

By enacting "a reversal of 'host' and 'parasite' text" so that "the present text claims priority over the original one, authoritatively reconstituting it as inauthentic" (Eagleton

4), Mahony's mock-hoax situates Moore in a genealogy of Irish roguery that extends back to Richard Head and the origins of the Stage Irish figure. At the same time, Mahony's "comic subversion of Moore's efforts to reproduce a distinctive Gaelic aesthetic in English" (Dunne 453) labours to delegitimise the authority of Irish nationalist balladry more broadly. Assuming the role of the Stage Irish antiquarian, Mahony falsifies the 'historical' documents that are vital to the nationalist project, disrupting the coordinates of origin, inheritance, and authenticity upon which it is based.

Drawing together the distinct practices, modes, and cultural politics of these post-Macpherson mock-hoaxes, we find that the "satirical, comic, irrational, almost-drunken-but-always-erudite" (Gaynor 313) art of Maginn and Mahony establishes a new set of aesthetic and affective possibilities for Irish literary hoax writing and Stage Irish self-presentation. Their 'anti-archive' of spurious translations of forged originals burlesques the era's reemergent anxieties over the problem of tracing or constructing the nation's fidelity to its cultural origins. Specifically, Maginn and Mahony exploit the form of the mock-hoax to critique "the politicised role of translation in contemporary efforts to offer an authentic literary and historical depiction of the Irish past" (Dunne 454). With ambivalence, their acts of parodic or creative self-marginalisation both exhibit and reject anti-Irish bigotry in slippery, provocative performances of their 'hybrid' status as both unionists and fully-fledged Stage Irish writers.

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STAGING IRISHNESS
IN THE TRANSNATIONAL MARKETING OF LOCAL COLOUR FICTION

Marguérite Corporaal

"Miss Jane Barlow," a short item published in the *Islington Gazette* of 24 October 1902 on the occasion of the author's recent birthday, commends Barlow for having "given in her books dealing with the West of Ireland admirable pictures of life in that region of laughter and tears, which might form as instructive reading for legislators at the moment as debates on that part of the Sister Isle in the House of Commons" (3). The anonymous critic frames the importance of Barlow's work in both a regional and national context: her fiction truthfully renders modes of existence from a specific Irish region, but apparently also provides the British with insights into the Irish people. However, as this chapter will demonstrate, when studying Irish local colour fiction from the turn of the twentieth century, one cannot merely consider these forms of cultural production as expressions of local tradition or responses to processes of nation building. Rather, the publication, translation and reception histories of works by Barlow, Seumás MacManus, Katharine Tynan, Emily Lawless and Frank James Mathew show that these texts functioned in processes of transnational circulation, mediation and reception. This chapter aims to take our understanding of Irish local colour fiction into new, transnational directions, especially in light of the rich publication history of Irish local colour fiction of the 1890s and early 1900s across the Atlantic.

Literature that recorded the vernacular, customs, folklore and modes of existence of communities in a specific region became immensely popular in Ireland during the Celtic Revival, and was rooted in a strong fascination with local colour. At the same time, regions in Victorian Ireland defied easy definition. The Ordnance Survey Ireland (1839-1842), in its ambition to map out "a colonised landscape" (Parsons 12), played a significant role in conceptualising areas as administratively identifiable regions with standardised names. However, as various scholars have pointed out, regions are inherently unstable categories when we think of them not as administrative units but as cultural constructions. Xosé Nuñes Seixas and Eric Storm state that the region is "a putative group, constructed upon the performative utterance of those who claim its existence or believe in it" (4). Anssi Paasi stresses the necessity to acknowledge that regions are not given units, and therefore should not just be studied in relation to "broader political, economic and administrative" but also cultural "practices" (11).

In the context of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Ireland, we should indeed be aware of tensions between administrative and cultural representations of regions. There is great variation among the names and geographical scales by which specific geographical areas were referenced in the media and arts during his period. For example, F.W. Crossley's Dublin-based magazine *The Irish Tourist* (1894-1907),

using the modern medium of photography to record images of traditional rural life, would frame snapshots taken in the same geographical area in various ways. Its July edition of 1895 included a series of photographs of women spinning wool, such as "A Galway Woollen Wheel," as illustrations of arts and crafts in a broader area, as the title of the article "Hand-Weaving in the West of Ireland" indicates (93). While this edition of *The Irish Tourist* presents a more or less homogenous culture belonging to a region called the "West of Ireland," its May 1896 issue depicts the Claddagh in Galway as a specific locality with its own traditions and modes of existence. This becomes evident from a photograph by F.W. Hindley tagged "In the Claddagh, Galway" (115), which features two women and a boy in fishing garb, posing on a quay.

Local colour fiction discloses similar patterns of variation regarding the ways in which Irish regions were imagined and identified towards the end of the nineteenth century. Frank James Mathew's stories from *At the Rising of the Moon* (1893) are situated in "Liscannor," close to Ballynahinch, Ennistimon and "Moher" in "County Clare" (24-5); the subtitle of the collection, *Irish Stories and Studies*, problematises this specific regional focus. At first glance, Jane Barlow's tales in *Irish Idylls* (1892) appear to be set in a specific local community, called Lisconnel, as well. However, this is a fictive village, and the address to the readers that is incorporated in the American edition, published by Dodd, Mead & Co in New York in 1893, localises the interrelated narratives in a broader geographical area, "the wild boglands of Connaught" (i). The setting of Katharine Tynan's *An Isle in the Water* (1895) is even more geographically elusive, as it is an unspecified island on Ireland's western coast. Additionally, the title of Charlotte O'Conor Eccles's short story collection *Aliens of the West* (1904) bears witness to the fact that the Irish "West" is a fluid conceptual construct with shifting, historically contingent borders, rather than a geographically fixed locality, as Toomevara – the village in which most tales are set – is in Co. Tipperary, an area usually not associated with the West. The chosen title may have been inspired by an attempt to appeal to the collection's imagined readership: as the frontispiece to the book edition states, three of the stories had previously appeared in *The American Ecclesiastical Review* and *Pall Mall Magazine*. Subsequently, they were published in London, New York and Melbourne by Cassell & Company, as part of "Cassell's Colonial Library." For British readers, Ireland would be associated with the west of the Empire; for readers in the United States and Australia, with the far west of Europe.

The audiences which these published editions targeted would significantly impact the ways in which these literary representations of Irish regions would be staged – amongst others, through paratextual dimensions such as covers, illustrations and prefaces that established readerly expectations of the localities depicted in the texts. Local colour fiction from Ireland was explicitly marketed as literature for reading communities beyond the region, beyond the nation or empire, and across the globe, including Irish diasporic communities. Yet, these strong transnational dimensions of local colour as a repertoire of cultural representations that are shaped by transcul-

tural interactions and in "cross-national" cultural spaces (Welsch 194) are often overlooked.

One reason for this neglected transnational angle could be the strong nationalist paradigm in studies of the region. Literary representations of the region have often been interpreted as forms of resistance against "the enforcement of national social norms" in the nineteenth century (Donovan 68), or, conversely, as a contribution to the crystallisation of national identity. As other scholars contend, local colour literature recorded regional ways of life that are regarded as symptomatic of national character.[1] Another reason could be the strong emphasis placed on Irish peasantry in the West as emblematic of national identity during the Revival period by cultural nationalists and antiquarians, even if it is vital to acknowledge that the Revival was far from "a singular movement with clear agendas and goals" (McDonald 92). W. B. Yeats's perception of the "wise peasant" (161) from the northwest as the embodiment of Ireland's pre-Christian past, Celtic origins, and the nation's pre- and postcolonial identity, is a well-known instance.[2]

This chapter will contribute to debates about regional literature from the long nineteenth century by examining the branding of Irish local colour literature in transnational contexts of translation, republication and reception. New York was an epicentre of cultural production of regional "Irishness" in that local colour fiction initially published in Ireland was reissued in editions for the American market or (re-)printed in New York-based periodicals. For example, Seumás MacManus's collection *In Chimney Corners* was released for the American market by Doubleday & McClure in New York in 1899. Shan F. Bullock's collections of stories set around Lough Erne, *Ring o' Rushes*, was published by Ward, Lock & Co. in both London and New York in 1896. Additionally, there are notable examples of Irish local colour fiction that was translated into foreign languages and launched elsewhere in Europe. An example is Emily Lawless's *Hurrish* (1886), which was translated into Dutch by Anna Bok as *Hurrish: Een Iersche Roman* (1890) and became very popular among readers in the Netherlands.

Analyses of prefaces, visual and material aspects which reframed these texts when they were published abroad will illuminate how Irish writers were not just producing a self- or "auto-image" (Leerssen 197) of Irish regional life but were also mediating "Irishness" towards communities abroad, in complex dynamics between regional, na-

1 See Fetterley and Pryse, *Writing out of Place*; and Lathbury, *Realism and Regionalism, 1860-1910*.

2 The passage from *The Celtic Twilight* (1893) reads: "To the wise peasant the green hills and the woods round him are full of never-fading mystery" (161). While Yeats's argument here stresses the regional peasantry's connection to Celtic folklore and pre-Christian spirituality, it must be noted that recent scholarship also extensively addresses the synergy between tradition and international modernism in the Literary Revival. For instance, Patrick Bixby and Gregory Castle point out that "modernism had many points of emergence, many of which can be traced back to Irish artists" (4-5).

tional, and transnational identity construction. Besides identifying trends in the marketing of Irish local colour fiction abroad, this chapter will examine the transnational reception of these regional writings. Such an approach will not only shed light on processes of transculturality, but will additionally reveal how Irishness was imagined transnationally, in diasporic contexts but also in relation to other regional identities and literatures.

Marketing the Irish Region

Local colour fiction often functions as an act of mediation between insiders and outsiders on a narrative level. Josephine Donovan points to the "double vision" (10) that is characteristic of the genre: local colour literature, she explains, often stages a protagonist or narrator who was once an insider and who has now distanced him- or herself from the native region, by moving away. The narrator's observation at the beginning of Barlow's story "Out of the Way," published in *Strangers at Lisconnel* (1895), illustrates this well. The unidentified narrator uses the first-person plural to suggest that "Lisconnel, our very small hamlet in the middle of a wide bogland" is a community to which she belongs. At the same time, the narrator evokes the suggestion that "a stranger's face" (1) may sometimes appear among the village community. She thereby implicitly invites the reader, who is one of these strange visitors to the locality she describes, to partake of this insider's guided tour through bogland rural existence in Connaught. Second, one should be aware that, generally, late nineteenth-century Irish local colour fiction was originally published outside Ireland – by London or Edinburgh publishers or in British magazines – and therefore targeted towards audiences for whom the Irish regions described were distant, unfamiliar grounds. Therefore, the infrastructures surrounding its dissemination generally implied an act of transcultural transference.

How did these transnational literary networks in which Irish local colour fiction circulated affect its marketing? We may perceive three distinct trends in the ways in which paratextual elements staged regional Irishness for its transnational readerships. The first is a suggestion of rootedness: prefaces, illustrations and cover designs offer the promise of access to an authentic piece of regional Irishness by references to land and landscape. The national emblem of the shamrock features prominently in these presentations of Irish regionalism. The covers of both the Belfast and Toronto editions of Archibald McIlroy's *The Auld Meetin'-Hoose Green* – published by McCaw, Stevenson & Orr in 1898 and by F.H. Revell in 1899 – are ornamented with a picture of blooming shamrocks. The cover of the American edition of Jane Barlow's *A Creel of Irish Stories* (1898), published by Dodd, Mead & Co., likewise features shamrocks that are grouped together in the shape of a heart.

This elaborate use of these symbols identifies the texts as Irish on a national rather than a regionally specific level. By contrast, in the preface to Mathew's *At the Rising of the Moon,* entitled "Shamrocks," the writer-narrator evokes "a bit of shamrock" – a

"dried weed" that he kept among "some dusty papers here in my chambers in the Temple." Finding it again after several years, the writer-narrator remembers "gathering it – years ago now – on a moor by Liscannor" and is further reminded of the "old times on the West Coast of Ireland" (1) and his many friends there. During the writer-narrator's residence outside Ireland, in London, the shamrock is not only a token of his native country; it also functions as what Ann Rigney would call a "portable monument" (363) that encapsulates recollections of regional existence and that prompts him to write down his local colour narratives. The dried shamrock stands for the rootedness of the stories in this region around Liscannor, Co. Clare, and the authenticity of local life they represent. Interestingly, in its review of *At the Rising of the Moon*, printed in the issue of 29 April 1893, the *Newcastle Courant* conveyed the opinion that "the volume would have been more fittingly entitled 'Shamrocks'," because of its focus on "Irish life and character" (5). This suggests that the foreword was rather effective in advancing the idea that the narratives are connected to the Irish land and the people who inhabit it, on both a national and a regional scale.

This idea that the presented work of local colour fiction offers readers a direct experience of the described geographical areas recurs in various printed editions. Jane Barlow's collection of regional tales, *At the Back of Beyond*, was published by Dodd, Mead & Co in 1902, after it had previously appeared in both a New York and London edition as *From the Land of the Shamrock* in 1900 and 1901 respectively. This 1902 New York edition of stories contains a prologue entitled "A Topographical Note," in which Barlow sketches the difficulties of finding one's way through the Connemara boglands when a complete stranger to the area:

> In Bogland if you inquire the address of such or such a person, you will hear not very infrequently that he or she lives 'off away at the Back of Beyond'; and this answer is never a satisfactory one. For it not only sounds discouragingly vague, but it moreover implies that you have a long road before you, and probably a rough road too. (1)

The writer-narrator uses the prologue to map out the area for the reader foreign to these boglands, sharing an insider's knowledge about the region. Furthermore, this "Topographical Note" serves as the starting point of a narrative journey through which the narrator will guide the readers, almost as if the latter are taken by the hand to explore the landscape and its people. The American audiences are positioned as tourists who can visit Connemara – for some perhaps even the ancestral region of their families – from their armchairs. This impression of travelling to the narrative's setting is strengthened by the book's cover, which depicts the dark green silhouettes of a rural cottage and trees.

An earlier publication by Barlow for the American market, the 1898 holiday edition of *Irish Idylls* by Dodd, Mead & Co., also used illustrations – in the form of photographs made by the Massachusetts-born folklorist Clifton Johnson – to enhance the narrative illusion of a journey to Connemara. In the introductory note that precedes the stories, Johnson claims that he has visited the "wild boglands of Connaught" depicted in the collection, testifying to the veracity of the regional world that Barlow recon-

structs. As Johnson maintains, the author "preserves the atmosphere of the region, and the sentiment of the life that she describes to a rare degree" (v), as travellers like himself will note. At the same time, Johnson suggests that he has shot images that offer authentic perspectives of the region: "I have tried to make the pictures faithful transcripts of nature and life as they really are amid the sombre bogs that are the predominant features of that part of the Irish west coast" (vi). The idea that Johnson conveys is that the narratives and photographs together offer a slice of authentic Connemara life to which American readers are given access: they will be able to experience and see Connemara life for themselves even if they are geographically remote and have never visited the area. Modern technology in the form of photography brings traditional ways of existence to life, preserves them for future generations, and connects local communities on a transnational level.

It is striking that rich illustrations – such as Johnson's photographs – are more often included in editions for North-American readerships than in those for the British market. The cover of the London edition of Barlow's *Creel of Irish Stories* (Methuen, 1897) bears no shamrocks or other decorative images. Similarly, the cover binding of the London edition of *Across an Ulster Bog* (William Heinemann, 1896), a regional novel by M. Hamilton (Mary Churchill Luck) is marked by plain cloth and lettering. However, the American edition (Edward Arnold, 1896) features an elaborate illustration of a hooded, forlorn young woman, holding her own in tempestuous weather. In the background, a rural landscape looms. How can we account for the more prevalent presence of images in American editions, apart from the fact that for these transatlantic readerships, the west of Ireland was a remote world that had to be brought to life visually rather than just textually?

Contexts of Migration

A clue may be found in the context of diasporic Irish communities in North America, most of which came into existence during and immediately after the Great Irish Famine, when more than 2 million people fled from hunger.[3] These diasporic communities would integrate the Famine migration from which they descended into narratives of involuntary exile. Thomas D'Arcy McGee's "The Exile's Meditation," published posthumously in 1869, presents a persona who laments the fact that his fellow countrymen are "wiled and cast away, / And driven like soulless cattle from their native land a prey," because those in power compel the tenant farmers to leave their communities (105). This template of exile persisted well into the 1890s, which saw both the influx of new waves of Catholic immigrants from primarily western Ireland (Moran 15) and the upsurge of a new nativist movement. The American Protective Association, founded in Clinton, Iowa in 1887, was "principally an anti-Catholic organisation" and "in 1893 […] counted as many as two million supporters across the country"

3 See, for example, Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*.

(Meagher 196). Andreas Huyssen states that diaspora communities, especially those whose legacies are rooted in the idea of forced migration, are inclined to "create a unified or even mythic memory of the lost homeland" that is steeped in nostalgia. These communities are driven by a desire to recuperate and reconnect the homeland through what Svetlana Boym defines as "restorative nostalgia" (42). The images and prefaces that accompany the reprinted local colour narratives may be interpreted as an attempt to retrieve true 'Irishness' by second and third generations living away from the homeland.

Significantly, in this light, a second way in which late nineteenth-century local colour narratives were framed for transnational audiences is through contexts and tropes of migration. The earlier referenced prologue "Shamrocks" from *At the Rising of the Moon* is a case in point. The writer-narrator positions himself as both an insider and outsider of the region: he is the native from Co. Clare who migrated to London. Therefore he is displaced from his indigenous homestead, just like many readers of his British and especially his American edition. There are several other examples: MacManus's collection of regional folklore, *In Chimney Corners* (1899), which came out in London and New York, and is not only dedicated to Irish migrants, "[o]ur Brave Boys and Girls who have fared forth from their homes, travelling away and away, far further than I could tell you and twice further than you could tell me, into the Strange Land Beyond, to push their fortune" (n.p.). The preface, "Our Folk Tales," also alludes to the mass emigration from Ireland. Just as Ireland's boys in "the old folk-tales" went off for adventure, "now our poor girls, too, must go" (xii) to seek their fortunes in the New World, the writer-narrator intimates. Some return, but some "never come" back, leaving their mothers in Ireland to bemoan their absence. MacManus ends his prologue by invocating the Virgin Mary to protect these emigrant children of Erin, to "soften to them the heart of the stranger" (xii). Charlotte O'Conor Eccles's opening narrative "Toomevara" – a prologue to the rest of the stories – also contextualises the region in Co. Tipperary in relation to migration, describing the departure of young villagers to the New World and the mourning relatives who are left behind:

> Every week in summer some eighty youths and girls leave the little railway station to catch the Queenstown express. Their fathers and mothers weep out loud, and often some heartbroken woman raises the *Caoine*, the wild cry for the dead that those who have once heard can never forget. (3)

By subsequently portraying those who went across the Irish Sea or Atlantic as exiles of their native region, "Toomevara" creates narrative bridges between the local and transnational: "those who were born amidst it, and that in Manchester slums or the back blocks of New York fills the old folks with sick longing for home" (2).

The preface to the 1893 New York edition of Barlow's *Irish Idylls* also envisages transatlantic ties. Barlow addresses American readers, to whose shores the wild boglands of Connaught send so many a forlorn voyager 'over oceans of say'" (i). She expresses the hopes that these readers "will perhaps care to glance" at the Irish emigrant's "old home, and learn the reasons why he leaves it, which seem to lie very ob-

viously on the surface, and the reasons, less immediately apparent, why his neighbours bide behind" (i). Barlow thus 'stages' a general American audience whose understanding of their Irish immigrant compatriots can be improved by showing them where these new Americans come from. The preface therefore imagines the published edition of the stories as a transaction which not only bridges the gap between Ireland and the United States, but also between Irish emigrants and US citizens, bringing them together in a transmission of folklore and tradition. Barlow even imagines her own edition as "one emigrant more" (i), awaiting a warm reception across the Atlantic. As such, Barlow situates her texts in the history of Irish immigration to America, but she also positions her collections of stories in a process of cultural transfer between what Stefanie Stockhorst calls "communicative communities" (21) that include the exchange of material as well as immaterial goods, such as thoughts, representations, and discourses. By drawing analogies between the "turf to be found in a bog" and the "human nature" (i) that she is excavating from the region and renders to her American readers, Barlow almost materialises this immaterial transaction. This sense of geographical transplantation is also articulated by the shamrock-covered binding and frontispiece of the book.

Barlow is by no means the only Irish local colour writer who explicitly addresses an American audience. Julia Crottie had previously published her collection of stories about the fictional village of Innisdoyle, modelled on Lismore, Co. Waterford, *Neighbours: Annals of a Dull Town* with T. Fisher Unwin in London in 1900. In 1920 she brought out a sequel entitled *Innisdoyle Neighbours*, which was launched solely for the US market by the Magnificat Press in Manchester, New Hampshire. Despite the fact that this text was published much later compared to Barlow's *Irish Idylls*, we find that Crottie's preface to American readers similarly tries to evoke sympathy for the Irish and their imaginative nature, their "faith in the Unseen" (n.p.). This spirituality is presented as diametrically opposed to the more business-like mindset of the Americans themselves, who are children "of a more materialistic civilisation" (n.p.).

This third trend in marketing Irish local colour fiction across the Atlantic, which juxtaposes Irish imagination to American capitalism, is also illustrated by the prologue to the New York and Toronto editions of MacManus's collection of local colour stories set in his native Co. Donegal, *Through the Turf Smoke* (1899). The people in his native "remote and mountain-barred Donegal," the author writes, may be "poor as paupers"; and yet, they are also "hospitable as millionaires" and, moreover, are rich in their wit and imagination, "the poetry, the virtues, the soul, of the most miserable amongst them the wealth of Croesus couldn't purchase" (x). The "American readers" (ix) are encouraged to embrace these different non-materialistic values and join the narrator at the imaginary fireside to listen to the village "shanachy, the teller of tales" (x).

Irish Local Colour Fiction: Transnational Receptions

In what respects and to what extent did the marketing of Irish local colour literature influence its transnational reception? As we saw, the promise – often expressed by cover designs, illustrations and prefaces – that readers will be offered a complete and faithful feel of a specific Irish region on their 'journey' through the narratives is mirrored by the books' reviews at the time. Authenticity proved to be an important point of assessment in reviews of Irish local colour fiction. For instance, the *London Pall Mall Gazette* of 24 March 1905 praises Charlotte O'Conor Eccles's *Aliens of the West* for its attention to minute detail and truthfulness, almost as if the work were a realist painting: "Rarely has life in a quiet, remote Irish country town been pictured more faithfully or more sympathetically. There is not a single touch out of harmony with the truth, not a line of shading omitted which could strengthen the canvas" (9). In its review of *At the Rising of the Moon* on 20 April 1893, *The Glasgow Herald* judges that "Mr Mathew shows us these West of Ireland people – as they are – or rather as they were ere the respectability of civilisation had supplanted their original state" (10).

Similar appraisals regarding authenticity can be found in critical reviews of Irish local colour fiction that were published outside Britain. The reviewer Henry v.d. M. in *De Groene Amsterdammer* of 15 June 1890 recommends the work to Dutch audiences by outlining that the novel offers "even zoo vele beelden uit de werkelijkheid" (3), many pictures of reality. Furthermore, he argues that Lawless paints "het Iersche volksleven," Irish folk life, in such vivid colours, "zulke levendige kleuren" (3). What is more, this review strongly reverberates with the naturalistic idea that land is a quality which determines the people's character: Henry v.d. M claims that Miss Lawless's Irish are one with the soil on which they live: "Eén zijn de Ieren van Miss Lawless met den grond waar op zij leven" (3). The desolate landscape of the Burren in the North of Co. Clare, the reviewer adds, is reflected in the character of the local population, which is eccentric and elusive.

The reviewer of Emily Lawless's *Hurrish* suggests that readers are presented with a truthful experience of life in the Burren. Nonetheless, this is not an authenticity that helps (in this case Dutch) readers to identify with the regional Irish characters, for Henry v.d. M. stresses differences in temperament between them and the Dutch readership of Lawless's work. By contrast, in the reception of American editions of Irish local colour fiction, the idea of authenticity is evoked to emphasise connection. This becomes clear from reviews in the following magazines: the American edition of *The Bookman*, issued by Dodd, Mead & Co. in New York; the *American Review of Reviews*, published in New York and edited by Albert Shaw, and The Chicago-based journal *The Dial*. In a double review of Shan Bullock's *Ring o'Rushes* and *By Trahsna River* published in *The Bookman* in 1897, the reviewer accentuates the fact that the stories in the former "are always from the inside, always distinctively from the Irish peasant's own point of view," so that the "atmosphere is completely realised, and a peculiar intensity arises from the narrowness of the environment" (427).

What the reviewer calls Bullock's "too faithful" representation of "the Celt" apparently also leaves ample room for identification on behalf of readers in different climes, for the peasants are said to "touch a common chord" and to be the "typical embodiment of noble womanhood and less noble manhood" (427). In other words, the Irish peasantry far away in County Fermanagh bear traits of humanity that are recognisable to audiences across the Atlantic. The review of Tynan's American reprint of *An Isle in the Water*, issued in *The Bookman* in 1897, not only intimates that Tynan's stories perfectly capture "the traits and characteristics in the home-life of the fisher folk" on the island she portrays, but also impresses the reader with the community's "chastity and the strict measures meted out to the one who has fallen" as well as characters "innocent at heart" who are "touching" in the devotion to loved ones they display (171). Here, a nostalgia for a pre-modern moral compass, an almost prelapsarian state of being, to be found in the Old World, appears to be one of the attractions of the stories as well, as the reviewer suggests.

Paratextual aspects such as illustrations are, moreover, mentioned as elements which increase the reader's engagement with the region in distant Ireland. This is demonstrated by reviews of the 1897 holiday edition of Jane Barlow's *Irish Idylls*. Johnson's photographs are often praised for providing an intimate, authentic insight into a region American readers are not familiar with, but can now successfully identify with. Often, the combination of Barlow's stories and Johnson's pictures are cited as confirming the veracity of the former. *The Review of Reviews* in 1897 stated that "the effect of Miss Barlow's vivid pen-sketches is heightened by the reproductions of actual scenes and incidents among the humble folk whose life story she tells" (767).

Likewise, in the same year, *The Dial* claimed that Johnson's photographs "serve to prove the accuracy of Miss Jane Barlow's descriptions of the desolate life of the Connemara boglands. The pictures have some of the quaint charm of the stories, and they give definiteness to our ideas of the bogs and the villages" (840). Stressing the fact that both the stories and images capture a faithful experience of Connemara, these reviews appear to echo Johnson's preface to the 1897 edition. Both bridge the conceptual gap between the region in Ireland and American readers – perhaps in particular diasporic communities identifying with a 'lost' homeland. As *The Review of Reviews* had written previously in 1893, Barlow's sketches had "such power" that they "wonderfully picture up before the reader a life so entirely different" from that to "which he has been used" (327) that they seemed familiar. Interestingly, the effect of illustrations in intensifying a sense of familiarity among readers across national borders is also mentioned in the 1893 *Glasgow Herald*'s review of *At the Rising of the Moon*: "In the illustrations Fred Pegram and A. S. Boyd have fairly caught and cleverly shadowed forth the spirit of the author" (10).

As we have seen, prefaces to American editions of Irish local colour fiction frequently place the texts in contexts of immigration, explicitly appealing for the readers' understanding of the Irish and their descendants in the United States. In the case of Jane Barlow, the ways in which her local colour tales were framed for the American market

appear to have impacted their critical reception. For example, *The Review of Reviews* in 1897 observed that the stories in Barlow's *Irish Idylls* "found a warm welcome four years ago in America, whither had come so many wanderers from Connemara's distant boglands. It is the old neighbors of these immigrants that Miss Barlow describes in her book" (767). These phrases clearly echo Barlow's own preface to the American edition of her stories and additionally situate the tales in the context of the Irish-American diaspora. The same applies to the reception of MacManus's *Through the Turf Smoke*, for in 1899, *The Review of Reviews*, in discussing the American edition together with Stephen Gwynn's *Highways and Byways in Donegal and Antrim*, concludes that both depict a "region not often visited by American tourists, but well remembered in many an Irish-American home" (119). Tourism and diaspora thus serve as lenses through which these reviews assess the marketability of these texts in the US.

While there was a rich local colour tradition in American literature at the time – with writers like Sarah Orne Jewett, Mary Wilkins Freeman, Joel Chandler Harris, Celia Thaxter and Mark Twain reaching heights of popularity – the reviews of these Irish local colour writers do not draw analogies with similar authors whom readers could have been familiar with. Instead, Barlow and Tynan are, for instance, compared to Scottish, Cornish and English regional writers. For example, the American edition of *The Review of Reviews* in 1893 likened Barlow's representations of the Irish peasantry to J. M. Barrie's Scottish Kailyard writings and Arthur Quiller Couch's narratives of Cornwall: "what 'Q' has done for the people of that part of Cornwall in which he lives" (327). In 1895, *The Review of Reviews* placed Barlow in a group of authors such as J. M. Barrie, 'Ian McLaren' and Samuel Rutherford Crockett, who render the dialect and manners of specific communities in "that form of local fiction" (241), thereby identifying a fashion for regional writing. Later that year, *The Review of Reviews* called "Miss Jane Barlow and Mrs. Kate Tynan Hinkson […] representatives of a new group of Irish writers" (462) similar to authors such as Crockett, Quiller Couch, but also Thomas Hardy and R. T. Blackmore, who were known for literature set in a specific region. There was, therefore, a clear recognition of how these Irish local colour authors fitted into similar trends in regional literature elsewhere on the British Isles, though broader transnational perspectives on these writers and the genre are missing. It must be noted, however, that it was very common to draw analogies between these Irish local colour writers and those from Scotland in the British press as well. The review of *At the Rising of the Moon* from the *Glasgow Herald* cited earlier, for instance, draws analogies between Mathew and J. M. Barrie:

> In this series of stories and studies, the biographer of Father Mathew has done for Moher and its people very much what Mr Barrie has done for Thrums in his 'Idylls.' They are not such a habitually serious people these of Moher as are their Scotch antitypes, but if they take life more lightly as a rule, they are not thereby emancipated from its pathos. (10)

When studying Irish local colour fiction from the turn of the twentieth century, as this chapter has shown, one cannot merely consider these forms of cultural production as

expressions of local tradition or responses to processes of nation building. Rather, as we have seen, these texts are key to processes of transnational circulation, mediation and reception. These dynamics of "transculturality" (Welsch 198) have to be taken into account, because they helped shape people's perceptions of regional Ireland globally as well as contributed to the ways in which local colour literature as a transnational genre developed. As we saw, Irish local colour fiction was often interpreted as part of a larger corpus of regional fiction from the Celtic fringes of the British Empire, which included Cornwall, Scotland and Wales. At the same time, Irish local colour texts were imagined as 'bridges' between diasporic and non-diasporic communities in Ireland and North America, because they traced roots of origin and provided routes of imagination.

There is, moreover, much more to be discovered through in-depth studies of the infrastructures through which Irish local colour fiction was transmitted. For example, Dodd, Mead & Co played a crucial role as a literary broker not only for Irish local colour writers such as Barlow and Tynan, whose *The Way of a Maid* they published in 1896. In fact, the New York company released various works of regional fiction in the period 1890-1917, mainly from England and Scotland, such as *Tales of Our Coast* (1896), a collection of tales by local colour writers from Cornwall (Arthur Thomas Quiller Couch) and the Deeside (Samuel Rutherford Crockett), Crockett's *Love Idylls* (1901) and George Eliot's most regional novel *Silas Marner, the Weaver of Raveloe* (1899). Additionally, Dodd, Mead & Co. issued some translated European works of local colour fiction, such as Fernand Calmettes' *Fisher Girl of France* (1892) and Stijn Streuvel's *The Path of Life* (1915), translated from West-Flemish by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos. Dodd, Mead & Co. therefore appears to have tapped into a market for local colour literature. What do these intersections reveal about the role of regions in cementing transnational readerships and identities? Local colour fiction is implicated in cultural transactions that cross borders and (re)codify genre in a transnational network of texts, audiences and identities. A paradigm shift towards the dynamics between the regional and transnational and the forms of what Jaan Valsiner calls "multidirectional transfer" (22) that were involved in the making of local colour literature is called for. Such an approach will help us to decode Irish literary production in global contexts in more refined ways.

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STAGING IRISHNESS
IN ETHEL COLBURN MAYNE'S "THE HAPPY DAY"

Elke D'hoker

This chapter will analyse the intersection of national and gendered stereotypes in Ethel Colburn Mayne's short story "The Happy Day" (1919). Describing a West of Ireland tour of a newly married English couple around the turn of the twentieth century, the story pokes fun at ideas of Irish national character that were current at the time. Underlying the story's gentle ridicule, however, is a more fundamental scrutiny of the deleterious power of preconceived images, because of the way they cloud perception, obstruct communication, and lead to a performative distortion of the self. The story is exemplary of Mayne's concern with the insidious nature of gender and national stereotyping throughout her oeuvre, but it also reflects and anticipates the slow shift in attitude to ideas of national character and gender identity in the modernist period.

With regard to national identity, Joep Leerssen has argued that the notion of national character was debated and historicised towards the end of the nineteenth century, but that "it was nevertheless still credited with an ontologically autonomous existence, as a 'real' thing pre-existing its articulation and persisting independently from it" ("Imagology" 21). Only after the Second World War, he continues, did scholars fully "abandon a belief in the 'realness' of national characters as explanatory models" (21). Nevertheless, even before that time, national images were subject to change. With regard to Irish identity, many scholars have observed that the nineteenth century witnessed a redefinition of the Irish national character: the "Stage Irishman" of Tudor times, an "uncivilised" character "tossed by primary, uncontrolled emotions, and either wicked or ridiculous, or both," gave way to a definition of Irishness in terms of "spontaneity, creativity, musical abilities and tenderness of feeling" (Leerssen, "Irish" 192). Writers of the Celtic Revival further substantiated that new interpretation of Irish national identity and the Irish tourist industry, which took off around the same time, started to market this national image as a great asset and export product.

Partly as a reaction against the commodification of national images in the final decades of the nineteenth century, literary authors began to treat these images with greater wariness. Leerssen thus notes an "ironic turn" in the modernist treatment of national character, with authors such as Henry James and Thomas Mann using nationality mockingly, "as part of that simplification of a complex, unknowable reality which gives characters a false sense of cognitive control" ("National Character" 74). Yet, even as these notions of national character are evoked ironically, "with a knowing wink from author to reader," Leerssen argues, they are also "perpetuated and given a new lease of life," for "[i]f they are used half-jokingly, they are also used half-

seriously" and thereby "perpetuate the currency of the stereotype they avoid taking seriously" (74-75).

This often uneasy mixture of irony and seriousness in the treatment of national character is also a defining characteristic of the fiction of Ethel Colburn Mayne (1865-1941), an Anglo-Irish woman writer who dissected images of national and gender identity throughout her versatile career. Since her work has been almost entirely forgotten, I will start my analysis with a brief overview of her life and work before turning to a close reading of "The Happy Day." I will discuss the story's engagement with the prevalent images of Irish national character in relation to both the establishment of an Irish tourist industry in the final decades of the nineteenth century and the constructions of Irish identity staged in the Celtic Literary Revival. In the final part, I will situate the story's critique of national stereotypes in the larger context of Mayne's sustained fictional engagement with the injurious consequences of typecasting, both for interpersonal relationship and for one's personal sense of self. In its juxtaposition of images of Irishness and womanhood, I will argue, Mayne's fiction anticipates the more pervasive critique of national and gendered identity in the second half of the twentieth century.

Ethel Colburn Mayne and National Character

Although Ethel Colburn Mayne is almost entirely forgotten now, she was a respected literary figure in early-twentieth-century London. The author of four novels and six short story collections, she also worked as a translator and published several works of biography and literary criticism, including celebrated biographies of Byron and Lady Byron.[1] She was close friends with Violet Hunt, Mary Butts, Ford Madox Ford, and other modernist writers, was involved in the founding of PEN, the international writers' foundation, and was for many years on the judging panel for the Fémina prize (Waterman 197). Her literary career had started closer to her birthplace in Ireland, however. Mayne was born in Johnstown, Co. Kilkenny in 1865 as the second child in an Anglo-Irish family. Her father was an inspector in the Royal Irish Constabulary and the family followed him on his different postings until they settled in Cork where he was appointed resident magistrate. From her family home in Blackrock, Mayne started submitting short stories to London magazines in the 1890s.[2] The acceptance of one such story, "A Pen-and-Ink Effect," by the high-profile literary magazine *The Yellow Book* in 1894 presented a break-through for Mayne. She was subsequently

1 The titles of her novels are *Jessie Vandeleur* (1902), *The Fourth Ship* (1909), *Gold Lace: A Study of Girlhood* (1903), and *One of Our Grandmothers* (1916). Her two-volume biography of Byron was published in 1912 and *The Life and Letters of Anne Isabella, Lady Noel Byron: From Unpublished Papers in the Possession of the Late Ralph, Earl of Lovelace* followed in 1929. For a more detailed biography see Waterman; Adams; and D'hoker, *Ethel Colburn Mayne: Selected Stories*.

2 For a more detailed discussion of the circumstances of Mayne's life in her family home, Rockmahon, in Blackrock, see D'hoker, "Rockmahon."

invited by its editor, Henry Harland, to take up the post of *The Yellow Book's* sub-editor in London (Samuels Lasner 18).

The experience would prove to be short-lived, but Mayne gained enough confidence, literary acquaintances, and understanding of the publishing world to embark on a literary career. Back in Ireland, she published her first collection of stories, *The Clearer Vision* with the London publisher Fisher Unwin in 1898. Her first novel, *Jessie Vandeleur* was published by Walter Allen in 1902. Both books betray the influence of *The Yellow Book*'s avant-garde poetics as well as the taboo-breaking New Woman fiction of the *fin de siècle* (see D'hoker, "Forgotten"). After her mother's death in 1902 and her father's retirement in 1904, Mayne moved to London, where her career took off in various directions. She remained unmarried but cared for her ageing father and invalid sister. Her literary output dwindled in the late 1930s and was brought to a final halt by the Second World War, as she died in 1941 following injuries sustained during the London Blitz.

As an Anglo-Irish girl growing up in various Irish garrison and naval towns, occupied by British troops, Mayne would have been highly conscious of the prevalent images of national character. In her stories and novels, she often draws on these images to mark the distinctions in class, religion, language, and culture between the Anglo-Irish gentry, their Irish servants, and their English relatives and visitors. Most of her characters are explicitly marked out as "English," "Anglo-Irish," or "Irish," even though she applies the latter two terms rather interchangeably to Ascendancy families. Some good examples of the way such images of national character are deployed with a characteristic ironic distance in Mayne's early work can be found in "The Red Umbrella," a story from Mayne's second collection, *Things That No One Tells* (1910). In the story, an "English" military man tells of his friendship with – and secret love for – an "Irish" girl.[3] While Nina is described as "passionate," "gay," and artistic, the narrator is called "blunt," "hard-headed, and hard-hearted," both by Nina and by her Irish artist friend who, he notes, "accounted for my brusqueries by some ready-made theory of the English character, the 'Army' character" (Mayne, *Things* 6, 7, 11). The red umbrella of the title, which Nina impulsively buys in a Dublin shop, serves her as a ready metaphor for the differences – in terms of both gender and national identity – between the narrator and herself. While the red silk signifies her fiery Irish soul and frivolous femininity, the "straight up and down" handle stands for the English male: "dull-immutable" if "convenient" (9). Although these national stereotypes are treated with some irony and the story subsequently shows them to be, at best, half true, the ease with which they are wielded by all characters nonetheless hints at their power and currency as explanatory models in the early twentieth century.

3 The girl, Nina Crichton, probably belongs to the Anglo-Irish gentry: the encounters take place at the Races, in Dublin, and, later on, in London. At the end of the story, she marries "into diplomacy" (34).

Touring Ireland

Even though Mayne had been living in London for over a decade by the time her major body of short fiction appeared in four collections, she continued to return imaginatively to the Irish places, characters, and problems of her youth.[4] Many of her "Irish" stories stage girls and young women who are struggling against gender norms, forbidding matriarchs, and depressing circumstances (D'hoker, "Daughters"). An exception to this mostly tragic treatment of Irish themes is the story "The Happy Day" from her fourth collection of stories, *Blindman* (1919). It is a funny, even satirical, story of an English couple who take their honeymoon in Ireland. Yet, underlying the comedy is an incisive attack on the poisonous power of national and, to a lesser extent, gendered and personal stereotypes as they cause misperception, misunderstanding, and unhappiness.

The central events of "The Happy Day" take place in Galway, where the English couple, Felicia and Lant (short for Lancelot), are visiting the town's main tourist attractions: the Spanish carvings, the horse fair, the Claddagh, and the seaside tourist tram. Yet, through Felicia's thoughts and memories, the larger context of their visit and their marriage is revealed. Thus, we learn that the newlyweds decided to visit Ireland on the recommendation of a friend:

> In London it was thought that now there was a chance for Irish Home Rule; so it were wise to see the land before it got contented and uninteresting. Felicia had an Irish friend in London, who amid the native ravings showed sometimes a gleam of commonsense. She, vitriolic about English politicians, said that Sinn Fein was at least achieving this – that Ireland would not be "funny" for the British any more. "You'd better go now, if you mean to go at all." (Mayne, *Blindman* 40-1)[5]

The political references set the story in the early twentieth century, when the different Home Rule bills were being debated in Westminster. Similarly, the couple's tour of some well-known tourist spots in the West of Ireland reflects the growing popularity of Ireland as a tourist destination for middle-class English tourists at the time.

In her historical survey, *Irish Tourism, 1880-1980*, Irene Furlong describes the establishment of an Irish tourist industry in the final decades of the nineteenth century, with Thomas Cook and sons drawing on the expanded railway network to offer package tours in Ireland and the energetic Frederick W. Crossley persuading restaurant and hotel owners, local politicians and the Irish government to invest in travel and accommodation and to advertise scenic attractions in magazines in England and beyond (Furlong 13-36). "Realising the importance of propaganda," Furlong notes, "Crossley established a publishing company and in June 1894 he began publication of a monthly journal, the *Irish Tourist*, with two specific aims: 'to make better known

4 These collections are *Come In* (1917), *Blindman* (1919), *Nine of Hearts* (1923), and *Inner Cir*cle (1925).

5 The page references are to the collection *Blindman*, but the story is also reprinted in D'hoker, *Ethel Colburn Mayne: Selected Stories* (123-35).

to the world Ireland's charm and beauty, and to attract multitudinous visitors'" (20). In 1895, Crossley was instrumental in founding the first "Irish Tourist Association," which became an important force in attracting more tourists to Ireland. Even though Crossley's efforts at developing a tourist industry for Ireland met with some protest from the Gaelic League, who "expressed concern that tourists would 'degrade the noble soul of the Irish peasant'," the League's own celebration of an authentic, Gaelic Ireland of unspoilt beauty and mysterious allure nevertheless served to reinforce the attractions of Ireland, especially the West, for English tourists (Zuelow xxi).

That the early twentieth-century vogue for all things Irish was inspired by the Irish Literary Revival and especially the plays which were a big hit in London theatres is also suggested in "The Happy Day." Felicia and Lant know the plays of Synge, Yeats, and Gregory and, like most of their friends, they went to see *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* not once, but several times. Indeed, throughout the story, Felicia refers to these plays as a prime source of information about the Irish national identity. As the narrator comments wryly,

> they had come with preconceived ideas, and one was that the women of all ages in the 'Irish' parts of Ireland had black rich hair, and blue or deep-grey eyes in pallid faces that were sad or scornful. 'Cathleen-ni-Houlihan:' that was the note; the beauty of the Irish Player's leading actresses had stressed it. London was cured of the Colleen – she was only fit for cinemas and post-cards; but there had to be a type, as with all foreign lands, so Dark Rosaleen was now enthroned in their imaginations. (37-38)

The literature of the Gaelic Revival, it is suggested, has replaced earlier national images with new ones: James Clarence Mangan's "Dark Rosaleen" and Yeats's *Cathleen Ni Houlihan* have replaced Dion Boucicault's *The Colleen Bawn* as sources for the typical Irishwoman, just as the buffoonish and drunken Irish Paddy has been replaced by Synge's noble peasants (Hirsh). Similarly, dissimulation is no longer seen as a discerning Irish trait. Rather, Felicia and Lant know "from Shaw and Synge and Birmingham" that "candour […] was truly national" (41).

Equipped with these literary ideas and national stereotypes, the newlyweds visit Ireland and they do not like it. This verdict, especially Felicity's, as she is the main focaliser, is repeated like a refrain throughout the story: "They weren't liking Ireland"; "So they could hardly like Ireland"; "It was not entirely surprising that they didn't much like Ireland"; "She was trying to like it, for her sense of justice was her strong point" but "It was no good pretending she liked Ireland" (40, 42, 43, 52). The reason is not simply that Ireland does not live up to the couple's "preconceived ideas" that were so ironically introduced in the beginning. On several occasions, in fact, they find these notions confirmed. For instance, the opening line of the story reads: "The town was dirty, stately, comic, and morose – quite Irish, they said" (37). Later on, the beautiful hooded cloaks they had been told about are said to be "really, all they had expected" (45). Similarly, the stereotype that "the Irish had a different standard of cleanliness from the British" is corroborated by the dirty plates and encrusted jugs and basins at their fishing hotel (41). Still, on other occasions the couple finds that Irish reality does

not confirm their expectations. Instead of either the dark Rosaleen or the auburn Colleen, they find "nearly all the little girls [to be] blonde" (37). Moreover, rather than finding the Irish quaint and amusing, as the plays have led them to expect, they find that the Irish consider the tourists a source of mirth:

> it was strange to find, in the torn tragic land, that "English" meant "amusing." Mockery seemed lurking somewhere; it would have been more comfortable to be looked on as the representatives of tyranny, for then they could have shown their graces, how unlike they were to fevered fancies of the conquerors. But against amusement, joined to the renowned good-manners, they felt helpless, not at all like conquerors. (43)

It is primarily Felicia's helplessness in the face of Ireland, it seems, that causes her dislike. By at times confirming, at times negating stereotypes, Ireland and the Irish elude her attempts at categorisation. She fails to read the place and the people and is bewildered by what she calls the "right wrongnesses," the way characteristics that fit the clichés are juxtaposed to – and hence undermined by – incidents that do not fit at all (49).

Reading with a Key

The visit takes a turn for the better, however, when, bored by Galway and on their way to Salt Hill, Felicia and Lant meet a woman who, with her splendid cloak, scarlet petticoat and patterned shawl seems the incarnation of "Cathleen-ni-Houlihan." The encounter feels like a revelation to the couple: "they felt they had seen Ireland at last" (46). Lant suggests they return to Galway: "'We're […] going back to see it *now*.' Felicia understood him. 'Now' they had the key; they'd look at Galway with a fuller understanding. Though they should not again see her, every street would be informed by her" (47). The cloaked woman, she feels, has given them the key to read Ireland and define its national identity. Yet, this key also fails them. Back in Galway, Felicia goes into a shop to buy handkerchiefs and finds herself once again baffled by the odd mixture of "right wrongnesses." While the shop is "straggling" and "shabby," as expected, with a "bare floor" and "turfy"-smelling peasant girls, it also has such unexpectedly modern and cosmopolitan features as a "walker," high prices and "a cash-system of ball-boxes that run round and clatter down" (50). Wandering the Galway streets, Felicia makes one final, desperate bid at interpretation, exclaiming "'Lant, it's like Rome' […] 'Upon my word, it is. The squalor and stateliness, and the rank alleys and raking blackness!'" (51). But Lant disagrees and the pair decides to leave Ireland and go to the – presumably less confusing – continent.

As will have become clear from the examples, the events as well as the ironic narrative tone of the story serve to mock the English tourists, with their preconceived notions of Ireland and the Irish. This would be no more than a funny, satirical story, were it not for the text's additional interest in the relationship of Felicia and Lant. Indeed, the couple's visit to Galway is also the prism through which the story illuminates the larger dynamics of their marriage. Felicia, as her name suggests, has high hopes for a perfect harmony between them: "she was thinking of endless love, an

endless sense of one another" (54). Yet, throughout the day she is anxiously trying to read her husband and gauge his mood. The key she has for understanding her husband is revealed early on in the story:

> He sounded cross. […] If he was cross, she mustn't be. The day seemed setting in for failure; crossness on both sides would be the last stupidity! She'd know if Lant was cross so soon as he said anything that had long words in it. If he didn't finish the long words, but left their ends to float like a spider's threads in his companion's mind, it would be proof that he was not cross. She had marked this as a symptom of good-temper since the earliest days of his love-making. (39)

Lant's habit becomes a second refrain in "The Happy Day," as Felicia's attempts to read and understand Ireland come to be juxtaposed to her attempts to understand her husband. When, at the end of their Galway visit, they decide to leave the baffling island altogether, Felicia is nevertheless "cheered [by] the sense of sharing disappointment":

> "Shall we make off?" said Lant, as if he knew what she was thinking.
> "Yes, for goodness' sake!" cried she.
> "I mean, altogether," Lant went on. "Right out of the daft country."
> He had finished "altogether:" he was getting cross! He hated Ireland as much as she did; that was something. (52-53)

Felicia's sense of mutual understanding and marital accord receives a tragic twist, however, in a little coda at the end of the story. At a dinner party three years later, Felicia participates in a discussion of the notion of "the happy day," a day during which, in retrospect, everything felt right. Felicia asks her husband what that happy day was for him. She is already enumerating all the Southern European places they visited after leaving Ireland, but Lant turns them down:

> "Oh no," said Lant at last, quite audibly. "Not Nemi."
> "Which then?" asked Felicia. But it was no matter; any day would do.
> "The day in Gal . . ." said Lant, and clasped his hand more closely on her arm.
> "The day in Galway!" gasped Felicia.
> "Yes – that day in Gal . . ." he said again, though not as if he'd heard her.
> "But I hated it," she muttered, feeling stunned and sick.
> Lant didn't hear that either; she was glad of it directly. For he mused aloud.
> "I don't know why, and I don't want to. That's my Day. It came togeth . . . noth . . . was left out." He drew her nearer. But she still felt sick. (55-56)

To Felicia, it is as if the world – and her marriage – collapses, as she realises she had been wrong about her husband and he did not share her dislike for Ireland at all. Much like she failed to read Ireland, she also failed to read her husband. In both cases, the keys or preconceived notions that were guiding her proved faulty and led her astray.

Nevertheless, the story does not merely poke fun at an anxious English woman, who desperately clings to simple stereotypes to read the world. For the other characters, too, are shown to perceive the world through preconceived ideas. The Irish, we have seen, find the English "amusing" and eagerly exploit their naivety. Lant similarly approaches his wife through typecasting. Through Felicia's flashbacks we learn that

from the start of their courting, Lant had decided that "she was of the type for whom felicity looms in the offing" and that her "sort of thing" is the ability to sum up situations in a clever and original way: "she had been surprised and pleased, because she did not know she *had* a 'sort of thing,' […] But every time that she was told she had, it pleased her freshly" (39). On several occasions throughout the story, then, Felicia can be seen to play up to Lant's typecasting of her: she searches for ingenious phrases to describe Ireland or the Irish, angling for Lant's approval. In this performative staging of the self, Felicia resembles the Irish actors she saw in a London performance of *Cathleen Ni Houlihan*, as they were also "looking out to see if the effects were savoured" (52). While this is something she disliked at the time – their "being so detestably self-conscious" –, it is clearly a failing she is guilty of herself.

Performing Irishness, Performing Femininity

Through this multi-layered short story, Mayne questions not just the stereotypes about Ireland dominant at the time; she also scrutinises the very practice of typecasting as a pervasive way of dealing with the world. Felicia's misreadings of her husband and of Ireland are clearly linked to the shortcomings of the reading keys she clings to: they occlude her perception of Ireland and cause misunderstanding in her relationship with Lant. At the same time, her genuine panic and helplessness when her notions fail her also demonstrate that she, like everyone else, cannot do without them. While Mayne thus recognises the explanatory power of preconceived images and types, she warns of their harmful effects in a way that seems quite advanced for her time. Particularly prescient, in fact, is her awareness of the performative dimension of such preconceptions as they invite one to stage the stereotypes one is identified with.

This becomes particularly apparent when Mayne's investigation of stereotypes, and their effect on the reading and staging of identity in "The Happy Day," is placed within the larger context of her oeuvre. We have already seen how national images obstruct true understanding between the characters in "The Red Umbrella" and how the narrator even plays up to the dull, sensible Englishman he is taken for or "display[s] sardonically the denseness which [he knows is] expected of the army" (*Things* 11). The same self-conscious performance can be found in "Desertsurges," where an English middle-aged man flirting with a naïve young Irish girl is said to have "found the part ready" and to have "played it well, telling himself that it bored him – but it did not bore him" (*Things* 48-9). If, in these stories, the characters staging certain stereotypes are men, throughout Mayne's short stories women are far more often conscious of this performative dimension of, especially gendered, identity. Indeed, Mayne's critique of the insidious effect of national images in "The Happy Day" gains a larger resonance when juxtaposed to the critique of gendered stereotypes that is even more central to her fiction.

Especially in Mayne's early novels and story collections, the female characters can be seen to struggle with the images and norms of conventional femininity. In this, her

work clearly participates in the New Woman fiction of the *fin de siècle* which sought to replace the Victorian understanding of womanhood in terms of submissive, self-sacrificial and sheltered domesticity by a more active and passionate interpretation of female nature (Pykett 137ff.; Ledger). Still, as with the debates about national character around the same time, these early feminist writers continued to refer to womanhood or womanly identity as realities with great explanatory power and terms like 'type,' 'essence,' 'nature' were used with considerable seriousness in their fiction. Evidence of the currency of these ideas can be found in "Herb of Grace," the opening story of *The Clearer Vision*. The protagonist is a clever and artistic young girl, who finds her "cleverness" sneered upon as "queer" and her professed dislike of children scoffed at (18). A "maternal instinct," she knows, is supposed to be an essential part of the female identity: "you know, a woman without that!," one of the characters remarks (64). In the face of this gendered stereotype, Adela struggles to prove that she can be a 'true' woman without maternal instinct. Hence, she puts forward the theory "of opposed types – the 'mother,' 'the wife' in womanhood" (18). In order to prove herself of the latter, passionate and romantic, type, she impulsively accepts an offer of marriage, even though her husband-to-be expects her to give up her writing as he wants her to be "a woman; not a 'lady novelist'," as if the two cannot be reconciled (53). In an ironic final twist, however, Adela discovers that with the writing she has given up her own true passion, while her feelings for the man are maternal at best.

The self-conscious approach to gendered stereotypes in this story is very similar to the half-serious, half-ironic way in which national stereotypes are treated in "The Happy Day." Yet Mayne again goes further than both ironic mockery and feminist reappropriation when she draws attention to the insidious effect of preconceived ideas on the reading and staging of identity. Even though Adela rebels against the traditional feminine stereotypes, they nevertheless mould her behaviour and lead her into an unhappy marriage. Stories such as "Lucille," "Honoria Byron," "The Lost Leader" and "Madeline Annesley," on the other hand, serve to show how the female character's personality is always more complex than the prevalent gendered "types" suggest.[6] In these stories, a baffled first-person narrator tries – and invariably fails – to square a woman's behaviour with what the traditional images of femininity lead him to expect. In stories like "On the Programme" and "The End of It," further, a male perspective alternates with a female one to reveal the misunderstanding to which these gendered stereotypes give rise. In the latter story, the woman is also very conscious of the fact that she is acting out feminine stereotypes by behaving and flirting in a certain way. One part of her thinks this is fun: "she would laugh and pretend that she thought it rather impertinent […] and then she would dress in a simulated 'hurry' […]. It was such fun, all this pretending, – these airs and graces, these sudden, premeditated fits of absence of mind, these deprecations, these humilities" (*Clearer* 85).

6 "Lucille," "The Lost Leader," "The End of It," and "On the Programme" are stories from *The Clearer Vision*; "Honoria Byron," and "Madeline Annesley" are from *Things That No One Tells.*

Yet, another part of her worries about the misunderstanding to which this performance will give rise.

When read within the context of Mayne's larger oeuvre, in short, the critique of national images and clichés in "The Happy Day" can be understood as but one aspect of her more sustained scrutiny of the way preconceived ideas about gender, nationality or character lead to a blinkered and one-dimensional perception that distorts a far more complex reality. Mayne's own experiences as an Anglo-Irish girl growing up in late-Victorian Ireland and setting out on a writing career in the midst of national and feminist ferment in London no doubt aided her in seeing the parallels between the images of Irishness and womanhood with which whole populations were being classified and contained. Mayne's sharp understanding of the cognitive function of such preconceived images would find confirmation some years later in Walter Lippmann's ground-breaking study, *Public Opinion* (1922), which would lead to a more critical scrutiny of national stereotypes after the Second World War (see Beller 4). Yet, as we have seen, Mayne goes further even than Lippmann in recognising the negative impact of these biases on personal identity as they become internalised and start to determine one's being and behaviour. If her awareness of the performative dimension of gender identity thus points forward to the performance theory of Joan Rivière and the queer theory of Judith Butler, her depiction of staging Irishness in "The Happy Day" arguably anticipates the more pervasive critical scrutiny of Irish national identity in the final decades of the twentieth century.

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DION BOUCICAULT, *ARRAH-NA-POGUE*, AND STAGE IRISHRY IN *FINNEGANS WAKE*

Richard Barlow

James Joyce's interest in drama informs both his fiction and his non-fiction. Ibsen was one of Joyce's early literary heroes and theatrical matters are explored in some of his early non-fiction pieces, such as "Drama and Life," "Ibsen's New Drama," and "Day of the Rabblement." Joyce also wrote a play titled *Exiles*, and Stephen Dedalus' elaborate literary theory in the "Scylla and Charybdis" episode of *Ulysses* is possibly based on an inventive reading of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (and a creative treatment of the scant details we know of Shakespeare's life).[1] The "Circe" episode of *Ulysses* reads like a hallucinatory closet drama and *Finnegans Wake* also has a 'dramatic' chapter of sorts, "*The Mime of Mick, Nick, and the Maggies*" (*FW* 218.18-19).[2] There are also hundreds of references or allusions to plays and theatres in the text of *Finnegans Wake* as a whole (especially Dublin theatres such as the Gaiety and the Abbey). As part of the dramatic themes and scenes in *Finnegans Wake*, there are a number of references to melodrama and to the work of the most prominent nineteenth-century source of that type of drama, Dion Boucicault.

While Joyce's debt to English and continental drama (Shakespeare, Ibsen) has been well documented in previous criticism and scholarship, his interest in Irish drama and critically neglected popular theatrical forms has been overlooked to some extent. Joyce alludes to Boucicault's work on several occasions in *Finnegans Wake*. These aspects of the text have been neglected within criticism somewhat, alongside a tendency in some quarters to dismiss Boucicault's work as commercial and sentimental trash with an overabundance of Stage "Oirishness" (O'Toole 5), and a lack of attention towards the political dimensions and contexts of the work. However, an understanding of the place of Stage Irishry within the history of Irish (and English) drama – coupled with an examination of the political context of Boucicault's work – will help us to understand Joyce's allusions to these subjects in *Finnegans Wake* and to appreciate Boucicault's influence on modern Irish literature. Responding to recent work on Boucicault's plays, this chapter will study the roles of Stage Irishry and Boucicault in Joyce's work – with specific reference to Boucicault's play *Arrah-na-Pogue*. In *Finne-*

1 This theory is perhaps partly based on lectures Joyce gave on *Hamlet* at the Società di Minerva in Trieste in 1912 and 1913. However, these lectures have not survived.

2 Throughout this chapter, references to *Finnegans Wake* will be cited with page and line number, as is standard practice in Joyce studies. The play mentioned above, put up "Every evening at lighting up o'clock sharp and until further notice in Feenichts Playhouse" (*FW* 219.1-2), involves a children's game in which one child, Glugg (a version of the Shem figure), must solve a riddle.

gans Wake, Stage Irishness is bound up with Englishness and the presence of English culture and traditions in Ireland. However, in typical Wakean fashion, and in a manner suiting a form of theatre popular in both England and Ireland, Stage Irishness is also associated with rebellions against British rule in Ireland and with Celtic matters.

According to Elizabeth Cullingford, the Dublin-born Boucicault (1820-1890) was the most popular English-language playwright between the years 1840 and 1900 (300). Boucicault was a global cultural figure in the late nineteenth century and Irish-themed dramas such as *The Colleen Bawn, or The Brides of Garryowen* (1860) and *Arrah-na-Pogue; Or, The Wicklow Wedding* (1864) make up only a fraction of his output. Recent decades have seen performances of a number of Boucicault plays, including productions of *The Shaughraun* at the Abbey in 1990 and 2004, a staging of *Arrah-na-Pogue* in 2010, also at the Abbey, and a Druid nationwide tour of *The Colleen Bawn* in 2014. However, Boucicault's work is omitted from collected volumes of modern Irish drama such as John P. Harrington's *Modern and Contemporary Irish Drama* (2008), which tend to focus on twentieth-century works. Still, there has been an attempt in recent years, particularly in Deirdre McFeely's book *Dion Boucicault: Irish Identity on Stage* (2012), to reconsider Boucicault's work, especially in the political context of mid-nineteenth-century Ireland and its diasporic communities.

One of the reasons Boucicault is important to the tradition of Irish commercial theatre is because he attempted to modify the stage presentation of the Irishman (and Irishwoman). An 1864 piece in *The Irish Times* states that:

> [N]ever was a country better abused by strangers than Ireland by its own dramatists […]. It is to their productions and not to the injustice of strangers, that we owe the disparaging estimate of the Celt which, until recently, prevailed in England. A thing of rags and tatters, of blunders and mischief-making, of noise and absurdity – a compound at best of rollicking good nature, impracticable obstinacy, and effervescent courage, was the stage Irishman. If Mr Dion Boucicault did no other service, he rectified this ridiculously false impression of Irish character. (Anon. 3)

This piece was written in response to the opening night of *Arrah-na-Pogue* in Dublin in 1864, the only play of Boucicault's to have a premiere in Ireland. Aside from his renovation of the Stage Irishman, Boucicault was an innovator in many aspects of theatre production and management.[3]

Echoing the sympathetic press response mentioned above, critics such as Seamus Deane and Cullingford have stressed the transformative aspects of Boucicault's work. Deane points out that "[a]lthough Boucicault has often been misrepresented as purveying the worst kind of Irish stereotypes, his declared intention was to *abolish* Stage Irishry" (234). According to Cullingford, "English dramatists created the drunken, stupid, and violent Stage Irishman; the Irish dramatist Dion Boucicault […] reinvented him as drunken, clever, and charming" (1). For Cullingford, the political resonances of Boucicault's plays are limited: "Boucicault's plays seldom betray the overt

3 "Boucicault introduced many innovations […] including fireproof scenery, touring companies for metropolitan productions, and royalty payments for playwrights" (Welch 57).

hostility to imperialism of his little-known pamphlet, *The Story of Ireland* (1881), which describes his country as 'the victim of a systematic oppression and contemptuous neglect, whose story will appear to you unparalleled in the history of the world'" (291). However, Deane has suggested that hostility to imperialism is encoded in the Irish landscape itself in Boucicault's play *Arrah-na-Pogue*: "In this play […], the landscape is in effect politicised. The scenery itself, not just the Irish character, is shown to be resistant to colonial occupation" (234). In *Arrah-na-Pogue*, Ireland is an unsettled, depressed land where nature itself seems to recognise a sense of pain and injustice. In this passage, the rebel leader Beamish MacCoul praises Ireland ahead of his exile:

> In a few hours I shall be on the sea, bound for a foreign land; perhaps never again shall I hear your voices nor see my native hills. Oh, my own land! Bless every blade of grass on your green cheeks! The clouds that hang over ye are the sighs of your exiled children, and your face is always wet with their tears. *Eirne meelish, Shlawn loth*! Fair ye well, dear Abbey of St Kevin, around which the bones of my forefathers are laid. (Boucicault 440)[4]

In *Arrah-na-Pogue*, mountains are both a romantic area and a dangerous, politicised terrain. As MacCoul mentions during the play's trial scene, "I have been organising an insurrection in the mountain districts of Wicklow" (Boucicault 467). The Irish landscape is also politicised through the presence of prison towers, blatant symbols of English power and control. When Shaun escapes from his cell in the tower, he places "the curse of Crumwell [*sic*]" on the stones of the building (Boucicault 473). In *Arrah-na-Pogue*, Ireland is a place of beauty and ancient culture but also a space of ruins, colonial oppression, and underground conspiracy against that oppression.

In the play, set during the 1798 Rebellion, the rebel Beamish MacCoul has returned from forced exile in France in order to instigate an insurrection. During the opening scene, Beamish robs the rent collector Oiny Feeney in the moonlight by the resonant ruins of St Kevin's Abbey at Glendalough. Beamish uses the young woman Arrah Meelish's cottage as a safe house and gives her some of the stolen money as a wedding present (she is to be married to Shaun, the play's main Stage Irishman, later that day). Four years previously, Arrah helped Beamish to break out from prison by smuggling a paper with escape instructions to him with a kiss. Feeney suspects Shaun of the robbery, confronts Arrah, and finds the stolen money. So, Arrah is suspected of involvement with the rebel Beamish and the play's authority figures Major Coffin (a Stage English character) and Colonel O'Grady plan to raid her cottage. That night, a celebratory gathering takes place in a barn and a band plays "The Wearing of the Green," much to Shaun's dismay.[5] A group of soldiers then raid the party as

4 As McFeely has observed, "in setting [the opening scene], Boucicault used potent symbols of romantic Ireland: 'Glenda Lough; Moonlight. The Ruins of St. Kevin's Abbey, the Round Tower, the Ruined Cemetery, the Lake and the Mountains beyond'" (40).

5 The idea that "The Wearing of the Green" was banned has become accepted in some quarters (see Welch 22). According to McFeely: "It has become a part of Boucicault myth that the song was banned from performances of the play following the Fenian bombing of London's Clerkenwell Prison in December 1867. However, […] Boucicault's

Beamish disappears. The money is discovered, but Arrah heroically refuses to say where it came from. She is to be arrested, but Shaun takes responsibility for the robbery, is apprehended in her place, and is sentenced to death. Beamish races to Dublin to confess to the Secretary of State and obtain a reprieve for Shaun. Beamish is then freed on condition that he returns to exile. However, before Shaun can learn of his reprieve, he escapes his cell and scales the walls of the tower in which he was being held. A figure falls from the tower and is presumed dead. This turns out to be Feeney, who had tried to kill Shaun, not "Shaun himself" (*FW* 405.2). Arrah and Shaun are reunited.

Aside from its connections with 1798, *Arrah-na-Pogue* has become associated with other significant eras in Irish history (as well as commemorations of historical events). As McFeely explains:

> [T]he London premiere and subsequent revival of *Arrah-na-Pogue* coincided with extraordinary political events. Equally, the Dublin revival in late 1868 took place amidst an atmosphere of heightened political tension. […] While Boucicault was singing "The Wearing of the Green" and escaping from prison every night on the London stage, the Fenians were planning a rising for 20 September, the anniversary of Robert Emmet's execution for treason in 1803. (30-45)[6]

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version of 'The Wearing of the Green' was never actually banned. In fact, Boucicault's rendition of the rebel song proved to be a popular highlight for English audiences" (30). Nevertheless, the highly charged nature of the song is made apparent in *Arrah-na-Pogue*:

> SHAUN. Will, ladies, its for you to choose the time of it. What shall it be?
>
> REGAN. The "Wearing of the green."
>
> ALL. Hurroo! The "Wearing of the green."
>
> SHAUN. Whist, boys, are ye mad; is it sing that song and the soldiers widin gunshot? Sure there's sudden death in every note of it. (Boucicault 453)

There are numerous allusions to "The Wearing of the Green" in *Finnegans Wake*, especially to the line "I met with Napper Tandy and he took me by the hand." For example, "I met with dapper dandy" (*FW* 464.24).

6 McFeely continues, "Boucicault wrote *Arrah-na-Pogue* at a time when the Fenians had upwards of 50,000 supporters and were so confident of support nationally that they were planning a rising for the following year. By setting the play in 1798, Boucicault evoked the revolutionary spirit of that year and all its connotations while avoiding direct links to contemporary politics" (35). Boucicault also produced a play titled *Robert Emmet* in 1884. However, it appears that Boucicault was not the main author of this play (see McFeely 139). A section of *Arrah-na-Pogue* is included in the 'Fenianism' subsection of the 'Political Writings and Speeches 1850-1918' section of the *Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing*, vol. II alongside, for example, writings by Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa and John Devoy. Boucicault's new charming, intelligent Stage Irishmen – such as Shaun the Post in *Arrah-na-Pogue* – entered the scene at the same time as a wave of transatlantic paranoia and hostility towards the Irish and a concomitant increase in anti-Irish caricatures in English and American publications. In Joyce's *Stephen Hero* the activist Madden denounces the "old stale libels – the drunken Irishman, the baboon-faced Irishman that we see in *Punch*" (64).

Later in the nineteenth century, the Irish Revival sought to banish Stage Irishry from Irish culture. In the *Irish Literary Society Gazette* for January 1900, W.B. Yeats wrote that the new Irish Literary Theatre would "expound Irish characters and ideas," and that plays would be written as "one writes literature, and not as one writes for the Theatre of Commerce" (197). Meanwhile, his collaborator Augusta Gregory wrote that the theatre would "show that Ireland is not the home of buffoonery and of easy sentiment as it has been represented" (20).[7] However, Boucicault and Stage Irish culture return to Irish literature in *Finnegans Wake*.

To some extent, the international contents and contexts of Boucicault's career are reflected in *Finnegans Wake*. There are allusions in Joyce's text to Boucicault's play *The Corsican Brothers*, based on the 1844 novella by Alexandre Dumas ("the corks again brothers," *FW* 465.1), and to the slavery-themed, America-set *The Octoroon*, adapted from the Irish novelist Thomas Mayne Reid's 1856 book *The Quadroon* ("Orcotron," *FW* 468.36). However, most of the allusions to Boucicault's work in *Finnegans Wake* are to the playwright's Irish plays. Joyce attended productions of Boucicault's work at the popular 2000-seat venue the Queen's Royal Theatre on Great Brunswick Street (now Pearse Street) in Dublin, including performances of *Arrah-na-Pogue*. According to James Atherton, the words "Shaun himself" in *Finnegans Wake* (*FW* 405.2) were probably remembered by Joyce from a performance of *Arrah-na-Pogue* at the Queen's Theatre, which was putting on political melodramas well before the establishment of the Irish Literary Theatre/Abbey Theatre (161).[8] The words "Shaun himself" are spoken in Boucicault's play after a figure – ostensibly Shaun – falls from a tower at the play's denouement and is presumed dead (before it is revealed that Shaun is alive and that it was another character who fell from the tower). A figure falling to his apparent death before being miraculously 'resurrected' resembles the incidents narrated in the folk song from which Joyce derived the title *Finnegans Wake* (see Ellmann 543-44).[9]

Book 1 chapter 3 of *Finnegans Wake* contains a list of 111 insults directed at the text's central figure HCE, including the phrase "stodge arschmann" (*FW* 71.34). As John Gordon has noted, book 1 chapter 3 is

7 Negativity towards Stage Irishry also features in conversations among the students in Joyce's early, abandoned work, *Stephen Hero*: "I suppose you heard that sentence in some 'stage-Irishman' play. It's a libel on our countrymen" (62).

8 Leopold Bloom thinks about Boucicault and the Queen's Theatre in the "Lestrygonians" episode of *Ulysses*: "Where Pat Kinsella had his Harp theatre before Whitbred ran the Queen's. Broth of a boy. Dion Boucicault business with his harvestmoon face in a poky bonnet. Three Purty Maids from School. How time flies, eh?" (137).

9 Furthermore, the name of the character Beamish MacCoul in *Arrah-na-Pogue* links him with Fionn mac Cumhaill, the legendary figure of Irish high medieval literature, one of HCE's many 'avatars' in *Finnegans Wake*. As will be discussed later in this chapter, the name 'Shaun the Post' has a Boucicault connection.

> the *Wake*'s 'English' chapter, in several ways. The scenes and characters tend to be English. [Here, HCE] […] is uncommonly, and unguardedly, proud of his British connections […], so much so that at the chapter's end the one hundred and eleven epithets directed against him are […] equated with the one hundred and eleven anti-English votes of the Irish Parliament against the Act of Union. (129)

The hail of vituperation also recalls the abuse and invective directed at Bloom in the "Cyclops" episode of *Ulysses*. Indeed, there are important similarities between HCE and Bloom: "HCE and Bloom are both attacked because members of the Dublin community regard then as not belonging […]. Quite plainly, the hostility of the visitor to the pub recalls the abuse of the Citizen in the 'Cyclops' chapter of *Ulysses*" (Kitcher 95).[10] Here, the barman HCE is attacked because he is, according to the Cyclops-like customers, not a 'real Irishman,' only a Stage Irishman. In other words, his Irishness is – to his one-eyed, abusive customers – something performative. Like the theatrical stock figure of the Stage Irishman, HCE has come to Ireland from abroad.[11] Not only did the Stage Irish concept come to Ireland from England (the first Stage Irishman was probably MacMorris in Shakespeare's *Henry V*), so did theatre itself. As Christopher Morash has noted, "while almost every other aspect of Irish culture could claim an authenticating, pre-Conquest genealogy, the theatre in Ireland was not only lacking in antiquity, it was a cultural form introduced – and, to a certain extent, maintained – by the colonial administration in Ireland" (13). Elsewhere, as I will discuss, HCE is associated with King Mark of Cornwall in a section with Boucicauldian connections. In *Finnegans Wake*, Stage Irishness is inseparable from Englishness and the presence of English culture and power in Ireland, hence the note in the 'night lessons' section (book 2 chapter 2) that reads "A stodge Angleshman has been worked by eccentricity" (*FW* 284. L 1-4).[12] English drama introduced the Stage Irish hetero-stereotype which Boucicault adapted and rehabilitated in his auto-stereotypical Stage Irish characters. In Joyce's work, Stage Irishry is often associated with a hostility towards outsiders or those who are not considered fully or authentically Irish. Joyce's responses to Boucicault's work specifically will be considered later in this chapter.

The phrase from book 1 chapter 3 of *Finnegans Wake*, "stodge arschmann," contains the word 'stodge' rather than 'stage.' According to the online *Cambridge English Dic-*

10 However, not all of the abuse is particularly stinging. The list also includes the fairly innocuous insults "Funnyface," "Hoary Hairy Hoax," "Muddle the Plan," "Boose in the Bed," and "Hooshed the Cat from the Bacon" (*FW* 71.12, 71.15, 71.27, 72.15, and 71.24).

11 HCE is associated with England in book 1 chapter 3 of *Finnegans Wake* but he is also given Scandinavian origins in the text. As Philip Kitcher has noted, "HCE, as others see him, [is] an outsider, impious [and] destructive" (219).

12 See also "trying to copy the stage Englesemen" (*FW* 181.1). As Stephanie Boland has observed, "In *Finnegans Wake*, a series of stage Irishmen – including, perhaps most prominently, Dion Boucicault's – regenerate to take on new, shifting roles that morph with the Wake's changing metaphysics […]. Just as Joyce reclaimed and manipulated the stage Irishman from its place at the margins of empire, so too did he draft the stage Cockney, a comic caricature of the working-class East End, into radical service" (81).

tionary, “Stodgy food is heavy and unhealthy, sometimes in an unpleasant way” (“Stodgy” n.p.). In book 1 chapter 4 of the *Wake*, HCE’s health problems are described through a play on Boucicault’s name: “his dyinboosycough” (*FW* 95.08). Stodgy can also mean “Boring, serious, and informal.” As for “arschmann,” this suggests ‘erse,’ a name for the Irish language (as well as a name for Scottish Gaelic) and contains the German for ‘arse’ (*Arsch*). Elsewhere in the text, HCE is rather unkindly referred to as “bargearse” and there are references to his “big white harse.” The arse is associated with usurpation and/or defeat in *Finnegans Wake*, as one of the repeated stories in the text involves a soldier shooting a general while the latter is voiding his bowels. Elsewhere, the word “culosses” (*FW* 261.12) combines arse with colossal, but also with colossus – something that is liable to be toppled, like the Colossus of Rhodes (generally, anything that is oversized in Joyce’s work is liable to deflation, vandalism, or destruction). So, the insults in book 1 chapter 3 connect with the father figure HCE’s fear of his eventual downfall and usurpation by the next generation. As we shall see, one of the son figures of the text, Shaun, is associated with incidents of Irish rebellion against “Saozon ruze” (*FW* 411.30) or ‘Saxon rule.’ Indeed, the final epithet hurled at HCE is “*Deposed*” (*FW* 72.16). The name “arschmann” also contains the German for man (*Mann*), but this may be an allusion to the character Danny Mann, a malevolent humpback servant in *Arrah-na-Pogue* (elsewhere in *Finnegans Wake*, HCE is described as having a humpback). HCE is regarded as false, inauthentic, unhealthy, un-Irish, but also as someone whose very existence is somehow an insult to Ireland or, to borrow a phrase from the Buckley and the Russian general section of the book, an “instullt to Igorlands!” (*FW* 353.18-19).[13]

An important nexus of allusions to Boucicault’s work appears in book 2 chapter 4 of *Finnegans Wake* (also known as “Mamalujo”), a section that depicts the text’s four old men watching “the big kuss of Trustan and Usolde (*FW* 383.18) on their ship “amid the bludderings from the boom and all the gallowsbirds in Arrah-na-Pogue” (*FW* 388.24-6). In this chapter, there are allusions to Boucicault’s *The Colleen Bawn* and *Arrah-na-Pogue* as well as to Boucicault himself. One of the central figures involved in this chapter, Isolde, is an Irish girl like ‘the Colleen Bawn’ and Arrah. In *Finnegans Wake*, Isolde is associated with Issy, the daughter of the central family of the text, with Tristan generally functioning as a composite of her brothers Shem and

13 According to Chrissie Van Mierlo, “The *Wake*’s ironic reference to ‘the good old bygone days of Dion Boucicault’ (*FW* 385.2-3) reinforces the sense that the world of the plays is nought but a sham […], there is no real sense that the popular dramatist is taken particularly seriously in the *Wake*. It is easy to see why some of Boucicault’s twee, absurd and chaotic themes appealed. For example, raucous celebrations are a feature of *Arrah-na-Pogue* […]. Here, Shaun-the-Post (a character name purloined by Joyce) buoyantly jumps atop a barrel during a party to celebrate his marriage, an act that is mimicked in [book 3 chapter 1] of the *Wake* when Shaun likewise delivers a speech from atop a floating barrel. The climax of the play’s second act – a rollicking courtroom scene […] finds a parallel in the courtroom-style inquisition of Shaun-Yawn that takes place in [book 3 chapter 1] of the *Wake*” (20).

Shaun. HCE, the father figure, is usually associated with the King Mark character of the romance. In the "Mamalujo" episode's phrase "the good old days bygone days of Dion Boucicault, the elder, in Arrah-na-pogue, in the otherworld of the passing of the key in Two-Tongue Common" (*FW* 385.2-5), Joyce draws together the kissing of Tristan and Isolde with the kissing mentioned in *Arrah-na-Pogue*. The words 'Arrah' and 'Anna' are intricately linked in *Finnegans Wake*. Indeed, in 1925, Joyce replaced the words "Anna Livia" with "Anna-na-Pogue" in the 'Anna Livia Plurabelle' section of what was to become *Finnegans Wake* (see Fordham, *Unravelling Universals* 76). Since Arrah suggests ALP (or Anna Livia Plurabelle), the central mother/wife figure of Joyce's text, and since "the elder" suggests the father/husband figure HCE, it seems that a vision of the two young lovers is being compared to, and complicated by, a vision of "bygone" loves of ancient times such as that of the older figures ALP and HCE.

In the "Mamalujo" section of *Finnegans Wake*, Boucicault's work – specifically *The Colleen Bawn* – is connected with memories of a romantic, erotic past: "cuddling and kiddling her, after an oyster supper in Cullen's barn" (*FW* 385.1), "when he was kiddling and cuddling and bunnyhugging scrumptious his colleen bawn" (*FW* 384.20-21). As such, HCE's relationship with his wife becomes mixed and confused with his relationship with his daughter (in addition to the word "kiddling," 'colleen' is an anglicisation of *cailín*, the Irish for girl). Here, as with the "stodge arschmann" phrase mentioned earlier, HCE is presented as a deposed figure of a previous era who, like King Mark and Dion Boucicault, has been left behind or rejected. However, HCE's identification with inauthenticity and Englishness is complicated by the Boucicault/Tristan and Isolde connections, since Mark was a Cornish rather than an English king. Furthermore, Joyce's interest in the Tristan and Isolde story was due, to a large part, to its strong Celtic connections.[14] Still, HCE is again linked to non-Irish figures. These kissing scenes connect with a further image of kissing at the 'end' of *Finnegans Wake*. As I will discuss, this later image also alludes to Boucicault's work.

Joyce takes the name of one of his son figures in *Finnegans Wake*, Shaun the Post, from *Arrah-na-Pogue* (in the play, Shaun is the driver of the mail car between Hollywood and Rathdrum in Wicklow). After 1916, postage attained political implications in Ireland, since much of the fighting during the Easter Rising occurred at the General Post Office in Dublin.[15] Furthermore, during the revolutionary period, the imperial red of post boxes was painted over with Irish green, an act referred to in *Finnegans Wake*

14 See Boland, "Cornish Tokens." For analysis of the Tristan and Isolde section of *Finnegans Wake*, see Bishop, 220-24, and Hayman.

15 On the subject of stages and theatre, Pearse's reading of the Proclamation of the Irish Republic has often been discussed as a kind of theatrical performance. As Nicholas Grene has noted, "The conscious theatricality of the Rising involved *mise-en-scène* as well as costume and script ('the para-theatre of the Proclamation'). Occupying the GPO, with its pillared neo-classical façade at the dead centre of Dublin's central shopping street, was a grand manifestation of the revolutionary design, however mad it might have been as a military strategy" (142). Michael Collins suggested that Pearse's performance had an "air of Greek tragedy" about it (qtd. in Foster 482-3).

through the phrase "painted our town a wearing greenridinghued" (*FW* 411.24), a line that plays on the title of the song "The Wearing of the Green," which is sung in *Arrah-na-Pogue*. *Finnegans Wake* 'ends' with a slightly misremembered image from *Arrah-na-Pogue*, as the river/mother figure Anna Livia Plurabelle – or "Anna-na-Poghue" (*FW* 203.36) flows out to sea: "Lps. The keys to. Given! A way a lone a last a loved a long the" (*FW* 627.34-628.16). As mentioned earlier, in *Arrah-na-Pogue* it is discussed that Arrah once hid an escape plan in her mouth and delivered it to the imprisoned rebel Beamish MacCoul through a kiss (this is why the play's heroine Anna Meelish is known as Arrah-na-Pogue, 'Arrah of the Kiss').[16] In *Finnegans Wake*, the escape plans become a key.

So, *Finnegans Wake* 'ends' – like *Ulysses* – with a kiss: "Lps. The keys to. Given!"[17] But the image is also one of escape (not least for the reader). Again, there is a similarity to the "Penelope" episode of *Ulysses* where Molly, in one of the text's self-reflexive moments thinks "O Jamesy let me up out of this" (*U* 18.1128-29) as though she cannot bear to be contained by the text any longer. Since the text ends with keys, we can perhaps think of the end of the book as a kind of door (keys are also a 'key' symbol in Joyce's work, especially in *Ulysses*, where they are linked to power, ownership, and control).[18] The final chapter of *Finnegans Wake* concerns Easter, dawn, resurrection, and the act of waking up (see Tindall 306).[19] Commenting on the phrase "Array! Surrection. Eireweeker […] O rally" (*FW* 593.2-3), Tindall notes that "'Eireweeker,' more than Earwicker alone, is the Irish rising of 1916, during Easter week. 'O Rally,' more than Persse O'Reilly, is [The O'Rahilly], killed at the Post Office in the Easter Rising, and 'Sonne feine' […] more than the rising son, is [Sinn Féin]" (306). Still, the reference to *Arrah-na-Pogue*, which is set during the 1798 rebellion, fits the theme of risings and uprisings at the close of *Finnegans Wake*.[20] Since Shaun

16 At one point, Fanny suggests that "No one but a woman would have thought of such a post office" (Boucicault 448). One of the first tasks of the actor playing Shaun in *Arrah-na-Pogue* is to sing the song "Open the Door Softly."

17 See also, "there's a key in my kiss" (*FW* 279.F08).

18 According to Atherton, "A meaning which can be expressed quite simply as that it is Love which is the basis of our existence [*sic*]. The symbol taken from Boucicault – the passing on of a message from a woman to a man by a kiss – was used by Joyce in *Ulysses*. It is significant that it was seed-cake that Molly put into Bloom's mouth from her own. Boucicault's [Shaun] uses the same image in his first scene with Arrah: 'There's a griddle in the middle of your face, Arrah, that has a cake on it always warm and ready to stop a boy's mouth'" (158). For a discussion on the role of doors in the end of book 4, see Van Hulle.

19 According to Tindall, the "divine abounds" in the final episode (305). Tindall continues: "Like Chapter I, Chapter XVII has an intricate introduction. After this, in place of Waterloo, comes a saint's life" (305-6). The saint in question Kevin of Glendalough. This provides another connection to *Arrah-na-Pogue*, since the play is set at Glendalough in Wicklow.

20 There are also allusions to Pearse and Erskine Childers in the chapter at *FW* 596.5 and FW 620.24.

the Post is a postman in *Arrah-na-Pogue*, the allusion to Boucicault at the end of Joyce's text can be read as a link to both 1798 and to 1916, as the character is from a play set during the earlier rising while his occupation links him to a central location of the latter event.[21] The different Irish risings alluded to in the chapter also suggest the theme of repetition (the chapter is also a '*ricorso*') and the cyclicality of the text is one of the ways in which the novel delays or resists its own completion. The image of keys, as well as suggesting potential solutions or explanations, implies that the book is a kind of prison from which it might be possible, at long last, to escape. This symbol of escape corresponds with the scene's imagery of the river rushing into the sea (while a homophone of "keys" – quays – places the word among the river and sea terms of the chapter). Of course, keys are turned in locks. This suggests that this passage is a turning point – the moment in which we open the lock, turn to the beginning of the book, and move from the final word "the" (*FW* 628.15) to the text's opening "riverrun" (*FW* 3.1).[22] *Finnegans Wake* is a cyclical text in which the incomplete 'final' sentence of the book links up with the incomplete 'first' sentence.

Stage Irishry in *Finnegans Wake* is related to Englishness and the English and is part of HCE's perceived inauthenticity. This is unsurprising since the Stage Irish trope originated in England. However, Stage Irishry is also linked in *Finnegans Wake* to Irish history, especially to Ireland's history of armed struggle against British rule. So, in *Finnegans Wake*, Boucicault's work can be linked to the eras on either side of the period in which Joyce composed the work. Joyce began writing *Finnegans Wake* in 1922 and finished work on it in 1939, dates that coincide roughly with the existence of the Irish Free State, when debates over the definitions and borders of Irishness took on a highly contested, political nature. Furthermore, the Tristan and Isolde kiss scene (which partly derives from *Arrah-na-Pogue*) was written early in the overall composition of *Finnegans Wake*, in 1923, and the 'final' section was written late in the process, in 1937/38. So, the two key kiss scenes bookend the interval between the Revolutionary/Civil War period and the final break from the UK marked by the new Irish constitution of 1938.[23] This suggests the importance of the Arrah/kiss moments for Joyce as he composed *Finnegans Wake*. The Arrah/kiss sections have strong associations with English culture, but they also express a sense of escape and release that assume a political resonance when considered within the historical context of their composition.

As the reductive and overly negative appraisals of Boucicault's work are stripped away and the political resonances of his plays are revisited, we can continue to re-

21 As Colin MacCabe has suggested, "*Finnegans Wake*, with its sustained dismemberment of the English language and literary heritage, is perhaps best understood in relation to the struggle against imperialism" (4).

22 As Finn Fordham has noted, "Though written in different ways over different periods, the Epilogue (book 4) and the Overture (book 1 chapter 1) are in large part conceived, composed, and recomposed as a unit" ("'~~The~~ End'; 'Zee End'" 462).

23 For a discussion of the "Soft Morning City" phrase, see Van Hulle 453-54.

evaluate the Dublin playwright's place in Irish literature, Stage Irish drama, and *Finnegans Wake*. There is a typically Wakean ambiguity or duality in Joyce's approach to Boucicault and Stage Irishry. The phrase "Stodge Arschmann" is used as an insult against HCE in the English-themed book 1 chapter 3 section of *Finnegans Wake*, suggesting that the text's central figure is an inauthentic and offensive presence to his aggressive patrons. The bloated, old, and suspiciously foreign figure at the centre of the text is compared to a Stage Irish character and linked to the old and spurned figure Mark of Cornwall. However, Stage Irishry is also associated in *Finnegans Wake* – through Shaun the Post – to Irish resistance and rebellion since Shaun's name comes from a play set during the 1798 rebellion. As such, Boucicault's work is connected in the text to the period of revolution and transition in which Joyce composed the work (1922-1939) in which most of Ireland moved from British rule to independence. Boucicault's plays are also associated with either side of that turning point. Dion Boucicault, a transitional figure who did much to renew Irish theatre, is also present at one of *the* major turning points of *Finnegans Wake*. A 'key' image from Boucicault's *Arrah-na-Pogue* – probably the most important Stage Irish intertext in *Finnegans Wake* – forms part of a pattern of references to the repetitions of Irish political resistance in the book and contributes to the powerful sense of escape and release at the temporary conclusion of Joyce's final text.

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SPECIAL FORUM (CO-EDITED WITH IGOR MAVER)

EXPATRIATE PERSPECTIVES: STAGING IRISHNESS IN VIENNA, TRIESTE, AND LJUBLJANA

AUSTRIA AND THE IRISH PADDY: SÉAN O'CASEY'S *JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK* STAGED IN 1930 AND 1934 VIENNA

Dieter Fuchs

This chapter serves as the opening part of the three contributions on Irish and Austro-Hungarian intercultural transfer collected in this section. Although these chapters focus on different aspects of the Paddy stereotype, they all have in common that they contextualise Stage Irishness as an othering process triggered by Anglophone and/or Germanophone cultural imperialism.

Elisabetta d'Erme's contribution focuses on the 'Lost Victorian' Irish novelist Charles Lever, who lived in Trieste and held the position of British Consul. Residing as an expatriate in the major commercial seaport of the Austro-Hungarian Empire – which became a part of Italy after the end of the Great War – Lever re-fashioned the Stage Irish cliché of the Paddy by applying it to the Hibernian pro-English landowning elite. To satirise the 'English' lifestyle of the landed gentry rather than the Irish peasants, Lever's novels feature Stage Irishness in terms of 'Stage Ascendancy.' Igor Maver's chapter presents an analysis of James Joyce, the Slovenian community in Ljubljana and Trieste, and the cliché of the orientalised 'Eastern Paddy' from the Balkan Peninsula colonised by the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The present contribution focuses on Vienna – the imperial metropolis of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the capital of the First and Second Austrian Republic[1] – to analyse two Stage-Austrian character types which may be called the Austrian counterparts of the Irish Paddy. As the Stage Viennese, the Stage Tyrolean, and the Stage Irishman bear striking similarities at a first glance, it is somewhat surprising that this intercultural parallelism either remains unrecognised or is even consciously ignored in Austrian society. With regard to the critical reception of Irish plays staged in the Austrian capital in the twentieth century, Viennese theatre reviewers fail to understand, yet tend to stress, the allegedly unbridgeable 'otherness' of Hibernian culture.[2]

To address this aspect, first, I offer a brief sketch of Stage Austrian performativity, by focussing on the Stage Viennese and the Stage Tyrolean character types that

1 After the fall and decline of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the end of the Great War, the first Austrian Republic was established in 1918 and collapsed when Hitler declared the so-called "*Anschluss*" and incorporated Austria into Nazi-Germany in 1938. The Second Republic emerged after the end of the Second World War and was fully fleshed out when Austria re-gained its full independence when the Allied occupational forces accepted the Austrian Independence Treaty in 1955.

2 See Rubik, Fuchs, "1914-1969" 87-128 and Fuchs, "From the Fall" 47-59.

emerge in eighteenth-century Viennese popular drama and musical comedy. Next, I focus on a real-life figure from the seventeenth century whose semi-legendary *persona* serves as an archetype of the Stage Austrian: the Viennese bagpiper Augustin Marx, who has been committed to collective memory by a popular song entitled "O Du Lieber Augustin" ("O My Dear Friend Augustin"). Having looked at the stage history and the archetypal roots of the 'Austrian Paddy' in the chapter's first section, in the second section I compare this character to the Irish Paddy stereotype featured in Séan O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock* (1924), which was performed in Vienna in 1930 and 1934. By way of conclusion, the third section serves as an Epilogue that focuses on Austria's involvement in Fascist ideology. This section shows that although the Irish Paddy and his Austrian counterpart bear striking similarities at first glance, their theatrical performance has different discursive functions in terms of the cultural construction of collective identity, knowledge, and power politics. Whereas Stage Irishness may be considered a misrepresentation inflicted on the Irish by England to vindicate British imperialism and cultural superiority by way of hetero-stereotyping, its Austrian counterpart functions exactly the other way round: it is an auto-stereotypical construct which serves to forge a collective identity of an imagined community of the lower classes, who have been disempowered by the domestic state apparatus of the imperial House of Habsburg and its political successors. In contrast to the derogatory misrepresentation of the Irish Paddy in the context of English imperial power politics, the Stage Austrian auto-stereotype celebrates the alleged superiority of the simple people compared to the country's political elite.

The Stage Viennese, Stage Tyrolian, and Stage Austrian Figures in Literature, Musical Comedy, and Popular Culture

In the field of literature, the emergence of the comic figure of the Stage Viennese may be traced back to the non-classicist tradition of eighteenth-century Viennese popular comedy. Also known as *Wurschtl*,[3] *Hanswurst*, or *Kasperl*, this figure is dressed in comically 'unfashionable' clothes, speaks dialect, swears, drinks, and has a choleric and unrestrained disposition. Like the Irish Paddy, the Viennese *Wurschtl* is featured as an anarchic, unruly, and ill-mannered counterpart of an allegedly refined upper class culture. Like the Stage Irishman, whom Anglophone Protestant culture features as a figure of anti-Catholic satire, the Stage Viennese – as a product of the Baroque world of the absolutist regime of the Austrian Empress Maria Theresia

3 In addition to the clown figure known as *Hanswurst*, the word *Wurschtl* is also an etymological variant of the South-German word *durchwursteln* – a term which refers to a phenomenon known as *österreichische Lösung* / Austrian solution: owing to the lack of agency monopolised by the country's elite, the simple people need to find unconventional 'solutions' which, although not 'illegal' in the strict sense of the word, bypass the letter of the law to realise their plans and projects. This aspect also includes opportunist social bonding, a mutual 'give and take' attitude on the verge of corruption etc. As a trickster figure from below, the cunning *Wurschtl* is expertly knowledgeable in the art of *durchwursteln*.

(1740-1780) – functions as a representative of Southern Catholic culture, which is opposed to Northern Protestant Prussia in a Germanophone context. Bearing this in mind, it is no coincidence that one of the roots of popular Viennese drama, which flourished during the reign of Maria Theresia, may be traced back to the tradition of Jesuit and courtly Baroque drama. In a similar manner as Englishmen created the Stage Irishman to emphasise the gap between English Protestant culture and Gaelic Catholic 'anti-culture,' Protestant Prussia tried to abolish the Stage Viennese *Wurschtl* as a means of cultural, linguistic, and political hegemony. Whereas the Irish Paddy served as a medium to affirm and legitimate English power politics inflicted on the Irish subaltern on behalf of the colonisers, the Stage Viennese functioned as a means to subvert hegemonial pressure – imposed by both the domestic absolutist state apparatus and its Prussian enemy – on behalf of the Austrian lower classes.

This socio-political background explains why the Prussia-born Protestant neoclassicist scholar Johann Christoph Gottsched (1700-1766) tried to ban *Hanswurst* (as he called *Wurschtl* in his 'Northern' vernacular) from the theatrical stage in 1737. This attempted prohibition foreshadows the rise of Prussia as a result of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) in the field of power politics: as Prussia gained Silesia from its Austrian enemy, the outcome of this armed conflict initiated the rise of Prussia and the decline of Austria in terms of central-European imperial hegemony. From then on, Austria focused its imperial interests on South-Eastern Europe. Apart from their common enmity against Napoleon Bonaparte, this Austro-Prussian power struggle continued until the Battle of Königsgrätz, which Austria lost in 1866 as a precondition for the Proclamation of the Prussia-ruled *Deutsches Reich* after Bismarck's defeat of France in 1871. Without going into detail here, it is worth mentioning that the Viennese comic theatrical tradition continues with the works of Ferdinand Raimund (1790-1836) and Johann Nepomuk Nestroy (1801-1862), and its enduring heritage can be observed in the field of modern and contemporary Austrian drama until today.

As a second facet of the Stage Austrian stock characters, the Stage Tyrolean functions as a rural counterpart of the Stage Viennese who is broadly comparable with the Irish Paddy. The emergence of the Stage Tyrolean may be traced back to *Der Tyroler Wastel*, a 1796 comic opera co-written by Emanuel Schikaneder (libretto) and Jakob Haibel (music). Referring to Schikaneder's most famous work, the libretto of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* (*The Magic Flute* 1791), Alfred Strobel quotes Egon Komorzynski: "Der 'Tiroler Wastl' [sic!] hat das Wiener Volksstück tief und entscheidend beeinflußt – so wie die 'Zauberflöte' die Wiener Oper" ("'Der Tiroler Wastl' has had a profound and decisive impact on Viennese popular comedy – in the same way as the 'Magic Flute' has had a shaping influence on the formation of Viennese opera," n.p.). Claiming that Schikaneder's play features all the stock characters known from Viennese popular comedy, Strobel considers *Der Tyroler Wastel* a foundational text of this literary comic tradition. Owing to the play's embeddedness in the popular dramatic tradition, it is no coincidence that the staging of *Der Tyroler Wastel* proved to be a great success throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Among other

places, the play was first performed in Vienna (Freyhaustheater auf der Wieden, 1796), then in the Tyrolean capital Innsbruck (in concert form: Der *Tyroler Wastel, Arien und Duette*, 1798), in Agram (1800), as Zagreb was called in German at that time, and in the Slovenian capital Laibach *alias* Ljubljana (Ständetheater, 1806; this performance was followed by a ballet which was composed especially for the occasion: *Die lustigen Tyroler* / *The Merry Tyroleans*). As Schikaneder worked in Innsbruck in 1775-1776, one may safely assume that this Tyrolean sojourn must have inspired his Tyrolean play, which triggered off a vogue of (pseudo-)Tyrolean Dirndl-fashion among Viennese society in the wake of the 1796 Vienna premiere (See Strobel).

Taking a closer look at the Stage Tyrolean shaped by Schikaneder's musical play, one must note that this character type is very similar to the Stage Viennese. The eponymous character Wastel is featured as a Tyrolean peasant who visits his *nouveau-riche* brother who has made an upstart career in Vienna. Rather than being characterised as an uncultured country bumpkin as the Stage Irish tradition would have it, however, Wastel is featured as a positive counterpart of his brother, who has been corrupted not only by social mobility but, primarily, by the degenerative impact of modern city life. In contrast to the culture-nature binary at work in the English hetero-stereotype of Stage Irishness, the Austrian auto-stereotype features the country as a positive contrast to the city as a place of moral and financial corruption. If the Stage Viennese as a poor but plain-dealing man loses his authenticity owing to the corruptive influence of money and social promotion, he needs the help and down-to-earth authenticity of his un-corrupted Stage-Tyrolean brother from the country.

To move from literature to the fields of popular culture and mythology, one must turn to the jolly Viennese bagpiper, pub crawler, and notorious wine drinker Augustin Marx (1643-1685), whose cultural memory inspired the making of the Stage Viennese by way of what Roland Barthes would call "*le mythe, aujourd'hui*" and who is still today widely known and fondly remembered as "Der Liebe Augustin." According to the popular myth, Augustin was the son of an impoverished publican, who went from tavern to tavern to entertain the boozers with his performances of indecent songs, to be remunerated by rounds of free drink. Augustin secured his place as an archetypal harbinger of life in Austrian collective memory, as his unbreakable will to live heartened the inhabitants of Vienna in the plague year of 1679 as a symbol of surviving, and coping with, the collective trauma of the 'black death.' As the myth that emerged around his *persona* goes, the Viennese bagpiper falls, dies and comes back to life, owing to the resurrective power of alcohol.[4] According to a popular legend from plague-stricken Vienna, Augustin drank so much white wine that he stumbled into a ditch on his way home and fell asleep. When discovered by the plague

4 As I have shown elsewhere, this structural pattern corresponds with the archetypal story line of James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* and the popular song of the ballad hero Tim Finnegan it echoes. In this article I have also identified verbal echoes which show that *Finnegans Wake* alludes to the ditty "O Du Lieber Augustin." See Fuchs, "Lolo Lolo Liebermann" 149-56).

patrol, the boozer was mistaken for dead and dumped into a pit already filled with corpses. When Augustin awoke among the highly infectious bodies of the deceased, he cursed so loudly that he was discovered and helped out of the grave by the living. Owing to the antiseptic power of the drinks consumed during his nightly escapades, Augustin escaped the 'black death' by a hair's breadth.

Augustin has been committed to cultural memory as the main character of a ditty, which was, and still is, widely known in Vienna and other parts of the German-speaking world:

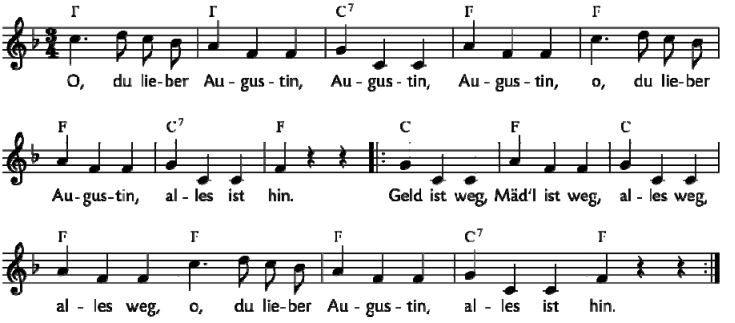

Fig. 1. "Lieber Augustin" musical notation

O, du lieber Augustin, Augustin, Augustin,
O, du lieber Augustin, alles ist hin.
(Refrain)
Geld ist weg, Mäd'l ist weg,
Alles weg, alles weg,
O, du lieber Augustin, alles ist hin.
Rock ist weg, Stock ist weg,
Augustin liegt im Dreck,
O, du lieber Augustin, alles ist hin
Und selbst das reiche Wien,
Hin ist's wie Augustin;
Weint mit mir im gleichen Sinn, alles ist hin.
Jeder Tag war ein Fest,
Und was jetzt? Pest, die Pest!
Nur ein groß' Leichenfest, das ist der Rest.
Augustin, Augustin,
Leg' nur ins Grab dich hin!
O du lieber Augustin, alles ist hin.

O, my dear Augustin, Augustin, Augustin,
O, my dear Augustin, all is lost now!
(Refrain)
Money's gone, girlfriend's gone,
All is lost, all is lost,
O, my dear friend Augustin, all is lost now!
Coat is gone, ashplant's gone,
Augustin lies in the dirt.
O, my dear Augustin, all is lost now!
Even rich imperial Vienna,
Has become broke like Augustin;
Let's shed our tears with him, all is lost now!
Every day was a feast,
Now we have the black death!
Just a great corpse's feast, that is the rest.
Augustin, Augustin,
Lie down in the grave!
O, my dear Augustin, all is lost now!

(my translation)

In the historical context of the song's emergence in late-seventeenth/early eighteenth-century Baroque culture, the "all is lost now"-leitmotif may be attributed to a society torn between the enjoyment of the here and now (*carpe diem*) and the futility of worldly bliss (*vanitas*) represented by the great leveller death and the *danse macabre*

– a borderline experience which entered Viennese everyday life not only during the 1679 plague year but also during the 1683 Ottoman siege.

In an essay from 1956 – which not only refers to the Austro-Hungarian Empire's collapse in 1918 but also to the fall of the first Austrian Republic in 1938 and 1945 – the Viennese critic Hans Weigel calls the "all is lost now"-lyrics of the Augustin-Song the unofficial Austrian national anthem (3). Although it has to be taken with a grain of salt, Weigel's statement may be traced back to a historical precedent, owing to the circumstance that the Augustin-ditty was sung as a sardonic farewell song to the last Austro-Hungarian Emperor Charles I, who ruled the realm from 1916-1918 and was disempowered and sent into exile after the end of the Great War. Rather than striking up the national anthem on this occasion, the frustrated people compared the deposed Emperor and his fallen realm to the broke Viennese bagpiper (Nachbaur 5 and Dreier 48-9).

Far from being a relic of seventeenth-century Viennese popular culture, Augustin as an archetypal Stage Viennese type has become a timeless messenger of life – a Rabelaisian figure whose enduring popularity even entered the Austrian Top Charts when Wolfgang Ambros, Manfred Tauchen, and Josef Prokopetz transformed his story into a mock opera in 1981. In *Augustin*, the bagpiper is presented as a mock-heroic counterpart of Prince Eugene of Savoy, who not only defeated the Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683, chasing the Turks from parts of the Balkan Peninsula, but also laid the foundational stone for the rise of Austria as a South-East-European imperial player. Whereas the social outcast and underdog Augustin is fondly remembered for coping with the collective trauma of the black death, Prince Eugene has secured his place in Austrian cultural memory as the hero who overcame the collective trauma of the Ottoman siege and saved the Western world from further Ottoman expansion. Whereas the boozing bagpiper has become famous as a carnivalesque Jesus-figure who dies a ritual death and comes back to life owing to the Eucharistic revivifying power of wine, Prince Eugene has achieved greatness as a hero of war. Like Augustin, who is remembered as the anti-hero in the well-known ditty carrying his name, Prince Eugene is also featured in a popular song, which dates back to one of his most famous military victories, the liberation of Belgrade as a strategic hotspot then held by the Ottoman Empire: "Prinz Eugen der Edle Ritter" ("The Honourable Knight Prince Eugene").

Failed Cultural Transfer: Stage Irishness Performed in Vienna 1930 and 1934

Having discussed the Stage Viennese and the Stage Tyrolean as two variants of the Stage Austrian character type that can be traced back to Augustin and Wastel, I will now explore how the Stage Irishman was presented and received in Viennese playhouses in the years of the First Austrian Republic (1918-1933/4). For this purpose, the present section looks at the critical reception of Captain Boyle as the Stage

Irishman featured in O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock*. The Viennese staging history within the time frame of the First Republic looks as follows:

16/04/1930 *Juno and the Paycock*: Raimund-Theater [English Players Company]

17/02/1934 *Juno und der Käpt'n*: Raimund-Theater [German Language Debut]

As already mentioned, there are striking similarities between the Stage Irish and the Stage Austrian stock figure if one looks at text-based aspects such as characterisation. If considered from the contextual perspective of power politics, however, one needs to acknowledge an important difference. The 'Irish' character type presents a negative hetero-stereotype constructed by English imperialism; its Austrian counterpart, however, emerged as a positive auto-stereotype, which was constructed by and for the lower classes as a humorous means to compensate for the political agency that had been monopolised by the absolutistic rule of the imperial state apparatus and its social elites.

Raimund-Theater – *Juno and the Paycock*, 16 April 1930

Seán O'Casey was introduced to Vienna by an English drama group called The English Players, who presented a series of English and Irish plays in their native tongue as a guest performance at the Raimund-Theater in 1930. On 16 April 1930, they performed *Juno and the Paycock*.[1] The Raimund-Theater, managed by Dr. Rudolf Beer from 1921-1932, had a reputation as an ambitious and progressive literary stage (Kinz 56-57), while The English Players troupe was well known for its artistic excellence and was warmly received by the anglophiles among the Viennese theatre audience.[2] Not only the actors but also the plays they staged were greatly received.

The theatre critic J. K. from the *Wiener Zeitung* newspaper considered *Juno and the Paycock*, as performed by The English Players, to be a text written by a highly original working-class author – a true people's poet who documents the allegedly unspoiled native 'primitiveness' of the Irish people in a realist manner:

> O'Casey [...] ist ein ursprüngliches Talent voll realistischer Begabung mit dem gesunden Witz des Iren, der selbst in den Elendsvierteln, in denen er groß wurde, den Sinn für den Humor des Lebens nie verliert. Diese armen Leute sind weder gehässig noch verbittert. Sie singen den ganzen Tag, wenn zwei zusammenkommen, werden irische Weisen gesungen und [...] getanzt und eine unbändige Heiterkeit scheint diese Menschen auch in den ernsten Tagen, in denen das Stück spielt, nicht zu verlassen. (J. K. 8)
>
> (O'Casey is a highly original talent in the field of realism fused with healthy Irish wit. Even in the slums, where he grew up, the concept of Irish wit always approaches life with a sense of humour. The poor Irish people are neither spiteful nor rancorous. They sing the whole day and, if two of them come together, they sing Irish ditties […], dance,

1 Breslmayer mentions The English Players and some of their guest performances at the Raimund-Theater (227 and 229). She does not mention their performance of *Juno and the Paycock* specifically, however.

2 Cf. I. K.: 8; F. M.: 8 and J. K.: 8.

> and – even in the gloomy days in which the plot of the play is set – they are deeply imbued with an irrepressible cheerfulness.) (my translation)

This eulogy of 'primitive' but allegedly 'authentic' folk culture imbued with perpetual laughter and happiness is inspired by the cliché of the Stage Austrian rather than the Stage Irishman. As the majority of the early twentieth-century Viennese critics and theatregoers were fascinated but, primarily, puzzled by the 'Irish Comic Tradition'[3] – with its drastic mixture of comic, tragic, and farce-like elements – one can rather safely assume that Viennese culture was ignorant of the concept of Stage Irishness at that time. Being uncertain with how to deal with the unknown theatrical convention, the reviewer must have tried to comprehend these alien elements of the play from the vantage point of domestic culture and the domestic tradition of the Stage Austrian known from Viennese popular comedy. Hence, the critic claims that O'Casey's characters are deeply imbued with a "Bohemian" merriness and a never-ending inclination to song and dance despite their poor slum-like living conditions. This is the "Lieber Augustin" myth applied to the Irish play. Like Augustin, the characters of the Irish play do not like to do serious work, are broke, sing, and drink[4] their days away.

In addition to the Augustin archetype, the mention of dancing merrily throughout the day may be attributed to Wastel. This Stage Tyrolean subtext may be also attributed to the circumstance that the plot of *Juno and the Paycock* features the aspects of spending too much money on booze, buying things on credit, and the loss of woven fabric and furniture because of financial bankruptcy. Be it a literary coincidence or not, all these elements are also present in the best-known song from *Der Tyroler Wastel*:[5]

Die Türoler sind lustig, Die Türoler sind froh Sie versaufen das Bettzeug.[6] Und schlafen auf Stroh. Refrain: […]	The Tyroleans are merry, The Tyroleans are gay They drink away their linen. And sleep in the hay.
Die Türoler sind lustig, Die Türoler sind froh Sie nehmen ein Weibchen Und tanzen dazu. Refrain: […]	The Tyroleans are merry, The Tyroleans are gay They seize the next girly And dance the time away.

3 As far as the reception of Irish drama is concerned, Viennese theatregoers count the plays of Oscar Wilde and George Bernard Shaw among their all-time favourites. As I have shown elsewhere, the Viennese audience has difficulties appropriating and understanding the dramatic tradition of Synge and O'Casey. See Fuchs, "1914-1969" 87-128, and "From the Fall" 47-59).

4 This aspect is not mentioned explicitly by the critic but is foregrounded in the play itself.

5 The song version reprinted here is the one which is remembered in the field of popular culture – a transcript of the original aria from the 1796 musical play is reprinted as an appendix to this chapter.

6 Another variant of this line is: "Sie verkaufen ihr Bettchen" / "They are selling their bedstead."

Die Türoler sind lustig,	The Tyroleans are merry,
Die Türoler sind froh	The Tyroleans are gay
Dann tanzen sie beide	And after the dance
Und fassen sich an.	They do touch each other.
Refrain: […]	

(my translation)

Considering that the first Vienna performance of *Juno and the Paycock* took place in the year following the 1929 crash of the New York Stock Exchange, which resulted in the Great Depression of the World Economic Crisis, J. K. must have tried to cope with the chaos, disorientation, and loss triggered by these events by retorting to the cultural resources with which he was familiar. Turning a blind eye to the tragic and disturbing aspects of O'Casey's Irish play[7] in an escapist manner, the Viennese newspaper critic romanticises and applies the alleged pastoral pleasures of the simple but healthy country life elaborated in the song of the Stage Tyroleans from *Der Tyroler Wastel* to his understanding of Ireland in terms of the Stage Irish hetero-stereotype.[8] If considered from such a perspective, the critic's misrepresentation of the Irish as people who sing, dance, and laugh amid domestic misrule, financial bankruptcy, and starvation resembles the Stage-Austrian cliché of the poor but happy Tyroleans from the Austrian Alps.

As a continuation of the Stage Tyrolean tradition, this escapist auto-stereotype is further elaborated and reproduced by the cinematic genre of the *Heimatfilm* when Austria experienced a similar crisis of economic and cultural disorientation after the Second World War. Foreshadowing this cinematic genre, which foregrounds carefree yodeling and sexual promiscuity[9] in an exaggerated manner, the above-mentioned 1796 song from *Der Tyroler Wastel* not only features yodeling, but also includes the bawdy final line that the couples start 'touching' each other during (and presumably after) the dance. Be it intended or not, it seems striking that the final words of the last line – "fassen sich an" / "touch each other" – strongly disrupt the rhyming harmony elsewhere at work in the song.[10]

7 Such as imperialist suppression, civil war, economic problems, lack of patriarchal authority etc.

8 This aspect also ties in with the slums ('Elendsviertel') mentioned in the review: be it in Dublin or Vienna, these are the typical housing conditions for poor people who leave the country for the city in the hope of bettering their living conditions.

9 In this context, one may refer to the well-known stage cliché "auf der Alm, da gibt's koa Sünd" / "what happens on the Alpine pasture stays on the Alpine pasture" as a South-German variant of the maxim "what happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas."

10 The rhyme works harmoniously in stanza 1, it is somewhat irregular in stanza 2, and very irregular in stanza 3.

Raimund-Theater – *Juno und der Käpt'n*, 17 February 1934

Four years after The English Players had performed *Juno and the Paycock*, the Raimund-Theater staged O'Casey's play translated into German: *Juno und der Käpt'n* (17 February 1934). In 1932/3, Austria felt the full blow of the 1929 World Economic Crisis with an unemployment rate of 22%, and the proverbially 'red' city council of Vienna was exposed to ever-increasing political tensions. As the poverty-stricken population had no money to spend on theatre tickets, the Raimund-Theater witnessed a series of interim directors who did not succeed in running the house in an economically profitable manner. Hence, the theatre had to be closed for several months. In January 1934, the playhouse re-opened and the new management of Paul Barney and Dr. Stefan Hock continued Dr. Beer's ambitious concept of an avant-garde stage (Kinz 57).[11] *Juno und der Käpt'n* was the second play produced by the new management, and the play premiered only a few days after the leading Viennese Social Democrats had fled into Czechoslovakian exile: before the first night opened on 17 February, the Austrian Civil War had broken out. Thus, the staging of O'Casey's play on the Irish Civil War from 1922 almost exactly coincided with the Austrian Civil War known as the February Uprising from 12 to 15 February 1934.[12] On 18 February 1934, the critic B. *alias* Hans Brecka from the *Reichspost* (18-9) reviewed O'Casey's play in the same vein as J. K. from the *Wiener Zeitung* in 1930: he called it an 'authentic' play written by a self-made proletarian people's poet. Hypocritically claiming that the Irish drama performed at the Raimund-Theater had nothing to do with the Austrian Civil War in an elephant-in-the-room-like manner, however, the reviewer did his best to de-politicise the production:

> [D]üster und drohend steht der zeitliche Rahmen da, in den dieses Stück hineinkomponiert ist: Der Bürgerkrieg. Hätte das Raimundtheater schon einen nur einigermaßen weitergediehenen Spielplan zur Verfügung, es hätte sicher gerade jetzt nicht nach diesem Stücke gegriffen, dessen Aufführung ihm nur allzuleicht übel ausgelegt werden kann. Gewiß, nicht die entfernteste Beziehung hat dieses irländische Stück, das mehr als ein Jahrzehnt alt ist, zu den traurigen Vorgängen unserer österreichischen Gegenwart. Gleichwohl ist es nicht unmöglich, daß sich die erregten Nerven manches Zuschauers unbewußt solche Zusammenhänge herstellen. (B. 8)
>
> It is vexing and disconcerting that the plot is set during the [Irish] Civil War. […] Of course, there is not the faintest nexus between the more than ten years old Irelandish [sic!] play and the very sad events we witness in present-day Austria. And yet, it is not entirely impossible that the overwrought nerves of some theatregoers might draw such an unconscious [i.e., erroneous] link. (my translation)

11 Dr. Stefan Hock was one of Max Reinhardt's confidantes. As shown by Fuchs (2010), Max Reinhardt's network of friends and confidantes had a significant impact on Vienna's theatrical scene in the twentieth century.

12 Breslmayer (238) mentions the success of the *Juno und der Käpt'n* production but excludes the Civil War scenario of the play.

A very similar point is made by critic E. from *Das Kleine Volksblatt*, who reviews *Juno and the Paycock* on the same day as Brecka.[13] He comments on the play's dark dimension as follows:

> [D]iese Wirkung ist, namentlich in den letzten Szenen, nicht wenig quälend. Wäre da nicht der sehr volkstümlich gefärbte Humor mancher anderer Szenen, unsere Nerven könnten gerade jetzt so viel Peinigung kaum ertragen. Wie denn überhaupt dieses Stück eben im gegenwärtigen Augenblick recht zu unpaß kommt. Nicht, daß es irgendwelche aktuelle Beziehungen zu den Vorgängen der letzten Woche hätte. Ist es doch mehr als zehn Jahre alt, also uns zeitlich wie örtlich weit entrückt. Aber da Szenen aus dem irischen Freiheitskampf hineinspielen, so ergeben sich, wenngleich nicht für unseren Verstand, so doch für unser Gefühl unwillkürlich gewisse Zusammenhänge, die der Aufführung des in seiner Tendenz durchaus friedfertigen und christlichen Stückes gerade im gegenwärtigen Augenblick übel bekommen. (27)
>
> The impact of the play is, at least in some scenes, rather vexing. If there were not the very down-to-earth humour at work in some other scenes, our nerves would not be able to cope with this vexing topicality – owing to the problems we have right now, the production of this play is not helpful at all. Being more than ten years old and having been written in a far-away country, the play does not feature any topical references to what has happened here in Vienna last week. And yet, it might be possible that the scenes focusing on the Irish Civil War might induce us, subjectively not objectively speaking, to suspect certain correlations. Although the play presents a pacifist and Christian worldview, its Vienna production at the present moment is not entirely unproblematic. (my translation)

Rudolf Holzer, who reviewed the production for the *Wiener Zeitung* on 20 February 1934, makes the same point, by calling the all-too obvious topicality of the performance a 'fatal coincidence' rather than a historical parallel event:

> Ein grausamer Zufall hat bei uns diesem Stück eine fast untragbare Aktualität gegeben. Das mußte geradezu lähmend wirken … [...]. Mit großem und aufrichtigem Verständnis wurde die Welt des Dichters erkannt; unter dem Eindrucke des Tages konnte sich freilich nur eine zwiespältige Wirkung ergeben. (10)
>
> A horrible coincidence has imbued this play with an almost unbearable topicality in present-day Austria. This cannot have but a paralysing effect. […] The world presented by the dramatist has been faithfully recognised and fully understood; given the [Austrian Civil War-induced] impressions of the day, the play has triggered off a very ambivalent response [among the Viennese audience]. (my translation)

Emil Klaeger's review for the *Neue Freie Presse* resorts to an even more radically outspoken self-distancing strategy when it claims that there is a fundamental – if not to say unbridgeable – cultural gap between Austria and Ireland:

> Ein irisches Volksstück, stark national gefärbt, darin Menschen und Probleme, die uns ferne liegen. [...] Wer den Iren kennt, nämlich aus Schriften und Romanen, aus Berichten, überhaupt vom Gedruckten her. Denn eine lebendige Beziehung zwischen diesem fremden Wesen und uns besteht nicht [...]. (10)

13 The very striking parallels of these reviews imply that the critics must have consulted each other: in order to avoid Civil War-induced trouble, they must have discussed a politically 'correct' text version.

> An Irish popular play with strong nationalist local colouring, featuring people and problems we are entirely ignorant of. […] All we know about the Irish may be attributed to printed source material such as papers, novels, newspaper reports etc. A real-life intercultural encounter between this alien world and our own world does not exist at all. (my translation)

Maybe Klaeger has the same intentions as critic Brecka from the *Reichspost*, who dissemblingly claims that O'Casey's revolutionary play has nothing to do with the Austrian Civil War but realises the danger that the audience might draw such an all too obvious link. Like the pseudo-Freudian analyst Brecka – who realises that the situation might escalate as soon as some of the more 'nervous' spectators lose their nerves[14] – Klaeger fears the bombshell-like destructive potential of O'Casey's allegedly 'foreign' Irish fantasy in times of domestic political unrest and thus considers Johnny Boyle's self-destructive activism in Irish civil warfare a fit of fanatic fancy if not to say neurotic self-destruction:

> Dieser Ire, der für die Freiheit seines Volkes zu sterben vermag. Aber sonst nichts. Untätig ist er in seine Phantasterei vergafft, verhudert sich darin, zieht andere, immer durch seine Phantasie, in den eigenen Untergang hinein. (Klaeger 10)

> This Irishman, who is ready to die for the liberty of his people. But nothing else. He loves his fantastic visions in an idle and narcissistic manner, gets hopelessly entangled in the maze of his own fancy which, vortex-like, induces others to get entangled in his own vicious circle of self-destruction. (my translation)

The most pressing reason for these self-distancing strategies may be, of course, attributed to the circumstance that every critic does his best not to become involved in the lethal machinery of the Civil War, which, historically speaking, results in the establishment of the Austro-Fascist *Ständestaat* under the dictatorship of Engelbert Dollfuß.

What must not be forgotten, however, is the circumstance that the Austrian Civil War must be considered an anti-democratic counter-revolution of the conservative elites rather than a suppressed people's revolutionary struggle for freedom. As this *coup d'état* was directed against the working classes, Dollfuß and his Austro-Fascists – who used the artillery to bomb the state-subsidised tenant blocks or *Gemeindebauten* inhabited by the Viennese proletarians and socialists – were called *Arbeitermörder* ('murderers of the working classes'). As the Stage Irishman in *Juno and the Paycock*, Captain Boyle is presented as a lazy boozer and coward who fails to protect his son Johnnie from being betrayed and killed by his republican fellow fighters. The Captain's role matches the anti-Irish hetero-stereotype created by English imperial discourse, but not the Austrian auto-stereotype of the Stage Viennese – a lower-class person who, albeit disempowered by the country's elite, successfully manipulates the establishment as a trickster- and survivor-figure on behalf of the simple

14 In this context, critic B's / Brecka's Freudian language of the unconscious has to be noted as a typically Viennese local colouring of his review: "Gleichwohl ist es nicht unmöglich, daß sich die erregten Nerven manches Zuschauers unbewußt solche Zusammenhänge herstellen" (8).

people. Being confronted with the hypocritical and parasitical Captain Boyle, the Austrian audience distances itself, owing to the fact that the hetero-stereotype of the Stage Irishman functions as a negative print of the positive auto-stereotype of the Stage Austrian. Holding a satirical mirror up to nature as an allegedly 'Irish' hetero-stereotype as part of the Irish dramatic tradition then unknown in Austria, the Austrian audience cannot help but apply this stereotype to their own country and discover that the self-made concept of the Stage Austrian is (like any other *auto*-stereotype) at least partly informed by wishful thinking. Like any other civil war, the Austro-Fascist *coup* includes decidedly un-heroic and immoral deeds such as opportunist scheming, dissembling, denunciation of others, and other strategies to better one's own condition at the cost of the freedom and lives of one's fellow people.

Seen from this vantage point, the hypocritical 'collateral damage' at work in the 1934 Civil War, and any other internal warfare, serves as a prelude to what happens after Hitler's annexation of Austria in 1938 on a much larger scale. Although Austria fashioned itself as Hitler's first victim after 1945, this hypocritical interpretation of history excludes the undeniable truth that many Austrians embraced the Nazi ideology and made a career as Hitler's willing collaborators and executioners at that time.[15] This is the topic to be dealt with in the concluding section, which functions as the Epilogue to this chapter.

Epilogue: Helmut Qualtinger, *Der Herr Karl* (1961), and the Austro-Fascist Uncanny

Qualtinger's satirical one-man drama *Der Herr Karl* (1961) satirises what one may call a hetero-stereotypical portrait of the Austrian as a willing collaborator and opportunist 'man for all seasons.' In this play, the eponymous character Herr Karl shares his personal memories from the end of the Great War until the time when the Austrian Independence Treaty is signed in 1955. Under the disguise of the auto-stereotypical concept of the tricky but amiable Stage Austrian, Herr Karl is satirically revealed as a sly hypocrite who succeeds in arranging himself with the Austro-Fascists, Hitler's Nazi regime, the Russian and the American occupational forces alike. No matter how bad the times may be, he always succeeds in living a good life as a parasite profiting from the 'ill luck' he transfers onto his fellow people by way of denunciation etc. In this respect, Herr Karl represents the Austrian people who collectively claim to be victimised by the fascists etc., but hypocritically deny any personal involvement in the political crimes committed by these regimes. Whenever there is proof that they were personally engaged in crimes on behalf of these forces, they claim to have done their 'duty' as faithful representatives of the state apparatus. This is what Hannah Arendt calls the "banality of evil," and this banality resulting from hy-

15 Regarding the tendency to exclude Austria's involvement in the Nazi regime, see Lamb-Faffelberger and DeMeritt 3-4; cf. also Rathkolb 144.

pocrisy is, up to a certain degree[16], also represented by Captain Boyle as the Stage Irishman in O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock* who, in contrast to his son, does nothing at all to resist the foreign rule of his country. As the Austrian theatre audience recognises the English hetero-stereotype of the allegedly fickle-minded and opportunist Stage Irishman as the negative print of its own auto-stereotype of the tricky people's tribune-like Stage Austrian, the critical reception of *Juno and the Paycock* (and other Irish plays, as I have shown elsewhere: 2015a, 2015b), denounces Hibernian drama as foreign, alien, and uncanny.[17] In this respect it is far from coincidental that the Viennese Professor Sigmund Freud (1919) claims that the term 'uncanny' fuses the alien ('unheimlich') and the domestic ('heimlich'), *as well as* the eerie ('unheimlich') and the familiar ('heimlich') in a highly ambivalent manner. This ambivalence inherent in the Freudian concept of the 'uncanny' reflects the culturally suppressed power struggle between auto- and hetero-stereotyping, as it surfaces if one looks at the Stage Irishman and the Stage Austrian as two unacknowledged aspects of one and the same conceptual framework.

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16 In contrast to Austria, ruled by criminal dictatorship, Ireland is ruled by a constitutional democracy abiding to the laws of fair government.

17 In her analysis of O'Casey's plays performed in Vienna from 1970-2000, Margarete Rubik claims that although many of his works were staged at well-established Vienna playhouses, they have not found a hospitable home in the city. Rubik attributes this reception to the fact that the Viennese still know too little about Ireland's political struggle for independence in the first half of the twentieth century and the Irish dramatic tradition with its mixture of tragic, comic, and farce-like elements (137-48).

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Appendix: The Original Lyrics of the "Merry Tyroleans" Song Featured in Schikaneder's and Haibel's *Der Tyroler Wastel*

Duett:

Die Tyroler sand often so lustig, so froh,
Sie trinken ihr Weinel und tanzen a so
Früh legt man sich nieder
Früh steht man dann auf
Klopfts Madl aufs Mida
Und arbeit brav drauf.

Und kommt dann a Kirta, so schaut man zum Tanz;
Der Jobel führt die Nannerl, die Gretel, den Hans
Da dreht sichs, denns Weibl, da dreht sich der Bau,
Er nimmt sie beim Leibel und juchazt dazu.

***

Die Tyroler sand often so lustig, so froh, …

Sie sorgen für die Stadtleut mit Milli und Kaß,
Sie treiben die Kühen auf die Almer ins Gras.
Sie jodeln und singen und thun sich brav um
Und hüpfen und springen wie die Gemsen herum

***

Die Tyroler sand often …

Hat einer a Schazerl, so bleibt er dabei,
Und giebt ihn a Schmazerl und liebt sie recht treu,
Da kriegens dann Kinder, wie die Kugeln so rund,
Die zappeln und springen, wie die Hechten so gesund.

(Schikaneder & Haibel 43-44)

"AND TRIESTE, AH TRIESTE…": STAGE ASCENDANCY AND CHARLES LEVER'S IRISH CHARACTERS

Elisabetta d'Erme

At the beginning of his career, the Anglo-Irish Victorian writer Charles Lever enjoyed great popularity among British readers, comparable to that of William Thackeray, Anthony Trollope and Charles Dickens. His reputation began to decline among his English readership, however, when he moved away from his sketches of careless young Irish dragoons to more serious descriptions of the plague of absentee landlords. At the same time, in his homeland, his popularity suffered due to the attacks of Irish nationalists who accused him of promoting the Stage Irish cliché to court the favour of his British readers. Unfortunately, these attacks proved fatal to Lever's reputation in Ireland and even when he made his social criticism of Ascendancy more explicit, this failed to salvage his reputation with his countrymen. The damage was done, and, in addition to compromising his fame during his lifetime, the charge of Stage Irishman clichés in his early novels is among the major causes of his subsequent fall into literary oblivion.

In recent years, new studies have challenged this view, and there has been an ongoing re-evaluation of Lever's place within the canon of Irish studies,[1] especially as part of a reappraisal of many authors[2] who were decanonised owing to the negative evaluations of the Celtic revivalists and cultural nationalists, who had a narrow understanding of 'authentic' Irishness, and because they were Protestant or Anglo-Irish writers.

This chapter will focus essentially on Lever's works as a novelist, and not as a journalist. It will side with scholars such as Tony Bareham, who questioned the charge of Lever representing Irish peasants in terms of Stage Irish clichés. I will argue that this charge was based on nationalist preconceptions, reinforced by the illustrations of the notorious Phiz, an English artist relying on stereotypes of the Irish as feckless, crapulent troublemakers. Instead, I will maintain that this charge is unjust and stress James M. Cahalan's concept of a "stage Ascendancy." That is to say, the "rollicking" behaviour of the irresponsible characters in Lever's novels is a device used to depict a decadent ruling class, and not the Irish peasantry. In contrast, I will claim that the at-

1 Tony Bareham's and S.P. Haddelsey's key studies contributed to Lever's renaissance, starting with Bareham's *Charles Lever: New Evaluations* (1992), and Haddelsey's monograph *Charles Lever: The Lost Victorian* (2000). In more recent years, there have been various articles on Lever, which attempt to re-orient the field. Most of them are acknowledged in the bibliography (if not explicitly in the text).

2 For example, authors like William Carleton, Charles Robert Maturin, and Sheridan Le Fanu.

tribution of Stage Irishness to Lever's manservant characters present in his early novels, such as Mickey Free, Tipperary Joe, Cross Corny, and Darby the Blast, is only a mask that Lever uses to introduce a spirit of Bakhtinian carnival that subverts the political Ascendancy-order and serves as a socio-political commentary on Ireland.

A Lot of Craic

Lever spent most of his life abroad as an expatriate, and, given that his novels are mostly set on the European continent, he could be considered as the first Europeanised Irish novelist.[3] This is a label that was later applied particularly to James Joyce, with whom Lever shares a medical background, his exile status, wanderlust, and spendthrift habits, as well as an itinerant lifestyle and a chance residence in the city of Trieste, where he was British Consul from 1867 to 1872.[4] Lever's skills and experience in diplomacy enabled him to analyse European politics after the 1848 revolutions, to predict the fall of the Austro-Hungarian and the Ottoman Empires, and to describe the effects of the mid-nineteenth-century 'credit-crunch' financial crisis. He was among the very few Irish writers who saw parallels between the continental turmoil of 1848 and what was happening in Ireland.[5]

Charles James Lever was born in Dublin in 1806, into a wealthy, upper-class, Protestant family, and died in Trieste in 1872. He experienced the great changes that took place in Ireland after the Act of Union, years marked by the Catholic Emancipation Act, the Repeal Movement, the Great Famine, the Encumbered Estates Act, the birth of Fenianism, and Gladstone's Land Act.

Having studied medicine at Trinity College, Dublin, Lever travelled to Canada and to Germany. After practicing in cholera-plagued areas in Co. Clare, he was appointed medical officer in Portstewart, Co. Derry. There, he met the writer Charles Maxwell, who – together with Maria Edgeworth – was a great influence on his works. Lever's first novels seem to be heavily indebted to Maxwell's style of picaresque and military romance, while Edgeworth's legacy is more evident in his later novels, where the ab-

3 The relationship of nineteenth-century Irish and Anglo-Irish writers with Italy has been widely researched. For an exhaustive close-up see Donatella Abbate Badin's "Introduction" to *Irish-Italian Studies: New Perspectives on Cultural Mobility and Permeability* and Anne O'Connor and Donatella Abbate Badin's edition "Italia Mia: Transnational Ireland in the Nineteenth Century".

4 The connection between Lever and Joyce has been stressed by various scholars, such as Albert J. Solomon (791-98) and John McCourt (24, 94, 186).

5 Irish writers who have dealt with this topic are, for example, Edward Maturin, author of *Bianca, A Tale of Erin and Italy* (1852), a love story between an Irishman and an Italian singer set during the Risorgimento, or Francis Sylvester Mahony (Fr. Prout), author of *Facts and Figures from Italy* (1847), or Ethel Lilian Voynich, who in 1897 wrote her popular novel *The Gadfly*, set in 1840s Italy under the dominance of Austria. For a wider British overview or perspective, cf. Bareham and Curreli.

sentee landlords theme becomes more prominent. Lever is described by his biographer Lionel Stevenson as being "typically Irish": he was well-known for his love of sports, off-hand cordiality, convivial hospitality, and anecdotal humour; and he had the reputation of being one of the best storytellers in Dublin. However, behind this mask lay a melancholic, hypochondriac and depressive personality, addicted to gambling and morphine.

Lever's first novel, *The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer*, was first serialised in the *Dublin University Magazine* between 1837-1840. It was subsequently published in book form in 1839 by William Curry, Jun. and Co., Dublin., and enjoyed immediate success, being reprinted twelve times in the first year, and going through numerous other editions during the nineteenth century (see Bareham 1-31). The novel is characterised by a markedly digressive, episodic manner, and consists of a collection of lively, amusing sketches of Irish life, written under the pseudonym Harry Lorrequer, a name which was so popular that it became a byword for a rollicking, devil-may-care young man.

Harry, the novel's main protagonist, is a young British officer who has just arrived in Cork with his regiment. The military environment, the band playing 'Garryowen,' and the "native drollery" (*Harry Lorrequer* 174) of the local people, are rich sources for Harry's witticism and anecdotes. At the same time, these features offer him many opportunities for playing clumsy practical jokes.[6] Not so much a land of saints and scholars, Ireland becomes a "land of punch, priests, and potatoes" (*Harry Lorrequer* 2), where everything is entertaining, and everyone is amusing. In nineteenth-century Irish literature, language was a sensitive issue and it plays a great role in Lever's works. In his early novels, he displays a facility for reproducing the 'mellow Doric of his country' (*Harry Lorrequer* 59) and is at his best when exploiting verbal wit and eloquence, baroquely displayed in dialogues of servants or members of the middle class. The rich brogue is rendered through exaggeration in speech, mimicry of Irish pronunciation, use of exclamations, metaphors and idiomatic phrases, the casual introduction of anecdotes and repartee, and Hiberno-English phonology and syntax. Examples include the following phrases:

> "I'll jist trouble ye to lean aff" (Harry Lorrequer 167).
> "Have ye the pass? Or what brings ye walking here, in nomine patri?" for I was so confused whether it was a 'sperit' or not, I was going to address him in Latin – there is nothing equal to the dead languages to lay a ghost, everybody knows." (Harry Lorrequer 178).
> "'Three pounds!' says I; 'begorra, ye might as well ax me to give you the rock of Cashel'." (Charles O'Malley 86)

6 For example, while recovering after a coach crash that has caused Harry Lorrequer a broken collarbone and three broken ribs, he meets a rollicking priest, a doctor, and their bibulous friends and they engage in a number of drunken frolics, *en masse*. Mrs. Clanfrizzle's boarding house becomes a hotbed of pranks and banter. With overturned tables, broken windows and ineffectual fisticuffs, the establishment resembles one of Hogarth's cartoons, and is well described in Phiz's illustrations for the novel.

> "Oh, devil fear you, that ye'll like it. Sorrow one of you ever left as much in the jug as'ud make a foot-bath for a flea." (Jack Hinton Vol. I 31)
> "And sure when the landlords does come, devil a bit they know about us – no more nor if we were in Swayden; didn't hear the ould gentleman down there last summer, pitying the people for the distress. 'Ah' says he 'it's a hard sayson ye have, and obliged to tear the flax out of the ground, and it not long enough to cut!'" (St Patrick's Eve 15)

Despite his talent for mimicking Irish brogue, Lever abandoned this device, starting from his 1847 novel *The Knight of Gwynne*, thus relieving his peasant characters of a forced comicality.

Although written in a slapdash style, *Harry Lorrequer* proved to be immensely popular, especially with English readers, playing up, as it did, to their prejudices. A. Norman Jeffares suggests that Lever's style suited English readers, among whom "there was a wide acceptance of Lever's early rollicking view of Ireland: in Lorrequer's words, it was 'a round of dining, drinking, dancing, riding, steeple chasing, pigeon shooting and tandem driving...'" (122) as well as "late breakfasts, garrison balls and plays" (*Harry Lorrequer* 9).

Charles Lever under Attack!

In Lever's second novel, *Charles O'Malley the Irish Dragoon* (1841), the protagonist is a young Catholic Irishman. It is also a picaresque farce written under the 'Lorrequer' pen name and it paints a similar picture of life in Ireland. After the success of Charles O'Malley, Lever was appointed editor of the *Dublin University Magazine*, a Tory periodical founded by Isaac Butt, and this meant returning to Dublin from Brussels, where he had been physician at the British Embassy between 1837-1842.

Dublin, in 1842, was a city dominated by Daniel O'Connell's politics, and soon Lever, a Tory, became the target of increasing attacks from nationalist authors, namely the "Young Irelanders." Lever's critics disliked what they considered to be the frivolous nature of his Stage Irish writing. In *Charles Lever, His Life in His Letters* (1906), a reconstruction of Lever's biography through his correspondence, edited by the Irish writer and journalist Edmund Downey, it is reported that Lever was "regarded by a considerable section of his countrymen as a farce-writer, or else as that abomination, the Anti-Irish Irishman." Downey qualifies this view by suggesting that "Irishmen […] are too ready to take offence at having their foibles laughed at" (Vol. I 188). In 1843, Samuel Ferguson was among Lever's chief critics, accusing him from the pages of the *Blackwood Magazine* (June 1843; Nat. Library of Scotland, 4065) of fostering through self-caricature "a pride in being despised." William Carleton, in an unsigned review of Lever's third novel *Jack Hinton, the Guardsman* for the *Nation* (7 October 1843), accused him of "selling us for pounds, shillings, and pence," and in another article (23 September 1843) of deliberately offering "disgusting and debasing caricatures of Irish life and feeling," and of depicting the local peasant as a "Stage Irishman." He also alleged that Lever wrote "for an English audience at the expense of the Irish peasantry" (qtd. in Stevenson 125; also qtd. in Haddelsey 68 and Blake

117). In the same paper and year, Charles Gavan Duffy accused Lever of plagiarism and labelled him as a Quack, a Clown, and a Charlatan (cf. Deane Vol. 1 1255). Moreover, Samuel Carter Hall blamed Lever for "slandering his native country and its people; labouring somewhat successfully to persuade the English public that every Irish gentleman is a blackguard, and every Irish peasant a ruffian" (qtd. in Fitzpatrick 217). These allegations cast a lasting shadow on Lever's work. As stressed by Jeffares:

> The paradox was that in 1843 Carleton himself [with his *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry* 1831-33, a collection of ethnic sketches of the stereotypical Irishman] was unpopular and was seen as a detractor of Ireland [...], and that Lever, with his *Jack Hinton* (1843), had begun the criticism of English rule in and attitudes to Ireland, which continued throughout those succeeding novels of his which dealt with Irish subject matter. (123)

However, it has been suggested that much of this criticism was born out of jealousy or crassness. Terry Eagleton contends that, notwithstanding "the high jinks and ripping yarns of an early work like *The Confessions of Harry Lorrequer* [...], technically speaking [Lever] is a highly accomplished writer, jovially at ease with the language in a way Carleton could only envy" (214). Unfortunately, William Makepeace Thackeray's dedication of his slightly satirical *Irish Sketch Book* (1841) to Lever increased Lever's negative reputation. As Downey notes, "[i]t was rashly assumed that he had promoted or suggested many things in the *Sketch-Book* which gave offence to Lever's sensitive fellow-countrymen" (174-75). In Ireland, Lever was at this point regarded as a farce-writer, or worst of all, as "the Anti-Irish-Irishman," to such an extent that "[i]t became the fashion for every Dublin print which was not of the same way of thinking, politically, as Lever, to abuse him" (Downey 184). This view of Lever was confirmed by his friend Anthony Trollope in his dismissive reference to Lever in his *Autobiography* (1883):

> How shall I speak of my dear old friend Charles Lever, and his rattling, jolly, joyous, swearing Irishmen? […] His earlier novels – the later I have not read – are just like his conversation. The fun never flags, and to me, when I read them, they were never tedious. As to Character he can hardly be said to have produced it. Corney Delaney, the old manservant, may perhaps be named as an exception. His novels will not live long, – even if they may be said to be alive now, – because it is so. What was his manner of working I do not know, but I should think it must have been very quick, and that he never troubled himself on the subject. (260-61)

To make matters worse, W.B. Yeats's negative judgement on *Harry Lorrequer*, in *Representative Irish Tales* (1891), sanctioned Lever's banishment from the Irish canon. Yeats argued that because Lever never wrote for the people, he never wrote faithfully of the people. In later years, as the nationalist canon became ever more narrowly defined, Lever's exclusion became complete. John McCourt claims that Lever's

> pronounced Unionism provided a good excuse for his work to be critically ignored or summarily dismissed down to our times by many Irish critics. [But] ironically, it was the gradual, cautious rethinking of his Unionist belief and his […] acknowledgement of Irish

> Nationalist aspirations that gave Lever's later novels much of their power. ("Charles Lever" 156)

The biographical entry on Charles Lever in the 1975 edition of the *Dictionary of National Biography* confirmed this bad reputation, accusing him of "the most inaccurate and patronising portrayals of Irish life and character" (DNB, Oxford, 1975, Vol. I 1207). Finally, W.J. McCormack's introduction to "The Intellectual Revival (1830-1850)" chapter in the *Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing* brings Lever, together with Carleton, Butt and Brady, among those figures for whom "the variety of whose changes of allegiance, political and denominational, constitutes a veritable Heisenbergian 'uncertainty principle' of Irish ideology" (Vol. I 1175).

In more recent years, Lever scholars have expressed a dramatically different view. For example, J.H. Murphy suggests in *Leisure in Charles Lever's Jack Hinton (1842) and the Continuities of Irish Fiction*:

> in Lever's early fiction rollicking seems to be a distinctive Irish quality. For this reason Lever was criticised for supposedly playing into the hands of British stereotypes of Irish irresponsibility. He was aware of this and thought of *Jack Hinton* as actually something of a corrective with an intended criticism of English stereotypes of Ireland in the course of the novel. Indeed, the fact that in *Jack Hinton* the rollicking is mostly that of the ruling classes is itself a way of moving the controversy away from the familiar topic of the irresponsibility of the Irish peasants. (120)

Furthermore, most of the Irish characters present in *Harry Lorrequer* (such as Father Malachi Brennan, Tom O'Flaherty, Mr O'Leary, Mr and Mrs Rooney or Doctor Finucane) are not peasants at all, but members of the upper or middle class: unreliable, mischievous people, prone to having fun at other people's expense. There is no doubt that Lever's books were meant to appeal to the growing Victorian readership on the other side of the Irish Sea, a wider and more lucrative audience than the one in Ireland. Thus, at this early stage of his career, Lever's perspective on Irish affairs was still philanthropic, patronising, full of ideals of feudal loyalty.

In spite of these shortcomings, Lever's acute social critique is already evident in his first novel, *Harry Lorrequer*. For example, when a Mr Burke visits a show of native Americans, he is baffled by the discovery that they are none other than poor men from Galway who – thanks to "[t]heir uncouth appearance, their wild looks, their violent gestures and, above all, their strange and guttural language" – had been hired by the theatre manager to replace the original *corps dramatique*. The manager thinks that "they were ready-made to his hands, and in many respects better savages than their prototypes." But Mr Burke is not so easily fooled and detects that "they were all speaking Irish" (*Harry Lorrequer* 240-42). Here, Lever's sympathy is evidently with the poor Galway men, while his contempt is reserved for the manager. Lever's engagement with the question of class is already present in this early novel and is an aspect of his work that is developed in his late political novels.

Mickey Free & Co

The cliché of the Stage Irishman is further confounded in *Charles O'Malley, the Irish Dragoon* (1841), a novel which is very difficult to brand as anti-Irish. Here, Lever creates the enduring character of Mickey Free, a whimsical, cunning, gossipy and lovable rogue of a manservant, who alternately amuses and exasperates his 'Masther' Charles O'Malley. Mickey Free is Lever's answer to Dickens's cockney character Sam Weller: Mickey "had the peculiar free-and-easy, devil-may-care-kind of offhand Irish way" (*Charles O'Malley* 81). He is sporty, sings, dances the jig to "Tatter Jack Walsh," plays the violin, wears a striped waistcoat, "a jerry hat" (*Charles O'Malley* 82), and is fond of pranks. He is a Catholic but blessed with sound scepticism. He speaks a Hiberno-English dialect with a Western-Irish brogue. On a superficial reading, Micky Free could be the quintessential Stage Irishman. However, Mickey is the one rational character in the narrative and it is he who is proactively able to solve problems. Behind the persona of the comic rogue, he is instrumental to the development of the story.

The book is filled with ballads, which became popular all over Ireland, such as "Oh once we were illigant [sic] people," which glorifies in the "ould" times when everyone was the son of a King, or the descendant of Irish Milesian Princes. James Joyce mocks this concept in the "Nestor" episode of *Ulysses*: "I have rebel blood in me too, Mr Deasy said. On the spindle side. But I am descended from Sir John Blackwood who voted for the union. We are all Irish, all kings' sons" (26). Mickey Free follows his 'Masther' O'Malley to Portugal, where the Irish Dragoon has moved with his Regiment to fight against Napoleon, until they manage to return home safely, not before celebrating a rollicking "Patrick's Day in the Peninsula," to which Lever dedicates the entire chapter LXXXVIII.

This affection for Ireland is even more evident in *Jack Hinton, the Guardsman* (1843), a novel that is also free of the anti-Irish charge. Here, a 19-year-old aide-de-camp from a London aristocratic family is appointed to Dublin Castle. Despite his initial scepticism about Ireland and its people, the young man learns to love their extraordinary qualities:

> in Ireland, where national character runs in a deep or hidden channel, with cross currents and back-water ever turning and winding, – where all the incongruous and discordant elements of what is best and worst seem blended together, – there, social intercourse is free, cordial, warm, and benevolent. Men come together disposed to like one another; and what an Irishman is disposed to, he usually has a way of effecting. (Vol. II 28)

This transformation occurs due to the appearance of a new class of character, which was not present in *Harry Lorrequer* and which first appears in *Charles O'Malley:* the Irish servant, whose function is to provide a wider historical-political commentary on the Irish situation. In *Jack Hinton*, this character is first represented by Cornelius Delany, also called Cross Corny, a stereotypically short-statured Irishman with semi-human features. His role is to express sardonic views of the rollicking at high social

levels, thus providing a constant class-conscious political critique.[7] The second character, introduced with the catchphrase "*Tally ho! Ye ho! Ye ho!!*," is none other than Tipperary Joe. He is always good humoured, trustworthy, noble, clever and even ready to give his life for his 'Masther.' To counterbalance the much-criticised figure of the unholy and reckless Father Malachi in *Harry Lorrequer*, Lever created the larger-than-life figure of Father Tom Luftus for *Jack Hinton*, a sort of learned, brilliant and compassionate modern 'street priest.'

In creating figures such as Mickey Free, Cross Corny or Tipperary Joe, Lever was influenced by a long tradition descending from the braggart-warrior and parasite-slave of Greek and Roman comedy, culminating in Dion Boucicault's and Samuel Lover's stage clichés of the Irish peasant. Yet, Mickey Free, Cross Corny or Tipperary Joe are not meant to be representative of the whole Irish peasant class. Instead, they are individual, original characters, whose main task resembles that of the jester, since their marginalised status gives them license to say what is otherwise doomed to remain unspoken. Lever's Irish servants seem to be more intelligent and to have a better historico-political overview than their Masters (especially, as we will see, Darby the Blast in *Tom Burke of "Ours"*), or any other single representative of the rotting Irish squirearchy.[8]

By 1844, with *Tom Burke of "Ours"*, set at the turn of the nineteenth century after the 1798 Bantry Bay rebellion and the 1801 Act of Union, Lever's political engagement has widened and the alleged Stage Irishness has almost disappeared. Here, Lever presents us with a new, explosive character, the charismatic piper Darby the Blast, a rebel whose wit and skill in plotting and disguise enable him to escape capture, prison and deportation. He will soon become the mentor and loyal friend of young Tom Burke, the second son of a decayed squire, who has just been left a destitute orphan on his father's death. Darby M'Keown's speech is baroquely eloquent: a mix of Latin, high-flown phraseology and brogue. Like Mickey Free before him, he has the habit of breaking into provocative songs. Being a performer is a cover for his involvement with the United Irishmen, and he is in charge of Tom's ideological education. Darby is the first real political subject in Lever's novels. He is the one who opens Tom Burke's eyes to the "wrongs his father and grandfather before him had inflicted on their tenants." Thanks to his political lessons, Tom learns to connect "the possession of wealth with oppression and tyranny, and the lowly fortunes of the poor man as alone securing high-souled liberty of thought and freedom of speech and action" (*Tom Burke* 44).

7 Just to give an example: in *Jack Hinton* (Vol. I 107-8), the drunken Lord Lieutenant conducts a pseudo-knighting of Cross Corny; Delany interprets it as an attempted act of humiliation, as he justly thinks the Lord Lieutenant is making fun of him.

8 Lever's lively Irish manservants also have an endless reservoir of self-irony, even in circumstances of bleakest hopelessness. The capacity to maintain a sense of humour even in bad times is a trait that links the Irish with the Hebrew. James Joyce would transform this equation into one of the main topics of *Ulysses*.

Exposing the grotesque body of Irish high society

In Lever's early novels, the figure of the clownish Stage Irishman hides a "stirring nature" (*Jack Hinton* Vol. 2 76) and the rollicking functions as a mask for political critique. In these early works, Lever is depicting what Mikhail Bakhtin would have called 'the grotesque body' of a carefree, crumbling, Irish upper class, shown in its "innate tendency to drollery, that bent to laugh with every one and at every thing, so eminently Irish" (*Jack Hinton* Vol. 1 74). Bakhtin's figure of the grotesque body is profoundly ambiguous: on the one hand, it is linked to birth and renewal, on the other hand – as in this case – it symbolises death and decay. Accordingly, Lever's description of Irish high society's grotesque body is a swaggering "exposure of feudal unreasonableness" (King 129);[9] and it can be read as a carnivalesque response to the impending collapse of Anglo-Irish ascendancy. All the key elements of the grotesque style, exaggeration, hyperbole, and excessiveness are to be found, for example, in *The Dodd Family Abroad* (1853-1854), an exhilarating epistolary novel in which Lever depicts a *parvenu* Irish family of small landowners on their catastrophic Grand Tour through Europe. Beside the absentee landlord theme, Lever's second pet hate was Thomas Cook's growing mass-tourism, a target that unfailingly excludes the Irish peasantry.

Conversely, Lever draws his main humble Irish characters empathetically. He portrays them as human – all eagerly searching some kind of "divarsion" (amusement) – and compassionate in contrast to the spendthrift landlords, judges, lawyers, clergymen, doctors, "pothecaries" and officers, whom he casts as "punch-drinking, rowing, and quarrelling bumpkins" (*Charles O'Malley* 54). Lever's Irish manservants are not buffoons, but representations of a healthy Bakhtinian spirit of rebellion and subversion. Their sharp tongues, and tall-tale-telling songs have a utopian, liberating, dimension, characteristic of Bakhtin's "carnivalistic laughter," which "is directed toward something higher – toward a shift of authorities and truths, a shift of world orders" (*Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* 127). Consequently, rather than accusing Lever of reinforcing the Stage Irishman cliché, it may be more appropriate to speak of a "stage Ascendancy." As early as 1988, James M. Cahalan observed in *The Irish Novel* that "Lever's novels exemplify the Ascendancy laughing at itself instead of at the peasantry and, rather than perpetuating the Stage Irishman, created instead a 'stage Anglo-Irishman'" (67). No wonder that, in private letters, Lever pointedly described himself as a "court-jester" and as "Her Majesty's flunkey" when in his consular duties, thus laughing at the people he knew best, including himself. In "Writing

9 In "Emigration and the Irish Novel: Charles Lever, The Picaresque and the Emergence of the Irish Emigration Narrative Form," Jason King makes references to Mikhail Bakhtin's study on the Picaresque in *The Dialogic Imagination* while analysing the figure of the Picaro and of the so-called "Victorian Picaresque" genre used by Lever in minor novels such as *Arthur O'Leary* (1844), *The Confessions of Con Cregan: the Irish Gil Blas* (1849) or *Roland Cashel* (1849). In this chapter, I refer to Bakhtin's idea of "grotesque realism" expounded in his study of François Rabelais.

from the Outside In: Charles Lever" (2004), Andrew Blake – while referring mainly to Lever's journalistic contributions to *Blackwood's Magazine* – establishes that "Lever simultaneously embodied various aspects of the Irish stereotype and explored them through his literary output" (116). He argues that "while his output was not one-dimensional – he was also capable of writing fiercely against those Hibernian clichés – his importance to the scholar lies precisely in his ability to capture and express the Irish stereotypes offered by the British periodical press" (116). Under the O'Dowd pseudonym, Lever also turned these stereotypes on their heads and challenged them, for example when he criticised the prejudiced attitudes and "negative stereotypes" evidenced in British press coverage of clashes between Orangemen and Catholics in Belfast offering a "fierce denunciation of anti-Irish racism in England" (Blake 122).

Who is to blame?

The charge of "malicious libel" against the Irish character might have been better directed towards the caricatures drawn by Halbot Knight Browne (1815-1882), alias Phiz, the famous illustrator of Charles Dickens's novels, who also drew plates for fourteen of Lever's stories. An important Lever scholar, the late Tony Bareham, suggested in a private interview:[10]

> there is no shadow of doubt that the 'culprit' is Phiz NOT Lever. The repeated graphic image of a dopey-looking tattered figure with a broken hat capering across the country waving a stick is degrading, stupid and absolutely untrue to what the text itself says about the Irish peasantry. And Phiz's other repeated standard response to the text is hideous gawping tatterdemalion females who offer no remission to the vision of the native Irish as ugly, stupid and degraded. The illustration for the front cover of the Railway Library edition of *St Patrick's Eve* just about sums up the whole thing.

Bareham is not alone in blaming Phiz for having used the stock caricature of the Stage Irishman and for providing grotesquely exaggerated, degrading caricatures of the Irish character. Informed in 1839 by his publisher James M'Glashan that Phiz was going to illustrate his first novel *Harry Lorrequer,* and knowing that Phiz tended to represent people in a satirical way, Lever asked the publisher to commission George Cruikshank instead. However, Cruikshank – another popular Victorian book-illustrator – was unavailable. The young Phiz was an "irresponsible roisterer" (qtd. in Browne Lester 109), with a boyish delight in slapstick. Aware of the problem, Lever was at pains to know if he had at least "any notion of Irish physiognomy" (letter to M'Glashan January 1839, qtd. in Downey Vol. I 109). His anxiety was well founded. It turned out that Phiz had selected the most uproarious passages in the novel to illustrate.[11]

10 Private email to author, 25 December 2018.

11 Phiz's illustrations are easily found on the web. In *Harry Lorrequer,* particularly coarse were the plaques for the second inside cover and those with Father Malachi, whose character has been emphatically sketched in the plate "The Supper at Father Mala-

The Anglo-Irish, Protestant, Unionist Lever was already aware of criticism from Irish Nationalists, who assumed that an Anglo-Irishman like him was incapable of writing without ridiculing his countrymen. Unfortunately, Phiz's rollicking illustrations helped reinforce that Irish nationalist belief. In her biography of her uncle, Halbot Knight Browne's niece writes that "Phiz's early illustrations of Irish peasant characters resembled those seen on the English stage – drunken, red-nosed troublemakers – the only type to which he had been exposed until he visited Ireland" (Browne Lester 114). Following his journey to Ireland, Phiz's representation of the Irish changed. One example is his plate "Farewell to Tipperary Joe" at the end of *Jack Hinton*. He no longer depicts the loyal manservant as the usual ape-like Irishman, but with all the gentleman-like traits that Lever actually attributes to his character.

It was these wilful preconceptions on the part of Irish nationalists, together with the grotesque illustrations of Phiz, that led critics to mistake the target of Lever's ire: the butt of his social satire was never the servant-class Irishman, but the absentee landlord, and the entirety of the drinking, duelling, fox-hunting, and indebted squirearchy, mercilessly described in the novels *The O'Donoghue* (1845), *The Knight of Gwynne* (1847), *The Daltons* (1852), *The Martins of Cro'Martin* (1856), *The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly* (1868) and *Lord Kilgobbin* (1872). In these works, Lever tells the story of the material and moral bankruptcy of the Anglo-Irish ascendancy. As he wrote in *Davenport Dunn* (1859):

> The old feudalism that had linked the fate of a starving people with the fortunes of a ruined gentry was to be extinguished at once, and a great experiment tried. Was Ireland to be more governable in prosperity than in adversity? This was a problem which really might not seem to challenge much doubt, and yet was it by no means devoid of difficulty to those minds who had long based their ideas of ruling that land on the principles of fomenting its dissensions and separating its people (Vol. I 93).

Instead of realising that even in his early works Lever was denouncing the weakness of the Ascendancy party, contributors to the *Nation*, like Charles Gavan Duffy or William Carleton, denounced him for degrading and mis-representing his countrymen. It is thus understandable that the hostile atmosphere of Dublin in the 1840s, and the closed-mindedness of the *Dublin University Magazine* owners, did not encourage Lever to stay in Ireland. In 1845, he set off on a tour of Central Europe, that would prove to be a self-imposed exile, as he was never to live in Ireland again.

Writing abroad, in addition to addressing the collapsing Anglo-Irish ascendancy, the rise of nationalism and of the Irish Catholic bourgeoisie, Lever began drawing parallels between Irish nationalism and the independence movements growing across Europe. As Bareham has pointedly stated: "Lever became more European than his readership could well stomach, and having first reviled him for invoking the stage Irishman, they then neglected him for his intelligent internationalism" (9).

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chi's." Among many, a perfect example of the representation of the 'grotesque body' of the carefree, crumbling Irish upper class could be found in Phiz's plate for Jack Hinton entitled "The Rooney's Party."

Looking at Ireland from Abroad

In 1847, Lever settled in Florence, a Habsburg satellite. The Habsburg empire then ruled various Slav nationalities as well as large sections of Italy, a country in the making, divided into kingdoms and duchies ruled by foreign powers, struggling for its Risorgimento, just as the Balkan countries were struggling for their independence from the crumbling Ottoman Empire. Great Britain followed with interest the changes occurring on the continent, always having the Irish Question and Home Rule in mind. The intelligence on European politics that Lever was delivering through his fiction, as well as his articles for his humorous monthly column "Cornelius O'Dowd Upon Men, Women and Things in General" in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* between 1850/60,[12] led to the offer of a diplomatic position. He was first appointed vice-consul at La Spezia in 1858 and in 1867, his Tory sympathies enabled him to obtain the consulship in Trieste, a city that he rapidly learned to hate and in which, fulfilling his worst fears, he is now buried. Lever's first impression of Trieste was hard to change; nonetheless, he wrote some of his best books there, such as his last novel *Lord Kilgobbin*, published shortly after the abortive Fenian Rising of 1867. Set in Ireland, Wales, Greece and Turkey, it tells the story of Mathew Kearney, sixth Viscount of Kilgobbin, a decayed Whig Irish nobleman, who lives in his crumbling castle with his wise daughter Kate. His son Richard studies medicine at Dublin with his friend Joe. After meeting the English diplomats Lockwood and Walpole, the two young men become involved in missions to the Mediterranean by the Foreign Office. The novel also sports a Fenian hero, Daniel Donogan, inspired by Donovan O'Rossa, who, having fought beside the Greek independence fighters, eventually escapes to America with Nina Kostalergi, Lord Kilgobbin's nice and capricious Greek-Irish beauty.

Bareham acutely notes that: "The career of Charles Lever very strongly suggests a man striving to be at the centre of things, but constantly being impelled towards a periphery, [towards] a position of 'Outsiderness'" (*Charles Lever: New Evaluations* 96). Lever's exile status – he was an outsider at home and abroad – did give him a different perspective on historical events that were happening around him. To this 'outsiderness,' we owe the surprising originality and quality of his forgotten fiction.

The Stage Irish Mask

Lever's later political novels explore themes of dislocation, social breakdown, and alienation, but their trademark is a conflict between generations. On the one hand, we have fathers, representatives of dissipated landed gentry belonging to the old colonial order; on the other, the sons and daughters – a younger generation struggling

12 Lever used his column in *Blackwood's Magazine*, not only to focus on social politics and British politics in general, but also to deliver information on the activities of the "Italian Regenerators." Innumerable articles were on the process of the Risorgimento and the epic figure of Giuseppe Garibaldi, whom he met personally at La Spezia. The "Hero of the Two Worlds" also inspired his 1865 novel *Tony Butler*.

in Ireland for freedom and independence, for identity and lost heritage, just like their brothers and sisters in Europe. It was the young people who were choosing exile from their homeland that Stephen Dedalus in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* would later compare to an "Old Sow that Eats Her Farrow" (220). In this way, Lever prefigures certain aspects of Irish modernism and its experimentations with narrative voice and the theme of identity. A key example in this regard is Lever's 1860 novel *A Day's Ride. A Life's Romance*, the story of a man who exchanges fiction with reality, a sort of Zelig *ante-litteram*, who assumes the personality of the first person he meets. The novel was among George Bernard Shaw's favourites.

It is based on these late novels, *The Daltons*, *A Day's Ride, The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly*, or the final masterpiece *Lord Kilgobbin*, that Lever should be read, judged and remembered. Jeffares describes the latter novel as a "clash of cultures" ("Introduction" xv) and as "a despairing picture of a decaying and discontented Anglo-Irish Ascendancy at the mercy of political unrest, angry terrorism and of that English ineptitude, swinging between repression and appeasement, which Lever could not venerate" (*Anglo-Irish Literature* 124). Lever's detractors should read, for example, the cameo in chapter 9 of *Lord Kilgobbin* of the Irish driver who takes Cecil Walpole, secretary to Lord Danebury, the new Whig-appointed viceroy, on a pretty jaunt through the Bog of Allen. Walpole ventures into the bog, taking little with him except his English hauteur and a conceited faith in his own superiority – a passage (among many in Lever) which consistently shows the English, not the Irish, as exhibiting grotesque cultural patterns.

Conclusion

The cosmopolitan, uprooted Lever seems to tell us that the clownish Stage Irishman may be hiding a "stirring nature," and that all the rollicking may be only a mask:

> But how vain is it for one of any other country to fathom one half the depth of Irish character, or say what part is inapplicable to an Irishman! My own conviction is that we are all mistaken in our estimate of them; that the gay and reckless spirit, the wild fun, and frantic impetuous devilment are their least remarkable features, and in fact only the outside emblem of the stirring nature within. (*Jack Hinton* Vol. II 76)

Lever's works are not to be found in any bookshop in the whole world. Among thirty novels written during his life, only one has seen a new edition in the twentieth century: *Lord Kilgobbin* (published by the Belfast-based Appletree Press in 1992). No mainstream publishing house lists Lever in its catalogues. Anyone who wants to discover him must be satisfied with old second-hand copies or print-on-demand editions. Nobody can form an opinion of his real literary value if his books are not on the market, are not annotated, translated or reviewed, as has happened with innumerable other Victorian writers.

Lever has been branded with fostering the caricature of the Stage Irishman for too long. As we have seen in this chapter, the charge of peddling Stage Irish clichés for comic effect largely stems from the preconceptions of Irish nationalists and the unfor-

tunate illustrations of Phiz. Rather, Lever refashioned and repurposed the Stage Irish cliché to satirise the lifestyle and abuses of the country's pro-English squirearchy – in other words, the people of his own class.

Lever's carnivalesque aesthetics function as social criticism, subverting and exposing the values of the crumbling Ascendancy, turning the tables and showing the Anglo-Irish, Unionist, absentee landowning elite as the real buffoons, fiddling and rollicking while their world burns around them. On the basis of this re-reading, it is now time to reconsider Lever's legacy and finally re-establish this gifted Anglo-Irish writer to his true place in the Irish literary canon.

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JAMES JOYCE AND THE SLOVENIANS: AUTO- AND HETERO-STEREOTYPES

Igor Maver

James Joyce was born in Dublin but grew up as a writer in Trieste during his more than ten years there, from 1904 until the Great War and then again until 1920. Joyce and Nora Barnacle were on the way to Trieste, via Paris and Zürich, in order for Joyce to take up his first job at the Berlitz School in the major Habsburg military port of Pula/Pola at the tip of the Istrian peninsula, which all foreign citizens had to leave for fears of counterespionage in 1905. He and Barnacle eventually ended up in Trieste, the most important port of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the gateway for Slovenians who wanted to migrate abroad by ship. During Joyce's stay there, Trieste was populated by the two biggest national groups, Italians and Slovenians, as well as Austrians, Jews, Greeks, Czechs, Hungarians, Serbians, and other (mostly Slavic) nationalities within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Karst hinterland, however, was predominantly populated by Slovenians. It was there that Joyce came in close contact, professionally and privately, with quite a few important Slovenians in the fields of economy, politics and art, including during his tenure teaching at the Berlitz school of languages. For example, he became acquainted with Amalija Globočnik from Ljubljana, who taught Croatian and with whom Joyce became very friendly (*Letters II*, 75).

Herbert Gorman's *James Joyce: A Definitive Biography* (1941), which is based on Joyce's notes, shows that Joyce in fact experienced Ljubljana – or *Laibach* (frequently also spelt *Laybach*) as it was still called during the last decades of the Austro-Hungarian Empire – first-hand, although it was for only a single night. Joyce and Barnacle were on their way to the Adriatic port by train and in the late evening on 19 October 1904 they got off by mistake in Ljubljana, where they had to spend that night alfresco:

> The train rushed southward and after an interminable period halted in the station of what appeared to be a great city, surely the end of the strange new journey. The young couple dismounted from their compartment and made their way out of the station and into the streets. A puzzled inquiry brought them the disturbing information that they were in Laibach (now called Ljubljana) some seven hours from Trieste. The train they had deserted was already hooting its way through the darkness, for it was night, and there would be no more traffic for the south and Trieste until the dawn came. The two travellers crept into a near-by garden and remained there until the morning. There was an Observatory here and they watched and counted the stars, that great wheel of light that glowed above the mysterious city, and agreed that they were bright and glorious. The rich odour of autumnal earth suspired about them and they were not unhappy at all. (Gorman 131)

Today, Ljubljana is the capital of the Republic of Slovenia, which achieved its statehood and independence in 1991. The Slovenian sculptor Jakov Brdar (born in 1949)

made a small monument testifying to Joyce's fleeting visit to the city by mistake, which one can see at the entrance to platform 1 at the Ljubljana Central Railway Station (see Fig. 1 and Fig. 2). Brdar's stylised bronze gutter grate, beside a plaque about Joyce as a writer, is really a metaphor, showing not only that James's and Nora's nocturnal moments in Ljubljana were fleeting, but also how quickly one's life trickles through our fingers to disappear through the gutter grate into the underworld of no return. The one half of the bones of a fish probably signifies the sea, which they hoped to find in Trieste, but of course was not there in Ljubljana.

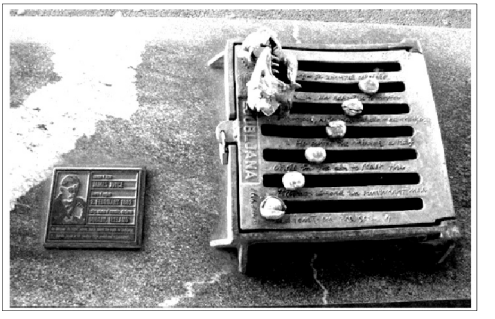

Fig. 1 and Fig. 2. Jakov Brdar's plaque and grate at Ljubljana Central Railway Station. Photos by Igor Maver

Also, in the 1994 book *Noč v Ljubljani* (*Night in Ljubljana*) a group of Slovenian literati wrote about their personal fictionalised views of Joyce's brief, unexpected overnight stay in Ljubljana in 1904 on his way to Trieste.

In the first part of my chapter, I will address Joyce's interaction with the Slovenians living in Trieste and / or the city of Ljubljana. Amongst other aspects, this section will focus on auto- and hetero-stereotypes of Stage Irishness – clichés which tie in with the late Victorian concept of the 'Oriental Paddy,' which English popular culture misattributed to the proverbially 'unruly' peoples living in the South-Eastern parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In the chapter's second part, I will focus on Trieste as a place of Joycean inspiration as far as Slovenian literature is concerned. The main focus will be on Drago Jančar's Slovenian novella-collection *Joyce's Pupil* (2008) – a fictionalised account of the encounter of Joyce and his Berlitz School pupil Boris Furlan known from Richard Ellmann's biography *James Joyce* (1959, revised 1982). With a grain of salt, Jančar's book may be considered 'A Slovenian Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man' and thus deserves scholarly attention in the fields of Joyce Studies and cultural circulation between Ireland and the European continent.

Heteroglossia: The Irish and the 'Oriental' Paddy

The cosmopolitan Adriatic city of Trieste had a major – exoticist and orientalist – influence on Joyce's writing in *Ulysses* and helped to shape his views on national iden-

tity, stereotypes, and nationalism. Upon their arrival in Trieste, in late October 1904, Joyce left Barnacle in the gardens outside the train station to find an accommodation for the night.[1] When they were in Piazza Grande just outside the station,[2] he got caught up in a brawl with drunken English sailors and was arrested. Living up to the Irish Paddy image under the influence of alcohol, he was released within a few hours thanks to the English Consul, so he could finally re-join Barnacle waiting for him in the square outside the railway station. Typologically speaking, this 'first night' in Trieste may be considered a kind of re-enactment of the first – and only – night they spent in Ljubljana.

Although, anecdotally, he lived up to certain clichés of Stage Irishness in his own proclivities towards drink, the sober Joyce was probably not willingly staging his Paddy-like Irishness while living in Trieste during his formative years as an Irish writer in the diaspora. Indeed, as he observed that the South-Eastern European people living in the Habsburg Empire in general, and in Trieste as a multi-cultural hotspot in particular, were subject to clichés based on the Paddy-concept of Stage Irishness, Joyce started to see the need to deconstruct the traditional late-Victorian 'Oriental Paddy' images of the 'unruly' Hungarians (mostly of Jewish descent as far as Trieste is concerned), Greeks, Slovenians, Serbians, Croatians, Turks, and others. The resonances and affinities that Joyce observed in Trieste between Stage Irish stock types and orientalised Hungarian stereotypes became a significant theme of *Ulysses* and an inspiration for the depiction of its protagonist Leopold Bloom.

Although her husband, the author and explorer Sir Richard Burton (1821-1890) – who served several years as British Consul in Trieste, where he also died (see Maver 17-23) – held a different opinion, the Trieste-based Lady Isabel Burton (1831-1896) wrote condescendingly about the Hungarians. Referring to the Victorian Irish novelist Charles Lever,[3] Lady Burton re-fashioned Stage Irishness into what she called the "Hungarian" phenomenon of the "Oriental Paddy" from the Austro-Hungarian Empire with its imperial interest in the Balkan Peninsula:

> As regards politics and finance, Buda-Pest is simply a modern and eastern copy of Dublin. The Hungarian magnate still lives like the Squirren and Buckeen of the late Mr. Charles Lever's "earliest style;" he keeps open house, he is plundered by all hands, and no Galway landowner of the last generation was less fitted by nature and nurture to manage his own affairs. […] And where, we may ask, is the power that can muzzle these eastern ban-dogs? Who shall take away the shillelaghs of these Oriental Paddies? (Burton 506-7)

1 For Triestine itineraries of Joyce, see Crivelli.

2 Today, the Piazza Grande is called Piazza dell'Unità d'Italia, and is situated just next to the emblematic Habsburg statue of the Austrian Empress Sisi, Elizabeth of Austria – erected after her death in 1898 in Geneva – who apparently liked Trieste very much.

3 Elisabetta d'Erme's chapter in the present volume adds further context by demonstrating what Lady Burton here ignores, namely the circumstance that Lever applied the Stage Irish cliché of the Paddy to the Hibernian Pro-English landowning elite to satirise the 'English' lifestyle of the landed gentry rather than the Irish peasants.

In this context, we can see more clearly the critique of this rhetoric of the Oriental Paddy that Joyce embeds in his depictions of Bloom as a truly cultivated and peace-loving person who is the descendant of a Jewish-Hungarian diasporic family that migrated to Dublin via the Austro-Hungarian cities Szombathely, Vienna, and Budapest (Joyce, *Ulysses* 17.535). In *The Years of Bloom: James Joyce in Trieste 1904-1920*, John McCourt identifies several Trieste-based Hungarian Jews who were Joyce's friends and who inspired the making of Joyce's protagonist. Bloom, in fact, represents a deconstruction of the negative hetero-stereotype of the 'Oriental Paddy' – an aspect triggered off by Joyce's multicultural and transcultural Trieste experiences, where Jewishness and oriental(ist) features, including the Slavonic European 'Other,' were considered as positive and enriching:

> In Trieste, Joyce came to know several Hungarians, including Nidia Frigyessy Castelbolognese, president of Il Circolo dei Magiari, whose father was born near Budapest, and Teodoro Mayer, founder and owner of *Il Piccolo* and *Il Piccolo della Sera*, the city newspapers that led the irredentist struggle (McCourt 94).

During his time at the multi-national Adriatic port of Trieste, Joyce absorbed a vast array of cultural, linguistic, and political influences. Among these, the Slovenian influence was an important one, and it is visible in *Ulysses*, where many Slovenian words are to be found. As Mina M. Đurić observes, in the "multilingual context" of the "Cyclops" episode of *Ulysses*, "the South Slavic material is incorporated in the exclamations of toasts: 'hoch, banzai, eljen, zivio, chinchin, polla kronia, hiphip, vive, Allah [...] evviva'" (Đurić 176; Joyce, *Ulysses* 12;600), where we observe "živio"/"long live." As a polyglossic text containing abundant multi-lingualism and incessant code-switching, *Finnegans Wake* is deeply imbued with the polyglot community which Joyce encountered during his Trieste years including Trieste-based Slovenians such as Boris Furlan or Amalija Globočnik. Like the *Triestino* spoken in Trieste – the lingua franca-like dialect fusing Italian, Slovenian, Croatian, Austro-German, and other languages – the 'Wakese' language of *Finnegans Wake* may be considered a polyglot construct encompassing multiple languages. Distortions and corruptions of Slovenian (and Croatian) words abound in *Finnegans Wake* (see Leeming 289-309), such as "Cheevio" (*Wake* 321) and "zivios" (548) for the toast "živio." A prominent example in the *Wake* is *Bog*/God, as it appears in the English-Slovenian phrase "by the wrath of Bog" (76). Joyce often resorted to the Italianised Slavonic languages and the Triestinised German and was frequently inspired by the Italian satirical weekly *La Coda del Diavolo*. In the sentence "Many a diva devoucha saw her Dauber Dan at the priesty pagoda Rota ran" (*Finnegans Wake* 466), for instance, "devoucha" suggests the small Slovenian Karst town of Divača not far from Trieste on the Karst plateau, and "Dauber Dan" recalls the Slovenian greeting "Dober dan" (Good day), while "Rota" refers to a well-known Triestine musician of the period. Due to his keen interest in the cinema, Joyce would have very likely known about the Slovenian actress Ita Rina (1907-1979) – the "diva" born in "Divača," who reached international fame between the two wars and later rejected Hollywood offers for her married life. Indeed, Joyce estab-

lished the first Dublin cinema, the Volta Cinematograph, in 1909 after seeing a cinema performance in Trieste. The Volta had to be closed in 1910, with a great loss for the investors, who were primarily rich Slovenian entrepreneurs from Trieste, such as Giovanni Reb(e)c, Francesco Novak, and Antonio Machnich/Mahnič. The main *spiritus agens* behind the project was Nicolò Vidacovich, Joyce's student, lawyer, and translator, originally from Capodistria (today the port of Koper in Slovenia), with whom Joyce was very close and who was a convinced Italian irredentist.

Cultural Circulation: Joyce's encounter with Slovenian literary production and vice versa

Let us now consider Trieste as a place which acquainted Joyce with Slovenian literary production and *vice versa*. The best-known Slovenian writer of the *fin-de-siècle* – the dawning of the modernist period – was undoubtedly Ivan Cankar (1876-1918), who holds an iconic status as probably the most important writer of fiction in Slovenian-language literature. He gave several widely advertised public lectures on Slovenian politics and culture in Trieste / Slov. Trst (the Slovenian lungs, as he called it, as opposed to the Ljubljana heart) from 1907 until 1918, when Joyce was living there (until 1915). There is every reason to believe that Boris Furlan, a Slovenian pupil of Joyce, would have attended at least some of these lectures. However, it appears that Cankar neither met Joyce nor the Viennese painter Egon Schiele (1890-1918), who had spent some time there, although they both shared rebellious critical views of their own homeland and society as well as the orthodox imperial order and morality. They would certainly have had a lot to talk about.

As regards the influence of Joyce as a source of artistic inspiration on contemporary Slovenian literature, the internationally best-known contemporary Slovenian writer Drago Jančar (born in 1948) heads the list.[4] Among many other prestigious awards, Jančar most recently received the Austrian state Prize for European literature (2020). In 2008, Jančar wrote a collection of novellas: *Joyce's Pupil, Ten Novellas.* The first, eponymous novella "Joyce's Pupil" describes Boris Furlan (1894-1957), a Slovenia-born inhabitant of Trieste who was a young student of English, taught by Joyce privately and at the Berlitz School. Jančar, of course, fictionalises his involvement with Joyce in Trieste, although he astutely follows the actual events from his life. The brief mention of Furlan in Ellmann's biography served Jančar as a prompt and pre-text for his short story, where he uses Ellmann's wording as the motto: "Another of Joyce's pupils was a young man of twenty named Boris Furlan (Ellmann 341; Jančar 1). With regard to Furlan, one needs to mention another important Slovenian pupil of Joyce's at the Berlitz school in Trieste: Josip Vilfan or Wilfan (1878-1955), a leading politician

4 While beyond the scope of the present chapter, it is worth mentioning that there are many translations of Joyce into the Slovenian language, where Tina Mahkota stands out as the foremost contemporary translator *par excellence* of Joyce in particular and Irish literature in general.

among the Slovenians in Trieste, who studied in Vienna, where he became influenced by socialist and radical democratic ideals and where he lived from 1928 onwards, with his last period of life being spent in Belgrade. After World War One, he became one of the MPs in the Italian parliament in 1921. He was among the founders of the State of Slovenians, Croats, and Serbs after the war in October 1918, soon after that to become the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenians. Furlan, a young lawyer, worked in his office, and as a legal theorist he became Vilfan's best-known collaborator.

Jančar's novella / short story "Joyce's Pupil" is set in 1914. It presents Furlan as a twenty-year old Slovenian student in Triest / Trieste / Trst, who repeatedly describes an oil lamp upon the command of his English teacher Professor Zois (Italian phonetic spelling for 'Joyce') and becomes fed up with the repetitive task. For Slovenian readers, the name 'Zois' phonetically carries an additional level of connotation and works as a pun, since in 18th century Ljubljana there lived an important Enlightenment patron of the arts, the richest Carniolan / Slovenian of his time, Baron Žiga / Sigismundus Zois (1747-1819). He was an avid supporter of the Slovenian language and a natural scientist who holds a special and important place in Slovenian science, art, and culture. This is the oil lamp-episode in Jančar's opening story:

> The first lines are spoken many years earlier, in English, in the quiet of a Trieste apartment. It is evening. On the table one can see a warm circle of light which radiates from a beautifully fashioned oil lamp. The thirty-year-old English teacher and his twenty-year-old pupil are bent over books and papers. A strong north wind is blowing outside, searching for a route through the streets to the sea. Shutters bang and the sea foams against the shore; the swirling winds only accentuate the tranquillity and safety of the room. The pupil reads English sentences aloud, and the teacher patiently corrects his pronunciation. When the lesson is over, the teacher walks to the window and looks out on to the street where a piece of paper blows and eddies in the wind. Perhaps he speaks in his Irish accent about the language, perhaps about Thomas Aquinas. After each lesson, pupil and teacher generally discuss philosophy. The pupil, like so many youths of the day, is much taken with Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. The teacher attempts to quell this enthusiasm; for him the only philosopher is Aquinas, whose thought, in the teacher's opinion, is as sharp as a sword blade. The teacher reads a page of his work in Latin every day. The teacher sits back down and asks the pupil to describe the oil lamp in English. The pupil gets hopelessly tangled in technical expressions, and the teacher takes over from him, describing the oil lamp in exhaustive detail.·He goes on for a full half hour, indulging a habit that many years later the student will call descriptive passion. Professor Zois, the student cries out, I will never learn English. Professor Zois chuckles, in part out of satisfaction at his description, in part at the way the pupil mangles his name. That is how the Italians say it because they can't pronounce Joyce properly. ...
>
> After these conversations by the light of the oil lamp, Joyce's pupil, a young Slovenian law student from Trieste, suddenly felt a certain blankness in his head. A moment before he had been speaking freely with his teacher about Schopenhauer and Aquinas, about problems of morality and courage, but when he was confronted with the puzzle of the oil lamp, the fuel well, the glass chimney, the wick and all the rest of the parts that made up that insignificant object, he felt a gigantic hole opening up inside his head, a hole that swallowed up every thought, a kind of empty space in which, nothing

> could be heard but the howl of the wind through the Trieste streets on the way to the sea. (Jančar, *Joyce's Pupil* [2003] 8-9)

Just before the Great War, in 1914, the Irish teacher and the Slovenian student of English met one last time before Joyce left for Zurich in 1915. This encounter is referred to in the story as well:

> Joyce and his Triestine student met for the last time on a hot July day in the summer of 1914. One could feel tension in the air throughout the city. Mobilised men were mustering near the barracks, while crowds shouting bellicose slogans milled on the streets and piazzas. The teacher, upset and worried, rapped on his young friend's apartment door. Then they looked through the windows of the pupil's room at the building of the Italian consulate, which was surrounded by an angry crowd. Encouraged by loud shouts, several of them tried to tear down the Italian flag. Stones were thrown at the façade; some panes of glass shattered; there was yelling. Joyce was clearly perturbed, and he worriedly asked his young friend what was going to happen. Professor Zois, he said with a laugh, there will be war. This scared his teacher. Joyce said that he would depart. When the shouts of the crowd grew louder, he shut his eyes, then he turned around, and while his pupil was still speaking, he ran out of the apartment and the building without saying a word. The pupil laughed; history was being made outside. He understood that some people can derive ineffable joy from describing an oil lamp, but he was interested in other things. (Jančar, *Joyce's Pupil* [2003] 10)

Furlan, whose life is fictionalised in Jančar's short story, was born into a Slovenian family in Trieste. He went to Slovenian private schools in Trieste. As a teenager, he also attended an intensive English course at the local Berlitz language school, where he was taught by Joyce. He finished his law studies in Vienna and Bologna, and in 1930 he fled to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia to escape fascist persecution. In 1931, he opened a law office in Ljubljana, and in 1936 he became a Professor of the sociology of law at the University of Ljubljana. In the second half of March 1941, upon Yugoslavia's accession to the Triple Alliance, Furlan was evacuated from the country and went abroad. He was sentenced to death *in absentia* by the Italian authorities after the invasion of Yugoslavia by the Axis powers and the Italian occupation of a part of Slovenia until 1943. He escaped via several stops to the United States and then to London in 1943, where he prepared and read regular broadcasts on Radio London. In London, where he stayed from June to August 1943, he was briefly appointed Minister of Education in the Royal Yugoslav government in exile. In 1944, however, he started to support the Yugoslav partisan movement.

After the end of the Second World War, Furlan became Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Ljubljana. He nonetheless tried to maintain a critical attitude towards the communist regime; for example, he secretly translated *Animal Farm* by George Orwell. In June 1947, he was arrested (with altogether 32 people) and tried at the so-called Nagode trial, along with 14 other Slovenian intellectuals of various political orientations, who were in favour of parliamentary democracy, for alleged conspiracy against the state and espionage. The main charge against him was his translation of Orwell's allegorical novel about Stalin's Russia. In August 1947, he was sentenced to death, but the sentence was later changed to 20 years of compulsory hard labour.

After being pardoned, he retreated to Gorenjska, a small town in the Upper Carniola region, where he was subject to a public lynching, which he barely survived, and which finds a vivid expression in the title story of Jančar's collection. Jančar's book vividly recounts this sad part of Furlan's life after the staged trial right after the Second World War in 1947, as alleged enemies of the then socialist Yugoslavia.

There follows, in part 5, Jančar's description of Furlan's return to Trieste after his studies abroad and the war that had ended. He specifically refers to the burning down of the Slovenski Narodni dom – the Slovenian National Hall –, which was, as an important political act, officially returned to the Slovenian community only in 2020 by the Italian state and under the auspices of both presidents of the two republics, Italy and Slovenia:

> On a grey November afternoon, Italian troops disembarked in the port of Trieste. And not too long after this, a new set of spectres appeared on the streets. Young men from Italian suburbs and small towns marched about in black uniforms singing of youth and springtime; they beat their political opponents, and set fire to a large building in the centre of town – the Slovenian National Hall. When firefighters came to fight the blaze, they cut their hoses to the sounds of bellicose slogans. The young lawyer tried to settle down in the midst of the blind tumult of history. […] He found himself among those educated Slovenians of Trieste who organised anti-fascist resistance. In 1930 he was warned that his arrest was imminent. He escaped over the border into Yugoslavia, and in a single day found himself in a new city among new people. In the thick fog that curled through the streets of Ljubljana that autumn, his inner vision searched for the far-off and now lost shining disk of Trieste's sun, and his inner ear listened to the howling of an Adriatic storm. (Jančar, *Joyce's Pupil* [2003] 11)

Years later, Furlan, having lost all contact with Joyce, reads about his teacher's rise to international literary fame on the occasion of his passing in 1941, when Ljubljana was occupied by the Italian Fascist troops in the early April of the same year. As Joyce was unknown in Slovenia at that time, Furlan is surprised to learn that "his former English teacher, the […] somewhat eccentric professor Zois, had become a rather well-known writer in the intervening years" (Jančar, *Joyce's Pupil* [2003] 6).

Joyce's Pupil continues with a long, fictionalised description of Furlan's life during the war and especially after it, including his 1947 espionage charge. Jančar himself mentions in an interview that he saw Furlan's name by chance in Ellmann's *James Joyce, New and Revised Edition* (cf. Jančar, "We Need a Memory of Everything" n.p.). The fact that he was Slovenian made him undertake further research which resulted in the novella / short story under consideration. Or to quote from this text:

> On the sixth or seventh day, the prosecutor deposed Joyce's pupil. He spoke of the book *Animal Farm* that the accused had received from England. According to the prosecutor, he had made vile use of his knowledge of English, acquired in Trieste, to translate excerpts from this loathsome pamphlet, and he had lent the book to his fellow conspirators. (Jančar, *Joyce's Pupil* [2003] 20)

Furlan later remembered in one of his letters: "In 1913/14 I started to study English. My teacher was James Joyce, who at the time was teaching at the commercial High School in Trieste" (Furlan qtd. in McCourt 200).

Conclusion

As I have shown in this chapter, it was during his stay in Trieste that James Joyce absorbed a vast array of cultural, linguistic, and political influences, among which the Slovenian was an important one. These influences are not only visible in Joyce's literary works; they may be also traced back to his self-fashioning in Trieste. Staging his Irishness in Trieste for over ten years, Joyce served as a multicultural mediator between English misrepresentations of the Irish as 'Paddies' and the South-Eastern Europeans as 'Oriental Paddies,' deconstructing these hetero-stereotypes in his writing. In turn, Joyce's influence on Slovenian figures, translators, and writers, such as Boris Furlan and Drago Jančar, through his time in Trieste, has shaped Slovenian accounts of their own history and national selfhood. In its own small way, the test case of Joyce among the Slovenians demonstrates the important work that remains to be done both in documenting and analysing cultural circulation between Ireland and the European continent, and in analysing the role that national stereotypes such as the Stage Irishman and the Oriental Paddy play in mediating and shaping these cultural encounters and exchanges.

For Joyce as an Irishman, as well as for each of us, as we know it from the English Shakespeare, life is but a walking shadow, every woman and man is a poor player on the stage of life, and so we all stage our little lives and endeavour in the *anima mundi* on a daily basis. Be it in terms of hetero-stereotypes enforced on our personal stage by others, or auto-stereotypes enacted by ourselves, the phenomenon of staging one's self is not a local but a global phenomenon: *Totus mundus agit histrionem.*

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POPULAR PADDIES:
PARADING IRISHNESS ON THE SCREEN AND IN THE STREETS

"BEGUILING SHENANIGANS": IRELAND AND HOLLYWOOD ANIMATION 1947-1959

Michael Connerty

If the predominant graphic figuration of Irishness in nineteenth-century America was an ape-like brute in human clothing, with a cudgel in one hand and a bottle of whiskey in the other, then the most commonly appearing twentieth-century representation in cartoons, in both print and animation, was the far more appealing leprechaun. Given that the most pervasive form of graphic caricature and cartooning in the twentieth century was the animated short, this is where the focus of the present chapter will, for the most part, reside. The intention is to illuminate a critical space between two amply covered scholarly areas concerned with the representation of Ireland and the Irish, in twentieth-century Hollywood cinema, and in print cartoons and comic strips. In a Venn diagram of popular American visual culture, the animated cartoon could be said to share many representational strategies common to both, but, given the ubiquity and specific formal properties of classical animation, it also offers a uniquely bold and direct, albeit occasionally ambivalent, visualisation of Irishness. Cartoons such as *The Wee Men* (Bill Tytla, 1947), *Leprechaun's Gold* (Bill Tytla, 1949), and *The Emerald Isle* (Seymour Kneitel, 1949), all produced by Famous Studios in Hollywood, exemplify a specific development in the representations of the Irish in America, and can be read as graphic markers in the evolution of Irish-American assimilation. In engaging with these examples, it will also be necessary to consider the influence of the Disney studio, because as a result of its unparalleled successes it exerted a stylistic and thematic influence on all the other American studios of the period, because many of the cartoons we will be looking at involved former Disney personnel in their production, and because any discussion of the leprechaun and popular screen culture will inevitably lead us to Disney's *Darby O'Gill and the Little People* (Robert Stevenson, 1959).

Filmic representations of Ireland during the first half of the twentieth century were largely produced by American studios and filmmakers, and this has been central to all the major accounts of the development of Irish film culture. It has been noted by commentators such as Luke Gibbons and Lance Pettitt that many of these American films – the most celebrated of which is of course John Ford's *The Quiet Man* (1951) – were primarily directed at large diasporic audiences and tended to emphasise a romanticised conception of Ireland as a pastoral retreat and a primitive wonderland of unspoilt natural beauty. Although such live-action films tend towards realist filmmaking modes, the cartoon examples outlined here operate more straightforwardly as fantasy, the presence of magic, supernatural creatures, and gothic settings functioning generically as an "alternative response to our anxiety in the face of technology, ra-

tionalism and alienation" (Fowkes 12), a feature that chimes with cinematic characterisations of Ireland as the antithesis of modern industrialised society. To an even greater degree than was the case with live-action cinema, there was no indigenous animation production that might have countered the representational conventions of Hollywood during these years. Indeed, the booming and dynamic Irish animation industry that continues to grow at the time of writing did not really evolve significantly until the final years of the twentieth century.

It is useful to consider these animated shorts in relation to popular graphic representations of the Irish from earlier historical periods. The caricaturing and stereotyping of the Irish in nineteenth-century newspapers and humour periodicals has been well documented by L. Curtis Perry, John T. Appel, and others. Although the especially brutal character types first emerged in the work that English artists like John Tenniel and William Boucher contributed to *Punch* and numerous imitators, such as *Fun* and *Judy*, from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, many of the visual tropes were adapted and developed by artists working in the US. Tenniel's work is usually understood as reflecting a colonialist discourse wherein the Irish were simianised or infantilised in crude drawings that presented them as a subhuman species prone to violence and insurrection, unfit for self-governance. Condescension, suspicion, and hostility towards the immigrant Irish in the US underscored the production of a similar range of images there, many appearing in the popular humour magazine *Puck*, and drawn by some of the most renowned cartoonists of the period, including Thomas Nast and Frederick Burr Opper. A cartoon by the latter, "The King of A-Shantee," which appeared in *Puck* in 1882, is, to modern eyes, a fairly extreme piece of work, emphasising backwardness, alcoholism, and violence, in the form of a grotesque Irish "Paddy," his similarly rendered wife, and their dilapidated rural dwelling (Curtis 63). Curtis makes much of the 'prognathous' jaw line applied to the protagonists in these images, a feature that, along with the rustic 'Shenandoah' or 'Lincoln' beard, would persist well into the twentieth century.

Kerry Soper has traced some of the ways that these images evolved over the subsequent decades as, to a great extent, the single panel cartoon gave way to the newspaper comic strip, and the sequential approach to cartooning that would achieve a mass readership during the first decades of the twentieth century. Running for many decades from 1913, George McManus's *Bringing up Father* series was a hugely popular satire on the so-called 'lace curtain Irish,' centering on the character of Jiggs, a former hod-carrier who becomes suddenly rich following a lottery win. McManus, himself the son of Irish immigrants, used the series to articulate "conflicted or ambivalent cultural attitudes towards assimilation, the Protestant work ethic, and materialist conceptions of the American dream" (Soper 176). Much of the humour derived from the conflict between his wife Maggie's social climbing aspirations, and Jiggs' desire to socialise with his rough crew of drinking buddies and to eat corned beef and cabbage. From the perspective of animation, an earlier Irish character, created by the afore-mentioned Frederick Opper – Happy Hooligan – is of interest

here, because as well as being the central protagonist in a wildly popular and influential comic strip series, appearing from 1899 in newspapers published by William Randolph Hearst, he was also the subject of an early example of comics adaptation for cinema, in a series of animated cartoons.

For the comic strips Opper had not only refined and adapted his cartooning style to suit the dynamic and snappy tone of the Hearst papers, but in Happy Hooligan, a hapless and accident-prone hobo, he had designed a far more sympathetic Irish character than those he had contributed to *Puck* in previous decades. Though he retains the prognathous jaw of earlier caricature, he is an appealing protagonist whose attempts to better himself or offer well-meaning assistance to the citizenry of New York generally backfire and result in him being hauled off by a tough cop with a billy club in the final panel. He was an early example of a transmedia character, a cartoon 'star' for whom the transition to the cinema screen was an obvious one. The series was adapted into a number of short cartoons by the Earl Bray Studio, a successful forerunner of Disney in the early 1920s. Unfortunately, only a small percentage of the cartoons, produced between 1916 and 1922, have survived. In one example, *A Trip to the Moon* (1920), the particular urban dimension that is quite central to the comic strips is de-emphasised, and the rendering of Happy himself, relying on thicker lines and a more minimalist style, contains fewer traces of the caricatural sources. The cartoon, a nod to George Méliès' science fiction spectacular *A Trip to the Moon* (1902), suggests the influence of Pat Sullivan and Otto Mesmer's surreal and anarchic *Felix the Cat* series, which had begun production the previous year, and which was by far the most popular animation of its time. There is evidence too that the Happy Hooligan cartoons were popular with contemporary audiences (Collier), who would have been very aware, at least in the US, of the specific ethnic and cultural *milieu* from which he sprung, given their familiarity with the strips.

Although Irish characters did appear in animated shorts produced during the rest of the 1920s and 30s, it was generally in supporting roles, and it was not until the immediate post-war period that Irish characters, most typically in the form of leprechauns, featured as the protagonists in a short cycle of cartoons produced by Famous Studios. In 1942 Famous succeeded the Fleischer Studio, best known for the success of their Betty Boop and Popeye cartoons, as the animation division of Paramount Pictures, and this marked a decline in the level of quality and innovation that had characterised much of their output, and which had made them Disney's only real competitor in the 1930s. Vladimir "Bill" Tytla, who directed *The Wee Men* (see Connerty Fig. 1 in Colour Supplement) in 1947 and *Leprechaun's Gold* two years later, had left Disney following the historic strike of 1941, which had resulted in the departure of many key employees. The strike, over pay and working conditions, caused enormous upset to Disney personally, and resulted in the dispersal of talent from all areas of production to the other studios operating in the US at the time, and to the foundation of an additional number, including United Productions of America (UPA), a studio that would radicalise American animation in the 1950s, and to which we will return.

Tytla had been a key member of the animation team that worked on *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (Disney, 1937), assigned specifically to work on the dwarfs themselves (a photograph of the picket line features a banner that reads 'Snow White and the 700 Dwarfs'). *Snow White* was one of the highest grossing Hollywood films of the 1930s, and its impact on the American animation industry proved to be profound and lasting. The influence on these cartoons of *Snow White*, and the Disney style in general, is immediately evident in the graphic look, the comedic tone, and of course the character design – albeit with less sophisticated execution. So, though not produced at the Disney studio, The Wee Men does offer a powerful example of the process that Jack Zipes argues is characteristic of Disney's adaptations – the dilution, distortion, and ultimately the commodification, of folkloric tradition, very often based on European source material, for a global cinema audience (Zipes 351-52). For example, in *Snow White*, an adaptation from the German folk tradition, via the Brothers Grimm, the dwarfs do not make a particularly substantial contribution to the original tale, but in the film function as a vehicle for Disney's key criteria of cuteness and mass appeal – qualities very much evident in the design of the leprechaun characters in *The Wee Men.* Curtis's simian qualities are still there too but are softened – more rounded – as part of an altogether more benign rendering, reflecting changing attitudes towards the increasingly assimilated American Irish. It is important to note that this was against the backdrop of an increased visibility of Irish Americans in live-action cinema, a number of whom, like James Cagney and Spencer Tracy, were among the most popular stars of the period. Like the New Deal-era dwarfs, these leprechauns embody admirable qualities of community-based industriousness, a striking advance on earlier graphic images of the work-shy Irish. In another lift from *Snow White*, the leprechauns sing while they work, expressing a cheerful stoicism with the words, "you will find that you won't mind your daily grind if you sing a pretty little ditty."

The Wee Men opens, as does *Leprechaun's Gold*, on a night scene, and an unseen narrator with a rich brogue tells us that, "This is Ireland – the Emerald Isle, set like a gem in the deep blue sea ... where the curling peat smoke around the thatched cottages blends with the mists of the hills and the damp wind from the sea." This is certainly of a piece with the emphasis on the rural, and specifically the rural West, that would have been familiar to American movie audiences from the template established three decades earlier by the Kalem Company, an American operation which based itself in Ireland to exploit the authentic locations that would be one of its films' chief selling points. The use of narration also echoes the way that similar voices function in the kind of contemporary travelogues and promotional films that emphasised Ireland as a tourist destination. In *The Wee Men* the mist-shrouded woods and moonlit sky evoke a gothic atmosphere that also echoes recurring visual tropes in Disney, best exemplified by one of the studio's early successes, the graveyard-set *Skeleton Dance* (Ub Iwerks, 1929), the narrator continuing, "where since time immemorial, elves and fairies have haunted the hills and wild places, and long deep valleys where leprechauns have made their home."

This mixing of touristic and fantastical registers might suggest a satirical intent to the modern viewer and were this a Warner Brothers cartoon, one would be inclined towards this view, the output of that studio tending more towards a knowing brand of ironic reflexivity. However, the humour here is playful rather than barbed, and the pastiche is more likely working in the service of cartoon exaggeration and the establishment of a hokey accessibility than a critique of representational convention. There are also elements, particularly in *Leprechaun's Gold*, of the kind of popular stage melodrama that would have provided entertainment to the diasporic audiences in the years before cinema. In this instance the brutal stereotype of nineteenth-century caricature is projected onto the figure of Mr. Gombeen, the landlord threatening eviction for Mrs O'Shea and her daughter, a return of the repressed repurposed as antagonist to the leprechaun heroes. This set-up is recycled almost frame-for-frame in a Casper the Friendly Ghost cartoon, *Spooking with a Brogue* (Seymour Kneitel, 1955) (see Connerty Fig. 2 in Colour Supplement), a later Famous Studios production that featured a number of the same creative personnel as the earlier cartoon. Kneitel was clearly attracted to this territory, revisiting it again in a Popeye cartoon for television, *The Leprechaun* (Seymour Kneitel, 1961), in which the role of antagonist is played by that series' regular villain, the Sea Hag.

Spooking with a Brogue is also one of a number of cartoons that positions a popular Irish-subject cartoon character as a tourist, with Casper inspired to visit Ireland after seeing a poster in the window of a travel agency depicting a castle and declaring Ireland to be "the land of the friendly people." A later film, produced by the MGM studio, has the character Droopy (*Droopy Leprechaun*, Michael Lah, 1958) engage in that most touristic of acts, the purchasing of a leprechaun's hat from a street vendor, on what is clearly recognisable as O'Connell Street. The Droopy cartoon is also notable for offering a more advanced and progressive vision of Ireland through its rendering, in some architectural detail, of Dublin Airport, an example of the international style and a visualisation of modernity that was all but absent from cinematic representations at that time. It is not made clear what the purpose of Porky Pig's trip is in *Wearing of the Grin* (Chuck Jones, 1951), but both here and in *Droopy Leprechaun*, much of the action takes place in the kinds of castle setting that were a key component of the promotion of Ireland as a tourist destination, one well-known example, Ashford Castle, featuring prominently in the title sequence of *The Quiet Man* the following year. Porky Pig, ever the hapless victim, encounters two sinister leprechauns named Pat and Mike, the spooky *mise-en-scène* a reminder that the leprechaun is an ambivalent character type, and can be presented as a grotesquely villainous figure as much as a quaintly mischievous one – witness the *Leprechaun* horror franchise which, at the time of writing, has had eight iterations since the first film was produced in 1993. Having addressed one of his tormentors with an ethnic slur ("you picturesque peasant caretaker of the old sod you!"), Porky is tried in a kangaroo court for apparently attempting to steal their pot of gold and sentenced to the 'wearing of the green shoes,' which, when buckled onto his feet, cause him to dance uncontrollably.

The scene that follows pastiches *The Red Shoes* (Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger, 1948), an international hit three years earlier, and mirrors that film in its bizarre transition from the 'real' world to a fantasy landscape – a nightmarish wasteland in the style of Salvador Dalí, replete with giant clay pipes, harps, and other signifiers of Irishness. The cartoon pushes the ethnic imagery and stereotyping to extremes, particularly in the exaggeratedly theatrical voice characterisations of the leprechauns, to the point where the caricaturing process itself is part of the joke.

In *The Emerald Isle*, director Seymour Kneitel operates more explicitly within these touristic discourses, taking the viewer from one site to the next in the manner of a musical travelogue, unmotivated by any narrative thread. The cartoon was part of a series of thirty-eight *Screen Songs*, released between 1947 and 1951, a revival of a successful series of the 1930s, in which audience participation in a sing-along was encouraged by the inclusion of the complete lyrics, which were picked out by a 'bouncing ball.' This device (still in common use in Karaoke machines), having been made popular in the earlier Fleischer cartoons, was adapted in this case as a bouncing shamrock, another example of the kitsch iconography of Irishness as a source of comedy. The narrator warmly claims that "the Irish are great lovers of music, and 'tis said that even the hidden creatures of the woodlands hurry out to listen when an Irish band strikes up a native tune," the tune in this case being "McNamara's Band," performed by an assembly of leprechauns. "McNamara's Band" was originally written in London and subsequently popularised by Bing Crosby, another keenly celebrated figure within Irish American culture, who had a huge hit with it in 1945. Music, often in the form of songs which were themselves highly marketable, was central to all of these cartoons, as it had been for Disney with the Silly Symphonies series of the 1930s – *The Band Concert* (Wilfred Jackson, 1935), starring Mickey Mouse, was another direct influence here. The use of music as a shorthand to help establish national character is a commonplace in cartoons set in many locations, but it is also important to recognise the key role that music, both popular and traditional, played in the self-identification of Irish Americans specifically during this period. Tin Pan Alley composers like Chauncey Olcott and Albert and Harry Von Tilzer had numerous hits during the early years of the twentieth century with songs like "My Wild Irish Rose", "Just Sing a Song for Ireland," and "A Little Bunch of Shamrocks," respectively (Moloney 395-96).

It is likely that the production of these Irish-subject cartoons with leprechaun protagonists was at least partly prompted by the success of the Broadway musical *Finian's Rainbow*, which ran for two years following its first appearance in 1947. In the story, written by Yip Harburg – who had penned the lyrics for the songs in *The Wizard of Oz* (Victor Fleming, 1939) – and playwright Fred Saidy, the leprechaun comes to America from Ireland, and brings an outsider's perspective to a narrative that unfolds in the fictitious southern state of "Missitucky." A similar case of the leprechaun-as-migrant informs *The Luck of the Irish* (Henry Koster, 1948), in which a New York reporter, played by Tyrone Power, is followed back to America by a leprechaun he en-

counters while holidaying in Ireland. The satirical thrust of *Finian's Rainbow* sees the leprechaun, whose crock of gold is buried close to Fort Knox in the hope that it will multiply, cast as "the capitalist's bogeyman" (Taaffe 12), and the film is far from being a merely superficial fantasy. James Silas Rogers has argued that during the volatile post-war period, which saw an embrace of conservative values and the framing of socialist ideas in terms of the communist menace, "leprechauns and Irish figures functioned as innocents in America, whose naïveté allowed them to comment on contemporary life, and to give voice to misgivings about what the nation was becoming" (Rogers 148). The potentially controversial way the narrative deals with the dynamics of southern plantation politics, and with race in particular (the skin of a bigoted Senator is accidentally turned black by a curse, only for it to be returned to its original white as a 'reward' when he mends his ways) may have been what stalled any interest in the property on the part of the Hollywood studios, and it was not adapted as a film until the Francis Ford Coppola version reached the screen in 1968, at a time when these elements might have been more palatable.

Production sketches and script notes for an earlier unfinished film of *Finian's Rainbow*, to have been directed by John Hubley, suggest that this could have been one of the most important animated features of the 1950s, certainly one of the most ambitious (Canemaker). The production had advanced far enough for soundtrack recordings to have been made, featuring Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, and other top tier musical stars of the period. At the time that preproduction work on it began, Disney was the only studio still producing feature length animation, a field in which it had dominated since *Snow White*. Only Fleischer Studios, with *Gulliver's Travels* (1939) and *Mr. Bug goes to Town* (1941), had produced anything other than seven-minute shorts, and Hubley, with a track record of innovation and experiment as a director and founder of UPA in 1943, and to whom the political and social subtexts of the narrative would have been appealing, was commissioned to work on an animated version. Like other directors we have looked at, Hubley began work at the Disney studio, but was dissatisfied with the limited creative options available to him in such a stylistically rigid environment, and, following his departure, established UPA with the specific ambition of pushing animation into more progressive territory, thematically and stylistically. It is possible to get some sense of the visual design of the film from the several hundred surviving pre-production sketches, which suggest the expressively modernist style of Hubley's earlier work, and an atmosphere that would have been entirely different from many of the cartoons discussed here. There is no certainty as to the precise reasons why the project was abruptly cancelled in 1955, though animation historian John Canemaker suggests that it was related to investor nervousness following John Hubley's coming to the attention of the House Un-American Activities Committee, and his refusal to testify before them (Canemaker 121).

Another factor that may have inspired the Famous cartoons and may indeed have been a contributary motivator for Hubley, was Walt Disney's ambition to make the

film based on leprechaun mythology that would eventually materialise as *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*, a concept that was under consideration for some time, something that would have been well known within the industry. Disney had in fact been planning the film, which he originally envisaged as an animated feature, since at least 1946, when he sent a number of artists to Ireland on a research trip (Maltin 416). Tony Tracy has written in detail about how, during this lengthy pre-production period, Disney engaged directly with the Irish Folklore Commission, and particularly with Dr. Seamus Delargy, who offered Disney a rich variety of potential source material, which was ultimately set aside in favour of the focus on the leprechaun character (Tracy 55). Intriguingly, records also indicate that Delargy was approached in 1947 by a representative from Paramount, the studio to which Famous was attached, again with a view to discussing the possibility of a film based on leprechaun mythology, and though this was indeed the year that *The Wee Men* was produced, it would have been without the assistance of the Folklore Commission as it was decided that first-comer Disney had a right to a degree of exclusivity (Tracy 51). *Darby O'Gill* itself was shot entirely on the Albertson and Rowland Lee ranches and on two sound stages at the Disney studio in California, meaning that many of the landscapes presented in the film are in fact matte shots created by special effects designer Peter Ellenshaw, and thus share the hand-rendered artificiality of the landscapes in the animated cartoons discussed earlier.

In a 1959 episode of his ABC television show, *Disneyland*, entitled "I Met the King of the Leprechauns," essentially an extended promotional film for *Darby O'Gill*, which was released later that year, Walt meets various people posing as experts, ostensibly as part of the pre-production process for the film. The series of books by Herminie Templeton Kavanagh on which the film is based are not alluded to, and instead the TV show presents Disney himself as the source of the narrative, appearing as a serious-minded researcher, notebook in hand. A recurring theme of Disney's research is his desire to capture the actual appearance of the leprechauns, and the quest is framed as a piece of investigative reporting or documentary, rather than as the creative *Disney-fication* of folkloric sources, and indeed Templeton Kavanagh's book. Later in the episode Disney travels to Ireland, and, as a stock exterior shot of College Green implies, into the Trinity College library, to meet another expert. This library custodian produces a (cartoonishly) large and dusty illustrated book, and relates a version of the leprechauns' origin story, "a kind of Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained rolled into one." The engraved pictures are in the style of the well-known illustrations for *Paradise Lost* by Gustave Doré, a noted influence, with other French Romantic illustrators of the mid-nineteenth century, on the style of Disney's background artists during the 1930s and 40s. The apparent authenticity of these images is underscored by the anachronistic incorporation of texts and page layouts based on the *Book of Kells*. Disney's insertion of himself into the diegesis of the film itself, with the signed note that opens *Darby O'Gill*, thanking King Brian and the other leprechauns for their co-operation, is of a piece with the self-figuration that was a key component of earlier

cartoons in which the artist/creator is revealed in front of the camera, and suggests in this case the emphatic placing of a proprietary stamp on the narrative. The television episode might also be regarded in this manner, his trip to Ireland in search of the leprechaun perhaps deliberately intended to mirror the genealogically investigative journeys of many Irish American tourists in search of roots, and the kind of promotional films, such as *O'Hara's Holiday* (1950), discussed by Stephanie Rains with regard to the touristic discourses that structure so many Irish-subject films (Rains 209). Disney himself had Irish roots, though he exaggerates these in describing himself as "*half*-Irish" during the chat with actor Pat O'Brien that opens the episode.

The studio's reworking of the leprechaun character is also exemplified in a book that appeared in 1955 as part of the Disney Little Golden Book series. The book, illustrated by Disney animator Richmond Kelsey, was titled *Little Man of Disneyland* and was part of a cross-promotional strategy in which every element of studio output that year was mobilised in the service of promoting the first theme park, which opened in Anaheim California on 17 July. The story, written by Golden Book regular Jane Werner, has "Patrick Begorah" play a role in the construction of the Disneyland theme park (note again the industriousness), and establish a home for himself in a secret place within its boundaries. Beyond his ethnic name and his self-evident status as a leprechaun (though the term is not used), there is no direct allusion to the character's Irishness, indeed it is implied that his 'home' is the Californian site on which the park is to be built. There is a self-reflexive tone to the tale, which has Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse surprised by Patrick's failure to recognise them, given their status as stars of film and television, though this meta-narrative quality is not extended to a recognition of Begorah's origins as a figure transposed from a specific folkloric tradition. As he moves his belongings into the theme park under cover of night on the final page, it is to take his place as a character in the Disney universe with no suggestion of any other context in which he might exist.

Pigs is Pigs (1954), a Disney cartoon produced during this period, based on a short story originally written by Ellis Parker Butler in 1905 and directed by Irish American Jack Kinney, centres on a human, rather than a supernatural, character. The design of its Irish protagonist, the over-scrupulous railway agent Flannery, owes much, even at this late stage, to the simianised type that prevailed during the nineteenth century, and he is endowed with a pronounced Stage Irish accent, though is otherwise not especially stereotypical in the traditional manner. Like the leprechauns of the Famous cartoons he is a diligent employee, though his over-zealous attentiveness to his job, and pathological desire to be an effective 'company man,' perhaps speaks to the insecurities Timothy Meagher has in mind when he outlines a particular mid-century perception of the American Irish as "handicapped by a backward Catholic culture that made them fatalistic, communal, suspicious of ambition and individualism, obsessed with conformity and security, and fearful of risk" (Meagher 131). The action takes place in a railway depot that could be anywhere (although we take it to be some-

where in America), the geographical abstractness compounded by the entry at one point of a stage Scotsman, with whom Flannery can only engage following careful consultation of a conversational rule book. The film's highly stylised look, which is striking, and earned it an Oscar nomination, owes something to the fact that Disney, like many other studios, was absorbing the modernist approach to design typical of John Hubley and UPA, who had recently enjoyed critical and commercial success with shorts like *Gerald McBoing Boing* (Robert Cannon, 1950) and *Rooty Toot Toot* (John Hubley, 1951). When Irish characters appear in human form in cartoons of this period, they tend to occupy peripheral roles, often appearing as officers of the law. A typical example is *What's Sweepin'?* (Don Patterson, 1953), a *Woody Woodpecker* cartoon set in the late 1800s that features Walter the Walrus as a dishonest Irish cop stealing bananas from the neighbourhood fruit stand. Bugs Bunny, in his characteristically vaudevillian style, briefly impersonates one in *Bowery Bugs* (Arthur Davis, 1949), also a period tale. Perhaps the most notable employment of this particular ethnic stereotype occurs in a Fleischer Studio cartoon titled *The Fresh Vegetable Mystery* (Dave Fleischer, 1939), in which the Irish cops appear in anthropomorphised form as drunken potatoes.

In *Finnegan's Flea* (1958), directed by Izzy Sparber (see Connerty Fig. 3 in Colour Supplement), again for Famous Studios, despite being a musical comedy, whose narrative owes a great deal to Chuck Jones' *One Froggy Evening* (1955), the Finnegan of the title is presented as a remarkably desperate character in the context of the theatrical cartoon of the time, and the narrative, related by a barman who is also Irish, is effectively offered as an explanation for the protagonist's chronic alcoholism. Finnegan's story begins with him awaiting release from prison, where he first encounters the singing flea who he becomes convinced will earn him his fortune. All such ambitions are dashed when, following his release, Finnegan visits a tavern to celebrate the signing of a big contract and the narrator barman casually kills the flea. We learn that the barman subsequently feels compelled to supply Finnegan with a steady diet of pretzels and beer in perpetuity, a set-up that Finnegan has accepted in grim silence for thirteen years, never leaving the bar. This is essentially another magical fantasy tale, albeit one that takes place in prison cells and homeless shelters, and is oriented around guilt, failure, and alcohol abuse, Finnegan's misfortunes being the very antithesis of the leprechaun's bright-eyed optimism. As a metaphor for the crushed dreams of the Irish American experience it is uncharacteristically strong stuff relative to the earlier examples from Famous.

The leprechaun type has continued to feature in various graphic contexts, for example as the pugilistic mascot for the Notre Dame University football team, designed by Theodore Drake in 1964, and in the promotional material for the Lucky Charms breakfast cereal, which includes a long-running animated incarnation. The first of the Lucky Charms television commercials to feature the character Lucky the Leprechaun was produced by another ex-Disney animator, Bill Melendez. For over fifty years, the

character has featured in dozens of animated advertisements that range in style from traditional cel animation through to digital 3D, making him by far one of American television's most enduring cartoon characters. The action in the advertisements is abstracted from any recognisably Irish context, often taking place in the kind of generic European fairy tale woodlands familiar from the Disney films of the 30s and 40s. Lucky's chirpy, playful *persona* has remained undeveloped over the decades, unsurprising given the extreme brevity and consumerist imperatives of television commercials. Diane Negra singles out Lucky's diminutive height as offering not only a particular appeal for the child consumers who are its target audience, but also as suggestive of a reduced "cultural stature," a factor that harks back to nineteenth century colonialist discourses around infantilism and paternalist condescension in relation to Ireland (Negra 80). This representation of the Irish as children also recalls the vogue in American greeting card and postcard art from earlier in the twentieth century, best exemplified in the work of Ellen Clapsaddle, who produced numerous cards, many celebrating St. Patrick's Day, featuring young children and infants in green bonnets, hats and britches, above legends like "and what color [sic] should be seen, where our father's homes have been, but our own immortal green."

The cartoons produced by Famous Studios in the middle of the twentieth century, though they combine elements of both parody and sentimentality, do powerfully render, in the bold visual style of classical animation, a technicolour world of magic, the supernatural, and touristic appeal. These short films speak to the conception of Ireland as a kind of fantasy, a place not entirely real, reflecting the experience of second and third generation Irish Americans, accessing, via a nostalgic silver screen imaginary, a place they had never known. Perhaps this resort to pure fantasy also suggests a failure on the part of the diasporic audience to reconcile the dramatic changes wrought by the real events of the Rising, the Civil War, and the new-found independence that preceded the release of these cartoons by only a short number of decades. The leprechaun figure has persisted in American popular culture since the 1960s, and there is rich potential for further research in this area. Ruth Barton has suggested that the grotesque characterisation at the centre of the *Leprechaun* horror franchise mentioned earlier was part of a "wider, and seemingly, conservative backlash against political correctness and the politics of assimilation and multiculturalism" (Barton 30). Until recently, one of the biggest stars of professional wrestling (a cartoon-like entertainment form if ever there was one) was a volatile 'leprechaun' with the *nom de guerre* 'Hornswoggle,' a word meaning to hoodwink or swindle, and whose tag team partner, 'Finlay,' regularly brandished a shillelagh in the ring. Unashamedly retrogressive leprechaun characters appeared in numerous episodes of both *Family Guy* and *The Simpsons*. In fact, the ironic take on ethnic humour employed by the writers of *The Simpsons* was regularly directed at Irish and Irish American targets, one episode, "The Day the Violence Died," specifically dealing with animation history itself ("Look out Itchy – he's Irish!"). In terms of the range of ethnically informed caricatures and cartoon characters that once proliferated in the graphic arts,

two decades into the twenty-first century the leprechaun is something of a last man standing.

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OBJECT LESSONS AND STAGED IRISHNESS IN *DARBY O'GILL AND THE LITTLE PEOPLE*

Michelle Witen

Upon its release in 1959, *Darby O'Gill and the Little People* prompted mixed responses. One anonymous reviewer praised it for its maverick use of "trick effects" and for Jimmy O'Dea's masterful portrayal of King Brian as "the most likeable and beguiling leprechaun yet to appear on the screen" (Anon. 87). However, this same reviewer also categorised it as a Disneyfied "excursion into American-Oirish fantasy," criticising it for "lay[ing] on the blarney with a trowel" and for the patently synthetic nature of its alleged Irishness (87). Since its release, the film has been held up as the gold standard of "Oirishness" by critics and filmmakers alike. For example, in his 2010 article, "When Disney met Delargy: 'Darby O'Gill' and the Irish Folklore Commission," Tony Tracy notes that the film has had an "enduring influence in shaping impressions of Ireland and the Irish as a romantic site of pastoral simplicity and premodern cultural practices," making it the epitome of "Hollywood's positioning of Ireland as whimsical rather than worldly reality" (44-45).[1] This commodification process is part of Tracy's delineation of the history of Walt Disney's meeting and subsequent communications with Dr Séamus Delargy of the Irish Folklore Commission. Tracy parallels the two, calling them "charismatic and visionary leaders professionally dedicated to gaining recognition for folk narrative in modern culture albeit in strikingly different contexts: Disney a highly creative exploiter of disparate narrative traditions in the global medium of the movies; Delargy the state-sanctioned director of the national folklore collection" (46-47). During their consultations, despite Delargy's repeated efforts, Disney could not be deterred from condensing Irish folklore into a film about leprechauns, and *Darby O'Gill* was the product of this preoccupation.

This chapter pinpoints the significance of this fascination with leprechauns, linking it to a trajectory of staged/screened Irishness. While *Darby O'Gill and the Little People* incorporates many Stage Irish tropes, I argue that it also engages with and problematises these stereotypes through the figure of King Brian and other folkloric objects catalogued in the throne room scene of the film. The precedent for treating *Darby O'Gill* as a site of resistance can be located in its source text, Herminie Templeton Kavanagh's *Darby O'Gill and the Good People* (1903). Here, Kavanagh addresses controversial issues such as sterility and barrenness, grief, and the clash between folklore and theology, even going so far as to stage a debate between the parish priest, Father Cassidy and King Brian Connors, King of the Good People, on the na-

1 Notably, the casting director for John Sayles's *The Secret of Roan Inish* used the acronym "DOG" for Darby O'Gill as an indicator for actors that tended to portray stage Irishness (Chanko, qtd. in Tracy 44).

ture of good and evil. The truce between the two is only established by engaging with politics and culture, with the two agreeing that Daniel O'Connell was the greatest man who ever lived, Tom Moore the greatest poet, and Owen Roe/Brian Boru tying as the greatest warriors (Kavanagh 50-51). Nevertheless, the focus of this chapter is Disney's film adaptation, *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*, for its emphasis on leprechauns, within the context of post-war Irish-American sensibilities, and the objects in the throne room (absent from the novel), all of which I argue are integral to the film's screen-Irish identity.

Positioning *Darby O'Gill* within a Stage Irish discourse, this chapter begins with a discussion of the roots of the Stage Irishman. Starting with an overview of the appearance and accoutrements of the stock character in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, I move through the politicisation of these types in the nineteenth-century figures of the "Fenian" and the "Paddy," as seen in caricatures, vaudeville and the music hall. I then examine the "Stage Gael" as a response to these types that tried to channel the ancient idealism of the Celtic past, which in turn provides the context out of which the leprechaun emerges as "the default icon of Irish culture" (Rogers 146). The nature of this default is assessed more particularly in the Paramount animated short "The Leprechaun's Gold" (1948), whose producers, like Disney, approached the Irish Folklore Commission, but fabricated a much less sensitive reading of Irishness that uncomplicatedly recycles stereotypes of Stage Irishness. By contrast, *Darby O'Gill and the Little People* also utilises tropes such as romanticised landscape, music, jigs, the Stage Gael, and the "Paddy," but the figure of the leprechaun destabilises these concepts by placing Darby in the position of being subservient to the Celtic past in the same way that Stage Irishness was used as tool to legitimise Victorian oppression. Finally, delving more deeply into Disney's attempted creation of what I refer to as a "stage folklore" – as seen in the film and its promotional materials – this chapter demonstrates that Disney's misreading of nationalist objects in the throne room, when interpreted alongside the leprechaun, causes these mythical objects to be sterilised by the very creatures the film seeks to anthologise.

Staging Irishness: From Stock Character to Leprechaun

"Stage Irish" is a representation of Irishness that finds its roots in seventeenth-century drama, but which soon after evolved into a stock character.[2] As Declan Kiberd writes: as early as the 1600s, "the rudimentary image of the Stage Irishman had been formed: he wore trousers, drank endlessly, swore wildly, and spoke a broken

2 See Graves's "Stage Irishman Among the Irish" and Bartley's "The Development of a Stock Character I: The Stage Irishman to 1800" for more particular stereotypes associated with the stage Irishman. Graves, discussing Dion Boucicault's precursors, describes the inherited types from Theophrastian and Plautine comic characters – i.e. "The Surly man, the Boor, the Patron of Rascals […] the old man, the trucky [*sic*] servant, the braggart soldier" (31) – while Bartley's breakdown is more particular to what he describes as its three stages of development from 1587-1800 (438-45).

but colourful brand of English, salted with Gaelic exclamations" ("Fall" 21). A century later, the character had acquired some props to make him more recognisably Irish, just in case his drinking, clothing, and Gaelicisms were not sufficient markers: "now the character invariably carried a shillelagh under his arm, ate potatoes as a staple diet and frequently appeared with a pig in close attendance" (Kiberd, "Fall" 21). The figure itself was meant to be derogatory, "his hobnailed boots and knee breeches, his swallow-tailed coat and shillelagh, his poteen in his pocket and 'begorra' on his lips" (Graves 36), articulating an Irishman who performed buffoonery through costume, speech, animals, and objects. These four categorisations develop further in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and will be the coordinates for my later analysis of Stage Irishness in *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*.

By the nineteenth century, the Stage Irishman had been adapted to several media beyond plays: early modern depictions of him in prose as a "wild Irishman" had evolved into the brutish, rebel-rousing "Fenian," just as the humorous figure had become the simianised "Paddy." This "dual image" appeared in Victorian caricatures (Hayton 31), but also in the form of music hall and vaudeville acts.[3] While "Stage Irish" tended to be a comically inflected (if pejorative) depiction, the staging of Irishness in the later nineteenth century carried political connotations that "vindicate[d] Victorian repression" and suppression of the Irish with reference to Home Rule and the Land War (Hayton 5). In British and American newspapers until the late 1880s, cartoons involving "Paddy, the Irish peasant" showed him to be "lazy, credulous, excitable, and irrationally hostile to lawful authority" while his counterpart, the "Irish rebel or Irish-American Fenian was depicted with more brutish features. At best he had a more pronounced jaw and at worst he appeared as an ape-like or completely dehumanised figure, signifying his degraded nature" (De Nie n.p.). By the turn of the century, the pig became a staple in caricature, and was used to represent politicians and Ireland alike: "The pig represented Ireland's status as an agricultural, rustic and backward nation, as well as the Irish peasantry's supposed indifference to filth and muck" (De Nie n.p.).[4] This is also when the leprechaun made his first appearance in caricatures, with the three representations of politicians Carson, Redmond, and O'Connor in *Punch* from 1910-1911, pictured as wearing "the standard 'Paddy' outfit" but with pointed leprechaun ears (Finnan 428).

3 See for example Kibler's "The Stage Irishwoman," where she describes sketches such as "The Irish Servant Girls"/"The Stage-Struck Maid." Other critics who discuss vaudeville and music hall acts include Mollenhauer (for the musical element), Flynn, and Malcolm and Hall.

4 See for example Michael De Nie's "Pigs, Paddies, Prams and Petticoats: Irish Home Rule and the British Comic Press, 1886-93"; L. Perry Curtis Jr.'s *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature*; Soper's "From Swarthy Ape to Sympathetic Everyman," and William Jenkins's "The Toronto Irish and the Cartoons of the *Evening Telegram* 1910-1914."

While the pig did not make it onto the music-hall stage, the simianised gait, the peasant costuming, the alcohol, the shillelagh, and the addition of a clay pipe did. The American counterpart to the music hall, vaudeville, showed "'Paddy,' the immigrant Irish man" as "uproarious and uncouth, in contrast with the plodding German and the stingy Jew" (Kibler 8). The emphasis on his immigrant identity showed how "the stage Irishman occupied the role of ethnic Other, a comic inversion of genteel Anglo-American masculinity reinforcing the popular opinion that the Irish were incapable of assimilation into modern American civilisation" (Flynn 123). As part of the act, the character was also known to perform an Irish jig, a fast-growing stereotype of performed Irish identity, since "no dance was more closely associated with Ireland than the jig" (Mollenhauer 374). The jigging leprechaun, wearing this same garb and dancing to "The Fox Chase" will return in *Darby O'Gill* as a key signifier of Stage Irishness.[5]

One final representation of Irishness that is relevant to the analysis of *Darby O'Gill and the Little People* that will follow is that of the "Stage Gael." In the wake of the Irish Literary revival, and Yeats and Lady Gregory's proclamation that "Ireland is not the home of buffoonery and easy sentiment, as it has been represented, but the home of ancient idealism" (Gregory, qtd. in Dean 72), the Celt and the numinous (elderly) peasant also came to be a marker of staged identity. As Kiberd writes, the "Stage Irishman gave way to an equally spurious stereotype, the Stage Gael, the long-suffering mystical peasantry of the west so beloved of Yeats and de Valera" ("Fall" 32).[6] The Stage Gael glorified the Irish peasant – whose primitivism seemed to confer upon him an innate understanding of ancient legends and folklore, Gaelic, and a knack for the oral tradition – as well as the surroundings of the "scenic landscape, Gothic ruins and romantic ruins of Boucicault's glamorised countryside" (Kiberd, *Inventing* 498).

After the establishment of the Irish Free State, the Stage Gael was extended into the prevalent image that Ireland wished to convey of itself to Americans in particular, in what Carol Taaffe refers to as de Valera's "cultural propaganda" agenda:

> In September 1945, Éamon de Valera made clear to his Heads of Missions that cultural propaganda should now be a priority – not only to protect Ireland's independence, he said, but to correct false ideas about the Irish people that had been disseminated worldwide to justify British mistreatment of the country. An official later handed the propaganda brief looked grimly on the prospect of university exchanges and badly attended lectures; he dreaded the interference of provosts and museum directors. There were better ways, he advised, 'to "put Ireland over" on the "plain American people." (n.p.)

5 See Mollenhauer for historical examples of the performance of the jig and its significance as an identity marker (377).

6 See also Kiberd's *Inventing Ireland*, specifically the chapter, "Flann O'Brien, Myles, and *The Poor Mouth*" (497-512) for a more thorough critique of the Stage Gael, a term which is derived from a letter from Brian O'Nolan to Sean Casey (498).

Earlier, in 1943, as an extension of this "cultural propaganda" that would particularly appeal to Americans, de Valera had also put forward an image of an "ideal Ireland" in his famous "The Ireland that we dreamed of" St Patrick's Day broadcast. This image consisted of "a land whose countryside would be bright with cosy homesteads, whose fields and villages would be joyous with sounds of industry […] whose firesides would be forums for the wisdom of old age" (de Valera n.p.). Thus, the coordinates of the Stage Gael alongside de Valera's pastoral Celticism gave rise to the rolling green landscapes and idyllic village typical of "heritage films" as well as the cultural capital of the Celtic past as recounted by elderly storytellers around the fireside.[7]

By the late 1940s, another folkloric figure emerged as a stand-in for Ireland not on stage but on-screen: the leprechaun. The heretofore "solitary, cross, busy little figure on the periphery of the Irish fairy world" (Taaffe n.p.) metamorphosed into a symbol of the ancient, pre-Christian Celtic past, of rural Ireland, of wiliness and bartering, of mystical powers, and of superstition. However, it is not completely clear at what point the leprechaun became "the default icon of Irish culture" (Rogers 146), particularly in the United States. Although the leprechaun had appeared in *Punch's* political caricatures at the turn of the twentieth century, as previously mentioned, and, in 1890, was characterised as "the best known among the solitary fairies" by Yeats in *Fairy and Folktales of the Irish Peasantry* (qtd. in Barton, "Glocca Morra" 28), by the middle of the twentieth century, he ceased to be a mildly mischievous cobbler and came to be "associated with sentimental or stereotypical visions of the country" (28). Critics such as Carol Taaffe, Ruth Barton, Diane Negra and James Silas Rogers have traced the rise of the leprechaun in post-War America as well as its cultural implications in film and advertisements. Both Taaffe and Rogers link his popularity to James Stephens' *The Crock of Gold* (1912) and the wish fulfilment of capitalism, demonstrating this influence on musicals/films such as *Finian's Rainbow* (1968). Barton further argues that both *Finian's Rainbow* and *Darby O'Gill* were integral in "establishing the templates for the function of the leprechaun in cinema" (29) before the leaping leprechaun was replaced by the vengeance narrative of the *Leprechaun* horror franchise.[8] However, the source text for *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*, Herminie Templeton Kavanagh's *Darby O'Gill and the Good People* (1903; serialised 1901-1902), predates Stephens' text by a decade. In it, Kavanagh only dedicates one story in the collection to the wish-granting leprechaun – giving other aspects of folklore, such as the banshee, the come-hither, the changeling, the Cóiste Bodhar, the Omadhaun, etc. equal treatment – and it is Disney's adaptation of the text that transforms the Good People and their King into jigging leprechauns.

7 For definitions of Irish heritage cinema, see Barton's "The Ballykissangelization of Ireland."

8 While Barton sees this as a template, Rogers instead sees *Darby* as "a decisive end to a literary tradition in which the leprechaun figure was employed in a nuanced, dialogic, and transgressive manner" (Rogers 147).

Nevertheless, the leprechaun does become a metonymy for Stage Irish folklore: just as the Irish on stage are distilled into stock characters, so too is the mysticism of Ireland refined into the single figure of the leprechaun. Dressed similarly to the Stage Irishman with his breeches, green swallow-tailed coat, distinctive hat, pipe, and shillelagh, the not-so-elusive leprechaun has become part of everyday narratives about Ireland in greeting cards, breakfast cereals, advertisements, and films that propagate existing, wrongheaded reflections of perceived Irishness – particularly with the emphasis on the pot of gold. As Diane Negra writes in "Consuming Ireland: Lucky Charms Cereal, Irish Spring Soap and 1-800 Shamrock," the 1963 Lucky Charms Leprechaun, for example, is part of a campaign that "directly or obliquely package[s] Irishness for US consumers by deploying imagery associated with an American idea of what Irishness is" (Negra 77). This idea is completely removed from the original context of the leprechaun or Irish folklore more generally, turning him into "a type derived from the tradition of the stage Irishman" (80), but one that suits an American purpose through the representation of the experience of immigration,[9] with the pot of gold acting as a joker card for the American dream. It is this exact version of the leprechaun that finds its way into "The Leprechaun's Gold" (1948), which will be discussed below.

Paramount's Stage Irish Leprechauns in "The Leprechaun's Gold"

While Disney studios was collecting material from the Irish Folklore Commission (IFC) for their Irish film in 1946,[10] they encountered a competitor: the IFC was approached by a representative from Paramount Pictures, who wanted to consult with them regarding a planned project on Irish folktales. The Disney production executive, Larry Lansburgh, promptly wrote to dissuade Delargy from meeting with Paramount, cautioning him that the material might not be treated with the necessary sensitivity: "I feel that the Irish leprechaun and fairy theme is a very delicate subject and unless it is handled well, might tend to ridicule the tradition that your Folklore Commission has been trying so hard to preserve" (qtd. in Tracy 51). However, even without the consultation, Paramount nevertheless went on to create the animated short "The Leprechaun's Gold" in 1948, arguably treating the leprechaun theme exactly as Lansburgh predicted and providing a case study of the Hollywood iteration of the previously discussed Stage Irish tropes. In its ten minutes of running time, the film almost seems to be a checklist of Stage Irishness, covering the romanticised landscape, the leprechaun costumed as a Stage Irishman, potatoes, greedy landowners, impoverished peasants, cunning trickery, and a pig.

9 Negra further argues that while "ads recuperate the experience of immigration," this is a "transform[ation of] negatively valued difference into positively valued accommodation" (82).

10 For a full account of the exchange between Disney and Delargy, see Tracy.

The animated short sets the tone with its opening images of a twilit verdant countryside, peppered with backlit ruins and the voiced over narrative description of Ireland as "[t]he land of legend, of romance and ruins, of shamrock and shaman, of banshee and Blarney stone, where peat smoke from humble cottages, curves like magic mist high over the countryside" (0:38-0:54). After establishing the rural, idyllic setting, the scenery shifts to faeries dancing, and more specifically to the leprechauns in their "underground cobbler shops, making shoes to give to the poor" (1:15-20). The subtle change of the leprechaun's initial task of shodding the feet of all the faeries to a more altruistic purpose foregrounds later philanthropic actions, such as the youngest leprechaun trying to give up his gold to rescue a poor family from eviction.

As the cartoon focuses on the underground workshop, we see four elderly leprechauns sitting at individual desks, hammering in tandem, while a younger, red-haired, red-bearded leprechaun provides slapstick comic relief, as he clumsily collects the shoes and prepares the soap and water for the ritual washing of the gold. This young one, "Paddy," wears a green cap and his face is simianised. Next, they gather around the fire to taste the evening's meal, until Paddy exclaims in dismay, "Faith! But there's no potatoes in the stew!" (3:35-39). Paddy immediately runs to the newly washed gold with the intention of using their funds to buy some "spuds" (3:52), but the naïve, "daft" youngster (3:55), and by extension the viewer, is quickly enlightened about the "Law of the Leprechauns": "When a leprechaun gets caught, the rest of the clan must give up their pot of gold so's he can be set free. That's why we need our gold, and don't you forget it. And as for the spuds, sometimes the widow Leary leaves a few on her doorstep just for us leprechauns" (4:02-24). In this American fantasy of Irishness, the leprechaun's gold has ceased to be a wish-fulfilling treasure and has instead become ransom money; likewise, rather than use their income towards buying food, these miserly Irish stand-ins – "A leprechaun without his gold, is like a man without a soul" (3:03-08), one says worshipfully – are willing to take charity from the poverty-stricken, superstitious Widow Leary, who cannot even afford to pay her rent, but nevertheless remembers to leave four massive potatoes on her doorstep for leprechauns.

In addition to the potatoes, Paddy also witnesses the debt-collector, Mr Gambeen, trying to extract ten pieces of gold from the widow – who is huddled inside her sparsely furnished cottage, still wearing her shawl – and threatening to evict her at dawn. Presumably this is a reference to the exorbitant rents charged before the Land Act of 1881, which would have been part of the inherited historical memory of Irish-American immigrants. Paddy feels sorry for the Widow and her daughter Molly and notes that his pot of gold would benefit them greatly. To manipulate her at his own expense, he orchestrates his own capture; however, the sensible and suspicious Molly refuses to believe he's a leprechaun: "Leprechaun indeed! Get down with you and your blarney!" (6:40-46). Fortunately, Paddy has another trick: he pretends to be hurt and forces Molly to see him home.

In the meantime, the four elderly leprechauns anxiously await Paddy's return, pacing and saying "Wirra, wirra," a Hiberno-English expression of concern, coming from the anglicisation of the Irish term for the Virgin Mary, *Mhuire* (OED, "wirra"). One of them mistakes Paddy for a mother pig and her two piglets, unexpectedly satisfying even this criterion of the Stage Irishman. As they amble by, he grumbles, "Well it sure looked like Patrick" (7:25-34). Molly and Paddy finally arrive, and Molly is given the cauldron of gold and a wheelbarrow, which she happily takes home to pay the mortgage. Unfortunately, she is spotted by Mr Gambeen, who, in his avarice, has raised the mortgage from ten pieces to the full pot of gold. Molly cries out against his thievery, but Paddy assures her that "Leprechaun gold never stays with them's that steals it" (8:58-9:03). The golden honey gold quickly turns into a swarm of bees and chases Mr Gambeen out of his house. Molly faithfully returns the gold since "the mortgage is settled" (9:40-43), and the short ends with Paddy revealing the bag of potatoes from his initial errand. The bag rips and covers the pot of gold with a dozen potatoes while all laugh uproariously. Paddy, at the centre of the image, is pictured as something between demonic and simian, though in keeping with the caricature-Paddy (as opposed to the Fenian), his features are "more chimpanzee-like than ape-like: in other words, they were cheeky and cunning rather than fierce and menacing" (Malcolm and Hall 145).

In this way, the animated short performs a number of facets of Irishness: its setting, stock characters, naming, costuming, potatoes, pigs, leprechauns, use of Irish English, and heavy brogues tick every box that would identify the short as Stage Irish. However, this representation of Irishness is not focused on authenticity so much as a perpetuation of stereotypes that reinforces marginalisation. Added to this, "The Leprechaun's Gold" also seems to be a moral tale, teaching its viewer that cheaters never prosper; kindness returns kindness; giving with a generous heart is its own reward; and blessed be the poor in spirit. Within this paradigm, the Stage Irishman, signified by the leprechaun, is a contradictory element that thrives even though he cheats, receives financial rewards for his kindness, succeeds through trickery, and prospers at the expense of the poor. This comic buffoonery embodies the playful spirit of performed Irishness, but also reinforces an ethnographic Othering of Ireland and, by extension, of the Irish in America.

Stage Irish and Stage Gael: The Dynamics of Subservience to a Leprechaun

While "The Leprechaun's Gold" seems to perpetuate every possible stereotype associated with Stage Irishness, the portrayal of Irishness in *Darby O'Gill and the Little People* is more nuanced despite its status as the "epitome of screen 'Oirishness'" (Tracy 44). On the surface, it is true to its movie-poster tagline, "A Touch O'Blarney, a Bit O'Romance and a Heap O'Laughter,"[11] which prepares the viewer for Irish

11 Other versions of the poster promised "A Touch O'Blarney, a Heap O'Magic, and a Load O'Laughter," "It's a wonderful world of Love, Laughter and Leprechauns," or a movie "Sparkling with Leprechauns and Laughter" but my focus is on the 1959 Buena Vista poster. For images of the poster – the one analysed above and subsequent post-

stereotypes with its joking conflation of Irish "O'/Ó" surnames with the preposition "of" as well as its use of the word "Blarney." The images on the poster similarly promise a cornucopia of staged Irishness, including a green-eyed, jovial Albert Sharpe as the comic Irishman; a mischievously grinning red-haired leprechaun king; Janet Munro as a green-clad Stage Irish colleen; two swarthy, dark-haired men, fighting; and folkloric highlights, such as the Pooka, the Banshee, the Death Coach, and jigging leprechauns alongside a fiddle-playing Sharpe. Alcohol is missing from the poster – though it features prominently in the film – but otherwise it aligns perfectly with what Kerr refers to as Hollywood's "'great lie' of Oirishness, which is that the Oirish are all lovable rogues with a twinkle in their emerald-green eyes who like a drink, a song, and then a bit of a fight" (44). While *Darby O'Gill* does perform Irishness to the point of parody, a closer inspection of tropes such as landscape, Darby as combined "Paddy" and "Stage Gael," music, and land ownership/poaching uncovers a power dynamic where Darby is subservient to King Brian.

The film opens with the "primitive picturesque" (Barton, "Ballykissangelization" 416) of the rolling green hills surrounding the village of Rathcullen, as the shawled Widow Sugrue minces towards the Gate House. The landscape tallies with the Hollywoodisation of the cinemascape of a non-industrial Ireland – calling to mind the Ireland of *The Quiet Man* (1952), which was also geared towards an Irish-American audience – even though "all the filming was done on two huge soundstages at the Burbank Disney Studio and at the Albertson and Rowland Lee Ranches in Southern California" (Sampson n.p.).[12] As Brian McManus notes, the film's Rathcullen is characterised by two edifices: "the church with an imposing spire which looms over the village and the public house, the Rathcullen Arms, which is recognisable from its beer barrels, lined up beside the wall," representing the centrality of Roman Catholicism and alcohol consumption in this construction of Irish character (McManus, Thesis 212). However, while the town seems to be divided between church and pub, I would argue that there is a noteworthy dichotomy between the village of Rathcullen and the ruin of the abbey that sits atop Knocknasheega (which in itself is a meeting of Catholicism and folklore, more reminiscent of Kavanagh's source material). These romantic ruins serve the purpose of mythologising County Kerry, connecting it to the heroic past and the mythic age of Ireland.[13] As Smyth observes, just "[a]s medieval ruins prompted

ers – see the photo gallery of the film's IMDB page: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0052722/?ref_=ttmi_tt> (29 June 2021).

12 Wade Sampson further describes the set and cinemascape: "The immense sets actually required the construction of a new soundstage at Disney [with] an entire village including a thirteen-foot Celtic cross in the town square. Many of the scenes of the village of Rathcullen were filmed on the lot, while all of the sequences set in the abandoned abbey were shot out at the Albertson Ranch. There was Second unit footage from Ireland, combined with matte paintings by Peter Ellenshaw that helped create the illusion of 19th century Ireland" (Sampson n.p.).

13 This notion is explored more fully by Smyth in relation to Boucicault's use of Bartlett's *Scenery and Antiquities* for his stage design: "Central to Boucicault's set design is a

meditation on the lost world of pre-Commonwealth Irish culture, this 'fairy architecture' suggested the remains of a mythical age" (356). By inserting this legendary and folkloric past adjacent to sites of drinking and religion, *Darby O'Gill* already locates the Stage Irishman alongside the Stage Gael. This comparison is seen even more clearly in the subtle adjustments that are made to Darby O'Gill's performance of Irishness as both "Paddy" and "Stage Gael." He is still an affectionate version of what Graves classifies as "a stage Irish-man 'full of wisdom and heart' […] who has been sentimentalised to the point that his flattery and cheating, his laziness and drinking, are seen not as irreparable flaws but as minor imperfections on a basically moral character" (35).[14] However, his elderliness, his closeness to the faerie folk, and his insistence that the townspeople uphold superstitions related to them puts him in the position of "the ignorant Irish peasant lout of English caricature" who has been "reframed as an idiot savant with a magical channel to a natural and supernatural reservoir of knowledge and spirituality" (McIlroy 369). Thus, Darby as "Paddy" also embodies the ancient idealism of the "Stage Gael."

While one could interpret this combination as consummate Stage Irishness, this performance of Irishness nevertheless contains elements of subversion. A frequent complaint is that the Irish are willing to "play Paddy or Biddy for the amusement of their [British] superiors" (Kiberd, *Inventing* 93), that they are somehow compelled to perform Irishness for an oppressor. However, Darby O'Gill offers platitudes and flattery to the British landowner, Lord Fitzpatrick – who benevolently jokes that Darby "retired about five years ago" but neglected to give his notice (4:20) – and appears gullible and diffident to Father Murphy as a representative of the Catholic Church. However, the points at which he is literally being forced to perform are in his interactions with King Brian. Even when he is first kidnapped by the leprechauns, Darby's resentment at the King's lack of gratitude for his having spread the gospel of the Good People is palpable:

> Who tells all the stories about you […] and who makes the women watch where they're throwin' their wash water when you and your lads are out walkin' invisible? […] And who makes the men tip their hats respectful to every swirl of dust? […] So you've put the come-hither on me, that's how you pay me back, you ungrateful little frainey. (25:58-26:20)

To each of these assertions of loyalty, King Brian responds placatingly, "You do, Darby," before finally congratulating him "You, you've done grand" (26:15). But for all his allegiance and devotion to ancient rituals and the tenets of the Gaelic revival, the reward Darby receives is that he has been lured to his death and cut off from being

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notion of the Irish landscape as a monument to a lost, heroic civilisation, an idea threaded through the text of Scenery and Antiquities" (355).

14 In this case, Graves is referring specifically to Boucicault's Stage Irishman. The extent to which *Darby O'Gill* incorporates the Stage Irishman as Boucicauldian "roguish hero" has been explored by McManus in his thesis, where he examines how Darby O'Gill, as a term, has come to be a negative "cultural signifier" for Irish identity (6, 43-50).

able to see his family or friends again. When the good people become angry at his perceived ingratitude, Darby bellows "They better watch what they're saying. I speak Gaelic too!" (26:32-35), thus weaponising his knowledge against the ancient past that he has previously honoured.

Darby's sense of oppression becomes clearer when he pretends to be resigned to stay, and King Brian calls on him to perform for him. When asked if he wishes to play the harp – which has been identified by both through lines from Thomas Moore as "the harp that once through Tara's halls, the soul of music shed" (25:24-31) – Darby would rather this symbol of the seat of Irish self-governance remain as silent as it is in Moore's melodies and play his fiddle instead. Even here, he is thwarted: he is denied his own violin and instead forced to play "the Stradivarius," which King Brian brags "was presented to [him] by the emperor of the Italian fairies in 1700" (27:44-50). The Stradivarius is a famously resonant violin, and King Brian's namedropping is likely meant to highlight the impressive rarity of the instrument and by extension Darby's ignorance in preferring his own inferior fiddle. However, the interaction in which Darby mutters "I'd rather have me own" (27:50) while King Brian condescendingly offers what he perceives to be a better-quality alternative, echoes the patronising mockery of the Stage Irishman's desire for self-governance in Victorian periodicals' caricatures. The Victorian response to the Young Irelander Rebellion of 1848, for example, was to infantilise and bestialise the simian Ireland next to the British lion, with the caption "One of us MUST be put down"[15] – "putting down" aligning with babies or animals being put to sleep (euphemistically or not), subjugation, and the quashing of insurrection. The violin's Italian origin is also significant, given the controversial history of Roman Catholicism in Ireland and the unionist fear that Home Rule would be "Rome Rule" if the Bill passed. Thus, one could read this scene as the Stage Irishman, who has previously performed constructions of Irishness for the British and the Roman-Catholic Church, now as Stage Gael, becoming an on-demand performer for his ancient past. And, this performance will be enacted with an Italian instrument that has been thrust upon him rather than his own violin.

When he takes up his instrument, Darby transforms the violin into a fiddle and plays "The Fox Chase," a traditional Irish jig. As previously stated, the jig was incorporated into vaudeville acts as being representative of Irishness: "it is the jig, in 6/8 time, which has long been prominently representative of Irish dance and music" (Mollenhauer 374). The fact that this jig incites the leprechauns to mount their miniature horses and go hunting also introduces another dichotomy of subservience: namely, that of hunting and poaching and, by extension, claims to land ownership.

Poaching is raised as an issue earlier in the film when Lord Fitzpatrick gives Michael MacBride a tour of the grounds and instructs him in his duties as groundskeeper: "I

15 See the *Punch* archive for this image and other examples of condescension in the periodicals: <https://punch.photoshelter.com/gallery-image/Ireland-Cartoons/G0000tcWkXyP4OHo/I0000c1E5Q7ELdBI> (29 June 2021).

can't afford an army of caretakers for the little use I have of the place, but I don't like to see the weeds higher than the summer house" (13:09-12). Already, the appearance and dynamic of Lord Fitzpatrick as a "John Bull"-type British landowner who rarely visits his Irish estate is set. When MacBride notices a rabbit snare and a dead rabbit, Lord Fitzpatrick warns: "Ah, that's a thing I want you to put a stop to. Old Darby couldn't catch a poacher if he tried. Like enough he helped to set the snare. Now I don't want any bad feeling between the townspeople and me. I like 'em, mind you, and so will you, but don't like 'em too much" (13:18-27). While poaching has been romanticised, the harshness of the Night Poaching Act of 1828 and the Game Act of 1831, which led to the sentence of transportation, contradict this occupation as inconsequential.[16] Although Darby's role as alleged poacher is treated indulgently by Lord Fitzpatrick and Michael MacBride, the questioning of legitimate claims to land ownership is highlighted by the portrayal of the leprechauns as a group of hunters on horseback, while Darby as poacher is stealthily setting snares at night. Lord Fitzpatrick owns the land, but the leprechauns have an ancient claim to the land: in this sense, Darby's poaching places him, comparatively speaking, in the same servile position to the leprechauns as it does to Lord Fitzpatrick, since he is stealing in either case. Worse, King Brian goes so far as to frame Darby as a poacher by posing as a rabbit to the visible eye inside Darby's game bag. Instead of speculating that Darby might be poaching, as is the case with Lord Fitzpatrick, King Brian's response to Darby's refusal to comply with his authority (i.e. making his three wishes) is far more insidious, as there could be very real consequences for the criminal activity of poaching.

Whether to King Brian or to Lord Fitzpatrick, Darby's subservience to the authority of both over the land is equally shackling. In the case of Lord Fitzpatrick, he is easily replaced on the whim of the landlord and is lucky to be given two weeks to vacate the Gate House that he has occupied for at least twenty years. In the film, it is unclear what year exactly *Darby O'Gill* is meant to take place – the set is described as "nineteenth-century" (Sampson n.p.) and Kavanagh's *Darby O'Gill and the Good People* was published in 1903 – but one can assume that if the Land War has not yet happened, this type of behaviour was part of their justification. Darby's property is not his own, though he can now move to "the old McCarthy cottage," which needs a "new thatch" and Katie's reward is that "she can have first call with the cleaning" of the Manor House whenever the Lord comes to town (13:47-14:51). Even when considering his wishes, Darby knows better than to wish for "a grand big house on top of a hill, as big as the castle at Cong"; this would be a trap because you would require "servants" and "money to run the house": "There you'd be with a big house in your hands, as big as a church, and you the poorest church mouse in it" (1:13:35-54). In

16 Speaking of poachers in the eighteenth century, William Savage describes how rather than starving peasants, it was most often violent poaching gangs who "descended on an estate to take large amounts of game to sell," thereby robbing landowners of their valuable partridges, pheasants, hares, and deer, and causing the issue to become "a class war" a century later (Savage n.p.).

other words, Darby has learned to manage his expectations, as seen from his three wishes from an earlier encounter with King Brian: "Me first wish is that you'll grant me health. […] Me second wish is a small wish indeed, but it means a lot to me. I want a big crop of potatoes. […] And me third wish is for the crock of gold" (8:30-50). Things go awry when Darby gets greedy and wishes for more pots of gold for his friends; otherwise, his humble wish for health, potatoes, and one crock of gold for himself would have been manageable.

The desire for a "big crop of potatoes" feeds into the stereotype that the Irish subsist on potatoes, but the agricultural wish would be especially resonant within the folk memory of Irish-American viewers whose families might have emigrated to America because of the Famine. However, the fact that leprechauns have the ability to grant a good crop of potatoes suggests the disturbing possibility that they might have had the power to prevent the Great Famine from occurring and that that calamity might not have been a simple potato blight. This implication is supported by King Brian's threats, should Darby harm him:

> Do that, and you'll have a scourge that'll make the potato famine look like a Sunday regatta. […] Your cows will die of the black leg and your sheep of the red water, and in every cradle in town there'll be a changeling! [...] I'm the one that keeps my kingdom in order, and all the unpleasant spirts of the night will run wild unless you wish your wish and let me go. (1:00:34-59)

King Brian's warnings involve starvation, agricultural failure, the death of livestock, and depopulation, all of which were results of the Great Famine and direct contributors to the strained post-Famine relations between Britain and Ireland. If this curse could be purposefully deployed, then the ancient Irish "landowner" is far more frightening and oppressive in his threats against rebellion than the British. Taken together, these depictions of Stage (or screen) Irishness demonstrate a troubled relationship with expected roles. Darby plays the comic buffoon for the British landowner and the Church, but in his role as Stage Gael, we see him forced to "play Paddy" for an ancient king who is meant to symbolise Irish independence.

Other stock characters are similarly rendered problematically, though not necessarily because of King Brian. Darby's "Paddy" counterpart, the "burly, bellicose, reckless, and recalcitrant" Fenian (Flynn 131), is also distorted in the form of Pony Sugrue. Pony is established from the beginning as a violent, pugilistic character. Within the first five minutes of the film, his mother brags to Lord Fitzpatrick that Pony has "whipped" every man in the parish (5:20). The subversion, however, is that Pony's brutishness is not turned against the British empire, but rather his own people: he physically threatens the pub-owner; he heckles Darby during his storytelling; he is violent with Katie's other suitors; he refuses charitable acts to Father Murphy; he makes bestial chicken noises when he assumes Darby's "leprechaun" is Lady Fitzpatrick's prize hen; and he physically overpowers Michael MacBride to set him up to lose his position. The revolutionary Fenian, who was meant to illustrate the "monstrous horror" of the Irish who were too uncivilised to be granted independence (Mal-

colm and Hall 144), has been replaced with a man who not only eschews his independence but is actively conniving for servitude to a British master. Pony Sugrue's mother is also represented as a scheming "witch" against whom Katie O'Gill should be wearing her "holy medal" (46:29-34), rather than the usual epitome of "feminine sacrifice and morality" of Irish motherhood (Kibler 19). Likewise, the "colleen" Katie, is not a "Pretty Irish Girl" looking for marriage and children, despite it being the theme song of the film. Instead, she resists settling down until she is supernaturally punished into submission by nearly being killed by a Púca (and a Banshee), and by being slut-shamed in her sleep by a leprechaun: "Courtship is it? And marriage the bone and sinew of the country? What would you call a girl who'd keep her lad dangling through pure selfishness or sinful dalliance? I know what I'd call her. I'd call her a …" (1:04:04-17). King Brian's denunciation of Katie's "sinful dalliance" aligns unexpectedly with Christian ideals of purity, given that he is a representation of ancient idealism.

Focusing principally on stock characters, the depiction of the "Paddy," the "Stage Gael," the colleen, and the Fenian are all subject to the power dynamics of subservience. In the case of Darby as both "Paddy" and "Stage Gael," the leprechaun represents a destabilising element, removing the colonial dynamic and making Darby subservient to his own Irish tradition. As will be seen, this relation is further complicated by Disney's representation of patriotic objects and staged depictions of folklore.

Object Lessons and Stage Folklore

In addition to stock characters, the stage in *Darby O'Gill* is also occupied by folkloric objects that become part of its performance of Irish identity. Over and above the leprechaun – who had already attained a status of Stage Irishness in the early 1900s when politicians such as Carson, Redmond, and O'Connor were represented as leprechauns in the pages of *Punch* (Finnan 428) – Disney brought to life an entire cast of what I call "stage folklore" in *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*. Much like the Stage Irishman, Disneyfied stage folklore plays to the ancient idealism of the Stage Gael. Despite the folkloric research that went into the film, including visits to Ireland, Delargy's itineraries and "the research carried out on [Disney's] behalf," all of which "suggests that Disney was committed to a film that accurately and respectfully reflected folk beliefs and their place in Irish life" (Tracy 54), the result reflected fundamental misrepresentations of Irish heritage and the folkloric uncanny. For example, rather than a portent, the Banshee became a bringer of death, who could seemingly be battled away with fire or a stick; the Púca, traditionally a shapeshifting goblin that favours the horse form, was now a menacing, murderous, strobe-lit version of Darby's horse, Cleopatra; the Cóiste Bodhar, a ghostly carriage with a headless horseman; and King Brian Conners, a cooperative leprechaun who could be convinced to star in a Disney picture as himself, and who also uses his trickery to help a friend (i.e. tricking Darby into nullifying his death by making a fourth wish).

In their production of *Darby O'Gill* and its advertising campaign, Disney Studios went to great trouble to turn their stage folklore into stock folklore through perpetuation. The promotional materials leading up to the release of *Darby O'Gill* included a piece called "How I Met the King of the Leprechauns" in the *Walt Disney Magazine* and a one-hour special on the TV-show *Disneyland* called "I Captured the King of the Leprechauns.*"* In both pieces, Disney repeatedly emphasises his half-Irishness (despite the ratio being closer to a quarter, given that he has one Irish grandparent) and recounts the leprechaun lore that was passed down to him:

> Being half Irish myself, I learned about the Leprechauns of Ireland while I was still a small boy on our farm at Marceline, Missouri. I began to believe in Leprechauns then, because some of my relatives had pretty convincing stories to tell about the magic powers of these Little People, and the tricks they could play when angry. […] Most Irish in the old country respect Leprechauns. They leave food out for them at night, to keep them happy, and are careful not to disturb old forts and other ruins these wee folk guard as their very own. They are particularly careful not to throw water across any of the tiny paths Leprechauns leave in the grass, because Little People hate water, and there is no telling what sort of mischief they will be up to if they get their feet wet. (Disney, qtd. in Sampson n.p.)

Disney uses these promotional spots as opportunities to educate his viewers regarding Irish folklore. For example, in the above excerpt, he reveals the practice of leaving out food for the leprechauns and animistic respect for the invisible fairy world.[17] In this way, he lends authenticity and sensitivity to his future iterations of the leprechaun, while also portraying a romanticised transplantation of Irish culture in America that nonetheless sets the stage for an "eternally unchanging" (Negra 89) Ireland that will be recognisable and accessible for those with Irish heritage.

The famous TV-special, "I Captured the King of the Leprechauns," sees Disney interviewing actor Pat O'Brien – "because there's nobody more Irish than Pat O'Brien" (1:09-15) – and asking him to talk about leprechauns and other creatures of faerie folklore: "You're full Irish so I thought you could tell me about these little people" (3:00-:05). Pat O'Brien then takes Disney on a tour of his room, showing him his collection of shillelaghs; the leprechaun statue that guards it; the boxed away pipe that his uncle claimed to have picked up when a leprechaun left it behind in shock; and a book that contains the tale of the O'Brien family Banshee and shows the Cóiste Bodhar (both of which are illustrated with the same images that appear in *Darby O'Gill)*. O'Brien also sings Disney a song about leprechauns that his grandmother taught him, claiming the oral tradition is more valuable than anything that could be

17 This preoccupation with leprechauns is also present in a children's book from 1955 called *Little Man of Disneyland*. There, Disney alleges that a leprechaun named "Patrick Begorra" inhabits an orange grove and is woken from his slumber during the building process for Disneyland. Goofy, Donald, and Mickey then take Patrick Begorra in a helicopter to the Disney Studios in Burbank and show him the plans for Disneyland and ask for his cooperation in not making any mischief. Patrick agrees on the condition that he be allowed a "'wee snug house' of his own in a private place in Disneyland that was 'out of sight, hidden away' but children would be encouraged to look for it" (Sampson n. p.).

read in books: “you can learn more about leprechauns from this [song] than you can from all the high-falutin’ books in the world” (3:38).

Walt Disney asks questions along the way and O’Brien corrects his wrong assumptions.[18] For example, when Disney categorises the banshee as “the old fairy lady that wails and carries on when somebody dies,” O’Brien corrects him three times: “No no, before. Before they die. She warns you about death *before* it happens” (5:04-12).[19] After his seemingly impromptu lesson, O’Brien assures Disney and his viewer, “Banshees, death, coaches, headless coachmen, the Irish love it all” (6:46-57), effectively opening the folkloric repertoire to include more than just leprechauns. Nevertheless, the conversation returns to leprechauns as he convinces Disney to cast real ones (which Disney awkwardly interprets to mean “midgets” at first), as “only a leprechaun can play a leprechaun” (7:16-26).

The next segment of the special sees Disney going to Ireland to capture the King of Leprechauns and convince him to star in his film. He begins with a visit to an archivist, who tells him the origin story of the leprechauns through allegedly illuminated manuscripts (as told by Kavanagh in *Darby and the Good People*; illustrated by Disney). During the consultation, the special depicts a twee Ireland, especially when the archivist unboxes a leprechaun coat that has been “mailed in by Mrs Macread” (10:20), one of many received reports of leprechaun sightings from the general public. Disney stubbornly insists that he wants to capture the King, as he “believe[s] in starting from the top,” so the Irish scholar refers him to Darby:

> Well, we do occasionally hear about King Brian. The last report came in from County Kerry. There’s an old seanchaí (Walt: shana-key?) – seanchaí, a traditional storyteller – this one is very good I believe. … in the town of Rathcullen … his name is Darby O’Gill … he’ll tell you about King Brian if anyone can. Just one thing to remember, Mr Disney. Whatever he tells you, it’s true. (14:26-15:00)

Here again, Walt Disney is using Irish terminology and his slow (slightly incorrect) repetition of “seanchaí” puts him in the position of being educated, but also someone who is trying to add this vocabulary to his viewer’s lexicon. At the same time, he is putting himself in the position of an Irish-American viewer who is far removed from his heritage but nevertheless qualified to catch the King of the Leprechauns.

The rest of the film features Disney easily capturing a leprechaun and requesting the King’s cooperation. Long sequences are interspersed from *Darby O’Gill* that feature characters or objects from Irish mythology (i.e. the throne room sequence described below). To convince the King to join him, Disney informs him that he is half-Irish, thereby asserting his entitlement to the collective folk memory of Ireland.[20] Although

18 Disney’s interactions here and later with the archivist are similar to those laid out by Tracy in “When Disney Met Delargy.”

19 Unfortunately, the film had finished production, so there was no correcting this mistake.

20 According to McManus, the Disney archive also contains photos of King Brian’s life in California, “relaxing in a miniature deck chair,” “negotiating the terms of his contract,” etc (Thesis 290-91). Taaffe, McManus, and Tracy discuss “I Captured the King of the

this promotional material was clearly intended to hype the film, it also served the purpose of reiterating the same folklore and animations that appear in the movie, thus making Irish mythology (beyond leprechauns) more accessible to a non-Irish audience when they view the film.[21]

In addition to establishing the key points that would make up the expanded stage folklore of *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*, Disney also incorporates iconographic Irish "objects" in his film. These are showcased when Darby enters King Brian's throne room inside of Knocknasheega:

> — Well Darby O'Gill, 'tis pleased and delighted I am to see you again! […] Sit down, man. Over there! Drop the lid man. It's only an old chest full of jewels. We took it from the Spanish ships when the Armada was wrecked on our coast. Ship's gun too. […]
> — And the throne?
> — By all the goats in Kerry, do you think I'd sit on a Spanish throne? This once belonged to Fergus mac Leda, ancient High King of all Ireland. […] And over there, the gold cup of Cormac. And here's the sword of Brian Boru, who drove out the Danes. And over there you see the harp.
> — Don't tell me it's 'the harp that once through Tara's Hall the soul of music shed.'?
> — Aye, it is that same. (24:24-25:38)

Much like "I Captured the King of the Leprechauns," this scene also seems to have the didactic aim of giving lessons about meaningful objects from the heroic sagas of Ireland's Celtic past. The "old chest full of jewels" and the "Ship's gun" are pilfered from the Spanish Armada when they were shipwrecked along the Irish Coast in 1588, during the Anglo-Spanish War. This was a fraught time for Ireland, as it also came in the wake of the Tudor Conquest and the "Anglicisation of Ireland" (Hayes-McCoy 183). Fergus mac Leda's throne, Cormac's cup, and Brian Boru's sword are all heroic relics of historic and legendary Kings and High Kings of Ireland.[22] Cormac's cup, which is the only icon not given any explanation in the film, was magical in that "if a lie be spoken over it, it will immediately break in pieces, and if a truth be spoken it will be made whole again" (Rolleston n.p.). The Harp of Tara is a symbol of Ireland; it was housed in Tara, the seat of the Ancient High Kings of Ireland and later became a symbol of Irish independence.

Leprechauns," and Disney's cooperation with the Irish Folklore Council (and Séamus Delargy) in much greater detail.

21 It should be noted that the intended Irish-American audience, at whom the film was principally aimed and marketed, had troubles understanding the Irish accents of the predominantly Irish cast and the interspersed, non-subtitled lines of Gaelic were inaccessible to the non-Gaelic-speaking viewer. Thus, when the film was re-released in 1969, it was dubbed over in a more accessible American-English and the Gaelic was similarly translated and dubbed; even the music originally sung by Sean Connery and Janet Munro was replaced with a track sung by Brendan O'Dowda and Ruby Murray (Sampson n. p.).

22 Fergus mac Leda was King of Ulster not all of Ireland, therefore the throne could not be that of the High King of all Ireland. I am not sure if there is a purpose to this mistake.

These patriotic objects tell stories of magical artefacts, Irish unification, and victory in the face of adversity. However, just as he destabilised the role of the oppressor in the performance of Stage Irish characters, so too does the King of the Leprechauns nullifies the significance of these objects. Knocknasheega is a place that is inaccessible to the average Irish person. As such, these relics of ancient heroes have been usurped by the leprechauns to be used decoratively and frivolously: King Brian dances a jig on Fergus mac Leda's throne, which in itself is a staging of Irishness; the leprechauns leap and climb all over the cannon, sit on the harp and slide down its strings, and jump into Cormac's cup, treating it like a swimming pool. These mystical objects are rendered into everyday furniture and playgrounds. The fate of "the harp that once through Tara's Hall the soul of music shed" from Thomas Moore's *Melodies* is that it will continue to hang silently; the legendary thrones will remain forever unoccupied (except by an elusive, jigging leprechaun); riches unspent; and swords unused from within the leprechaun's throne room. In other words, these sacred objects will be used decoratively, disrespectfully, and inaccessibly, turning them into stage "props" on a false cinematic set that is constructed in America. As such, by placing these objects within Knocknasheega, Disney's attempt to pad his stage folklore with evocative mythical objects has the reverse effect of being invalidated by the exact creatures, the leprechauns, he seeks to anthologise.

Conclusion

Darby O'Gill and the Little People has generally been dismissed by critics as "the peak of an American popular culture tradition of representing leprechauns, and Irishness more generally as inane" (Rogers 146). However, while *Darby O'Gill* incorporates clichéd tropes such as romantic landscapes, the Stage Gael, the "Paddy," the "Fenian," a throne room full of nationalist objects, and folkloric creatures in its construction of Irish identity, I have argued that a further analysis of these elements demonstrates that the film is not necessarily an uncomplicated "epitome of screen 'Oirishness'" (Tracy 44), especially as compared to contemporaneous productions such as Paramount's "The Leprechaun's Gold." Rather, the triangulation of ancient idealism, British landowners, and the Church are rendered problematic by the subtext of Darby being subservient to all three. Similarly, Disney's misreading of folklore and the misrepresentation of patriotic items in the throne room leads to an implied nullification of an independent Ireland. Irish cinema critic Harlan Kennedy has asked: "Is Ireland a land at all, in the sense of a self-determining country and culture or is it a product of everyone else's perceptions?" (24). *Darby O'Gill* answers this question to a certain extent through its depiction and undermining of Stage Irish conventions: on the one hand, it is an American projection of a rural idyll populated by leprechauns, banshees, peasants, and comic buffoonery; on the other hand, these same stereotypes are subverted, with leprechauns deconstructing the system on which Stage Irishness is built.

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'WEAR SOMETHING GREEN':
THE RE-INVENTION OF THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

Eimer Murphy

> This chapter is dedicated to the memory of Rupert Murray, who lost his long battle with cancer in 2006, and to Monica Frawley, who lost her shorter battle in 2020.[1]

The celebration of St. Patrick's Day has always been inextricably linked with the Irish Diaspora. In many ways, historically the celebration of Ireland's National Saint's Day has had less to do with 'the Irish' and far more to do with 'the Irish-American.' My own personal history with St. Patrick's Day began as the child of Irish immigrants in America, and so my earliest memories of St. Patrick's Day are of the package posted out by my grandmother in Ireland containing cards, badges for us kids, and carefully boxed living shamrock for my parents to wear. In their book *The Wearing of the Green, History of St. Patrick's Day*, Mike Cronin and Daryl Adair note:

> One of the most common traditions and customs associated with St. Patrick's Day has been the annual dispatch of shamrock to Irish family members abroad […] the packaging and sending of Shamrock has been a commercial enterprise since the 1950's. (238)

When my parents later made the return 'home' to Tipperary, my participation in the celebrations went from passive to active, marching (wet and frozen) in my school's tin whistle band in the Nenagh Parade from 1977-1983. Fast forward to 1996. As a fledgling theatre stage manager, I was drafted in to work on my first Dublin Parade, and I have been involved, on and off, ever since.

With this research paper I wanted to look at the celebration of St. Patrick's Day as a 'material marker' designed to project specific ideas of Irishness, both on a national and on an international level. I also wanted to interview and acknowledge some of those 'backstage' individuals who are behind so many of our biggest celebrations. From St. Patrick's Festival to Grand Slam winning team receptions, and from the Ryder Cup opening ceremony to the 1916 Commemorations: these are the people called upon to make it all happen. In 1996, I first met them as the distant figures directing everything, either from the tops of cherry pickers, or as voices over the headset system. Over the years, as I became established in the industry, they became col-

1 Acknowledgements: Thank you to the following people, who gave me their time and attention: David 'Spud' Murphy – Festival Parade Director. Edelle Moss – Festival Marketing Director (2015). Michael Colgan – Artistic Director, Gate Theatre (1983-2017). Sheelagh Power. Rachel Murray. Sabine D'Argent – Designer City Fusion and Brighter Futures Pageants. Gary Flood – Street Festival Manager, 1996. Se Purcell – Theatre of Fire, 1996. Monica Frawley – Designer 1996. Dara de Buitlear – Sales and Marketing Executive, Carrolls Irish Gifts. Marie Tierney – Production Manager. Donal Shiel – Freelance Producer. Nancy Murphy. Karen Walshe – Artistic Director St Patrick's Festival. Darren Murphy, St. Patrick's Festival.

leagues and friends. I particularly wanted to record formally some of the anecdotal stories of that 1996 parade because, although I did not realise it at the time, 1996 was a significant year in the history of the Dublin Parade. In his essay, "Funereal Black Trucks Advertising Guinness: The St. Patrick's Day Industrial Pageant," Mike Cronin writes that the event offers "a series of visual images through which the Ireland of the time can be understood" (162). Viewed in this context, the re-invention of the St. Patrick's Day Parade in 1996 can be seen as a reflection of an emerging cosmopolitan and increasingly confident Ireland in the beginnings of the 'Celtic Tiger' era.

In their history of the celebration, Cronin and Adair find that although "[t]he wearing of the green on St. Patrick's Day has ecumenical origins and was evident as early as the seventeenth century […] the custom of staging street parades for St. Patrick's Day seems to have been a North American invention" (xxiii). While in Ireland 'the wearing of the green' may have referred to something as subtle as a bunch of shamrock, or perhaps a dark green overcoat, Cronin and Adair note that in America, the commodification of St. Patrick's Day began as early as 1898, when fancy dress costumes, souvenirs, and other special goods were produced: "it seemed that any product, if emerald coloured for the day, could be sold […] irrespective of its 'authentic' relationship to Ireland" (166). By 1960, concerns were being expressed about the levels of commercialisation, and the parades, particularly those in New York and Boston, were seen as the root cause. In 1962, the Irish Ambassador to Canada wrote to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Dublin: "Many Irish people would find offensive the green top hats, the shillelaghs, the green carnations, green beer, green whiskey […], not to mention the festooning of everything with shamrock" (qtd. in Cronin and Adair 168). All of this was worlds away from the manner in which the National Day was marked in Ireland. As a Holy Day of Obligation on the church calendar, the emphasis was placed on attendance at sombre religious ceremonies. Up until the 1970's, pubs in Ireland were closed on St. Patrick's Day – the chief form of entertainment was to attend the local version of the parade.

In his book *National Identity, Popular Culture, and Everyday Life*, Tim Edensor notes that parades and other "national(ist) ceremonies" are:

> Still the most obvious and recognisable ways in which national identity is performed […through] grand, often stately occasions when the nation and its symbolic attributes are elevated in public display […]. Such ceremonies are played out to legitimate the power, historical grandeur, military might, legal process, and institutional apparatus of the nation-state. (72)

As the state capital, the parade in Dublin has always attracted the most international media coverage, and as such has been the focus of a series of state-sponsored re-interpretations, designed to project specific notions of Ireland's status: the 'shop window' for the nation.

In the 1930's and into the 1940's, the New Irish State celebrated its independence with military pomp on its National Day. The triumphant shine of these parades gradu-

ally fading as the 1940's became the 1950's, and the memory of the War of Independence receded. Kathy Sheridan, writing humorously on those early parades, recalls:

> Soldiers with fixed bayonets and polished leggings tramped down one side of the street and up the other, reverently overseen by politicians with hats clamped to their bosoms […]. There was radio commentary on the parade from Radio Athlone. The commentator, poor creature, was doubtless mightily relieved the year the IRA broke into the box and the tedium. 'You have been listening to a commentary on a fine display of British Militarism' intoned the IRA voice to the masses. (Sheridan, "Doing What We Do Best")

From these military-style parades of the 1930's and 1940's to the involvement in the 1950's of the National Agricultural and Industrial Development Association (NAIDA), there has always been a "link between Irish Government policy and the staging of the pageant" (Cronin and Adair 168). Run by NAIDA throughout the 1950's and 1960's, the Dublin Parade, was a largely commercially sponsored display of machinery and plant, dominated by government agencies such as Bord na Móna, Aer Lingus, and the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) alongside businesses such as Guinness. In an era of mass-unemployment it was, as Cronin puts it, "not a St. Patrick's Day parade that sought to tie the people to an idea of identity, rather (it was) […] designed to convince people that Ireland was not a country of mass emigration but one of thrusting capitalism" (154).

Fig. 1. Float from the 1962 NAIDA Parade urging the public to 'Buy Irish,' a precursor to the government's 'Guaranteed Irish' campaign of the 1970's. (Image courtesy of the Irish Photographic Archive)

By the late 1960's, the industrial pageant had become passé, and attendance had dropped off considerably (see Cronin and Adair 168). Ireland had had its own national television station since 1961, and under its influence the entertainment value of trucks and tractors had undoubtedly diminished. The shadow of 'The Troubles' in Northern Ireland had begun to take a toll on tourism, and in 1970 the parade was handed over to Dublin Tourism by a government keenly aware of the need for a boost to that sector. Americans in general, and Irish Americans in particular, were the target of this campaign. Dublin Tourism believed that the best way to attract American buying power was not to *provide* an entertaining parade, but rather to invite Irish Americans to *be* the parade. As Cronin and Adair put it:

> While there was undoubtedly a desire to import American performers to make the parade a more attractive spectacle, the overarching reason behind the propagation of such links was financial. A marching band of perhaps fifty American teenagers would be accompanied by a large number of adult relatives and supporters; they would spend money flying to Ireland, staying in hotels […|, eating and drinking (185).

They go on to add that "[t]he Dublin Tourism parade, relying so heavily on American involvement, became an event that appeared to be trying to be more American than Irish" (Cronin and Adair 185). Highlights of the 1979 parade can be seen in the online RTÉ Archives;[2] among the American marching bands and the waving groups of 'walkers' (the nickname given to the visiting Irish American groups) are the numbers of Irish groups presenting entries based on American popular culture, music, television, and film. Dublin-based company Abel Alarms (perpetual winners of the float competition) that year presented a depiction of the popular American television series *The Muppet Show*. The footage also shows several new Dublin groups such as the Glenview Majorettes, Tallaght, and the Balbriggan Musical Society: groups of preteen Dublin girls dressed in American cheerleader-style costumes, carrying batons and pom-poms, influenced, perhaps, by nine years of seeing real American Majorettes on Dublin streets. As Cronin puts it, "the parade from the 1970's through to the 1990's was not specifically or exclusively Irish; rather it was a parade that became a poor-quality copy of what was perceived as American razzmatazz' (162). Notably too, in that same year (1979), the RTÉ News shows a snippet of something far more reflective of the reality of the Ireland of the time. The parade was gate-crashed by a group who somehow smuggled their float (a cage full of prisoners wearing blankets) past organisers and onto the parade route in protest against the treatment of IRA prisoners in the H Blocks of the Maze Prison.[3] Cronin and Adair note that while the parade remained relatively well attended, the media coverage of the event was reducing each year. The enthusiasm of the crowd, too, seemed to be waning, as evidenced by the manager of Dublin Tourism, Matt McNulty who, in 1975, complained

2 <https://www.rte.ie/archives/exhibitions/923-st-patricks-day-as-seen-on-tv/287770-st-patricks-day-parade-dublin-1979/>.

3 See the RTÉ Archives online exhibition "Lá Fhéile Pádraig: St Patrick's Day On TV and Radio": < https://www.rte.ie/archives/exhibitions/923-st-patricks-day-as-seen-on-tv/>.

about the lack of response from the crowd, saying: "I'd love to see more cheering and waving […], more enthusiasm generally" (qtd. in Cronin and Adair 186).

Nuala O'Faoilain, writing in *The Irish Times*, gives a tongue-in-cheek description of the experience:

> We counted our possessions in it, so to speak. We didn't have just one Downes's Bakery bread van […]. We had tens of bread vans […]. Any old body can enjoy colourful, imaginative entertainment. It took a real Dubliner to enjoy 25 bread vans followed by a flatbed truck with a frozen swing band on it. (n.p.)

Almost everyone I interviewed for this project spoke of the memory of having been 'dragged' to the Dublin Parades in their childhood, and how the American 'walking groups,' marching bands, Guinness and other commercial entries were the same year after year. There was a decidedly amateur feel about many of these entries, as companies dressed their workers in *ad hoc* costumes or even work uniforms as walking advertisements for the brand. Confectionary companies such as Cadbury's and McIntosh's threw chocolates out to literally 'sweeten' the waiting crowds, and Superquinn workers handed out hot sausages (Health & Safety Regulations had yet to be invented). In a 1996 *Irish Times* article, Kathy Sheridan quotes Dublin Tourism Chief Executive Frank Magee, who responds to criticism of the parade by insisting: "Our function is to promote Dublin as a tourism destination, not necessarily to entertain the people of Dublin […]. Having an artistic director for the parade is a pie in the sky idea" (11).

Fig. 2. Superquinn workers win over the crowd at the 1982 Parade
by handing out the famous Superquinn sausages (Image courtesy of the Irish Photo Archive)

In the introduction to his book (co-edited with Terence Ranger) *The Invention of Tradition*, Eric Hobsbawm notes that the reinventing of traditions occurs "more frequently when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which 'old' traditions have been designed" (4). And, as the 1990's began, things in Ireland began to change rapidly. Much has been written about an emerging sense of national confidence and pride which began to establish in the 1990's. The decade began with the World Cup Italia '90, which saw impromptu post-match explosions of joy at each advancement of 'Jackies Army,' with crowds spilling outdoors, bringing songs, chanting, and colourful celebrations onto the streets. Later that year, Ireland made history by electing its first female President, Mary Robinson, and the Northern Irish Peace process reached a significant milestone with the IRA ceasefire of 1994. After the gloom of the 1980's, the national mood began to lift. Significantly, too, in the early 1990's the entertainment industry was achieving prolific success overseas. Irish musicians such as U2 and Sinead O'Connor had broken America, while Irish theatre was recognised with Tony Awards for Brian Friel's *Dancing at Lughnasa* in 1991. Roddy Doyle's *The Commitments* and Jim Sheridan's *My Left Foot* achieved worldwide popularity, and Oscar nods in the case of the latter. Even the Eurovision Song Contest contributed to this success, through a remarkable run of Irish wins (in 1992, 1993, 1994 and 1996) and RTÉ's technically accomplished host broadcasts (the interval act of the 1994 production became the internationally acclaimed *Riverdance, the Show*). After decades of being the butt of jokes and the subject of negative news stories, Ireland and the Irish seemed suddenly to be becoming cool and capable of shaking off old insecurities. Declan Kiberd, in his 1996 book *Inventing Ireland; the Literature of the Modern Nation* describes this era as "something very like a second renaissance" of Irish writing (613) and singles out Joseph O'Connor and Roddy Doyle, "who took a more relaxed, even humorous, approach to Irish pieties, [and] often seemed to achieve more as artists and as social analysts" (611).

Others have noted that this globalised and confident Ireland was fast becoming a marketable brand. In their book *Cosmopolitan Ireland: Globalisation and Quality of Life,* Carmen Kuhling and Kieran Keohane note that the appearance of cultural and popular Irish successes like *Riverdance* actually precedes the first ever use of the term 'Celtic Tiger' in a 1994 Morgan Stanley report (Kuhling and Keohane 1). In the chapter "Guinness, Ballygowan, and Riverdance: The Globalisation of Irish Identity," Kuhling and Keohane describe *Riverdance* as "a commercially successful, mass produced global product" (77). They compare *Riverdance* to Guinness's "[k]nowing what matters" ad campaign to explore the ways in which "artistic creativity is brought into the service of commerce and merchandising under conditions of global consumer capitalism" (Kuhling and Keohane 76).

With the focus increasingly on Dublin as the centre of modern Irish life, the old-fashioned St. Patrick's Day Parade came under scrutiny, and once again the Government sought its re-invention. In a radical departure, this time the reins were handed not to government bodies or commercial interests, but to the artistic community. It is

possible that this decision was partly influenced by a series of street carnivals and professional events held in the city, beginning with the Dublin Millennium in 1988, and continuing with celebrations surrounding Dublin's tenure as European City of Culture in 1991. These events identified under-used public spaces in the city centre (such as the plaza in front of the Central Bank on Dame Street, the area at College Green, and the wide Georgian streets around Merion Square) and utilised them to great effect as concert and festival sites (Flood n.p.). Unfavourable comparisons began to be made between these professionally run events and the Parade itself. Writing in *The Irish Times*, Hugh Linehan notes:

> The whole point of parades and street festivals is that they're an urban phenomenon, celebrating urban life. In Ireland, since the foundation of the State, the urban experience was ignored in favour of a national narrative which privileged the rural and pastoral […]. The first sustained critique of the old-style parade came in 1992 from the UCD Architectural Graduates' Association, who described it as 'a collection of separate elements strung together along the streets […] sadly lacking in entertainment value, in imagination and in design.' (n.p.)

Michael Colgan, then Artistic Director of the Gate Theatre, recalls the phone call from then Taoiseach John Bruton, the moment his involvement with the Parade began:

> He said, 'This country finally seems to be getting its act together, but we are not getting St. Patrick's Day right. The biggest St. Patrick's Day Parade in the world is still in New York. I want to change that.' I had run the Dublin Theatre Festival and had just done the Beckett Festival, so he asked me if I would take over the running of the parade and turn it into 'something new, something spectacular.' (Interview, n.p.)

Colgan is adamant that the tone of these initial conversations centred around national pride, and not commercial gain: "Absolutely not. It was all about making it the best St. Patrick's Parade in the world, showcasing our people and our talent. Creating something so spectacular that it would make people forget about New York; making Dublin the place to be on St Patrick's Day" (Interview, n.p.).

Colgan was installed as the Chairman of the new Board of Directors in November 1995, a mere four months out from the event. The sum of £500,000 was allocated; considering that the overall budget the previous year had been £98,000, this represented a considerable level of investment on behalf of the Government. The first duties were to "wrest the power" from those who had organised the Dublin Tourism parade for decades. "There are people upset. We're making omelettes and we are doing it in a hurry, but overall change will be good" (Sheridan, "Don't Hail, St. Patrick" 11). There were many long-term decisions made on the artistic content of the parade, which due to the short lead in time, could not be implemented immediately. One of the first to be 'phased out' were the groups of American 'walkers.' Colgan went head-to-head with tour operators who were bringing these groups over and to whom the Parade was a big source of income:

> There was a lot of resistance, naturally. I wasn't against them taking part, but I *was* against them running the gig. They (Dublin Tourism) came at me with so many statistics; the number of hotel beds sold, the number of meals eaten […]. I said, 'what does it matter if hotel beds are filled with people from Galway or America as long as they are

> filled?' and I was told: 'Americans are our core business, they bring the dollars.' (Interview n.p.)

With such ideas so deeply entrenched it is remarkable how much change the committee did manage to implement in that first year, a testament to the strength of their vision for the festival. A large part of that vision came from Rupert Murray. A legend in theatrical circles, Murray was a multi-*Irish Times Theatre Award* winner for best lighting design, the original lighting designer of *Riverdance, the Show,* who also lit the Gate Theatre production of *Juno and the Paycock* which premiered on Broadway in 1988. Murray had worked with Colgan as coordinator of the 1991 Beckett Festival: "Rupert had a flair for organising large events, I knew he was the man for the job" (Colgan, Interview n.p.). Murray, as Festival Director, was teamed with Marie Claire Sweeney as Executive Director (see Murphy Fig. 1 in Colour Supplement). Sweeney had been Chief Executive of the Dublin Millennium celebrations in 1988, and on the City of Culture celebrations in 1991 (Flood n.p.). Gary Flood, a former street performer, had worked with Sweeney on Millennium '88 and City of Culture '91:

> When I heard that they were going to re-invent the parade I thought, I want in. I had seen almost every parade since 1969; I *was* that kid who watched Abel Alarms trucks going by, all that stuff. My love for street performance had been fed by seeing the Terragona Carnival: a massive spectacle festival in Spain. And having been around Macnas a couple of times throughout the 80's, these were my influences in terms of what I wanted to do. (Flood n.p.)

In press releases for the new-look parade, the organisers highlighted its celebratory feel and the importance of the audience: "We are trying to change it into a highly visual, theatrical and musical parade. This is a day for celebrating Ireland and the Irish; it's a people's event. The most important element is the audience" (Murray qtd. in Carey 3).

The day of the drab parade is given its marching orders

The Irish Times - Saturday, March 16, 1996 - Page 11

Don't hail, St Patrick, on our glorious £500,000 parade

Dublin organisers promise 'new route, new theme and new concept'

The Irish Times - Friday, January 19, 1996 - Page 2

St Patrick to get festive facelift

Irish Independent, Wednesday, March 13, 1996 3

Revamped parade all set to beat the band

A capital spectacular

This year it's all change for Dublin's St Patrick's Day parade — so look out for some truly exciting and imaginative action along the way. Justin Comiskey reports

Making the most of a very special day

Putting green on the spot

"As you have come to know, love, hate, or never ignore it," says the Minister for Tourism and Trade, Mr Kenny, "the Irish St Patrick's Day parade is a thing of the past."

Fig. 3. Press coverage surrounding the announcement of the re-invented St. Patrick's Day Parade

Speaking in the *Irish Independent*, Marie Claire Sweeney set out the long-term plan:

> This year's parade is not a one off event, but the first stage in the development of a major international festival. Unusually we've been given enough time to develop something, a sort of ongoing full dress-rehearsal, if you like, for the Millennium. (qtd. in Mac Reamoinn 12)

One of the innovations was to invite established European street performers to participate in that first parade. These professionals would work with Irish community groups and theatre practitioners, teaching street performance and clown techniques to create original pageants and performance pieces for the festival, but with an Irish flavour. Irish groups had unprecedented access to high calibre professionals such as Alex Pascall, one of the people behind the Notting Hill carnival, and Spanish super group Els Commedients, who had provided the closing night's spectacular of the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games. This access was key to the artistic vision of the Festival; rather than a poor copy of an American parade format, the organisers wanted to create a highly professional, uniquely Irish parade.

I spoke with Marie Tierney, a theatre Production Manager who, along with designer Barbara Bradshaw, was enlisted to create one of the decorative elements of the 1996 parade: the fabric snakes along the parade route. Tierney and others spoke about Murray's passion for street theatre, and the importance of his legacy:

> Rupert saw the Festival as a big opportunity for the theatrical community. He insisted that people use some of their budget to travel to see European street carnivals, meet with groups like Els Commedients, and see them perform. You would never get the chance to do that otherwise. As far as Rupert was concerned, it was an investment; we were bringing back new ideas and skills, training the Irish theatre practitioners of the future.[4]

Murray gave the task of creating the overall design to Monica Frawley, a multi-award-winning set and costume designer. Frawley had worked with both Colgan and Murray, designing for the Abbey and Gate Theatres, and her film work included the costume design for *Michael Collins.* Frawley recalls:

> Rupert called in everyone he knew, and we called in everyone we knew – real 'trickle-down economics.' It was a huge deal for the theatre community to have access to Government money. I remember being thrilled with my budget at first, until I realised what an enormous amount of work there was, and how little time there was to do it.[5]

The design brief for the first year was "to transform the city centre, to make it look as different and exciting as possible," according to Frawley:

> The easiest way to make an impact on a streetscape is with blocks of colour, and since green is the simplest and most universal association to make with St. Patrick's Day it was the obvious choice in terms of the design. 'Green' in all of its significance: growth, energy, vitality, as well as in the Irish national sense, became the overall theme for the Parade. (n.p.)

4 Marie Tierney, in interview with the author, 29 March 2014.

5 Monica Frawley, in interview with the author, 10 March 2015.

Frawley tried to avoid stereotypes associated with St. Patrick's Day; she chose instead to highlight buildings of architectural and historical importance to Dublin. She wanted to 'wrap' buildings in green fabric "[l]ike the work of artists Christo and Jeanne Claude," and give each its own identity: "The GPO (General Post Office) was to be wrapped like a giant parcel, with a big bow, stamps, and a gift tag which read 'To the People of Ireland'" (Frawley n.p.). Giant fish were to leap out of the Liffey at O'Connell Bridge (see Murphy Fig. 2 in Colour Supplement), and the fabric snakes made by Tierney and Bradshaw were to adorn statues and buildings along the parade route. To add to the pressure, this magical transformation was planned as a "surprise wake-up call" for Dubliners (Sweeney qtd. in Mac Reamoinn 12), which meant that all of the elements had to be installed overnight on 16 March, a massive logistical undertaking.

One of her simplest ideas on paper proved hardest to implement. Frawley wanted to replace all of the bulbs in the street lighting along the route with green ones "and all of the Christmas lights in the trees on O'Connell Street. But Dublin Corporation wouldn't allow it. It was so frustrating. But apart from that there was a terrific level of co-operation. There was a huge sense of good will surrounding it; people generally got on board and helped us with whatever we wanted to do" (n.p.). Although some of her ideas had to be shelved due to budgetary and time constraints, one of Frawley's innovations, the miles and miles of green bunting, made of fabric and sewn by volunteers and community groups, was adopted and is still being used today. "In some ways it was the triumph of mediocrity over aspiration in terms of what I wanted to do originally, but compromises had to be made" (Frawley n.p.).

Gary Flood was made the Street Festival Manager: "I was responsible for any content which wasn't the actual parade. I had dancers, jugglers, speciality acts of all kinds, comedians, barber shop quartets, around 200 people, working in groups" (n.p.). Flood's performers were to be deployed to keep the waiting crowds entertained in the long pre-parade build up. Originally to be dressed as traffic wardens walking the route, the surprise would come when they "would suddenly turn and start to juggle, or to sing, or whatever" (n.p.). Again, the idea had to be compromised, and Flood settled for bright green chemsplash overalls (see Murphy Fig. 4 in Colour Supplement):

> At the time green was the obvious thing to wear, because in the crowds there wasn't that much green around, it was only recently that people started to wear something green and all of those hats and costumes came in. At the time it stood out; you could spot your dancers quarter of a mile down O'Connell Street. (n.p.)

This observation by Flood articulates a theory that, as had happened in the US in the 1960's, the Festival Parade is partly responsible for the creation of a market for novelty parade costumes here. World Cup Italia '90 had kick-started a trend for Irish people wearing the type of leprechaun hats, tricolour face paint etc. that previously had been dismissed as 'paddywhackery' or 'only for tourists.' Attempting to re-capture some of the spirit of Italia '90, Irish soccer hero Paul McGrath was made Parade

Marshall, and people were encouraged to become part of the spectacle. "Organisers are also calling for a sea of green to add dramatic colour to the occasion. Director Rupert Murray wants everyone, including the crowd, to turn up in green or to use green paint and make-up liberally" (Khan 3). This call was repeated again in 2000, when the then Festival Chairman, Fergal Quinn, promoting the Millennium Patrick's Festival, asked people "not to be shy about putting on green and silly clothes. Do it just for the craic. We will have all the excitement of last year, plus a little bit more" (qtd. in Cronin and Adair 245). I spoke with Dara de Buitlear, Sales and Marketing Executive with Carrolls Irish Gifts, about sales trends of novelty items, the omnipresent green velour hats in particular. De Buitlear admits that the market for such items has grown since the 1990's: "Tourists generally buy their items from the 14th onwards. Irish people tend to buy exclusively on the 17th itself. But both demographics seem to dress up. On parade day it is primarily all novelty clothing/costume accessories etc."[6] Certainly, photographs of the early Festivals show few mass-produced green costumes in the crowd. When compared with today's scenes of seas of green leprechaun hats, it seems obvious that the Festival organisers did get their wish, as Irish people began to shed sensitivity around historical associations with negative Irish stereotyping and began to 'own' Paddywhackery in a way that would have been unthinkable even 10 years prior.

The first Festival Parade (as it was known from then out) reversed the traditional Northside to Southside route, and started at St. Patrick's Cathedral. This route re-established the connection to St. Patrick and made a distinct break from the old format. Frawley's design associated the cathedral with its literary history: in reference to its former Dean, Jonathan Swift, the building was dressed with painted cut outs and small puppet figures depicting a giant Gulliver trapped inside and swarms of Lilliputians scaling the outside. The cathedral bells rang out to start the 1996 parade. "The only surprise about changing the route to a starting point at Patrick's Cathedral was why nobody had thought of it before" (Colgan, qtd. in Mac Reamoinn 12).

Much of the responsibility for carrying off the 1996 Parade was given to the Galway-based Macnas, Ireland's leading street performance group. Founder members, influenced by Els Commedients, had created the company in 1985, but Macnas had quickly found their own visual style and uniquely Irish sense of artistry and wit. With lead-in time so short, Macnas raided their back catalogue to use as many existing puppets, props, and costumes as possible: elements from *Gulliver's Travels*, for example, had debuted in 1988 as a Dublin Millennium project, and the giant U2 heads were originally made for the 1993 Zooropa Tour (see Murphy Fig. 5 and Murphy Fig. 6 in Colour Supplement). There was scarcely a festival or event in the 90's which didn't feature these Macnas' 'U2 Heads.' They even appeared alongside the real band in the 1998 music video for their single "The Sweetest Thing." Macnas formed the backbone of the '96 Parade, their pageant, woven through the entire parade, in-

6 Dara de Buitlear, in an email exchange with the author, 12 March 2015.

volved a giant St. Patrick puppet, which 'banished' hundreds of snake puppets all along the parade route with a wave of its arm. Theatre of Fire, Ireland's first professional pyrotechnics company, added drama with smoke, flares, and explosions (see Murphy Fig. 3 in Colour Supplement).

In visual terms, the parade was vastly different from anything that had gone before. The loose performance style of the pageant elements was the polar opposite of the stiff regimented rows of marching bands and 'Ceremonials,' such as the formal elements of the parade provided by An Garda Siochanna (Irish Police Force) and the Irish Army. This parade had a narrative, a cohesive design, and plenty of character. It was edgy, witty, and displayed an artistic and creative vision that set the standard on which to build the festival in the following years.

The initial press response, however, was lukewarm at best, with Miriam Lord in *The Irish Independent* writing scathingly:

> Mr. [Enda] Kenny [then Minister for Tourism and Trade] was so confident that the parade was going to be different that he did something very dangerous when he arrived at the O'Connell Street reviewing stand yesterday. He took the credit for dreaming up the new, super-dooper march past before it even started. 'It's my baby,' said Enda proudly. Perhaps this reporter was standing in the wrong place […] but there wasn't that much to write home about despite the £500,000, Colgan's involvement and the Minister's blessing. (6)

This slightly disingenuous assessment was based on the fact that this first 'new look' parade did not seem to look that different. Due to the four-month lead-in time there was only so much that could be done, and there were still marching bands and commercial groups involved. By 1997, however, when the Festival became a three-day event, and with a year to plan, the vision was closer to being realised.

The official program for 1997 shows a confident, ambitious line-up, with a substantial decrease in commercial and American groups and a fair percentage of professional Irish performers. By 1998, an *Irish Times* Culture piece titled "How Paddy's Day Became a Humdinger" was praising the organisers for achieving a level of excellence that "has people voting with their feet," adding that "the spectacular combination of street theatre and public entertainment makes the festival a model for Ireland's Millennium events." The Festival has built on its reputation ever since; it is now attracting over 120,000 overseas visitors, with the top visiting countries being the USA, Germany, France, and Spain. 500,000 people attend the parade, and the festival contributes an estimated €122 million to the Irish economy (2015 statistics). The Parade itself gives work to hundreds of prop makers, float builders, dancers, costume makers, choreographers, directors, performers, designers, technicians, and stage managers, and the standards rise year upon year as practitioners receive invaluable experience and training in these highly specialised areas. The parade is also the chief source of funding for a number of newer Irish street theatre companies, such as Spraoi (Waterford), Dowtcha Puppets (Cork), and Inishowen Carnival (Donegal), who provide innovative pageantry each year aligning to the Parade's theme. The St.

Patrick's Festival also funded two community outreach groups: Brighter Futures (which worked with children's groups) and City Fusion (which worked with adults). Both groups celebrate diversity and inclusiveness. Working with immigrant groups and people of various physical capabilities, they have been the heart of the parade since 2005.

It seems fair to conclude that the first St. Patrick's Festival Parade in 1996 was made possible by the dedication and good will of the people involved on all levels. Colgan, who gave four years as Festival Committee Chairman, managed to pull in substantial corporate and commercial sponsorship for events such as the Aer Lingus Skyfest, while he himself worked on an entirely voluntary basis. Rupert Murray and Marie Claire Sweeney were paid a salary by the Festival; most others, like Frawley or Tierney, were paid a fee. As Frawley puts it: "Rupert would often say 'I don't know *how* you're going to do it, just do it.' It was that usual thing of getting it done by working twelve-hour days, seven days a week, for weeks on end. Afterwards you realise that you've worked for about 2 pounds an hour" (n.p.). This willingness to work long hours in difficult conditions for little financial gain is often ruefully called 'the hidden subsidy of the Arts' by those who work in that sector. Philip McMahon, from the theatre and events production company Thisispopbaby, articulates the difficulties of working in the Arts sector through straightened economic times in an *Irish Times* piece entitled "Culture Shock: Killing Art Won't Create Hospital Beds. It Will Just Make Society Duller": "Things are less creative than they used to be. We expect culture to flourish in Ireland but no longer want to support it. We denounce artists as spongers leeching off of the public purse, until there is a new bridge to be named" (n.p.). Rapid development in Dublin has also had an impact on the availability of workshop, storage, and rehearsal spaces, with far reaching implications. Spaces are rare and those that exist are costly, which inflates already stretched budgets.

Keen to update this piece (I originally wrote it in 2015), I spoke to Karen Walshe, current St. Patrick's Festival Artistic director, in April of 2021, after she and her team had pulled off the first Virtual St. Patrick's Festival. Walshe surprised me by commenting that she is the first full-time Artistic Director who has been employed, to the best of her knowledge "since around 2000." The AD role had been reduced to a part time appointment, with previous AD's coming on board "in October/November of the year before, so of course there's no time to turn anything around" (n.p.). It seems that, once the big 2000 Millennium celebrations were over, the Government funding began to dry up again. It was at this point that Murray and Colgan stepped aside, with Sweeney following suit some time later. Around this time, the Festival was handed over to Failte Ireland, with the perhaps unsurprising result that American involvement has again increased.

Speaking to Walshe, a sense of *déjà vu* crept over me, as she spoke of tighter budgets, arguing for artistic content over yet more marching bands, and the struggle to adequately fund Irish artists and pageant companies:

> We are very tied to Failte, still, in terms of funding. Every year the funding from Government to Failte is reduced, and so every year the money that comes down to us would be reduced and the budgets would be tighter, so we can't grow the festival in the way that we feel we should. And Failte of course are always very tourist-focused and want us to spend the money on developing entertainment for visitors. (n.p.)

Walshe confirmed that Brighter Futures/City Fusion, due to funding cuts, had to be amalgamated into one group: The Community Arts Project. Cuts in funding have made it unsustainable for many of the pageant companies to provide original content each year, with the result that fewer pageants now participate, and those that do often have to recycle pieces from previous years.

Somewhat unexpectedly, however, the Covid restrictions this year may actually turn the fortunes of the Festival around once again. Walshe and her team, left in the dark in early 2021 with the government scrambling to contain the third wave of Covid-19, were told they were to be funded, not by Failte, but by the Department of the Arts. Almost immediately, recalls Walshe:

> We really felt for the first time like we were in the right place, like we were talking to people who understood us. We were given the overall funding money from the Department of Arts and Culture to go off and just spend it as we wanted to, and we were just allowed to breathe. I was able to create this programme that has never been so big, and really just go out and touch all areas of culture and arts and society and create this full spectrum of what Ireland is. (n.p.)

Of necessity, the 2021 program of events was to be streamed online, but far from being restricted, Walshe was able to give the funding directly to the artists, which in turn gave them the freedom to create their content. Artists submitted innovative short films, music, spoken word, poetry, and puppetry performances from all corners of Ireland. The resulting festival engaged with a staggering 99 million people worldwide over the 5 days.

Walshe ended our interview talking about the possibilities for the 2022 festival, and their plans once again to deconstruct and re-invent the format:

> I think we all feel that we are coming into a new era because Covid has blown it all open, wide open. People are now willing to look at doing things differently. We've just been told that the Department of the Arts is going to fund us again next year, and they are talking about giving us more funding and, crucially, getting the money to us earlier so that we can get it to the artists earlier. The other side of it is that we will never be just a Dublin-based festival anymore. What was discovered, accidentally almost this year, was that we can be an Irish-based Festival taking place all over the country now, through technology, and that's the way we will have to go forward. (n.p.)

But I return to 1996 to leave the last word to Monica Frawley, who described the push and the all-night session pulled by her team to dress the parade route:

> We barely stopped to eat: it was freezing cold, and so stressful: we had no idea if it was even possible. But we did it, and we arrived up to O'Connell Street, cold, hungry, and exhausted, but pleased with ourselves, to take our places on the viewing stand, only to find that no one had thought to book us tickets. So we went for breakfast together, and then all went home to bed. I never even saw the parade. (n.p.)

Afterword

Rupert Murray worked on the St. Patrick's Festival until the Millennium Festival in 2000, after which he, and many of the team behind that first re-invented the Parade in 1996 (including Monica Frawley), went on to create the spectacular opening ceremony of the 2003 Special Olympics in Dublin.

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COLOUR SUPPLEMENT

Connerty Fig. 1. *The Wee Men* (Bill Tytla, 1947)

Connerty Fig. 2. *Spooking with a Brogue* (Seymour Kneitel, 1955)

Connerty Fig. 3. *Finnegan's Flea* (Izzy Sparber, 1958)

Murphy Fig. 1. Rupert Murray and Marie Claire Sweeney, from the 1997 Festival Brochure
(Image courtesy of the St. Patrick's Festival Parade)

Murphy. Fig. 2 Giant fish designed by Monica Frawley and built by then Abbey Theatre prop makers, Paula and Ian Conroy, 1996 Parade (Image courtesy of the St. Patrick's Festival Parade)

Murphy Fig. 3. Part of the Macnas pageant, with smoke bombs by Theatre of Fire (Image courtesy of the St. Patrick's Festival Parade)

Murphy Fig. 4. Street performers, entertaining the pre-parade crowd, 1996. Note the snakes and bunting in the background (Image courtesy of the St. Patrick's Festival Parade)

Murphy Fig. 5. Macnas's 'U2 Heads' travelling in a vintage car in the 1996 parade. Snakes installed by Tierney's team can be seen on the statues in the background (Image courtesy of the St. Patrick's Festival Parade)

Murphy Fig. 6. Macnas snakes pageant at St. Patrick's Cathedral, 1996 parade. Gulliver's giant green hand and face can just be seen on the side of the cathedral (Image courtesy of the St. Patrick's Festival Parade)

DECONSTRUCTING STEREOTYPES AND OTHERING THROUGH HUMOUR IN LISA MCGEE'S *DERRY GIRLS*[1]

Verónica Membrive

Linda Anderson has described Northern Ireland as "one of the most over-narrativised areas of the world" (qtd. in Kennedy n.p.), while Freya McClements reflects that "if there is a lesson in the literature of the Troubles, it is that its legacy is inescapable" (n.p.). Yet, literary and audio-visual representations of Northern Ireland as a territory that has suffered from extreme confrontation and violence often resort to stereotyped representations of all factions. The twentieth anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement in 2018 saw a wealth of research papers, special issues, and monographs dedicated to reckoning with the problem of representing the Troubles in Northern Ireland. These works draw attention to misguided and prejudiced depictions of Northern Ireland in diverse media and reflect on the progression, if any, that has been made towards a more balanced representation of the conflict. Underpinning these critical conversations is the question of whether a change in the representation of Northern Irish identity is possible after twenty years of relative peace and reconciliation. Monographs by Siobhán Fenton and Etain Tannam – alongside edited collections by the Royal Irish Academy and Colin Coulter, et al. – interrogate what has been achieved in the twenty years following decades of violent bloodshed in the streets. Noting the interference of Brexit, they concur that current politics seem to have failed to establish a healthy and functioning political apparatus.[2] Between them, works by Jennifer Todd, Katy Hayward and Cathal McManus, and Colin Coulter and Peter Shirlow chart a critical turn from polarised to more multifarious approaches to post-conflict Northern-Irish identity. This transformation has been addressed from the perspective of culture and art in Armstrong et al.; however, there remains a gap in the scholarship regarding how contemporary Northern-Irish audio-visual products contribute both to changing how the Troubles are represented and to renegotiating Northern Irish identity after the peace process.

This chapter adds to the critical debate concerning the role of media in the process of renegotiating representations of the Troubles by analysing how the 2018 sitcom *Derry Girls* uses humour and irony to deconstruct stereotyped notions not only of the

1 Some aspects of this chapter have been published in a slightly different form in Membrive.

2 Charles I. Armstrong, David Herbert, and Jan Erik Mustad wonder if the Agreement has "lived up to the hopes of its most enthusiastic supporters or has, quite to the contrary, the historical record proven the nay-sayers and doubters were right all along" ("Introduction" in Armstrong et al. 3). Certainly, since the Good Friday Agreement, doubts regarding the "fresh start" included in the Declaration of Support of the Agreement have persisted.

Catholic and Protestant populations but also of other 'Others' in the city of Derry – or Londonderry, "depending on your persuasion," as Erin, the series protagonist, says at the opening of the pilot episode (S1 E1). In particular, the chapter will explore how the legacies of Stage Irish hetero-stereotypes and auto-stereotypes are intermingled in seasons 1 (2018) and 2 (2019) of *Derry Girls*, as it represents changing sectarian, gender, and religious identities of Northern Ireland in the years 1994-1995 with humour and irony.

Stage Irishness, Sectarian Stereotypes, and Northern Ireland

The theatrical representation of the Stage Irish, historically associated with Irish Catholics, created a unique cultural identity throughout the centuries and has variously played a part in either perpetuating or critiquing popular English hetero-stereotypes concerning Ireland and the Irish. One of the most explored representations of Stage Irishry is the stereotype of the clownish Irish peasant – a dirty, shiftless person wearing country clothes and smoking from a pipe. Although affable and laughable, he is potentially belligerent, and he has traits of "garrulity, pugnacity and a rather unfocused ethnic pride" (Kiberd 13). Besides, he is also eloquent but easily duped. As Mary Trotter notes, for "imperialist audiences, Irish stereotypes on the stage affirmed English superiority to the Irish while also expressing a degree of anxiety over the relationship between the two cultures" (37). Imperial presence was justified as a civilising paternalistic force for the infantilised, feminised, and underdeveloped colonised people and culture. Trotter continues: "For Irish nationalist audiences, the plays pointed out discrimination against the Irish within the United Kingdom, so they either boycotted plays with Stage Irish characters or developed resistant readings of such dramas" (37).

By contrast, the drama of the Irish revivalist and nationalist movements attempted to subvert imperial representations by presenting rather idealised versions of Irish national identity, Ireland's cultural as well as political right to independence, and, above all, Ireland's distinction from English national identity and culture. "Stage Irish stereotypes appear in these plays, but their vices are turned to virtues" (Trotter 39). The positive outcome of this strategy of auto-stereotyping was that it allowed the Irish to take "many images which were rejected by English society, occupy them, reclaim them, and make them their own" (Kiberd 32).[3] Thus the Stage Irishman "provided a rhetorical structure for staging an identifiable 'Irish' identity, a structure that remained in use – adapted, transformed, or merely employed for pro-Irish purposes-well into

3 Pastor and Fuentes define the term "hetero-stereotype" as "a group's perception of another group's members' traits, characteristics, or values with a tendency to define others as rigid ethnic characterisations and strong generalisations about group membership. Different national or cultural assumptions can be described as either simple or projected" (649). By contrast, "auto-stereotype" refers to "a group's views about the traits or characteristics of its own members" (649).

the 1920s" (Trotter 39). This process of negotiating a new but still identifiable national identity by reframing comic Stage Irish clichés provides a framework for McGee's attempts in *Derry Girls* to use humour and self-ironising comic performance to deconstruct and reclaim stereotypes about not only Catholic but also Protestant communities in 1990s pre-Agreement Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland is particularly significant, if often overlooked, in this history, as there the Irish stereotype assumes certain sectarian dimensions. As Liam O'Rourke writes:

> It is a practical and necessary social skill [in Northern Ireland] to be able to "tell the difference" between Protestants and Catholics if the problems endemic to a sectarian social milieu are to be avoided. Telling the difference is based on the social significance attached to name, area of residence, school attended etc. These elements provide the material for fashioning in an ongoing and narrative manner the theories and stereotypes which each side has of the other. (n.p.)

Central to the peace process is the idea of reconciliation between these communities, yet Arthur Aughey argues that the Agreement "appeared to strengthen the very [sectarian] tendencies it was designed to weaken" through "its elevation of cultural divisiveness driven not by equality and discrimination but by the idea that Northern Ireland has two distinct communities whose cultures and interests are different, and who must be constantly policed and kept apart" (170). Although there are in fact multiple, overlapping and diverging internal and international sides to these communities and their encounters in Northern Ireland, the "ideological representations" of these sectarian stereotypes "are based on a mixture of myth and reality. In order to understand sectarian stereotypes, it is necessary to understand their material roots in society. To do otherwise is to fatally underestimate their strength and durability" (O'Rourke n.p.).

One of the effects of the peace process, then, is that it effectively transformed the Northern Ireland conflict from a political dispute over national sovereignty into a cultural conflict over respect for identities. The most recent Northern Ireland Life and Times survey from 2018 reveals that 35% of the population identify themselves as British, 28% as Irish and 25% as Northern Irish. Kevin McNicholl, Clifford Stevenson, and John Garry note that:

> Northern Irish was first given as an option on surveys in the late 1980s (Moxon-Browne), replacing Rose's hybrid category of "Anglo-Irish." It is now the preferred option for 25% of citizens, making it the third most popular in the region, and the only [category] that is accepted by equivalent numbers of both Catholics and Protestants. (4)

Elsewhere, McNicholl notes that as "the societal division" in Northern Ireland "is often (and arguably increasingly) described as an 'identity conflict.'" Such survey results that suggested a growing identification with the third category of "Northern Irish" were

> taken by many as an indication of a deep psychological change within the region that could signal a movement towards a natural post-conflict identity, associated with a young, enlightened urban middle class that were keen to emphasise that "we are all the same." This movement was called the "Rise of the Northern Irish" in the *Belfast Telegraph* (n.p.).

McNicholl goes on to ask:

> Now that the common narratives have been tested to destruction what can we say about this new identity? The academic literature in this area using qualitative methods is keen to emphasise that even those who identify this way are not entirely certain of its meaning. This ambiguity of meaning is even said to be one of the appeals of Northern Irishness. (n.p.)

Given the promise of this emergent "new identity," novelist David Keenan asks if we are "finally far enough away from the events of 1968-1998 to start fictionalising them" in a new way beyond the standard binaries and if it is "necessary for there to be a sort of cultural/historical gap before we can interrogate trauma" (n.p.).

Humour in Representations of the Troubles

In their foreword to *Humour and Tragedy in Ireland*, Patricia Trainor de la Cruz and Blanca Krauel Heredia reflect on whether "'humour' and 'tragedy' are inextricably linked as they are emotions which are complementary and therefore difficult to separate" (9). Writing in 2018, Katie Markham observes that "humorous reflections on the Troubles appear to be experiencing a renaissance in the North" (n.p.). Markham's article on "Troubles tourism" in Belfast highlights the impulse towards gallows humour as one of the defining features of the black cab mural tour in particular (n.p.). Markham claims that she "always got the sense when on these tours that such jokes went beyond mere 'stage Irishy' [*sic*] and were in fact illustrative of a significant change that has taken place since the signing of the Good Friday agreement" (n.p.). It is in this context that I am interested in exploring how *Derry Girls*, too, both exploits and goes beyond "Stage Irishry" in exploring the possibility of challenging binary stereotypes about Irish Catholics and Protestants through humour in post-Agreement Northern Ireland.

To name a few examples, pre-Agreement comic depictions of Northern Ireland can be observed in plays ranging from Stewart Parker's off-beat wry comedies of the 1970s and 1980s, Christina Reid's *Did You Hear the One About The Irishman…?* (1985), and Mary Jones's *A Night in November* (1994), two plays that stage terrible events through a humorous perspective. Markham's claim for a current renaissance of "humorous reflections on the Troubles" (n.p.) is evidenced on the stage, for instance, in *Lally the Scut* (2015) by Abbie Spallen and *Cyprus Avenue* (2016) by David Ireland. In fiction, Lucy Caldwell's collection of short stories *Multitudes* (2016), although at times bittersweet, deserves acknowledgement as a relevant representation of the pre-Agreement 1990s society. Anna Burns's Booker-Prize winning *Milkman* (2018) enacts an equally humorous and scarring image of 1970s Belfast. Finally, Paul McVeigh's *The Good Son* (2015) is "a warm-hearted, funny novel about growing up gay in Troubles Ardoyne" (McClements n.p.).

In relation to audio-visual products, the cinematic legacy of the conflict has been examined in several publications (Rockett et al.; Neve; Pettitt; McIlroy; McLoone, *Film, Media* and McLoone, "Film, Television"; Armstrong et al.). Literature on television

representation of the conflict mostly focuses on its news coverage and its impact on the peace process (Smith; Cairns et al; Cairns; Collins; Spencer, "The Impact" and Spencer, "Pushing"). However, while there have been many television dramas during and after the conflict, none of them were produced in Belfast until the 1970s. The "Golden Age" of this genre occurred during the 1960s with productions by the BBC and ITV which dealt with Northern Irish politics and violence (McLoone, "Film, Television" 7); it is worth noting *Cemented with Love* (BBC, 1965) and *Progress to the Park* (BBC, 1965) as examples. McLoone considers that this 1960s television drama falls into three broad categories: drama/documentary, thrillers, and authored drama ("Film, Television" 11), leaving no room for a comical approach to these events, although the later series *Foreign Bodies* (1987-1989) and *So You Think You Have Troubles* (1991) tried to explore this intricate and distressing topic through the sitcom genre with inauspicious results. Some years later, the well-known satirical television comedy series from BBC Northern Ireland *Give My Head Peace* (1995-2007) poked fun at political parties, paramilitary groups, and the sectarian divide in the territory. Other recent comedic representations of the Troubles include *Divorcing Jack* (1998), *An Everlasting Piece* (2000), *Wild about Harry* (2000), and *The Most Fertile Man in Ireland* (2000) (see Crosson, "The Shore").

Derry-born stage and screenwriter Lisa McGee had already portrayed the Troubles in some of her works, such as the play *Girls and Dolls* (2006), but the sitcom *Derry Girls* consolidates her as a contemporary Northern Irish comedy writer who skilfully draws heightened comic characters from the region that nevertheless reflect and perform the experiences of adolescence in times of local and national transformation. The success of *Derry Girls* provokes us to ask whether it is the case that when a conflict is represented from a humorous perspective, in which stereotypes are turned into the material not only for prejudice but also for self-ironising comedy, reconciliation has taken place or is in an advanced stage of development?

Deconstructing National, Sectarian, and Gender Stereotypes in *Derry Girls*

Derry Girls is produced by Hat Trick Productions and broadcast on Channel 4 in the UK and on Netflix internationally. Its story of a gang of 16-year-old girls in early 1990s Derry (or Londonderry) shows the reality of Catholic families in the city from a comical point of view. The series is a celebration of clichés and conveys a nostalgic, but not sentimental, gaze at stereotypes in order to embrace and, simultaneously, deconstruct them. The show is based on McGee's own experience as a teenager in Derry and offers the audience the chance to follow the milestones and tribulations of four Catholic Irish girls and an English boy in a place full of contradictions, surveillance, and violence. The group is composed of Erin Quinn (Saoirse-Monica Jackson), a 16-year-old who aspires to become a writer and seems to be concerned about the political turmoil of the city; Clare Devlin (Nicola Coughlan), an anxious teen who comes out as a lesbian; Michelle Mallon (Jamie-Lee O'Donnell), a foul-mouthed teen and the most subversive of the gang; Orla McCool (Louisa Harland), Erin's cousin

who likes to burn things; and the English boy, James (Dylan Llewellyn), Michelle's cousin whose Irish mother went to London to have an abortion and never came back. James is assigned to a girl's school owing to the fear of suffering violence in a boy's school in Derry for his status as an outsider.

McGee wanted to articulate her story through the female experience, since the discourse from women from Northern Ireland has been largely sidelined in representations of the Troubles. As *Derry Girls* demonstrates, Northern Ireland is not only experiencing a political transition but also a shift in gender roles and stereotypes. There has been a relevant change from 2015 since new policies ("Six Point Plan on Gender Equality") and movements such as Women in Film and Television Ireland have been promoted in order to support gender equality in the Irish audio-visual industry. Two recent studies help to situate McGee's sitcom in the current Irish, British, and even international audio-visual scene. Ruth Barton's *Irish Cinema in the Twenty-First Century* (2019) "foreground[s] representations of women in contemporary Irish filmmaking" (20), while Susan Liddy's *Women in the Irish Film Industry* (2020) "identifies and challenges the inequalities, and the disenfranchisement of women in the Irish film industry, which replicate, in many ways, women's position in Irish society and culture […], echo[ing] the ongoing, vigorous international debates" (11-12).

McGee claims in a recent interview that "a lot of stuff about Northern Ireland is very male" (O'Reilly n.p.), and *Derry Girls* does explore changing male gender norms and stereotypes through the character of Erin's grandfather, who constantly teases his son-in-law for representing a new affectionate parenting model. However, McGee is not interested in presenting the main gang using the stereotype of the coquettish "Colleen" – the "female version of the [Stage Irish] Paddy" defined by Mary Trotter as "a virginal beauty in need of protection" in the middle of the conflict (43) – but as independent people who "did the things you heard about. I want them to be the urban myths themselves" (O'Reilly n.p.). We do, in fact, find an Irish stereotyped woman in the form of Erin's mother Mary, obsessed with surveillance and gossip, being a religious and moral beacon and worrying about the possibility of Erin getting pregnant. But at the same time, she makes Erin swear on a portrait of Dolly Parton instead of the Pope, in an affectionate nod to Roddy Doyle's *The Commitments*, in which Jimmy Rabbitte Senior hangs a portrait of Elvis Presley above the Pope's. McGee also delves into the cliché of the Irish woman who left the city for London after bringing shame to the family for being pregnant and returns after many years. James's mother is represented as a liberated cosmopolite woman from a comic perspective, but the drama of abortion, misjudgement, and abandonment, a lived reality for many Irish women, is also there as the backdrop of James's story.

Religion is one of the most explored themes in the sitcom's reflections on stereotypes. The show's irreverent representation of priests and nuns is imbued with the spirit of *Father Ted* (1995-1998), "a comedy of terminal and unalleviated desperation" (Crowley 30) in its reworkings of religious mores. Apart from the handsome priest

Peter, who at one point doubts his spiritual vocation, the cliché of ambivalent religious devotion is embodied by Sister Michael (Siobhán McSweeney) who works at Our Lady Immaculate College. She epitomises the trope of the tough, strong, and severe Catholic nun who hates Protestants, likes a good statue, and whose main aim is to ensure that all religious conventions are followed by the students; she even applies restrictions to the songs they can listen to. At the same time, however, McGee confers Sister Michael with an ironic eye and wit that challenges commonplace hetero-stereotypes. The nun delights in reading *The Exorcist*, drinking red wine, and practicing judo, and she does not seem to relish her work at the college. In season 2, when then-US president Bill Clinton visits Derry after the ceasefire is declared, Sister Michael does not want to give the students a day off because she does not have faith in real change, and she does not seem to yearn for that change. Thus, McGee suggests an unspoken fear among institutions that they may lose the power that is allowed to them under the status quo.

Certainly, the most remarkable element of *Derry Girls* is the way in which violence and sectarianism are conveyed. Although from the very beginning the armed conflict overshadows the gang's everyday lives, the series does not explicitly centre the Troubles. The sitcom rather focuses on the perception of cultural alterity, stereotyping and Othering of Catholics and Protestants (in particular Protestants, considering that the series is communicated through the Catholics' point of view) through the teenagers' everyday lived cultures. There is a blatant distinction between "same" (victims) and "the Other" (perpetrators), as in the pilot episode in which Sarah (Erin's aunt who lives with the family) learns that a bomb has exploded on the bridge and she claims that "they want ordinary people to suffer." Protestants are mostly referred to as "they" or "these Protestants," with comments such as: "that's the English, they are fucking savages" (S1, E1). Thus, "both sides of a conflict perceive it through the lens of the myth of pure evil – but in mirror images. Each side sees itself as the innocent victim and the other as the evil attacker" (Baumeister 102). A clear distinction between 'victim' and 'perpetrator' is identifiable in older characters, as they experienced the worst years of the conflict (especially the 1960s and 1970s) as well as a more radical position: the grandfather regards Protestants with a higher level of disregard than his daughter (Erin's mother) does.

This prejudice is less obvious when the spotlight is put onto younger generations of Northern-Irish citizens in the show, especially the main gang. An apparent banalisation of terror and evil could be derived from the series' filter of a comical outlook on the armed conflict. For instance, we learn that a bomb on a bridge inconveniences Erin's mother because it means her daughter has to stay home from school another day, and because Sarah would miss her date at a wellness centre. Similarly, in the final scene of one episode, a voiceover acting as Erin's thoughts is reading a passage from her diary: "injustice is something I have become used to. I am after all the daughter of crossfire. But I choose to get over it, the road to peace is paved with tolerance and understanding. Violence is never the answer" (S1, E1). After that final

sentence is pronounced in voiceover, Erin – together with the audience – realises that Orla is actually reading from her diary, and Erin springs into action and tries to hit Orla, as the sincere sentiments of the voiceover are comically undercut. McGee represents the process of identity change experienced among the population after decades suffering from terrorist attacks, kidnappings, and murders. To this end, McGee underlines the difficulty for this community to establish their individualism in a very uniform, sectarian, and closed group, holding the balance between a strong provincialism and a thriving globalisation. The urge of these teenagers to define their own identity in the microcosm that is Derry is represented and subsequentially ironised through the scene in which Erin tells her mother that she "should be allowed to express [her] individuality" (S1, E1) by wearing a denim jacket with her school uniform. Once she meets the gang without the garment, Clare decides to take off her own jacket and claims that she is not going to be "individual on [her] own" (S1, E1).

The genuine interest in the multi-layered concept of alterity that is hinted at in season 1 is explored and developed in greater detail in season 2. The girl gang takes part in the peace project "Friends Across the Barricades," in which there are gatherings among boys and girls from Catholic and Protestant neighborhoods in order to promote cross-community relations. As it happens with foreign students who visit the city for a short period, in *Derry Girls* Protestants are also regarded as exotic: the gang all believe that if they are able to become friends with a Protestant, they will be considered cool at school. During this exchange experience, the girls' main aim is to have sex with one of the Protestant boys. This scenario seems to be a nod to the cliché of "love across the barricade" based on the "Romeo and Juliet syndrome" present in many Northern Ireland television dramas in the 1960s (McLoone, "Film, Television" 9). O'Rourke dismisses such "'peace and reconciliation' programmes" as "profoundly idealist and conservative in nature because they are based on the axiom that it is a matter of 'educating,' of removing individual prejudices and stereotypes rather than a change of sectarian realities" (n.p.). In this episode, however, the series both blurs and comically amplifies the lines between 'same' and 'Other.' When the whole group is instructed to fill two blackboards, one marked "similarities" and the other marked "differences," both the Catholic girls of Our Lady Immaculate College and the Protestant boys of Londonderry Academy are only able to stress differences: "Catholics like to walk" while "Protestants like to march"; "Catholics must obey the Pope" while "Protestants love the Queen"; "Catholics go to Bundoran" while "Protestants go to Newcastle"; "Catholics love statues" while "Protestants love hymns"; "Catholics love bingo" while "Protestants keep toasters in cupboards," and so on (S2 E1). Donald Clarke observes that the blackboard's "slurs and generalisations […] cross the spectrum from genuine prejudice to harmless misconception" (n.p.). The audience does not know which team wrote that "Protestants think Catholics keep coal in the bath" or "Protestants think Catholics are all alcos," thus these could constitute "a manifestation of bigotry or a complaint about such bigotry" (Clarke n.p.). This is the moment when the gang, and especially Erin, come to realise that they are 'the Others' Others'

and the lack of knowledge and trust between both communities is hampering reconciliation.

Indeed, there are minor plots in both seasons in which – apart from the Othering of Protestants – women, Travellers, gypsies, and homosexuals are Othered as well. At one point, even Belfast is described as a "primitive and savage place" (S2, E2), and Erin's grandfather hates it. Those identified as different, as not 'proper' members of the in-group, are always a potential enemy and "the more threatening the behaviour of these outsiders seems, the more clearly is the internal enemy identified" (Elliot et al. 157). The role of James in the story, then, is essential to developing this dynamic, as he seems to represent the only outsider outlook on the conflict inside of the main gang as a complicated figure of Irish descent but born and raised in England. The Derry Catholic community considers him an Other (part of the Protestant community), and there is a deliberate mirror situation between James and Orla: while James is constantly emasculated, Orla is presented as a stereotyped 'masculine' character. Yet, the main issue of the story is less the violence and terror of the armed conflict than the gang's aims and anxieties as teenagers. This is explicit at the end of the season 2 episode 1 when the whole group starts fighting and Erin writes "Parents" on the blackboard as one thing they all have in common.

Conclusion: Local and International Gazes

Derry Girls reverses the common use of Northern Ireland "as a colourful 'background' for universal human drama" (Donnelly 395). McGee presents the city of Derry, where violent acts perpetrated by both sides are part of the story, not just as a background but as a device for telling the story from the inside: in actual locations with localised characters who adapt their everyday lives to the surrounding violent environment. In *Derry Girls*, the differences between good and evil, right and wrong, are never simplistic, and there is a process of demystifying the conflict through humour, especially in season 2.

In the show, there is an array of character categories, all of them personifying virtues and immoralities. The Stage Irish trope of the Fighting Irish is integrated at the end of both seasons. In season 1, we encounter the apparently affable member of a paramilitary group who slips into the family car to leave the city unnoticed, and Michelle is attracted to him. This character embodies the cinematic stereotype of the romantic freedom fighter with a surface allure of evil as "relentless desire" (Bradley Salamon 27). Episode 5 from Season 2 also exemplifies how McGee plays with violence, terror, and teenage experience. The girls go to the end of the semester prom, and a girl from Donegal wants to reproduce the final scene from the film *Carrie* to ruin their dresses and spoil the entire night. In the very moment that the paint falls from above, shots of Erin's parents watching the announcement of the ceasefire on TV are interpolated. The final episode from Season 2 focuses on Bill Clinton's 1995 visit in which he referred to terrorists as "yesterday's men." McGee again composes the episode's

storyline around an actual historical event related to the Troubles, but the main plot revolves around the gang. However, on this occasion the episode closes the season with a special remark on the importance of reconciliation as the only possible solution to the conflict: James becomes a full member of the 'Derry girl' gang as Clinton is giving his speech in which he says: "build on the opportunity you have before you."

The origins and meaning of the armed conflict are challenged through characters who do not belong to the region. In season 1 episode 4, the school participates in a project to host students from Ukraine some years after the nuclear catastrophe in Chernobyl. The student, Katya, coming "out of the frying pan into […] a different type of frying pan, or some sort of wok," as Sister Michael defines it, is regarded as coming from a very deprived family. Erin wants to take a leading and educating role derived from her preconceptions of Katya's place of origin. However, Katya defies the group and tells them that "you people like to fight each other and, to be honest, what person understands why," as "you're not two different religions here, you're different flavours of same religion" (S1 E4). After this, Clare experiences an epiphany, as she wonders about the conflict's true nature while wearing a T-shirt bearing the Union Jack.

McGee combines alterity with the search for identity as a teenager, especially through James, the English boy who wonders "how things work here" and sometimes feels that "he fucking got into the other side of the mirror." References to the shift between two perspectives scattered throughout the episodes with nods to *Alice in Wonderland* and *The Wizard of Oz* enable the spectator to approach the gang's struggles to become adults and deal with the armed conflict. The English Other is, most of the time, embodied by James even if he is not actually quite aware of the political situation of Northern Ireland, and he "cannot tell the difference between the rebellions and the uprisings" (S1, E3). People around him make fun of his accent and take for granted that the English are violent "savages" who have "all the jobs, all the lands, and all the fucking rights" (S1, E2) and who are "worse than Chinese people" (S1, E2). The question of who the Others are is exposed in *Derry Girls*, since the Catholic characters feel themselves to be the oppressed Others, and every episode is riven with colonial stereotypes (Markham n.p.). It is only through representations that the experience of the traumatic event can be conveyed – as Jeffrey C. Alexander puts it, "imagination is intrinsic to the very process of representation" (9), and this trauma process occurs in the "gap between event and representation" (11). Now that twenty years have passed since the Good Friday Agreement, this gap is increasingly becoming the key site for the renegotiation of Northern Irish identity.

Certainly, what makes *Derry Girls* an achievement both inside and outside the boundaries of Ireland and Britain is its local take on transcultural experiences, which is achieved, in part, through references to pop culture signifiers.[4] Which girl from the

4 *Derry Girls* has become the most watched TV show in Northern Ireland with a 54% share in general terms and a 64% in the target 16-34 years old (*Belfast Telegraph*, 21 February 2018). As a result of its rating success, Channel 4 confirmed a second season and sold the international rights to Netflix. The specialised critic has conveyed very

90s did not listen to The Cranberries, love Take That, or learn the choreography of Whigfield's "Saturday Night" by heart to dance with friends at a party? McGee transcends nationality and has been able to put together two moments of transformation: the time when Northern Ireland was walking towards the beginning of peace, and the changed view of these events from the vantage of the twentieth anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, both periods of uncertainty. The success of the sitcom lies in how this process is enriched by these local particularities encoded through comedy.

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POLITICAL THEATRE:
RENEGOTIATING IRISHNESS ON THE TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY STAGE

RECONFIGURATIONS OF GENDER IN CONTEMPORARY IRISH STAGE ADAPTATIONS, 2019-2020: DEIRDRE KINAHAN'S *THE UNMANAGEABLE SISTERS*, EDNA O'BRIEN'S *THE COUNTRY GIRLS*, MARINA CARR'S *HECUBA*, AND MICHAEL WEST'S *SOLAR BONES*

Anne Fogarty

Adaptations are a conspicuous, lively, and inbuilt feature of the contemporary Irish stage. Despite their ubiquity, they have attracted little critical attention and are regarded in general more as an intellectual bane and a sign of downward mobility in the cultural sphere than as a consequential and distinctive area of creative endeavour. There is a gaping mismatch between the popularity and frequency of such shows, the wariness they arouse in reviewers and commentators, and the low prestige they are accorded. Programming for theatres in 2019 is indicative of the centrality, variety, and pervasiveness of such work. Offerings included a musical of Frank McCourt's *Angela's Ashes*, at the Lime Tree Theatre in Limerick, Roddy Doyle's adaptation of his novel, *The Snapper* at the Gate Theatre and of his novella *Two Pints* at the Abbey Theatre, while the Dublin Theatre Festival featured an adaptation of Joseph O'Connor's *Redemption Falls* at the Abbey Theatre and an opera by Irish National Opera of Melatu Uche Okorie's *This Hostel Life* with a libretto by Evangelia Rigaki, performed promenade-style in the crypt of Christchurch Cathedral.

This chapter examines four plays performed between June 2019 and August 2020: Deirdre Kinahan's *The Unmanageable Sisters*, Edna O'Brien's *The Country Girls*, Marina Carr's *Hecuba*, and Michael West's *Solar Bones*.[1] My analysis posits the relationship between the adapted text, the production, and the original work as a three-way dialogue and not as a hierarchical arrangement. The purpose of juxtaposing these texts, moreover, is less to identify and compile a compendium of common or distinctive adaptation practices than to inspect how the productions of these plays emanate from and are coloured by conjoint socio-political concerns and anxieties, and to probe how in this light their dramaturgy self-consciously tests the span and limits of character, embodiment, and voice and interrogates power structures and gender roles in the different worlds that they envisage. Prominently, scenography and sound design are used to this end in these stagings to exercise critique, to articulate social impasses, and to lay bare the workings of ideology. Further, retrospection, circling back, and moments of revision are facets of these works that encourage both immersion and distance, and oscillate between acts of rebellion and escape, and the delineation of states of failure.

1 I am grateful to Lynne Parker for access to the unpublished script of *Solar Bones*.

Conceptually and theoretically, adaptations are a vexed phenomenon and occupy an in-between space awkwardly straddling the literary and the popular. The expansion of studies in this area in recent decades, and their consolidation into a discrete area of inquiry, have aimed, however, to rehabilitate this mode and raise understanding of how adaptations are created, and the artistic and social functions that they serve.[2] Nonetheless, the term itself is bedevilled, as commentators have long pointed out, because it is freighted with normative expectations. It is still regularly the case that adapted works are adjudged suspect and sub-standard, as illicit attempts to recycle the efforts of others, and signs of a lack of originality and creativity. A 2019 article by Fintan O'Toole taking the co-directors of the Abbey Theatre, Graham McLaren and Neil Murray, to task for failing to foster a world-class theatre through ignoring the literary play is a case in point. In making his case that the Abbey is not living up to its mission, and has turned its back on the Irish and international dramatic repertoire, he proffers as evidence for a lack of ambition and scope the fact that adaptation has become the dominant aesthetic at the theatre: "To get on to today's Abbey stage, it helps a lot if the work is already familiar from print or screen. Is this what 'ambitious, courageous and new' Irish theatre is meant to look like?" He cites the terms of reference of the Abbey's mission statement and uses them not only to critique the overall achievements of the institution, but also to attack adaptations as cultural exercises that are necessarily *ersatz*, derivative, and an indicator of a lack of creative drive and vision.

Whatever the validity of his overall broadside, O'Toole is guilty of falling back on a perennial and peculiarly entrenched stance that denounces adaptations in moralistic and value-laden terms. Some inherent gender bias also lurks in his argument, as four of the adapted shows that he itemises are by women – Edna O'Brien's *The Country Girls*, Louise O'Neill's *Asking for It*, Marina Carr's *Anna Karenina,* and Emma Donoghue's *Room*. Contrary to his comments, all of these shows were successful and compelling, and embraced by large and diverse audiences. O'Toole sees literary dramas and adaptations as binary antitypes in a hierarchical system which assigns dominance to the former and presupposes that the latter are devoid of merit or artistic value. Hence, he decries a situation in which adapted works, cuckoo-like, edged out the classics of the Irish stage and high-calibre international texts. The central assumption is that an adaptation is inherently unworthy and that reliance on such work is a sop to a populist taste for cultural experiences that are safe and pre-packaged or a reflex of a risk-averse theatre sector that for commercial reasons prefers texts with brand recognition that guarantee houses and publicity.

Rather than view adaptations as unworthy and lowbrow, this chapter sees them as hybrid and purposefully blurring existing presumptions about the distinctions between

2 For overviews of central debates in this field, see Cutchins, Krebs and Voigts, and Leitch. See, too, Elliott for an account of the inveterate theoretical problems attached to scholarship in this area.

the literary and the popular, the classics and the contemporary, high art and what I. Q. Hunter and Heidi Kaye have redolently termed "trash aesthetics" (1-13). It sets out to examine the heterogeneous nature of a selection of Irish stage adaptations 2019-2020, and to examine the synergies and individual and collaborative visions that inspire and shape them. Adaptations, it will be seen, are not a unified phenomenon or set of practices; they are diverse and varied artistically, but also because of their moot standing they free practitioners from many dominant artistic credos such as mimetic or naturalistic imperatives. Yet, as works that are unapologetically responsive to audience tastes and expectations, they are also vitally enmeshed in current cultural and socio-political moments which they harness and open up to scrutiny. In particular, the texts examined in this chapter are uneasily poised between critical interrogation, possibilities of empowerment, and the desire for social change in the past and present.

A foundational study by Linda Hutcheon persuasively formulated some of the key ways in which adaptations may be re-evaluated. Hutcheon's precepts and contentions continue to galvanise the expanding field of adaptation studies. As an initial and all-important rallying point, she contended that we need to eschew morally loaded assessments of adaptations and to consider them instead as aesthetic objects in their own right. Like many commentators, she recognised that, although the urge to repeat may form part of the pleasure of an adaptation, it can also validly be seen as a discrete and distinctive act of creation. In her pithy summation, "an adaptation is a deviation that is not derivative – a work that is second without being secondary. It is its own palimpsestic thing (9)," Hutcheon conceded that the verb 'to adapt' is slippery and ambiguous; the process always entails borrowing or rescuing a prior text, but it also presupposes interpreting and creating something anew. Writers who adapt works, whether their own or those of others, thus braid together many different activities; they appropriate and salvage an original work, but are also involved in a double process of interpreting and creating something fresh. In this light, adaptations are intertextual and engaged in dynamic acts of revision, recuperation, and invention.

Additionally, they are in dialogue with social and political undercurrents that determine their relevance and answerability to audience needs, and nuance the ways in which they may be interpreted, especially in terms of their contemporaneous frames of reference. A primary, formative context for the four plays examined in this chapter is the "Waking the Feminists" campaign, which ran from November 2016-November 2017. This strategic movement for the furtherance of gender equality in the theatre sector, spearheaded by Lian Bell, Anne Clarke, and Sarah Durcan, in unison with a large group of high-powered practitioners and activists, was sparked off by the startling absence of work by women in the Abbey Theatre's "Waking the Nation" 2016 programme with the sole exception of Ali White's *Me Mollser*. The strategic and focused crusade sought to utilise and channel the outrage caused by the public sidelining of women to make Irish theatres more inclusive and lastingly to undo the power base that had protected and continuously cemented and upheld a male hegemony.

The "Waking the Feminists" movement had many of the hallmarks of fourth wave feminism in its quest for gender balance, its acknowledgement of the importance of intersectionality, its interrogation of how power becomes enshrined, and its reliance on a goal-specific activism.[3]

Like many other current feminist movements, such as the "Me Too" initiative, it was impelled by what Hannah Arendt redolently described as "the right to have rights" (269-84). As Arendt noted, it is only when rights are overridden or in abeyance that their absence is brought home to us. Congruent with these movements that seek not only to reactivate feminist principles of egalitarianism and social justice, is also an endeavour to rethink gender in more fluid and inclusive ways. It is noteworthy that the unearthing of hidden forms of exploitation and disenfranchisement is a prominent feature of these plays that set out to grant a voice to individuals or groups that are normally silenced or viewed in distorted ways. Female disempowerment is scrutinised in the guise of home workers, mothers, girls, nuns, refugees, and victims of war, sickness, and violence. However, it is not just subaltern roles that are reconsidered and brought to life – the stances and attitudes of the wielders of power, the warmongers, such as Agamemnon in *Hecuba*, and Marcus Conway, the engineer and *paterfamilias* in *Solar Bones*, who is implicated in a post-capitalist, neoliberal economy that preys on and destroys the environment, are also graphically embodied and forensically exposed.

The interrogation of gender roles and power structures in these plays will be analysed through a set of suggestive terms and precepts put forward by Nancy Fraser. She contends that an apprehension of the politics of framing is a concomitant of the quest for justice by contemporary social movements (189-208). The political, she holds, is boundary-setting and determines who counts as a subject of justice in the first instance. Thus, one approach to the issue of framing is to contest, but not discard, existing structures, and to raise questions about who is encompassed in reigning concepts of power and who is granted political space, validity, and authority. In this regard, the calling out of injustices induced by misframing is important. The politics of framing, as Fraser avers, is concerned centrally with "the question of who" (189-208), that is, the issue of who is accorded the right to justice or not. The second approach to framing is more radical and transformative, in her eyes, and involves a recognition that the problem of justice goes far beyond the structures of the territorial nation state, and touches on matters of global governance. In such cases, she explains, the forces that perpetrate injustice belong not to the "space of places" but to the "space of flows" (189-208). While framing and frame-setting are defined as inherent aspects of the political sphere and of social contestation by Fraser, in the analysis that follows they will be seen as conjoint facets of the dramaturgy as well as the thematic concerns of recent Irish stage adaptations. These texts address the ques-

3 For an analysis of the "Waking the Feminists" initiative, see Miriam Haughton and Emer O'Toole.

tion of who in terms of what is enacted and performed on the Irish stage, and how stories are embodied and represented. Moments of blockage and dissonance in these productions, it will be seen, often point to disconnections between different forms of framing, and a clash between utopian desires for change and stagnation within existing value systems and hierarchies.

The Unmanageable Sisters by Deirdre Kinahan, an award-winning playwright, actor, and producer, was her first play on the main Abbey stage and a belated recognition of her considerable heft and scope as a writer. Kinahan is the "leading Irish playwright you haven't necessarily heard of" was the rueful but tendentious summary of the author's standing by Maggie Armstrong in a 2018 profile. In the interview, Kinahan argued that one of the reasons she had been excluded from the literary mainstream and lacked currency was because it was believed that women did not write national plays. Her adaptation of *The Unmanageable Sisters,* first staged in March 2018 at the Abbey and revived for the Summer season in 2019, gave the lie to such views. It is a version of *Les Belles-Soeurs* (1968) by the Canadian playwright Michel Tremblay and a transposition of his play set in Catholic, working-class Montreal to the Tower Blocks of Ballymun in 1974. Tremblay used *joual*, a Québec working-class dialect, to capture the women in his play, and Kinahan, by contrast, a Dublin demotic. As in his other work, Tremblay alternated naturalistic dialogue with experimental scenes which questioned the ambit and veracity of the voice. Hence, conversation regularly and unexpectedly ceded to choric declamations, in which all fifteen caste members spoke in unison, or to monologues in which a character broke away from the main action and revealed aspects of her private story in a confessional but often self-incriminating speech. Kinahan revelled in the disruptive structures of Tremblay's text and used them to draw out the friction between the jostling stories of her ensemble of fifteen working-class women. The alternations between realist dialogue and other forms of address to the audience raised issues of framing, of who gets to speak in this working-class world, and of the clashing realities touched on in public exchange, communal declarations, and private musing.

The title of Kinahan's play borrowed and repurposed a comment by Eamonn De Valera, who purportedly opined that women make for the boldest but most unmanageable revolutionaries.[4] The text in accordance with De Valera's sexist pronouncement shows the chasm that lies between obstreperous feminist insight and the effecting of social change. It also depicts the women who gather in the Ballymun on an evening in 1974 as an unruly, fractured collective as well as a potentially united feminist front. In the play, Ger Lawless, who has won one million Green Shield stamps, dreams of all the objects she can buy to transform her flat. She summons her daughter, Linda, her sisters Rose and Patsy, and her friends to help her stick the stamps into booklets. The other women are resentful and disapproving of her win, it tran-

4 Margaret Ward used the phrase in the title of her 1989 study of women and Irish nationalism but did not give a source for de Valera's comment.

spires, and over the course of the evening they contrive gradually to steal the booklets and the stamps. The exchanges between the characters and their confiding soliloquies to the audience exposed the unruliness of female desire and the emptiness of existences eked out on the margins of Dublin society. In the first chorus of the play (15-17), the women described the monotony of their lives; in a litany, they catalogued their repetitious routines as housewives and mothers which were replicated on a daily basis and punctuated only by the turning on of "the telly" in the evening. In unison they lamented the "dreary rotten life" (17) that they shared. Their joint voicing of their discontent in these choric pronouncements consolidated into an act of feminist protest. These poetic outbursts allowed Kinahan not only to frame their world differently, but also to question what rights these women have in a censorious society that curtailed their possibilities to pursue happiness; the jibes and in-fighting that characterised their exchanges with each other were transmuted into redolent protest.

Overall, Kinahan translated the unmanageability denounced by de Valera not into a vision of sisterliness but into a web of dissonant effects and insights. The anger evinced by the chorus was undercut by the fractiousness of the women's conversations in which there was little evidence of feminist accord or of working-class solidarity. These women were cross-linked instead by their Catholic conservatism, their rapacious but unappeased material and sexual wishes, and their bickering and irrepressible Otherness. Unruliness applied, too, to the clashing interweave of scenes in the play which moved unevenly from lacerating comedy to displays of heart-rending neediness. In one of the most poignant monologues of the play, Dolly Snow – who had devoted her life to caring for her mother – admitted to her unfulfilled longing for the travelling salesman, Mr Simon:

> I haven't held anyone's hand since Mammy died and I dream about him now every night and I dream that we're married and we're living all happy in my flat and the place is shining with his tea cups and brushes and he's the first man who ever cared for me and I don't want to lose him. I don't want Mr Simon to go away and I'm kind of terrified now on a Thursday that he won't come because then I'll be all on my own again and how would I ever meet anyone? (38)

Another member of the group, Angela Smith, who lives with her pious, church-going friend Ruthie Barrett, was outed as a secret frequenter of a night club on Leeson Street where she sought solace and a let-up from the prejudiced world that constrained her:

> It's easy to judge isn't it. It's always easy to judge. Ireland is awash with it … I've been judged all my life. That's what happens when you grow up in the convent, when you're born into it. Fallen. I fell into this world a fallen woman, a fallen child … Joys isn't the club where Patsy started, it's for the older crowd and although it's full of loneliness, there's a comfort in it because it's dark and we can pretend … That we are young. That we are loved … Now I'll have to stop going down. I'll have to stop pretending and live with who I am. (58-59)

The image of the fallen woman was a recurrent one in the play; it acted as an overarching trope for all of the *dramatis personae*, as each of the characters was revealed to be carrying a burden of shame. All of the women elicited the disapproval of

the others; each failed to attain her own desires, but nonetheless was castigated for deviating from society's expectations of female propriety. Patsy, Ger Lawless's sister, particularly epitomised this fallenness and the manner in which female desire was destined to be thwarted by Irish mores and moral norms. Treated as a pet when a child because of her beauty and intelligence, Patsy was shunned by her family and friends in adulthood because she was held to have violated the standards of sexual morality they purported to uphold. In her soliloquy, Patsy disclosed the material destitution she faced in the wake of abandonment by her procurer and lover:

> Now I've wasted thirteen years of my life on Leeson Street … He threw me out on the street … I've nothing to me name now bar the clothes on me back … What's left to me now but Fitzwilliam Square? Standing in the shadows. Hoping. Waiting. Praying that you turn a trick so you can get in out of the cold … You age fast down there on the square … you're lucky to get out with your life. But what choice do I have? I'll have to do it for a few weeks … take me chances … get some cash. (70-71)

The monologue framed Patsy's story differently. The precarity of a seemingly glamorous life as a hostess in a Dublin night club was prised apart and shown to be a prelude to the even more demeaning and uncertain existence of a prostitute turning tricks on the streets. The reframing effected by the address to the audience at once movingly outlined Patsy's predicament, and also made clear how capitalist exploitation and patriarchal control in tandem oppress and exploit women.

Kinahan's play conveyed the stories of women who suffer in isolation and are pitted against each other, rather than making common cause. It refused to romanticise working-class lives but emphatically exposed the way in which poverty ground these characters down, depriving them of vitality and the conditions they needed to thrive. The group at the end came to blows and then scattered, while Ger was forced to recognise the nullity of her dreams of material advancement. Tremblay's work ended with the cast reuniting to sing "O Canada"; the finale of an adaptation into Glaswegian culminated with the women singing "Scotland the Brave." In Kinahan's version and the Abbey production, the women sang "Amhrán na bhFiann," the Irish national anthem, forcefully, unironically, and seemingly in ungrudging unison. It is the final dissonance and jolting act of framing achieved by this tragi-comedy that succeeded in breaking with the overwhelmingly bourgeois conventions and perceptual lens of Irish theatre, and in creating a painfully suggestive and rare account of working-class women's lives in Ireland in 1974. Although Peter Crawley declared himself nonplussed by the ostentatious lack of irony of the ending, this conjured-up harmony was, in fact, central to its upending of things. The inclusiveness and sense of community that an anthem denotes are at variance with the individual stories of misery and oppression in the play, and the vignettes of interpersonal conflict such as Teresa Doyle's violent custodianship of her mother-in-law Olive, who is suffering from dementia. Kinahan pointed up the fallacies in de Valera's sexist observation. It is not given to the women she represented to be revolutionaries, and the unmanageability they embodied is an offshoot of their sense of shame, frustration, and disempowerment. *The Unmanageable Sisters* required the audience to abandon its need for

feminist uplift, and to grapple instead with the complex acts of empathy it elicited for the disappointed and broken lives of an embattled ensemble of women.

Edna O'Brien's adaptation of her epochal novel *The Country Girls*, which was published in 1960, was premiered in the Garter Lane Theatre, Waterford and the Gaiety Theatre Dublin in October and November 2011. A revised version was staged in the Minerva Theatre, Chichester, before being revived in a further revised text in the Abbey in February 2019. The production fortuitously coincided with the city-wide celebration of *The Country Girls Trilogy* in April 2019 for the "One Dublin, One Book" annual programme. At the opening night of the run in the Abbey, O'Brien came on stage for a final curtain call. Her adaptation of *The Country Girls* was hence in dialogue with her career and the changed status of a work, once banned and decried and now feted as a canonical and perdurable text. If, as in Hutcheon's view, all adaptations are palimpsestic then the new production of *The Country Girls* directed by Graham McLaren was coloured by the perspectives of a contemporary audience not only on the text but also on O'Brien as a feminist icon and pioneer.

Eimear McBride has contended that *The Country Girls* as a quintessential tale of Irish girlhood "is not the novel that broke the mould, it is the one that made it" (xi). In her adaptation, O'Brien continued to innovate, as her stage version was not concerned with fidelity to her novel. Reviewers misconstrued this dimension of the production and accused it either of sentimentality or of reneging on the erstwhile radicalism of the original text. Inherent in such commentary was a presumption that a feminist text which has gained wider currency must necessarily have forfeited its challenging Otherness. A feature of the 2019 Abbey production was that it deliberately risked anachronism in revising some aspects of the plot and thus freely oscillating between the past and the present. It further challenged the audience in eschewing naturalism, forgoing a set, and fluidly deploying the ensemble of actors to double up on roles. Apart from the leads, all the actors played several different parts and were choreographed as they moved in and out of the rapidly succeeding scenes, gathering into tightly knit groups that then suddenly dispersed. The sense of an unfurling dreamscape was further added to by the swift set changes effected by aerially dropping and lifting sparse and uniformly painted pieces of furniture to indicate domestic settings, school rooms, or dormitories on a largely empty stage denuded of a backdrop.

The staging of this adaptation hence suggestively represented femininity as a phantasmagoria, thus breaking with the realism of the novel, the plot of which it echoed but also altered. Kate Brennan, the central heroine, was defined from the start of the play by her self-divided nature; her quest for the ineffable – she danced to "Liebestod" from Wagner's *Tristan* in the opening scene (3) – placed her at odds with the world around her. Her yearning to be an artist was shown to be at variance with the compliance and self-denial expected of her as a woman, and also with the hedonism and pragmatism of her friend Baba, who called her to task: "You want different things, kiddo …You want poems and stuff … that's not the buzz … that's not the carousel" (60). The conflict between Catholic conservatism and romantic idealism was particu-

larly drawn out in the boarding school scenes in which Sister Immaculata enjoined silence and asceticism, while a younger nun, Sister Mary, revealed her uncertainty about her vocation and its roots in unrealised desires. The latter's singing of the hymn, "Lady of the Way" (25), with its evocation of a lovelorn but otherworldly Mariolatry, captured the difference of female longing but also its fatally self-undermining aspects.

Indeed, music and poetry were used throughout the production to capture the subversive nature of the woman artist and of a female desire that seemed at once part of a heterosexual economy and to exceed and topple it. Kate's mother appeared to her as a reproving ghost, but also as a soothing spirit who sang to her and enveloped her in a shared feminine semiotic space. By contrast, the symbiotic but conflicted relationship between Kate and Baba was characterised by performances that alternatively expressed the mutual subversiveness that united them, as when they sang "I'll tell me my ma when I get home" at the end of Act One, and underscored their opposing stances on the world, as when Baba in Act Two ironically performed, "How Can You Buy Killarney," stressing her own mercenary attitude to love and taunting Kate's otherworldliness. Literature also acted as an instrument of female desire and queer attachment. Kate, for example, beguiled Sister Mary by reading the ending of James Joyce's "The Dead" to her and confiding that she regularly mixed up "God and poetry" (24). Despite her artistic proclivities, Kate was shown as torn between seeing love as sublimation and as pathic. Thus, she recited "Molly Bawn," a song about the tragic killing of the eponymous heroine who is mistaken for a swan, in order to fend off the advances of Reg and to convey her sense of fatedness. Contrastingly, she deployed poetry proactively in her affair with Mr Gentleman and repurposed Joseph Mary Plunkett's mystic poem "I See His Blood Upon the Rose" (57) to convey her lover's erotic power over her and her illicit but overwhelming sexual desire for him. His failure to make good on his promise to take her on a trip to Vienna during which he planned to seduce her, however, turned into a scene reminiscent of "Nighttown" in *Ulysses* in which hobos, buskers, and prostitutes sang "Monto" (66-67). Her passion thus was de-sublimated and redirected.

Notably, Joycean intertextuality, as in her performance for Sister Mary, allowed a reframing of her desire and the intermingling of her artistic ambitions with those of the male modernist author. Instead of with Mr Gentleman, her sexual initiation took place with the poet Finn, who also seduced with a talismanic poem, Padraic Colum's "The Drover" (71). In a moment that mirrored her abandonment by Mr Gentleman, Finn, too, deserted her but urged her to leave Ireland, citing Joyce's words in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*: "Ireland is the sow that eats her farrow" (72). At the end, Baba, momentarily reconciled with Kate, shared her bewilderment, but also the growing insight into how they have both been shaped by patriarchal culture. She posed the question, "was it men who broke us?" to which Kate proffered the tentative "maybe" (79). Rebuffing Mr Gentleman, who pleaded with her to stay in the country, Kate uncertainly but defiantly boarded ship with Baba in the final moments of the play *en*

route to the UK. Emigration was depicted at once as enforced and as an active choice by the country girls who have recognised their precarious position as women in Irish patriarchy and asserted their right to have rights. O'Brien, hence, in conjoining past and present in her adaptation, links 1960s feminism with the contemporary movement, but leaves open what kind of future might await her heroines, albeit Kate in the closing words heralds her journey to a "bright, unwritten place" (81).

Marina Carr's *Hecuba*, a version of Euripides's play, was first staged at the Swan Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon by the Royal Shakespeare Company in September 2015. It premiered in Ireland in the Project Theatre, 27 September-6 October 2019. Carr radically reworked Euripides's text in order to reconceive Hecuba and to question the violent vengefulness that she instigates and for which she is held to task. Her declared intention was to rehabilitate the central character and to redress how she has been received ("Playwright Marina Carr in Conversation with Fiona Macintosh"). *Hecuba* is traditionally seen as the most rebarbative of Euripides's tragedies because of its blighted view of human behaviour. Abducted and enslaved by the victorious Greeks, Hecuba is depicted as broken by grief and the impact of war following the death of her husband, Priam, and her fifty children, and the sacking of Troy. Problematically, she unites the roles of righteous war victim, grieving wife and mother, and bloodthirsty avenger. In Euripides's work, the unappeased ghost of Achilles, the Greek hero, demands the sacrifice of Polyxena, Hecuba's daughter, as recompense for his violent death. Hecuba attempts unavailingly to prevent this killing and to substitute herself for her daughter. Adding to her grief for the butchering of Polyxena is her devastation at the death of Polydorous, her young son, by Polymestor, her Thracian ally, who instead of shielding him has killed him for the treasure he brought with him. In retaliation, she blinds the latter and murders his two children. Her transformation from sorrow-laden survivor to merciless avenger is often seen as jarring and implausible by modern readers and audiences.[5] Moreover, the denunciation of Hecuba in misogynistic terms at the end of the play as a rapacious and immoral mother and the perplexing, closing prophecy that she will turn into a dog in the future, thereby fully embodying the bestiality that she has displayed, further reinforce the sense of a bifurcated figure who is viewed disjointedly and held to ransom for a gendered essentialism that casts women as Other and deems them prone to atavistic reversions.

Carr's adaptation thoroughly questioned every aspect of Euripides's play, revising its plot and overturning its sexist presumptions about women and patriarchal concepts of honour and male heroism. She excised the ghosts and chorus from the play and completely altered the ending. Her text, hence, is palimpsestic, at once an interrogation of the original Greek text, a host of later intertexts, and a discrete feminist reimagining of them. Countering her negative typecasting in received versions of the

5 See Foley 1-90 for an examination of the reception history of *Hecuba*, its interpretive cruxes, and modern stagings of it.

story, Carr's Hecuba never resorted to revenge; the violent actions she reputedly carried out are represented as hearsay and a falsification. In tandem with these departures from a supposedly fixed matrix, Carr replotted and re-psychologised the motives and affects of all the main figures, including the male characters, in different terms. Hence, Agamemnon and Odysseus are more torn and conflicted than in Euripides's play, and Polyxena, rather than transcending the bloodiness and injustice of her unwarranted death as traditional views of her as a complaisant daughter would have it, petulantly embraced her fate because of her love for Achilles and was shown as alternately resolute, defiant, fearful, and self-divided.

However startling these changes may be, Carr particularly challenged her audience to rethink inherited Greek myths and the foundational sexism of Western culture by constantly playing with point of view and the possibilities of dialogue in her script. All of the exchanges were a mixture of reported speech, inner monologue and, more rarely, direct conversation. This oscillating pattern was established in Hecuba's long opening speech and continued thereafter as in the following initial encounter between Agamemnon and the Trojan queen who has become his war slave:

> *Agamemnon*: Fabled queen I say. She hears the mockery in my voice though it's not compulsive mockery. I've been waiting to get a good look at her for a while. And there she is, perched on her husband's throne, holding what? His head? The blood flowing down her arms. And what arms they are, long and powerful. What's that? I say. She doesn't answer, just looks at me as if I'm a goatherd, the snout cocked, the straight back, three thousand years of breeding in that pose.
>
> *Hecuba*: They told me many things about him, this terror of the Aegean, this monster of Mycenae, but they forgot to tell me about the eyes. Sapphires. Transcendental eyes, fringed by lashes any girl would kill for. I pretend I don't know who he is. And you are? I say. You know damn well who I am he laughs, and you may stand. (12-13)

Dialogue in the play thus constantly spliced the public and private, the words of others and internal monologue, direct address and narrated thoughts and events. Even though some critics found this risky textual strategy obstructive and unsatisfactory, it had the effect of radically unsettling things, as characters who were at odds nonetheless partook of each other's words and thoughts.[6] Conflictual conversations became participatory and unspoken thoughts breached the boundaries of private consciousness, and were factored into the emotional and political sparring in the play. Likewise, the audience was forced to rethink what it knew and constantly to reassess the action from the multi-perspectival viewpoints granted to them.

Counterbalancing Carr's estranging effects with dialogue, the Rough Magic production directed by Lynne Parker transposed the action to a contemporary but unspecified warzone, reminiscent of the war in Syria.[7] Upturned chairs on a stark, denuded

6 For conflicting views of Carr's narrative experimentation see Wallace, Wang, and Sihra 265-76.

7 Headrick and Lonergan 109-14 provide useful summaries of Parker's vision and resourcefulness as director and the co-operative ethos that she fosters as a central dynamic of performance.

stage space were the only items used to suggest the chaos and violence of the context and setting. The text was acted in the traverse with the spectators seated around the central performance space and placed deliberately close to the action. The emotional immersiveness and inquisitorial nature of the text were reinforced by the actors' positioning of themselves in the audience when not directly performing, thus continuing their wary involvement in the unfurling events.

Hecuba's moral stance and ethical questioning of war in terms that coincided with contemporary concepts of rights and criminality were immediately made evident in her opening speech:

> And I say, the women? What about the women? The children? The women too, they're killing the women he says, all the old ones, the ugly ones, the ones past childbearing, past work. And the children? I say. Priam's head oozing onto my dress. The children he says, all the boys and all girls under ten. Why? I say, though I know it's a stupid question. Not enough room on the ships he says. They're rounding them up, have them in the cattle pens. And I think, this is not war. In war, there are rules, laws, codes. This is genocide. They're wiping us out. (12)

Shifts in point of view gave contour to this disquisition, as Hecuba, chorus-like, commented on the killing of the citizens of Troy in the aftermath of the sacking of the city, made us privy to the visceral immediacy of violence, and also forensically adduced the carnage that she witnessed to be "genocide." The use of this twentieth-century coinage alerted us to the way in which contemporary perspectives necessarily infiltrated and contaminated the play. In another signal scene of horror, Hecuba's discovery of the dead body of Polydorous, her young son, Carr also effected a disquieting intermingling of reportage, the direct voicing of emotion, and intertextual allusion to intimate the unspeakable brutality of war:

> *Hecuba*: And there he is on his side looking past me, they didn't even close your eyes. I gather him up, he resists me, doesn't want my embrace now, will never want it again, no breath none. You knew you would come to this day, in you from the start, all gone now and something akin to relief comes flooding in, you can put aside motherhood now, take it off like a scarf…Who did this? Who did this to my war baby, born in the first year of these unimaginable times? I must bear this too it seems.
>
> *Agamemnon*: She comes howling, charging, her mother's nose has smelt him out. She stumbles past me, the veins leaping from her neck with the dead weight of him. The howls. This. This. This. This. This. (53-54)

Hecuba, unlike in Euripides's play, was completely taken up by maternal grief and not by thoughts of revenge. Spectators were made aware of the extremity of her emotion which was conveyed with impartial but not unfeeling precision by Agamemnon. The echoes of King Lear holding the body of Cordelia and of Maurya faced with the body of her drowned son in John Millington Synge's *Riders to the Sea* compounded the intensity of her loss and endowed it with a universal but also meta-theatrical dimension. It was not bestiality that was laid bare but the enormity of engulfing anguish. Hecuba's comments also, in keeping with Carr's feminist reclaiming of her, had a self-explicatory and accusatory force. Her question, "Who did this to my war baby?," pointedly re-

framed the scene and directed attention to the largescale issues that the play addressed about the voicelessness of refugees, their right to a fair hearing, the ethics of war, and the marginalisation of women. In the final scenes of the play Cassandra, Hecuba's daughter, changed from ostracised prophet to a knowing witness who discerned her mother's grief-stricken decline into "a ghost of herself now, haunting herself" (55). Cassandra's final speech, which rounded out the play, continued the readjustment of our vision and uncovered the porous and questionable lines of division between self and Other, civilisation and barbarity, victim and hero:

> They said many things about her after, that she killed those boys, blinded Polymestor, went mad, howled like a dog along this shore. The Achaeans wanted to get their stories down, their myths in stone, their version, with them as heroes always, noble, fair, merciful. No. They were the wild dogs, the barbarians, the savages who came as guests and left an entire civilisation on its knees and in the process defiled its Queen and her memory. What she did was put her last child on the pyre, say her prayers, wait for death quietly by that pyre. And it came, grudgingly, but finally it came. And the wind came too, and we sailed with it to a new and harsher world. (57)

Ultimately, too, Cassandra exposed how versions of history are dominated by the victors, in this case the Greeks, and their obliterating partisan views. By contrast, Carr's play preserved its revisionist and emphatically questioning stance to the end. In daring to rewrite Euripides but also to concoct a disturbing dramaturgy predicated on a continuous interrogation of reported speech, third-person narration, hearsay, rumour, and mythic transmission, she wielded the art of adaptation to compose a radical renegotiation of a provocative tragedy, to produce a heart-rending, feminist reclamation of Hecuba, and a potent denunciation of war. The right of stateless minorities and of subaltern groups, including women and refugees, to have a voice is asserted as part of the unfurling, adaptational vison of Carr's play.

After the first lockdown brought about the closure of public venues due to Covid-19, Michael West's adaptation of Mike McCormack's *Solar Bones* became one of the only plays actually to be staged in Ireland in 2020. Exceptionally, it was viewed by a live, albeit masked and socially distanced, audience in Kilkenny in August 2020 as part of an attenuated programme for the annual arts festival in the city. Directed by Lynne Parker, the show skilfully transposed much of the virtuosity and intensity of the novel, but also reimagined key aspects of it. Reinforcing the current vitality and cogency of adaptations, it may with some justification be dubbed *the* Irish pandemic play, as it was subsequently filmed and screened on 2 November 2020 on RTE and as part of *Seoda*, a week-long online celebration of Irish culture made available internationally by Culture Ireland to mark St. Patrick's Day, 2021.

McCormack's celebrated fiction is a poetic meditation voiced posthumously by Marcus Conway as he revisits his life during a brief, anguished return to the world afforded to him on 2 November, All Souls' Day. Self-consciously carrying forward some aspects of the artistry of the modernist novel, it narrates in unpunctuated but carefully sculpted and formatted prose Marcus's meandering and anxiety-laden reminiscences about his marriage, family life, and working existence as a road engineer in County Mayo.

Mirroring Joyce's *Ulysses*, it is a one-day novel which centres largely on the private and familial life of one man, but also on the public role he fulfils as a benign, but conservative, patriarch. However, it also inverts some aspects of *Ulysses*, as it is the central hero, not the heroine, who is confined to the home to which he has returned to mull over his festering existential predicaments.

Michael West's deft adaptation distilled vital facets of the meandering and increasingly ominous preoccupations of the protagonist, but also dovetailed them with those of a community in the throes of a pandemic. Not surprisingly, the first-person narration is transmuted into a monologue. But, startlingly, Marcus's house which, we learn in McCormack's text, he has constructed with great pride, was depicted as an unfinished building project, divided by ghostly plastic sheets in lieu of walls. In step with this dismantling of the domestic and of the neoliberal pretensions of contemporary Ireland, the play also deconstructed Marcus's hold on his role as spouse and father and his presuppositions about masculinity. In particular, his retrospective worries about his wife's illness due to contaminated water unmoored him as did his discomfiture with the installations of his daughter – a visual artist –, which were inscribed with her own blood. To the degree that Conway played the part of a reconceived and transgendered Molly Bloom, his kinship with her was borne out by the emphasis on the bodily, the sexual, the introspective, and the domestic in this adaptation. West's reimagining of McCormack's text also drew out and orchestrated its gathering apocalyptic undertones in the precise computational pronouncements of the main figure. Thereby, masculinity was rendered not as toxic, as the current nostrum would have it, but as a purgatorial and anguished state of incompletion and lack. But damnation as well as salvation and insight dogged the vision of this male *persona* who hovered between a bodiless spectre, a soul in torment, and a material, atomistic object on the verge of disintegration:

> animal, mineral, vegetable
> father, husband, citizen
> my body drawing its soul in its wake, these residual pulses and rhythms, nothing more than a vague strobing of the air before they too are
> cast out beyond darkness into that vast unbroken commonage of space and time, into that vast oblivion in which there are no markings or contours to steer by, nor any songs to sing me home and where is nothing else for it but to keep going, one foot in front of the other
> the head down and keep going
> keep going
> keep going to fuck (32-33)

Even though Conway's compulsive chewing over of the diurnal and unremarkable events of his life suggested, in part, that he was an Everyman figure, his unexplained but insistent distress marked him out ultimately as a latter-day Faustus, doomed not because of any particular misdeeds but because of the very modernity and ordinariness that he had embraced and was part of, and because of his floundering but human lack of discernment. The *angst* dissected and enacted in the production was peculiarly apt to the ongoing experience of the pandemic. However, the redisposition

of things intimated by the house as building site also suggested that the issues of contamination and culpability addressed in the play belonged, in Arendt's locution, to the space of flows rather than of places. Global and even cosmic anxieties trumped and reframed local, domestic, and particularist ones.

Linda Hutcheon has argued that adaptations should be seen as processes as much as products. The four distinctive plays examined in this chapter, Deirdre Kinahan's *The Unmanageable Sisters*, Edna O'Brien's *The Country Girls*, Marina Carr's *Hecuba*, and Michael West's *Solar Bones*, chime with this formulation since they all interrogated, changed, and re-envisaged the original text which was their jumping-off point. As adaptations they were exploratory and inventive, and provided the basis for productions that were dramaturgically imaginative and innovative, and often broke with many of the naturalistic and narrative norms of the Irish stage. Above all, ethical, feminist, and revisionist imperatives underwrote and variously cross-connected these works which inspected and amplified the modes of femininity and masculinity that may be envisaged socially and culturally, whether in the form of the working-class woman, country girl, tragic heroine, grieving mother, refugee, male warmonger, or citizen and father, and the injustice, exclusions, and exploitation attendant on gender divisions. Even though frequently denigrated and discounted, adaptations, as these texts and productions exemplify, constitute a fertile, resonant, hybrid, and variegated mode of writing for the Irish stage which command attention and warrant further and ongoing critical investigation.

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SET PIECE, SET PEACE?
NEGATIVE EMOTIONS AND THE POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE IN RECENT STAGE IMAGES OF THE NORTH

Clare Wallace

This paper considers the frictions between status quo and change in three recent theatrical works that offer images of Northern Ireland. Stacey Gregg's *Shibboleth* (2015), David Ireland's *Cyprus Avenue* (2016), and Jez Butterworth's *The Ferryman* (2017) vividly illustrate some of the intricate and, at times, counterintuitive, ways in which Northern Ireland in the second decade of the twenty-first century remains an overdetermined site of ambivalent affects and negative attachments, in a cultural discourse now further inflected by Brexit. Such patterns are, of course, well established. Seamus Heaney's 1975 poem "Act of Union" is a paradigmatic example of the tropes that congeal around the North. Refurbishing the eighteenth-century *aisling* form in which Ireland is personified as a defenceless woman at the mercy of a masculine England, Heaney portrays the process of imperial conquest as a rape through which the province is conceived. The bastard outcome of Britain's violent incursion is an "obstinate fifth column / Whose stance is growing unilateral. / His heart beneath your heart is a wardrum / Mustering force. His parasitical / And ignorant little fists already / Beat at your borders and I know they're cocked / At me across the water" (Heaney 49-50). Written in the early phase of the Troubles, Heaney's poem bitterly ventriloquises the voice of the coloniser, laying responsibility for the creation of this foetal fury at Britain's feet, but leaving the reader to grapple with the intractable ugliness of feeling the image transmits. In the ensuing decades, the narrative of the North as a dysphoric site of grim tribalism, atavistic violence, paranoia and perpetual conflict became deeply etched in the cultural and political discourse, so much so that in an essay published in 2001, Ronan McDonald warned that "The central danger of all writing about the Troubles is the danger of cliché" (233). McDonald was not the first to flag the problem of imagining the North as a set piece. "[A]s early as 1972," Mark Phelan notes, "Frank Ormsby published his 'Write-an-Ulster-Play Kit' in *The Honest Ulsterman*, signalling just how swiftly drama dealing with the conflict had ossified into stock characters and scenarios" (372). While playwrights such as Stewart Parker or Frank McGuinness were instrumental in contesting such modes of imagining the North, routine motifs of 'love across the barricades,' 'heroic domestic survival,' or the allegorising of the province as an intractable modern-day tragedy (often via adaptations of Greek classics) have been enduring (see Phelan 372 ff.).

It is now more than twenty years since the Good Friday Agreement proposed a new course for Northern Ireland. In the post-Agreement context of a 'set peace,' the challenges of imagining a cultural space that is not predetermined by political violence

and sectarianism, while still respecting the legacy of the Troubles, are complex and ongoing. Despite their many differences, *Shibboleth*, *Cyprus Avenue* and *The Ferryman* each refract the ambivalences of the affective patterning of the North as it is staged. While sharing a temporal zone in the political penumbras of post-Agreement governance and Brexit, their production contexts overlap unevenly in several ways: *Shibboleth* and *Cyprus Avenue* both opened on the Peacock Stage at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin; *The Ferryman* was produced and *Cyprus Avenue* was co-produced by the Royal Court Theatre, London, and both transferred to highly successful West End and New York runs. Three plays, one by an English playwright, are not taken here as representative of the full spectrum of contemporary/post-conflict drama about the North, but they do provide vividly contrasting approaches to the 'set piece/ set peace' conundrum. They invite audiences to think and feel in particular ways that are freighted with political implications. My analysis of their affective textures draws on Birte Heidemann's theorising of the North's negative liminality alongside Sianne Ngai's reflections on the aesthetics of negative emotions, in order to investigate how the tangle of "dysphoric affects" (3) that adhere to the North continue to find expression. In particular, Ngai's notion of "animatedness" with its racialised aspect, I will argue, elucidates the politics of powerlessness and agency embedded in these plays, and how they reproduce and restructure the tropes associated with a Northern Irish imaginary.

Suspended states

As Stefanie Lehner has observed, there is an "uneasy tension between the demands for remembrance and reconciliation" (278) in the post-Good Friday Agreement period. Through an analysis of Jimmy McAleavey's *The Sign of the Whale* (2010) and David Ireland's *Everything Between Us* (2010), she presents a case for "a process of 'un-remembering'" that would enable the "transgress[ion of] previous delimiting and defining paradigms" (282). For Lehner, writing in 2013, Northern Irish theatre-makers are caught between "register[ing] the painful burden of the past" and the need "to dissect it in order to exhume possibilities for a different future." This, she suggests, might "give rise to a 'transformative aesthetics' that proposes an un-remembering of the past to make way for a transformative re-remembering for the future" (278). The fragility of a future-oriented transformative aesthetics, however, must be recognised in a greater cultural context in which remembrance and commemoration are acutely politicised markers of ethnic identity within the province, but are also offset against the cyclical amnesia of British culture more generally with regard to the recent history of Northern Ireland. Brexit negotiations have revealed the painful irony that the 499km land border had been overlooked in the campaign to take back control of Britishness. Meanwhile, Unionist suspicions that a different border – one in the Irish Sea – might ultimately be in the offing confirms a thinly veiled anxiety about British betrayal that has always dogged the Northern Protestant identity. Evidently, the discursive contours of the North in the British (popular) imagination are marked by a very par-

ticular form of thinking that Brexit has merely brought to a level of explicitness, one that simultaneous admits and denies the status of the North as an equal part of the UK, but also one that can, for its own purposes, disregard Irish sovereignty as well.

In *Post-Agreement Northern Irish Literature: Lost in a Liminal Space* (2016), Birte Heidemann elaborates how this delicate, often contradictory, process of suspension, reinvention and rebranding involves contemporary Northern culture in "a *different* kind of 'conflict.' While such a conflict may certainly be less violent *per se*, it gestures towards new forms of violence exerted by the Agreement's rhetorical negation of the sectarian past and its aggressive neoliberal campaign" (4). It is a rhetoric that habitually associates progress with economics, prosperity with peace. Heidemann explores how Northern Ireland's "negative liminality can be understood as a precarious state of being trapped in a geography of fear, one that is performatively configured by a profuse sense of claustrophobic intensity" (39). This state, characterised by forms of temporal and historical disjuncture, is captured in the interchange between liminal suspension and liminal permanence in cultural and political discourse. In aesthetic terms, she argues, "[i]f liminal suspension refers to textual devices in which fictional subject positions remain perpetually suspended between the two liminal coordinates of identification (loss) and reidentification (renewal), past and present, conflict and conciliation, then liminal permanence pertains to the literary-aesthetic as well as the cultural stasis forged by the non-resolution of such suspended subject positions" (51). Reading Butterworth, Gregg and Ireland through the lens of negative liminality clarifies the questions that arise in their modes of representation and the emotional patterning they produce.

In *Ugly Feelings* (2005), Sianne Ngai focuses on "weaker and nastier" (7) types of affect – irritation, anxiety, envy, paranoia and disgust – that she posits as "*a*moral and *non*cathartic" (6) to argue that such dysphoric affects mapped in and generated by cultural texts and artworks register states of "obstructed agency" both individual and collective (3). One of these affects, she contends,

> becomes publicly visible […] as a kind of innervated "agitation" or "animatedness." On one hand, the state of being "animated" implies the most general of all affective conditions (that of being "moved" in one way or another), but also a feeling that implies being "moved" by a particular feeling, as when one is said to be animated by happiness or anger. Animatedness thus seems to be both an unintentional and intentional form. (31)

Ngai reads animatedness against racialised stereotypes and clichés. These "cultural images […] are perversely both dead and alive," persistent in their "liveliness, vigor, zest" and they "remain ugly categories of feeling reinforcing the historically tenacious construction of racialised subjects as excessively emotional, bodily subjects" (124-25). Within Irish studies, such affective manoeuvres and their political implications are familiar in the discourse of the Celt and in the longevity of Stage Irish types. Matthew Arnold's nineteenth-century diagnosis of the "nervous exaltation" of the Celtic sensibility, at once "undisciplinable, anarchical, and turbulent," but with "an audacious, sparkling, immaterial manner" (108-110) is an obvious, yet unacknow-

ledged, master text for Ngai's analysis. Arnold's homage to the sentimentality of the Celt clearly does not bend towards an acknowledgement of obstructed agency, but rather serves as a justification of an existing distribution of power. In this vein, the Celt as a Stage Irish figure, and now the Northern Irish have long been framed as animated (colonial) others – accented, ambivalently civilised, emotionally unstable – paradoxically both puppets and actors in an overdetermined narrative that diminishes responsibility and agency in favour of transhistorical tropes. Yet simultaneously, such tropes and types clearly offer paradoxical affects – the pleasures of recognition and misrecognition – as evidenced in work by Dion Boucicault, Bernard Shaw and numerous others. The ongoing affective economy of this representational heritage is, as I hope to demonstrate, palpable in *Shibboleth*, *Cyprus Avenue* and *The Ferryman* and remains, as Ngai puts it, "a nexus of contradictions" (125).

The Natives are … Lively

The Ferryman played to packed houses in the spring and summer of 2017 and was greeted with widespread acclaim. The play opened in April, directed by Sam Mendes, and soon became the fastest selling show in the Royal Court Theatre's history. By June, it transferred to the Gielgud Theatre in the West End and in 2018 toured to New York. Both the London and Broadway productions have swept up numerous awards. Its author Jez Butterworth is a seasoned British playwright and screenwriter with hit plays like *Mojo* (1995) and *Jerusalem* (2009) to his name. *The Ferryman* was welcomed as a masterwork of Shakespearean dimensions that unravels the treacheries of the Northern Irish near past with humour and heart-warming sensitivity (see Clapp, Brantley). Butterworth drew inspiration from his partner Laura Donnelly, an actress from South Armagh, for whom he created the lead female role. One of Donnelly's uncles was murdered by the IRA during the Troubles – his body was never recovered – and this story underpins the play's proliferation of subplots and scenarios. Sean O'Hagan in the *Guardian* was perhaps the first to question the dramaturgical hyperbole and the sense of dislocation the play produces (n.p.). Butterworth's refutation of such criticisms is revealing – in an interview with Sarah Hughes, he complained that "It does just feel frustrating to be called offside for a lack of authenticity. My first play, *Mojo*, was set in 1958 in Soho, another place I didn't grow up in; *Jerusalem* is about a place I spent 12 months in; I've written 10 films in the American vernacular. […] I feel like the idea that I am English and therefore shouldn't write a play on this subject is a problem" (Hughes). O'Hagan, in fact, does not suggest that as an Englishman Butterworth should not write about Northern Ireland; rather, he outlines reservations about the way Butterworth handles his material, concerns that deserve further unpacking.

The Ferryman is set in the late summer of 1981 during the IRA hunger strikes. After a brief prologue scene in urban Derry, the remainder of the stage action takes place in a South Armagh farmhouse kitchen. The scenography is naturalistic and overflowing with minute domestic detail, while a nostalgic mood is curated through the use of vis-

ual and auditory cues. At the centre of the drama is Quinn Carney, former IRA man, farmer, father of seven children, and head of a household of extended family. Action is catalysed by the discovery of his brother's body in a bog. Sean Carney disappeared some ten years earlier and since then, his wife Caitlin and her son, Oisin, have lived with Quinn and his family. In the course of the play, it is revealed that Sean has been killed by the IRA because Quinn rejected further paramilitary involvement. As I have described elsewhere, the central plot thus twists together the consequences of Republican paramilitary involvement with a barely suppressed, romantic attraction that pulses between Quinn and Caitlin – an impasse signalled by the play's title reference to the Greek myth of Charon, the ferryman who transports the souls of the deceased across the Styx and Acheron, but who can do nothing for those restless souls who are unburied. Crossing this core strand are multiple associated subplots attached loosely to the farm, the Troubles and members of the community inclusive of youthful visiting cousins from Derry to help with the harvest, Quinn's household and neighbours (Wallace, "Retro Magic").

The Ferryman contrasts with the literature that Heidemann examines in significant ways, not least because it sits within the context of British rather than specifically Northern Irish theatre. However, liminal suspension and liminal permanence are fundamental to the play's affective operations, situation and plot. Being set in the past, the play invites its audience to cross time, to imaginatively leap over the intervening thirty-six years to a very dark time in Northern history, one that may, or may not, be recognised by audiences, but one that appears 'typical' of that history. The specific geographical positioning of the story in a farmhouse kitchen in a borderland county makes explicit a form of negative liminality, where the traumas of Troubles era pulse just beneath the surface of seasonal work and communal celebration. The characters, too, are presented in diverse states of negative suspension: Caitlin hovers on the limen between wife/widow; Quinn's past is neither active nor resolved; the English "factotum" Tom Kettle as wise-fool is neither native nor foreigner; Aunt Maggie suffers from dementia and slides between actively telling stories and complete mental absence; Quinn's wife, Mary, in denial as to the state of her marriage, wavers between illness and health; Aunt Pat railing against the injustices of British colonial power can neither let go of the past nor accept her family's apparent disinterest.

Yet *The Ferryman* is not 'merely' concerned with documenting the impacts of the Troubles. As I have argued elsewhere, it insistently cultivates a sense of something that transcends the tangible material of its present, through its emphasis on harvest traditions and the quirky, at times otherworldly, narrative interventions of elderly family members. This symbolic predisposition produces a tension in the dramatic structure – on numerous levels *The Ferryman*, like its namesake, is between worlds, the natural and supernatural, the rational and irrational, past and present. Even as the audience is reminded of the contemporary moment by the set, the music and the current affairs on the radio, the political realities of the Northern Irish conflict blur into an inexorable atemporal destiny. The outcomes of violence, jealousy, frustration, disap-

pointment and dementia are presented in fateful ways that reach an apex in the play's concluding moments when Quinn kills his old IRA associates, and the rising screams of the Banshees are heard approaching from offstage (Wallace, "Retro Magic"). In consequence, the North's fateful, liminal permanence as a set piece is reinscribed by Butterworth's reliance on mythical and folk allusions, and cyclical patterns of behaviour.

That said, the commercial success of this play testifies to the winning nature of Butterworth's synthesis of comic, melodramatic and tragic elements. The show is saturated with motifs of community, scenes with children and animals, feasting, dancing and music generative of good feelings seasoned with the sharpness of political volatility and poignancy of forbidden love. With a full cast of twenty-three and a running time of three hours, it operates on a grand scale. Butterworth assembles an impressive collage of thematically linked, familiar images and dramatic types that includes one-dimensional evil IRA henchmen, an ethically compromised priest as a failed mediator, a simple-minded, yet strangely eloquent Englishman who has quite inexplicably been part of the community since he was abandoned there as a child. There is a multigenerational Irish household, teeming with children and young people, as well as an old uncle and a couple of aunts in various states of decay with political axes to grind and stories to tell. There is a harvest feast, dancing to both contemporary and traditional music, there is a continuous consumption of whisky that even, at one point, includes the children. There are two secret love stories, and, by the finale, two murders. There are even banshees to conclude. *The Ferryman* proudly and non-ironically displays almost as many borrowed 'treasures' as does the British Museum, from scraps of plays by Brian Friel, Tom Murphy and Marina Carr to allusions to Seamus Heaney.

Strikingly, the affective overcharging throughout the play is channelled through Butterworth's revitalisation of animated figures, many of them – as one reviewer caustically put it – "shameless conscript[s] from Central Casting" (Holden). Highlighting the "interplay between the passionate and the mechanical," Ngai suggests that "if we press harder on the affective meanings of animatedness, we […] see how the seemingly neutral state of "being moved" becomes twisted into the image of the overemotional racialised subject, abetting his or her construction as unusually receptive to external control" (91). The most rudimentary example of this state is to be found in the character of Aunt Maggie, who is literally wheeled on and off stage, sitting quietly in a geriatric stupor, sporadically coming to life to deliver tales of past ranging from the Fir Bolgs and the Tanuth Dé to the events of 1916 and unrequited love. But all the characters are mobilised for similar ends. Butterworth's figures are ethnically (rather than racially) marked and "overscrutable" (93) in their hyperexpressiveness – whether they are starting their morning routines, toasting each other over the harvest dinner or arguing over politics. In the dramatic frame of the play, they are lively, but are swept along by forces apparently beyond their control.

There is a keen irony in the coincidence that as *The Ferryman* was filling theatres in London and receiving jubilant reviews, Brexit negotiations with the EU began to reveal the extent to which Northern Ireland's recent history or precarious post-Agreement political balance had been ignored by pro-Brexit politicians in the UK. In its rediscovery of the past as melodramatic tragedy, *The Ferryman* unveils a pre-packaged narrative that unmasks and monetises a fundamental forgetfulness. It capitalises on the fateful, romantic semi-strangeness of the Northern Irish context and tragic inevitability of the natives' affairs while assiduously avoiding what Ruane and Todd in a more general context call "the real structural determinants of the conflict" (40).

Puppet pathology

With the controversy surrounding his latest play, *Ulster American* (2019), David Ireland has been lauded as provocateur and satirist, who like Martin McDonagh is unafraid to sacrifice political correctness in the name of an acidic polemic, a trajectory largely initiated by *Cyprus Avenue*. Ireland's *Cyprus Avenue* is an intense chamber piece for four performers. Commissioned by Fiach Mac Conghail at the Abbey Theatre Dublin, Northern Irish writer and actor David Ireland developed the script with Vicky Featherstone who at the time was the Artistic Director of the National Theatre of Scotland. Featherstone moved to London in 2013 to become the Artistic Director of the Royal Court Theatre and in the end *Cyprus Avenue* opened in February 1916 on the Abbey's smaller stage, the Peacock, as a co-production between the Abbey and the Royal Court directed by Featherstone. Thanks largely to the presence of Stephen Rea in the lead role, the show has been a considerable success with productions in London, New York, Belfast and was remounted in Dublin and London in 2019. In 2019, the second London production was filmed and in September was broadcast on BBC 4; this filmed version was also briefly made available online in 2020. Like *The Ferryman*, the play has won several awards and has been very positively received, with many reviews of the 2016 run noting the relevance of its portrayal of bigotry and sectarianism (see Meany, Billington, Clapp, Cavendish).

The setting of the drama is the urban and bourgeois heartland of contemporary Belfast in a loosely defined, post-Peace Agreement present. Its protagonist, Eric Miller, is a middle-class Belfast Protestant who is meeting with his psychiatrist for the first time. Bridget, a Black-British doctor, invites Eric to talk about himself and what has led him to this point (9). Composed of ten short parts, the plot oscillates between scenes in the present and those from Eric's past, showing how he became convinced that his five-week-old granddaughter was former Sinn Féin leader Gerry Adams, and the outcomes of this conviction. The play opens with some edgy comic exposition of Eric's attitudes as he stridently defends his British identity, before tracing his growing anxiety about his granddaughter's, and by extension his own, identity. Unsurprisingly, familial conflict ensues when he tests his hypothesis by costuming the infant with toy glasses and painting a beard on her face with a black marker. Banished from the

family home by his wife, Eric roams in a state of extreme distress to the working-class area of Dundonald. There, he finds himself in a park, questioning his cultural identity and contemplating suicide. At that moment he meets Slim, a hyperactive, aggressive, fast talking UVF man, disgruntled by the way the new peace regime has deprived him of a chance to kill a "Fenian" (46). As becomes evident, Eric's fortuitous meeting with Slim is in fact an externalisation, a dramatic embodiment of his fierce anxiety about and rejection of a set peace. While Eric's paranoia initially seems aligned with a quirky identarian bigotry, the somewhat uncomfortable comedy is suddenly ruptured by the graphic violence in the play's closing scenes when Eric kills his daughter, then his wife and, finally, the baby in order to save Ulster from "Fenian" infiltration.

With a protagonist who is unable to relinquish the past or adjust his sense of self to such an extent that he loses his grasp of reality, the play exemplifies the paradoxes of negative liminality. Eric and his alter ego, Slim, seem emblematic of an Ulster Unionist impasse – an identity perpetually beleaguered by its own liminal fragility. This liminality functions on several axes, the most prominent being the politics of identity within the UK, the tensions of reconciliation in the Northern context, and finally, the ontological fracture of the self as these tensions reach their apex.

Although Eric's struggle to define himself and his world is the source of much of the play's humour, his first question to Bridget – "Why are you a nigger?" (7) – strikes a harsh, and gratuitous, note. Indeed, following criticism from the cast, the language of this exchange was significantly modified in later performances during its 2016 run and in the 2019 production and film. Despite the removal of the crudest incendiary racist epithets, the version recorded and broadcast on BBC4 is tonally coarser and more self-explanatory than the original production. Rea's performance becomes less nuanced, and the character's situation was more obviously framed throughout as sectarian dysphoria and psychosis. This impulse to clarify the terms of encounter between Bridget and Eric in the recorded adaptation, I would suggest, is indicative of the shift in anticipated audience. Commissioned by The Space and produced for BBC Four by the Royal Court Theatre, the film caters to the non-Irish and non-Northern Irish spectator by establishing Eric's locale and depicting Bridget's perspective on Belfast with additional visual footage. As a result, Northern Ireland as a site of strangeness to the British eye is accentuated, an effect augmented by the ongoing reverberations of Brexit.

Intrinsic to Bridget and Eric's conversations is his unwillingness to accept her Britishness and her misunderstanding of his national and cultural identity. David Ireland exploits the irony of misrecognition when Bridget refers to Eric as Irish. Insulted, he firmly corrects her by listing proofs his Britishness: a grandfather who died at the Battle of the Somme, a father who died at Dunkirk, participation in Orange parades, his job for Her Majesty's Government. This set of statements indicates a constant pattern of demonstrative acts of loyalty to a static concept of Britishness. Similarly, Eric's

world view rests upon a transhistorical definition of the Catholic (or in his vernacular, Fenian) other. He cleaves to a fixed, projected dichotomy while his anxiety about Fenian domination of public and cultural life feeds a burgeoning paranoia that eventually overwhelms him. The suspicion that he might be Irish is ontologically destabilising; he can no longer be certain of himself or of those around him – "is that all I am? A puppet?" (37), he asks.

In a sense, Eric and Slim are indeed puppets animated by dysphoric Northern attitudes and allegiances. Yet, they are perhaps more accurately understood as caricatures – strident, hyperbolic, loquacious and accented. David Ireland takes his audiences on a veritable rollercoaster of ambivalent affects and downright ugly feelings. The play courts audience complicity in the recognition of an array of stereotypes, and uneasy laughter at the bold utterance of offensive views. Simultaneously, there is something pitiful in the hypersensitive and contorted system of distinguishing self from other, Protestant from Catholic, Irish from British. Ireland carefully crafts an affective escalation across the scenes, pushing the humour to a bleak tipping point. The violence implicit in the swell of obstructed agency erupts shockingly in scenes seven to nine, when Eric beats and strangles his daughter and continues to the devastating image of his smashing a bin bag containing his granddaughter around the corpse-strewn stage.

Cyprus Avenue presents a shocking theatrical image of Northern Irish identity crisis in a post-conflict context that is expressed through dislocated, nonlinear experiences of time and is viciously consolidated in acts of violence against women (Wallace, "Commemoration" 92). The minimalist stage picture contributes to the cumulative sense of dissecting a particular Northern malaise. But the question of the effect and purpose of the recycling of the familiar tropes of the stage Ulster Unionist – dour, patriarchal, self-destructive, unrepentant and psychotic – cannot be entirely ignored. The re-circulation of clichés is played for certain affective dividends. Whether these affects contribute to a dismantling or a reification of those clichés is moot. Ronan McDonald suggests that "If we see cliché as the tired use of language, a use that calcifies and deadens the imagination, then it is the verbal equivalent of tribal entrenchment, a spasmodic reflex towards the familiar and the reassuring, the instinct to go with the grain" (233). Shadowed by a long tradition of performances of Northern Irish crisis, *Cyprus Avenue* confirms the ongoing irredeemability of the Northern Unionist male, and leans uncritically into the all too familiar use of women's bodies as a trope for territorial conflict. So, while the play is not immediately recognisable as reassuring, its edgy humour and visceral climax predominantly serve to reaffirm the narrative of dysphoric Northern identities.

Building and deconstructing

Stacey Gregg was commissioned by the Abbey Theatre and the Goethe-Institut to write a play in response to the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 2008; how-

ever, it was not until October 2015 that *Shibboleth* was first performed during the Dublin Theatre Festival at the Peacock Stage, directed by Hamish Pirie. It is a piece distant from the well-made and naturalistic predispositions of *The Ferryman* and *Cyprus Avenue* that certainly does not share their commercial or critical successes. Gregg's play is deliberately messy, refusing to resolve itself into a tidy dramaturgy. As its title suggests, it sets its sights on Northern shibboleths, customs and codes that maintain and perpetuate social division.

Shibboleth is an assemblage of short scenes set in contemporary inner-city Belfast. The focal point of the play is the extension of what is euphemistically called an "Interface Barrier" (17). The characters include a cluster of men who work on the building site, a city councillor and some members of the men's families. Action revolves around morning routines, banter on the construction site and the characters' frustrations and desires. The arrival of a Polish immigrant worker, Yuri, on the site sparks expressions of resentment and threats of violence, yet also results in a new bond of friendship between Alan and Yuri, who share hopes for better lives for their families. The cautious optimism of Alan and Yuri's attitudes is offset by the pent-up anger and self-destructiveness of their younger colleagues Corey and Mo, while both impulses are complicated by the ambivalence of Stuarty the foreman, the city councillor, the choral voice of the Brickies and the Wall itself.

Gregg samples a varied set of Post-Agreement experiences and handles them in a self-consciously neo-Brechtian manner. She is patently uninterested in well-made or naturalistic routes through her material. Instead, the play invites reflection on the constructedness of the scene. As stage directions indicate, "We should see the mechanisms of production" (5). Like *Cyprus Avenue*, the spatial points of reference are urban and Belfast-based, but in contrast to Ireland's play, the voices belong to children and young people, the working class and immigrants. The diversity of this world is kept perpetually in view as cast members may remain onstage throughout. The central device is the building of a wall – a wall that is personified in the play and described by Gregg as a scenographic and semiotic "invitation" that may be "manifested in one being, or in all, or in none" (5). In the Abbey production, the Wall was voiced by opera singer Cara Robinson as the cast built a structure of oversized blocks across the stage space.

The play exposes the absurdities of post-conflict Belfast. Encouraging the Brickies to get back to work, the Councillor confesses: "Look. I know, it must seem strange to be building lush city apartments one week and this wall – er, residential barrier extension the next, but, […] The only way to overcome divisions is to build *more* walls. […] Yes – security drives up the value of the land. And – money means peace" (60-61). The paradox of building "Peace Walls" (17), purportedly to divide "Themens and Usens," reproduces a state of liminal suspension in the characters, for whom manufacturing structures of division becomes their bread and butter, but also diminishes their existence. The Wall provides much-needed employment while at the same time serving the interests of property developers who exert influence over council officials

in order to maximise profits at the expense of already impoverished communities near these urban dead zones. Throughout the play, the Wall demands construction, defying the Brickies' doubts, and finally even consumes one of the characters into its self-aggrandising negative liminality. Like the dramas discussed by Heidemann, *Shibboleth* "expos[es] the pitfalls of post-Agreement Northern Ireland's neoliberal politics" (193) by revealing the cracks in the narrative of peace as prosperity and senses of disenfranchisement and dissensus.

Gregg highlights the exhausted rhetoric of sectarianism, its set pieces, while simultaneously insinuating the complexities of her characters' attitudes, their faults, strengths and vulnerabilities as they try to live in Belfast. *Shibboleth*'s cast of voices are energetically vernacular, distinctly Northern in tone and accent, but not 'animated' in the same ambivalent ways in evidence in *The Ferryman* and *Cyprus Avenue*. In contrast, Gregg refuses to let clichés congeal or roles to settle, while her characters repeatedly challenge and question the forces that deprive them of agency.

The play's image of the buried past – the Brickies' discovery of a stone with a name engraved on it – gives rise to numerous imagined explanations of its significance and grim reminiscences, all of which are knotted with the violence of the Troubles era. The object of their imaginings brings work to a halt as they seek advice on how to proceed in a moment that suggests the paradoxes of dealing with the past. The tension between elevated and mundane registers is comically signalled as they attempt to invest the line of the fence (and future wall) with the ancient significance of ley lines. Such lines as "All converging on epicentres of incredible mythical power" ironically meet in the banal space of a commercial present – the "Craighaven Pound Shop" (59). The escalation of storytelling and the investment in dubious, semi-mythic pasts is challenged by the city councillor. She is the voice of 'reason,' but also of what Mark Fisher calls "capitalist realism" (10). She swiftly deflates the meaning of their discovery with evidence that the stone is merely another piece of commercial communication, a sign made for an undertaker's business displaced by the development of the city.

As can be seen, *Shibboleth* circulates opposing attitudes to Belfast, to immigrants, to the future and most pertinently, to change through its formal experimentalism. Gregg keeps the attitudes unsettled. In response to the Councillor's pragmatic assertion that "There's generations of trauma. Depression. The blood spilt of thousands, mostly along these lines here. But change is possible," the foreman replies, "No love. Things don't change" (59). As if to physically underscore this impasse, the stage directions indicate: "*A breath. Somewhere a rook caws. A car passes.* […] *Has someone forgotten their lines? They glance about, out at the audience, uncertain*. […]" (59). In contrast to the other dramas under discussion, this moment of fourth-wall rupture offers the dilemma of transformation to spectators before turning back to the stage action.

Notwithstanding the characters' scepticism, change *is* happening. Alan and Ruby's son will move to an integrated school where his enthusiasm for dancing might thrive.

Despite being attacked by her boyfriend, Yuri's daughter Agnieszka remains determined to continue her studies. Yuri, the Polish outsider, bonds with the Brickies, and Alan in particular. But the play does not reduce change to a simply affirmative gesture. Belfast remains a site of violence, as is evidenced by the beating and suicide of Mo, Corey's seething frustration, or pervasive economic precarity, despite the Councillor's unconvincing assurances that the benefits of luxury property development will "trickle-down" (61). Meanwhile, the improbably personified Wall clamouring to be built impedes any sentimental resolution. In many respects, *Shibboleth* doesn't quite work. Its rapidly paced episodic structure, the use of music, verbal asides and choral effects overload the dramaturgical structure. Yet considering the politics of form, *Shibboleth* is indicative of an attempted transformative aesthetic approach that energetically challenges simplistic or simplified images of contemporary Northern life.

Resisting inevitability

Vis-à-vis an ambivalently evolving 'set peace,' *The Ferryman*, *Cyprus Avenue* and *Shibboleth* each illustrate the problematics of staging the North in the contemporary moment. It is not a little ironic that of the three, the two plays with the highest public profiles, greeted with the strongest public acclaim, offer a tangled web of "dysphoric affects" (Ngai 3) that arguably reify rather than deconstruct the set pieces of Northern Irish exoticism, violence and extravagant temperamentality. Chief among the pitfalls here is an insidious animatedness and the resilience of fixed tropes that prioritise suspension over transformation, and simplicity over complexity. If ideally theatre moves audiences towards the unexpected, discovery and reflection then, as these three dramas suggest, the North remains a volatile discursive space, where the politics of form needs to be continuously interrogated in order to open a space for the transformation of perspectives and attitudes.

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REGARDING THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS: SPECTRES OF THE MIDDLE EAST IN CONALL MORRISON'S *THE BACCHAE OF BAGHDAD*[1]

Natasha Remoundou

> When we look into a mirror we think the image that confronts us is accurate. But move a millimetre and the image changes. We are actually looking at a never-ending range of reflections. But sometimes a writer has to smash the mirror – for it is on the other side of that mirror that the truth stares at us.
>
> – Harold Pinter[2]
>
> The fundamental deprivation of human rights is manifested first and above all in the deprivation of a place in the world which makes opinions significant and actions effective.
>
> – Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

In the opening scene of Frank McGuinness's play *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* (1992), three Westerners, an Irishman, an Englishman, and an American who recites from the Bible and the Quran are all held hostage by unseen Arab kidnappers in a windowless prison cell somewhere in Lebanon. Memorable for interweaving Beckettian absurdity with *realpolitik* and the complexities of cultural constructions of hypermasculinities, the play was inspired by the hostage crisis that had swept Lebanon in the late 1980s. The narrative grapples with a representational paradox, in theatrical and ontological terms: the image of the three Western men who remain under the panopticon gaze of their captors is, in turn, built upon the spectral invisibility of the terrorising Lebanese agents from the material theatrical stage. McGuinness's dramatic approach in negotiating the problems of 'otherness' by representing the perennial clash between East and West here provides a rigorous exploration of the "problematic history of frequently uneven exchanges driven by Western-led Orientalist aesthetics" (McIvor, "Introduction" 7). This becomes possible with the projection of absence as an ethical encounter with the detainers' identity as Arab 'others.' Such a site of embodiment between cultures within the text provides an ideologically charged ground to debate on humanity stripped of its defences and rights: "Arab? English Arab? Irish Arab? these guys don't need to tear us apart. We can tear each other" (25),

1 This paper was written during the time I was a Visiting Research Fellow at the Moore Institute of the National University of Ireland, Galway (2018-2019), conducting research on the Abbey Theatre Digital Archive. I wish to thank all the librarians at the Hardiman Library, as well as Dr. Charlotte McIvor, Professor Daniel Carey, and Dr. Barry Houlihan for their support.

2 From Harold Pinter's pre-recorded Nobel Prize in Literature Lecture shown on video on 7 December 2005.

wonder the three captives of the Western world. Similarly, they imagine having invited their Arab prosecutors to join them in sharing bread: "Take the weight off your feet […] the same the world over. Have a drink if you like. We won't tell. Join us" (34-35). On a meta-theatrical level, the imaginary space of reciprocal hospitality negotiating differences between members and strangers (hosts and guests, friends and enemies) juxtaposed against the ghostly disappearance of the foreign guards from their own territory, embodies a kind of regressive representational violence analogous to the missing Middle Eastern 'other' from the Western stage itself.

Cast as a particularly charged kind of human rights activism, theatre has the power to protest against cultural norms and hierarchies of race, religion, class, gender, and sexuality on behalf of victims of violence. Theatre that directly engages with performing the rights of others *vis-à-vis* the double standards of the international community is an area that is posited as an epistemological *lacuna*, especially in Irish drama. The representation of others that are coincidentally far away from us, not only geographically but also from our imagined individual and collective comfort zones – especially in the context of the Middle East before and post-9/11 – can often be ethically and performatively problematic on stage. Such a figuration also attracts unavoidable scrutiny in contemporary writing for the theatre, for it succinctly dramatises the inherent violence enacted upon imagining those (we think) we know very little about. Conversely, this guiding principle draws attention to theatre's power to bear witness, critique various forms of oppression, and advocate for the rights of marginal others on stage. When politics fail, however, how can theatre become that reclaimed forum that Hannah Arendt seeks in reflecting on the re-enactment of significant opinions and e/affective actions on behalf of powerless others? Superimposed upon a representation that problematises even the Kantian mandate to be hospitable to others, how can new insights into ideas of *being foreign*, as Paul Ricoeur argues,[3] illuminate the structural incoherence of rights and their visibility in Irish theatrical praxis?

While the focus on staging 'Irishness' in Irish theatre criticism has emphasised how the representation of Irish identity has been ideologically constructed, stereotyped, and othered on the British stage, it has also pulled attention from representations of

3 Ricoeur (37-48) illustrates diverse categories of 'strangers' in order to scrutinise the legal status of difference as predicated on citizenship. He further argues that the strangers/foreigners "in our country" (visitors, immigrants, refugees) constitute a tragedy whereby the stranger "assumes the role of 'beggar'" (41). The overarching argument of "being a stranger" is reinforced by Kant's theorisation of the concept of universal hospitality (*Wirthbarkeit*) and cosmopolitan law in *The Project of Perpetual Peace*: "this here is not a question of philanthropy, but one of law. Hospitality signifies the right of the stranger not to be treated as an enemy upon his arrival on foreign soil […] the right to visit [is] the right that every human has to put himself forward to as a potential member of a society, by virtue of the law of common possession of the earth's surface on which, it being spherical, we cannot infinitely disperse ourselves; we need to tolerate one another, no one having any more right to a particular piece of land than anyone else" (qtd. in Ricoeur 41).

the Middle Eastern 'other' in contemporary Irish theatre. The dynamics of this contested scope of representation I am interested in exploring here, is manifest in theatrical performances that specifically dismantle dominant assumptions about Muslims, Arabs, and the Middle East for Western (often white Christian/secular) audiences and in Irish theatre in particular. In identifying and addressing the ways through which Irish theatre responds to these imperatives aesthetically and ideologically, this chapter examines contemporary engagements with both an ethics of 'otherness' and the rights of 'others'/strangers as ciphers of the confrontation between East and West on the contemporary Irish stage. As a case study for these multinodal inquiries, I revisit Conall Morrison's play *The Bacchae of Baghdad* (based on Euripides' *Bacchae*) which premiered at the Abbey Theatre in 2006, at the height of the Celtic Tiger period, to condemn the American invasion of Iraq. Written at the backdrop of the widespread denunciation of US imperialist jabs manifested in the reproof of public intellectuals such as Harold Pinter, Adriana Cavarero, and Slavoj Žižek,[4] I draw on the title of Susan Sontag's *Regarding the Pain of Others* and her central argument that "being a spectator of calamities taking place in another country is a quintessential modern experience" (16), in order to interrogate how this argument brings human rights issues in contemporary Irish theatre into sharper focus.

The Spectatorship of *Horrorism*

The representation of violence against 'others'/strangers in the Western theatrical tradition, from Aeschylus to Sarah Kane, has had a long uninterrupted history and an equally mythical staying power in the various dramatic reimaginings of brutality and suffering. The innovative representational strategies and epistemic modalities through which the act of Dionysian *sparagmos* has inspired writers and fascinated (or shocked) audiences, provide a useful lens to understand violence in its contemporary theatrical expression in terms of what Emmanuel Levinas designates as a "first philosophy" of the agonistic confrontation between self and other(s) (75-87). The present chapter surveys current theatrical stages in Ireland as cultural spaces where ethical encounters with terror occur when confronting 'otherness.' On this basis, I propose a reckoning of violence against 'others'/strangers not just as embodied performance and staging approach, but also as an ideological preoccupation with political theatre through the prism of what Adriana Cavarero defines as twenty-first-century *horrorism*. In this light, the ways through which mimetic trajectories between source and target cultures foreground a representation of Western politics and notions such as war, persecution, and torture, are effectively rendered obsolete in encompassing the scope of violence on stage. In doing so, I seek to survey *The Bacchae of Bagh-*

4 In *Iraq: The Borrowed Kettle* (2005), a sequel to Žižek's acclaimed post-9/11 *Welcome to the Desert of the Real*, Žižek employs the Freudian metaphor of the borrowed kettle to present the invasion of Iraq as predicated on an inconsistency.

dad's efficacy to be no mere ideologically biased medium of "sermonising"[5] gestures, but a "mirror-smashing" agent, as Pinter argues, on the grounds of a timely vehicle of justice, free speech, and righting. Without neglecting to consider the troubling and conflicting genealogies of "cultural imperialism, appropriation and colonisation" (Knowles 2), Euripides' *Bacchae* as a 'classical'[6] text (European/Greek) is enmeshed in while originating from "the home of the rights of man" (Stonebridge, *Placeless People* 4). Morrison's *The Bacchae of Baghdad* further interrogates received notions of ethnic dichotomies between natives and strangers (Greeks/Barbarians, friends/ enemies, us/them) within the Western tradition. Translated thus for a largely Western/European stage and audience, while directly engaging with racial and ethnic 'others' under the white gaze, Morrison's version renegotiates the political subtext and aesthetic tenets of the original play by Euripides, taking into account the complexities of identity and power and their role in the Greek tragic convention. This argument can be read opposite one of the central claims in Edith Hall's study *Inventing the Barbarian* and her analysis of the historical conditions during the Persian wars that gave rise to the evolution of the Hellenic ethnic self-consciousness against the barbarian/stranger as the "universal other" (*Inventing the Barbarian* 6). Such contradictions that touch upon identity politics and ethnic/racial legitimacy are mirrored in Aeschylus' *Persians* (472 BCE), the play that constitutes one of the first theatrical accounts of an East/ West encounter. Morrison takes up the ambiguities of this legacy in his version of *The Bacchae* in twenty-fist-century Ireland: his version of the tragedy functions as an instantiation of the acts of both speaking for marginal 'others' and listening to the voices of privilege (Wilkinson & Kitzinger 92). By means of this contradistinction, Morrison's *Bacchae* attempts to interrupt the processes of racial and ethnic othering. In doing so, the play, thus, destabilises rather than legitimises received binaries of self/'other' established by the Western-driven Orientalist imaginary.

Before examining the potentialities and methodologies of a rights-based approach to the performance of such binary relationships in contemporary Irish theatre, I want to dwell further on Adriana Cavarero's theorisation of *terror* and *terrorism* as conceptual

5 See Pinter: "Political theatre presents an entirely different set of problems. Sermonising has to be avoided at all costs. Objectivity is essential. The characters must be allowed to breathe their own air. The author cannot confine and constrict them to satisfy his own taste or disposition or prejudice."

6 Here, I draw attention to recent debates on the elitist use of the eighteenth-century term 'classics' to describe the study of the cultures and languages of the ancient Greeks and Romans often used to further the atavistic causes of slavery, imperialism, whiteness, and female oppression. As Edith Hall argues, "the title could do with revisiting" to include civilisations in constant ethnic exchanges with the Greeks and Romans extending beyond the Mediterranean and as far as the Middle East while also acknowledging the use of these texts to defend "the abolition of slavery […], anti-colonialism […], gay rights, female suffrage, and the Trade Union movement" ("On not Apologizing." See *Edithorial Blogspot*, 21 February 2021).

markers of the experience of being in the position of a spectator or audience member viewing an act of actual or simulated violence. The application of the spectatorship problematic in theatre is imperative here. To begin with, responses to these critical approaches are pivotal in analysing *The Bacchae*, one of the most violent narratives in theatrical history, while illuminating the impact these events have, real or imagined, upon the victims who suffer their immediate repercussions in times of war, conflict, natural disaster, or everyday life. Cavarero posits those who simply witness these acts at the centre of her analysis of *horrorism*, investigating its impact on spectatorship. By providing first an etymological and linguistic *exegesis* of the terms 'terror' and 'horror,' Cavarero exposes a fundamental contrast within the semantic shifts of both words that resonates strongly with the kind of dramatic *mimesis* Conall Morrison is preoccupied with in his version: in consonance with tragic conventions, *The Bacchae of Baghdad* dramatises the brutal attack of Pentheus and his dismemberment by the Maenads without ever graphically displaying it on stage. What is more, in a post-9/11 context, the rewriting of the tragedy operates as an act of recognising cultural trauma, mourning, and re-membering the dismembered parts of collective memory and grief embodied in Pentheus' corpse, literally and metaphorically. The reclaiming of a horror-inducing and "sorrowful" vacuum or "gap" in an attempt to make sense of tragic events, as Jennifer Wallace observes in *Tragedy Since 9/11: Reading a World out of Joint,* "hollows out" (34) the final part of both Euripides' and Morrison's *Bacchae.*

Whereas 'terror' construes the physical response of fear that compels the body to mobilise itself, to act towards flight, Cavarero remarks, 'horror' designates an awareness of standing frozen, immobile, paralyzed, the antithesis of *praxis.* In this light, Lucy Nevitt's questions regarding the reverberations of Cavarero's theoretical framework in theatre are consonant with the ethical questions Morrison's writing and theatre work are committed to in staging Irishness:

> Does theatre generate horror more frequently than terror? What might we learn from experiencing spectatorial horror in a theatre, where it can be pleasurable as well as disturbing? Cavarero's term prompts us to put spectatorial experience to the fore in our considerations of theatre and violence. It also insists that we notice the workings of language, and the significance of the choices that we make when assigning words to actions, images, representations of their effects. (4)

It is thus the morphological trajectories of terror and horror that Irish playwrights find themselves in when trying to speak on behalf of the Middle Eastern 'other' on the stage. In Morrison's case, *The Bacchae of Baghdad* enact a performative site of communal lament by seeking to restore the scattered body parts of Pentheus's body in the ending of the tragedy.

The Middle East in Contemporary Irish Theatre

Representative engagements with the Middle East in contemporary Irish theatre include figurations of the protracted Palestinian-Israeli conflict in cultural events like those organised by PalFest Ireland in support of Palestine. One of the earliest exam-

ples of theatre that focuses on issues of citizenship, asylum, and 'welcoming' host cultures anticipating the establishment of the Direct Provision system and the 1996 Refugee Act drafted in Ireland is *Asylum! Asylum*! by Donal O' Kelly staged at the Abbey Theatre in 1994 (and published in 1996). Similarly, playwright Charlie O'Neill examines Ireland's growing multi-ethnic landscape and the tensions that arise between guests and hosts, natives and newcomers, in his play *Hurl* (2003). Conall Morrison wrote a version of Sophocles' *Antigone* for the Project Arts Centre in 2004 that re-imagines the titular protagonist as a Palestinian suicide bomber in Gaza while he also collaborated with The Ashtar Theatre company in Ramallah. In 2007, a panel discussion of the Irish Society for Theatre Research highlighted the difficulties of producing a collaborative Northern Irish, Jewish, and Arab production in Arabic, English, Hebrew, and Irish through the lens of the 1972 *Bloody Sunday* massacre and the bombings in Israel and Palestine.[7] Palestinian-Irish writer Hannah Khalil's work deals exclusively with the rights of the dispossessed Palestinian people and their right to return in plays such as *Scenes from 68 Years*, *Scar Test*, *Plan D*, and *Waiting for Barack O* based on Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*.[8] Rosemary Jenkinson's plays *The Lemon Tree* (2009) and *Basra Boy* (2012) recount the impact of the conflicts in Palestine and Iraq upon the lives of the Northern Irish youth in post-conflict Belfast. In the same ideological context of rerouting the public attention to the chronic tensions in the Middle East between Israelis and Palestinians, Mutaz Abu Saleh's *New Middle East* directed by Bashar Murkus travelled from the Druze community of the occupied Golan to be hosted at the Peacock theatre as part of the Abbey Theatre's "Waking the Nation" programme. The play, originally staged at the Oyoun Theatre and the Khashabi Theatre of Haifa in 2016, formed part of the commemorating repertoire of the Centenary of the Easter Rising in Ireland. Within Irish youth theatre organisations, important contributions and interventions in human rights theatre include Calypso Productions' intercultural project *Tower of Babel* that engaged with the people living in direct provision in Ireland as well as Kildare-based Crooked House Theatre company in collaboration with Athens-based Kinitiras Theatre company and their staging of the *Supplicants* in 2018 Athens, Greece. More recently, Morrison dealt with the refugee crisis and the draconian anti-immigration EU policies – at the

7 Orna Akad, a writer and director from Tel Aviv, and David Grant, a theatre director, lecturer at Queen's University Belfast and director of the Dublin Theatre Festival worked on a production involving Arab and Jewish actors in Israel, as well as Northern Irish actors that was set to be staged in Belfast and Haifa. Grant's ambition to develop an image-based performance that would explore parallels between Bloody Sunday and a similar event in Israel in 2000 did not materialise. Following the panel discussion, a group of students from the drama department at Queen's gave a short multi-lingual performance.

8 Khalil's script *Deportation Room* for BBC Radio is based on verbatim accounts and fictional drama recounting Gazans' experiences in the 'waiting room' for Palestinians at Cairo airport. Khalil, who never lived in Ireland but grew up in Dubai and the UK, argues, "I do feel like you can't get away from the political if you want to write something really meaningful: with my background being Palestinian-Irish, I suspect it's why I have a keen sense of injustice, and that's the thing that inspires me to write." See www.hannahkhalil.com.

same time extending the critique to Ireland's immigration laws – with his modern-day adaptation *Pericles* based on one of Shakespeare's romance tales and staged at the Lir Academy, Dublin in 2019. The thematic preoccupations of these productions of the Celtic Tiger period transposed to present-day political and human rights' issues, both in Ireland and the world at large, reflect changing approaches to what staging 'Irishness' in a post-Celtic Tiger context means.

Human Rights Irish Theatre since 9/11: Rethinking Interculturalism

Echoing Pinter's Nobel Prize speech, Morrison's 2006 production for the Abbey Theatre directly responds to a politically turbulent turn-of-the-millennium, locally and globally: on the one hand, it participates in the international intellectual movement castigating the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, a trenchant reproach that resurfaced with the Guantanamo and the Abu Ghraib prison photo leaks. On the other hand, it considers the explicit impact these events have on the relationship between political and aesthetic practices in Irish art, culture, and society without eschewing a broader examination of public debates on social policy structures and human rights violations in an Irish context, following increased immigration flows in 1990s Ireland. In fact, a more attentive reading of *The Bacchae of Baghdad* necessitates a reckoning of Ireland's strategic geopolitical role in international military operations and warfare as well as its increased racial and ethnic diversity structures. This is crucial in considering the impact these shifts have had upon cultural and artistic performance and practices under the rubric of 'interculturalism'[9] following the Celtic Tiger demise. In a post-9/11 European context, the play also interrupts in performance Eurocentric narratives of othering, migration, rights, tolerance, and freedom of expression (religious, political, artistic) between East and West (Europe and Islam) that intensified following the 2005 Danish cartoon controversy.

These tensions and catalytic shifts set the tone for Morrison's subversive reworking of Euripides' tragedy. Theatre writing, in this context, is re-conceptualised as a form of activist and righting inquiry that scrutinises "the foundation of human rights themselves" (Potter & Stonebridge 1) by dramatising encounters between 'us' and 'others.' As a model of representation, human rights theatre enables a confrontation with the silence of disenfranchised 'others' (notwithstanding the silence of privileged ones). This point of departure presents a pivotal corrective to the romanticised focus by dominant voices on the weakness and suffering of 'others' that, according to Sue Wilkinson and Celia Kitzinger, tends to "study down" 'otherness:'

> one of the problems endemic to 'studying down' […] is 'the temptation to exaggerate the exotic, the heroic, or the tragic aspects of the lives of people with little power.' The

9 For an in-depth examination of the contemporary history and genealogies of intercultural and multi-ethnic Irish theatre post-1990s which simultaneously surveys the relationship between social and aesthetic Irish interculturalisms as social policy in the European Union to tackle racism and promote equality, see McIvor, *Migration and Performance* 1-36.

> danger lies in romanticising Others and in using our representation of them to delineate 'our' vision of the Good Life. Some early ethnographers saw in 'primitive' cultures the nobility of the 'savage,' the healing rituals and harmonies of the 'natural' life, and the pure essence of the pre-colonial. (88)

Such critical representational strategies in theatrical praxis and human rights discourse further draw attention to the contingent frameworks that shape engagements with migrant 'others' and ethnic minorities in Ireland today. In an Irish postcolonial context, the multiple intersectional discourses (and silences) of 'otherness' challenge structural power in a globalised perspective. As such, their reenactment can open up sites of countering a number of human rights issues prevalent in Irish culture and society today. Among these, one of the most inconsistent policies with human rights agendas is the contentious identification of Shannon Airport as a transatlantic gateway between US and Europe, acting since 2002 as a stopover point in the US Government's extraordinary rendition programme that was used for the invasions and occupations of both Iraq and Afghanistan. The implication of Ireland in the US-led 'war on terror' lead thousands of people, including members of the Irish Kurdish Iraqi community and the anti-war Muslims 4Peace and Justice group,[10] to march in Dublin in order to oppose Irish support for the US invasion of Iraq. In 2014, playwright, activist, and Aosdána member Margaretta D'Arcy – known for protesting for women's rights and civil liberties among other causes and controversies in Ireland – was arrested and imprisoned along with Niall Farrell for refusing to sign a bond that put a ban on entering parts of Shannon Airport closed to the public and for taking part in the protests over the US military stopovers there.

Almost two decades after its first production, Morrison's *The Bacchae of Baghdad* is also read against experiences of a contemporary structural racism reinforced by social policy directives and legislative measures which claim to integrate new minority communities as Ireland's 'others:' asylum seekers, refugees, and migrant women and children. In this context, *The Bacchae of Baghdad* critiques a number of systemic rights' breaches against both the Irish Constitution and the European Convention of Human Rights. Among these are the State's controversial Direct Provision[11] system operating since 1999 under the auspices of the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) and

10 Since the late 1970s, there is a growing Iraqi *diaspora* of refugees and emigrants that live in Europe as a result of their displacement due to the massacres of the Kurdish population, the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988), the 1991 Gulf War, and the US-led Invasion of Iraq in 2003, among other violent events. Based on The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) resettlement programme, only a minor percentage of the Iraqi refugee population are hosted in the EU. A great part of the Irish Kurdish Iraqi community that was (and still is) a minority in Ireland, expressed at the time of the invasion their mixed feelings and was ultimately divided into pro-war supporters who wished for the removal of dictator Saddam Hussein and those who opposed it as criminal. See Haughey (*The Irish Times*, 11 April 2003) and Murphy (*The Irish Times*, 10 April 2003).

11 Current academic research on direct provision and Ireland's breach of international human rights law is conducted by Dr. Liam Thornton at the UCD Sutherland School of Law: <https://expertise.ucd.ie/direct-provision/>.

the Department of Justice, as well as the landmark 2004 Citizenship referendum that contained constitutional legislation to remove automatic rights to citizenship from children born in Ireland. These jurisdictive arrangements feature large in the increasingly aggressive neoliberal rhetoric undergirding human rights' concerns in Irish society.[12] Studied opposite Pinter's Nobel lecture following the catastrophe in Iraq and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights drafted in the aftermath of WWII, Morrison's version emphatically alludes to the indivisibility, inviolability, and inalienability of certain collective rights that are fundamentally inconsistent with the universality of human rights' articles. In a post-conflict theatre-making landscape indebted to genealogies of civil activism, *The Bacchae of Baghdad* reiterates the specific covenants addressing racial discrimination (1966) in the representation of Dionysus, discrimination against women (1979) in the figuration of the Bacchae and Agave, torture (1984) with the lynching of Pentheus, and the rights of the child (1989) in the kinship rules between Dionysus and Pentheus that represents a conflict among equally oppressed, vulnerable subjects. At the same time as the delicate distinction between victims and perpetrators is often obscured in tragedy, Morrison provides a critical view of theatre as a rights-bearing entity used to promote and protect human rights that can often be reductive. According to Paul Rae, these ambiguities can be precariously amplified in human rights' theatre that involves "sensitive and sustained engagement with specific communities and contexts," particularly in intercultural performances of ethnic 'others' produced by Euro-American practitioners. This is because, he warns, such 'human rights' theatre demonstrates

> how the language of human rights can be used for self-serving ends. In the name of universal values, it smoothes the passage between recognising the plight of another and identifying it as one's own, cannibalising and diminishing the original suffering in the process [...]. The warning against taking up the localised atrocities of 'our' universal instruction must be as keenly felt by theatre-makers as by anyone. The generalising impetus in any staging of suffering entails an ethical responsibility to those individuals, communities or cultures being represented [...]. [I]t is similarly ill advised to shoehorn the universal truth of human rights into every concrete situation. (36-37)

The aesthetic and ethical strategies of adapting and translating Euripides' *Bacchae* for the Irish theatre, hence, are elucidated by Morrison's engagement with such histories and genealogies of conflicts over the rights of minority ethnic communities in a majority white secularised society. Postdating another Abbey production written in response to the American invasion of Iraq, *The Burial at Thebes* by Seamus Heaney in 2004, *The Bacchae of Baghdad* anticipates Cavarero's explosive study on horror, terror, and violence in times of war. Within this temporal trajectory, Morrison's work

12 Attitudes pertaining to issues of religious tolerance and ethnic, political, gender, racial, and social prejudices in the Republic of Ireland (based on a series of national surveys conducted by Micheál Mac Gréil from the late 1970s to 2008), reflect the demographic shifts in the size of a non-Irish resident population, whereby immigrants of Middle-Eastern, African, and Asian origins such as Arabs, Iranians, Israelis, Nigerians, Indians, Palestinians, and Pakistanis are perceived in a negative light (see Mac Gréil 71-83, 92-93, 101, 149, 156).

navigates a dangerous territory on the margins of what is ethically tolerable, informed by the atrocities committed against the Iraqi people. His 'horrorist' version of the *Bacchae* becomes thus the public plateau of a visceral political analogy of ethical dismemberment or *sparagmos* in material, social, and ethical frames of reference. Morrison, accordingly, sets the play in the Green zone of Iraq: he reimagines Pentheus' and Dionysus' confrontation as the violent opposition between George W. Bush and Saddam Hussein, between law (*nomos)* and nature or custom (*physis)*, between the enlightened 'civilised' West that stands for democracy, freedom, and reason pitted against the 'barbarian' Muslim Eastern 'other' as synonymous with tyranny, autocracy, irrationality, and terrorism.

Strangers, Others, *Xenoi*: From Euripides to Conall Morrison

The Bacchae was written around 410 BCE and premiered at the City Dionysia posthumously in 405 BCE winning the first prize. Central to the tragedy is the foreign god Dionysus, an 'other' and a stranger. The myth revolves around Pentheus, the King of Thebes and his mother Agave who are punished by the vengeful god Dionysus (also known as Bacchus) for refusing to honour him as a legitimate deity of the city. In fact, Pentheus (who is Dionysus' cousin) has declared a ban on worshipping the latter as idolatry. The title of the play takes its name from Dionysus/Bacchus and his ferocious, terror-inspiring cult of fanatical female disciples from the city of Thebes called 'Bacchae,' 'Bacchantes,' or 'Maenads' whose allegiance to Dionysus is 'absolute' (Walton 206); they revere him as the ultimate god in ecstatic frenzy while dancing and hunting. Dionysus was worshipped in a Delphic festival every second year in the middle of winter with the female Bacchae practising an ecstatic dance culminating in the dismemberment of animals (*sparagmos*) and the eating of the raw animal flesh (*omophagia*). The play ends in mayhem when the Bacchae become Dionysus' accomplices in mutilating Pentheus's body on Mount Cithaeron.

The political and psychological underpinnings of the original text reiterate Ricoeur's fundamental distinction between members and strangers of a community, and Cavarero's *horrorism* paradigm, so vigorously dramatised in the play. These facets are emphasised with the invasion and incursion of prominent Asian and Near Eastern influences in cult practices and religious beliefs by making a half-god (not fully integrated into the cultural and religious life of the Greeks, as it were) the protagonist of the tragedy. Dionysus is a foreigner or *xenos*, an 'other' and alien, an intruder in Greek culture from the barbarian fringes of Phrygia and Thrace. By virtue of his foreignness, he is thus portrayed as encompassing a set of polarities and antinomies which destabilise notions of membership, kinship, and gender, simultaneously dismantling even an understanding of the sacred and the psychopathology of revenge. For being a threatening intruder, he is a dishonoured young god of "ruptures" and "demolished structures" (Morrison, *Bacchae* 23), enraged for being scorned by his own mortal family, the royal house of Cadmus that has denied him an honourable place as a de-

ity. Exacerbating the primordial *hubris* of his identity, Dionysus is the offspring of an illegitimate affair between Zeus and his mortal mother Semele and an orphan, since Hera murdered her husband's pregnant mistress:[13]

> Semele, they said, mated with some mortal,
> humped some human
> shagged some soldier.
> (Morrison, *Bacchae* 2)

Having travelled through Asia and other foreign lands where he was worshipped, Dionysus returns home disguised to take revenge upon his own family. Due to his ancestry, he is the god of contradictions, embodying simultaneously a divinity and a mortal stranger, a foreigner or *xenos* worshipped as a primitive force in the wild and within the order of the city. Symbolised by a giant phallus, he is at once intensely masculinised and feminised giving permission to women to question the supremacy of men. As Edith Hall notes,

> Dionysus challenges many of the social, chronological, spatial, and other boundaries with which the ancient Greeks tried to demarcate and control the world around them: he is an effeminate male, an ancient god of youthful appearance, a Greek god who leads hordes of oriental barbarians, a god worshipped both in the untamed wild and within the walls of the civilised city, the tutelary deity of both tragic and comic theatre, instigator of total ecstasy but also absolute terror. (2)

At the backdrop of such heterogeneous embodiments, Euripides' play questions, in psychoanalytic terms, the existence of irrational forces which operate within a well-structured and ordered community as a struggle between two extremes: the tyranny of self-control versus the savage instincts of collective desire. This conflict is fundamentally gendered in the manner it reflects the female transgression of the manic Bacchantes juxtaposed to the cross-dressing scene of Pentheus and Dionysus' effeminate attributes. By intentionally obscuring the distinction between tragedy and comedy, Dionysus is an androgynous trope of the unfathomable, the unintelligible forces of the unconscious impulses that elide us epitomised in the natural cycle through birth, death, and resurrection. Most crucially, he is also the god of the theatre, the mask, and the protagonist in a play performed during the dramatic competitions in his own honour, the City Dionysia in Athens. In this sense, Euripides has Dionysus effectively play the central role of 'self' *and* 'other' at the same time, self-directing, choreographing, and orchestrating what Pinter calls the never-ending range of reflections "staring back at us" in performance. The *Bacchae* assume their own collective "corporate nature" (Walton 206) as a subversive female *thiassos* that acts both as a protection and a challenge to a masculinist authority. As such, their catas-

13 In the Orphic version of the Dionysus myth, Brian Arkins remarks that "Dionysus Zagreus was born from the union of Zeus and Persephone [but] Hera was jealous and incited the Titans to tear Dionysus to pieces and devour him; but the virgin goddess Athena rescued the heart of Dionysus and brought it to Zeus who swallowed it and was therefore able to beget Dionysus later with Semele when he came to her in the form of lightning" (85). It is this later part of the myth that is central to Euripides' *Bacchae*.

trophic defiance becomes the theatrical device that epitomises the limits of sexual difference most acutely. It also directly conjures the biopolitical relationship between life, rights, and art superimposed upon the desire to become someone else, an 'other,' through theatrical *mimesis*.

The figuration of Dionysus as 'other' resolutely puts to the test the cultural, ethical, and legal principles of the right to movement and hospitality as performed by many Western states in times of crisis and war. Such a strategy problematises contemporary notions of the 'stranger' at the backdrop of such terms as migrant, refugee, asylum seeker, and foreigner (often referred to as a 'non-national'). The etymology of the word 'stranger' denotes a 'foreigner' from the Latin *extraneus* and the Old French *estrangier*, an unfamiliar entity and a foreign body, who, according to Ricoeur, is threatening because it is "someone who is not "'one of our own' – someone who is not one of us" (38) but an outsider. The Greek equivalent of 'stranger,' *xenos*, signifies such contradictory concepts as 'enemy/foe' or 'foreigner' and 'guest friend,' so often referred to in Homeric epic in the context of *xenia* (hospitality).[14] Dionysus is a barbarian *xenos* who is an enemy barred from entry into the civilised world of Pentheus. As such, his status is reminiscent of the current persecutory and exclusionist practices of modern Western states against immigrants and refugees. Playing off metaphors and allusions of strangers, outsiders, and (il)legitimate members[15] (Bush's notorious distinction between 'us' and 'them'), a feminist reading of the play (consistent with Morrison's translation) interrogates yet another oddity which eradicates the rules of belonging and expulsion. For it is not Dionysus that will be exiled (or deported), but a female collective, Pentheus' mother Agave along with her sisters (55-57).

The *Bacchae* Effect: International & Irish Adaptions

From Nietzsche's aesthetic theory of the Dionysian and Apollonian elements to the outset of the political and cultural revolutions of the 1960s, Euripides' *Bacchae* has offered itself to a myriad of re-framings and adaptations, particularly since the outbreak of the Vietnam war. Before that and as early as 1922, it was performed at the Ancient Theatre of Syracuse, and in 1950 in the same theatre with Vittorio Gassman in the role of Dionysus. One of the most emblematic twentieth-century productions in the history of theatre was the premiere of Richard Schechner's revolutionary *Dionysus in 69* in New York's Performing Garage on 6 June 1968, later documented on film by Brian de Palma in 1970. With its radical reinterpretation of *The Bacchae*, Schechner's unsettling experimental staging draws on anthropological studies and theories of primitive ritual. The production took place at a time of unprecedented post-WWII violence responding to the *horrorism* of armed conflict precipitated by the US involvement in the Vietnam war. Other significant precedents at important historical junctures in the second part of the twentieth century include Luca Ronconi's pro-

14 For an in-depth analysis of 'xenia' and 'refugeeness,' see Remoundou (16-30).

15 The Irish 'other' or 'migrant other' is cogently conceptualised by Loredana Salis.

duction in the Vienna Burgtheater and Hansgunther Heyme's in the Cologne Theatre in 1973 (Ronconi restaged it in Prato two years later). In the same year, Wole Soyinka's retelling of the myth as an allegory of civil unrest in his native Nigeria titled *The Bacchae of Euripides: A Communion Rite* was presented at the British Royal National Theatre in London (later staged by Carol Dawson in Kingston, Jamaica in 1975). In 1977, Tadashi Suzuki's version premiered in Tokyo while in 1986 Caryl Churchill and David Lan adapted the tragedy as a dance-theatre performance titled *A Mouthful of Birds*. In 1993, Charles Mee gave his *Bacchae 2.1* a modern spin as a critique of the clash between barbarism and civilisation exploring hyper-masculinities and sexuality, while Ingmar Bergman dealt with Euripides' text on three distinctive occasions, in a libretto for the Royal Swedish Opera in 1991, in a 1993 production for Sveriges Television (SVT), and for a stage production for the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm in 1996.

In an Irish context, according to Marianne McDonald,[16] Dionysus can be seen as a symbol of the Irish post-colonial condition and the struggle to reclaim rights against the British colonisers and oppressors. Conjuring up the pretexts of the tragedy to interpolate 'friends' versus 'foes' – or members of a civic community against alien 'others' and strangers that are not 'our own' –, *The Bacchae*'s afterlife in Ireland has reached what Simon Perris identifies as the "age of its fame" (164) since the turn of the twentieth century. Plays by Irish writers or plays connected to Celtic sensibilities that echo Euripides' *Bacchae* include George Bernard Shaw's *Major Barbara* (1905) and Brian Friel's *Dancing at Lughnasa* (1990), while in 1944, Christine and Edward Longford produced the latter's translation of *The Baccanals* for the Dublin Gate Theatre. Moreover, in 1967 New Zealand, James K. Baxter's version *Mr O'Dwyer's Dancing Party* has Dionysus perform Irish jigs and reels. In addition to Morrison's 2006 *The Bacchae of Baghdad*, translations of the ancient Greek text that make urgent explicit or implicit parallels with Middle Eastern vs. Western politics comprise those by Derek Mahon (1991) and Colin Teevan (2012). Recent productions of Euripides' *Bacchae* for the Irish theatre include a new translation by Classics Stage Ireland for the Project Arts Centre in 2010 and 2012, respectively, directed by Andy Hinds. In 2017, NUI Galway's Drama and Theatre Studies students performed the play directed by teaching staff Max Hafler at the Mick Lally Theatre.

16 Qtd. in Perris (165).

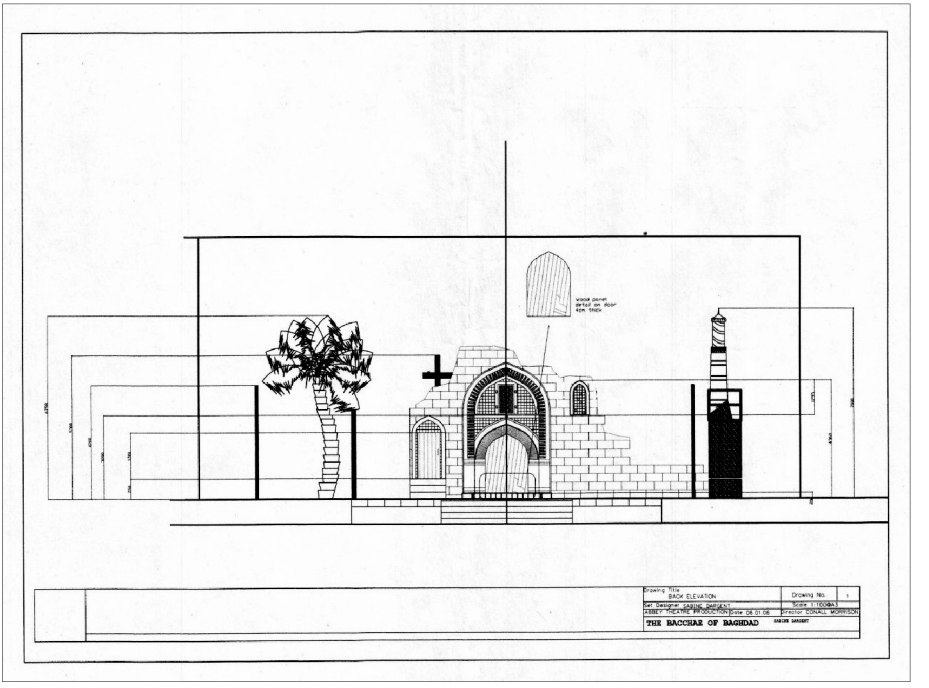

Fig. 1. Drawing of the set design by Sabine Dargent based on Saddam Hussein's Republican Palace in Baghdad, Iraq (2006, The Abbey Theatre Digital Archive, National University of Ireland, Galway)

Conversant with the performance of 'otherness' as well as the source play's reception history in the twentieth century, Morisson's post-9/11 version simulates a distinctive Middle Eastern aesthetic to represent the terrain of the rational and irrational forces that transform Dionysus into a cipher for Sadam Hussein and Pentheus into another for Bush. While narratives of political radicalism, religious devotion, and sexual freedom embodied in the title of the play itself were extended to the material stage, the production highlighted the intersections between prevailing discourses separating Europe from Islam. This was highlighted as a result of the visual hauntology of the US invasion of Iraq in the post-9/11 era through the ubiquitous dissemination of photographs and videos of atrocities inflicted upon Iraqis, which brought about a fundamental shift in the way violence is reckoned and represented.

In her introduction to *Horrorism: Naming Contemporary Violence*, Cavarero revisits the scene of the massacre in Iraq as reported through the western media in order to reframe notions of the visuality of collateral damage and the lexical failure to name violence. The blurry border separating 'martyrs' from 'terrorists' is caught up in Morrison's scene of Pentheus interrogating Dionysus whether he would "suffer more and be a holy martyr" (29). Yet, this is no mere re-enactment of the former's dismemberment by his mother and the Maenads, but an ethical encounter with horror head-on:

> Baghdad, 12 July 2005. A suicide driver blows up his automobile in the middle of a crowd, killing twenty-six Iraqi citizens and an American soldier. Among the victims of the carnage – dismembered corpses, limbs oozing blood, hands blown off – the greatest number were children to whom the Americans were handing out candy. Did the perpetrators want to punish them for servility toward the occupying troops? Did they think that violence makes a stronger impression when there are no qualms about massacring children? (Cavarero 1)

As a visual medium of the liminality upon which terrorism and *horrorism* are predicated, Morrison sets the action nominally in the heart of Baghdad's Green Zone, the twenty-first century fortified forefront during the 2003 invasion of Iraq also known as 'little America.' In 2004, Colin Teevan employed the theme of the US invasion of Iraq in the first play of his war trilogy, *How Many Miles to Basra?*[17] as an ethical inquiry of neutrality in times of war and the role of media in disseminating the truth. Like Morrison, Teevan transposed the ancient plot to 2003 Iraq to perform a direct critique of its invasion and the relationship of that conflict to earlier British military operations, including those in Northern Ireland. Both plays are engaged with the hard ethical questions regarding representation and the power of the mediated image in shaping public opinion about the Middle East. Both Morrison and Teevan advocated that the war in Iraq was a catastrophic imperial project breaching the international declaration of human rights, echoing Pinter's anti-war address:

> The invasion of Iraq was a bandit act, an act of blatant state terrorism, demonstrating absolute contempt for the concept of international law. The invasion was an arbitrary military action inspired by a series of lies upon lies and gross manipulation of the media and therefore of the public; an act intended to consolidate American military and economic control of the Middle East masquerading – as a last resort – all other justifications having failed to justify themselves – as liberation. A formidable assertion of military force responsible for the death and mutilation of thousands and thousands of innocent people […]. We have brought torture, cluster bombs, depleted uranium, innumerable acts of random murder, misery, degradation and death to the Iraqi people and call it 'bringing freedom and democracy to the Middle East. (Pinter n.p.)

By rendering the drama of modern foreign politics as a compelling investigation of the lethal clash between two irreconcilable positions represented by Pentheus and Dionysus, victims and perpetrators, political sovereignty, ethical certainty and religious fundamentalism, Morrison reiterates Cavarero's reflections on the shifting meaning of violence in the new millennium that begs for a neoteric understanding:

> in war and terror, horror is not an entirely unfamiliar scene. On the contrary. But this scene has a specific meaning of its own, of which the procedures of naming must finally take account, freeing themselves of their subjugation to power. To coin a new word, scenes like those I have just described might be called 'horrorist,' or perhaps, for the sake of economy or assonance, we could speak of horrorism – as though ideally all the innocent victims, instead of their killers, ought to determine the name. (3)

17 The play was produced in the UK and the US and staged as a rehearsed reading at Dublin's Abbey Theatre in 2009. The other two plays of the trilogy are *The Lion of Kabul* (2009) and *There Was A Man, There Was No Man* (2011), set respectively in the Middle East, in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Jordan.

In order to simulate the image of remote contemporary *horrorism* as a result of relentless warfare on the Abbey stage,[18] the set and the costume design along with the sound and choreography reinforced a distinctive Middle Eastern aesthetic. Sinuously highlighting what Edward Said terms as instantiations of 'latent' and 'manifest' orientalism (203), and deconstructing at the same time the demonising fantasies and stereotypes of Occidentalist thought, the aesthetic choices of the production affirmed the virtual antithesis between the secular West and radical Islam as something more than a geopolitical rarity. In this light, the cover of the programme note depicted the interior of a house in ruins in Baghdad after a bombing with an ornate armchair at the centre still standing amid the rubble. On the Dublin stage, the set design plans by Sabine Dargent deliberately replicated the façade of Saddam Hussein's luxurious palace, built based on the principles of Islamic architecture, with an enchanting garden with a palm tree on the left of the stage. The pronounced material dynamics of the production, emanating from a quintessentially Western performance milieu and defined by evolving Western theoretical frameworks of theatre making, critically redirected and reassessed the received historical/imperialist record into a 'rhizomatic' intercultural archive exchange driven from the margins of 'otherness.' This explosive performance encounter of collective and individual identities from below is remediated in *The Bacchae of Baghdad*, in both local and global contexts, through what Ric Knowles perceives as a dismantling, reversing, and complicating of hierarchical binaries of prestige, power, and, therefore, rights that "no longer retain a west and the rest binary" (59). The transformational discursive shifts of Morrison's play further explore the multivocality of new intercultural exchanges within Irish theatre and culture as a primary ideological *topos* of resisting the East/West imperialist binary by extending it to a rights discourse. Symptomatic of these emerging methodological and theoretical approaches in interculturalism and human rights theatre is *The Bacchae of Baghdad*'s momentum to confront the political expediency of such terms at a historical and critical juncture when such preoccupations, representations, and embodiments were understudied or elided.

The possibilities of such critical engagements and political frameworks with the utopian intercultural imaginary (Fischer-Lichte, 11) were opened up on the contemporary Irish stage. Pentheus, whose name in Greek means 'grief,' emerged as a Bush-like "swaggering, tyrannical"[19] patriot and leader of the American insurgency forces in Iraq. The army uniform, the distinct American accent and the close-cropped haircut deliberately superimposed against Christopher Simpson's Dionysus (accentuated by the actor's hybrid ethnic identity with Irish, Rwandan, and Greek roots) and the female Chorus of Bacchantes (Mojisola Adebayo, Ruth Negga, Mary Healy, Donna

18 The play premiered at the Abbey Theatre on 4 March 2006 with a cast reflecting an intercultural Irish theatrical and cultural landscape including Christopher Simpson in the role of the god Dionysus and an all-female chorus of manic Bacchae played by Mojisola Adebayo, Mary Healy, Shereen Martineau, Donna Nikolaisen, and Ruth Negga. Robert O'Mahoney impersonated Pentheus, and Agave was played by Andrea Irvine.

19 See the Programme Note of the production for the Abbey Theatre, 2006.

Nikolaisen, Merrina Millsapp, and Shereen Martineau) dressed in chadoor emphasised the intercultural fabric of the production. The deliberate aesthetics of Orientalist metaphors and allusions conjuring the traumatic historical event, also paid homage to Wole Soyinka's *The Bacchae of Euripides: A Communion Rite* (1973). Commissioned by the UK's National Theatre, the play's scope carefully surveyed issues of race, gender, and class reflected in Soyinka's note that "the Slaves and the Bacchantes should be as mixed a cast as is possible, testifying to their varied origins" (234). In his essay "The Future of Ancient Greek Tragedy," Morrison expanded on these ideas of dichotomising East and West as predicated upon a historically nurtured fallacy:

> The notion of the Chorus dressed in *chadoor* also takes its cue from Euripides' instructions, when they are described as Asian women […]. I thought, making a play for a contemporary audience, why couldn't I use an image (i.e. the *chadoor*) that resonates more with us when you think of that which is other, foreign, exotic […] and the one of the most piquant and poignant images in our popular imaginations, I believe, is the image of fundamentalist Islam. (151)

The Islamic veil and the architectural mystique of the stage served as subversive symbols of the simultaneous strangeness, familiarity, and threatening exoticism of Islam reminiscent of the new and barbaric Asian invasion that threatens Theban order. However, the play's internal argument seemed to stretch the metaphor to its limits by aiming at this kind of unveiling that exposed, through the use of this particularly clichéd imagery of the Eastern 'other,' the rogue political tactics of the West in the twenty-first century. By focusing on this perennial encounter between pervasive binary concepts from the perspective of the non-Western/minority/subaltern agent, Morrison's use of these images aimed at something more than challenging collective spaces of "in-betweenness" beyond postcolonialism, racism, and "what is currently imaginable" (Fischer-Lichte 12). The production further interrogated interculturalism's "performative aspiration" shaping the transformative role of theatre to act as an agent of rights discourse in contemporary postcolonial cultures. It is this particular mode of new intercultural engagement that *The Bacchae of Baghdad* seeks to represent textually and in performance by "stay[ing] with the challenge" of Ireland's own postcolonial condition while,

> these very dynamics continue to shape and interrupt its own critical and aesthetic utopian imaginings in the present […,] new interculturalism demands that we do not lose sight of the power dynamics and historical genealogies that interrupt this performative aspiration (particularly postcolonial ones), even in the very moment the intercultural performative achieves temporary utopian states in and through performance. (McIvor 5)

With the psychological foundations of this performative aspiration being more intense than their political equivalent, the opening scene of the play finds Dionysus – feral, ferocious, fearsome, lawless – bursting out of an ancient, cracked urn to become a vague, broad reference for the oriental 'other,' a stranger who has "come from the East / from the golden ground of Lydia and Phrygia" (Morrison, *Bacchae* 1) to reclaim his legitimacy within the city. Unfolding as a conflict between a fanatical religious intensity and a rational autocracy, the Bacchantes are refigured as suicide bombers

terrorising the house of Cadmus and Dionysus as an Islamic fundamentalist with high ambitions that threaten to avenge "the sinners who don't sing his song" (3) in battle. This is the East gazing back at the Western 'civilising' forces not in order to rectify a sense of flawed 'otherness,' but so as to aggravate it by exacting revenge. Dwarfed by Dionysus' Nietzschean resolve, Pentheus plays the role of a passive spectator who gradually moves from the periphery of the action to the heart of darkness. His absolute disapprobation of the female Bacchic rites that have lured even his mother and aunts is analogous to his repudiation of their spiritual leader Dionysus who, in his eyes, emerges as the paradigmatic emblem of fundamentalism precisely because he hails from the Orient, the "fertile ground for fanatics and fools" (18). In Pentheus' public proclamation, Morrison's text vocalises the intransigence of US neoliberal politics of horror after 9/11 as a tacit condemnation of the Bush administration:

> Go straight to this man's cave
> Where he plucks his birds and dreams and raves;
> Take crowbars and coals – scorch his ground,
> Break it all up and burn it down!
> Throw to his winds the charms he uses to foretell,
> Let him divine that I am powerful as well!
> Go scour this city, every souq and alleyway –
> You bring this man-girl freak to the light of day.
> We must catch our infectious foreign tempter,
> Wipe him out before every bed is empty!
> Chain him, hood him, bring him here to me.
> I'll hear his case and then we'll see
> If death by stoning in a public place
> Fits his description of Bacchic grace! (13)

Staging *Horrorism:* Pentheus in Abu Ghraib Prison

The dialectical deflection into the imagery threading Morrison's opaque language readily provides a direct allusion that predates the scandalous legacy of the controversial *Iraq War documents leak* (aka *Iraq War Logs*) or 'torture memos' (McKenzie; Mirzoeff; Perucci; Phelan) published by *Wikileaks* in 2010 and documenting reports of over 150,000 civilian deaths as a result of abuse, torture, rape, and murder by Iraqi police and soldiers classified by US troops as enemy casualties. Looking back at the digital archives of horror which comprise leaked photographs of Iraqi prisoners tortured by American soldiers in Saddam Hussein's infamous Abu Ghraib prison, it is hard to miss the continuity of the caricature of the Middle Eastern 'other' concurrently problematising the symbol of the *jihad* turned into terrorist, enemy, and here, into a victim. Pentheus' public edict visually evokes one of the most shocking images from the war disseminated in mainstream media for the world to see, the 'Hooded Man.' With arms outstretched in an unnervingly Christ-like pose, the photograph of a hooded semi-naked man sprouting wires in Abu Ghraib exposes the systemic *horrorism* authorised in military torture policies. The unapologetic graphic brutality of these photographs erroneously simulating the Dionysian entrapment and Bacchic mutila-

tion of Pentheus' body, replicates a public spectacle, and memorial of torture and shame archived in the Western memory museum. The aim here is to humiliate the prisoners whose lives matter less than those of 'others,' as Sontag reflects in *Regarding the Pain of Others* and her subsequent *New York Times* article "Regarding the Torture of Others."

Reframing the intricacies of the original plot, Morrison's language lays bare how the inherent polarities in the play are often inadequate in illuminating the drama of a tragic ethical encounter between East and West in a straightforward way. Pentheus is the ethnocentric zealot whose repeated xenophobic insults levelled against Dionysus are formulated on the basis of both race ("foreign freak," 30) and gender (the "obscenity" of dressing in "a woman's clothes," 32). On the other side of extremism, Dionysus the 'libertarian' is at once 'strange' and 'intimate,' cautioning "those whose reason is closed to otherness" that "they will be the first to be overwhelmed by it" (Eagleton 4).

What is more, Dionysus presages the corruption of the women of the city by encouraging them to defy the state and with it, male authority. At the intersection between a "fascist cult" and a "utopian community" (Eagleton 2), the Bacchae liberate themselves from the confines of the domestic sphere under the emancipatory influence of their master, who metamorphoses them into the ultimate *nemesis* of patriarchy. Such radical deviations from reason to the exuberance of collective desire and from the rule of law to the lynch-mob (Walton 209) imperil social order because they derive from the core of 'otherness.' This dynamic culminates in Pentheus' cross-dressing scene: "We are told we are 'foreigners' / Well, your grief is foreign to us. We don't weep over FREEDOM" (Morrison, *Bacchae* 40), the cast-out Maenads declare when it is too late for Pentheus to escape his fate or *kismet*.

Invoked as a rumination on the experience of spectatorship, the scene of Pentheus confronting the Bacchae has obvious theatrical overtones in the manner it equivocates the recognition of a "world that is not really there" (Arkins 87), echoing McGuinness's elision of the Middle Eastern 'other' from the Irish stage. At the climax of the action, when the Dionysian *horrorism* prevails and the royal house is shattered, the panopticon of Pentheus' demise is unforgiving. Cadmus urges Agave who has been seeing "double" to "look again," to "stare," to "take a glance," and "look into the truth" (50), namely the crime she has committed in dismembering her own son without knowing. The rhetoric of blind allegiance to fanaticism juxtaposed to a kind of vengeful theophany, leads to an elusive dead-end divorced from any hope of resolution in the exodus. This confrontation with anarchy, Terry Eagleton argues, which is momentous because it emanates from the menace of 'otherness,' offers no simplistic liberal melodrama in the manner it depicts Bacchic savagery: "Neither Pentheus nor the Pentagon understands that the most obtuse way to deal with terrorism is to turn terrorist yourself […]. The Bacchae, who, like Islamic suicide bombers, rip innocent bodies to shreds, is not to be excused" (3) nor eulogised in its pictorial *horrorism*.

Morrison's script recasts the words 'look' and 'visual' in parentheses, as a chilling reminder of the ocular spectacle of war that remains profoundly undemocratic according to Nicholas Mirzoeff (23). The play, thus, ends with the iconoclastic obliteration of the royal house of Cadmus. The Dionysian rage might have prevailed, but Morrison (after Euripides) reminds spectators that *horrorism* "lies at the root of all civility" (Eagleton 1):

> And now, Cadmus […]
> you are an exile in your own country;
> these are no longer your streets;
> Dishonour is for dark comers in some strange land.
> Now, forever, we will all be foreigners. (Morrison, *Bacchae* 52)

Morrison invites the audience to see theatre as that space of ethical encounters with self and 'others,' a zone that is often disjointed by the advent of the unknown (Peperzak 60). Providing a prescient rereading of *The Bacchae*'s formulaic concluding lines, Morrison ends his play with a theophanic gnomic for mortals that does not simply incite religious fundamentalist sensibilities to pantheism and tolerance, but prescribes the certainty of divine *nemesis* as a result of intransigent fanaticism. While Dionysus remains dancing on the stage, the Chorus chant:

> The divine will takes many forms.
> Men think they can forsake it,
> Or make it perform
> To their ends,
> Make the norm be what they decide.
> But God does not respect any one brethren,
> Does not choose a side;
> He produces the unexpected
> And we'd have no chance of knowing,
> No tradition, no holy text showing
> If he had laughed or he had cried
> As he watched mankind dance,
> Dance blindly, dance madly,
> Dance towards suicide. (57)

Despite receiving mixed reviews, Morrison's Abbey production managed to raise a set of pressing questions regarding the role and the place Irish theatre occupies in highlighting the "deep narrative grammar" (Slaughter 4) that writing and theatre share with human rights. It also opened up a margin to rethink the way the arts and the media provide unbiased contexts for moderating means, tools, and methodologies that actively help writers and theatre practitioners to represent others ensuring the evasion of cultural appropriation. In this vein, the dramaturgical parameters that affect the way we perceive and represent the Middle East on stage were carefully balanced with the production's post-show discussion where *Irish Times* journalist Lara Marlowe talked about her own experience as a war correspondent in Baghdad and the proclivity of western media to represent the Middle East in a certain 'other' light.

Uncannily prefiguring the motifs of terrorism and *horrorism* in a world characterised by rage, the programme note featured intellectual meditations by various thinkers,

writers, and academics from both sides of the 'divide' (East & West). With an introduction by Terry Eagleton titled "Holy Terror," the programme note included quotes by George W. Bush and passages taken from Eliot Weinberger's *What I Heard About Iraq*, the Operation Iraqi Freedom article "An Isolated Retreat for Busy Americans" by Ariana Eunjung Cha (2003), and Malise Ruthven's *Fundamentalism: The Search for Meaning* (2004). In addition, the programme incorporated verses from the Iraqi poet Muslim Saint, Sufi mystic Rabia of Basra read opposite excerpts from *Occidentalism: A Short History of Anti-Westernism* by Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit (2004), and Salman Rushdie's 1990 Herbert Read Memorial Lecture "Is Nothing Sacred?"

Agave's *Anagnorisis*: Envisioning Alternatives in Irish Theatre

The ideological impulse to explore the possibilities of theatre as a space for dramatising the realities of violence and the defence of rights in the twenty-first century is quintessentially predicated on visuality. By providing the ethical tools to look through the gaps, the fissures that deem 'others' absent, theatre makes visible that which we fear to look at in the eye, like Agave. If today we are once more turning specifically to Irish theatre writing and performance to imagine rights as "something that is not there," something that is absent like the Arab captors in McGuinness's play *Someone Who'll Watch Over Me* – an elision that could furthermore "confer [and] disseminate privilege" (Potter and Stonebridge 3) only to what is present/visible on the same stage –, it is because in doing so we might contribute to a more inclusive theatrical *praxis* that creates, as it were, the possibilities for a more just and peaceful world. The perils of this absence (or *sparagmos*), as Eagleton contends, still, remain timely:

> The Bacchic women signify something precious, which civilisation forgets at its peril; yet they have also sunk their individual selves in a mindless collective, one quite as violent and authoritarian in its own sweet way as the social order which casts them out. Human bodies may be interchangeable in the orgy, but so are they in the death camps. (3)

Given the manifold and often contentious nature of the role and scope of human rights in their claims for universality, it is imperative to reframe representations of this dilemma in theatre upon what Pinter refers to in his Nobel lecture as "the other side of that mirror," refracting multiple sides of the story-telling spectrum. Representations of the Middle Eastern 'other' in Irish theatre that engage with human rights debates show how little is written and known about the region and its people beyond stereotypical figurations through the media exacerbated negatively since 9/11. Theatre productions like Morrison's *The Bacchae of Baghdad* restore what Arendt calls the deprivation of a place by actively co-writing "a history of suffering and survival" (Stonebridge 113) that remains to be acknowledged and archived in w/ri(gh)ting and performance.

Almost two decades following the invasion of Iraq and while internal political divisions and military reforms are underway in the Middle East, the world remains out of joint: the war in Syria is still raging, Yemen is being annihilated, refugee and economic cri-

ses deepen, the Direct Provision[20] system in Ireland gains fixity, and the Covid pandemic exacerbates our global environmental and ontological uncertainties whilst the fantasy of a better world is perpetually deferred. In such a climate of uninterrupted upheavals, one feels compelled to question the power these often tele-transported images continue to hold collectively for members of the international community and for Ireland's 'newcomers' seeking international protection. The same questions resurface when discussing the potentialities of sustaining and representing human rights debates in Irish theatre as an activist forum that actualises Arendt's claim for a place that safeguards human rights precisely because it "makes opinions significant and actions effective" in the twenty-first-century history of theatre writing and performance.

By averting the amplification of stereotypes and biases that surface when the tragic plot is patronisingly used to 'shed light' into contemporary conditions of oppression and marginalisation which claim to 'give voice' to the suffering subject, Morrison's play widens the insights and similitudes of *The Bacchae of Baghdad* to its ancient counterpart, casting both writing and theatre as gestures towards diversity, inclusion, recognition, and representation in contemporary culture and society. Such processes of representation and critical engagement in cultural and social policies (long taken up by feminist and post-colonial thought), foreground an ethico-political conversation in theatre for the rights of *all*, which is imperative right now more than ever, as it interrogates "the basic conditions within which those rights must be anchored and, where they do not hold, to envision alternatives" (Rae 41). By discontinuing a theatre semiotics of rights "intrinsic to the fantasies of the democratic conscience" (Stonebridge 92) that tells the story of the powerless from the perspective of the powerful, Morrison's rewriting of an ancient Greek tragedy in the Middle East for Ireland's stage does something more than galvanise trenchant re-evaluations of tribalism, materialism, fundamentalism, Occidentalism, and nationalism, while assuming that it will lead to justice by making the tragedies of 'others' visible on the stage. By rewriting an ancient tragedy to map the contemporary tragedies of right*less* people, fifteen years since its premiere, *The Bacchae of Baghdad* participates in the process of constructing a new archive recording a history of oppression and mourning in the twenty-first century. Above all, it re-assembles its fragmented constituent parts in the act of rewriting as a reclaiming of human dignity back "from inhuman historical processes" (Stonebridge 113) to diagnose, often in uncomfortable ways, what it means to regard the rights of others as our very own.

20 Just as I am putting down the concluding remarks on my chapter, news of the publication of the 'White Paper' to end Direct Provision in Ireland by establishing a new International Protection support service fully in operation by 2024 surfaced with the announcement of Minister for Children, Equality, Disability and Youth, Roderic O'Gorman, T.D. (see *White Paper*).

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