

YEATS AND THE ART OF ANCESTRAL RECALL:
TWILIGHT, MODERNITY,
AND IRISH-JAPANESE INTERCULTURALITY

by

SEÁN GARY ADAM SOMERS

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the processes through which the works of W. B. Yeats, as representative of Irish folklore generally, became absorbed into Japanese modernism. *The Celtic Twilight*, as one example, had enormous appeal to Japanese literary figures, including Akutagawa Ryûnosuke, Yanagita Kunio, and Tanizaki Jun'ichirô, particularly in his famed essay, *In'ei raisan* [*In Praise of Shadows*]. Such authors were intrigued by Yeats's evocations of the *ancestral* as a phantasmal resonance through which cultural memories, and social histories, could be accessed and questioned. Overall, the notion of *Keruto* [the Celt] to the Japanese imagination provided alternative case studies of European-ness, ones that challenged developing prejudices in Japan at that time. Gaelic languages and cultures, geographically and sociologically marginal, embodied the tensions between an ancestral past and a non-descript future in a provocative way. Yeats's poetry and prose, exploring this growing fissure in modernity, made frequent use of what Marilyn Ivy terms *the discourses of the vanishing*. And, such *ancestral vanishings*, recognisable in many Japanese texts as both poetic allegory and social reality, draw much of their conceptualization from Irish examples.

Previous readings of Yeats's connections to Japan have focused on a sense of his bungling reinvention of *nô* drama: an Orientalist example of mishandled Asian-European unidirectional discourse. However, by considering the intercultural dialogue taking place, I wish to offer more complex readings, ones that account for the enormous scholarly activity between Ireland and Japan at that time. Yeats's *nô* (a term he rarely used himself) can best be understood in comparison to his Japanese contemporaries. For example, Yeats's drama, in terms of style and content, influenced the works of Izumi Kyôka's *neo-nô* [*kindai nô*]. As in Yeats, the ancestral is invoked, and interrogated, through the chronotopic performance of *neo-nô*. Cultural memory, engaged through performative necromancy, becomes a dynamic *twilight* [*tasogare*], through which recovery and re-narratavisation is possible.

I contend throughout that a fresh sense of a shared *world literature* between Ireland and Japan was not the result of isolated translations, nor Orientalist/Occidentalist dabblings. Intercultural artistic networks consciously developed between scholars and poets, ones that facilitated the exchange of knowledge during an historical period of rapid transition. At stake for Ireland and Japan were contentious, problematic issues. These include the construction of cultural identity, the ethics of translation, anachronism as strategy, and the crisis of heritage in the face of modernisation. Intercultural textuality, however, provided a method for investigating the dissolution of cultural memory into the nebulous, vanishing traces of the ancestral twilight.

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It is customary in Buddhist devotional texts, as well as academic dissertations, to offer due thanks and obeisance to one's teachers and tutelary benefactors, this being the most fitting way to begin. And so, at this time, I am humbled by this obligation and privilege to note, in the most personal of terms, my gratefulness.

Dr John Xiros Cooper has been both great mentor and great friend during these years of a “customarily arduous process.” I cannot imagine having a finer person to be so fortunate enough to work with, even if I were to apply to thousands of graduate schools, in dozens of countries. His patience for my idiosyncrasies was limitless; his perceptive comments always helpful; his inspiration essential; and his love for literature boundless. As supervisor, he was a stalwart defender of my ideas at many critical junctures. When funding was withdrawn at the start of my fourth and final year, precipitating a wee crisis in my desire to continue onward, he stepped in to provide support. More important than the usual money worries, his personal encouragement has substituted, at crucial moments, for any lack of patience or faith I had in myself. I have grown enormously under his guidance: Dr Cooper proved on every occasion to be a sympathetic scholar, critic, and reader of my work. And it is my wish to have done him proud, in any small way, with this dissertation. Whatever merits there may be in this work, they benefited directly from his influence.

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᾿Ων ἡ σοφία παρασκευάζεται εἰς τὴν τοῦ ὅλου βίου μακαριότητα πολὺ μέγιστόν ἐστιν ἡ τῆς φιλίας κτῆσις.

The ideas for this dissertation, as first fermenting in my mind, came directly from an extended stay with friends in Kildare and Sligo throughout 2002. Their hospitality provided me with an opportunity to return to Ireland for a much needed spot of decompression. There, I was entirely free to pursue my interests and passions outside of academic contexts, and this was intensely productive for my own self-growth. A particularly raging debate one night, as to how

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Macey Cadesky always had a kind smile, as well as a lovely version of *Kol Nidre* arranged for viola. Watching him triumph over cancer, with an indomitable heart, was a compelling example to me.

אל תשאלי על אושר

אולי גם הוא יבוא, כשהוא יבוא

ירד עלינו כמו גשם

Professors Nadel, McNeilly, and Wisenthal lent me their expertise and keen eyes on countless occasions. I would like to thank them sincerely for their time, which was always kindly given. I am also most appreciative for Professor Joshua Mostow's critiques and suggestions; his expertise in premodern and modern Japanese literature provided many important points for me to consider and reconsider.

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And, as always and ever, I dedicate this dissertation to Kawagoe Chizu, my *unmei no hito*. It was on one of our first dates that she introduced me to *Sen to Chihiro no kamikakushi*, and so began the new chapter of our lives together. Since then, she has repeatedly reminded me of that beautifully strange space that exists between dubbing, subtitles, and the original speech.

千寿ちゃんへ

あなたは僕のラピスラズリ。はるか彼方、西洋から東洋を幾千年も旅をして言葉、文化、芸術、そして愛を運んで来たこの石は僕の論文となりました。ラピスラズリは僕にとって愛です。

愛してる。

夏川翔音より

All translations from Japanese, and the occasional Hebrew, are my own, unless otherwise noted. For additional reference, I also cite, in deference to their skill, canonical translations (by Edward Seidensticker, for example), if available.

For Irish Gaelic texts, I provide renderings in English, whenever possible, from those editions that were available to Yeats. In regards to contemporary poetry, I reference translations that are contained within popular anthologies.

Japanese names are given in the traditional format: family name first. On rare occasions, I do not follow this pattern when referring to authors who publish primarily in English, and therefore whose names are known in the Western format: Haruo Shirane or Eiko Ikegami being two examples. I do refer to several Japanese writers by their pen-name, as is the accepted and

affectionate custom. For example: Norinaga, Kyôka, Sôseki, Santôka.

Any errors, errancy in style, or moments of formidable stubbornness, are entirely on my own account.

All thanks and praise to G-d, the master of the worlds, the Merciful, the Compassionate. O molaibh Dia, oir tha e maith, sìor-mhairidh tròcair Dhe: abradh clann Israeil a nis, gur buan a ghràs gach re.

-Feast of St Cyril of Alexandria, 2008.

EPIGRAPHS

Frank Dunn: What's she sayin'?

Eddie “Scrap-Iron” Dupris: Wants to know what you're readin'.

Frank Dunn: It's Yeats.

[turns to Maggie: her nose is still bleeding from a boxing bout]

Frank Dunn: Keep your head back.

Eddie “Scrap Iron” Dupris: Why don't you talk a little Yeats to her? Show her what a treat that is.

-Million Dollar Baby

Elaine: [Reading card from Kramer]

Think where man's glory most begins and ends
and say my glory was I had such a friend.

Kramer: [To Jerry with a smile] Yeats.

-Seinfeld, “The Deal”

Kramer writes a slightly modified version of the last two lines of “The Municipal Gallery Revisted” in Elaine’s birthday card.

We require history, for the past continues to flow within us in a hundred waves; we ourselves are, indeed, nothing but that which at every moment we experience of this continued flowing.

-Friedrich Nietzsche

1 Introduction

There's a crowd says I'm alright,
 Say they like my turn of phrase,
 Take me round to their parties
 Like some dressed-up monkey in a cage.
 And I play my accordion . . .
 Oh! but when the wine seeps through the façade,
 It's nothing but the same old story.
 --Paul Brady

Yeats amongst old enumerated themes?

With the possibility of another dissertation with Yeats in the title, one reviewer for my doctoral proposal asked, "Why Yeats, now? What's at stake?" And this query, depending on how it is phrased, might seem prompted by certain symptomatic biases in the current climate of literary scholarship and criticism. One might be the cheeky iconoclast that calls into question, obliquely, the place in literary history of major figures. W. B. Yeats is, one presumes, a particularly tempting target. But, whether we like it or not, Yeats is still a major figure in twentieth century Irish and British literature, and I would guess that his importance for the Irish is at least as great as such favourites of contemporary post-structuralist criticism as the Croatian Dubravka Ugrešić, Ismail Kadare in Albania, and Natsume Sôseki in Japan. Another bias seems founded on the belief that single-author studies are themselves symptomatic of a critical tradition that is now dead and gone. It seems that the death knell of the single-author study was signalled by the decline of close reading as the principal critical methodology in literary study. Ever since the "death of the author" was announced by Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault a number of years ago, the single-author study is now clearly a suspect enterprise. Perhaps it is, if close reading is all that is being proposed. However the notion that Yeats is a single author is misleading. Yeats, a duplicitous conjurer of many masks, identities, positions, and responsibilities, requires a sort of multiple-author study. Any consideration of his writing must necessarily concern itself with the literary, political, and cultural nexuses of his day. His extraordinary range of international contacts includes Ezra Pound, Suzuki Daisetsu, Noguchi Yonejirô, Kahlil Gibran, Rabindranath Tagore, and Akutagawa Ryûnosuke. This list demonstrates his literary interactivity—a comparable one for politics would be equally extensive. I do not think that Yeats requires any *apologia* as a

preface to a commentary on him as a poet, a statesman, or a facilitator for particular historical events in his era. Yeats, from his earliest metered verse until the final freeform jottings, was a model agnostic who never completely believed, nor completely rejected, both his occult and political reflections.

What we need do is to explore the relationships within the range of his multiple capabilities: those artistic, cultural, and intellectual projects are venturesome yet connected. Despite the volumes of material concerning Yeats that have been written, and will continue to be written, the possibilities remain for detailed studies of Yeats that analyze his diverse, but arguably convergent, interests. These diverse materials need to be analyzed as relative factors co-operating in his continuous project, a project defined by interactivity rather than a division in intention or purpose. Several continuous themes unite these elements. One is a possible viewpoint of the ancestral, the manner in which tradition itself repeatedly seeks to write itself into the contemporary space. Yeats is a profound example of how this presumably parochial interest expanded into transnational contexts.

These diverse materials—cultural political, religious—coalesce in unpredictable ways—and across multiple geographies. But, it seems to some extent that Yeats's works first require some defending on ethical as well as artistic grounds. Some accusations have been made about the accuracy, sustainability, or legitimacy of those resources that Yeats compiled into his personal almanac, one of dreams as well as politics. Yeats's philosophical experiments always had social ramifications, many of which were of his own choosing; however, many implications are actually later *post hoc* footnotes. These rebukes have grown since his passing and have not abated with the advent of critical theory. In response to this scholarly material, I will pursue twinned themes. They concern Yeats's *nationalism*—his interests in the Irish state, his conceptions of Irish culture, and his conscious sense of Irish history—and his *transnationality*—by which I mean his ongoing encounters with global cultures, particularly those of the Orient and Near-East. In regards to the former, the primary allegation, although variously expressed, is that Yeats's output, notably that of the 1890s, is Irish gimcrack of the most stubborn variety. However, if given closer attention, I think the materials provide a complex depiction of an Ireland juggling the competing pressures of modernity and trauma. In terms of nationalism, the future of the Irish nation, Yeats had

already anticipated the disastrous loss of rural communities and the advent of the pan-European state.

In terms of Yeats's *transnationality*—the use of Islamic mystical hermeneutics and Japanese classical drama to name two examples—he is said to be guilty of the same mistake: shallow conjectures and misleading caricatures, but this time for the *Other* rather than his own country. I think a re-assessment of these claims, while appreciating the sensitive ethnic issues at hand, could produce a consideration of Yeats as a highly intuitive thinker and key figure in interfaith dialogue. There is a growing reconsideration of modernism's role in establishing positive multiculturalism. In regards to the East-West exchange in literature and religion, the last few years have brought us vigorous and valuable defences of cultural exchange in the twentieth-century. Harry Oldmeadow in particular gives a thorough counter-argument to the prevalent tendencies to evaluate *all* Europeans as functioning in a single category of Orientalistic fetishism.¹ He offers a balanced but optimistic assessment—that some of these encounters between intellectual figures helped initiate ecological and pacifistic movements. I am mindful of his overall findings in my own thinking of Yeats's poetic, and personal, attempts to understand such topics as Japanese literature, Buddhism, or Sufi eschatology. While problems of mis-interpretation affected what Yeats concluded, he nonetheless was a key member of the early effort to bring the Occidental and the Oriental into fruitful communication. A more penetrating look at not just Yeats and Japan, as the equation usually goes, but Japan and Yeats would do much to show the complexity of the issue. Over all, my sense is that neither Yeats's nationalism nor his internationalism was ever one hundred percent absolute in judgment, instead being always unbalanced by his deliberate insertion of alternative possibilities and dispositions. Nothing should be taken at face value. This procedure of uncertainty helps to create a more *holistic* Yeats, one who constantly brought into opposition the competing viewpoints he held. In such a way, the so-called

¹ Oldmeadow, following J. J. Clarke's arguments, offers a robust assessment of post-colonial critics who use Said's theories in a pandemic fashion, assessing an American journalist in Tibet with the same blueprint for evaluating Israel and Palestine (*Journeys East* 7-16):

Nonetheless, the Saidian thesis has given birth to many lop-sided and reductionistic works in which the hermeneutics of suspicion and malice aforethought have blinded the authors to the many positive aspects of orientalism. (11)

Orientalism has become an unsalvageable moniker, and a new term would be preferable, one that reflects the mutuality of inter-cultural exchange, as well as the potential for reciprocal benefits for such persons and communities, including human rights, communal artistic endeavours, and peace movements.

romantic lyrics are not altogether naïve. They are meditative pieces that contain themes of doubt, ones that re-appear throughout his life, reflexively bringing forward, through development and experiment, in a variety of literary forms. The later Yeats, who was after all the younger Yeats with more experience, perpetuated a zetetic mindset which inquired into not only truth at the core of the matter, but also the surrounding probabilities for truths, or doubts, in many phenomenal variables. When questioning nation, folklore, and heritage, he acknowledged the role of invention and renarrativisation as filtering assumptions of heritage. By the same measure, because of their practical relevance to Ireland, Yeats could not dismiss either cultural memory or communal history as mere ideology, insubstantial or illusory. His studies of folklore, and its connections to the ancestral *vox populi/vox loci*, were based on this mode of enquiry: “Even if it is all dreaming, why have they dreamed this particular dream?” (“Irish Faeries”, *FLM* 19).

In 2002, noted artist Calum Colvin exhibited several pieces at the National Portrait Gallery of Scotland (Edinburgh) under the title *Ossian: Fragments of Ancient Poetry*. One of these paintings, *Twa Dogs* (2000), juxtaposes a craggy landscape and a warm hearth (images of an Ossianic era) with consumer goods emblazoned with the crests of the Celtic and Rangers football clubs (Glasgow-centric tribalism of the modern day). Colvin’s *Twa Dogs*, alluding to the Burns poem of the same name, redefines the canine’s identities according to contemporary sectarian lines. With such a spectacle, the University of Stirling, which uses Colvin’s art to promote their MLitt in Modern Scottish Writing programme, asks these questions on their posters: *Is Scotland Different? Is Scotland Real?* How is Colvin suggesting that *Scotland* can be reduced to Celtic FC jelly tots or an Ibrox coffee mug? Do all enquiries into cultural history and heritage reveal, shallowly, mass produced trinkets or shallow sigils? Catriona Black, writing for *The Sunday Herald*, argues that Colvin’s work does not argue that all tradition is fabricated, so much as to interrogate the conditions of tradition as something fluid and subject to appropriation:

Colvin has used kitsch and tartanry to examine our ambiguous relationship with our own cultural heritage, in which we have lost a grip on what is real, what is reconstructed, and what is nothing but romantic nonsense.²

² This review (27 October 2002), and others, was accessed on Calum Colvin’s homepage: <http://www.calumcolvin.com/media/ossian/reviews/index.htm>

Ireland's relationship to its own historic and folkloric assessment of its past, as somehow establishing the contextual narrative of the present, has been no less controversial in terms of legitimacy and/or blarney. In his introduction to *Locating Irish Culture*, Diarmuid Ó Giolláin assesses the number of ways in which *tradition*, as requiring something already vanished in order to assert itself, can conjure up shibboleths that have no practical or tangible relationships to that which it claims to articulate, neither for people nor as pasts. But Ó Giolláin's overall analysis, in considering how folklore acted in a reactionary fashion to Irish colonial modernity, documents how *tradition* enabled forms of communal communication, particularly on the peripheries, and he finds many positive contributions that folklore has in the process of national self-consciousness. Ó Giolláin's conclusions, in fact, hint at a theory that Gayatri Spivak wrestled continuously with, the notion of a *strategic essentialism*. Never entirely satisfied with how to articulate such an operation, which is necessarily a counter-active one, Spivak nonetheless identifies how marginalised cultures must engage in folklore (as national self-questioning) to become more dynamic in asseverating their collective rights.

In a different way, Declan Kiberd, in his essay "On National Culture", applies an experiential analysis of Fanon's historiographical account of the "liberation phase" in regards to Irish nationalism. Rather than a strategic essentialism, Irish authors could disrupt the master-narrative through exaggerated mimicry:

In Ireland, mimicry eventuated in two traditions: a political resemblance called nationalism (which tended to repeat old models) and a literary movement dubbed Irish modernism (which tended to subvert them). (132)

But whether entirely essential, or entirely inessential (mimicked), neither of these binary extremes fully explains the activities of cultural nationalism in building their heterogeneous, yet collectively aligned, paradigms for identifying social and geographic space. Aware of these theoretical tensions, Frantz Fanon identifies the rather paranormal activity of heritage in relation to the cultural present, at once vanished or vanishing, as necessarily contingent on the present context. The realm of communal self-questioning, in order to break free from dominant discourse, must carve out an alternate domain: "We must join them in the fluctuating movement which they are just giving a shape It is to the zone of occult

instability where the people dwell that we must come (152). Or, as James Clifford notes, we need to account for “different chronotropes for art and culture collecting” (71).

I cite these examples to show how theorists have sought to slip out of the dichotomy of essentialism/inventionism as that which defines the role of cultural heritage as contiguously informative to the present moment. Yeats believed in occult instability. He also experimented with both mimicry as well as strategic initiatives to recover the *ancestral* as a figuration of Ireland’s cultural past. Many tactics and techniques combined into his capacity to subvert inherited models in service of supporting the new consciousness of an Irish sovereignty. Yeats engages with the ancestral, as a possible prosopopoeia for negotiating with what Bhabha describes: “language of culture and community is poised on the fissures of the present becoming the rhetorical figures of a national past” (*Location* 142). Yeats’s ancestral, as phantasmal speaking *into* current contexts, puts into practice what Bhabha posits more generally: “the knowledge of the people depends on the discovery, Fanon says, ‘of a much more fundamental substance which itself is continually being renewed,’ a structure of repetition that is not visible in the translucidity of the people’s customs or the obvious objectifications which seem to characterize the people” (*Location* 218).

In Yeats’s writing, I argue, the ancestral phantasm enables a destabilisation of normative modes that, in various ways, seek to overwrite landscape, community, and culture. Yeats in various ways, and through various genres, opens up spaces in which the ancestral phantasm works through the chronotope of *twilight*. Twilight, as the multiple traces of the cultural memory and the processes of communities, is not invented wholly anew, nor does it successfully liberate some premodern ideal. But by allowing for a phantasmal condition, the rhizomatic exchange of multitemporal information can act against the monologic of internationalistic modernity.

My study examines how is Yeats’s interests in Ireland’s past did not lead into a kind of narrow-minded parochialism, *Twilight* revealed transnational networks of artistic exchange and cultural dialogue. Increasingly, Yeats saw a conflict between “the rooted against rootless people” (qtd. by Ellmann 242). The omnivorous habits of cosmopolitan capitalism, as a homogenising internationalism, devour both culture and landscape of the regional. Emancipating the archaic, of bringing the force of cultural memory into the

present, was one strategy of disruption. And, for his political concerns and his artistic revolts, Yeats would find diverse sympathy and solidarity in different nations.

It is very difficult to articulate, quantitatively, the Yeatsian methodology for a cultural nationalism as either historiography or myth. Mythologically, although certain figures and figurations reappear, he does not develop a systematic, uniform pantheon as in the manner of William Blake. Yeats created, in many ways, symbolic systems of representation, but he would also undermine his own arrangements and organizations for stylistic, political, and rhetorical effects. In terms of someone who seems both innovative but institutionally conservative, Yeats in some ways embodies this contradictory duality as in the manner of other twentieth-century artists, including Gibran's Christianity, or Shostakovich's Soviet irony. Rather than now systematically presenting an encapsulated synopsis of Yeats vis-à-vis critical theory, I have chosen to address important issues through progressive discussions, noting rhizomatically how various tensions and critical points unfold in relation to the many perspectives offered by Yeats's writing.

Yeats could be intensely private, and this provides one line of enquiry into his thought. He evolved a comprehensive study of the mythical forms, personages, and traditions that informed the psychical drama of his other-worlds. Yeats assiduously consumed himself with such studies and his hermetic inclinations provided the incubator for all manner of symbols and spectres. He fashioned, concomitantly, an engaged personality for public discourse — as senator, journalist, speech-maker, and social commentator—enacting Rousseauian libertarian views, gradually trying to reconcile them with an emerging republican nationalism. Instead of a self separated into two contesting *doppelgängers*, as critics have sometimes conceived, others have pursued alternative studies. I wish to seek out new conclusions through examining both the national and trans-national contexts in which Yeats worked. His imaginative realities act continually, in his own nation and beyond, to inform co-operatively a critique of assimilating cultural forces.

One critical suggestion that has enjoyed some measure of support—including from major Yeats scholars such as Ellmann, Jeffares, and Kenner—implies that Yeats's literature

can be readily divided in two directions and two chronologies: the romantic (the dreamy lyricist) and the modern (the political realist). I am not suggesting that the above named scholars have perpetuated a pernicious error, or do not offer sophisticated analyses of continuities within Yeats. But I do wish to address any potentially lingering beliefs, particularly ones in some forms of contemporary reactionarianism, that Yeats is somehow inseparably divided between the romantic and the modern. The romantic element, the one at times disparaged, has been typified as idealistic, fanciful, emotionally immature, hermit-like, and passive. The modern, on the other hand, has been characterised by engagement, nationalism, community building, and a bitterness forged in the politics of his day. If stretched too far, such a bi-focal point of view, and its presumed gap divide between these two selves, perhaps resulting is explained away on account of some external catalyst. Yeats's naivety moults away with the arrival of Ezra Pound, Maud Gonne, Irish home rule movements, and so forth. Hough summarises this critical depiction of Yeats as a split dichotomy:

And in Yeats there is the notorious opposition between the ethereal love poetry of his early days and the work of the fierce old man who said he could be stirred only by lust and rage. (15)

I am not suggesting this viewpoint of the *notorious opposition* has dominated Yeatsian criticism entirely, although I will cite examples of it below. Certainly, moments of strong criticism have rebuked the *early* Yeats for its sentimental evocations of Ireland and Irishness. And by extension, when one thinks of green beer, *Lord of the Dance*, or *The Quiet Man*, Yeats might seem to be that foundational entrepreneur, with whom the cause of fabricating an *emerald isle* can be aligned.

Yeats indeed keenly felt different forms of internal divisiveness, and had proposed a split vision of himself through the personæ of Aherne and Robartes . . . but is he really a Siamese twin of his own making, a congenitally two-headed creation of divided understanding? Does the early work entirely lack the rigorous acumen of the later? Certainly many critics have also found reasons for continuity between the *early* and *later* Yeats. So, rather than perceiving a great gulf, scholars have used different critical strategies and readings to show that, rather than disconnected, his writings are continuous in evolving. For example, Yeats reshaped his poetry in relation to his prose, exploring in various ways the

early lyrical foundations as re-distributed across emerging stylistic techniques as well as political events. Through such an approach of continuity, it is possible to demonstrate that Yeats's comprehensive formation followed along several parallel sub-themes, mutually rubbing tectonic elements, which are disparate yet aligned. Such readings have allowed us to understand the varying dimensions of Yeats without theorising large gaps and sudden ruptures.

This dissertation proposes to contribute to these conversations as to a *continuity* by examining the manifestations of the *ancestral*, understood as those phantasms of heritage and twilight of the past, and its relation to a modernising nation, as a continued focal point for Yeats's writing. His conceptualisation, interpretation, and negotiation with the ancestral, so carefully pursued in the early works, was precisely what led to such profound interest from Japanese scholars and poets in Yeats's time and beyond. Out of these preliminary explorations, a productively intercultural network developed in Japan as a response to Yeats, and the examples he presented as representative of Irish literary modernism. And, indeed, this Japanese perspective, which focused attentively on Yeats's early works so carefully, can give us a fresh perspective in appreciating a Yeatsian continuity, and the overarching themes that underline all of his oeuvre.

By an *early* Yeats, some might mean a poet who held too strongly to a lingering fancy for the Romantic ideal, one that took his affectations from the Wordsworthian notion of lyrical sublimity as shown in earnestly simple country folk. Certainly, Yeats's sentiments echo a vibrant, heartfelt tradition of naming and glorifying the features of the western landscape of Ireland. But, in comparison to much of the lyrical balladry of his time, Yeats stands out in distinction. Compare, for example, Yeats's Sligo poetry to the pastoral Co Clare of Tomas O'hAodha (1856-1935), poet, cartographer, and ardent Irish language enthusiast. His scenic and tropic effects have become staples for song in many of the *seisiún* in the county of his birth:

I remember well the hurling, the hunting on the heath,
The *cuaird* we made to rest ourselves, on some cosy hearth beneath,
And while chatting there in comfort around the turf-fire's glow

We could see among the rafters mystic shadows come and go.

The Angelus is mellowly a-ringing in the air,
 Men bare their heads and piously to Mary breathe a prayer,
 Should e'er I see this act devout beyond the ocean's foam,
 'Twill bring me back to this last day I spent in my old home.³

This passage is very characteristic of O'hAodha: praise of Clare's homesteads, rites of Catholicism situated in an idyllic environment, a smattering of Irish Gaelic, and a belief in the aesthetic supremacy of the homeland's landscape. As I will examine in Chapter Two, Yeats, in contrast to this, seems measured in his own esteem for rustic Ireland, and its inhabitants.

Yet Yeats receives a great deal of the blame for the perpetuation of peat-fire clichés as representing the *real* Ireland. In any contemporary effort to debunk a romantic depiction of an idealised Ireland, Yeats is often the straw-man to be held up and mocked for the ongoing circulation of the Irish mawkish. For example, Justin Bergman, in a newspaper review evaluating contemporary Irish drama, headlines with this declaration: "Memo to Yeats: Ireland has Changed" (*New York Times* 18 November 2007, Arts 10). What is implied is this *memo* and its addressee? Yeats, himself now an ancestral spectre, is lurking about? And he is not capable of realizing his nation has undergone further development? For whatever reason, the blame of identity blarney lands at the foot of Yeats's shadow.

Of course, Yeats was deeply concerned with the question of Irish identity, in his time of raw violence, and the condition and identity of the land was at the heart of the conflict. Furthermore, he addressed issues as to how these questions would turn out in the forthcoming years, and what pressures would act in shaping their outcome. Yeats was participating in a stream of literary ethnography that gripped Ireland at the time, as Gregory Castle has pointed out, as well as a trend in Europe generally. Yet, what Yeats was doing seems altogether more subtle and distinctive from those other, overt political usages of memory and folklore. A quick scan of both past and present agendas shows for constant the

³ O'hAodha's works can be found in folksong collections, although collected editions of his work have fallen out of print. A comprehensive, digitised edition is available online for viewing:
<http://www.familyorigins.net/pages1/ohAodha.rtf>

linkages are in Ireland between an imagined *folkness* of the past, and its emotional collateral in relation to issues of colonialism, human rights, and national self-consciousness.

Consider Paddy Reilly, whose *The Fields of Athenry*, a mournful lament concerning injustice for a fictional couple in famine-era Ireland, was composed in the 1970s. Rightly addressing the humanitarian crises of the past, the song has a very contemporary purpose as a melody co-opted by Celtic supporters for terrace chants at football matches. Likewise, such tunes of indignant reminiscence, such as *The Fields of Athenry*, have become so enmeshed with Republican, and even pro-PIRA, sentiments, that in 1997 Parkhead management in Glasgow, in a scheme called ‘Bhoys against Bigotry,’ pushed to ban the singing of ballads at home fixtures, a move to stamp out radicalism. Of course, such a top-down provision has not really worked, and opinions on the matter were divided from the start. Some felt *Athenry* had historically resonant, yet politically neutral, colouring—and could be kept by the faithful. The more violent ballads, however, had to go. In the Sinn Féin allied newspaper, *An Phoblacht*, Ciaran Heaphey and Liam O Coileain wrote this response in an editorial:

To say that songs about IRA Volunteers taking on the might of the British Empire is sectarianism smacks of ignorance of republicans and their traditions. Fergus McCann and his fellow directors “endorse” the singing of *The Fields of Athenry* yet opposes the singing of *The Boys of the Old Brigade*, classifying it as belonging to a “terrorist organization”. I have witnessed the tactics being employed by the club with people singing their songs ejected from the ground. What way does that song [*The Fields of Athenry*] go again, “Against the famine and the crown, I rebelled, they cut me down...” Is that not a bit radical Fergus? (*An Phoblacht/Republican News* 27 Nov 1997)

These songs, based on penny whistles and archaic slang, persist as battle rallies in contemporary clashes. The lyrics, fashioned around the personalised melancholy of a ballad, invoke into present contexts the perceived injustices of the past: history itself is not so long ago, but an unbalance that can be corrected and made right retroactively by actions here and now. For Irish nationalists, the ballad genre, allusions to folklore, and glorified medieval personages, remain the most popular expressions for rousing the party line. Rooted in legitimate historical circumstances, the post-traumatic state of the Irish people is *not* often

considered in the past-tense in political discussions. The textbook scenes of the gaol, starvation, and exile to Australia ignite incendiary implications in the current political climate. These memories of trauma or injustice are recontextualised into the current agenda, valued for their folkloric appeal as well as a collective sense of bringing the past to account in the present.

As such, the famine became revised as a historical event for vengeful nationalist sentiments, from the murals of Ardoyne that pop up after a terrorist bombing, to the covers of Irish language polemics which argue for linguistic autonomy. Bobby Sand's slogan *Tiocfaidh ár lá* (our time will come), popularised during his widely publicised hunger strike that led to his death, intimates that the past is an unresolved tension informing the present. The coming day is a guarantee. However, slogans and ballads tend to address historical questions in one-dimensional ways: for example, when was there a united Ireland or what exactly was it? When, from out of the divided kingdoms, had the split island of centuries become the *Éire* of republicanism? Yeats takes on such complications. In his poetry and plays, his commentary pushes beyond the limits of shallow folklore and sectarian history. Such dramas as *The Dreaming of the Bones* or poems such as "The Tower" debunk easy ethnic assertions based on soft history.

Yeats, in "I see Phantoms of Hatred and of the Heart's Fullness and of the Coming Emptiness," recognised that folklore serves to take historical events and recycles them into the patterns of future events waiting to be recorded and reconciled:

The half-read wisdom of daemonic images,
Suffice the ageing man as once the growing boy. (39-40)

Football chants are a case in point: at an Old Firm derby, Rangers supporters will verbally retaliate with poems which describe standing knee-deep in Fenian blood, or loud battle-songs celebrating the Boyne's aftermath. The milieu of ballads will incorporate current political events in retaliation to the phantoms of the past, adding another link in the historical chain of event, accusation, and recrimination:

Could ye go a wee can of Coke. Bobby Sands?
Could ye go a wee cool can of Coke?
Well, you're not getting none, Bobby Sands,

There's a bed made in Milltown⁴ just for you.

In this case, Sands's death by self-starvation is viciously seen as a parody of the famine. Football demonstrates the combustible mixture of roots, identity, history, which explode across the globe, and not in Glasgow alone.⁵ Football supporters frequently define themselves by heritage, sectarianism laid out in an entrancement with quasi-historical imagery. The bravado in the stalls draws its inspiration from the life in the streets. The raw qualities of the poetic formats act as vehicles for remembering, or nourishing, old grudges for contemporary sectarian motivations. Interestingly, preferred Celtic songs are endorsements of the Original IRA, rather than odes memorialising the nineteenth-century priest who started the club as a means of working with impoverished Catholic youth. In asserting claims to Irish loyalty, they do not chant Yeats's poetry in the Scottish Premier League. So, conversely, would Yeats have been a radical Celtic supporter? It seems many critics would say so, if Yeats so glibly absorbs ready-made notions. The question concerns how much impact has Yeats had in the perpetuation of Irish, or *Celtic*, stereotypes, ones that readily prop up invented traditions, or supply emotional materials for sectarian causes, such as the ones suggested above.

A central dilemma of Yeats I will examine is the problem of politics, as attempting to negotiate heritage, and how it antagonizes the claims of an individual person, or marginal regions such as the rural. I first consider this theme as developing out of the early verse, and I will then proceed to consider how his interactions with Japanese literature enhanced his considerations, and how his considerations influenced Japanese modernism. Heritage and landscape has been a crucial debate in Ireland and Japan, where a profound folk tradition typifies the country as much as do bombs, clerical scandals, and cycles of recriminations.

What purpose does the pastoral serve, either a falsely imagined one or a legitimately earthy one, in relation to political trauma? On such a question, in a personal essay, an Ulster

⁴ A Catholic cemetery near the Falls Road, West Belfast, where many Provisional IRA men are interred.

⁵ Two Tel Aviv squads, Maccabi and ha-Poel, include supporters who frequently taunt each other with references to the Holocaust, Russian pogroms, and suicide bombers.

schoolgirl, Sharon Ingram, wrote a reaction piece entitled “McSweeney Astray,” which concerns a thinly disguised rendition of Seamus Heaney. She writes,

Oh, how I looked forward to meeting him, hearing him read, absorbing the cameos of Ulster life which are so dear to me—the sound of blackbirds after April rain, visions of primrose on the mossy banks in Tyrone, and the pungency of the turf fires all along the Findrum valley. (273)

The poet, Shay McSweeney, disappoints at first glance, turning up in a tinted-out BMW. He does not read his own poetry so much as provide a news-reel telling of bombs, kneecappings, and other horrors from the headlines. This upsets Ingram, as it seems another BBC style fixation on the negative aspects of life in Northern Ireland, without any attempt to present the uplifting and positive:

Gone were my visions of springtime, clear weather, and the enjoyment of our rural communities. Gone was that miraculous perspective he had once given me Above all, gone was the one true link with myself and my past—Ulster *before* 1968, 1921, 1916, *before* the Famine, *before* the Gaelic Celts and the Brittonic Celts. Ulster as the land, the soil, the scattered shower, the sunny spell, without any nuclear waste “McSweeney Astray?” I wondered. “Do you really find innocence and hope naive? Do you really prefer shades of red to shades of green?”

The *green* should, in fact, be apolitical: neither Protestant nor Catholic, but an environmental realm that provides peace of mind and stability as a sustained ecosphere for the human. The rural offers the pastoral alternative, which at least provides a distinction from the ongoing tragedies perpetuated by society.

The discourse of colonialism creates a paradox, where rurality is equated with primitivism. A September 1997 episode of *EastEnders* featured a dander through an Irish village, one in which cows, sheep, and donkeys wandered freely down shamrockish streets and footpaths. On account of numerous public complaints, the BBC issued an official apology for any offense caused to viewers. To end such stereotypes, the village must become one with the market-oriented economy. It must abandon the trappings of the past and become reliant upon a bigger brother who dictates a new scene and setting. The abhorrent caricature of the toothless, stupid culchie listening to fiddle music continues to win

laughs in television skits. In regards to such stupefying images, some view Yeats as the preeminent forger of Irishness. Certainly, during a period of Irish national self-determination, issues of identity were variously put forward; and Yeats had his opinions. Politically, these questions of national characterhood, or the *Celtic* generally, could counteract longstanding feelings of subordination, as a disempowered suzerainty. Yeats, as poet and statesman, protested those urban vassals who paid tribute to the foreign elites, having in turn collected taxes from their rural tributary. Elementalism, an attentive connection to nature, is no longer a soppy New Age fantasy. Even as it continues to invoke spiritualist metaphors in response to technology, elementalism poses a desperate solution to a terrifying environmental situation:

You—you will make no terms with the spirits of fire and earth
and air and water. You have made the Darkness your enemy. We—
we exchange civilities with the world beyond.

(“Scots and Irish Faeries”, *FLM* 29)

Rather than seeing change as inevitable, and inevitably sacrificial of the smaller communities, Yeats throughout his life drew upon myth, politics, and international contacts to maintain the importance of the local, and the forms of knowledge it uniquely maintains.

The issues of the soil—who owns it, who benefits from it, and who is displaced when the land is taken away—were at the heart of civil grievances in the nineteenth century; the Home Rule movement; and now even more so in the era of *Celtic Tiger*.

What is the voice of the rural, the so-called *culchie*? The *spalpín fanach*, the peasant-like subject of many popular ballads, is an itinerant labourer, many of whom were displaced persons after the Famines. Now, such is a term of abuse in western Ireland, often used to mock people pursuing careers in music or other performance arts, rather than more lucrative livings with Dell or Pfizer. The Celtic Tiger of financial gain roars across the country, providing jobs but taking livelihoods. The rhetoric of corporate expansionism holds the course and, indeed, toys with the accusations of *nostalgia* or gross sentimentalism to any forces—environmental, socialist, heritage foundations—which stand against the unchecked paving of the countryside for the sake of the business echelons. Protestors who seek to preserve local landmarks, including those of folkloric significance are agents of romanticisation, as in the case of Eddie Lenihan, author of *Meeting the Other Crowd*, a

modern collection of Irish fairy mythology. Lenihan must be an eccentric, after all, to take such strong interests in a fairy bush or other bits of landscape.⁶ A century earlier, when they more physically intact, these mythotopographic features of the Irish landscape certainly had tremendous meaning to Yeats, both artistically and communally, as a way of linking past with present: “I was marking in red ink, upon a large map, every sacred mountain” (A 378).

A distaste for Yeats, as a glamouriser of a synthetic *Celtic* version of the village diorama, may actually have more to do with posthumous effigies fashioned in his name after him, rather than what he actually wrote or said. Representations of Yeats used by the Bórd Fáilte and other Irish institutional bodies have refined Yeats’s iconic value, his legacy rendered as clichés and physical monuments. This has supplanted his importance as both artist and politician, and turned us from the early poetry. This metamorphosing of his work has taken the poetry into the realms of ethnic marketing. Yeats’s political engagement with Irish heritage has little relation in the imagery of Irish diasporic longings, those who tend to prefer the leprechauns of Notre Dame Catholicism and the shamrocks of Boston Red Sox anthem, or other twee tokens of ethnic pride in a North American setting. Marketed ethnicity appeals to post-emigrant longings. Considering the massive success of *The Sopranos*, and its contentious foregrounding of Italian-American identities, it seems only a matter of time before television brings us a series concerning the trials of a scrappy Irish clan. Certainly, the stereotype is well-known, and not much is done to discourage it from inside of Ireland. The 2006 Ryder Cup, an old boys golf duel set in Co Kildare, featured green top-hats and buckled brogues a plenty.

Outside of Ireland, pub colonialism is a big business of Guinness glasses, fiddles, and a smattering of up-you-boyo and wedding toasts. Paper maché replicas they are indeed, and there is a desire to continually clone these trite reproductions. But, truly, is Yeats in the same category as this kind of market-oriented ethnicity fetish? Or to what extent shall he be held responsible for the false lustre bestowed on Ireland and Irish things by commodity culture? After all, from the start, in regards to the stage Irishman, or to cultural portraits *abstentia*, Yeats wrote early of his distaste for easily produced tripe:

⁶ By the same appeal to monetary virtue, villagers who do not want inner-relief roads pounded through their neighbourhoods—as it might despoil the environment, the quieter way of life or damage religious archaeology—are selfish adherents to a negligible past. The imagery of organic farming—buttermilk valleys, free-range animals, and pastoral splendour—may be dismissed as supercilious, but they powerfully offer an alternative to the unadvertised carcinogens of the factory farm and the horrors of animal testing.

Mr McAnally is an Irish-American. In his feelings for the old country there is a touch of genuine poetry. But the Ireland he loves is not the real Ireland: it is the false Ireland of sentiment. He strains to make everything humorous, according to the old convention, pretty according to the old prepossession. (“Irish Wonders”, *FLM* 30)

These conventions and prepossessions had been shattered by historical accounts and lingering horror, growing in the national self-consciousness, which was part of Yeats’s point of view. He notes in this essay that the Irish famine “burst the bubble” of popular stereotypes. An honest attempt to access the meaning of history and its influences on the present should trump any attempts to revise fancifully such a history. Thus, Yeats’s preferred ballad is one “neither humorous nor mournful: it is simply life” (*IFF* 6). Is Ireland a notion, a mentality, an artifact, or real estate? The nuances behind these commodities are the very tensions which make Yeats’s poetry, even the *Celtic Twilight* material, unstable and problematic . . . and intentionally so! Yeats’s stress between local customs and external forces engages an early phase of an historical process that comes more fully into view later in the twentieth century.

Yeats was anticipating the effects of Europeanisation, as well as more general social trends, traditions, for example, giving way to mass produced, homogenised goods. In this way, Yeats has much in common with the activism of Irish language writers of the *gaeltacht*, they who in fact have the most to lose as the particular and local is eroded. It is disastrous when institutional bodies are either aloof with respect to the plight of the minority, or even complicit in those exchanges which lead to its demise. As Seán Ó Ríordáin wrote—on the dust-jacket of a recent dual-language edition which celebrates two stories by Máirtín Ó Cadhain—“Ar deireadh shílfeá leat féin Éire agus nár le Bord Fáilte” [In the end you felt that Ireland belonged to you and not to Bord Fáilte (the Irish tourism authority)].

Cultural theory might be rightly suspicious of statements such as the following: “The triple harp is a uniquely *Welsh* sound.”⁷ The ideological pursuit of identity politics

⁷ Robin Huw Bowen, harper and composer, made this assertion to NHK television in an episode of *Kodawari raifu Yūroppa* [Inspiring Lives: Europe.] Bowen’s album of triple harp music, *Y Ffordd I Aberystwyth* [The Road to Aberystwyth], describes his commitment to a Welsh tradition of folk music as a means to better approaching the musicality of other folk(s) music.

accompanies such claims. Welsh. How can this refer to a homogenous unit of collectivity, defined unanimously through inherent properties of a *folk*? The humour of *Little Britain*'s skit character Daffyd Thomas, “the only gay in the village”, works because, to a certain degree, notions of apparent Welshness must be true and pervasive enough, so as then to be available for unsettling. But when speaking of the triple harp as Welsh is a musician necessarily positing a discursive claim to universal characterhood? Ethnomusicological perspectives might, instead, consider the currents of transmission that can be documented in the history of this instrument, as contextualised by the conditions of a specific region. Further, how the triple harp connects to other cultural practices—language, clothing, dance—over a period of time and community investment also propose what senses of uniqueness are historically allocated to the performance. Historical methods such as prosopography take as their aim the research of those strata of characteristics which can be researched over a period of time according to the particulars of place. Something like a *Welsh* sound, then, can be suggestive—a worthwhile nuance to explore or debate based on accessible materials—rather than a mere myth confined to false consciousnesses. The irony of Daffyd is that he will not accept any other gays in the village, especially ones who speak Welsh and do not mimic London SW7 rave fashions.

It may surprise some to hear that the critical view of splitting Yeats into separate chronological strata still guides some interpretive approaches to Yeats. Recently, on an edition of *The Enchanted Way* in 2005, an RTÉ programme designed to help prepare pupils for the Leaving Certificate exam, Selena Guinness rightly states that one aspect that makes Yeats difficult is “his own self-assessment, his own re-assessment of his earlier work, and the quality of his intellect—he is a poet who never rests easy with one opinion.”⁸ The challenge, she suggests, is one of a changing mind. Pat Boran then suggests to the panel that there are three (“at least”) distinct Yeatses: the Celtic mythological Yeats, the transitional Yeats, and a later Yeats. Stephen Slattery, the moderator, confirms that this is a valid approach, from both pedagogical and scholarly points of view.

⁸ Originally broadcast 5 March, 2005. Available as a podcast from <http://www.rte.ie/radio1/theenchantedway/index.html> (accessed 30 August, 2006).

This kind of compartmentalising holds that Yeats's interest in fairy lore, largely ornamental, has little to do with the later Yeats. This is convenient, because uncomfortable aspects of Yeats can be disavowed chronologically. The early poetry might be dismissed as juvenilia, which the later Yeats cast off. Certainly, the so-called early Yeats has been the butt for most of the anti-sentimental criticism. Contemporary Ireland, in popular culture and scholarly assessment, finds Yeats to be responsible for much of the ersatz Irish representations so widely circulated. The rose-tinted imagination of the Celtic strawman perpetuated some regressive and essentialist prescriptions for identities, and Yeats and the Celtic Renaissance are directly implicated in this affair. The British scholar Kenneth Hurlston Jackson, in a preface to his collection of translations from early Irish literature, presents a strong indictment of the Celtic Renaissance for initiating and propagating false presentations of Irish myths and sagas. In doing so, Yeats willfully spread misrepresentations concerning Celtic history and literature:

. . . it has been the fashion to think of the Celtic mind as something mysterious magical, filled with dark broodings over a mighty past The so-called 'Celtic Revival' of the end of last century did much to foster this preposterous idea. A group of writers, approaching the Celtic literatures (about which they usually knew very little, since most of them could not read the languages at all) with a variety of the above prejudice conditioned by the pre-Raphaelite and Aesthetic movements and their own individual turns of mind, were responsible for the still widely held belief that they are full of mournful, languishing melancholy, of the dim 'Celtic Twilight' (Yeats's term), or else an intolerable whimsicality or sentimentality. Although scholars have long known, and all educated people really acquainted with the Celtic literatures now know, this is a gross misrepresentation, the opinion is still widely held, and for instance a Welshman can hardly publish a book of the most realistic and cynical short stories without some reviewer tracing in them the evidences of 'Celtic mysticism' or the like. (19-20)

Here, Jackson establishes a polemical treatment of interrogation for the term *Celtic Twilight*, presuming that Yeats himself had issued such a phrase infallibly with the intention of declaring a definitive, categorical *zeitgeist*.

However, despite seizing upon this phrase as embodying all that is ignorant and misrepresentative of Celtic literature, Jackson begs the question. An examination of Yeats's own writings reveals a more demanding and multiple senses of both *Celtic* and *twilight* than that of an unquestioningly marked-out formula of ethnic characterisation, somehow demonstrative of the *Celtic*; and, thus, the name-sake collection is not meant to assert a simplistic evocation of Irish literary practice and its sense of heritage. Yeats's own self-reflexive criticism critiques the interrelationships of poetry to country. His interactions with the phantasmal past, made visible as shadows and twilight in the present, invokes different viewpoints that complicate notions of nation as a product of continuous history. *The Celtic Twilight* frequently addresses this issue, using the voice of the *ancestor* to both affirm and debunk contemporary claims to the past. Likewise, his journalism is full of rebuttal evidence that suggests nationhood is first a desire that cannot be acted upon. But the purposeful assessments of a pervading twilight, as the ongoing but receding shape of the ancestral, informs the continuity within the methods of his writings, in how they explore how a communities feels itself enplaced in historical and environmental situations.

Nonetheless, there has been a tendency to separate the early work of Yeats as highly distinct from the later. Ellmann helped to suggest a sense of an *annus mirabilis*, or miracle year, in which Yeats matured from romance to modernity. Ellmann expresses the model of division in clean-cut terms: "the defect of Yeats's work during the first half of his life" (Ellmann 164). This almost suggests that the defect of Yeats's life was its first half. Standby sources such as *Encyclopaedia Britannica* have been equally as pithy: "Had Yeats ceased to write at age 40, he would probably now be valued as a minor poet writing in a dying Pre-Raphaelite tradition that had drawn renewed beauty and poignancy for a time from the Celtic revival." The first half of Yeats's life includes a series of misguided experiments that are best overlooked, or perhaps defined as juvenile memoirs. Then, perhaps in a given year (1915 is often cited), or a given event (Irish Rebellion) or a specific person (Georgie Yeats), a critical catalyst cauterised his life. Suddenly, he was transformed from the puerile lyricist into the Nobel laureate. This is a viewpoint associated with disassociation: Yeats's early output lacked a vital incertitude which would have kept in check the robustness of his romanticism, but a later power reversed the earlier trends and greatness was hatched. Kinahan, in acknowledging the sometimes perceived split, finds that critics compensate for

his apparent divisions: “a widespread impression that Yeats’s quest was largely the product of one man’s idiosyncratic need to arrange it all in one clear view” (9).

I do think that few would hold that Yeats is an example of punctuated equilibrium, a minor lyrical poet who, in a moment of sudden evolution, changed into the modernist superhero. But there is a sense that a gradual evolution took place, in which personal selection slowly discarded earlier traits in pursuit of a more full-bodied vision of himself. The search for syncretic perfection is the attainment of a personal life-belief successfully nurturing a poetic externalism. The model of a career split, if strictly adhered to, cannot effectively approach the diversity of Yeats’s writing chronologically. But, somewhat symptomatic of this willful dividing, there has been a tendency to discard, or largely discount, the necessary importance of his earliest writing as directly contributing to the later works. I find that Yeats’s early writings, and in particular his prose text, *The Celtic Twilight*, shows evidence of a kind of political maturity that runs against certain existing scholarship, one that sees *CT* as naïve ethos, or one that breaks Yeats’s career neatly in two, dreamy nationalist first and hard-bitten realist later.

I, as have others, am arguing for continuity between early and late. In my view, the continuity can become especially apparent when an outside perspective, one from Japan in this example, is brought to bear upon the whole of Yeats’s oeuvre. Thus, in considering both the early works as directly contributing to the Irish-Japanese intercultural dimensions, I will make my case on close attention to the dramatics of voice and counterpoint in the entirety of his writing, particularly as these demonstrate the technique of ancestral recall, and of investigating the ghosts of heritage in twilight.

Because of Yeats’s stature as a poet, and his global prominence as an Irish writer, he seems to readily connect with the propagation of an essence of *Irishness*. The Nobel Committee, in their citation, acknowledged that Yeats gave “expression to the spirit of a whole nation.” What describes that *spirit*, and how that spirit represents a whole nation, is one of the problems at hand. The problem, of course, increases in anxiety as issues concerning territory and sovereignty are fought over and debated.

Popular entertainment has a major influence in perpetuating the stereotype, even if also acknowledging these stereotypes to be impractically false. The most popular video game of all time, the ultra violent *Grand Theft Auto IV*, delights in self-consciously hyperbolised performances of ethnic identity. In the latest installment of the franchise, one mission requires the Niko protagonist, himself an Eastern European thug, must fight his way out of a “dark and musty” Irish/German public house/beer garden. Choppy concertina reels, congenital alcoholism, drink driving, and Dublin street sights assert all the pub’s ethnic identity as proudly Irish. Like *Borat*, the campy presentation supposedly mocks the stereotypes through obvious exaggeration, but gleefully reinforces them all the same.

Equally violent, and alarmingly real, a search for *Ireland* on the popular public domain video site YouTube will uncover an incredible array of PIRA (and sub-factions) propaganda: montages of snipers training near Crossmaglen, anti-decommissioning jeers, bomb blast footage, all riffed with a soundtrack of menacing fiddles. The lyrics, overlaid furiously, are citations of bloodbaths from the past. In effect, they are semtex anthems phrased according to the conventions of folk music. It cannot be exaggerated. These images up for public viewing are shocking: the supergrass lying dead on the roadway, punishment beatings, and other nightmarish videos. For that matter, loyalist films, with their own Ulster Scots vocabulary, are equally horrifying. How is it that in both Republican and Loyalist murals we find images of Cú Chulainn, and petrol bombs emblazoned with both the three-leaf shamrock and the saltire? These images are glorifications of sectarian abuse assuaged by the notion of a collective myth. This digitally enhanced setting of sentimentality and nationalism, balancing modern technology with a preference for a pseudo-vocabulary of nineteenth-century Ireland, is one that contains no moments of self-criticism. This is a major distinction from Yeats, who is accused of cooking up a soupy legacy for which he is the boiling point. A careful reading of his works shows that Yeats, supposedly the purveyor of unchecked ideals and cheap Irish pride, could never be found as the inspiration for these tableaux. His thought process was too sceptical and duplicitous to enable such compunctions. Yeats must be separated from the virulent forms of violent nationalism or market-driven sentimentality.

First of all, he was aware of the problems. He had explored thoroughly in “Meditations in Time of Civil War” that the legendary associations of the west of Ireland had

become intractably combined within an immediate theatre of hostilities. Yeats, the major Irish modernist, usually understood as having demonstrated a remnant of a nineteenth century viewpoint, occupied a unique place in a difficult time of transition in his homeland, when the jigsaw puzzle of the Irish identity crisis needed to be jiggled as central to the struggle to declare a newly independent republic. But Yeats, as Colin Graham and others describe, has been seen as conjuring up a distorted nostalgia for an imagined past, and then transposing this fantasy onto the rural population of western Ireland, thereby encoding a false sense of Irish nationhood using an exaggerated typology of rurality and folk-life. Yeats, it seems, cannot be a historian, but only a dramatiser of schlock heritage. The impoverished Patrick Kavanagh composed “The Great Hunger” as an antidote to the Yeatsian sentiments for a drawing room pastoralism. He thus is said to have a more legitimate claim to *speaking for the people*. Writers such as Kate Roberts have stronger credentials, for she lived in the muck and hardship of peasant life, rather than idealizing it from afar. Like Kavanagh, Roberts, a prominent Welsh nationalist and one of the greatest novelists in the Welsh language, wrote heartbreaking depictions of the coal mining class in *Traed mewn Cyffion* [*Feet in Chains*, 1936]. However, she also produced movingly pastoral depictions of childhood, similar to the gossamer stories of Selma Lagerlöf, in works such as *Te yn y Grug* [*Tea in the Heather*, 1959].

What is wrong with delighting in the loveliness of nature, especially when the beauty of the Welsh countryside is being destroyed by Liverpool’s hunger for natural resources? The coal mines of Roberts’s time symbolised the eviction of grace from the earth, and the recent flooding of Cwm Tryweryn demonstrates the effacing of the hillsides as the spread of urban glut.⁹ Roberts saw this process, as did Yeats for Ireland. True to say, there is an adoration for turf smoke and village life in Yeats, and many other Irish and Welsh writers as well. The local and particular are a competing alternative to the dehumanising mechanizations of urban industry: “The people of the cities have the machine, which is prose

⁹ See Chapter Seven of Gwynfor Evans’s *Fighting For Wales* for an analysis of this incident: Cwm Tryweryn was a prosperous, lively community which was flooded to make a reservoir for Liverpool. Evans clearly identifies the forces which permitted British metropolitan needs to exploit subsidiary rural lands. Evans also details the depressing cycle of strip-mining in the Welsh countryside, with its cycles of unemployment and capital means, which rob rural communities of any chance for self-sustainment.

and a *parvenu*” (*IFF* 3). Yeats was concerned with an alternative to the morass of mass communications that had begun to overtake the individuality of village voice and thought:

We Irish should keep these personages much in our hearts, for they lived in the places where we ride and go marketing, and sometimes they have met one another on the hills that cast their shadows upon our doors at evening. If we will but tell these stories to our children the Land will begin again to be a Holy Land, as it was before men gave their hearts to Greece and Rome and Judea. (*FLM* 334)

At face value, this kind of admonition seems no different from something a post-Jungian thinker such as James Hillman might say: myths are a kind of spiritual sap that run in the landscape and provide life to the psychological community, providing a shared self-consciousness to individuality.

Based on such inferences, others would prefer that, as a representative of what Yeats claims to access, we should turn instead to such figures as Máirtín O Cadhain, an Irish language writer, innovative prose stylist, and a socialist radical. If there should be an ambassador for Gaelic Ireland, he should have more meritorious credentials in terms of upbringing. Declan Kiberd’s *Irish Classics*, which benefits greatly from the author’s linguistic capabilities in Irish Gaelic, advises us not to discount Yeats’s own subjectivity and its importance to the development of Irish national self-consciousness. Kiberd assesses Yeats’s place alongside these Irish language writers in a shared opposition to social forces that supplant or erase native legitimacy. In fact, because of his compromised position socially as Protestant and upper class, Yeats was able to evaluate exactly what effects the urban elite could inflict upon the rural population, and the arsenal and methods they had at their disposal.

Yeats’s legacy also reveals itself in the manner his work inspires the current generation of traditional musicians—for example, Tommy Keane and Jacqueline McCarthy’s highly regarded CD *The Wind Among the Reeds*—those folk who must eke out marginal incomes without major labels and relying on Radió na Gaeltachta for airplay. No one is dismissing that music as plastic paddyism. And Irish broadcaster RTÉ frequently engages in treks to document folklore and dying rural traditions in a manner absolutely similar to what the Celtic Revival had attempted. But Yeats, in terms of how he negotiated with the

competing agendas of his time, tell us more about his politics than the later re-imaging of him as icon.

Yeats's relationship to the development of Irish media, and the forms of Irishness it advised, was frequently turbulent. Indeed, he repeatedly decried newspapers as a textual industry of bulk productions and disposable insights, although he himself repeatedly adopted the media to forward his opinions and defend his enterprises. In the poem "September 1913," Yeats's ongoing public row with William Martin Murphy and the entrepreneurship of the Irish newspaper industry would reach its strongest expression. However, a strong distrust for mass media had been simmering from the start. In an ironic rejoinder, Yeats writes,

Indeed, it is a question whether any of these personages will ever be heard of outside the newspaper offices or lecture-rooms and drawing-rooms and eel-pie houses of the city. (*FLM 2*)

Yeats had many occasions to be wary about this industry of rubbish bin headlines that served to centralise a social point of view. The fraught contrast between rural and urban mentality was a source of humour for him:

though even a newspaper man, if you entice him into a cemetery at midnight, will believe in phantoms, for every one is a visionary, if you scratch him deep enough. (*IFF 2*)

Yeats also comments: "But the Celt is a visionary without scratching"; and perhaps such presupposes some innate gift that is of a racially essentialist nature. In a later chapter, I will evaluate such comments in detail in relation to Yeats's equally dismissive treatment of such ideals. If viewed in the overall arc of the argument, the preface to *IFF* is an extended set of comparative values: city-folk and rural folk. Yeats prefers the traditional modes of communication, including the dying minority language, because these, unlike the Dublin newspapers, are circulated oratures that maintain the dignity of interpersonal networking. Yeats's attention to country life, very much like Kate Roberts's, demonstrates the wariness for the environmental and social effects of mass manufactured sprawl.

I think many would agree that there are political dimensions to the early Yeats, and these suggest that these poems of the 1890s include more than rehearsed pastoralism, or schemes of sentimentality. But, as figureheads of a misplaced Irish yester-year, Yeats and Lady Gregory are now distinctly intertwined with the fundamentals of the twentieth century

enterprise of building (and critics suggest *packaging*) an Irish essence. This is a notion which surfaces continuously in many novels, plays, and films of our time. To cite one intriguing and curious example from these, in his memoirs of his time in the Provisional IRA, Eamon Collins remembers a moment during his incarceration when he engaged in a discussion with a police interrogator, an Ulsterman who, despite his political category as Protestant, was none the less interested in Yeats and the historical framework of literary Ireland:

He said he would have liked to have made his feelings known about his own people's role and place in Irish history He talked intelligently and authoritatively about Lady Gregory and the Irish sagas I felt sorry too that he felt republicans were depriving him of his Irishness because of the fact he was Protestant. (270)

Plastic paddy became the shame label for Irish ex-pats in Liverpool and London, as well as second or third generation descendents of Irish ancestry in North America who strive to be more *Irish* than the Irish. Yeats, in many ways, acts as a calling card for Irish affinities.

Patricia Monaghan, who wrote a sort of new-age, Celtic travelogue entitled *The Red-Haired Girl from the Bog*, describes a pilgrimage through Connemara, almost obligatorily inspired by Yeats:

after unpacking my volumes of Yeats and Lady Gregory at Máire's, I began inquiring in the pub after the local fairies — calling them, as I remember, by that very name. (53)

The good humoured publican is not at all put off by her overture, and a cheery local offers to stand her a pint, saying that drink is a sure method for spotting the otherworld. But, catching on to being slagged, Monaghan ruefully says *sotto voce* in defence, “The unsubtle coddling stung. I had not, after all, asked for directions to . . . the pot o' gold.”

In pursuit of such a cultural principle, some critical outlooks of the last twenty-five years in regards to Yeats have shifted from symbolist analysis and close readings—that is, the system which he wrote with—to critiques of his fashioning of an Irish cultural orientation. Often, however, this describes a *material* Yeats, a longstanding icon whose

legacy is under review, rather than the works themselves.¹⁰ But can the criticism of the icon be separated from the criticism of the poet? The situation of poet becoming plaster is most pronounced, of course, in County Sligo, where Inisfree is the name for a waterboat that plies the shadowy waters, christens the names of a hostel, and provides cutouts for the stained glass of student pubs. The transition of his work into tourist monuments has obscured a more accurate picture of the contexts within which he worked. No doubt, Yeats, as a distiller of Irish consciousness, provides tropes and suggestions that have been seized upon by the Irish-American audience in particular. In *Million Dollar Baby*, Maggie Fitzgerald is continually emblazoned with Celtic motifs: the euthanasia debate of the movie is heightened by the suggestive Irish Catholicism of her persona. She takes to the ring in a robe with the phrase *mo chúisle* appallingly misspelled on it. And, to make sure Yeats gets his stamp of approval, “The Lake Isle of Inisfree” also makes a cameo appearance at a moment of dramatic tension. When a poet becomes so synonymous with the literature of his country—as very few writers do, individuals such as Halldór Laxness or Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz come to mind—the hologram overwhelms the person. His or her visage appears on bank notes, stamps, and travel catalogues. The commemorative induction of his or her identity substitutes a collective social claim for the personhood.

In the case of Yeats, the tug-of-war began immediately with his death, particularly in the drawn-out funerary rites and row over place of burial.¹¹ Clearly, a pitched battle developed around the private needs of the family, in accordance with W.B. Yeats’s will, and the Irish government’s desire for a state-sponsored spectacle. In the end, politicians co-opted the mourning rights from the private sphere. A state burial had enabled further possibilities for grand public ceremony and memorialisation. The *Irish Times* (23 September 1952) asked under the title “A Yeats Memorial: A Tower? A Statue? A Poetry Prize?” how best to materially commemorate Yeats from a fund bequeathed by an American donor:

Some months ago an official of Coras Trachtala Teo., the Government-sponsored Dollar Exports Co., was handed a cheque for 1,400 dollars (about

¹⁰ See, for examples, *The Mechanics of Authenticity*, edited by Colin Graham and Richard Kirkland, and also *The Irish in Us: Irishness, Performativity, and Popular Culture*, edited by Diane Negra.

¹¹ The ministrations over Yeats’s body is thoroughly detailed by Foster (2:653-59), in an epilogue entitled “Genius and History”. The question is the extent that history makes a conjecture in regards to genius, or how history will enshrine genius according to its own needs and fashion.

£500) as the nucleus of a fund to provide a memorial to the poet W.B. Yeats. The donor was Mr. John J. Kelly, an American business expert, who was on a mission here to advise the Government of the possibilities of increasing exports to the dollar area.

Mr. Kelly has asked the official, Mr. W.H. Walsh, to act on his behalf. He stipulated that an equal sum, at least, must be collected from other donors. Although no public appeal has been made, several other contributions have been made, and the fund now stands at about £1,100.

The *Times* was open to suggestions, to “give their views upon the form, which the memorial should take.” Thomas MacGreevy—poet, critic, and director of the National Gallery—responded by first wondering:

It is, I daresay, the result of historical circumstance that we squander, that we literally throw away much of our present genius and of our past genius, let the monuments be wholly or partly destroyed and the memories remain unrecorded.

After lamenting the cold shoulder Irish artists receive in their country of birth, MacGreevy turns his attention specifically to Yeats: Thor Ballylee would not require too much effort and upkeep, as a national monument; or perhaps the *Castle in the Water*, the ideal refuge envisioned by Yeats, could be turned into reality, if only economic bounty could match the level of romance. MacGreevy suspects that banality will win the day, and so he advises,

If there is to be a sculptural memorial I think the solution should be, first, to find a sculptor whose work shows that he is not insensitive to poetry; second, to set him on the subject of W.B. Yeats; and third, to give him his head.

MacGreevy’s quip about the statue—enshrine the icon by decapitating the man—wittily anticipates the next fifty years of evaluations and afterthoughts in Yeatsian criticism. We have his poetry, we have his head in our hands, and somehow from these materials we are to carve an efficient visage that does justice to the decapitated corpse. The Yeats legacy exemplifies the issues of national solidarity and territorial attachment affixed to the arts. As a cultured face for nationhood, his image is called upon to re-align the fractured polity of the state. Irish heritage agencies control objectification of the past, and Yeats provides a human,

if statuesque, face. In the shadow of all this, we do well to remember Seamus Deane's analysis of Yeats's folklore as an ideology of the reactionary, as opposed to promissory, in terms of its evaluation of ethnicity and mythology: "He repudiated the stage-Irish, tourist Ireland of some of the nineteenth-century collectors and emphasised in its stead the importance of folklore for the realization of both nationality and literature" (Deane 212)—according to Yeats, great literature and nationality are co-dependent. Deane reminds us, however, that Yeats need not be read as a call to *volk* consciousness, as I will further detail in Chapter Three, but stands on its own as the sense that folklore is a repository for cultural self-examination, not ossification. This requires much consideration, as the other possibility is to read such a comment—that nationality equals literature—as proof that Yeats was a consummate fascist. Memorials to Yeats, in a way, cast his image as a frozen statement of cultural essence. Public ceremonies circulate the tokenism of the project, affixing the artifice of memory in place of a realistic, organic populace.

By way of comparison, I refer to a key point pursued by John Nelson, in a thorough study of the political and religious mechanisms behind the Yasukuni Shrine controversy:¹²

In assessing these projects [of "social memory as ritual practice"], it is easy to let our critiques about "invented traditions" or ideologies of memory obscure the personal as we assess the political and institutional. And yet, regardless of the

¹² Yasukuni-jinja (靖國神社), literally *peaceful nation shrine*, is a Shinto shrine which houses the spirits of Japanese war dead, including, most contentiously, a dozen or so 'Class A' war criminals, as determined by post World War Two American tribunals. As the primary religious institution for commemorating those killed in Japan's conflicts, Yasukuni's connection to State Shinto and the Emperor is unavoidable. Also of concern is the nearby museum, which has been accused of glorifying or glossing over Japan's colonial practices. Yasukuni is, some argue, a gathering point for right-wing revisionists, "a conflicted message of apology and praise" as an editorial in *Yomiuri shinbun* recently put it. Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō has received heated criticism for his visits to the shrine, albeit as a private citizen, for exacerbating relations with Japan's neighbours, who feel that proper restitution has not been made in the aftermath of Japan's imperialism. Koizumi argues that his visits are his own business, guided by his own religious observance, to pray for peace and express condolences to all victims of war.

Because of its contentious position as both place of worship, as well as its status as a kind of memorialising enshrinement of political events, Yasukuni has become a rallying point for various ideologies. So controversial is this particular shrine, Emperor Hirohito decided to stop his visits, on account of the position granted to the spirits of the war criminals, as reported in released memoranda, published by *Nihon keizai shinbun* (20 July, 2006). This situation can be compared to Pope Benedict XVI's visits to battle graveyards in France, where the remains of Waffen S.S. troops are kept, as described by Timothy W. Ryback in *The New Yorker* (02 February 2006).

Yasukuni continues to be an intricate mixture of memory, politics, patriotism, and reconciliation with the past. In August 2006, many families in the Osaka area petitioned to have their relative's names removed from the Shrine's official list of housed spirits.

manipulative politics involved, it is important to account for and acknowledge the struggle of individuals, and the considerable agency they exert, as they grope for ways to keep the memory of loved ones secure against the threats of pain, forgetfulness or, worse, of condemnation. (444)

Yasukuni remains divisive for many reasons, including Koizumi's appeasement politics for his constituencies, as well as the maintenance of good relations for trade with neighbouring countries, some of whom continue to claim monetary reparations. Article 20 of the Japanese constitution forbids official heads of state from making public religious observation. Koizumi's visit to the shrine on August 15, 2006 — the anniversary of Japan's surrender — was the first in over twenty years to be made on this highly symbolic day. He repeated his earlier arguments about the right to pray for peace at the appropriate religious institution, to pay respect to those who died because of an inability to separate themselves from a national agenda:

I do not go to justify the past war or to glorify militarism. I go with the feeling that we should not wage war again and that we must not forget the sacrifice of those who went to war and died. I am not going there for the Class A war criminals. I am going there to mourn the many who made sacrifices.¹³

Nelson somewhat dismisses the “sanctimonious speech of victimization.” The past catches up in the present in an inter-personal way, but the recent outcry over Günter Grass's participation in the Waffen SS has not yet led to his Nobel Prize being recalled.

Ireland abounds in shrines to ancient battles and testaments to heroic freedom fighters of the recent past. At Kilmainham Jail, coach-loads of pupils on school trips receive visceral lectures about executed revolutionaries, those founding fathers who were denied the Eucharist as a last meal. And, like Yasukuni-jinja, Kilmainham provides dual roles to the community: an educational space for glorifying a nation's war dead, as well as a war-memorial park for those who to another nation are traitors.¹⁴ This site now also houses the Irish Museum of Modern Art. Yeats, for some, is the Yasukuni of Ireland — not a war criminal as such, although that suggestion is attached to his Blueshirtism—but at least a

¹³ As widely reported in major newspapers. This translation was provided through the *Reuters* news network (August 14, 2006).

¹⁴ See the Protect Kilmainham Jail Campaign's website: <http://www.kilmainham-gaol.com/>

culture criminal. Yeats's conscience is as a public figure, a composer of parliamentary ethics, as well as an architect of nationalist agendas in literary form. Yeats, the statesman working alongside the constitutional thrust of the Dáil, embodies the added conundrum of how to measure public sentiment in governmental spaces. But at the time of the events which are celebrated in the above mentioned museum, Yeats opens a complicated interpretation. In "Easter 1916", the momentum of the poem is a critical look at the bewildered martyrdom of Irish commemorative politics. Only in the aftermath can there be an establishment of monument as a declaration of abstract memory. The next generations will further re-shape the nation as an historical entity, but they require a tangible connection to the materials that precede their own particular era. Whether it was the Abbey Theatre or his tower, Yeats, consciously toggled his personal drama with the unfolding social history—the extent that he allowed the two to be connected, or separated, was held in check by his own return continually to the earliest themes of his project for investigating the shadows that heritage casts upon the contemporary. What is of particular interest in this study is how the careful attention from Yeats to the local and particular—Sligo, Ireland—led to a dialogue with other local and particulars—Izumo, Tōhoku, in Japan. Interestingly, a participatory invocation of *twilight*, as the shadow of the ancestral and the lustre of time, allowed for a coinciding relationship between these cultural geographies. The more that Yeats assessed the situation of Ireland, the more his attention also expanded to include areas such as Japan. Such an activity, in return, was reciprocated—and a shared dialogue began.

In such a transcultural way, one might re-assess the relationship to heritage and history that surfaced with the early lyrical narratives and increased in urgency throughout Yeats's later work. These early works formatively established an intercultural dialogue between Irish and Japanese literatures. Certainly, Japanese authors, analysing Yeats's work, found that the first thirty-years included a project with more depth than a mismanaged form of Irishised pre-Raphaelitism. Indeed, such works as "The Wanderings of Oisín" and *The Celtic Twilight* depict concerns found in *The Tower*,¹⁵ and such works helped to initiate the reception of Irish literature at the global level. Indeed, these earlier works inspired conscientious response from Japanese literary modernism, which partially fashioned its

¹⁵ By also considering Yeats's journalism at the time, I would like to argue that Yeats in fact is rejecting a *Celtic* tradition, as envisioned by Matthew Arnold.

methods from considerations of the early Yeats. While recognising the romantic function of summoning up the fantastic and esoteric, I will note also the cynicism and mistrust which threaten the twilight ideal with the pressures of a material modernity. I will consider how works such as *The Celtic Twilight*, and other related poems, document and enunciate crucial developments in Yeats's early confrontations with heritage and tradition. Many such themes can be traced into their crescendo of expression in "Easter 1916", a poem of surprisingly scandalous humour, sarcasm, as well as a testament to a personal impasse within a writhing political situation. Furthermore, the poem series "Meditations in Time of Civil War" addresses the incongruity between action and meditation as an ongoing dialectic between past and the immediate present.

What various patterns can map the continuity of Yeats as a poet-in-progress project, and many intersections are repeatedly identified: idealia/realia; poet/politician; mage/magistrate; youth/age? Certain literary forms, styles of voice, and thematic textures continue to repeat and revise themselves. Yeats summoned up figurations of a cultural history, and attempted to negotiate the ghosts who wandered the ruins of a landscape, but he does not necessarily endorse what they seem to be saying. Philosophically, his ongoing agnosticism prevented him from accepting any model or theory as completely true or untrue. A careful study of Yeats's various literary outputs—journalism, drama, and poetry—reveals consistently a man who practised an investigative study of twilight as a space that lingers between a vanishing past and a fast-forwarded future. In assessing twilight, and the cultural resonances it contains, Yeats was at times sceptical in his assessments; but this scepticism accompanied a profound sense of the fantastic and ancestral.

Scepticism has appeared increasingly in the critical vocabulary of modernist scholarship, most often in relation to T. S. Eliot. I now digress briefly to consider the implications of this word as it applies to modernist poets, being mindful of its broader implications as to how modernity examined its ancestral materials. Jeffrey Perl's *Skepticism and Modern Enmity* discusses scepticism as akin to the practice of rabbinical hermeneutics, that principle of argument and interpretation which is the foundation of the Talmud, in relation to his notion of Eliot as sceptic (60-1). Leon Surette continues this discussion with his reading of Perl,

furthering the usage of the Talmudic model (84). To add my own commentary, I first must address problems in terminology as utilised by these two authors. The Talmud consists of two primary components: the *mishnah*, the first compilation of the Oral Law; and the *gemara*, the assembled collection of interpretations, exegesis, legal pronouncements, and theological debates directed toward the *mishnah*. Perl and Surette refer mistakenly to the *gemara* as the *midrash*, which is in fact a distinct body of interpretive literature unto itself.¹⁶ Thus, Perl's description of the *amorim* as sceptics perhaps misleads the issue. Talmud interpretation is a collective, dialogical process of point and counter-point across time and geography. However, it is not in itself sceptical, as such. The *mishnah*, its status and integrity in relationship to the Oral Torah, is never in doubt; rather, the debates attempt to refine what is the optimally correct way to carry out its precepts in the most faithful way. This is the principle contained in the *bracha*, blessing, that talmudic students recite before study: "May it be your will, ha-Shem, my Lord, that a mishap not come about through me." God has decided the Law; the rabbinical discussion explores terrains of a basic truth which requires elaboration through articulation, rather than articulation which must discover (or reject) a basic truth. That is not to say all is a matter of legalese: highly emotional language sometimes inflects talmudic disputation. In one infamous instance, Rav Nachman bar Gurya's arguments are dismissed with the quip, "Your teacher was a reed-cutter in a marsh!" (Shabbat 95a). On occasion, the great sages would hurl insults at each other: Rabbi Yehoshua Ben Karcha lampoons the virility of a eunuch [*gawza'ah*] who is also a cynic [*apikores*]. The eunuch, his sexual performance questioned, retaliates with an assessment of R' Yehoshua's receding hairline (Shabbat 152a) . . . this not so pleasant exchange said to have taken place on Tisha Be'av, or Yom Kippur, the holy day of repentance. *Apikores* is now insulting slang for one who denies fundamental tenets of the faith, or has become an apostate altogether.

For all of this, however, the *gemara* seeks elucidation, not justification. The Talmud, as demonstrated proof of a continuous cultural self-inquiry, acts as a profound example of

¹⁶ I ask the reader's patience as I make this necessary distinction between *midrash* and *gemara*. *Midrash* refers to interpretations, hermeneutical stories, homilies, and folklore which concern the *Tanakh*, or Hebrew Bible. In fact, much of the *midrash halacha*, legal discourses which connect a Biblical text to an obligatory rule, predate and anticipate the *mishnah*. Perl's comparison of Eliot to the Talmud is interesting, and prior to reading his work I had also considered a similar analogy for Yeats.

how spaces could be developed in which genealogical knowledge could be passed across time and geography. In this way, the Talmud was a powerful model to modernist anxiety: in its example, the cultural knowledge an entire religion or nation, depending on your point of view, was none the less preserve despite the diaspora. Jacques Derrida's *Glas* delights in the polyphonic capability of the Talmudic text, whose chronotopic pages link disparate times and geographies into a conversation with the articulate dead. Yeats, in pursuing the art of ancestral recall, sought out those formats for a political obligation to maintaining cultural connections with what has gone before, and how the voices of the past perpetuate themselves in conversation with the present investment.

Debate and reflection will accompany the act of handing down a tradition. Certainly, then, an important aspect to the modernist situation was the relationship between assumed orthodox truths and the rejection of these by new empirical modes of enquiry. Speaking generally, scepticism in modern thought is a contest between the reception of abstract religious truths in competition with emerging paradigms of scientific methods. As another example from Jewish philosophy, much of Gershom Scholem's esteemed research has argued that the *Zohar* could not possibly have been written by Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai in the second century, but was compiled in the thirteenth century by Moses de Léon through the artifice of affected Aramaic. Conversely, the greatly admired religious authority (*mekubal*), Rabbi Yehudah Lev Ashlag, has categorically stated,

Genuine students who know the way of the *Zohar* must agree, if they do indeed understand truly its contents, that its author is the great holy sage [*tanna*], Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. Those who are far from wisdom will instead profess that there is no certainty in regards to its source. Based on fabrications of evidence they argue that the author was, in fact, Rabbi Moses de Léon, or someone else of his period.

(*Hakdama le-Sefer ha-Zohar* 59, my translation)

Ashlag's commentary and Hebrew translation of the entire *Zohar*, *Perush ha-Sulam al ha-Zohar*, remains definitive and profoundly influential in *yeshivah* circles. Such a debate will never be mutually satisfying: one appeals to discursive analysis, the other to spiritual axioms, and each argument has its receptive community, for whom the original status of the

text is unassailable. The modernist tension between enquiry and received tradition was an evolving locus of discussion.

Perhaps in India and Japan there may be a philosophical tradition more in keeping with Yeats's agnosticism. Critics such as Skaff and Logenbach have explored the relationship between Asian epistemology and modernist practice; however, in Skaff's case, scepticism for Eliot was something to be transformed, rather than studied. Perl's discussions on Buddhism are useful, as they help take the meaning of scepticism past its pre-Socratic or Humean limits. Moreover, Perl demonstrates that *scepticism* does not need to refer to a philosophical viewpoint, but can refer to a mental attitude, an ongoing custom of thought which accompanies idea and perception. I agree with Perl that, at least in a limited way, Buddhism is another candidate for a *reductio ad absurdum* form of scepticism to explain T. S. Eliot's, and modernism's, philosophy of doubt. Eliot had the benefits of a Harvard education in Sanskrit at his disposal, and the worlds of Nāgārjuna and *Madhyamaka* philosophy were in direct reach. Yeats's interests in Indic philosophy were sketchier, and his instructors of varying quality. But Yeats's tastes were more than just sampling from whatever Madame Blavatsky had on tap. He worked closely with Shri Purohit, who translated many of the Hindu classics into English, including their jointly edited *Ten Principal Upanishads* (Faber and Faber, 1938). Yeats's friend and correspondent, Suzuki Daisetsu, was an accomplished translator, as well as explicator of Buddhism. Knowledgeable in Sanskrit, he translated the *Lankavatara Sutra* into Japanese and English. Through many sources, Yeats was exposed to those psychologies and philosophies founded upon demonstrations that concepts and perceptions are without substances, and are, in fact, nascent emptinesses. Knowledge, in generalised Buddhist thought, is an account of the faulty activity of knowing—*knowing unequivocally X*—as a state unto itself. Knowing is not just a substantiated category outside of the event of thought itself. Thus, Indic philosophy is deeply concerned with the status of mentalistic operations, not only as a means of acquiring knowledge, but as the operation of knowledge which is extant only unto itself.

The manner in which cognition cannot account for knowledge, nor that knowledge can account for cognition, was always a complex issue for Yeats, and one that he never resolved.

Yeats's *A Vision* seems to offer models for dispositional *knowing*, but much of what his poetry says is less certain. The so-called early Yeats of Romantic poetry, in the way it queries the stuff of fantasy or reality, shows an inclination to disbelieve in the inherent existences of either thought or action. Philosophy and ontology put aside for a moment, Yeats's scepticism can more directly be read as his fundamental practice for unsettling his own pronouncements, in an intentional distortion of mythic narrative and historical fact. An agnostic outlook produced a dissonance that unified the music. The pursued dialectic between the actual and the imagined, both subjected to distrust, freed him from either absolutism or relativism. Yeats pushed the Romantic critique of the Sublime beyond its identification by a poet, into an analysis for the formation of the Sublime itself.

Yeats had often used satire to unbalance assumed perspectives and their expectation; and his sense of humour on these points is rather under-rated. A quick glimpse through his collected works reveals many moments of sacrilege and absurdity. Lyrically pristine passages of esoteric baffle-gab are undercut by whimsy and banality. Faeries drink and mutter, prance and flutter, because they are hilariously incapable of following the priest's antinomian principles. In *The Cat and the Moon*, saints piggyback on each other. "The Tower" gives us an account of a bog accident: the tragedy receives this epitaph, "Strange, but the man who made the song was blind" (I:36). In *The Celtic Twilight*, Satan takes the form of *The Irish Times* so as to assault a villager, lampooning both superstitions as well as mass media. We should not let a portrait of Yeats, his eyes affixed to the Byzantine distance, render us unappreciative of the caustic wit which is a part of Oisín as much as Crazy Jane.

Yeats classifies the doubting mind, as opposed to the sceptical mind, as one who shuts off creativity and individuality for manufactured uniformity:

Tradition seems half gone. Thomas of Ercildoune and his like go with it.
The newspaper editors and other men of the quill this long while have
been elbowing fairy and fairy seer from hearth and board.

("Scots and Irish Faeries" *FLM* 26)

The kind of differentiation affirmed here, between the newspaper and tradition (orature) is an ethical issue of great importance for Yeats. The enquiring mind, for Yeats, should not accept the absolutes offered by nihilism. But, as important as the issue of negotiating with the phantoms of heritage were, a degree of careful consideration is required. Yeats, in this

regard, was a man capable of entertaining many viewpoints simultaneously, that of the informed apostate or the pious believer:

When all is said and done, how do we know that our own unreason
may be better than another's truth? ("Belief and Unbelief", *FLM* 112)

The restlessness of Yeats's uncertainty in regards to the voices of the past unsettles his search for a unity, cosmological or political. Since his own temperament could not sustain the label of mystic or seer, Yeats invented his own semi-mythic personages to enable the masks of devotion and dissent: as Moses de Leon did, Yeats sought out a Shimon ben Yochai, a Holy Guardian Angel from the hermetic caves to bring forth revealed speech and wisdom. Yeats had many experimental personae: Kusta ben Luka (more correctly in the Arabic Qusta ibn Luqa al Ba`albakki); Leo Africanus (originally al-Hasan al-Wazzan, something of a Richard Burton in reverse), who was indeed a historical figure;¹⁷ and a number of bit players in his works. In these frames, Yeats's mediumship composes an autobiography of the *afterlife* by interrogating the self through the multicliplity of the mirror's projections.

At tabloid value, this question of necromancy has almost overwhelmed Yeats with rationalist accusations. How could he believe that stuff, they ask? Jack Kerouac, tellingly, understood Yeats's automatic writing not as occultism in its most garishly salon form, but as a methodology which was precursor to his own technique of spontaneous prose. In a letter, Kerouac described his realisation for a writing method:

rapidly until sometimes I got so inspired I lost consciousness I was writing.
Traditional source: Yeats's trance writing, of course. It's the *only way to write*. (1: 356)

Yeats's trance writing had less to do with proving contact with the dead—as in the current fads of Sylvia Brown and James van Praag—but rather a method for disorienting perceptions and unleashing forces of creativity into varying patterns. This is still too close to mysticism for some, but poetry has many other examples. Allen Ginsberg claimed, without shame, to have had a life-changing revelation from William Blake after masturbating in a humid Harlem flat in the thick of summer. Was it really William Blake? This kind of question proposes a need for legitimacy that has nothing to do with the visionary experience: a poet

¹⁷ See Natalie Zemon Davis's biography *Trickster Traveller: A Sixteenth Century Muslim Between Worlds* for a full treatment of Leo Africanus's life.

utilises mythopoetic visualization as a trigger for manifestations within the artistic process. To cite other examples, Ranier Maria Rilke, Jalal ad-Din Rumi, Muhammad Iqbal (whose *Javid Nava* is a Dantean journey through the heavenly realms, Rumi as his guide), Julian of Norwich, and Jim Morrison could be added to this list of practitioners.

The role of the occultic mind in modernist literature has received increased attention, if also mixed reviews, from the neo-theosophical to the ultra-materialistic. Brenda Maddox in *Yeats's Ghosts* (also known as *George's Ghosts* in a previous edition), a work not altogether friendly to Yeats's paranormal pursuits, gets close to the fundamental issue in acknowledging that real debt in Yeats to the process of spectral writing, whatever its true origins might be. She concludes that "If George's ghosts are responsible for 'Byzantium,' they should not be mocked" (262). One of Maddox's central contentions, however, is that George Yeats effectively faked mediumship so as to win the interest of her self-absorbed husband. The role of ghosts has more to do with promoting marital stability through an externalised imagination than some possibility of paranormal agency. Her works suggest that any study of Yeats must balance those sensational details that add an angle of the bizarre to the more reverential portraits of an arch-poet. So, occultism remains a dirty word, an unsettled issue half brushed under the magic carpet.

Leon Surette's *The Birth of Modernism* admirably restores this question to scholarly prominence, not as an issue for derision, but as a legitimate piece of the modernist makeup. Others, following the legacy of Carl Jung and Kathleen Raine, or as in popular religious historians like Karen Armstrong, formulate occultism as a narrative of mythic understanding. Work by Graham Hough and Frank Kinahan affirms the status of occultic speculation as poetic material, personal involvement, and the extent that such function together. The enduring question, however, is to what heights did Yeats really aspire as a hierophant, an initiatrix whose writings enact metaphysical secrets? When in his poetry does druidism, and and rituals of folklore, become a kind of magic? To what extent does the poetry separate itself from the theurgy and theory developed in his esoteric prose? Because, as I would like to detail, Yeats is very distinct from the theosophic literature of the time, from metaphysicians such as G. R. S. Mead, Blavatsky, Aleister Crowley, to the *fantasy* occultists such as H. P. Lovecraft or Arthur Machen. At what point in Yeats does personal conjecture overpower more generalised definitions of the occult genre? The question is more

complicated in our time, where once marginal themes now dominate Hollywood and Paris: Knights Templar, Richard Gere playing a Qabbalist in a movie, or those variations of neo-Paganism which have moved from the obscure and taboo into forms of fodder for culture wars. Also, the political implications of his work, occultism even being a form of satire, further extract his magic from the usual realm of the parlour trick. Mostly, I believe that Yeats was always a man who could smile at his own saints and demons: in a rebuke to his Scottish audience, he wrote in an editorial, “You are too theological, too gloomy. You have made even the devil religious” (*FLM* 27). This notion that Satan himself pursued his position with Catholic-like attention to ritual or Presbyterian workmanship is hilarious, reminding his readers that no fixed image should trump the flow of the storyteller.

Thus, Yeats’s ghosts, whatever theories he may have had for them, should not be subjects for regret, disdain, or dismissal, as critics such as Hough have argued. The thanotic concepts, and esotericism, enabled a conversation with several Japanese writers. Moreover, as figurations of the political nuances of his time, Yeats’s ghosts enact historical events, perpetuating a kind of trans-temporal reality that influences the present. This is especially true in his modified versions of Japanese poetry and drama, where ancestral recall is an existential obligation and duty of the individual. While Yeats almost always avoids direct discussions of God, his writing invokes the world through a cataphatic theology that requires the believer to fill his or her mind with the absoluteness of God, the Byzantine Divine image filling consciousness, like an Orthodox icon. At the same time, his verse demonstrates an apophatic theology, which empties the mind of all attributes and perceptions, and God becomes what It is *not*.

Yeats’s necromancy and *twilight*, the fundamental aesthetic through which he questioned heritage and history, coincide somewhat with modernist trends that resisted the philosophies of rationalism or logical positivism. Yeats, in poetry, moved from epistemology to deeper issues of ontology. In this way, he reflects Heidegger’s interest in Empedocles and Parmenides, which arose from the German philosopher’s shift in focus for what could discern the central problems of philosophy. In pre-Socratic thought, *being*, not knowledge, constitutes the primary issue. Heidegger had realised that to persist with models of

epistemology would result only in patterns of a fragmented consciousness. After all, if epistemology is subject to its own relativised instability, then the dilemma of perspective cannot be resolved. To have knowledge is only to have a particular form of data, which is filtered through categorical biases that overcome the individual project. The legitimacy of any *a priori* universal basis cannot exist in a given cultural framework. This contest between being and knowledge had certainly been described before, but Heidegger was acutely concerned with the practical ramifications if epistemological relativism could not be underscored by any notion of the absolute. One of the primary diagnosticians of this condition had been Nietzsche. Heidegger prepared himself to answer the forthcoming postmodern nihilism that Nietzsche had predicted, and which he himself also gravely anticipated. Heidegger's *Lectures on Nietzsche* have, as an underlying question, the history of nihilism as a history of disconnection from being in favor of mentality. To avoid the philosophical outcome of such a view, Heidegger, like Bergson, moved to ontology, a domain perhaps not contaminated by perspective: the strategy shifts the question from the fluidity of mind to the foundation of being. Eliot had wrestled with this condition as well, and turned, like Yeats and Heidegger, instead to Indian and Buddhist epistemology.

This turning to the East to find possibilities offered by other philosophical systems has an appeal not just to Theosophists. In fact, it could be described as a specifically modernist theme: multicultural metaphysics. There was for them a sense that a nation such as Japan or Tibet had an altogether unique identity in its language or cultural distinctions, even its civilisational roots. Such nations, however, could offer intellectual stimulation that could be accessed through a philosophical cross-study. Language, as a cultural distinguisher, put up a formidable barrier.

Let me clarify this by saying that when I speak of a distinguishable qualities that makes up a language, as a cultural entity, I am referring to those interfaces which function in the language: those connections, fixed by usage as convention, which operate in the historical context that has shaped those usages. We know there is no assumed relationship between the word *cat* and the furry mammal playing in the back garden. However, the principal of saying *cat* is a usage shaped by a particular cultural environment, or social systems that shape consciousness in one way or another. Those first individuals to take up residence in Asia, who sought to study indigenous linguistics with the ulterior motive of evangelisation or

administration, were confronted with the reality that fundamental, irreconcilable distinctions exist between people. Fosco Maraini, one of the first Europeans to spend an extended period of time in Tibet, made this comment in 1937 concerning the globalising process and the force of change on the Occidental world: “We have, perhaps, acquired a Bergsonian sense of time and becoming, but we have certainly lost the Parmenidean sense of being and eternity” (106). The uniqueness of a language can be understood as adaptation according to a Darwinian blueprint: biological traits arise as selected unconsciously through patterns of acclimatization. The human organism has produced linguistic acts that have been adapted, over time, environmentally. The notion that the Inuit have one hundred words for snow has been dismissed; however, evolutionary anthropology has demonstrated that thought in language is encoded by contexts larger than any individual speaker. What the human organism does possess, and it is not alone in this ability perhaps, is the potential for self-reflection, instances of agency when the usage is modified through intellectual intervention. Thus, the Heideggerean challenge is to confront, through culture, the relativity of epistemology—and nothing reveals that more than attempts to navigate a foreign culture, as anyone who has spent a decade living in another country can attest—while seeking to substantiate the mutual *beingness* that permits the confrontation in the first place.

Yeats was not an academic philosopher, but this question informs most of his work. In a much quoted piece from “The Borders of our Mind,” Yeats allies ontology with memory. Remembrance, he argues, is a kind of flexibility:

(1) The borders of our mind are ever shifting, and that many minds flow into one another, as it were, and create or reveal a single mind, a single energy.

(2) That the borders of our memories are as shifting, and that our memories are part of one great memory, the memory of Nature herself.

(EI 28)

To expand those borders, Yeats had made estimations of wisdom traditions from East and West. This general project was hardly systematic, but had led critics, such as Bushrui, to claim that Yeats achieved a *perennial philosophy*, a term coined by Aldous Huxley, which proposes a universally Divine truth which is at the core of all religions and cultures, albeit manifested in different versions according to place or time. Such a belief, a *spiritus mundi*,

may, now, seem altogether untenable in the face of popular readings of Derrida, and anyway it is difficult to say whether Yeats propounded a formula or declaration of such a principle. What Yeats did was participate in the burgeoning exchange of Near Eastern, Asian, and European religions and literary traditions, and the problematic social contexts of these mergers. Yeats was informed by preliminary efforts, such as Powys Mather's translation of *Alf Lailah wa-Lailah* [*The Arabian Nights*]; the Jesuit scholar, Anathasius Kircher, whose serious scientific works included hieroglyphics and Sinology; and Henry Corbin's detailed studies of Sufism, including the Illuminationism School of Suhrawardî. Rather than trying to achieve a universal form of knowledge, Yeats's openness to other cultures can be understood less categorically as an ongoing effort to break out from rather xenophobic claims to understanding.

In later chapters, having first necessarily examined how Yeats first conceived of the ancestral in relation to Irish modernity in his early poetry and prose, I will then explore how these works led to Yeats's participation of literary interculturality through the Japanese. These initial questions of twilight, heritage, and the ways in which communities negotiate rapid change, were the topics that united Japanese and Irish artistic and social interests. More general issues concerning Orientalism, and the circulation of fabricated notions of culture and ethnicity, will need to be addressed. However, I do note that Yeats relationship to Asian literature was rather unique, in comparison to the people of his time. His efforts can be understood as part of a new trend in modernist transnationality that was evolving, but departing away, from previous examples.

Nineteenth-century print culture included attempts by Western lexicography to systematise Asian languages. Here, the biases are most telling and distasteful. Monier-Williams completed his dictionary of Sanskrit in 1899, and H.A. Jäschke his dictionary of Tibetan in 1881. Both men state explicitly, filled with righteousness, that the major reason for their endeavour was to enhance missionary ideals, of communicating the Christian religion to heathen believers, of subsuming the pagan tongue into Christian terminology. The best way to communicate Christian truth is

through the medium of a phraseology and diction as simple, as clear, as popular

as possible. My instrument must be, as in the case of every successful translator of the bible, so to say, not a technical, but a vulgar tongue. (Jäschke iii)

Jäschke has no compunctions whatsoever in forcing delicate Tibetan religious terminology to act as cognates with Christian theology. His dictionary attempts to provide the missionary with an exploitive interpretation of Tibetan culture so as to proselytise by covertly appealing to a *common* ground of belief. Under such a justification, Anne Royle Taylor had attempted to convert the thirteenth Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso, to Presbyterianism. Indeed, owing to such incidents, foreigners were generally regarded as trespassers in Tibet, and occasions of capture and torture awaited many would-be explorers.

Advances in literary diplomacy have been made, after all, and an examination of the Victorian discourse towards Asia should make that progress in modernism clear. To consider the earlier work of the nineteenth century, one can see the improvement was being made in genuine cultural appreciation. The slow decline of missionary zeal and colonialism, negative and corruptive as they were, allowed for a fresh sensitivity in encountering other cultures. Moreover, as individuals acquired linguistic fluency and personal familiarity foreign cultures, important documents became available for the purposes of education. This was, and is, a tricky business. Lt. Col. Laurence Austine Waddell (1854-1938) exposed a version of Tibetan religious practice based on his observations, although he himself was geographer, military man, as well as interpreter.¹⁸ His books present Tibetan Buddhism in colourful depictions, but perhaps not altogether inaccurate when compared to the readings of current scholars, and his writings certainly represent a step above the earlier fare, those missionary accounts of dark-skinned idolaters. Waddell, for his faults, at least attempts to understand the indigenous religions of Tibet on their own terms, based upon the resources available at hand. While much criticism can be made of Waddell's interpretations, he offered a transnational perspective that someone like Richard Marsh did not. Waddell spent a great deal of time in Tibet, whereas many other foreigners had been expelled at a moment's notice. This at least suggests that his presence was not entirely distasteful to Tibetans.

¹⁸ The British presence in Tibet is documented thoroughly by a number of historians, including *The Pundits: British Exploration of Tibet & Central Asia*, by Derek J. Waller. Political intrigue frequently coincides with ethnological activity, as several key spies for the British were also invaluable collectors of linguistic and cultural information. For example, Sarat Chandra Das, whose dictionary of Tibetan is still highly regarded to this day, acted as a liaison for Montgomerie in territorial affairs around Nepal; Das is the prototype for Kipling's Mukherjee.

Cultural interpretation in modernism suffers because of its immaturity, but it none the less is the foundation of all that would come after it. Distinctions should be made concerning W. Y. Evans-Wentz—friend of Yeats and author of a study on Irish fairy lore—who, in collaboration with Lama Kazi Dawa Samdup, presented an English edition of the funerary liturgy *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* [*Bardo thödol*], a work that would have enormous influence on Carl Jung. He also contributed informed studies of Tibetan Tantric practices, and a study of Milarepa and his advanced meditative practices, *gTum mo* (Sanskrit: *caṇḍālī*):

Let not the visiting Westerner expect—or worse still, ask—for the great Guru or Great Lama to give a display of his powers for his benefit. He will deny having any

Let those who come from the West to the East, therefore in search of a Guru and the Teaching, remember that sincerity of purpose and an unshakable determination is the first essential. The Eastern Guru tends to regard the Western aspirant with suspicion, from bitter experience. (7, 24)

Evans-Wentz was intrigued by Milarepa's role in Tibetan folklore as both poet and evangelist, that he converted indigenous demons to Buddhism, whereupon they became guardians of the Dharma in a manner akin to St Patrick who preferred to expel such forces altogether. Evans-Wentz, in partnership with Tibetans who came to trust him, produced many texts explaining and elucidating Buddhist concepts, including well-regarded version of Milarepa's allegorical *dohās*, ejaculatory songs which describe moments of spiritual illumination.

Evans-Wentz and Waddell present Buddhist beliefs as sufficient, independent treasures of human thought; they do not require conversion nor justification through European intervention. What Europeans can do, they argue, is attempt an informed understanding. Recent scholarship has, with its greater access to information, demonstrated the somewhat shallow and blurred claims in these previous studies. However, such field-researches, as both Waddell and Evans-Wentz were, did not steal artifacts nor exploit native cultures. The doors to future academies were opened through their initial efforts in intercultural communication. Waddell did not have the comforts of a research library, dictionaries, and journal articles with which to work: all of his writings arose from, and are

limited by, the fact that he lived according to the etiquette and standards of the local populace. Because, at this time, both East and West *mutually sought out each other* for intellectual, cultural, and religious reasons. Some of the greatest pacifist movements of the twentieth-century are indebted to these early collaborations. Evans-Wentz, as a sincere student of another's tradition, wrote from within the cultural framework outward, rather than in the opposite direction. Pierre Delattre is a counter-example, a Theosophist who made no attempt to travel to, or learn the languages of, India or Tibet, and instead haphazardly brewed various terms and concepts together into a mishmash of esoterica.

What studies have increasingly found is that the level of communication, between a so-called East and West, is more diverse and example specific than blunt theory can easily assess. Yeats's contemporaries in Asia engaged in activities that paralleled his own nationalist, and internationalist, statesmanship in Ireland. Through these mutual concerns, friendships and political alliances were forged. Although my thesis is concerned with Yeats and Japan primarily, I briefly note here some other examples, so as to indicated just how expansive Yeats's network of relationships truly was. For example, Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), writing in Persian and Urdu, is a premier figure in Pakistani literature as well as an activist, and very much connected to Yeats. Distraught by the social upheaval of his time, he tried to assess a balance between the competing secular and Islamist movements with the goal of spiritual knowledge co-operating with governmental power. As a statesman, he tried to influence policy in the legal sphere, and stood for his constituency to win a seat in the Punjabi Legislative Assembly. He struggled to end factionalism, emphasised religious rights, and promoted constitution reform. Iqbal's overt religious commitments combined with his political involvement, attesting to the ongoing strife that characterised all countries under the colonialism, including Ireland. Interestingly, Iqbal and Yeats would become linked; they did not limit their enquiries to the conditions of their own nations, but sought relationships with their contemporaries in similar circumstances. Mulk Raj Anand (1905-2004), a social progressive, under Iqbal's influence, traveled to England and Ireland, where he met both Yeats and George Russell. Indeed, these meetings inspired Anand to return to India to work against British colonialism, as well as caste system orthodoxy. Russell's encouragement led Anand to make his fortuitous meeting with Mahatma Gandhi, who not only invited Anand to join his peaceful revolution, but also acted as its literary critic. Gandhi echoed Yeats's

advice—use simple, colloquial language, a helpful tip that would lead to Anand’s first major novel, *The Untouchable*, published after many rejections, finally seeing the light of day because of an endorsing preface from E. M. Forster.

I cite this network of interactivity to offer an illustrative depiction: transcultural dialogue, at any time, exhibits some degree of misinterpretation and prejudice. However, the historical record also evidences points of contact that proved productive and beneficial, particularly in the realms of art and human rights. Social concerns did not remain isolated as indigenous affairs, but became international solidarities, opportunities for fostering support and inspiration.

That Yeats could be a source for interfaith dialogue, with such wide reaching traditions—Arabic, Indian, Japanese, and so forth—testifies to both his intellectually venturesome nature, but also the advent of cross-cultural transmission that the material conditions of modernism, limited in terms of transport and communication, allowed. In questioning what role otherworldly communication would play, we might take notice of how diverse Yeats’s research was in assessing religious points of view. Are Yeats’s otherworlds actual, alternative planes of existence, or a manner of changing one’s habits of thought, or both? On such an issue, an influence on Yeats can be seen in such figures as Shaikh Ahmad al-Ahsa’i (1793-1826). To state briefly here, al-Ahsa`i had placed great emphasis on mythic homilies, rather atypical for Islamic theological writings.¹⁹ He attributed a kind of symbolic interpretation of his Prophet, although he himself was an opponent of Sufism and its identification with mysticism. Al-Ahsa`i and Suhwardî represented a trend in Islamic thought that caught Yeats’s attention, including such a concept as the *hurqalya*, an interworld, based upon a cosmology of gradated intermediaries. The questions I would like to address involve understanding to what extent Yeats incorporated these concepts, or, at least, to what degree he studies them, and what allegorical or practical purposes were in such research? Is Yeats doing the same kind of confusion-fusion that marked the system of Aleister Crowley, who concocted his own mixture of Buddhism and hermetic Qabalah with

¹⁹ Although it is difficult to prove a direct literary connection between al-Ahsa’i, a Shi’ite scholar who died in Iran, and Yeats, there has been discussion concerning a possible influence, particularly via the Baha’i religion, which absorbed some of al-Ahsa`i’s teachings. For a consideration of Yeats’s Arabic sources, please see Bushrui, who argues that, ultimately, Indian and Arabian influences are much more pronounced in Yeats’s poetry than, as he claims, the marginal amount from Japan.

little regard to the synchronic heritage of those traditions? There is an opportunity here to present a comprehensive study of Yeats's philosophy of the apparitional: that is, ghosts, phantoms, and the ontological conditions of dead souls.²⁰ The scholarly difficulty of this task involves a balanced investigation into the manner in which ancestral ghosts operate in Yeats's poetry and plays, as well as how his occultic theories discuss the condition and status of the soul through various levels of epistemology. I will attempt such a study by beginning with Yeats's contrasting deployment of these entities as spirits of mystery, yet ones always encroached by a political allegory. This is not to say that Yeats was simply re-directing a polemic into the disguise of the occult, but rather that the domain of the occult allowed for a deployment of a new kind of political critique. As Yeats's sense of nation embraced a study of the international, a productive interplay began to influence his writing. What he previously wrote was not abandoned, but rather transmuted, through encounters with a growing global sensibility.

It seems more than coincidental that Yeats's commitment to alternative metaphysics coincided with his use of Asian performance conventions that created his non-realist dramas as a rejection of dominant modes of theatre. From this perspective, I will consider how Yeats used mask, ritual, and stylisation as techniques for reaching back into the ancient past, and, at the same time, trying to import older performance traditions from non-Western theatre into his works. What is curious and requires critical explanation, however, is how the hermetic equations of reincarnation and ancestry can be juxtaposed, on the stage, with an intensely engaged political didacticism, as occurs in such plays as "The Dreaming of the Bones" and "The Cat and the Moon". To come to an understanding of this, I will engage in a discussion of Japanese dramatic forms and folklore, and their crucial influence on Yeats at this stage of his writing. As a fair amount of material has suggested (de Gruchy; Oldmeadow; Makoto; Noguchi), a critical interface for Yeats was his relationship with Japan, and Japan's encounter with Yeats. On this topic, my study begins by analysing Yeats's presentation of

²⁰ One exception is a brief section in Wilson's *Yeats and Tradition* (144), which relies on Jungian systems to make sense of the difficulties and paradoxes in Yeats's later poetry.

phantasmal vanishing, and the ruptures in space and time through which present day notions of culture become immaterial sentiment or phantom voices. Crucially, Yeats's medium-like ability to address the nuances of folklore, ancestry, and phantasms was what first attracted Japanese authors to Yeats, and other Irish and Scottish writers. Yeats, however, was the leading figure in this prominent rise of *Airurando bungakukai*, or Irish Literature Societies, who passionately translated and discussed his works. This attention blossomed into a conversation, and Ireland and Japan drew comparative examples from each other for the formulation of supernatural themes: liminal spaces, locating spirit/place in a transnational communication.

All too often, the relationship between East and West is viewed as a shallow conduit flowing in one direction. Instead, to discuss the mutual interaction of East and West in the period of modernism, I will examine Tanizaki Jun'ichirô's seminal essay *In'ei raisan* [*In Praise of Shadows*] (1933), the tone and method of which is extremely similar to Yeats's own complicated sense of the shadow, as the vanishing past of twilight, and its relation to the physical, the material remainder of that past. Tanizaki discusses the principles of architecture and ancestry in Japanese literature, demonstratively in its modernist condition. This crucial essay, by a foremost Japanese novelist, confronts the conflicting pressures of advancement and ancestry as revealed in contemporary living, juxtaposed with the shadowy relic of *nô*. Utopic and escapist tendencies alternate as Tanizaki puts forward, by conclusion, that the growing influences of Western aesthetics converge and clash with Japanese theatrical models and sensibilities, for the sake of progress. This discussion has extraordinary similarity to Yeats, who had his own preoccupations with Ireland as a nation whose identity is constituted by relics in a period of modernist transformation. Tanizaki and Yeats, while seemingly addressing the conditions of the past, as a shadow or spectre, are at the same time critiquing the indifference of the present. Yeats and Tanizaki readily link on this theme: when source materials—communal, aesthetic, and such—are undergoing displacement and reconstruction, a process of phantasmalisation occurs. Personal experiences and artifacts cease being a part of the present moment, and are banished into amorphous realms of collective memory, nationalistic nostalgia, and the general dustbin of *the past*.

As both the Irish and Japanese experience shows, modernity was accompanied by a layering of such phantasms: real things turned into rhetorical tropes or psychological

sentiments. Thus, as Todorov, Bataille, and other critical viewpoints indicate, the mode of *fantasy* or the *fantastic* in society can act as a kind of recovery. At the very least, in positing the fantastic, the phantasm reacts against the rational enterprise of forward-thinking utilitarianism. In thinking about Yeats in this way, I follow Marilyn Ivy's sense of the *phantasmal* as the condition of disconnected heritage. Irish examples also describe how the phantasmal becomes an avatar of the vanishing: thus, Irish and Japanese folklore, concerned especially with the supernatural, are more than romantic tales of the past. They are configurations and expressions of local communities disembodied through geopolitical progress that typified post-Meiji Japan as well as colonial Ireland. In the modern period, with the advent of technology, market society, and transnational collectives, the mode of the alterity within the fantastic can distort the modules and functions of the institutional mandate. Fantasy, of course, can also be co-opted.

Ivy's term *discourse of the vanishing* explores the relationship between social change and ancestral dissipation. The developmental drive of modernity overwrites, displaces, and erodes both habitation and culture within the local. Yeats's earliest writings, such as *The Celtic Twilight*, depict this epochal shift in which tradition, in form and spirit, is made discarnate. For this reason, they proved to be of enormous interest to Japanese authors grappling with similar issues, who found in intercultural communication a possibility for fresh forms of analysis. The remnants of history and culture become, in effect, wraiths struggling to maintain connection with their former contexts. Ivy's assessment of *vanishing* in Japan applies much the same to Ireland. Indeed, as I argue, authors in Japan and Ireland during the modern period realised *in and through each other* a shared predicament of disappearing *twilight*. This subject became a pivotal zone of dialogue and interaction. Akutagawa's translations of *CT*, as I will discuss, helped to introduce into Japan an Irish concept of the ancestral folk. To access *twilight* invokes the chronotope: the dimensions of space and time are combined in such a way that ancestral recall becomes possible. This would be a fundamental strategy for resisting uni-directional forces in modernity. *Fushigi* or *fantastic* are terms often used to describe the domains of the paranormal. I employ these, but also prefer the term *irrealism*, as Nelson Goodman coined it and J. L. Borges practiced it. Comparable examples could also include Milorad Pavic's *The Dictionary of the Khazars*; Mudrooroo, *Master of the Ghost Dreaming*; and Alejandro Carpentier, *The Lost Steps*. In all

of these works, the ancestral becomes a contiguous zone with reality, indeed merging with reality. In such a combined mode, knowledge of heritage is not limited to the trapdoor of the present. Irrealism, as both epistemology and ontology, positions the fantastic as an inter-relational metaphysical space, one not just for perceptions but also an alternative space-time continuum. Locality and psychicality become interchangeable in shape, feeling, and meaning.

The many nuances of these fantastic terms resist categorical definition; Yeats himself is notoriously elusive in his understanding of *fairy* or *ghost*. The usages of the *fantastic/fushigi* are best shown in context, by example, rather than abstractly defined. As a literary technique, necromantic and oneiromantic devices of *twilight* are a major theme of my study, in terms of how I examine relationships between Yeats, Tanizaki, Akutagawa, and Kyôka—between ghosts, authors, and topographies of heritage. The search for the *chûkan* [in-between-ness], which overlaps with Yeats's *twilight*, had deep social motivations driving it. Izumi Kyôka developed from *nô*, as Yeats developed from Old Irish *aisling* literature, a discourse of twilight as an investigation into received cultural patterns: the speech acts of the ancestors, a perspective on the glosses of culture, the resonances of relics and ruins. Of major concern, to Yeats and his Japanese counterparts, is that what one imaginatively thinks of as *sídhe* [fairy] or *yôkai* [monster] may actually be voices from banished cultural elements and persons. The ancestor has become metamorphosised into abjection through marginalisation. Noticably, Yeats's use of *twilight*, as ancestral recovery and recollection, would become a subject for thematic traffic, within a cross-cultural engagement between Irish and Japanese literature. *CT*, further developed through Akutagawa's translational choices, helped to establish twilight as cultural interphase. Twilight became a rallying point, a constitutive realm in which not only letters and ideas are exchanged, but localised traces of the ancestral and cultural can be retrieved as well.

Gerald Figal's *Civilization and Monsters* gives a compelling analysis of the production of the fantastic in Japanese modernity. His interesting research helped to inform and confirm my own suppositions in regards to authorial relationships and practices within the competing cultural milieus of that time. Figal examines a range of genres as demonstrating this principle of the *fushigi*. The local entails ancestral referents and cultural habits as configured into an interstice for community, heritage, and tradition that can be

viewed anthropologically as well as poetically. This configuration, of course, was not without its persuasions and ideologies; truth, lies, and consequences, as the formula of identity politics, would uncomfortably press upon authorship in Japan and Ireland. In analysing the influence of Yeats on Japanese writing, I have also explored similar pathways of influence, thought, and conceptuality. From my perspective, Yeats's early works require concentrated attention, because these were the materials that inspired such writers as Akutagawa, Yanagita, Tanizaki, and others. My main pursuit is how literary interactivity became, through Japanese-Irish conversations, a comparative poetics of the ghostly, as something connected to the local and particular of spatiality.

Yeats and Tanizaki's *In'ei raisan* depict those metaphysical architectures of haunting, in which spiritism [*rei no sekai*] is an extended dimensionality of landscape. Tanizaki and Yeats are mutually concerned with *tradio* in the strict sense of *handing down*: the aura of a relic is, actually, the glossy sweat of personal touch. Likewise, Kyôka's promotion of *tasogare* received an impetus from Yeats's *twilight*, as a chiaroscuro of shadows and light, which are processes within and beyond location and heritage that rationality cannot empirically measure. Importantly, there is a documentable network of Yeats's influence on Japanese writers, which helped to introduce *twilight* as the interface for ancestral recall to a rapidly narrowing world. The theme and presentation of twilight in Irish literature, contributing to the formation of Japanese modernism, is a current gap in research. During the Taishô period, a collective energy was being generated towards the study of Irish literature and Irish identity, in response to Yeats's folkloric stylistics. As I will discuss in Chapter Four, in Tokyo and Kansai, *Airando bungaku aikokai* [Irish literature clubs] were active and passionate, receiving support from such premier writers as Saijo Yasô, Akutagawa Ryûnosuke, and many of the leading ethnographers and poets of that time.

Indeed, Japanese modernist poetry and prose owed a debt to the Irish influence, a point Mishima Yukio²¹ makes in a letter to Kawabata Yasunari (1946):

... move beyond Tanizaki's darkness. The past can be made ours again, and

²¹ The overwhelming psychoanalytic treatment of Mishima's work in the West fixates on extended themes of sadomasochism, nihilism, and violence; important elements of his work, true enough, but not entirely the whole picture. Mishima cites Yeats on several occasions, and in Chapters Three and Four I will consider Mishima and Tanizaki's references to Yeats in the context of Ireland's influence on Japanese literary modernity.

we can wake up to this daylight through the example of Irish literature.

(32)

Mishima sensed the tremendous arc in themes that united Tanizaki and Yeats in this insightful letter. Thus, Mishima states, and I agree, that the Japanese influences on Yeats must also be discussed in the context of Yeats's influences on Japan. This dissertation will show in descriptive and interpretive ways that Yeats's study of Japan developed out of early efforts at lyrical drama and nationalist writing, as exhibiting the tension between past and present in the notion of *homeland*. The literary genres of Japan provided conceptual formats in which these concerns found cohesion and advancement. In such a way, Yeats's "Lapis Lazuli", in its Silk Road accumulation of a carved stone, suggests how literature attempts to enact reconciliation between reality, twilight, and modernity—between natural and supernatural, and paratemporal and temporal. To achieve this balance, Yeats also explored East and West, history and future, and the inter-relations between all of these.

Certainly, much has been said about Yeats and his attempts at *nô*. Indeed, the Fellanosa-Pound-Yeats triad (with Arthur Waley on the side) has come under much unfavorable scrutiny. What has become clearer is that Yeats's role is much larger than previously assessed: Chiba Yoko has argued that Pound very much reconstructed Fellanosa's notebooks into an altogether distinct shape, and the Yeats's extensive corrections of the manuscript for the Cuala Press edition—most of which Pound willingly adapted—demonstrate a sophisticated, informed interpretation of the task at hand. Along this line of research, Chiba's recent scholarship has, in English, charted the interactive relationship between Lafcadio Hearn and Yeats, building on extensive studies written in Japanese. The complex semiology of *Noh* in Japan requires attentiveness to and knowledge of language, culture, and religion. I will argue for a new appreciation of Yeats's understanding of "Noh" and its cultural meanings than is available in the criticism to date. Certain clichés and simplicities about Japan and the *nô* are unreflectively circulated from one critic to another. I believe that an extended treatment of the materials, situated in the context of *modernist* Japanese literature, can give a new perspective of the value in Yeats's drama.

A popular viewpoint, however, has dwelt on how Asians and European sought in each other either a supportive reflection of their own vain self-image, or an enchanted phantasmagoria which invoked a fantastic version of humanity. Hearn, for reasons very

similar to Yeats, has been thoroughly castigated for this activity, although the vast majority of these critiques have been by English language scholars. In Japan, he remains very much a national treasure of high regard, a standing that tends to overwhelm his dissenting objectors.²² Hirakawa Sukehiro, a translator of both Dante and Hearn, has been one of Hearn's most ardent defenders, and his extended treatments on Hearn demonstrate his profound influence on a generation of Japanese writers, including the translator of Homer, Doi Bansui (1871-1952), who had a mastery of Classical Greek and Latin. Hirakawa takes issue with readings of Hearn's life, such as Ôta, who dismisses Hearn's Japanophilia as a hopeless tryst that was "veering from early infatuation to disillusioned realism" (204). Hearn, it must be said, was an immigrant, struggling with a visual disability, working to adapt and identify with a foreign culture during an era when such an alien presence was ambivalently acceptable. Rather than rebuke his intentions altogether, Hirakawa replies, Hearn should be understood in context, with a certain dispensation given for the fact that he was a writer, not a historian, and coped, like everyone, with the limitations of his age. After all, similarly to the experiences of Japanese painters in Europe, or Shimazaki Tôson's Christianity, Hearn acted as a pioneer; and both European and Japanese literature benefited from his work.

However, Yeats's relationship to Asia, as I discuss in Chapters Four and Five, has been described rather narrowly and unfavourably. He is also said to have formulated an inauthentic version of Japan. He has likewise been judged for producing a phony portrait of Indic literature, in an *ersatz* edition of Tagore. Yeats's lack of intimacy with Gaelic, Japanese, Bengali, Sanskrit—and their literary traditions—is said to be hopelessly uninformed and could only produce a phony imitation to be embraced by the West. But if Yeats had done such a poor job of it, considering his public prominence, why was there not more outcry from the respective populations? Why did Japanese writers embrace, rather than

²² One of Hearn's strongest detractors is Ôta Yûzô. In "Lafcadio Hearn: Japan's Problematic Interpreter", he labels Hearn something of a fraud, who circulated counterfeit notions of Japanese-ness, an unfavourable judgment often made of Yeats. For similar reasons, Ôta also critiques cultural heroes such as Nitobe Inazô. In a discussion of haiku (16-17), Ôta demonstrates Nitobe's pandering duplicity on the subject. On one hand, he describes the genre, in English to an American audience, as being filled with "spiritual truths" and "cosmic consciousness," while, around the same time, he penned an article, in Japanese, proclaiming that the philosophical value of haiku is less than that of Spinoza's little finger. This kind of cultural ambivalence and sermonising is also felt to be a foible of Hearn's. Ôta quotes from Hearn's journals to say that Hearn himself was aware of his own excessive glamorization of Japan and literary inability to create anything other than nostalgia. An ongoing debate as to who was the better Japan interpreter, Hearn or Basil Hall Chamberlain, has been variously argued by Ôta, Hirakawa, and others.

shun, his work? Why did Tagore not do more, publicly, to correct any misguided interpretations?²³ This literary master seemed content to share with Yeats his own works, vouchsafing an edited collection in English, as well as discuss his cultural treasures: the Sanskrit poets such as Kalidasa, Tamil epics such as the *Tirukural* or *Silappadikaram*. As Joseph Lennon notes in *Irish Orientalism*, Tagore and Yeats's friendship was not without misunderstandings of a personal sort. None the less, professional respect and literary support existed between them.

This is not to suggest a general condition for idealised fantasy of ethnic relations, from the past, nor the present. Clearly, there are unresolved problems, and sometimes unscrupulous behaviour, which accompanied the embryonic process of intra-cultural exchange. Some would reach a crisis over time, and others were sudden, volcanic eruptions of accusation. Advances in cross-cultural scholarship have provided deep analysis of the world's literary classics, from specialists who have extensive knowledge in linguistics and texts, even if they are not from the ethnic group which produced the object of study.²⁴ The status that a particular person had as a kind of racial avatar, an embodiment of an essential tradition, put pressure on the relevant person. In letters to Thomas Sturge Moore, Tagore had

²³ An online article by Somjit Dutt, "A Foreign Shine and Assumed Gestures: The Ersatz Tagore of the West," candidly argues that Tagore was deeply driven to fashion, for Westerners, "a dubious Western identity with the fervour of a schoolboy" trying to win over the newly appointed headmaster, "who knows nothing about his students' background and abilities." This reading, to me, seems a disservice to both Tagore as well as the Europeans who were interested in his writing, which they held in high regard, and he became the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize for Literature (1913).

²⁴ We are fortunate to live in an era of affordable communications and multimedia that allow for new venues of multi-lingual discourse. However, it must be remembered that history may very well judge the mismanagement of resources and opinions, such as are held toward Modernism. In "The Globalization of Korean Literature," Kwon Young-min, describing the paradoxical condition of Korean literature in North American universities, sees much work that needs to be done in creating conducive habitats for authentically learning another literary tradition. He is equally hard on Western academics, as well as Korean translations of European literature:

No matter how proficient a Korean is in a foreign language, he or she will likely never attain the linguistic intuition about or affinity for the language that a native speaker has. (12)

Moreover, he questions the legitimacy of university classrooms that assimilate Korean literature into artificial learning environments.

Considering the number of dissertations in English departments on such topics as Islamic hermeneutics, by candidates with little or no facility in Arabic, Kwon Young-min's assessment acts also as a warning.

railed privately about the false avatar he had become in the West. Somjit Dutt quotes from one of Tagore's letters:

... I ought never to have intruded into your realm of glory with my offerings hastily giving them a foreign shine and certain assumed gestures familiar to you. I have done thereby injustice to myself and the shrine of Muse which proudly claims flowers from its own climate and culture.

However, it seems unfair to dismiss the entirety of an author's activity based upon private moments of regret or indecision. Dutt's critique takes the same tack as Ôta's, who likewise quotes from one of Hearn's private letters, in order that a candid moment of cynicism undoes the preceding work over a lifetime. Tagore's letter, alluding to Delphic shrines and classical muses, distances himself from the Gods of those idolatries. He posits, curiously, that unique breeds of flowers bloom on account of a distinction of the soil. Climate, and geography, equals culture; where you were not born, you can never hope to understand, this analogy would say, as taken to an extreme. This can lead to a xenophobic predicament. There are claims that an authentic sensitivity that comes from belonging to the internal coherence of a cultural tradition, one that outsiders cannot share in. This would render intercultural communication impossible, for through what channel can legitimate access, or exchange, take place? And if a form of dialogue is enabled, can it produce anything beside disinformation and prejudiced rhetoric?

Such questions are central to the interstices between East and West in modernity, in which Yeats was an active participant; and both Japanese and European critics have been rightly cautious. For example, in Hori Ichirô's entire bibliography to his book *Folk Religion in Japan*, Hearn's *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation* is the sole entry that warranted an annotation: "An eccentric and romantic work, but also informative" (254). This seems reasonable enough--eccentric and romantic being literary judgments, after all. Hearn was a storyteller, an *attempter*, and not an ethonographer, a definer. "Informative" recognises the fact that Hearn did increase interest in Japanese arts, an interest that was not dissuaded at the time. Rather than rejecting Hearn's output as "bogus", to use Ôta's judgment, Hirakawa instead elaborates a more sophisticated thesis that Hearn's identity politics, split between Europe and Asia, parallel the macrocosmic conditions of artistic immigration at that time, between East and West. Europe and Asian were undergoing massive transitional changes,

internally and internationally, and Hearn—who communicated with Yeats and helped introduce Irish poetry to Japan—was a pivotal figure in facilitating interfaith dialogue and cultural awareness.

If Europeans were fascinated by the Orient, there was an equal amount of conjecture going the opposite way. A few Asian painters moved to Paris for a lifestyle of straw-hats, sketchy cathedrals, and wine with every meal. This gaze—if one wishes to use that term—operates from both sides. This notion of *returning to* Japan or Europe, or *going to* Japan or Europe, coincides with the complicated processes of global development in modernism: the advent of radio, mass communication, inter-continental transportation for the middle class. An alternative way to consider this is as not solely the problematising of *otherness*, but a willful adaptation of that otherness in pursuit of an expanded awareness. Hirakawa and Oldmeadow argue vigorously that the encounters between Europe and Asia, while not simple, resist more general post-colonial readings. They forward instead alternative perspectives for appreciating the Western engagement with the religious traditions of the East. Oldmeadow strenuously pursues the understanding that these exchanges depend on “the meaning of Western encounters with Eastern spiritualities *as understood by the European participants themselves . . . the existential and spiritual engagement*” (16). Incriminating documentaries of modernist participants in interfaith dialogue—including Merton, Suzuki, and others—might reveal the problems negotiating world cultures. However, it is also important to describe the foundational efforts for peace and justice established at that time. As is increasingly being recognised, as for example in Hans Küng’s *Weltethos* (global ethics) movements, modernism’s invitations to multi-religious communication forged important, initial zones of contact. Yeats’s role in this collective project is not altogether acknowledged or remembered; but it is worthwhile to mention that his friendship and scholarly work with Shri Purohit Swami had emerged from the groundwork built by Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), honoured teacher of Hinduism and representative of that faith at the first Parliament of the World’s Religions (1893). In Yeats, we find an early twentieth century example in the formation of world literature as the result of intersections and dialogue, rather than remote comparisons.

Yokomitsu Ri'ichi, a writer who specialised in Chinese classics as well as Japanese nationalism, compiled a number of anecdotes concerning Hesse's encounters with Buddhism in an essay called *Akunin no kuruma* [The Cart of the Evildoer] (1948). To enhance the parable-like quality of this work, Yokomitsu frequently cites from a letter between Hermann Hesse and an un-named Japanese novelist. Hesse was advising this enthusiast of Western culture that an adoration of European academics and writers is misplaced, that the experiential practices, such as found in Zen, are more valuable than books and essays (350).²⁵ This is, as Hesse says, an impasse: you admire me, I admire you, and where is the beneficial truth in that? What is required is a middle way of informed exchange. Personal limits are hard to overcome, but that should not negate the capacity for interaction. As Yeats wrote, "I was born into this faith, have lived in it, and shall die in it" (*EI* 518). Along this line, Yokomitsu Ri'ichi discusses Hesse's inability to convert to Buddhism. Hesse felt that he could not escape the faith of his birth and to undertake a different religion would be an illegitimate escape into the exotic. Hesse makes it very clear that the translation or appreciation of another tradition must never be, as Yokomitsu translates with great attention, "生半可" [*namahanka*: superficial] (350). Guardedly, Hesse is hesitating here: he does not wish to be presumptuous. Instead, he warily reminds his Japanese colleague that the reach often exceeds the grasp:

私は禅を尊敬してゐる。貴方のいふヨーロッパ的理想などよりもずっと尊敬し、もっと靈妙なものの一つと置いてゐる。(350)

[I respect Zen Buddhism more than those European ideals as you present them, as mysterious.]

Respect, fascination, and idealisation are insufficient. What is most helpful, Yokomitsu and Hesse suggest, is when two people of different cultures, aware of the fundamentals established by their own backgrounds, sit down together in an informed sincerity that produces both dialogue as well as self-reflection. Discussions of art and religion in particular can lead to this fraternity. This is not about apostasy or conversion. Yokomitsu, using Hesse as a spoken counterpoint, argues that genuine, mutual understanding can only arise from conditions of shared, balanced information. Hesse is saying, incorporated through

²⁵ There are many useful comparisons between Christianity and Buddhism in this important work that contrast and analogue these two faiths without creating an exaggerated sense of co-identity.

Yokomitsu, that when he has an understanding of Christianity, and Yokomitsu has knowledge of Zen, only then will their intentions behind the meanings blossom in cross-pollination. Yokomitsu concludes,

諦念めに諦念を重ねて生の肯定に起つ意識の訓練は西洋人にも
通じるところのものだったにちがひない。(356)

[Although repeatedly resigned and defeated, life encourages us to rise up again, to improve our will (*ishiki*) through personal development (*kunren*). Indeed, Westerners also share in and understand this common truth.]

Yokomitsu's point is reminiscent of Bakhtin in this passage, which is very apt to the concerns of my thesis:

In the realm of culture, outsideness is a most powerful factor in understanding. It is only in the eyes of another culture that foreign culture reveals itself fully and profoundly. A meaning only reveals its depths once it has encountered and come into contact with another, foreign meaning: they engage in a kind of dialogue, which surmounts the closedness and one-sidedness of these particular meanings, these cultures. We raise new questions for a foreign culture, ones that it did not raise itself; we seek answers to our own questions in it; and the foreign culture responds to us by revealing to us its new aspects and new semantic depths.

(*Speech Genres* 7)

What Bakhtin describes here, in principle, was also a fundamental aspect of Yeats's literary praxis. Notions of culture emerge through extension; interpretations as to what constitute understanding benefit from encounters, exchanges, and linkages that come from horizontal movements. Optimistically—although necessarily aware of such dangers as appropriation, commodification, and such—a *revealed meaning* arises through the interfacing of cultural articulations. Authors, in kinds of horizontal, face to face encounters, open up spaces for engagement, ones that consider mutual pasts, as well as approach a dialogical future. Yes, there are risks, but the potential requires the personal investment.

This practice of information through engaged reflection continues to be a promising space for intercultural exploration. Recently, Kaneko Hirotsugu laments the collapse of the

Irish language in an article for the *Hito to kuni* arts series, in the *Okinawan Times*.²⁶ Kaneko notes the discord between Galway, supposedly the capital of Gaelic Ireland where many pubs have Irish Gaelic names, but a serious dearth in actual daily speakers of the language. Kaneko identifies the erosive forces of globalization as a culprit, but also offering perhaps a latent saviour, as travelers and tourists are inspired to take up the language. Because, at issue, are living communities interpreting long-range patterns of cultural investment that must connect to the present moment. In Ireland, and Okinawa by association, Kaneko is defending the use of folklore as a colleague of rural identity. Yeats was also diagnosing a situation of internal division, between urban growth and a rurality that must be sacrificed for progress. In an understated way, Kaneko aligns the situation of rural Ireland to his native Okinawa, an island with a proud tradition of independence from the mainland, including distinct folk beliefs, music, and language. This kind of formative relationship with the special characteristics of a minority culture does not necessarily invoke crude, simplistic interpretations of the past. It is certainly not the variety of ethnic fascism expounded in Himmler's visions of dirndl maidens dancing in the pastures, or, for that matter, De Valera's visions of shamrock maidens flouncing at the crossroads. This racial fascism pretends to connect with a natural order whilst falsifying a purity to be exploited by politicians and cosmopolitanism. Senses of an internal coherence within a space are products of wish fulfillment. For example, Benedict Anderson describes the nostalgia for nation as *imaginary community*; Amanda Andersen posits a kind of cultural enchantment enabled only through erasure. Either way, distance makes the sentimental heart grow fonder. Yeats certainly explored these themes in his own way. He did, however, approach cultural heritage, and its ancestral voices, with a mixture of romantic awe but modernist suspicion. The ruptures and fissures of the present time, and the ways it anticipates a devastating dissolution of culture in the future, demanded both sensibilities.

These are the questions of the local and particular, in relation to the global and the corporate. Yeats, and many alongside him, felt the desire to maintain the particulars of a

²⁶ *Kotoba de shutsuji tashikame* [Ensuring the Language of One's Identity], *Okinawan taimuzu* (30 August 2006, 11).

For an Irish perspective on the interrelationship of language and identity, see Gearóid Ó Cléirigh's *An Ghaeilge A Feidhm feasta agus i gCónaí* [Irish Gaelic: Its Contemporary Purpose and Enplacement]. Ó Cléirigh critiques the assumptions that drive American English as a homogenising medium of communication as a threat to cultural diversity.

historic cultures against what they clearly recognised as the machinery of globalisation which would efface all boundaries. In contemporary writing, the situation is especially urgent. As in Japan, Ireland, America, Greece—really any nation, if one stops to consider—the details of geography are definitive forces in the construction of literary mood and ambience. For example, the Korean writers Cho Chông-nae's epic novels are controversial because of their dense usage of regional dialects, depiction of the past, and privileging of a rural environment, a deprived area generally regarded as backward by the urban elite of Seoul. Like Yeats, Cho depicts peasantry, agricultural economies, archaic modes of speech, and a resistance to consumerism. However, progressive development, in fact, is what creates the real caricature: the coal-mines of Kate Roberts's Wales are now tourist attractions, and woolly jumper shops fill up the Aran islands. Cho Chông-nae watches his Korean villages such as Nak-an as they are cleansed and converted by community schemes into open air museums, to be displayed as fossils of an abandoned way of life. Traditional crafts and handiworks are allowed to be a part of the more general market, but the price of entry is gentrification

My dissertation concerns itself, initially, with the methods in which Yeats examined Ireland the decline of culture as a twilight reflection that unsettles the modernising process. Importantly, however, Yeats understood this dilemma as one not particular to Ireland, and he sought out international contacts in trying to gain a deeper perspective through comparison. Likewise, Japanese authors, also assessing the meaning of heritage in a time of transition, found in Yeats a figure with whom to develop a broader dialogue. The diverse pieces of Yeats's psychological and spatial enquiry, in the form of Irish myth and its longevity, are what enabled the later intercultural engagement.

I consider the many sides of Yeats's encounters with Japan—its art, religion, folklore, and history—as two directional traffic that moves in a reciprocal fashion. I will examine some critical, unifying themes that repeat throughout Yeats's oeuvre, themes that achieve magnification when juxtaposed with the Irish folklore of his early poetry. I will formulate further my reading of Yeats's interests in history as necromancy, and occultism as politics, by comparing some of the ancestral rites, funerary customs, and ghostlore of Shintô and Buddhism that Hearn, Suzuki, and others had relayed to Yeats. My gradual contention is that Yeats's interest in *nô*, and more generally Japanese folklore of the Edô-jidai (1603-1868), was not an isolated dabbling in foreign persuasions; rather, his examination—and eventual

implementation—of these traditions gave an invaluable contribution to the creation of a spiritually dynamic sphere for the rotation of his visionary cosmos.²⁷

Within these Japanese traditions, sometimes at odds with the very institution which sought to nationalise them, Yeats found a new method of contemplation, of balancing the seen and unseen. However, it is my strong sense that Yeats's work must be viewed as a consciously syncretistic process. Yeats did not simply deploy Irish or Asian variations of a caricature without mediating them through radical analysis. Just as Yeats's earliest poems functioned as a kind of drama, perhaps even ritual drama, the later *nô* echoed, rather than rejected, established patterns of anachronism, politics, and myth as confrontations with modernity. This mix of elements, arising from personal and cultural anxieties, was encountered through the discourse of the vanishing.²⁸ I see such early narrative works as *Baile and Ailinn* as pre-figurative models that anticipate the conventions and atmosphere of the *nô*. By studying his interest in Japanese folklore and drama, as seen as emerging from Irish concerns, I wish to investigate how Yeats's recurrent themes were enriched and expanded by comparative mythography. There is a discernable development from the early lyrical dramas, such as the *Wanderings of Oisín* and the ontological themes of the drama. I would like to suggest that these early dramas anticipate the later experiments with Japanese genres, in the way that they concern themselves with verbal representations of sacred landscape and the use of dialogue to interrogate ancestry and historicity, such as the *nô* does in Japan.

In tandem, Japanese writers investigated, from the Irish example of Yeats, a strategy of historical consciousness that envisioned a cultural past as ancestral and folkloric. The Irish example, in Japan, counteracted the overall sense that the West was a monolithic

²⁷ Oshima and Naito have both established through painstaking documentation that Yeats's personal library contained a sizable collection of works on Asian philosophy, many of which are filled with Yeats's handwritten notes. This dissertation will consider, in the light of this scholarship, the various ways that Japanese religion influenced Yeats's writings, as well as ways Yeats represented more general trends of *japonaiserie*.

²⁸ Rob Doggett, through the lens of post-colonial theory, also argues for a more complex view of Yeats's considerations of historical self-consciousness as informing the present nation state. In particular, Doggett emphasises Yeats's use of the "fissure", the moment when "when history is becoming History":

By shifting our gaze to this transitional moment itself and to Yeats's engagement with these nationalist constructions of history as they are being formulated, we begin to perceive a more complicated Yeats whose poetic meditations on an Ireland gripped by war may not be so readily dismissed as romantic idealism or naive historical mythmaking. (4)

imperial project. Comparable situations had been pursued by a large number of Japanese writers, for whom local cultures had to confront progress (development) and modernisation (homogeneity). At stake was something more than myths of national heritage, but a geopolitical agenda that threatened a communal annihilation, its arts, traditions, and people. There were parallel discourses that developed between Ireland and Japan that shared a mutual concern for issues relating to tradition and modernisation. This is the main subject matter of Chapter Four. Here, I examine the Irish-Japanese literary exchange movements [*Airurando bungakukai*] as catalysts for a conversation between different topoi, ones emerging from the *The Celtic Twilight* as figurative example.

My sense is that the formation of Yeats's Japanology was not meant to be congruous with his representations of Irish mythology and history. He was, however, interested in the cross-contextual as the expanding topography of modernism. *Nô* drama, like much of Yeats's poetry, derives from both a sense of nationality and internationality. Supernatural catalysts do not exclude cultural concerns. Yeats, somewhere between recollection and prophecy, discovered within the realms of the public and private new possibilities and realities for poetry and performance that would extend his own process of making maps, not only of imagination, but also of the boundaries for statehood. His plays were often created around shifting borderlines in Irish political action and aspirations. To understand how these elements function together, I will ultimately, in a similar manner of approach as I do with *The Celtic Twilight*, address both aesthetics and material cosmopolitanism. The issue, for Yeats, has remained the same: can history be understood through an evaluation of national characterhood? The literary approaches that Yeats took to such problems provided intriguing source examples to Japanese authors.

Thus, my dissertation explores the coherent links between Yeats's early works, as foundational experiments developed in his later plays, essays, and poems. Crucially, these In conclusion, I examine the poem "Lapis Lazuli" as depicting, for Yeats, a profoundly historical example of how multiple heritages, shifting landscapes, and anonymous craftsmanship all combine in creating the *lustre of time*. This is the aura of the ancestral past, attached to the physical relic, and accessible evidence that twilight continues to be in contact with the everyday. Ireland and Japan shared a similar project in assessing how the ancestral

might be staged, through what channels it may become articulated, and in which spaces it might be recovered.

I conclude this introduction by referring to this chapter's epigraph and its lament for the same old story. In these lyrics, Paul Brady sings of the paradox of the Irishman in London, partly despised for representing political tensions, but partly welcomed for a quintessentially Irish habit of speech. Brady's song describes his experiences working as a builder under the climate of suspicions in London during the 1980s, a period of intense Provisional IRA activity. He is bewildered by the extremes of reception that are directed towards him: simplistic fear and hatred because of his accent, or, on the other hand, that said accent has a particular cachet for entertaining on the pub and party circuit. As the working-class *Oirishman*, Brady finds this treatment almost more repugnant, to be accepted only as a circus animal, an ethnic monkey in the social cage, an accordion-turning street performer. He is an unskilled builder, only fit for laying the brick, but whose accent and verbal formulas can be called upon for a performance. To the countrymen he has left behind, the London Irish are plastic paddies, decontextualized foreigners. Thus Paul Brady describes the condition of ethnic dislocation, of being a trained animal with a cosmopolitan circus, amusing an audience who demands a trick of Irishness, one he provides to enhance his chance of acceptance.²⁹

How does the flow of history so readily channel itself through individuals, that they become embodiments of past grievances and present conundrums?

Yeats proclaims that to seek a *theme* out of heritage does not always entail the institution of a caricature, the same old story, as such. The conflicted recollections of a "The Circus Animals' Desertion," of which Brady is a variation upon the theme, show that the ringmastering of the 'I' is unsteady, both internally and externally. The second section presents a direct a self-hermeneutic. Yeats enumerates the "old themes" in such a manner of assessment that the status of these phantoms as personal avatars is unmistakable. The

²⁹ Kevin McNeilly's research brought to my attention Yeats's own tendency to magnify his *Irishness* when on tour in North America. Interestingly, Yeats's reading choices for the radio tended to be taken from the earlier lyrics: "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" for example. Such selections may be due to their auditory simplicity, being suitable for the format; Yeats's fondness for their lyricality; or that their apparent Celticity tended to be crowd-pleasers.

interplay of inner-dialectic is presented not as mistakes, but as reflective forms subject to intervention: “character isolated by a deed” (2:21). This litany of personal prototypes, this almanac of his dreams—the heavy burden of this section—is bracketed by two sections of greater difficulty.

The third section, the most difficult one, declares the ontological paradox that is the very crux of this poem:

Those masterful images complete
Grew in pure mind but out of what began? (3:1-2)

How is it that an image can be both *complete* but also in a period of gestation, growth? That is, how can something spring forth *creatio ex nihilo* as a distinct, whole unit, but still subject to development? This is different from the Athenian principle of emerging entire and intact out of Zeus’s brain. What is brought forth is somehow finished but still in progress. How is this possible? To resolve such a contradiction is not feasible, as no answer can logically sustain the momentum of the question. A pause ensues. Therefore, the following lines (3-6) must not necessarily be read as answering directly this preceding question of *beginning*. “A mound of refuse or the sweepings of a street” no more solidifies the paradox than, just as in section two, presents a list of material forms. The gross realia of this passage balances the imaginary wisps of Countess Cathleen and the fairy bride. The question is still unanswered. The rhetorical structure involves an unbalanced query followed by flashes of bare reality. The answer delays indefinitely.

A reminiscent passage occurs in the work of Philip Larkin. The weight of the poet’s rhetorical question renders intellectual observations ineffective. The natural-ness of sensory data, the immediacy of life-in-sensation, overtakes the process of analytical thought:

But superstition, like belief, must die,
And what remains when disbelief has gone?
Grass, weedy pavement, brambles, buttress, sky . . .

(“Church Going” 35-36)

Disbelief without belief is an impossible dichotomy, a black hole of consciousness. At such an *aporia*, the present moment asserts itself. Contemporary readers might find moments such as this reminiscent of how Zen parables are often now portrayed. The student, stumped by a *koan* riddle, suddenly attains *satori* or enlightenment, expressed in a single glimpse such

as *cow in the grass! or the bucket is in the well*. As in the “The Circus Animal’s Desertion”, a deliberate effort is made to separate mental phenomena from whatever underlying psychical stage supports such phenomena.

Yeats’s poem could just as well be called “The Circus Animals’ Dissipation” or the “The Circus Animals’ Ejection.” The agency of the first person pronoun undoes the performances of the circus personæ. This man-behind-the-curtain realization was a repeated theme throughout Yeats’s work—“And I myself created Hanrahan / And drove him drunk or sober through the dawn” (“The Tower” 41-42), and so there is nothing epiphanic about this poem, nor is it intended to be. The contrast between “pure mind” and a ladderless heart proves the indefinableness of the origin. The narrator sits down to breakfast, has a cup of tea from that kettle on the hob, that second of mortal beingness in “The Stolen Child.” The whistling kettle is sufficient to overwhelm all the glamour of the fairy’s dance. Yeats acknowledges the sense of trauma and betrayal at the machinations of the ego, “the raving slut who keeps the till,” the agent who counts and changes the various investments made by the exchanges of consciousness. But, ultimately, this poem is not a rebuke or a debasement of the human predicament; rather, it is a realisation of contingency. His studies of Buddhism had produced some concept of phenomenological non-essentiality, the *reductio*. The foulness of the rags and bones, the gross corporeality of the body which is the holder of thought, has no more disgust in it than a wilted rose or a broken teacup. Buddhism, particularly its Tibetan variants, finds nothing ghastly in skeletal remains or pungent reminders of mortality. “Those masterful images” are made of the same stuff as the juxtaposed heaps of refuse; consequently, “out of what” (3:2) means *out of whatever*.

In closing, before I begin more focused examinations of the themes I have now outlined, I will acknowledge that much of what I have to say may not convince those of that critical view which demonstrates that an author does not actually mean what he or she seems to be meaning. I endorse close-readings of poetry--being as what it is, poetry--instead of just characterless, scattered bits of social documentation, that morass of mass communications of which Yeats was distrustful. I wish to present methodological themes that can chart Yeats’s journey with multiple voices, the collaborative cacophony of those circus animals, “the wind and the harlot, the virgin and the child, the lion and the eagle” (*EI* 530), through an Irish-Japanese framework, one built from real relations rather than abstract comparisons.

A coherent outlook emerges through the study of Yeats's earlier works, in their concerns with the landscape's negotiation of memory and twilight, as they became approached and re-focused through Japanese intercultural relations. Yeats, due to his position geographically and historically, was also a locus of converging themes and activities. I am seeking to re-interpret the territory, geographically and thematically, as to Yeats's position in his own time as well as subsequent literary developments. Rather than a single-author, Yeats is a multiplicity of nexuses.

2 The Cartography of Dreams or The Landscape of Nation?

A sheanóir do shálobh do chiall
 beag in sgel gan a mbeith beó
 a raiph do shlúgaibh ann sin
 ní bhia as ní fhuil acht mar cheó,³⁰
 --*Duanaire Finn* (LVII: 37)

Summer, 1892 — Yeats was preparing preliminary chapters for *The Celtic Twilight*. As a young poet, self-aware of being at a formative crossroads of art and politics, this collection would become the culmination of an experiment in genre, voice, imagination and population. It would be different from those poetic materials that celebrated a mythic heritage removed, in time and text, from contemporary environs. To emphasise the increasing conflict between historical idealisation and contemporary social realities, Yeats first developed a symbolic praxis in verse, one spoken through folkloric avatars such as Oisín,³¹ who are at once indigenous to an ancestral landscape but temporally divorced from its current circumstances. They are transliminal entities whose historical reference cannot tangibly be transferred into the present. Ossian—or Aengus, Forgael, and Fergus—exist in a diachronic trap: space and physicality have been abandoned for an otherworld that lies outside of normative dimensions. Yet this Otherspace provides nothing substantial, nothing that converges with human sensation. To return to reality is to encounter once more the corporeality of emotion, a material response to palpable stimulus. Having been so out-of-time, and thus out-of-world, Oisín no longer can navigate or recognise his homeland habitat. As such Oisín depicts the dangerous dilemma of ancestry, landscape, and change. Retreating into some pseudo-realm of symbolic eternity does not confer any meaningful status. However, the elemental world of

³⁰ St Patrick rebukes Ossian's attachment to the past:

“O ancient man, who have perverted your reason: you make little account of their being alive no more: all those hosts of past time shall be, and already are, but mist.”
 (*Duanaire Finn* 2:215).

³¹ The many variants in the spelling of this name increase the risk of confusion. I use *Ossian* when referring to this mythic hero in his broader contexts: the body of folklore, literature, and so forth appended to this namesake. I use Yeats's use of *Oisín* when referring to his particular representation of this hero in *WO* and other works.

culture and landscape, permeable to change and conquest, likewise provides unstable categories of being.

Departure from worldliness into otherworldliness had entailed a sacrifice of personhood, as one who is networked with the circumstances, customs, and changes that mark the progression of a history. Yeats, in *WO*, confronts the legacy of symbolist poetry, changing with fin de siècle European writing, as expressed in a conundrum of ancestry in relation to physical place. Symbolism conceives of the allure in Irish folklore, or Classical Greek art as another example, as aesthetic ideations. They remain static as fragments of presumed purity. To transplant these artefacts into the present betrays its status through a kind of lowering as incarnation. Yeats wants more than the ethereal; he is seeking out the ancestral current as a continuous trace that connects directly with tangible times and places. *WO* exposes the false substance of an ethereal world so far removed from national cartographies that its domain has no more influence than a false dream. To critique the symbolist perspective, Yeats uses Oisín as a figure of vanishing. What is Oisín's place in St Patrick's new dynasty? Where has the Ireland of his origins gone? How can he articulate himself within the shifting tensions and dilemmas of history. If he becomes a figment of mythology, what ongoing influence can he have on contemporary politics? In depicting Oisín's dissipation from the Irish cultural landscape, Yeats also identifies the issues that were churning in an emerging Irish nationalist identity.

Ancestral Recall in Fragmented Geographies

Also in 1892, an entire continent away, under the shadows of minarets and the ghosts of the Ptolemies, Constantine P. Cavafy also attempted to both invoke and reject the past. The cultural habitats of Alexandria or the Acropolis, fixed as remembrance and connected to a burnt archive or a crumbled temple, provide a continuum of speculation. The landscape as it was, and the landscape as it is now, can be resuscitated through an imaginative circulation of landmark as a point of reference. Athena lives on through the dimensions of mythopoesis, and mythopoesis consecrates the physical through its stature as a formative past. Likewise, as spirit becomes form, Christ can walk the green Albion hills of Blake's poetry. The Bavarian forest comes alive with Nordic creatures, and the geysers of Iceland spray Odinic

Eddas of verse. Dramatic repossession of an idyllic past has a sheen of antiquity, but does not entirely satisfy the profaneness of the present. Many Symbolist writers eschew the mundane realms of politics, society, and progress, in so far as such things do not properly enshrine Myth. Yeats and Cavafy, however, investigated the ancestral, but were opposed to this kind of remote distancing of heritage into figurative transcendence.

Cavafy's interior poetics suggests a reclusive gesture, a withdrawal from elemental powers and urban harm into symbolic realms. His figurations of classical culture – as modeled into a classical present—perceive human events as conditions best understood by mythic precedent. In the movingly didactic “Ithaka”, the teleology of the soul is described as a process of navigation, rather than a culmination of destiny. In “The Horses of Achilles”, the divine personage of Zeus is limited to a form of one-dimensional omniscience. The great God, caught between event and consequence, can only witness a disaster in repeat. Cavafy's maturing thrust as a poet was to expand the narrowness of symbolist allusions to social energies of the present. Cavafy's early fascination with Classical Greek verse—stylistically as well as thematically—had partially failed to satisfy a desire for innovative style. The materials of his composition, the Greek language and its Hellenic configuration, were in a state of contention. Sociolinguistic pressures were intervening on a hermetic portrait of the insulated Classical. Cavafy's poetry evidenced this lexical struggle in its combination of Hellenistic (purist) Greek with the emerging *demotic* (contemporary) argot, which more accurately reflected both ancestral voice as it relates to contemporary practices.³²

The need to preserve a vestal presentation of one's ethnicity in language had particular influence on the expatriates in Egypt. Across the Mediterranean, the Greeks were in a period of return, from Turkey and across Asia Minor, in an accelerated repatriation whose destination were the piers of Piraeus, then the slums “celebrated” by *rembetika*. The ethnic *ennui* of drawing-room diaspora took shape in their pipe smoke fancies of Athens,

³² In Cavafy's time, attention shifted toward Egyptian dialectical forms of Arabic, over the somewhat artificial Standard Arabic, which itself is a derivative of Classical Arabic. This renewed interest, likewise, coincided with nationalist agendas in North Africa. In fact, broadly speaking, so much of the linguistic politics of the late nineteenth century involve the overturning of diaglossia, the prestige of the government language is displaced by an insurgence of the vernacular. Thinkers such as Salama Moussa argued that formal Arabic acted as a barrier for an underclass struggling with illiteracy, and a recognition of Egyptian Arabic in print and media would improve the situation. His efforts greatly influenced Naguib Mahfouz, a Nobel Laureate, whose novels thrive in the language of alleyways and coffee shops of Cairo, as, for example, in *Midaq Alley* [*Zuqâq al-Midaq*] (1947). Thus, my sense is that Yeats's interest in “Kiltartanese” or rural speech can be contextualised against broad, pressing trends of his time, ones not limited to ethnicity or geography.

whispering up from the embers. The new national imagination dreamt that the Socratic academy could be rebuilt, or at least refitted, but required an ethnically unmixed discourse for its hallowed halls. The only suitable tongue of civility and philosophy for the Socratic academy would be the language of Socrates, or so it was described, this fashioned *katharevousa* (cleansed Greek), supposedly the dialect of the truly ancestral. This enterprise sought to resurrect, phonologically, lexically, and architecturally, the condition of a lost Attica. Theorists such as Deborah Cameron have documented the sort of agenda at operation in cleansed language: verbal hygiene is a normative expectation that is conducive to producing healthy, pure citizens. The Greek diaspora, overwhelmed by the majority language of their adopted country, fostered neo-Classical ideals of Hellenic sublimity. The lofty and leisurely pursuit of purging a corrupt language and establishing a facsimile of ancient eloquence suited their rather nostalgic, also elitist, position. Guardians of the academy had the same notions; and *katharevousa* became the preferred mode for law, education, and governance. The architectural image of the Acropolis becomes both beacon and landmark: the symbolic forms of Dorian architecture become reformed so as to stand against the erosion wrought by modernity.

Yeats and Cavafy are motivated by a tradition of Baudelarian Symbolism, an abstract poetical mode that embraced both antiquity (classical culture) as well as vulgarity. Yeats—though having none of the language himself—perceived in Irish Gaelic, as well as Hiberno-English, a form of knowledge that was not *katharevousa*. The language of the peasantry, of disempowerment and marginalia, had also once been the speech of the epics, of the Brehon laws, and several hagiographies. The Irish Demotica—the displaced Gaelic—had a racial heroism to it that the newspapers of Dublin did not. The native language had become a decimated diaglossia, and its prestige was colonial martyrdom. The quaintness of the country-tongue actually stood against the hackneyed nobility of the Queen’s English. Thus, I think it is worth noting that an impulse toward dialect informs Yeats’s writing, and many Irish writers since him. Hiberno-English takes many regional flavours in Joseph O’Connor or Roddy Doyle’s form of Dublin slang; Deirdre Madden’s representations of Belfast Catholic tribal speak; as well as the peculiarities of Kerry vocabulary in John B. Keane. The particularities of dialect language, and the localised traces it contains, combine the vestiges of the past with the circumstances of the present. Slang is a form of revolt. A pivotal

moment in French literature was when Jehan Rictus, a major influence on Céline, embraced Parisian street talk. Modernism in general re-affirmed the vernacular, as an attention to cacophony. Chaucer reacted against Anglo-Norman French, and hence Latinate discourse. Dante took up street Italian to resist Church Latin and the Papacy.

If a poet seeks, at all costs, a mystical or aesthetical transcendence in thought or speech, a willingness to sacrifice social realities becomes necessary. This, at least, has been a Gnostic path, in which mundane reality is associated with the lowest form of experience. The transcendence may not necessarily be religious, but may entail a *unia* with an Idea. Durtal, in Huysmans's *Là-bas*, sought assimilation into a realm codified as the *Middle Ages*, and, much like Yeats's Byzantium, understood as an ontological kingdom in which art, life, and spirituality were unified:

The day on which Durtal had plunged into the frightful and delightful latter mediæval age had been the dawn of a new existence. The flouting of his actual surroundings brought peace to Durtal's soul, and he had completely reorganized his life, mentally cloistering himself, far from the furor of contemporary letters . . . (21)

To enter these *Middle Ages*, one has to cloister the senses away from the corruption of modernity. The astrologer, Des Hermies, offers this advice:

There is one recourse left To escape the horrors of the present day never raise your eyes. Look down at the sidewalk always, preserving the attitude of timid modesty. When you look only at the pavement you see the reflections of the sky signs in all sorts of fantastic shapes; alchemic symbols, talismanic characters, bizarre pentacles with suns, hammers, and anchors, and you can imagine yourself right in the midst of the Middle Ages. (272)

Huysmans, through Durtal, clearly is aware that his concept of the *Middle Ages* is shaped by a rhetorical imagination and has no reflection in historical reality. Historical reality, indeed, is precisely the problem, and only tremendous personal devotion can transfer the psyche out of the temporal banality within the commonplace. To wake from the nightmare of history, transfer the soul into a realm outside of history. As a form of meditative visualisation, Durtal's *Middle Ages* provide a comprehensive set of images, a thematic paradigm, and a

spiritual atmosphere, offering solace to the spirit. Although his novels explored how one comes into permanent contact with this higher place, Huysmans never fully reconciled spiritual ideation with the process of everyday life. He could only transfer the ethereal portrait into a form of penitential Catholicism.

Huysmans uses psychological artifice—psychical decadence—as a means of personal transformation. Spiritual alchemy cures the agitations of material existence. The mental realm effects a means of escape into a suprareality, through “a delicious straying away from the world, and never the return” (Huysmans 181). Salvation must occur outside of space and time, since the physical world, and its societies, is associated with corruption. *Là-Bas*'s symbol for a deaf and mute culture is the ongoing neglect of the bell-ringer, Carhaix. His craft which announces the liturgical hours has no spiritual impact on the indifferent populace. The bells, Carhaix sighs, will soon be replaced by machines; and the skill and meaning of the bells as ancestral timekeeper will be relegated to a vanished past. Thus, his chimes are hollow, inverting the Pauline formula that actions without compassion are empty gongs (1 Corinthians 13:1). Rather, in this novel, action done compassionately but received indifferently by a spiritually dead city is genuine emptiness. The clutter and clamor of a local election, the scene that concludes the novel, indicts that social process in which Durtal and his aesthete refugees have no wish to participate. Indeed, to Durtal, the noisiness of the *faux* democracy is worse sacrilege than the Satanic anti-Mass he attends in an earlier chapter. The Satanic, although in a subversive fashion, at least still concerns itself with the Eternal, whereas politics and society make an idol of the mundane here and now.

Huysman's transcendental realm, a higher plane of idealised sensibility, excludes both the organic present as well as historical fact. Cavafy had expressed a similar desire to transmute sensory experience into loftier realisation:

When I enter a church of the Greeks,
 With its frangence of incense,
 With its voices and liturgical choirs
 My mind goes to the high honours of our race,
 To the glory of our Byzantine tradition. (“In Church” 4-6, 10-11)

This contrasts with the Philip Larkin poem discussed in the introduction. For Cavafy, the Orthodox imagination attunes to a theological symbol that embodies the past, since the form

of the present is insufficient.³³ Cavafy—as well as his successor, Seferis—infuses the Hellenic into the bare form of the here and now:

What extract can be found according to the formulas
Prepared by the ancient Greco-syrian magi which,
Along with this return to the past,
Can also evoke for me our little room?

(Cavafy, “Greco-syrian” 10-13)

However, Cavafy and Seferis intentionally complicate this devotion to an ancestral aesthetic completely removed from everyday circumstances. Cavafy, to affirm the physical, turns to eroticism (much like Yeats). He actively repeals a Christian dedication to the insulated soul as only immaterially meaningful, and that the amelioration of the senses requires a concentration on the *ikon*. Cavafy wants to physically engage an *ikon* through sensual contact. Like Yeats, his difficulty, and the source of much contradiction, is how to best bring into juxtaposition the sheen of dissipating antiquity with elemental concreteness of the present. An imagination convinced of Beauty, and its cultural ideations of heritage, must also experience in physicality (sexuality) those materials that represent the past.

Concerned as he is with taking the classical into the present in a touchable form, Cavafy cannot position himself as the second-coming of Callimachus—an abhorrer of modern things, a restorer of outdated hymns and anachronistic odes against the epic and the macro-society. Unique historical circumstances do demonstrate certain models of universal themes, but the archetypal should not efface the particular and tangential. In her recent translations of Cavafy, Alik Barnstone finds in both Yeats and Cavafy a form of mytho-historicism that combines a personal perspective, which can take national particulars and turn them into cosmopolitan discourse. For this to be the case, an understanding of *poet-historian* must be reckoned. In the Grecian way, Cavafy was under the influence of two competing modes of history, Thucydides and Herodotus. Cavafy resisted documenting the events occurring around him, the proximity of the present, with Thucydidian accuracy for the ancestral order. Poems such as “Myris: Alexandria, 340 C.E.” invoke the Herodotian mode

³³ John P. Anton describes Cavafy’s experiments in Romanticism and Symbolism as measurements of “intellectual scope or the ideological vision” (96). Anton takes up Robert Liddell’s reading of Cavafy as one who had “felt the torturing impact of the great modern city upon the lonely individual” (106). Cavafy, in such a reading, is an extension of Baudelaire and a potential kinsman to T. S. Eliot.

of fantastic narrative that reference the past through interpretive visioning. Facts are not putty, but they are not blocks of concrete either.³⁴ Poetry makes use of quantifiable historical points of reference that can become stable and accessible to a global readership. However, by positing a historical citation as a kinetic site of description, the allusion becomes lively and intermingles with the present circumstance.

Modernity, noted both for its allusive attention to classical ideals as well as social upheaval, drifts between polar opposites: transcendence and society; inner mysticism or the mass electorate. And, as themes are also dominant in Yeats, what kind of cartography is he drawing up? An ancient Ireland or a brave, new one? The polarities, for Yeats, cannot hold. We must further take into account that, for Yeats, the particular formation of the historical avatar—its symbolic appearance—is only part of the design. The situating, the geographic staging, of this avatar—who takes the form of a dramatic character—is equally important. Like Cavafy and Huysmans, Yeats struggled with what exactly constitutes the materials and perspective of a mytho-history. In the 1890s, several trends climaxed in the advent of modernism. These include such influences as facsimile reproductions (and authentication) of national-culture texts; increasing political disputes over territorial integrity (particularly in Ireland); and the waning of Symbolist trends that posit a hierarchy of meaning. The authentic source for a universal sense of meta-history arises in ideas, not materials. However, the pursuit of nation and nation-formation sought more and more a pedigree through archaeology and old manuscripts, but a rooted sense of a cultural landscape situated in geographic place.

Critics have adopted varying degrees of exegesis in discovering Yeats's national politics in his early poetry. "The Song of Wandering Aengus" may be a post-Symbolist lament for unattainable beauty, a standby lyric in many a folk guitarist's repertoire. Or, in Deirdre Toomey's reading, this poem allegorises the quest for national sovereignty: to find the Beloved, costumed as she is in the iconography of Lady Eire, means to actualise the freedom of the state. Elizabeth Cullingford and Leith Davis have argued that gendered prescriptions dominate the depiction of Irish characterhood as a feminine weakness, convenient enough for the colonialists, or as the perpetuation of the red-haired rebel in art or

³⁴ Almásy in *The English Patient* adapts the very text of Herodotus according to his own unfolding accretions. Cavafy, in his way, writes addendums to Herodotus as positioned in a modern Alexandria.

music, suitable for sentimental revolutionaries. Yeats's early poetry does not fit any of these categories neatly, and these works deserve consideration as to how they challenge preceding trends of the Symbolists, while at the same time justifying myth as a communal inheritance. Yeats, in addressing the status of cultural narratives, sought ways to bridge historical ruptures. In such a way, Yeats first experiments, with what will be lifelong theorisations, were to assess how the traces of the past become displaced, and how they might relate to present day circumstances of a community. Poems such as *WO* ask, how is the ancestral accessed, and what face does it attain through the meditation of the present?

Yeats had a conflicted relationship with the more general project of recovering a literary history, in the form of texts presumed to be indicative of racial origins, situated outside of a blurred modernity. The Celtic Renaissance, an arguable term, was not an isolated expression of yearning for a primordial national *ethos*, entrenched in nativistic poetry. For all of his countless words on the subject, Yeats offers no single-viewed conception of either literary heritage or indigenous experience. Much to the annoyance of critics seeking to pin him down, Yeats contradicts himself on numerous occasions, intentionally so. The complications of a forthcoming civil war require no less than such an attitude. So, for this temperament in his writing, many poets who connected to Yeats on those of issues of how a nation state changes through decolonisation: examples include Rabindranath Tagore (India), Pablo Neruda (Chile), Nizar Qabbani (Syria), and so forth.

This chapter focuses on how Yeats first navigated the condition of culture in the fissures of Irish modernity, exploring how he developed notions of twilight access and ancestral necromancy. Akutagawa, for example, found that Yeats's sense of the *fairy* actually implied an exiled ancestor, or a banished figure who represented ancestrality—a discourse of the vanishing. Parallel developments between Irish and Japanese modernist literature can be uncovered by first understanding what Yeats wanted to accomplish in the twilight aesthetics of the early works. I do not, however, specifically address Japan's relationship to Yeats in this chapter. First, I wish to assess the methodologies of Yeats's writing in the 1890s, the varieties of landscape they present, and to what sensibilities they promoted. Having first explored these questions, I will then later be in a better position to argue in the development of *twilight* as a thematic domain of cultural recovery, which might offer meaningful contiguity with an Ireland in political flux. On account of these issues, in

The Celtic Twilight and *WO*, Yeats became of enormous interest to the Japanese, and what topics and themes linked them together in dialogue.

Pseudo-epigraphy as the Yearning for the Ancestral

Renarrativising the past was not a project unique to Japan or Ireland, and its practice can be detected in many different eras. In Europe, many ethnic detectives sought in the manuscript evidence to prove, *a posteriori*, the nationalist presumption. This pursuit can be traced to Franciscus Junius (the younger, 1591-1677), if earlier, who had introduced a form of philology that, while attempting to scientifically manage archives and ancient manuscripts, was motivated by a revival of a buried Teutonic sensibility. The formulation of the past—as recovered text from a neglected era—came into shape through contemporary desire. And, down the line, English antiquarians had been no less biased in their efforts: William Camden’s *Britannia* had its specious fixation on the Glastonbury Cross, the talisman recovered during the exhuming of King Arthur’s grave.³⁵ Scientific indeed, Camden gave extensive attention to this artefact, reproducing at great cost the letterforms of the inscription for an epigraphically correct document. As a work of scholarship, it pioneered a method of cataloguing, an attention to typography, as well as a form of investigative archaeology. The Glastonbury Cross was pictorially presented, as accurately as possible, for the sake of documentary idealisation. Nonetheless, Camden appends several anecdotal markers to such physical traces of the past, as spurious links to a vanished Fatherland. Similarly, Matthew Parker (1504-1575) revived Old English, as a linguistic pioneer, but through an assertion that the language demonstrated an indigenous pedigree of the church: an English institution for an English people, as the history shows. In light of this, Aaron J. Kleist has argued that Parker manipulated Ælfric of Eynsham’s homilies and hagiographies to inscribe them as precedents to current theological viewpoints. Kleist’s conclusion is worth repeating here:

while Parker may not remain faithful to the spirit of Ælfric’s thought, he is at least careful to remain faithful to the letter. (327)

Matthew Parker adopted Ælfric’s theology as a typological precedent, an assumption that does not fairly represent Ælfric’s thought. However, Parker’s faithfulness to the letter,

³⁵ For a full treatment of Camden’s project, see Graham Parry’s *The Trophies of Time*.

literally in terms of typographics and other physical matter of the text, established a scientific model for preserving and disseminating manuscripts. Archaeology had developed as an experiment in substantiating national heritage. National discourse, connected to tangential antiquity, framed whatever political pursuit the compiler wished. The possibilities for the nation's architects were tempting. An interest in Roman Britain could be used to displace the prominence of Saxony in the nation's racial blue print. The ludicrousness of these pronouncements to a fragmented society is not lost on the contemporary children of preceding Empires. As London hip-hop artist Mike Skinner puts it, with all due sarcasm, "I'm forty-fifth generation Roman / But I don't know 'em / or care when I'm spitting" ("Turn the Page" / *Original Pirate Material*, 2002).

And, pressed into the margins as they were, the various countries claiming a Celtic identity would erect a counter literary tradition, one against the dominant Latin-Saxony of England and its version of archaeo-history. A particularly troublesome example, related in subject matter as it is to Yeats, is James Macpherson's *The Works of Ossian* (1765), a collection that compiled a lifetime's work of (supposed) accumulating, translating, and anthologising. Macpherson prefaced his works with a declaration of timeless authenticity: this was a collection, a translation of a lost epic, a gesture of preservation toward highland Gaelic culture. The archaeology of the past is revealed through digging in the rural community's stories. Controversy followed Macpherson's edition from the start. Samuel Johnson had famously attacked the authenticity of the material in *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*. Johnson, his own anti-Scottish stance aside, did have a point. Satisfactory documentation that could legitimise the folk origins of Macpherson has never been produced. The antique status of the poems had come under such assault that the 1773 edition included an apologia entitled, "A Preliminary Discourse". Rather than argue in a scholarly manner a defence of the legitimacy of the works, the writer appealed instead to the graces of the imagination:

Some Scotch critics, who should not be ignorant of the strongholds and fastnesses of the advocates for the authenticity of these poems, appear so convinced of their insufficiency, that they pronounce the question put to rest forever. But we greatly distrust that any literary question, possessing a single inch of debatable ground to stand upon, will be suffered to enjoy

much rest in an age like the present. There are as many minds as men,
and of wranglers there is no end. (19)³⁶

The editor also had tried the suggestion that the most vocal critics were “prevalent among the men of letters in London” (6), and thus geographically dodgy. This Preliminary Discourse cites firm believers such as Hugh Blair, who offer fiery support, but lukewarm justification. All of this was hardly compelling, of course. The sheen of antiquity was, after all, artificial. To this day, scare-quotes must be attached to the words *translator* or *folklorist* if used in reference to Macpherson. Certainly, however, the work had enormous emotional appeal to a cultural territory under threat and dispute. The countryside reeled with the desperation of a post-Culloden Scotland (1746), that furious defeat to Scottish sovereignty resulting in acts of horror that are, today, described as ethnic cleansing by locals. As a countryside occupied and eroded irrecoverably, an audience was ready for an incorruptible treasure of the vanishing past.

But an air of dubiousness also hung over the recovery of literary heritage in Wales, although, arguably, there existed a more detailed record of medieval Welsh literature. Iolo Morgannwg (the Celticised pen-name of Edward Williams) summoned cultural ancestry by claiming to produce lost poems of a Welsh language icon, Dafydd ap Gwilym Morgannwg. He had also, as now generally assumed, forged most of these poems, concoctions culled from many sources. Nevertheless, the excitement of a lost literary relic returned proved contagious. Morgannwg’s brew strangely mixed a druidic, Arthurian occultism with a more scholarly fascination for Welsh poetic forms. Pseudo-history, with the unique textual mechanics of the Welsh style, united into a text that claimed both ancient wisdom as well as ancestral scansion. The printed edition thus had an appeal not only for its typological format, but also the pre-modern *Zeitgeist* it embodied. The lost word became a text that would dwell among a nation under cultural siege. Documentation was not required.

In terms of authenticity, song collecting in Brittany fared better. Théodore-Claude-Henry-Hersart de La Villemarqué’s edition of the *Barzaz Breiz* claimed a Macpherson-esque pastoral authority as its foundation. Pushed to the edges of society, literally at the edges of geography, the rural communities of the *Keltoi* offered a musicality that

³⁶ This bit of sophistry is still called upon: certain contemporary translators of Chinese, rather than be forthcoming about deficiencies in knowledge, instead argue that they are claiming the border areas between translation and imitation.

industrial elites did not have. De la Villemarqué proposed himself as a pioneering ethnomusicographer, a collector by folksongs of the Breton peasantry—an oral, communal tradition. Counterfeit accusations have also been pointed at De la Villemarqué, although his research has been ardently defended, and substantiated. His faithfulness to legitimate sources of, it must be said, derived from field contact with a vanishing language and musical tradition. In his preface to the standard French-Breton edition of the work, Yann-Fanch Kemener writes,

L'édition de 1867, et la quarelle qui va s'ensuivre, sur fond d'authenticité et de rigueur scientifique, va servir la recherche sur la matière orale de Bretagne et susciter de nouvelles vocations pour plusieurs de generations. (10)

That is to say, the authenticity, and scholarly acumen, must be the methodology of this songbook for it to have continued cultural impact. As such, *Barzaz Breizh* remains crucial materials for musicians, language students, and Breton cultural nationalists.

Irish scholars, pursuing the fragments of the past as cultural precedents, also developed folio societies, which pursued a recovery of a mythic age through a typographical agenda of anthology. Inevitably, the concept of a pan-Celtic identity, trumpeted as a political union, arose from an urgency of change and influence that threatened to push the Celtic nations into the sea. The past-as-collection had been a process long in the making. Debates on the meaning of *bard* had existed in sixteenth century Wales, and the modern creation of the Eisteddfod evolved from an ongoing effort to recreate the past as public performance, standardised ritual.

Yeats's efforts can be considered within these general trends. In particular, however, his mythically-personaged poems as nation-studies position themselves against Matthew Arnold's definition of the Celt as a political category, but they also problematise those errant efforts at racial reclamation, such as Macpherson. *The Wanderings of Oisín* reveals both Yeats's interest in literary recovery, but also his unwillingness to act as either passive editor of a selective past, or a conscientious fabricator of tradition. Yeats struck a deliberate, if often contradictory, balance between mythic personage, literary inheritance, and contemporary landscape. The inevitable paradoxes of juxtaposing time with space, of

depositing lost figureheads into transformed topography, allowed and invited a scepticism that Macpherson had sought to cover up.

Yeats's Oisín: The Ancestral Countering the Immaterial

For *WO*, Yeats's derived his source material from medieval Irish literature, as has been documented according to various references (J. Blake; Kinehan; Alspach). Some of the more crucial texts include *Cath Gabhra* [The Battle of Gabhra]³⁷ and *Duanaire Finn* [The Lays of Finn]. *Cath Gabhra*, an event also discussed in *Duanaire Finn*, narrates the climactic battle that ends the Fenian era (and the Fenian Cycle of literature). Cairbré Lifechair, high king of Ireland, defeated the Fianna, shattering their ranks as well as their prestige. According to Nicholas O'Kearney,³⁸ who as Alspach has documented was Yeats's primary source, the Fianna had invited the battle through their boasting, a flaunting of their near omnipotence in Irish society. Their oligarchical power-wielding was no longer tolerable to the aristocracy. As O'Kearney describes, the Fianna claimed first right to all the *mna na hÉireann* [women of Ireland], and only those whom the members declined could then be released into the public marriage pool. Love became leftovers for those outside the Fianna clique. *Cath Gabhra* describes the Fenians as having become so corrupted, so stripped of their chivalric aura, that they were little more than extortionists, shaking up Cairbré Lifechair for protection money. The parallels to contemporary paramilitaries are obvious: the rhetoric of knightly nationalism hides the criminal deeds which actually keep the organisation running. *The Book of Leinster* and the *Metrical Dindshenchas* likewise describe the Battle of Gabhra as an inevitable contest as administrators acting against a too-independent military.

Yeats, by his own admission, worked with later renditions of the Ossian narrative, rather than original Irish Gaelic sources. This has troubled some, but we should not assume

³⁷ Gabhra—now Gowra, Co Meath—lies near an area faced with serious destruction because of the proposed M3 motorway.

³⁸ O'Kearney actively contributed, edited, and translated for the Ossianic Society. His translation of *Cath Gabhra* included the original Irish text. Whitely Stokes, in his rendition of "The Destruction of Dá Derga's Hostel", credits O'Kearney with launching a new interest in classical Irish literature. On occasion, however, O'Kearney based his research on contemporary versions given by storytellers, as opposed to working from historical manuscripts. See, for example, "The Story of Conn-eda" (originally in *Cambrian Journal*, 1855), "translated from the original Irish of the story-teller Abraham M'Coy".

that academic precision mattered to Yeats, whose *Oisín* only partially resembles the *Ossian* of received tradition. Certainly, these later versions of Yeats's time were scholarly but also politically charged, their editions associated with pressing nationalistic issues. A desire to treat literary anecdote as accepted historical fact motivated much research at that time, as is apparent with O'Kearney. Another example is Bryan O'Looney, who had translated *Laoi Oisín ar Thír n-Óg*, as featured in the *Transactions of the Oisianic Society* (1861). O'Looney was interested not only in the art of translation, but also in proving, geographically, the actual placing of those sites described, even if some sleight-of-reference was required. A tension ensued between what persists in cultural memory and the enactment of those fragments in narrative form. To situate the text, the personages and emblems of those works, required a cartographic felicity defined by the secondary author. A new Ireland could be fashioned out of landmarked reverence to a mytho-historic map, even if the two topographies do not perfectly overlap.

Yeats worked from multiple sources, such as these translators, but he did not merely paraphrase them: a second-time removal from the original. Instead, he sought to re-frame the original tale, at both the expense of accepted geographic narrative, or the normalised format of the story. This essential distinction in Yeats's poetry—the departure from literary recovery and into thematic innovation—distinguishes his from much of the work that preceded him. Yeats initiates his own version of *folkloric present*, wherein myth becomes partially displaced from its conventional heritage, and aligned (in)congruously with present circumstances. Neither straightforward accounts of political allegory (Aengus = nostalgic modern Ireland in search of its past), nor purely Symbolist readings (Oisín = the psyche in search of its Self), sufficiently describe the multiple strata of time and place being arranged. The folkloric present combines the dynastic resonances of the ancestral avatars, as brought into operation with the geopolitical quandaries of Yeats's time. Unlike O'Looney, neither the folklore of the past nor the politics of the present remain stable. Each has the power to overrule the other. Yeats, like Cavafy, made this multiple-historical view a principle hallmark of his style. This temporal mirroring, sometimes overt and sometimes subtle, began with *WO* and would remain an essential aspect of his repertoire. Thus, *The Dreaming of the Bones* and “Ribh at the Tomb of Baile and Aillinn” will operate from this same confrontation between spectral ancestry. Oisín exists within a contemporaneity, retaining the twilight of his past, but

Patrick has become the administrator of dawn. The historical or mythic personage, invoked in relation to the present, acts as a revenant of interference. The phantasmal impulse manifests as a ghost that crosses temporal boundaries, both *polter* and *geist*. Importantly, Yeats is not content to treat these as mere persona, literary formula, or abstract symbols. They are dramatic characters, placed and managed on a stage; and Yeats carefully establishes the boundaries of physicality (or non-physicality) that circumscribe them. Often, this shaping occurs through references to a changing geographic situation and shifts in the collective status of society. The situating of that ancestral ghost into these diversified chronological contexts is a form of stagecraft: the materiality of the landscape allows for a continuum with the spirit of the past. Yeats's resurrection of the epic character is more oblique and challenging than a paralleled paraphrasing of the literature itself. Yeats's folkloric subject matter, in a context of political overtones, is brought into distortion through its manifestation into changing geography. As such, the spirit coalesces with its sense of place as a chronotope, but one of disorientation. The shifting boundaries of place, identity, and territory disturb the contact. As I will show below, *The Shadowy Waters* and *The Wanderings of Oisín* demonstrate this liminal truth-seeking that ends not in fusion, but confusion.

The manuscript revisions of *WO* evidence fundamental changes in the geographic structure of the work: the 1889 published version of the poem shifts the location, as once in the 1887 manuscript, from Killarney to Sligo. This, in effect, takes the myth out of its traditional habitat—Leinster and Gabhra—and situates it near Maeve's cairn, atop Knocknarea:

Came to the cairn-heaped grassy hill
Where passionate Maeve is stony-still. (*V* 3: 17-18)

By initiating the main action of this revision in Sligo, Yeats is effectively working from his home turf, as such. County Sligo serves as Yeats's personal cartographic almanac of symbols and associations. That earliest version of the *WO* manuscript (1897) contains no references to Sligo at all, even though the formal literary tradition has Oisín, the babe, discovered on Benbulbin,³⁹ which, besides Knocknarea, is the other major mountain visible from Sligo Town. The later revisions, however, increasingly paid attention to the

³⁹ For details of these revisions, see Bornstein for manuscript examples, compiled for the *Cornell Yeats*.

particularities of place-naming, of associating the character with a new backdrop of mytho-landmark identification. There is not much in the pre-modern Irish tradition to suggest that Oisín took up residence in Sligo after the defeat of the Fianna. However, as historian Joe McGowan has described, ample oral tradition, localised in the county, has its own apocryphal anecdotes. Off the coast of Sligo, near the isle of Inishmurray, is said to be the mysterious island *Banc Ghráinne* [Gráinne's Shoal]. According to these local customs, Oisín adopted Christianity at this site upon hearing the ringing of the Angelus. Yeats naturally involved himself in the speech genres of Sligo, which perpetuated their own scenarios for Oisín. Instead of repeating the canonical account of how Oisín was adopted on a Sligo mountain, Yeats emphasises his later death, through a priestly adoption, upon a Sligo hill. The county's mythic registry would become Yeats's domain for mapping the interstices between ancestral past and current geographic reality. Such a method is also evident in such poems as "The Stolen Child", a veritable catalogue of many Sligo locations, rhetorically powerful because of their mythic, as well as geographic, significance.

Preserving Placename as the Heritage of Cartography

Any further discussion of toponymy, landscape, and Irish national heroes in the nineteenth century must first consider the intensely contested state of the land, as territory, in colonial Ireland. Agricultural land tenure had become a diplomatic and legalistic quagmire for British authorities, especially their landlord surrogates. In response to the increasing agitation, ambivalent legislation sought to address the rights of tenants, while at the same time safeguarding foreign ownership. Approximately seven major Land Acts were passed between 1870 (Landlord and Tenant Act) to 1903 (the Irish Land Act). As a solution to the *land question*, and the intensified rebellions of the local populaces, this final bit of legalese schemed to provide tenants a method for purchasing their holdings.

Sligo, with its large Protestant population and strategic proximity to Ulster, has had a particular prominence in these national issues. Liam Swords, in a chapter entitled "The Land War", describes the diocese of Achonry's broad activity as a centre for revolt: anti-rent manifestos, ecclesiastical meetings, and such led to police action against popular spokespeople. In 1881, in the village of Knocknaskea, Co Mayo, eleven RIC constables

unleashed a volley of musket fire, injuring several locals, including a seventeen year old girl, Kate Byrne, who had been working in the potato fields (242). Although shot four times, she recovered to testify against the constables. Despite her wounds and eye-witness account, no sentencing, or punitive measures, were filed against the defendants. Knocknaskea was not an isolated example, and violence etched the land as a matter of civil right.

The Irish Ordnance Survey, began in the early nineteenth century, investigated the reality of territory, through exploration and the sovereignty of names. This enterprise, as a national project, sought to name the landscape from an indigenous point of view. We have extensive records from John O'Donovan's exploration of Co Donegal that documented cartographic features, as well as notes concerning dialect, genealogy, and history. O'Donovan's writing demonstrated that folk sayings had achieved serious prominence, as a way of standardising cartography that privileged local tradition. O'Donovan's letters abound in references to the Fianna, and Fenian cycle of myth, and he has a go at folktelling himself on several occasions. Place-naming, in Ireland as elsewhere, involves the resonance of a fable, story, or anecdote, as it achieves linguistic association with the location. That the natural distinctiveness of a geography serves as mythic documentation delighted O'Donovan: "We viewed the Lake of the Fair Finn to see if the name could have been imposed from the brightness of its waters" (86) [*fionn*: IG-bright]. O'Donovan's letters gave tribute to accepted local tradition, even if such undermines conventional wisdom:

The general tradition in the country is that Killybegs is dedicated to St Catherine which shews that there must have been a nunnery there though we have no record which mentions it.

There is also little archaeological evidence to justify this claim, as he notes. However, O'Donovan continues with a paragraph that extrapolates a meaning from the Old Irish etymology for the harbour's name as counter-evidence for the town's ecclesiastical heritage. As final proof, he offers a citation from *Annals of the Four Masters* that "corroborates the tradition at present prevalent among the peasantry" (114). Local pride in the village's history had been the standard for centuries. Thus, the proprietary right of the villagers to inscribe their meanings, arising from the accepted habit, had priority. Local custom trumped scientific evidence. The historical method of Herodotus was preferred to the technique of Thucydides. The Irish were navigating a hybridized landscape, of Anglo authority over a

Gaelic source, and if an official topography of the nation were to be declared, the cartography of myth had to be recovered.

The home landscape as another's property, the legacy of corrupted ownership, the Famine as a result of policy and not nature—these are pressing themes in Irish literature in negotiating local spaces. Maria Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent* compellingly describes the problems of absentee landlordism. Emily Lawless's works had described the Land Wars and the peasant uprisings, although Yeats found such works as *Hurrish* to be political journalism, and a somewhat mixed opinion of *With Essex in Ireland*. Another major trend, not overtly political but sympathetic to nationhood, was the canonisation of the local cartography's uniqueness, as that unifying physicality that solidifies the Irish experience. George Moore wrote in *The Untilled Field*:

There is an unchanging, silent life within every man that none knows but himself, and his unchanging, silent life was his memory of Margaret Dirken. The bar-room was forgotten and all that concerned it, and the things he saw most clearly were the green hillside, and the bog lake and the rushes about it, and the greater lake in the distance, and behind it the blue line of wandering hills. (31)

Moore's sentiments here remind of Oisín, for whom human exchange is coupled with mortal landscape, the mental echoes of which are attained through artifacts with emotional resonances.

Yeats, for practical political considerations, draws upon the stylistic trends of the Gaelic tradition, as well as the emerging nation-writing, are not easily sketched out. In *WO*, Yeats manipulates accepted modes of pre-modern and early modern Irish literature. Old Irish literature divided the archetypal wonder-voyage into two categories: *echtra* and *immram*. *Echtra* (*MI: eachtra*)—meaning *adventure*, and a cognate to the Latin *extra*—refers to those tales that focus on a hero's exploits--adventures—after he arrives in an Otherworld. The *immram*—to row and go forth—is a tale that focuses on the voyage-for-itself. Such a narrative concentrates on the adventures that occur *en route* to a destination. *The Divine Comedy* might be thought of as an *echtra*, while *The Odyssey* has the qualities of an *immram*. Such comparisons are not entirely apt, however, since I am discussing genres represented by the Irish language, with the conventions inherent to this tradition. Even within the corpus of

these tales, distinctions become largely theoretical, although they had been entrenched classifications.⁴⁰ *Immram Maele Dúin*, the spark for a Tennyson romance, involves a revenge story that leads to a Christian conversion during a journey. The nautical navigations change according to a newfound moral compass. However, *The Voyage of Bran* entails elements of both *immram* and *echtra*, as implied in the work's header: "Imram Brain maic Febail, ocus a Echtra andso síis" [The Voyage of Bran son of Febal, and his Expedition (*echtra*) here below] . As Meyer notes in his 1895 edition of this work, the voluntary motive of the hero's sojourning is an important aspect of the *immram* (2), distinguishing *imram* from *longes*, an enforced journey of exile. Thus, in practice, the genres are malleable. The definitions can comfortably include such works as *Longes mac nUisnigh*, and arguably, although in a modern framework, *The Fields of Athenry*.

Ossianic literature straddles two eras: the Fianna, and hero-romances of pre-Christian Ireland, but also the arrival of St Patrick and the cultural changes this brought. Ossian is a representative of a vanishing era, a sole survivor of an ancient worldview. Textually, Christian scribes transferred his personhood from *Fiannaíocht* literature into a Trinitarian perspective. The idyllic life before *Cath Garbha* becomes only post-apocalyptic memories in a Catholic Ireland, which, to Ossian, was no longer recognisable. The choice is to convert, or to disappear. Such is the ultimatum that had evolved out of the early, pagan literature. Oisín confronts the dawning of a new era, personified by the evangeliser St Patrick, as the catalyst of an Europeanising dynasty of Christianity. *Acallam na Senórach* [The Colloquy of the Old Men] entrenched this scenario. Frequently, like-minded perspectives evidenced this ecclesiastical bias that puts St Patrick in an apostolic matrix, converting the entire heathen past and its cultural geography, signified in the death-bed confession of Ossian who renounces both himself and his social era. However, as later writers worked with the themes of this dialogue, more satirical versions were developed out of the previously didactic verse. As Ó hÓgain points out, "When the lay writers put their hands to composing such dialogues,

⁴⁰ These literary terms continue to have validity for discussion and exploration. Paul Muldoon's poem "Immram" (1980), for example, plays with the undefined conventions of the genre. Muldoon also translated Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill's poem sequence *Immram*—"The Voyage"—a work which combines contemporary gender issues with a classical form. Neither sensibility excludes, nor dismisses, the other. The imaginative locus of the ancient genre, associated as it is with mystical geography and otherworld persona, allows Ní Dhomhnaill to explore the terrain of identity, femininity, and nation. Like *WO*, *Immram* involves a journey by boat to a multitude of Atlantic islands which evolves into a critique of a belief system that posits either romance or religion as an unsuitable format for nation-making.

however, they had Oisín pointing out the sanctimonious attitudes of the clergy and stressing the generosity of the Fianna” (411). The colloquy, as both literary trope and depiction of transitional history, debated not just the respective merits of monastic or warrior lifestyles, but deliberated the contest between two competing *weltgeist*. The wraiths of Patrick and Oisín are situated in contested domains, both physical and metaphysical. Oisín, denuded of his phenomenological connections to the landscape, must make a pledge of new-found faith or else vanish entirely. Patrick attempts to efface the self-knowledge of a hero who has lost his immortality. Sacramental dispensation means out with the old, in with the new, the old man being thrown out with his baptismal water.

Yeats, by establishing a Sligo setting for his version of this dialogue, makes Oisín analogous to Yeats’s own position in a changing Ireland. The overlapping contexts of Patrick, as the bringer of a new era that overwrites the ancestral past, and Yeats, as poet in a radically altered Ireland, conflate in this work through landscape and trope. In a letter to Katharine Tynan, Yeats expressed his continued dissatisfaction with the poem, as well as his relationship to the landscape that sustains it: “This to me is the loneliest place in the world. Going for a walk is a continual meeting with ghosts. For Sligo for me has no flesh and blood attractions—only memories and sentimentalities accumulated here as a child, making it more dear than any other place” (qtd. by Foster, 1:71). I return briefly to George Seferis, who wrote in “Reflections on a Foreign Line of Verse,” a response to Cavafy’s “Ithaka”:

and of how strangely you gain strength conversing with the
 dead when the living who remain no longer meet your
 need. (44-46)

This describes Oisín’s predicament precisely; moreover, this passage relates to Yeats’s own desire to transfer mental energy into the cartography of dreams, rather than the society of the present. The dialogue between St Patrick and Oisín leads to the Celtic hero’s dissipation: unable to locate himself either in the false otherworld of the purely immaterial, nor the vividly changed social landscape of geographic Ireland. He thus vanishes entirely, being so radically decontextualised by massive social change.

Oisín as the Vanishing Ancestral: The Atlantis Paradox

As Yeats notes, extending Oisín's journey to multiple islands in a quest for eternal stability is largely his own innovation, with only *Silva Gadelica* as a precedent (V 793). Yeats would offer a famous cipher to these islands in "The Circus Animals' Desertion", a much later poem still in deep conversation with one of his earliest. "Enchanted islands, allegorical dreams" affirms the artificiality of these otherworlds; the wandering leitmotif finds no pleasure or sustenance in the enchantment. This instability of the Romantic ontology—as embodied by Oisín's illusory embrace within dreamworld—needs multiple symbols to express the degrees of dissatisfaction. The spirit of Shelley's Asia, as with Oisín, says,

My soul is an enchanted Boat

Which, like a sleeping swan, doth float

Upon the silver waves of thy sweet singing . . . (2.5.72-74)

In response, Patrick would rebuke,

"O wandering Oisín, the strength of the

bell-brance is naught,

For there moves alive in your fingers the fluttering sadness

of Earth. (WO III:123-124)

The extraordinary concern for a more spiritually imbued world, or at least a more pleasurable one, had pagan overtones that Christian literature disdained, or at least reworked in a more acceptable format. Oisín demonstrates that the presumed treasures of such a kingdom are illusions of the ego: "vain gaiety", an illusion of pleasure; "vain battle", conflict without victory; and "vain repose", sleep without rest. Like the Byzantine clockwork bird whose mechanisms keep the emperor awake, "So I lived and lived not" (III:94). What constitutes authentic, meaningful existence—which in fact can only be understood in relationship to mortality—disavows the Island's promises.

Yeats possibly has in mind more than an Irish literary depiction of the mystery isle. Yeats wrote against a contemporary fascination for an archetypal Atlantis, the universally perfected site of an ideal civilisation, and whose version of *ancestral* memory points to a realm of astral solace. Before considering further Oisín's duplicitous connection to both spirit and matter in terms of Irish colonisation, I would like to discuss the notion of escape, as

enshrined in otherworld location, exemplified in the popular spiritual-cognitive mapping of a non-physical Atlantis.

The Atlantean paradigm, which enjoyed a considerable boom in the late nineteenth century, combined speculative forms of archaeology, heritage philology, and, of course, a great deal of national self-consciousness. In search of a mystery island that symbolised a humanistic immortality, many researchers posed geographical conjectures for an Atlantean empire, as loosely elaborated from *Timæus* and *Critias*. Foremost of these was Ignatius Donnelly (1831-1901), an American congressman, who made a tremendous splash with his imaginative book *Atlantis: the Antediluvian World* (1882). The work combines a number of pseudo-sciences to formulate bold, esoteric claims. First, Donnelly establishes that Plato's allusion can be realised as cartographic truth. The historical veracity of Atlantis—as a historical place with an indigenous ethnic identity—can be proven through shrewd detective work. As a landscape, Atlantis was a *pangaea* of perfect geology and naturally supernatural beauty. As a culture, all noble aspirations of civility had been achieved. This conjunction of *polis* and *gaia* formed the first and only utopian society, a world whose perfection preceded the rise of history. For Donnelly, who strongly influenced Blavatsky, this island-nation of Adams and Eves is the proto-racial genus for modern hominids. Atlantis had once upon a time some kind of geological emplacement, they argued, but its true meaning is derived from the transcendent cartography it represents as the place which exists outside of social and historical processes.

The evidence for these claims, of course, is scattered, specious, and full of whimsy. At one time, Donnelly engages in Biblical hermeneutics, to place the fall of Atlantis in relation to the Great Deluge. Comparative mythology then offers equivalent patterns of belief, from Sanskrit to Germanic, that indicate a single source. In fact, all myths inevitably point to Atlantis as the *locus originis* for ethnic diversity in the world. The fall of Atlantis knocked over the archetypal cradle from which the world's founding civilizations would crawl out: Indo-Aryan, Egyptian, Mayan, and so forth. Likewise, the spectrum of Greek Gods, Nordic myths, and Tibetan demons owe their iconography to Atlantean models. To discover Atlantis is to find the primal archive of consciousness. It continues to act, metaphysically, as a spiritual home for lost souls.

It is easy to be glib in summarising Donnelly's quest for the beginning of the world. However, it should be said, Donnelly's work was the *Da Vinci Code* of its day. According to Colin Wilson in *The Atlantis Blueprint*, British Prime Minister William Gladstone had written to Donnelly to express his delight in the book. Soon after, he would ply his cabinet for funds to sponsor an expeditionary mission to re-discover Atlantis. The legislators refused, but the book continued to sell handsomely. Donnelly had excited a very broad readership with a unifying theory that catered to many lurking interests, from ethnic speculation, classical civilisations, nationhood and history, as well as Blavatskian occultism.⁴¹ Real cultural truth, therefore, is generic, being before the degenerate processes of the local and particular. Ireland, though, had a very special relation to Atlantis. Donnelly suggests that some of the first inhabitants of Ireland, including the mythic Firbolgs, arrived with breakaway Atlantean colonies. Irish literature, conveniently, proves his claim:

The Irish annals speak of the Formorians as a warlike race, who, according to the "Annals of Clonmacnois," 'were a sept descended from Cham, the son of Noeh, and lived by pyracie and spoile of other nations, and were in those days *very troublesome to the whole world.*'

Were not these the inhabitants of Atlantis, who, according to Plato, carried their arms to Egypt and Athens, and whose subsequent destruction has been attributed to divine vengeance invoked by their arrogance and oppressions? (408)

Donnelly has not been the only one to see the *Celtic sacred space*—Ireland, as a network of spiritual ley-lines. Even recently, Ulf Erlingsson's book *Atlantis from a Geographer's Perspective: Mapping the Fairy-Land* (2004) argues that Ireland itself was once the island-nation of Atlantis; such is evidenced in the megalithic architecture throughout the country. Ireland is aligned with ancient monuments and spiritual epicenters. The geodesical outline of Ireland's stone circles are said to be proof of its hypothetically Atlantean character. The point is that Ireland's cultural landscape points to Atlantean truths, rather than being of merit in their own right as ancestral presences of historical investment by local communities.

⁴¹ That Atlantis, besides an entertaining story, was a geographic agency that could position identity, nationality, and heritage *in absentia* would lead to vicious repercussions. Himmler's brand of racial cryptography would seize upon Donnelly's theories, and upon the Aryan Atlantis itself.

All mystery voyages, in various ways, could be viewed as derivative of the Atlantean meta-narrative. In 1898, Thomas Wentworth Higginson published *Tales of the Enchanted Islands of the Atlantic*, which included a rather benign bedtime version of Atlantis, as well as a telling of “Usheen in the Island of Youth”. For his sources, Higginson indicates Donnelly—“his work has been very widely read, although it is not highly esteemed by scholars” (230)—and P. W. Joyce and Yeats for Usheen. Higginson wishes to present a collection that shows off the unique “glamour of enchantment” (xi) that the Atlantic, once the impassable barrier to Columbus and Vikings alike, had for the nautical imagination of European literature. True, Irish tradition has had a sense of the Atlantic ocean as the margin of the world’s end, personified in those monks, in their *currach*, pushing into the unknown seas, Gospel in hand. While Yeats makes no direct statement on Oisín’s isles as figurations of Atlantis, it is reasonable to suspect he was toying with certain fascinations that had been obsessions of that decade. Oisín’s islands describe pantomime societies who play out Atlantean gestures of timelessness, unchanging purity: an Eden devoid of political change or national ambition.

The navigation of the liminal in *WO* leads to those “isles of the farthest [Atlantic] seas where only the spirits come” (III:132), which are generic non-realities of monotonous behaviour. These landscapes preclude physicality, and that tactile sensuality and political turmoil that accompany active, engaged societies. Carnal instinct, the simple pleasures of the home, and the power of friendship—themes that would dominate Yeats’s work—are entirely absent in these isles. This void of feeling, more than anything, unveils their false glamour: it is a kind of Manichaeism in reverse, where matter and reality describe truth, but spirit and dream actually reveal nonsense. Oisín is awakened from his astral stupour three times, each because of a material artefact that shatters the monotony of the trance. The dynamic, the energy of tangible materials, and the affective attachments they create, disrupts the habitual fantasy. Real communal processes, in fact, create the lustre of time that imbues a cultural object with an attestable sense of that energy that has circulated it. The dilemma, however, is when twilight, as this lustrous shadow, becomes entirely disconnected from the physical world. An expansive gulf comes into being, one that Oisín has transversed, but has not managed to bridge.

Thus, these three islands are case studies in mythic epistemology, in which the elemental has more power than the mysterious. The anonymous battle staff, “of wood / From some dead warrior’s broken lance” has efficacy because it can actually hurt people, and it has probably done so on many occasion (I:361-62). The rich smell of blood is on it. Oisín’s memory of similar objects, aroused through this surrogate reference, brings to mind his own battles. The touchability of the object situates the mind in historical contexts. But therein lies the problem. To be elemental also means to be subject to decay and change: “And the moon like a pale rose wither away” (I:427), the warning which concludes the first canto. Each of the three artefacts that breaks the trance was a species of natural growth that had been, in some way, cut or broken from its source: this wooden battle staff; the beech bough (II:226); and the “odour of new-mown hay” (III:153). With ease, these organisms—disconnected as they are from growth—enter the imaginary Celtic kingdoms and, in doing so, dispel them. This long-poem describes the organic as having supreme authority—connected as it is to the excitement of body—over the hazy fakery of the Atlantean dreams. Oisín becomes a vision of the decontextualized ancestral, a myth so radically disconnected from terrain that it drifts in the abodes of the inconsequential.

References to warfare and conflict in Ireland —Oisín’s battle lust—would call to an audience’s mind the ongoing conflict for Home Rule. Those Land League factions were concerned with an Irish past as a cultural marker for the new nationalist enterprise. Yeats, the poet, sits on the cusp of change, just as Oisín does. *WO*, however, addressing national issues in the guise of historical figurations, does not endorse any single view of Irish identity. Oisín certainly could have addressed an unhappiness with occupation and modernity, but not from a propagandist viewpoint. The personal elements of this work, the place of art in the thinking of the self, permits a multi-layered appreciation that pamphlets and didactic novels cannot. At the same time, Yeats also avoids being a scholiast by neither imitating a standard premodern Irish narrative, nor endorsing an Atlantean ideal.

As discussed in my Introduction, Yeats expressed grave distrust for simplistic realism as a mode of historical documentation, which takes the form of disposable opinions and facts confirmed and distributed through a network of newspapers. Yeats saw the juggernaut of journalism as a direct threat to an underclass of people, disconnected from the articulations of an elite nation, as perpetuated through the privilege of print culture, as it was centred in the

market capitals. Print culture, an extremely diverse category, is after all an academic euphemism for mass technology, are engaged with boundless consumerism. In *WO*, Patrick, the evangeliser of the one true Word, brings a homogenous Christianity that must first absorb and then erase the pagan particulars of a previous Ireland. Both landscape and cultural context shift tremendously. Oisín, thereby stripped of his longevity as ancestral presence, cannot exist in the new framework of a revised history or geographic; his own culturality is eclipsed by a new religion, a new era, redefining the local geography through missionary work.

Oisín's Dilemma and the Home Rule Movement: Geography versus Symbolism

In evaluating the nineteenth century as a kind of Oisínic paradox, many Irish writers addressed civil rights, historical grudges, and personal injustice as connected directly to landscape. Eibhlín Ní Chonail's elegy for her husband, *Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire*, is a passionate love poem, but also an indictment of penal laws and apartheid justice in eighteenth century Ireland. She modifies the genre of keening into a call for contemporary revenge. The Wolfe Tone rebellion of 1798 particularly incensed the moral sensibilities of the national literary culture. Said's reading that, under colonial fixation, the colonised are "too hard pressed by the wasps to make any honey" does not seem apt. In Ireland, the bees were busy being harassed, by the heavy artillery wasps, so they banded together to combine their hives of smaller stingers. Charles Kickham's *Knocknagow* [*The Homes of Tipperary*] presents a contrasted world of a settled, pastoral people exploited harshly by the landlord system. The situated communities unite according to their proximity and mutually shared customs. This novel is a polemic, but one softened by the cachet a unique Irish characterhood. This particular ejaculation, from the thirty-sixth chapter, gives an idea:

"God bless us!" exclaimed Jack Delany's wife as she stooped to pick up the "rattler" and "corncrake," when the priest had passed, "did any wan ever see a man wud such a proud walk?"

Despite such forms of Tipperarese, and this novel abounds in such passages, the political overtones of the work turned it into a best-seller. Kickham wrote for such Fenian outlets as *The Nation* and *The Irish People*.⁴²

Irish literature abounds in *wonder voyages*, from any number of which Yeats could have selected a mystery explorer to be the maidenhead for his own explorations. His selection of Oisín was deliberate in theme as a politically motivated act of ancestral recall. Ossianic allusions, and the Fianna in general, have become linked to those Fenian mores which Ossian represents; and, of course, *fenian* has been an ongoing codeword for Republican activity or sympathies. *Oisín*, for example, is the pen-name for a political cartoonist with *The Andersontown News*. In the Belfast context, Fionn mac Cumhaill, Oscar, Diarmuid, these epic heroes are re-framed as murals and other politically ethnic declarations. Oisín, in Yeats's time as now, represents a period free from the consequences of English settlement. Thus, the nationalist activities of the Ossianic Society—national literatures as political stepping stones—were certainly well understood. Founded officially on St Patrick's Day, 1853, the group was a sort of preservation society for the Irish language, as a collective strategy for independence.⁴³ Members such as John O'Daly did much to expand interest in Irish literary heritage. As both commentators and translators, authors in these periodicals develop themes of ethnic idealism as a response to colonialist provocation. As one voice among many for the soil, the Ossianic Society had conflicting inter-relationships with the Irish Archaeological Society, the Celtic Society, and others. When on friendly terms, these organisations studied the sociolinguistic situation of Ireland, as examined in traces from a material record of habitation. Although these groups had similar goals, they nonetheless were divided in sectarian biases.⁴⁴

⁴² As extensive research by such scholars as Leith Davis and Adele Dalsimer have shown, the mobilisation of commercial art served the diverse purposes of gender, nationality, and sovereignty. The Irish-language tradition had its role, including Merriman's *Cúirt an Mheadhón Oidhche* [The Midnight Court]. The increasing attention critics have given to Thomas Moore documents the interconnections between nationality and musical idiom. From my point of view, Yeats participates, keenly, in the developing forces of home rule, but always maintains a certain distance, a kind of scepticism that prevents him from keeping to a single contingent, a single sect, for extended periods of time. This is certainly true in the poetry.

⁴³ Damien Murray has outlined the coalescing of agendas: "The Ossianic Society, Romanticism and the revival of the Irish Language, 1853-61", ACIS Limerick, July 2000.

⁴⁴ See Robert Somerville-Woodward, *The Ossianic Society: 1853-1863*. <http://www.ucd.ie/pages/99/articles/somewood.html>

A casual reading of *WO* could easily dwell on the important, but superficial, themes of the work: the ethereal disappoints the seeker. So much of the dreaminess, after all, ends up in acute cases of Faephobia as vanished beings with no relationship to the real and social. This is a more common theme for Yeats than is usually acknowledged: the fae confound more than they comfort. In “The Man who Dreamed of Faeryland”, a sort of abbreviated *WO*, the illusory state of contentment, within an immaterial Faeryland, contrasts with the rough, but rewarding, experiences of mortality. Ultimately, the trance-like obsession for the imaginative world stupefies the dreamer, who is unable to properly measure the meaningfulness of everyday living. But this poem is also intensely cartographic, each of the four sections—meditating on a human concern—is entrenched within a particular location: Drumahair, Lissadell, Scanavin, Lugnagall. Rather than appreciating the pleasure and peace afforded by being imminently in-the-world, Oisín wrongly fixates himself on a *changeling* geography, one that holds no authentic place-in-space for him. In trying to escape the tensions inherent in worldly being, he actually sheds himself of the very elements that enable real experience. The “world-forgotten isle” (8) itself has forgotten the world and exists in a metaphysical limbo. In such a way, “Who Goes with Fergus?” is ultimately a rhetorical question. The anti-climatic *tír na nÓg* entails a banishment amongst a non-descript heap of stars.

Yeats’s poetry explores this conflict between a departure for some Atlantis—or Byzantium, or Land of the Young—as a presumed space of stability, as opposed to the physical world and its ruthless socio-historical processes. Being in the socio-historical world requires the building of the modern *polis*, the social network Durtal so despised. To refuse the world in favor of the archetypal realm—to be *alone with the Alone*, to borrow a phrase from Henry Corbin—means an absorption of the creative imagination into a realm outside of the elemental. In such a scenario, the imagination overwhelmingly selects one side of the dialectic between the real and the symbolic.

On this account, Yeats, particularly his works of the 1890s, has often been classified as a latent Romantic lyricist, a dabbler in Pre-Raphaelitism, or Symbolism, or other modes of allegorical thought and representation. True, he experimented with all of these, but, like Oisín, he did not remain with them. Indeed, he found their stylization to be wanting in addressing the tangible merits of cultural geographies, of ancestral symbols in touch with

physical place. That is not to say, however, that Yeats disregarded Symbolism entirely, nor that he had no curiosity for the paranormal, nor that poems such as *WO* do not engage in metaphysical conjecture. The political, however, does not exclude the metaphysical, and vice versa. Yeats was being tugged in various directions, and the contradictory directions of these poems represent a sceptical engagement, rather than a single, obligatory point of view.

The poetic activity of Symbolism itself describes a kind of shadowy waters, “Shadows before now / Have driven travelers mad for their own sport” (*SW* 104-5). An attempt to disconnect the Symbol from its means of sensual engagement takes representation, the physical form, to a place where only its shadow, an outline, remains. As Idea increases as a realised substance, the division between symbolic and physical blurs. Since much of Yeats’s work ruminates on the tensions of these two aspects, the *early Yeats* is sometimes said to be a latent manifestation of either Symbolism or Pre-Raphaelitism.

There are certainly Symbolist models in all of the major genres within which Yeats worked: the codified tropes of the poems (the Rose, dancers, the Tower); the complex cosmology of *A Vision*; and the formula of presentation and representation in some of the drama. The Symbolist’s legacy establishes a Romantic ontology of a world-order, where nature – to paraphrase Baudelaire—is a temple, and the poet-priest invokes correspondences to the universal symbols. Yeats’s *Rose* cycle of poems, for example, evidence some of this method, and thus have lent themselves to Jungian readings. The retreat into the dreamworld, and its ethereal patterns, is opposed to the engagement with historical terms and their attempts to enplace the ancestral not as dream, but as realisable trace.

However, what is of interest is not that Yeats is *symbolising* something on any given occasion, that a *unia mystica* exists between an ineffable Idea and the garb of a natural form. Rather, Yeats queries the inherent tensions of such a combination. This tension exists in both the spectre of the creation, the symbol, as well as the imagination of the beholder. From the beginning, in an effect which has evolved from Baudelaire or the Romantics, Yeats willfully obscures the perspective that enables the modeled meaning of symbol to be maintained. The Symbolist configuration, as Rimbaud famously stated, required a delirium of cognition, that then could accommodate its own distortions. This cognition, however, had to render into a hypostatic unity the disparate dimensions of representation. For Yeats, this request is often too much to ask. In the essay, “Symbolism in Painting”, he writes,

Every visionary knows that the mind's eye soon comes to see a capricious and variable world, which the will cannot shape or change, though it can call it up and banish it again. (*EI* 151)

The spheres of reference—the context of vision in which the symbol/object are understood—are terrains of miscommunication. Under such conditions, Forgael's harp, an invocational tool of the Bard, can become interfused with the net, the snare of confused meaning: “Both you and I are taken in the net. / It was their hands that plucked the wind awake . . .” (*SW* 322-3). At this point, Forgael can no longer distinguish reality, ideal, fate, and action within the obfuscated patterns of this inter-world.

The Shadowy Waters concerns another voyage, also at the edge of the Unknown, that leads to a dissipation of the principal seeker. Like *WO*, *SW* depicts not just the modeling of the symbol, but the interiority of the mind who is doing the figuration. As this work suggests, Symbolism misleads as much as it enchants. Aibric, the voice of reason and loyalty, can accept neither the water nor the shadows:

Shadows, illusions,
That the Shape-changers, the Ever-laughing ones,
The Immortal Mockers have cast into his mind,
Or called before his eyes. (565-8)

Like Yeats's comment on the “variable world”, Aibric describes the impermanent quality of mental substances, the infinite reducibility in their essence. Beginning with “shadows” and ending with “eyes”, the cycle of data swerves from the ethereal to the empirical that results in an inescapable obscurity. The only force that can distinguish them is the effort shaped from one's own desire. In this case, Forgael's obsession will either find the Ideal, or force an appearance, Dectora, to become that Ideal. To transform their beings, they must sacrifice a version of the material world—“we will gaze upon this world no longer” (613)—to escape, and discarnate, into the shadows. Their physical presence, with the cutting of the rope, becomes a conscious dissolution of one into the other. The phrase “the world” had been repeated endlessly throughout the work. The material concept of “the world” had been disbanded. *The Shadowy Waters* exhibits two extremes of human desire: the gross greed for material pleasures—treasure—and the maddening pursuit of the Ideal. As the psychological drama of these works entails, the poetic idealism leads either to a confused

cartography of illusions, or a murky mixture of land-less oceans. Oisín's antidote is the geology of his native land;⁴⁵ Forgael, too far from the shore, drowns in the strange seas of his own thought.

The mind as maker, as the critic Vlasopolos describes in Coleridge and Yeats, is the moment of symbolisation. The mind overrules nature in favor of the transcendental.⁴⁶ But the imagined and the imaginer are much more conflicted in Yeats than for Verlaine or Baudelaire. In "Adam's Curse", a wobbling moment of self recognition—"That you were beautiful, and that I strove / To love you in the old high way of love" (35-36)—acknowledges that figuration manages the figure. What higher authority can be appealed to for justification? What poems such as these do, partially, is challenge the *carte blanche* acceptance that Symbolists gave to the existential independence, and validity, of their own creations. The more codified symbols in Yeats's portfolio—the Rose, for example—must be identified as organic species subject to the climate and conditions of worldliness:

Rose of all Roses, Rose of all the world!

You, too, have come where the dim tides are hurled . . .

(“The Rose of Battle” 25-6)

In “Symbolism and Poetry”, Yeats's quotes Robert Burns, that a moon disappearing behind a wave is an event simultaneous with Time, as depicting the mutability of symbolism in the operations of the intellect. Yeats derived from French and German Symbolism, particularly its anti-realist stance, the idea that freed the imagination from Victorian rationalism.

⁴⁵ The Urashima Tarô [浦島太郎] story is one which Yeats would later become familiar with through the writings of Lafcadio Hearn (Koizumi Yakumo). Urashima Tarô, seeing some youths tormenting a turtle, offers them a fish in exchange for the reptile's freedom. Grateful for his intervention, the turtle offers to carry Urashima Tarô, on his shell, to a splendid enclave under the sea. Their destination is the Sea-Dragon King's palace, *ryûgû-jô* (竜宮城). After several days (centuries, actually, in mortal time) of enjoying the royal family's hospitality, Urashima Tarô becomes intensely nostalgic and asks to be returned home. The queen bestows a bejeweled box as a gift, but with those oft repeated instructions never to open it. Once home, he finds the landscape—his native village, the countryside—utterly changed. He is now a man at once in and out of time; memory of the past cannot navigate contemporary geography. Nostalgia cannot find anything commensurate with reality. By the seashore, where his act of charity led to his current predicament, he opens up the box. A puff of white smoke, the material manifestation of his true physical age, overtakes his body and he crumbles to dust.

⁴⁶ Robert O'Driscoll argues for a comprehensive implementation of symbolist methodology in Yeats's poetry, especially as channeled by his ideas on Blake and the occult. While there is much practical truth in such an approach, I suggest that at no time Yeats's method—which shifted considerably—should be affixed according to a particular inherited *symboliste* format. In the same way, Cavafy is said to be under the shadow of nineteenth-century Symbolism, but none the less departs from it in a way equally worthy of study.

However, as Symbolism turned to decadence, he developed a precautionary attitude that eschewed the para-Catholic literariness of the movement, bedeviled by its transubstantiation, of the Ideal in a perceptible form (*The Symbolist Manifesto*, 1886). In privileging materiality, Yeats must accept that the idea of Byzantium is rendered incomplete. Likewise, the emergence into Byzantium entails a radical transmutation of the personhood, to the point that the elements of individuality become nondescript. In the strange isle of *WO*, flowers do not really bloom, and trees do not take root.

The contradictory implications of Yeats in the 1890s reveal an innovative, multi-faceted, young poet, attracted to the magnetism of many new orientations. Yeats exhibits a power of inconclusivity, a willingness to keep unresolved artistic, spiritual, or historic conundrums. Being pulled by many influences, he is not yanked holus-bolus altogether into a particular doctrine of poetic thought and escapes handily those definitions which weigh heavily on other writers of his generation. Yeats assesses, without formal commitment, many different materials, without being recruited entirely by any particular movement. Curiosity abounds, but a scepticism maintains his independence. For some, this results in an irresolute body of work that, due to its many faces, lacks the cohesiveness of the *mature* writing. However, that cohesiveness never really materialises for Yeats; and these early experiments with form, content, and voice demonstrate a poet keen on experience as much as craft.

In his essay, “The Happiest of Poets” (1902), Yeats expresses respect for Rossetti’s vivid distinction against the moral earnestness of grey, Victorian literature. His introductory comments focus on colour and palette, appropriate critical material for an aesthetic that produced more painters than poets. Yeats finds in Rossetti that tension between “the cry of the flesh” with the “rejection of Nature” (53) that interested him all his life. To hypostatically link supernatural with natural, a certain degree of Neoplatonism must inform a reading that the soul, “drunk with natural beauty” should come upon “supernatural beauty, the impossible beauty” (64). But *WO* is a rejection of impossible beauty. Yeats has been seen as a continuation of the Pre-Raphaelite, for his lush scenarios and vibrant damsels. George Watson, for example, finds throughout *The Wind Among the Reeds* a strong Pre-Raphaelite influence, based on the physical traits of the *sídhe*, they said to resemble the Marian and mythological portraits of Rossetti or Waterhouse. In my view, however, the

ethereal qualities are consistently undermined by the naturalistic contexts in which these ideals are placed. The organic nature of thought leads to the rhetorical decay in *The Moods*. *The Fish*, using those images again of tide, nets, and Time, demonstrates how mental phenomena require nascent linkages between word and effect. This same conflicted intensity in these poems—between figure and figuration, image and imaginer—will be explored in the same manner by more renowned poems like “Among School Children”. The ballad of dementia, a tragic description of something like Alzheimer’s disease in “The Song of the Old Mother”, does not rely on symbolism for impact: wind and fire, as elemental realities in themselves, also lead to their own decomposition and forgetting. In *The Voyage of Bran*, St Patrick’s advice is to avoid the vain pleasure of life, and keep one’s sufferings directed towards the divine:

It is a law of pride in this world
To believe in the creatures, to forget God,
Overthrow by diseases, and old age.⁴⁷

Yeats counters with poetic creations that convulse with both sensorial pleasure as well as the biological decay of memory.

The elemental features of worldliness are the same, for the Old Mother’s embers or the bonemeal of her human body. This kind of juxtaposition reminds one more of Shiki’s *haiku* about illness and the garden rather than Rossetti’s laments. Thus, the impersonal naturalism of the wind in the reeds distinguishes itself from the Romantic æolean harp; the personalized dejection of the Romantics is contrasted by the ambivalence of the Yeatsian mind. Both the subject and the lyrical object, tangible and experiential, are only half realized by inconsistent faculties of apprehension throughout these poems. Reeds, unlike Rossetti’s ivy, does not fashion itself as a garland for Beatrice, but grows wild according to principles disconnected from the whims of poetry.

What most crucially distinguishes Yeats from Pre-Raphaelitism, and in fact erects one of those bulwarks that would become foundational to modernism, is that Yeats’s personification of the past lends no moral certitude to the present. Like Huysmans, Rossetti

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[47] Is recht a úabuir i m-bith ché
cretem dúle, dormant n-Dé,
tróithad n-galar, oculus áiss,
apthu anma tríá togáis. (22-23)

found in the Middle Ages an ideation rather than an era, a conceptual beacon that could provide a moral infrastructure. Dante gives Rossetti an ethical stability, not the Dante of the *Commedia*, but the one of *La Vita Nuova*, the pseudo-Mariolatry of Beatrice and the blessed damosel, as a redemptrix. Is Patrick to Yeats what Dante is to Rossetti? Not at all. Or, for that matter, is either Oisín or Cú Chulainn? Like Cavafy's Trojan heroes, the ghosts of the past are well into a period of decline. Thus, the symbolisation of the past can never replicate that yearned for standard of medieval morality. Yeats has a general lack of transcendental figureheads to provide a code of ethics or aesthetics. Only later, perhaps in Leo Africanus, would some kind of necromancy provide a stable channel of communication for the mentality of antiquity. Leo Africanus, however, as a revenant of discharged history, does not lead all souls to Paradise. This is a subject I will take up later in Chapter Four, but I would like to show the disconnection here. Yeats disregarded Rossetti's theodicy of purgatorial intercession, the tears of Beatrice in the vale of the world. If Yeats's Beatrice was Maud Gonne, then it is a Beatrice who knows how to empty a clip from a Tommy gun.

The tension between these two realms, the disconnected symbolic and the organic reality, is affirmed by pressing political situations that, like the Parisian elections of *Là-Bas* or the Home Rule movement in Ireland, cannot be ignored or silenced. Their uncomfortable concerns often intrude on the flight into fancy. For example, the outright sentimentality of "He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven" describes a lingering concern with the sustainability of a metaphor's tenor—the cloths of heaven—woven into a mortal's apparel, not to be worn. This garment will be "spread . . . under your feet" (7), over the puddles in the manner of Sir Walter Raleigh. Tenor and vehicle of the metaphor collide with footwear. Raleigh, as indirectly alluded to, did not "tread softly" on the figurative puddle of Ireland: his suppression of the Desmond rebellions fundamentally changed land ownership and the distribution of power in the country.

If Yeats had a pre-Raphaelite streak, we might identify it with his time in the Rhymers's Club. Ensnared in the Cheshire Cheese pub, across the waters from Ireland, the Rhymers's Club themselves were something of an island of vain glory. Generally more concerned with self-perceptions of tragedy and mournfulness, their activities tended toward chat rather than poetry, although two anthologies managed to be produced. Yeats's participation in the Rhymers's Club was the closest he would come to membership in a pre-

Raphaelite circle or a society for the sake of decadence. Decidedly a London phenomenon, its members still professed their Celtic connections. Lionel Johnson converted to Catholicism, and Arthur Symons was Welsh-born, of Cornish extraction. T. W. Rolleston, originally of Co Offaly, an intermittent associate of the group, produced several volumes of Irish folklore, in the manner of Thomas Crofton Croker. Rolleston's anthologized poem *The Dead at Clonmacnoise*, paraphrased the Irish of a forgotten poet, Enoch O'Gillan [Aongus Ó Giolláin]. An excerpt from the fourth stanza provides a counter-balancing example to Yeats's presumed Romanticism:

Maura du of Ballyshannon!
 Maura du, when winds blow south,
 I will with the birds fly homeward,
 There to kiss your Irish mouth.
 Maura du, my own, my honey! (50)

Despite these claims to pedigree, "The Celtic element, in any case, became diluted with time" (Foster 1:107). Indeed, the *Celtic element* expressed itself mostly as a dabbling in appearances, or as a kind of ancestral blood fetish. Seemingly more a drinking and smoking club, the Rhymer's Club project relied on stagemanship for its ongoing sense of purpose. True, Symons produced influential essays on Symbolism, and French literature in particular, analysing for example Pater in relation to Baudelaire. Such works as "Spiritual Adventures" (1905) and "The Decadent Movement in Literature" (1893) established him as an influential channel of French literature, whom T. S. Eliot acknowledged as his gateway into Jules LaFargue and Baudelaire. Symons played a hand in Joyce's early publications. But as a group their purpose was hardly fixed. As Yeats said to Joyce, aside, "Symons has always had a longing to commit great sin, but he has never been able to get beyond ballet girls" (Ellmann 112). This suggests the decadence remained in the world of the Degas painting, rather than an avowed vocation in Symons's habits.

While individual members of this group espoused viewpoints such as pre-Raphaelitism, decadence, and so forth, they as a whole produced no manifesto that established a unified declaration of group intent. It is important to recognise that Yeats was under the sway of many of their aesthetics, but not altogether pulled or possessed by them. Much as Oisín quits the islands he has been welcomed into, Yeats distanced himself from

this group rather quickly, just as he had from other covens in which he took initiation and fellowship. This, in fact, is a pattern for much of his life: a curiosity leads to admission within a society, only to be abandoned within due time once the veil has been lifted, and the inner life of the organisation revealed. Yeats would join and eventually drift from the The Rhymers's Club, the Golden Dawn, the Theosophical Society, and many other indoorsy guilds. Johnson's ghost surfaces in the third section of "In Memory of Robert Gregory" as a man who prefers the cloister of study to the company of people: "the measureless consummation he dreamed" has a resemblance to Forgael's "My teeth are in the world, / but have not bitten yet" (278-9). Yeats's poetry, concerned as it is with sensuality, the energy of the landscape, and the immediacy of the elements, has no wish to leave his mouth gaping. Yeats recognised in himself a tendency to symbolist escapism:

The chorus to the "stollen child" [sic] sums it up—That is not the poetry of insight and knowledge but of longing and complaint—the cry of the heart against necessity. I hope some day to alter that and write poetry of knowledge. (*L2* 1:54-55)

The existential lesson of "The Stolen Child" goes unrecognised in those countless ballad renditions, by the Waterboys and Loreena McKennitt, spun around these lyrics. One second of a whistling kettle is worth one hundred years of glamour. The brown mice plotting their way into a feast of oatmeal have a tangible quality that the stolen cherries do not. The last verse, dedicated to the "solemn eyed", offers a farewell to those investments in simplicity that lead to subjective experience. The dividends of the dreamlife pay nothing. Emotions depend on interaction with that which initiated them originally; to be removed from these is to lose the very thing that makes the emotions worthwhile. The boiling kettle produces the tea that comforts the breast, whereas the frothy bubbles of faeryland are only chased, and are infused with no taste. The faeries merrymaking or the whistling kettle—the play between the imaginary and the actual in Yeats is quite contrapuntal, as melodies of opposition sounding against each other.

Ancestral Geography as the Persistence of Memory

As in *WO*, the physicality of the senses redirects the straying thought. The tectonic rubbing

of earth against mind produces quakes felt as emotional changes. What *grounds*, even relieves, the poet in times of cartographic confusion is an awareness of the particularities of the earth, the blessed tangibility of the landscape. For a poem un-slipped from the bonds of earthiness, “The Stolen Child” resonates with the almanac of the Sligo countryside. Yeats conducted his own sort of ordinance survey: poems such as *WO* and “The Stolen Child” negotiate landscape through not only mythical reference, but an interaction with natural features. A waterfall or a particular rock formation guides the senses. In such a way, Yeats mimics the Irish *Dindsenchas* [*D*]. A complicated, lengthy piece of literature, *D* maps the countryside through a topography-as-verse. The Irish passion for naming—for consecrating the landscape with personages and events—is catalogued within *D*, which records and associates the repertoire of mythic figures with particular locations. These catalogues of names and places enabled bards and storytellers to develop a highly idiomatic form of travel-poetry in which allusion and events could be substituted for generic place-names. Thus, directions could be given through metaphoric reference, rather than by a compass. In such poetry, geography becomes framed as a continuous narrative. For example,

Temair noblest of hills
under which is Erin of the forays,
the lofty city of Cormac son of Art,
son of mighty Conn of the hundred fights. (*D* III.1-4)

Yeats’s sort of *Dindshenchas* for Sligo reads like this:

Caoilte, and Conan, and Finn were there,
When we followed a deer with our baying hounds,
With Bran, Sceolan, and Lomair,
And passing the Firbolgs’ burial-mounds . . . (*WO* I.12-16)

Poems such as “The Song of Wandering Aengus” result in a wandering through unfulfilled landscape: although orchards abound, Aengus wants the taste of golden apples, vanished though they may be. Despite having his mind on an unrealised destination, he finds his way according to geographic references such as “hazel wood”, a particular forest on the banks of Lough Gille. In such a way, “The Ballad of Father John O’Hart” describes a congress of noise gathered from the locales of the countryside. These are the most effective waymarkers.

Rather than a form of juvenile topophilia, *WO* addresses the conflict between action-

in-the-world and a retreat, in which mythic-time contrasts with landscapes suspended in their artificiality, or a cultural geography altered utterly by change. This poem does not necessarily demonstrate an achievement in narrative verse—the model of Tennyson — nor a detailed description of a personal history—as in Browning’s monologues. Even in the medieval Irish genre of the wonder-voyage, this poem acts unpredictably and unnervingly. The dialogue partnership of this poem — the repudiation of St Patrick by Oisín— enables a dichotomising of themes and personages: ecclesiastics and mystics compete for the right to an epistemological history as well as a psychology of mortality. The temporal reflex of the poem, Oisín’s flawed immortality, unites the passage of time with the persecution of geography. *WO* also addresses themes that will be echoed later in poems such as “Easter, 1916”, issues of what constitutes natural or un-natural artefacts for the imagination, as debated by a scepticism towards both heritage and society. What is at stake in these poems is the failure to realise ancestral permanence through a retreat into the purely imagined. *WO* is an important poem that addresses, historically and geographically, the past and future of the Irish landscape. Several important Yeatsian concerns emerge here in an early form, concerns which will come to pre-occupy him throughout his life.

This is, as I wish to foreshadow, one of the key points I will make in my conclusion. Dramatic poems such as *WO* and *SW* anticipate and prefigure, in acute but preliminary ways, Yeats’s later versions of *nô* drama. As closet dramas, *SW* and *WO* configure time, space, and geography, through a conflict of the spectral in relation to the physical. The dramatic imagination, enabled by strategies of this poetic form in the staging of Oisín or Forgael’s living-death, acts as a warping mirror that reflects both metaphysical and social conditions. These figureheads—Oisín or Forgael—become theatrical characters, not just allegories; the manner in which they are staged, by temporal and physical settings, is as important as the personalities they enact. What occurs in *WO*, its forms of ancestral recall, contribute to Yeats’s later interpretation of the *mugen nô* [phantasmal spirit *nô*] as a kind of liminal position. *WO*, compared with, say, *The Dreaming of the Bones*, erects a spatial dimension akin to the battlements of Hamlet’s castle. Ghost and mortality meet, truth versus history becomes contested, and a castle’s and country’s future are confronted. Dramatic necromancy turns a ghost story into performed actualisation of alternative metaphysics in which twilight contorts normative modes of time and progress.

WO diverges in a pronounced manner from standardised folkloric poetry in its mixtures of politics, mythology, and artistic ingenuity. The text addresses a multiplicity of themes, being content with neither antiquarianism, nor single-minded nationalist statements. *WO*, as a standard bearer for much of his poetry in the 1890s, represents a fundamental attitude of ambivalence in Yeats, as a poetic craftsman exploring a range of influences. On an imaginative level, the ambitions of the psyche do find their most meaningful expression in tactile form. Yeats, the mystic, was not Yeats the Manichaen. The concept of the *profane*, the gross, corrupt material world, would become crucial poetic material, an appreciation for the data of the senses, that leads to Yeats's own treatment of maturation and elderliness. The quintessential Old Man Yeats, bemoaning his geriatric state, is a caricature. In actuality, the corpus of his works has long investigated the relationship between sensory experience, as authentic being-in-the-world without remoter charm, and the necessary decay of the organisms that constitute this being-in-the-world. Anatomical reality interrupts the Gnostic condition, and indeed has more value.

As a continuation of Keats, Yeats takes to task not only the Romantic criticism—the inability to sustain the vision—but a sceptical enquiry into the *locus standi* of the vision itself. In *WO*, and also “The Madness of King Goll”, for example, landscape acts as an augmented mode of cognition. The situation of the psyche is channeled through the conditioned particulars of the locale. Thus, the map of places can reverberate with poetic interrogation:

And now I wander in the woods

*They will not hush, the leaves a-flutter round me, the beech
leaves old.* (“The Madness of King Goll” 37, 47-8)

My initial comparison between Yeats and Cavafy was not meant to overstate the similarities. Cavafy was one of many Greek émigrés spread out across the Mediterranean, dreaming of a *Hellenic World*, a classical Hellenic era, and the echoes of such in a displaced present. Who would synthesise classical genius with contemporary nationalism, a lyricist or a politician? Cavafy's efforts were born abroad, an extension of a nation whose cultural sensibilities arose within other territories. Yeats never left his island: the questions of state and culture constantly were inflamed by the occupying power. These two poets, grappling with their own forms of introversion, demonstrated one of those predicaments that came to a crisis with

the cusp of modernism. Yeats, like Cavafy, adopted the verse of the past tense into multi-temporal animation within the landscape. This quality in his poetics will become thematically resonant in the deepening of his friendships with Tagore, Hearn, and Pound.

The Celtic Literary Revival is a misnomer, at least if this term is understood as a thirty year burst of activity, centred around a few figures in the Celtic Renaissance. Numerous critics, specialising in various media, have described the trend as an ongoing process of revolutionary zeal, derived from the advent of print technologies. This includes Terry Eagleton in *Nationalism, Colonialism, Literature*. As one example, the production of music as a cultural enterprise, through mass communication, promulgated an Irish characterhood, augmented by gendered constructions, in negotiating received patterns of heritage. The topics of nationalism and its props does become massive in its scope, and what is left out often says as much as what is studied. For example, Leith Davis's book research could also be expanded to include performative strategies which are particular Ulster expressions of nationhood through music. These of course include the infamous marches, including lambeg drums, fifes, and sectarian lyrics, served up as ritualistic, public discourse. The Apprentice Boys of Derry had constituted public ceremonies to commemorate the 1688 victory against the Jacobite siege since within a year of that event. They only grew in size from there, and their contentious prominence in Irish society is always a worry. In these marches, public declarations of territory and turf enflame the local conditions between rival communities. Do such activities not have equal, or more, impact than a songbook or sheet music for the parlour piano? Yeats was more interested in the public displays that combine inherited musical tradition with festival performance, such as the Wren Boys or mummers, rather than the mass-produced consumer product intended for the privacy of the home.

Consider "The Fiddler of Dooney". An itinerant musician buys a generic songbook from the Sligo fair. However, the moniker of his reputation is based on his place of birth, the experience of the public performance, and the geographical distinctions of his fiddle style. "The Fiddler of Dooney," light diddle that it is, nonetheless identifies who are the primary agents in nation-building: the people who build the nation. Individual actions, in public roles, create greater impact on society than some general, anonymous flow of *Zeitgeist*. The Fiddler, in the town square, incites a louder call to action than privately-lived prayerbooks. or other print cultural materials consumed in seclusion. The national poet of Greece, Kostis

Palamas, is another such kind of public artistic authority. His verse, crafted for cultural performance on festival occasions, literally became anthemic, in the case of the Olympic hymn. Through poetry rather than stentorianism, he exerted profound influence in overturning the prestige of *katharevousa*. Likewise, Yeats's national influence, inseparable from these early poems, involves a figure who had a much greater impact than a folk lyric expressing a national sentiment, or a pamphlet espousing a political agenda.

Those commitments Yeats had to nineteenth-century modes of symbolism and lyric were challenged by encroaching political crises, of land, nation, and nationality. Hence, the contestation of the landscape involves forces of assimilated history—colonialism, landlordism, capitalism—against heritage, which sustains a mythic connection to people as belonging in a particular history within nature. Some of Yeats's quotations do seem like hackneyed nostalgia—"Indeed Cuchulain, Fionn, Oisín, St Patrick, the whole ancient world of Erin may well have been sung out of the void by the harps of the great bardic order" (*FLM* 52). In his later works, the relationship of void, as erasure, and harp, as ancestral recall, becomes clearer in purposes. And, as environmentalists know, one purpose of folklore is to erect barriers against technological processes that would push nature out of view. Folklore provides a discourse for appreciating and communalising a public landscape that is, without exaggeration, endangered. Landscape in Yeats's poetry, which at first might seem devoted to the otherworldly, identifies primarily the importance of local landscape a natural resource to be harmonised with a non-invasive human influence. The appraisal of the meaningful cultural past—an *in-placed* source—has been under serious threat from industry, bureaucracy, and constitutionality, all of which are answerable to contemporary demands for profit and production. The reverence for antiquity does seek an offering that becomes contentious, as modeled from an ethnographic gaze. Industry tolerates ethnicity in so far as it has market potential; an open air museum has more collateral than scattered dolmens in a farmer's field. The myopia of technology fixates on the maximum productivity of the present; the past does not dissolve, but only disappears from view, including those ancient landscapes and cultural traces.

In exposing the treachery of the dream in *WO*, Yeats emphasis his concern for the particulars of place and community as to be founded upon ecological concerns and environmental obligation. The specific integrity of a local habitat, and its cultural contexts,

can be understood through its resonance as configuration of a continuous community. Yeats's poetry is thus often intensely ecological and nationalistic. Its depictions of decontextualized cultures and vanishing presences critiques invasive social processes that annex the past. Yeats identifies both the necessary importance (and inevitability) of social change and historical process, but he also warns against their power to erode and erase tradition.

The first antiquarians were very much shoring up the past against change, although in their case religious change: the reformation, the dissolution of monasteries, the urgency of a new national order. Place writing can take the form of a cringe-worthy veneration of the aulde sod. It can also be marketable nostalgia, such as the recent scheme to sell bags full of Irish dirt to be scattered over the graves of the diasporic children of Éire.⁴⁸ But Yeats's point of view is neither of these. He argues that economic expansion, served by mass media, would eliminate the particulars of culture and landscape through its exponential growth: "If the papers and lectures have not done it, they think, surely at any rate the steam-whistle has scared the whole tribe out of the world" ("Irish Faeries" 60). In an anticipatory way, Yeats is identifying what will become serious threats to the very ecological foundations that sustain the environment. On this point, Ireland continues to question the promise of progress against sustainability. Just ask the elderly women of Corrbín, lined up at dawn, rosaries in hand, to protest Royal Dutch Shell's offshore gas terminal near Bellanaboy. They are, in fact, refusing to accept the oil industry's treatment of the local landscape as selfish resource. That the earth can continually provide us limitless capital, while holding limitless waste, is the far bigger dream-world than anything in *The Rose*. Yeats's acumen, prescient as it was, detected those industrial forces whose tendency is to assess the future as power. To fight against such an invasion, Oisín would become the director of the Abbey Theatre, as well as a statesman.

An eco-critical model of Yeats's poetry puts into perspective the mythology of landscape as that which unites habitat with human narrative. Similarly, for Séamus Heaney, Station Island is not only as retreat centre, but a temple of unbroken ritual, a circularity of communal performances. Robert Burns also described an organic order, which is congruous with his love, yet one ransacked by hunters in "Now Westlin Winds":

⁴⁸ Patrick White, "Irish Entrepreneur Hits Paydirt in America", *The Globe and Mail*, 21 November 2006 (A3).

Thus ev'ry kind their pleasure find,
 The savage and the tender;
 Some social join, and leagues combine,
 Some solitary wander:
 Avaunt, away! the cruel sway,
 Tyrannic man's dominion;
 The sportsman's joy, the murd'ring cry,
 The flutt'ring, gory pinion!

This is an unusual tone of vegetarianism within a Scottish balladeer more often known for his *haggis*. Such themes are not isolated bits of Romanticism, but are forerunner to such contemporary Irish language writers like Cathal Ó Searcaigh, from the Donegal Gaeltacht. In his verse, the landscape resonates through its symbiotic connection to human life and sustenance. The farmland is not metaphor, a terrain of agricultural Ireland, but a living organism of intense sensuality. Yeats and Ó Searcaigh have a theme in common in that Ó Searcaigh, especially in the collection *An Bealach 'na Bhaile* [*Homecoming*], shows many influences from Eastern spirituality. Yeats should be re-assessed as being more aware of threatening changes that he is given credit. Through Oisín's displacement, he articulates a vision of the cultural landscape as an affirmation of human interaction that sustains its ongoing traces.

In trying to identify a situation of being in between the vanishing (as exemplified in *WO*'s mystery isles) or the strictly empirical rational historicism, Yeats tried to identify a liminal state that connects to physicality but is, at the same time, not restricted by knowledge determined by the here and now. In this way, he voices ideas similar to Heidegger's description of Being-in-the-World, as a condition that entails the space/time condition as pre-ontological. Being is immediateness realised in the *presencing* of being as a dependent origination in the metaphysics of space/time. Without any suppleness in the organic, when sensuousness is taken out of the earth, Being is stripped of the subject that gives rise to its own knowing. Heidegger, and being in the world, will be discussed more in the forthcoming chapter, but I believe this quote is relevant to *WO*:

The circularity of consumption for the sake of consumption is the sole procedure which distinctively characterizes the history of a

world which has become an unworld. (*The End of Philosophy* 107)

Thus, following Heidegger, the *un-world* of the Faery is actually realized in the ruthless myths of consumption that ignore climate, environment, and folklore. In “The Stolen Child”, the hidden “fairy-vats” have an uncomfortable similarity to stockpiles of crude oil. The early Yeats need not be dismissed as dreamy lyricism with an Irish accent. All his works frequently involve a political devotion to physicality and material concerns for communal survival. Patterns of metaphysical and folkloric reference extended the dimensions for Yeats in not only a visionary sense, but a social view as well. In describing a rural world under erasure, Yeats claims that symbols extracted from landscape are useless. If historical sites must be removed to make room for a motorway, its presence in a museum is ruined through decontextualisation.⁴⁹

The natural world provides outlets, rather than prescriptions, for human emotions. Myth, as a kind of ongoing examination of the physical record through communal story, need not be a domain of elitism or exclusivity. Ó Searcaigh and Yeats both find in the traces left in dirt and habitat a domain for intersecting culture with the processes of the past. The landscape, marked by heritage, provides a kind of reference point for coherence. On the importance of landscape referents as interstices for human contact, many comparative examples can be made. Kawabata Yasunari’s *The Sound of the Mountain* describes a sound much like Yeats’s “lowing / of the calves on the warm hillside”. The landscape provides sensory realisation of one’s organic nature, one’s physical embodiment of thought and thinking. To Ogata Shingo, an aging man slowly overcome with senility in Kawabata’s novel, much like “The Ballad of the Old Mother”, the vibrant natural world provides an enduring connection to the process of life. For Oisín, landscape cannot substitute

⁴⁹ Consider the selection of the Inuit *inukshuk* as the symbol of the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. This symbol was chosen based on a desire to represent B.C. with a *First Nations* marking, regardless of its relevance to the physical location of the event. Local First Peoples argued that, actually, *inukshuk* reflected nothing of the living tradition of area tribes. West coast tribes argue that there are many talented, innovative artists who could have provided an appropriate logo that would honour local customs but also welcome the international visitor. Inuit elders, whose tribal jurisdiction is nowhere near Vancouver, stated that they had not been consulted at all. Displacing a territorial landmark such as the *inukshuk* reveals the crude marketing ploy at issue here. The Vancouver Olympic Committee avoided the issue, showing a chilling insensitivity to cultural-geographic issues. The stubborn motivation behind their graphical design is clear: First Nations symbols belong on souvenirs and t-shirts, and not in the physical landscape. The relevance of myth, artefact, and location are completely effaced. That the purpose of the *inukshuk* was to guide and mark a journey through the particularities of Inuit culture and topography had been rudely misconstrued.

for interpersonal relationships, but can act as an intercessor for lost memories. The living environment is an intercessor which networks the realm of human expression. As Shiki wrote,

In our parting,
Between boat and shore
Comes the willow-tree. (Blyth 2: 563)

In these brief examples, my purpose is to show that common ground in which Yeats's early works finds many points of contact with others.⁵⁰

Demarcating the Land: Unresolved Issues and Contrary Opinions

After all, Yeats had both begun and continued trends on a global scale. Those concerns he raises have increased, rather than diminished. Indeed, the Irish fascination for its own countryside has become a political crisis in the post-E.U. world. *The Mapmaker* (2001), although a political thriller, focused on a cinematographic view of the Irish countryside as a kind of modern cultural topography, layered with narrative references from Irish literature. In this film, the area surrounding the northern border becomes a realm of mystery, somehow zig-zagged by an invisible line that represented the United Kingdom. Identifiable features prominently act as backdrops, and it became something of a game to see how many topographic features one could identify. Even Benbulbin makes a cameo appearance. The film hints strongly at the continued dispute over Northern Ireland as a landscape, which, because of occupation, has turned the ethics of place into a blurred dialectic between culture and geography. Gerry Adams has written a series of short stories on this theme. One of them, "The Mountains of Mourne", is a surprisingly fair-minded account of a Protestant and Catholic working together for a drinks company. Devoid of Sinn Féin sloganeering, the narrative evolves as the two characters recognize their common class situation, their mutual

⁵⁰ Interesting intersections between Irish and Japanese authors continue to be fashioned. For example, Takahashi Matsuo, after a visit to Ireland, composed a series of poetic meditations that frequently respond and interact with the works of Cathal Ó Searcaigh and Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, particularly on the themes of gender, sexual orientation, and the contexts of cultural landscapes. For a bilingual edition of these poems, see Takahashi's *On Two Shores*.

interest in the history of the land. In one scene, they give a lift to a rather mountainy older man, who gives his own cartography of the mountains:

The bloody border . . . You can't see that awful bloody imaginary line that they pretend can divide the air and the mountain ranges and the rivers . . .

Listen to all the names: Slieve Donard, or Bearnagh or Meelbeg or Meelmore— all in our own language. For all their efforts they've never killed that either. (51)

Geordie, a Protestant, evinces the Ulster paradox: the nationalistic collusion of Irish myth and landscape precludes a belonging to others, even if legalistically they hold a sense of power:

You and that oul' eejit Paddy are pups from the same Fenian litter, but you remember one thing, young fella-me-lad, yous may have the music and songs and history and even the bloody mountains, but we've got everything else; you remember that! (53)

The narrator, surprised by the outburst, can only reply that the mountains (and therefore the music) do not actually belong to any one person or single political unit: "It's not ours to give and take. You were born here same as me."

The national assemblies, however, do not see the issue so simply. The turmoil surrounding Irish place-naming and tourism continues to be a thorny issue. Oisín's prophecies of an over-run, bureaucratic Ireland have been realised. Turf continues to be divided as the regimes of political discourse inscribe territory over landscape. For example, consider the Gaelic Athletic Associations laws regarding the acceptability of sport. The GAA posits an integrity to the pitch of the Gaelic games as a sacrosanct field of indigenous play. Only until a vote in 2005 did the GAA suspend Rule 42, which then permitted Croke Park to be used for *colonialist* sporting events. Previously, the regulation stipulated that Gaelic sport grounds are reserved for Gaelic sport, and on the odd occasion for Australian rules football, or American rules football. Colonialist trespassers, namely soccer and rugby, were not welcome. A ban continues to exclude British servicemen and members of the RUC from participation in hurling leagues. The GAA made this point clearly by derailing a partnered bid between Scotland and Ireland to host the European soccer championship. The connection between terrain and identity is clear: *Cumann na Fuiseoige*, a Belfast based GAA club, has faced criticism over the republican symbols on its badge.

Yeats feared that the landscape could be turned into a commodity to be controlled and manipulated by an elite few. The Icelandic poet Sveinbjörn Beinteinsson, whose manual on Old Norse poetics (*rímur*) *Bragfræði og Háttatal* is a standard textbook, has argued the same point. A sheep farmer, poet and pagan priest, Beinteinsson has increased awareness in the archaeological significance of local landmarks, their relationship to the national literature, and their importance to the life of the community. As he described in an interview before his death,

G.: Is Nature taking revenge while she dies because man has lost his relationship with her? Is that what you're saying?

S. B.: Yes, I can well remember what the old people used to say to me as a kid: 'Let the tree stand; leave the moss on the rock; don't kill the fly in the window!' Nature was a part of our lives back then. After the arrival of technology and like someone who is being forced to dance. A long time ago, I knew of people who were forced to dance and couldn't stop dancing until they either fell completely exhausted or dropped dead. That how it is in the world today with all its wars. The world is dancing itself to death and can't stop itself.⁵¹

Yeats would understand this metaphor: “How can we know the dancer from the dance” when the centre cannot stop itself? The green politics in Yeats, surfacing in the early poetry, point out the consequence of local landscape, local communities, as under threat from erasure and erosion. The landscape offers sensual interaction and situates the body as *being*:

And his sun-freckled face,
And grey Connemara cloth,
Climbing up to a place
Where stone is dark under froth. (“The Fisherman” 29-32)

For verse to equal the cold and passionate qualities of dawn, it must proffer organic reminders. In the case of Seamus Heaney’s bog bodies, history is a corpse preserved in the grime of natural time.

⁵¹ From the book *Die Neuen Hexen* by Gisela Graichen. An English translation of this interview can be found online: <http://www.angelfire.com/nm/seidhman/beinweb.html> (accessed November 2, 2006).

Importantly, from these early works, we can see Yeats investigating the phantasm of heritage. The Symbolist ideation of an otherworld realm of transcendental truth, as Oisín discovered, is dangerously impractical. Likewise, the utilitarian view of history as defined by the present moment could easily justify violent agendas that forsake the past, and its cultural heritage. This was St Patrick's disregard for the national cartography that he reinvents. Out of these questions, Yeats began to formulate the ancestral past as located in a domain of *twilight*, resonant of previous generations, perpetuating their knowledge, but also contiguous with the present day. The exploration and consideration of twilight would continue onward into his later works.

An important aspect of Yeats's twilight, however, is also how it served as the primary themes through which Japanese authors began their extensive considerations of Yeats as a compelling author in their time. Certainly, Irish and Japanese writers found in each other a comparative predicament as to the condition of modernity. The juggernaut of progress had demonstrated its potential to over-run the particulars of place, in Ireland or Japan. On this theme of twilight, Irish and Japanese literary modernity developed comparative models for debating and assessing the discourses of the vanishing, as Ivy termed it, in relation to the forces that would decontextualize and displace them, from both society and geography.

To rebel against the expansion of generic modernity and its utilitarian goals, Yeats first devised a verse cartography of both physical and mythopoetic boundaries and landmarks, negotiating political and symbolic waymarkers to work against topographical displacement. Beinteinsson states that to destroy the landmark is to lose the poetry. The actual geography becomes merely a footnote, a scholarly exercise in identifying a forgotten place or feature. The real connection has been irrecoverably destroyed; the authentic traces vanish. Thus, the critical nexus between folklore and the environment is the obligation of the person. The person recognises the processes of the past as well as the inheritance of the future. Beinteinsson does not propose a generic Luddism, but he questions whether SUVs and regular flights across the globe are incontrovertible rights. While the world of folklore is now often dismissed as a New Age fetishism, its forms of knowledge provide alternative stories that describe the interactions between communities, as well as their dependency on the natural world. What is lost for the sake of mechanical conveniences is irreplaceable. Considering that some motorways in Iceland are marked with goblin warnings, a certain

prestige for storytelling has achieved more than mere superstition. For Yeats, cultural landscape and its attendant aura of twilight enable all ancestral processes, all memories, to come into contemporary being through interconnected relationships:

No conscious invention can take the place of tradition, for he would write a folk tale, and thereby bring a new life into literature, must have the fatigue of the spade in his hands and the stupors of the field in his heart.

(“A Literary Causerie”, *FLM* 89)

The customs and practices of a culture produce a narrative and grant it the air of primacy. They then perpetuate it through the conventions of the generations. *People precede myths*—not, as Jung had it, the other way around. For such reasons, the etymology of the word *gehenna*, the hell of the *Tanakh*, is derived from a site south of Jerusalem, where all the town’s rubbish was burned.

3 The Politics of Druidism

... a furious 'local joskin' with a mobile phone, 'giving out', says Quirke when he's gone, 'about Yeats. Said he was only a story-teller, as if there's anything wrong with that. That he only listened to people, as if there was anything wrong with that. Of course *he* never listens to anyone.'

--Mark McCrum, *The Craic*⁵²

Yeats's *The Speckled Bird* (*SB*) comes closest to a hermetic autobiography, totaling about four hundred pages, in various versions, but unpublished in his lifetime. Its unfulfilled hypothesis was to depict the development of the individual mage, the sorcerer as a young man, as he progresses through gradual stages of knowledge toward an esoteric epiphany. As such, this book seeks to meld personal experience into a general code from which an occultic order would be established, complete with rites appropriate to a *Celtic* system of magic. The *Speckled Bird* is the heraldry for a new, initiatic fraternity, one based on Kabbalah as well as Celticism. In some ways, *SB* envisions the paranormal formula to be propounded in sections of *A Vision*, but prefers for the moment the narrative genre of a *bildungsroman* to reveal the mystic, as a young man, growing up on the path of an aspirant. Through meditations, trances, and visions, attuned to the local environments of Sligo, Michael Hearne experiments with modes of magical epistemology. *SB* ultimately formulates its reflections in the manner of a childhood memoir, rather than providing the Rosicrucian textbook which it seemingly desires to be. Through the multi-staged apprenticeship of Michael Hearne, esotericism is described in a hands-on manner. This stylistically diverges from the conventions of the folklore collection, a format Yeats earlier pursued in *IFF*. The focus is now on a more personal force of memory and interlocution as the source of gnostic realisation. Tradition and personhood converge through the metaphoric alchemy of Hearne's mind in pursuit of the mysteries. The field of this investigation, the landscape, relates to consciousness through the intermediary of *spirit*, a power of creative imagination that discerns Reality from realities. However, concerned with locality, *SB* claims of dissatisfaction with the empirical world,

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This anecdote was recorded in an Englishman's travelogue while passing through Sligo Town. Michael Quirke is a local artist, a butcher who later turned to wood carving, using figures from Celtic mythology as his models. Quirke is a wonderful repository of knowledge concerning Irish legends, as well as an uncanny wit for Sligo and its ambivalence for Yeats. In this passage, Quirke rebukes the almost omnipresent use of mobile-phones in Ireland as a response to this popular notion of disapproval towards Yeats's work.

preferring the dimensions of the transcendental Spirit.⁵³ The physical is, at best, a portal to higher truths, and at worst a distraction. The narrative begins in rural Sligo, continues into the ceremonial, Masonic temples of Europe, and concludes with an eastward glance.

The persona of Michael Hearne combines the disparate masks of Michael Robartes and Owen Aherne into a singular portrait of Yeats's revolt against ecclesiastically organised religion. As an antidote to isolation, like Huysman's Durtal, the young protagonist takes refuge in conversation with other individuals of a spiritualist bent. Scepticism combines with passion in an assault on the institutions of prescribed faith. Foster's summary of this work, its autobiographical implications, makes several apt observations:

A slightly satirical note was introduced into his hero's adventures among the adepts, along with a more sceptical portrait of Mathers. . . . But if the passages of *The Speckled Bird* inspired by the Golden Dawn in 1900 are ironical, those which record his and Gonne's pursuit of 'Celtic Mysteries' are not. (1: 233)

True, *SB* often defies any one evaluation of its purpose, on account of its inconsistent tones of sincerity and irony. Yeats did heap equal derision on formal, established occultic networks, while privately developing an idealistic vision of founding his own. This sardonic view of Blavatsky and other reclusive gurus and poobahs can be found in *A Vision* as well as *SB*. Hearne expects Ireland to provide the missing ingredient to constitute the *Celtic* as not only a cultural ideal, but a metaphysical essence. The *Celtic* suggests a pre-Patrickian era of variability in observation and dogma.

SB is a story of failed love as well. The love of Michael (Yeats) to Margaret (Gonne) should invoke a new aeon of tantric unity, in which sexual acts and spiritual ambitions unite under a neo-Pagan banner of Ancient Ireland reborn. The love plot, more than the esoterica, defines the novel's sense of transcendence and rebirth. Hearne swaps ghost stories with Margaret, as a kind of foreplay. Previously, he debated philosophy with his father, and now seeks out mentors and guides. In Margaret, he anticipates a *rosa alchemica* that will release a *kundalini* spirit of transformation. This sexual druidism, as a kind of revived spirituality, can re-instate the *brehon* laws of the past for a contemporary society.

⁵³ See O'Driscoll ("Preface") and Hirsch ("Transcendental Moment") for a more detailed discussion of this text as mystical programme.

The problem is . . . Yeats never finished the work, never formalised the kinds of impractical sorcery at issue, and never brought the text to a state of publication. For all its geometries of Mystery, much of the manuscript is actually motivated along intensely personal assessments of not belonging. The work critiques conditions, from a youth's perspective, the various kinds of class strategy in Ireland, and the accompanying alienation. Hearne's strongest emotions involve the sense of disconnection he feels from religious institutions, community networks, and other forms of mainstream belonging. Hearne, rather than addressing a secret fraternity, directs his attention to the everyday level of the community. He describes the phantomisation of specific, local knowledge (available to all, not just an elite few), which is being assimilated or overwritten by trans-national authority: from Rome or London, for example. Hearne seeks to recover the submerged voice, which he detects in the local acts of storytelling. Having a receptive ear, for the cadences and stories of his youth, actually becomes Hearne's main principle for gaining special knowledge. Indeed, *listening* becomes the major practice for understanding the impulses of the soul and its diverse relations.

Hearne discovers that the people around him, although variously aligned to institutional orthodoxies, regularly disregard dogma in favor of a good tale. The most pious Catholic provides for him entertaining (and educational) tales of the apparitional virgin at Knock that contain traces of premodern folk beliefs. Much more than the artificial seriousness of the magus, Hearn delights in these rural modes of speech, which he appreciates for their tone, timber, and forms of local history they reveal. Throughout *SB*, clergymen, labourers, and soothsayers—of all sects and classes—bequeath a particular form of local experience that informs Hearne in ways that his symbolist texts do not. Their comfortable contradictions in spiritual matters, their unconventional methods of delivering a story, all resonant with speech practices of Irish Gaelic and Hiberno-English dialects, mark each speaker in a manner that demonstrates a shared sense of communal practice and experience. These modes of speech enchant Hearn far more than some abstract alchemy. Hearn's real magical training, actually, arises through oral exchange (banter) with the locals of Sligo. The cumulative effect of the dialogue is a trance of audibility, of acoustic wisdom, whose commonplace utterances enrich far more than the unattainable gnostic ideal. What characterises their personal narrations, which to our contemporary ears may sound like

hackneyed Irish blether, are forms of oral history that document a post-famine Ireland in a time of extraordinary social exchange. As a memorable example, Patrick Scanlan's theatrical description of the mis-adventures of the Irishman in Boston has great impact on Hearn, far more than the cold lecture of the hierophant:

My curse on the curraghs and my blessing on the boats; my curse
on the booker that did the treachery . . . (38)

Scanlan's tale of his emigrant brothers, the disasters and racism that awaited them in the New World, take up far more textual space than any occultist. Hearne prefers the homespun experience at the dockside, with its local flavor and earnest reflections on love and loss, to the abstract formulations of the secret temple.

In privileging the local and particular, and its marked forms of verbal style, the narrative structure of *SB* must implicitly reject its two fundamental goals: the first was to form a secret society known as *The Order of the Grail*, an elite institution for a magically gifted few; and to provide this abbey with suitable instruction for its hermetically removed members, through *The Castle of Heroes*. Hearne initially desired a Celticity, as a panacea of ancient spiritual identity, to provide the qualitative mood for his distinctly Irish form of Masonry. But *SB* remains a tale of youth, albeit one set in an Ireland enduring a period of swift political change. The work's uninhibited romanticism, combined with repressed sexuality, turns to occultism to find a mythology for integrating sentiment with flesh. Hearne tries to reframe his infatuation for Margaret in terms. Frustrated by their unconsummated love, he turns his contempt into formal attacks on Irish partisan politics, Catholicism, materialism. Hearne, however, cannot bring about an alternative to these establishments. In response to the banality of contemporary thinkers, Hearne initially clings to a formulation of Ireland as sacred inheritance, one possessing the true knowledge of the mythic. The *Celtic*, as the true religion of old Ireland, must be restored if the portal of initiation is to open for the elite aspirant. Coded in such a way, in *SB*, the *Celtic* suggests a magical milieu for a human condition predating industrial society. Or so Hearne, as did others at that time, imagine. But, as *SB* staggers under its own narrative wishes left unfulfilled, Hearne's own theosophy turns into vapor.

For the *Celtic* to have some meaning, as a more immediate in its point of reference than Red Branch myths and heroic codes of ethics, Hearne cannot depend on conjurations out

of his old storybooks. He turns, instead, to the living speech that excites him with its nearness, its connections to the ethos of place. Father Gillam notices this trend first in Hearne, that of the listening, by warning his father:

“You must not take Master Michael Hearne in the boat fishing.”

“Why mustn’t I?” says I. Says he, “Because he is putting nonsense in people’s heads and getting nonsense put into his own head, and because he is without religion and without the grace of God.” (35)

To decode Fr Gilliam’s admonition . . . Hearne is simply enjoying too much *cráic*, in listening to the local talkers, bantering back in response, and studying the forms of local knowledge they communicate. There is little point to a nonfigurative description of Irish society. If an authentic alternative to church and occupation can be found, surely it is in the words of its inhabitants, their unique ways of describing their history and geography.

A less circumspective writer may well have completed *SB* with a tediously resolute conclusion; Yeats, however, abandoned the work, leaving it unfinished and unresolved. The incompleteness of the manuscript—Yeats’s inability to formally publish it or resolve its flawed esotericism—testifies to the inevitable confusion of Hearne’s preoccupations. Even critics who are particularly interested in Yeats’s occultism do not devote much time to *SB*, and fair to say that Yeats was dissatisfied with this text. As a generic bit of mystery school literature, *SB* can be conveniently related to the fad for ethnic occult treatises: a Celtic counterpart to arcane Egyptology, Persian mystery schools, or secret Tibet. Hearne, in this general climate of mystery literature, sought to invent a version of a distinctly Irish wisdom academy, but allied to the broader curiosity for lost, arcane knowledge of Atlantis. In detecting a shared vision of mystical knowledge, Edward Hirsch attunes the “transcendental moment” of *SB* to a pure expression of Sufi-like dissolution into the Eternal (61). However, whatever its pretensions, no such ego-dissolution occurs in *SB*, either through the spiritual, sexual, or a combination of both. In short, Hearne finds himself in the same position as Forgael: all shadows and no substance. *SB*’s project of a hidden tower collapses with the separation of Michael and Margaret (or Willie and Maud), overpowered by the exterior conditions of rule and morality as discourse in Irish society.

SB, like much of Yeats’s later prose, attempts to render into narrative what could not be elaborately detailed in the conventions of his poetry. Much of Yeats’s panoramic output,

in terms of form and format, can be understood as a process of confronting or circumventing genre conventions. For all of its flaws, a very noticeable characteristic of *SB* is its polyphonic vocality, which tests the boundaries of utterableness by imitating speech genres. Crucially, although a failed experiment for Yeats, *SB* documents his first concerted efforts toward oral tradition in contemporary Ireland, as daily usage. The Brehon laws remain in the past, but Yeats finds in contemporary circumstances modes of debate and discussion that offer both a connection to the past, but a viable kind of community discourse in the present. In *The Celtic Twilight* (1893, rev. ed. 1902), which explores themes of literacy, information, and ethos in a much more comprehensive way, owes its conception to much of *SB*'s flunked ambitions.

CT emerges, but also critically turns away, from a stream of literary genres that eddied throughout the Victorian period that practised forms of premature ethnography in response to the arrival of modernity. For Yeats, *CT* developed into a new format which required a versatile style, one that might document qualitative aspects of Irish society, as well as and quantitative observation of communal memory. *CT* combines all of his earlier efforts at short fiction, poetry, auto-ethnography, and political journalism. As such, it represents crucial experiments with artistic style and cultural issues. Critics have argued over how to decipher not just the idealistic goals of this work. Its tensions with comparable genres—in folklore, ethnography, and paranormal literature—pull the narrative into multi-dimensionality. At face value, the episodic structure relays a series of Irish folktales, although contemporary rather than archival; one might also see these, then, working in tandem with a national identity crisis. It is this latter condition that can, in fact, evaluate the former. Certainly, *CT* has a vigorous political argument that separates it from more benign and complacent travelogues of the time. Ireland had its own tradition of indigenous tourism, the kind of *journey through my native land*, such as Synge's *In Wicklow and West Kerry*. The passer-through sequences his quips and observations, taking snapshots of locals and his or her passing impressions of the terrain. Very little dialogue occurs, and discussions of the weather predominate.

CT instinctively asserts its purpose to be more than this kind of breezy travelogue. However, in terms of critical reception, *CT* has an uncomfortable status as some manifesto for the Celtic Renaissance, as well as a soppy form of Victorian ethnography. Can *CT*

provide cultural information with more depth than ethnic posturing and essentialising? What if this work employs *Celtic* in a variegated form rather than basic green, and that fairylore, rather than retreating from the world, confronts the world with its politics of speech acts?

“You Look More like a Black-Eyed Susan to Me”: Yeats as the Quiet Man?

The critiques of *CT* as a blatant kind of cultural nationalism (and ethnic chauvinism) need to be discussed. Indeed, aside from the *The Quiet Man*, there are few works relating to a depiction of the Irish that arouse so much disagreement. If viewed as a declaration of some peculiarly Irishised sentiment, *Celtic Twilight* has become the codeword for the worst sins of fantasy and romance in a plastic accent. For example, a *Time Magazine* review, published on Bloomsday, 1961, summarises the resentment toward this work, already in extensive circulation:

Then there is Yeats, the prophet of the Celtic Twilight (the "cultic twalette," Joyce called it), sitting on the turf in Connacht and self-consciously schooling himself to be a poet of the peasants. But as Stephen Spender once noted, the calculated lyricism of "I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree" suggests "the image of a young man reclining on a yellow satin sofa."⁵⁴

Such an indictment against Yeats, as a founder of a definition of *Celtic* as a racial entity with a unique mentality, has been argued from many angles. As discussed in the above quote, in *CT*, Yeats's overall goal was to dramatise himself as a "prophet" of a false religion of ethnic doctrine. To accomplish this, he condescends towards his subject matter, the peasantry, who somehow dependably define the abiding folk of pure Ireland. He himself, however, is of questionable stock. The dreamy wishes of this work reflect only an aristocratic sensibility that has the privilege of picking and choosing its nostalgia.

Yeats, accordingly, authenticates a Celtic tradition with dubious conjectures. *CT* in particular fancies Ireland, an imaginary "Ireland", so removed from social reality that it enters the realm of souvenir shop fantasies. Certainly, a great deal of contemporary Irish literature makes a strenuous debate against the presumption of a *Celtic* Ireland, if by such one

⁵⁴ Archived online by Time Magazine, Inc.: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,895396-1,00.html>

means the *real* Ireland involves bogs, Aran jumpers, and accordions. This foundational cliché (from Yeats and his ilk) jarringly contrasts against the civil reality of the nation, the other “real” Ireland”, of technology, Celtic Tiger economy, drug problems, and social decay. Call it an ongoing rebellion, now fighting against *Riverdance*. For a recent example, during the criminal climax of *Intermission* (2003), the film intentionally juxtaposes music from the folk group *Clannad* against contemporary scenes of urban Dublin grittiness. The juxtaposition is clear: weepy fiddle tunes can never be calibrated against the everyday materiality of realism. Legitimate access to Ireland cannot be achieved (nor was ever realised) in ethnically and spatially loaded terms such as *Celtic* or *Twilight*. Yeats, it is said, has only conjured up portraits out of glamour, misleadingly situating them as authentic ethnic representations, and doing nobody a favor in the process.

The *Time* article comes at a middle point of decades of dislike for Yeats’s Celticity, a critique begun much earlier during Yeats’s life in pamphlets that attacked his stage Irishness and claims to Irish identity. Currently, it is rather fashionable to slag off his films and novels, as I note in my introduction. Certainly, Irish people, whatever that might mean or whomever that might be, do not want to be identified with stereotypes. Global processes of emigration from Ireland (and now immigration *to* Ireland) will helpfully test our assumptions. As “Irish” pubs proliferate across continents, and green become *de rigeur* for a particular day in March, much distaste for the *Riverdance* mindset has been expressed. What is of interest to my study is the large extent to which the blame for all this shamrock propaganda has been laid directly at Yeats’s feet. If we believe the critics, W. B. Yeats, more than almost anyone—including Bono or Daniel O’Donnell—has popularised this *top-o’-the-morning* concept of the faxus Irish for the global imagination. Bono, at least, has Dublin street cred, and O’Donnell’s down-home country ballads have a kind of racial neutrality. Yeats, however, has his culpable fairy-folk, Kiltartanese, visions of the hearth fire, and reference to Celtic lore, amongst other gnomish skeletons in his cupboard.

Issue #76 (“Confessions of an Irish Rebel”) of the popular Gothic comic-book *Hellblazer* provides a very pity observation on this sense of accusation. In this story, a ghost character—who is an amalgam of Brendan Behan and James Joyce—wanders Dublin with his British friend. In between bouts of spectral vomiting, he bemoans how Yeats’s writings have reduced the Irish, in the world’s view, to a nation of superstitious absurdists. Yeats, he

argues, has led to a pernicious stereotype of romantic buffoons, looking for faeries underneath every common hedge-row. Nonetheless, this Behan-esque figure has a sentimental toast or two of his own when it comes to drinking the Guinness. John Constantine, the English friend in the comic, points out this double-standard: decrying in Yeats for promoting stereotypes, while at the same time downing pint after pint with romantic salutations to the homeland. As another example of discontent, *The Rough Guide to Ireland*, a well-regarded travel guide, dismisses *The Celtic Twilight* as a book wherein “Yeats gets all misty-eyed about an Ireland that never existed” (561). Richard M. Dorson, in the forward to Seán O’Sullivan’s edition of folk tales, notes the experimental quality of *CT*, describing it as “a musing, introspective diary.” However, unlike O’Sullivan, Dorson argues that Yeats ruined the project with his imaginative mismanagement of fairies and peasantry, all ruinously based on silly inventions.

In scholarly writing, Colin Graham and others have vigorously critiqued *CT*, in particular, for what seem to be its nativist assertions of a pure Irish spirit. So great is their possible fabrication, Graham equates Yeats with the ethnic melodrama of *The Quiet Man*,⁵⁵ very much a culturally charged accusation of guilt by association. In popular Irish argot, one of the worst examples of ethnic accessorising of Ireland took place in this film; and to equate Yeats with such a production is a strong accusation indeed. But this is the implication at hand. Yeats, as does the film, concocts a melancholia for an ersatz past, which will then be converted into the present’s industry of romanticism. The title of Graham’s essay reminds us of this link by referring to Maureen O’Hara, the flame-haired lead in the film — who is also maligned for its propagation of a mythic Irishness. The comparative linking here is unmistakable: Yeats, in *CT*, did little more than launch an industry of rainbows and crocks o’ gold . . . Bórd Fáilte take note. Thus, with good reason, *CT remains* a potent source for heterogeneous Irish resentment, as no one wants to be categorised by what are perceived to be outmoded and trivial political identities. Certainly, *The Quiet Man* serves up quintessential fabrications and hyperboles of national stereotypes. In particular, its cast of

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Ruth Barton’s history of Irish cinema summarises the dubious legacy of this film as follows:
 Certainly, its Technicolour vision of a land of rosy-cheeked colleens, leprechaun-like intercessionaries and humane clergy united by song, drink and public brawling had little in common with the Ireland of the 1920s in which it is ostensibly set.
 (72-73)

culchies play out a preposterous pantomime of Irish men and women. But does *CT* really perform the same function? Does Yeats find little more than ethnic accessories to support his ideologically cloying vision of an Emerald Isle.⁵⁶

From Yeats, to John Wayne and onward, the leprechauns bounds onward. The twentieth-century tide of Celtic sentimentality continues, in all manner of knotwork tattoos and claddagh rings, particularly amongst the Irish diaspora. We must keep in mind the implicit suggestion, in some scholarly circles, is that the typology for the tourist brochure, often marketed to North Americans, originally stems from the quips of the Celtic Renaissance. Yeats, its patron and “prophet”, did the most to instigate the misrepresentations. And texts such as *CT* are unforgivably saturated with nonsense and whimsy for ethnic idealization and racial blarney. In short, figures such as Yeats and Lady Gregory, through negligence and narcissism, failed to negotiate modernism in a meaningful way and resorted to the worst kinds of cultural nationalism.

We, as readers, should recognise the problematic functions of romance, nationalist ethnography, and the literary fantastic, all of which potentially describe of *CT*. However, my own analysis of this work is more favorable than most. I believe that Yeats here documents alternative living strategies amongst the ethos of a community which had been, in various ways, shattered by a colonial mandate. I believe that more nuanced attention can be given to *CT*'s multiple genre mechanics, as exhibiting trends in the history of ethnography, cultural discourse, and poetic experimentation. Moreover, in regards to Gayatri Spivak's use of the term, I believe *CT* offers forms of strategic essentialism, at least as these might temporarily provide a counterclaim to centuries of interference from other national agendas. *CT* may engage in ethnography, but it provided a alternative sensibilities and experience to much of what existed in the popular reckoning of Ireland in other nations. Indeed, a crucial feature of this work is its parallel impact on national dialogue in Ireland, but also its extended influence on other cultures. Western critics rarely note that *CT*'s legacy indicates a range of influence well beyond the Irish sphere. But, as the most conspicuous example, the Japanese reception of this work, in particular, has been complex and engaging. Modernity and the cultural conditions of Japan and Ireland at that time detected similarities in each other.

⁵⁶ In a later version of this essay, published in *Ireland and Cultural Theory*, Graham removes the references to Maureen O'Hara but still presents a critique of Yeats's disingenuous manufacturing of authenticity.

Certainly, many writers in Japan felt the force of that affinity; they include Akutagawa Ryûnosuke, Tanizaki Junichirô, Yanagita Kunio, and Izumi Kyôka—some of the most influential contributors to Japanese modernist literature. For them, Yeats's enquiry of *twilight* had been a strong influence, as compelling conceptions in understanding culture within time and space.

Marilyn Ivy's seminal work describes a phenomenon that she terms the *discourse of the vanishing*. One feature of this discourse is that it depicts the configuration of the phantasmal as dissipating trends of material culture under erasure, which Ivy locates as a salient feature of Japanese modernity. Similarly, I regard this discourse of *twilight*, as an epistemological and historical condition (which was also described by both Yeats and Tanizaki) as a condition relatable to Ireland. Ireland and Japan both developed innovative literary spaces for negotiating with these phantasmic energies, understood as disembodiments of displaced aspects of culture and heritage. On this theme, a sense of cross-continental kinship united Irish and Japanese literature based. Certainly, many Japanese writers in Yeats's time, such as Yanagita Kunio and Doi Bansui, found particularly in Yeats a kind of catalyst for transforming the vanishing materials of post-Meiji Japan. Yeats, through Lafcadio Hearn,⁵⁷ had provided examples of rural folk collection to the former; Akutagawa greatly admired *CT*, translated sections of its into Japanese, and shows a complementary sensibility in such works as *Kappa* or *Rashômon*. Many of the terms and typologies provided by Yeats amply coincide with certain literary practices in Japan. I will engage with *CT* and other poems as being crucial points of reference for Japanese literature, an inspiration and methodology to a group of writers, struggling with their own cosmopolitan pressures. Thus, Ivy's descriptive argument can be expanded through a consideration of the Irish intervention in the formative time of modern Japanese literature. *CT*, as a text and a project, influenced Japan as part of a crucial network between Irish and Japanese writers not only for its investigation of Irish communal ethos, but its critique of its loss and dissipation.

⁵⁷ Whether a critic chooses *Yakumo* or *Hearn* as the preferred name for reference involves something of a political move, indicating perhaps whether or not one entertains Hearn's sense of his own *Japaneseness*. Japanese language criticism uses both his original name and adopted name. I have chosen to follow the Western custom of using Lafcadio Hearn. I do think, however, that we should concede to any author his or her right to be known by a chosen pen-name.

The usual thesis of *Yeats and Japan* is unnecessarily described as a one-sided affair. Instead, a comprehensive dialectic between nationality and internationality emerged very early in Yeats's defence of the local and particular. As Hesse claimed, quoted in my Introduction, the deep engrossment with one's own notions of nation should then productively lead to inter-cultural dialogue firmly established through the consideration of *ethos*. Conversion is not possible, but an informed grounding in the local can then allow for comparative dialogues with other locales. The deeper Yeats had immersed himself in a consideration of Ireland, its folkloric receptivity, the more he understood broader continuities of fantasy, history, and nationality in other places. The same can be claimed for Japanese writers who turned to Yeats, and Irish folk literature, for investigation.

In this chapter, however, I will first discuss Yeats's model of *CT* as it stands against its Irish and European contexts. The methodology it employs to address the Irish situation will then lead to its reception in Japanese writings of the late Meiji and Taishô periods. The networking of cultural relationships and investigations, between Japan and Yeats, is not limited to just some examples of poorly drawn *nô* drama, nor does this transcultural dialogue occur only during a *later phase* sense of Yeats's output. The first and most persuasive impact Yeats made on Japanese literature was through *The Celtic Twilight*.

Herder and the Supposition of an Ongoing Folk

CT is a multivalent reaction to specific cultural situations and their contextual voices, very broadly defined by the island of Ireland. As a kind of utterance in progress, Yeats's methods can be described as a fraught example of nativist ethnography. Yeats makes obvious his interventions, whenever they occur, and no pretence to scientific neutrality is made. The work operates on these interactions of the *personal* and the *public*. The authorial and its relationship to the collective subject can be understood as parallel in formation. The shifting position of narrator and narration, in relationship to audience, stands out as a force that shapes the ambiguous text. The term *public* relates to political engagement as a communal activity, community centred discourses, as nationally minded way of rallying themes and ideas to enunciate the margins of locality and particularity. As such, the authoritative merit this work presents is one of cultural geographic concerns, the relationship of ethnicity to

cultural assumptions about itself and its place. But Yeats is a poet, not an anthropologist. The *personal* describes the strongly self-referential nature of this text, as to Yeats's mindfulness of his artistic experiment and development, as well as the politics of a man who will one day be a senator in the new Irish state. This latter aspect distinguishes him very much from other works of heritage collecting, such as Frazer's *Golden Bough* and puts him more in the line of Hearn.

But what exactly defines *CT*, in terms of genre, quantitative disciplines, or historical documentation? Is it one of a number of moments in the rise of Irish national self-consciousness in the late nineteenth century, or is it an entirely imaginative document? Is it a blow against the imposition of British culture via the imperatives of imperialism, or is it an early form of resistance to a far more serious threat to local cultures?⁵⁸ How does *The Celtic Twilight* document and enunciate crucial developments in Yeats's early confrontations with heritage and tradition? Should *CT* be read instead as a kind of phantasm discourse, an attempt to reckon the vanishing, during a phase of globalisation as we know it in our own time? One could argue that the text is to one degree or another all of these things. But it is in this latter sense that the text takes on a far more important meaning than it has hitherto been given. *CT*, a format for listening to the isolated voices, resists the hegemonic force of a global culture, driven by market-based economics rather than by political conquest. Although displaying similarities, *CT* does not neatly fit with the various ethnographic genres that various cultural claimants had used for ethnic bravado in the nineteenth-century. Its diversity in form, tone, and dialogue suggest a project with a commitment to tradition, but variable in its political argument, and primarily concerned with a here and now. *Twilight*, more than an endorsement, is in fact a warning for heritage identities endangered.

Certainly, though, Yeats both identifies with, but ultimately separates himself, from the preceding century of ethnography, and its varying considerations of folk, tradition, and cultural origins. A primary formulator of these thematic concerns, and investigations into

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Terry Eagleton states that this nation "had not leapt at a bound from tradition to modernity. Instead, it presented an exemplary case of what Marxism has dubbed combined and uneven development" (274). My contention is that, while not necessary following a Marxist situating of Ireland's identity politics, Yeats understood the changes in his country as based upon variable and spasmodic tensions between the character of the folkloric and traditional, circumscribed by rurality, and the expanding metropolis, Dublin, the steeping stone to Europeanisation.

ethos, was Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803). Herder had established a way of understanding folk narrative as not relying on assertions of an essential purity of essence, existing outside of the processes of time and society, but as a crucial variable that is enmeshed to location through the continuity of custom. Herder's *On the Origin of Language* concerns itself with the development of human language. His pronouncements go on to examine and appraise the origins — and the symbiotic relationships — of culture to vernacular discourse, as a performance of national identity. To draw out this connection, Herder first builds his hypothesis on a distinction between the characteristics of human linguistic structures and the auditory behaviour of animals. Herder sees that language naturally arises according to humanity's rational and irrational faculties, as cognition seeks to assert itself—poetically as Herder would have it—as an introspective response to its environment. As this corollary of processes develops reflexively—and conventionalises itself along historical patterns—a language will become inextricably bound-up within a distinct culture. This culture is a set of conventions which correspond to special features of a locale, that in turn nurture and produce this language: “And what else, after all, is the entire structure of language but a manner of growth of his spirit, a history of discoveries?” (132). Therefore, to pursue Herder's eventual conclusion, a distinct geographical ethos could be preserved and revived through a passionate attention to folklore, traditional songs, and oral stories of the countryside. These possessed, he insisted, a deeper expression of the real sentiment of a community— a continuum with the past — as opposed to the affected nomenclature used by the aristocratic class. This is the Purist Hellenism of the previous chapter, a language refining itself artificially as a means of negotiating power and diplomacy.

Herder's essay introduced the concept of *volk* as the spirit of a people arising from pragmatic functions within a given community.⁵⁹ The Grimm brothers took note: not long after Herder's publications, they began their lifelong efforts in collecting rural folktales, culminating in *Kinder und Hausmaerchen* (1812, rev. 1815, 1819). Not merely a fanciful collection for the amusement of children, the Grimms had combined their rural sensitivities with nationalist desires towards creating what they felt to be a compendium of distinctive

⁵⁹ Herder introduced the concept of *volk* in an initial, political sense that ethnicity was a primary factor in determining political identity. However, later, *volk* has been more associated with the distorted principles which Göering used to define his ideals for a *purist* Third Reich.

Germanic culture and tradition. Not surprisingly, their work with fairy tales, as the phantasmic imagination in continuity with older traditions, would be combined with philological scholarship. Jacob Grimm, besides writing *Märchen*, also penned many works on German linguistics and lexicography, including the massive *Deutsche Grammatik* as well as an expansive dictionary documenting regional variations.⁶⁰ Underwriting these efforts was a romantic longing for a kind of pre-Industrial integrity. At a time of exponential utility, the Industrial Age, such a desire seems more than a facile yearning for myth.

The Romantics, such as Blake, understood from Herder that folk culture could enunciate a more ancestral condition, an earlier and purer remnant of religious truth and cosmological understanding. In questioning what enable cultural longevity, a profound interest for folk culture spread most of Europe, coinciding with this rise of markets and machinery. In Finland, Elias Lönnrot arranged selections from supposed oral sources into the *Kalevala* (1839, rev. ed. 1845),⁶¹ which was to be a patriotic anthology of classical poetry, formulated as a national epic of origin and progress that would be definitively Finnish in its character, vocabulary, and themes. Yeats admired the *Kalevala* and thought it to be a fine example of literature acting as cultural redemption, a legacy of the past that co-operates with community as a particular practice of a language. The forged Celtic classics, discussed in Chapter Two, borrow from this more general mood of nostalgia and history.

Based on the above examples, we can make broad formulations: the national mythology is never complete within a nation as both are entirely illusory. Bits and pieces of data and example are conflated, forcefully, into some hegemonic national narrative that lays claims to an origin. The construction of nation, at least for the literary imagination, must

⁶⁰ Quite prodigious and venturesome in their output, there is none the less a distinct configuration to their scholarship which exhibits nationalist feelings. Among the Grimms collected works are *Altdeutsche Wälder*, essays on linguistics and folklore; *Der arme Heinrich von Hartmann von der Aue*, a commentated edition of this old German poem; editions of early Icelandic literature; and a German translation of Thomas Crofton Croker's *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland*. Folklore, linguistics, and ethnography were coinciding interests for the Grimms.

⁶¹ Concerns of the actual *authenticity* of this work, in terms of it arising from *ancient* sources, have arisen in the twentieth-century, reminding that issues of legitimacy and political intentionality cannot be avoided when discussing folklore. Whatever the final verdict, Lönnrot, attempting to make a literary archive, a collection of manuscript documentation of traditional poetry which would act as a repository of cultural identity and language, was among many such activists in the nineteenth century. Other examples, not so controversial, include the Swede Esaias Tegnér, a noted poet of war who became famous for his *Frithjofs Saga*, which was also assembled from fragments of an early epic cycle.

necessarily include those two aspects: reverence as a negotiator for a yet-to-be established past. This line of argument has enjoyed enormously popularity, and has been applied to many different social and cultural situations. *CT*, however, exhibits a strategy entirely different from the *Kalevala*. Fundamentally, it does not purport to be a transcription of ancient authority. It takes its materials from contemporary voices, understood as having a greater sense of communal investment in a local history than some facile projections of the past. Indeed, they saw themselves as informed by a dialogue with that which precedes the present moment, the Nietzschean flow of history.

To better understand the purpose of *CT*, and its great appeal to Japanese authors, some critical perspectives must be addressed. That Yeats writes Celtic forgeries, for nefarious purposes, needs to be addressed fully. The argument suggests that Yeats, an aristocrat in his own country, effects a kind of minstrelsy of the lower classes. Putting on the greenface, Yeats composes comedic skits or slapstick ethnic slander. His performance is thus said to be disingenuous and harmful: an excessively sentimental routine delivered in a Kiltartanese fabrication, but presented nonetheless as racial mandate. This Celtic pantomime has the same effect as a minstrel show: the targeted minority, the peasantry, is lampooned not through blame, but praise . . . the praise of their animistic sensibilities that, quaintly, hearken back to an idealised age. This project assuages a longing for heritage and a myth of ownership for the ruling classes, as well as mobilising diversity into an enforced contract of citizenship and its uniform identity. Yeats's ideological assertions of himself, as a *de facto* cultural custodian, assume and appropriate voices and representations of Irish history and identity.

To understanding the implications of this accusation, I would like to focus my attention on the arguments from one of the expositors of this critique. Colin Graham has variously presented discussions of Yeats's enterprise here as the manufacturing of cultural perversion, not preservation.⁶² Graham exhorts us to be critically sensitive toward the kinds of nationalist machinations Yeats might be undertaking, under the problematic banner of *Celtic*. Graham's findings are worth considering in some detail, as they reflect some of the

⁶² Graham's essay, "Blame It on Maureen O'Hara: Ireland and the Trope of Authenticity," debates the persistent assumption of Irish identity as being a product of media propagation.

resentment, both in criticism as well as popular opinion, as to how Yeats propagated illusory ideals of Ireland, the Irish, and Irishness.

Primarily using Adorno and Baudrillard's sense of *authenticity* to evaluate the presumptions of *CT*, Graham analyses Yeats's position within the colonial, as well as the liminal, in pursuit of manufacturing Irishness, one produced by Yeats's manipulations of himself as mediator. Graham finds that ". . . Yeats can be understood as colonizer controlling the voice of the colonized" (68). Graham later softens this evaluation, demonstrating how such a view is a fraught assessment of Yeats that requires qualification. But the kernel of Graham's reading is that Yeats acts as a pivot in phases of Irish representation. *Old authenticity*, the precursor movement to the Celtic Renaissance evolves into, the new authenticity, which finds its expression in the heritage industry of post-colonial Irish tourism. Yeats manages the gap between these two stages of ethnic posturing by reproducing a declaration of synthetic Irishness that answers to both the call of the past and the market economy of the future. *CT* invents antiquity in the service of foregrounding an elitist modernity, as entitled to the label Irish, which they then later can exploit, under trademark, for profit. In Graham's view, Yeats cannot avoid acting as a coloniser, pumping and dumping a market stock of Irishness for the power network of imperialism. Heritage cannot be recovered, as it only arises through supply and demand in the present circumstances; *celtic* advertises its clout through *culture*, the contents of which are forwarded through putative evidence.

Describing Yeats as an imperialist an at-home colonialist—and that's what is being levied here—is pretty strong stuff. The examples cited above, whether scholarly or from popular culture, suggest that Yeats almost single-handedly instituted persistent stereotypes, ones that contributed to the Irish Republic, and whose retrograde formulations have persisted into post-modernity. This changeover from *old* to *new* frauds, disguised as ancestral authenticity, in Ireland is positioned according to Yeats as the figure of transition. Thus Graham can connect Yeats's poetry to the versions of Irishness that came after, such as John Wayne's Hollywood Ireland in *The Quiet Man*. Because, as the prime conduit for the new authenticity, Yeats is held responsible for the production of ethnic lies and clichés of the misty, rooted isle—the idealised expectation of transnational imaginations. Global nostalgia,

no matter how bizarre and distant, still takes its cues, directly and indirectly, from Yeats's dreamy lyricism.

Those many shades of synthetic green can be found in the ongoing proliferation of St Paddy's day paraphernalia and other facile forms of caricature. *Riverdance*, according to some, turns ethnicity into profit through its crass commercialism. One wonders where Daniel O'Donnell or Van Morrison fit into all of this. Or Paul Brady, as his lyrics read in the popular song, "The Homes of Donegal",

I'd like to stay along with you
And while away the night.
With fairy lore and tales of yore,
Beside the turf fire bright

There is no question that Irishness has been subjected to relentless typecasting. However, does Yeats deservedly belong in the same category as, or is he somehow responsible for latent specimens of Irish roleplay, such as green beer, or those coachloads who come to kiss the Blarney stone?

The crux of the debate arises according to what degree Yeats presumes authenticity, as an ontological model ready for declaring an eternally *Celtic* to which the Irish are uniquely privy. Graham's application of Adorno to Yeats does not take into account the contrast in contexts. Adorno's critique of authenticity was leveled against Heidegger's sense of *authenticity in time*, as it functioned as a discourse within the German bureaucracy, the institution of control and people-management. Adorno was specifically addressing that new language of altruism that cloaked, in fact, a method of command and supervision. It was still very much the realpolitik way of the past, even though it, superficially, did not use the former language of Bismarckian authority. This is a strategy Foucault might call *soft power*. But how does Adorno connect to Yeats? Adorno's argument does not concern itself with the survival of folk culture, whether it be the persistence of Irish myths, rural oratures in Finland, or the traditional dances of the Catalan. Yeats was just as concerned with hegemonic discourse, published in the capital, that had a top-down approach to managing the outlying counties of Ireland.

Baudrillard's discussion on authenticity has perhaps a more pertinent relation to Yeats. This reading then argues that Yeats is a businessman, an ethnic entrepreneur, rather

than an artist questioning a cultural inheritance during a time of prosecution and legislation. Yeats is either a profiteer, or perhaps a fool incapable of scepticism, discretion or other cautionary measures to manage his materials, and his manner in receiving them. Describing the twentieth-century as a culture of similitude, a Baudrillard could see Yeats as presenting replicas of a pre-supposed Irish authenticity, packaged and commodified for the purposes of sale and profit. Yeats not only collects folk stories, but cultural debts as well – he colonises through his recording. Thus, Yeats converts *Celtic* into an agenda for the heritage industry: stress on *industry*, and much less on *heritage*. So, if Yeats is culpable of such deeds, then what do we make of the vast, institutional forms of heritage preservation (Dúchas, An Chomhairle Oidhreachta)? These statutory bodies initiate the laws and policies that identify, justify, and enhance cultural objects as collateral of national heritage. *Experience heritage* is a contemporary slogan for the tourist authority; for Yeats it was a multiplicity of encounters. *CT* has neither the legislative design, nor the entrepreneurial goals, nor the institutional blueprint, to enact power.

The search for a single visage of the motherland, “a vision something of the face of Ireland” (32), seems to preclude variability. But the multiple vignettes of *CT* are very doubled and Janus-faced. Many examples from *CT*, in its consideration of multiple voices and perspectives, reveal varieties of *people* who are connected and identify with unique qualities of place. Yeats shows that if tradition is entirely turned into phantasm, the referents that make possible the debate of society will be lost. Yeats, rather than offering essential definitions, leaves open the possibility of enquiry and interrogation for evaluating internal coherences within Irish society. The faces that Yeats recalls are ancestral in that they are living people who maintain a communion with a continuity of cultural knowledge defined by place.

Chapter Two described the polemics of geography as companion to memory, particularly in England and Ireland. Yeats sought to move out of this trend. He is more in line with other nationalist projects of cultural preservation which are typical of early modernism: the work of G. K. Chesterton, Hilaire Belloc, and Patrick Dinneen, for example. After Yeats, in Ireland and as his influence spread elsewhere, further interactions with folklore have sought to preserve regional stories, histories, and dialect. Joe McGowan records anecdotes about vestiges of pagan customs, and their confluence with Catholicism, in

Cos Sligo, Leitrim, and Fermanagh. In her introduction to Ulster folk music, Pádraigín Ní Uallacháin describes the dependence on music as a form of circulation particular to localised features:

. . . a hidden world – accessible only to those who could speak and read the Irish language, that is, to people like myself whose home language was Irish and whose parents had made a commitment in the hope that their children might have a greater understanding of the life-enhancing tradition from which they came and which it was their right to know. (15)

Ní Uallacháin sees collection, if done properly as a necessary reaction to the collapse of the normal method of instruction: community. Seeing a similar threat to voice, Dorothy Harrison Therman assembled, through recorded transcriptions, various conversations with residents of Tory Island, Co Donegal. Often, the topics still now concern the supernatural, the manufacture of magical charms, the distillation of *potín*.⁶³ These titbits do not display the typical hijinks of some bog Irish, downtrodden by superstition and rurality. These stories contain many important recollections of dying community activity, relations, and lineages. The anecdotes fit together into much larger patterns of reference and understanding for a community's ethics, especially as they now come into conflict with post-modernity. The possibility for unique information, one contextualised according to place, is revealed orature as resonating which utterances continuing from the past. Certainly, the rural—as social geography—exhibits unique features that cannot be found in the same way as through Wikipedia. The erosion of the rural environment has therefore made these recording even more essential. In such a way, Therman, or also Margaret Bennett in Scotland, demonstrates that orature is adaptable and can cope successfully except with that which seeks to erase it. Yeats, decades before them, anticipates the necessity of this documentation and its ethical importance. Vanishing, which is what happens to a tradition that dissipates in shape and substance as its contexts yields to radical change, invokes the notion of twilight as the genre for the disappearing.

⁶³ Therman's book, *Stories from Tory Island*, and Joe McGowan's *Echoes of a Savage Land* compliment the work of local historians, often priests, who write histories of their dioceses, including such examples as *Toraigh na dTonn*, by Father Eoghan Ó Colm (1971) and *The Diocese of Elphin*, editor Fr Francis Beirne (2000).

Was Celtic a Strategic Essentialism? Alteration and Identity in the Irish Colony

The configured terms of Yeats's collection—*Celtic* and *Twilight*—need a certain amount of nuanced exegesis. *Celtic* need not imply a form of essentialism, a quintessential Irish soul to be represented and indoctrinated as the true ethnic soul. In Yeats's time, the term worked very flexibly as an attack on British sovereignty and its own empire driven notion of racial clarity. For such a reason, the political nature of Pan-Celticism, as a political polemic of lineage, acted out against imperialism, organising their oppositional clout according to a broad theme of historical and geographic distinction. Archaeologists certainly can find both the merits and flaws in the label *Celtic*. But for their disparate social situations—as Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and Galicia were—a Celtic ideation drove independence movements forward with a more cohesive diplomatic agenda.⁶⁴ The Pan-Celtic Society in Dublin (1888) as well as a Celtic Congress (1900) had a sufficient turn-out to suggest that their form of political identity could seize both a moral ground as well as a cartographic one.

Independence, arising from an envisioned sense of a shared geographic culture, could comfortably allow some blurring of the relative distinctions of linguistic, cultural, or historical category of *Celtic*. Not all of those who used this term sought to mandate nativist prescriptions. The word itself derived from the churlish *keltoi*, a leftover moniker from a long-dead Greek historian, which had been reclaimed by the revivalist mindset. In such a way, Celtic had power as an operation against colonialism and its agents.

Celtic, also, has too much of a blood fetish attached to its usage, and thus makes many uneasy. Working with the term *Celtic*, suggestive in its political motivation, could easily become disreputable due to its fancifulness. In Yeats's time, suspicion of one-dimensional representations of *Irish-Celtic* identity were very much a part of the nation building process. The stage Irishman, so dominant in its hateful ethnic mockery, had loomed

⁶⁴ *Celtic* retains an emotive appeal to culture, as in the form of the Welsh Eisteddfod or in community-oriented names for numerous North American newspapers. *Celtic League* refers to a rugby competition between Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Geographical possession of the term *Celtic* continues to be a contentious gesture: the so-called *Celtic Tiger*, referring to Ireland, declares through zoomorphic imagery a cash influx that has nothing to do with art or culture. The market roars in a Celtic fashion, despite minimal economic management in Dublin.

large over the Irish at home and abroad throughout the nineteenth century.⁶⁵ Surely, Yeats was aware of the pressing dilemma as to the instability of terms that might either assert a national characterhood, as well as demean it. Yeats set himself up against, in particular, the pedagogical racism of Matthew Arnold, who had first done much to coin *Celtic* as a pejorative label. In the discourse of education, *Celtic* implied a sub-standard form of backwater civilisation. His infamous essay concerning the “Celtic element” of literature typified the *Celtic* (and more specifically, the *Irish*) as an effeminate group—think of superstitions, uncontrolled emotionally, and lacking in rational sophistication.⁶⁶ This depiction of the primitive, coupled with an imperialist strategy, could be seized upon to defend a British parental attitude towards its colony. An attitude of needful attendance kept in check a culturally stunted underling. This became part of the broader, underlying bigotry that guided so many policy decisions. Certainly, then, a response would come from these marginalised cultures, who would naturally seize back this label and re-define it through a surge of ethnic pride and communal responsibility.

Yeats’s had his mind exactly on Arnold’s formulation, and he used his essay “The Celtic Element in Literature” to make numerous rebuttals:

When Matthew Arnold wrote, it was not easy to know as much as we know now of folk-song and folk-belief, and I do not think he understood that our ‘natural magic’ is but the ancient religion of the world, the ancient worship of nature and the troubled ecstasy before her. (*EI* 176)

This comment can easily be picked up the wrong way: in disabusing Arnold of his sentimental caricature, is Yeats instead proffering his own? Following my earlier reading of Beinsteinson, I do not believe that Yeats defends neo-paganism here. Ancient religion

⁶⁵ As has been the subject of much scholarly attention, various media put forward suppositions of *Celtic* identity, not just in Ireland, but in Scotland and Wales as well — going back to the 18th century in particular. Sharon Alker, for example, has studied the print culture of Celtic identity in the island politics of between Scotland and England, in parliamentary records as well as popular works of literature, such as Robbie Burns, or novels like *The Wild Irish Girl*. Siân Rhiannon Williams has discussed the rhetoric of the Welsh woman in periodicals from the 19th century.

⁶⁶ For a comprehensive discussion of the exaggerations and misrepresentations of Irishness in Victorian England, see Curtis, who questions the political motivations behind the intentional dehumanisation of the Irish by various policy-makers.

refers to a previously uninterrupted convention of beliefs and practices that had been disturbed by foreign incursions. The worship of nature, the troubled ecstasy of *gaia* . . . Yeats uses such phrases to describe a geography that has been violated. There is no magic but nature itself, and the derived customs of a community in relation to this energy of organic experience. Various forces, usually industrial, fabricate an economic *dawn* of capital, as arising from these resources. The economic reconfigures the traditional culture as *twilight*, something fading into the past, leading to the rise of new dynamisms that eat up that culture. The economic model, Yeats argues, is the myth, and not the stories of the people themselves:

The lover of the Irish folk-song bids his beloved come with him
into the woods, and see the salmon leap in the rivers, and hear the
cuckoo sing, because death will never find them in the heart of the
woods. (179)

Environmental death, as we know from Oisín and Al Gore, is the eradication of those same woods, the pollution of those streams, the loss of all those habitats. Yeats has said as much in many places.

But in trying to re-phrase Celtic according to favorable sensibilities, Yeats runs afoul of those whose own claims to Irishness conflicted with his own. The political anxiety of that time, so evidently near to realising Home Rule, amplified the rhetoric. D. P. Moran, a member of the Gaelic League, came to prominence as a feisty journalist who mocked the general mood and pretensions of a Celtic Twilight. This phrase became one of Moran's favoured term of abuse for the perceived cabal of Yeats and his associates. Moran had expressed a certain tone of disdain for the political aspirations of the early Sinn Féin and other nationalist parties. By his reckoning, Irish nationalism was entirely a Catholic affair, with Yeats and his ilk fitting into an uncomfortable category of *Anglo*-Irish literature. That those least able to claim affinity should thus be wearing the *Celtic* badge bothered him, obviously. In response to Moran's assessments, of Catholic Celticism, Yeats published a letter in Moran's newspaper, *The Leader* (1900). The purpose was to defend himself against Moran's scurrilous editorials, which had insinuated that Yeats propagated a ridiculous presentation of the Irish people. Moran had argued that the perverse aesthetics of the *Celtic Renaissance* had done nothing to effect genuine political change. Yeats established, in response, several points: first, he expands on his deconstruction of Matthew Arnold's *Celtic*,

by recasting what, politically, might be meant by the *Celtic* element in a national literature. Yeats defends the notion that Celtic is not necessarily fixed essentially. Secondly, Yeats takes the opportunity to make a retort to Moran's *Anglo* label of Yeats's writing, and his view that Yeats involuntarily shares Arnold's opinion that there is a definitively *Celtic nature* which can be reified and appraised. By adopting such a dual line of response, Yeats argues that his sense of Irish character is much more diverse than Arnold's superficial analysis of a pandemic Celtic. Moreover, he can suggest that Moran's Catholic loyalties can also be a kind of political limitation:

You have been misled, doubtless, by reading what some indiscreet friend or careless opponent has written, into supposing that I have ever used the phrase 'Celtic note' or 'Celtic renaissance' except as a quotation from others, if even then, or that I have quoted Matthew Arnold's essay on Celtic literature on 'a hundred platforms' or elsewhere in support of the ideas behind these phrases, or that I have changed my opinions about the revival of the Irish language since a certain speech in Galway. I have avoided 'Celtic note' and 'Celtic renaissance' partly because they are both vague and one is grandiloquent . . . I have argued that the characteristics [Arnold] has called Celtic, mark all races just in so far as they preserve the qualities of the early races of the world.

("To D. P. Moran's *Leader*", *FLM* 279)

In the 1890s, certainly a crucial moment for national self-reflection, the romantic aspirations of nation did not neglect practical identity. Yeats wants to affirm the present rather than a quest for a mythic past. *Celtic* can suggest, rather than essentialise, outlining communities in a particular place in time, subject to eradication.

Yeats does not necessarily understand *Celtic* as a fixed racial prototype, some monolingual identity beyond reproach. *CT* presents the term through a diversity of portraits, united through a shared sense of political ambition and cultural circumstances, however flexible (and prone to defeat) those might be. Such a method is far less essential, and runs deliberately counter, to Matthew Arnold's singular definitions. Yeats understands the ramification of a culture fractured by the conflict, between recovery and eroded tradition.

Thus, Deborah Fleming suggests that Yeats's understanding of *Celtic*, considering its geographic and commercial marginalisation, preserves a cultural repertoire that arose as a response to invasive market societies: "Because of their closeness to nature, the peasants could appreciate poetry as the materialistic urban classes could not" (83). This may seem too pat for some readers, but Fleming cites many examples from Yeats's essays and letters in which he concerns himself with the "hidden character" contained within the tightly-knit communities. I see in many of Yeats's essays and pieces of journalism a similar concern: modernity threatens the local and particular, substituting a generic formula for heritage. Organising a cohesive response to such invasive threats, colonial ones, necessitates a certain amount of strategic essentialism, in so far as *Celtic* might meaningfully identify human rights needs of specific communities. But Yeats was not alone in his worry about how far the strategy should go, in response to what has already been lost.

Many modernist authors, examining the loss of cultural contexts, raised similar alarms. One need only look at I. B. Singer, and the vanishing of Yiddish writing and theatre, as another example. The short story "The Kabbalist of East Broadway" describes the process of a scholar turning into a spectre. The dissolution of his cultural homeland has rendered his niche knowledge obsolete, and he now roams anonymously through New York, disconnected from the community that has literally vanished. The Kabbalist also exemplifies what Marily Ivy means by the phantasm as something material, but in an identifiable process of vanishing. The phantasmal is "an epistemological object whose presence or absence cannot be definitively located" (22). The twilight is the ontological condition of such a in-between character. Thus, the irony of Singer's story is that the Kabbalist dissipates, or vanishes from view, not because he is *spirited away* by arcane knowledge, but because his arcane knowledge is made irrelevant with the loss of the tradition that created the knowledge in the first place. The twilight is a place of forgetting, a discourse of the vanishing, a phase of people and their practices being relegated first to non-importance and then disappearance.

Twilight, the second half of this work's title, also has its own share of dubious nuances that further destabilise the hopeful nuances of *Celtic*. *SB* had sought that archetype for liminality—the passage through the misty threshold of twilight describes the seeker's transition from the mundane into the ethereal. And this kind of sensibility reflects the view that spiritualism that finds in places like Ireland special portals into paranormal worlds.

Certainly, many books describing Celtic pilgrimages imagine Ireland as pockmarked by such doorways and ley lines. Negotiating the sacred nostalgia has been a difficult issue for Irish writers. Contemporary Irish Gaelic poetry has brought its own unique perspective on this theme. Consider Ní Dhomhnaill's depiction of the famous vanishing island in the late of day:

ag rá liom teacht
go dtí do oileán
draíochta

'Tair chugam, tair
chugam, éinne

atá traicgta.' (4-6, 13-15)⁶⁷

This verse echoes the call in the concluding poem of *CT*, "Into the Twilight," to the out-worn heart. As another take on Ossianic deliverance, the desire for disappearance into the higher reality leads to surrender.

Twilight has a very disconcerting presence in *CT*. In many of Yeats's poems, the psychologically disjointed, split with cognitive dissonance, can detect neither space nor time. "Into the Twilight" describes a "Young mother Eire" in contrast with the "grey twilight", and the seeker's emotional ideals are corrupted, being in a stasis between personified country and vanishing atmosphere. The heart goes to "where hill is heaped upon hill: / For there the mystical brotherhood . . ." – is this a cairn? The fraternity here arises from the interrelationship of natural elements: sun, moon, water, and wood operating according to "their will." This poem also features, rare for Yeats, a direct reference to God, who presides over the turning and dissipation of a world caught in time. The twilight, in fact, envelops the principal constituents of the poem: the condition of modern Ireland cannot negotiate a bargain with either twilight (history), dew (sweat and work), or morning (the future). How does this poem, almost paratextual, relate to the overall shape of the book's argument?

Twilight implies a vanishing, but not of the hermetic kind as an escape from the world. *CT*'s focus on disintegrating voices shows that twilight is a form of

⁶⁷ ". . . asking me to come to the Isle of Enchantment. . . . 'Come to me, come to me, all who are tired' (Tr. Paul Muldoon). Hy-Breasil is also the name of a coffee shop on Bridge Street, Sligo.

phantasmafication. The rapidly evaporating becomes disembodied, and then dissipated, a transition from daylight into darkness. Coming to terms with twilight best gives a sense of how to understand Celtic. We know that Yeats's frequent distrust of rationality, as the ideology of industrialization, left him with the fearful impression that a person could be "gone as if the earth had swallowed her up" (*CT* 84). Phantasms can be visibly detected as the movement of substance into a darkening disappearance. Yeats, through satire and elegy, would frequently use the wraith as a return of the disembodied culture of the erased past. In *CT*, he continues this theme from his earlier epics, and lays the groundwork for experiments in his drama and later poems.

Yeats would develop a concept of a *Golden Age*, or heroic era, as an ancestral vision of the past that acts in continuity to inform the rapidly changing present. Both past and present can be vocalised concurrently, if the access to twilight is sufficiently stable:

It said that if only they who live in the Golden Age could die we might be happy,
for the sad voices would be still; but they must sing and we must weep until the
eternal gates swing open. (123)

This is the sense of *CT* as a multiplicity of speech genres, from living communities as well as traumatic past. The *Heroic Age* as a functioning domain of the paranormal, first explored in *CT*, will be a crucial feature of Yeats's *nô*. I will explore this theme in tandem with Tanizaki's understanding of *golden* as the luster of the past in a later chapter. Objects obtain a nostalgic charm not only through an aura of heritage, but from the oil of the hands with created and care for the object. This similarity will be increasingly clear in Yeats's study of *nô* drama, and his influence on Japanese responses to modernity more generally, but first the methodology of *CT* deserves more consideration.

From Spellcasting to Storytelling: Twilight as the Art of Ancestral Recall

Yeats's introduction to the 1893 edition, from which the above quotation is taken, lacks the theoretical framework that we expect a contemporary ethnographic study to contain. He hardly seems to take on the mantle of anthropologist. His empirical models are based on the data of conversation and reflection, "what I have heard and seen", as intersections for various commentaries, not scientifically satisfying. But Yeats aligns himself with the artist, yet his

material must not be overly subsumed by his own agenda, so as to be “unoffended or defended by any arguments of mine”. The Muses of hope and memory, he suggests, are also a methodology through which art and community interrelate. Kathleen Raine insists on the importance of social context to *CT*:

It is his own life that he records. In County Sligo he discovered the map of the territory of his own imagination, bounded by contours in hill and wood, wind and weather, bird and beast. (“Introduction” 19)

This assessment draws attention to a prevalent condition of this work: its role in Yeats’s development as a poet, its articulation of liminality, as well as twilight’s environmental contiguity with the boundaries of the natural world. The problem, so keenly felt in Oisín, is where the supernatural begins and the natural ends, or when the ancestral becomes detached from the present space. Oisín had taken up the challenge of “The ancient map-makers wrote across unexplored regions, the willingness to go to the margins: ‘Here are lions’ ” (43). Yeats turns away from the quest as archetype, and concentrates instead on speech genres as a search of localised history. Closer attention to the vignettes in *CT*, rather than general descriptions of their overall intention, reveals how multivalent the disappearing voices are.

The nineteenth-century waves of emigration, which were journeys into the unknown on coffin ships across the Atlantic, had replaced historical trauma for the fantasy of the *imram* genre. With a third of the population dead or effectively exiled, the edges of the Atlantic offered not mystery but eclipse. *CT*, as a response to a crisis in population and culture, explores, evaluates, and negotiates the landscape of native place as artifact rather than symbol. There is no voyage, but a conscientious attention to the environment that is being changed, argued over, and sometimes abandoned. *WO* explored this intangibility, in which culture is only a dream: tactile sensation, as proof of a social context, breaks the spell. In *CT* the aural imagination, the act of listening, engages the soundscapes of nature and community, the dimension through which so many of the cultural phantasms are transferred. The first vignette, “The Teller of Tales”, enacts this primacy of listening, as all the forthcoming sections follow from this initial sketch of voicing. Not only are words a means of communication, but auditory effects such as snoozing under a hedge may suggest more than pastoral banality. The storyteller pursues a way of life, a way of using the natural world, that cannot be offered by modern media. He contrasts with the industrialisation that Yeats

clearly saw as noisy, invasive and destructive, with an enormous ecological footprint. That is the real monster. The faeries, whatever they are, offer an auditory experience more like natural rhythms:

“I have seen it,” he said, “down there by the water, batting the river with its hands.” (35)

Keeping in mind this first impression of the phantasmal, Yeats’s focus becomes clearer: the soundscape of conversation, in relation to the natural acoustic, form the enquiry between people and their heritage. The status of faeries allows for a kind of engaged pantheism that restores life and performance to the environment, as well as possibly representing a previous experience of the land.

That this kind of mediation does not require adulteration, in the form of technology or industry, offers an alternative to resource capital. The “story-teller’s commerce” (33) exists, as much as it can, outside the trademark hysteria of print industries and packaged entertainment. Thus, Paddy Flynn, and other storytellers, act against the commodification of the countryside. *CT*, with highlighted satire, presents hilarious parables of this process, such as “The Devil”. Working against storytellers, Satan, in his devilry, chooses to take the form of a newspaper to conduct his mischief. In a maelstrom of broadsheets, he attacks a woman, enveloping her with inky pages. I have quoted Yeats on his distrust of mass communication previously; sketches such as this make the same point metaphorically. The paper “flaps in her face” (65), almost suffocating her. There is no dialogue or sharing of information, only a blur of headlines, produced hastily from the urban centre. Yeats cannot help but point out that, on account of the weight of this diabolic media, “she knew by the size of it that it was the *Irish Times*” (65). The devil prefers print; faeries are enticed by music and tales. This is the principal theme that inspires Yeats. Storytelling has direct correspondences to other people as well as to the natural world, as voicing or vocalising the particulars of a place. The general indifference of the urban, characterized by the noise of industry, does not attain this level of sensitivity. Paddy Flynn’s metaphorical awareness of his surroundings counteracts his physiological deafness. Yeats shifts attention towards the intertwining of human culture and its natural surroundings. Technology, after all, fosters a kind of deafness, and rural dialects are at odds with modern conventions of language. These qualities in Yeats suggest trends of what we now call ecocriticism. His initial concern for the destruction of habit,

biological and cultural, reveals those alarm bells going off long ago, during the rise of globalization.

In being primarily a document of unrehearsed listening, *Celtic Twilight* differentiates itself from many of the previous ethnographies in Europe. Unlike Lönnrot, *CT* does not seek to present that definitively one-voiced assertion of Irish identity, nor does it concern itself with mythic origins which establish a heroic lineage of peoplehood. In *CT*, Yeats is both author and listener, who reveals people rather than mythologies. The recorded dialogues predicate themselves on the author acting as attentive participant within a living social practice, not on page but in the streets. Only then can any material fit into the dimensions of poetic presentation. *CT* is very elusive in terms of conventions and genre. It has neither the entirely self-invented manner of Andersen's fairytales, nor the objective, impersonally archived feeling of the Grimms. Yeats does not claim to be the sole creator of these stories, yet they are completely filtered and shaped by his personal participation as well as his intervening commentary. In their versatility of themes and gestures, they pose complex suggestions rather than soft anthems of uniformity. Genre—and this is key to understanding his work with *nô*—entails much more than following a set of rules in a particular context. He writes a hybrid text, within a colonialised society, revealing a breakdown of traditional hegemonic forms. This is, generally, the way in which modernism began within outlying countries, as being settled away from more centralised nations and their economic hubs. Yeats has invented a discursive means of dealing with the modern experience; these are not just transcriptions but creative acts.

Yeats plays with this ambivalence by embedding romantic sentiments into *CT*'s complicated and unstable frameworks. But to what extent is *CT* exhibiting symptoms of the Gabriel Conroy syndrome? *CT* diversified its material through voicings and situations that give a much more nuanced confrontation to the notion of the west of Ireland. Conroy's nostalgia arises from the fact of increasing loss, the dissipation of Connacht, combined with a convenience that he does not have to live there. Dublin means departure: a transportation locus that allows the option of ferry to Paris, from a train arriving from Tralee. This is the Dublin of expansion that now, as its suburban environs swell and expand, absorbs villages and towns into itself. Its infrastructure demands wider motorways and more cars. Those on the outskirts, however, do not have the Conroy option. Here custom and marginality

coincide according to sites shared through tradition and landscapes. Positioned on the edges, these communities face serious threats, then as now. The destruction or assimilation of landscape means the loss of community, or vice versa. Conroy personifies a general sense of anxiety that Ireland, as traditionally split into feudal kingdoms, cannot unify itself into a politically hegemonic, contemporary nation-state.⁶⁸ Conroy's dialogue occurs in the drawing room, whereas *CT* moves from outdoor scenes. Thus, it cannot offer a manifesto for the enshrinement of the Celtic, as either political entity or ethnic essence, for the materials in question will not yield to political specifications.

Yeats may have attempted a formulation of national consciousness in his more public-oriented projects—the Abbey Theatre being another kind of community-engaged concourse. *CT*'s elegiac tones, on the contrary, mourn the sustained diversity that is sacrificed in pursuit of unified national mobility. Yeats challenges the artificial climate of political awakening with his own personal poetics, not just as the subjugated interests of the author, but as strategies working concurrently in the creation of texts. The survival and continued expression of Irish folklore operates against the *katharevousa* of the capital.

Yeats's sympathies are clear:

Past Irish literary movements were given overmuch to argument and oratory. Many had come to think the Irish nation essentially rhetorical and unpoetical, essentially a nation of public speakers and journalists, for only the careful student could separate the real voice of Ireland, the song which has never been hushed since history began, from all this din and bombast.

(“The Evangel of Folk-lore”, *FLM* 135)

Yeats has identified the “din and bombast” as coming from a number of exhaust pipes of that time, blowing and fuming across the countryside. The *Diablo Newspaper* is an example of frenzied rhetoric suffocating people.

⁶⁸ These former kingdoms now operate as economic prefectures: Leinster, with Dublin at its core, achieves overwhelming prominence. Agricultural Connacht, not able to demarcate itself monetarily, possesses on its margins a potential form of transaction, through the marketing of disappearing cultural assets. This is the Galway-Dublin tension, the former asserting itself through a Gaelic affiliation, to the European-leaning marketplace of Dublin. The metropolis will accept, with provisions, the national cachet that folk traditions present. Usually, however, this takes the form of partisan politics and institutional heritage.

When Yeats speaks of the Devil, he often has in mind the consequences of a malevolent agenda in society. The Dáil has not arrived yet, but Yeats is cautious as to what it will offer, in exchange for sole governance. *CT* frequently combines considerations of the paranormal with the parliamentary. For example, “The Sorcerers” narrates Yeats’s experimental participation in an urban circle of Satanists. This is assumed to be autobiographical: Yeats’s willingness to try anything once, especially if the paranormal is involved. Tellingly, this coven is composed of clerks and civil servants. They invite the poet to a private gathering of public officials who have a demonic invocation on the agenda. Unlike much of *CT* which is deeply interrelated with landscape, this meeting occurs in black curtained rooms, devoid of any natural embellishment, to beseech dark powers. Their clothes and habitat are the antithesis of the natural world. In inverting the laws of love, they promise more than they deliver. Yeats describes them as a uniformed lot of robed buffoons, stuttering spells to the ancestral, spoken in mangled Arabic. What is frightening is that, despite the mishaps and clumsiness of the proceedings, a black cloud does somehow appear. Like the demonic newspaper, the thick mass threatens to *absorb* everyone present, to further gather individuality up into a monochrome uniformness. Recognising the potential loss of individuality, the chief magician concedes that the true threat is to “go out of this room . . . with his character added to your own” (64), to be assimilated by Satan. This is, remember, a civil servant speaking. Like being mummified by the broadsheets of *The Irish Times*, the monolithic cloud leads to an envelopment—hegemony, if you like—that assimilates individuality. Having a character added to your own implies a possession of the soul, one in which the person is replaced with a monomaniacal proxy. When this abstract force materialises “in shapes as solid and heavy as our own” (62), they become embodied specters, powers derived from the dark turned into poltergeists that overwhelm with a “deathly trance” (64). Only a “needful exorcism” can return the mind to its natural state, “the freedom which is the breath of life” (62).

These Satanists, at the end of the day, are petty administrators, dabbling in arcane arts that promise authoritarian power. Their devil is more suggestive of the bureaucracy they serve than the eternal hell of theology. What further distinguishes them from the overall folk traditions in *CT* is how they eagerly gather up a wealth of material artifacts, ritual implements and affected talismans. This is the practice of their magniloquence, since the

“din and bombast” of their clumsy chants has no audience. The sorcerers can only speak in vague metaphor. Their “vow of silence” (one of Yeats’s amusing asides) prevents genuine communication. The robed clerks, parodies of legislators and the judiciary, provide no aural satisfaction, no context, and no soul. Using them as a counter example, Yeats turns to the real purpose of *CT* as coming from the storytellers, living speech, not from these kinds of silence and hollow ceremony.

Much to Yeats’s possible chagrin (if also his prediction), the recognition and protection of the rural in contemporary Ireland has fallen into the hands of civil servants. What Yeats recognised as *Celtic*, the belief in overcoming Conroy’s sense of dislocation and to engage with the local, now has become constitutional practice. There are a number of agencies defined by this folkloric purpose: the Irish Folklore Commission and the Department of Communal, Rural, and Gaeltacht affairs, *An t-Uas*, and so forth. As a means of self-preservation that is very similar to *CT*, these councils archived their predecessor’s more earthy work, including the recently deceased Seán O’heochaidh, of Teelin, Donegal. Over his lifetime, he preserved a massive number of stories, memories, and songs from his native county during the 1930s and 40s, recording them all on wax cylinders. His efforts almost single-handedly saved masterworks of the Irish language, including Mici MacGabhann’s *Rotha Mór an tSaoil* [*The Hard Road to Klondike*]. Entirely a transcriber, O’heochaidh has many similarities to Yeats. He compiled several books of Donegal folklore, unique in its geographic position as being on the edge of Ulster, as being a debated historical unit as well as a contentious national demarcation. The subject matter of the stories resembles *CT* frequently: residents of Inishmurray, for example, recount eerie tales of supernatural encounters, disappearances, and ghosts.⁶⁹ Charles McGlinchey (1861-1954), a tailor from the Inishowen area of Co Donegal and a friend of Patrick Kavanagh, also accumulated a personal collection of songs, lore, and details about his native peninsula. His

⁶⁹ In Scotland, likewise, Margaret Bennett, a native of the Isle of Skye and Professor of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh, has engaged in a project of the same magnitude. Equipped with a tape-recorder, she travelled extensively through Scotland’s rural areas conducting interviews with elderly villagers, recording their observations and memories. She has compiled and organised these interviews as they relate to traditional customs associated with rites of passage. Being able to present an auditory copy of these conversations, Bennett does not need to affect a rural dialect in text, as these stories speak for themselves in their own accents. Bennett’s work has received much praise in Scotland.

presentation of the supernatural also includes shocking depictions of archaic communal practices. No doubt, many of these activities—unwed mothers abandoning babies— are gladly left in the past. He does not overlook the negative aspects. McGlinchey’s *The Last of the Name*—Brian Friel’s edition based on McGlinchey’s private journals—does however consciously exclude Irish political issues that pertain to national movements. Home Rule parties, Parnell, and so forth do not feature in his writing, because they are so concerned with constitutions they forget people. McGlinchey’s political statement, by means of ignoring politics, focuses on the endemic, the particulars of the region. Authority comes from using a sort of dialect that McGlinchey refers to “as the old people say”.⁷⁰

In terms of poetic verse, “as the old people say” comprises much of the content in *CT*, exemplifying Yeats’s listening attention to the connections between *vox populi* and *vox loci*. Although *CT* resounds with much poetic content—evocative language, lyrical phrases, and melodic cadences—formal, stanzaic *poetics* are largely absent from the text. Yeats, as Poet, rarely announces himself, nor does he take on some role as the central interlocutor for composing verse and stanzas. Notably, Yeats defers the title of *poet*, its bardic position as ancestral voice, to Raferty (Antoine Ó Raifteiri, 1784-1835). No personage of myth, Raferty, the blind and wandering bard, represents the declining era of Irish language verse and the customs of orature and countryside audiences. Douglas Hyde, conscientious of Raferty’s accomplishments, helped to maintain his ongoing reputation by publishing an edition of translations in 1903. It is clear to see why Raferty occupied such a prominent position as an embodiment of Irish literature. Known for his love poems and skills in Irish syntax, Raferty also had a pronounced social activism in his verse: “An Cíos Caitliceach” [“The Catholic Rent”], for example, depicts the subscription used amongst the disenfranchised agricultural class to amass funds for Catholic emancipation. In terms of grassroots political organization, its success was extraordinary in networking scattered, disempowered labourers. In short, Raferty’s legacy arose from living the poetry that he wrote, and writing the poetry that he

⁷⁰ Like Yeats, these writers chronicle folk customs, based upon recorded conversations with local residents. Nikos Kazantzakis, in composing his sequel to the *Odysseia*, collected a massive (and unpublished) glossary of Demotic Greek, including diction from the private cant of fishermen, farmers, and ferrymen, the sort of living-language which he wanted to incorporate, not as idiom, but as a vivid and realistic speech for as that which exist contemporaneously in the imaginatively defined text. Kazantzakis’s notion of the *Cretan Gaze* implies that community involves shaping a ritual space defined by its geography. Hence, the confluence of emotionality and festival of *Zorba the Greek* culminates during the Easter festival. Kazantzakis was aware that barbarity could also ensue out of these moments of communal susceptibility.

lived, in Ireland's western counties. That Yeats includes so little of his own verse, but highlights Raferty, as in "Dust Hath Closed Helen's Eye", emphasises the presence of the ancestral voice as imminent and tangible within the contemporary context. And much of the poetry in *CT*, as formal stanzas, comes out of ancient mouths.

But Yeats does not passively receive these songs, oldes, and stories in *CT*, as if he were incapable of exercising a healthy distrust for ready-made claims to ethnos. He understands that a nation, seeking maturity through independence, must be capable of accepting the positive and negatives of its cultural history. *CT* remains complex because of this principle. So, in regards to the typecasting supposedly to be found in this work, one can trip over more Gaelic stereotypes—lusty barmaid, naughty priest, mountainy shepherd, etc.—in a single episode of *Ballykissangel* than in all of *CT*. The oral format of *CT* allows for a multiplicity of opinions. Post-colonialists have frequently noted that orature and folk customs necessarily antagonize the forces of imperial oppression, and by their nature threaten the dominant norm. Yeats had reacted against a certain Scottish counterpart whose writing had served "to moralise over the defects of the Irish character" ("Irish Fairy Beliefs", *FLM* 250). Yeats notes, "the truth is that moralising over defects and virtues of national character is for the most part foolish." National character, as the foundation of, say, a mystical order, was a concept Yeats left abandoned with *SB*.

SB and *CT* have a point in common in that both texts move from broad patterns of politics to concentrate on the situation at the ground level. The circulation of counter-colonial forces commune in spontaneous locations. At the crossroads, an unscripted public display of mourning takes place:

Presently, a score of men and boys and girls, with shawls over their heads, gathered to listen. Somebody sang *Sa Muirnín Díles* [Savourna Delight], and then somebody else *Jimmy Mo Mílestór* [Jimmy Mo Mhile Stór], mournful songs of separation, of death, and of exile. ("By the Roadside" 153)

Yeats's knowledge of music is a bit imprecise. *Savourna Delight* is a slow air, in D-major, of Irish origin, but popular enough in Scotland to be included in the *The Gow Collection of Scottish Dance Music* (1784-1822). *Jimmy Mo Mhile Stór*, a standard for the likes of Dolores Keane, describes the pains of separation. With her lover away overseas, the speaker

is unable to bear her grief, and seeks a kind of solace in nature. These two pieces mentioned here combine a stately dance tune with an elegy for a lost love. In short, Yeats, slowly lured into this roadside ritual, comes to participate in a kind of community wake. The crossroads have become a site and sanctuary for social expressions of grief and loss in a performance of ancestral recall. This vignette's emphasis on choral speech, musical tradition, and Yeats as both participant and bystander, fittingly summarises much of *CT* by concluding in this scene: "The voices melted into the twilight, and were mixed into the trees, and when I thought of the words they too melted away, and were mixed with the generations of men" (153). *Twilight's* tragic meaning, as the occultation of the past and the vanishing of a heritage, comes to the forefront, through the intergenerational phantasmal. In such a moment, Yeats witnesses the art of ancestral recall: in the twilight, the multiplicity of voices, the cultural memory in their oratures, come to intermingle.

Thus, for many reasons, folk arts, such as the harp, have used the language of twilight and magic in identifying its kind of power against economic rationalism. In doing so, they sometimes ally themselves with environmentalism and shamanism, for whom enchantment is a form of rhetoric that acts in opposition to corporate technology and urban institutions. *Twilight*, which would become the crucial theme in Japanese evaluations of Yeats, is often understood as both liminality as well as disappearance: the intermission between light and dark, the threshold spectrum in which immateriality and reality co-exist, the realm of shadows, and so forth. In keeping the twilight from turning to dark, *CT* seeks to substantiate the people who circulate the heritage, as they are also carriers of the heritage from those who preceded them. Cultural artefacts are not valued for their correlation to a museum's sense of ethnic unity or social triumph. Instead of trying to perform a uniform assessment, *CT* rallies resistance through a multitude of portraits, focusing on the dynamic of speech that keeps culture alive in the competition with history. There is no oblique endorsement here of *Irish* as a homogenous political identity. The *Celtic* suggests the diverse senses of Irish life, while passing into a state of twilight, which can be lost altogether to an assimilating global culture and its new world order.

If in my reading of Yeats's defence of the local you hear an endorsement of historical stasis, let me clarify. One point of view declares that while dedication to rural traditions and the *old ways* has environmental and cultural validity, it none the less reflects conservative

politics. The provincial, in its quest for protection, becomes frozen in a kind of subservience to itself and cannot imagine anything beyond what has already taken place. In its most extreme form, this sensibility can lead to the politics of a Jean Marie Le Pen in France, or other far right figures in Europe who appeal to tradition as an argument against change. Now, I do not believe that Yeats is entirely adverse to progress. However, he understands the assumptions that underlie into the market forces that define progress and modernisation. Does history always move in a progressive direction? Does technological revolution always entail benign influences? Is the kind of mobile-phone sense of freedom defined by market society? Do these same forces, using the rhetoric of freedom and convenience, actually assign its value solely on a chart of profit? As Mary Douglas argues, political categories, based on definitions of poverty as a lack of specific manufactured goods, are frequently misleading and in fact reinforce capitalist agendas.

Thus, it is also important to keep in mind that Yeats was not the sole engineer behind the Celtic Renaissance, nor even its most monolithic proponent. Historians and politicians such as Standish O'Grady and George Sigerson had attempted identity formulations in much more zealous ways than Yeats. Fairytale anthologies were also published by William Carleton and Thomas Crofton Croker, both of whom have also been accused of having a derisive attitude to their subject matter and of lacking the Irish language. Mary Helen Thuente's study of the Celtic Renaissance has demonstrated that, as a political consensus, the Revivalist movement in Ireland combined many disparate committees that included various degrees of national aspiration. Charles Gavan Duffy's Young Ireland movement advocated the founding of cultural institutions to forge national character; however, there is a militant sensibility that caused a gradual distancing between Young Ireland and Daniel O'Connell's Repeal Movement, primarily over the issues of violence as a means of national self-assertion. Certainly there were many other organisations and leagues who, distinct but somewhat interchangeable by alliance, nonetheless shared general characteristics of forwarding the causes of Irish independence through a revival of cultural practices, ones supposedly indigenous to Ireland, against colonialist interference.

CT straddles many problematic Irish national causes, and the means they had at their disposal to respond to the transitional period in which they operated, and the ongoing policy of British rule which influenced every detail of daily governance. In terms of creating a

consensus of resistance in the nation, Gregory Castle's recent, extensive study of the Irish Literary Renaissance demonstrates compellingly that the fieldwork of Yeats, and many others, undertook a kind of exploration that neither science nor politics could accomplish. Yeats does not index the rural society in totality. He, as were others, investigated alternatives to Victorian imperial demographics: "Yeats's ethnographic imagination combines the desire for accurate cultural description with a reluctance to achieve the kind of distance that would allow for the separation of observer and observed" (63).⁷¹ Castle's analysis returns Yeats to the circumstances of the Irish ethnographic movement, with the understanding that the nationalist narratives being analysed had a pressing situation context unique to Ireland. I see *CT*'s role within his framework, serving as an interaction with heritage, against the inroads of British racial topographies.

Many activists in Ireland, particularly in the arts, recognised that whatever elements might involve a notion of Ireland, they were threatened with imperial encroachment and assimilation. Jack B. Yeats's paintings, from an ecocritical perspective, record the features and perspectives on an endangered landscape. Its view parallels *CT* in its concern with Irish settings and scenes as a contemporary activity, framed by the natural environmental. Tradition, in its encounter with paint or words, functions in a relationship of cultural-situational knowledge. The Yeats brothers, in different mediums, testified to the same perceived threat of extinction. Strategies developed, in painting and poetry, to articulate the forms of local discourse that if erased would also delete the bonds of communities. Thus, a Bakhtinian reading could see the vignettes of *CT* not as disconnected stories, collected second hand, but as a circulation of speech as a genre. Marginal communities define and support them as a proclamation of self-reliance. In such a way, fairytales, words supposedly aimed at fantasy, are actually a rebellion against those forthcoming communications that absorb all with which they come in contact.

Another arguably revivalist movement, the Irish Texts Society took on the duty to act in an important academic role in codifying texts of the pre-modern classics. These works,

⁷¹ Castle's *Modernism and the Celtic Revival* argues compellingly that the Irish Literary revival should also be understood as an engaged sociological study. Castle states that he does not view the Revival as ethnographic in character, at least as we might think of it as a discipline within the academic social sciences. However, the Revivalists had "an historical opportunity to create (through strategies of appropriation and resignification) new representations of Irish culture and to resist the *mis*representations generated by British colonialists and anthropologists and Irish-Ireland nationalists" (11).

not understood as providing a national narrative of origins, offered a sense of a continuous Irish literary tradition, one whose works are reflected in the Irish Gaelic language of the present. Founded in 1898, the Society's goal was not only translating Irish classics, but annotating to preserve the cultural information contained within the tradition. Their efforts, certainly, triggered reform movements throughout Ireland's diverse dialect regions that sought to standardise a written and spoken form of Gaelic. Arguably, this came at the expense of minority dialects.

Fr Patrick Dinneen, an important member of the I.T.S., whose connection to the Gaelic revival, has not been sufficiently understood. He realised that something more needed to occur than just archiving and footnoting manuscripts. Certainly one needed to remember, to copy-edit, the oral forms of the older epics and their medieval manuscripts. But, to best accomplish this, the pre-modern language had to be understood in all of its living nuances. The truest line to the conversations of the past lay in the Irish and Hiberno-English, Gaelic as really used by the populace. Dinneen thus took to the countryside and began compiling his famous dictionary of the Irish language, recorded from listening to spoken usages, according to regional custom and occupational cant. What he discovered was a breathing legacy of historical connotations, coloured by regional experiences and social variations, that had ethnographic character. Noel O'Connor, former secretary of the I.T.S., described Dinneen's work this way:

But his dictionary is not merely a compendium of words and their meanings. He gives examples of usage and idiom that have seduced the reader over the years into many fascinating byways. As his was the first modern dictionary he had to wrestle with problems of spelling and standardisation of a language in the doldrums for two centuries and split into three main dialects. His rigorous training revealed itself in his capacity to make firm sound decisions on these major matters so that his book would be the virtual cornerstone of the Gaelic Revival.⁷²

⁷² A copy of this lecture, as well as other materials relevant to Dinneen, may be found on the Irish Texts Society's website: <http://www.irishtextssociety.org>. The I.T.S. has recently published a collection of essays and assessments, *Dinneen and the Dictionary: 1904-2004* (ITS Subsidiary Series 16, 2005), edited by Pádraigín Riggs.

Dinneen's dictionary appeared in 1904 and made an immediate impact, not only for the etymological information it provides but the detailed notes concerning practical utilisation of the lexicon as developed in various areas. It is a compendium of Irish rural elocution as the proclivity of distinct speech acts, which are also historical referants.

Dinneen was a lexicographer, but he was not entirely possessed by scientific detachment. He undertook a more interactive anthropological approach, in which his oral sources also became his defining contexts. For example, for the word *samhain* [October], he writes:

All Hallow-tide, the feast of the dead in pagan and Christian times, signalling the close of the harvest and the initial winter season lasting till May, during which troops (*esp.* the *Fiann*) were quartered, the fairies (*aor sídhe*) were imagined as particularly active at this season, from it the half-year is reckoned. (937).

This definition is followed by a list of idiomatic expressions, which document how *samhain* functions as slang in the vernacular to describe mysterious circumstances. Many of Dinneen's entries further detail folkloric names derived from this word, as well as other references to how this word has become embedded in Anglicised placenames. The local metaphors, which exist in the place names, still exert influence, despite colonial assimilation. Dinneen's Irish-English dictionary is more than a collection of definitions and orthographical details: for example, he compiles a field notebook that saw how folk customs, attitudes, and practices relate to the specific implications of a word. Language, as Dinneen saw, can be made susceptible to vanishing, and in the throes of disappearance acts as its own meta-narrative of disappearance. Most I.T.S. documents provide glossaries of Gaelic as static examples, fossilised in a particular epic or verse. Dinneen proved that the pre-modern language, through a continuity of exchange, exists in the utterances of the present, evolving but still hearkening to ancestral custom. The language of the past remains the vernacular after all. Its academic status, as a museum piece, was secondary to its ongoing implementation in people's lives. *Táin* was not only an incident from mythic literature, the *Táin Bó Cuailnge*, but a necessary term for cattle rearing and herding, as well as an idiom for ruffians. *Eabhóg*, which is not only the word for aspen tree, but also

a favourite wood for certain parts of a spinning wheel;

*mo ghrádhra-ra do thromán do chluara ir do rhlíneán a
bhí déanta d'eabhóig, what a lovely whorl, lug and standard
of aspen (address to a spinning wheel) . . . (383)*

Dinneen's documentation of the continuity of cultural meaning in Irish Gaelic continues to have a particular sense of urgency. Many of the species he documented are now endangered or under threat. As a sign of how the government is trying to restore a more biocentric view, the newly established National Tree Council each year encourages a re-forestation of Ireland. 2007 was the year of the aspen, *Bliain an chrinn chreathaig*.

Dinneen has had a folkish appeal that, as preserving kind of rural lore, has also attracted New Age attention. Modern neopaganism had readily latched onto Dinneen as providing proof for the cliché that the Irish have a more shamanic spirituality than other peoples.⁷³ And, because of this, one might assume he too has perpetuated a *Quiet Man* version of Irish witchcraft. In all likelihood, Dinneen, as a Jesuit, would not appreciate being associated with a neo-Pagan agenda. His contextual circumstances required in the Irish Renaissance had a pressing attention to customs and nuances, exemplifying communal heritage, which had associations with ancestral practices. He sought to chart the genealogy of a minority language whose fluent speakers were dwindling in number. In his view of his role with the I.T.S., the way Irish is spoken now has much to reveal about the literature of the past, and vice versa. The colloquial speech of Irish Gaelic would soon be at the mercy of artificial language reforms as well as the Queen's English. Dinneen's scholarly importance thus extends beyond the value he seems to have provided postmodern Wicca. Despite its now archaic font and obsolete orthography, Dinneen's dictionary gives a snapshot of Irish as a dynamic language that engages a location through cognitive frameworks that see custom and language as co-dependent.⁷⁴ This kind of investigation makes an attempt, through living speech, toward legitimate cultural traces. As Herder argued, these words necessarily resonate, rather possessively, in the spoken tongue. Yeats too listened and recorded everyday

⁷³ Dinneen does have an appeal for neo-paganism. A *Witches Bible Compleat* notes that Dinneen is preferred to the more modern dictionary by Ó Dónaill: the latter is "less informative than Dinneen on mythological and folk-lore references" (176), being less in tune with the *old ways*.

⁷⁴ Dinneen's Scottish counterpart, Edward Dwelly, the original edition including woodcuts for illustrative purposes (1911). Dwelly originally published the edition under a Gaelic pseudonym, Eoghann MacDhomhnall, presumably fearing a receptive prejudice against an Anglo name. He also pays attention to etymology, but as practical impact in community discourse, attuned to cultural practices spanning centuries.

activity in varieties of the Hiberno-English dialect, within a habitat that frames its communal significance. Dinneen and Yeats move away from previous tendency to pseudoepigraphy, in people such as James Macpherson, keen on rural speech only as circumstantial evidence for inventing epics. For Macpherson, it is not the words and their present indications that matter, only that they burnish the creation of fake antiques.

Rather than organise his work according to lexical headings, Yeats transcribes his chapters as identifiable by conversations, in dialogically centred social encounters. The vignettes of *CT* do not remain hermetically sealed or self-absorbed but derive their qualities through outward interactivity. Antithetical themes and attitudes are held together through the dynamic exchange of people who enable a co-operative storytelling. However, despite the ethnographic qualities of *CT*, Yeats's interjections remind us that this text concurrently acted as a diary. That Yeats's sense of custom and heritage was also a personal repository of poetic ideas does not detract from these sources as variations of voices within time and community. *Celtic* provides a multivalent space for individual spokespersons to interact through creative non-complacency. It actually counteracts the solipsism of *SB*. Thus, likewise, on a larger scale, *Celtic* acts against the grey, sooty glamour of prosperous empire, the Victorian enterprise, primarily through its phantasmagoric rebelliousness which also strives to maintain human contact.

Victorian corporations, generally, had praised individual sacrifice as a utilitarian virtue, necessary for social progress. Institutional models for collective engagement derived from a reliance on development and productivity as the ultimate merit. *CT*, like Dinneen, commits itself to a public community, but recognises individual agency whose efficacy is realised through its faculty to rebel against uniformity. Each voice, acting as both speaker and preserver, offers a perspective on those sub-conventional traditions that articulate its marginality. The individual is given the power to rescind commitment. This theme, certainly, has been a principle of post-colonial scholarship in general. The phantasmic-cognitive model enabled genuine resistance to commercial mass media. As Yeats explains in "The Celtic Element in Literature", the interest in ancient Ireland is not a mere resuscitation of fantasy:

I will put this differently and say that literature dwindles to a mere chronicle of circumstances, or passionless fantasies, and passionless meditations, unless it is constantly flooded with the passions and beliefs of ancient times . . . (185)

“Chronicle of circumstances” describes the result of a machinery that demoralises culture, and in which people are reduced to records of rational progress. Resonances, as Yeats and others maintained, arise not from a mythic Golden Age, but as conditions of socio-linguistic practice that operate against the colonial procedure through their timelessness.

The *phantasmal* influences the perspectives of *CT* by perceiving ancestral realities of time and space, ones that enable through the unworldly a counter-reality to the modern world. To see Yeats’s faeries as fantasy and entertainment, of the *Dungeons and Dragons* type, misses the entire point of the political and philosophical principles that enquire into twilight as the discourse of the vanishing. In examining the plight of real communities being transformed into mist, *CT* opens up to varying ontological domains, represented by different forms of physical and temporal existences, which interact to create reflexive points of view. The phantasmal, although apparitional, does not remain removed from the material. It exerts influence and refraction against the mundane political and social.

Twilight and the Community: Disfigurement, Refiguration, Recovery

Robert Kirk and Andrew Lang’s book *The Secret Commonwealth* (1893) had invented a legislative and civic discourse for interpreting the esoteric societies of the Fairy. Yeats, in his preface to *CT*, anticipates a more comprehensive book on the subject. Kirk and Lang had attempted to describe the Fairy-world as a kind of onto-political entity, a phantasmal civilisation, which they idealised as a justiciable utopia. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, inspired by Yeats, had described the Fairy realm not just in anecdotal terms, but as a comprehensive society comprised by rules of governance and hierarchy.⁷⁵ Exploring the comparative

⁷⁵ This book, and its notes on legal procedures, has a different quality than other books of fairy-lore during that period. Compare with another text by J. G. Campbell, *Witchcraft and Second Sight in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland* (Glasgow, 1902). Both books, however, rather than merely being records of bizarre superstitions, act as documents which record storytelling and other oratures from remote regions of the Scottish countryside.

potential of the Faeries as alternative, Yeats can make assessments of civic responsibility and governance in Ireland, with the Faerie as a kind of refractile comparison. The murky glance of the supernatural actually enhances pointed political critiques.

Through ancestral recall—the address of the fairies who seem to be the previous citizens of an older Ireland—Yeats in *CT* makes retroactively sceptical observations concerning the legal status of his own modernist society. The faeries provide the counter-example. “Regina, Regina, Pigmearum Veni” depicts two sets of beings who occupy different epistemological realms: the mortal and the Fae. When brought into juxtaposition, one of mis-alignment, Faerie sovereignty exposes what is lacking in the human (Ireland/Irish) situation. The Queen in this story insists on using her own language of civic authority. She defines judicial boundaries according to self-affirmations of who is a citizen of her world, and their rights to privacy and freedom of activity. Self-contained rules, the epistemological boundaries that shield her commonwealth, thus preclude unlawful knowledge (intrusion and interference) from outsiders. In defying their human curiosity, she creates a sociological confrontation. When declaring to Yeats that “It would not be lawful for you to know” (80), the queen has delivered a proclamation with potent political bite. She asserts that real autonomy lies in an ability for members to control their independent existence against the investigation of threatening non-residents. She further reveals that, even when the Faerie emigrate into the human world, they may retain the right to confidentiality over their true status. They are human, but may retain their dual-citizenship in the Faerie world.

And so the Queen simply cannot understand the mortal-centric notion that the Fae’s very nature is sustained upon the whims of human fancy. Yeats suggests her kind are only illusions, projections born of mental functions only. This runs so against the grain of the Queen’s thinking that she responds only with total bewilderment. Yeats has attempted to dethrone her by denying both her ontological right to exist, as well as governance over her own formative nature. Actually, Yeats tries to do to Faeries what Matthew Arnold attempted to do to the *Celtic*. The idea that society exists only due to whims and fancy does not hold true. Faeries are independent from such external definitions of *Faerie* as a label that would subjugate them. And this is ultimately possible since her parallel land has not been colonised. She retains separation from external meddling that would assimilate her kingdom.

She and her realm are not subjected to any justification through another nation's disclosure of judgment. Instead, she can, much to the envy of Ireland in that day, issue abiding pronouncements from her own jurisdiction. The Fae are a self-defining society.

In this section, as in others in *CT*, Yeats has been drawn into a political fable: representatives of two nations have met in free association. However, the phantasmal, whose sovereignty is intact, act as ambassadors who expose the colonial status of marginal Ireland. The Queen, the adjudicative authority of her commonwealth, issues rules of engagement from her own *lex loci*. Uncomfortably, this makes for a reflective contrast to Ireland's own disfigured constitutionality. The Irish countryside, as a culturally independent but politically occupied space, does not have such formal privilege of autonomous decision making. Its own Queen, Victoria, splices from afar her constituencies with edicts, limiting Ireland's own boundaries of exchange. Yeats here begins to develop his sense of the phantasmal is that, rather than an aesthetics of daydreams, it represents an alternate existence, one that threatens commercial materiality through its ghastly relationships to social events.⁷⁶ These phantasmal apparitions, discarnate but still connected to the human world, have arisen consequentially from a predicament of physical disappearance. The Queen implies that her kingdom contains citizens who were once human, and who might become human again. In short, under her dominion are both ancestral and forthcoming generations of those who will live in Ireland.

Yeats's regards the phantasmal as a performative agency. Their power counteracts the monocular view enforced by some utilitarian, forward-thinking agenda. To recall or to interact with the twilight—to actively intersect with it—destablises oppressive frameworks of predictability and normalcy. As noted in the previous chapter, this concept of twilight had been at the centre of Yeats's earliest lyrics. In the twilight, Oisín's dialogue with St Patrick contests and exposes both of their respective temporalisations. Oisín becomes the wraith because his battle staff has been negated, his past erased, and his phantoms act out against the crosier, the new material power. Oisín, as a kind of vanished character, must somehow negotiate both his being, and his being-in-time, according to a landscape that has been rendered anachronised by St Patrick. Oisín senses, through his phantom state, that the Irish

⁷⁶ Fantastic elements or beings often have a closer relationship to their formative social contexts. For example, a pop monster such as Godzilla has much to do with the horrors of a post-atomic age. Recently, as the film *Pan's Labyrinth* painfully demonstrates, conditions of social and political flux lead to irregular forces of perception and apprehension in coming to terms with social change.

land has been massively altered through change and has become uninhabitable, much like the lost isles of fancy. St Patrick lords over a new conditionality that he had instituted, by either expunging or converting the old society. This political evangeliser of Ireland has redefined the social networks and geographic landmarks of the country. However, because phantasmal dimension persists in the form of Oisín as twilight, he had not been able to *totally* exorcise the wraiths of the previous age. Oisín, as the spectralised past, persists to adjudicate this changed space through a possibility for ancestral recall, the recovery of memory into the cultural landscape. However, as a sad statement of allegory, the erasure of geographic effects and social communities finally becomes enough to cause Oisín's total dissipation, literally both form and spirit evaporate. In Japan, the Urashima Tarô paradox arises when the hero returns to a home, so profoundly altered, that no referent remain for orientation, and therefore memory loses the meaning of itself. The faculty of remembrance, as a condition of having engaged the landscape, becomes transferred into the spectral, as the physical link has been lost, or severed. When the spectral fails to locate itself physically, it may give up, or be given up, entirely to oblivion.

On this account, Yeats could investigate the phantasmic—in the form of humans who turn into ghosts—as the result of a dislocated or traumatised moments in the processes of transition in Irish history. Certain Irish placenames, indeed, reflect this sense of vanishing as, paradoxically, marking the landscape. For example, *Poolaphuca*, in Co Kildare, means *hole of ghosts*. In the previous chapter, I examined how Beinteinsson had made the same point, with a similar poetic apparatus, in regards to Old Norse and the contemporary Icelandic understanding of the vanishing past as totem spirit of faeries and ghosts. In this way, like Beinteinsson, Yeats argues for a sense of belonging within the continuity of time in a place.

In pursuing this attachment of twilight value as ancestral traces in place, Yeats may not be in the same class, socially, as Kavanagh, and his form of realism; but, at the other extreme, his writing cannot be dismissed as Celtic occultism. Though Yeats has been drawn into that setting in *SB*, he contrasts strongly with the more overt practitioners of that style in *CT*. Montague Summers or Edward Plunkett (Lord Dunsany) exhibit that Celtic-Gothic stylistic akin to H. P. Lovecraft and other forerunners of contemporary fantasy and sword-and-sorcery genre fiction. Generally, Celtic-Gothic concerns itself with attaining a transcendence, an emergence into a utopia of druids, which the Irish landscape suggests but

does not represent. Summers and Dunsany have more in common with the Atlantis of Donnelly than the Kerry of Dinneen. The former ignores the social world as the domain of the bestial and material. Of course, today, we have plenty of genre fiction, focusing on bards and unicorns. Trade magazines such as *Cabinet des Fées* regularly feature Gaelic journeys of soul-making, often by authors with Irish names written in traditional orthography. *Irish* acts as culturality to garb a plot with a fabric of mystique and otherworldliness. Gaelic culture provides a leverage for turning routine plotlines into something more presumably textured with shimmering ethnic realities. Japan, in James Bond films and detective novels, provides the same service as beguiling backdrop to bland storylines.

To better understand those qualities that make *CT* revolutionary, and distinct from the Celtic-Gothic formula, the works of such authors as Arthur Machen offer an instructive contrast. Machen, once a colleague of Yeats in the Golden Dawn, had mixed in his writing elements of ceremonial magic with his own variations of Celtic Christianity. In every way, his autobiographical novel *The Hill of Dreams* (1907) lacks the versatility, polyphony, concern for real communities, and scepticism that makes *CT* such a complicated investigation of *muintire* or the people of the margins. *The Hill of Dreams* describes, quite prominently, the *Celtic* as an ethnicity with an innate magical aptitude, a quality that in fact defines the culture's universal temperament: %50 Catholic, %50 *other*. This work differs substantially in tone, voice, and themes from *CT*, or even *SB*, because even the latter still at least concerns itself with actual geographies. Machen, instead, is looking for wormholes into imaginary kingdoms. Thus, his sense of the Welsh landscape is one of mere appearances that, to the keen of spirit, contain openings to transcendental, Celtic worlds.

In terms of oral tradition and local culture, Machen's sense of speech is nowhere near as honed as Yeats. When locals speak, only vague aphorisms and pseudo-incantations come out. But this does not matter. The only real truth comes from the acosmological, the kind of otherworldliness that exists away from people, customs, and cultures. Like the mobile phone Quirke mocks in my epigraph to this chapter, Machen has his ears fixed to his own aerial, listening to the heavens, the kind of distant isles of Oisín. Machen's hill, where the Dream is found, is not an actual spot of earth, but a garden of a redeemed Eden, and his flight into the astral journey of the soul is a journey into the realms of neo-Platonic Beauty.

But, in contrast, a work such as “Enchanted Woods” shows Yeats’s social concerns for *twilight* as cultural vanishing, for real people and their predicaments, fiercely political in a way that Machen is not. This work, as another example from *CT*, reveals Yeats’s efforts to abandon conceptual frameworks and facile genres for ethnography. To do this, he turns to the irrational as a kind of intuitive capability that does not deny materiality nor social circumstances, but seeks to appraise them from competing perspectives of time. The phantasmal is not an imaginative ploy for daydreams, but complexly fluctuates in various modes of speech. This episode represents a young poet’s defence of the imagination, a bit of homage to Shelley, but follows through on its interrogation of “the true nature of apparitions” (85). Yeats tries to find a middle ground between Kavanagh’s realism, a sense of the “common opinion” (85), with a recognition for enchantment as something *irrealistic*.

In terms of society and class, Yeats cannot absolve himself of his position as Anglo-Irish. But through the act of listening he sheds the conventions adhering to his status. When Yeats speaks of the “net we were taken in it at birth”, the force that shuts out emotions, he is often understood as offering a Gnostic viewpoint. Physicality is the trap of the higher self. On this idea, *nets* had been a crucial symbol of *The Shadowy Waters* of ensnaring solipsism. In *CT*, Yeats describes the net not as gross materiality, but the trap of disconnection that snares people out of their situation in the landscape: he identifies this as either the fattened, lazy body alone at home or the other extreme, “to run hither and thither in some foolish sport” (86). What the twilight offers is a broader, non-linear perspective on human activity and its orientations to time and place. Shadows, Yeats says in *CT*, are the stuff of

Foreshadowings mingled with the images

Of man’s misdeeds in greater days than these . . .

This is Yeats’s commitment to ethos, as the enchantment of a place; and orality must become the political argument of *CT*. The heteroglossia of multiple voices and experiences shapes tradition through social co-existence, with ancestral continuity, in a specific geographic region, and this is an opposition to modernisation.⁷⁷

Yeats’s sense of landscape, as formative to consciousness, has parallels in twentieth century philosophy, in both the East (Watsuji Tetsurô) and West, as with Martin Heidegger.

⁷⁷ See Matthew Spangler’s “Haunted to the Edge of Trance” for another discussion in which haunting and trance denote peripheral perceptibility. In much of Yeats’s writings, altered states of consciousness relate to moments of twilight access.

His meditation on the unique enchantment of standing before a tree evokes the bio-cognitive exchange in which human thought becomes a form of shared habitation:

We stand outside of science. Instead we stand before a tree in bloom, for example—and the tree stands before us. The tree faces us. The tree and we meet one another, as the tree stands there and we stand face to face with it. As we are in relation of one to the other and before the other, the tree and we *are*. This face-to-face meeting is not, then, one of these “ideas” buzzing about in our heads . . . A curious, indeed unearthly thing that we must first leap onto the soil on which we really stand. (“Thinking” 40)

Heidegger shows the experience of the tree, of being-in-the-landscape as the most natural and necessary foundations of ontology. Epistemology, the concentration or awareness, gives way to an energy of being. Yeats, by slipping out of rational epistemology into the paranormal, offers a kind of tree/person experience that erases the presumed dichotomy separating the two. A belief in this kind of reality, expressed through unrealistic perceptions, is not mere superstition or emotional retardation. The focus on the moods and forces in the landscape shifts attention from the utilitarian gaze that evaluates the local as equipment to be extrapolated and used. The paranormal represents the perspicacity to understand the soil of Heidegger’s tree, and that rational technology does not have “the right to decide what man’s place is” (“Thinking” 43). The enchanted sense of history arises out of that particular moment, as well as the ancestral penumbra along the cultural borderlines, connected to that tree.⁷⁸

In Yeats’s essay “The Moods”, routine mechanisms of habitual thought can be overcome through strange impulses from the phantasmal domain. Thus, even at the level of

⁷⁸ Fleming applies a Jungian reading to Yeats’s concept of the *great memory* with the notion of the collective unconscious (66). As the primordial archive which holds essential images and symbols shared by humanity, Jung’s theory coincides with Yeats’s notion that magic and folklore express most effectively primal imaginative patterns. Jung and Yeats might both extend their parallel notions, as Fleming notes, to appreciating the need for a mythological heritage. Thus, for Fleming, “Irish peasants as Yeats and Synge created them embodied the collective memory of the nation and the timeless memory of the world; their imagination was necessary for the preservation of Irish culture. Free from materialism and ambition, they lived close to nature and in the old ways” (67).

enterprise of commodified communication or an urban disconnect from nature, the *moods* can transverse time and space to disturb subjugation. Heidegger's theory of moods is not a fairy-tale vision. However, he argues for a cross-dimensionality that shows the unreliability of empirical data and affirms that there are intuitive forms of communication that arise from transferences of unique energies. Quentin Smith analyses the Heideggerian sense of *vision* has a touch of the Oisianic phantasmic:

[Indifference] has the ecstatical meaning of an inauthentic mode of beenness. Indifference, which can go along with busying oneself head over heels, must be sharply distinguished from equanimity [*Gleichmut*]. This mood springs from resoluteness, which in a moment of *vision*, views the situations that are possible in one's ability-to-be-a-whole as discarded in our anticipation of death.⁷⁹

Oisín's original predicament had been a false disclosure of his *findedness*, of being-out-of-the-world, assuming the *mood* was an island unto itself. Only memory in concert with tangible object restored his *Dasein*, through the crucial aura of enchantment, which arises from handling the object. The object is object-in-the-world to the mind through the *touching* of this object. Psychometry, the art of obtaining memory from a physical object, acts as a restorative to ontology. The accessed or recalled presence of memory in the object informs the appraiser of the object's historicity in terms of the particulars of place and time. Memory, spirit, and physicality co-operate through total interactivity. Place becomes situational justification and preserver for a legacy potential. St Patrick knows this, and thus he had to destroy all associations of objects by erasing their situational landscape. Like Oisín, the objects become unmoored and adrift in the open ontological sea, without any form of memory to relocate them. In this way, St Patrick could forward his new agenda by overcoming the persistence of memory.

Much of *CT* explores Yeats's belief in alternative epistemologies that negotiate the landscape through both direct and indirect perceptibility.⁸⁰ Such agencies, by their actions

⁷⁹ I quote Smith's translation and commentary, for he usefully summarises Heidegger's theory of moods as "a unique and primary way of disclosing Dasein's Being-in-the-world, and disclosure that is prior to the 'cognitive' disclosure of the so-called 'faculty of reason' " (211). In regards to disclosure, the materiality of *da* [there] of *dasein* equals the condition of the revealed state of being-in-ness.

and even superstitions, query and unbalance the encroachment of conventional modes of thought and knowledge. Opposed to the dominant utilitarianism, Yeats had enough philosophical muster in *CT* to explore how a perceiver derives information from an array of possibilities, rather than by the monotony of normative stimuli. Thus, in *CT*, the blurring of enchantment with the commonplace is a virtue: “I am not certain that he distinguishes between the natural and the supernatural very clearly” (84). Such a description is, after all, a compliment. Forms of imaginative cognition can perceive timbres in the environs that are inaccessible to utilitarian norms and the market economies that drive them. Yeats was sceptical of urbanism as an accelerated form of Victorian *progress*: “In the great cities we see so little of the world” (“Village Ghosts”, *FLM* 34). Yeats prefers those experiences that are produced through an awareness of *ethos*, and its attendant village ghosts, in the traditional sense of abode and place-dwelling. The advent of radio signals and other media disconnected the person from the aural landscape. Hence, *CT* derives its forms of knowledge and experience through interactive storytelling, frequently outdoors, as pathways of *energeia*, energy, activity, and existing.

Yeats was not alone in this questioning of progress as generic collectivity. Previously, Thomas Hardy’s *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* chronicled mass transportation as a violation of local communities. The financial agenda of the metropolis, seeking to gather cheap labour into its centres, extends its tentacles in the name of convenience. Part of the community itself dies, it seems, when an oncoming mail van kills the family horse. In *Jude the Obscure*, expedited communication and transport, rather than allaying hardships, creates haste and confusion for the sake of capital gain. The guiding principle had been that the margins offered a culturality that the metropolis cannot reproduce, even though its markets desperately want to. So, when we think of Yeats’s attention to local modes of speech, we might compare with composers such as Bartók or Enescu who turned to ethnomusicology for transcribing the rhythms and melodies of ethnically isolated communities.⁸¹

⁸⁰ Perceptual ecology now argues that the multi-dimensionality of nature, our creative access to it, allow for a cognitive liveliness.

⁸¹ Also, musical ethnographers such as Margaret Fay Shaw and her study of folk songs have shown how dialects encode centuries of memories and traditions in that region, creating a sense of identity in small communities against the eroding pressures of expanding foreign influences.

In terms of documenting the phantasmal margins in *CT*, Yeats's fairylore, as lens for social observation, does not record data and anecdote about superstitions for their own sake. He had already compiled several volumes on that notion, as had Andrew Lang and others. Likewise, Thomas Keightley's *The Fairy Mythology* (1880) gathered forms of folk tradition, but as an anecdote collection that has little engagement with actual communities and their ways of circulating tradition. *CT* works on a different principle. It concerns itself with the people telling the story—their descriptive habits, patterns of speech, and hereditary forms of knowledge—as much as the actual story itself. For Yeats, to be attuned to the paranormal allows for multiple expression of the temporal, as the paranormal acts as a conduit for subversive knowledge from different eras even. But, this fantastic form of communication can only be understood as it is connected to a specific environment and its related communities, to the locals and to their particulars. Much of *CT*, unlike Keightley, concentrates on *persons* and how they perceive, and also as much as *what* they perceive. Conversations in regards to the “wee people” are in fact a rhetorical strategy, rather than a dogmatic belief or a form of amusement. The folkloric entails ways of representational thinking that champions the marginal, traditional, and acoustic. Yeats is helping to establish new literary methods here—the folk art polemic, the genre of twilight: the folkloric acts in tandem with environmental and cultural minority issues.

It is important to remember that Yeats was not alone in this method, however, especially in Ireland. Indeed, his influence can be understood positively, in the ways he inspired individuals to take stock of folk culture in their surroundings. For example, following Yeats, Paddy Tunney recognised that cultural survival entails concerted activism. His important memoir, “a journey into traditional song”—*Where Songs Do Thunder*—tips its hat to Yeats on many occasions. Tunney, a troubadour gathering songs around rural Ireland, makes a declaration of fidelity to folk music, its traditional methods of circulating tunes, and the community building power through its enjoyment as worthwhile anachronism. Tunney, ignoring the industry of pre-packaged television programmes and disposable pop concerts, declares that folk music must be accessed directly as an existential acousticality. This is what the *seisiún*, the village pub session, should offer: intimate community, instruction, and an ethics for cultural location. The Fiddler of Dooney, for Tunney, best represents this ideal of music as learnt by ear and exchanged person to person:

“Wheesht!” he commanded. “Ah! That’s *The Blackberry Blossom!* By damn, but it must be the ‘wee people’ that’s in it. Would it be unlucky to dance to their music, do you think?”

“Dance away,” I assured him. “That’s not ‘gentle music’
When blackberry blossoms berried and ripened as black and shiny as sloe, there was a song to honour their maturing. It’s called *Na Smeara*, or *The Blackberries*, and was composed in the native tongue by J P Craig, a teacher in Saint Eunan’s College, Letterkenny, round the early decades of this century. It was taught to me by Hudie Devanney . . . (8, 9)

The tune’s validity is understood through the reliability of its transmission: place-names, teachers, connections are of crucial importance for the sustenance of the musical community and its heritage. Thus, the inevitable connection between folk music, geography, and history undergoes a Herder-like gestation. The music will act as an interface, a way to access a cultural and physical environment that, socially speaking, are both creative habitat and auditorium. Performed outdoors, the tune further exacts its themes from natural phenomena and the phantasmal merges with this process. Thus Tunney can slyly mock the “gentle music” as the stuff of printed booklets for the home parlours of the bored and wealthy.⁸² Magic, really, becomes a metaphor for the glamour of something that technology cannot produce. The teacher of music, who is also a collaborator, brings his or her own personal heritage to the occasion. This concept has been explored in Derek Bell’s books on Ulster harplore. He explains that continuity and tradition are the same in operation, in terms of understanding folk music as something diametrically opposed to disposable pop music.

In paying such close attention to the *rural* as formative to a particular identity, Yeats has been accused of imagining a pseudo-strata of Irish society broadly termed *the peasant*, who is attuned to the boggy hinterland and leads an upright agrarian life. To what extent did Yeats intend *peasant* to define the Irish people under colonial occupation? The word

⁸² Irish *trad* music now has its own institutional spokes-forum. *Comhaltas*’s agenda, according to their website is “Passing on the tradition of Irish culture is what we do”. They see themselves as both instructors and promoters, to increase globally the promotion, identification, and preservation of Irish music. They are organized according to a hierarchical series of exams and fees, codified instruction, although in a non-profit manner. Many still learn tunes the old way, by ear, in local sessions. Some may have distrust for the commercial nature of many Irish *fleadh* (festivals). Off the record, some refer to the Eisteddfod as a *middle-class jambouree*.

peasant, after all, has its origins in feudal society. Certainly, to continue to use this identifier, as collectively describing various segments of Irish society around a much broader *gaeltacht* in that time, is not anthropologically satisfying. Yeats's point about traditional communities is that those who live "a simple and natural life" are better off, as opposed to the "hurried, troubles, and unhealthy", the urban rationalists. The term is oppositionally suggestive, but not without its problematic inferences.

Yeats's use of *peasant*—as would Yanagita Kunio's *jômin* [common folk]—has been thoroughly scrutinised for its inherent political biases. In Yeats's time, as now, the evaluation of the agrarian cultures of western Ireland as being a distinct social entity has caused much consternation. Certainly, this consternation—who is being identified and according to what criteria—contributed effectively to the debate about the Irish during a period of national self-determination. But Yeats, particularly in Kavanagh's view, was not sufficiently class conscious to make any credible statements about the so-called country life. Yet, when we think of how readily Yeats broke class taboos, we can also appreciate him for being so class *unconscious*. The *Celtic Twilight*, in its variety of entries from different social positions, deliberately circumvents the hierarchical patterns of exclusive, class-based networks. One just has only to imagine the initial embarrassment, amongst both parties, as Yeats knocked on cottage doors, ignoring entrenched barriers about acceptable company or proper decorum. In *CT* at least Yeats cares little for the supposed merits of elite society and its representative occupations.

In the early twentieth-century, in that time of transition, Irish authors were staking out in their art respective claims to political territory. Class distinctions inflected the relative claims to be speaking for independence movements, and these could be further sub-divided by religion, district, income, and so forth. For the marginalised majority, living away from the metropolis, and dependent upon now ruined means of pre-industrial capital, the options had seemingly been stagnant poverty or progressive industrialism. Much of the population of Catholic Belfast is derived from Donegal immigrants, who had come for the linen mills and shipyards when the fields were no longer fallow, or the crops were indexed at low cost. As many political commentators at that time noted, Yeats's Anglo-ness was a source of distrust. He was seen as occupying a privileged position, tied to the colonial history. Thus, Patrick Kavanagh unflatteringly alludes to Yeats in "The Great Hunger" as a kind of class tourist,

perusing a decaying landscape with a full belly and plenty of sentiment. From such a lofty position, Kavanagh suggests one can regard the *earthly* tradition of the peasant abstractly, with no real dirt under the fingernails. Against this, Kavanagh's poems claim the soil as a territory of rustic suffering that poetic affectations cannot mimic. The real voice of labour, of true agricultural dependence, has the authenticity of historical trauma that are class-specific. Certainly, several Irish artists have been said to have played up a working class upbringing for stylistic credentials: Brendan Behan has been said to have exaggerated his proletarian life in Dublin; and Colin Farrell's accent has become noticeably more guttural as his global fame increases.

But questions as to how the Irish could unite across class boundaries informed much of the twentieth-century quest in Ireland to challenge the alleged mysticisms and mystifications of the Irish soil. That need not lead, however, to dismissing the potential of landscape to act as a repository of an irreplaceable history. Contemporary Irish language poetry continues to explore this possibility, whether in the pastoral mode of Heaney or Muldoon. Consider also Cathal Ó Searcaigh's work, which often resonates with the Kavanagh viewpoint that soil is not sacred but is rather scandalous:

Here I came from hill and bog,
from small parishes of hypocrisy,
from the gossip towns, from the poverty
and anonymity of my people,
from the mossy nest of their kindness,
the hedges and fences of their complacency . . . (105)⁸³

Such a view is often positioned as an antidote to the presumed Yeatsian romance. Instead of storytellers and musicians, we have gossips and hypocritical priests, also a part of Irish society.

Kavanagh attacked Yeats's adoration of the soil as fixated on magical reverberations. This sort of disconnected dithering rises from the drawing-room Irish.⁸⁴ The bourgeoisie are

⁸³

Tháinig mé anseo ó chnoic agus ó chaoráin,
Ó pharóistí beaga beadaí an bhéalchrábhaidh, ó bhailte
an bhéadáin, ó bhochtaineacht
agus beagimhe mo mhuintire, ó nead caonaigh a gcineáltais,
ó chlaí cosanta a sorachta. (*in Min a' Lea* 104)

incapable of a realistic awareness in regards to rural society, its hardship and labour, the bread and butter of people born into a dependency on agriculture to eke out a living. But Ó Searcaigh, interestingly, moves beyond Kavanagh by balancing a healthy distrust for drizzly Irish provincialism, yet also promoting a commitment to ecological sustainability and organic farming as a positive aspect of the soil. That agriculture can operate according to its own ecologically sensitive tenets, respecting the earth as both sustainer and employer, challenges from a current market perspective those corporate forces that Kavanagh only partially addressed.

Yeats's relation to rural writing fascinates partly because of its split identity. As a resident of Dublin and London, he does bring a certain degree of the city to his outlook. This provides useful information, in fact, as he is well positioned to know exactly how the machinery of modernity worked, and those who were oiling its gears. From his mother's side, the Sligo perspective, he grew up with a point of view that recognised the uniqueness of these outlying communities, their distinctions and uniquenesses.⁸⁵ Yeats begins *CT* by using, as does Ó Searcaigh in the above verse (*mo mhuintire*), the phrase "my people". Whom is Yeats referring to when he says, to introduce *CT*: "My own people who would look where I

⁸⁴ Peter Kavanagh, a relation of Patrick, was a folklore collector himself, publishing a small book entitled *Irish Mythology: A Dictionary*, containing numerous observations of rural life in the west of Ireland. Patrick Kavanagh, in his introduction to this volume, makes several interesting observations: "this book did something . . . landmarks in my memory appeared" (1). Building on the notion that landscape and unique human cultures are inseparable, Kavanagh continues by describing his friendships with various local personalities, including Jack Hamill, who had "quarried out forts and other gentle places and his luck was none too good. Sickness and cattle losses dogged him till he grew wise in the way of the fairies" (2). Kavanagh's descriptions are not altogether unlike *CT*. Peter Kavanagh's list of memories continues and he laments the passing of the countryside. He argues, from a point of view very similar to Yeats, that books provide some, if distant, recollection:

Perhaps that whole world of imagination is crumbled now. It was destroyed by the raw consciousness of compulsory education whose expression is the illiterate newspaper, but echoes of it still linger in the crannies of the people's minds turning erstwhile savages into men of sensibility. (5)

Yeats himself was keenly sensitive to Kavanagh's point here: that this paradoxical, and supposed, amelioration of the peasant, the conversion of savagery through mass-media and early globalisation, was in fact a destructive kind of enforced uniformity that demolished the local in its efforts towards international discourse. Yeats criticises in *CT* the mechanisms of this new society — generic newspapers and hegemonic education systems.

⁸⁵ *Howards End* also struggles with the same network of influences: Edwardian economics, advancing capitalist culture, and a dissipating rural tradition.

bid them” (32)? For most of this work, it is Yeats who looks where he is bid.⁸⁶ This broad notion of *muintire* is difficult to render in English, meaning both *people* generally, but also trenchant social units, such as community or households.⁸⁷ As a politically charged but rhetorically vague term, *people/muintire* variously defines itself according to geographic place, geology of landscape, or cultural temperament. *My people*, in the Home Rule movement, described a process of organising a group identity to be brought forward for a political goal. Clearly, the General Election of 1918 exposed the great strain amongst the diverse constituencies of the island—but a democratic consensus had been managed.

Sometimes, however, it seems the only legitimate version of Ireland, as proposed through the shrill backlash of satire, is one of Hibernophobia, which seems to be the nihilism of films such as *Intermission* or, at times, in the novels of Patrick McCabe. Political ennui and social surrender as generic indifference, has become the authentic way of accessing “Ireland”. However, the rejection of all things that claim *Irishness* is, after all, another essentialism. To expose this tendency to devalue *Irishness*, Emma Donoghue’s novel *Stir-Fry* (1994) interestingly explores the contrast between the rural and *Dub* points of view. Maria, from a small town, loves to vilify her upbringing through parochial exaggeration:

“There’s a little statue of Our Lady with the hands chipped off, and a field out back full of cow shit.”

Her Dublin friend sees this straight away as a political performance:

“Look, don’t satirize it for my benefit,” Jael broke in. “I’m not a journalist. . . . don’t try and be sophisticated by slagging it.” (90)

Jael points out that a quest for hyperbolic realism can just as easily justify itself through smug satire, in which the *culchie* becomes envisioned in a certain way backward to the

⁸⁶ The notion that this text is, in fact, multi-faced is crucial as a counter-argument to the view that Yeats presents a fascist fantasy in this work. As I have suggested, *CT* was part of that line of thinking which begins in the late 18th-century and culminates in a number of different ways across Europe, not always in the same way in any one place. Hence, the difference needs to be established between De Valerian nationalism—his political manifesto of maidens dancing at the crossroads, as his infamous speech encouraged—and Yeats’s own varieties of national self-consciousness. I think the point that needs to be made is that, in *CT*, Yeats does more than promote ethnic nationalism. There is a sense of scepticism here that protects him from either the milder green variety of *Oirish* fascism, or the toxic kind which developed east of the Rhine, which also uses Herder as a foundation. Yeats’s multitude of articulations confounds the text in a way that resists its co-ordination with aggressive national politics. *CT* is not a fascist document because it is double-voiced. Fascism silences the other voice, either by stuffing its mouth with clover or by cutting its throat altogether.

⁸⁷ Dinneen’s orthography, *muintear*: “household, family community, religious order, tribe” (769).

jackeen, the Dubliner of the *real* Ireland, the nitty-gritty. Privileging the economic centre, in Irish literature, there has been a tendency to rebel against rurality as a subordinate pattern of superstitions, a sad kind of holy old Ireland stuck in the past. TV programmes such as *Father Ted* push this mockery to the limit. Another example, much more balanced, is John B. Keane's *The Bodhrán Makers*. The prose unflinchingly chronicles the foibles of village insularity; but a technocratic future, in which craftsmanship is martyred for mass production, is not an appealing alternative. And Roddy Doyle's *Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha* has a ruined outbuilding at the core of its urban setting: the peripheries still contain these decomposing relics of the past. Arguably, a new surge of geographic pride is coming into vogue, as the Dublin metropolis literally sprawls outward with development. Today, T-shirts reading *People's Republic of Cork* can be purchased, and the wearing of county colours during major hurling matches still remains popular. So, decades after Yeats's death, the question of what defines the varieties of Irish lifestyles has not subsided nor been resolved—but his attention was to raise the issues, not to put them to rest.

So, in terms of understanding the multivalent presentation of *Celtic* in *CT*, Bakhtin allows me to think of *CT*'s rhetorical as speech acts, dynamic linkages in a communal network that connect with a continuity of the past. These includes such examples as the religious pluralism in "Our Lady of the Hills", the self-sacrifice of "The Religion of the Sailor", or Yeats's analysis of the many voices who, like him, have debated the role of ethos in "The Evangel of Folk-lore". And, contrary to Machen or even the Grimms, *CT* resists so many of the conventions and clichés of the fairytale genre by stepping outside of unorthodox typologies of storytelling, and into the diversified fields of multiple speech. In this way, neither the anthropological or literary dimension over-rules the other. Folk tradition and local orature as performance offer, in combination, livelier forms of discourse, and substantial perceptions of cultural environments. They present a perspective more comprehensive than those intransigent ideologues who reject outright the coherence of culture, or the continuity of tradition, they who simply "deny for denial's sake", as Yeats described in a quote from the 1892 version of "Belief and Unbelief". *CT* understands *belief*, philosophically speaking, as potentiality, as a willingness to engage in the ancestral phantasm and to document its mark upon territory. *Unbelief* is the relentless drive to scoop up materials in the service of monetary progress.

consumerism. Irish society, as mentioned in the previous chapter, is now being rapidly forced to choose what to do with its relatively small terrain. One need only think again of the women in Co Mayo, rosaries in hand in 2007, opposing Dutch Royal Shell who would transform their communities into refineries, dump sites, and halting sites for lorries.

It is certainly true, conversely, that emphasis on tradition can lead to shrill parochialism. Likewise, the belief that the rural, and the people who live there, have a unique capacity for understanding beauty can lead to uncomfortably essentialist statements, many of the kind presumed to be offered by Yeats. My point is that *CT* cannot be reduced to a metaphysical racism in which the *Celtic* stands for ethnic superiority. Also, he is not codifying a tourist blueprint, from romantic adulation, into a sitcom of sentimentality, a manifesto of fascist purity, or a screenplay for *The Quiet Man*. (John Ford's film, after all, was based on a Maurice Walsh short story.) We must not overlook the critical issue resulting out of Herder (and perhaps Yeats by extension) in the way that his defence of the local seems to necessitate a kind of xenophobia. Yeats, at this stage of writing, has not confronted that question: how to preserve the local whilst relating to the global. *CT* however did not drive away the *other*, something "non-celtic", from the discussion. In fact, *CT* allowed for forms of crosscultural dialogue that Herder did not develop. Based upon the communal activities of *CT*, Yeats describes a twilight realm through a diversity of cultural traditions can be accessed. Such a proposition elicited an exchange with Japanese authors, who considered an intercultural exchange with Ireland as conducive to investigating their own sense of the local. *CT*, rather than pushing away debate, lead to various locals and particulars whose sense of identity offered an alternative to the generic versions of modern nation-identities ("European" or "Asian"), as I will examine in the next chapter.

Yeats candidly showed that, in attempting to preserve one local and particular, he would not have to hermetically seal Ireland from the world. Rather than a racial retreat, Yeats's boldest move would be to continue the work of *CT* in an intercultural perspective. Generally speaking, the condition of local folk cultures in dialogue with one another has been a crucial theme in twentieth century artistic development, in Ireland and elsewhere. At the ground level, one can see the real effects of this favourably in the most remote of Irish pubs.

Dún na nGall (Donegal). Corporate mapmakers are expected to follow this law. It is difficult to say what effect this largely symbolic justification of the Irish language will have.

Certainly, the debate between insularity and fusion has been contentious, and will always be so. Indeed, many *trad* musicians have a story of being told not to play Donegal fiddle tunes in a Kerry session. They will also have reports of brilliant results from the rhythms created by a *bodhrán* and *tabla* playing together at the same table in Sligo, as I myself have witnessed. Anti-innovation, as an inflexible attitude can become quickly distasteful, can also be racist. Folk music has often tried to manage the struggle between preserving local custom, while playing duets with other local customs: for example, *shakuhachi* and tin whistle together in a tune. When performed well, with musicality at its best, few would complain. Nothing has been lost, and the fusion can augment the timbres and concerns of each instrument. Both, after all, can be said to have legitimate worries about cultural forces that would break apart the necessary identities that transmit received tradition, as say a musical convention of style or interpretation. Together, flute and *shakuhachi* do not negate each other; and, from a broader perspective, they may enhance an awareness of the plight faced by each tradition. After all, they share a commonality as sounds against the record industry's machinery.⁸⁹

Hinting toward this approach, *SB*, which anticipates the heteroglossia of *CT*, concludes with something a rather prescient prediction for an important step in the continued development about to occur in Yeats's writing.

He was going to the East now, to Arabia and Persia, where he would find among the common people, so soon as he learned their language, some lost doctrine of reconciliation. The philosophic poets had made sexual love their principal symbol of a divine love . . . (*SB* 106)

Hearne, here, describes a salient feature of Yeats's viewpoint: concentrating on the local and particular will lead to a greater sensitivity for *other* locals and particulars. A larger dialogue could be created not through imperial fusions, but through cross-cultural awareness. The important transition in Yeats's literary sensibility, thus, was not romance to realism—but

⁸⁹ The extent that technology augments, or inhibits, folk practice is a complex issue. Contemporary institutions, such as the Internet for example, allow mail-lists such as IRTRAD-L to take advantage of the global electronic community, but they still hang on to the trappings of knotwork and fiddleheads in digital form. My sense, though, is that Yeats predicted how difficult the issue would become if left in the hands of governing authorities. Irish television programmes such as *The Pure Drop*, the title of an RTÉ series, made clear the politics of choosing the most undiluted forms of musical performance

nationality to internationality. *Twilight*, being paratemporal and possessing ancestral forms of knowledge, provided materials for exchange in an artistic way that mass trade could not. As a kind of ancestral recall, Yeats's taste of twilight would become a sourcebook of suggestions for Japanese considerations.

4 Accessing Ancestral Houses

Really, the lustre of time [*jidai no tsuya*], so associated with antique elegance, is a gloss derived from dirt. The Chinese word *shutaku* [dirt from handling] implies a beauty that arises from the touch of generations of handlers. In Japanese, *nare* [familiarity] implies an organic glow, an absorbed aura from the oil of the fingertips. Repeated contact, over the span of time, buffs this filth of the hands until a shine naturally surrounds the object. It is only dirt after all, dirt from human hands.

--Tanizaki Jun'ichirō, *In'ei raisan*

At the domestic centre of Yeats's poetry-cycle *Meditation in Time of Civil War*, there is a Japanese sword, a centuries old piece of workmanship, that enables physical contact as a transference of familiarity with the ancestral. Strange, perhaps. *The Tower* often concerns itself with Galway as a refuge not to be breached by Irish politics, ideological histories, and European economies. Yet this short-sword—a *wakizashi* according to its giver, Satō Junzo—has crossed chronos and topos to turn up as a welcomed artefact in Connemara. The inertia of the past and the generosity of an individual have delivered it across time, generations, and geographies:

Where Sato's gift, a changeless sword . . .
 A bit of an embroidered dress
 Covers its wooden sheath
 When it was forged. In Sato's house,
 Curved like new moon, moon luminous,
 It lay five hundred years . . .
 That when and where was forged
 And seemed unchanging like the sword.

(“My Table” 2, 6-7, 9-10, 16, 21)

Yeats leaves the blade sheathed, on a table, at the centre of his home, the most intimate space of *The Tower*. He does not highlight its international importance with the sterility of a museum, nor does he display the scabbard on the wall like a decorative trinket. The meditation confronts more than the material components of the weapon, but also the aura that

accompanies it, a halo inseparable from the physical. Satô's sword has an implicative nature both tangible and symbolic. Its fancy includes more than its surface fabric in its present condition. Thematic power arises from that glowing forge of a different tradition, the craftsmanship aligned to a different deity, extending across time and space. Friendship is the trajectory that brought the blade to Ireland. The formative contexts of families and cultures that created it and preserved its luster have been transferred into a new encounter.

Juxtaposition with a different cultural context is not a predicament, but an opportunity. Now, amidst Yeats's country-in-process, the sword balances on its edge dual attunements: a foreign import, received into the hands of an Irish beholder.⁹⁰ The young man of *SB* may have turned his eyes to the East, but he could not have anticipated that extent the East would be glancing back at him.

What was exchanged between Satô and Yeats that day? Respect, payment of a personal debt, a gesture that gives permanence to a momentary encounter? We cannot know at this remove. But Satô clearly had a deeper purpose than fulfilling some travel book maxim that *o-miyage* [token gifts] are mandatory for doing business. Or, as Kramer elucidated on *Seinfeld*,

Konichi-wa. Yeah, it's a gift from my Japanese friends.

They're known as gift-givers. (8.07 – *The Cheques*)

Satô has offered Yeats a cherished heirloom, passed hand to hand because of its personal value. Its *jidai no tsuya* [lustre of time] is its worth that cannot be indexed, but appraised poetically.

Yeats understands that a weapon, received during a time of civil war, becomes uncomfortably pretty as a talisman. Does it symbolize any nation, or embody any state ethos? Some would argue that admiring heritage is to be like Harun Al-Rashid: the allure of tradition is an imaginary yearning for exotic distance, a “thirst for those old crabbed mysteries” (86). Perhaps we can compare Yeats's consideration of the sword with Western connoisseurs of the subject. Victor Harris writes of the samurai sword's appeal to the West in the catalogue *Cutting Edge*, the handbook for the sword collection in the British Museum:

⁹⁰ In Japanese, Irish, and English, proposed connections between the Celtic and the Japanese have enjoyed much speculative attention. For example, see Kamata Tôjo and Tsuruoka Mayumi (eds.) *Keruto to Nippon*. A recent poetry anthology, entitled *Our Shared Japan*, assembles a variety of Irish authors who have explored, imaginatively or experientially, cross identification between these two *shimaguni* [island countries].

As well as being a deadly weapon and a unique work of art, the sword in Japan is imbued with a spiritual essence. With the jewel and the mirror, the sword is one of the three holy objects of the ancient Japanese imperial regalia. Swords are even venerated as the resident deity of some Shintô shrines . . . (8)

Harris's description resembles certain essays that had promoted the way of the sword as an exemplary discipline for spiritually perfecting the mind. The sword represents heroic literature in a nationally masculine way. As the television programme *Heroes* depicts, wielding a samurai sword instantly transforms a young man from *otaku* [comic book nerd] into paladin. Because of his sword, Nakamura Hiro, the Japanese hero, can travel back to Edô-era Japan. The mystique of the samurai sword has been a problematic symbol of how imaginative invention turns the historical into the romantic. This has been particularly true in intercultural contexts. In explaining Zen in the English language, some much criticised twentieth-century texts, building on pre-modern manuals, have used the *katana* as a Zen tool for destroying illusions. The way of the cut enables *satori* through accepting life as a dichotomy against death. This warrior-priest notion—transferred from the military as a general approach to perceiving selfhood—has had enormous appeal; but possible chauvinistic overtones to this warrior-Buddhism have been uncomfortable to many. Suzuki's Daisetsu had commented on swordsmanship, and its presumed relationship to Zen, in this way: “The sword comes to be identified with the annihilation of things that lie in the way of peace, justice, progress, and humanity” (89).⁹¹ The Japanese sword's expression is

⁹¹ Suzuki's impact on Ôshima is quite pronounced. A word, then, concerning Suzuki's notion of sword-mind, and its potential relationship to Japanese imperialism and militarism, should be noted here. This has been a subject of an increasingly emotional controversy. Robert Sharf has identified problematic passages from Suzuki's writings to implicate him as a propagandist for Japanese ethnocentrism, and the conquest of Asia during the Second World War. Brian Victoria documents an account of the collaboration of Zen, as a religious institution, for the colonial project, including quotes from Suzuki. Harry Oldmeadow (168-173), Loy, and Kirita have sought to bring a more comprehensive stability to the discussion in relation to Suzuki. See also Michael Goldberg's film *A Zen Life*.

Investigations of Suzuki's compliance with state militarism have usefully taken the sheen off his Western hagiographies. But that the entirety of Suzuki's project can be positioned within the milieu of Japanese militarism has not been satisfactorily defined. Suzuki's ideals of “pure Zen”, as the supreme revelation of Japanese culture, are open to debate. However, his philosophy overall should not be parlayed as a subscription for the fascist agenda. Suzuki's statements after the war have been contradictory, and his lack of a formal acknowledgement of Japan's war crimes—several Zen sects have also refrained from acknowledging their role—remains an issue. From the 1940s his views seemed to have changed considerably, and did express regret for

actualised through its employer, the samurai, to “approach Zen with the idea of mastering death” (72).

The true motivation for this gift, and its meaningfulness, is known to Satô and Yeats alone. But the moment shared between them, so representative of Yeats’s relationship with Japan, has intrigued Japanese critics. Suzuki’s sense that the sword exhibits a spiritual resonance had clearly impacted Ôshima’s understanding (121), and one might suspect a lingering wistfulness in his comments, a post-war yearning for perfected weapons that never drew blood. Satô, on the other hand, had been an aficionado of physical blades themselves, having come from many generations of antiquarians. As a caretaker of antiquities, he had been one of the individuals responsible for repatriating *katana* from America to Japan in 1960 (Ôshima 121). His interests were, therefore, more of a hands-on approach, rather than an abstract examination of *sword* as thesis in which Suzuki or Ôshima engage. Satô admired craftsmanship, and his gift represented a family lineage of art.

Satô’s sword demonstrates a legacy, if only of a brief, personal encounter between him and the poet. But a convergence of culturality occurs here, owing to the efforts of two individuals, not consulates or corporations. The sword’s continuous luster, which comes from Tanizaki’s sense of grimy fingerprints, depends on ongoing inter-personal relationships that carry an object from time to time, and maintain it from place to place. Ôshima Shôtarô’s interview with Satô Junzo provides helpful details in regards to his relationship to Yeats (Ôshima 119-131). Initially, Satô had brought the sword abroad to fend off homesickness, to ease culture shock with a deeply personal item of familiarity:

OSHIMA—Then you had no intention of giving it to someone
when you left Japan, had you?

SATO—No; I took it only to enjoy it myself. I thought it would
console me when I felt lonely in strange countries. (121)

some his previous writings, particularly his comments on poet-warrior ideals. The relationship of modernity to authoritarianism as a whole is a contentious issue, and Yeats is part of the debate.

Shostakovich and the Soviet government is another difficult example of performance, context, and intentionality. I am also reminded of John Cornwell’s *Hitler’s Pope*, which received immediate acclamation but has been subsequently discredited entirely. There are competing agendas at stake in revising the historical acceptance of major religious figureheads. The Japanese sword remains a dubious object, claiming to be a spiritual *way* to self-improvement, but acting as apologist for the executioner.

Brian Victoria’s research should give all of us, and our affiliations, pause to consider. At this time, what relations, complications, and participations do we have with ongoing human rights violations in East Asia, and everywhere else?

Satô had chosen the finest piece of his family's prized collection as a travel companion. Throughout the interview, he refers to the sword in honourific terms, as *Motoshige*, an appellation derived from the swordsmith's family name.⁹² Indeed, Satô's sword ranks many levels higher than a generic *katana*, the everyday prop of the samurai. Yeats's description focusses on the circumstances of craftsmanship, as demonstrating a long tradition. Thus, Japanese translators of this poem restore the masterful nuance of tradition by using the powerful moniker *meitô* [famous sword] to denote its distinct status.⁹³

Generations of the Satô line have cared for this sword, not only preserving its aura, but enhancing its lustre further through repeated handling and polishing. Thus, noting the built-up echo of ancestry in its sheen, Yeats feels that the sword proves its own continuity of tradition. Time's action provides the glossy wear of familial longevity and communal interaction. The sword's sheen evolves and changes by way of transference. The fingerprints denote friendship, sensitivity, and exchange. The effect is even greater at those points of intercultural contact different social spaces merge and historical times are woven together. Satô's act extended what had been a brief, temporal encounter. And this gesture, after all, expresses the best sentiments of the endearingly popular proverb of *ichi-go, ichi-e*, one meeting, one opportunity.

Yeats's tower is precisely one of those points of contact. There coincide many phantasmagoria of past, present, and future –and a cast that includes muses, philosophers, and drunkards. He beholds the kaleidoscopic interface of ideas and materials, coinciding in the blur of process. The poet wonders, “How the daemonic rage / Imagined everything” (“My House” 16-17). What does the imagination do to recover, or communicate with, lingering demons and ghosts caught between time and space? This theme, a long standing tension in his verse, questions the intersections of materials, memories, and interpretations that offer an accessible view of ancestry. On one hand, there is an understanding that cultural

⁹² A striking feature of Ôshima's conversation with Satô's is the contrast in their sense of the sword. Ôshima often turns towards a Suzukian mysticism, while Satô remains more grounded in discussing its metallurgy.

⁹³ In Kobori's translation of this poem, the value of Satô's gift is confirmed by this accolade, translating sword as *meitô* [名刀]. This is an epithet reserved for weapons of the highest quality, fame, and noteworthiness of craftsmanship and denotes a value at the opposite end of the spectrum from cheap, machine-made costume swords. For more information, see Yokota, *Sengoku jidai to meitô*.

lineage should not be dismissed as another false viewpoint trapped in a limited historical conjuncture. Yet, there is also an accompanying dread that, as the Civil War showed, authorities who claim the ghosts of ancestry and tradition invoke a new cycle of demons into the future. *Meditations in Time of Civil War* deliberately transforms spatial and temporal patterns to indicate that history is not a nascent series of step-by-step events. Rather, history is an ongoing dialogue of exchange in which various spaces and various times act upon each other. No matter where Yeats stores the gift, sweeping social processes intrude and tarnish the heirloom..

Yeats's reckoning, that this *Motoshige* was forged five hundred years before the composition of the poem (1922), dates the sword directly within Japan's *sengoku-jidai*: the civil war period waged between rival shogunate powers. Ôshima's timing is different, noting that the third generation of Motoshige swordsmiths would be Bishû Osafune Motoshige, who "flourished in the Era of Ôei (1394-1428)" (133). This would place its creation only a few decades before the Ônin War, a preliminary civil war fought over shogunate succession (1467-77). Regardless of which exact period of strife in which *Motoshige* was created in response, the suggestive parallels with the Irish Civil war remain. Satô's interview shows his sympathy for Ireland's estranging predicament of internal conflict. Satô, in particular, remembers the distress that Yeats felt when rust and discolouration had slightly marred the blade, due to its poor handling and storage during the violence and confusion. At that time in London, no one had the appreciative skill or knowledge to conduct adequate repair, despite Yeats's efforts to correct the damage.

But Satô expected no apologies. He made the following point repeatedly through his life: this gift was a spontaneous gesture, without premeditation and expectations in return. In his memoirs, he thought of that moment as an epilogue to a heartfelt conversation with Yeats over Japan, Ireland, and their respective literatures. Satô admired Yeats as a "man of broad observation" (128), someone who could set aside prejudice and appreciate another culture's art. Satô had, after all, been pleased to see Yeats's interest in Japanese literature. He reiterates with the point that Japan had been equally fascinated by Irish literature, especially Yeats. And, as friends will see the larger picture in their actions, the gift was a kind of reciprocation, a recognition of Yeats, and Irish literature generally, its growing intercommunication with Japan.

Yano Hôjin (1893-1988), a noted scholar who held various academic positions, had made two initiatives to bring Yeats on a lecture tour of Japan.⁹⁴ One wonders what further effects this visit may have produced, had it occurred. As I discuss below, Japan had already received much from Yeats's poetic example. Satô's sword confirmed the two-way participation of cultures in the development of literary modernisms. Understanding that Irish literature co-operatively intermingled with Japanese literature is important. The traffic flowed in cross-currents. This point deserves much consideration as, all too often in the critical accounts of Yeats's relation to Japan, the flow is thought of moving westward only, carrying a load of orientalism along with it.

By the time of Ôshima's meeting with Yeats, there had already been a wide range of interconnections between Yeats, Synge, and some of the most important writers and texts of early twentieth-century Japanese writing. By the time of *The Tower's* publication, about thirty-five years had passed since *CT* had been first published. During this time, many of Yeats's writings—along with works of Synge and others—had been translated and well-received in Japan. *Airurando bungakukai* [Irish Literature Societies] and *Keruto kenkyûkai* [Celtic Studies Societies] had sprung up across Japan. Participants in such groups engaged in reflective discussions with Yeats's work, compared against their Japanese contexts. Perhaps the single most dominant interest for these varied study groups was the sense that Irish literature represented a unique course of folkloric continuity. I believe that, as the theme of *fushigi* became a crucial feature of Japanese modernism, the Irish notion of *rún* [mystery] had a likewise appeal.⁹⁵ Like the figurations of the spectral in Japan, Irish ghostlore in

⁹⁴ Yano Hôjin had written two important account of Yeats's relationship with Japan. *Yeats to nippon* contains numerous anecdotes about his own friendship with Yeats, the two having met in Ireland. Yano had first proposed that Yeats have a speaking engagement in Tokyo. A second offer, some years later, had increased the offer to an adjunct professorship. *Eibungaku yawa*, another personal series of observations and musings, contains more information on the sword, written before Ôshima's interview with Satô. Yano had been an introductory figure in linking Suzuki to Yeats, a correspondence that Ôshima pursues vigorously. Yeats wrote to Yano (January 1928):

Since I have met you I have felt a door open into Japan; you have told me so much, and given to me the means of further knowledge. (Ôshima 23)

Yeats, unfortunately, never took up the position in Japan, citing age and ill health.

⁹⁵ Gerald Figal's *Civilization and Monsters: Spirits of Modernity in Meiji Japan* investigates "the fantastic as an object of interest and mode of thought that manifests itself across literary, scientific, educational, medical, religious, and even legal discourses" (11). As such, this book makes robust explorations of "historical conjunctures" as they append the supernatural to the ideological. Leon Surette pursues a similar case study for Europe: the mysterious, monstrous, or occultic can have a persuasive strategy with/against Modernity.

Yeats's presentation was understood as more nuanced than the spooky tales of a Lord Dunsany. The varied Irish dimensions of ghosts, phantasms, and the like demonstrated a sense of the folkloric as ancestral recall. In short, it offered a parallel example to kinds of discourses being explored in Japan, as the contentious relationship between modernity and heritage. This not only engaged two traditions in an extended dialogue, but also upset generalised definitions of East and West as opposing fronts of ideology. Irish literature's imaginative range went against the grain of the usual depiction of the West as a domain of rationalism and materialism. The decline of community, on both sides of the globe, found in each other not mutual identification, but rather comparative discourses of the vanishing. In the kinds of conversation that literature enables, a dialogue of wraiths, as disembodied cultures, emerged from cross-cultural contacts. New genres would appear, in Japan and Ireland, based on these thematic correspondences, expanded through innovative exchanges fashioned from twilight/*tasogare* liminalities.

In regards to the general thesis of Yeats and Japan, the subject almost always addressed, in isolation, is Yeats's *nô* dramas. These are often misconstrued as a nostalgic, Western gaze looking upon an archaic tradition from afar, with little in the way of a Japanese cultural context to situate them. But, in regards to moments like his meeting with Satô, Yeats's plays dramatize in an exemplary way the methods and goals of Irish-Japanese literary networks. The presence of twilight, as the domain of the ancestral, allowed for a coinciding of style and perspective between these two national literatures. Negotiating the voices and appearances of spectral heritage, invoked into contemporary situations such as contemporary *nô*, became a technique of many Japanese modernist writers as well. These specific points of contact fashioned a comradely artistic dialogue, one involving aesthetic cross-fertilization that dealt with the predicaments of heritage and preservation. This is the

Since *fushigi* acts more suggestively than conceptually, the *mysterious* can be attributed to an exceedingly wide variety of examples. At some point, broad applicability can overtake any practical sensibility. In a general climate of the uncanny, various themes and subjects relating to horror, folklore, and abjectivity can become constituted as elements of retreat, engagement, or transformation with rapid modernisation.

Figal's nuanced discussion of *Kyôka*—and his relationship to Akutagawa and Yanagita—does a service in detailing a prominent contour of Japanese Modernist thought. My own research had tracked similar pathways of influences within segments of the Japanese literary community. My point of view begins from Irish literature, its inceptive influence on some Japanese authors, and then accounts for a trace in return. Twilight, or forms of irreality, is the repeated theme. In this scheme, Yeats occupies a position that augments, rather than overshadows, the works of these Japanese writers.

significance of Satô's sword. Yeats was conscious of what the gift meant and Satô was, in his turn, aware of what Yeats had given Japan. In examining Yeats's relationships with some of the Japanese literary projects at that time, then, a more comprehensive exchange emerges. His *nô* can then be understood for the context that truly informed it: twentieth-century Japanese *shinpa* [new style] drama, with its unique negotiation of space, time, and the liminal apparitions. There were many specific interstices of cross-cultural interplay, and the conversations that accompanied them. In this way, mutuality best describes how these different artists and their localities came into dialogue with each other. The sense of a shared conversation more accurately describes what is often seen as multicultural influences glimpsed as *telescopic*, a distantly removed gaze. That is to say, modernisation had also done much to show beleaguered artistic communication that the haunted remnants of marginal cultures, actually, had in common. The upswelling of spectral themes marked the cross-cultural rebellion of voices being silence by the din of modernity.

Whose History, Whose Sword, Whose Probate?

Debatable practices between East and West, however, make the flow of cultural information and identities a vexed issue. Theoretically, it has become increasingly problematic to speak of ways in which coherent communal identities, rooted in a particular place, can be described or understood by the *other*. To avoid the issue entirely, a new form of anti-essentialism, indeed, has gained acceptance in claiming that all notions of tradition or heritage are entirely imaginary. There is, really, no substantiated notion of *Irish* or *Japanese*, as a cultural or social collective, except through artificial discourse. And, therefore, multiculturalism means to swap flimsy, constructed ideas. Oscar Wilde, satirically, had anticipated this point of view in *The Decay of Lying*, Vivian claims: "In fact the whole of Japan is a pure invention. There is no such country, there are no such people" (45). This statement, of course, comes with that rhetorical flourish and exposition through exaggeration that is a mark of Wilde's style. But this claim, if taken *literally* in the sense of imagined communities or invented traditions—"simply a mode of style"—leads to a quandary. If there are no Japanese people, then there are no Irish people. There are no Dubs, Tokyoites, or any remotely meaningful sense of one's place within a human geography. No meaningful space exists to discuss the

differences between Tokyo or London. Perceived differences remain unsubstantial, as a commonly generic state must underlie all of the conceptualising. And, taking this line of logic to its conclusions, there can be no sensible way of *indigenous art* either, for what would constitute the context from which a unique tradition emerges? If pushed far enough, one might as well tell the Navajo nation to disband any notions of ancestral distinction.

Excogitation, no matter how sincere, cannot deliver the goods. So what is left to us? A dogmatic sense that heritage is only an invention, after all, turns out to coincide that of the multi-national corporation: Coca Cola would love for us to buy the world a drink. Fizzy drinks belong equally in the streets of London and Tokyo; the *tabula rasa* nature of the subject is easily overpowered by the industrial production of taste. No substantive alternative, in describing the identity of a specific place, can be held if an interpretation of Vivian's claim is accepted as true in its non-essentialism. But if we allow for differences between cultures, for legitimate characteristics that result from differing cultural geographies, then we open up that space in which discussions of those differences will occur.

Admittedly, Vivian may be lashing out at the delusion of ethnic purity, of pat identities that inculcate a superior sense of an eternal ethnicity and inimitable uniqueness. This purity is fashioned out of reductive predicates, of striving to be *more Japanese than the Japanese*. Vivian distrusts art as the artistry of eugenics. For example, he specifically mentions Hokusai as having fashioned an archetypal ideal of Japaneseness, more in line with a Platonic abstractions than actual people. He argues, "The Japanese people are the deliberate self-conscious creation of certain individual artists" (45). There are any number of problematic consequences if any sympathies or identifications with the particulars of geography, culture, and customs are reduced to incoherence. Nonetheless, a useful mode for questioning the nuances of the cultural subject is not easily defined.

Does a sense of ethos invariably mean a declaration of essence, and the philosophical trouble that goes with that? Is there a domain for a distinctive ethos that is the product of time-space relationships that produce differentiated but realisable patterns of identities? The negotiation of cultural materials, especially literary ones, does not enjoy the code of ethics that now bind anthropologists in the field. Ethnic stereotyping is a danger, and many bestselling novels present troublingly trite versions of Asia and Asians. Disney's *Mulan* is certainly cringe worthy; but, in feeling such, surely then we have some standard by which to

measure our flinching? In wondering why *Mulan* rings so false compared to the reality of Asian, the question is opened as to what constitutes authentic access to other cultures or representations. In feeling, or describing, how something is inauthentic, the alternative suggests its reality. But if culturality is denied any chance for coherent expression, the satirical nuances of Vivan's statements become realised. Staying at home and perusing an art-book is more or less the same dirt and sweat of traveling abroad. All is misapprehension and fancy. Why bother learning another language, if that's the case?

Exposing the maltreatment delivered by cultural curiosity, Joseph Lennon's *Irish Orientalism* surveys patterns of Asian references that had surfaced in Irish literature, as artistic tokens. There had been an inconsistent process of identification aligned along the more general arc of colonialism. The Irish example is distinct in so far that it, a colonized space seeking actuality, understood the *other* as also being under the imperial thumb. Literary Orientalism, as a theoretically charged term with broad applicability, concentrates on one-sided cultural mimesis: the mimicking, in art, of *oriental* representations. The poster-board set pieces are appropriated and reproduced by a society as distortions seen through a telescopic lens. So, cultural encounters are limited, and their social value restricted by a self-blinding toward gross misunderstanding. The terms of what constitutes authentic access of their cultures remain unclear, if impossible. Part of this misconception, though, is perpetuated through considering only one side of what was actually a mutual exchange. Lennon's understanding of *oriental* includes a bewilderingly large geographic materials, from the Hebraic bible to Yeats's *nô*. Peculiarly, many studies of a Western nation's relation to the orient, as *orientalism*, pay no attention to scholarly and artistic works written in Asian languages. If we look to see what the East is saying about the West, we find a more complex dialogue. If we consider the dual point of view, a conversation rather than a gaze, a more dynamic interchange becomes apparent.

Yeats and International Artistic Exchange

Rather than examining extremely broad categories of the *oriental*, we might also devote time to specific encounters. Irish and Japanese writing in the early twentieth century (and continued from there) is just such a tête-à-tête. This exchange presents a more nuanced and

dialogical interface than some of the more sweeping theoretical considerations. I think it is fair to say that literary figures in both traditions engaged in a more comprehensive intercultural conversation than the limited orientalism of the post-colonial viewpoint that draws from Edward Said. When we examine how Japanese modernity responded to Irish literature, we find a wholly different story. Indeed, we will find that there is more of Yeats in Japan, than Japan in Yeats. Of course, such vague labels as *Japan* will incline us to the errors that Said takes issue with. Let us look then at specific individuals to help us better appreciate the mutuality and specificity of the discussion.

Yeats had extensive interactions, through word and literary influence, with a number of key writers: Akutagawa Ryûnosuke, Tanizaki Jun'ichirô, Mastumura Mineko, Yanagita Kunio, and Izumi Kyôka, to name only five. The literary effects, in observable influences, produced progressive, productive, and informative forms of knowledge that contributed to both Japanese and Irish literary modernism, and beyond. As a nexus that enabled a flow of information in both directions, the Irish-Japanese literary dialogue represented an advancement in aesthetic open-mindedness. I do not believe it is accurate to read modernist writing in general as an extension of the Victorian colonial project. A development in the level of sensitive access, as part of progressing human relations, should be given credit for challenging and transforming the Victorian standard.

Victorian orientalism, in fact, is hard to categorise as either entirely good or entirely bad. For example, a notorious figure, Edwin Arnold was, on one hand, closely tied to the British management of colonial India. His supervisory role in the First War of Indian Independence (1857) entailed oppressive intervention. As a poet, Arnold's presentation of Old Japan cannot be easily vouchsafed. But he did help to introduce Buddhism to the West—not on philological or evangelical terms—but as a religion in its own right. He described an ethical, historical Buddhism as a religion amongst the world's religions, neither more or less dignified than the claims made by the Abrahamic traditions. *The Light of Asia*, an enormously popular epic on the Buddha and his Dharma, can be seen as a positive contribution to the presentation of Buddhism to the West. It led to a number of multimedia projects, including a collaborative effort between German and Indian filmmakers to produce a film version, *Prem Sanyas* (1925). Arnold's book went through some eighty editions. Scholarly investigation has revealed, as it should, the deficiencies of this work; however, its

fundamental stature is one of exploration, of creating entire fields of intellectual enquiry from this initial effort. As Harry Oldmeadow recognises, Arnold's insistence that Buddhism is founded upon egalitarianism and ethical consciousness counteracted prejudicial European notions of a nihilistic faith bent on negation, misanthropy, and denial of reality (87).

Buddhism, as Arnold tries to explain in his Preface, offers a worldview based on "the eternity of a universal hope, the immortality of a boundless love, an indestructible element of faith in final good".

I am not saying that these interpreters are beyond reproach. Arnold, a resident in Japan, certainly exhibits *japonistic* excesses, such as the following:

The Musmee's pocket-handkerchief
 A square of paper! All day long,
 Gentle, and sweet, and debonair
 Is, rich or poor, this Asian lass:
 Heaven have her in its tender care,
 O medetô gozarimas!

A relic of traditional girlhood preoccupies him in a shallow way. The young woman displays *yamato nadeshiko*, the so-called feminine virtues of a traditional Japan, on the surface. The inaccurate orthography of the various loanwords suggests a fundamental linguistic incompetence and deafness. Moreover, this vision implies a more general sense of cultural pride, *yamato damashii*—the spirit of Japan—that would become a troubling shibboleth for promoting all kinds of cultural chauvinism later. What is the *musume* [daughter] holding? Is it a piece of tradition, or a mass-produced import? Akutagawa, in a critical short story *Hankechi* (1916), used the handkerchief as a sign of Westernisation, as will be discussed below. Arnold has, rather, claimed through this simplified portrait a presentation of authentic, routine Japaneseness: the girl embodies, through narrative collateral, an affected cultural spirit.

Rudyard Kipling, also sought out definitive versions of Japaneseness, and in doing so makes confusing claims. He descends more fully into the orientalist fog:

If you wish to know their costumes, look at the nearest Japanese fan. Real
 Japs of course are like men and women, but stage Japs in their stiff
 brocades are line for line as Japs are drawn. (*From Sea to Sea* no. 13)

Arnold sees a versified world of cartoon characters, a floating world scenario that many decades later still exist as the scenery in such video games as *Okami*, or Gail Tsukiyama's romantic novels about *nô* mask carvers and samurai. Kipling works in the Don Imus mode of observation: racial quips that diminish "men and women" to "Japs." Centuries of theatrical heritage in Japan are reduced to stiff costumes and doodled caricatures. The Western eye becomes the judge of modern legitimacy. This method of appraisal, generally, had been a guiding theme in evaluating the proportionate *modernity* of Eastern and Western nations. The Paris World Fair (1900) had, in such a way, acted as a competitive showcase between nation builders whose policies defined progress as taking place on a global stage. At the same time, legendary materials had to be implanted so as to prove ancient credentials. Can these materials be thought of only as entrepreneurship? What did Japanese audiences at that time, and now, make of Kipling and Arnold? Indeed, what is rather telling is that neither Kipling nor Arnold enjoyed a wide readership among the Japanese. In practical terms of community, these two Englishman certainly did not enable a multicultural space of discussion such as what Yeats and Lafcadio Hearn created. There must be an element of mutual recognition in *how* a culture in general responds to those who are making gestures toward it.

An example of such a mutual recognition is Satô's sword. In a letter, Yeats specifically details his understanding of Satô's gift as something more than a museum piece, abstract symbol, or a *japonist* trinket. Yeats wrote to Edmund Dulac, and the letter is worth quoting in length:

A rather wonderful thing happened the day before yesterday. A very distinguished looking Japanese came to see us. He had read my poetry when in Japan and had now just heard me lecture. He had something in his hand wrapped up in embroidered silk. He said it was a present for me. He untied the silk cord that bound it and brought out a sword which had been for 500 years in his family. It had been made 550 years ago and he showed me the maker's name upon the hilt. I was greatly embarrassed at the thought of such a gift and went to fetch George, thinking that we might find some way of refusing it. When she came I said "But surely this ought always to remain in your family?" He answered "My family have many swords." But later he brought back my embarrassment by

speaking of having given me “his sword.” I had to accept it but I have written him a letter saying that I “put him under a vow” to write and tell me when his first child is born—he is not yet married—that I may leave the sword back to his family in my will.⁹⁶ (*L* 662)

The sense of inheritance, legacy, and heritage in the letter accords well with one of the registers of discourse in “The Tower”. This poem in particular repeats legal terms of probate in describing how individual lives and communal histories intersect. Framed by the multi-temporal perspectives, inheritance and debt are realised as personal, cultural and ancestral concerns which much relate to more than the present moment. In this letter, Yeats explicitly acknowledges the ethical ramifications when there is an intermingling of real contexts and real ethos. The sword as continuity needs to be recognised as an individualised artefact. That it now is a multi-cultural crossing-point in space and time heightens its importance. Yeats knows that the Herderian prohibition against intermixing localities leads only to barriers. There must be a way of reaching out and moving beyond locality. Cultures can be protected without resorting to isolation or *purity* as the only model. Satô’s gift is an enfranchising moment: two folk cultures relate to each other in a personal, non-exclusive way. No one gives up his or her point of view or right to have a say. This is different from free-trade zones and trans-national oligarchies that notice geographic distinctions only as part of global marketing strategies.

A recent issue of the *Bungei shunjû* (May 2007), still one of Japan’s top literary magazines, featured an article by Shinozawa Hideo of Gakushûin University. His column “Achira no kokoro to nihon no kokoro” [*The Spirit Over there and the Spirit Here*] discussed *Kerutojin* [The Celt] as indicative of a spirit, half-vanished, of a tradition that continues to surface in Brittany and Ireland, despite the odds against it. The European Union’s policy, toward minority cultures, is to balance regional or national identities with a general Euro-culture. But this policy is at odds with economic realities. Shinozawa argues that *Celtic* suggests a compelling incentive to a wealth of music, literature, and art that defies mass conventionality. Shinozawa finds in the polytheism of pre-modern beliefs in Ireland a kind of variability that upsets the “catholicity” of the Catholic church, as a cross-geographical

⁹⁶ George Yeats attempted to fulfill this condition of Yeats’s will, writing to Satô and offering to have the sword returned to Satô’s son in Japan. Satô refused in a letter, writing, “I did not present the sword with the intention of having it sent back to Japan. I shall be very happy to give it to your son” (123).

Western institution. Christianised Ireland continues to exhibit pagan customs. With Endô Shusaku's novels in mind, he further notes the extent to which the Japanese language has not easily accommodated notions of a unified, entirely transcendental God. Thus, Shinozawa locates a point on which the Celt and the Japanese have a shared sensibility on mythic matters. He states, rather boldly, "Nihon no kokoro to onaji datta" (82-83). The Japanese spirit is the same (as the Irish). Of course, such a blunt equation will set off essentialist alarm bells. Shinozawa is amused that, when he wears a piece of knotwork jewellery, Westerners automatically assume that it is a Buddhist symbol. In his personal experience, only Princess Michiko recognised that his necklace was, in fact, modeled from *The Book of Kells*. Fusion can mean confusion—especially when prejudices are fueled by superficial assessments, especially when people do not make the effort to be informed. Shinozawa, after all, is not altogether without humour in making this point. But, his claim is clearly augmented by a strong criticism of American militarism as defining *Westernness*. Shinozawa is arguing, in fact, against an increasingly typified notion of the *West* as rational monotheism mixed with military technologies, duplicitously justifying God and guns as it storms through Iraq.⁹⁷

The writers of Yeats's time had their own global issues to deal with. After the Meiji Restoration, initial reports of *Westernness*—as a model of civilization—had not been positive. Admiral Matthew C. Perry's black ships [*kurofune*] suggested a single agenda. They arrived at Uraga Harbour (1853), loaded down with cannon balls and gunpowder. The implication was that further armadas were on their way. Generalisations of the West became easy to manufacture and circulate. Still, those initial fears of being over-run gave way to curiosity. The discomfiting treaties opened up new markets for goods and exotica. Images of Perry, as the standard-bearer of the *other*, became a chic collectible: a cornucopia of mementos commemorating his surprise visit were prized souvenirs. For example, the *kawaraban* [newspaper printing blocks] relating to the *kurofune* arrival served as displayable tableaux. The impression of a coal-smudged ship, at dock, was the definitive sign of historical change. There had been precedents: porcelain and *manju* [bean cakes] can be found throughout

⁹⁷ South Korea, when previously deployed troops to Iraq, arranged for broadcasts of *Gyeoul yeonga* [Winter Sonata], translated into Arabic, to be shown throughout the Middle East. This blockbuster concerning an intentionally modest, old-fashioned drama involves a love story with chaste characters and devoted family values. Presumably, its airing was meant to associate the South Korean troops with an ethically differentiated perspective (and moral conduct) than that of their American (Hollywood) counterparts.

Kyushu, emblazoned with St Francis Xavier and other religious themes commemorating the arrival of Portuguese missionaries (1549). In terms of diplomatic relations, Perry's visit was reciprocated by the Iwakura Mission (1871), which also was part treaty negotiator and part fact-finding mission. First impressions count, and in this case their initial arrival at frontier San Francisco defined the West. One wonders what the reports would have been, the snap judgments made, had they first arrived in London. This delegation did make its way across the continent, eventually reaching England in 1872. By then, their observations dwelt on the West's technological superiority, and European intransigence when rejecting returning offers of more balanced treaties.

Natsume Sôseki's own mixed feelings of the British metropolis were recorded in a series of memoirs (1900), following a two-year stay as a government funded scholar. His love of European literature did not mitigate the general misery he felt about Western urbanism. Yet where he found a kind of desolation, commercial enterprises found opportunity. Ikeda Kikunae, the scientist who invented monosodium glutamate, visited London around the same time as Sôseki. His research, and business travel, paved the way for Ajinomoto Inc. to become one of the world's largest producers of M.S.G. Sôseki debated in long notes the merits offered by Western painting; Ajinomoto Inc. found a marketplace where the only taste that mattered pertained to the tongue.

Growing eye-witness accounts, such as Sôseki's or Mori Ogai's, confirmed a sense that the West was a unified front, backed by technological skills, capital producing classes, and militaristic know-how. It is not surprising that this sudden competitive pressure between East and West prompted market societies of capitalist modernity into nativist self-defence, leading to facile definitions of national characteristics at the political level. Emergent market forces mobilised nations as trade blocks as well as unified fronts of racial perspectives. Certainly, in this situation, artistic materials could be used for creating false senses of cultures, used to aid and abet commerce. While Perry became a poster boy in Japan, the *West* had busily collected tableaux of their own—*ukiyo-e* prints, for example, became popular artifacts, valued as *Japanese* collateral. The developing formulae of what constituted East or West was inevitable in a global face-off of encroachment and colonialism. The desire for representative definition remains strong today, even if *East* continues to be recast in geographical (or religious) terms. With the contradictory analyses and interpretations of the

Other currently available, the clash of preconceived ideas at times seems unending and intractable. Accessibility remains a matter of information as well as negotiation, but attempts at such seem indivisible from imperialism. On this note, John Walter De Gruchy examined how Waley's translations act as an extension of the British imperial project. Literary figures can be selected as predominant intellectual figures who act as the embouchure through which cultural essences are being directed. Bashô, as a frequently deployed example, has been appointed by Western poets and critics as a spokesman of Zen Japan. Their selective presentation, of course, is simplistic. If one artistic form, person, or notion becomes the *visage* of national characterhood, then any chance for dialogue ends and the codification begins.

Nation Studies Narrating Ancestry

Consider the mixed messages contained in *Mishima's Sword: Travels in Search of a Samurai Legend* (2006), by Christopher Ross. He investigates Mishima's suicide as a definitive assembling of Japanese cultural values. Ross's subject position is one of intentional hybridity. As a practitioner of *iaidô* [samurai sword drawing and cutting], Ross identifies himself completely with that kind of rarified Japanese spirit, produced through his *bushidô* [warrior arts], which leads to *the* "imperturbable spirit known as *zanshin*" [heightened alertness] (6). In pursuit of this state, to shed himself of Westernness, Japanese martial arts are a kind of self-help programme, and the sword is the way to perfection. Ross's understanding of the samurai sword is a marked difference from Yeats and Satô. *Shugyô* [developmental practice] for Ross means to train so he can "study how to kill with a single spectacular slice" (5).⁹⁸ Deadliness coalesces with spiritual mastery. And, tellingly,

⁹⁸ The film *The Last Samurai* depicts the sword as the heroic tool of tradition, rebelling against the gattling guns of modernity. Saigô Takamori, the historical inspiration, indeed had many anti-Western pronouncements. *Ghost Dog* is laden with quotes from the *Hagakure*. In this example, the samurai sword transmits an astral knowledge of Zen. Moreover, Jack Kerouac's novels, following Suzuki, compared *haiku* to the Samurai's *zanshin*:

a Samurai warrior in a fit of suicidal depression . . . what to be Japanese really meant—To be Japanese and not believe in life anymore and to be gloomy . . . the gloom of Bashô behind it all, the huge thunderous scowl of Issa or of Shiki, kneeling in the frost . . . (*Big Sur* 64-65)

Following R. H. Blyth's influential analysis of *haiku*, Zen enables the "glad freedom" of the Japanese soul (66).

Ross, as his journey into the soul of Mishima (and Japan) progresses, experiences a phantom abdominal pain, which he attributes to a psychosomatic realisation of Mishima's *seppuku* (124).

Ross, for research purposes, also frequents SS uniform memorabilia shops and spends hours reading Paladin Press manuals on improvised munitions (I.E.D.). But when it comes to warrior bravado and mystical gear, Japan, however, is the pinnacle of martial discipline that creates a triumph of enlightenment: zen experience. Ross's persona thus vacillates between perceiving Mishima as a madman, to sympathetic meditations on warrior-culture as a true, pure experience of lost Japaneseness. Mishima's act of suicide, Ross implies, arose as a rebuking psychosis for Japan's denial of its terrible beauty as a warrior-culture: "Japan's was a martial culture in the same way that Prussia's was a martial culture" (52). But unlike the Prussians, the behaviour of Japanese soldiers on the battlefield expressed necessarily an essential Japanese *volkgeist*. Ross, through Mishima as mouthpiece, posits this sensibility as a Japanese inevitability to be cautiously admired. Elaborating on Wataru Tsurumi's somewhat wistful account of *seppuku* [ritual suicide by sword], Ross wonders, through Wataru:

So even contemporary suicide in Japan is a Western import, the easy-living, pain-avoiding, scientific culture of Europe and America. (174)

Where does his sword quest lead? When Mishima's sword finally does appear, rusted and broken, the solipsistic anxiety of the search becomes fully apparent. Although history has made Ross wary of where martial Zen may lead, the extenuating allure of this *yamato damashii* [spirit of Japan] still has an appeal that has nothing to do with material reality. As he stands in the rising sun of the last page, Ross claims to transcend the duality of life/death, an enlightened samurai in a triumph of the pure spirit: "The idea of altered states of consciousness where death is willingly sought is hard for the youth-obsessed West to digest" (Ross 236).

Ross, intentionally or inadvertently, documents how a sense of tradition can be conjured up as a machismo of *esprit de corps*. Institutional religion, in the East or West, has not been immune from complicity with military authorities, and on occasion has contributed to them. Yeats was deeply aware of these problems, particularly as to how the elite would behave in post-revolutionary Ireland. In Ireland and Japan, as elsewhere, we can find the negative, terrible outcomes of those swept up in jubilee moments of national pride. As noted previously, sections of the Buddhist hierarchy in Japan participated with the state in the rise of twentieth-century fascism. Several centuries before, Buddhist religious leaders had also

willingly backed authoritarianism in pre-modern times (Kato 278). It is not difficult to find many examples of this process in which religion, as a cultural identifier, is used for pernicious purposes. In John King's novel *England Away*, the Celtic-Ranger rivalry is deemed worse than Manchester United-Liverpool because religion tips the balance. A search using provocative Irish vocabulary on the internet will turn up a violent menagerie of videos, featuring Catholic relics alongside snipers. Even folk music can be used as apologetics for terrorist bombings of civilian neighbourhoods in Omagh. But does this mean that all folk music should be implicated in political or ethnic violence? How did Yeats position cultural materials against stifling institutions, which he long distrusted, as well as the national frivolity they presented?

In discussing ways that cultures access their traditions, a predilection to calling upon the emotionalism as the past as a motivator to the present cannot be overlooked. Yeats had been aware of the potentiality for ancestry to be excusatory. Senses of history can function as histrionic monikers in the hands of despots. For this reason, Yeats avoided John O'Leary's funeral in 1907. In regards to emerging patterns of iconic performance, he summarised the Irish independence movements in a poem (1921):

Whatever their loose phantasy invent
And murmur it with bated breath, as though
The abounding gutter had been Helicon
Or calumny a song. ("The Leaders of the Crowd" 4-9).

Oisín had this very problem. In engaging the ghostly, he explored a realm that was all immaterial and difficult to concretise in an ancestral context. What snaps the delusion of vague ideation is the tangibly ancestral, which seems to leave its traces on place and objects. As suggestive imprints, these nuances are subject to fancy and miscomprehension. So, without a connection to the ancestral in physical and contextual form, as Oisín discovers, one becomes dislocated and history loses its references and specifics.

But, in identifying and indexing a sense of legacy or continuity, nativist politics can step in to enforce a depiction of unified community, derived from the legendary associations that mark a place as inhabited over a period of time. The manner in which folklore can be turned into ethnographic politics did not go unnoticed by poets and novelists, in Ireland or Japan. Many writers struggled against the aping and annexing of the past. Overwhelmed by

political interference, some would abandon notions of culture as altogether imaginary. For others, this concession was too extreme. Antiquity could provide reference points that offered waymarkers not provided by modernity. One possible set of reference, as a repository of older knowledge, were the various traditional arts. These enjoyed ancestral validity as a result of being handed down. For this reason, Tanizaki Jun'ichirô, as an author concerned with the meaning and maintained for an authenticity within tradition, saw this *handed-downness* as both aesthetic and ethically meaningful to individuals trapped in their own oppressive historical junctures. For Yeats's part, his national imagination found the cultural aspects, such as the theatre movement, much more important than the radical nationalism of John MacBride and Fenian ideologies.

Yeats had been cautioned against straying from literature and into politics. The combustible mixture of territory and community would be ignited through a critique of culturization as defining national selfhood. Folkloric sentiments, and literary representations of these, could readily become part of institutional machinations in producing a new social order. For these reasons, the Lebanese poet Khalil Gibran had chastised Yeats for his activities in the Irish public sphere. It is dangerous, Gibran said, to be both a poet of spiritual as well as political aspirations. When a poet adopts the role of social organizer, he or she makes a supplication to a secular program.⁹⁹ Art and propaganda become even more blurred. Gibran himself had played both roles. He authored the pious yet heretical book entitled *The Prophet* (a book once banned in Egypt). He took on a vocation of social criticism, an agitator whose works were frequently blacklisted for their attacks on the rise of Arab dictatorships.¹⁰⁰

Generally, in questioning who were the people under the control of potential oligarchies, certain labels, such as *volk* or *peasant*, had been affixed onto patterns of

⁹⁹ This incident is recorded by the biographer William Shehadi in *Kahlil Gibran: A Prophet in the Making* (Syracuse UP, 1995). Gibran met Yeats in 1911, a time when he was at work on his first English-language manuscript, *The Madman*. Gibran took this opportunity to draw a portrait of Yeats, a man with whom he was very much impressed, but whose nationalism he had reservations about.

¹⁰⁰ An excellent example of Gibran's own contentious combination of politics and religion is his short-story collection *Spirits Rebellious* [*al-Arwah al-Mutamarrida*] (1908): more so than his English language works, Gibran's Arabic writings are fiercely anti-feudal and anti-clerical, arguing instead for a sense of personal spirituality and altruism not based on ruling ecclesiastical codes.

communal practice or expression, so that then certain poetic forms could be said to be a voice of *volk*. Often, the purpose of such a tactic was to present a unified front. In Ireland's case, some measure of faith in the home rule movement had to be maintained. To justify itself, as often happens, the socio-historical impetus of the political agenda developed all manner of categorical terminology for reifying heritage: formerly dynamic, undefined forces of cultural reality became archived according to analytical screens of interpretation. I have previously examined this quandary in the works of Dinneen and others in the Irish context. Similar activities can be generally seen in the institutional orderings of folk content in Japan, with a variety of consequences. For example, *minzoku*, which had a sense of the *folkways*, became nativist ethnography, now the standard translation of this word. But coining or theorizing a term does not solve the problem of how the paradigm, *post priori*, describes the behaviour of the actual contexts. Historians, such as H. D. Harootunian and Carol Gluck, for example, have analyzed how Japanese folk arts were contested over as possibly contributing to new political identities in the twentieth century.¹⁰¹ The issues at stake are often a question of who has the right of defining, and thereby clarifying, what constitutes tradition. Labels, in fact, do organise the amorphous past into current political cachet. But often, the debate can seem semantic: for example, what criteria differentiate a *minwa* [folk tale] from a *densetsu* [legend / tradition]? One could devise many terminological phrases, and write many books assessing such questions, but what impact would these have on the actual usages, as stories and legends, under scrutiny? These questions applicable to Japanese modernism also apply to Irish modernism, as authors such as Yeats and Tanizaki recognised. Where does folklore end and the more anthropological *volkskunde* [folk arts] begin? What, or who, is the

¹⁰¹ Historians and critics have been increasingly sensitive to how modernity in Asia, as shaped by emerging postcolonial nation-states, had resulted in increased domestic anxiety within East Asian nations surrounded by topographical incursions. See, also, Leslie Pincus, *Authenticating Culture in Imperial Japan: Kuki Shūzō and the Rise of Nationalist Aesthetics*. Pincus uses Kuki (1888-1941) as a case study of a modernist philosopher who evaluates pre-modern aesthetic ideals as demonstrative elements for not only a continuous literary sensibility, but also constitutive elements for a collective, eternal *Japaneseness*.

Western authors had posited this as well, including R. H. Blyth or Basil Hall Chamberlain, particularly in *Things Japanese*. Kuki, however, clearly positioned his ethnic pride in support of Japanese imperialism, aligning literary vocabulary with military pride.

Currently, Kobayashi Yoshinori (1953-) has published many bestselling books of war apologetics. This highly controversial writer and *manga* artist has critiqued the depictions of Japan's role in the Pacific War. Kobayashi calls for *gōmanisumu*—resurgent pride—in considering Japanese history in opposition to Western pronouncements.

instrument of transmission, and what is the formula for presentation and reception? What is gained or lost when living patterns are subsumed by the terminological nebulosity of *kokugaku* [National Studies]?¹⁰² Do studies of the nation require nativist specifications at its core? When does folk observation become didactic prescriptions? Can local customs automatically enable state mandates?

Modanizumu [modernism], typically in Japan but also abroad, developed theoretical formulations based on national internality as a set of cohesive relations, positioned against an invasive externality, such as the West. The dilemma has been, as critic Naoki Sakai describes, that the construction of a unified, assertive state, as a discursive unity, was based on contemporary appeals that co-opted previous, illusory articulations of state selfhood. In short, the ancestral became both evidence and supposition. However, its real prerequisite is present day authority as the agency of actualisation. This is not connecting with the ancestral, but more like putting words into the mouth of the ancestral. These source materials are extremely diverse, but propagandists are notably selective in their constructions. Ireland, likewise, included a diverse complexity of independence movements, dedicated to the nuances of an ongoing sense of Ireland as spanning time and place. Sometimes, ethnic aphorisms promoting *Irishness* were produced, particularly by elements of the Fenian movement.

The Irish were concerned about what it meant to be Irish, particularly in relation to home rule. The term *nihonjinron*—the examination of Japaneseness—came into prominence in the 1970s to categorise a wide variety of discourse, themes, and fixations of varying magnitudes in ethnocentrism. Investigation of *Japaneseness*, however, had been an activity indulged in various ways previously, as a response to political and social concerns particular

¹⁰² Many book-length studies have examined *kokugaku* and its operations as discourse as representing different implications within different historical frameworks. A monumental work on the subject of nativist strategies in Japan is H. D. Harootunian's *Things Seen and Unseen: Discourse and Ideology in Tokugawa Nativism*. Mark McNally's *Proving the Way: Conflict and Practice in the History of Japanese Nativism* is a rebuttal to Harootunian, and certainly shows the considerable debate concerning the discursive strategies of communal collectivity. Western participation in unpacking *nativism* has forced the internal debate to turn outward.

Susan Burns analyses the development of *kokugaku* in the early modern period as a multivalent genre that enabled a great range of debate and interpretive viewpoints in considering mythohistorical materials and their ongoing influence on social formation. Burns thus reminds us of the complex, rather than prescriptively straightforward, debates that *kokugaku* inspired. Intertextuality was a key feature for extending the format of the debate. *Kokugaku* in the modern period [*Meiji jidai*], as Burns finds, led to a conflation of culturalism with national polity. But Burns also shows that this development was not a unilateral transition from one era's ultranationalism, the Tokugawan, into another, the Meijian.

to different eras. In the early twentieth-century, postulating a sense of being Japanese were often directed as a response to Western incursions into Asia, and the value systems that possibly represented. The twentieth-century in Japan, in general, accelerated the fashioning of neologisms to suit varying agendas and desires of a national polity. For example, the term *yamato damashii* had appeared as early as the *Man'yōshū*; but by the 1940s this term had been codified in such a way that its nuances must now be linked to the disastrous principle behind Imperial Japan. As scholars have documented, *kokugaku* operated in varying ways according to what were the perceived concerns specific to the era and the ideologues who critiques it. The arrival, and rapid development, of Zen and Pure Land Buddhism as cultural transplants from the Asian mainland had generated a range of debate as to what constitutes the *native* in the Kamakura era (1185-1333).

One could also theoretically speak of *Kerutojinron*, as studies conducted in the nature of the Celt, or *Itariajinron*, and so forth. Assertions have long been made about the constitutive forces that allow for a sovereign sense of a thirty-two county Ireland, as the blueprint for a one-island unity. The materials to ground these claims, in appealing to a sense of longevity, came from much older times and ancestries. Japanese translations of Yeats, and assessments of the *Keruto*, arrived during a time of intense internal debate. This proved to be entirely useful. Exploring concepts of other folk traditions could, in fact, offset the insulation that comes with the hardening of xenophobic rhetoric.

A terrible relationship has existed between the some practices of ethnography and the development of racial chauvinism. Ethnographic claims, especially when used to attribute pure qualities to one group so as to belittle another, have driven countless, rampaging excursions across the globe. A number of social historians, such as Theodor Adorno or Phillippe Lacoue-Labarthe, have used a sense of *national aesthetics* to locate the points at which between cultural sensibilities become owned by the state. At the same time, as Gayatri Spivak documents, we should appreciate the varying context-specific circumstances that shape the discourse of communal identity. It seems too reductive a generalization to see the questioning of cultural practices as predicated upon a discursive quest for racial triumph, ready to be enlisted by state-supported armies. *Budō* [the discipline of martial arts] had been a fundamental theme in developing the *esprit de corps* of Japanese militarism. However, despite the uneasy observations of Christopher Ross, many people practice *aiki-jujitsu* or

iaidô, as traditional martial arts, without becoming proponents of authoritarian power. Yeats has been thought of proto-fascist at times, even though he very much disagreed with Pound's politics. Most notably, he felt very uncomfortable with the politicisation of Wilfred Owen as national elegist and voice-of-the-nation poet of war. In regards to excluding Owen from an edited anthology, Yeats wrote to Dorothy Wellesey in 1936:

I did not know I was excluding a revered sandwich-board Man of the revolution & that some body has put his worst & most famous poem in a glass-case in the British Museum . . . (LDW 113)

Most of all, Yeats did not think of nationalism as a static thing. On this account, much can also be said about how he disagreed with many individuals, overwhelmed as they were by various regimes of conservative essentialism, who attempted to appreciate heritage patterns by compiling a database of *us* and *them* dichotomies. Yeats, as did many architects of the new Irish republic, used national self-questioning as to how we distinguish one territory from another, or one heritage from another, as inevitable in periods of rapid change. However, these inquiries need not lead inevitably to proto-fascism or apologetics for eugenics. The interplay between Irish and Japanese literatures is an instance of conversations of an intercultural encounter that sought to work independently of the rhetoric of state power. Folklore, rooted as it is to a given place, directs attention to the local and particular; its first conversation is with the traces of tradition that operate in communal discourse.

This requires a kind of ground-level communication that political forms cannot comprehend at this level of cultural practice. It is precisely here, in these practices, that Yeats's internationalism must be located. The force of this commitment can be most clearly seen in his relationship with Japanese writers. However, a similar case could also be made for his impact on Arabic language poetry, particularly by Palestinians.¹⁰³

I am not suggesting that Yeats was a perfect exemplar of world peace. On the contrary, violence and anxiety are everywhere in his work. Much of *Meditations in Time of*

¹⁰³ The debate over what is *Palestine*, as a singular collective of Arab identity, also involves questions of cultural coherence over a period of time, as rooted in one place. Tawfiq Sayigh, who translated Eliot's *Four Quartets* into Arabic, was deeply influenced stylistically by Yeats. This topic has been examined by Zahra Ali. Yeats's versions of an Ireland, vacillating between romance and crisis, powerfully informed Mahmoud Darwish's understanding of politics, poetry, and Palestine. Joe Cleary has compared Ireland and Israel/Palestine through the lens of *partition literature*. I would suggest that the Yeats-Darwish connection would be a useful addition to, or development from, Cleary's thesis.

Civil War analyse those motivations which manufactured ammunition from art. The sword, of course, is a crucial symbol of this, but so also the gun in Irish hands: “As though to die by gunshot were / The finest play under the sun” (“The Road at my Door” 4-5). *Meditations in Time of Civil War* interrogates the civic enterprise of nation building, as a process inherited from the past, as well as an inevitable project in the present. The poems repeatedly lead to a contemporary question—is Ireland, after all, only a territorial fiction, easily swept away by those in power? If one wants to appeal to continuity, of ancestry as a sense of continued context, then those linkages between legend and contemporary circumstances must be examined. *Meditations in Time of Civil War* is therefore chronologically split between the *mythic time* explored in the earlier poems and the crisis of the present civil war. The aspects of the landscape are suggestively positioned to touch upon both the ancestral as well as the immanent. The “ancient bridge, and a more ancient tower”, site of previous tumult (“My House” 23), now is marked by civil war. A continuing question of sovereignty, for a particular group of people, remains the issue that will not dissolve. These liminal moments of *The Tower*, in which twilight allows for a status to the ancestral, frames the ongoing conflict of the present. Enquiries into nation, as being something more than fiction but contextually rooted to the soil, are informed by Yeats’s acts of necromancy with the voices of the past.

Yeats’s sympathies were not uniform, and his role as spokesmen for the new Irish order was not a comfortable one. Yeats’s Nobel Prize was awarded to him in 1923, seemingly not as a coincidence, just after the conclusion of the Irish Civil War. Stockholm, often, is fond of giving the prize in literature to countries that are emerging from conflict. Thus, at this time of crisis, the judges cited Yeats as giving “expression to the spirit of a whole nation”.¹⁰⁴

Earthbound Aura: The Trace of Twilight in the Processes of Place

Spirit of a whole nation sounds like a kind of *Airurandojinron*, the claim to sole Irishness. I do not believe that Yeats was interested in such smooth-spoken pronouncements. Yeats argues throughout the poems in *The Tower* that standing outside of the gyres, as being

¹⁰⁴ This quote is taken from the Nobel committee’s citation of Yeats’s accomplishments as a writer and is used as the banner for the webpage documenting his award:

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1923/index.html

hermetically transcendent, was never possible. The tower itself represents a tangible legacy, communal investments in the land that correlates with a process of culture. Like the sword, and Tanizaki's sense of *jidai no tsuya* [lustre of time] corresponds, the tower stands structurally in opposition to the machineries of mass production, which quickly produce trinkets of culturality, the state of being *in-cultured*, out of hackneyed symbols. What Yeats is concerned with is the extent that trinkets are pushing treasures to the edge of the peripheries. The shadows, the silhouettes of the past that Tanizaki praised, offer something that the contemporary cannot reproduce: "Our shadows rove the garden gravel still, / The living seem more shadowy than they" ("The New Faces" 7-8).

When the monuments and relics in a landscape are overturned, or forgotten, their occurrence is turns into auras and hauntings, shadowy outlines against the materialistic present. This diaphanous quality, easily dismissed as imaginary or non-substantive, leads to their devaluation and dismissal. Access to the phantasmal is itself phantasmal, which is the condition of Oisín in *WO* and the threat to destroy the twilight in *CT*. As the ancestral becomes immaterial, it thus assumes the non-existence that seems to prove the view that it never existed in the first place. Hence, the belief that all tradition is imaginary, as variously described, becomes predicatively true. "Ireland" and "Japan" have both been analysed as being composed of a series of variously mythic claims to selfhood, ones derived from elusive senses of the past. For example, Declan Kiberd describes how the "past", as a pre-requisite to a sense of Irishness, allows for recreation of history to which the revolutionary present becomes the definitive point of view. The past itself is a prisoner of the present. Fantastic narratives are another way of inventing a pseudo historical reality:

History thereby becomes a form of science fiction: in order to get a fair hearing in a conservative society, the exponents of revolution had to present their intentions under the guise of a return to the idealized past. (*Inventing Ireland* 293)

Kiberd's point might be read in a way that suggests Vivian is claiming that *all* of tradition is an inauthentic narrative, invented to meet current political and cultural needs. I am not suggesting that this is Wilde's point in *The Decay of Lying*, however, as the context is highly satirical. Perhaps Wilde means, overall in this work, that truths created by artists are really more authentic than prosaic reality, as Keats had suggested. However, the current prevalence

of the theory of *invented tradition* might read Vivian as proof of this fabrication of the past. The invention of a preceding culture, and the claim to it, is thus based on a contemporary consensus that invents a past out of gimmicks and fantasies. In such a state of illusory beginnings, violence—as civil war or outward imperialism—becomes an anxious assertion of pride against a subconscious fear of a collective’s own rootlessness.

Violence is a worst-case scenario that results from such anxieties of disconnection. The more typical expressions of how this paranoia is overcome is the heritage industry and its typology of clichéd expressions: *kimono*, woollen jumpers, harps. Relatively innocuous on their own, they become imbued with sentimental attachments. These sentiments, circulated with sufficient authority and repetition, become the building blocks of a unified national idea. We can see the evidence of this daily, of course. Nativism continues to be demarcated by slogans, souvenirs, *knowledge exams* for immigrants, and so forth. As Yeats described, this cultural claptrap can overwhelm individuality with the “labyrinth he has made / in art of politics” (“Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen” 3.12-13). Consider how Yeats himself has become an invented tradition, in that businesses use his image to sell versions of Irishness. Recently, in an advertisement in *The Wall Street Journal* (14 May, 2007), the Irish Government’s inward investment agency (IDA Ireland) uses the Louis le Brocquy oil portrait of Yeats to promote the country’s info-technology sector: “The Irish mind The Irish. Creative. Imaginative. And flexible” (R4). In a very similar way, *Japan* is promoted and defined by an essential spirit. On 7 June 2007, also in the *Wall Street Journal*, the Japanese External Trade Organisation placed this adversarial call to action: “The future is now Japanese are notoriously impatient. They keep trying to get the jump on the times through forward-looking innovations and template-busting breakthroughs” (A8). More examples such as the above can be found. So many, in fact, that the sense of all material culture as counterfeit becomes evident.

However, the practical consequences of such a theory, that the real materials of society could be valued and devalued at a whim, had been one of the most serious complaints of the Irish under colonial occupation. Absentee landlords, the deprivation of food during the Famine, and Penal Laws that confiscated religious art were all examples of tradition being confiscated. Were the materials taken only imaginary, or valuable only through relative measure? This had been the question behind Jonathan Swift’s analysis of how Ireland in

various ways was devaluated in *The Drapier's Letters* through the colonial manipulation of revenue. He attacked the mindset that arbitrarily assigns worth and value to cultural products, assigning worth based on contemporary exchange rates. *The Drapier's Letters* takes up this issue in observing the undervaluing of Irish currency. The case that led to the composition of the letters began with a bribe. William Wood was granted a patent to produce inferior copper to make the new coin of the realm. Made of a cheaper alloy, the coinage was used for currency in Ireland, but was not legal tender—did not have authentic, sterling value—in the international market. Thus, the entire system of supply and demand, as controlled in Ireland, was based on counterfeit production, deemed as twaddle by the judgment of empire. A system of quasi-values manipulated legitimate goods and crafts produced by culture and labour. This economic policy, in turn, depreciated the material culture of the people. Literally, what was made and exchanged had its value equated with illegitimate tokens. Swift had also explored this sense when, in “A Modest Proposal”, human beings are described as commodities subject to inflation. *The Drapier's Letters*, like this essay, is deeply concerned with a moral issues in regards to how communities are dehumanised through economic interference. The standard of measuring value has only a cursory relation to the *materials* and craftsmanship of the product itself. Swift, in the form of fake money, sees by extension the social culture of Ireland degraded.

Thus, it is the imperial mindset that reduces folklore to another quaint, irrelevance. Critics have shown how authors or philosophers have been complicit with ethnic aggrandisement, through research in folklore, but there is also the story of how artists looked to such materials for a space in opposition to the market mentality. In particular, cultures under rapid change will turn to the knowledge of shadows, partly found in folklore, a knowledge that makes a space outside of the purely economic. Yeats had suggested this possibility in *CT* in fashioning a perspective out of twilight, and its ancestral lustre. Very similarly, arguably informed by *CT*, this was Tanizaki's central thesis in *In'ei raisan* [*In Praise of Shadows*]. What scholars have not clearly identified, in the growing intercultural communication between Irish and Japanese literature, are the clear influences between authors in these two areas and their shared interest for folklore as informing the local. Twilight acted, for authors such as Yeats and Tanizaki, as a repository of premodern knowledge that offered something modernity did not. Communal realities, especially along

the margins of Irish and Japanese society, sought a sense of legitimate ancestry. These realities resonate in time and create a domain for the preservation of local history as a continuity of heirlooms and practices set against an hegemony of generic identities.

Tanizaki's thesis describes how time gives an artifact its powers through the touch of many hands, which wear it down and make it shine with use. The oily sheen left by the touch of generations bears the imprint of a community's ongoing emotional reality. Oisín's *sillelagh*, washing ashore in the otherworld, dispelled the fantasy with its roughhewn touchability. Satô's sword, likewise, arrives at the Tower, demonstrating a coherent continuity within Japanese craftsmanship and historical methods. Their communal value cannot be assigned, really.¹⁰⁵ The sword and *sillelagh* possess an enchantment—the dirt of time and handling, as Tanizaki reminds us—that evades the jurisdictions of mass manufacturing. Satô's sword is an important artefact in Yeats's life, for it confirmed his own sense of heritage in Ireland, but offered a parallel example from another heritage, a comparative ancestral context. An exchange took place that defied the Herderian sensibility that declared heritage needed to be isolated. In this instance, the sword, carrying a transmigratory sense of culture, coincides with that ongoing dialogue between Irish and Japanese literature, two distinct heritages came into conversation with each other in the twilight of modernity. The ancestral, whose presence permeates the wood and steel, asserts itself in a time of technology, trade, and mass manufacturing. Yeats would see that, for a post-Herderian model to take effect, local cultures would need to come into dialogue as a form of rebellion against nondescript identifies fostered by capitalistic cosmopolitanism.

Tanizaki's essay *In'ei raisan [In Praise of Shadows]* makes an important statement in regards to those processes transforming Japanese folk arts, the change of their habitat, and this work has clear influences from *CT*, as will be examined below. *In'ei raisan* begins as a defense of positive anthropogenic contributions to the process and continuity of history and its material perpetuation. The human hand acts in consort with material environment to imbue unique artifacts with the luster of time. The objects, refined through intimate interaction, are thus connected to their local context through communal relations. Tanizaki

¹⁰⁵ In May 2008, thieves robbed the Museum of Anthropology, at the University of British Columbia, of a number of gold pieces created by famed Haida artist, Bill Reid. If melted down, the actual worth of the metal would be approximately \$15,000. The worth of the pieces as artwork, for insurance purposes, is approximately \$2 million. Their value according to the Haida people? Incalculable.

argues that the feeling of enchantment that these objects acquire cannot be dismissed as whimsical caprice or cheap sentiment. The shine, as ancestral presence, is a kind of aura, one produced from a polish of elbow grease and gravedirt. This is, actually, the ongoing presence of antiquity. Walter Benjamin, using the term *aura*, had made a similar claim: in an age of mechanical production, art testifies its meaningfulness through the qualities that result from it being a handicraft. Thomas Hardy's poem "Old Furniture" bears a resemblance to Tanizaki's theory of *jidai no tsuya* [the lustre of time], as quoted in this chapter's epigraph:

I see the hands of the generations
That owned each shiny familiar thing
In play on its knobs and indentations,
And with its ancient fashioning
Still dallying . . .

An important issue in Tanizaki's essay is how technological change, although welcome for the benefits it might bring, can also destroy organic qualities of beauty. Electric lights, for example, destroy the elegance of shadows, which are synonymous with the qualities of the past that have a distinct aesthetic. In considering those forces that are driving the issue of heritage loss to a crisis, and the loss of the preceding domains of beauty, Tanizaki perceives a potential collision in competing worldviews between East and West in terms of pleasure:

True to say that this elegance [*gachi*], which we so esteem, involves elements of the soiled and unsanitary. I stand to be thought of, correctly perhaps, as overly defensive in stating the following. Is it not true that – compared to *seiyôjin* [Westerners/Occidental], who stomp out and eradicate the smallest bits of dirt – the *tôyôjin* [Easterners/Oriental] thoughtfully preserve these bits, as they are, and glorify them [*bika suru*]?¹⁰⁶ (13)

¹⁰⁶ Thomas Harper has produced the authoritative version in English of *In Praise of Shadows* in its entirety. Tanizaki's essay has had a longstanding impact, asserting certain characteristics of Japanese tastefulness, through which he conducts a meditation on the irrecoverable effects that come with change. *In'ei raisan* contrasts with Kuki Shûzô's *Iki no kôzô* [The Structure of *Iki*] (1930) in that the latter attempts to summarise the Japanese taste according to a single (supposedly untranslatable) essence. Tanizaki describes *shadows* as a kind of terrain, rather than an aesthetic label. In all of the Japanese authors under discussion, *twilight* was not used

Such pronouncements on geographic mindset, although frequently made at that time, are too general to be taken too literally now; but Tanizaki begins with this comparison to negotiate points of cultural distinctions as a way to understand difference. Different regions, owing to the particularities of their formative conditions, have their own ways of developing artistic temperaments. As noted, such a belief can be easily turned into essentialist proclamations about the *Japanese mind* or, as quoted above, “The Irish Mind”. But, rather than trying to assert a uniform definition of the Japanese, Tanizaki initiates a dynamic interrogation into how cultural differences are first established and managed. He continues from the above point by asking why Hellenic architecture might look a certain way, how it served polytheistic beliefs, or how Buddhist pagodas might enable another kind of observance and discourse. Such questioning, after all, is distinct from the Atlantean thesis that all religious beliefs—and their buildings—are derivatives of a single archetypal source from time.

Architecture is a central theme of *In'ei raisan*, just as it is in *The Tower*, in situating communal communication according to a physical setting. Ancestral buildings shape the habitat of thought and the sense of belonging that extends over a long period of time. Tanizaki is concerned with traditional building designs and materials, their aesthetic methods, which are a counterweight to the new Victorian edifices then being built across Japan. These were marks of Western political and cultural incursion. The American consulate in Kobe (1881), for example, is jarringly Southern Gothic, incongruously set in a local landscape. The Holy Resurrection Cathedral, an Eastern Orthodox institution, and British-style railway stations, as well as other structures, had been implanted in landscape and cityscape as statements of encroachment. Being edifices of a potentially colonial dynamic, their forms and configurations suggested the possibility agendas of the nations that designed them. Meanwhile, the coal, iron, and steel required to build them, and to fuel the machinery to maintain them, had a glaring impact on the environmental scene of both the rural and the urban, as Yanagita Kunio noted. Tanizaki's essay most carefully engages the issue of balance: how can ancestral relics find a place in regimes of technological progress? What values are lost when custom and ceremony are disposable superstitions, or are treated simply as atmospheric effects? Such is the case is the past is only sentiment. Tanizaki

as a uniquely Japanese aesthetic, such as Kuki posits for *iki*. On the contrary, *twilight* enabled an intermingling of different cultural notions, places, and eras. For a discussion on how various discourses have formulated a Japanese uniqueness, see Dale.

looked for something earthier: the dirt, soil, and handiwork are initial principles that resist the globalizing world view, which sees *place* as abstract space for future development.¹⁰⁷

As discussed in the previous chapter, Patrick Kavanagh and Yeats were also concerned with dirt and the soil, as the terrain upon which communities derive, develop, and negotiate their existence. They saw that the turf-cutter may represent inefficiency and obsolescence if compared to the factory; however, the turf-cutter represents both a whole way of life and a people who provide for, as Knut Hamsun called it, the *growth of the soil*. In this way, Kavanagh, particularly in *The Green Fool*, has much in common with Miyazawa Kenji's essay on agronomic aesthetics entitled *Nômin geijutsu gairon kôyô* [*An Outline of Agrarian Art*] (1926). With the crop cycle in mind, as it relates to metaphors in Japanese literature, he argues that labour and dirt do not preclude an ideal of Beauty. Urbanism and the chattering classes are not the preserve of *bukkokudo*, the Buddha-Land. Thus, Miyazawa's Buddhist morality felt that the realms of ancestry, and Buddha's compassion in the cycle of earthly life, were irreplaceably bound up in these agricultural conditions. Miyazawa, like Kavanagh, was painfully aware of the brutal toil that came with tilling the soil, and its susceptibility to oversight or exploitation. Still, the agrarian, with its proletarian overtones, offered a way of sustaining community that the metropolitan factory did not. Yanagita Kunio's, whose academic studies focused on agriculture, also had a concern for farming systems in Japan, and those who depended on them for their livelihood, out of which his interest in folklore developed.

Generally at this time, we can find examples of the loss of home due to rurality being mobilised for a national agenda: war, mass production, and so forth. Of course, dying unwillingly for another man's cause will lead one to homesickness. One need only read the poems of Hedd Wyn to really feel this.¹⁰⁸ Likewise, in Japan, Tsuboi Sakae's *Nijûshi no*

¹⁰⁷ Margherita Long also sees Tanizaki in regards to the pleasure of the old object as a question of "evenness": "culturalism struggled to balance the perceived evenness of tradition with the unevenness of global capitalism" (432). Long, however, locates Tanizaki's discussion of *nare* [familiarity] in a psychoanalytic understanding of the pleasure principle in traditional aesthetics, exacerbated by an emergent national psychosis.

¹⁰⁸ Hedd Wyn, the *nom de plume* of Ellis Humphrey Evans, (1887-1917) was a promising Welsh-language poet, committed to traditional Welsh forms and chronicler of rural lifestyles. Conscripted to fight in the First World War, Hedd Wyn died in Belgium. As Paul Turner's 1992 film *Hedd Wyn* explores, this poet represents how Welsh people, as well as the Welsh landscape in the form of coal mines, is co-opted for British political purposes. The contrast between Hedd Wyn's farmstead, British military barracks, and the battlefields of Belgium exemplify the differing social environs that Hedd Wyn has been forced into.

hitomi [*Twenty-Four Eyes*] describes the apparently insular environment of the hinterlands, in this case Shôdoshima.¹⁰⁹ Here, the rural community prides itself on petty prejudices as a defense mechanism against manipulative outsiders. A rather liberal schoolteacher arrives, bringing both broader knowledge and contemporary sensibilities with her arrival. Like *Anne of Green Gables*, much of the novel then describes her efforts to perform her duties in a distrusting community. This anecdotal narrative framework collapses, however, under the force of an imperial government that bombards the people with draft notices and shrill propaganda. One by one, the village's youth are conscripted as cannon fodder for war, and smoke and ashes in boxes are returned. The schoolteacher is left wondering as to whether any refuge from a regime is possible. In terms of class and the countryside, the sense of community proves to be no match for a national agenda; the toiled land becomes only an area on lease before its inhabitants are evicted.

Yeats, in various ways, considered the theme of delocation from local geography. In "An Irish Airman Foresees his Death", the airman does more than retrospectively glorify the *aulde sod*. The airman realises a valid sense of connection to the local, the earthbound, after war breaks apart his synchronic understanding of space in time. Although not subject to conscription, the pilot—Robert Gregory—chose the element of air over the element of land on account of the former's apparent thrill-seeking value. Once in the crosshairs, however, the delight of flight does not satisfy with its promised adrenaline. Air, yes, is a release; but the price of entry is to divest oneself of rootedness. Now compelled to kill an enemy he does not hate, he has consigned himself to die where he has no home. The knightly archetype takes on no chivalric value; kin and soil have been left behind, exchanged for vapour. Thus,

¹⁰⁹ Tsuboi Sakae grew up on Shôdo island. Her more well-known husband, Shigeji, was a prominent anarcho-pacifist who adamantly declared a role for literature as a radical politics of freedom, one that could cross any class or affiliation. Both were active in anarcho-pacifist movements. Tsuboi Sakae's novel *Nijûshi no hitomi* confronts both the widespread destruction and famine brought upon the Japanese people through militarism, as well as their ethical acquiescence in the face of this fascism. This book is generally regarded as one of the finest anti-war novels in Japanese literature.

Although, for a different point of view, see James J. Orr's critique of Tsuboi. Orr reads Tsuboi's work, and the film based on it, as mongering a myth of victimhood to assuage the collective psyche of a defeated Japanese society (107). Orr does not mention Tsuboi's longstanding Marxist and anti-military activities, a topic covered by Nishizawa (41-48). Kobayashi Takiji, another author of proletarian literature, died under police torture at the age of 29 (1933).

Shôdoshima is twinned with the isle of Milos, Greece.

ironically in the vain openness of the atmosphere, both air and breath are short-lived and wasted.

The poet, in other ways, invisions a retreating from the soil and community as the purpose behind “Sailing to Byzantium”. The escape from temporalisation, and its surrounding social circumstances, follows an aesthete’s journey into *despatialisation*. The pilgrimage concludes in a destination of stasis and non-placement. In this sense, “Byzantine”, as the pseudo-ancestral, is inclined to a sense of spatial transcendence entirely different from the pilot’s. The airman, seeing his death, would willingly strip off his uniform in exchange for a moth-eaten coat. The artiste, however, shrugs off the ragged coat and the stick, the elemental reality, to escape into the essence of artficed eternity. The impossibility of this is shown by the fact that this otherworld, achieved in the last stanza, retains reflectively an ironic duplication of the environs from which the poet fled in the opening stanza. Imagistically, Yeats reproduces the first stanza in the fourth. The dirt is recast as mosaic tiles of icons. The social menageries of the first stanza are inverted as cadres of nobility. Thus, the “young in one another’s arms” are replaced by courtly lords and ladies. The salmon and bird, species of air and water, become the gold and yellow pigmentations of Byzantine artwork. The old man, keen as he was to leave, now takes a seat as a drowsy emperor. That which is born, begotten, and dies—the cycle of life—becomes bland phases of what is past, or passing, or to come. The mechanical bird, the hollow version of the energetic chirping in the first stanza, lacks the Tanizakian “luster of time”, which is warmth and touchability. In an echo of Hans Christian Andersen’s tale, the bird chirps inorganically, offering no peace to its frozen listeners. Its perch is not a sign of continuity, but a remote abstraction, reminiscent of the hollow symbol. Its birdsong is a false, hypnotic buzz of the kind that Oisín had rejected in the Otherworld. The active liveliness of the first stanza actually is the true Byzantium, in that its dance is not mechanical. Oisín had reached this conclusion when he discovers the windfallen tree branch, from his former ancestral home now far behind him, which still bears the marks of *jidai no tsuya*, the lustre of organic touch. This living sap seeps into the synthetic glamour of the fantasy realm.

Twilight: The Ancestral Aura as Temporal Differential as Traced on Place

In regards to identifying the ancestral as inseparable from space and time, attested to by a tangible object, *jidai no tsuya* [the lustre of time] is a crucial theorisation. As connected to place, community, and intergenerationality, the lustre suggests a temporal differential, something that marks both past and present simultaneously as inherited continuity. In pursuing this idea, Tanizaki refused to dismiss or devalue the real feelings of investment and relationship that people have to local traditions, artifacts, and situations of living. He reacts most strongly to that which tries to impose an internationalist vision on the particular. Under such a grey erasure, people cannot help but try to preserve bits and pieces of physical connectivity as embodiments of the past. Thus, the central argument for praising *shadows* leads from the aura around materiality to the shadows as the vague silhouettes of cultural topoi. He contemplates the schemes of those wraith-like presences that resist global domestication. As a ring of dark matter around the peripheries of sensation, the ghostly is a half-embodied paradox of mythic time, the resultant echo of an ethos that is disintegrating. Likewise, my readings of Yeats's early poems pursue his Tanizaki-like sense of the spectral as the lingering, as seen in *WO*, as the ancestral voice negotiating with an altered topography. *Discourses of the Vanishing* can connect to Tanizaki's essay on many points. Tanizaki questions the predicament of modernist culture in Japan: the spectral, or phantasmal, exists as an enigma, an unstable entity between presence and absence. *The lustre of time* describes a situation which Ivy articulates as to how "the surviving numinous became the romantic object of those caught up in the disenchantment of the world" (73). As an expression of anxiety in regards to cultural transmission, the haunted is an abject dislocation resulting from enforced loss and disappearance. A ghostly trace only partially announces itself, or affixes itself, to a predicament of unrecognisable change.

The lustre of time, which creates a numinous energy around the antique, can also be applied to spectral ancestry as imagined in poetry and other forms. The Fianna are vanishing figures unable to navigate a world that their memory no longer matches. In the areas called Ireland or Japan—and, really, Hawaii, and elsewhere—there have been complex categories for describing the interaction of the ghostly with the landscape: *jibakurei*, *gaki*, *beán sidhe*, *ikiryô*, *go-senzo*, *sluagh*. The spirits of the dead and living dead, in various states

of unrest, maintain contact and influence with the physical world. Historical trauma produces a radical alteration of psyche in relation to landscape as a topography of relational characteristics. For example, *feár gortach* [hungry grass] is phantom turf that grows over unmarked graves of famine victims. A mortal is overcome by overwhelming pangs of hunger when treading on such a spot. The ancestral aura can be detected on object, locale, and as phantom presences configured as images of the departed and departing.

In pursuing the relationship between Irish and Japanese literature on this theme of *jidai no tsuya* [the lustre of time], as the cross-tracing of twilight, we need not to say that Irish and Japanese folklore are the same, as somehow ready-made archetypal templates that match up as cognate expressions. On the contrary, the circumstances, customs, and negotiations with ghosts and ancestry were distinct, as Tanizaki argued, products of formative conditions. The phantasmal, accordingly, is a continuum alongside social operations. How the phantasmal, its shadowiness, is reflexive to a particular environment, society, and marks a localized experience as haunted. That folklore became a twilight conscience, a hermeneutics of shadows, had a similar practice in Ireland and Japan. The interstices between Irish and Japanese literature, as mutually exploring this twilight and its figurations of the past, is born out in the written works of major authors from that period. Twilight was not a remote realm, but something suffused to the landscape itself. Yeats, through Japanese literary heritage, found a compelling demonstration of this principle:

Perhaps even these images, once created and associated with river and mountain, might move of themselves and with some powerful, even turbulent life, like those painted horses that trampled the rice-fields of Japan. (A 194).

Likewise, Japanese authors, through Yeats, found similar interest in the Irish example.

It is no surprise, then, that some of the earliest translations of Yeats, by Akutagawa Ryūnosuke, were taken from Yeats's own praise of shadows, *The Celtic Twilight*. The parallel discourses of the vanishings became productive points of contact. This cross-cultural theme of endangered folklore, its connections to a social dynamic of a community negotiating its heritage, enabled a common principle out of which an international conversation was staged. Yeats argued that the vanishing re-emerges as the folkloric spectral, as attached to landscape. The trauma of erasure creates the predicament in which

something like a *sluagh* or *bean sí* find themselves, disconnected from the order of the landscape but still interactive with it. The Oisín or Selkie paradox—of a being topographically displaced through the disorientation of the social setting—had practical meaning to communities on the verge of dissipation. Thus, in “Kidnappers”, from *CT*, Yeats uses the *spirited away* trope as representative of real communal orders being ejected into the phantasmal: “Therein he saw walking or sitting all the people who had died out of his village in his time” (96). Like the liminal funeral at the cross-roads, a community witness its own dissolution, as social substances turn into the poltergeist’s air. The rapid material development of the countryside creates such vexing contradiction: social relationships, once enmeshed in custom, now retain disclosure of their past only as hangovers of superstition. This is an important aspect of Yeats’s depiction of the fairies, and his pursuit in drama for a kind of soteriological model for redeeming the marginal condition of ancestral twilight. In questioning the souls of the fairy kingdom, Yeats discovers that their world populated with former humans (the ancestral): “There is hardly a valley or a mountain-side where they cannot tell you of someone being pillaged amongst them” (96). Ancestry, the network for understanding generations as cultural transmission, is banished into the speculative. The trace is further removed, and their conversation has been turned into the phantasmal, half-vanished and half-forgotten. Likewise, in “The Prisoners of the Gods”, Yeats explores “the countless stories told of people who meet ‘the others’ and meet friends and neighbours among them” (156).

Japanese authors have also recognised the convergence of themes, if also outright influence, of *The Celtic Twilight* on Tanizaki and others. Mishima Yukio, in a series of letters to Yasunari Kawabata, identified the strong similarities, if not outright influence, of *CT* on *In’ei raisan*:

Exactly the same thing, even in different countries, is this Irish twilight of Yeats and Tanizaki’s *In’ei raisan*

In the *Nihon shoki*, the Gods hide their body during the daylight, but in twilight they come to life, dancing. (*Letters* 32-3)

Tanizaki also follows Yeats in using twilight as an optical device for apprehending the marginalia and peripheries of sensation and belief. They both find a common ground in their defence of folklorality as bearing witness to an ongoing story of cultural experiences.

Collectivity, these experiences build upon preceding connections and associations that gather and form around place. Myth and ritual are, in part, the results of these continued relationships. Yeats and Tanizaki, composing manifestos about the past as shadows in relation to the present, do more than compile quantitative data in regards to customs; they actively describe the supersensual nature of object, place, and people as participating in the production of regional characters. Shadows and twilight are in fact habitations, metaphysical nodes and abodes that house those ancestral traces that, by nature, are both elusive as well as perpetual.

Twilight, as ancestrally conversational space, opens a dimension for partially circumventing both the limits of time, but also the limit of place. Twilight, as described by Yeats, helped to create an international discussion, helping to confront the dilemma of cultural isolationism. According to a Herderian model, if one is conditioned by his or her own cultural upbringing, attuned as it is to the particulars of place, how is authentic appreciation of *another's* cultural position (place) possible? A possible solution is that diversity does not need to be transcended in favor of a universalist framework (such as Nishida Kitarô eventually envisaged). Diversity can meet diversity, and retain its distinction, through a mutually shared praise of shadows. Shadow is a point of communicative contact and intermingling, preserved by the qualities of the phantasmal domain. As Mishima suggests, the twilight dimension had breached political rhetoric and allowed for an artistic exchange between Tanizaki, Yeats, and many others. Real objects, such as Satô's sword, were enabling sites of psychometry – touch seemed to communicate a kind of information from the past. One could realise the lustre of time, its relational meaningfulness to its testimonial qualities. As Herman Hesse suggests—and the main principle underscoring Hans Küng's Global Ethics Foundation—is that a capable awareness of one's own cultural continuity needs to be in place so as to resonate with another's cultural continuity. The kind of psychometry, of touching cultural experience, does involve the risk of personal attachment. And, of course, this imaginative capability goes against the grain of rationality, the systematic posturing of internationalist politics. But shadows are substances that resist the pedestal lamps of museums. The twilight is ephemeral but still clings to its formative context. Thus, shadows and twilight, although in some ways the epiphenomena of the vanishing, can also be an interliminality for mutual consideration. The twilight-shadows

dialogue permitted an appreciative, perspicacious insight that is an option out of Herderian isolationism. Yeats and Tanizaki's differing senses of ancestral tradition and locality had more to say with one another than the generic integers of free trade and globalised economics.

On this occasion of Irish-Japanese literary exchange, the particular relationship between *Nihonjin to Airurandojin* [The Japanese and the Irish] can be chalked up to all kinds of curious similarities: both being island nations [*shimaguni*], similar folk practices, a shared sense of sacred sites and music . . . but none of these claims are satisfying. We need not repeat tired clichés about shared qualities that define either Japan or Ireland. It is more interesting to pursue the comparative discussions, initiated in modernism, that resulted from the intercultural exchange between Irish and Japanese literature. This subject has had ongoing appeal. Recently, Shiba Ryōtarō examined the cultural inter-relationships between areas in Japan and Ireland through his thoughtful Irish travelogue, *Airurando nikki* (1993). Intrigued by the prevalence of Irish folksongs in the Japanese education system, Shiba seeks out the mutual harmony between these two cultures that would facilitate musical transposition (2:192). As well as music, he finds a comparative landscape that he analyses through contemplative essays much in the way Hearn did with Japan. According to Shiba, Ireland is rife with the fantastic populating the everyday, containing numerous spirits and superstitions. This makes for an interesting point of contact with Japan. His *Airurando kikō* contains a number of *CT* moments of local storytelling and orature that can coincide with Japanese parallels.¹¹⁰ Shiba pursues Yeats's point that folklorality must be connected with the particulars of the local: as Yeats described, "races had their first unity from a mythology that marries them to rock and hill" (194). Generally, Shiba sees similarities in the ways in which Irish customs show an involvement in the landscape as perpetuating associations with the

¹¹⁰ In a recent article for *The Guardian*, Seamus Heaney made the claim that the *haiku* of Buson, Issa, and Bashō bear a strong resemblance to Old Irish verse, based on a shared sensibility of "the economy of means, the sense of a huge encircling stillness": <http://books.guardian.co.uk/review/story/0,,2216007,00.html>

This work originally appears in *Our Shared Japan*, an anthology of Irish poems that have, in variously loose ways, taken *Japan* as their subject matter.

It is only conjecture to make such comparisons. Western literary criticism, with its almost fascination for these three *haiku* poets in particular, could seemingly relate *haiku* to any genre of poetry, given sufficiently imaginative leeway. Heaney, however, emphasises the *Irishness* of the premodern verse as coinciding with a Japanese viewpoint. This demonstrates the continued perception of a shared Japanese-Irish literary sensitivity. Moreover, Yeats's active engagement with contemporary Japanese authors seems even more important. Rather than making abstract equivalences, he went further in actively promoting the arts and literature, as intercultural dialogue, in his own era.

ancestral. As Shiba confirms, *CT* takes up this theme ardently: even the displaced become sites of radical alterity as narratives that haunt the topography of Ireland and Japan. Otherworldly voices are not spawned from afar, but are the resultant miasma of evaporating heritages, and the communities and perpetuation of tradition that supported them. Japanese and Irish topographies are not the same: their distinctive, irreplaceable contexts were vastly different, and we need not claim similarities to make a dialogue comprehensible.

With an appreciation for the theme of ancestral twilight in Yeats, Akutagawa helped to bring the concept of *hakumei* [twilight] into Japanese literary practice. He translated three tales from *The Celtic Twilight* in 1914: “The Eater of Precious Stones” [*Hôseki o tabefumono*]; “The Three O’Briens and the Evil Fairies [*San-nin no ôbiyurun to ashiki seireitô*] and “Regina, Regina, Pigmearum Veni” [*Jo’ô yo, waijin no jo’ô waga kitareri*], under the translated title *Keruto no hakumei* [*The Celtic Twilight*]. An extensive discussion of the linguistic features, and the interesting ways they manage the Irish materials of these translations, is not possible here. However, one important quality of inter-cultural negotiation becomes readily apparent in examining Akutagawa’s lexical choices. Although relatively cognate words such as *yôsei* exist in Japanese, Akutagawa deliberately uses *seirei* [*shôryô*/deceased people] to translate “fairies”. This word, in essence, confirms Yeats’s thesis that the fairies are, in fact, populated by vanished ancestors and displaced countrymen. Akutagawa has found a religiously charged term, with overtones of ancestral recall, to render Yeats’s sense that many of the fairies are vanished figures of the past caught in a predicament of liminality. Through such a suggestive vocabulary, Akutagawa draws a kind of comparison between the dim kingdom [*yûan ôkoku*] and Yeats’s commonwealth of Fae. Twilight is being marked not only as aesthetic, but a para-communal dimension. Akutagawa’s interest in *CT* pursues a sense that Yeats’s writing on fairies and monsters had immediate social implications, rather than tricks of entertainment and thrill-seeking. In reviewing the three selections Akutagawa chose to translate, we can see a common theme readily: waking dreams are a form of knowledge gathering. Encounters at the peripheries of sensation allow for interactions of individuals, families, and ancestors. The folkloric, in its unreal closeness to human affairs, readily satirises generalised accounts of social behaviour. The folkloric, however, arises out of oratures that are a kind of palimpsests in which voicings continue to speak from the past. The extent of the influence of Yeats’s consideration of

Yeats, on the thematic impact of twilight, would include many Japanese authors. Later, Kyôka's *tasogare* [twilight] would also figure Yeats's twilight as a temporal differential between ancestor and present, converging in the mytho-cartography of place.

Twilight, Rationalism, and the Revolt of the Atemporal

Ichiyanagi Hirotaka, in examining different themes of early twentieth-century Japan, argued that the general curriculum of rationality had many apostates. Even mainstream, urban sensibilities had a taste for communing with the uncanny. Various forms of Western divination, in particular, had been imported for parlour entertainment. Foreigner-style séances and ouija boards rattled and breathed with all kinds of arcane pronouncements and foreign accents. When thinking of the tomfoolery of the Theosophists, it is well to remember that similar psychic clubs, of tarot cards, psychic healers, and palm readers, were also popular in Asia, as Ichiyanagi and others have described. Curiously, Western interfaces with the dead became new mechanisms for communicating with one's own ancestry in the orient, a subject that has an enormous history throughout the world. The Tokyo salon activities of psychics combined telepathy and clairvoyance with Eastern spiritualities. *Seiyô kijutsu* [Western magic] had an innovative potential for invoking two strange worlds at once: the astral realms of both East and West. If urban spaces were quickly absorbing mutual correspondences as new world cosmopolitanism, then their threshold spaces also contained cultural relationships that collapsed into each other so readily. This kind of parlour magic was a syncretic borrowing and blending, ravenously opportunistic, usually for personal gain or entertainment, and lacking the folkloric approaches of Yeats or Yanagita.

I think *seiyô kijutsu*, in describing paranormal activity, was more broadly understood by theorists and poets as a kind of literary strategy as well. Matsumura Mineko —avid translation of Yeats, Synge, and Fiona MacLeod in the early twentieth century— performed a sort of séance through the art of translation. She divined from a translated text an Irish-Japanese portal through which Celtic twilights could be channelled, and intercultural ancestral recall performed. Matsumura's folkloric clairvoyance was both imaginative and scholarly. Imura Kimie's essay on Matsumura, *Airurando bungaku hon'yakuka: Matsumura Mineko*, documents the number of personal connections Matsumura had with Irish and Scottish

literature. Matsumura had routinely consulted with Suzuki Daisetsu's wife, Beatrice Lane, who claimed a modicum of Gaelic knowledge from her Scottish-American mother. Lane had been a member of both the Golden Dawn and Theosophism, which may make her information suspect, but none the less these societies did enable further links between Lane and those of Yeats's circle. Another influence on Matsumura had been the lectures of Ichikawa Sanki, who had spoken extensively on Synge (Imura 287). What Lane and others could not provide, Matsumura sought out from local embassies, and received it from the Gaelic-speaking wives of local ambassadors (Imura 288). Matsumura, from these influences, sought in the Celtic folktales a realm of interplay to offset Japanese literary isolationism. Matsumura, whose work has been under-explored by scholars, did much to encourage literary and social encounters with the *Keruto* [the Celt]. She helped to present *Keruto* as a sensibility that destabilised growing prejudices toward a monolithic *West*, in a post-Perry era of the Anglo-American military complex. Her annotated studies of literature and folklore from Ireland and Scotland sought to undermine blanket understandings of the "Westerner" [*seiyôjin*] as presented to a Japanese audience. This required, however, a concentration on folktales as unique communications of cultural antiquity and experience. By their nature as marginal, they operated outside of the pressing political rhetoric that had so rapidly defined geographic isolationism.

Akutagawa Ryûnosuke and the Airurando bungakukai: Translating Twilight

Akutagawa wrote in his diary that Yeats's poem "The Secret Rose" had deeply affected his literary development, encouraging him to translate first "The Heart of Spring" and "The Curse of Fires and of Shadows" (*Akutagawa shinjiten* 28). Partially based on the Yeatsian presentation of the ancestral twilight, the Akutagawa oeuvre contains numerous spaces in which hauntings and enchanted items convene to give forms of knowledge that the empirical cannot. Quite famously in the short story "In a Grove" [*Yabu no naka*] (1922), the presence of ancestral voices, insubstantial and contested nature, are confused and conflicting in their accounts of the past. Their testimony can give evidence only of witnessing events, not documented facticity. As such, they cannot be readily voided by rationalism, nor proven litigiously.

Akutagawa took after Yeats's strongly anti-naturalist point of view in privileging the paranormal as operative in his stories, letters, and essays. That does not mean a flight of fancy took him away from social criticism. *Kappa* (1926), for example, is a compelling satire of modern life seen through the eyes of folkloric denizens. This novella strongly resembles passages from *The Celtic Twilight*, in which demons and fairies are sceptical foils against the humdrum assertion of progress and enlightenment. Chronologically speaking, translating *CT* had been one of Akutagawa's earliest literary efforts.¹¹¹ And, thus, there is a certain amount of discernable influence on his later, more famous works. For example, "Hell Screen" [*Jigoku hen*] (1918) takes up the challenge put forth in "The Eater of Precious Stones": how does the artist paint or write the hell of artistry? This work exemplifies Akutagawa's ability to fashion a tableaux out of Japanese aesthetics while playing with Western narrative techniques he acquired through the art of translation.¹¹² I also think of Akutagawa's Buddhist homiletic of "Kumo no ito" [*The Spider's Thread*] (1917). At face value, the plot follows ethical value systems, part Buddhist and part Christian perhaps, that result in salvation. The religiosity, while sincere, may also suggest a Zosima playing to the aesthetics of Ivan Karamazov. "Hell Screen" possesses the same kind of dangling spirituality for which "Happy and Unhappy Theologians" finds respite. Heaven or Hell expand or recede according to the manner in which one grabs for it.

In his literary circles, Akutagawa most demonstrated his ongoing fascination for Yeats and Irish literature. Akutagawa, in his choice of vocabulary for importing Irish cultural idioms, gives his sense of how he understands the nature of *twilight* to be a movable dimension, one that haunts the ruptures and fissures created by accelerated change. Not only as a translator, Akutagawa's prominence in the Tokyo *Airurando bungakukai* [Irish literature societies], a prominent group which enjoyed much active participation, helped to establish Yeats as an exciting, Western contemporary. By some measure, Akutagawa developed a Yeatsian style; however, it is clear that his personal convictions were not merely derivative of Irish materials, but developed from his own locality and its residual, ancestral fragments of

¹¹¹ These versions were included in early issues of *Shinshichō* [New Trends of Thought], also including the works of Masao Kume and Kikuchi Kan. Writings of the Celtic Renaissance, including Lady Gregory, were regularly featured.

¹¹² This technique of adaptation—of adjusting traditional folk tales with modern notions of plot and plotlessness—would influence a range of writers, including Dazai Osamu and Murakami Haruki.

Japan. Informed in this way, Akutagawa is not formulating a convention *gothic* out of either an exoticised homeland, or an imported Ireland. There are more nuances and perspectives here than in, say, Kipling's *The Phantom Rickshaw*. Akutagawa, through *CT*, began a consideration of how Japanese folklore surfaces, contentiously, in the shifting contexts of the modern age.

That his ghostly materials have an inherent value beyond the spooky— the simple entertainment factor. As such, they are open to interrogation of a shadowy ancestry by competing ideologies of modernity. Thus, Akutagawa grapples with how the energies of enchantment are just as often manipulated by curio seekers, politicians, or antique dealers. Yeats's own indignation took issue with those "leaders of the crowd" that appropriate formulations of a neglected countryside to gain political clout. Twilight, like Tanizaki's *lustre of time*, is an argumentative domain which favors *kokoro*, or sentiment and spirit, as a necessarily immeasurable inheritance of feeling. As Swift noted in regards to Ireland, Akutagawa saw all around him how ignorant investors and greedy collectors would seize upon anything Japanese for a market value nostalgia to be exported. This indexing of globalised sentiment, though, is not the same as how an individual cherishes those items that possess an undefinable sense of historicity. To depict this, Akutagawa draws a stark contrast in how different points of view evaluates *worth* in regards to heirlooms in the short story "The Dolls" [*Hina*] (1923).

As relayed from an elderly storyteller, the narrator describes the gradual dispersal of a family's inventory of their ancestry: folk items, many generations old, are pawned to foreign buyers. Their value is predicated by bargain hunting. Perhaps as a kind of *karma*, the family members themselves have descended through a genealogy of moneylenders, who had operated as the financial prop for the shogunate. In short, their own collection had been purchased out of the old dynasty's commerce. Now, however, the family has been destroyed financially through the reform of the Japanese commercial infrastructure and Western know-how. They cannot even sustain themselves as shopkeepers, and their heirlooms function as items to be bartered yet again. The two children in the story, assessing a way of embracing the future, articulate, Janus-like, contrary viewpoints. The brother's solution is to abandon anything suggestive of Japaneseness altogether, in pursuit of a superior (and unsentimental) Western rationality and *enlightenment*. The sister, instead, looks helplessly backward into

oblivion, as a heritage recedes into obsolescence. There is no logical or economic basis upon which she can assert that her antique doll, a unique creation with its own cumulative fingerprints, deserves a place on the future's shelf. The foreign collector sees her *hina ningyô*, the doll crucial to the *hina matsuri* [girl's festival], as an export commodity; and the impoverished family relinquishes ownership to the lowest bidder. (It is as if Satô's sold his sword to a token hunter, rather than gave it to a poet as thanks for a meaningful friendship.) That this doll's proper contextual situation, as defined by generations of practice, is within the socio-cultural framework *hina matsuri*. No dream, custom, or ceremony can truly animate a past in the cash and grab society, especially when the tangible object, and its lustre, become props for trade. Purchase uproots the physical documentation and radically decontextualizes the object by denying it a formative, enplaced history. In the closing scene, the sister watches a raucous Western child twisting the head viciously from a similar doll. The trace itself has been beheaded. Reduced to the status of a novelty toy, the doll, once suggestive of festivals and ancestral ideals, is discarded in a bin along with lead soldiers. The past, indexed now as international market value, is primed for embezzlement: the doll's value becomes exchanged as a collector's token, taken from the context in which its true worth cannot be measured. When its short term pleasure is exhausted, and the brief attention span exhausted, the artefact becomes another piece of rubbish in the macrocosmic bin.

"The Dolls" examined the devaluation of time's luster. Akutagawa's "Hankechi" [The Handkerchief] depicts the cosmopolitanism that makes this process possible. The mass-manufactured *hankechi* is something of a rejoinder to Edwin Arnold's *musume* poem, cited above. *Hankechi* had been written in *kanji*, traditional Chinese characters, although it was a recent English loanword. As a piece of vocabulary, it exists between naturalisation and foreign nuance. It is not the traditional *tenugui* [a hand towel], and the textile craft associated with it, but a Western affectation donned by rote as an imitation of European ideals. Worn by Professor Hasegawa Kinzô—a specialist in both colonial policy as well as Scandinavian drama—the *hankechi* proclaims his tokenism. Belonging to the elite sphere means adopting the trappings and ideologies of the foreign influence. Ingratiation is a careerist strategy. This professor relies on his ability to mimic Western conduct and make passing remarks about its drama (Wilde, Strindberg) to enable his academic authority and cosmopolitan credentials. As an educator, he sees his role as channeling the necessary foreign-ness into a

narrow funnel of lectures to make global citizens of his students. Eagerly, he assumes, they will absorb international policies as the next step in professional development. In advising one student to choose German law over German philosophy, Hasegawa makes the implicit recommendation that dialogue is only enabled at the corporate level. This is the bridge of the future, with his students as the paving-stones of currency exchange. The professor, childless himself, churns out the odd article and obituaries on a vanished tradition.

Readers have rightly suspected that Professor Hasegawa is a narrative incarnation of Nitobe Inazô, for whom the Japanese gardens at UBC are named after, barely disguised. Certainly, the biographical details match congruously: Hasegawa and Nitobe both studied in Germany, both had American wives, as well as no children. Hasegawa's purposefulness as an international bridge reflects the rhetoric Nitobe's speeches. And, like Nitobe, he argues for a principle of *bushidô*, the rhetorical code of conduct for the samurai warrior, in so far as it thematically supplements Western posturing. Despite his voracious economic appetite, "The Handkerchief" also details Hasegawa's internal (repressed) debate about the real costs of material progress. On one hand, he desires a way of appreciation that allows heritage items to maintain a kind of thematic worthiness. Nonetheless, the policy aspect of his studies totally overshadows the literary. In short, Akutagawa depicts Hasegawa/Nitobe as an abstracted way of experiencing comparative cultures. Hasegawa defines culturality according to the letter of international law, spiritless in the extreme. Opportunities of interculturality arise in so far as they are moments of acquisition. Hasegawa's first interest, after all, is colonialism: he makes literature serve this policy through its social cachet and pretense to worldliness. This professor, a title he relishes, jams together East and West as a hoax of theoretical fusion. Safely set up in the tower of Babel of his coursework, he perches upon grey, neutral chairs. Akutagawa implies that there has to be a participatory encounter with culturality, more personal, immersive, and introspective than what Hasegawa offers by his handkerchief, his tissue of lies. And Akutagawa's own investigations of Irish literature may offer a different example. *Airurando bungaku*, as Irish literature in Japanese translation, demonstrated a more informed pursuit, questioning the senses of marginality, folklore, and continuity of tradition, and acted as a tincture to the generic version of the Hasegawan "West".

Akutagawa's versions of *CT* were one initial effort that led to a forthcoming wave of interest in Yeats and Irish folklore. As president of the Tokyo-based *Airurando bungakukai*, Akutagawa had a particular need to not only translate Irish literature, but to promote an international discussion. The development in Japan of *Airurando bungakukai*, as a study of Irish culture and folklore, is a large topic and could be a book length study in itself. The geographically widespread popularity of such clubs—with major concentrations in both Tokyo and Kansai—and the number of translations and newsletters accompanying this project demonstrate the seriousness of its participations. The names of people amongst its membership include some of the foremost writers of that time. I note, in anticipation of next chapter's discussion of *nô*, that Osanai Kaoru studied over a long period of time with these societies and their considerations of Yeats. Not coincidentally, he was also a leading proponent of innovative Japanese drama, had adapted Yeats's play *The Hour-Glass* (1926) for Japanese audiences. This example suggests that Yeats's so-called "Noh" dramas were more aligned with the Japanese avant-garde than its classical drama.

Hirata Tokuboku, another member, had written an essay entitled "*Raichô sentosuru Yeats no fûkaku*" [*The Character of Yeats, Soon to Visit Us*] (1920). *Raichô*, which suggests a visit to Japan, marked the collective anticipation in Japan that Yeats was considering a limited-term appointment of a professorship in Tokyo or elsewhere. Hirata, also, had a profoundly influential role in the shaping of Fellanosa's original notes on *nô* and can be regarded as a primary source, later, for Yeats's own sense of the genre. Taketomo Sôfû had been a frequent contributor of Irish related materials to *Eigo seinen* [*The Rising Generation*], a popular magazine dedicated to English language literature, particularly featuring Irish poets. The previously mentioned Matsumura Mineko [Katayama Hiroko] in particular presented senses of *Keruto* [the Celt] through her translations and studies of folklore, renowned for her expertise by the *Airurando bungakukai*, promoting further study. Matsumura's enduring friendship with Beatrice Lane enabled many unique discoveries of Scottish folklore and etymology to first appear in Japanese. Matsumura's essays on Irish and Scottish customs, frequently appearing in *Kokoro no hana* [*Flowering Spirit*] magazine, would be some of the earliest investigations of imagination and the fantastic as qualities that shaped Irish modernism.

Another noteworthy *Airurando bungakusha*, or scholar of Irish literature, Noguchi Yonejirô was well placed to act as a facilitator of cross-cultural traffic. A renowned poet in both English and Japanese, he was in frequent contact with Yeats and Pound through a series of letters. The friendship culminated in a visit to Stone Cottage in 1913. As Pound was compiling Hirata/Fellanosa's notes at the time, we might count Noguchi as a further primary influence on the intellectual formulation of these source materials.

Yeats's influence on Japanese literature continued throughout the twentieth-century, as Oe Kenzaburo notes in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech. Yukio Mishima's bookshelf included a large selection of Hearn, Yeats, and Kyôka (13), all of whom he saw sharing a common aesthetic philosophy. Mishima describes in detail--through comparative references to Kyôka and Yeats--how Hearn created a hybrid space as an *Tôyô no girishajin* [An Oriental Greek]. Mishima, with amazement, describes how Hearn tapped with into notions of twilight as an interphase of spirit (Kawabata-Mishima 32). Hearn and Kyôka, inspired by Yeats as Mishima argues, shared a devotion to evening as the stage for waking those alienated presences. Hearn, as Mishima makes clear in this letter, did much to interpret twilight, as unrealistic space, that contrasts with the daylight of modern rationality.

All of the above cited figures deserve considerably more detail as to the degree and depth of their relationship to Irish modernism. Certainly, they represent encounters between Japan and Ireland that could be more diverse and interconnected than state sponsored discourse about the *occident* or the *orient*. What commonly united them was a pursuit of Irish folklore as a medium of conveying cultural knowledge that had extraordinary appeal, and impact, on their own literary sensibilities. The crisis of retention and tradition, change and innovation, had been mitigated through an Irish example.

Lafcadio Hearn: Networking Irish and Japanese Authors

As Akutagawa noted in his depiction of Nitobe, intercultural exchange is not without its pitfalls. Much criticism has been lobbed at figures such as Lafcadio Hearn, or Nitobe as a Japanese counterpart who thoroughly adopt a Western persona. On this point, Ôta allocates

Nitobe and Hearn to the same Orientalist/Occidental project.¹¹³ The pair of them had promoted exaggerated cultural keepsakes as cosmopolitan equity. Culturally duplicitous, they were free to play up racial features to suit the tenor (and audience) of the occasion. Certainly, Hearn and Nitobe both used their command of English to articulate conditions of Japan and Japaneseness, in relation to the Occident—and vice versa. I do not intent to dismiss in any way the varying ways, positive and negative, that Hearn contributed to Irish and Japanese literary imaginations. However, I would like to note, in conversation with Ôta, that Akutagawa evidently saw differences—in practice as well as principle—between Nitobe and Hearn. Akutagawa was only thirteen when Hearn died, and they never met personally. Inspired by Hearn’s legacy as scholar and thinker, however, Akutagawa made a trip to Matsue specifically to visit Hearn’s former home. Akutagawa, according to many of his letters, had been impressed by Hearn’s reputation as an excellent teacher, and referred to him exclusively with the honourific of *teacher*, “Hearn-sensei”, throughout his personal writings (*Koizumi Yakumo jiten* 8-9). Despite having no familiar relationship, Akutagawa always used polite, deferential language when speaking of Hearn and his contribution to his own development as a writer.

Hearn has little in common, I suggest, with the large contingent of *o-yatoi gaikokujin* who had monopolised multiculturalism in Japan. *O-yatoi gaikokujin* were government employed experts brought in from abroad to advise the state on achieving economic and military supremacy of the West. They represented a diverse number of specialities, including entrepreneurs, weapons experts, artists, scientists, missionaries, and economists. Their range of connections included an eager audience of elites, who had granted these hired consultants extraterritorial privileges throughout most of the late nineteenth century. Lafcadio Hearn can be considered amongst this group, but his relationships to various Japanese peoples and their communities often went further than most of the other *o-yatoi gaikokujin*.¹¹⁴ That Hearn had, on occasions, conflicting attitudes towards his adopted country suggests an active mind,

¹¹³ For more on this debate, see Hirakawa’s “Rediscovering Lafcadio Hearn”, which argues that Loti, Chamberlain, and Hearn do not neatly fit into the same category of *exoticist*. There had been, of course, many interpreters of Japan at that time, including W. G. Aston and F. V. Dickens, as well as writers in German, French and others. Hearn, arguably, has left the strongest legacy.

¹¹⁴ Josiah Condor is a notable exception. A prominent architect, Condor educated a new generation of Japanese designers, including Tatsuno Kingo, as well as cultivating friendships with noteworthy artists such as Kawanabe Kyôsei.

rather than a propagandist. Hearn should be placed amongst those contemporaries with whom he shared cultural appreciation as a means of cross-cultural literary investigation. For an example of how accomplished Hearn was, as will be discussed below, Doi Bansui comes to mind as a fascinating figure under Hearn's tutelage: many of Hearn's students became informed translators, working with the materials at hand, documenting traditions contained in a disappearing materiality along the margins of societies. This is, one hopes, a kind of blow against bland cosmopolitanism.

To appreciate Hearn, and by extension Yeats, as proponents of preservation in the Irish-Japanese literary societies, I argue that they anticipated the very quandary that is now centre stage in Ireland, Japan, and everywhere: the catastrophic loss of cultural and environmental habitats. In a recent editorial entitled "Erin go Faster", published to coincide with the Irish general election of 2007, Paul Muldoon articulates the sense of amnesia that results from willful "cultural vandalism". Yeats had anticipated all of this a century ago. The threatened bulldozing of the Hill of Tara, in particular, has become a landmark case of how willingly progress will pave over material history. Muldoon, as have others, argues that the representative geographies of the Tara-Skryne Valley engender an importance beyond their cartographic label of *site*. They are, experientially, a landscape, a network of associations, nuances, dialogues, ceremonies, and events. Landscapes such as this enable a form of ancestral *immersion*. The rituals, although performed by previous generations, leave touchable imprints of their participation. These are points of ancestral access. Wiping them away, through the present-tense denouement and infrastructure, permanently blots out both trace and shape. Yet, critics, following Benedict Anderson's sense of imagined communities, will variously claim that a personal or communal commitment to such places, on account of their mythic and historical value, is simply projecting an idealised image that has nothing to do with reality.

Imagined community suggests a number of theoretical issues. What substantiates a claim to reality and what measures an imagined falsification? To identify something as too nostalgic or falsely *idealised*, one must suggest that there is some authentic standard to measure the nostalgia or idealism against. That some authentic criterion exists, after all, often leads to the questioning and consideration of what that authentic criterion actually is. Hearn and Yeats argue that, in destroying physical evidence in the form of heritage, then the

matter can never be resolved? Industrial societies are also an imagined community that, in their own fashion, conjure up idealistic graphs that measure profit through resources along a utilitarian sine wave. In their view, landscape is authentic only when its profitability is realised through its being turned wholesale into a developed resource. Yeats and Hearn, like Muldoon, want to keep the issue open and enplaced. Yeats's *Celtic Twilight* and Hearn's essays on Japanese folk customs see *imagined communities* as a social condition in which mass production has run amok over the cultural landscape. Their writings are deeply concerned with pressing social issues.

But, if to be in opposition to this pursuit of utility, Hearn seems *romantic*, so be it. If by this term we mean an emotional, personal interest in the customs and practices of marginal communities, then let that be a form of sympathetic resistance. Hearn, to make his point, did use dreamy, unreal styles of discourse at times, regarding the vaporization of communities on the edge of crisis. Hearn—and he readily connects to Akutagawa, Yeats, Yanagita, Kyôka, and many others on this—resorted to the discourse of oneiromancy for allocating a dream of ancestral voices in a manner that capitalist development would not. The confrontation of the twilight, the personal reads a kind of language that can negotiate with ancestry. Invoking the past as presence counteracts those organisational principles that industrialise communities and landscapes as mute commodities. On this understanding, *CT* was well received in Japan as an important critique of that historical conjuncture. Yeats had opened up a *chiaroscuro* dimension in which shadows, as the lustre of the past, informed an understanding of the present as light. The liminality of haunted performance, against local foreclosure, carried a form of protest that had global implications. Thus, twilight, variously figured in Japanese as *chûkan*, *ryôshô*, *tasogare*, is a set of terms for accessing the in-between and interacting with spaces of banished tradition. Irreality must assume its anti-linear interface as a rebellion to the techno-progressiveness. The assemblage of Irish folk materials, the manner in which they confronted social fissures, had become a predominant influence on Japanese modernism. In such a network, Hearn was well-placed, international as he was, to further orchestrate the flow of ideas moving in *both* directions. As a multinational, he was a firsthand witness to the various effects of maldistributed power, the free for all pursuit of the idealistic modern capital state that could, in fact, conflate distinct communities—New Orleans with Izumo—given sufficient time, transnational investment,

and corporate blueprints. Far from being ignorant of locals and particulars, Hearn's experiences of living in different regions highlighted the importance of those distinctions.

With these ideas in mind, I assert again that *CT* was more than a collection of Celtic stereotypes to its Japanese readership; and this is very clear from the variety of responses it generated by the *Airurando bungakukai*. It was a project altogether different from mainstream *fantastic* literature that pursued the arcane for the arcane's sake. We need not assume that for Yeats the *fantastic* means the *fanciful*. The Taishô period [1912-1926], broadly speaking, already had a fondness for *ryôki*, or claptrap strangenesses, which exhibits trends very different from the *Airurando bungakukai*. *Ryôki* was mainly the urbanite quest for curios as a way of ornamenting the city's metropolitan banality, as Akutagawa satirises in "The Doll". This appetite satisfied itself in countless ways, from tabloid cutouts of astonishing tales; short stories of *eroguro-nansensu* [eroto-grotesque nonsense], and lurid pictorials of criminality. This is the stylized creepiness in the author Edogawa Ranpo [a play on Edgar Allen Poe], whose detective novels explored the Moriarty-like mind of the criminal ghoul. Hearn, whose livelihood in New Orleans depended upon bread and butter journalism, often similarly concerned with macabre tales, had been perceived as a Big Easy (a term he coined, incidentally) equivalent of this. Still, in such articles on the seedy death of Marie Laveau, voodoo priestess, Hearn shows an openness to a multi-racial milieu that was far from common in his day. His writings on Japan also variously demonstrate this quality of care and consideration.

One of Hearn's major contributions, along with Akutagawa, involved his presenting Irish literature, Yeats particularly, as having a dynamic that mixed the past with the present. Irish literature therefore had a model to offer the Japanese. But, mindful of the same critique made of Yeats and *The Quiet Man*, we must also exercise discretion in assessing how critics (especially in the English language) now view Hearn, as ethnic forgery. If limited to a brief selection of Hearn's works, early or late, critical opinions can reductively position him as a collector of strangeness and little more; or, on the other hand, a willing volunteer for *yamato* [imperialist Japan] propaganda. Hearn, thus, can be mistakenly seen as a roving H. P. Lovecraft, a purveyor of exotic conceits, from Creole to Kantô.¹¹⁵ His own visual disability,

¹¹⁵ For a sense of the contrasting evaluation of Hearn in English speaking societies, it's worth comparing the different emphases contained in two articles, one from the *Irish Times*, "The Most Famous Irishman You've

blind in one eye, is read metaphorically as an authorial lack of vision: monocular, no depth perception, purblind to reality. Like Andrew Laing, he is said to pull together *holus bolus* diverse, separate traditions under the free floating category of *fairy*. Distinctions are erased under the archetypal umbrella. Although he personally despised Ireland, Hearn is said to have been unable to overcome its superstitions and stereotypes. Ôta, most notably, has described Hearn's work as manufacturing typical Japanese exotica for Western delight. Without a kinetic trajectory behind his perceptions, he can only toss out ready-made tropes for whatever diorama is at hand. When that grew tiresome, he became an ethnic supremacist looking to excise all that did not match the purity of the nation. This criticism frequently verges on the *ad hominem*. For example, Takayuki Tatsumi, although frequently appreciative in his interesting analysis of Hearn's methods, dismisses Hearn's marriage to a Japanese woman as a sham of convenience: one in a series of "pseudo-marriages" (80).

I do not deny that there are many problematic issues with cultural and national definitions as variously phrased or suggested by Yeats, Hearn, Yanagita, and their developments of new literary techniques. Were they poets or were they anthropologists, or were they a knotty combination of both? Gregory Castle examined the development of ethnography, as a social science and a revival strategy, in Ireland. Alan Christy and Uchida Ryûzô, amongst others, have considered the ideological frameworks behind nativist studies and anthropology in Yanagita Kunio and other folklorists in Japan. The similarities between Irish and Japanese folklorists of that time are striking. Essays by Yanagita, such as *Tasogare-doki [Twilight Time]* (1930), suggest that these similarities on a theme of twilight are more than coincidental: channels of influence were in place. Nonetheless, as in Ireland and Japan, contentious issues concerning description and prescription, in relationship between the discourse of documentation and the production of culture, challenge the critic. But Roy Starrs invites us to keep a balance in mind when evaluating their practices. In considering Hearn, Starrs argues that he worked for, and against, cultural codes that constructed translatability as an aesthetic virtue:

. . . along with Ernest Fenellosa . . . Hearn encouraged the Japanese to

Never Heard Of" (20 September 2004, 12) with another in *The New York Times*, "Honoring a Westerner who Preserved Japan's Folk Tales" (20 February 2007, 4).

For an amusing anecdote about a Hawaiian storyteller who, mistaken for a famous Hearn expert, receives great hospitality while visiting Japan, see Glen Grant.

reevaluate their own culture at a time when many held it in rather low esteem (and equated “civilization and enlightenment” with the West). (Starrs 207)

The Irish role in providing another perspective to this reevaluation, and the way that *twilight* acted as a comparative theme, is a central concern of my discussion.

In considering the various genres and themes that Hearn worked with, a more complex interpretation of these authors, as racial prescriptivists, is possible. I begin by discussing Lafcadio Hearn, who, as a multinational character never really a *local* in any situation, was forever a *gaikokujin*, or an outsider: in Ireland, American, and Japan. But this hybridity allowed for forms of facilitation. His keynote role in promoting Irish literature in Japan helped to initiate the intercultural dialogue between Ireland and Japan, in which folklore acted as a living archive of pre-modern knowledge of the ancestral. As such, Hearn’s work needs to be placed in the extended network of literary interchange taking place at that time. *The Celtic Twilight* established at an early time for Hearn, Tanizaki, and Akutagawa a kind of supersensual ontology. The sheen accompanying an object is the glow of human interactivity; the lustre bears witness to the extended space/time dynamic that enables cultural sympathies. Nostalgia, as virtue rather than vice, is a form of cultural telemetry: the mind measures something much larger and dynamic than itself through the ebb of these resonances. Being itself becomes protean and being in contact with the ancestral overcomes the tendency to narrow mindedness.

Lafcadio Hearn and Ancestral Timekeeping: The Maintenance of Communal Habits

Hearn immersed himself in varying communal dimensions, and his breadth of work suggests a more complex approach than ethnic jingoism. Proving this, many approaches have been taken in Japanese language scholarship that usually offers a more comprehensive portrait of the man than one finds in English. Consider Tanaka Yûji’s *Gendai ni ikiru Lafcadio Hân* [*Lafcadio Hearn: Living in the Modern Era*]. He regards the complexity of Hearn’s Irish and Japanese interests as distinct societal investigations that were coupled by his formative experiences of American racism and social malaise. Kudô Miyoko, in her collection of Hearn’s writing *Kamigami no kuni: Lafcadio Hân no shôgai* [*Spirits of the Nation: The Life of Lafcadio Hearn*], compelling demonstrates that Hearn was highly aware of the distinct

regional features of Kobe, Matsue, Kumamoto, Yokohama, and so forth. This analysis of Hearn and cultural topography, in effect, dismantles the common claim that Hearn could only think in manifestations of universal Japan-ness.¹¹⁶ Hearn's multifold experience of various Japanese loci established for him the contrast between the urban and rural, mountain and coast, peninsula and city. Different traditions expressed themselves in differing locales. What they had in common was the harmful encroachment of cosmopolitanism on these peripheries.¹¹⁷ In many works, and he resembles Yeats and Dinneen on this point, Hearn was intensely sympathetic to geographic variations, their particularities of dialect, customs, *meibutsu* [local specialities], and mythic etymologies.

His late collections such as *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation* [*JAI*] seem to make that precipitous leap from cultural observation to cultural theorisation, from descriptive to prescriptive. In such instances, Hearn's interpretations act more like definitions. A feeling of pessimism—particularly warfare and its relation to regional autonomies—pervades throughout. Like the conclusion of Tanizaki's *In'ei raisan*, the prescriptions are voiced with a certain air of abdication: the *attempt* at interpretation cannot mitigate the colossal speed of change that erases all autonomies. *JAI* was, however, published posthumously. The other collection to appear after his death, *The Romance of the Milky Way*, shows that his observational powers had not fully given way to dogma. Concerning the *Tanabata* festival, which was almost unknown to the West, Hearn analyses Japanese poetry as it relates to this colourful, festive celebration in July. Not only does Hearn describe the customs of the festival, he presents an analytical history of how *Tanabata* developed out of Chinese tradition. Indigenous characteristics arose through a continuity of repetition of iconic patterns within Japanese society. The pursuit of literary purity, however, is negligible if the

¹¹⁶ At least two or three book length studies on Hearn have appeared in Japanese each year over the last decade. Titles have included *Mimi no etsuraku: Rafukadio Hân to onnatachi* [*The Pleasures of the Ear: Lafcadio Hearn and Women*]; *Kyôikusha Rafukadio Hân no sekai* [*Lafcadio Hearn as Educator*]; and *Rafukadio Hân: Kindaika to ibunka rikai no shôsu* [*Lafcadio Hearn, Modernity, and the Comprehension of Foreign Cultures in Transition*].

¹¹⁷ Hearn's later writings and beliefs do, to an extent, coincide with the rhetoric of Meiji state nationalism, and its assertive policy-building based on *kokugaku* studies. As Starrs also argues, there is diverse reasoning behind the shaping of Hearn's concept of nation, and offers a balanced depiction of how crises and anxieties encouraged his sense of impending social disaster. The fraught progression from culture, to observance of culture, and then to the nation state requires many intermediary steps. Hearn's attitudes toward emerging nationalisms are, after all, incomplete. Claims that he would have endorsed the Pacific War or imperialist atrocities are, at best, conjectural.

public performance, the communal rite, is not there. Its power is textual and well as experiential: the coming together of a community thus matches the annual mythic meeting of Orihime and Hikoboshi that Tanabata celebrates.

JAI is certainly his darkest and most politically unnerved work; and it goes beyond, in nationalist tenor, what Yeats attempted in *CT*. Here, Hearn moves away from his style of documenting cultural practices into overt analyses of what constitutes the national muse. Disconcertingly, Hearn seems to mirror Tokugawa period inquiries [*kokugaku*] as to what are the constituent elements of Japanese society. The context in which Hearn wrote, of course, was just before the launching of the Japanese annexation of East Asia. Read now with this historical imperialism in mind, the various articles in *JAI* partially lament, and partially condone, the strategy of protectionism which Hearn believed to be Japan's only response to invasive presences from the West. Hearn's critique finds evidence that aggressive national states, in this case Europe and America, compel Asia to re-organise itself into a coalition in self-defence. As a citizen of Japan, Hearn makes robust claims in favor of Japanese identity as a counter-claim to stand against Western declarations of superiority, which had already annexed sections of Asia. Japan's role, he implies, is to promote the *oriental* into a collective force so as to avoid complete dominance from colonialism. Hearn writes,

No: what remains of this elder civilization is full of charm,--charm unspeakable,--and to witness its gradual destruction must be a grief for whomsoever has felt that charm. However intolerable it may seem, to the mind of the artist or poet, those countless restrictions which once ruled all this fairy-world . . . (“Reflections” 458)

And, progressively, Hearn adopts a certain amount of brawny rhetoric in regards to the right to self-preservation. Notably, Hearn's rhetoric can seem to echo contemporary ultranationalist apologetics in Japan, such as made by Kobayashi Yoshinori: the East-Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere, according to him, was a legitimate cause when faced with centuries of European colonialism in Asia.

China and Japan, as Hearn saw it, were under immediate threat of becoming composite sketches of their former selves, caricatures re-drawn by Western might. Hearn has in mind general anxieties concerning industrial modernization as enforced participation in a global infrastructure. For example, in “Industrial Danger”, decries the power accorded to

corporations that abandon cultural materials in favor of technologies that poison the lives of generations. In response to such a prospect, almost all of *JAI* concerns Shintô, and ancestor worship, as a mechanism to maintain fealty with the past, for the preservation of non-market driven values embodied in a cultural artifact as attachment and inheritance. Much of Hearn's defensiveness becomes a polemic against Western evangelisation, both in a religious sense as well as a metaphor for Western cultural imperialism. Shintô, he suggests, has this in common with Irish paganism: both preserve a sense of ancestry in opposition to colonial monotheism. Hearn formulates all of his interpretations in the context of this problem:

Hitherto the subject of Japanese religion has been written of chiefly by the sworn enemies of that religion: by others it has been almost entirely ignored.

(Hearn, "Difficulties" 2)

The concentration on literary and religious matters fights for a recovered space that resists political domination or superficial cosmopolitanism. But Hearn did not preach a doctrine of Japan-Alone. Throughout his teaching career, Hearn encouraged the transmission of Western literature. After all, this also had been Tanizaki's hope: that literary space could be positioned outside of the violent collision of national identities. Art could engage in intercultural dialogue in ways that diplomacy does not.

By recognizing the kind of cultural nationalism that Hearn describes at the end of his life, we should also peruse the formative texts that led up to that point. In this, Hearn appears less an isolationist, and more a collaborative spokesman for comparative literature. As a naturalized citizen, Hearn's relationship with Japan's representative governments is not simple. On his first day as a lecturer at Tokyo University, Hearn was not aware of the custom that everyone must bow to the picture of the emperor when commencing or closing a class. This breached observational etiquette clearly upset his students. What did I do wrong, he asked? After all, a certain amount of *gôni haitara gôni shitagae* [When in Rome . . .] was required. Hearn obligingly began his next day with the proper bow. Sympathy with the cultural situation required that he adopt the behaviour required of him, with no allowances for his foreign-ness. Sensitivity to social mores may make an expatriate more compliant than his or her predispositions might wish. There is no fool-proof method for maintaining an aloof neutrality. In any case, Hearn had no desire to be a faceless functionary, one insulated

from people and guided solely by bureaucratic decrees. We can find in Hearn's writings, personal and public, occasional prejudices and mistakes, ones that can be found in any extended dealings in the areas of multiculturalism, inter-racial marriages, and expatriate living. What is harder to find, even in the self-congratulatory travel literature of our time, is Hearn's knack for being accepted into rather closed communities.

Hearn did not work in isolation; and his writings were in continual contact with both those localities in which he interacted, as well those international connections he maintained. Yeats figured prominently on the horizon. The tangible connection between Yeats and Hearn includes a few letters and references, including examples of Hearn copyediting unpublished poems by Yeats¹¹⁸ Hearn had made use of Yeats in his lectures, and thus can be as a major initiator of *Airurando bungakukai* [Irish literature] study groups. In the broader constellation of Japanese and Irish writers who engaged in folk writing, Yeats and Hearn shared a common theme in recording communal practices, oratures, and their presentation of diachronic modes of perceiving cultural traditions. Thus when Yeats discusses Hearn in his later introduction to *The Resurrection* (1934), a play dedicated to Satô Junzo, he states:

All ancient nations believed in the re-birth of the soul and had probably empirical evidence like that Lafcadio Hearn found among the Japanese.

(*Wheels and Butterflies* 96)

In conceiving a return to the ancestral, this passage argues in favor for a move away from Abrahamic teleology and into an understanding of human time as a cycle of repetition evidenced in daily encounters. The transmigratory soul, against linear time, suggests a kind of alternative ontology that is rebellious and resilient in the face of the progressive norm. It derives its knowledge from being able to successfully negotiate the twilight, in which a chronotope of cross-cultivation exists. The communications that the ancestral presents, through twilight, vacillate in amplification: the voices and messages fluctuate due to instability. But, hearkening to what has come before, twilight could be a domain for a kinetic conferencing of ideas in a way not relegated to the particulars of time. The twilight, as contiguous with a situated historical reality, enables multitextual senses of the ancestral as it

¹¹⁸ Hearn's lectures covered a range of English literature, including Tennyson and others. In recorded form, the important anthology of Hearn's work *Life and Literature* contains several examples of his comments to Yeats, including the folkloric dimension to Irish society.

circulates traces of the past and makes them contiguous with the here and now.¹¹⁹ This will be a major theme in Yeats, Hearn, Kyôka, and recently in the films of Miyazaki Hayao: *twilight* enables a continuity in which spaces and traces of the past can be recuperated.

Yeats, developing a style influenced by medieval *aisling* literature, positioned levels of inter-dimensionality within his works, which he saw as preferable to staid Victorian rationalism. Likewise explored by Japanese writers, the temporal differential of *twilight* presented an aesthetic for being and time that operated outside of modal naturalism. The fullest treatment of twilight as offering such a potential would be articulated later by Izumi Kyôka. Leading up his work, we first find in Hearn an intermediary who provided contexts for twilight in both East and West. The literary communities had been committed to the idea that authorship, as representing trends in other cultures, brought a necessarily comparativist view to one's own social situation. Literature enabled this trafficking of ideas in a way that other documents, such as political treaties, could not.

Twilight was a freer place of exchange, one outside of oppressive social imperatives and offering a chance to espy a continuity with other times and places rather than a normative definition of the here and now. As materials were being lifted out of context and given new characters, could this twilight, a luster of time, act as preserver or buffer against modernities? The hobby of spiritism and parlour tricks had been one thing, but necromancy as a dream-language for apprehending cultural reincarnation was another. The latter had been inexorably connected with, the predicament of disembodied tradition. Shimokusu Masaya describes in *Airurando no yôsei* [*The Fairies of Ireland*] that Hearn and Yeats had found an archive of cultural experience through the alternative source of the fairy. Shimokusu claims Hearn as an important contributor to *minzokugaku* [ethnography/folk studies] whose influence needs to be re-affirmed (159). Hearn had further interpreted, from Yeats, the anti-discursive flow of ghosts and twilightism as also very practical concerns for an endangered

¹¹⁹ Of Hearn's relationship to Yeats in terms of occultism, see George Hughes's "W. B. Yeats and Lafcadio Hearn: Negotiating with Ghosts", which explores a relationship of these two writers based on a shared Theosophist interest in séances.

See also Ciaran Murray's "Japan as Celtic Otherworld: Lafcadio Hearn and the Long Voyage Home", which sees Hearn as conflating Tír-na-nÓg with Buddhist otherworlds. For Murray, Jung provides a trans-historical, universal origin for both Irish and Japanese spiritualities. This, to me, does seem rather limiting of Hearn's breadth of comprehension.

folk culture. The ghostly, as Yeats, Akutagawa, and Hearn saw, reverberated with trauma from people and situations that had been erased, brokered, dismissed, or abjectified.

In analysing this discussion on twilight between Japan and Ireland, and the reception history of Irish literature in Japan more generally, Hearn's importance must also be recognised in relation to the *Airurando bungakukai*. In considering Hearn's general contribution to Irish-Japanese literary exchange, he was doing more than purveying *Irishness* or *Japaneseness* as a category of knowledge. Like any good educator, he challenged his students to unpeel the layering of history, to open one's mind to the past, to art and history. As a result of this opening, modernity might mean something. Thus, Hearn's achievement, although largely restricted to literature, should also be seen in his impact as a teacher.

Hearn had, formatively, introduced Yeats to Japanese academics, often teaching through draft copies of Yeats's poems (*Koizumi Yagumo daijiten* 29). Hearn had expressed dismay to Yeats, in a memorable letter, over his revisions that stripped out fairylorish elements from "The Host of the Air". Hearn expressed his misgivings concerning some editing he had made of his poems that seemed to take out elements of the fairy. Surprised by Hearn's copy-editing, Yeats responded that these cuts were based on rhythmical concerns. He went on to say that he would consider Hearn's suggestions, to restore more of the fairylore, but he never did incorporate them (*L2* 3: 101-2). Hearn's university students, especially, found the reworked poems, as published, more deficient because Yeats had been made them more realistic. Hearn had long argued that paranormal depictions need not be sacrificed in order to appease normative social conventions or prevailing aesthetic for the rational. The paranormal, the *aisling*, was a socially-minded space as well, and thus also real. The fantastic should not be dismissed as superstition, but maintained as an important element in narrativising the past.

Hearn's Students and the Airurando Bungakukai

Doi Bansui, one of Hearn's most famous university students, had an unfavorable view of the West at first, one based on a visit with Natsume Sôseki and Ikeda to London. This metropolis was taken to be representative of Western culture in its entirety. Hearn, through examples in literature, reshaped and expanded Doi's initial impressions of what constituted

European arts and letters. The central element to the curriculum had been Yeats's poetry, which was an important first step in moving from impression to immersion, and Doi acquired excellent English. In fact, as Akutagawa had been the leading figure of the Tokyo-based Yeats study group, Doi became a prominent member of the Kansai chapter (*Sôseki daijiten* 35). Further under Hearn's tutelage, one of Doi's lasting accomplishments would be the translation of the Homeric corpus from Classical Greek into Japanese. This was a humanistic intervention, in that it gave Japanese readers access to those foundational texts of Hellenic civilization, ones that had been disparaged in ultranationalist circles. As Eric A. Havelock famously proclaimed, Homer had compiled an encyclopaedic knowledge of the ancient legends as a founding ethos for generations. Thus, Homer suggested a counterpart to the *Kojiki*, the crucial early text of the Japanese canon that contains a number of foundation myths and legends. Homer and the *Kojiki*, to Doi, both contained fundamental recordings of the earliest awareness of place, culture, and religion. Comparative study did not need to resolve apparent cultural differences, but offered spaces for discussion and contrast. From the epics of Ancient Greece, Doi would then go on to render versions of the formal verse forms of Byron, Milton, and Shelley. This activity led to interesting critical works that studied the implications of the sonnet form as transferable into Japanese. For his efforts, Doi was the first poet to be awarded the Order of Cultural Merit.¹²⁰

Doi himself became a professor at Tôhoku University, where he established himself as a compelling lecturer and sensitive interpreter of world literatures. His students thought well enough of him to rebuild his house after it was obliterated during the aerial bombing of Sendai (1945). Almost his entire library was destroyed; and now the Tôhoku Library Collection contains the few items that survived the inferno. These small remainders nonetheless give the impression of Doi as an intellectually venturesome poet who combined interests in Eastern and Western writers. Buddhist *sutra* in Chinese stand shoulder to shoulder with Homer and Victor Hugo on the shelves. As another example of Doi's international affiliations, also preserved, having been found amongst the charred rubble, was

¹²⁰ Aside from Doi, many of Hearn's students became important interpreters. For example, Ueda Bin, another one of Hearn's favourite students, became a translator of Verlaine.

Ueda Bin, Kikuchi Kan, and Yano Hôjin had been the active members of the Kansai section of the Irish Literary Society. The Tokyo section of *Airurando bungakukai* was centred around Akutagawa, Saijô Yaso, and Kobayashi Yoshio.

a personal letter from Albert Einstein. Doi always acknowledged, in regards to his accomplishments, the important mentorship that Hearn provided as the major inspiration for his life's work. Doi always respected Hearn for his pedagogical prowess, which had educated his Japanese students with the diverse, undiscovered materials of Irish folklore, *girisha no minwa* [Greek myths, folktales], and legendary cultures. At a time when transnational oligarchies began assembling global trade blocks, the study of art provided a crucial alternative for approaching and appreciating the distinctiveness of other societies and their cultural heritages. According to Doi, literature of the past can save the future.

And so, for the twenty-fifth anniversary of Hearn's death, Doi composed a twenty-five poem *waka* sequence, each one dedicated to a different aspect of Greece and Hellenic customs and ancestry. Hearn's life in Ireland and Greece, framed in the conventions of Japanese verse, became an inter-dimensional evocation of customs. In very personal terms, Doi's poems offer thanks to the isle of Lefkada, as climate in which the first breath of air was drawn by its internationalist son. As like the manner in which Satô's sword was passed on in the Yeats family, Doi's son, Rinkichi, willed out of his own pocket for a pedestal commemorating Hearn to be set in front of the Ueno Library. The plaque bears a relief of Hearn, his Japanese name etched in characters below; and a verse in the Chinese style by Doi:

Literature guides people to feelings of beauty;
The brush opens us to this brilliant realm.

Yeats, through Hearn's teaching, certainly had opened Doi to the possibilities of Western literature. Doi's initial works, such as *Tenchi ujô* [*The Sentient World*], told in epic verse themes, displayed a kind of nationalist surge, a trajectory he would later avoid. Doi's innovative Homericism, although also epic, counteracted the myopia of his earlier works. Translation was not about promulgation of the polity. Through an intercultural presentation of European myths, Doi sought an alternative against those self-proclaiming trends in certain Japanese literary magazines that saw their own literary tradition as superior. As noted, rapid foreign investment led to cultural redecoration that sparked a retaliatory xenophobia that exhibited hostility to anything that smacked of the West. In literary circles, the overall effect was to shut off any chance for appreciative exchange. Watsuji Tetsurô's highly polemical *Nihon kodai bunka* [Classical Japanese Culture] (1920) had unflatteringly compared Greek

epics against the more accomplished *Kojiki*: each legendary text was read, antagonistically, as definitive summations of an inner spirit in the Hellenic versus the Japanese. Watsuji accorded ancestral stature to each tradition, but he recasts their representative foundation narratives as political manifestos, speaking in there here and now. Homer and the *Kojiki* define broad psychological typologies of Western and Japanese temperaments. An ongoing trend in the literary world of Japan, highlighted at that time, had been to prescribe national virtues, as exemplified by the classical canon. Accordingly, as Watsuji implies, the *Kojiki* demonstrates a more sophisticated mentality than the capricious behaviour of Olympian Gods, and their descendents.

Hearn and others often worked against such categorical assessments, exploring through comparative appreciation (rather than competition) as to where might lie cultural distinctiveness. Similarly, Arthur Waley may be said to have unavoidably positioned himself in English colonialism in his role as a translator. At the time, however, he provided a service similar to Doi, producing editions of *Genji monogatari* and *Man'yōshū* for English readers. Waley did not find in these works essential statements of national selfhood, defined by representative models that are unchanging and readily reproducible in current political situations. It is not necessarily fair to implicate either Doi or Waley in these extreme interpretations of Japaneseness, or the subsequent politicization of the translated work. In a time of inevitable self-questioning, encounters with other cultures and their literatures enabled more diverse registers for accepting otherness.

The opposite approach is the vis-à-vis mentality, between East and West, which led to a concretised literary sensibility in which competing totalities were on a collision course, one that mirrored geopolitical confrontation. In this mode of thought, the philosopher Miyake Setsurei had been at the vanguard of compiling notions of the total Japanese spirit as patriotic counterclaim to an expansionist West. On the principle that literary magazines had to be politically instructive, Miyake launched the journals *Nihonjin* [*The Japanese*] in 1888 and later *Nihon oyobi nihonjin* [*Japan and the Japanese*] as the ramparts from which to fly the flag of literary (as racial) loyalty. These magazines followed an editorial code promoting Japanese xenophobia at the expense of suspicious foreign influence. However, to be fair, Miyake had allowed for a dynamic forum of debate that most others did not. Notably, he recruited Hasegawa Nyozeikan in 1907 as a column writer. Hasegawa would later become

one of the most outspoken proponents of liberal democracy. Hasegawa's economic opinions favored forms of pan-Asianism, but his *Nihon fuashizimu hihan* [A Critique of Japanese Fascism] (1932), remains one of the primary texts against totalitarianism and the co-opting of national sympathies for fascist ideals. Miyake had also tried to broaden his own views with *Uchû* [The Universe] (1908), which attempted a complimentary depiction of Eastern and Western philosophies.

In terms of those oppositional prejudices in which they worked, which often defined the discourse of East against West, Hearn and Doi were very much a part of this debate in comparative literature, between political exclusion or transnational dialogue. In promoting informed reading and critical response, the *Airurando bungakukai* were a tremendous force in this project, with Yeats as their focus, and individuals such as Akutagawa, Hearn, and Doi as their communicators. Their research and scholarship sought to complicate the view that the Japanese, unlike other nations, uniquely resulted from a peculiar obsession with the supernatural. Irish folklore, in Yeats, also disproved claims that the Japanese had a singular devotion to ancestry and tradition. Comparative studies and multi-faith dialogue, preliminary as they were, had legitimately sought to keep open, through study and conversation, spaces of interpretation. They saw art, literature and folklore as common (although distinct) grounds, ones that globalisation sought to raze either commodity or erase in pursuit of a common global culture. There is no real conversation when the terms of the conversation are homogenous. Certainly, the massive nature of this assimilative process had not been anticipated fully by Herder. Hearn's works confronts this tricky question of defending the local and particular, while still addressing other locals and particulars. A way out of the Herderian cul-de-sac of isolation could be found through an informed interplay, one that kept cultural continuity as a form of communication, rather than reaching for universals. A rooted virtuosity, combined with a musicality of open-ness, allowed John Coltrane to jam the blues with several *shakuhachi* masters.

Mapping Generations

One of the overall effects of the *Airurando bungakukai* was to encourage Japanese to travel to Ireland and record the sights and sounds of the country, much in the manner that Hearn did

in Japan. To use Yeats's parlance, the dancers were continually seeking out new dances; one stage need not exclude other stages. Thus, we find a Hearn equivalent in popular writers such as Shiba Ryôtarô, whose own accomplishments included historical novels of Japan's past. Shiba's close friend, the painter Suda Kokuta (1906-1990), painted detailed landscape tableaux of the Aran Islands, despite his inability to afford the trip. Based on Shiba's travels, notes and documents, Suda provided a series of illustrations (entitled *Kaido o yuku*) to graphically enhance Shiba's essays on Ireland. Suda's own sense of the Arans had been informed by the practices outlined in Dôgen's *Shôbôgenzô*. Based on Dôgen's advice for cultivating Zen, Suda argued that Inis Meáin's rural lifestyle—routinely disparaged as poor and backward—in fact offered a possibility for environmental simplicity that Dôgen had advised for his monks. Miyazawa Kenji had, as previously noted, made similar claims about agrarian work. Certainly, Suda felt a strong attachment to Ireland; this could be dismissed as romance or nostalgia, but it is useful to keep in mind his outlook as a combination of Dôgen and Shiba. Suda believed that the Arans offered an experiential domain that ennobled the artistic eye as well as the ethical consciousness. Thus, he would say to Shiba,

Watashi mo kokoro no Aran-tô ni sunde irun desu.

My heart also abides in the Arans. (Shiba 2:64)

The multicultural experience could be an empathetic panorama of the visual, sensual, imaginative, and interpersonal. And, with the popularity of Synge and Yeats in Japan, the *Airurango bungakukai* found in Inis Mór a participatory environment of alterity, with its own repository of cultural utterances and social dances. The *Keruto*, Shiba's investigation of what is *Celtic*, was not offered up as a ready-made cognate to Japanese folk beliefs. Shiba had no interest in mixing up a conflation of *Lebor Gabála Érenn* with *Kojiki*, nor did he wish to disparage one in relation to the other, in the manner of Watsuji. If such had been the intention, then he could have stayed, like a caricature of Wilde's Vivian, in the parlour with a picture book. However, immersive access to landscape and ancestries offered, he felt, a far more legitimate social experience. His sense of the Gaelic became a crucial signifier that was a rebuttal to the West as Anglo-American technocracies.

Although several Japanese authors traveled to Ireland to meet Yeats, the *Airurando bungakukai*'s activities were hampered by difficulties in terms of travel. Their scholarship, nonetheless, seriously attempted to bring into focus Irish literature to a wide readership.

Japanese literary magazines developed emblematic approaches to Ireland through a Celtic-Christian imagery, as suggestive of cultural contrast. A major journal for Irish literature enthusiasts was *Seihai* [*The Graal*], whose title had deliberate Arthurian overtones. Its pages had been an important space for publishing essays, travelogues, and other impressions of Irish culture. Some of its writers included Kobayashi Yoshio and Saijô Yaso. Also, Kikuchi Kan, a novelist and playwright that Yeats admired, had expressed strong interest to Ôshima in regards to Yeats's plays for dancers. Kikuchi, active in the Kansai *Airurando bungakukai*, would later establish the *Beungei shunjû* magazine, as well as the Akutagawa Prize, named for his lifelong friend. As a further connection, Yeats had seen a performance of Kikuchi's play "Madman on the Roof" [*Okujô no kyôjin*] in Dublin, at the Abbey Theatre. Yeats spoke of Kikuchi's plays in comparison to Synge's (Ôshima 103), and Kikuchi had credited Synge for inspiration (Ôshima 163). Yano Hôjin, another contributor to *Seihai*, would travel to Ireland to meet Yeats in 1927. Yano is credited with introducing Suzuki Daisetsu's work to Yeats, as he describes in his work, *Henrei* [*A Gift in Return*, 1931]. Saijô Yaso, a major poet who had a strong interest in Japanese *min'yô* [folk songs/*Volkslied*], translated and commented upon Yeats's lyrical verse, including "The Lover Tells of the Rose in his Heart" (*Saijô Yaso zenshû* 1:518). His own research on Irish folk music continued throughout his life.

Seihai presented the *Keruto no sekai* [Celtic World], more descriptive than prescriptive, as an edifying experience of otherness, not a mass-marketed souvenir of Westernisation. Its thoughtful considerations of Irish history, its contemporary political issues of sovereignty from England, and the modern development of its literature through periods of social strife showed to readers that the rhetoric of a pan-European identity was suspect. It also offered a compelling example of heritage in the grips of modernity to Japanese writers, themselves struggling to combine literary traditional with imported innovation. As resolute as Tokutomi Sohô and others were in rejecting the West, *Airurando bungakukai* undermined their principles of ethnic exclusion. Retroactively, then, investigations of another's space could complicate definitions of the East. *Seihai*'s willingness to follow the trail of an Irish text suggests that typical categories of *native* and *foreign* were not so myopically exclusionary in artistic circles. Overall, the *Airurando bungakukai* gathered together a group of scholars and authors whose interests in Japanese

folklore, and its debated state in modernity, were expanded through the model that Irish literature provided. In mentioning some of the major figures involved—Akutagawa, Hearn, Yanagita Kunio, Saijô Yaso, Matsumura Mineko—the mutual interests in research, heritage preservation, and orature are clear. The theme of twilight, and the ghost as the representative voice of twilight as ancestral presence, becomes clear through examining the major figures of the *Airurando bungakukai*.

Hearn's influence extended to both the Kansai and Tokyo Irish Studies Societies, and he must be regarded as a primary inspirer for Japanese interests in Yeats, and Irish culture, during his time. Hearn, in approaching Japanese customs and traditions, suggested to the *Airurando bungakukai* that they could do the same for Ireland. Hearn contributed to the *Airurando bungakukai* through intercultural example.

Hearn's collections such as *Kwaidan* [Ghost Stories] are part of this formative network of interculturality that took up twilight as a strategy for negotiating the aura of the past. For Hearn, like Yeats, discarnate entities, or ghosts, become interlocutors for chronotopic heritages. Basically, a ghost presents forms of knowledge that link multiple times of diverse generations with the particulars of a local space. As Hearn's most straightforward collection, *Kwaidan* resembles *IFF* in its aboveboard homage to orature and folk antiquity as that which resists the generic.¹²¹ Making an example to writers such as Doi, Hearn introduced the problems and possibilities for relating a literary heritage through a non-native language. Hearn makes accessible in English *mukashibanashi* [folktales] such as “The Story of Mimi-Nashi-Hôichi”, one of the most beloved stories in Japan. The tale does entertain in a campfire sort of way—but like most folktales also contains a degree of fabulistic admonition. The example of Hôichi exemplifies the devotional practice of chanting the *Hannya shingyô*, the *Heart Sutra* shared by most denominations, as a important spiritual practice of different

¹²¹ Note that Hearn uses an archaic orthography for *Kwaidan*. More properly known as *kaidan*, this literary category include various genres of ghost stories. Frequently anthologised, they have a long history as the preserve of orature. They also allowed the author's imagination to an alternative space for social critique. Hearn had a forerunning example in Ueda Akinari's *Ugetsu monogatari* (1776). Akinari had a larger vision than composing typical gothic vignettes. Akinari worked from Chinese models of folktales, reframing them according to Japanese social situations and local ancestral utterances. The literary format of ghosts, thus, did not have to be a static template. Dennis Washburn identifies an important quality to ancestral recall: “Moral fables” enable “recognition of the spiritual qualities of art” (55). Ueda's interest in the details of local philology and story-telling methods align have aligned him with *kokugaku* learning. Like Hearn, he struggled with a lifelong visual disability.

Buddhist schools. This *sutra*'s formulas describe important ontological beliefs, including the inessential nature—in the way we might understand *inessential* from Derrida several hundred years later—of forms. *Kwaidan*, despite what some critics find, shows a vast arrays of subjects and theme. Hearn's selections do reflect ethical sensibilities. For example, "Oshidori" [The Ducks] blurs species barriers between human and bird, promoting a Buddhist view for supporting vegetarianism.¹²² As a point of cultural introduction, "Oshidori" depicts the birds's love as monogamous and transcendental; hence, for this reason, ducks have been semiotically meaningful at Japanese weddings. What characterises the majority of these stories is the ghostly as glossolalia. The phantasm becomes intelligible *only* through heritage procedures, in the present, that can approach the ancestral *geist* of previous generations. *Kwaidan* acts in a manner like *CT* in its attention to speech and storytelling. Heritage simultaneously exists as presences of the past, continued now as practices in the present.

Hearn's concern for the ritualistic details of daily life increasingly required a deeply personal association with the local. To understand the voicings of a folk-tale required activities beyond that of an archival work. The tales themselves, as language, exhibited a kind of *jidai no tsuya* in the manner of an aged object shining with history. To Hearn and Yeats, twilight words were also a kind of *bakemono*, or shape-shifting spirit. Thus, the locations and peoples that circulate the narrative exhibit the same processes of handling that give off a glow of familiarity. Tanizaki found a polish made out of sweat and fingerprints; Hearn describes in many of his works the aura of spittle, gob, and larynx in the folk practices of the everyday. As he often describes, the voices that convene the rites and stories maintain the association within a physical setting. Thus, the handing down of stories has its own sense of its ancestral historicity. Hearn, and Yanagita later, followed a principle that O'Donovan had decided upon in mapping Donegal: internal facticities of a community, how they named and understood topography, defined itself along ancestral familiarity. Although not scientifically true, their value as identifiers, and the knowledge they contained, could not be readily dismissed.

Hearn's most important text, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan* [*GUJ*], follows a multi-

¹²² R. H. Blyth, for that matter, had been both an outspoken pacifist, as well as arguing that Buddhist morality necessitated a vegetarian diet.

vocal, polyphonic format that had also been the manner of *CT*. Both texts take up the act of sympathetic listening as the principle of receptivity, learning, and communicating with the past. To achieve this, Hearn also immerses himself in a community dynamic that required his personal investment. There was no such thing as impersonal or aloof participation. Hearn displayed the necessary willingness to be led into tradition, the oral and material. The wide diversity of *GUJ* utterances—the layering of metaphysics and geographies as interactive contexts—allows a flow of dialogism in which speech reflects forms of spatial contact. But this informed perspective, which looks into folklore as an archive of heritage, is not possible without a willing series of introductions from those on the inside. This had been a crucial development in the network of scholarship and cultural activism in Ireland as well. Aside from Yeats, we might also consider how Alf Sommerfelt acknowledges in his study of the Torr dialect (1922) that his real understanding of their language (and community) came out of “every evening, an assembly of some 6 or 8 persons who answered readily my thousands of questions and who willingly told me their stories and songs (2). So, *unfamiliarity* does not necessarily mean exotic, as in the pejorative sense. Unfamiliarity is the initial state of coming face to face with the different; and thankfully this condition has a cure.

Hearn, as he frequently stated, had intended to counteract those uninformed Western *observations* that had gained prominence as armchair evaluations of cultures and people. This could include the view that any notion of heritage as illusory, and therefore neither familiar nor unfamiliar. In another way, E. M. Forster’s *A Room with a View* contrasts the experience of Italy, as cultural landscape, with the version provided in Baedeker’s guidebook. Hearn’s use of *unfamiliar* need not imply *strange*, in showing that one can glimpse something beyond one’s own previous experience, through travel.

Unfamiliar is, really, a term of rebuke against the presumptive circulation of xenophobic prejudices that had enjoyed the prestige of information. Hearn’s participatory witnessing—and we should remember it was welcomed and encouraged at every point—was a kind of communal intercession that no armchair in the parlour room will allow. Likewise, *CT* hardly resulted from parlour room musings. Both Yeats and Hearn examined regions that had, for various reasons, been pushed out of view by elitist perspectives.

But to go forth into the unfamiliar also requires humility. The willingness to be *guided*

is a kind of humility that requires entering into the mindset of the pupil. Hearn, as teacher, is also Hearn, the student, of materials that are vanishing all around. Yeats takes a similar stand in describing the required contribution of art in a time of vanishing:

Here, traveler, scholar, poet, take your stand
Where all those rooms and passages are gone,
When nettles wave upon a shapeless mound
And saplings root among broken stone . . .

(“Coole Park, 1929” 25-29)

What can survive this mass evaporation that Yeats is describing? The rural alternative that Hearn and Yeats explored had an enriching effect in terms of a particular heritage that cosmopolitanism does not allow. From the point of view of local eyes, ancestry is neither a *glimpse* nor an *unfamiliarity*, but rather an intimacy and a familiarity with the experiential textures of landscape and tradition. To overcome one’s own unfamiliarity requires a difficult, but worthwhile, negotiation of spatiality, language and other social filters.

Hearn was, as Shimane locals will readily tell, the first Westerner to be granted access to the inner sanctum of Izumo Taisha, one of the three most important Shintô shrines in Japan. According to the *Kojiki*, Izumo was the birthplace of the first *kami* [Gods, ancestral spirits]. Its famed importance relates to its spatial value; the shrine serves as the congregational meeting place where the land’s multitudes of Gods gather in Autumn. As myth connected to architecture, Izumo Daisha provides both communal and mythological significance, and thus a frequent literary subject, especially in Issa’s verse:

mizu abi[te] narabu karasu ya kami mukahi

A bath in cold water:

the crows line up to meet the Gods. (*Issa zenshû* 4:506)

That Hearn should be invited into such a hallowed space suggests the extent of the welcome he received. Most of *GUJ* concerns Hearn’s time in the regionally fascinating areas of Matsue and Izumo; and as such demonstrates his belief that regional customs and ceremonies shape the infrastructure of the legendary. Ongoing contact with a given place involves this juxtaposition of imagination, geography, and the people who are enmeshed in the two. Prescribing a localised characterhood, based on abstractions derived from such features, is impossible, but need not go that far. Speech genres do accumulate patterns of acclimatised

usages that give local dialects a particular shade and colour. Dinneen repeatedly found this to be so, as did Hearn. The conditioning of speech according to region suggests another way of considering Tanizaki's sense of *handling*. Izumo, as Hearn learned, had a proud literary tradition, evidenced by the works of Irisawa Yasuo's and others.¹²³ The dirt of the fingernails, after all, arises from a soil of a real, dirty landscape, and the habitations established in such locales. Mapping such locations, through the patterns of heritage, also means to map the preceding generations in terms of received customs.

Hearn and Yeats described speech as a shapeshifter that crosses space and time. The core themes of *GUJ*, like *CT*, involve those places, performances and rituals that enable ancestral recall: the talismans, hallowed sites, chants, and domestic artifacts that allow people to connect with ancestral presences. Their power comes from frequent, refined usage. Akira, one of Hearn's guides, makes it clear that most of these sacred artifacts are not stored away, only to be used on rare occasions. The majority of the items are always to hand for daily use. Hearn experiences how the time-space continuum is crossed daily as part of the day's negotiation with existence.

Hearn uses his talents to provide extraordinary detail to those everyday surfaces upon which the natural and supernatural are shown as mutually interactive. In his view, ancestral recall occurs daily, as part of marking both the past in relation to the flow of current time. His examples of Shintô architecture include the most elaborate shrine, as well as the home *hokora* [small shrine], both equally deserving of respectful observance, and both equally a part of daily practices. Grave stones [*haka*] also require frequent ablutions and commemorative rituals. Stone lanterns [*ishidoro*] give off a kind of hallowed light in whose shadows cryokinetic effects, and strange changes in ambient temperatures reveal ghostly presences. The soot from particularly haunted lamps is prized for the creation of calligraphy ink [*sumi*]. The intricate features of the *butsudan* are emblematic of the care and regard given to their importance. Home Buddhist altars [*butsudan*] are the seat of the departed, the place

¹²³ See Torrance for an extended discussion of Izumo's sense of itself as literary regionalism amidst policies of institutional education and collective land management. It would be interesting to measure Hearn more closely to modern Izumo literature, including Miyazaki Koshoshi. The right to claim regional specificity involved, as Dinneen noted, the connectivity of dialect with the continuity of customs. The local offered a particular palette of associations that the urban model could not replicate. Donegal or Izumo writers can demonstrate a particular affinity for the importance of the imaginative geography that shapes a literary regionalism. Thus, claims to local colour, of regional specificity, had an anti-integrationist strategy.

where ancestral tables rest, and deserve greetings. The unfamiliar becomes familiar through interaction.

Hearn's encounters with familiar spectrality is most fully realised in his noteworthy essay on *O-Bon*, one of the most important days in the Buddhist calendar. On this occasion, the village itself thus functions together as a communal *butsudan*. During this period, ancestral spirits are completely free to return to their *furusato* [home village] to intermingle with the living. To erase this *furusato*, through the cascades of transaction that comes with free market trade, is to excise a layer out of metaphysical continuity. Hearn knows that such claims will come off as sentimentality to the hard-nosed view of utilitarianism. However, he defends the sense [and the spirit, *kokoro*] of these customs and ceremonies as grounded in real human relationships, and which lay an obligation on past and future in all its human reality. One key feature Hearn notes in the rites of ancestral observance is that young and old co-operate together, in mutual understanding of each other's place in the cycles of time and space:

He dreams that for him, as for his father, the little lamp will
burn on through the generations the children of his children's
children . . . the little dusty tablet that bears his unforgotten name.

(416)

The *Moody Blues* would title an album *To Our Children's Children's Children* in 1969. Hearn's descript of *O-Bon* makes for an interesting comparison with Yeats's "At the Crossroads", in *CT*.

Hearn's "From the Diary of an English Teacher" ruminates on his own role as instructor of youth, to provide them with community knowledge. Respect for the aged coinciding with the stewardship of a new generation implies an ethics of continuity; and this Hearn considered in the contemplative experience of "The Cave of the Children's Ghosts". Again, it is revealing how original Hearn's work was in its time. This was the first carefully observed study of the Bodhisattva O-Jizô, and the Buddhist funerary rites performed in his name. O-Jizô is particularly known as a guardian of children, and little statuettes of his form continue to dot roadsides and school bus shelters in Japan. And, as anyone who has visited a temple dedicated to O-jizô-san can attest, his image is still where bereaved parents gather to leave offerings of soft toys and baby booties. In the cave, Hearn is shown that the shapes of

the spirit-children, their discarnate quality, are not divisible from the ongoing context of life.

A great deal of *GUJ* thus concerns children, childhood, education, and filial obligations, as linked to the ancestral. The generational framework presents the accumulation of memory as both probate and inheritance. The observation of folk practices entails participation in the hands-on approach that proper etiquette towards the past requires. *GUJ* and *CT* very much shares this quality of communal ritual, and its scenic settings, as an interface for accessing twilight as ancestral presence. The *unfamiliarity* that Hearn describes relates to the shadowiness of *twilight*. Familiarity is gained through interaction. Continuity with twilight, in terms of generations, requires a passing on of knowledge; and folklore, for Yeats and Hearn, is the contested repository of this information. The *Airurando bungakukai*, as an intertextual literary phenomenon, allowed for one tradition of folklore to interact with another's. In this case, Irish and Japanese folklore, through the format of literature, came into conversation. Yeats was the primary figure who enabled this. *CT* had taken up major issues about how to negotiate the ancestral, but this question cannot be relegated, critically, to a *younger Yeats*. The *Tower*, for example, is equally concerned with the phantoms of history, the cultural knowledge they represent, and the fissures being ripped into the present. Much like Hearn in *GUJ*, Yeats turns to this question of how children inherit ancestry in his memorable poem "Among School Children". This poem, in particular, questions how individuals come into participation with the cycle of time, through which an individual makes participatory contact with the force of the past.

Being among children, Yeats also senses the presence of death. Through reflection, he maps the course of his own life in regards to the generations that preceded him (his parents) and those who will follow. This need not be an existential dread, but a complex understanding of how the energy of life is situated and transformed. But, before Yeats can perceive the macrocosmic power of *eros* as a kind of telemetric impulse, he must disengage his own various egotisms. The first face to be dropped is "the smiling public man", the didactic persona, the inspecting agent of state authority. The next to go is the lover-poet, the self-centred whingeing of one wrongly done by a vengeful scheme of love and loss. This inescapable condition seemingly arises from the curse of birth. Then, almost with self-reproach, one moment of self-forgetting, one phrase—"enough of that"—helps to cancel out

the gravitational collapse of the previous roles. The poet sees that such aped persona are themselves puppets built of the stuff of scarecrows, fixed smiles drawn on top of straw faces.

A marked shift begins in stanza V, with the personal witnessing of the real pain of viviparous birth. From the womb and into the world, the shape upon the mother's lap (Yeats himself) cannot be divided from the coming forth of birth, death and re-birth. The physicalness of this moment makes a claim more direct than the religion or analytical philosophy of the poem overall. Both religion and philosophy, in their way, are dogmatic formalisms that erect a logic of abstraction. Their abstractions come in the guise of cohesive "presences" as identified in stanza VII: presences are categorical labels turn "images" into codified systems. Yeats, by playing into their structural methodology, actually shows how simple and pat these categories are. By formulating lists of feeling in stanza VII—"passion, piety, affection" (6)—Yeats suggests that this list will, column-like, match up with other similar lists in other sections. "Passion" connects to love, the awestruck poet persona. "Piety" suggests devotion to the institutional icon, the kind of love that the nun pursues. "Affection" suggests a kind of caretaking involved in motherhood, the birth in stanza V. *Presences* must somehow represent these diverse moments of experience. Clearly, Yeats finds such intellectual associations—nun/icon; mother/baby—insufficient. "Heavenly glory" is hardly symbolised by single vocations that supposedly define their own domain according to definition. In retreating from these patterns in the last stanza, Yeats wants to de-educate himself, to shed the limiting condition of the school's enterprise. As he notes, Aristotle had been a sadistic headmaster, disciplining the bottom of Alexander the Great (VI.3). The world is not figured by a Pythagoras. Human thought is not the measure of all things. In pursuing this emphasis on the relation of *eros* to personhood, Yeats here follows Kierkegaard's critique of Hegel's "the suffering consciousness"; *i.e.*, you may be able to conceptualise suffering, but that does not enable the me who suffers. Rule governed schema cannot account for the spiky particularities of actual events, of actual suffering.

The dance of life perhaps relates to Yeats's conception of Vedic philosophy or his *Vision* of cyclic continuity. Dancing, as a kind of cosmic trance in which movements separate the veils of space and time, had been a central theme in much of his poetry, and would become a crucial performative act in his drama. Yeats posits an unchoreographed, organic energy that outmanoeuvres any labels placed on it. No one birth, no singular dogma,

no one icon, can possibly be the standard. Thus, the carnality of consciousness coincides with the momentum of the experiential: one sees only the blur of movement, the dance(r). In Japanese, the concluding two lines can read:

*Ikanishite watashitachi wa buyô suru mono to
sono maio miwakerareyôka*

The dancers are undifferentiated grammatically, conceptually, and metaphysically from the dances. Kinetic interplay of place, movement, and expression must precede any categorical imposition. Like the *Oxen of the Sun* section of *Ulysses*, the force of this generative dynamic can liberate the flow of bodies and the tide of generations from seemingly parallel trends in ideology. The tension, as Yeats saw it, is between the surge of life and its ebb, between rational speculation and religious “repose” against the initial, elemental “reverie” of twilight. A flexible recognition of the performance space enables the dancer to merge into the broader field of play, the dance. By this concluding metaphor, Yeats finds that adoptability, in the form of a dance’s transitional movements, had its form in the mutuality of contextual contents (the stage). Eliot made similar claims in “Tradition and the Individual Talent”: the larger scene acts upon the individual catalyst. The problem is that, if the *stage* is destroyed—and this includes landscapes and communities—then both dancer (talent) and dance (tradition) disintegrate.

Dancing into the Twilight: Yanagita Kunio, Yeats, and the Local as Stage

Dancing, as a spontaneous act of collective remembrance in “At the Crossroads”, is a defining moment in *The Celtic Twilight*. This collection would have strong similarities with Hearn’s work, as well as other literary ethnographers in Japan, such as Yanagita Kunio. Indeed, the connections between Yeats, Hearn, Akutagawa, and Yanagita are extensive. Akutagawa and Yanagita, for example, exchanged ideas in regards to *twilight* as an aesthetic; and both authors demonstrate familiarity with Yeats’s work. *CT* established both a fresh sense of multi-genre writing, as both folk poetry and political argument. It exemplified to Japanese writers the extent of a vanishing cultures, its transformation into twilight auras, and the morphic resonance of something lost, felt still in a trace.

Yanagita Kunio holds a distinct place in twentieth-century Japanese literature as one of several premier developers of native ethnography and folklorality. His *Tôno monogatari* [*TM* / *The Legends of Tôno*] helped to establish a mixed genre that blended poetry, folklore, and cultural anthropology. Yanagita's precursor had been *The Celtic Twilight*, which several of his essays indicate he had read just prior to beginning *TM*. His connections to the *Airurando bungakukai* become apparent through his relations. Like Doi, Yanagita also had been a student of Lafcadio Hearn. Following Yeats as an example, Yanagita conducted regional research in what is now Iwate prefecture. *TM*, geographically specific, is thematically international as the text is a responsive counterpoint to *CT*. It stages a kind of comparative dialogue: *You showed me your ghosts and ancestors, so I'll show you mine*. Yanagita's method takes up on *CT*'s textual hybridity, in the various modes for communication between the living and the twilight, as a strategy for undercutting rational empiricism. Its guiding principle was that listening is something more than passive receivership of impressions. The project required again that risk of personal investment as entering into the moral force of the community. One might see this as yet another nostalgia for the origins, a dreaming up of roots through supernatural speculation. This is particularly the trend now, particularly as Yanagita himself as become iconic in a way like Yeats. But Yanagita also considered those referants that positively mark a particular place as the site of a continued local tradition.

Cultural topography, according to Yanagita, is grounded in historical evolution; and experience intersects with the texts (including speech genres) produced out of a community space. Following Yeats, and others, Yanagita found resources for cultural information to include linguistic, spiritual, aesthetic, and environmental. In this way, Yanagita had a Herderian sense of how particularities of language arise through the conditioned habits of specific regions. Social networks create dialectical, and dialectal, usages that extend, through ripples, in outward expanses of concentric circles of time and space [*hôgen shûkenron*]. Thus, although passionately concerned with regional distinctions, Yanagita's sense included allowances for how various expanding circles of influence would intermingle with each other.

Indeed, as Yanagita discovered, foreign influences can be incorporated into the very particulars of a regional landscape, inscripting their own traces as becoming part of the

ongoing heritage. Yanagita explores this theme in Legend 58 [Foreigners]. Catholic missionaries to Japan, mostly from Portugal, enjoyed only a brief period of tolerance from the shogunate bureaucracy. Eventually, they were driven underground as a pernicious influence.¹²⁴ These hidden priests and their flock of crypto-Christians maintained secret worship. When caught, they endured crucifixion or other tortures. What Yanagita documents, through local folktales, of how their cries still resound into the presented time. Aurally, their experiences, as foreigners, are now imprinted upon the local soundscape. Their trauma became a part of the collective associations which coexist with the physical terrain. In describing this paranormal event, Yanagita also notes, from a sociological perspective, how the *gaijin* [foreigners] entered into the communal order, including miscegenated offspring. Yanagita shows that cultural purity is, ultimately, illusory. No place or time is free of external influences. The socio-historical will include changes that, in part, constitute the flow of community. What Yanagita fears in *TM*, actually, are not the encounters between diverse cultures. He, at least initially, is championing peripheries as a refuge from total obliteration of spirit and custom through urban sprawl and cosmopolitan homogeny. Modernity had made such a situation of ancestral vanishing, and economic lawlessness, entirely possible; and the limits of Herder's point of view had been permanently crossed. Recognising that such a situation was coming into view, how can the local respond? As one such possibility, considered as a whole, *TM* documents the narratives of a region as a form of traditional content that carries across ancestral time, but managing the social realities of space. In *TM*, ghosts interceded to fill those gaps being dug out of collective a memory. In studying both ghost and community as *living* personifications of Tanizaki's shadows, Yanagita has a Yeatsian sense of *twilight* as ancestral resonance. This is not fanciful occultism. Yanagita wanted to find a sociological realm similar to what Yeats proposed in *CT*: a space in which alternative epistemologies, even clairvoyant ones, could become narratives of both current experience as well as a cultural recollection of the past, simultaneously.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ For a discussion of the treatment of Portuguese clergy, and early *Karishitan* [Christians], in early modern Japan, see Hur.

¹²⁵ Ancestral transmissions, as informative communication via spectral forms, has been a crucial narrative device in contemporary *terebi dorama* [TV serial drama], including *Dae Jang Geum*, *Imotako nankin*, *Aguri*,

But Yanagita cannot altogether avoid aligning his legends with the production of regional characterisation: the local and particular as having some essential spirit that marks the terrain of its people. This had been, of course, the accusation dogging *CT* also, and relates to problematic discourses of national identity and nationalism. The contentiousness of Yanagita's claims increases as he developed out of *TM*'s notational format a more definitive dogma of ethnicity. In short, folklore can lead into prescriptive national characterology. If Yeats's druids have a political agenda, then so much Yanagita's shamans.

The *kokugaku* [native studies] tradition had included any number of predecessors on this project, working with a range of symptomatic materials and territorial assessments. A noteworthy forerunner includes the influential Moto'ori Norinaga, whose study of *Shintô* examined patterns in grammar, toponymy, and religious observance.¹²⁶ One might view Norinaga's commitment to intuitive knowing, as a means for connecting to the legacy of place, as comparable to Yanagita. And, Norinaga's *Kojiki-den* [*Kojiki* studies], which explores local linguistics, songs, and myths in forty-four volumes, has similarities in spirit and function to Dinneen. This Irishman's own cultural annotations demonstrated that place names and legends grafted themselves onto a landscape, through generations of communal activity in that place. Norinaga might also be compared to *The Metrical Dindshenchas*, in that legendary place-naming had explicit navigational value as a form of diachronically

and *Kaze no haruka* (narrated by the *kami* of Yufudake mountain, near Beppu). Indeed, in *Sakura*, the entire narration is given through an ancestral spirit, a grandfather, who repeatedly intervenes with commentary toward his grand-daughter's transition from life in Hawai'i to Japan. Through the same technique, the central narrative in *Junjô kirari* is provided via a deceased mother, and in *Asuka* through a ghostly grandmother.

The appearance of ghosts and demons in *anime* and *manga* is superlative. An interesting example of cultural dynamics of ghosts is the video-game series *Perappa the Rappa*. The original Japanese version included levels that involved a decent into *jigoku* [Hell]. The player then had to appease the *gaki* with a vigorous hiphop performance. These scenes were removed for its American release, presumably to avoid offending Christian sensibilities.

¹²⁶ For an interesting, multi-media overview of his life and work, see the Moto'ori Norinaga Museum online: <http://www.norinagakinenkan.com/>

Tokugawa *kokugaku*, and its debate on what constitutes authentic culture, had definite impact on the Meiji ideologies of *restoration*, although Burns shows that the progress was not simply one of progression. Yanagita, like other modernist writers, repositioned received texts into the political situation of the moment. He was neither simply reviving old ideas, as if they had not changed, nor was he inventing them as ad hoc components of culture. His writings are informed, necessarily and problematically, with and against an accumulation of claims to the historical. Hearn, particularly in *GUJ*, had referenced his discussions alongside Hirata Atsutane's early work as an expositor for *Shintô*.

maintained knowledge.¹²⁷ Interestingly, Shiba Ryôtarô frequently compares *CT* to Norinaga in his *Airurando nikki*.

The Celtic Twilight coincides with *kokugaku* [nation studies] writing, of the early twentieth century, in many ways. But an important feature of both Yanagita and Yeats is that they both dispute the claim by Japanologists of Celticists, the intellectual elite, as being the only worthy arbitrators of tradition, identity, or the lack of both. Both Yeats and Yanagita shift the attention to the margins from the centre. In this regards, Yanagita's early conceptual emphasis on *jômin* [abiding folk] seems to have the same imaginative slipperiness as Yeats's sense of the *peasant*. Yanagita, in presenting *jômin* as a social realm that has its own narrative relation to macrohistory, had reacted against centuries of historiographic genres that privileged culture and politics as the manifest domains of aristocracies, warriors, and warrior aristocracies.¹²⁸ Canonical accounts of nation such as the epic *Taiheiki*, and *gunki monogatari* [war tales genre] generally, excluded entire swaths of the population in their scope. Yanagita claims back the peripheries: the agricultural regions whose own religions and agricultural production has been excluded. Yanagita wants to show that society's operational ability is not by the elite alone. Yeats, at his particular moment in history, had likewise used the term *peasant*. It is important to remember that his context was a period in which the land itself—its cultivation and ownership—had been denied for centuries to the people who toiled on it. The fight for basic residential rights had produced a huge number of casualties. *Peasant* or *jômin* is a designation with real political edge. Yanagita and Yeats proposed thematic strategies that shifted focus onto those communities which had been relegated to a tenancy and disenfranchisement.

There was an ecological sensibility behind this sense of the soil as well: the joining of environment and people in the production of milieu. Yanagita may have overstated the point when he claimed that the boggy Irish geography had a climatic effect in generating a Celtic vibe ("Tengu no hanashi" [*The Tengu's Tale*] 185). But, in a similar exploration of Japan's topographic features, Yanagita wants to understand how different landscapes offered

¹²⁷ Eric Havelock, on Homer, had made similar claims. His discussions on how the poet attempts to also document history does much to provide an analysis of the poet-historian's method.

¹²⁸ Yeats brandished Satô's sword as a response to an Indian professor's concern about India at the time of a growing independence movement. Yeats yelled in reply, "Insistence on the antinomy" and "Conflict, more conflict!" (Ôshima 119).

a diversity of poetic synesthesia. Arguing that an environment is a precious narrative effect itself, Yanagita, like Yeats, turns to ecological metaphors to defend organic space. Izumi Kyôka, in one of his last works, “*Usu kôbai*” [*The Pink Plum Blossoms*], would depict the ecological sensitivity of his native Kanazawa region.

The Landscape as Dancer

The philosopher Watsuji Tetsurô emphasized that climate and environment are directly relational and proportional to a given culture’s standards of expression. Watsuji, rather than seeing bio-diversity as exploitable assets, argued for a sense of *fûdo* [climate] as a mutual convergence of the human subject enmeshed in biological spatiality. Atmospheric circumstances are inseparable from the communities who build themselves, over time, in response to their localised climatological processes. Certainly, using meteorological forecasts to make cultural predictions does not altogether stand up to scientific scrutiny. But, on a basic level, *fûdo* implies that an environmental dynamic must be acknowledged as a mode for influencing human existence.¹²⁹ Conditioned behaviours arise relationally to habitat. Scientists index climate change statistically; but we can also observe a direct impact on people’s lives. Yanagita and Yeats had a less definitive sense of *fûdo* in that they placed particular attention on the variables of lifestyles that were particular to natural processes as related to varieties of landscape. As will be discussed in the next chapter relating to Miyazawa Hayao, rice-growing, as agricultural necessity, had influenced almost every aspect of Japanese culture.

Yeats and Yanagita attempt to find narratives through the lustre of time, both on individual objects but in the cultural landscape as a horizon. What topographically had been important in the development of a cultural ethos?¹³⁰ Yeats’s sense of communal memory as

¹²⁹ By the same token of theorising, commentators have claimed that classical Japanese literature readily yields, with no turbulence, to French post-structuralist theory. On this abstract level, *nô* drama can be read and analysed according to Derrida; that Lacan can be entirely synched with the subtexts of the *Man’yôshû*; and that Saikaku entirely exhibits Foucault’s panoptic.

¹³⁰ This line of questioning can lead into the *forty Inuit words for snow* type misconceptions. But, for another example, we might think of how cedar or salmon contributed to coastal First Nations in British Columbia. A Watsujian reading might see this as an instance in how the influential *fûdo* of the coniferous rain-forest helped to shape a culture.

connected to cultural heritage had many components, including art, religion, and environment. The practical point is that the present is governed by the past, in the form of accumulated influences, and this includes meteorological agency and geographic spacing. Despite Watsuji's suggestion, typhoons may not directly cause a given modality for a regional ballad style. But, as famous *enka* songs such as *Kanazawa no ame* know, the rain in one place feels sympathetically different than another. Lawrence Durrell put it this way in *Justine*: "We are the children of our landscape; it dictates behavior and even thought in the measure to which we are responsive to it" (41).

While Watsuji, Yanagita, and Yeats are marked by their modernist concern for finding specific regional identifiers, their critical attention to culture-in-ecosystem has a prescient quality. They demonstrate how specific environments are ontological territories that network relationships within the human order. Hearn notes that the vibrations of *O-Bon* observances are necessarily underscored by those "trillings of summer life that blend to make the great sweet / Cry of the Land" (*GUJ* 138). I wonder what Yanagita would think now of the withering of the countryside under former Prime Minister Koizumi's reformist policies; or the suicide of Matsuoka Toshikatsu, Minister of Agriculture, under a cloud of corruption charges in 2007. What Watsuji and Yanagita began in terms of deep ecology, the interdependencies of people to place, has increased in global attention. The environmental poetry of Nanao Sakaki and Gary Snyder takes the response to pervasive industrialism even further. Some may also dismiss this as anti-technological nostalgia, a contemporary yearning for a past that may, in fact, have never existed, or existed in another form that time has idealised. But this is not so. The land, and people's place in it, and the hard-won fruits of agricultural labour are not imaginary activities. Imagining vast industrial complexes, then building them regardless of the damage done to the actual world, is fantasy gone mad. There is more fantasy to be found in the *Report on Business* and *Vogue* magazine than in anything Yeats or Yanagita ever wrote. And in terms of personal life, the realm of fantasy can be found abundantly in the inconsequential imaginings prompted by such video games as *Sim City* and *Second Life*, games that relay banal lifestyle simulations, with no fresh air, clean water, or real earth. While critics find fault with the Tôno-fication of postmodern Japanese sentimentality, one shudders even more at the alternative forms of unreality.

But surely *Sim City* does not represent the *zeitgeist* of the early twentieth-century entirely? Surely such an example, although of sociological interest, cannot be magnified through analysis so as to be made ethnographically definitive? Compared to these virtual worlds, there must then be a grain of truth in Watsuji's claim that the biosphere varies from place to place, producing unique habitats. Yanagita and Yeats, in their studies of the narrative landscape, as the recovery of ancestral patterns, argue that these distinctions deserve the utmost care and respect. Food has been accounted for as climatologically determined, after all. The care and preparation of local delicacies exhibits knowledge refined through the trial and error of time. The cold Nagano weather produces a kind of *soba* whose texture is different from, say, that of Ôsaka. Add to this the fact that, generally, the people in Kansai prefer different sauces, and one can taste a wide variation in something as seemingly simple as a buckwheat noodle. The famous *daikon* of KagÔshima, *sakurajima daikon*, has a particular flavour owing to the volcanic ash that permeates the local soil. Eisai Zenji's *Kissa yôjôki* had, many centuries previously, discussed climate variability as affecting the cultivation of tea leaves. Tea produced different health benefits according to where it was grown, or from the specific water source used to boil the leaves. Shiba had been quite taken with the quality of *wakame* and *konbu* that could be found in the West of Ireland. Yanagita had argued from the irrecoverable importance of dirt, soil, landscape at a time of increased urban sprawl. To turn back to Tanizaki, writers questioned how different types of dirt, soil, or clay might condition experiences differently. Climate cannot be separated from human endeavour.

Nonetheless, in turning attention to the margins, Yanagita and Yeats as propagating that pseudo-charm of rootedness for a modernist society feeling, in a way, as homeless, even as the Irish pushed for Home Rule. The word *nostalgia* creeps up once again. But these are important points to consider. We may agree, as Edward Hirsch argues in "The Imaginary Irish Peasant", that revivalist concepts of *peasant* (and *jômin* for that matter) are constructed out of polemical dichotomies with a bureaucratic republic, one that pits social identities against presumed transparencies such as "centre" and "urban". These semantic labels are not satisfactory, especially if put to the test of social sciences in the manner that they evaluate anthropological data. But it seems injudicious to relegate any sense of rural reality to textual

effects alone, as backdrops and props for an insular imagination, as if artists and critics alone conjure up societies and traditions.

Yeats's context, in relating the rural to the ancestral, concerned he traumas of history, oppressive legislation, and profit-driven economic development have alienated the countryside. Their legitimate experiences have been turned into mere semiotic signs, their reality expunged, under colonial occupation. The markers of real people are there. In Sligo, land development frequently turns up nameless famine burials. The number of anonymous bodies in the official Hunger graveyard, at the edge of Sligo town, entombed without the benefit of semiosis and labels, are not literary make-believe. They are corpses in the soil.¹³¹ Terms such as *peasant*, although of varying (and competing) historical meanings, did not appear in the mindset of modernity as linguistic figments. The literary figuration cannot be entirely divested of legitimate experiences on the land.

Notions of community and continuity arise from a constant stimulus of dirt and soil, much more so than mere fantasy and romance. If the word *peasant* were only referenced to imaginary figments, then the disposability of such notions would be easy to effect. That people continue to critique the notion of what constitutes the “rural folk” suggests, by the virtue that the debate continues to point to something, that there must be a substantive reality to which the debate references. And, of course, these revivalist re-narratives, the Celtic amongst others, *do* deserve debate. Shifting the attention away from the accents and flags that represented power had been one of the Celtic Revival's objections. The revivalist impetus was to put the subjects of land and community practices *back* to the forefront of consideration. On this account, the revivalists succeeded, even if the findings are controversial. If Yeats and Synge instigated a counter-revival, defined in such works as *Peig* or *An tOileánach* [*The Islander*]*—*all the better. And if resurgent attention, even as rebuttal, is given to the *sean nós* [old style] singing of Elizabeth Cronin, or dance traditions in the Sliabh Luachra region—then the focus of the debate has, thankfully, expanded.

¹³¹ For a discussion on how these sites are preserved and their importance as communal memory, see “Tobercurry – Keeper of the Flame”, *The Sligo Weekender* (5 April, 2005).

<http://archives.tcm.ie/sligoweekender/2005/04/05/story22394.asp>

According to local reports, when ground was broken for an extension to Sligo General Hospital, the builders turned up a number unmarked famine graves.

Overcoming Modernity or Overcoming Modernists?

Yanagita would, over his career, come to see his role as more avowedly ethnographic than Yeats. His later research would include a more general range of materials, including ornithology and architecture; generally speaking, he is less concerned with the shaping of orature as poetry. Still, his influences from Yeats and Hearn reflect an immersive, literary approach to the patterns from which custom and tradition gain their purpose. In examining different sections of society, and the environments they inhabit, Yanagita and Yeats studied narrative as a process that arises over time, according to governing features of a social habitat. Yanagita revealed in *TM* that *minzogaku* [ethnography or folk studies] is complicated, invoking multiple senses of nativity, ethnography, and folklore. The word *dentô* [tradition] is itself a neologism, perhaps suggesting the paradox that what is sought has already been lost; that which has disappeared re-identifies itself through its own absence. Their works consider, ethnographically so, the creative and physical initiative that people demonstrate in negotiating their pasts and futures as a community.

It is important to remember that the question of the status of the rural people in Ireland (and Japan) has not gone away. Their unique features serve as important political signposts, in poetry as well as elections, revealing trends that the information capitalism of the urban electorate does not. For whatever reasons, the Irish and Japanese landscapes, through poetry and travel, continue to cross-identify. Cathal Ó Searcaigh recently wrote an Irish language haiku entitled “bealach portaigh” [Bog Trail],

I bpollán sa bhóthar
comhairim an t-achar
idir dhá réaltóg (150)¹³²

What should we make of this Gaelic, peaty haiku? Is it another orientalist confusion of romance and exotic nostalgia for the *other*, still being published, amazingly, in the 1990s? Or does Ó Searcaigh articulate a perceptive potentiality for the environmentalist perspective,

¹³² here in a puddle
i can estimate the space
between two stars

further heightened through the seasonal features suggestive of the *haiku* genre?¹³³ When a puddle's surface no longer provides any reflections nor offers any depth, it is the symptom of a loss in that conscious attention Heidegger referred to as the *treeness* of a tree, in *What is Called Thinking?* (41-44).

Maintaining the reflection of the ancestral image concerns much of the contemporary ethnography in Ireland. Brian Bonner notes, in his discussion of Inis Eoghain heritage, that neglect for mortuary sites is the most prominent sign of a region's near extinction. To forget the continuity inscribed within this marker of ancestral presence is cultural amnesia:

The ravages of time and greed and ignorance of a minority have done much damage. Over the past century we have evidence of the disappearance of old graveyards, standing stones and other monuments. (Bonner 13)

Social systems, burial grounds and shamanic folk religions are social orders that, in practice, work against the ravages of time and greed to maintain a recall of past experiences. What disgusted Hearn most about the Christian evangelical mission was that it demanded the erasure of centuries of indigenous obligations to one's predecessors in favor of a new, universal orthodoxy:

To demand of a Chinese or an Annamese that he cast away or destroy his ancestral tablets is not less irrational and inhuman than it would be to demand of an Englishman or a Frenchman that he destroy his mother's tombstone in proof of his devotion to Christianity. ("Reflections", *JAI* 474)

The sacrifice of cultural memory for a newfound world order had been at the heart of the debate between Oisín and St Patrick. Oisín realizes that the lustre of time is not the glitter of the fairy world, but the *twilight glow attached to the land*. He therefore returns to Ireland empowered with this knowledge of time and place. Patrick, however, has other designs in reshaping the cultural topography. In erasing the heritage markers of the Oisín era, Patrick also rubs out the lustre of time. Yeats saw the advent of an Irish republic, in regards to internationalisation, as potentially repeating the Oisín/Patrick cycle of erasure.

¹³³ For other instances of Irish poetry modeled after Japanese verse, see Paul Muldoon, *Hopewell Haiku* and Michael Hartnett, *Inchicore Haiku*.

Hearn was struggling with and against a national rhetoric that defined a larger regional formation at the expense of smaller localities, whose identities were props to be subsumed for propaganda value. This tension between centre and periphery had broad implications for modernist writers. Kobayashi Hideo's Herderian sounding essay "Literature of the Lost Home" [*Kokyô o ushinatta bungaku*] (1933), influenced I think by T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, argues that waste now had more prominence than land. The flotsam and jetsam of global markets has buried geographic distinctions and invoke, through their clutter, the disorientation of homelessness: without markings and reminders, one cannot become in-placed anywhere at any time, since cultural signposts have exploited or re-branded as other things. This had been the Urashima Tarô complex, who like Oisín returns from the Otherworld in a state of spatial-temporal confusion, but now on a global scale. Kobayashi rebels with a vigorous xenophobia that at times argues for national autonomy as a necessary bulwark against the encroachment of global trespass.

As Starrs points out, Hearn would also sympathise with this will to exclusive sovereignty, in so far as he saw it as a response against wholesale assimilation of peoples (205). Hearn disliked any form of mass acculturation in which cultural identity is, in effect, merged with (really subjugate to) other's standards through conversion. On this note, there is a famous anecdote of Hearn berating a Mormon evangeliser in Matsue.¹³⁴ Hearn, for the same reasons, sympathized with the Boxer Rebellion and the Chinese revolt against colonisation. As he writes in "Reflections", an invasion of "uncompromising attitudes" will promote a response of inflexible violence, especially when one's home and family are at stake. The forms of ideological and material encroachment, working together, are the monomaniacal force of the jaws closing in on continuity:

Never will the East turn Christian while dogmatism requires the convert to deny his ancient obligation to the family, the community, and the

¹³⁴ The cinema of the Reaganite presidency gave us a number of films that had unappealing attitudes towards Japan, accompanying the decline of American industry (*Black Rain*; *Gung Ho*). The Japanese salary-man commits a suicide-through-work [*karôshi*] who, for slavish corporate identity, turns the Samurai ethic of death into a policy of personal sacrifice for work. In this Western tabloid picture, the Japanese have neither time for spousal intimacy nor a spare evening to cheer at a son's baseball game. At the same time, the 1980s was the decade of the *ninja* as an exaggerated army of assassins who were/are embodiments of martial mysticism. Moreover, Miyagi-san's aphorisms, from *The Karate Kid*, quickly entered the popular vernacular as sage advice.

government,-- and further insists that he prove his zeal for an alien creed by destroying the tablets of his ancestors, and outraging the memory of those who gave him life. ("Reflections" 480)

Evangelism had become another economy. Kobayashi's solution, however, posits a tit for tat discursive front to stave off invasion. Japanese internal policies, after Hearn's time, were increasingly driven to solidify broader frameworks of power at the expense of the periphery. As Figal writes, Japanese bureaucracies seek "to redirect the sentiments of the masses away from heterogenous complexes of local beliefs in the supernatural and toward a homogenized belief in a unique *kokutai* [national polity] (199).¹³⁵ These included shrine mergers, which conflated the multifarious forms of worship and interpersonal relationships of local intimacy into broad, municipal districts. Formulaic definitions of people, places, and the qualities that unite them became the official national narrative, presented against an international contest of wills. This rhetoric would, in Japan and elsewhere, turn into the horrors of obstinate fascism. The Japanese motivation toward imperialism, as it has been variously excused, was self-defence in the midst of a European land grab across Asia.

Hearn, and Yeats as well, cannot be easily called fascistic, particularly with the horror with which we now must use this term. Modernity exhibited the sense that religion, culture, and social rituals in Japan and Ireland had been turned into vulnerable traditions threatened with disappearance. Against his own understanding of Catholic theocracy, Hearn sought in the multiplicity of polytheistic paganism a ritual sensibility that reflected varying cultural strata, continued experience, and commitment to place. The polyphonic ceremonialism, as he saw it, arose dialectically through the continued interactions of text and experience. As Ribh put it to Patrick in Yeats's poem "Ribh Denounces Patrick", "Natural and supernatural with the self-same ring are wed" (4). The symbiosis of spirit and matter is seen in the erotic subtext, of a carnal deity opening his loins to the energy of nature. In short, the narrative arose from the ground up, rather than being forced from down from the top. Top down transcendentalism is characterised, Hearn and Ribh believe, by dogmatic monotheistic theology that excludes local pluralities. This version of a canonical universality assimilates geographically varied people, unilaterally, into a new orthodoxy. The accusations of

¹³⁵ See also Howell, who describes in detail the manner in which Meiji authority exercised control over the social order in ways that actually exceeded the Tokugawa regimes.

displacement and assimilation are those made by Yeats. The snakes that Patrick banishes are the sins of unorthodox variedness: “The mirror scaled serpent is multiplicity” (10). The abstraction of the Trinity, like the philosophers of “Among School Children”, is another form of rational prescription. In *CT*, “A Visionary” tells of the anxiety when dogmatic theology contradicts communal folk beliefs.¹³⁶ Monotheism legitimizes itself by a claim of *logos* and trans-historical truth. How does this negotiate multiculturalism? Endô Shûsaku’s novel *Chinmoku* [*Silence*], from a Catholic perspective, struggles with this question of how varying societies can be compelled to accept notions of omnipotence at the expense of their own ancestral histories. Conversion becomes a kind of cultural surrender.

Thus, from the vantage point of our place observing history, we also recognise a counter-fundamentalist trend in ethnic isolationism that butted heads with globalisation. In Japan, as elsewhere, this assembling of a nationalistic totality involved a number of bullish ideologies. Perhaps a watershed moment in formulating a national sense of exclusivity was the intellectual debate of the Overcoming Modernity Conference, a symposium that included some of the leading ethno-philosophers of the day, including two from the Kyoto-school (July 1942).¹³⁷ Modernity, after all, had become a euphemism for Westernisation; and *overcoming* thus suggested a confrontation of cultures, and a clash of civilisations. An ultranationalist trajectory became increasingly evident in some of the presentations, and the

¹³⁶ Castle reads this chapter as posing the central question at issue: “that is at the heart of Yeats’s Revivalist project: to what authority, aesthetic or ethnographic, does one appeal to succeed in redeeming an authentic folk culture?” (66). The answer, in part, entails moving outside of the roundabout debate of *authority* and *invention* and into what the community is saying about itself.

¹³⁷ It is worth quickly distinguishing Hearn’s, Yanagita’s, and Yeats’s sense of *landscape* from Nishida’s philosophy of *basho* (topos or place). The latter refers, in part, to a logical space [*basho no ronri*] for the engagement of Hegelian systems. *Basho* is a site in which categories of knowledge converge in universal applicability. The *basho* could overcome dead-end dualities through a negation of those stubborn predicates that define subjectivity. Modernity can be counteracted through the *basho* of monistic worldhood or worldness (*sekaisei*). *Basho* has less to do with a dialectic of physical geographies or landscapes, although elaborative critiques led to a debate about cultural milieu.

As a kind of logic that leads to the concreteness of spatiotemporal concepts and psychologies, Nishida leads to discussions on technology, environment, and cultural values arising from the friction between these two. Political ramifications are near at hand. *Basho* can orient absolutes from, say, disparate cultures into a common ground of globalness. Ultimately, the mission of history should abandon notions of itself as unwieldy and commit to the global unity, not demarcated by temporal processes that produced localised results

Nishida tried to overcome the abstractness of *basho* by considering how real communities can be measured by a universal standard that would unite them in a global field. Such a concept leads to the question of which community authorises this standard.

Pacific War context of annexation overshadows the philosophy. Nishida, the most renowned if also most criticised participant, posited a logical philosophy of the *basho* [place] as universalist site for global mutuality. This was, actually, supposed to be a solution to cultural mis-translation and isolation. Nishida became a leading philosopher for a return to transcendence, that the *basho* existed as untouched by the sirens and wandering rocks of *Ulysses* or the nebulous rubbish of *The Waste Land*. But this abstract sense of *basho*, in a Hegelian model of history, still represented territorial prejudices.¹³⁸

But Yeats and Yanagita's considerations of the local do not maintain an equidistant position. The Irish-Japanese intercultural dialogue, by recognising both differences as well as common grounds, worked against the promotion of shallowness and the promulgation of universalism. Its major themes had been co-operation and co-relationality as a productive literary encounter. Twilight, with its gestures to both twilight and landscape, was a necessary strategy, as the phantasmagoric aspects of cultural and historical traces became accessible as ethos or a source of memory. Ancestrality, connected to place, enabled an exploration not only of one geography, but another in comparison. A compelling view of cultural difference became possible through heritage and its lustre of time. Nuances of Irish twilight touched Japanese twilight, as a fantastic intertextuality of memory, folklore, and sense of investment and experience in a topography that had centuries of accumulated awareness. Satô's sword exemplified Tanizaki's maxim: touch, transmission, and history collaborate in the production of *aji ga aru*, the difficult to translate sense of individual beauty and unique taste. This is the indefinable aura of the object, darkened by oils, as a topography of fingertips and historical grooves. For this reason, twilight came to understood as a resonant presence that marked physical objects and places. Tanizaki and Benjamin both, in various ways, postulate the same sense of touchable ancestry. Walter Benjamin, in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", uses the word *aura* to allocate a sense of importance to the unique object as conditioned by the passage of time in human hands. Tanizaki's *jidai no*

¹³⁸ The Overcoming Modernity (1942) debate, featuring many of Japan's leading philosophers, were driven by nationalism. As the majority of critics have found, their coded forms of discourse employed theories of universality as a motivation for cultural expansionism. For an in-depth discussion of this conference, see *Rude Awakenings*, edited by James Heisig.

tsuya [the lustre of time] likewise describes the sense of awe by indicating that the beauty is not the product of one craftsman, but a legacy of heritage and time.

Yeats helped to inform Tanizaki's reading by locating a sense of aura—*twilight*—as multiple halos that imbue the cultural landscape. The *Keruto* [Celt] provided a discursive space for interculturality, something not-West but in the West, being demonstratively dissimilar to British imperialism or American technology.¹³⁹ Hearn had, at times, tried to counteract the hardening of presumptions and mob mentalities. One such attempt is the essay "The Japanese Smile", which critiques with the banality of general pronouncements:

Those whose ideas of the world and its wonders have been formed chiefly by the novels and romance still indulge a vague belief that the East is more serious than the West. (*GUJ* 656)

He presents, instead, a comical sequence of his social *faux pas* in language and etiquette. The humourous anecdotes, more than an essay could, disabuse the reader of the sense that one nation is somehow more serious than another. NHK television provides the same insight today, for those visitors who equate the Japanese mind with Zen austerity. *The Tower* is full of slapstick and buffoonery, and Yeats's dramas would make a satirical performance out of obsessions with the serious. Yeats had been, by the same impression, annoyed by the Arnoldian depiction of the somber, superstitious Celt. Superstition and sadness were present, but these qualities relate to the conditions of history, the story within it, rather than a genetically Celtic hard-wiring in the DNA. Hearn argues for a more comprehensive, contextual sense of Japanese practices than that offered in Percival Lowell's *Occult Japan* (1894).

¹³⁹ In a fundamentalist reading of Said's initial claims, imperialism is pre-destined. It seems almost impossible to evaluate the respective multiculturalism of individuals. Historical power precludes any legitimate access to the foreign. Cultures, possible are indomitably inscrutable. Learning one word of another language means to corrupt it with the entirety of your own. Orientalism/Occidentalism are shambles of faulty cultural mimesis from a distant gaze. There seems no way to step out of the Disney diorama. English monolingualism, as the global *lingua franca* and scholarly coin of the realm, can go unchallenged. How can we get out of racist predestinationism?

Oldmeadow identifies a mood of superciliousness that has become a rather uncritical form of judgement, "the study of comparative religion based on rootless humanism" (173). Optimistically, more critics are forwarding other theoretical understandings of how peoples emerge and relate to each other across varying impediments (artistic, social, religious, linguistic). Timothy Weiss's *translational register* is one such possibility, in which words are embodied in intertextual, horizontal dimensions of mutual implication (6-7). Weiss explains his theories through both Husserl and Buddhism (203-216).

But the debate remains about who best has the authority, or the acumen, to act on behalf of the intertextual. Theoretically, there has been a side debate for critics as to who is the better interpreter of Japan: Lafcadio Hearn or Basil Hall Chamberlain? In terms of enduring popularity and popular respect, Lafcadio Hearn has won, both in Japan and the West. For example, Kenneth Rexroth and Malcolm Cowley, in later efforts at Japanese-American literary dialogue, found in Hearn a formative explorer of Buddhism and Buddhist aesthetics. It is worth noting that, in putting his face on a postage stamp, popular Japanese memories maintain Hearn as a sensitive and thoughtful appreciator of Japan at a time of intense change. The main character of the *manga* series *Ginyôbi no o-togibanashi* [Silver-day's Fairy Tale] is a noticeable casting of a Hearn look-alike, mustachioed and with bad eyesight. This *manga* is an expression of homage. In quiet words, the protagonist holds long conversations with grandmothers and children and now and then bumps into local fairy phenomena. These lingering traces, phantoms that they are, upset those assumed modes of predictability on which institutional models rely.

The hazards of participating in another culture, as filtered through our own preconceived filters, is an unavoidable risk. Dissimilarities in cultural perception are *the* basic challenge of translational intercourse between different societies. The *Airurando bungakukai* made it their mission not to abandon the quest in the face of potential fallacy. It has always been so. Yáng Xuànzhi had to negotiate all manner of knotty problems, social and linguistic, in transferring the *Mahāyāna* canon into Chinese. Any overview of Buddhist history quickly indicates a large number of languages and cultures who shared and transmitted the teachings over great distances. Established, adopted, and refined within China, Buddhism was communicated, against an entire new set of problems, into the Japan. And, of course, the communication continued, and this religion and philosophy reached the West, where it has been renarratavised (rather than evangelised) accordingly. The struggle over making rough equivalents and points of interaction, against the shallow museum mentality, had been one definitive challenge for the multi-lingual, multicultural dynamic of modernism. The Japanese-Irish literary dialogue willingly questioned the interstices of parallel discourses, the gaps between speech and translated echo, of compassionate rapport between communities. Perfection in communication is unattainable, but the openings created by such dialogue offered a crucial alternative. What options are left us if no authentic

interactions between different societies is declared psychologically untenable? Learning another language, especially through contextual involvement, will at least open a wider aperture.

Many current crises we now face have resulted from that predatory utilitarianism that swallowed custom and ceremony in an unprecedented manner. There was an early warning system sounding in much modernist writing: the vanishing can become the vanished, and the cultural can become ephemeral and erased. Twilight, along with the cultural signposts to which it connects, faced extinction. Even the fantastic can be wiped away into featurelessness. Logarithmic rates for political capital and resource expenditures could rapidly assess centuries of history according to facile market values. As Yeats saw in Ireland, the post-Herderian monster was the trans-national behemoth of corporate power. The disloyal cosmopolitanism was the grave threat, not the meeting of different cultures, as in the conversation of *shakuhachi* and saxophone. Can twilight remain if everything has been paved over or digitised? The recent *Save the Future* series on NHK TV, featuring primetime debates and discussions about potential environmental catastrophes, makes Yanagita's *TM* seem very prescient.¹⁴⁰

As a further point of similarity between Ireland and Japan, the Bórd Fáilte have duplicated the kinds of exploitation that Marilyn Ivy documents in regards to Japan. The dislocated monument, without morality or memory, has been re-packaged and re-branded. The *Discover Japan* campaign, intentionally or coincidentally, has been duplicated as *Discover Ireland*. As the multi-media displays and glossy brochures tell us, discovering Ireland really means hiring a car and driving quickly around the Ring of Kerry. According to the barrage of television advertisements, discovering Ireland is when a North American barrister imbibes—well, *discovers*—his first pint of St James Gate Guinness.

This cannot be the only way of telling the story.

¹⁴⁰ A number of interrelated programmes based on this theme, *Save the Future*, were broadcast in June, 2008. The format alternated from panel discussion, to short documentaries on community-centred environment activism, land reclamation projects, and other efforts to counteract climate change.

5 The Stagecraft of Twilight

On a moonlit night,
 this picked-up button
 penetrated my fingertips,
 pressed on into my heart.

--Nakahara Chûya, *Tsukiyo no hamabe*

Miyazaki Hayao's film *Sen to Chihiro no kamikakushi* [En: *Spirited Away*] depicts an intervention from beyond.¹⁴¹ Astral entities, essentially *kami* and *yôkai*, remove a young child, Chihiro, from the physical realm and spirit her away into an intermediary state of *chûkan* [in-between-ness]. Chihiro, having recently moved to a new town, is suffering from the *lost home* syndrome. She has only a faded bouquet of flowers, a parting gift from a friend, to remind her of their shared friendship and *furusato* [home village]. Her communication, initially, is to moan and complain about her new domestic circumstances. This changes, however, when her family takes the wrong route to their new residence. They stumble, instead, upon what appears to be an abandoned carnival. As a realm of the ancestral, this carnivalesque dimension is a portal that allows for a wonderland transformation. New doorways and transparencies open. The metaphysical becomes a vivid spectrum of vanishing shades and twilights, resembling a Kirlian photograph, which purports to reveal auras and energies surrounding a person or location. The veil between the seen and the unseen is forcibly rent; and Chihiro emerges into a ghostly world, still touching the physical, whose denizens fundamentally challenge her attitudes, assumptions, and habits.

As Susan Napier points out, *Spirited Away* functions, in part, as an allegorical contest between the forces of disposable consumerism and cultural recovery. Certain key themes appear throughout the film—industrial organization, cosmopolitanism, the loss of a personalised home, gluttony, and garbage. The visual territory of place, and its attendant ancestral history, has been, in effect, overwritten by global fads and pop disposables. In the

¹⁴¹ For a comparative example, see *Seirei no moribito* [Guardian of the Sacred Spirit], a series of fantasy novels which have been produced in *anime* and radio programme formats. Uehashi Nahoko, the author, holds an MA in cultural anthropology from Rikkyô University. Her works are filled with references to indigenous folk religions and customs.

film, the consumer cycle of desire, then temporary satisfaction, and then desiring again, literally turns her parents into Circean pigs. Exposed to the ghostly resonances, the internal motivation becomes the bodily situation. Chihiro, in the mode of a children's fantasy, must save her parents through redeeming herself. This requires a negotiation with the *chûkan*, the liminal region of the in-between. However, as the architecture of the spirit-world bath house reminds us, this parallel world is not separate from the mortal world—just as Yeats's *CT* depicts the inter-relational performance of fairy and mortality. "The Stolen Child", for example, arranged its fairy terrain as connected to a map of Sligo. Likewise, Miyazaki's depiction of a traditional world recognises itself through quintessential architecture that hearkens to a pre-industrial Japanese landscape. As Tanizaki emphasised, traditional architecture [*Nihon kenchiku*] designs religious and social housing that shapes and organises shadows. On a similar principle, the Miyazakian ancient inhabits its space through the maintenance of a folkloric domain. Chihiro encounters ghosts as a dialogue with the culturally ancestral. Necessarily so, because this intervention of twilight is the only force capable of disrupting the pseudo-rationalism of the daily Pavlovian buy and devour consumerist trance.

As the film critically emphasises, and critics have noted, the crucial sacrament of recovery and redemption in *Spirited Away* is the riceball [*o-nigiri*], which Chihiro digests (rather than consumes) in order to prevent her own vanishing. *O-nigiri*, as talisman, nutrition, and symbol, is also the film's narrative realisation of cultural prosopopography. Rice grows due to collective agricultural relationships and practices that connect to many forms of communal identity. The importance of rice in all facets of Japanese life cannot be overstated or trivialised. One need only look at the older *kanji* for *ki* [spirit/life]: 氣. This character, used in countless Japanese idioms for expressing feelings, is composed of two elements: rice [*kome* – 米], which is being cooked in a pot, the steam rising [气]. Rice, as a form of both economic and social exchange, touches upon so many moments of socialization and ritual. As Hearn described, and is still the practice now, rice is a daily offering [*o-sonoe*] at *butsudan*, as well as a gift to ancestors during *o-Bon*. A bowl of rice is the seat for chopsticks of mourning at funerary rites . . . as any etiquette guide will tell you, impaling your chopsticks in a bowl of rice at the dinner table is incredibly bad form. Napier also documents a other associations between rice and communal relationships, including how *o-*

nigiri reminds of children's *bentô* boxes and maternal devotion (307). Rice is the essential Shintô ingredient that mediates blessings and favor between the divine and human realm. The special *sake* at the wedding ceremony is also representative of this. Rice is used to make *mochi* cakes, preferably through the pounding of a team effort, rather than the new machine made variety. And rice connects to numerous folktales: the story of the rabbit, the Seven Gods, and so forth. The list could go on, of course. The basic point is the unquestionable importance of this grain as a way to connect body to culture through digestion. Hence, the ecological overture to Yanagita's *TM* begins with a description of the shades and lushness of the rice paddies in a bountiful summer's day in Tôno. Documentary programmes on television such as *Nippon gohan kikô* [*Journeys into Japanese Rice*] explore the range in taste and production for this crucial grain. Its preciousness arises from generations of care, sharing, gratitude, and sympathy amongst people connecting agricultural practices with public ritual. For that reason, as well, rice could become a tax measure, a way of oppressing the farming class, as the Japanese feudal system had done.

Chihiro's initial feelings of disconnection lead a behaviour of contemporary selfishness: her family acts in an equally headstrong fashion, tending toward the voracious. So, when the ghost makes the rice offering, they reverse the pattern of *o-Bon*. The ancestral offers the past so as to revive the humanity of the present. Their rice offering, as antidote, is framed by a larger context of hospitality and health. Chihiro has stumbled into, and now performs rather menial labour for, an *o-bake no ryokan*: a Ghost's inn. Tidying is done with traditional brooms and other implements; and Chihiro's cleaning deliberately resembles monastic meditation practices performed through work. The *ryokan* features deliberately anachronistic imagery for ambience and amenities: *tatami* rooms, *geta* sandals, traditional diet, and such. Indeed, many inns of this type are known for the promotion of wellbeing and vitality. When certain waters are well known for their medicinal properties, guests will travel great distances to partake of the healing effects of the geothermal. As its architectural purpose implies, this ghost's *ryokan*, as ancestral house, provides shelter for the denizens of folklore and mythology in an antique structural design resplendent with Tanizaki's sense of pleasurable shadows.

Miyazaki's homage to traditional folktales is also apparent: the multitudes of spirits that Chihiro encounters are narrative embodiments of that Shintô sense of *yaoyorozu* [the

ghostly parade of the multitudes]. Chihiro accesses, through this ancestral house, those vast multitudes of *kami* who inhabit and relate to all natural phenomena. This notion of *spirited away* as a recovery through twilight, rather than an erasure through vanishing, importantly defines the informative possibilities contained within the ancestral. The mortal realm, in contrast, is one of fantasy and ignorance. As a foil to sugar snacks and chemical sweets, the rice ball both nourishes and restores Chihiro to an empowered, inter-relational self. *O-nigiri* contrasts with fast food indigestion, it being a more nutritious and less processed food. The shaping of *o-nigiri* by hand carries a message of care and deliverance. Chihiro's rice ball, like Satô's sword, enacts an actual, experiential participation in a relationship of beneficial exchange. The unreal beings *offer* (rather than sell) the very substantial thing that Chihiro needs to become authentic and alive. The critical image is that, as Chihiro begins to fade into nothingness, the riceball restores her materiality. One of Miyazaki's points is that the ragtag phantasmic monsters and spirits understand giving and relating, while contemporary-minded Chihiro does not. The intervention of these spirits is a kind of redemptive interlocution via apparition. Chihiro, in effect, reads in their faces an ancestral biography—the ghosts are dialogical forms that instruct in cultural identifiers and spiritual referents.

Miyazaki blends in this movie many different atmospheric elements—personages from *kaidan* [ghost stories], Shintô elements, as well as European folk imagery. A touch or two of Yanagita and Moto'ori pervades much of the film, as well as, perhaps, Yeats. The English translation, *Spirited Away*, is itself a neologism of Irish fairy abductions; and this phrase is still relatively common in the Irish vernacular.¹⁴² Miyazaki has taken the negative kidnapping from the “The Stolen Child” and presented an intercessory connection, through which the contiguous domains of spirit and matter interact to form a more complete sense of location and heritage. *Spiriting away* can have overtones of escape into the supernatural, either as a portal to spiritual recovery or a disappearance from the pit of reality into the dream of release. Many of Yeats's early poems see the result as negative, in so far as the kidnapped vanishes into absolute opaqueness. But, as Yeats also discovered, a deeper ontological understanding can result through negotiation with the culturally fantastic. So

¹⁴² Sayaka Ikuyama, a folk harper from Fukuoka, had returned from extended period in Galway studying Irish music. Upon returning to Japan, she saw Miyazaki's film, and so struck by its message – community and memory—as being built out of both Irish and Japanese folk traditions. Emphasising this combination, she composed an album describing her social experiences in Connacht as a kind of educational *spirited away*.

long as *spirited away* results in *recovered return*, a morphology renews the material through an interaction with twilight. Thus Miyazaki dramatises, through narrative and dialogue, what Yanagita claimed in “the ancestors are observing us from a hidden world” (qtd by Figal, 149).

This example from contemporary *anime*, in addition, has legendary resonance in that it reflects customs established in the performative realm of classical *nô*. A solitary wanderer undergoes an epiphanic, dramatic encounter with spirits and ghosts that leads to mutual amelioration. A trapped spirit is redeemed, or a wayward character is revitalised. In this case, with the film’s critique of global consumerism, the fantastic must necessarily reach into the so-called rational cycle of behaviour. The twilight transitions of this work, therefore, reinscribe Chihiro with recovered memory that gimmicky lifestyles, including even mobile phones and new laptops, cannot provide. The blank mask of her gluttonous self is reinscribed with heritage, achieved through ancestral recall and the ethics of inter-relationality with the local. Enchantment, responsibility, place, and personal obligation must necessarily work together in order to preserve both self and setting. This is the meaningfulness of *ryokan*, the traditional inn of hospitality, in providing rest and rehabilitation: this culturally specific site, and its customary hospitality, acts as the entryway into an aura of timelessness. Through its architectural dimensions and sensory engagements, the bath-house in particular becomes a dramatic space that revives intuitions of cultural recovery. The ancestral spirits, partially exiled as vanishing discourses, still exert a presence against postmodernity from their twilight world. Their previous enshrinement, through customs and ceremonies, at least offers a glimpse of those engendered senses of memory, place, and culture that they represent.

Thus, the principle underlying the performance of the ghosts is that they occupy a metaphysical space more rooted in the flow of history than floating psychological fixations of the present day (such as Chihiro’s point of view). Miyazaki accords the phantasm the same kind of humanity that Chihiro must rediscover. These beings emerge as coinciding with *tasogare*, the twilight interphase of appearance and disappearance that *CT* depicts as folkloric ephemera. When Chihiro’s physicality changes from presence into dissipating trace, she realizes in herself the very real possibility of vanishing. Such an ontological crisis causes her to reevaluate her own sense of spatiality, as well as increase her conscious attention to

self as interrelated with others. The film depicts the fluctuations of a dislocated self, effaced from tradition and removed from place, who loses grip on substantial livability.

Miyazaki intimates that this is a result of brand name consumerism, in which a global saturation of trans-national hamburgers and automobiles has attained the same stature as ancestors and artifacts. Transnational capitalism invades public spaces and personal minds with relentless versions of brand-name reality. In Miyazaki's discourse of the vanishing, the phantasms are exiles, resultant castoffs of spirit from the self-destructive pattern that makes finite resources into throwaway titbits. The *o-nigiri* then staves off this paper cup mentality of the throwaway. Children watching this movie, mindful of their Japanese mothers, would recall the concept of *mottainai* (not wasting). A common piece of parental wisdom is that to throw away a grain of rice also means to toss out the seven Gods contained therein: *hitotsubu no kome ni shichinin no kami ga yadoru*. With all of these associations in mind, the sacramental riceball, as linking the generations as well as the cycle of agriculture, returns Chihiro to substance.

With such details, Miyazaki locates in the landscape the *reijō* (sacred site / hallowed space) as the local ground for specifically enspirited presence. These culture inheritances, as myth and aura, promote correlative possibilities between spirit and matter, memory and place, person and people.¹⁴³ As long as the imagination seeks out a taste of twilight, the monomaniacal consumer urge might be offset. So, in regards to Napier's important question as to "whether such cultural recovery outside of the bathhouse is possible" (309), Miyazaki optimistically suggests that *yes, it is*. Conjuring a world so readily identifiable with traditional customs, distinguishable from plasma screen logos, at least promises an ecocritical reprieve. Miyazaki must have succeeded in some form of cultural recovery, as we are left with a firm notion as to what *Spirited Away* represents, even as we search and debate for the proper milieu to experience it. The moral underpinnings of Miyazaki's film keep the

¹⁴³ For another discussion of landscape in Yeats's drama, see Natalie Crohn Schmitt. Yeats was exacting in his depiction of local ruins, naturalistic elements, and geographic particularities for situating his play in a suggestive environment ambience. In this regard, he further develops an Irish system of *reijō* upon which dramatic events interact with the local scenery. Yeats considered multiple factors, including folkloric associations, flora and fauna, and the aura surrounding local ruins, graveyards, and other places of ancestral observance. His cataloguing of such details has similarities to Hearn, Yanagita, and Kyōka: haunted situational context are instrumental in creating the stagecraft of twilight, in that they possess that crucial *jidai no tsuya*. It is useful to think of Yeats's cartographic imagination, so essential to his drama, as having developed from the folkloric considerations of *CT* and other works.

fantastic close to the issues of the social. The ancestral mirror, made animates in this film, opens the space for debate and alternative outlooks. One only has to ask the rural communities of Japan: what does *Spirited Away* represent to you? As former Japanese prime minister Koizumi Jun'ichirô's privatisation policies have shown (2001-6), these traditional villages, in the rural margins, supposedly equally entitled to those vaunted guarantees of *modern conveniences*, are entirely expendable. When corporate restructuring becomes the mode for organising landscape, the investment favors go primarily to metropolitan locations. In such a process, which is evident at this very moment, local festivals and the lineage of craft become visibly denuded from the landscape as communities dry up in favor of the urban consumer index and its support of global economics. But *Spirited Away*, tremendously popular as it has become, draws attention to this process through fantastic narrative. In North America, Miyazaki's films are distributed by the superbrand Disney, which may seem to undermine the film's focus on the local and particular. Still, such distribution brought him a larger (English speaking) audience; and the affirmative message of the cultural space as resistance strikes a vibrant chord. Perhaps this accounts for the film's enormous popularity, in terms of audience numbers and scholarly attention.

I begin with this brief discussion of Miyazaki because he enacts in a widely embraced medium (*anime*) some of the same themes that had been previously explored and invoked by Akutagawa, Yeats, Hearn, and Yanagita. *Spirited Away* brings together, in the current cause and effect patterns of globalisation, those modernistic nuances of twilight, ancestral intervention, and locality that retrain traces of cultural processes across the flow of time. In artistic pursuit of this goal, Miyazaki may be said to have an artistic relationship to reimagining *nô* in the same way that Yeats did. His *anime* include certain subversive stylistics—the contractions within liminal spaces for cross-metaphysical communication—that owe a debt to evolving models that hearken to classical examples from *nô*. A *mythodology* of phantasmal drama stages a space of discovery and investigation that makes a dialogic dance that animates the archived folk story in relation to the present moment. *Anime*, like *nô*, involves a dynamic of audience and performance that emphasises the theme of the ancestral, as voice of the past, being capable of intervening into physical space.

Miyazaki also borrows frequently from European folktales; and this does not preclude Chihiro's recognition of cultural values located in a local venue. After all, as Akutagawa discovered, a multi-racial spirit world does not hinder understanding of the varieties, similarities, and differences in local cultural imaginations. Kon Satoshi's *Paprika* similarly explores how the urban technopolis can be readily fissured and breached by the paranormal and atemporal. Yeats's reworking of *immram*, the Irish genre of the wonder-journey, coincided with similar depictions in Japanese modernism as *the literature of the lost home*, leading to what Seiji Lippit also describes as a *return journey*.¹⁴⁴ *Spirited Away*, reminiscent of themes from the *Celtic Twilight* and *immram*, depicts a journey along territories that are caught in the process of disintegration. The ancestral and physical realms are interdependent, a connection demonstrated through the axis of an in-between space, the *ryokan*. In here, free communication between terrains of twilight and materiality takes place. This setting, defined by its ontological spectrum, shadows the changing landscape with its peripheral traces of heritage. The dust arising from progressive erasure in the physical world must settle elsewhere: the lustre of time, though wiped away, has not vanished altogether.

Yeats first described a situation of the fraught return in *WO*, in which he reversed the fantastic voyage, as an outward journey to a mystery isle, into the return search for a lost reality island (Ireland). These notions of a confounded return, of spatio-temporal distortion, are variations of the Urashima Tarô time/place/form paradoxes.¹⁴⁵ One returns to a home, but referents that mark landscape and community are so warped that the self becomes dissonance. The stripping away of culture thus entails an erasure of memory, a wiping away of the face in both landscape and subject. The connective layers of Tanizaki's lustre are brushed away, and with it familiarity, continuity, as well as a sense of historical placement. Memory morphs into dementia and amnesia. The pronounced effects, as represented by the vanishing of Oisín and Urashima Tarô, both as heroes who return to an unrecognisable home, are seen in their corporeal and psychical dissipation. As Yeats's fairies numbered amongst

¹⁴⁴ Even Abe Shinzô played with this theme, although in a kind of homeland security rhetoric, in a work entitled *To my Beautiful Country*.

¹⁴⁵ Stefan Tanaka's *New Times in Modern Japan* explores how, in the Meiji era, Japanese institutions adopted Western methods for the reckoning of time (and, by extension, the measuring of past as history). As Tanaka analyses, such adaptations had tremendous impact within various nodes of Japanese society.

them exiled humans, Miyazaki's character Kaonashi, the faceless ghost, represents an estranged individual shed of visible characterhood and particular individuality. Kaonashi's blankness can only be corrected through reciprocal human interaction: Chihiro's humane kindness towards him restores forms of personhood to his faceless spectre. Both ancestral and contemporary negotiate a restitution of identity through each other.

Interestingly, in regards to Kaonashi [顔無し], his semaphoric movements and plain white visage clearly mark him/her as reminiscent of a *nô* actor.¹⁴⁶ Its face, however, is blank (literally “face-without”) rather than masked. As such, Kaonashi exemplifies what Terasaki Etsuko, building from Paul de Man, argues is a key feature of *nô*: *prosopopoeia*. I think the term can be expanded from its basic usage of *speaking as another* to an enabling intercession that reclaims mouth and face for the vanished. Chihiro performs this service by recognising and interacting with the ancestral dimension: she restores, through *prosopopoeia*, the facial form of mouth and speech to the twilight. Likewise, Yeats's use of the mask, as restoring face/mask [*prosôpon*] to the ancestor, has similarities to this understanding of *nô*. Necromancy reclaims some of the expressions, features, and articulations of the disappeared subject.

Following this line of thinking, much of the ghostly *nô* involves a multi-metaphysical spectrum of identification and intercession. The allegorical principle behind *Spirited Away*, most clearly realised when Chihiro distinguishes her parents amongst the herd of swine, is that *prosopopoeia* gives shape, or restores identity, to a distorted personage. *Spirited Away* makes face-giving into a metaphysical dialogue. Chihiro reinstates the particulars of subjectivity to the spectral through her recognising of their space, and by making contact with their twilight existence. The spectral, in return, revivify her with their phantasmal powers, ones that are an energy of ancestral knowledge. In effect, each side of the ontological divide restores visage to the other. As such, a co-operation between spirit and matter can rebel against generalised effacement—the destruction of the local and particular. Together, the *face* of the landscape (and its people) returns as well. In *Spirited Away*, the *kawa no kami*, or river spirit, finds its face through being re-situated into its natural habitat, which Miyazaki depicts as an intermingling flow of spirit through water. Mythic-

¹⁴⁶ Murakami Haruki's novel *Afutâ dâku* [After Dark, 2004] also features an enigmatic nocturnal character named Man Without a Face.

topographies can be invocatory through associative patterns that maintain and reclaim events, entities, and communal investments in place, ones that also can be disremembered or disregarded. The conceptual possibilities of face-finding, as an imaginative recognition of time and place, had been a crucial motivation of Yeats's, from the earliest lyrical poems to the later ceremonial dramas. Although *anime* and *manga* generally include a lot of robots and schoolyard soap operas, there is also a pronounced trend of *mugen manga* that uses ink and word to portray the twilight, in a kind of theatrical engagement. Izumi Kyôka's style is a predecessor to Miyazaki in this regard by depicting the shapeshifting of place and time. Both have taken elements of *nô* and refracted them through their own lens of the *fushigi/fantastic*, either cinematic, pictorial, or literary.

Yeats can be understood alongside Miyazaki and Kyôka along these concepts of animating, of giving *prosopopoeia* to, the ancestral. Yeats's stagecraft took the two-dimensional storytelling of tale as text and situates it within the theatrical. One transitional line I have pursued in Yeats follows his early efforts in lyrical closet dramas, to ethnographic tales, and now into the performative possibilities of dance and music as drama. In the early poems, this occurs as a spontaneous, celebratory act of communal witnessing—such as in “The Fiddler of Dooney” or “At the Crossroads”. In *The Shadowy Waters*, the folk harp plucks a mesmeric power to transfigure normative modes of cognition. Yeats became increasingly interested in forms of dancing as representing the individual agency acting in operation with a chronotopic space. As the resolving image of “Among School Children”, the dance(r) embodies the general flow of cross-generational time in connection with local space. Kyôka and Yeats took ritualistic functions of dance, such as the *o-dori* associated with the *O-Bon* when the ancestor visits, as Hearn and Fenollosa had detailed. Since these performances coincide with major festivals, they have the virtues of traditional choreography as well as communal enhancement. Hearn and Yanagita, especially, documented these features in their writings as markers of local cultural patterns. Their impression was that the roots of theatrical custom derived from earlier public rituals and ceremonies, and the supernatural dialogue intended to be created. The agricultural nature of religious observance, in another way, fits in with Tanizaki's attention to dirt and soil as grounding particularities of performance.

Fenollosa, in the same current of enquiry, discusses the origins of Greek tragedy from within rites based upon religious duties. In this, he follows Nietzsche in finding the Hellenic notion of supernatural communication influencing communal drama. Japanese critics have also argued for similar comparisons. Nogami Toyochirô examined how Classical Greek drama and *nô* share a heritage from fertility rites and other forms of public ceremony. Greek religion and tragedy, Shinto and *nô*, combined in similar enough ways to justify a cross analysis between Aeschylus and Zeami, the most famous *nô* playwright. Movement and dance, as formative structure for the dialogue, is a central principle for Yeats. Fenollosa investigates the elements of *nô* drama as having also evolved out of Shinto religious festivals and practices:

The most certainly Japanese element of the drama was the sacred dance in the Shinto temples. This was a kind of pantomime, and repeated the action of a local god on his first appearance to men. The first dance, therefore, was a god dance; the god himself danced, with his face concealed in a mask. Here is a difference between the Greek and Japanese beginnings. In Greece the chorus danced, and the god was represented by an altar. In Japan the god danced alone. (108)

The incarnate dance Fenollosa identifies has been, as quoted earlier, the compelling feature that Mishima found as the similarity between *CT* and the *Kojiki*, the classical Japanese text. With these comparisons in mind, he explored the range of associations between Hearn, Yeats, and Tanizaki.

Dancing for Yeats had many practical and ceremonial implications: as part of communal festivities, as regional expressionism, or perhaps a metaphor for cyclical time, and so forth. The hypnotic trance of dance and chant brings the discarnate into a bodily presentation.¹⁴⁷ The notion that, in ceremonial drama such as *nô*, choreography represented an embodiment of a God-form or other vanished character, suggested techniques for emboldening twilight in a demonstrative way. Yeats's ongoing project of actualising the voice of the departed, how it communicates with the present, could be made attainable through this new genre that he was experimenting with. *Nô* techniques encouraged a method

¹⁴⁷ For a study of ritual dance in relation to ceremony and theatre, see Irit Averbuch's study on *yamabushi kagura*.

for implementing a polylogue on stage between the seen and unseen. Certainly, *CT* had previously provided Japanese authors with the same mechanism. Twilight, as constitutive space, would be both atmosphere and element for shaping this presentation of the phantasm as interconnected with landscape. Twilight, through which the stage becomes *chûkan* [the in-between] doubly exposes the physical and the phantasmal as equally apparent and intersected. In this, Yeats further developed a drama as being in praise of shadows. The initial procedures for such a stagecraft can be found in the lyrical poems such as *The Shadowy Waters* and the communal dialogues of *CT*. This innovative genre-space of twilight, explored early on in Yeats's lyrics, became more dramatically realised through the plays. It is not that Yeats wished to copy *nô* as world literature project for replication, but found, as other playwrights did, a space of paratemporal potentiality that this tradition had preserved and modernity might recover.

Likewise, Tanizaki has reached similar explorative conclusions about *nô* as the stagecraft of shadows in which the ancestral can be ensconced. *In'ei raisan*, the essay in praise of shadows, concludes with an elegy for twilight, a space that tries to locate architecturally and regionally a domain that preserves cultural continuity. *Nô*, according to Tanizaki in this work, both as stagecraft and as tradition conserves the shadow in the service of maintaining a trace of the past. His preceding subjects of time, architecture, culturality, and ancestry find their more conclusive articulation through the activity of *nô*:

The darkness enshrouding *nô* is a nascent beauty arising from its depths.
This quality makes for a distinct world of shadows [*in'ei no sekai*].
Now, in our day, such can only be found on a stage. Not to long ago,
these aesthetics were near at hand and part of daily life. (31)

In'ei raisan, following *CT*, asserts a defence of heritage and critiques the modern trends toward neglecting the past. As Tanizaki sees it, the gap between culture and personal practice is the critical issue. Retrieving shadows, he argues, is not a retreat from reality, but a commitment to ancestry. On similar principles, *Kyôka* and Yeats would fully develop a *shadowed stage* as the *sekai* [world, space] for spectral possibility. The separation of the long ago with the current day, or the shadowy ancestral with the mundane present, is overcome through the practice of a multi-linear perspective, attuned by stagecraft. The received genre of *nô* had been, historically, aristocratic, and Yeats had a degree of elitist

notions about his audience, also though in terms of intimacy. However, equally compelling was *nô*'s representative force in contemporary social models as a sudden anachronism: this quality of the relic genre could be harnessed so as to conjure the mystique of the temporal differential. Tanizaki, who had this sense like Yeats, described *nô* as an architecture of time and space. The form situates the ancestral as the performative, to be witnessed and testified. As the lingering traces of cultural predecessors—the unreal, twilight realm—the ancestral becomes visible to the audience, who in turn enable the prosopopoeia of the past as speech.

But Yeats, Tanizaki, and Kyôka were aware that something more than mere imitation of the classical *nô* canon was required. Responsive innovation was more important than duplicating, exactly and mechanically, the older conventions. The developments of twentieth-century twilight drama did what Pound required: it made it new. And, while invoking the traces and methods of the past, this classical sensibility becomes re-narrativised through the contemporary avant-garde. The perceptible voicing of movements of cross-metaphysical relationships could be staged in such a way as to make necromancy a testimonial encounter. Anachronism acted as a strategy for staging the blend of ancient and contemporary: the drama of a classical present, ancestral and modern in negotiation.

Yeats, and he bears comparison to Miyazaki for this, found a phantasmal potentiality suggested by the classical canon of both Irish and Japanese literature. A precedent existed in both *immram* and *nô* for the ghostly to be made accessible as an experiential possibility. The mediumship of drama could be an apostrophising project, one that names and restores speech to the dispossessed. As activating this power, the ghost plays [*mugen*] from *nô* in particular had been most appealing, not just to Yeats, but Kyôka, or the current master of tattoo [*irezumi*], Horiyoshi III, who has a rather mystical sense of what happens when he inks images of the apparitional into people's skins. The phantasmal *nô* made use of dramatic architecture and theatrical choreography to open portals for the discarnate to appear. It is no accident that both Yeats and Kyôka, the premier developer of twilight drama in twentieth century Japan, had initially started with the folk-tale as the platform for the shadows. The voice of the ghost, as connected to lore of locality, had always been for them a rebellious articulation against models of rational authority. Yeats often describes apparitions as a rhetorical strategy:

Because there is safety in derision

I talk about an apparition,
 I took no trouble to convince,
 Or seem plausible to a man of sense. (“The Apparition” 1-4)

The phantasmal, in its ancestral seriousness, stands against the mockery and rejection of utilitarianism. But folktales operate on their own genre principles. Twilight drama recontextualizes the lore by acknowledging both the original location, presented through the enplacement strategy of the representative stage. The chronotropic attributes of the fantastic stage not only talk about an apparition, but allow the apparition to talk, from its vantage point in the past. The multi-metaphysical stage removes some demarcated periphery that separates rational cognition. The zones of the natural and supernatural are represented as contiguous and continuous, exactly the same metaphysic that *CT* had pursued.

Both Yeats and Kyôka found in *mugen nô* a rich, realised tradition of twilight ambience. Classical Japanese drama includes, of course, a vast variety of themes and depictions of reality, which the critic Konparu Kunio roughly divides between genres of the phenomenal and the phantasmal. *Mugen nô* is a form of phantasmal *nô* that operates according to alternative agencies: spirits, god-forms, ancestors and such can operate within and without of normative space and time, and thus be accessible for both recall and revelation. The breadth of *nô* categories concerns, of course, more matters than the topic of ghosts. However, the sub-genres that incorporate a framework of irrealism clearly appealed to playwrights of a particular temperament. These distinctions for twilight preferences had always been a consideration for scholars. Japanese critics in the modern period, such as Haga Yaichi and Sakaki Nobutsuna, who edited the multi-volume of *nô*, *Kôchû yôkyoku sôsho* (1913-1915), had also emphasised the spectral quality of *nô* in their commentaries and annotations.

Thus, keeping in mind that Japanese authors such as Kyôka and Mishima developed alternative *nô* formats, in relation to crossways communication between Irish and Japanese art, there is no need to describe Yeats’s plays as *nô* drama at all. Irish *nô*, Celtic *nô*, such terms will invariably disappoint, mislead, and indeed misconstrue the innovations, and agendas, that Yeats and his contemporaries had pursued. In fact, the argument that Yeats had intended any of his plays to be a genuine fusion of *Celtic Nô* has become something of a red

herring that diverts too much of our attention.¹⁴⁸ Yeats employs the term “Noh” to his works only on a limited number of occasions, rather breezily, in his personal writing. Yet the phrase “Celtic Noh” or “Irish Noh” has become utterly prevalent in English language criticism in assessing Yeats’s failure to match early modern standards of Japanese drama. The fraught usage of *nô* has led to all kinds of attempts to read in Yeats a justification for purity or authenticity. No doubt, Yeats found inspiration, and development, from classical drama in a way entirely similar to Japanese playwrights. But Yeats’s *neo-nô* had no more intention of obeying regulatory prescriptions than did Mishima’s *kindai nô* [modern *nô*] or Kyôka’s *nô* influenced works. Indeed, rather than classical *nô*, most of Yeats’s informants had been proponents of *shinpa*, or new style, drama.¹⁴⁹ And this bigger picture, and its modernist context, needs to be kept in mind. In terms of probing the possibilities of contemporary art, the literary traffic was going both ways between Ireland and Japan in particular. Hinatsu Kônosuke developed a kind of Japanese Romanticism from Wilde and Poe. Saijô Yaso found in the Irish folk song a format for developing modern *min’yô* [folk song] lyrics. Much of Izumi Kyôka’s theorisation of twilight, discussed below, are informed by Yeats. And Mishima had translated Yeats’s plays as some of his earliest practices as an author. That *CT* inflected the nuances of *In’ei raisan*, or Akutagawa’s writing, should thus be no more curious or questionable than that *nô* drama stimulated the creative vision of a major Irish dramatist. With these examples in mind, Yeats acted prominently and critically to foster

¹⁴⁸ In private correspondences, as in a letter to John Quinn (July 23, 1918), Yeats casually refers to certain plays as “noh” (*L* 651). See also a letter to Lady Gregory (September 8, 1917). But this does not necessarily mean he saw his drama as point for point pure reproductions.

Itô’s production of *At the Hawk’s Well* in New York gave Yeats mixed feelings. On one hand, as he wrote to John Quinn on 23 July 1918, the conventional American theatre did not match his ideal of a venue (*L* 651-2). But, Yeats adds, “Ito and his Japanese players should be interesting” (*L* 651). Edmund Dulac provided a brief review of the performance, noting that “rightly or wrongly” the Japanese cast inspired a certain kind of confidence. Itô’s *At the Hawk’s Well*, neither endorsed nor forbidden, aroused Yeats’s curiosity with the possibility of his drama being adopted interculturally, arranged innovatively, and therefore further adopted by contemporary aesthetics, even at the expense of his own personal views. As noted in this chapter, *At the Hawk’s Well* continues to be restaged in many different forums.

In correspondence, in fact, Yeats would use the word “noh” only a few other times in reference to himself, again to Lady Gregory (eg April 10, 1921), and lastly to Edmund Dulac (October 14, 1923):

. . . perhaps produce a Noh play if Civil War does not start again . . . (*L* 700).

Thus, Yeats only applied *nô* suggestively to his drama in limited, private usage. After only a brief period of imagining with this conceptual label, Yeats seemingly abandoned any further self-references to his work as *nô* since the early 1920s.

¹⁴⁹ *Shinpa*, more technically, was a modernist movement that combined elements from *kabuki* with more contemporary developments in drama. As a transitional movement, *shinpa* notably combined the classical tradition with innovations, including influences from the European nineteenth-century stage.

intercultural transmissions that gave rise too all kinds of observable patterns of modernist development in Japanese literature, and vice versa. Preferable to “Celtic noh”, if by that we mean somehow Irish texts can somehow perfectly imitate Japanese drama, would be a descriptive term that locates Yeats’s drama in its proper stylistic context: those conceptual theatrics that combined anachronism with contemporary twilight into new formats of performance.

I would like to move away from the customs of comparing and contrasting. This form of critique mistakenly evaluates Yeats as hoping to configure a “Celtic” *nô*, one replicated entirely from a static Japanese template and a patrilinear *iemoto* [household system] tradition. Classical *nô* has, of course, both of these qualities, established modes of performance and institutional operators who preserve them; but many contemporary *nô* actors in twentieth-century Japan did not feel constrained by older rules either. Yeats need not have had a definitive intention to mimic *nô* formulae entirely, or even correctly, or that he even thought such a reproductive transaction was possible. Whether or not Yeats wrote authentic *nô* very much begs the question as to whether he wrote *nô* facsimiles in the first place. Influence does not mean confluence. *Nô* conventions were suggestive, and, as Satô notes many times in his book, Yeats had a strong admiration for classical Japanese literature. But his own attention to the locals and particulars of Ireland, as well as the matrix of his own imagination, led to his own style.

But in appreciating that *nô* did suggest influential aesthetics to twilight modernists, I am arguing that the useful comparison is not Zeami, but someone like Izumi Kyôka. His twilight interphasings in drama suggest a Japanese avant-garde whose concerns for cultural landscapes matched with Yeats. Kyôka’s *neo-nô* are similar to Yeats for a number of reasons. The pair of them demonstrated that a contemporary playwright, working through anachronism, lore, and local myth, does not have to slavishly follow the formalism of previous, generic conventions. It is clear that Kyôka and Yeats, with their phantasmal inclinations as well as modern stylisations, found that elements of *nô* could be reinterpreted as part of a broader strategy for unrealistic dramaturgy. Both had in mind the rapid transformation of the local, regional landscape. Kyôka, like Yeats, sought those portals from which the culturally ancestral could emerge still intact. One of his central declarations, entitled *The Taste of Twilight* [*Aji no tasogare*], contemplated the ways for making *twilight*

into a tangible sensation. This has a Yeatsian feel to it; Yanagita and Akutagawa, and previously discussed, brought *twilight* into Japanese literary modernism, as a thematic concept, based on *CT*. Kyôka further queried the twilight possibilities, turning like Yeats to drama. How does one taste twilight? Kyôka asks. How does the folkloric and the ancestral erect a framework of praiseworthy twilight, the traces of the ancestral, alongside rapid modernity? What form do vanishing voices take, and where do we locate them?

Yeats struggled with these same issues, experimenting with different aesthetic strategies. Undoubtedly, Yeats's concept of the theatre underwent considerable evolution during the period of 1913-1917; major influences on him during this time did include the traditional dramatics of Japan, as understood and presented by Ezra Pound and others. The interest in non-Western theatre traditions pervaded much of the avant-garde drama, throughout the early modern period, in such authors as Antonin Artaud and Bertolt Brecht. Like these contemporaries, Yeats had limited access to cultural information and observation of Asian performances. Their archaeology of dramatic performance could not attain any scholarly completeness.¹⁵⁰

Yeats and Neo-Nô: Mimicry or Reinvention?

When it comes to Yeats and Japan, critics often cannot help but make puns, about *knowing nô* or *orienting the orient*, to describe his apparently problematised relationship with Japanese art. Yeats's relationship to *nô*, as an inauthentic one, has been a problem for some commentators. The compare and contrast critique sets Yeats's works directly against classical *nô* as a false circularity of *Japaneseness*. To accomplish this comparison of authenticity and forgery, a critic might first offer a cursory overview of what constitutes classical *nô*, with Zeami as the exemplar. This is then followed by a checkmarked consideration of Yeats's plays as implementing, or not implementing, this standard. The verdict follows quickly. Yeats, invariably, falls short against true tradition, and becomes another casualty of *japonism*. For example of this method, which has been used repeatedly,

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P.G. O'Neill remarked in a book review that the analysis of Yeats and its relation to Japanese dramatics "must have been the subject of more graduation theses than any other single topic" (452).

Sylvia C. Ellis shows how “an analysis of the characteristics of this genre [*nô*] will act as reference and yardstick with which to measure the poet’s own writings” (113). Ellis’s own yardsticks, however, are English language translations and English language commentaries. Like many commentators in the West evaluating Yeats, she makes no use of Japanese language materials.¹⁵¹ Thus, while appreciating Yeats’s plays and offering much in the way of insight, she must evaluate them as being less pure than the Japanese models.

Ishibashi Hirô has a command of the Japanese source materials and brings these as evidentiary source material in questioning Yeats’s methods. Ishibashi, with Iwata Miki being two of the few critics to write in both Japanese and English on this topic, has demonstrated that the dialogue structure of Yeats’s plays is a poorer simplification of legitimate *nô* speech arts. To criticise the illegitimacy of Yeats’s variation of *nô*, Ishibashi must rely on a concept of “Japanese beauty”, a term he uses frequently. Ishibashi’s linguistic study develops a comprehensive analysis of the stylistic mandate which defines the original Japanese libretti of *nô*. The Irish “noh”, in the English language, betrays the standard set by the source material through its clumsy attempts at translated duplication. Importantly, as Ishibashi reminds us, we must keep in mind that the ways in which Yeats (and others such as Kyôka) understood Zeami do not accurately reflect how Zeami understood his own artform, and its particular functions within the social conventions and audiences specific to that era. Moreover, to be sure, if we compare the style of language between Classical Japanese and twentieth century Hiberno-English, gaps and slippages will appear. But we need not overly cluck our tongues on this point, as Yeats does not position himself as either an authority on Zeami. In terms of reformulation, Yeats’s plays demonstrate innovation, rather than a passive redactions of a received form. If we do not acknowledge this sense of invention, then we again lose sight of the intercultural context he worked in, one based on contemporary influences and current cultural predicaments.

¹⁵¹ Curiously, Ellis seems to think that Koizumi Yakumo/Lafcadio Hearn are two different people: “the latter being a fanatical Japonophile who left the United States of America to set up home, married a Japanese wife . . . without, however, ever directing his attention to her [Japan’s] theatre” (125-126). Hearn, in fact, was aware of *nô*, and found it quite intimidating. Writing to a student, he described “the enormous labour that would be required to prepare a few of these for western readers” (Ichikawa 250)

Recently, Sakate Yôji has composed several *neo-nô* dramas that are based on Hearn’s texts. For production notes, see <http://www.alles.or.jp/~rinkogun/e.kamigami.html>.

Such an intertextual outlook topics allow us to avoid also the other extreme, in which *nô* is viewed as having little impact on Yeats in the longterm. Critics such as J. L. Styan, sidestepping issues of appropriation, argue that the *nô* influence on Yeats was entirely minimal. Plays such as *At the Hawk's Well* should be thought of as another example of European symbolist drama. But this also overlooks the continuum of literary exchange between Ireland and Japan in the early twentieth century. Genre and convention are important tools of analysis, but to my mind it is thematic concepts and cultural predicaments from which the plays arise that seem to be the strongest links between Yeats and Japanese literature.

There are important points to be made about classical *nô*, of course. We might even thank Yeats for helping to instigate the ongoing interest in the West for this artform. And, after all, the question as to what constitutes the pure or authentic, in the insular world of the *nô* households, has been a subject of intense debate. Eric C. Rath in the *The Ethos of Noh* documents the conflict over genealogy that has been a crucial motivation in social-historical development of form. Which school, or which headmaster, has the true spirit of Zeami? There is no clean yardstick to ascertain which *hiden* [secret tradition] most fully maintains the knowledge of the original source.

Perhaps the most thoroughly charted set of comparisons can be found in Sekine Masaru and Christopher Murray's *Yeats and the Noh: A Comparative Study*. They show, with sensitive attention to stagecraft and theatrical conventions, Yeats's various debts to Japanese drama, which they find to be almost point for point in some of his works. First, *mô* is introduced, its constitutive terminology explained (*waki*, *shite*, etc). Then, Yeats's plays are arranged categorically against a particular *nô* as his formative model. This is informative, certainly, and their research provides much care in considering the conventions of classical *nô* as reimagined by Yeats. Many similarities do exist, and influences and emulations can be traced. But in this study little or no reference, unfortunately, is made to contemporary Japanese drama of his time. While acknowledging the great amount of work done on Yeats and *nô*, I am arguing that the context of modernist playwright in Japan further emphasises the conjunctions between Yeats and other forms of contemporary, derivative *nô*. Of course, there will invariably be an unbalance when a modernist play is measured presumptively authentic (historical) original. It is almost like trying to answer the question whether the

boxer Muhammad Ali could beat Joe Lewis, two champions from different eras. The conditional circumstances that situate such a theoretical contest are too dissimilar. However no one can deny the skill and ability of these men as boxers, in the sport of boxing.

Certainly, we do need to keep in mind, in positing the stature of tradition, how cheap knockoffs trivialize complex art, ones that have enormous cultural meaning. As Harry Partch said of his own *nô* influenced work, “It would be senseless of me to follow a path of superficial duplication” (355). What is duplication, and what is received tradition, has been under increased scrutiny in twenty-first century Japan and Ireland. Technological facsimiles have intensified the tension between claims to a legitimately authentic paradigm from the past, and facsimile anarchy in which copies enable copies, and forgeries lead to more forgeries. Just where can the standard be found? What is custom, as something inherited that denotes a continued tradition, and what is costume-playing, which is just impersonation based on superficial accoutrements? Many virtual realities now enable the *cosplay* as a hobby of imitation. Consider how *miko* [shrine maidens] and *maiko* [apprentice *geisha*] have become weekend simulations for some. One needs only a bit of instruction and the money to hire a kit and acquire the veneer of pageantry. But does this prove that all of tradition is easily Xeroxed, and therefore constitutionally superficial to begin with? In a recent article on the rigorous training of *miko*, a priest at Kanda Myôjin stated, “*Cosuplay dewa zettai mane no dekinai miko no utsukushii kokoro o shite moritai.*” [Cosplayers cannot imitate the refinement of the *miko* spirit] June 24, 2007 (*Yomiuri Shinbun* 25). *Nô*, similar to the duties of *miko*, demands incredible dedication and attention. Its actors attune themselves to an intense *shugyô* [strict training] that requires utmost perseverance to master the intricacies of the form. Forgeries of this art form, to a culturally knowledgeable audience, will be easy to spot. But, in comparison to custom and ceremony in these artforms, I do not regard Yeats’s drama as “*nô*” *cosplay*; and I believe he was fully aware that his drama could never replicate nor repeat, in some Hibernian way, the classical dramas of Japan.

Yeats is different from the other preliminary *nô* enthusiasts of his time (Waley, Péri) in that he was a playwright, rather than a scholar. His *neo-nô* can be read as innovative, intercultural theatre scene that represented expanding literary knowledges of East and West from the perspective of artistry. In this, he was a pioneer, who augmented Waley and Péri’s efforts to present *nô* textually. Yeats’s *nô* have served as points of appreciative investigation.

Richard Emmert, a Western *nô* performer and researcher, has found sufficient power in Yeats to produce *At the Hawk's Well* in Japan, following a classical format. Further pursuing Yeats as a model example for stylistic progress, Emmert instrumentally prepared a recent performance in a “Canadian *nô*”, written by Daphne Marlatt, in collaboration with Emmert and Matsui Akira. Under their collaborative efforts, *The Gull* was staged for several performances in Richmond, British Columbia, 2006. *The Gull*, as Marlatt saw it, was about both adherence to and departure from classical *nô*. As a contemporary play, an interactive product of Japanese and Canadian artists, the performance benefits through the development of cross-cultural modulations. Marlatt, interviewed in the March, 2006, issue of the Japanese-Canadian magazine *The Bulletin*, found that cooperation leads to invention:

i've [sic] written this in a more naturalistic and less stylized way – after all, these are Japanese Canadian fisherman in the 50s, not classical warrior poets (26).

Matsui Akira, in the play's performance programme, sees such *neo-nô* as important achievements of interculturality:

I hope the art of Noh will serve to foster a greater friendship between the two cities and that it will further teach the people in Japan about the hardship suffered by the Japanese who immigrated to Steveston. (5)

Thus, Emmert also states, “It is my wish that Noh too will prosper outside of Japan. I feel that the possibility has increased with this performance of *The Gull*” (5). The viability of the Steveston Noh Project, and its noted success, came from the inclusion of Japanese, American, and Canadian performers. The Steveston Noh Project builds upon, not overwrites, such traditions. *The Gull* is a product of that cross-fertilisation of artforms that has enabled new takes on traditional style, responding to diverse historical issues. In this case, *The Gull* addressed the initial generations of Japanese who worked in the British Columbia fish industry, their homesickness, and their new legacy in their adopted home.

Yeats, unfortunately, did not have access to the kinds of human resources, in terms of expertise and experience, that Marlatt had. One of his major informants, Itô Michio, often suggested to be a charlatan (Lennon 423), provided Yeats the experience of *shinpa* that

would most help his drama to develop its own character, not imitate the inimitable.¹⁵² Itô, and other Japanese of Yeats's acquaintance, did have a degree of *nô* experience. It should be remembered that *nô* chanting has been a popular exercise, and many amateurs were capable of delivering fine enough renditions. In London, Yeats and Pound benefited from the presentations of Kayano Nijûichi, Gun Torahiko, and Kume Tamijurô, who chanted *uatibon* [*nô* texts] for their edification (1915).¹⁵³ However, Itô, being ultimately a proponent of modern drama and experimental choreography, provided a catalysing influence on Yeats that a more dogmatic *nô* performer could not have. Itô believed in alternative theatrical possibilities in the spirit of comparativism, and so arranged Western and Japanese elements into a new aesthetics that, in some ways, anticipated the development of *butô* dance, an avant-garde style, in postmodern Japan. Since Itô had knowledge of tradition, but was not entrenched in any overly orthodox codes, he helped Yeats in matters of creative departure. In his productions of Yeats and *Kyôka*, and its telling that he studied both playwrights, Itô employed innovative techniques of movement to convey a haunting atmosphere. He, too, shared in the stagecraft of twilight. Itô may not have been an expert on *nô*, an insider with a lineage to certify him; however, his versatility as a performer was exactly the kind of support most useful to Yeats's and *Kyôka*'s own spectral experiments. As his biography shows, Itô Michio produced the premier of *Tenshu monogatari* [*The Legend of the Castle Tower*] in 1951, one of Izumi *Kyôka*'s most renowned plays. Moreover, Itô's use of unsettling costumes, and unorthodox choreography, can be seen a predecessor to what would become the angelology of Tatsumi Hijikata's concepts of surrealistic dance. Another important aspect of Itô's aesthetics was his sense of the *dance poem*, in which stylised movements articulate, through gesture, a kind of verse narrative. Clearly, Yeats and he shared a common point of view on this subject; and Ito's choreography helped to stage the kind of motions Yeats had

¹⁵² Some of Itô's autobiographical details can be found in Oshima, and a full version in Japanese, *Utsukushiku naru kyôshitsu* [*A Classroom for Beauty's Becoming*]. Helen Caldwell has written a biography of him in English, *Ito Michio: The Dancer and the Dance*. In Japanese, see Fujita Fujio's *Itô Michio: Sekai o mau*, [*Dancing the World*]. A translation of Caldwell has also been made: *Itô Michio: Hito to geijitsu* (tr. Nakagawa).

¹⁵³ See Sanehide for a collection of Kume's notes and essays in regards to his friendship with Pound and Yeats. Kume had a considerable knowledge of classical *nô*, and evidently assisted Pound in translation and other editorial matters.

described only textually. What becomes apparent then is how a shared motivation, based on folklore and avant-garde theatre, further enhanced the linkages between Japan and Ireland. Itô deserved credit for bringing technical expertise, through his knowledge of the stage, to enhance those concepts of performance that Yeats experimented with since the early 1890s. *CT*, as previously discussed, relies on a public staging for locating listening and speech in the landscape. Through the inspiration of *nô*, these sensibilities would be elaborated into the speech-dance of physical drama, also attuned to geographic particularities.

Yeats, while limited in his “Japanese” materials, pioneered a kind of drama to which contemporary *neo-nô* playwrights, such as Marlatt, acknowledge. His emphases on masks and movement, as well as folklore and setting, developed a ritualistic style that went beyond European symbolism. Critics may take issue with Yeats’s fidelity to pre-modern genres (and this criticism thus could be extended to any of the other post-*nô* hybrids). Yeats is open to this, because he was a groundbreaking designer for a form of modern theatre, in English, that has grown continuously over the last century. Because of its difficult conceptual figurations, Japanese writers and critics have found such plays as *At The Hawk’s Well* extraordinarily interesting. Mishima Yukio, while working in an aircraft factory, translated *At the Hawk’s Well* into a kind of Classical Japanese and considered this project as one of his most useful during the war years.¹⁵⁴ Yokomichi Mario developed two adaptations of this play so as to demonstrate the intricate dimensions of its performative ambience. His first version, *Izumi* (1949), staged the play in a faithfully *nô* production. The later version, *Takahime* (1967), in a freer format, explores the play’s equally suggestive versatility and avant-garde possibilities. From Yokomichi’s examples, we see that Yeats’s “noh” contained realisable elements for both classicists as well as modernists in Japan and elsewhere. Thus, we need not be overly meticulous in ascertaining, as Richard Taylor posits it, “the accuracy of the transmission” in Yeats’s *nô*.

¹⁵⁴ Munkata Ueda is a prolific actor and playwright who has translated and thoroughly adapted Shakespeare into a *nô* style, including arranging the iambic meters into a suitable format of chant. He has lectured often on Yeats and Eliot, and adopted *Murder in the Cathedral* into a kind of traditional *nô* stylistics. For more information, he has a personal website, including several pictures of performances:
<http://www002.tokai.or.jp/noh/english.html>

Conversely, how useful would it be to claim that Mishima fails to incorporate legitimate French decadence into his play *Sado kôshaku fujin* [*Madame de Sade*],¹⁵⁵ or how Kabuki versions of *Medea* make a hash of Euripides? It seems to me that, following Tony Harrison's way of reshaping Greek tragedy in his own dramas, a Kabuki *Medea* offers a reinterpretation, a renarrativisation, rather than a quintessential rebirth. The negotiation of the ancestral voice, as speaking in the here and now, constantly challenged any attempt to either stabilize a view of the past, or to reject it. Instead of evaluating Yeats against the early modern dramaturgy of *nô*, we might see him within the burgeoning field of new-style drama that developed in Japan—under the influence of Chekov, Wilde, Ibsen, Yeats, and Maeterlinck. In Japan, European symbolist drama has, at times, coincided with traditional myths and classical drama to create multi-layered space of non-realist performance. Of the many writers engaged in this sense, Izumi Kyôka may or may not be incorporating Symbolism into his work. But he does bear a striking resemblance to, if also a degree of influence from, some of Yeats's earlier formulations on the situating of liminality as the zone of twilight. Regionality and folklore unite in this staged space, to be encountered and negotiated, as the performance of ancestrality fading from the audience's view.

The phantasmal—the spectralisation of the actor into a phase of twilight—is an important conceptual framework that both Yeats and Kyôka carried from prose into drama. Kyôka—especially in plays such as *Uta andon* [*The Lantern Song*—works with elements of the *nô* in an avant-garde staging. Classical *nô* might suggest a ceremonial, if also liturgical, relationship to space and time; and its origins in agrarian rituals of the countryside continued as folkish components in theme and scenario, even as the artform became the entertainment for warrior elite, as Konparu assesses in detail. Kyôka represents a reclaiming of the *fushigi* [mysterious] from those socio-historical situations that had turned folklore and mystery into a pastime for an exclusive club. Kyôka explored the ontological multiplicity that hints of *nô* could emphasise. This became another element for a thematic twilight/*tasogare* that employs the oneiromantic as a contrary strategy.

¹⁵⁵ Compare, for example, the findings of two different PhD dissertations: Linda Sue Grimes, “W. B. Yeats's Transformation of Eastern Religious Concepts” (Bali State University, 1987), which sees Yeats as ignorant of Eastern religions; and Chiba Yoko, “W. B. Yeats and Noh” (University of Toronto, 1988), who reads Yeats's “noh” drama as explorations of Suzukian Zen.

I engage in these discussions to explore the limits of the compare and contrast scholarship which measure Yeats against classical *nô*. This body of analysis has nonetheless brought needed attention to the subject of Yeats's relationship with Japan. Tutorial terms such as *shite* and *waki*, technical vocabulary for understanding *nô* in relation to Yeats, are useful for understanding similar formats for actors as working from specific roles. Yet such terms can also limit our expectations of how Yeats's drama function uniquely. Other possibilities for understanding Yeats's relationship to Japanese literature remain yet to be explored.

In thinking of Yeats's use of staged twilight, and its influence and confluences with other Japanese dramatists in the intertextual relationships of Ireland Japan, we have a fresh way of appreciating the accomplishment of his drama. *Nô* was not so much a set of conventions, but could be a form of suggestive twilight ambience in which Yeats's sense of the ancestral might be made visible in a paratemporal stagecraft. Japanese scholars have identified this atmospheric sensibility of *nô* as shadows and spirits. In detailing how *nô* links varying time periods to the singularity of place, Konparu Kunio has shown that the actors can be situated in a complex stagecraft of multiple-dimensionality. *Nô*, as a staged metaphysic, suggested thematic textures for encountering the paranormal, as voicing the vanishing or displaced, that could be brought into the present.

Yeats and Kyôka's *neo-nô* derive technical and thematic mannerisms from the classics. In terms of ancestral recall, of negotiating and discussing with the phantasm, trends in *nô* had provided spatial apparatus and dramatic techniques to create a theatrical transmutation of the time-space continuum. The actors and audience both participate in this emergent space of alternative realities. Using the descriptive category of *phantasmal nô*, Konparu analyses certain plays as based upon distorting phenomenon: oscillating time, reversed time, soul-body ruptures, and so forth. Not surprisingly, Yeats was drawn to the *nô* category which included mysterious interactions and shadowy textures [*mugen*], most often with a *genius loci*. These same elements and considerations coincided with formative atmospheres as developed in *CT*, *WO*, and other earlier works. But dramaturgy could take the uncanny landscapes of the poetry, or the anecdote of a short and story, and place it on a stage, endowed with a theatrical aspect. *Nô*, as phantasm, contained multiple intervals of spatial distance, chronological relationships, and geographic references. These became an

informative schematic for rethinking stagecraft. Konparu's terms for the metaphysical dynamics of *nô* thus follow closely some of Yanagita, Yeats, and Kyôka's own theories for realizing *in-between-ness* [*chûkan*]. For example, in a sense not altogether different from Yeats's gyres, Kyôka had theorised in his stories a kinetic model of time and space as overlapping circles. For him, the theoretical design of the *neo-nô* stage sought to address the fissure that separates the past from the present. Yanagita, under a Yeatsian influence theorised *kawatare-doki* [twilight time], in which necromantic frequencies became available for accessing the ancestral. Kyôka, also under the spell of *The Celtic Twilight*, developed his aesthetic of *tasogare no aji* [the taste of twilight]. The culmination of twilight as concept, twilight as practice, and twilight as reality become most fully realised in drama. Because, for both Yeats and Kyôka, the stage permitted a *twilight phasing*, the spectrum of shadows and light, ancestor and contemporary, heritage and modernity. *Neo-nô* exemplifies the chiaroscuro domain as the interplays between supernatural and natural, chronos and topos.

Kyôka had developed an atmospheric twilightness of such vivid reflection that Akutagawa, and others, had identified the atmosphere with its crafter, the *Kyôka no sekai*: a Kyôkaian worldview of atmospheric attributes. Kyôka's manifesto for liminality, his praise of shadows, is the above mentioned essay *Tasogare no aji* [The Taste of Twilight]. As is frequently noted, the Japanese word *aji* suggests both taste, as the sense of flavor, as well as taste, as a feeling or attitude. Kyôka asserts that twilight, as contiguous presence to the flow of history, demands our attention. We must, consciously, develop our supersensual capacity to feel out the shadows, to detect the phantasmal connections in physical settings—much in the manner of *CT*.

Twilight, for Kyôka and Yeats, is neither metaphor nor metonymy, but a magnitude of in-between-ness. As Kyôka describes, twilight is “the phase which exists as neither darkness nor light . . . the space of darkness emerging from light . . . it is a shame of our time and place that people think and do with no acknowledgment of a place besides darkness or light” (29:683).¹⁵⁶ In regards to previous discussions of the lustre of time, Kyôka's taste for

¹⁵⁶ The difficult to translate idiom *aji ga aru* expresses this meaning of a tinge or feeling, as a *taste*. For example, a piece of calligraphy may convey a certain dignity, even if its technical qualities are poor. Figal found *Tasogare no aji* of such critical importance that he uses this essay as the overture to his study on Japanese modernity (1-7).

twilight connects with Tanizaki's lament for disappearing shades or shadows, or Yeats's many statements on the perceptibly ghostly as ancestrality. The persistence of cultural memory exists in the numinous traces of exchange, as the aura they conjure.

A theatrical performance, then, might transliterate and transcribe this twilight mode into a visible facility of balanced light and darkness. Similar to *Kyôka*, Yone Noguchi had understood the difficulty in manifesting *atmosphere* as a metaphysical strategy:

. . . the most intense atmosphere of grayness, the most suggestive color in all Japanese art, which is the twilight soared out of time and place. (Hakutani 17)

To taste the twilight, and have an affinity for its spectrum, is to enter into a non-empirical sensitivity for the murky nuances of the peripheries of place and community. So much of Yeats's work on the ancestral involved the circumstantial metaphysic of the changeling, the fairy as a transformed entity cast away into twilight through historical development. Yeats *neo-nô* continues on from his earliest essays on twilightism. His drama further develops alternative topographies, exploring the same dynamic of non-linear time and inter-dimensional contact that filled *WO* or the wanderings of Aengus. Twilight, as temporal rebellion, locates blurred points within chronological modules or cartographic modernity. The imagination, the *aji*, intervenes to uncover the vanished. Yeats's early lyrics poems, and his later drama, are hermeneutics as well as performances of shadows and ancestry as interchangeable species, interfacing with space and time.

At a recent lecture and performance by the Uzawa Noh Troupe in Vancouver, Uzawa Hise emphasised the phantasmal semiotics that constitute the *nô* stage as a ritualized space.¹⁵⁷ The architectural framework is intentionally reminiscent of a Shinto shrine. The bridge leading onto the *nô* stage [*hashigakari*] demarcates a transition into a liminal world in which time behaves more freely. The *torii*-like entryway, which resembles the gate found at the entrance to Shintô shrines, is a portal through which phenomenon and phantasm can cross freely. Bridge and gate mark off the stage as metaphysical in-between-ness.

¹⁵⁷ Uzawa Hise, leader of the Uzawa troupe, is one of the few female *nô* actors in what had been, for centuries, a male-only profession. A receiver of the title of National Treasure, Uzawa represents how *nô* today can be absolutely faithful to the model of tradition, while still incorporating innovation and adaptation. As such, she is a passionate promoter who has staged performances across North America as well as Japan, as well as lectures and educational workshops.

This is not to say that *nô* automatically entails the paranormal or the occult; certainly, it includes a number of sub-genres. Kyôka and Yeats, clearly, were interested mostly in the *mugen* category of *nô*, which is defined in part through its emphasis on the metaphysical performance of the spectral. The denizens of ghostlore—*jibakurei*, *ikiryô*, and *yûrei*—are common characters with equal stature to their mortal counterparts. *Mugen* is more than its cast, however. Both plot and character are realised through phantasmal mechanics that create this *chûkan* space. Kyôka also, in his appetite for twilight, found in *mugen* a stage-space for folkloric epiphany, the ancient becoming the present through the gates of shadow and light.

In these kinds of ancestral exchanges, and literary intertextuality, Yeats's relationship to Japan becomes most fully attested. Yeats's *CT* helped to establish in Japan the notion of *twilight* as a performative ontology and as an imaginative dimension. Conversely, *nô* later provided him with analogous concepts developing a theatre of the phantasm. There are demonstrable similarities between Kyôka's *Kôgyoku* [Devil's Pond] and *At the Hawk's Well* that can be traced back to the ideas generated through artistic discussions at that time between Ireland and Japan. Kyôka and Yeats are examples of modernist authors turning to the twilight stage to further explore the predicament of the trace and the enigma of anachronism. Drama further optimized what Yeats and Kyôka's prose first examined: threshold dialogues, ones between the present and the ancestral, as located in spaces of between-ness that modernity had not erased. I do not wish to deny either author his individuality; however, compositional methods between them reveal interesting similarities. *CT* had enacted the sense of a haunted time and space; drama would situate the *discourse of the vanishing* as a theatrical, spirited encounter. With these preliminary discussions in mind, the *tasogare* mechanisms of Yeats's *neo-nô* become apparent and compelling as performative necromancy, between Irish modernity and fought-over legacy of heritage.

AT THE HAWK'S WELL (1917)

Yeats's dramas invoke the folkloric personages, lyrical narrations, and situating of place to history that were characteristic of his earliest poems. The central concerns of *CT*—metaphysical banishment and a form of mediumship to negotiate the resultant ghosts—emerge now in a stagecraft of twilight. To examine this continuity between the so-called

younger and older Yeats, *At the Hawk's Well* makes a useful case study. The overall design represents Yeats's initial attempt to consciously interpolate formulae partially derived from *nô* as well as the Ulster Cycle legends. As such, this first effort is the most noticeably syncretic, as combining Japanese theatrical conventions with Irish figures. The *nô*-esque qualities are most apparent in *HW*'s stage schematics. The sparse design is intentionally reminiscent of bare, unadorned *hinoki* [*Chamaecyparis obtusa*] wood used for the classical stage. The architecture of the *nô* theatre suggested to Yeats a space both enclosed yet atmospherically uncluttered. The audience's point of view and the actor's performance are aligned to the same centring effect. In *HW*, the well defines the apex of sight and action, representing both a real well in the Irish landscape, as well as a channel for the spectral. Narrative description informs us of both the well's legendary importance, as a sacred site, and marker of mytho-cartography of the Irish landscape. Movement and speech accord value and importance to it, so its artistic resemblance to a *real* well is not required. Indeed, early productions used a prop more suggestive than mimetic. Performances of *HW* require a small cast of musicians and actors, seated on stage, in a visual arrangement similar to a *nô* performance. The musicians share the stage space, and furthermore act in the role of choral commentary. Yeats has swapped the traditional ensemble set of *nôkan* (flute), shoulder and hip drums (*ko-tsuzumi*, *ôtsuzumi*) for gong, western drum, and zither. Thus, Yeats does not incorporate harp or other stringed instruments that might divert from the *nô* example of percussion matched with solitary melody.

The folding of the cloth acts as a ritualistic invocation. In this unrealistic drama in which the word shadow appears six times, Yeats resets the optical textures by first getting away from the figurative cliché of an opening and closing curtain. Of course, the folding of the cloth cannot be claimed as having a parallel in *nô*; however, as an ontological reshuffling, its nuances are obvious enough. Time and space are being creased, bent, and unpackaged. This space is now a re-defined domain in which the variable dimensions of imagination and imagining will be given freer license for varieties of cognition. The area is declared as partly separate, partly in-between. As Konparu describes, the *nô* stage evolved from agricultural rites in which areas within the countryside were roped off for sacred purposes. As Hearn and Yanagita noted in shamanic practices, natural terrain was encircled and marked out as consecrated, requiring particular etiquette and other forms of observance. This is not

sentimentality, but religiosity. These demarcated areas, distinct but still contiguous with the general social landscape, were venues marked out for a hallowed presentation. Yeats's important stage direction — *OLD MAN enters through the audience* — maintains this sense that the communal transforms into the ritual through a people-originating power of interpolation. The stage is neither a hermitage nor an otherworld, but a peripheral dimension detected in this world, confirmed through communion with spiritual-imaginative presences and settings. Twilight has been released. Assumptions as to what is a *realistic* character or scenario are distorted. The phantasmal atmosphere produces spectral effects that situate the conceptual shadows as physical and temporal in-between-ness:

Night falls;
 The mountainside grows dark;
 The withered leaves of the hazel
 Half choke the dry bed of the well. (298-99)

This is the language of the vanishing: suffocation, parched environment, a neglected hillside, and an incoming dusk. The experiential conversion of stage into shadowstage makes material those elements and those phantasms that Yeats's prose described.

A primary feature of *nô* that matched Yeats's own literary practice is the preciseness in naming geographical settings. Modernist authors were intrigued with the ways in which Zeami chose his settings with exacting precision. Certainly, Zeami's understanding of *space* and *meisho* respond to the socio-historical conditions of his era, including the kind of noble audience who attending *nô*. Yeats and Kyôka's approach to Zeami reflects the biases of their era, identifying a kind of topographic folklore in an understanding in a manner different from what Zeami intended. Twentieth-century playwrights, in reformulating stylistic qualities that Zeami represented to them, brought their own considerations of space and folklore to their interpretations. They set their plays, descriptively in toponymic *locations* chosen specifically for their allusive power, rather than, say, a generic focus. In their reinterpretation of Zeami, *neo-nô* could draw upon a collective cultural knowledge through the allusive qualities of a specific site in regards to cultural memory. Yeats in particular believed that such inferences and associations sound resonances that surround topography with folklore. To him, this feature is particularly important in *mugen* drama, in which dramatic tension, and spectral articulation, is amplified through the uniqueness of the location. Scenery, in the form of

material props, is secondary to the appositional effect of specific location and its cultural references. *Mugen* achieves rich, ambient nuances by drawing upon the thematic relevance embedded in the mythic topography of a *place*. A tree, well, altar, or bridge may be implicative when a *specific* bridge has a tale attached. It acts as a nexus for narrative auras supported and shared through a folkloric collectivity.

For example, *Izutsu* [*The Well Cradle*] begins with a monk announcing he is on pilgrimage to Hatsuse, the site of the Hase Temple, dedicated to the Bodhisatva of mercy, Kannon-sama. En route, the major activity occurs at Ariwara Temple, said to have been built by a character whose misdeeds are the source of the play's premises of betrayal and guilt. The specific setting, and specific destination, are imbued with meaningful circumstances and legendary content. The location is itself a character who must be negotiated. Thus, Zeami circumscribes the dramatic stage with a geographic imagination through which the audience participates. The mind's eye sees a staged landscape marked by thematic correlations. Yeats develops a format in which minimalist staging becomes semiotically valid through a theatrical presentation of local knowledge. The spatial setting of the drama connects to mythic content, co-creating a vivid kind of topopoesis:

. . . the form I am adapting for European purposes may excite once more, whether in Gaelic or in English, under the slope of Slieve-na-mon or Croagh Patrick, ancient memories; for this form has no need of scenery that runs away with money nor a theatre building. (*EI* 236)

Landscape is a heightened sensitivity. Yeats's specific nativist purpose included a communal strategy, as Andrew Parkin has described: "Yeats wished to celebrate the haunted landscape of Ireland" (118). The *haunting* that Yeats saw was more than a Gothic thrill; *haunting* entails those resonant traces of ancestral voices to be recalled, so as to know what investments have made *place* what it is.

In Japan, *Zenkoku reijô daijiten* [Dictionary of Sacred Places Throughout Japan] documents thousands of shrines, temples, and natural features that have supernatural connections, festival importance, or other manifestations of legend. Folk beliefs imbue topography with specific meanings and allusions: mountain-ranges become feared because of wandering dead. Certain sites require ceremonial observances to offset diabolical influence. Folkloric significance transforms a set of rocks, a hillside, or a specific cherry tree

as poetry. This can be seen in Japan in collections such as the *Man'yōshū*, in which temples are christened with legend and other narrative associations. The mythopoetry of folklore denotes the landscape.

Thus, one reason that the Second Musician states “I am afraid of this place” is that the haunted pedigree of the location, as a conduit for the disturbing energies of the vanishing. As discussed previously, Yeats had selected Sligo locations for his Oisianic verse. Once more this county will offer local particularities to give his drama a *nô* like effect of the folkloric *mise-en-scène*. The actual, geographical Hawk's Well (*Ir*: Tubber Tullaghan) sits atop Tullaghan Hill, having a long, chronicled history from early historical manuscripts.¹⁵⁸ Associated with many things, including a beheading, this well is renowned for the peculiar taste of its waters. Alternating between bitter and sweet, the water has curative powers, instilling youth and health in the drinker. Like Miyazaki's *onsen* [hot spring for bathing], the well relates to the natural environment, with supernatural qualities, that serves to vitalise the body. For this reason, traditionally, Tubber Tullaghan was a favourite spot for celebrating Lughnadsadh, held at approximately mid-summer. In terms of setting, the jutting form of Hawk's Rock nearby matches the attributes that the play describes. The rock protrudes from gnarled hazel and drifting leaves, the scattering of scree and wind. *Hawk's Well*, as an Irish *reijô*, a spirit-site, has a number of connotative meanings. And today, the theatre in Sligo Town, mindful of Yeats's attention to the local geography in his plays, is named *The Hawk's Well*.

“Haunted” entails liminality, the performance of in-between-ness. Haunted is the potential for ancestral access. Yeats's drama works with multiple layers of not just space, but narrative connections that span time. Thus, in specifying a *Heroic Age* for the modern audience of *HW*, Yeats enables a sense of the folkloric present. The actions and situations suggest someone or somewhere ancient, culturally remembered but too distant in time. They

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Jim McGarry of Collooney wrote an interesting description of this area in *The Sligo Weekender* newspaper (April 8 2003):

On the right-hand-side going from Coolaney to Skreen is Tullaghan Hill with the Holy Well attributes to St. Patrick, known as the Hawk's Well. Listed as one of the *mirabilia* [miracles, wonders] of Ireland by writers from the 9th century onwards. The reason is because of the tradition that the water in the well rises and falls with the tide although the Ox Mountains lie between it and the sea. A short distance further on the same side is the striking Carraig na Seabhach, the Hawk's Rock, referred to in the works of W.B. Yeats and the origin of the name of the Hawk's Well Theatre in Sligo.

occur, however at a specific location that, for now, can still be accessed in the present. *Heroic Age* thus is not a chronological isolate, but is perpetuated through resonances still grounded in place. To use St Thomas Aquinas's term, the *Heroic Age* in Yeats's plays is an *aeviternity*: a temporal node that exists in-between eternity and normative time. The ancestral becomes epistemologically available through the haunting's resonances, concentrated at a specific locus. The ghostly aura continues through prolonged witnessing, an ongoing legacy of interactions between the seen and unseen in twilight. This has material connotations to culture and heritage, vested in ruins, shrines, and wells, as ancestral monuments. Destroy these, and the aura goes with them. That penchant for destruction had been a crisis in modernity and has worsened in post-modernity, as Muldoon describes in *Erin Go FASTER*, and community activities will attest. *Kyôka*, likewise, scried in these remnants of the past as experientially suggestive: ruined stone, relics, sacred sites, bits of statue, abandoned shrines, all of these reverberate with individual character. The landscape acquires a like lustre of time through an imprinting, a process occurring in broader geography in the same manner Tanizaki describes on physical objects. When Tanizaki uses the word *kahô* [heirloom], he emphasises that this word combines the characters for *home* with *treasure*. As individual objects can acquire such a gloss through domestication, so on the larger scale do localised areas. *The lustre of time* is the grit of continued accessibility. Thus topopoesis requires community as continuity. The features of a haunted landscape arise from the apposition of individuals who interact with the terrain.

Yeats, in his play notes, sets this work in a multitemporal framework known as *Heroic Time*. The manifestation of the ancestral, its ghostly voices as representative of preceding eras, occurs through stylized masks. The means through which twilight time allowed for the articulation of the ancestral, as personage, is a crucial theme for *HW*. Yeats found in *nô* concepts for the multiplying of selfhood, for reviving variations of a legendary character. Although not realised as naturalistic *persons*, emblematic characters such as Oisín or Cu Chuláinn are interlocutors who occupy a unique perspective on history and heritage. Yeats found suggestive in *nô* the ways in which a heroic personage acts as a paradigmatic point of view.¹⁵⁹ Heroic ancestry, as embodied in the atmosphere of a haunting, acts as a

¹⁵⁹ Shimazaki Chifumi's translations of *nô* include the categories *Warrior Ghost Plays* and *Restless Spirits Plays*. For an introduction to the classical theatre of Japan, see Karen Brazell.

cultural interrogator whose lineage draws cultural knowledge from geography. The face of the old appears against the state of the present. On such an account, the Arthurian myths—and Tolkien is an extension—have enjoyed a great deal of ongoing popularity, remixed in various forms of the fantastic with the epochal. Japanese literature has its own examples of re-circulated heroic characters, the re-narrativisation of whom is a kind of prosopopoeia. For example, the semi-historical Yoshitsune has been the origin of a corpus of writings that could be called Yoshitsuneian due to its breadth and longevity. The incidents of his life provide indicative scenarios that have been adopted into many genres as means of interpreting the ethos of the past.

The youthful Yoshitsune (known as Ushiwakamaru at the time) was ensconced in the temple of Kurama-yama near Kyoto (for his own protection). Nightly he would sneak out into the mountain wilds to pray and mourn at a waterfall for the loss of his parents, particularly his murdered father. His solitary excursions are, however, interrupted by the visitations of an elderly ghost. In most versions, but not all, this spirit is the Tengu King, Shojobo, who instructs Ushiwakamaru in the way of *budô*, or way of the warrior. During the final lesson, Shojobo preaches the morals of *shinrabanshō*, a Buddhist concept which explains how all living beings come to intermingle within each individual's spirit. Thus trained, Ushiwakamaru takes on the mature name Yoshitsune. He leaves the static serenity of the monastery and pursues a lifelong quest for justice, collecting numerous *deishi* [disciples] along the way. One famous follower of his, the disgruntled monk Benkei, became his devotee after losing a contest of arms on a bridge. This incident became the subject of many artworks and plays, including the *nô* entitled *Hashi benkei*.¹⁶⁰ In another memorable episode, the ghost of Tomomori attacks Yoshitsune's ship, but tragedy is averted as Benkei, being a monk and knowledgeable of the other realms, knows how to speak to the spectre.

Yoshitsune would come to lead armies who would one day overthrow the Taira family dynasty, and with them the age of ancient nobility. It is the events along the way, however, that provide the situational materials, as referenced to specific sites in Japan, for future artists. Shizuka Gozen, the love of Yoshitsune's life, is one of the most famous female characters in classical Japanese literature owing to the continued attention given to her

¹⁶⁰ Waley included *Hashi benkei* [*Benkei on the Bridge*] in his anthology of *nô* translations.

personality. Like many heroes, Yoshitsune is done away with through an act of betrayal following the battle at the Koromo River. Undeterred, he would become an *o-bake*, a kind of revenant carrying his grudge into the spirit world, paying visitations to his treacherous older brother. The famous epic *Heike monogatari* [*The Tale of Heike*] depicts some of these events; and cultural markers across the Japanese landscape document the places referenced in the text. More broadly, these many Yoshitsunean incidents have become the subject for paintings, epics, several *nô* drama, and *gunki monogatari* [war chronicle literature], including *Gikeiki*. Moreover, there is also a puppet play by Izumo Takeda (1747), *Shin heiki monogatari* [*The New Tale of Heike*] by Yoshikawa Eiji (1950-7), and a novel by Miyao Tomiko (2004), which became the basis for a recent NHK *taiga dorama* [TV samurai drama]. At the end of each episode, a short documentary provided travel details and regional insights in regards to how locations depicted in the series match up with real physical places.

As a figure with a wide body of materials examining the meaning of his heroic personage, Yoshitsune is the representation *par excellence* of the nullifying defeat inherent in the warrior's life. Certainly, one aspect frequently touched upon is how the repetitious spiral of violence defines the periods of historical strife and ultimately destroys his heroic code. Ireland has its own sense of a legendary canon, one in relation to its own equally turbulent history, and Yeats knew how to make use of it. His Cuchulain, like Yoshitsune, is trapped in a seemingly limitless cycle of civil wars that will define the future of his nation. As he did with Oisian, Yeats had re-imagined the mythic personal of *Cú Chulainn* on multiple occasions for various purposes. Yeats composed a cycle of plays based on him: *The Green Helmet*, *Only Jealousy of Emer*, *HW*, and *The Death of Cuchulain*. Poetic examples range from the early to late works: "Cuchulain's Fight with the Sea" (1892) and "Cuchulain Comforted" (1939).¹⁶¹ Yeats, however, is not interested in repeating verbatim already archived versions from classical Irish literature. His recontextualized Irish sagas have strong political bite in depicting national struggles and violence of the modern era. But the figuration of the ancestral emphasises the continuous flow of history in place. Today, in both

¹⁶¹ An extensive consideration of Cú Chulainn as a reoccurring character in Yeats is *The Interpretation of the Cuchulain Legend in the Works of W. B. Yeats*, by Birgit Bramsbäck. See also Skene, *The Cuchulain Plays of W. B. Yeats*.

the Protestant and Catholic enclaves of Belfast, Cú Chulainn is a favourite theme for disparately motivated political murals.

In reference to Japanese theatre, both Taylor and Sekine see *HW* as directly based on the *nô* play *Yôrô*, although no version of this work appears in either Waley's or Fenollosa's editions. Dorothy Pound produced a typescript based on Fenollosa's notebooks, which Yeats had access to, but the text remained unpublished until Taylor edited a version for an issue of *Paideuma* (1975). There are certainly enough similarities between *Yôrô* and *HW* to find analogous components. Another comparison can be made in that the Hawk-Woman, as animated combination of bird and person, has a certain resemblance to the feather mantle of *Hagoromo*. Animal-human hybrids feature often in Irish and Scottish tales, including *lost home* narratives such as the *selkie*, the seal-women of Scottish folklore. These connections are suggestive, but need not be taken as exact correlations. Over-emphasising perceived similarities can also lead to missing out on the uniqueness of *HW* itself. *Yôrô*'s plot concerns the relationship between a God and the emperor, who receives from the heavens a drink of immortality. The beverage is a potent *sake* known as *kikusui*, which literally means *chrysanthemum water*, and is symbolic of the imperial throne. Cú Chulainn also desires a beverage of longevity; and, like an emperor, his legendary stature is related to his dynastic status. As chief hero of the Ulster Cycle, Cú Chulainn occupies a figurehead position as a personification of an ancestral *zeitgeist*. So, before reading *Yôrô*, Yeats had long imagined the means in which the vanishing legend might resuscitate itself from degeneration and final oblivion. Much of his earlier poetry, in which characters are a paradox of age, form, and time, explored this predicament of ancestral fragmentation. The twilight stagecraft of *HW*, like *WO*, dramatizes the quest for revival and recovery.

In evaluating who is Cú Chulainn, and what he will become (vanished), the audience must also confront who is the Well Guardian, and what/whom has taken over her body previously. The conflict in this play arises over cycles in which one epoch overwrites the next. The *sídhe* have possessed the Well Guardian, and they too are a species of legendary disappearance. Associated with ancient races that once occupied Ireland, they became metaphysically deported, made invisible, through a dynastic succession of newcomers, of whom Cuchulainn is one. As vanished peoples, displaced communities who have been usurped through radical change, they prefigure Cuchulainn's own fate as the next to disappear.

Cuchulain recognises that he will also fall in this series of dissipation, in which one era conquers (and erases) another. He hopes, in spite of this, that the well water can offer an antidote to this fate of vanishing. The Old Man, to him, demonstrates how youth will come to decay:

You seem as dried up as the leaves and sticks,
As though you had no part in life. (CP 303)

But the paratemporal well offers immortality. Like Miyazaki's *o-nigiri* [rice ball], the well-water restores the body, preventing the process of decay and transparency. What motivates the Guardian, as combination of marginalised spirit and natural elements, to keep the next generation from achieving what the *sídhe* could not? Possibly, as in many *nô* drama, the answer is madness or jealousy. Yeats, recognising *sídhe* as exiled ancestral spirits, perceives their potential as influential spiritual phenomena. In this case, this influence is harsh and retributive. Their status is of restless revenants and poltergeists who exact revenge on the present world.¹⁶² In *HW*, the soul-less quality of the *sídhe* results from banishment, not birth. Yeats's poetry had attempted to find a kind of soteriology of the fairy. How can they, being entrapped discarnateness, be revived or exorcised? Do these fairies have souls, or are they accursed children of Cain? Trapped in their liminal predicament, how are they redeemed?

Cuchulain allows himself to be distracted by the *danse macabre* of the Guardian. The hypnotic rhythms of her possessed state arise from the traumatic mania of covariant spirits in a single body. The dance depicts the fought-over interstices between lost time and disappearing present. Being in the *sídhe*'s presence causes feelings of amnesia and effacement in the audience. Likewise, Cuchulain's own identity turns into confusion. When the young man announces his name, he is met with confusion:

OLD MAN. I have never heard that name.
YOUNG MAN. It is not unknown.
I have an ancient house beyond the sea. (CP 300)

¹⁶² Yeats did not develop a systematic definition for fairies or ghosts. He explores a variety of depictions, including the aristocratic, mischievous, evil, and violent. I do not view these contrary descriptions as contradictions, but a presentation of a spectrum that spirit presences take in relation to human imaginations, and that they can coincide with social shifts in collective imaginations. *Kappa*, in Japan for example, have been depicted as terrifying creatures in Edô tales, as a satirical device for Akutagawa, or used in cucumber adverts, as well as soft toys for children. The ways in which the folkloric bestiary, as mirroring society, can be both friend and foe informs much of Yeats's writing.

But can the ancient house, the ancestral house in *Meditations in Time of Civil War*, survive? Without the beverage, Cuchulain returns once more to the cyclical flux of destructive history. He will be crowned king of Ulster. He will be tricked into murdering his own son. He will be disposed of and displaced, like Yoshitsune, by an ignoble betrayal. A blind man will behead him for twelve pennies. Without the taste of the immortal water to sustain him—and to sustain the Ulster Legends—the encroaching powers of progress will overwrite his body and spirit. The well bubbles up, occasionally, but distractions cause the waters to go by unnoticed or undrinkable.¹⁶³ Food, as intimately tied to agricultural production and thus material soil, is connected to physical sustenance. Hungry ghosts or mischievous fairies have previously stolen what they themselves cannot consume. Cherries for the “The Stolen Child” are hidden and hoarded, but never swallowed. Beautiful things are “thirsted for” in “The Eater of Precious Stones” but cannot be digested. In *Spirited Away*, the ancestral benevolently feeds Chihiro, re-connecting her to food so as to prevent her disappearance. Contrarily in *HW*, the jealous spectre deprives Cuchulain of nourishment, so causing him to assume, eventually, the same fate. He, too, will become a revenant, a banished spirit of ancestral immateriality filled with anguish and discontent, aligned with the landscape but displaced from it.

Yeats’s ongoing hermeneutics of the shadows investigate the contentious communications between the ethereal and the tangible in relation to communal order in spatial contexts. The uncanny in *CT*, and in *TM*, are figurations of the *fushigi* [mysterious] as resultant textures that are forms of character which/whom inhabit a special, local place. Lady Wilde, in *Ancient Legends, Mystic Charms, and Superstitions of Ireland*, repeatedly shows the necessary connection between the oral tradition and the spatial specific:

Near the great mountain of Croagh-Patrick there is lake called
Clovencagh, or the Lake of Revenge, to which evil-disposed persons

¹⁶³ Tober n-Alt [Well in the Cliff?] in Sligo, an important religious and heritage site, was famed for its delicious waters and curative powers. A popular site for devotions on Garland Sunday, the well probably had also been a site of pagan observances, evidenced by the continued in the practice of tying wishing rags nearby. Sadly, during recent land development in Sligo, a septic tank used by builders broke open and contaminated the ground and spring waters. Also, in terms of the undrinkable, the tap water in Galway City is now so unhealthy that it requires treatment in order to be digestible.

used to resort in order to imprecate maledictions on their enemy.¹⁶⁴

The *haunted* does not need to be an unmoored, vague principle of eeriness. Local historical sites radiate very particular kinds of *genius loci* that are particular to visible features, and folkloric attunements, of their social conditions. A staged recreation, while not the real geography, can emphasise how that landscape contains *jidai no tsuya*, the luster of time. Drama can re-enact how centuries of interaction enhance a legendary site. *Iseki* (ruins, relics), as Tanizaki showed, are distinctive on account of the direct associations that shaped their tactile, and thus also ambient, properties. However, twilight, as the atmospheric content for the stage, is a strategy for drawing attention to mythic auras as realisable presences. Elements of nature can attain the same power of significance. A twilight performance, which uses reflections of communal ritual to establish its dramatic feeling, reminds an audience of those ancestral attributes that are outside, meaningfully embedded into the terrain.

As often as such feelings are described, cynically, as nostalgia or weepiness (“tree-hugging”), one cannot dismiss out of hand the enduring allure for the cartographic imagination. Impressed by such a feeling, Bernard Shaw could write of Skellig Michael in 1910 in this manner:

I tell you the thing does not belong to any world that you and I have
lived and worked in: it is part of our dream world. (*Letters* 2:942)

The point is that Shaw did not visit an Oisianic otherworld, remote as Skellig Michael may be. This is a real place, one built through human investment, of hermits whose personal involvement negotiated terrain and territory to establish places of worship and contemplation. Skellig Michael testifies to the labour and faith of a band of monks who built architectures of observance on the precipices of Ireland. Skellig Michael’s power as relic is one of continuity that spans both the natural and dream-like, remote but attainable. Shaw’s *John Bull’s Other Island* (1904) has many points of contact with themes in this dissertation: the relationships between romance, landscape, and land development, and the necessary assertion of the past,

¹⁶⁴ From “The Lake of Revenge.” Much of Lady Wilde’s important work *Legend, Charms, and Superstitions of Ireland* concern the interactivity between these legends and superstitions as specific connections to local spaces.

as strategy, against the threat of erasure.¹⁶⁵ Keegan, the defrocked priest, summarises the ruthless ambitions of capitalist colonialism and its *modus operandi*:

The conquering Englishman, sir. Within 24 hours of your arrival you have carried off our only heiress, and practically secured the parliamentary seat. And you have promised me that when I come here in the evenings to meditate on my madness; to watch the shadow of the Round Tower lengthening in the sunset; to break my heart uselessly in the curtained gloaming over the dead heart and blinded soul of the island of the saints, you will comfort me with the bustle of a great hotel, and the sight of the little children carrying the golf clubs of your tourists as a preparation for the life to come. (165)

Broadbent, the “conquering Englishman”, believes that hotels and golf courses are a triumphant thing, representing forms of wealth capable of producing even more wealth. Keegan counters this assumption, that expansionism and growth necessarily lead to well-being, by positioning a language of sentiment (religion, relics, environment) against the supposed payoff of rapid manufacturing. For many Irish writers, a poetics of custom and its connections to place act as an uprising against the rhetoric of heedless consumption. For example, Seamus Heaney’s visit to an island monastery, and his participation in its ritual patterns, inspired the verse of *Station Island*. . Dramas such as *HW*, as part of its political argument, refocus attention on these sites that Keegan references as the unique power of place, owing to heritage. Considering today’s increasingly endangered habitats and threats to ancient houses, I do wonder what Yeats would make of a motorway running through the Skyrne Valley.

A folkloric sensibility sees ruins as character-possessing specters. Yeats would go so far as to view their resonances as a trace of half-faded ancestry, attaining the status of real literature:

. . . what I have called the “applied arts of literature”, the association of literature, that is, with music, speech, and dance; and at last, it might be, so deepen the political passion of the nation that all, artist and poet, craftsman and day-labourer would accept a common design? (A 194).

¹⁶⁵ Yeats commissioned this work for the opening of the Abbey Theatre, but later rejected it owing to concerns for its length, production requirements, and perhaps its controversial content.

The Yeatsian *kokugaku*, or sense of nation studies, developed the Abbey theatre for the promotion of the national self-questioning, including the a view to the past: to remind, particularly an urban elite, of that “dream world” currently under threat. The fantastic, so interwoven with the historical, feels threatened by modernity. The implication is that the twentieth-century is also a process in which a Well Guardian will be once more displaced by the coming of a conquering tribe. The rapid technologies of modernity could deliver such a frightening epochal shift: technological investment now, in an unprecedented way, was bent upon exhuming landscapes wholesale for expansive development. The stakes are even higher, now: the new juggernaut runs roughshod over both well *and* guardian.

The Swedish poet Anders Österling, via Bramsbäck’s translation, declared that Yeats’s “ ‘reverence for folklore . . .’ must to a large extent be attributed to his “fundamental susceptibility to every kind of mystical suggestion’ ” (1). Shaw’s attribution of “our dream world” to Skellig Michael restores legitimacy to feelings that are often dismissed as fantasy or nostalgia. Shaw returns to the bare elements: the aura is constituted by composite factors of history, legend, folk cartography, and physical monument. Equally important is the viewer who is audience to the allure. Shaw takes on “reverence” as a susceptibility based on a natural inclination; to reject the awe is to be trapped in the present, the world in which one “lives and works”. Without the sensory capacity for wonder, people lose the imaginative potential for appreciation and respect for a continuum to which the landscape is enchanted. On these principles, the twilight trend in Yeats has a degree of ecocritical forbearance to it: “All these stories are such as to unite man more closely to the woods and hills and waters about him . . .” (“A Literary Causerie”, *FLM* 88). Legends can be both referential and motivational. Superstition, tutelary spirits, ghosts—as entities configured by cultural situation and geographical setting—had relevance, and presence, to modern society in *Kyôka* and Yeats. *HW* and *Kyôka*’s *Demon Pond* share in a sensibility of the folkloric present: the “heroic age”, represented through rebellious anachronisms, should not be temporally separated from the current landscape. Material relics link with spirit anima.

Demon Pond precedes *HW* by four years, and there is no concrete proof to show a direct influence in terms of one piece of dramatic literature on another. The similarities between these works, however, are striking, and demonstrate that some Japanese *shinpa* [new style] drama developed out of *nô* along the same strategies that Yeats had also pursued. To

summarise briefly, *Demon Pond* concerns a wanderer who approaches a haunted, secluded site: a belfry at twilight. Like *HW*, the geographic setting is given precisely: “Kotohiki Valley, village of Shimaki in the county of Ono, Echizen Province” (Poulton 119). There, the traveler, Gakuen, swaps old stories with the vigilant bellkeeper, Akira. The latter relates a local legend to the traveler about the demon pond, a nexus of mystery, which draws in travelers with a black-hole like gravity. Gakuen responds with his own fantastic tale, heard along the road, which unwittingly happens to be about Akira. Thus the bellkeeper says, concerning the relationship of storytellers to stories, “I’ve gone a step further. I myself have become one of those [folk] tales” (Poulton 129). Meanwhile, acting like a *kyôgen*—the comical interlude in a *nô sequence*—a group of nearby goblins give their version of events, nonplussed as *yôkai* [monster] beings, pushed off to the peripheries. The final act depicts how the multiple folk elements of the play conclude in an ontological conflation of monster and human, legend and present. Akira and the maiden Yuri experience a narrative metempsychosis: their personal stories are transfused into a new, second generation of legends. Like Cú Chulainn passing away into the immateriality of lost legend, Akira and Yuri experience both discarnation of personhood. However, this leads to a transubstantiation into new ancestral forms, even being born again [*umarekawaru*] as the legendary. The belfry remains intact, the story continues in a new form, but the resonance remains as a sign of lastingness.

Sangû Makoto—another translator of Yeats under the Tokyô *Airurando bungakukai* influence—described a commonality between *Kyôka* and Yeats. The former, he judged, would be more successful if he had “drawn upon myths and legends worth writing about, as Yeats does” (Poulton 163).¹⁶⁶ This might be somewhat unfair, as a worthy legend would require appraisal from artistic as well as political grounds. Certainly, Yeats’s choices reflected the increased sense of Irish independence. But *Kyôka*’s choices are no less meaningful, addressing as they do overlooked regions of Japanese geography. *Kyôka* and Yeats were both interested in re-narrativising folkloric material so as to show their influence

¹⁶⁶ As first cited by Muramatsu in *Izumi Kyôka* (312). Poulton is suggestively sympathetic to a Yeats-*Kyôka* link, being one of fortuitous correspondences. I believe that there are sufficient chains of connections to suggest a measure of influence, particularly arising from *CT* and circulating amongst Japanese literati. Along with translations of Yeats, Sangû also published a small study of Hearn in English: “Lafcadio Hearn in Japan” (1959).

and impact on contemporary circumstances. A drama derivative from phantasmal *nô*, not as a replication of the old form, permitted forms of ancestral intercommunication, of recalling tales and ghosts connected to place, as a modernist practice. Many critics have argued that *Demon Pond* develops along the plot progression that typifies the pace and development of plot found in Zeami (Muramatsu 7). But, as discussed with Yeats, Kyôka's relationship to *nô* does not need to be evaluated according to its degree of fidelity. The modernist impulse to innovation could interpolate *nô* texts and conventions as a conceptual strategy. Kyôka's *chûkan* [in-betweenness], in dramatic form, utilised *nô* like sequences for twilight effect: inverted time, dream interpretation, as well as the meeting of the legendary with the contemporary. Yeats's shadows recreate, on stage, the powerful realm that Shaw described. It is the rational, rootless world that thus becomes dim. The peripheries restore what the centrifugal centre has been shuffling away.

Kyôka's entire body of work demonstrates that time, language, and place are themselves species of *bakemono*, fantastic changelings caught between quasi-empirical states. Manifestations of *oni* or *yûrei*, spirits and ghosts, are shifts and disturbances in the substance of experience. He can draw upon, in the name of tradition, stylistic conventions from Japanese aesthetics and religiosity for his methods. These precedents can include a number of terms to describe how artists envision of the fleetingness of the spectral: *goryô-e* festivals for communion with departed spirits; or *mono no ke*, spirit possession, which has been the subject of paintings and literature, including *Genji monogatari*. Zeami may have codified and canonised *mugen* as having specific, stylistic expectations. However, with modernism we can see a further development of oneiric dramaturgies, which negotiate tradition through and working with it. Hence, necromancy, reckoning with ghosts as ancestors, had a practical, contemporary agenda. Retrocognitions, therefore, were conversations with the ancestral past, an interrogative intervention against pressing questions of the present.

These conversations between different strata of metaphysics were facilitated through the strategy of theatrical masks, which connote the access of alternative persona. In this device, Yeats found the interface for the meeting of mortality and eternity, between flesh and disembodiment, and the restoration of face to faceless forms. The mask mouths the prosopopoeia. In terms of drama, we should also keep in mind, Nietzsche and Greek tragic

drama influenced Yeats as much as did *nô*.¹⁶⁷ Yeats's usage was, ultimately, his own craft, and suited that necromantic task that so much poetry and prose had set for itself. The mask situates a form of confrontation between alternate epistemologies. Tony Harrison describes its potential function this way in "Facing up to the Muses":

The mask reinforces that primacy [of language] by continuing to speak in situations that "normally" or in realistic or naturalistic drama would render a person speechless. (27)

In *mugen*, this primacy of language is an amplification of vanished discourse, channelled through the mediumship of the mouthpiece in the mask. The theatrical incarnation of Cú Chulainn is enabled through that en-facing that shapes an animate face out of the blurriness in twilight. The mask can have *ouija* board like effects. Miyazaki's *anime* masks had shown that cultural recovery is possible, so long as the ancestral can find a way to speak, and that there exists a medium for connection. But Chihiro had to reinscribe the face through her communication. Likewise, Yeats's masks were a kind of *mono no ke* [spirit possession] for allocating presentational form to the legendary. For Yeats, the ancestral comes into presence through the mask's instillation of figured ancestry. Yeatsian prosopopoeia not only speaks for the ghost, but returns a mouthpiece so the ghost can speak for itself. The immaterial becomes embodiment, through the re-inscribing of reviving of the ancestral inscription, marked by the mask.¹⁶⁸ More generally, Yeats had developed a theory of mask that was psychological, as he outlines this in several places, including *Autobiographies*. But the performative sensibility of the masked marvel can be a form of agency within a cultural multi-spatiality, in the chronotope created through *mugen*. Thus, imbedded in the

¹⁶⁷ In pursuing a thesis of symbolic hermeticism, F. A. C. Wilson sees *At the Hawk's Well* as an alchemical mixture of Shintô and western mystery traditions. Noh masks are objects of contemplative iconography, a product of religious meditation. Although, the mask's purpose remains elusive: "The least we can say is that Yeats's imagination caught fire from the Noh masks, and that this largely accounts for the elaborate stylisation of his characters" (32).

¹⁶⁸ In a recent online interview, Slavoj Žižek offered his views on Japanese characteristics and customs: the Japanese are well aware that something which may appear superficial and unnecessary has a much deeper structural function. . . . Surfaces do matter. If you disturb the surfaces you may lose a lot more than you think. You shouldn't play with rituals. Masks are never simply mere masks. Perhaps that's why Brecht became close to Japan.

Available online through *C-Theory*: <http://www.ctheory.net/articles.aspx?id=79>

psychology, a theatrical premise is apparent: “the mask . . . is linked with another age, historical or imaginary . . .” (A 152).

The drama need not be seen as chronologically, formatively, or autobiographically split from Yeats’s overall approach to literature and culture. “A Dialogue of Self and Soul” picks up on themes, and repeats some of the images, from both “Ancestral Houses” and *The Shadowy Waters* (the early lyrical poem as well as the later play of the same name). Modes of ancestral appearance act as a visible darkness that hangs over any notion of the present state of things. The well-like “basin” in *HW*, a receptacle for legendary energy like the Demon’s Pond, had also spilled over in “Ancestral Houses” (4).

In “A Dialogue” the basin collects the runoff of a shifting history (I.34). Also in this poem, Satô’s sword appears again as a symbol of physical continuity, one that survives transference through time and bears witness to the compositional experiences that forged and marked its nature. The debate between self and soul is located within “the winding ancient stair”, an architecture of twilight that must be “summoned”. But, like *The Tower*, the halo of this shadow surrounds a crumbling, neglected monument (I.3). The tongue itself might become another stone stair upon which a lost tale is dumbly told. The Soul and Self cannot make sense of the attainability for this ancestry under poor conditions: the past is persuasive in its emblematic appearance, but unreliable due to its materiality. On one hand, the *Soul* in Yeats’s poem has looked for an ancestral talisman that has both the veneer of heritage as well as the applicability of engagement in the astral. The Self wants the ancient, but practically and physically so. Satô’s sword provides both, being “emblem of the day” while still keeping the heritage of “the night”.

In dividing Self from Soul, Yeats allows for a pervasive instability that keeps categorical notions of *I* unsettled. What or who inhabits the body, what motivation is acting through it, creates unbearable tension in the Well-Guardian’s character. What is the personality who can “think of ancestral night that can / If but imagination scorn the earth” (I.17-20). The Soul scorns all of this, viewing the “the crime of death and birth” (285) as an ouroboros to be avoided. The Self thinks of experiential encounters, seeing instead a cyclic return that restores vitality. Oisín has taken a similar position: the physical artifact bears witness to continuity and exchange.

Satô's sword cuts through the Gnostic predicament that the Soul insists on making, in effect *uniting* the bifurcated spirit/matter split that the Soul maintains. The second section of the poem describes the Self's intensely personal project of building anew in the shadow of the past:

I am content to follow to its source
Every event in action or in thought;
Measure the lot; forgive myself the lot! (II.25-28)

This poem ultimately argues that the Self cannot perform its role in the world without the contact of pleasure and memory that the Tanizakian aura provides. A necessarily kinetic energy keeps the flesh from turning into another kind of forgotten stone. The sword balances, neither ignoring the twilight nor being sheathed entirely by it either. Sensuality must be maintained in the daily encounters. The emblems of the night infuse the performance of day, refined through a grayness of twilight. In combining the measure of the individual against the length of Satô's sword, the Self thus comes to a dancer/dance conclusion. The flow of history, and its tangible story, carries both Self and Soul along with it, as a unity. Tanizaki and Yeats, were committed to the belief that bodily practices must connect ideas of traditional to an experiential awareness at the cellular level.

Without these processes, the mask acts only in a stylised guise of representation. Acknowledging this possibility, Yeats wonders in his preface to *Four Plays for Dancers* that, perhaps, in the end one would write plays specifically for a type of mask. In such a way, the figuration of plot, defined by the mask, would depict only a lost fossil, a decontextualised. Cú Chulainn may become only a convention, out of touch with all Irish scenery.

THE CAT AND THE MOON (1924)

Yeats conceived of a performance programme for three of his dance plays, modeled in part from a traditional *nô* cycle. *HW* would be first, followed by a satire, and then conclude in a final work that reflected the preceding themes. *The Cat and the Moon*, he felt, would act as the second performance, the comical interlude:

I intend my play to be what the Japanese call a *kiogen*, and come as a

relaxation of attention between let us say, 'The Hawk's Well' and 'The Dreaming of the Bones'. (*The Cat and the Moon* 36)

The playwright has in mind a developed repertory, organised so as to follow the thematic succession of a *nô/kyôgen* sequence, although in a compressed fashion. Yeats's study of Japanese drama went beyond just ghost tales or fallen heroes. As a platform to showcase his humour, a *neo-kyôgen* could divest itself from the high solemnity and ritual prescriptions of the preceding play. Humour and farce are operative modes that counterpoint the thematic seriousness and dramatic presentation of the antecedent *At the Hawk's Well*. Like Hearn's essay "The Japanese Smile", Yeats introduces genres of Japanese comedy that helped to dismiss the dour stereotypes.

As has been documented, the two major source books for Japanese dramaturgy during Yeats's time were the annotated translations of *nô* drama by Ernest Fenollosa (as edited by Ezra Pound), and the edition by Arthur Waley.¹⁶⁹ However, we should remember that Yeats had both interest and knowledge of Japanese aesthetics prior to *Stone Cottage*. Sylvia C. Ellis's research provides a helpful number of interesting examples published in *The Times* that concerned Japanese aesthetics and the popularity of the subject. Certainly, side effects of consumerist *japonisme* could be seen in museum exhibitions and other forms of increased scholarly attention to Asian art and religion. Preliminary studies were becoming increasingly available to the non-specialist; one example of this is Henri Doré's important study, *La lecture des talismans chinois* (1913). We should also keep in mind that, while Waley and Pound tend to get the most press, rendering *nô* into Western languages had been seen as a crucial challenge for a growing group of Japanese translators. There were, in fact, at least a dozen such attempts within the span of Yeats's lifetime. I mention briefly a few here: Noel Péri's work was very prominent, including two studies on the subject: *Cinq No* (1929) and

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In Japanese scholarship, *nô* texts are usually organised and compiled into edited and annotated anthologies, similar, for example, to a Norton edition of Jacobean drama. *Nô* texts in this form are usually known as *yôkyoku*, which simply means the recitation of *nô*, but thus also refers to the text from this performance is derived. Two of the most popular sources of this sort of material are found in multi-volume anthologies within the authoritative *Nihon koten bungaku zenshû* and *Nihon koten bungaku takikei* series. Individual playgoer's editions, *utaibon*, of a single play are designed to be used for performance study, or for the once popular hobby of amateur chanting. These contain more intricate subscript symbols that indicate suggestions for rhythm and intonation, similar to the dynamic markings on a musical score. As a nod to tradition, *utaibon* are often written in the elegant style of script called *kuzushiji*, a cursive style of brushwork. There are also actor's handbook editions, which include the exacting conventions established by a particular school, or *house*, or *nô* thespians.

Le No (1944).¹⁷⁰ Other versions include B. H. Chamberlain in *The Classical Poetry of Japan* (1888); Beatrice Suzuki, *Nogaku: Japanese No Plays* (1932); Wolfgang von Gersdorff, *Japanische Dramen für die deutsche Bühne* (1926); and Noguchi Yone, *Ten Kiogen in English* (1907).¹⁷¹ In this variety of renderings, we can see that the developing area of Japanese studies at the time required a tricky balance: between meeting the strict, but insular, standards of a handful of specialists, or creating texts that would enjoy wider popularity and enthusiasm.

Waley found Fenollosa's source materials as incomplete. Increased discussions have confirmed this: the Italian-American's work does not qualify as authoritative translations, according to scholarly opinion. Pound himself was not entirely satisfied with the methodology of Fenollosa's field notes: "Many facts might be extremely interesting if one had enough knowledge of Noh. Many names might be rich in association, which are, at the present state of our knowledge, a rather dry catalogue" (251). But Fenollosa was well-placed to act in a pioneering role. Living in Japan, he had more access to performers and stages than Waley, and cultivated friendships with actors that Chamberlain did not. Fenollosa also represents that effort to take Japanese poetry beyond the clutch of aficionados, for whom translation was a cliquish affair, and introduce the artform to a general readership.¹⁷² Because of this social role, Fenollosa had a large degree of influence on

¹⁷⁰ A wide variety of European playwrights influenced Japanese authors in the early twentieth century, including such diverse styles as Ibsen, Maeterlinck, and Wilde, whose *Salome* was extremely popular. Conversely, Japanese dramatics influenced many Westerners besides Yeats, including Bertolt Brecht, Paul Claudel, and Benjamin Britten. Critical writing has increasingly shown that the Japanese-European artistic exchanges were complex and multi-dimensional, not easily summarised by categorical depictions. For a Japanese language account of Fenollosa's contributions to the promotion of Japanese classics, see Yamaguchi Seiichi, *Fenollosa: Nippon bunka no senyô ni sasageta isshô*,

¹⁷¹ A recent anthology of scholarship, edited by the Institute of *Nôgaku* Studies at Hôsei University, considers the unique difficulties *nô* poses to a translator: *Nô no hon'yaku: bunka no hon'yaku wa ika ni shite kanô ka* [*Nô in Translation: How is the translation of culture enabled?*]

¹⁷² For an example, Tsukui Nobuko's *Ezra Pound and Japanese Noh* demonstrates Pound's textual failures by providing vigorous contrasts between the historical texts of *nô*, as preserved by the *Kanze* house of performers, and the inaccuracies within Pound's version. However, considering the relative privacy of the *iemoto* tradition, it is not surprising that Fenollosa did not have complete access to *Kanze* archives at that time. Like Hearn, however, Fenollosa did enjoy a greater degree of admittance than others. He was, of course, one amongst a general movement. Just as Yanagita was not the sole creator of *minzokugaku*, Fenollosa need not be regarded as the forefather, or founder, of *nô* translations.

Japanese playwrights as well. For example, Tsubouchi Shôyô, his student, wrote several dance plays partly under Fenollosa's encouragement, including *O-Shichi kichiza*. Tsubouchi took from Fenollosa not an obsession with the past, but a commitment to contemporary genres that intersect with the cultural past. He was thus a major proponent of *shingeki*, or new style Kabuki. Tsubouchi was also one of the pre-eminent translators of Shakespeare, producing innovative versions for Japanese audiences. He may have provided Kurosawa Akira with inspiration, as seen in such films as *Ran* and *Throne of Blood* [*Kumonoso-jô*]. So, like Yeats, Fenollosa did not have a slavish fascination for an imagined past. When looking at whom they associated with and the influences they produced, we find through Fenollosa all sorts of links to a network of innovators rather than fantasists.

Fenollosa and Waley were committed to presenting classical *nô* in an accessible format, for the purposes of introducing a theatre-going public to its style and beauty. By 1925, Waley had established his purpose with selections from major Japanese poetic classics, including *Manyôshû*, *Kokinshû*, as well as an edition of *Genji Monogatari*. Arthur Waley's *The Nô Plays of Japan* (1921) shows his prowess with pre-modern drama. This work is generally regarded as the finest translation of this subject until the end of the Second World War. Waley, by no means a spiritist, showed an interest towards some exegesis of the supernatural qualities in these plays, as being contrary to the Victorian stage. Drawing attention to these features, he states in his introduction that the "theatre of the West is the last stronghold of realism" (17). While not necessarily committed to *mugen*, he indicates the likelihood of a new Occidental movement that "would like to see theatre that aimed boldly at stylization and simplification, discarding entirely the pretentious lumber of the 19th century stageland" (17). And Waley asserts that this new movement can look to Japan for a venerable example for a variety of possible non-realist dramatic forms. Waley, in discussing the possible influence *nô* might provide a range of modernist playwrights, encouraged intertextual study. The more developed the artistic interchange between East and West, he suggests, the more catalysts could be produced to spark revivals and reconsiderations of what constitutes an aesthetic heritage.

CM is also one of these flashpoints, being neither slavishly "Irish" or "Japanese" in either content or method. As its own kind of Yeatsian stylisation, *CM* presents interesting interpretive versatility for a director. Yeats clearly states that he modeled this play on a sense

of *kyôgen* as mirth.¹⁷³ At the same time, Yeats connects this farce to his symbolist exegeses concerning the hermetic soul, particularly through the introductory namesake poem, which seems to make use of formulae from *A Vision*. So, on one hand, the satyr-play like format allows Yeats to exhibit some of his most underrated qualities, foolishness and humour. Yeats's own notes remind us of Minalouche's *Vision* symbolism (*Plays* 896), although he voices allusive potential in an uncommitted way. So, as well as being a comedy of saintly errors, a serious occult cosmography is being pedagogically delivered? The two forces, as Yeats exposes, cannot be balanced as a performance. *Kyôgen*, in its own domain, wins the contest of mood. Comedy and mystery are deliberately left unresolved and asymmetrical. Any sacred cow can be milked: religion, occupation, and Yeats's own beloved occultism.

While the theatre of Maeterlinck, it is fair to say, would strongly be in the minds of Yeats's audience, *The Cat and the Moon* defies that symbolist condition by refusing to provide stable patterns of meaning. The burlesque execution intentionally undercuts any metaphysical presumptions. And, like Villiers de l'Isle Adam, the play drives on recklessly through indeterminate nuances of belief or situation. What the stage reveals is that the symbolic praxis of the prose-ish *A Vision* cannot be sustained in the dance. This has the effect, as in "The Dialogue of Self and Soul", of turning away from transcendental Truth to the raw impact of theatrical elementalism. To make an entirely symbolic reading of this play, as F. A. C. Wilson finds, requires that elaborate, multiple allegories be enshrined in the written text. The performance aspects—speech, dance, slapstick—then are overlooked for the sake of intellectual frameworks. Rather than a kabbalistic allegory, Yeats had in mind an alternative conclusion for the satire in this work. He did not include this work in *Four Plays for Dancers*, as originally planned, because *CM* "was in a different mood" (*CP* 896). In functioning as a *kyôgen* like discombobulation, the mood works because of its difference as satrdonic counterpoint to *HW*. There may be symbolism here, but the performance elements upset it through a clowning manner that tempers the audience's frame of reference.

CM contains some of the wildest comical action in all of Yeats's oeuvre: haphazard gestures, clashing cymbals, and piggy-backed saints. Their dialogue is a highly exaggerated

¹⁷³ *Kyôgen* literally *mad words*, refers to a style of play which was intended to complement *nô*. As a kind of farce, this genre emphasised comedic action, everyday circumstances, and bawdy conduct. Often presented as an interlude between two plays of that more serious genre, *kyôgen* could both relax the attention of the audience, as well as surreptitiously mock the emotional pretensions to which it contrasts.

Hiberno-English, a stream of pseudo-patois of *Kiltartanese*. As often as Yeats has been accused of mangling local dialects unwittingly, here the effect is clearly intentional and hyperbolic. The contrived syntax is a much more exaggerated form of the speech habits that Yeats ethnographically recorded previously. Excessively clichéd syntax acts as a metaphor for confused national identities. Their ancestral voices sound off gibberish. The following exchange typifies their slapstick repartee:

BLIND BEGGAR. Look well now, can you see the big ash tree that's above it?

LAME BEGGAR [*getting down*]. No, not yet.

BLIND BEGGAR. Then we must have taken a wrong turn; flighty you always were, and maybe before the day is over you will have me drowned in Kiltartan River or maybe in the sea itself. (*CP* 445-46)

This passage has a resemblance to a comedic aside from “The Tower”:

Music had driven their wits astray –

And one was drowned in the great bog of Cloone.

Strange, but the man who made the song was blind . . . (I.31-33)

This poetic passage takes a swipe at the legacy of Toirdhealbhach Ó Cearbhalláin (O’Carolan) or perhaps the Co Mayo bard, Antoine Ó Raifteiri (Raferty), both of whom were sightless poet-composers. *Cloone* derives from the Irish word *cluain* [meadow] rendered into English language phonetics. Drowning in the Cloone bog or the Kiltartan river entails the same topophilic hazard: one chokes on his or her hunger to digest the landscape. A musician or poet can get lost trying to navigate a map that either has no bearings at all, or only disproportional ones. As Yeats conceived, the audience would have, less than an hour earlier, see Cuchulain leave the well thirsty. Now, the rebuttal—one can be so overwhelmed by the land as to gag on it. Even in farce, landscape is crucial to the psychological ambience of Yeats’s plays. *CM* exhibits a kind of warped cartography of myth, one that undercuts the lost ancients of *HW*’s “heroic age”.

This kind of reflective mockery demonstrates Yeats’s capacity for critical reflection. For this, Yeats exhibited a tolerance for ridicule that sets him apart from much of the Edwardian occult revival. *Master Therions*, such as Aleister Crowley, had a naughty side, but rarely would he so visibly debunk his own macro narratives of gnosis. Others, such as Eliphas Lévi and G.R.S. Mead, were so obsessed with Masonic formula that their conceptual

writings never leave the realm of rites and initiations. Now, I am not suggesting that the occult can be set aside from Yeats's plays or poetry, or that it was a minor interest. On the contrary, I have read Yeats as a crucial formulator to an intercontinental movement of the *fushigi* as a response to modernity. Moreover, I disagree with certain attempts to *normalise* Yeats, to make him more respectable by shoving his superstitions into the broom closet. Yeats credits a spirit-guide Ameritus for inspiring some of his drama. As the phantasm tells him, "I have also given you material for a Noh play" (*Calvary 2*: 387). Such comments smack of a pronounced unreason, and Yeats as the ethereal traveler has been shunned some by scholars. For these same tendencies, psychedelics embrace Yeatsian cosmic antics. For example, as Tom Nolan claims, Van Morrison's cult album *Madame George*, from the trippy *Astral Weeks* album, is an allusion to Georgie Yeats and the power of mediumship (*Wall Street Journal* 18 April 2007, 14).

There need not be a separation between these two accounts, between the fantastic and politics. I agree with Leon Surette, who shows that occultism (understood in diverse ways) had an important role in the creation of modernism. This can be documented and observed in Japan and Europe. Occultism includes diverse methodologies for exploring and interpreting spirits, ancestry, and twilight. This, I believe, had a necessary prominence in the practice of Yeats's anti-naturalism, as it did for Kyôka and other authors under discussion. My point is that Yeats also had a capacity for satire and scepticism, and the targets could include his own Great Mysteries. Yeats had a fine talent for blasphemy, as his mage's moniker *Demon est Deus Inversus* suggests. In setting itself up as the retort to the brawny Celts of *HW*, *CM* contains also mild rebukes of Theosophy, Catholicism, land worship, and the convoluted codes within *A Vision*.¹⁷⁴ The play confounds both orthodox religion and hermetic spirit. If the dancing cat's duet with the moon is somehow a depiction of Sufi equations, it remains a sideshow poem to the three ring circus of saints and beggars.

Yeats's friendship with Blavatsky, like his participation in the Golden Dawn,

¹⁷⁴ Yeats scholars tend to be sheepish about their subject's vast complexes of superstitions; Kyôka scholars, however, seem to delight in them. Donald Richie offers a typically Kyôkian anecdote:
 Rough drafts were offered before a photograph of his mentor, Ozaki Koyo, and then burned. The ashes were then eaten as a talisman against cholera, a disease of which Kyoka was in mortal fear. (*The Japan Times*, 15 July 2001)
 Like Joyce, Kyôka's phobias included dogs and thunder-storms.

provided some satisfaction for his paranormal curiosities . . . initially. Theosophy introduced—for those who were not academics, travelers, or diplomats—small glimpses of Asian philosophy from a more reputable heritage that was inaccessible. Theosophy, and its claim to Hinduism, is Blavatsky's creation, and thus a good example of the difference between a tradition and a reinvention for personal gain. But Blavatsky claims to speak for a lost, Atlantean *inner essence* of Tradition, to which all cultural materials can be interpreted. Much of *The Secret Doctrine* combines channelled teachings in the voice of her mentors:¹⁷⁵

In other words, they were the Lemuro-Atlanteans, the first who had a "*Pneumatologie*"), but of actual living *Devas* (or demi-gods or *Angels*, again) who had assumed bodies to rule over them, and who, in their turn, instructed them in arts and sciences. Only, as they were *rupa* or material Spirits, these Dhyanis were not always good. Their King *Thevetata* was one of the latter, and it is under the evil influence of this King-Demon that the Atlantis-race became a nation of wicked *magicians*. (2:221-222)

However haphazardly, Theosophy introduced to Christian Europe, Sanskrit vocabulary, yoga, and the epics of Ancient India. For Yeats, such passages could entertain with a kind of metaphysical bestiary for poetic materials. But his research went beyond what Theosophy presented. Yeats would develop, through further study and Asian scholars, these interests into more substantial projects, such as his reading of *The Upanishads* and friendships with contemporary poets of the Asian sub-continent.

In an interview with Daniel N. Dunlop, Yeats said:

“A clever American, who was not a Theosophist, said to me once: ‘Madame Blavatsky has become the most famous woman in the whole world, by sitting in her arm-chair, and getting people to talk to her.’”

(*The Irish Theosophist*, 15 November 1893)

Yeats also spoke out quite candidly about his time in Theosophy, even with fellow disciples. Despite his preliminary enthusiasm, Yeats cannot be thought of as passively submissive to all of Blavatsky's auto-suggestions. In his own memoirs, Yeats's account of his meeting with

¹⁷⁵ In footnote, Blavatsky comments, “Since then Donnelly's *Atlantis* has appeared, and soon its actual existence will have become a scientific fact.”

Blavatsky contains great slapstick. He portrays the Madame as a headmistress in the medium's chair, playing with Akashic images: "She sat nightly before a little table covered with green baize and on the green baize she scribbled constantly with a piece of white chalk" (A 160). This image of an enthroned scribe will be recreated for the opening section of *A Vision* in Robartes's drawing room. After setting out a good sample of drink—"glasses and a bottle of champagne out of the cupboard and laid them on a small table" (37)—Robartes then reveals a piece of vellum covered in archaic symbols which act as headers for his lecture notes. But, in the real meeting with Blavatsky, the young Yeats experienced a moment far from sublime. With a touch of clumsiness, like Gatsby near the mantelpiece, the young Yeats almost knocks over a majestic timepiece. This earns him a matronly reprimand: "Don't break my clock" (A 161). Yeats's foot was probably asleep, since Blavatsky had kept Yeats waiting like a patient in the dentist's office. The clock had not enabled Blavatsky to be punctual, perhaps because she has too many supernatural chronologies to maintain. The meeting with the master ends in a trip and a punchline.

CM, as a theatrical performance, cannot maintain the mystical focus that the pursuit of gnosis requires. The dimensions of its space are deliberately erratic, paced in hectic and headturning directions. The two beggars are never certain of the reality of their destination, or the authenticity of their communication, nor the condition of their own bodies and souls. Everything remains in an indeterminate mood. Religion and salvation, faith and healing, are found through whim rather than belief:

LAME BEGGAR. That is a lost soul, Holy Man.

FIRST MUSICIAN. Maybe so. (*CP* 452)

And, moments later, this conditional mood is reiterated, with no further degree of certainty or resolve:

FIRST MUSICIAN. Aren't you blessed?

LAME BEGGAR. Maybe so. (453)

CM's staging could make use of the same well that appeared previously in *HW*. The pagan font now becomes an ecclesiastical holy well; the Christian dynasty has replaced the Cuchulainic one to the audience's perspective. Yeats, even in his farce, works from a cartographic specificity. He uses the visual and suggestive dimensions of exact sacred sites, reproductively, for theatrical emplacement. As Yeats identifies in his introduction to *CM*:

The well itself is within a couple of miles of my Galway house, Thoor Ballylee, and is sacred to St Colman and began a few years ago to work miracles again, rejuvenated by a Gaelic League procession in its honour. (VPI 805)

The political overtones of this statement are subtle, but pronounced: nativist movements, in their assertion of place and pride, were apparently reviving the dormant magic of the landscape. St Colman's well is indeed a picturesque reality, prominent in a rustic landscape—although one of many such holy wells to be found in this diocese. Indeed, *Colmán* [*Ir*: wood-pigeon, derivative of *Columb*, dove] is the name for almost two hundred saints in early Christian Ireland.¹⁷⁶ According to local oral traditions, the Colman in question at this site is one Colman Mac Duagh. And these wellwaters, near Corker, Galway, were the site of his baptism. The local legend that Yeats refers to in his introduction—"some story, which I have half forgotten"—involves two pilgrims, one blind and the other lame. At their pious destination, they chance upon Colman's mother, who is awkwardly trying to baptise her child with no water at hand. They put their prayers to the task, asking divine blessing, a bit of rain for the ceremony. Then, suddenly, a nearby ash tree erupts into a geyser of water. The child is baptized and the hermits healed.

This story is a point of pride for the village's Catholic church, where displayed relics support the legend with tangible evidence. One can find there the *miraculous stone* that St Colman and his mother used to float out upon, so great were the rushing waters. All in all, according to the church's version, this story is a moral tale of faith, nature, and divine transcendence. As holy travelers in quest for a cure, their faith has healed them: *Go; your faith has made you well* (Mark 10:52). Pilgrimages continue to Corker now to, particularly for Catholics with strong pre-Vatican II sympathies.

According to this official, standard version, the pilgrims were pious monks, summarily blessed by the baptismal waters, not at all the backbiting beggars in Yeats's version. But Yeats rejects this line of homily of St Colman and its Trinitarian message. His play, instead, concludes with an inconclusive miracle. Why can the lame beggar suddenly dance—is it divine agency or self-hypnosis? Why does the First Musician, St Colman,

¹⁷⁶ *Colman* is used descriptively in *Baile Bricín*: "co ngúis colman cãdha, co cridi seboic" (*Dictionary of the Irish Language* C 328.26) [. . . a noble wood-pigeon's face . . .], noting his brown complexion.

prance off stage singing a show-tune like song about a black cat? The closure confuses, not redeems: the meaning remains irresolute and irrational, rather than religious or redemptive. The plot does not deny that a sacred site is present, only that this time the mythic-topography is mocked. *CM*'s staging assumes the suggestiveness and allusive purpose of the specific location, but corrupts the ancestral recall of the religious tale for comical effect. Chronologically, this play takes place in a post-Cú Chulainn era. This deliberately Catholic epochal play transforms, visually and historically, the pagan well of *HW* into a Christian baptismal font, much as the coming of Christianity renamed ancient sites with new beliefs. An uncomfortable Oisín-into-Patrick like shift has occurred. *CM* takes place at twilight; however, the greys are different, reproducing and also rewriting, the rough beauty of *HW*'s setting. Natural landscapes still suffer from neglect and drought, not the flood narrative in the official story of the monks. And, as parenthetical image, why is the dancing cat a vision of playfulness?

The insertion of the dancing cat, at beginning and end, but totally removed from both plot and stage directions, is enigmatic. It is hard to see how, in this play, either the cat or the saint fulfils what Yeats describes in the preface:

The saint may touch through myth the utmost reach of human faculty and pass not to reflection but to unity with the source of his being. (*VPI* 806).

Minalouche's lunar inclinations do suggest *A Vision*'s phasal workings, but how does this become imparted on stage? Yeats acknowledges that Minalouche does relate to the tinctures, but just as quickly backs off by saying, "It all grows too faint to me" (*VPI* 806). As an independent poem, "The Cat and the Moon" more readily lends itself to some occultic content, as in the manner of "The Gift of Harun Al-Rashid". But used parenthetically for a *kyôgen*, the gnosis becomes warped. To maintain a symbolic reading of this work requires tremendous stretches to consistently read the theatrical action as connected to the *lunar phase* paradigms. Is this cat really a model of lunar phases in zoomorphic form? Possibly. But the stereotypical casting is suspect. The black feline, after all, is famous enough as the witch's familiar, and Minalouche happened to be the name of Maud Gonne's pet. It is just as possible that the animal provides a satirical perspective that the human does not, as Natsume Sôseki famously did in *Wagahai wa neko de aru* [*I am a Cat*]? Yeats had made a large white cat the demonic force in "Village Ghosts" from *CT*. But the black cat has a

disconnected feeling from the action. Minalouche's talent, perhaps, is an ability to stand outside the quest and conquest cycle of cultural history. Thus, when Yeats describes Minalouche's behaviour as "tired of that courtly fashion", he also makes a claim for the nature of *kyôgen* as the possibility to parody what might be elitist pretensions of *nô*.

CM, like *HW*, demonstrates the adaptive matrix of Yeats's dramatic vision, as one informed by, and departing from, pre-figured models of genre heritage. His stagecraft still assumes a degree of local knowledge from his audience for maximum effect, just as Zeami would have relied upon a level of legendary knowledge from his. National farce still requires folklore. And this characteristic, in part, leads to that air of elitism that surrounds Yeats's *neo-nô* plays. Quotes from Yeats, like the following, further strike an exclusivist stance:

I want to create for myself an unpopular theatre and an audience
like a secret society, where admission is by favor and never to
many. (*EI* 254)

Reconciling the "secret society", such as in *SB*, with Yeats's vigorous work in creating a public Irish National Theatre suggests two contrary motivations. "Admission is by favor" implies a selective screening process, an exclusivity that has also dogged classical *nô* for centuries. That drama, after all, had its origins firmly in an artificial world created out of privilege and power, one that culturally contrasted with *kabuki*. During a recent performance in New York, *kabuki* master Nakamura Kanzaburo XVIII bluntly stated:

Noh has a history of patronage by those who hold power. It is the
common people who have always supported Kabuki. Noh and Kabuki
have nothing in common.

(Gurewitsch, *New York Times* 15 July 2007, Arts 6)

I do not wish to mount some defense of Yeats in regards to aristocratic assertions, which surface in many aspects of his life and work. I do see, though, how some comments also relate to his overall wish for a theatre independent of popularity and media culture. By getting away from the *masses*, Yeats had in mind a theatre independent of fads and advertisements, one that "had no need of mob or Press to pay its way . . ." ("Certain Noble Plays", *EI* 221). I also believe that, in terms of privacy, Yeats wanted a *nô*-esque intimacy for the twilight dramas, a smaller setting of closeness and familiarity. He wanted to move away from the grand productions of opera and European showmanship. Yeats states that the

most appropriate lighting for his variant drama is “the lighting we are most accustomed to in our rooms” (207), which bears a liking to Tanizaki’s description: “The darkness on a *nô* stage is the same darkness within a household [“domestic architecture” Seidensticker 26] of that time” (Tanizaki 31). Yeats wants to maintain the nearness of shadows, to keep the stage low and visually accessible as an intimate connection to the audience, a performative apparatus of light and dark (*meian*). He also, for the Abbey Theatre, produced dramas designed for larger audiences.

But small scale stagecraft was intended to develop the twilight sheen necessary for the unrealistic atmosphere: “I had a different feeling about [the] stage when I wrote it—I would not now do anything so remote, so impersonal . . . it is almost religious, it is more a ritual than a human story” (*The Shadowy Waters* 425). This required experiment, adjustments in format, and other reformulations. Yeats had made directorial suggestions; actors should behave in the manner of a “marionette” (*At the Hawk’s Well* 210). In his essay on “Certain Noble Plays of Japan”, he states that the Japanese actors to achieve style “found their movements upon those puppets” (*EI* 230), the still gestures of *bunraku*. Æ had suggested that the suitable presentation of this play would require an alternative stage “an old hall in a castle” as well as paradigmatic costume “an ancient robe” (*L2* 2:175). The theatrics of restraint and sparsity enacted dreamlike spaces of participation for the minds of the audience. Landscapes, both legendary but accessible, and characters, both anthropomorphic and astral, operated together to intensify the metaphysical multiplicities of a work. Yeats was open to trial and error. The unavoidable hostility, between ancestral stylisation and the presence of the modern, demands as much. *CM* demonstrates, however, that a variety of narratives modes, including satire, produce an attention to the ancestral that resists the superficial collusion in what the *official* tale might didactically enforce.

THE DREAMING OF THE BONES (1919)

Rostrevor, a predominately Catholic village in County Down, nestled near the Mourne Mountains, exhibited symptoms of a localised haunting. At various times, residents and visitors alike swore adamantly that they could hear the eerie ringing of a phantasmal bell. So persistent was this sound, and so ongoing were its chimes, the ghost-ringing took on the

proportions of folklore and legend, from the parish of Kilbroney to beyond. No one could locate its clapper, or where the sounds were coming from, so doubters began to make noises. But the numbers of witnesses were extensive and persistent, so blaming the phenomenon on auditory hallucination, nostalgia, or whatever else, did not put the matter to rest. Then, during one particularly nasty storm in 1855, a terrific wind uprooted a large oak—in which, amongst its branches, an ancient bronze bell had lain hidden for ages. Here was the fantastic belfry, intact, dislodged from its perch in the tree. The phantom bell had a physical location after all. But how did a large instrument of the church end up in a tree? One likely theory as to its strange concealment is that, during the era of the Penal Laws, a priest from St Bronagh's hid the parish's cherished treasure, lest it be confiscated or melted down to make ammunition, as was frequently done to Catholic sacramentals.

This kind of mytho-historical story is fascinating, but not uncommon, for many reasons. History, folklore, and communal vigilance co-operated in the construction and reception of this story as local narrative. The bell is a real artefact, as well as a perceived spectral effect, heightened by the poignancy of local circumstances. The haunting of Rostrevor demonstrates that a folktale, atmospheric circumstances, and legitimate historical events all coincide dramatically in producing the phantasmal within the local space. The supernatural is not so otherworldly, but concomitant to human activity.

Wayne K. Chapman, the editor of *The Dreaming of the Bones* for the *Cornell Yeats* series, documents how Yeats tinkered, through manuscript revisions as he did with *WO*, with the right geographic setting to situate his themes. Originally set in the Wicklow Hills, much closer to the 1916 violence, Yeats finally chose a more reclusive spot in the bleak and windswept area of Co Clare. The ancient battlefield of Corcomroe (*Corco Modhruadh*),¹⁷⁷ in

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Corcomroe is a Cistercian abbey, known as *Sancta Maria de Petra Fertilis*, Saint Mary of the Fertile Rock, principally thought to have been founded by Donal Mór Ua Briain, King of Limerick, in 1194 (or 1180). According to *Annals of Innisfallen*, a battle occurred here in the thirteenth century between the O'Briens and their enemies:

An army was lead by Conor na Siudaine, the son of Donogh Cairbreach O'Brien, to Kinel-Fearmaic, where they were joined by O'Dea and O'Hehir at the head of their forces. They went to the upper Canthred to bring the inhabitants thereof to submission, and they burned the country north of Duibh-Gleann, and proceeded northwards to Béal-Clogaidh, near the sea, where they were met by Conor Carrach O'Loughlin and his allies and a battle ensued in which Conor na Siudaine O'Brien together with a great many of his people were slain by O'Loughlin and the race of O'Donnell Conachtach O'Brien, and he (Conor na Siudaine) was buried by the monks in the Abbey of Burren.

the area of the Burren, furnished the ancestral nuances that thematically link landscape to theatrical action. Yeats was drawn to the Corcomroe Abbey partly because of its surrounding natural milieu, a combination of desolate limestone and green fields. However, Lady Gregory's own field notes on this area's myth and history, intended as an introduction for a play in the same location, provided Yeats with the research that determined his eventual choice for setting. The cast of characters in *DB* does not relate to Corcomroe directly, but Yeats found situational correspondences in deeds connected to location. As St Colman's story is connected to the site in Galway, the misdeeds of Donagh O'Brien, who invited the Normans into Ireland for his military goals, infect the terrain of Corcomroe. The situational guilt is thus contextually receptive to the similar actions of *DB*'s poltergeists, Diarmuid and Dervorgilla. Diarmuid and Dervorgilla relate to Corcomroe not through factual history, but by symmetrical cause and effect relations that create an ontological trap, one that captures their roaming spirits. *DB* will, more fully and problematically than any other of Yeats's plays, dramatise the historical and cultural quandaries that ancestral recall implicates. As much as one may or may not be obligated to invoke the heritage of the past, there will be distressing encounters when some of those ghosts are summoned into the present. Accepted interpretations of a historical narrative may not square up with the adaptation required to serve a current order of business.

Diarmuid kidnapped Dervorgilla, a daughter of the King of Meath, in 1152. In some versions, they elope together, departing from Dromahair, Co Leitrim, a village to which Yeats frequently traveled. In response, Dervorgilla's husband, O'Rourke, organized an invasion into Diarmuid's kingdom, located in Leinster. (Arguing against Sinn Féin, historians will thus point out that Ireland had not been, historically, a united island, but a violent contest of powerbrokers and warlords.) However the Irish understood themselves as a cohesive identity, it also had the markings of an internal dispute. O'Rourke's incursions resulted in the de-throning of Diarmuid, and his exile to England. Desperate and driven by vendetta, Diarmuid—in what is considered to be one of the earliest and most gratuitous acts of Irish collaboration—invited the *sasanach* [Englishman] into Ireland for military and

University College Cork provides the entire texts of the *Annals* online as part of their ongoing Corpus of Electronic Texts project: <http://www.ucc.ie/celt/published/T100004/>

The *Annals of the Four Masters* also detail the warring chronology of Corcomroe. For a detailed history of the abbey, see Michael Mac Mahon, *On a Fertile Rock*. A version of this tale appears in Thomas J. Westropp's article, "A Folklore Survey of County Clare" (1912).

financial support. Colonially keen, Henry II obliged and offered to restore Diarmuid's position, for a price. Some of his Leinster lands would become as a settlement for the English army who accompanied him. England made its foothold in Ireland thereby. And Diarmuid's name, like Benedict Arnold, became an epithet for national betrayal. The play explicitly makes the association between Donagh and Diarmuid as linked by the same crime:

The King of Thomond was his rightful master.

It was men like Donough that made Ireland weak. (*CP* 439)

And, as the play's current situation of an occupied Ireland in 1916, the twilight setting combines current politics that reflect the ancient topography of a collaborationist Thomond.

Yeats's understanding of Irish, and Celtic generally, literatures and languages was inhibited by a number of conditions. His sources were secondary, and their accompanying commentaries often had strong political motivations. Fundamentally, Yeats lacked knowledge of the languages. In short, he was not a professional scholar. Although he supported archivists and medieval paleography, he did not position himself as a scholarly authority. Yeats acquired most of his concepts and depictions not from manuscripts, but from orature, versions of stories as circulated in the street and in the fields. This kind of community-based information entertained both as retellings from an earlier source as well as contemporary lore adjusted to the present. Folk materials—symbols, stories, and images—were evolving and adopting themselves in response to external and internal stimuli. Thus, Yeats's versions and re-narratives have their own kind of rootage in the speech discourses of western Ireland. Further redactions for a received heritage of myth need neither reject, nor perpetuate, a standard version. As Yeats said earlier, "I have brought the harp-strings into 'The Shadowy Waters,' where I interpret the myth in my own way" (*V* 188). Irish literature abounds with the practice of working innovations and derivations from prototypical models from the classics. As Dáithí Ó hÓgáin points out, medieval texts concerning Cú Chulainn took massive liberties with the traditional account. Authors "took great liberties with pre-existing material of the Ulster Cycle" (145). They reshaped the legends in many ways, to make more romance-friendly genres, or by adding their glaring substitutions or alterations for narrative purposes.

But these authors, as did Yeats, do not treat the materials as purely inventive and disconnected from a genealogy of storytelling that had brought folkloric materials into their

hands. Mythic poetry acts necessarily as an ongoing zone of exception, in which the local keeps a vestige of the ancestral myth, transmitted through a continuity that both preserves and adapts. Necessarily, the storytelling must perform both duties, preservation and adaptation, so as to act against the encroachment of social forces that impinge on minority histories.¹⁷⁸ Old tunes in new tricks had been the motivation for the “The Fiddler of Dooney”. Scenes in *CT* such as “By the Roadside” depict how the knowledge distribution of folk music requires a community of performance, a face-to-face relationship of exchange and instruction. The oral referants find their bearings in locale: Ballysodare, Cooldumman (the site of the infamous *Battle of the Books* between Sts Colmcille and Finian), the Hungry Rock, and so forth. Thus Yeats admired the organic quality of storytelling/storytellers as the real commerce of culture: “the economists should take their measurements not from life as it is, but from the vision of men like him . . .” (*FLM* 63).

DB, however, takes on a crucial debate as to the relationship between current version and ancestral model, between foundation myths and contemporary issues of revolutionary statehood. What happens, face-to-face with the half-vanished, when the local legend is a curse of history that the modern would rather do without? What does a minority culture do when, fighting off its occupation to reclaim both past and future, it actually owes its ongoing predicament to the sins of its heritage? Ancestral recall influences the national narrative of current events with a negative reminder, one perhaps best left, disregarded, to the past.

As a kind of phantasmal *nô*, *DB* combines the mythotopography of Irish history and saga with atmospheric elements from the *nô*, particular the usages of ghostlore as the dramatics of a phantasmal aesthetic [*yûgen*]. Arthur Waley had discussed a sense of this concept—variously translated as *mystery and depth* or *the subtle and the profound*—as a characteristic of *nô* (22).¹⁷⁹ The two characters of this word both suggest mystery, spirit,

¹⁷⁸ Michael Powell’s film *The Edge of the World* dramatises the events of St Kilda, an isolated island in the Shetlands, the residents of which were forced under government order to leave. This event was seen as evidence of how rurality is being sacrificed for the sake of economic modernism.

¹⁷⁹ 幽玄 – an important aesthetic term in Japanese arts and culture. Robert H. Brower and Earl Miner established the preferred translation, *mystery and depth*, in their study *Japanese Court Poetry*.

Yûgen has the connotation of shadows, depth, mystery, or mysterious elegance. Kawabata Yasunari produced a famous calligraphic scroll of his own brushwork with the phrase *shin’ô yûgen*, translated as subtle and profound mysteries by the Kiseido company, who manufacture board game equipment. They use this description to emphasise the nuances of *go*, a board game, and Kawabata’s scroll hangs in a room reserved for

grace, although in combination *yûgen* is a sensibility. The term is much older than Zeami's sense of refinement and elegance. The twelfth-century poet Fujiwara Shunzei wrote extensively on its varying nuances, many of which developed from religious sermons that had dark and penitential overtones ("Jichin" 2:312). Shunzei argued for a broader sense that included a formal appreciation for eerie beauty, the presence of the *fushigi* as a force of the apparitional. The modernist perspective, of course, had their own sense of *yûgen* that distinguishes them from both Zeami and Shunzei. DB's most poignant decision involves whether or not the soldier, as a figure of revolutionary politics, will make amends with a heritage that suggests Irish duplicity.

To see how the soldier reaches this crisis of involvement with the dead, it is important to remember that the theatrics of *DB* commit to an accessible reality that is paranormal and the paratemporal. *Kyôka* and Yeats, utilising modern kinds of *yûgen*, critique a social predicament in which industrialisation or other forces might over-rule a longstanding regard for the mysterious. The actuarial basis of Enlightenment, and elements of science, had made "superstition", "foolishness", and "mystery" cognate expressions. A counter-strategy develops, one in which superstition becomes intentional and resistant. *Spirited Away* and *The Celtic Twilight* contain all manner of deliberate phantasms as perceptible: topographic animisms, natural elements as potential talismans, ablution rites, necromancy. Likewise, the chimeric power in *Kyôka* can be found in his imagery, as a language developed from a kind of automatic writing, exemplified in such works as "One Day in Spring" [*Shunchû*]. Overcoming utilitarianism and temporality means to turn, partly, to the archaic as a rebellious aesthetic and alternative ethical mandate. The mystery, however, has a communal outline for presences that are in the process of disappearance. What else can depict them if technology will not?

In terms of how a modernist literature interpolates folkloric materials, Yeats parallels *Kyôka* in that they worked from their deep interests in forms of literary mediumship as a means to negotiate ancestral voices and symbols. Neither was limited in their approach by a parochial commitment to their own national literature. However, the mythology of place and landscape provided bearings for communicating with the local *genius loci*. Yeats drew upon

varied repositories of Irish fairy lore, and *Kyôka* worked out of a familiarity with Chinese ghost legends, as well as Japanese examples such as Ueda Akinari. It is useful to think of Yeats's multicultural, composite approach to ghostlore as a research tendency, a very much modernist technique shared by other *yûgen* authors of that time in Europe and Asia. Contemporary journals such as the Japanese *Kai* maintain this interdisciplinary and intercultural approach, as Yeats had taken:

Certainly I find it in old Irish literature, in modern Irish folk-lore,
in Japanese plays, in Swedenborg, in the phenomena of
spiritualism, accompanied as often as not by the belief that the
living can assist the imaginations of the dead. (V 221)

Note that Yeats does not say here *noh*, but speaks of Japanese drama generally, which could include its contemporary forms. By “*it*” Yeats refers to methodological examples in which ancestral recall is an existential obligation of *assistance*. *Reibaisha*, or mediums, are not necessarily the preserve of Gothic novels, crystal balls, tarot cards, or the *I Ching*. Yeats finds an ethical motivation, a spiritual purpose, to the past. Necromancy claims, recalls, a particular glimpse of the vanishing and the previous, to peer into the cross-temporal phantasms who leave traces in the twilight present. But *DB* shows Yeats's willingness to complicate the issue of both ancestry and recollection. In this play, the lustre of time can be, in fact, a curse. The abbey contains numerous effigies, many of which seem better left to their private purgatories. Folk history cannot be swallowed whole as a pristine capsule of undefiled truth.

In portraying the condition of Diarmuid and Dervorgilla as vanishing characters who have become entrapped, Yeats draws upon Japanese depictions of *jibakurei*, traumatised spirits fettered to place through psychical debts, to further elaborate on the vengeful characterhood of the *sídhe* from *HW*.¹⁸⁰ In *DB*, the *jibakurei* are “angry ghosts who wander

¹⁸⁰ Earthbound spirits who, because of an emotional attachment, a physical object, or another sort of fetter, cannot fully transcend the material plane and so exist partially amongst the living in an unrequited state of incorporeality. Somewhat like the analogous *poltergeist*, *jibakurei* are often vindictive and jealous towards the living. As in *Nishikigi*, they can also be pitiable and languishing in their condition. Both Buddhist and Shinto liturgies contain prayers and services designed to help free these trapped entities. Ancestral observance requires one to be careful in areas of *jibakurei*, to be conscious and cautious in areas where they are thought to be dwelling.

in a wilful solitude” (440).¹⁸¹ As negative *spirit loci*, they are inverted ancestral presences, ones vanished yet still affixed to a specific location as *kárma* prisoners. In *DB*, the punishment is the result of a rupture caused by national psychomachia, of which they were the instigators.

DB's similarity to *Nishikigi*, the *nô* play by Motokiyo, is well known. Yeats makes it clear on several occasions the degree of conceptual influence. For example, in the essay “Swedenborg, Mediums, and Desolate Places”, Yeats provides an extended summary and description of the plot of *Nishikigi* (*EI* 334-35).¹⁸² But, aside from outlining the plot, his commentary on the thematic material explains the role for folklore in modern drama as interrelated with phantasmal history. New trends in stagecraft can still extrapolate from heritage materials—indeed, show their relevance rather than leave them behind in dusty stasis. *DB* takes up this predicament of how the modern, the living, assist the imagination of the dead. *Nishikigi* also resonated with the local storytelling, striking a note of sympathy for Yeats:

I remember that Aran story of the lovers who came after death to the priest for marriage. It is not uncommon for a ghost, “a control” as we say, to come to a medium to discover some earthly link to fit into a new chain. It wishes to meet a ghostly enemy to win pardon or to renew an old friendship. Our service to the dead is not narrowed to our prayers, but may be as wide as our imagination.

(*West Ireland* 335)

Just as this restless couple is freed by a priest's sacrament, in *Nishikigi* a wandering *yamabushi* monk offers an *o-harai* purification to free the spirits from a karmic blockage. Of course, *Nishikigi* is not a Catholic story of indulgence and redemption, but one of

Jibakurei reports were regularly featured in Thai newspapers after the tsunami disaster. In Okinawa, devout Buddhists conduct an annual search for bones and other remains from the battlefields, so that they may receive proper funerary rites.

¹⁸¹ Komatsu offers an extensive discussion of the historically religious foundations of this phenomenon in Japanese legends.

¹⁸² Donald Keene's anthology would include a more authoritative version of this play, in *Twenty Plays of the No Theatre*. According to Itô Masayoshi's annotations, Mt Shinobu, in Fukushima prefecture, has a longstanding reputation for lovers, a useful place for romantic interludes (3:29).

intercession and release. However, while sharing different religious dogma, the two stories have much in common. The imaginative present, operating in the in-between-ness of twilight, can intercede and communicate with the ancestral past, even so far as to revive, release, or redeem it through metaphysical intersections. The physical remains interactively contiguous with the immaterial.¹⁸³

Much of the world's literature exhibits archetypes of crossing of a bridge, or other symbol of a liminal threshold, in which spirit and person come into contact. Ghosts regularly intercede in human affairs, and vice-versa. Such depictions are particularly noticeable in Irish and Japanese writing in early modernity. Utagawa Kuniyoshi's (1797-1861) visual arts depicted various demons and wraiths interconnected with the activities of a human agency. For this kind of unreal art, Kuniyoshi could draw upon a massive inventory of the spirit world found in Buddhism. Hungry Ghosts [Jp: *gaki* or *jikininki*; Sk: *preta*] have been a common motif in Hindu, Buddhist, and Jainist preaching. Allegorically, they suggest how desire can transmute the soul after death into a ravenous phantom. Kuniyoshi worked out of both innovation and ancestral conception. As a classical literary example of the ancestor in the otherworlds, Kyôkai penned the influential the *Nihon ryôiki* in approximately 823 CE.¹⁸⁴ This work is an anthology of miracle tales of matters pertaining to the intercessional relationships between the living and the dead, as how these can produce beneficial and harmful *kârma* in the transformations between being into next-being. Also, the *Ketsubonkyô* sutra describes the damned being sent to a blood-pool hell. On a recent bus tour of Kunisaki Peninsula, Oita, the guide earnestly invited all of us on the coach to chant the *Hannya shingyô* for the repose of any angry spirits in this region's many haunted temples. A crucial moment during the annual memorial service in Nagasaki, for atomic bomb victims, is the

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Hori and Yanagita provide extensive documentation and social analysis concerning the parallel developments in Japanese mortuary rituals (and death-memorial festivals, such as *o-Bon*) and the cultural experience of the living-dead in Japanese literature and society.

The Japanese language has a highly varied vocabulary for describing the undead, including *shiryô* (spirits of newly departed), *sorei* [ancestral spirits] and *goryô* [vengeful spirits]. Religious beliefs concerning the status of the soul after death evolved during the Heian era, and by the Edo period the personal intervention of ghosts into mortal affairs was a common theme in all Japanese literary genres, as well as featuring in idioms from the popular vernacular.

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Also read as *Nihon reiiki*, the full title of this work is *Nihonkoku genpô zen'aku ryôiki*—'Miraculous Tales of Karmic Retribution of Good and Evil in Japan'.

presentation of sacred buckets filled with water. This *kensui* offering originates from witness accounts of how the streets were filled screams, *Mizu nomitai!* [Water, I need water!]. Many people, of all ages, did not die immediately, but slowly over several days from burns and radiation. *Mizu nomitai!* Every year, in the summer heat of Kyushu, schoolchildren offer now what was not available then, that this drink might give succor to any suffering spirits still in the vicinity.¹⁸⁵ One of Yanagita's earlier essays, *Senzo no hanashi* [About our Ancestors], examines in great detail the practical meanings of *senzo* in relation to cultural practices, as cross-influential. With such examples in mind, we can also think of Yeats's interests in Japanese depictions of intermediate states [*chûin*], and his concurrent portrayals of limbos and purgatories.

The Catholic belief in Purgatory, one ardently shunned by almost all Protestants, has been found faulty because its theology requires a liminal soteriology. Such a domain of in-between existence demands a kind of ancestral recall, in the form of indulgences and offerings. Prayers for the dead have a circularity of retroactive effects. As Yeats writes at the conclusion of his play named after the place of purgation:

O God!

Release my mother's soul from its dream!

Mankind can do no more. Appease

The misery of the living and the remorse of the dead. (544)

But Yeats strongly differs from Catholic teaching in that his belief in pre-Christian traditions that the *sídhe* are not children of Cain or other soul-less devils. In fact, they seem to include former humans, sent into ontological exile, from neglect or banishment by mortal influence. As mentioned previously, Akutagawa strongly detected this sense in Yeats when he selects the word *seirei* [deceased persons] rather than *yôsei* [fairy] for translating the word "fairy" from parts of *CT*. Kurihara Kojô's 1914 translation of *The Shadowy Waters*, the poem, had taken a similar tact: the shades represent forces of alterity that, out of jealousy, consume the human spirit out of apparitional hunger. Yanagita would, in his writings, gradually replace *senzo* [ancestor] for more general words such as *yôkai* [monster], including *tengu*. This emphasis on the contextual (socio-religious) shaping of the accursed spirit was as important

¹⁸⁵ I observed this ceremony during the annual Nagasaki memorial service, on the anniversary of the atomic bombing [*genbakui kinenbi*], August 9, 2007.

as the spectral effects produced thereafter. Interestingly, this might explain the major differences between the film series *Ringu*, and its American adaptation. The original Japanese narrative describes much more extensively the foundational conditions that created the *jibakurei*'s predicament. The film script was based largely on the lives of Mifune Chizuko and Takahashi Sadako, two mediums from the early-twentieth century who fit into the trend of *fushigi*. Their stories, and the highly nuanced Japanese ghostlore, were cut from the pyrotechnics-driven, American remake called *The Ring*.

Both the *nô* and *kabuki* canons have many examples of exorcism and purification for restless spirits. As limited as Yeats's access was, plays such as *Aoi no ue* [*Lady Aoi*] depicted *ikiryô*, a projection of a living person's spirit into a spiteful astral form. Only an exorcist can nullify its power. *Nô* developed a pantheon of ghost-spirit masks for depicting the various entities that interact with the protagonist. Thus, a common plot device involves a traveler figure—usually of clerical persuasion—who encounters a paranormal presence. The meeting of form and spirit leads to repairs in the space-time continuum. Such literary, as well as metaphysical, situations were suggestive to Yeats as well as *Kyôka*. The latter's *Kôya hijiri* [*The Holy Man of Mt Kôya*] has a *nô* like feeling but is in prose: a young man enters into a liminal world, typified by twilight and phantasm, and undergoes an interaction with the ancestral to heal his own emotional dissatisfaction. Ghostlore, as a kind of folklore, further connects literature to the orature of the peripheries. Both Yeats and *Kyôka* prefer poor country priests rather than celebrated ecclesiastical scholars or other authorities. *Kyôka*'s depiction of the lowest castes and outcasts of Japanese society, similar to Yeats, reveal elements of society that had been marginal and disregarded.

What Yeats also found through his comparative paranormal studies were varying accounts of how a site or object can be attuned to negative ancestral memories. In some cases, this can take the form of a hex. Superstitions might prevent the purchase of antique *kimono* sold after the Second World War for food money. A grudge [*onnen* 怨念] becomes a resonant attachment, one that bedevils an object. What if Tanizaki's aura is an angry one? The discourse of the vanishing exacts a black shadow on its former materiality, returning envy for what had been destroyed, displaced, or assimilated into hostile contexts. *Chûkan* realities possess these characteristics as well as more benevolent and informative forces. Yeats's own depictions of devouring *shadows*, of being *spirited away* into non-being, had

demonstrated this sense of a malevolent revenant on many occasions. So, if the element of *yûgen* in this kind of *neo-nô* turns necromancy into a rebellious act against time and rationality—can it also ritualistically intervene to heal the trauma of the past? Could a priest remove the curse on a patch of *féar gortach* [hunger grass]? Can the mad spirit of King Goll or the Well Guardian be assuaged?

The stagecraft of *DB* does not recreate a heroic age as a substitute for the contemporary. The dramatic conflict arises from the interfacing of a stylised, masked legendary apparition with a youthful, unmasked Irish insurgent, existing in the forward motion of the rebellious present. The two faces, mask and flesh, meet and speak in a colloquy of past and present, but they do not resolve the temporal and national split that divided present politics and ancestral legacy. The stagecraft represents this ideological separation by having flesh confront mask, the former speaking out of the present, and the latter articulating through the astral. Previously, Yeats had experimented with intertwining the legendary with contemporary voices, paratactically through stanzas, with “Baile and Aillinn”. This poem’s textual mechanics rend the verse into patterns of plain type and italics. The former narrates the action according to mythic time, while the latter, as a kind of metered interruption, puts the romantic storyline into the perspective of a sceptical present. *DB* takes this stanzaic format of divisions and turns it into the conflicted dialogue of the stage. The young soldier behaves as a foil to the heavily stylised motions of the ghost-actors who perform with a rigid degree of grandness and precision. Dervorgilla and Diarmuid are affixed to this spot because their actions exhibited the same fault as O’Brien’s battles. Both guilty parties invited intervention of a foreign army that, in the continuity of history, led step by step to the violence of 1916.

Were Yeats to be typologically following *nô*, the role of the soldier in *DB* should be, instead, a kind of monk or cleric, one who balances the seen and unseen through an absolving touch upon phantasmal predicaments. If Yeats were trying to reproduce a Celtic *Nishikigi*, then the present would heal the past, and the past would teach the present. The priest proxy would cleanse the ancestral lovers of their sins. But Yeats is not writing verbatim Celtic “Noh”, or copying *Nishikigi*. The bones of Yeats’s Ireland are dreaming within a critical interrogation of ancestral spectres within geo-politics and memory. Ireland’s nativist origins and historical antecedents are exposed as confused and irreconcilable with the present. The

soldier, on the run, rejects communion with the corrupt heritage and the national narratives they represent.

The gun in Yeats's play replaces the love-token of *Nishikigi*.¹⁸⁶ Certainly, as a visual motif, the red-wand had abundant folkloric associations of union and passion. In the *nô* source, the talisman changes from an abandoned love-charm into fusion into a harmony with the tones of late autumn. *Nishikigi* is a play of seasons and colour: the teardrops on the sleeve are chilled into the snow of winter, ejaculated in the dance of reunion:

How glorious the sleeves of the dance,
That are like snow-whirls! (148)

DB's dull greys of cursed twilight are corpse-like in contrast to *Nishikigi*'s chromatic hues. Armed and trained, the soldier refuses to perform a priestly function; and there is no salvific miracle for the boney ruins and effigies of this abbey. Thus, as geographic synesthesia, the landscape reflects the protagonist's blank encounter. Nature becomes an anti-dream of the heroic past, a crumble of grey neglect. The play's conflict asks the audience, should the soldier offer a spiritual intervention necessary to free the stasis of the ghosts? The staging of this play in Ireland directly puts a moral onus on the nation builders of the post-1916 era. To do so would amount to a truce, a nationalist reconciliation and closure to collaborationist history. Or should the soldier uphold the sense of *ourselves alone* as temporal as well as geographical fact? Yeats has taken the metaphysics of *Nishikigi*—its spiritual and romantic moral of transformation through votive offering—and transposed a political revolt. It is not that the ancestral does not exist, or is invented. If either case were true, then they could be safely ignored. Rather, the force of their story as heritage and history is so beguiling and meaningful that lore confounds the revolutionary agenda of the present. The soldier describes the divisive effect, addressing his abandoned ancestors:

You have told your story well, so well indeed
I could not help but fall into the mood
And for a while believe that it was true,

¹⁸⁶ *Nishikigi* means “brocade tree” which was a symbol and gesture of romantic interest in the Michinoku region. *Saigyô's Travelling Tale* documents another literary example of this custom.

Paul Muldoon may have both Yeats and *Nishikigi* in mind with this *haiku*-like poem:

The yard's three lonesome
pines are hung with such tokens.
A play by Zeami. (*Hopewell Haiku XXVII*)

Or half believe . . . (CP 443)

Crucially different from *CM* or *HW*, *The Dreaming of the Bones* takes place not at twilight, but at dawn and the break of a new day. The soldier's obligation is to stand watch for the future: "I am to lie / At daybreak on the mountain . . ." (309). The young man prays in Irish, but he refuses to converse in a resolved way with the ancient speakers of that language. As an inversion of the Oisín predicament, he recognises all too well the shape and strata of modern culture and geography; it is the legendary that is the unrecognizable habitat. According to his model for the nation, revolutions must overcome the deepening of the fissures and crevices within a colonial society, ones that ancestral allusions alone cannot fill. The *dreams* of the bones are disconnected from the surge of political action: "let them dream into what shape they please" (310) means to be made of the same substance as when "Romantic Ireland's dead and gone / it's with O'Leary in the grave" ("September 1913").

The *jibakurei* of modern Ireland, the spirits of revolutionary martyrs, are leaders such as Roger Casement or Patrick Pearse. The soldier thus has no duty to centuries old *jibakurei*, but is obliged to a contemporary *geis*, or command, to armed revolt. In this regard, the drama is more Nietzsche than *nô*.¹⁸⁷ In this space of in-between-ness, the ancestral exists, but they are stuck in twilight, incapable of moving into the new Easter, the "horizon to the east is growing bright" (314). In refusing to aid the trapped spirits in rejoining Ireland, the soldier reverses the *kamikakushi* model of a mortal kidnapped by the fae. This time, the mortal does not release the phantasmal hostage. By turning away from the ghosts—by declining the prosopopoeia of restoring the dignity to their faces—he claims that physical erasure is, in fact, caused by the ancestral, not the modern:

The enemy has toppled roof and gable

That town had lain,

But for the pair that you would have me pardon. (314)

Revolutionary nationalism, in this case, is not activated by a recollection of a romantic heritage. On the contrary, this refusal to engage the spectral has a sectarian quality, a commitment to solidarity with the present. Instead of repeating a Buddhist parable of

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See also Michael Valdez Moses, who invites readings of Yeats's effort to shape a style of drama in which the imaginative power of pre-modern location operates in symbiosis with contemporary circumstances.

enlightenment, or a Catholic tale of absolution, *DB* castigates twilight in favour of the growing dawn of nation-building. In *Nishikigi*, love and intercession had conquered all:

It is a good service you have done, sir,
A service that spreads in two worlds,
And binds up an ancient love
That was stretched out between them. (Tyler 140)

Militarism, instead, trumps some moment of ancestral-cultural apotheosis. The political tensions are too inherent in nostalgia; and so as the young soldier says,

I had almost yielded and forgiven it all—
terrible the temptation of the place! (*CP* 444)

Putting aside exoneration, the young man closes the door on history as a wraith whose unrequited legacy cannot find forgiveness within contemporaneous fragmentation. There is no olive branch to replace the *nishikigi*; there is no sacrament of reconciliation from mortal to ancestor. The contemporary confusion of warfare shows how laying claim to ancestry leads to fraternising with misleading revenants. Better to look forward then—homeland security takes precedence over homeland necromancy. The contentious panorama of twilight passes into nightfall, emerging into the configured dawn of movement and change.

The Dreaming of the Bones is a challenging accomplishment of Yeatsian *neo-nô*. The playwright combines his interests in Japanese drama with his concerns for Irish history as well as the current political situation. The characters of this play are demarcated citizens, ones split by chronological time. To be masked, or unmasked, codifies these manifestations of apparitional history in juxtaposition to political combat. The ghosts wear the stylised guise of the *heroic*, while the soldier faces both past and future exposed as the skin of violence. *DB* puts insurgency as the force that might find the Easter tones of redemption. Therefore, consider the impression this play would make, if only two hours previous or so the audience had seen Cú Chulainn leave the well parched and cursed. And, next, a farcical romp in which saints—inheritors of Cú Chulainn—twaddle their way towards a miracle. Chronologically progressive, the pre-modern Ulster cycle becomes the Christian era, and then finally the modern, 1916. A single stage, representative of landscape, has been three times re-inscribed within one evening's cycle of theatre. Lustres of time have moved at breakneck speed to rapid modernity. Those spatial auras that denote residency within a

mythic-geography have been first uprooted and displaced by Christianity, then the English, and now by the armed founders of twentieth century statehood. The vanishing entities on the rim become increasingly layered symptoms of the traffic of time. Twilight assumes so much vanishing, at such a dramatic pace, that most people, things, and places are hurled to the edge by the forthcoming gyre-cyclone. Modernity, then, as a speed of movement, outpaces the models of space and distance that the *neo-nô* represented.

The mobilisation of the modern Irish nation emblematically hearkens to tradition but is institutionally mandated to occupy the future. Wolf Tone's nativist assertions of multi-social unity had sought a common name of Irishman for any Protestant, Catholic, or Dissenter. To break the connection with England, the flags and identities of the past had to be dissolved and made anew. The military voice becomes the anthem of nationalism. In "The Road at my Door", Yeats himself becomes a Diarmuid figure, an apparitional dream at the sidelines of young men at war: "And turn towards my chamber, caught / In the cold snows of a dream" (14-15).

Yeats also, through the unresolved actions of *DB*, makes predictions about the new militarism of the Irish cause. What will this soldier do in a free and independent homeland? Some of the leaders of the 1916 rebellion, as well as the Civil War, would make careers out of military causes. General Eoin O Duffy, blessed by bishops, would sail with his brigade of Blueshirts from Galway to Spain on a Nazi ocean liner. Their next port of call was Madrid in a civil war that Fr Paul O Sullivan, rector of a church for expatriates in Lisbon, called "the holiest war that was ever waged on this earth".¹⁸⁸ O Duffy apologists are quick to point out that he had also been a technical advisor in the IRB and eventually Chief of Staff for the IRA in 1922. What will the dream of his bones be? a blue-shirted supporter of Franco, or an important builder for the fledgling Free State, its police force, and a pro-treaty supporter for Collins? The wounds are still fresh, the bones not yet settled. Ken Loach's film *Wind that Shakes the Barley* has shown the dramatic call that the Irish civil war had, already near the legends and twilight, its title taken from a folk song.¹⁸⁹ What are the bones dreaming in

¹⁸⁸ As quoted by *The Irish Post* (21 July 1979).

¹⁸⁹ Another interesting area for research is the use of Irish poetry, songs, in relation to the memory of war in Japan. For example, in the programme *Sokoku* [Homeland], Irish folksong acts as the principle musical theme. *Tokutai*, a conscripted pilot who could not follow through on his *kamikaze* mission, returns sixty years later to

Japan? Ishihara Shintaro, the charismatic governor of Tokyo, has his own right-wing version of race, history, and nation. Revisionist *manga* the ultra-nationalists, such as the infamous *Kenkanryu* [Hating the Korean Wave], try to forward another. How much do these accounts figure for the Japanese public at large? From what perspective can these claims be countered, without playing into the usual over-simplifications of aggressor or victim?

Yeats's lifespan included that period of rapid development, the early phase of an historical process that comes more fully into view later in the twentieth-century. Dublin urban geography now defines itself by the millennial Spire as much as the GPO. In Japan, the Kyoto Tower, built in 1964, has been viewed as a similar declaration of futurism. Dublin's metallic exclamation mark also announces progress, a new monument for post-2000 minds, a salute to both the Celtic Tiger as well as the European Union. The Spire functions as a testimonial substitute for the past's troubles, as it sits in a surrogate fashion where once stood Nelson's Column, destroyed by an IRA bomb in 1967. The Irish populace has not overlooked this sense of historical replacement as public performance.¹⁹⁰ In June 2008, Ireland held a public referendum on ratifying the latest version of the Lisbon Treaty, the only member out of twenty-seven in the European Union in which citizens could exercise their right choose. The debate over Irish sovereignty, and its relationship to the wider theatre of geopolitical operations, persists, with the entire national demographic involved.

Japan, not to an Emperor's anthem, but Irish folksong, a Japanese translation of *Danny Boy* (Londonderry Air). The song was originally brought to Japan through Irish missionaries in the early twentieth century and became enormously popular. The Japanese lyrics are markedly different from the Weatherly original, including this phrase:

祖国に命をあずけた
おまえの無事を祈る

To your homeland dedicate your life,
while for your safety I pray.

The renowned writer of *yûgen manga*, and ghost researcher Mizuki Shigeru is an amputee from the Pacific War. He attributes his interest in the supernatural from eerie experiences of soldier-ghosts on battlefields.

¹⁹⁰ Jan Morris relates the Dublin humour for an ambivalence of history and progress when she records a conversation she had with a local, regarding the new Spire monument in O'Connell Street:

'Why, they're to demonstrate that the object has been pulled out, dragged out, so it has, from the very soul of Ireland.'

"The soil, did you say, or the soul?" I queried.

"Ah, sure, you've hit it on the head there, right on target, full marks — the soil or the soul, that's the be all and end-all of it . . ." (73).

Yeats, in various ways, considered the multifarious fashions in which the Irish validated their sense of national self-consciousness. Yeats's literary output, unlike most *kokugaku* authorities, straddled the intense debate between ancestral recall and progressive anticipation. But one of Yeats's most apparent concerns was for vanishing voices, dissipating heritages, the auras and landscapes erased into cosmopolitan indeterminacy. Most prominently, Yeats, through the diversity of works, toggles the variables in the equation of people, nation, and the traces of whatever may account for their heritage. What now constitutes now a lustre of time for the modern enquiry, where the fingerprints of the previous handlers have been wiped clean?—

Is that body bag
Cuchulainn's or Ferdia's?
Let's check the dog tag.

(Muldoon, *Hopewell Haiku* LXXVII 433)

6 Epilogue--Lapis Lazuli

“Alvah says that while guys like us are all excited about being real Orientals and wearing robes, actual Orientals over there are reading surrealism and Charles Darwin and mad about Western business suits.”

--Jack Kerouac, *The Dharma Bums*

Assessment of Western influences of Japanese culture, as representing both a colonial threat of assimilation yet also an external catalyst to revival, is a much argued topic. Recently, Valerie Henitiuk’s research, along with others, has pursued how foreign translations of *Genji monogatari* have inspired a Japanese renaissance for this, apparently lost, classic.¹⁹¹ In her view, Western interpretations have caused average Japanese readers to become “more passionate about them—about their own culture’s treasures—after seeing them reflected in the sometimes distorted mirror of world literature.”¹⁹² How does one gauge a classical revival in Japan (or anywhere) as being largely a feedback loop dependent upon Western interest and/or interference? What of the distressing suggestion that indigenous interest is pre-programmed by external persuasions? What are the implications if a current mania for the cultural past is another manufactured enthusiasm, once more brought out through foreign instigation? I think that Setouchi Jakuchō—a Buddhist nun, popular spiritual author, and recent translator of *Genji monogatari* into modern Japanese – as well as, say, Fujiwara Shunzei—writing in 1150 AD the *Genji monogatari* was a masterpiece – have much to tell us about Murasaki’s work. They might have as much to say about the annals of Japanese literature and national self-consciousness, independent of Waley or Seidensticker, as controversial and interesting as translations and *world literature* paradigms may be.

¹⁹² A description of Henitiuk’s SSHRC funded research can be found on the Council’s website:

http://www.sshrc.ca/web/winning/prize/2005/postdoc_henitiuk_e.asp

For a similar study, see Michael Emmerich’s “Replacing the Text: Translation, Canonization, and *The Tale of Genji*” (PhD Dissertation, Columbia, 2007), which also documents how various mechanisms, visual and textual, helped to enshrine *The Tale of Genji* as a representative classic of Japanese literature at home and abroad.

Certainly, informed participation by foreigners can intensify the ways in which a heterogeneous collective assesses its own arts. Previously, Hearn and Fenollosa had helped to revive, by directly working alongside Japanese authors, interest for traditional literature and folk customs, both in Japan and abroad, during the advent of international, technological modernity. But, if in the present day, *Genji* comic books and *monogatari* computer games represent a restored love of the classics, how do such presentations counteract a foggy Western mirror? It seems that, “in a shrinking world”, the local and particular can only assert themselves as a pantomime, staged for an ignorant, global audience. For precisely this reason there here has been a longstanding malaise in Japan toward cultural restoration if done as a Western-dependent activity. On this note, in the early twentieth century, Sakuma Shôzan’s famously cautioned against the way of “Japanese ethics, Western techniques”: *wa kon, yô sai*. Long-standing mistrust has existed towards figurations of a traditional soul [*tamashii*] brought about through, or in contrast with, Western methodology.

There are many cultural forces that mitigate and negotiate the reception and transmission of aesthetics. Not all of them are preclusive, or dependent on Otherness for autonomy. *The Great Gatsby* is highly regarded as a masterpiece in Japan, and not just because Murakami Haruki translated it, somehow justifying its place in *world literature*. *Heike monogatari* is just as popular as *Genji monogatari* in multimedia Japan, despite its relatively smaller stature in the World Canon. If video games are the standard by which a literary renaissance is measured, *Heiki monogatari* has fared very well. The spirit of Yoshitsune has been absorbed into the virtual fantastic. The video game *Genji: Dawn of the Samurai* (2005) is a roleplaying game based on *Heike monogatari*, not *Genji monogatari*. The immortal Shizuka and Yoshitsune are in the lead, digitised roles. And what about the Yoshitsune texts as patriotic education, or classical appreciation? My wife, with her fellow pupils, memorised the first dozen lines of this work as a school assignment, including the famous bit—

Gion shôja no kane no koe
shogyô mujô no hibiki ari . . .

At Gion shôja, the bell’s voice –

Everthing goes, nothing lasts,
reverberating . . .

For me, a cursive example of *shogyô mujô* [諸行無常] was one of the first *tehon* [example model] I was given for practicing Japanese calligraphy. All of my Chinese friends can recite Li Bai's "Yuè Xià Dú Zhuō" ["Drinking Alone, Midnight"] in his or her dialect from memory. That a poem has such prevalence as a cultural treasure has very little to do with the fact that Ezra Pound or Arthur Waley happened to make a good or bad translation, or that Canadian poets such as Roo Borson make affected references to classical Chinese poetry.

Senses of tradition, or folk culture, will summon up a range of ideological responses. As Kikuchi Yuko and Kim Brandt have analysed, the *mingei* [folk arts] movement in Japan during the 1920s arose complexly, from a variety of agendas. These included artisan commitments to handicrafts, as well as increasingly nationalist redactions, further complicated by increased attention from European potters, such as Brian Leach (who carried with him the philosophy of Morris and Ruskin). Kikuchi finds much of this *mingei* movement ultimately to be a project of "Oriental Orientalism", based on a "dichotomic framework" of hybridity that forwards the illusion of authentic Orientalism both internally and internationally. This critique applies directly to major figures such as Yanagi Muneyoshi or Hamada Shôji, who were amongst the main expositors of folk crafts, as well as the social systems that sustained them. As Oku Shôzô documents, Yanagi's indignation towards mass production methods, and attraction to heritage, arose from seeing many Edô-era pots being tossed away as rubbish during urban development. He initially began with a desire to preserve kilns and manufacturing techniques. But, many critics find the concept of *folk*, tradition, or heritage to be entirely a discursive invention, lacking historical substance as well as cultural authenticity.

What could *mingei* theory say about the much broader genealogy of ceramics, in, say, Shigaraki pottery design? While acknowledging the ideological pretenses of modernity, we cannot lose, entirely, the practices that contributed to artisanship over an extended period of time. The firing of stoneware as an aesthetic delight pre-dated a twentieth-century need to impress Westerners, to fill the pockets of its profiteers, or spread colonialism across East Asia. Modernity did certainly bring with it an escalation of national postulations vis-à-vis the reception of international marketplaces. But can the culturally domestic be thought of in other ways besides the imperialistic or the disingenuous? These questions are not addressed

to a straw man. The notion of *tradition*, which must be interrogated, should not be abandoned in favour of a discourse-centred theory of total deconstruction, one that can only address present notions and today's circumstances.

Surely in all of this access and emergence, there must be a way to appreciate folk arts without becoming a fascist ideologue? John Dougill argues that *mingei* provided a hospitable context in which ceramicists such as Kawai Kanjirô could perfect his masterful style (201-2). There must be space for inter-cultural exchange besides the profit margins. Imagine the conversations that took place when Ogawa Senyô visited Auguste Renoir in Cagnes, 1913. Ogawa's encounters with the French landscape, the palette of Provençal daylight, and the patterns of its coastal colours would excite his brushwork and enhance his technique. Or Miura Tamaki—while recognising the problem of a *Japan* as Oriental ambience for Puccini or Mascagni—was an artist passionate about singing opera. To pursue her musical goals, she faced down any number of difficulties to study performance in Europe and North America. Casting stereotypes then (as now, with, say, *Miss Saigon*) have affected which roles she could access: namely, *Madama Butterfly* and *Iris*.¹⁹³ However, as an Asian performer mastering Occidental melodies, she took a pioneering spot on both the Western stage and in the musical societies. The critic Norman Peterkin, in 1920, ranked her as a *prima donna* (607). In context, this title is a compliment, suggesting a performer of the top rank in the emphatic, Italian style, rather than a passive Asian woman. And interculturally likewise, Leach (a pacifistic member of the Bahai'i faith), Hearn, and Fenollosa all lived in Japan, interacting with local artists, and contributing to, rather than being responsible for or moving away from, the developments of craftsmanship in the early twentieth century. Globalisation, as we now know it, was in its formative stages, but the interrelational nature of translation could be co-operative, facilitating subjects and objects, rather than just fusing and confusing them.

The collaboration between discourses that glorify the state, such as the nativist *kokugaku*, and the certification of an aesthetic pedigree, is a major critical issue for Japanese

¹⁹³ Pinkerton's first aria in Act I of *Madam Butterfly* celebrates the rapacious spirit of the homogenising internationalist:

Dovunque al mondo lo Yankee vagabondo
 si gode e traffica
 sprezzando rischi.
 Affonda l'áncora alla ventura . . .

scholars. As an example of how the theories of Bourdieu and Foucault expose the fabrication of authenticity, Leslie Pincus's *Authenticating Culture in Japan* is a model study. Her strategies, derived from Western post-structuralist theory, can also be found in other scholars who, in different ways, debunk claims to heritage and inheritance as a national birthright. The first half of the twentieth century in Japan, as Ireland, seems to provide many examples in which imperialism and aesthetics readily coincide.

Mingei includes both ideological and tactile approaches in modernity to categorising dislocated traditions in service of the state. Critics find that its methods regrouped and reconfigured, like *minzokugaku*, accumulated data and experiences according to entirely modern sensibilities. True, what theoretically constitutes a folk art is not the same now for the current head of the Sakaida Kakiemon pottery lineage as it was for Yanagi, or previously as it was for Ogata Kenzan. Still, all of them, if brought to the table from their respective eras, could discuss together the merits of a *shino* glaze or other aspects of teaware. Particular schools of pottery, such as Morgan Pitelka examines in the *raku* category, fashioned sole claims of ancestral pedigree both to commodify their own creations, and then supply satisfaction of prestige to their patrons. These claims, as cultural capital, depended upon a systematic effort to maintain exclusive relations between craftsman and connoisseur. Authenticity mavens use *art* as ornamentation to be bartered for status and control. Institutions, *iemoto* or otherwise, organise and affirm the power of trade. Tea and pottery are forms of empire, and formats for control and oppression.

A similar critique could be made against the orthodox histories of the *Tozan* or *Kinko* schools of *shakuhachi* flute. In various ways, for selfish purposes, these *ryû* [school] may be deconstructed as falsely positioned as inheritors of pre-modern musical heritage. In claiming a truer preservation of an original musical composition, one school's moniker stakes out spaces against a competing claim to an authenticity of tradition. The repository of musical notation acts as one form of exclusive material evidence. Performative characteristics that mark one school's method from the other can then be subjected to the theory of tradition as invented. But can such a reading also detail the music itself—and the spiritual and aesthetic principles that accompany it—as conserved and communicated across generations? In the history of *shakuhachi*, a vast chain of references exists that document the origins of particular compositions, as well as the sequence of musicians who innovated certain interpretive

techniques, and so forth. Alongside the assertion of exclusive status and purity in a given school, there is also meaningful evidence of music as an engaged continuum.

Pitelka reminds us that cultural bureaucrats can create historical versions of tradition that fuse gaps in depicting, so that a legendary origin—the artisan Chôjirô, for example—is linked, in a straight line, to an artistic trademark in the present. The passageways between then and now are much more complex than unbroken chains of command. But with careful circumspection, we can also understand *mingei* or *rakuyaki* for the aesthetic merits they fostered, and the stylistic innovations they promoted, in a meaningful way that address continuity and complexity. And, to think of other examples, the importance of weaving patterns, as a passed on handicraft, has to the Chilcotin peoples of the Pacific Northwest. Patterns and channels of transmitted knowledge can be observed. Within these paths, important cultural information, and artistic achievements, continue on through methods of instruction. Despite what the hegemonic trends in theory as of late suggest, aesthetics need not be abandoned, or entirely discounted, when questioning tradition and the passages of cultural memory. Are all artists downtrodden by Knowledge/Power, incapable of self-reflexive intervention?

Shakuhachi or *sadô* [tea culture and practices] include more than the representative material accoutrements in and of themselves, or the bartering and exchanging of these, disciplined and punished. Bodily activities interact and develop through these items as well, and not necessarily to serve the purposes of a secret overlord of Control. Beauty, and may the debate continue as to what that is, can be empowering, personally and politically. As Eiko Ikegami examined in the various artistic networks of Tokugawa Japan, aesthetic concerns remain viable as affective incentives for artistic networks, linking within a society and forging social relationships for cultural expression. Still, the persistence of artifacts, as an inherited lustre of familiarity over time, testifies to those styles and methods that give notions of coherence, through convention and technique, as the ongoing elements for an identification. Politics can turn these characteristics into ideologies, sometimes imperialistic or chauvinistic ones. However, if folk arts are, *de facto*, only these ideologies, and thus fraudulently conceived projects from conception to shipment, what useful purpose can they ever serve? What legitimate form could they ever take? On one hand, these materials falsely substantiate a nationalised sense of unity, yet these pseudo-relics are at the same time

produced to exploit a foreign curio market. If folk appreciation [*mungei undô*] derives entirely from such forged contexts, should it be any surprise that their reception history, in the world at large, has been marked by a misconstrued orientalism? If the source was bunk to begin with, what is the standard to measure the falsification? Self-orientalising is both strophe and anti-strophe for the back and forth movements of culturality. When is there ever any legitimate access or creation? The fake can only get faker.

We do need to understand the potential for cultural appropriation, one that trivializes and condescends through imitation and dabbling. In the 1990s, the Yasusada poetry hoax painfully demonstrated how easily a Japanese, even a *hibakusha* [atomic bomb victim], could be adopted as a persona for personal gain, literary hype, and—as its perpetrator(s) claim—a postmodern prank. This counterfeit also demonstrated how easily the American editorial elite were willing to take yellowface at face value, without checking the documentation first, or consulting with, say, Japanese poets, who might have caught out the trick from the start.

The disconcerting ITV programme *Kelly Osborne: Turning Japanese* (2006) shows that the current trend of mediagenic Orientalism is undeniably popular. The daughter of rock legend Ozzy Osborne takes a working holiday in Japan. There, she will experience, in the words of the narrator, “the mysteries of the east”. This phrase will be surpassed in repetition only by the other oft-stated claim, that Japan has “one of the strangest cultures on Earth”. According to the producers, *Turning Japanese*—or *Watashi wa nihonjin ni naru* as its Japanese subtitle reads—entails being plunged into extreme scenarios supposedly representative of the Japanese people and culture. Aping the pretenses of Reality TV, each episode concocts ridiculous “Japanese lifestyle” vignettes, all of which are nothing more than sensationalised improv scripts. The exaggerated anecdote becomes the expositional norm for defining identity.

Osborne does a stint in a *meido* café (because Japan is populated by fetishistic *otaku*/geeks); she takes a couple of *iaidô* lessons (swords, one again, express the Japanese soul).¹⁹⁴ Osborne routinely struggles to work an electronic bidet (Japan is a hyper-hygienic

¹⁹⁴ Buddhist and Shintô terminology frequently appears in Japanese manuals on *budô* styled martial arts, such as *kendô* and *aikidô*. These should not be assumed as endorsements for imperial authoritarianism. For a sense of how deeply personal, and self questioning, this vocabulary as a way of understanding training, consider the range of contemporary writings: examples include such books as *Zen to aikidô* [Zen and Aikido]; *Watashi no kendô shugyô* [*My Kendo Training*]; and *Kami no kokoro, ken no kokoro* [*Spirit of Kami, Spirit of Sword*].

nation, one full of alien gadgets). Now and then a temple is visited, festivals are gawked at, and giggling always ensues. And, not to be outdone by Arthur Golden, Osborne finishes up with a one week crash course on *geisha* behaviour. All this under her belt, in a final camera pan, Osborne returns home, bewildered and cursing, but with a mental souvenir of *wabi sabi*.

That meaningful cultural notions, ones indicative of ethnicity or heritage, persist as referents is why such programmes are so trivial and offensive. Something deeper than a stereotype, humanistic and worthwhile, must be possible to attain. Without that value, how else can we discern presentations that are condescending and trite? Of course, positing *value* complicates, rather than simplifies the debate. Yeats saw this as necessary for a society to grow. No doubt, the debate as to who are the guardians of authenticity will take curious turns. Some Japanese elite schools are now requiring students to prove their adroit skill with chopsticks as part of the entrance exam. What standards can be used to compare or contrast Osborne's claim to an experience of "Japan" with, say, Maura O'Halloran's *Pure Heart, Enlightened Mind*? As another kind of *gaijin monogatari*, this work is a memoir, "the life and letters of an Irish Zen Saint" as the new book jacket reads, on a quest for Zen enlightenment. Where does this work fit in with Orientalism, travel writing, or religious autobiography? Does O'Halloran's certification of enlightenment through ongoing *dokusan* [religious dialogue] with an accredited abbot, or her accidental death in Thailand, lend different kinds of credibility to her diaries? A search in iTunes Music Store for *Zen* returns a bizarre hodgepodge of results: Amsterdam chill-out music and guides to home decoration. The list is endless: the number of travelogues that claim to decode the soul of Japan grows every year, and all of them overtly define the identity of the other as cultural leverage for the circulation of presumptions. For example, Karin Muller's *Japanland* uses the literary gimmick of searching for the *wa* [harmony] at the heart of Japanese culture. Her observations include claims that courtesy is bred into the Japanese DNA. Any number of prejudices, orientalisms, or other for-profit affectations that plunder cultural identities can be exposed. Such accusations, however, implicitly imply some kinds of legitimate alternatives. Representation, subordination, and appropriation are the key terms that rightly draw attention

Zen identity, as complementary to athletic training, is approached with somewhat less circumspection by martial artists in North America. For example, the characters *zen* [禪] and *ki* [氣] are used as a name and promotion gimmick for an energy drink, a corporate product from a sponsor of mixed martial arts (MMA) competitions.

to the biases inherent in travel, translation, or miscegenation. However, if corrupting biases are the only point of evaluation, how can there be (or why should there be) any escape from the parochial systems?

Accessing different cultures, especially through direct contact, can cause a reflexive consideration of one's own traditions. Hermann Hesse and Shiba Ryōtaro both make this point explicitly in their studies in, respectively, Buddhism or Irish literature. In a recent essay entitled "*O-tsuki-sama kara Man'yōshū he*", the Catholic novelist Inukai Michiko examined moon imagery in classical Japanese poetry and Irish language epics. She hails the publication of *The Book of Kells*, with accompanying Japanese commentary, as an important contribution, rather than corruption, of comparative aesthetics. Interculturality, and cross-cultural studies, are creating what Weiss optimistically calls an "emerging reality" (8). And people are enjoying this opportunity, as a form of knowledge acquisition. As a tribute to Hearn's connection with *fushigi-na manga*, a kind of mystery *manga*, Miyabi Haruka has adopted from his writings a sequence of illustrated tales, her first to be written in English (Spring, 2007). Ian Condry has documented a booming Japanese hiphop scene and its power in creating belonging for youth subcultures. And what is happening here? Is it really *hiphop*? Are Hearn's *o-bake* really beings of Japan? Who decides, and why?

Many argue as to whether or not Nippon Professional Baseball has ever produced a true knuckleball pitcher. Conversely, similar arguments can be made about the legitimacy of *anime*, which now has been globalised into an international culture, most of it is based upon giant robots and large-eyed schoolgirls. Are so-called pop formats easier to replicate, or to knockoff, requiring so little recourse to the source context? Are artists such as Miyazaki Hayao or Osamu Tezuka inimitable, standing in a class of their own? Why do North American renditions of *anime* not "feel right" to many in a Japanese audience? Are we still facing down the same issues attached to Yeats's "Noh", but now in a virtual reality, with broader models of distribution?

Questions are endless, but answers present themselves in the registers created out of inter-cultural encounters. There is much to be found in the depths and varieties of conversation that should accompany the transnational spacing of an artform. *Haiku* is now a global genre. And, yes, problematically so. But this diversification of the *haiku* as poetic voice has both enabled environmental activism and religious dialogue, perhaps at the expense

of classical conventions. In the Beat Generation, I find moments of multicultural activism and camaraderie, not just cultural piracy. Interculturality sparked and inspired the poetry and politics of Nanao Sakaki alongside Gary Snyder, their environmentalist commitments to such habitats as Ishigaki and Okinawa. It is not surprising to see that both Buddhism and *haiku* have continued on the same migratory path that marked their development. Yeats had earlier sought out these broader points of contact and dialogue with Japanese modernity.

It seems to me there must be some texture of realisable culture to be accessed, in order for an offence or a theft to take place. One cannot steal the imaginary or corrupt the make-believe. The word *genuine* frightens with its pretense to power and authority, but can also stake claims against *laissez-faire* kleptocracies which take human culture and replace it with a brand logo. As preservationists or environmentalists will tell us, the really desperate fight for “cultural treasures” is not taking place within virtual realities, museums, research fellowships, anthologies, or reader’s clubs. Miyazaki’s commentary on his own film has said as much: *Spirited Away* means to take personal responsibility outside. Cultural survival still, first and foremost, depends on the ground level, where the shrinking world mentality is enforcing a corporate cosmopolitanism across the globe. This is truly a planetary problem. As to Japan, in considering the rapid manufacturing of the landscape, Japanese and Westerners have sounded a note of alarm over the real occasions of cultural loss and erasure.¹⁹⁵ In 2003, the famed Lissadell House in Co Sligo, and its furnishings with their lustre of time, were auctioned off for a paltry sum. Although the new owners have allowed for a degree of public access, much of the original furnishings have been sold. The Irish property grab continues to take important sites out of the public domain. Akutagawa, in “The Dolls”, portrayed the valuation of culture according to the auction gavel. Increasingly, as the privatization of heritage increases, culturalists are becoming activists. If a desire to protect the local and particular against trans-national agendas means romanticism, more and more are willing to take on that label.

Many critics, Kevin M. Doak most notably, have assessed the Japanese Romantic School [*rôman-ha*], a particular movement that emerged in the 1930s, as founded upon a paradoxical purpose. This movement sought a valid expression of nationalism by attempting

⁴⁵ For example, see Alex Kerr’s post-Hearnian *Utsukushiki nihon no zanzô* [*Glimpses of Beautiful Japan*] or Alan Booth’s *Looking for the Lost: Journeys through a Vanishing Japan*.

to find unchanging nuggets from tradition, none of which seemed to be available. The pessimism of Tanizaki's *In'ei raisan* had now reached a crescendo of crisis and disappearance. Writers such as Yokomitsu Ri'ichi yearned, *in absentia*, for a lost homeland, or vanished state, of unsullied cultural materials. Nothing authentic it seemed, survived the sweep of modernity; aesthetic recuperation was a lamentable dream, rather than a practical recovery. The dream had to fill the voids of a chopped-up landscape. John Xiros Cooper's description of Wordsworth and English romanticism thus equally applies to Yokomitsu. Both writers, centuries apart, identify "a general point of struggle or contention in society about those visible aspects of the modernized world that had appeared by that time" (124). But, in searching for cultural clues that might reconstruct a new whole despite a hostile state of fracture, does invention mean a total lack of historical record? Does the Romantic mode only come up with artificial genealogies, false imprints of lineage, to justify a connection to the ancestral? Is the anxiety of influence be only a mask for parochial paranoia?

For authors such as Shimazaki Tôson or Miura Ayako, whose Christian faith provided an alternative frame of reference for investigating Japanese heritage, this search for traces of the past, in the present, led to a diversified sense of the ancestral, one containing a mixture of thematic and cultural elements, and one not easily annexed as state ideology. No doubt, too, that the *rôman-ha* were aware of the irony in attempting to resurrect a whole body out of scattered ashes. But it would be wrong to dismiss any sense of culturality, or the questioning of it, as devoid of a stable value or a legacy beyond the present trap of naïve fantasy. This has been, however, a popular critical opinion, although applied inconsistently. No one could fairly argue that First Nations treaty claims are only a product of discursive nostalgia. There is too much at stake to label all ancestry as artificiality, especially if a Western source proves to be the modular universal.¹⁹⁶ Similarly, smaller nations will

¹⁹⁶ Pursuant to these questions, the debate between Benedict Anderson and Partha Chatterjee is interesting. Chatterjee's *The Nation and its Fragments* critiques the consequences of how, in a world of imaginations, a dominant imagi(nation) uses its modularity to colonise all other imagi(nations), through ideation, with little recourse to contrary materialities:

History, it would seem, has decreed that we in the postcolonial world shall only be perpetual consumers of modernity. Europe and the Americas, the only true subjects of history, have thought out on our behalf not only the script of colonial enlightenment and exploitation, but also that of our anticolonial resistance and postcolonial misery. Even our imaginations must remain forever colonized. (Chatterjee 5)

Chatterjee also notes that the interface of globalisation creates duplications in form and content of nationalistic presentation in reflex. However, a caveat needs to be kept in mind:

question what distinguishes their characteristics, especially when broad collective enterprises (such as the European Union, the Asia-Pacific Union, or the shrouded North American Union) will override their jurisdiction.

Concerned with such implications, periods of self-questioning will accompany the growth and maturation of communities. The materials that constitute the debate, certainly, can be open to deconstruction. Essay collections such as *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions in Modern Japan* can show how the all-out pursuit to discredit historical self-consciousness can be both penetrating, but also glib. For example, to suggest that *sake* as ritual emblem is a modern convenience is hard to accept wholesale. Or that *sumô*, as we now watch it, is a fabricated production of the modern era, disconnected from any strain of documentable heritage. There are changes now, certainly, but Lee A. Thompson argues that contemporary *sumô* cannot be aligned to a continuous tradition. Today, such features as a ranking system, or fresh developments in rules-oriented techniques, apparently prove that modern *sumô* is a different species altogether from its predecessors. Certainly, today's competitions look nothing like *sumô* in the *Heian* era. But F. G. Notehelfer, in reviewing this book, agrees with the aim of demystification, but he cautions against dismissing a sense of longevity because of evolution. He points out, by way of debating with the embedded suppositions of this collection, "I wonder if he [Thompson] would claim that the game of [American] football was not the game of football when it did not include the forward pass" (434). Just as readily, we could deconstruct the ideology of hurling: how the modern game differs from its prehistoric predecessor; how the GAA operates a discourse of *Gaelicness* through sport; how the introduction of helmets and provincial championships led to rules refinement. We can expose Power/Knowledge, nation/narration, and yet the hurling and *sumô* will go on.

Such critical discussions, methodologically, suggest that *tradition* becomes rebuilt and reimagined through history. Like the Argonauts's boat, the debate concerns both the details as well as the whole: if, over a period time, every single plank and nail is gradually replaced by a new plank and nail, is the current boat really the same as its predecessors?

The greater one's success in imitating Western skills in the material domain, therefore, the greater the need to preserve the distinctness of one's spiritual culture. This formula is, I think, a fundamental feature of anticolonial nationalisms in Asia and Africa. (6)

In any kind of historical analysis, in which evidence accumulates in recognisable patterns, the tradition to which the evidence seems to document should not be taken for granted. Certainly, debates can and will arise (and must arise), and sometimes painful evidence arises of how the pride of culture is propelled by what we now think of as *nihonjinron* [studies of Japaneseness] undercurrents. The *sumô* world has been a much analysed arena of these tensions. The debate over whether or not Hawaiian born Konishiki should have been elevated to *yokozuna*—was he held back for being non-Japanese?—is an example. Konishiki denied statements attributed to him, that he felt that promotion was declined because of his country of origin. However, there were whispers that ethnicity, not skill or manner, prevented his assent. His legacy as a champion, now, is without debate; his status as a great *rikishi* is not denied. Israel Kamakawiwo'ole, the famous Hawaiian singer, commemorated Konishiki, Musashimaru, and Akebono's struggles to cope with the rigours of *sumô* in the song *Tengoku kara kaminari* ["Thunder from Heaven"].¹⁹⁷ Sports, even highly ceremonial ones such as *sumô*, will evolve. Similarly, the Korean style of wrestling, *Ssireum*, has changed considerably, but can be traced back to the Three Kingdoms period. And, at the moment, the top *yokozuna* is a Mongolian. Asashôryû has mastered not only the fighting aspects, but also necessary rituals and etiquette, of the discipline. These he does flout on occasion, including the odd fist-pumping gesture, or other displays that apparently violate the high decorum of his office. Of course, these antics push the limits with the purists. According to widespread news reports in Japan's major dailies, in August 2007, Asashôryû suffered intense emotional distress after a recent hefty fine and suspension from two tournaments. These were punishments for his skipping a regional tour to play in a football fixture near his hometown. Apparently, his public persona was not living up to the stature of *yokozuna*. Still, his prowess on the *dohyô* is unmistakable, even if the nuances of his title are. Asashôryû's picture hangs in the *sumô* museum in Ryôgoku, situated in a visual lineage of previous champions.

¹⁹⁷ Konishiki, himself an accomplished folk singer, had a cameo appearance in the Hawaii influenced series *Sakura*. This *terebi dorama* also co-starred Albert Camus's direct descendent, Thane, who is perfectly fluent in Japanese, having lived there from a young age. As narrated by the ancestral spirit of *Sakura*, the main character, the plot describes her emigration to Japan for work. A sub-plot follows how development threatens the landscape and traditions of the Takayama region.

Many modernist authors keenly understood the tension between received heritage and etiquette with the concessionary strain of necessary progress. This had been one of the primary themes of Kawabata's, Tanizaki's and Mishima's novels. In *Meijin* [*The Master of Go*], Kawabata recognises how the rules change, but argues that the power of tradition is neither easily dissolved nor readily conjured out of glamour. If that were so, we would all be prisoners of the present, existing in a rupture that produces disposable claptrap out of nothingness. Tanizaki showed that to understand *jidai no tsuya*, the glow of the past, there must be something received, something to which the glow is attached. There are formative contexts that actions and results cannot be divested from. Notehelfer, in critiquing the assumptions that postulate tradition as *invention*, reminds us that traditions are never produced *ex nihilo*: "it is hard to imagine an invented tradition could be constructed for 'ketchup' or 'french fries' within the modern Japanese context" (433). Certainly, the advertising agencies of most food conglomerates are currently doing their best to achieve this, and the consequences of this are frightening. If everything is invention, a fizzy drink can take precedence over centuries of tea brewing on account of a bigger budget and better brand placement. Local water supplies take notice. If tradition is only invention, ancestral recall would mean always dialing the wrong number. And if heritage is only a logo, we should easily find ourselves in Will Self's futurist dystopia, depicted in *The Book of Dave*. In this novel, an angry screed from a Fathers For Justice member becomes the supreme religious text for a Brave New World centuries in the future.

"Romanticism" has not gone away, if Miyazaki is any indication, and other contemporary forms of art and entertainment repeat forms of collective knowledge. For example, an important episode of the serial drama *Dondohare* was set in the rice-fields of Tōno, with copious references to Yanagita: supernatural entities, such as *yōkai* and *kappa* are described, as well as the local customs for *o-fuda* [talismans] writing. The characters explored many settings referenced in *TM* as a contrast to the urban nondescript. Folktales, storytelling, and rural circumstances are depicted as mutually supportive in engaging appreciative faculties toward the natural environment. *Shibawanko no wa no kokoro* [しばわんこの和のこころ] is one of the most popular *manga/anime* at the moment. Across Japan, generations sit down together and enjoy this programme. Of course, there are forms of cultural memory embedded in these narratives. The connotations of the title's *wa* serves

dual purpose. This character suggests both indigenous tradition [*wafû*] as well as tranquility [*wa*]. Depicting an anthropomorphic dog and cat, both blessed with an extraordinary amount of cultural knowledge, this series explores the varied ways to physically experience the practices associated with a traditional Japan. *Shibawanko*, in praising tradition and invoking it into current domestic spaces, is actually an *In'ei Raisan* for the *Heisei* era, the current time. The characters live in the light and shadows formed by an architecturally traditional house, and the accompanying glow of heritage practices. Electronics make no appearance at all. Letters are handwritten, not emailed; *wagashi* are taken on picnics, not potato chips. The emphasis is on realisable, experiential customs that can be incorporated, beneficially, into daily life, such as *shodô* [brush writing] or the etiquette for opening a *hoji* screen. *Shibawanko*'s daily life feels aesthetically nostalgic, and intentionally so. But her situations are always grounded in a cultural accessibility that can be realised bodily as a folkloric present. This requires, however, shifts in personal attention and hypnotic patterns in lifestyle. *Shibawanko* offers a counter to the vision of the *hikikomori* stereotype of Japanese youths shut in with pixelled PlayStations (as if that were somehow only happening in Japan). As an alternative, to promote peace of mind and social community, this programme argues for the everyday meaningfulness in the appreciation of cultural practices, as handmade pleasure and peaceful repose from the hysteria of mass production and consumption.

Shibawanko no wa no kokoro includes many discussions and considerations of what is tradition [*dentô*], but does not argue for a Luddite manifesto. The characters, through their habits, negotiate the reception of tradition by preserving the simple pleasure as exhibited by cultural practices, readily accessed: a trip to a wind bell festival; the correct temperature for brewing *gyokuro* tea; how to clean a house without using harmful chemicals; the joys of company and *sake* during *o-Hanami*, the social occasion of cherry-blossom viewing. *Shibawanko*, following Tanizaki, seeks a space in which modernity does not erase the past, nor the past becomes a Huysmans-esque fantasy removed from reality. The echo of heritage vibrates through the emerging register of the present moment in touch with the ancestral.

Echo has two possible senses in Japanese: *hankyô*, a sound which is returned; and *hibiki*, to reverberate or resound. Yeats's "Man and the Echo" depicts the mind which

discovers that ripples, as they extend, also demand attention. The subject-subject relationship becomes encounter:

What do we know but that we face
One another in this place? (39-40)

Matsumura Ken'ichi, a prolific commentator on Yeats in Japanese, describes this poem as based upon *oto no fûkei* [soundscape]. Yeats is describing a supersensual encounter that goes beyond normal call and response aurality: a cross-temporal experience of information is taking place, enabled by the landscape as conduit for metaphysical voicings. D. H. Lawrence begins his discussion of *Studies in Classic American Literature* with an ode to the spirit of place. The *spirit* can be understood as a process of ethos that has developed through interactivity:

Every continent has its own great spirit of place. Every people is polarized in some particular locality, which is home, the homeland. Different places on the face of the earth have different vital effluence, different vibration, different chemical exhalation, different polarity with different stars: call it what you like. But the spirit of place is a great reality. (12)

The limits of place put up barriers that inhibit the importing of cultural materials. Anyone who has ever wandered the Tully Gardens in Co Kildare will be struck by a kind of spatial-ethnic dissonance. There are many deliberately *Japanese* elements in composing this garden, but the overall atmosphere is unmistakably more Curragh than Kyoto. Colonel William Hall-Walker had sought authenticity by commissioning the renowned landscaper Eida Tassa, but the orienting effects of place seem to make for a botanical diorama, one resolutely surrounded by the horse culture of Leinster. Watsuji's theory of climate would have something to say about the problems of arboreal transplanting as reproducing visual environments through soil grafting. The Tully Gardens, though, are not an unpleasant place by any means. These kinds of Anglicised Japanese garden was extraordinarily popular in Europe at that time, including other examples in Clingendael and Shepherd's Bush, as well as the one owned by Albert Kahn, at Boulogne-Billancourt. Kahn is well-known for his compiling his *Archive of the World* on autochrome, an attempt to archive visually the varieties of heritage that were disappearing rapidly.

The problem really, as Yeats saw it, is that both cultural and intercultural sensitivities requires an imaginative comprehension for qualities that are not easily defined or readily produced:

In a society that has cast out imaginative tradition, only a few people-- three or four thousand out of millions—favoured by their own characters and by happy circumstance, and only then after much labour, have understanding of imaginative things, and yet the imagination is the man himself. (CT 154)

Moreover, we should not confuse the systems of representation for that which is being represented. My overall sense is that Yeats, although varied in his approaches, had been aware of all the pitfalls discussed in this chapter: the tensions, contentions, pastiches, ideologies, discursivities, and subjugations that claim ancestral authenticity. For an artist, the moral stake is serious. Can one stand apart from seizing trends? Why even inter-relate if the result is pre-ordained to failure? Why rebuild what was corrupted to begin with? What should be preserved or what can possibly survive? Yeats accepted the difficulties, but did not foreclose the potential for beneficial moments of intercultural self-reflection. Indeed, one of his last poems, “Lapis Lazuli”, offers a vision of holistic humanity as the antidote to the border and the bomb.

Geologically speaking, *lapis lazuli* is generally not thought of as indigenous to China. It is more reasonable to assume that the stones in this poem reached the Chinese carver’s hands after a long caravan journey across Asia, first originating from the quarries of Afghanistan. Taxonomically, *lapis lazuli* conflates Latin, Arabic, and Persian elements, reflecting the contributions from a geographic and cultural range of scientific knowledges. The poem’s statue, then, is a product of a local folk art tradition, but one using imported materials, both physically, spiritually, and culturally. How this bit of lapis lazuli reached China, from Afghanistan, is the poem’s aesthetic (and moral) narrative of trade and travel: the inertia of creation out of dialogue. This splice of rock reached the Chinese sculptor after an arduous journey of place and conversation: haggling, caravanning, bartering . . . endless exchanging of hands along what is now popularly known as the Silk Road. Lapis Lazuli is *jidai no tsuya*, the lustre of time, in transit.

The second half of this poem invites the reader to imaginatively shed the limitations of personal space and time. One needs to envision, instead, a vast chain of cartographic movements that link up wide swaths of culturally diverse peoples. The rock is quarried in Afghanistan. Perhaps from there, under banner and on horseback, it is brought to the great interlingual hub of Kokand, a lively crossroads of religion, art, and science. The large chunks of rock are there split into smaller units of currency. A bit traded for yak butter or a brick of tea, for winter hides or cooking pots. By camel, caravan, or horse-trot the lapis lazuli now splits variously along the crossroads of central Asia. Eventually, a Byzantine mosaic will feature a piece as a glint of bright blue shine, contrasting with darkly sainted eyes. Centuries before, a funerary room for pharaohs was also adorned by rounded nubs of this rock. Temples as far as Nara, Japan, will enshrine in art what once had been in a miner's sweaty hands. The Tibetan Medicine Buddha, Bhaisajyaguru, the great healer, is known as the lord of the lapis lazuli coloured light. And, some time, through Anxi, across the Mongolian plateau, and into eastern China, a smallish lump, a fraction of the original, will come into the possession of a sculptor.

Trade along the Silk Road involved cultural activities as well as economic processes. Transactions were done face to face, usually prefaced by a sharing of coffee or the like. Although weary from travel, the torchlit spark of night would ignite storytelling, poetry recitals, religious debates, and the sharing of stronger drink. Passed along in the handling of the lapis lazuli were cultural knowledge, ways of life, and philosophical points of view. Ideas, as well as rocks, traded hands. Stanzas form, musical modalities adopted, and sculptural techniques moved along the dust and mud roads. Kumārajīva, the great translator of Sanskrit into Chinese, acquired his learning from the opportunities this network provided. Marpa the Translator, teacher of Milarepa, brought the Buddhist sutras from India into Tibet along these routes. Civilisations, as well as individuals, were in a process of contact and transmission. For Yeats, the power of lapis lazuli is that it accommodates the continuities of times and places. The rock maintains its basic outward properties but ingratiates itself into varying contexts. Its physical component becomes uniquely expressive according to what local imaginations shape out of the stone's features. Yeats is describing a multi-directional process along a map marked by diverse cultural topographies. The rock, not magical but somehow infinite, reacts according to historical situations and cultural interactions.

As an object of time, the surface cracks and marks are formed through the physical and interpersonal. The physical texture of the stone coincides with the topographic features of the journey the gem has just undertaken:

Every discolouration of the stone;
 Every accidental crack or dent
 Seems a water-course or an avalanche,
 or lofty slope where it still snows . . . (43-46)

The lapis lazuli is a microcosmic geology that documents the abrasion of touch, travel, and imaginative arts. The faces of the landscape, the faces of the trade and art, and the face of the lapis lazuli all coincide together, sympathetically, at once. This rock is thus a testimonial account of the places and persons that conducted its transformation across a connected series of localised handlings.

Samarkand, Thessaloniki, Malacca, Rome, Mumbai, Baghdad, Constantinople, Mashhad, Kabul, Ceylon, Seoul, Xi'an, Nara. Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism, Islam, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, folk beliefs, sects, hermits, scientists, philosophers. Kingdoms, dynasties, empires, and eras.

Yeats was always concerned, as "Lapis Lazuli" depicts, with the web of associations within tradition, also to the extent that these merged and influenced other traditions. Tradition is not necessarily established by a foundation myth, nor by claimants in the here and now who assert sole ownership of the tradition. Tradition, for Yeats, is a fundamental continuation, in which certain aesthetics and ideas are circulated through a network of complex connections across generations. Rather than idealise a particularly famous artist, an emblem of the cultural canon, Yeats focuses on the anonymity of these carvers. They can neither affirm some foundation myth, nor can they be used to enshrine the prestige of some present personage who acts as inheritor. Exchange and continuity, as the force of tradition, which fascinated him with an interdependent lustre of time.

Anonymously, in the Chinese sculptor's hands, carving Taoist symbols of longevity, the lapis lazuli becomes realised as the alchemy of the creative impulse. It had always been such, from the moment first carved out of the earth. The first half of "Lapis Lazuli" had listed a number of perfunctory doomsday scenarios, an apocalypse figured not by Biblical typology but an aerial bombing that flattens the earth. The tragic declamations of a Hamlet describe

the theatre of annihilation, in which ghosts demand revenge and entire monarchies fall in one swoop. The prosaic simplicity of the stone, touched by the carver's cloudy identity, grants the virtues necessary to outlast the hysteria of self-destructive societies. Its primary earthiness, which excites the artistic temperament, extends beyond the momentary encounter. This simple bit of stone therefore offers the same glittering delight as found in Nakahara Chûya's previously cited poem: a solitary walk on the beach, and the blinders of introspection, can be suddenly interrupted by the discovery of a pretty, errant button.

Lapis lazuli offers a multi-handled vision of continuity, through change and movement, similar to the dance(r) in "Among School Children". Yeats's most memorable poems often conclude in a powerful positivity. The carving has attained, through sweat and time, a fundamental embodiment of the energies in creation and *building*, rather than desecrating or destroying. Lapis lazuli is musician and sage, dancer and dance. A transformative vision of artistry has aligned its textures over geographic divides. Some nameless spirit of culture and creativity proves to be indomitable, something that will endure beyond the eponymous posturing of a King Lear or a Prince Hamlet (10), or beyond the nationalism of the Boyne or the zeppelin's smashing bombs (6-7). "Lapis Lazuli" pays homage to those forces that drive ancestral currents into contemporary creation, powers that move and shift steadily across barriers . . . between cultures, arts, generations, and peoples. Stones become encounters become artists become cheerful eyes. The stone becomes enlivened by the lustre of time: the handling along through *tradio* is reflected within the sculpture's glittering, immortal gaze.

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unless otherwise noted.

NKBZ: *Nihon koten bungaku zenshû*

SNKB: *Shin nihon koten bungaku taikai*

ITS: Irish Texts Society

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