Forming the Nation:

Early Modern England and Modern Ireland

By

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in English and Comparative Litera-
ture

University of Warwick, Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies

November 2015

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Acknowledgements

I have known for a long time that like early modern dramas, doctoral theses are collaborative productions. Some of those collaborators are named in my bibliography, however insufficient those references are. More inadequate, though, are those whose influence courses through these pages but go unnamed. I am indebted to my students primarily, at the University of Warwick and Hampton School – I am fortunate to have been afforded the opportunity to learn from those whose appetite for learning is keener than mine. I am nearly as indebted to my teachers, several of whom need explicit reference. The late C. 'Perry' Keenlyside, who taught me *Hamlet*; Michael Cook who lectured energetically on the Histories; and Phillip Parr, in whose Latin lessons I learnt grammar and was taught the intricacies of meaning and of translation.

To library staff at Warwick, at Hampton and the British Library I owe a chief thanks for ferrying my requests and being ever helpful. I am indebted to my colleagues at Hampton for their support. To organisers of seminars, reading groups, symposia and conferences I owe a professional thank you; equally to those who have given me invaluable feedback over the last three years. Some of the conversations in the pub after the papers are done have been the most profitable of my research; the results of many have made it into the thesis. My thanks to Aoife O'Donnell for her close care and attention.

I insufficiently acknowledge the huge debt I owe to my doctoral peers at Warwick, without whose balanced despair and sanity I would have struggled more than I have; they redefine 'collegiate'. Those in Warwickshire, London and Switzerland have my unending thanks.

My thanks must undoubtedly go to academic staff who have helped, ca-

joled and improved me and my thesis. First to Sue Brown of the Warwick Students' Union student support team, who believed, helped and supported me when others did not. Thank you to my mentor Professor Tony Howard and to my sometime supervisor Dr Elizabeth Barry. My thanks to my supervisor Professor Carol Rutter, who first listened to my plans on *Ulysses* (1922) and *Hamlet* and somehow saw the thesis through to an end; and finally to Professor Thomas Docherty, whose influence is indelible and whose advice has been unfailingly helpful – academically and professionally. I have valued each and all of our discussions. Without his guidance this thesis would still be a shadow of an idea.

My last 'thank you' to my family. 'Thank you,' because the words fall short. To Lucy and Claudia, thank you for your pride and perpetual support. To my mother, Lindsay, your unequivocal, unconditional care has underpinned all my study. To my father, Stephen, your intellectual rigour and curiosity continue to inspire me. To you all, your caring closeness has kept me warm.

To Emma Taylor, only you can know how much and how far my thanks are due; you have kept me going and remained patient beyond comprehension. If the below reads well, then you are due all the accolades. You have been a happy companion on this, the strangest of journeys.

Any remaining infelicities are mine and mine alone.

Declaration

I declare that the work included in this thesis is entirely my own. Elements of my Introduction are due to be published in a forthcoming article in *Cahiers Elisabéthains* (2015), and the section on John McGahern and *King Lear* has been published in emended form in *John McGahern: Critical Essays* (ed. by Mullen, Bargroff and Mullen; Peter Lang, 2014). I declare that this thesis has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

Abstract

Previous work links early modern England with modern Ireland solely through the figure of Shakespeare. This thesis broadens the connection to early modern literature more generally, and examines the deeper cultural tie between the two temporo-geographical spaces. In forming nations, writers in the two periods adopt the same strategies; England and Ireland as nation-states emerge into modernity in the same manner because they share a cradle of modernity, characterised by widespread cultural production. The respective polities of Elizabethan England and the Irish Republic are shaped by the same forces: modern Ireland is not merely post-colonial, but is post-early modern England. Without a positive engagement with early modern England, there is no modern Ireland.

In five chapters I examine different formal arrangements that are rewritten through literary culture. The relationship between mothers and daughters in James Stephens and Eavan Boland is central to Irish modernity through the motif of maternity, as with Queen Elizabeth I. Fathers and sons in Pádraic Pearse, James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) and in John McGahern are reorganised into fraternal relationships at the foundation of Ireland's modernity alongside *Love's Labour's Lost* (1594-5) and *King Lear* (1605-6; 1609). Ghosts are the ideal figure of the sovereign, descending from *Hamlet* into J. M. Synge, Joyce's 'Hades' and John Banville. Additionally, bodies are the most alienating form, yet provide the surest path to personal sovereignty from *Volpone* (performed 1605-6; published 1607) to *Troilus and Cressida* (1602), through to Samuel Beckett and Edna O'Brien. Finally, a national poet emerges from the nationalised land in the dance of John Davies' *Orchestra* (1596) and W. B. Yeats, as in the digging of *Hamlet* (1600-1) and Seamus Heaney.

We have long known about early modern writers' importance to the shape of the nation, and here those ideas are updated. They now show how modern Irish writers' contribution to the Republic's polity forms through their English forebears several centuries earlier; the literary form of the nations gives rise to authors' sovereignty – authors who in English script the modern Irish nation.

Note on the Text

When citing William Shakespeare I use the latest *Arden* editions, but I do not footnote references; instead I cite in parentheses in the main text. Occasionally I have used a different Shakespearean text, which has been signalled in the notes. Standard systems of reference have been adopted for Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* and Joyce's *Ulysses*. I parenthetically cite line numbers for poems, rather than increase the number of notes. For prose and for drama, aside from Shakespeare, notes are used. Notes are reset for each chapter.

Introduction: Forms and Nations

In Richard Helgerson's (1992) and Declan Kiberd's (1996) works we see a parallel project: Helgerson's *Forms of Nationhood* matches Kiberd's *Inventing Ireland: Literature of the Modern Nation*. Both critics explain the importance of cultural production to emerging modern nation-states.[1] In an opening gambit that could stand for Gaelic Leaguers at the beginning of Ireland's modernity in the late nineteenth century, Helgerson explains what early modern English writers sought:

> To have the kingdom of their own language. To govern the very linguistic system, and perhaps more generally the whole cultural system, by which their own identity, and their own consciousness were constituted. To remake it, and presumably themselves as well, according to some ideal pattern.[2]

Three ideas here merit a closer reading. First is the idea that writers have their own kingdom. By using the language of monarchy and of rule of law, Helgerson points us towards the importance in the late sixteenth century of writers to sovereignty, and *vice versa*. The second is the idea that in this kingdom, cultural systems are rewritten: writers are important to society, and to the process of modernity that took place at the turn of the seventeenth century. The third idea is that writers themselves change in this cultural exchange, since they are themselves constituted by culture and society. In this dialectic, society and writers mutually benefit from one another's development.

In this thesis, early modern England is defined as the England that was governed by monarchy, aided by a bicameral parliament, in the second half of the

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[1] The politics of canonisation goes unchallenged and undiscussed in this thesis, though the privileged place that certain authors examined here continue to hold deserves scrutiny. It is the not the aim in this thesis to stage that discussion, though other work has attempted to explain the importance of Shakespeare, in particular, to the cultural revival in Ireland at the turn of the twentieth century. For example, see Adam Putz, *The Celtic Revival in Shakespeare's Wake: Appropriation and Cultural Politics in Ireland, 1867-1922* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[2] Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 6-7.

sixteenth century and opening decades of the seventeenth century. The texts under examination are from a narrower period of time, starting in the 1580s until the 1620s. As will be seen below, it was a period characterised by 'theatricality', both in its predominant pop culture at the theatres, and in its politics. Modern Ireland, by contrast, is defined as the post-1867 Ireland, in which independence from the colonising power of Britain was sought. 1867 marks the year of the Fenian uprising, an armed rebellion against the British colonisers, as well as the year of other Fenian attacks in Ireland and North America. These attacks in 1867, in short, 'brought the Fenians to public prominence';[3] these Fenians, nearly identical with the Irish Republican Brotherhood which later developed into the prominent Irish Republican Army, have a direct legacy in today's politics in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The Fenians were a modern insurrectionist force. From 1867 on, Ireland was an emerging modern nation-state. This emergence carries on past the Home Rule Bill of 1912, beyond the Treaty of 1921 that led to the Irish Free State, after the Irish Constitution of 1937, up until the Marriage Equality Bill of 2015.

These two periods are asymmetrical in both time and space: England was growing, with its protocolonial tentacles reaching out beyond its borders and shores, whilst Ireland suffered a dramatic and lasting internal fracture; and the texts from the earlier period are separated by around forty years, and the texts from the later by over 100 years. In both cases, the history I draw on extends beyond those bounds. This thesis opposes the common connection drawn between these two: that England, as it grew and developed into Britain, colonised Ireland and forestalled its modernisation. In this thesis, however, the argument will run that Ireland's modern nation was formed through the same textual engagement as early modern England's nation.

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[3] Putz, *The Celtic Revival in Shakespeare's Wake*, pp. 20-1.

In this thesis I will show that modern Irish writers share a cultural connection with early modern England, and that they too are intimately involved with social change and modernity. Sometimes this cultural connection is overt, with Irish writers explicitly quoting or adulterating the earlier literature, most notably with Shakespeare; however, the deeper connection is early modern literature's underpinning of and absorption in modern Irish writing. The connection might best be described by Raymond Williams' (1977) 'structure of feeling' which recognises both the structures of any one society at any one time, and the cultural response to those structures:

> We are talking about characteristic elements of impulse, restraint, and tone; specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships: not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought: practical consciousness of a present kind, in a living and interrelating continuity. We are then defining these elements as a 'structure': as a set, with specific internal relations, at once interlocking and in tension. Yet we are also defining a social experience which is still *in process*, often indeed not yet recognized as social but taken to be private, idiosyncratic, and even isolating[.][4]

Critically 'structures of feeling' are visible in 'emergent formations' primarily:[5] early modern England is one such location, as is modernising Ireland. In what follows I will recall Williams' structure of feeling as a way of explaining how in two contrasting historical moments we see matching cultural solutions, defining a new 'interrelating continuity' and its importance to literary and cultural analysis.

The idea of structure leads on to one of my key terms, that of form. Form appears in several guises below, such as the form of the nation, form of the family, the bodily form and formal relations between individuals. In each instance, there is a discussion about this form's content. Walter Benjamin helpfully points us toward

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[4] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 132.
[5] Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, p. 134.

the modern implications of a matching form and content, explaining that an individual's 'reflection indicates the free activity of consciousness taking itself as its own object of thought'.[6] The formalised individual is able to take herself as object of thought: this is form matching its content. For Kiberd, this type of match is symptomatic of the 'republican ideal' of the 'achieved individual, the person with the courage to become his or her full self'.[7] Coupled with Helgerson's quotation, above, in which the form of the nation was reconfigured by writers providing a new content, it is clear that both in early modern England and in a modern Ireland heading towards republicanism, matching form and content are a *sine qua non*.

But Benjamin also fears for the detachment of form from content, most clearly enunciated in 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (1936): 'Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be.'[8] Modernity's commitment to formal reproduction does not necessarily bring with it the matching content. We thus have a paradox: modernity is characterised by form matching content, but modernity's commitment to reproduction also makes way for empty forms – forms void of content. This is not restricted to the industrial world, but is a colonial strategy belonging to the realm of politics:

> The European *élite* undertook to manufacture a native *élite*. They picked out promising adolescents; they branded them […] with the principles of western culture; they stuffed their mouths full of high-sounding phrases, grand glutinous words that stuck to the teeth. After a short stay in the mother country they were sent home, white-washed. These walking lies had nothing left to say to their brothers; they

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[6] Peter Osborne and Matthew Charles, 'Walter Benjamin', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2013), § 3, para. 2 <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2013/entries/benjamin/> [accessed 25 July 2014].

[7] Declan Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation* (London: Vintage, 1996), p. 119.

[8] 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' in Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, trans. by Harry Zorn, ed. by Hannah Arendt (London: Pimlico, 1999), p. 214.

only echoed.[9]

The echo is the emptied form, and allows us to see the English colonial strategy as offering the form of governance to natives, but none of its content. If, as in Kiberd's post-colonial reading, the Irish are the colonised natives left echoing, then in order for the Irish to modernise they must take ownership of the form – the kingdom, say – and fill it with their content – their own language.

This is necessarily a question of sovereignty: who is able to govern a nation, and how that governance is executed. For Paul Raffield, this transition between culture and politics – between poetry and sovereignty – also takes place through the 'coalescence' of form and content. Raffield explains that, according to Sir Philip Sidney,

> a poet is not to be recognised by his ability to versify, but rather by his imaginative representation of 'virtues' and 'vices'. Both Sidney and [Percy Bysshe] Shelley describe an ideal coalescence of form and content, whereby the ethic is subsumed by the aesthetic and the two become indivisible.[10]

In marking this connection between ethics and aesthetics, Raffield highlights the thing most interesting to me in the early modern English polity: the form of English monarchy that is filled with the content of art and literature. Raffield adds that 'the public performance of late-Elizabethan poetic drama operated at one level as a political event in which a communal relationship between audience and actors was engendered and participation in a political process of sorts was enabled'.[11] The involvement of the public and individuals in this monarchical and aristocratic politics suggests that the content of the polity is dramatized and available to those who are not in control of the formal constitution, perhaps for the first time.

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[9] Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Preface' to Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. by Constance Farrington (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1967 [1961]), p. 7.

[10] Paul Raffield, *Shakespeare's Imaginary Constitution: Late Elizabethan Politics and the Theatre of Law* (Oxford: Hart, 2010), pp. 3-4.

[11] Raffield, *Shakespeare's Imaginary Constitution*, p. 3.

This new individual, whose role in society is changing from the purely 'subject', would take on a new legal status after the French Revolution. The individual becomes the citizen *de jure* in the Declaration of the Rights of Man; however, prior to 1789 we can see traces of the citizen. For example, in my first chapter I explain how we might be able to consider Captain Macmorris in William Shakespeare's *Henry V* (1598-9) a type of citizen, particularly as I sketch the shift of emphasis between his 'my *nation*' and '*my* nation'. For Giorgio Agamben (1998) the citizen is important because of her new relation to 'national sovereignty', in which she can take part, thereby contesting kingdoms juridically, and even perhaps becoming sovereign herself.[12] In modern Irish writing, James Joyce also writes a character labelled the Citizen; but Joyce's Citizen is bullish, a member of the Gaelic League and full-throated supporter of Douglas Hyde's 'deanglicization' and complete denigrator of all things British. The Citizen is depicted as the sovereign of the new, as-yet-non-existent modern Ireland, 'the puissant and high and mighty chief of all Erin'.[13] One of the Citizen's chief claims, which most of those drinking with him in the pub believe, is that the British have no culture of their own. Instead of a healthy colonisation, Britain's relation to Ireland is

> syphilisation, you mean, says the citizen. To hell with them! The curse of a goodfornothing God light sideways on the bloody thicklugged sons of whores' gets! No music and no art and no literature worthy of the name. Any civilisation they have they stole from us.[14]

Proceeding to complain about Ireland's emigrant workforce and lost industry, the Citizen appears to be a model Citizen to forge Ireland's modernity. The Citizen recognises that Britain has given Ireland the supposedly-helpful form of colonial

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[12] Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 76.
[13] James Joyce, *Ulysses*, ed. by Hans Walter Gabler (London: The Bodley Head, 1986 [1922]), p. 12.1184.
[14] Joyce, *Ulysses*, pp. 12.1197-1200.

governance, but has emptied it of content, leaving Ireland helpless. However, an alternative discourse shadows the nationalist discourse in this chapter, with several unacknowledged references to Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1600-1): 'a barborous bloody barbarian'; 'Frailty, thy name is *Sceptre*'; ''Tis a custom more honoured in the breach than in the observance'; 'a flagon of old Rhenish'.[15] Thus, though the Citizen seeks the legal use of the Irish language in his Ireland,[16] his cultural vocabulary cannot escape Shakespeare's influences. Here we are able to see the structure of feeling at work, as even at those moments when the new Irish content is advanced, Shakespeare is part of that content.

The Citizen's political strategy *per se* is not controversial. His seeking to break from Britain's colonial clutches is revolutionary, modern and necessary. However, to read Shakespeare as an impetus in his endeavours appears to undo his political independence and importance. In arguing thus, I could be accused of West Britonism, the idea that because Irish writers rehashed Shakespeare and contemporaries, then the Irish were in fact English at heart; the idea that colonialism did more good than bad. When Miss Ivors challenges Gabriel Conroy in Joyce's 'The Dead' and accuses him of being a West Briton, she is accusing him of colonialism.[17] If Gabriel cannot appreciate the Irish cultural heritage *tout court*, then by implication he wants to eradicate it and maintain support for British culture instead. My argument is at risk of being similarly accused; however, my restoration of the importance of Shakespeare and contemporary writers in modern Irish writing accords with ideas in current postcolonial theory, as suggested by Kiberd, Frantz Fanon and Homi Bhabha, amongst others: that on the path to liberation, the tools

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[15] Joyce, *Ulysses*, p. 12.432; 1228; 1342; 1617. These lines echo, respectively, II.II.515; I.II.146; I.IV.15-16; and I.IV.10. William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006).

[16] Joyce, *Ulysses*, pp. 12.1180-91.

[17] 'The Dead' in James Joyce, *Dubliners* (Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Classics, 1993 [1914]), p. 139.

of the oppressor are the tools most readily available to the oppressed. To write out of the oppression is to repeat the logic that led to the oppression. It is important in this thesis to reclaim the idea of West Britonism as a space or perspective from which modern Irish literature can be illuminated, both as to its origins, and to the huge power it has in contributing to a nation's modernity.

The argument I advance in this thesis is that between England's early modernity in the late sixteenth century, and Ireland's political modernisation in the late nineteenth century, Ireland's modernity was forestalled. Importantly, in the earlier period England was not only modernising when Ireland was not, but England was modernising through its treatment of Ireland. In Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, for example, the poet who was based in Kilcolman describes the marriage of the rivers in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. They include the following:

> Ne thence the Irishe Riuers absent were,
> Sith no lesse famous then the rest they bee,
> And ioyne in neighbourhood of kingdome nere,
> Why should they not likewise in loue agree,
> And ioy likewise this solemne day to see.
> They saw it all, and present were in place;
> Though I them all according their degree,
> Cannot recount, nor tell their hidden race,
> Nor read the saluage cuntreis, thorough which they pace.[18]

Spenser's poetry enacts a double movement in its treatment of Ireland here. On one hand, the poetry equates Irish rivers – and Ireland by association – with those on the English and Scottish mainland (line 2); and yet, the poet also confesses the inability to 'tell their hidden race, / Nor read their saluage cuntreis'. The latter comes under the veil of the poet's modesty, but is actually a backhanded criticism of the Irish: their country is savage and impenetrable. This negative description reappears in *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*, another poem of the 1590s, and in Spenser's dialogue *A View of the Present State of Ireland* (1596).

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[18] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. by Thomas P. Roche and C. Patrick O'Donnell (London: Penguin Classics, 1987 [1590, 1596, 1609]), IV.xi.40.

In each case there is an implied derivation of English character based on the poor character of the Irish: England's modernity came at the cost of the Irish modernity. Kiberd writes that 'Ireland would be a sort of absence in English texts, a utopian "no place" into which the deepest fears and fondest ideals might be read'.[19] A useful example of this is in *2 Henry VI* (1590-1) when Richard, Duke of York returns from Ireland to England with an 'army of Irish' (V.i.0 S.D.) [196]by his side. The intrusion on to the stage of the Irish is enough to scare King Henry, and bring closer the Wars of the Roses. Interestingly, the 'army of Irish' plot in Shakespeare differs slightly from Holinshed's *Chronicle*. The 'army of Irish' is, according to Holinshed, assembled of men from the 'marches of Wales';[20] similarly, P. A. Johnson's study on the Duke of York suggests that York's army was formed after his landing at Denbigh and grew as he approached London, with some men 'joining him of their own accord'.[21] There is a deliberate interpolation in Shakespeare's play of the Irish army as the threatening Other onstage, ignoring their historical offstage-ness. The addition may have been motivated by historical events: when the play was first produced (1590-1), the stability of the nascent colonial enterprise in Ireland was at risk. Hiram Morgan characterises the shift that takes place during Elizabeth's reign: 'Whereas Elizabeth began her reign with allegiance and goodwill of the majority of the inhabitants of Ireland, by the time of her death she was left with a sullen and forced obedience.'[22] The outsider and threatening status of Ireland is restaged in Shakespeare's *Richard II* (1595), a play that was requested for staging by those supporting the Earl of Essex's attempted uprising (1600). Both in

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[19] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, p. 12.

[20] Allardyce Nicoll and Josephine Nicoll, ed., *Holinshed's Chronicle as Used in Shakespeare's Plays* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons; New York, NY: E. P. Dutton, 1927), p. 120.

[21] P. A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York: 1411-1460* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 78 ff.; p. 84.

[22] Hiram Morgan, '"Never Any Realm Worse Governed": Queen Elizabeth and Ireland', in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 14 (2004), 295-308 (295; 308). Q.v. also Chris Butler and Willy Maley, '"Bringing rebellion broached on his sword": Essex and Ireland', in *Essex: The Cultural Impact of an Elizabethan Courtier,* ed. by Annalies Connolly and Lisa Hopkins (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

literature and in reality Ireland as fearful Other was foundational in Elizabethan England.

As Kiberd asserts, 'Through the centuries from Spenser's *View* to [Matthew] Arnold's *Irish Essays*, most English persons who visited Ireland did so as colonial administrators, warmongering soldiers, planters or tourists. Their contacts with the natives were necessarily attenuated'.[23] Shakespeare's plays, such as *2 Henry VI* and *Richard II*, are included in this period. From this, it is evident that the writing of Ireland in 1590s England clung to perceptions of Ireland for the centuries that followed. I believe that when these conceptions were finally contested forthrightly in literature, then Irish modernity could take place. It is also the reason why I believe as critics we need to start by looking at the literature of the 1590s, as that is the cradle of Ireland's modernity. An understanding the forms and contents of the early modern English nation and its literature, gives greater insight into how Irish literature and its nation becomes modern.

Previous work in this area has approached it differently, and all of it in the last two decades. Some have approached the connection historically, showing how Ireland featured in Shakespeare. Others look at the importance of cultural colonisation in the long twentieth century, and how Irish citizens were culturally impressed by Shakespeare in their own production of modern Ireland. Some term the relationship as the 'appropriation' of Shakespeare by the Irish, through which the Irish writers become themselves because of their interaction with Shakespeare's legacy.[24] Shakespeare becomes infinitely mutable according to Irish writers' needs, adapting and adopting him as they see fit. In each case two primary ideas present

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[23] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, p. 30.
[24] See the following for reference: Ramona Wray and Mark Thornton Burnett, ed., *Shakespeare and Ireland: History, Politics, Culture* (Basingstoke: Macmillan; New York, NY: St Martin's Press, 1997); Robin E. Bates, *Shakespeare and the Cultural Colonization of Ireland* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008); Janet Clare and Stephen O'Neill, ed., *Shakespeare and the Irish Writer* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2010); and Putz, *The Celtic Revival in Shakespeare's Wake*.

themselves when these critics analyse modern literature: first is the necessarily overt reference to Shakespeare in the Irish literature; second is reliance on Shakespeare and Shakespeare alone to make these connections. By necessity, these two facts confirm that the critics are investigating writers more than writing in the modern period, silently assuming a coherent intentionalism; additionally, these critics are missing the larger cultural importance of early modern England to modern Ireland because of their singular focus on Shakespeare.

To counter these problems I adopt two strategies: first, as I have already mentioned, I am thinking the cultural connections through Williams' 'structure of feeling'; second, I am looking beyond Shakespeare to early modern history outside literature, and other writers of the period. These writers include Thomas Kyd, John Donne, Spenser, Queen Elizabeth I, King James VI/I, John Foxe and William Caxton. Through this broader literary base I am able to make different and more far-reaching claims than my forebears in this discipline.

As part of my cultural endeavour, I structure my thesis according to motifs and cultural phenomena. The first two chapters examine different relationships of the family, first the relation between mothers and daughters in James Stephens and Eavan Boland, and second between fathers and sons in Pádraic Pearse, Joyce (*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* [1916]) and John McGahern. The forms of the family in both periods are countered by new structures and new demands: mothers call on daughters to endow them with futurity; sons become brothers to their fathers in a more egalitarian and revolutionary manner. From these discussions I establish how an apparently stable structure such as the family can be tempered by a new content that revolutionises how the family acts in modern nation-states. I proceed to look at the phenomenon of ghosts in father-son relationships, establishing that spectrality – otherness, absence – is also an important space in the shift

into modernity, both on a public and personal level. This is shown through an examination of work by J. M. Synge, Joyce ('Hades') and John Banville. My fourth chapter looks at the most personal and public object of any citizen, establishing that through the form of their body, the citizens are able to take control of their formally restricted space in society; this is true for female figures in Edna O'Brien and male figures in Samuel Beckett. In my last chapter I show national poets emerging from their poetry's relationship with the land, making the land homeless in the poems of W. B. Yeats and re-rooted in Seamus Heaney's.

I conclude by explaining how through each of my chapters we see the public and private realm joined in literary modernity, both in early modern England and modern Ireland; we have seen a renegotiation of the problem of myth and of the demands of inheritance; we have seen how outsiders can become national sovereigns; how sometimes the most abject of situations, and the necessary alienation of our bodies, provide means for the rise of individual subjectivity; and that the land that ties a poet to its nation can also be re-landscaped in poetry. The form of a nation is determined by its citizens and their assuming different shades of sovereignty, and in modern Irish literature those citizens share more than a passing resemblance to their Elizabethan and Jacobean forebears in England. Modern Ireland is not merely post-colonial, but is post-early modern England.

Family: A Revolutionary Force

In this and the next chapter, the broad focus will be on families and their importance to a modern nation. I initially adumbrate two key parts of my argument in early modern literature: the idea of the citizen, and the centrality of children in families. The first citizen to examine is the Irish Captain Macmorris in *Henry V*. Macmorris, along with Fluellen, Gower and Jamy, are embodied territories on stage. Macmorris' response to Jamy's inquisitiveness is overblown and reveals an important tether between Macmorris and Ireland: 'Of my nation? What ish my nation? Ish a villain, a bastard, and a knave, and a rascal? What ish my nation? Who talks of my nation?' (III.II.124-6[195]) This stage-Irishman is Irish because he is from Ireland, and is nationalist because he is laying claim to that Ireland: the claim and belonging are interchangeable in this conversation; inversely, nations are constituted here by their representatives who lay claim to the land. Ireland and Macmorris (or 'Irish' as he is called in F when indicating his speeches) are mutually endowed. Macmorris as citizen is unthinkable beyond the realm of an emergent nation-statism.

Macmorris and the other national representatives are landowners in their own right. We could see in this connection a version of nationalism that arose between a family and the land that they owned. As this land was passed down through primogeniture, the family becomes landed and nationalised. Lawrence Stone sees this type of family as an older, pre-modern type which was tied together by what it owned, rather than by one another. Furthermore, Stone writes that 'No study of the English landed family makes any sense unless the principle and prac-

tice of primogeniture is constantly borne in mind'.[1] Maurice Keen notes that families in the later middle ages were part of a larger household which, for much of the year, was peripatetic, journeying between the different sites of ownership of the paterfamilias.[2] These families that were tied to a nation purely through land-ownership did not appear to have the same connection of belonging that Macmorris establishes in *Henry V*.

These households that travelled between their sites of ownership could join forces through means of marriage, and land was given as dowry or inheritance. Consequently, marriage for these families is an economic transaction: for 'upper and middling ranks [marriage] was primarily a means of tying together two kinship groups, [and] of obtaining economic advantages'; whilst for 'peasants […] it was an economic necessity for partnership and division of labour'.[3] Financial wealth privileged families as the mode of transaction. These marriages, and the families that preceded and succeeded these unions, were empty of affective love, revolving instead on the exchange value of the child and the use value of land.

However, when affect becomes constitutive of the family in the early modern period, then we see modernity take place. Stone labels this new family a 'Restricted Patriarchal Nuclear Family', which is characterised by affective individualism between a husband and wife. In the tethering between the family and the land, the child becomes the new object cathected; desire replaces land in the economy. This sexualises the sociological. We shall see how the child – cathected and the produce of desire – becomes the citizen of the new nation. On a larger scale, if the nation was formed by families and their relation to the land before, it shifts in

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[1] Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), p. 87.
[2] Maurice Keen, *English Society in the Later Middle Ages: 1348-1500* (London: Penguin, 1990), pp. 160-1.
[3] Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 4.

the early modern period in England, becoming instituted and formed by a collection of families conjoined primarily by desire:

> [T]he search for explanation must carry us to areas far removed from the family itself, since what is involved is a change in how the individual regarded himself in relation to society (the growth of individualism) and how he behaved and felt towards other human beings, particularly his wife and children on the one hand, and parents and kin on the other (the growth of affect).[4]

Though Stone's Marxist argument is materially and historically interested, I take it as theoretically useful in my following argument, providing me with a framework to examine literature as much as historical fact. In this vein, we see the nation in some way deterritorialized and re-oriented around the individual and her desires: the family becomes a sociological marker of individuals' coming together for their mutual benefit, deriving from their individual affect. Macmorris' 'What ish my nation?' should be reconsidered in this light. Instead of being read as a declaration of the Irishman's allegiance to the land – the relationship that is the so-called content of the formal Irish nation – it ought to be read as an indication of the growth of affective individualism. The stress, it turns out, is on Macmorris' 'my': 'Who talks of *my* nation? What ish *my* nation?' Our early modern citizen emerges from this emotional connection with the land, feeling as if he belongs to Ireland: any contest against the nation is equally a contest against the citizen.

In this reading, the nation and its land are figured as something contestable and debatable. They are a becoming space and conditioned by a set of new structures – those that make up the contemporary family. The relationships that interest me between this and the next chapter are the mother and daughter, and the father and son. Thinking of the family in this way also asks us to consider who has a right to the nation and how so; this also conditions the existence of the citizen, for

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[4] Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 222.

without being able to lay claim to space, the citizen is merely a non-modernised subject. Crucially, having the right to claim this space changes this space. In *Le Droit à la Ville*, Henri Lefebvre (1968) writes that

> Through these specified needs [of creativity and of work, for example] exists and persists a fundamental desire, of which the game of sexuality, corporal acts such as sport, activity, art and knowledge are particular manifestations and the *moments* [*of an event*], more or less overcoming compartmentalised divisions in jobs and employment. Ultimately, that which is necessary in the city and in urban life is only expressed freely in those ideas which try to break open the horizon.[5]

The focus on the material organisation of individuals is central here, and what individuals are able to do within a regulated space. Lefebvre later stresses the important difference between product and appropriable work.[6] The latter is something to which we can lay claim, over which we can assert a right. The modernising Irish nation of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries might more properly be located not in its citizens' relationship to the land, but in the way they negotiate new relationships amongst one another.[7] '[T]he question of what kind of city [read nation] we want', writes David Harvey (2012), 'cannot be divorced from the question of what kind of people we want to be, what kinds of social relations we seek.'[8] Of course, to relate the claim of morality – that of 'right' – to a change in social roles is nothing new. As Eric Hobsbawm (1962) summarised in reference to the French Revolution – '*the* revolution of its time' 'to the point where a tricolour of

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[5] My translation: 'À travers ces besoins spéficiés vit et survit un désir fondamental, dont le jeu de la sexualité, les actes corporels comme le sport, l'activité, l'art et la connaissance sont des manifestations particulières et des *moments*, surmontant plus ou moins division parcellaire des travaux. Enfin, le besoin de la ville et de la vie urbaine ne s'exprime librement que dans les perspectives qui tentent ici de se dégager et d'ouvrir l'horizon.' Henri Lefebvre, *Le Droit à la Ville*, 3rd edn (Paris: Anthropos [1968]), p. 96.

[6] Lefebvre, *Le Droit à la Ville*, p. 134.

[7] The 'land question' is no doubt important, and I address it on its own merits below; however, in this and the next chapter I want to consider the nation formed by sociological, familial tethers that, though more generic, will be revealed as nonetheless 'Irish'.

[8] David Harvey, *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution* (London: Verso), p. 4.

some kind became the emblem of virtually every emerging nation'[9] (quoted above)

– 'the demands of the *bourgeois* of 1789 are laid down in the famous Declaration of

the Rights of Man and Citizens':

> This document is a manifesto against the hierarchical soci-
> ety of noble privilege, but not one in favour of democratic
> or egalitarian society. […] The declaration laid down […]
> that 'all citizens have a right to co-operate in the formation
> of the law'[.][10]

The rise of the citizen changes what a nation comes to mean: the signifier 'Ireland'

may stay the same but what it signifies alters. The discourse here is between two

versions of Macmorris: one who is tethered to his land as stage Irishman, but

whose service is dedicated to King Henry V absolutely; the other in which Mac-

morris' laying claim to Ireland as 'my nation' produces Macmorris as content of

that land. Macmorris models citizenship as content of the formal nation, and other

citizens can emerge from the centre as natively Irish, and not subject to an English

sovereign. This latter Macmorris stands in opposition to the former, not least be-

cause, as Hobsbawm wrote, he stands in opposition to 'hierarchical society' in his

national citizenship. He is a revolutionary who was born in the French Revolution,

as Agamben confirms:

> Declarations of rights must therefore be viewed as the
> place in which the passage from the divinely authorized
> royal sovereignty to national sovereignty is accomplished.
> […] The fact that in this process the 'subject' is […] trans-
> formed into a 'citizen' means that birth […] becomes the
> bearer of sovereignty.[11]

In a modern world, birth as the specific 'product' of marriage and a significant

marker of a nuclear family (specifically Stone's 'Restricted Patriarchal Nuclear

Family') is already politicised. Though Macmorris was born into an Ireland under

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[9] Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789-1848* (London: Abacus, 1999 [1962]), p. 75; p. 73.

[10] Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, pp. 79-80.

[11] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p. 76.

the sovereign power of England, his notional children would be born into an Ireland that offers them immediate citizenship as long as they claim Ireland as their own: the country succeeds the citizen's claim to their nation, which in turn creates a national space available to claim. The familial relationship is at the heart of this nationalisation of space, primarily because of the importance of birth: Macmorris' children are born into this space about which they make a decision. This is how a 'national sovereignty', in Agamben's terms, comes to be. Moreover, whoever is born is sovereign, and the family takes on a sovereign role also: the changing role of family, and its microcosmic relationships, reconstitute the nation. The mother-daughter and father-son relationships which I analyse below are part of this 'content' of the formal family that eventually gives rise to the 'form' of the modern nation. Stone's emphasis on the individual is another version of my argument in my Introduction: that early modernity saw the complete marriage of form and content, from the individual to the state; for the individual, this marriage entailed a self-fashioning that allowed individuals to take themselves as object of inquiry, to take note of their individual self and how it is affected. In this, marriage and family is not just a coincident space in which citizenship emerges and can be expressed, but the family is the primary space of citizenship in modernity, primarily because of the visibility of the change of the economy: land is replaced by desire as the primary intercourse between individuals.

As with the French Revolution, the result of the emergence of the citizen is a space of freedom and civility. Stone writes that

> This fundamental shift in human values and in the social arrangements that went with them in the period from 1560 to 1640 has been well described by one historian as a shift from a 'lineage society', characterized by bounded horizons and particularized modes of thought, to the more univer-

salistic standard of values of a 'civil society'.[12]

If the *telos* is a civil society, then growth or progress is intimately associated with the idea of an early modern nation state. The form of society – the 'social arrangements' – is matched by its content: new 'human values'. The family is central to that shift, thereby becoming foundational in early modern England. The net result for the individual is citizenship of a modern nation-state.

Having established how the citizen emerged through the family, I now turn to the developing importance of the child in modernity. Phillippe Ariès charts the shift in values ascribed to the child, noting that 'In medieval society the idea of childhood did not exist;[13] and that

> The concept of the family, which thus emerges in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, is inseparable from the concept of childhood. The interest taken in childhood […] is only one form, one particular expression of this more general concept – that of the family.[14]

Importantly, when Ariès links the two, he has good reason. Ariès writes that 'the birth and development of the concept of the family' as a 'powerful concept was formed around the conjugal family, that of the parents and children'.[15] The new emphasis on childhood is visible in sixteenth-century literature, such as in Erasmus' various treatises on how a child should behave. Erasmus' emphasis on education, moreover, also demonstrates Ariès' argued link between childhood and family. In *De civitate morum puerilium* (1532), Erasmus proposes four key tenets of the raising of a child:

> That is / the tendre wytee shall drinke the seedes of loue
> to god and his parentes. Secondely that he shall loue and
> lerne the lyberall scyence. Thyrde / that he shalbe instructe

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[12] Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 134.

[13] Philippe Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, trans. by Robert Baldick (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1986), p. 125.

[14] Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, p. 341.

[15] Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, p. 351.

to the order of his lyuyng. Fourth that fro the first rudy-
ment of youth he shall be accustomed to cyui|lite and
norture.[16]

Erasmus here emphasises a loose form of education, but education nonetheless: a

boy's learning will develop him such that he will become a gentleman when he

grows up. The development of education marks a shift from the idea of appren-

ticeship that Ariès argues was prevalent in the middle ages, as in this passage from

Erasmus (1550): 'if beyng an infant he lerne smaller thinges, he shal lerne greter,

grow|ynge vpwardes in those yeres, in which those smaller shuld haue ben

lerned'.[17] For Ariès, education is the lynchpin that allows the new concentration on

childhood to flower into the form of the family: 'The substitution of school for

apprenticeship likewise reflects a rapprochement between parents and children,

between the concept of the family and the concept of childhood, which had hither-

to been distinct. The family centred itself on the child.'[18] I have therefore sketched

in the early modern period a greater emphasis on socio-sexual relations in the fami-

ly which replaces the preceding, primary exchange value of families in order to free

up the use value of land. Land is replaced by desire in this economy, and within the

socio-sexual relation a new 'product' is cathected, namely the child. The child is the

bedrock of the new, nuclear family, bearing the family's sovereign weight, and de-

veloping the new citizen that will shape the nation in the future. It means that in

Macmorris' family the child is not just the member of the family that renders their

family sovereign, but the child is the site over which sovereignty holds sway. In this

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[16] Desiderius Erasmus, *De ciuilitate morun [sic] puerilium per Des. Erasmum Roterodamum, libellus nunc primum & conditus & aeditus. Roberto VVhitintoni interprete. = A lytell booke of good maners for chyldren, nowe lately compyled and put forth by Erasmus Roterodam in latyne tonge, with interpretacion of the same in to the vulgare englysshe tonge, by Robert whytyngton laureate poete. Cum priuilegio* (London: Wynkyn de Worde?, 1532), sig. A2r.

[17] Richard Sherry and Desiderius Erasmus, *A treatise of schemes [and] tropes very profytable for the better vnderstanding of good authors, gathered out of the best grammarians [and] oratours by Rychard Sherry Londoner. Whervnto is added a declamacion, that chyldren euen strapt fro[m] their infancie should be well and gently broughte vp in learnynge. Written fyrst in Latin by the most excellent and famous clearke, Erasmus of Roterodame [De pueris statim ac liberaliter instituendis]* (London: John Day, 1550), sig. B11r.

[18] Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, p. 357.

newer idea, modern sovereignty takes shape.

Families in Early Modern Literature

These shifts are equally visible in early modern literature. In Kyd's drama *The Spanish Tragedy* (written c. 1582-92), families are an organising structure with the daughter, Bel-imperia, used purely as a token of exchange between families. When she exceeds this role, her father checks her actions:

> Young virgins must be ruled by their friends.
> The prince is amiable and loves her well;
> If she neglect him and forgo his love
> She both will wrong her own estate and ours.[19]

The King's concern is not only for Bel-imperia's wellbeing, but also for his own wellbeing because of her actions. Even if part of the family is out of joint, the whole family is affected; this is an old type of family that 'fulfilled a function' and 'ensured the transmission of life, property and names; but it did not penetrate very far into human sensibility'.[20]

Kyd's use of the family in *The Spanish Tragedy* is countered by Shakespeare's use of families, most notably in his histories. In Shakespeare's histories we see English history domesticated and reduced to familial strife.[21] For example, in *Richard II*, the cousins Bolingbroke and Richard contest the crown; in *Richard III* (1592-3), Richard organises the deaths of his two older brothers and his nephews, before trying to marry his niece. The Duchess of York's bile for Richard is as a mother to one remaining son, and not as national matriarch:

> KING RICHARD Who intercepts me in expedition?
> DUCHESS OF YORK O, she that might have intercepted thee –
>   By strangling thee in her accursèd womb –
>   From all the slaughters, wretch, that thou has done.

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[19] Thomas Kyd, 'The Spanish Tragedy', in *Four Revenge Tragedies*, trans. by Katherine Eisaman Maus (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998 [1592]), pp. 1-91 (II.iii.4-6).

[20] Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, p. 395.

[21] In fact, we are hard pushed to find any of Shakespeare's plays that does not start with a problem in the family, let alone featuring it later in the plot.

> [...]
> Either thou wilt die by God's just ordinance
> Ere from this war thou turn a conqueror,
> Or I with grief and extreme age shall perish
> And never look upon thy face again. (IV.IV.136-9;
> 184-6) [198]

The Duchess' anger is not purely directed at her Machiavellian son, and she also hopes to end Richard's reign over England: as mother she can change England's future history. The form of the family here is indissolubly linked to the nation.

King Lear (1605-6; 1609), however, questions the notion that the family is an organisational tool giving strength to the nation. From positions of perceived stability, and resembling something near 'nuclear', the Lear and Gloucester families strain as their members contest control. Edgar, as he claims the vacant role of sovereign after the tragedy, offers a dynamic content – youth, potentiality – to match the new role of family in early modern society: 'The oldest hath borne most; we that are young / Shall never see so much, nor live so long.' (V.III.324[197]-5). As I discuss to a greater extent in the next chapter, I read this as Edgar's confirmation that the family can continue to exist and to be in control, but that its youth is now its dominant characteristic. Shakespeare's play is still concerned with the family, as with Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy*, but now the family that takes over at the play's end is organised differently to the one that started in control; Shakespeare's text demonstrates an understanding of the changing nature of family in the contemporary historical period, supporting my idea that families were the creative content informing the nation, and not *vice versa*. Shakespeare's dramas also evidence the new idea that the family *is* the nation, and not merely resident *within* the nation. Thus Edgar's stress on youth is not merely a question of his own age, but also manifests his determination that the nation be renovated, made young and reconfigured. The new family is coeval with a new nation; the new family is sovereign over the nation,

and Edgar as child heralds that sovereignty.

In this examination of the family in *The Spanish Tragedy*, Shakespeare's histories and *Lear*, whilst there was no established *de jure* version of the family there was certainly a working understanding of the shape and role of families in early modern England; by the latter end of the period I examine, the family is changing shape. This is not just owing to society's operation, but to how its leaders perform as society turns into an early modern nation state. The family is not just a phenomenon that influences itself or its members – parents, children, extended family – but also plays a role in society. In this initial section I have established first that families saw a greater stress on childhood in the early modern period than in the mediaeval; this stress in turn changed the family from an organisational structure that played a role in the economy, such as in transfer of lands amongst families and between generations. Instead, the new family was conditioned by desire, producing a very different, nuclear family that was held together not by economic interests primarily, but by 'affective individualism': love. This shift to affect took place through the tenet that citizenship involved belonging to a national space; but this individualised '*my* nation' was only made possible by the move towards nuclear families that were not beholden to the land for their economic health. This shift witnesses the growth in importance of the child, such that the chid signifies the new family, and families' interactions make up the nation. Thus, children of these families are coterminous with a modern nation, to the extent that the children are the nation. Just as a parent who lays claim to her/his child, so too people also lay claim to the nation. The rise of citizenship over subjecthood in this period also moves individuals into the realm of sovereignty over their nation, the future of which is embodied in their child. As evidenced best in *Lear*, the new nations emerge from youth and children, rather than patriarchs' continuing stress on tradi-

tion. In this way, Shakespeare's families exhibit the characteristics of a nation emerging into modernity through their families, rather than families through their nation.

Modern Irish Literature and the Family

There is, however, a small problem with this argument, for Macmorris is still an English subject, denied the full rights of his own national citizenship, and as far as we know he has no children to claim that national sovereignty. Macmorris remains the stage Irishman whose nationalism is allowed to stand on the early modern stage precisely because it is not to be taken seriously: it is merely a jest. This indicates that the Irish in this period are not undergoing the same transformation towards modern nationalism (and its concomitant move towards independent sovereignty) as the English polity. It appears that Macmorris' and Irish families generally do not modernise at the same rate as the English families. For example, Spenser would criticise in this period the laws of Tanistry that governed the conduct of Irish families in handing on land after death, with Spenser's Eudoxus labelling it a 'dangerous custom' because it avoided direct patrilineal inheritance.[22] For these reasons, Macmorris' 'my nation' could never be 'my children' because he has not modernised; his 'nation' is in fact always and only the land to which he lays claim. In this Macmorris remains subject to English control as long as England controls Irish land. However, in modern Ireland we finally see the familial-national transformation in two chief spaces: in the literature of the island and the Bunreacht na hÉireann – the Irish Constitution. Colm Tóibín's *The Heather Blazing* (2012) evidences both sites of the nationalised family as the protagonist Eamon is a high-court judge

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[22] Irenius also explains to Eudoxus that Tanistry was practised so as to avoid the problem of having a child inherit control of lands, since Tanistry demanded that the eldest kin would be next in line, regardless of connection to the last leader. Of course the problem of a child's inheriting the throne is one that Shakespeare thinks through in *1 Henry VI*. Edmund Spenser, *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, ed. by W. L. Renwick (London: Eric Partridge, 1934 [1596]), p. 12.

asked to play arbiter in a case between the family of a pregnant teenager and the principal of her convent school: Eamon must turn to *Bunreacht* for help. A sixteen-year-old girl has been excluded from school and prohibited from returning there. In what seems like a protection of the Irish family that represents Catholic family values, the principal, according to the girl's mother, 'had been more interested in keeping the pregnancy a secret than in her daughter's welfare or the welfare of the unborn child'. The principal's defence centres on the fact that 'She was employed to run a Catholic school' and 'she had to protect the school's ethos'.[23] I read in the principal's actions a protection of the family as outlined in the Constitution through rejecting the form of an actual Irish family: the constitution and the *de facto* religion collide to obstruct reality. As Eamon turns to *Bunreacht*, he reads the prescription that governs the family:

> 1. 1° The State recognises the Family as the natural primary and fundamental unit group of Society, and as a moral institution possessing inalienable and imprescriptible rights, antecedent and superior to all positive law.
>   2° The State, therefore, guarantees to protect the Family in its constitution and authority, as the necessary basis of social order and as indispensable to the welfare of the Nation and the State.[24]

Having read these articles, Eamon wonders:

> What was a family? The Constitution did not define a family, and at the time it was written in 1937 the term was perfectly understood: a man, his wife and their children. But the Constitution was written in the present tense, it was not his job to decide what certain terms […] such as 'the family' had meant in the past. It was his job to define and redefine these terms now. Could not a girl and her child be a family? And if they were, did the girl have rights arising from her becoming a mother, thus creating a family, greater than the rights of any institution?[25]

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[23] Colm Tóibín, *The Heather Blazing* (Basingstoke: Picador, 1992), pp. 86-7.
[24] 'Article 41' of the Bunreacht na hÉireann (Constutition of Ireland)'
<http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/attached_files/html%20files/Constitution%20of%20Ireland%20(Eng)Nov2004.htm> [accessed 5 June 2013].
[25] Tóibín, *The Heather Blazing*, p. 89.

Eamon realises as a judge that he could alter the concept of the family, thereby granting victory to the girl. But he struggles with this idea since 'he was still unhappy about the case because he had been asked to interpret more than the law, and he was not equipped to be a moral arbiter'.[26] Eamon's concern is with who in society is allowed to claim rights over the Irish nation; the same feeling pervaded *Richard II* in the contest between the Duchess of York and King Richard. And yet in *The Heather Blazing* and in Ireland writ large it is the work achieved by the Constitution, which by entering the family as an epistemological unit into law also accords it positive moral status. The constitutional family is therefore the 'natural' social unit, and this social unit is the topic under discussion in the literature I explore. Just as in Tóibín's novel, however, the formal structure of family is stubbornly fixed throughout and, instead, the content of the family is the focus for action: the actual beings involved in the family, and not how it ought to be perceived. This is the same notion I sketched in relation to early modern England and subsequent to the French Revolution. In this way, the families may be used to question notions of entitlement and citizenship in order to show that the sixteen-year-old with her baby can – and perhaps must – be considered a family.

At the same time, however, the formal, constitutional family must still be acknowledged and not dismissed: the formal family, too, has a part to play in the extra-constitutional family, even if it is relegated as secondary. The mother-daughter relation will be revealed as conditioned by the sterilising myth of Mother Ireland; the father-brother relation as underpinned by the problems of inherited power. Though the constitutional family is formally established and circumscribed, because of women's inherent potentiality, and a child's inevitable citizenship, the Irish family exists beyond the Constitution. In the modern Irish literature I exam-

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[26] Tóibín, *The Heather Blazing*, p. 90.

ine, this potentiality allows the family's content to flourish, working against, though within, the myth of the family as consecrated in *Bunreacht*. When we compare Shakespeare's families (in the histories and *Lear*) with the family that Eamon must delineate in Tóibín's *The Heather Blazing*, there are clear similarities between the two: the shifting epistemology of the family and its growing importance in what we consider to be the modern nation-state. But, more than that, these are all families that point beyond themselves to society writ large, to a polity that is in the process of being shaped.

Irish society is thus established *de jure* as a collection of families forming the basic social unit. Moreover, families are the basis of 'order' and 'welfare'. Even those writing before the 1937 Constitution exhibit characteristics that accord with the notion that the family is central to Irish life. For example, Big House literature foregrounded the family, albeit in texts that were partly concerned with the Anglo-Irish landowning class and colonialism's continuing strength in Ireland. In terms of modern Ireland, however, Joyce's texts centralise the family. The family is a sure path to ensuring one's Irish-ness; the Constitution provides the form that circumscribes the family as its content, and allows those who are members of a nuclear family to become 'Irish'. As Kiberd states, 'The pressure and intensity of family life in such a setting is due to the fact that the family is the one social institution with which the people can fully identify.'[27] To be in a family in Ireland makes you Irish, and to be Irish in Ireland is to be in or have a family. Consequently, the Constitution creates its own authors after the fact: the family members become citizens of Ireland who are the *de jure* constitutive members who authored the Constitution and, thereby, the nation. This circular logic demonstrates the centrality of the family within the Irish polity.

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[27] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, p. 380.

In short, these families compel us to re-read Macmorris' 'What ish my nation?': from reading a subject's relation to the land which gives rise to his identity, to reading an emergent citizen's claiming his right over the nation which he produces in his becoming. The family within this latter schema is an organisational unit that constitutes the nation; yet this means that it offers itself up as appropriable by the state. As modern Ireland constituted (and continues to constitute) itself, the family played a crucial role, just as it had (in a more organic fashion) in early modern England. In my analyses below the changing shape of the family in early modern England is matched by modern Irish literature; more than that, the formal changes established in the earlier period return in the later. The cultural feeling that underpins early modern England – but was denied to colonised Ireland – returns in Ireland's modern period. Through both the mother-daughter and brother-father relationships, the nation is modernised: maternity will be shown as interchangeable with modernity; and fraternity models renewed structures of inheritance.

Mothers and Daughters: Maternity is Modernity

> *Ireland has always been a woman, a womb, a cave, a cow, a Rosaleen, a sow, a bridge, a harlot, and, of course, the gaunt Hag of Beare.*
> *– from* Mother Ireland *by Edna O'Brien*

Early Modern Mothers and Daughters

My argument in this chapter is that maternity can be understood as modern. When women assume maternity's modernity, then greater agency follows. The problem posed by the idea that maternity has always existed, and therefore should either always or never count as modern, is countered by the specific situations of early modern England and modern Ireland. In these two periods, women's roles were politically important to the nation. Queen Elizabeth I's role was important as she was the monarch, and women in modern Ireland were (and are constitutionally still) relied on to continue nurturing the future Irish nation, in accordance with the myth of Mother Ireland and as prescribed in the constitution. The subtle shifts in discourse I adumbrate – Anne Boleyn's political and religious recuperation in order that Elizabeth I can 'mother' the nation, and the soft revolution of the Mother Ireland figure without rejecting it entirely – enhance female agency without threatening masculinist politics and overthrowing the latter's mythical narrative. The nation continues to use maternity as an animating myth, but these women have greater control over how it is effected. In terms of the overall thesis, this connection between the two historical periods shows that in both nations, as they become modern, certain restrictive forms can never be fully avoided; however, in some cases the content of that form – here Elizabeth, Stephens' textual characters, Boland's persona and female figures – is adapted in order to exploit it as best as possible. Maternity is the content in these instances.

In what follows I examine the roles of mothers, daughters and their relationships in the writing of two Irish writers; I will tell a story about the becoming-mother whose importance supersedes that of the mythic Mother Ireland. Mother Ireland nevertheless remains important. The movement from 'daughter' to 'mother' is extremely important in the formation of a national matriarch: the daughter is the future possibility of the nation, but the mother historically represents a position of stasis, so it is important that I show how a daughter of potential can become a mother of potential as well. The relationship between the two is central to the becoming modern of the nation; changes in values are effected through this female, familial relationship. The writers I examine contest the mythical Mother Ireland figure – Erin, *Mathair Eire* – by forwarding a new type of relationship between mothers and daughters. In Elizabethan England, Queen Elizabeth herself moves from being a daughter of the Protestant Reformation, as embodied in her mother Anne Boleyn, to becoming the mother of England's progression into modernity, both in religious and colonial terms. This is the model I interrogate in the later Irish literature.

In Stephens' *The Charwoman's Daughter* (1912), and in Boland's poetry there is a troubled understanding of the mother-daughter relationship. Stephens' *The Charwoman's Daughter* tells the story of Mrs Makebelieve and her daughter Mary. The two live in Dublin where Mrs Makebelieve works as a housekeeper, though she aspires to greater standing in society and stable wealth, both for her and her daughter. Mary's aspirations, additionally, include becoming a wife – to a successful and loving husband – and a mother. The Makebelieves, unsurprisingly, often vocalise their aspirations through play and imagination; however, this play only goes so far with Mrs Makebelieve, for when she realises that Mary wants to become a mother herself Mrs Makebelieve fears her daughter's growing up. As I elaborate

below, Mrs Makebelieve's reaction evidences a rejection of Mary's becoming mother because of what it entails for Mrs Makebelieve: the end of her mothering – her counselling, her caring – and the beginning of her superfluity. There is room only for one mother in *The Charwoman's Daughter* and Mrs Makebelieve would like to maintain the role. In this I read a challenge to contemporary revolutionary politics, and to the masculinist Irish Republican Brotherhood at the forefront of the revolution. *The Charwoman's Daughter*, instead, advocates a steady evolution of shifting power to alleviate the stresses of too many women claiming the role of mother. This new type of mother-daughter transition opens the door to a new type of Ireland.

However, in Boland's poetry we read about the many problems that women have had in Irish history, including their systematic silencing and perceived impotence: there is little chance for revolution here as women struggle to find a foothold in the national narrative. Nevertheless, the poet persistently addresses themes of motherhood, eventually finding a way to explain how actual mothers can contest the 'historical' narratives of Mother Ireland. Boland's speaker assumes the role of daughter to her mother, and mother to her daughters, teasing out the possibilities of these roles. A problem, however, is the speaker's inability at times to represent sufficiently the mother figure in the poetry, even if the mother is the focus of the poem, as in 'The Muse Mother': 'lost noun / out of context, / stray figure of speech'.[28] The resistance here to the ageing mother figure suggests that only the daughter figure is available as a locus of future potentiality. Boland's poetry evidences this potentiality only so far, until the daughter is shown to be growing up into a mother herself. Here it is through the conceit of the apple of Eden and

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[28] 'Domestic Interiors: 6. The Muse Mother' in Eavan Boland, *New Collected Poems* (Manchester: Carcanet, 2005), ll. 22-9. Unless otherwise indicated, all further references to Boland's poetry will be to this volume.

the Fall, as in 'The Blossom' the daughter stretches her 'dawn-soaked hand to me, / whose fingers I counted at birth / years ago. // And touches mine for the last time. // And falls to earth' (ll. 1-30). The speaker is challenged in her own position as an increasingly sterile mother by the potential daughter calling her: how can she avoid the pitfalls of the ageing mother without a daughter to keep her young? Politically, this commits to the potentiality of women, in spite of the necessary loss to the mother that this entails: a mother must lose her daughter in order to actualise the latter's potentiality, a potentiality that is also available to the mother.

In both of these cases the realpolitik manifestation of the nebulous figure of 'Mother Ireland' is important. Mother Ireland is neither just a political ideal nor an idealised representation – that is, a form which governs the relationship between citizens and Ireland – but becomes the description of a type of relationship between mothers and their daughters. The description is the content that exceeds and contradicts the mythical form of Mother Ireland; it is in the description that Irish writers contest Mother Ireland as a stable entity and organisational force. These new descriptions centre on the role of the daughter, in spite of, or while accepting, the role that the mother must play. In each of the texts I study there is a positive outcome of the relationship's reassessment, even if that violates the integrity of the relationship: Stephens' daughter must become the new mother; Boland's daughters must have their own daughters to create their possibility as mothers. Only by looking at another period of history when the family was under strain and implicated in social change might we be able to understand fully how important the mother-daughter relationship is and, moreover, how it manifests in the literature of each period. In addition to an analysis of Queen Elizabeth's role as Supreme Governor of the Protestant Church of England, I will look at the mother-daughter relationships in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (1595), *Pericles* (1607) and *The Winter's*

Tale (1609-10), and from Book III of Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. The latter book is dedicated to the virtue of chastity – a virtue which denies the possibility of daughters by its very nature – and lends to my discussion an awareness of the biopolitics of how mothers and daughters are tethered by more than just blood: their gender prescribes their position in society. Daughters pose a problem and yet they come to be the bedrock of a future Irish state. How we understand this paradox in the early modern literature will shape how we read it in the twentieth-century Irish texts, revealing as it does the importance of mothers to daughters and daughters to mothers in the move towards a modern nation-state. We will see in this argument how woman's contribution to modernity is central in these polities, and not marginal.

This paradox shows how the troubled mother-daughter relationship must necessarily exist in the literature, even if it is overturned. *Pericles* and *The Winter's Tale* show how mothers and daughters need to exist in order for the plays to conclude, but that the daughters are committed to a futurity beyond the play and beyond their relationships with their mothers. That is, Thaisa and Marina, and Perdita and Hermione, are reunited. But their reunification comes only in the last scene of each play. Conversely, in *Romeo and Juliet* Lady Capulet is able to access her daughter throughout, except for the fact that Juliet is looked after by the Nurse: Lady Capulet's formal relation to her daughter is mediated. The difference in the immediate though short-lived relationship of the former, late romances, and the mediated though longer-lived relationship of the early tragedy, leads to the difference in ending. The romances end with a promise of a future centred around the daughters and their future marriages, whilst *Romeo and Juliet* ends with the death of Juliet, according her no future. This is partly a reaction to the relationship between mother and daughter and not just to the daughters in and of themselves. The

daughters' potentiality is privileged over the mothers' consumed potential; however, we shall add to these readings by drawing parallels between Hermione's and Perdita's reunification, and the recuperation of Anne Boleyn's reputation during Elizabeth's reign. Daughters need mothers in order to become mothers themselves.

The growth of female agency that accompanied the changing role of the family in the early modern period is notable. For example, Betty Travitsky notes that 'the evolution of the role of the woman in English Renaissance society became centered on the woman as mother'. This came in opposition to a mediaeval idea in which the father was the sole custodian of the children's education.[29] Indeed, Rachel Trubowitz devotes her monograph *Nation and Nature* to the emerging and changing roles of women in nurturing their children and, metonymically, the nation:

> [T]he conceptual reformation of the nation and the revaluation of maternal nursing take place simultaneously. Maternal nurture newly occupies a central if highly contested place in the early modern cultural imagination at the precise moment when England undergoes a major conceptual paradigm shift: from the old dynastic body politic, organized by organic bonds of blood, soil, and kinship, to the new, post-dynastic, modern nation, comprised of disembodied, symbolic, and affective relations.[30]

Trubowitz's argument accords with that which was established above: the intimate relation between the child and the nation, and how the changing shape of the family in the early modern period deterministically led to a changed national formation. In the sixteenth century many writers, whether 'Puritans, humanists [or] aristocratic

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[29] Betty S. Travitsky, 'The New Mother of the English Renaissance: Her Writings on Motherhood', in *The Lost Tradition: Mothers and Daughters in Literature,* ed. by Cathy N. Davidson and E. M. Broner (New York, NY: Frederick Unger Publishing, 1980), pp. 33-43 (pp. 33-4).
[30] Rachel Trubowitz, *Nation and Nurture in Seventeenth-Century English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 4-5.

women',[31] recognised this shift in maternal duty, and even drove the changes forward. For example, Erasmus's and Joannes Vives's writing about maternal duties was made available in sixteenth-century England; however, their ideas were not always subsumed into literature. A prime example of the missing mother-daughter relationships is in Shakespeare, leading to Myra Schotz's declaration that

> on the vast Shakespearean stage only one kind of parent-child relationship is virtually missing. Sons and their fathers are there, as are sons and their mothers, and fathers and daughters. But where is the mother of Jessica? Desdemona? Ophelia? What woman carried in her womb Regan, Goneril, *and* Cordelia?[32]

Schotz's point is not easily dismissed as there are only three plays in the canon that seriously exhibit and expose the mother-daughter relationship. In *Romeo and Juliet*, the Nurse distances the mother from her daughter: Lady Capulet has not heeded Vives' (1547) advice to nurse her own daughter so as to increase the love between them:

> And the mother mai more truly betoken hir daughter hir own, whom she hathe not only borne in hir wombe and brought in to the world, but also hath carried styl in hir armes of a babe, unto whom she hath gyven tete, whom she hath nourished with hir owne bloud, whole slepes she hath cheryshed in hir lap, and hath cherfully accepted & killed the first laughtes, & first hath joifully herde the stamaring of it, couetyng to speke, and hath holden harde to his brest payenge it good lucke and fortune. These thinges shall cause and engendre such reuerent and inward loue in the doughter towarde the mother[.][33]

This intercorporal connection is perhaps doubly crucial for Vives, given its position as the first chapter in *The Instruction*, subtitled 'Of the bringing vp of a maide when she is a babe'. It appears that the mother assigned a new, enhanced position

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[31] Trubowitz, *Nation and Nurture*, p. 11.

[32] There is only one mention of the mother of Lear's daughters in F, as Lear tells Regan: 'If thou shouldst not be glad, / I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb, / Sepulchring an adultress.' (II.II.319-21) Myra Glazer Schotz, 'The Great Unwritten Story: Mothers and Daughters in Shakespeare', in *The Lost Tradition: Mothers and Daughters in Literature,* ed. by Cathy N. Davidson and E. M. Broner (New York, NY: Frederick Unger Publishing, 1980), pp. 44-54 (p. 45).

[33] Joannes Ludovicus Vives, *A Very Frutful and Pleasant Boke Called the Instruction of a Christen Woman*, trans. by Richard Hyde (London: n.p., 1547), p. 1.

in society, with the mother-daughter relationship given particular privilege. However, in failing to heed Vives' advice, Lady Capulet resists the trend towards affective individualism and to a loving relationship with her daughter; in this Lady Capulet rejects the progress towards a 'love and conjugal affection [that] were in some quarters being praised as things good in and of themselves'.[34] Stone confirms that Juliet 'had only stiff and formal relations with her mother, who could not even remember her exact age';[35] her mother's distance is to be expected in a familial environment that typifies an earlier, pre-modern period. As such Juliet favours her Nurse, on whose milk she was weaned and in whose company she has grown up. Lady Capulet recognises the need for mediation between herself and Juliet when she goes to dismiss the Nurse before recalling her, telling the Nurse that 'I have remember'd me, thou's hear our counsel' [202](I.III.9). This iteration of the mother-daughter relationship is not necessarily distrusted in Shakespeare, but it is rooted in a mediaeval ethic wherein the mother plays no role in the nursing or education of the child; rather, the mother is the one who has borne the child *in utero.* The daugher's birth signals the end of their relationship.

Stone comments on another facet of the play when he writes that 'the tragedy of Romeo and Juliet […] lay not so much in their ill-starred romance as in the way they brought destruction upon themselves by violating the norms of the society in which they lived'. Perhaps Lady Capulet recognises that her role as a mother is rooted in the earlier Open Lineage Family. Thus, it is the Nurse who carries Juliet's secrets and who acts as go-between for the two lovers. It is only at Juliet's faux suicide that Lady Capulet returns as Juliet's affective and emotional biological mother – rather than a social one who tries to organise Juliet's marriage – and la-

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[34] Jean E. Howard and Phyllis Rackin, *A Feminist Account of Shakespeare's Histories* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 27.

[35] Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 106.

ments her daughter's death: 'O me, O me! My child, my only life. / Revive, look up, or I will die with thee. / Help, help! Call help!' (IV.v.19-21) Onstage, this may come across as overblown rhetoric, rather than genuine emotion; however, Lady Capulet's assertion that a part of her will die with Juliet is reminiscent of Vives' point about shared blood and milk meaning a shared character; Lady Capulet gestures to an early modern view of motherhood that she has, hitherto, rejected. But this is as far as it goes for Lady Capulet and Juliet: the latter is never able to supersede her mother, nor is she able to escape the strictures of the mediated mother-daughter relationship.

Pericles and *The Winter's Tale*, however, offer us an alternative vision of mother-daughter relationships in Shakespeare. Ironically, the mother-daughter relationships they depict are not assigned much time onstage; however, in *Pericles* and *The Winter's Tale* the audience is offered two mother-daughter relationships that are only coherent in the final stages of their respective plays. It is from these romances that I draw in order to show how the later Shakespeare offers a perverse model of the mother-daughter relationship. One way of figuring this connection would be to say that certain modern Irish texts draws on Shakespeare's late romance mothers and daughters because they offer female agency in a world that is primed for male dominance. That is, Shakespeare's stories that include moments of mother-daughter relations are never wholly devoted to expressing or representing that relationship.

Another way of expressing the connection, more forcefully and intimately, is by highlighting the comparative social situations of early modern England and modern Ireland; further, to stress the periods' literary representation of those social situations, which saw the rise of the family as an exemplar of how subjects turned into citizens in modernity, and how citizens determined their nation and its limits.

As established above, it appears that the epistemology of the family enmeshes with that of the nation in modernity. The moment when a family could claim their own nuclear space was simultaneous with the growth in emphasis on the child in the family. The nurturing of the child, as Trubowitz argues, metonymically corresponds to figures of mothers nurturing the nation, such as Queen Elizabeth in her role as Supreme Governor of the reformed Church of England. Two strands of ideas can help us fully understand Elizabeth's relation to the Reformation and the Reformation to the land. With regard to the latter, both Helgerson and Trubowitz draw our attention to the female nature of the frontispiece to Michael Drayton's *Poly-Olbion* (1612; Figure 1). The female Britannia that adorns the frontispiece nods to a female predecessor who was similarly enthroned only a decade earlier. Drayton

> seats his figure in a position strongly reminiscent of that assumed by Queen Elizabeth on [Christopher] Saxton's frontispiece, an image that was itself already an adaptation of the familiar icon of the Virgin Mary as queen of heaven. As the cult of Elizabeth had replaced the cult of the Virgin, so the cult of Britain now assumes power in its turn.[36]

Britannia replacing Elizabeth is indicative of the land becoming central to nationhood, and its indelible link to sovereignty. But, for Trubowitz, it is also indicative of an emergence of nurturing motherhood: 'As Drayton's frontispiece suggests, the nursing mother gains cultural capital as a satisfying symbol of national wholeness – capital that a wide range of rival political parties and religious sects wish to acquire and spend'.[37] Central to the image for Trubowitz is the cornucopia's suckling at Britannia's breast: Britannia is a mother nursing her own bounteous and plentiful produce.

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[36] For the frontispiece to Saxton's maps, see Figure 2. Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, p. 120.
[37] Trubowitz, *Nation and Nurture*, p. 3.

Figure 1: Frontispiece to Michael Drayton's Poly-Olbion *(1612)*

Figure 2: Frontispiece to Christoper Saxton's Atlas of the Counties *(1579)*

In the link between Britannia and Elizabeth, we see a connection between Eliza-

beth and mothering the nation, a mothering that makes it whole. That wholeness

we see linked not accidentally to holiness,[38] and connecting it to the Reformation

and the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559. In the year following her ascent to the

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[38] As I discuss further in my next chapter, below, holiness and wholeness are cognates.

throne, the Elizabethan Settlement restored Protestant practice in the kingdom, and encouraged religious toleration for the Marians and Catholics remaining in England. The Bills of Supremacy and Uniformity helped to cement the re-establishment of the Church of England with Elizabeth as its Supreme Governor: Elizabeth oversaw the uniformity of the church in England, and her longevity maintained that uniformity until the beginning of the seventeenth century: Elizabeth nurtured health and wholeness, qualifying her as a modern mother figure, albeit in the public and not private sphere.[39] Moreover, by adopting that role in the public sphere Elizabeth supplants the preeminent, public (and iconographic) mother figure of the Virgin Mary.[40]

Helen Hackett examines the connection between Queen Elizabeth and the cult of the Virgin Mary, establishing that the pageants that celebrated Elizabeth's coronation can 'be said to be attempting to forge a new Protestant form of state iconography'. Moreover, when that iconography is moulded into a Virgin Mary-type iconography by John Aylmer, there appears stress on the maternal and on Protestantism: 'Mother England converts maternity from a Marian, Catholic attribute into a symbol of the progress of Protestantism, by claiming to have given birth to the Reformation.'[41] Here again we see Trubowitz's stress on maternity as a key feature of early modern women. In relation to Mariolatry, Hackett's broader argument is that in the early years of Elizabeth's reign 'new [Elizabethan] iconography strategically avoided overtly Marian terms, although it almost inevitably paralleled some of the typological sources and structures of Mariology'.[42] By the time of *Poly-Olbion*, as we have seen, that iconographic identification progresses to the stage that

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[39] John Guy, *Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 258-64.

[40] For details about the emergence of the discrete private and public spheres for women in the early modern period, see Howard and Rackin, *A Feminist Account*, pp. 27-8.

[41] Helen Hackett, *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen: Elizabeth I and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), p. 47; p. 51.

[42] Hackett, *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen*, pp. 70-1.

Elizabeth is now Britain's mother instead of the Virgin Mary; this is precisely because Elizabeth cemented her role as head of the established Church as well as the nation in the early years of her reign. This is one element of Elizabethan modernity, as Elizabeth was able to determine her nation publicly through the idea of maternal nurturing.

However, we need to consider a second key element, which is Elizabeth's move from being a daughter of the Reformation to her position as its nurturing mother. I write daughter of the Reformation because Elizabeth's mother, Anne Boleyn, was the signal woman who brought about Henry VIII's break with Rome from 1532. However, with Anne's execution in 1536 her role within the public imagination was much reduced, and her importance to the Reformation played down – Anne's enemies hoped to have her 'religious patronage' 'neutralize[d]'. Though Elizabeth was the first in line to the throne at this stage, her position was radically diminished as the daughter of an accused incestuous adulterer, and she, like her half-sister Mary, was 'bastardized by the Second Act of Succession'.[43] And yet, despite these setbacks as a daughter of the Reformed, but now disgraced, Anne, Elizabeth still managed to oversee and nurture the coherent English nation later during her reign.

The transition from Elizabeth-as-daughter to Elizabeth-as-mother is critical to understanding her ability to nurture her nation to further its modernity, particularly in her overseeing the Settlement. In Shakespeare's collaborative *All Is True* (1613), Anne is a pleasant, mild-mannered woman without any overreaching ambition: she repeatedly tells the Old Lady that she could not brook becoming queen (II.III.24; 45) [206]; Henry VIII's initial description of Anne is pleasantly positive, calling her a 'dainty one', 'Sweetheart' and 'Sweet partner' in the dance (II.I.94; 103).

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[43] Guy, *Tudor England*, p. 142.

Another place we need to look for Anne's recuperated character is in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, in which Anne Boleyn is considered a queen of 'sincere faith':

> [H]er modestye also did vtter the goodnes of her cause and quarell There were in this Quene besides the comelinesse of her forme and beauty, many other giftes of a well instructed minde, as gentlenes, modestye, and piety toward all men, besides a feruent desire in her hart vnto the true and sincere religion, so that during her life, religion happely flourished and went forward.[44]

Far from an ungodly, incestuous adulterer, Anne now becomes a martyr in Foxe's famous catalogue; crucially that returns her to the 'true and sincere religion' of Protestantism. When Philippa Berry reads this description alongside Foxe's description of Queen Elizabeth as '[I]phigenia'[45] – the daughter of Agamemnon who is taken as a sacrifice, and in some stories escapes, thereby linking to Elizabeth's 'escape' from Mary I's Catholic regime – she sees an important connection between Queen Elizabeth and her mother:

> [A]n uncannily appropriate feature of the Iphigenia myth chosen by Foxe was the fact that the princess' special destiny was part of a complex family tragedy. It had prompted the sexual betrayal and murder of her father by his wife Clytemnestra, and the subsequent act of matricide by her son Orestes. Inevitably, the accession of the new queen prompted recollection of another, not too dissimilar, collapse of familial affection, which had occurred only twenty years previously: the well-known and sensational story of her mother Anne Boleyn's supposed adultery, which was followed not only by her tragic death by beheading but also by Henry VIII's rejection of his two-year-old daughter, in a declaration of her illegitimacy[. … I]t is noteworthy that the Iphigenia myth emphasizes the bond between mother and daughter; while the father betrays his daughter, it is the mother who revenges her, and a surrogate mother, Artemis or Diana, who protects and preserves her. […] Thus while Elizabeth's political status stemmed from her father, her mother could genuinely be regarded as a key figure behind

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[44] John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO*, ed. by Sheffield HRI Online Publications, 1563 edn (2011 [1563]) <http://www.johnfoxe.org> [accessed 3 April 2015], p. 581 [p. 526].
[45] Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, p. 1792 [p. 1711].

her claim to authority over the Protestant church, and Foxe appears to recognize this dual lineage.[46]

Importantly the first edition of Foxe's book was published during Elizabeth's reign – not Mary's, and certainly not Henry VIII's: Anne Boleyn is recuperated only after her daughter has transformed into a national and religious mother. Foxe was not alone in recuperating Anne during Elizabeth's reign. Maria Dowling points to Sir Thomas Wyatt and William Latymer – the latter praised Anne during Elizabeth's reign. Addressing Elizabeth directly, Latymer wrote of Anne's humanist approach to education:

> [H]er majestie [Anne] vowed to almighty God that yf it wolde please hym to prolonge her dayes to see the trayninge upp of hir younge and tender babe prince Elizabeth, she wolde endewe her with the knowledge of all tounges, as Hebrue, Greeke, Latyne, Italian, Spanishe, Frenche, in such sorte that she might in after tyme be hable sufficiently to judge of all maters and embassages, and as occasion might serve sufficiente knowledge to administre the estate. Which happelye sithens is allotted to your majestie, to the great comforte, joye and desire of your moste obediente subjectes.[47]

Returning us to the humanist ideas set out by Vives and Erasmus, Latymer's Anne not only wanted to give her daughter a wide-ranging education, but also to make her sufficiently expert in the governance of state. That is, Elizabeth was moulded as a maternal leader of her nation and as God's divine representative in England, after having been nurtured by her mother Anne.

This marries the emerging private sphere of early modern England with the public sphere of national politics, whilst also offering an intergenerational shift that

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[46] Philippa Berry, *Of Chastity and Power: Elizabethan Literature and the Unmarried Queen* (London: Routledge, 1989), pp. 71-2.

[47] Maria Dowling, 'William Latymer's Chronickille of Anne Bulleyne', in *Camden Fourth Series,* 39 (1990), 23-65 (63) <doi: 10.1017/S0068690500004591>.

is not patrilineal, but matrilineal:[48] Elizabeth's modernity in acting a mother to her nation (and the eventual symbolic emergence of the Britannia figure, as in *Poly-Olbion*) is added to by her marrying the newly-established public and private spheres, and by her critical shift from daughter to mother – even if that daughter-hood was ascribed to her *post hoc.* In fact, the belated daughter narrative merely cements the importance of this shift in early modern families, showing how critical a daughter (and a proto-nuclear family) is to the affectively individual and national-ised family and the familial nation. These daughter-mother and public-private Protestant modernities allow Elizabeth to bring her nation together under her ma-ternal stewardship. Elizabeth becomes Mother Britain, as it were.

There is a maternal parallel in modern Ireland. Mother Ireland is a para-doxical figure who represents the unification of Ireland under the auspices of a caring mother, as with Kathleen ni Houlihan. Richard Kearney notes that in the I.R.B.'s declaration of the Republic of Ireland in 1916, Mother Ireland is addressed as 'a maternal and mythical personification of the Nation who addresses her chil-dren in the name of God and those *dead generations* who have sacrificed themselves for her nationhood'.[49] In the guise of Mother, 'People can fall in love with Ire-land'.[50] On the other hand, Mother Ireland is symbolically raped by colonial invaders, perhaps best evidenced in Heaney's 'Act of Union' (discussed to a greater extent in Chapter Five below): 'I am still imperially / Male, leaving you with the pain' of childbirth (II, ll. 1-2). Since Mother Ireland is a proxy for the Catholic Vir-gin Mary, children of this mother inherit 'a trinity of guilts (a Shamrock): the guilt

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[48] Critically, Elizabeth is not recorded to have said anything, either positive or negative, about her mother. This tells us that the ideas I am collating are established in the cultural imagination at the time, and that the ideas of the public and private spheres were important, and not necessarily – or not only – the real growth of women's labour in the private sphere as men dominated the public sphere.

[49] Richard Kearney, *Transitions: Narratives in Modern Irish Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 210-11.

[50] Edna O'Brien, *Mother Ireland* (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1978 [1976]), p. 19.

for Christ's Passion and Crucifixion, the guilt for the plundered land, and the furtive guilt for the mother frequently defiled by the insatiable father'.[51] This latter Mother Ireland is stultifying and suffocating – a sign of weakness – and a cross that the Irish must bear.

Mother Ireland's identification with the Catholic Virgin Mary suggests two chief ideas:[52] first that any change in the political landscape takes place under her auspices; second that any change that goes against the ideals of the Catholic church, or the 'established' idea of what Mother Ireland means, comes to represent a symbolic violation. This Mother, in short, cannot be replaced or reorganised without assaulting Ireland itself. Far from identifying children – least of all daughters – with the modern Irish nation, the myth of Mother Ireland appears to be premodern in its identification of the nation with a strict and unchanging (hence Virgin) matriarch.

Mother Ireland as a figure operates against the idea of a modernising family form, restricting modernity through coercing the biopower of children. Escape from its confines entails a perverse 'spirit of expiation and submissiveness', according to O'Brien (1978); only then can you undergo 'that metamorphosis from child to bride'.[53] We saw how Queen Elizabeth transitioned into the space of power previously held by the Virgin Mary, and we see similar politics in Ireland: in order to be a daughter of the future, it seems as if you must accept Mother Ireland as a perpetual presence. However, below, my two key writers offer alternatives to find a future through the daughter who becomes the mother of the nation – just as Elizabeth achieved in early modern England. As already demonstrated, such aspects of modernity are evident in *The Winter's Tale*, *Pericles* and *Romeo and Juliet*; to these I

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[51] O'Brien, *Mother Ireland*, p. 19.
[52] Q.v. Catherine Lynette Innes, *Woman and Nation in Irish Literature and Society, 1880-1935* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1993), p. 41.
[53] O'Brien, *Mother Ireland*, p. 86.

shall add Book III of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, which deals with chastity – an outright rejection of maternity. As we will see, chastity in early modern England is no barrier to maternity.

I will now investigate how these modernities operate in modern Irish literature, and explicate the necessary connection between the two periods because of the growing importance of mothers, and also the centrality of the mother-daughter relationship. In Stephens' *Charwoman*, the transition between daughter and mother is important; moreover, the emphasis is on the private sphere, after Mary Makebelieve's attempts to mature in the public sphere fail. This cements the importance of national politics in the private sphere. In Boland's poetry, by contrast, the public sphere co-opts the biological, private sphere of women to its own ends. In this way, families and mother-daughter relationships are important not only personally, but also publicly for national politics. These sovereign discourses intersect with one another, showing how Elizabethan, maternal modernity – linking the family to the nation – returns in modern Irish literature. The importance of Elizabeth to this argument has in some ways been outlined already, but it is important to highlight that this shows that there is not a similar turn to a comparable sovereign over Ireland, Queen Victoria.

Two chief ideas need foregrounding: one, that Queen Victoria's reign was constitutional rather than governmental – she may have approved of her governments, but her role in politics was vastly diminished compared to her forebear Queen Elizabeth; two, that the Home Rule Bills (at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth) that sought to continue British control over Ireland, albeit in a diluted fashion, represented a transplanting of Victoria's domesticated rule into England. Queen Victoria's rule failed to brook the private and

public spheres as successfully as Queen Elizabeth,[54] and so Victoria's presence is, if anything, far less modern than Elizabeth's: Victoria's, purely constitutional rather than effectivey political, is primarily formal, whereas Elizabeth's presence creates a new content instead. For a country such as Ireland on the brink of modernisation, it is no wonder that Elizabeth's modern rule appealed much more greatly than Victoria's.

The Charwoman's Daughter: *Private and Public Rebellions*

The Charwoman's Daughter tells of a Dublin charwoman, Mrs Makebelieve, whose daughter, Mary, wants to grow up into a beautiful woman with a wonderful husband. Both mother and daughter share an ambition to improve their lot socially, removing themselves from the working-class job as charwoman. En route, Mary has to take on her mother's job as charwoman when her mother is ill, thereby denting their hopes of improving themselves. However, Mary becomes infatuated with a Dublin Metropolitan police officer, through whom she sees herself becoming an independent and mature woman, and moving away from her mother's care. That relationship does not last, and Mary returns to her mother's house. The story ends with the Makebelieves inheriting a cousin's fortune, and a male lodger taking Mary on walks, a far more eligible match than the DMP police officer, against whom the lodger victoriously fights.

I will look more closely at the transition that Mary attempts to make between being a daughter and a mother, at the two types of rebellion – personal and public – that she instigates, and at Mrs Makebelieve's fear of her daughter becoming a mother, and her own growing uselessness. *The Charwoman's Daughter* advocates an evolutionary politics over and above revolutionary masculine politics:

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[54] Adrienne Auslander Munich, 'Queen Victoria, Empire and Excess', in *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature,* 6.2 (1987), 265-281 (esp. 265-6).

sovereignty emerges through a daughter's futurity. These ideas rely on my stressing the gender of Mary and Mrs Makebelieve. Whilst Joseph Valente usefully aligns *The Charwoman's Daughter* with the earlier Sovereignty drama genre, he discounts Mary by promoting the neighbouring lodger as the hero.[55] Mary merely provides the latter with access to the nation, rather than being a female representative of that nation in her own right. In my reading, Mary's gender is central to the evolutionary politics advocated in *The Charwoman's Daughter*. In this it can be seen to take part in what Seamus Deane would later describe as the feminine politics of Catholicism: 'That which in political or sectarian terms could be called nationalist or Catholic, belongs to maternity', but 'that which is unionist or Protestant belongs to paternity'.[56] To be a daughter with the potential of motherhood is to engage with the biopolitical myth of maternity – in Ireland that involves nationalist politics, and an engagement with the problematic and obstructive figure of Mother Ireland.

Part of *Charwoman*'s modernity is its identification of the family with the nation, much as we saw in the early modern literature. Stephens linked the family to the nation in a 1907 article. Writing in *Sinn Féin* Stephens established that 'your country is your father and your mother. That the ashes of your parents, and of your grandparents, and of all the long intricate line of your ancestry, down to the remotest mist-hidden ages of antiquity, are interred and bosomed in your land'.[57] Deane's assessment that 'Maternity is of the earth' is clearly relevant here.[58] Moreover, Stephens' writing in *Sinn Féin* also turns us to the question of the ownership of the land – a modern 'What ish my nation', in fact, given that *Sinn Féin*'s literal

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[55] Joseph Valente, *The Myth of Manliness in Irish National Culture, 1880-1922* (Urbana, Chicago, Springfield, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2011), pp. 133-9.

[56] Seamus Deane, 'Seamus Heaney: The Timorous and the Bold', in *Celtic Revivals: Essays in Modern Irish Literature, 1880-1980* (Winston-Salem, NC: Wake Forest University Press, 1987), pp. 174-87 (p. 175).

[57] James Stephens, 'Patriotism and Parochial Politics', in *Journal of Irish Literature,* 4.3 (1975), 112-15 (114).

[58] Deane, 'Seamus Heaney: The Timorous and the Bold', p. 175.

translation is 'we ourselves', thereby claiming this space as one's own. This is one of the many reasons that we must consider the mother-daughter relationship as critical in Ireland, as it confirms one's link to the land of Ireland, for Stephens; indeed, the mother-daughter relationship is particularly privileged for obvious reasons in that the biological nature of this relationship is incontrovertible.

A novella by a nationalist writer that foregrounds the mother-daughter relation in this way should overtly promote the importance of that familial relation – it might even suggest ways of coupling a revolutionary daughter with the national matriarchal figure. Thus, we see Mary approving of her mother's proclivity to counselling, such as when Mrs Makebelieve 'sat down on the floor and drew her daughter's head to her breast, and then, staring into the scarp of fire, she counseled Mary wisely on many affairs of life and the conduct of a girl under all kinds of circumstances'.[59] Mrs Makebelieve is advising her daughter on how to be a woman. Part of that process, of course, is how to transition from 'child to bride', in O'Brien's phrase. In the following process, Mary begins that transition, behaving like a girl just as her mother behaves like a mother:

> Mary Makebelieve thought it was very clever of the little ducklings to be able to swim so well. She loved them, and when nobody was looking she used to cluck at them like their mother, but she did not often do this because she did not know duck language really well, and feared that her click might mean the wrong things, and that she might be giving these innocents bad advice, and telling them to do something contrary to what their mother had just directed.[60]

In the novella this passage precedes Mrs Makebelieve's counselling above, indicating that Mary knows how to act like a mother (its content) before she is granted the opportunity (the form). Though Mary understands that she must replace a

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[59] James Stephens, 'The Charwoman's Daughter (Mary, Mary)', in *James Stephens: A Selection,* ed. by Lloyd Frankenberg (London: Macmillan & Co., 1962 [1912]), pp. 1-112 (p. 72).
[60] Stephens, 'The Charwoman's Daughter', p. 5.

mother (here the ducklings') in order to become one herself, she is not willing to change the traditional role that mothers have fulfilled in Ireland. We see in this the acceptance of Mother Ireland as an immovable figuration in Irish society, and yet the social demand for Mary to have children is enticing for her. Mary wants to be a mother, but will not overthrow or adjust the influence of Mother Ireland and Mother Ireland's double-bind.

However, though the mother-daughter relationship predominates in *Charwoman*, its power and importance are undermined by Mrs Makebelieve's desire for a son. The desire is rooted in economic necessity and the desire for health. The health of the nation is certified by its male leaders – daughters are thus rendered unimportant in modern Ireland. Mrs Makebelieve 'considered that a house which had no young man growing up in it was not a house at all':

> Her girl was inexpressibly sweet, […] but a little boy […]:
> he would have been life to her and adventure, a barrier
> against old age, an incantation against sorrow, a fragrance
> and a grief and a defiance.[61]

For Mrs Makebelieve a son would be far preferable to a daughter. This is partly because of the way a boy would love 'with a difference which would be strangely sweet',[62] but also because the boy could protect her in her old age. This is Stephens' underlying argument throughout the novella, giving credence to Mary's fairy tale-like search for an eligible husband, but also confirming to his reader that Stephens believes, politically, that mother Ireland should be in the hands of her sons. *Charwoman* on the surface endorses the myth of Mother Ireland, using women to underwrite masculine political power.

In upholding the boy as a preserver of his mother, Mrs Makebelieve wishes to keep the boy as a son. A similar ethic is in evidence in Yeats' and Lady Grego-

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[61] Stephens, 'The Charwoman's Daughter', pp. 80-1.
[62] Stephens, 'The Charwoman's Daughter', p. 80.

ry's overtly political *Cathleen ni Houlihan*. The Old Woman seeks 'good friends that will help me' and she entices Michael to join her;[63] the Old Woman is acting as the stereotypical Mother Ireland. As the young man Michael – who has rejected his marriage to Delia in favour of joining the Old Woman – leaves with the Old Woman she turns into the young Cathleen ni Houlihan:

> PETER Did you see an old woman going down the path?
> PATRICK I did not, but I saw young girl, and she had the
>   walk of a queen.[64]

Michael's helping Cathleen eject the 'strangers' from her 'four beautiful green fields' not only preserves Cathleen but reinstates her beauty and her youth.[65] However, against the biopolitics of the mother-son relationship, Stephens' mother-daughter relationship stands: the son's ability to keep his mother would preserve the mother-son relationship *ad mortem*, whilst the daughter's inability to maintain her mother involce the daughter's accepting female subservience as her mother had done.

In this way, Mary seems the opposite of modern, instead choosing to stick with the status quo by seeking to marry a male figure of authority – a representative, in fact, of the masculine politics that dominated in Ireland for centuries. Mary's choice of man, a Dublin Metropolitan police officer, is a key proxy of colonial power in Dublin.[66] Their courtship involces a seeming external rebellion by Mary, outside the relationship with her mother. Stephen Putzel points out that the police officer 'is her introduction to the world outside the park, the world outside

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[63] 'Cathleen ni Houlihan' in W. B. Yeats, *The Major Works*, ed. by Edward Larrissy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), l. 220.

[64] 'Cathleen ni Houlihan' in Yeats, *The Major Works*, ll. 300-3.

[65] 'Cathleen ni Houlihan' in Yeats, *The Major Works*, l. 146; l. 217.

[66] Q.v. Georgina Sinclair, 'The "Irish" Policeman and the Empire: Influencing the Policing of the British Empire-Commonwealth', in *Irish Historical Studies,* 36.142 (2008), 173-87; and q.v. Valente, *The Myth of Manliness*, p. 130. 'The suit this policeman pays the young girl seems to place him in the pre-scripted role of Prince Charming, the anticipated savior of the Makebelieves' fortunes. It is therefore telling that he is the one character in the novel most consistently and comprehensively identified with imperialist agency. By profession, of course, he enforces the legal and political authority of a foreign power; by election, he promotes the cultural authority of that same power.'

herself.'[67] This leads to Mary's internal rebellion as she withholds knowledge of the secret courting from her mother. Thus, while she knows that she wants to marry a man and become a mother in the future, Mary cannot brook the idea of usurping her mother: 'Mary Makebelieve was burning to tell some one of her adventure during the day, but although she had never before kept a secret from her mother she was unable to tell her this one. Something […] kept her silent'.[68] This withholding of information couples with Mary's later embarrassment at her mother's job:

> She could not bear to say that her mother was a charwoman. It did not seem fitting. She suddenly hated and was ashamed of this occupation. It took on an aspect of incredible baseness. It seemed to be the meanest employment wherein any one could be engaged.[69]

These twin rebellions – the private and the public – evidence the idea that Mary's endeavour to become a mother figure, and to leave the world of daughter-hood behind, awaits a rebellion both against Mother Ireland – the socialised, public mother – and against her own mother – the private family sphere. Augustine Martin neatly summarises the internal and external rebellions, and highlights how they form part of Mary's maturation:

> One aspect of Mary's growing up involves her escape from the charwoman's tightly woven net of fantasy and wishful thinking and into the world of real or everyday experience. The other side of the process resides in her cultivation of a life outside, which she must keep in guilty concealment from her mother.[70]

The external and the internal rebellions meet here, showing that Mary's understanding of her own coming-of-age requires an external rebellion in order to furnish her internal rebellion against her mother, thereby replacing Mrs Makebelieve as the family's mother-figure. Far from a steady transition between Elizabeth-

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[67] Steven Putzel, 'James Stephens's Paradoxical Dublin', in *The Irish Writer and the City,* ed. by Maurice Harmon (Gerrards Cross, Bucks.: Colin Smythe, 1984), pp. 103-14 (p. 106).
[68] Stephens, 'The Charwoman's Daughter', p. 34.
[69] Stephens, 'The Charwoman's Daughter', p. 40.
[70] Augustine Martin, *James Stephens: A Critical Study* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1977), p. 8.

as-daughter and Elizabeth-as-mother that we saw in the early modern period, Mary adheres to contemporary masculine politics of revolution in order to become the 'Sovereignty lass […] destined' to be won over by the novella's patriot.[71]

Stephens' contemporary, and founder of the Ulster Literary Theatre, was Gerald Macnamara. In *Suzanne and the Sovereigns* (1907), Macnamara offered a parodic example of a female figure in thrall to masculinist sovereigns and politics. As Eugene McNulty shows, the feminine (and therefore caring) Mother Ireland figure is upset in Macnamara's play because of the fun the playwright pokes at those who celebrate Irish nationalism's masculine figures in tow to feminine Ireland – in this instance the permanently offstage Suzanne. McNulty writes that 'in *Suzanne* Ireland is seen as wayward and fickle, a young girl blowing random kisses to random kings'.[72] By parodying plays such as Yeats' and Gregory's *Cathleen*, Stephens also mocks the Revivalist veneration of nationalised femininity. Though beneath the surface Stephens' novella advances modernity through maternity, on its surface *Charwoman* also reveres the male figure in Irish history, and masculine politics *tout court*. Both of these Anglo-Irish writers, pre-War of Independence and pre-Treaty, follow the same path. Though politically contemporary and consonant, the reverence for masculinist politics is problematic.

Written in 1912, *Charwoman* comes at a time when Irish Republicanism was coming to a head in its militaristic phase, it was composed a year before the Dublin Lockout which according to Diarmaid Ferriter was a 'dispute [that] was the culmination of a new generation of union leaders encouraging a more militant stance'.[73] Additionally, *Charwoman* was published just four years shy of the Easter Uprising.

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[71] Valente, *The Myth of Manliness*, p. 133.
[72] Eugene McNulty, *The Ulster Literary Theatre and the Northern Revival* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2008), p. 150. There is another connection between Macnamara and Stephens, as the latter acted in the former's *The Spurious Sovereign* (1910).
[73] Diarmaid Ferriter, *The Transformation of Ireland: 1900-2000* (London: Profile Books, 2005), p. 166.

In that public political battle, to which Stephens subscribed as a Republican, it is the sons of Ireland that are important in the struggle against the English and in the struggle to gain sovereignty.

At the heart of that modernity is male, and not female leadership. To tie that in with the argument outlined above, if the sons can take control of Ireland, then they can preserve Mother Ireland and look after her; however, the counter-argument runs that in preserving the public figure of Mother Ireland, the sons of Ireland also preserve the charwoman, the person who has served the ruling classes at their leisure and on their pay: formally the situation remains the same. This is a problem that Stephens' writing does not appear to anticipate, but one that is revealed in the writing's content. By contrast, with the emphasis on the singular, personal mother who is continuously evolving, Mother Ireland becomes open to change and new possibilities, whilst also remaining Mother Ireland.

I advocate in this reading Rita Felski's strategy of paying greater attention to the female in processes of modernity – and in doing so valuing the private sphere as important in public politics. Felski contends that 'to write about modernity is always to be implicated […] in hierarchies of sexual difference, but also that the history of the modern itself contains an extended tradition of questioning and contesting dominant gender norms'.[74] Kiberd adds to these ideas by showing how the modern literary challenge against the mother – and against Mother Ireland by extension – also challenges the masculine hegemony:

> What daughters must do in order to become women is more problematic: killing the mother could hardly be enacted in any recognizably comic mode. Even the more radical thinkers of the modern age defined the revolt of women in terms of the attempt by wives and daughters to break free of the constricting images of the female devised by men, and devised as often by men of national resistance

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[74] Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 208.

movements as by men of the occupying power.[75]

The public nature of this attack on the masculine hegemony is part of the reason why Mary's external rebellion fails. When the police officer and Mary no longer see each other – because he sees her working in a local Big House and discovers she is a charwoman's daughter – we realise that the public rebellion that attacks the masculine hegemony is doomed to failure. Instead, Mary's private rebellion against Mrs Makebelieve is all that is left to Mary if she wants to become a mother.

Mrs Makebelieve problematizes this further when her desire for a son is coupled with her fear of no longer being a mother to her daughter; the fear manifests in Mrs Makebelieve's hope that her daughter will not grow up: 'she feared the time when Mary would become too evidently a woman, when all kinds of equalities would come to hinder her spontaneous and active affection'. This ties in with Mary's own desire to mother her mother, to 'take her mother on her own breast and rock her to and fro' since Mrs Makebelieve 'could not bear to have her motherhood hindered even in play'.[76] In Mrs Makebelieve's resistance to her daughter's maturation, we see a symbolic resistance by Mother Ireland to her daughter taking over; and, by linking it to 'play', we are reminded of the importance of the Sovereignty drama, such as *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, in which the play shows sons being conscripted for the fight to reclaim the land of Ireland, but not daughters. In fact, Michael rejects Delia Cahel so thoroughly that, in his bid to leave with the Old Woman, he 'had forgotten' that he was going to marry the young lady.[77] When Mrs Makebelieve hopes that her daughter does not grow up, she seeks to preserve her position as mother, just as when Mary fails to survive in the public sphere beyond the family home: the handing on of power from mother to daughter fails at this

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[75] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, p. 395.
[76] Stephens, 'The Charwoman's Daughter', p. 15.
[77] 'Cathleen ni Houlihan' in Yeats, *The Major Works*, l. 283.

pointin modern Irish literature.

However, we have seen above how at another cultural moment this transition was made possible, despite similar strictures. Queen Elizabeth had to brook the public rejection of her position as daughter, and the public rejection of her own mother; Elizabeth also had to deal with a matriarchal figure that united the nation, threatening to forestall change and modernisation. In the face of all of these, Elizabeth was able to transition from her position as exiled daughter to mother of the modern nation, and part of that process was the recuperation of Anne Boleyn as a mother to her daughter – this we saw specifically with Latymer's description of Boleyn's wish for a humanist education for her daughter.

In *Charwoman* we see the same issues set out: a mother-figure who resists cultural change of a certain type (female-led cultural change); a mother who resists her daughter replacing her as mother; and a daughter who wants to grow up to become a mother, but without overthrowing matriarchal power. This is resolved by Mrs Makebelieve's acceptance of her daughter's maturation: Mrs Makebelieve 'saw in [Mary's] work [as a charwoman] a beginning and an end, the end of the little daughter who could be petted and rocked and advised, the beginning of a womanhood which would grow up to and beyond her'.[78]

Above I established that Mary wants to use her public rebellion with the police officer as a means to escape the strictures of home; though that rebellion fails, we see Mrs Makebelieve using her daughter's position in the public sphere as a charwoman as a reason to change her mind about her daughter growing up. In this, Mary will become a mother figure both in the public and private spheres, uniting the two as she transitions from daughter to mother. Crucially the Makebelieve family, constituted by mothers and daughters and reflecting the figure of Mother

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[78] Stephens, 'The Charwoman's Daughter', p. 49.

Ireland and her citizens, shows the way forward: revolution comes from within social forms. This would maintain Mother Ireland and its mythical status, but allows for a change in content: how the country is run and who runs the country. In this way, Stephens' mother-daughter relationship in *Charwoman* critiques the revolutionary spirit that was male-centred and threatened to revolutionise the formal structures of society (we could think of the Dublin Lockout of 1913 as an occasion on which the working classes sought to disrupt the class system according to Marxist principles); the *Charwoman*'s critique instead involves using the family as a microcosm through which a new relationship between citizens and their country can be negotiated.

Charwoman promotes a soft revolution from within existing forms. The family's position in society is central to this implied modern Ireland, both figuratively (using the mother-daughter relationship as symbol) and textually (in which the family becomes central in the Bunreacht na hÉireann).

As *The Charwoman's Daughter*, Mary represents the head of a steady evolution that adopts and adapts Mother Ireland to her cause. As the 'Sovereignty lass' she comes to represent a new female modernity that can still bring Ireland together under a maternal figure, but she does so by replacing her mother in the public sphere, first, before being able to replace her mother in the private sphere. The family exists in both spheres, and Mary is able to transition from daughter to mother in both families. Mrs Makebelieve's initial desire that her daughter does not grow up not only preserves male hegemony in the public sphere, but also tries to protect Mary from a 'symbolic defloration':[79] if Mary grows up, marries and becomes a mother, then she will no longer be the chaste daughter of Ireland who incubates the potential for Ireland's future. Therefore, a future that sits outside the

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[79] Jonathan Goldberg, 'The Mothers in Book III of *The Faerie Queene*', in *Texas Studies in Literature and Language,* 17.1 (1975), 5-26 (29).

remit of masculine politics and male influence is desirable in all circumstances for Mary, as she would avoid the public politics of masculinity, and the private politics of sexual disempowerment.

Queen Elizabeth, too, had to wrestle with these issues, telling the nation that she was married to her nation, rather than to any particular male courtier. Instead, both for Queen Elizabeth and Mary Makebelieve, there is a 'restoration […] in the newfound identity of mother'.[80] Jonathan Goldberg writes these comments neither about Queen Elizabeth nor Mary Makebelieve, but about Book III of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. Book III expounds the virtue of chastity, and especially in Spenser's explanation of the birth of Belphoebe and Amoret, we see how chastity can be maintained and yet motherhood venerated. In the following, Chrysogonee gives birth to twin daughters, having been impregnated by the sun's rays. Diana and Venus come across her asleep in the woods:

> Vnwares she them conceiu'd, vnwares she bore:
>   She bore withouten paine, that she conceiued
>   Withouten pleasure: ne her need implore
>   *Lucinaes* aide: which when they both perceiued,
>   They were through wonder nigh of sense bereaued,
>   And gazing each on other, nought bespake:
>   At last they both agreed, her seeming grieued
>   Out of her heauy swowne not to awake,
> But from her louing side the tender babes to take.[81]

Diana is the virgin goddess of childbirth, while Venus is the goddess of sexuality. In their appropriation of the sinless birth of the daughters – in the next stanza called Belphoebe and Amoret – they also promote a maternity that avoids sexual impropriety. The future they consider therefore re-establishes motherhood as a vocation that neither requires nor leans on masculine discourses of power.

Queen Elizabeth is the cultural touchstone for Spenser's poetry in six-

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[80] Goldberg, 'The Mothers in Book III of *The Faerie Queene*', 29.
[81] Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, III.vi.27.

teenth-century England, and in Ireland we now see that Mary Makebelieve stands as the new future of Ireland; however, there are problems with Mary's status as a new mother of Ireland, since Stephens' overt political aspirations accorded with the contemporary Irish politics of masculinity. Similarly, Stephens' story enables critics such as Valente to emphasise the role that the lodger plays in the novella, rather than the intrinsic difference that Mary's story offers. In terms that will become apparent below, Stephens' story enters the discourse of history, rather than serving the past; in Walter Benjamin's terms this is the difference between institutionalised stories of former years, and the truth of the past that is omitted or bent to favour the discourses of the victorious. Stephens' story seems to fall into the latter category, in spite of its nascent modernity. By contrast, the writer I examine next actively contests the omitted past, and tries to rewrite the violence of history by looking specifically at women and, notably, mothers and daughters.

Eavan Boland: Surviving Daughters

In Boland's poems, there are two insistent familial relationships that recur throughout the oeuvre. They are the relationship between the persona and her mother, and between the persona and her daughters. It is clear that the persona assumes a dual, Janus-like position as both mother to her daughters and daughter to her mother; the persona is able to assess and rehearse her own version of daughterhood and motherhood for the relevant parties. But, moreover, the persona is able to see that on the one hand, motherhood can become stultifying and static, an obstruction to progress and a marker of a dead history – i.e. Mother Ireland; on the other the persona reveals that daughters open up the possibility for a future. It is the daughter who becomes mother who takes advantage of the possibility, even though that mother will soon become the *topos* of the dead past.

Boland's persona actively shows the problems and benefits of being and

having both a mother and one or more daughters. These particular ideas manifest in Boland's writing, and they are politically salient in discussing women's and a nation's modernity. Whilst above we saw a connection between the importance of the public political and private political spheres – the private was bent to the public – in my reading of Boland's poetry and its manifestation of mothers becoming daughters, we see how the biological (i.e., private) is bent to the political. In this, Boland's persona is able to mother a nation of daughters.

Before I establish fully how Boland's poetry operates, I must first add to my reading of Queen Elizabeth's biopolitics. Elizabeth's first speech to parliament in November 1559 openly aligned her with the mediaeval notion of the king's two bodies: 'I am but one body naturally considered, though by His permission a body politic to govern[.]'[82] The distinction between these two bodies is largely a temporal one. The former is mortal, the latter eternal; it means that there is no historical moment when there is no political body (or Prince) to reign, even if the sovereign dies. To parliament, Elizabeth's failure to marry, and therefore failure to produce heirs, threatened the succession of the Tudor monarchy. These failures also entailed Catholic neithbours threatening Protestant England.[83] Parliament questioned the queen and wondered when she would produce 'heirs of her body',[84] the queen responded firmly:

> Think not that I, that in other matters have had convenient

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[82] 'Queen Elizabeth's First Speech Before Parliament, February 10, 1559 (BL, MS Lansdowne 94, art. 14, fol. 29)' in Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, ed. by Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 57.

[83] Hackett explains how parliament's understanding of Elizabeth's virginity shifted during her reign: 'It appears that until around the mid-1570s Elizabeth was viewed by her subjects as a Virgin Queen not in the sense of perpetual virginity on the model of the Virgin Mary, but in the sense of being nubile, in a state of preparatory to and ripe for matrimony.' This latter 'virginity' is one that accords both with the king's eternal body, and also Agamben's ideas of potentiality: it promises futurity. However, Hackett is here stressing that parliament came to understand the biological implications of Elizabeth's virginity: there would be no Tudor successor. Hackett, *Virgin Mother, Maiden Queen*, p. 73.

[84] 'The Commons' Petition to the Queen at Whitehall, January 28, 1563 (PRO: State Papers Domestic, Elizabeth 12/27/35[B] fols. 139r-142r)' in Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, p. 74.

> care of you all, will in this matter touching the safety of
> myself and you all be careless. For I know that this matter
> toucheth me much nearer than it doth you all, who if the
> worst happen can lose but your bodies. But […] I hazard
> to lose both body and soul.[85]

Both the queen and parliament thereby turn what is a matter of biology and the queen's personal body into a political project, one which was never resolved: 'Rather than being placed in the service of the state and her royal lineage,' writes Berry, by the 1590s, 'Elizabeth's gender had become an image of political authority in and of itself'.[86]

Here is a version of that modernity I outlined above: Queen Elizabeth becomes a mother to the nation, and does not have children of her own, thereby converting her personal duty into a public one. In this process her chastity was converted from a questionable quality to a positive attribute, thereby showing her as mother to the nation. Though Elizabeth 'refused to subordinate her private body to the needs of the state', there is certainly evidence that her two bodies merged into one, but only after her political body absorbed the positivity of the personal body's chastity. This is absolutely modern, as Felski indicates, since in many grand-narratives of the modern 'women were situated outside processes of history and social change';[87] instead, by stressing women's role in the public sphere we counter those grand narratives and reveal the foundational importance of successfully leading a nation publicly, even if that public role borrows from the private sphere.

This reminds us of the key difference between Queen Elizabeth and Queen Victoria in the English cultural imagination. The former was a monarch in the

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[85] 'Queen Elizabeth's Answer to the Commons' Petition that she Marry, January 28, 1563 (PRO, State Papers Domestic, Elizabeth 12/27/36, fols. 143r-144r; fols. 143r-154v)' in Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, p. 71.

[86] In Berry's study, she draws attention to 1590s literature from Chapman, Ralegh, Shakespeare and Spenser. Berry, *Of Chastity and Power*, p. 163.

[87] Felski, *The Gender of Modernity*, p. 16.

mould of her father whose King-in-Parliament governance allowed him to be both figurehead and operative sovereign. Victoria, by contrast, headed a household that was separate from the political goings-on at Westminster, and was known more for her mourning clothes as a widow to a husband than a mother to a nation. Turning away from Victoria – who of course was sovereign of Ireland – and to Elizabeth is critical in establishing the importance of the link between the early modern and modern periods. Those moments that emphasise the public sphere's co-option of the private sphere represents a reverse trajectory from what operated in *Charwoman*; and yet, as we shall see, it is an idea operating in Shakespeare's literature, as well as in Boland's poetry. In all instances, the mother is established as a privileged position.

In Boland's 'Anna Liffey' we are introduced to many of the key ideas that manifest in her poetry; we will see the complex relationship between the past, children and Ireland's future. The poem intertwines the land and the notion of the persona and her daughters. Early in the poem, we are told that

> My country took hold of me.
> My children were born.
>
> I walked out in a summer dusk
> To call them in.
>
> One name. Then the other one.
> The beautiful vowels sounding out home.
>
> Make a nation what you will.
> Make of the past
> What you can – (ll. 50-8)

We learn two things from this passage. First, the notion of the 'past' that Boland employs is of a particular type. As with Walter Benjamin, the 'past' in Boland differs from 'history'. In his theories of history, Benjamin writes about 'history' being the record of the past that is a 'document of civilization' and always a 'document of

barbarism' as well: 'history' is epistemic violence done to events of the past. Instead, the past is a neutral reading of what has happened, and should not discriminate between 'major and minor' events, for nothing 'should be regarded as lost for history'.[88] Boland uses this terminology identically in her writing, but adds one final term which she uses to describe the documents that properly explain and document the past: 'tradition'. Boland's attempt to establish tradition is her poetry.[89] In this, Boland takes part in the following discourse, as explained by Felski:

> The issue is not one of going 'beyond' history, but rather one of acknowledging that the act of constructing a relationship to one's past is always already invested with interests and prejudice (prejudgment) rather than embodying the creation of value-free science.[90]

And so, reading about Boland's 'Mak[ing] of the past / What you can' indicates that in this poem the 'nation' belongs to the past, and is subject to the violence of history; simultaneously, the poetry offers a way of reading the story of tradition in the past, since the past is protean at this point.

The second point is the passage's emendation near the poem's end: 'My children were born. / My country took hold of me.' (ll. 150-4) We infer, taking these two passages together, that the narrator's country and her children's births are interrelated. This is a modernity in which family determines nationhood, returning us to the early modern period when this process was also taking place. This is emphasised by the comment that the Dublin river, the Liffey, 'is a source', its name coming from 'The land [that] took its name from a woman' called '*Life*' (ll. 1-8). This river is also the name of the poem, the source of the country, the source of the narrator's children.

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[88] 'Theses on the Philosophy of History' (1940) in Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p. 248; p. 246.
[89] See for some of these ideas 'Outside History' in Eavan Boland, *Object Lessons* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1995), pp. 123-53. I have also heard the poet herself talk about these disintinctions, and her role facing them as poet.
[90] Felski, *The Gender of Modernity*, p. 207.

We also infer from the first passage that the land precedes the birth of the children. This is established in terms of narrative, but also in the implied grammatical syllogism: 'My country took hold of me [and then/and so/and thereafter] / My children were born.' The persona's formal relation to the country is assured before she is filled with the presence of her children: the public sphere precedes and conditions the private sphere for this mother. However, this is soon destabilised when it is the sound of the 'beautiful vowels' that establishes the environmental space of 'home'.

The syllogism of the lines now suggests that into the country called Ireland came the children, who in turn were able to call Ireland home. If that is the case, then children turn an already existing nation into home; their native futurity is also, therefore, fertility and maternity. Taken together these ideas show that through children modernity can take place in Ireland, but also that Ireland – and its protean, un-assimilated past – is open to children's modernity. Here the emphasis is very much on the public sphere, and how the children can take Ireland's past and turn it into the future.

However, there is a problem after the second passage, when the narrator laments that 'My children are / Growing up, getting older. / My country holds on / To its own pain' (ll. 156-9). In this, land and children remain intertwined, but in the form of stultifying history, recalling Mother Ireland: maturity comes to mean retention of the past, just as Mrs Makebelieve desired a son to preserve her as a mother, stopping the possible growth and dynamism in her family's (and by extension, the country's) future. The possibilities opened up by the futurity of the children are lost when the children grow up, or when the country looks backwards. The country as an object from the un-assimilated past remains, but also tends towards history rather than tradition: 'A river is not a woman. / Although the names

it finds, / The history it makes / And suffers –' (ll. 65-8). The intergenerational shift is indicative of Boland's work as a whole and is particularly true in the more recent poems in which the references to the narrator's mother are increasingly prevalent but where the mother's presence is similarly difficult to manifest.

In the 'Domestic Interior' sequence, for example, Boland's poetry finally arrives at something called 'The Muse Mother'; however, trying to grasp what the Muse Mother is appears difficult, as the narrator struggles to get hold of her, even struggling to enunciate the word 'mother':

> If only I could decline her –
> lost noun
> out of context,
> stray figure of speech –
> from this rainy street
>
> again to her roots,
> she might teach me
> a new language[.] (ll. 22-9)

The noun 'mother' is absent from this passage, despite its inherent presence. It appears ungraspable; it is a noun that the narrator struggles to 'decline', that is, put it through its paces as a noun to be subjectified after its implied accusative performance in 'her'. For the persona, this is indicative of the struggle to get 'to her roots', to discover her past so that she might open up a new tradition, 'a new language'. Instead, she is 'stray' and 'out of context', suggesting that the muse mother is distracted or deferred in her environment, rather than being specifically located. The muse as inspiration is occluded, and so futurity and the becoming mother that the Muse Mother might offer disappears: maternity in this poem is never maternal and does not unite. In the specific modernity in which the mother comes to the fore, Boland's poetry admits failure.

Additionally, the form of this mother is so inaccessible that there is a danger that the present content of the nation might also stultify and no longer mature;

indeed, in a more recent poem, Boland's persona worries 'whether her [mother's] country had included her' in its national narrative.[91] In this reading, modernity is precluded precisely because of the stultifying effect of the image of Mother Ireland, rendering the figure completely negative with regards to Ireland's future. This is more damning than Mother Ireland only investing in masculine futures, for it insists that motherhood in its current form is holding Ireland back. With this in mind, we read an implicit criticism of *Bunreacht* that prescribes women's roles in the home and renders women subordinate to male financial dependence.

These ideas consolidate in 'Fever', when 'My grandmother died in a fever ward, / younger than I am and far from / the sweet chills of a Louth spring – / its sprigged light and its wild flowers – // with five orphan daughters to her name' (ll. 17-21). The grandmother is directly opposed to life, futurity and fertility; by extrapolation, she is also opposed to 'Anna Liffey'. All that remain are

> Names, shadows, visitations, hints
> and a half-sense of half-lives remain.
> And nothing else, nothing more unless
>
> I re-construct the soaked through midnights;
> vigils; the histories I never learned
> to predict the lyric of; and re-construct
> risk[.] (ll. 22-8)

The narrator is offered a possibility, but none that is inviting. Rather, the possibility of a future demands her own creation, her own reconstruction – her own turning

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[91] 'Lesson 6' in Eavan Boland, *A Woman Without a Country* (Manchester: Carcanet, 2014). 'Lesson 6' comes from the section in *A Woman Without a Country* with the same name as the collection. The collection, and this particular section, gestures to and laments woman's relegation beyond 'history', even if woman's position in the 'past' is undeniable. There is a further connotation, though: a 'woman without a cunt' is a forcibly chaste woman, exhibiting the worst of the characteristics of a Mother Ireland designed and upheld by masculine politics. This line of argument recalls Hamlet's crude accusation to Ophelia on whether 'you think I meant country matters' (III.II.110) when he requests to lie in her lap during the Mousetrap performance. This conversation continues Hamlet's earlier cruel dismissiveness, instructing Ophelia to 'Get thee to a nunnery' (e.g. III.I.120). When we place these references within the discourse of maternal femininity, there is a troubling connection between a woman's banishment from 'history', as in Boland's poems, and her reduced agency. Male hegemony relies on controlling women's relation to their own sexual organs, fracturing the female self. Boland's poetry heals that fracture, and moves maternity to the centre of modern politics.

of public 'histories' into tradition. As such, the space that the grandmother inhabits models a familial space from which the persona wishes, as daughter, to escape; the grandmother models how not to construct a family, since orphans are all that are left from her family. Far from a modern family in which children are the modern nation, here the persona as daughter is the only means of escape from Mother Ireland. In this way, reconstruction offers a way of creating a new family space, but this futurity only comes about at the expense of the previous failures, and not as their continuation. In political terms these poems advocate a break from the past in order to create the possibility of the future, but the mother-daughter relationship is completely forgone in order for this to happen.

Boland's persona also worries about her daughters and what their potentiality means for her as mother. First, I will discuss the daughters' potentiality. In 'Domestic Interior: 4. Partings' 'Your fingers fist in mine' and 'Outside the window / winter earth // discovers its horizon / as I cradle mine' (ll. 13-17); in 'Domestic Interior: 10. Fruit on a Straight-Sided Tray' we read that 'you are my child and between us are // spaces. Distances. Growing to infinities' (ll. 15-16). This implies that the familial space as coloured by the future is infinite. Here we see the modernity of a nation through its children. I reject Sabina Müller's negative reading of these lines, finding in them instead a positive idea.[92] Müller laments the lines' autumnal decline, whilst I am reminded of Hamlet's 'I would be a king of infinite space' and Donne's 'The Canonization' in which the persona commits to 'build in sonnets pretty rooms'.[93] In Boland's 'Legends' these ideas climax as

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[92] Sabina Müller, 'Apple Blossom and Pomegranate: Eavan Boland's Mother-Daughter Story', in *Anglia: Zeitschrift für englische Philologie,* 122.1 (2004), 89-108 (91).

[93] William Shakespeare, 'Hamlet: the First Folio (1623)', in *Hamlet: the Texts of 1603 and 1623*, ed. by Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006), pp. 173-360 (II.ii.253); 'The Canonization' in John Donne, *The Complete English Poems of John Donne* (London: Everyman's Library, 1991), l. 32.

> Our children are our legends.
> You are mine.
> You have my name
> My hair was once like yours.
>
> And the world
> is less bitter to me
> because you will re-tell the story. (ll. 9-14)

In this final passage Boland's persona collapses the past and the future into one, highlighting how the present daughter – with hair like the past narrator's – will 're-tell the story'; that is, the daughter can open the past up to the future in the way that the persona was able to as a granddaughter, but not as a mother. In the daughter is sited the possibility for the renewal of tradition. At the heart of this is the symbol of the hair, the synecdochic representation of inheritance through time, which acts as a fulcrum between the public 'world' and the private persona.

We reach the following conclusion: successful mothers temporally succeed their daughters; mothers survive their daughters, living on, living in and living as a byword for their daughters. Through these ideas we understand that the familial space permits the present mother to become through the possibility of her daughter's future; although the daughter is to re-tell the story in the future, it is she who permits the narrator to write in the present in Boland's poetry. Daughters are not just their own future, but the daughters' potentiality opens up possibilities for the now, turning the formal mother position into *Jetztzeit*, a 'now time' filled with content.[94] The possibility that the daughter opens up is the now-liveable present for her mother. Politically the public tradition manifest in the poetry is made possible by the younger generation in the private relation between mother and daughter. The daughter is identifiable with Ireland, and this grants the mother the opportunity to 'Make of the past / What [she] can'. In this instance it is not the transition from daughter to mother that is important; rather it is the reverse process, in which

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[94] Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p. 253.

the mother learns from her daughter.

This inevitably is a cycle that has been constructed and reconstructed through time, mother to daughter; however, its manifestation in modern Irish literature suggests something more politically salient in its poeticisation. It is a situation that can only at this moment – at the moment of the poetry – be described or understood, during the changing familial performance. Poetry is itself caught in this bind between describing and creating the world; Boland's poetry is no different. In a previous cultural moment when the family was changing shape and when literature took part in the shaping of a modern nation, the mother-daughter relationship also appeared as a point of departure, rather than as something that merely reconciled the family. In *Pericles*, for example, Thaisa's introduction to her daughter Marina is given fewer lines than Thaisa's introduction to Pericles' substitute in Tyre, Helicanus:

> MARINA   My heart
>   Leaps to be gone into my mother's bosom.
> PERICLES Look who kneels here: flesh of thy flesh, Thaisa,
>   Thy burden at the sea, and called Marina,
>   For she was yielded there.
> THAISA   Blest and mine own!
> HELICANUS Hail, madam, and my queen.
> THAISA   I know you not.
> PERICLES You have heard me say, when I did fly from Tyre
>   I left behind an ancient substitute.
>   Can you remember what I called the man?
>   I have named him oft
> THAISA 'Twas Helicanus then.
> Pericles Still confirmation. (V.III.44-55) [201]

Not only is Helicanus' introduction to Thaisa afforded more dramatic space than Marina's to Thaisa, but his name is accorded equal value with Marina's; Marina is as important to Thaisa as Helicanus. Thaisa and Marina are no sooner reunited than Marina's wedding is due to be celebrated. Marina's future supplies the play's final note of optimism: as the scene proceeds we learn that Thaisa will marry Ly-

simachus at Pentapolis. Pericles tells Thaisa that 'We'll celebrate their nuptials, and ourselves / Will in that kingdom spend our following days; / Our son and daughter shall in Tyrus reign' (V.III.81-3). The contented and nuclear family is contingent on the daughter's future, an ethic repeated in Boland's poetry; this is not only a strategy in the personal sphere, but also in the political one. Moreover, Marina's restoration to Thaisa also allows Thaisa to think about the political ramifications: she turns to Helicanus the substitute, who has publicly looked after Pericles' jurisdiction during the latter's absence. It suggests that political futurity grounded in a particular public place (claiming a right to the state of Tyre in *Pericles*) is contingent on biological, personal futurity.

Mothers, in this national endeavour, need daughters. To return to Trubowitz's reading of *Poly-Olbion*, the frontispiece of which showed Britannia cradling and nurturing the cornucopia, we realise not only that mothers were becoming maternal in early modern England, but that mothers needed the daughter *in order to become maternal*; thereby they were able to mother the nation. The shift is from personal to public politics. Richard Wilson adds that in *The Winter's Tale* there are references to Anne Boleyn in the figure of Hermione – she was accused of adultery and only belatedly recuperated as a figure. Wilson comments that 'with Protestant claims dependent on Anne's exoneration, Shakespeare's brief was surely to discredit such suspicion'. Moreover, in rejecting the oracle's truth, 'Leontes dooms a dynasty to extinction' in killing Hermione and ordering the murder of his daughter; 'yet the line descends through a princess lost in a northern land, to unite two kingdoms.'[95] Perdita is political continuity, in spite of a vicious patriarchy that seeks to assert control; she returns kingly power to Leontes at the moment that her

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[95] Richard Wilson, *Will Power: Essays on Shakespearean Authority* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), p. 171.

mother, Hermione, sees her for the first time. The ultimate reconciliation between

Hermione and Perdita in the play's final scene, acting as a cipher for Elizabeth's

renewed 'meeting of minds' with Anne Boleyn and her Protestantism, asserts the

importance of the matrilineal line, and demonstrates the need for a princess such

as Hermione to have her mother's blessing for marriage more than her father's:

> PAULINA Please you [Perdita] to interpose, fair madam, kneel,
>   And pray your mother's blessing. Turn, good lady;
>   Our Perdita is found.
> HERMIONE   You gods, look down,
>   And from your sacred vials pour your graces
>   Upon my daughter's head! (V.III.119-23) [205]

Hermione's reunification with Perdita is more important than Perdita's with Leon-

tes, or Leontes with Perdita. In this the private precedes, or makes possible, the

public, national narrative. Undoubtedly this political element also features in Bo-

land's poetry, as it addresses (and perhaps rewrites) the mythical figure of Mother

Ireland: Ireland's political future is founded on a private relationship between

mother and daughter.

The importance of the daughter opening up to the future is exposed when

Boland's poetry more explicitly addresses the *Máthair Eire* trope. In 'The Lost

Land' the persona declares that

> I have two daughters.
>
> They are all I ever wanted from the earth.
> Or almost all.
>
> I also wanted one piece of ground.
>
> One city trapped by hills. One urban river.
> An island in its element.
>
> So I could say *mine. My own.*
> And mean it. (ll. 1-8)

In connecting the woman with Ireland – and also declaring a desire for ownership

or appropriation, along with an adaptation of the phrase *Sinn Féin* – we know we

are in the midst of a discussion of sovereignty and land ownership, 'For in *The Lost Land* the fate of the daughter is linked to that of the land', according to Müller.[96] Here is replayed Macmorris' monologue in *Henry V*, but this time through Boland's persona's appropriation of her children. As such, the poetry is immediately politicised, and the future family – the future possibility – is at the heart of that politicisation since 'my children are distances, horizons'.

As with 'Partings', above, the positing of the daughters as horizons suggests the possibility of something in the offing, something elsewhere, and not a limiting process; or, as Deborah McWilliams explains, for Boland, children are 'the thriving source of promise – the flowering of possibilities'.[97] McWilliams' reading is equivalent to Pericles' assessment of his and Thaisa's future happiness in Marina's and Lysimachus' reign. The persona in Boland's poem declares that 'I see myself / on the underworld side of that water, / the darkness coming in fast, saying / all the names I know for a lost land. // *Ireland. Absence. Daughter*' (ll. 31-5). These last names can be read as demonstrating the sadness of first losing a daughter to her own maturation – and by extension the mother's grasp of the present through that daughter – and second the association of woman with Ireland and with absence. In each case loss is the primary sentiment; however, I believe that much like the 'distances' and 'horizons' that children represent, and McWilliams' 'flowering of possibilities', the sentiments labelled '*Ireland. Absence. Daughter*' represent positive attributes.

Absence needs to be read as linked to horizons and Hamlet's infinite spaces, rather than emptiness and vacuity; that is, absence is the opening on to a future of possibility embodied through the daughter, and not the sadness felt at the

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[96] Müller, 'Eavan Boland's Mother-Daughter Story', 108.

[97] Deborah McWilliams, 'From Out of My Womb: The Mother-Daughter Poems of Eavan Aisling Boland', in *Across the Pond: Reflections on Irish Writings – A View from the United States,* 88.351 (1999), 315-22 (320).

daughter leaving the mother. 'Absence' becomes the *Jetztzeit* in which history happens. In the early modern period when daughters were important to the emergence of maternal mothers who brought the nation to modernity, we see the absence that greets the mother-daughter reunification, both in *Pericles* and in *The Winter's Tale.* The fact that both plays end within a dozen lines of that reunification leaves a space of silence: this is the absence that structures the daughter's possibility for the present.[98]

If the mother-daughter relationship is always characterised by the duality of loss-futurity, then there is always hope for historical progress. If Mother Ireland is perceived as stultifying, then the daughter is the hope that heralds a different future, whilst also admitting that the mother-figure is here to stay. 'Boland, for her part,' asserts Kiberd, 'adopts the view that myths are best dismantled from within.'[99] I read these ideas as equally salient in Boland's poetry as in Shakespeare's late romance plays. The plays establish a space in which Perdita and Marina are the future – in the offstage space of the play's afterlife, once the groundlings have exited the Globe; Boland's poetry establishes the future of her family and the figurative Mother Ireland through the loss of the daughter, and through the mother's calcification as mother who can no longer be declined – who can no longer assume a subject position, who can no longer create her own future history. Hermione wakes to greet her daughter, Perdita, and her husband, Leontes, but her daughter will marry Florizel after the play: Hermione's character is assured in its position in relation to husband and daughter, whilst Perdita's future is unbounded and open. The content or presence of the daughter, her engagement with the *Jetztzeit*, is

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[98] In the terms of 'absences that structure', we could also turn to Jacques Lacan's ideas of the importance of absence, emptiness and vacuity in structuring meaning. Of course, another way of thinking of this absence is the empty womb which, biologically, is the prime definition of potentiality.

[99] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, p. 607.

achieved fully in both literatures, but accompanies the static form of the mother and the latter's relation to others around her. This, in the biopolitics of Elizabethan and Jacobean England, is about the future of the nation: who will reign and what will England look like in terms of its religion and organisation? In terms of modern Ireland, the outlook is no different: how can a mythical figure labelled Mother Ireland be relevant to modern Ireland? The answer is in her figurative daughters who leave her to stand as a figure, but proceed to offer change in their name.

Conclusion

Women and maternity have long been excluded from narratives of modernity, but as this chapter shows, maternity not only needs to be reconsidered in modernity, but plays a central not marginal role in modern nation-statism. Queen Elizabeth's sovereignty was founded on a symbolic maternity, whether her own or her mother's. Through her use of maternal discourse, we saw Elizabeth's power over both the private and public spheres, making England a holy land with a positive future in store. Elizabeth's maternity was both private and national; in combining both these spheres, sometimes the public co-opting the private, at others the private co-opting the public, Elizabeth is the first modern sovereign. Elizabeth emerges from the family as a sovereign, but uses the family as a means to sovereignty in its new, privileged space in the polity. Maternity is modernity. Elizabeth's reign, importantly, continued her father's and brother's religious discourse, ensuring that the break with Rome was no flash in the pan. The country that Elizabeth left to James was healthy and sure of itself.

Modern Ireland, of course, already had a matriarch to look to for its sovereign empowerment, as the country's citizens wanted to become independent from colonial and imperial Britain. However, Mother Ireland was an ideology employed by the masculine politics of violent revolution, and its cultural manifestations, such

as *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, obviated Mother Ireland's maternity, instead showing how she sought men to fight and die for her honour. As with Elizabeth I, Mother Ireland's chastity was the signal of her central potency; but this meant that she could mother no children. Instead sovereign power resided in the male representatives of masculine politics. However, in the texts examined in this chapter, we have seen a refocusing on maternity in poetic constructions of Ireland's modernity, primarily through the vessel of the daughter, and in the relationship between mother and daughter.

Mary Makebelieve's modernity co-opted public rebellion on behalf of private rebellion, in which sphere her mother could accept her daughter's growth and maturation and nascent futurity – even though that entailed her own 'shuffling off'. Mrs Makebelieve as Mother Ireland did not seek the death of others to preserve her, but rather accepted her own ageing as an important part of maternal sovereignty and political evolution. By contrast, Boland's modernity drafts private, biological futurity into the public sphere of national politics, using the daughter's potentiality as an opening for the mother's voice. And, though Molly O'Hagan Hardy argues that 'the nation […] is necessarily antagonistic to women because patriarchal institutions, from the [Irish] state's inception, have relegated women to the private sphere, outside of the realm of the public', both Hardy and I agree that Boland's poetry actively contests that symbolic imprisonment.

Hardy adds to her discussion of Boland a discussion of Mary Robinson's presidency (1990-7), stating that through Robinson's engagement with symbol and, necessarily, Boland's use of symbol, 'Robinson recast her presidential role as that of a voice, and a listener, and in some ways, a mother figure for Ireland'.[100] Robinson, born in 1944, has known no southern Ireland that is not a Republic, and as

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[100] Molly O'Hagan Hardy, 'Symbolic Power: Mary Robinson's Presidency and Eavan Boland's Poetry', in *New Hibernia Review,* 12.3 (2008), 47-65 (49; 56).

such can be considered a daughter of the Republic; her transformation to its mother is testament to the possibility of mothers and daughters in modern Ireland, and women's centrality to sovereignty in modern Ireland. Women, through their roles as mothers and daughters, in public and private, are modern sovereigns, revolutionising the form of the family.

In the next chapter I continue to look at the family as a formal revolutionary force, but I concentrate on the relationship between fathers and sons. Whilst mother-daughter relationships looked to the future because of daughters' innate potentiality, the father-son relationship must start by looking backwards at the problem with inheritance; indeed we might call it the inherited problem with inheritance. I show that to obviate the necessary evils of inheritance, Irish writers turn instead to the anarchic structure of fraternity, and use it as both foundational of the modern Republic, liberating, perversely, a better mode of transmission from father to son. Fraternity models the new inheritance.

Brothers and Fathers: A Lateral Anti-Inheritance

In this chapter I interrogate established forms of linear, vertical and predominantly patrilineal inheritance. I show how the vertical form stymies those who inherit, and so another form of inheritance is established: a lateral, fraternal form. In Pearse, the schoolroom is analogised to the Irish Republican Brotherhood, in which an oath of fraternal equality ties members together, rejecting traditional hierarchies. In Joyce's *A Portrait*, Stephen feels liberated at the moment when his father, Simon, seeks fraternal equality, longing to enjoy and share in Stephen's successes. Finally, in *Amongst Women* (1990), Luke's absence allows his father Moran to become the magnetic centre of his family: the father inherits from the son. These adjusted inheritances find a basis in Shakespeare's masculinist dramas, such as *Love's Labour's Lost* (1594-5), *Hamlet* and *King Lear*. This argument constitutes an important moment in my overall thesis: traditional forms of patrilinearity are not as effective as hoped for by those in sovereign power. Instead, sovereignty is best spread amongst the citizenry by logic of anarchic fraternity, both on Shakespeare's stage and in twentieth-century Ireland. This unusual adjustment explicates the paradoxical importance of showing how modern Ireland inherits from early modern England, demonstrating that formal inheritance is disrupted by citizens who, through their fraternal impulses, contribute to emerging nations.

In my previous chapter I wrote about the motif of mothers and daughters and how it allows certain Irish writers to conceive of a feminine future for Ireland, based on potentiality rather than masculine revolution. I wrote about the mother-daughter trope within the framework of changing familial relationships, and also altered views of the family and the nation-state. The family form became a sovereign force with its own members as sovereign citizens within the emerging

nation-state, both in early modern England and in modern Ireland. This is a nation-state that was detaching itself from the physical land, and was being constituted by individuals and their interpersonal relationships: the content of the new nation-state is its citizens. In short, the relationship between mothers and daughters was modern because each needed one another, with a modern future the net result. The early modern period was important as a moment in history when the family could be identified with the nation, and when children were more involved in the role that families could play in the national future; in modern Ireland, that is also the case. Mothers need daughters in order to fulfil the *Jetztzeit*; and daughters need mothers so that they can replace them. Through these ideas we see Ireland's modernity in terms of the mother-daughter relationship as it points forward.

But what if we look to the past for inspiration instead? Boland's poetry rejected the problems of the past as they are inherited in the present; however, in this chapter I examine a vertical inheritance – from father to son – that is changed in the present to a horizontal membership – from brother to brother. This changes the way that inheritance is viewed, as normatively it is considered restrictive and burdensome – indeed, Kearney points out the problematic relation of Ireland as a 'fatherland' and its intimate relation to faith. For Kearney, when fatherland is articulated in this way, it is used to '*internalize*[] its colonial master in its historical memory';[1] however, as the lateral, fraternal relationship is handed down between generations, a greater equality is shared between men, which puts the past into service for the present, rather than the present in the service of the past.

In this endeavour, Benjamin's criticism about the problem with history is allayed:

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[1] Kearney, *Transitions*, p. 242.

> The past carries with it a temporal index by which it is referred to redemption. There is a secret agreement between past generations and the present one. Our coming was expected on earth. Like every generation that preceded us, we have been endowed with a *weak* Messianic power, a power to which the past has a claim. That claim cannot be settled cheaply.[2]

As with Benjamin's conception of the past, the situation I reveal is inherently political. Two scenes present themselves in early modern literature. The first is Henry V's rallying monologue to his troops to encourage them when they fear that they are short on numbers. Having offered a paid-for homeward journey to any soldier that wishes it, and having explained that the fewer the men, the greater their share of honour, Henry tells his officers how the battle will be remembered:

> He that shall see this day live t'old age
> Will yearly in the vigil feast his neighbours
> And say, 'Tomorrow is Saint Crispian.'
> Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars
> And say, 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
> Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot,
> But he'll remember, with advantages,
> What feats he did that day. Then shall our names,
> Familiar in his mouth as household words […]
> Be in their flowing cups freshly remembered.
> This story shall the good man teach his son,
> And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by
> From this day to the ending of the world
> But we in it shall be remembered,
> We few, we happy few, we band of brothers.
> For he today that sheds his blood with me
> Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
> This day shall gentle his condition. [195] (IV.III.44-63)

Henry here offers parity with his subordinates in the stories they tell. The story of St Crispin's day will be passed on in time – from generation to generation – but the story it will tell is of equality and fraternity. The 'band of brothers' idea will pass down as inheritance, even though its ethic belies its mode of transmission. This fraternal inheritance is elsewhere problematized by Spenser, in a passage to which I adverted above; his discussion of native Irish Tanistry

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[2] Benjamin, *Illuminations*, pp. 245-6.

> is a custome amongst all the Irish, that presently after the death of any their chiefe Lords or Captaines, they do presently assemble them selves to a place, generally appoynted and knowne unto them, to chose an other in his stead: where they do nominate and elect, for the most part, not the eldest sonne, nor any of the children of ther Lord deceased, but the next to him of blood, that is, the eldest and worthiest, as commonly the next brother unto him, if he have any, or the next couzine germane, or so forth, as any is elder in that kindred or sept: and then next to him do those chose the next of the blood to be Tanist, who shall next succeede him in the said Captenry, if he live therunto.[3]

Spenser's interlocutors view this idea as perverse, particularly because it is a 'dangerous custom' that avoids 'civill government'.[4]

In both of these scenes, the familial is political. Moreover, Tanistry resembles Henry V's ideas of national spirit, suggesting that this is also a national politics – or, at least, a politics that operates just as nationalism begins to take shape, be it in Elizabethan England or Ireland; however, in spite of the normative understanding that patrilineal inheritance is the dominant mode of transmission between generations – and that this inheritance guarantees the sovereign discourse of power – I will trouble that understanding by stressing instead the important fraternal relations in both periods, even as they are couched within vertical lines of inheritance. This new type of brother-father relationship promotes a more egalitarian, republican brotherhood as the form of the polis. But, more than this, I will show how fathers adopt fraternal relations as a strategy to authorise and legitimise themselves through their sons; power can be seen to descend from the younger brother-figure to their father.

This undoes the pressures of the fatherland, as well as those of Catholicism and of social expectation. Instead, there is a lateral anti-inheritance, in which vertical structures of power are collapsed, and in which the father inherits from the son

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[3] Spenser, *A View*, p. 12.
[4] Spenser, *A View*, p. 13.

in a fraternal, horizontal relationship. The father is initially the most powerful citizen, but through the adoption of the lateral power structure, the family succeeds the single citizen to secure sovereignty in modern Ireland. This family structure is then passed down through the generations – both in literary texts, but also in how the writers turn to their forebears to inherit the fraternal structure of power.

These ideas recognise that the logic of affirming the citizen as the content within the form of the nation-state leads us to the question of law, because the citizen is a legal body, and therefore to the question of sovereignty. The citizen with whom I am concerned in this chapter is the brother-figure that was once considered the son. Whereas the mother-daughter chapter was concerned with negotiating the mythical Mother Ireland figure, this present chapter is about juridical power; it is about formalised sovereignty. These father-brother ideas are important to my thesis because they alter, if not contradict, the dominant criticism of Irish literature: the metanarrative of the vertical father-son relationship in Irish literature. 'A son's attitude to his father', writes Patrick Crotty, 'need not be emblematic of his relationship with his inherited culture, of course, but in Irish literature it usually is';[5] in this vein Kiberd writes that 'Whenever sons revolted against fathers in a revival text, the confrontation was soon metaphorized as the story of Ireland'.[6] Of course we know that father-son motifs appear not only in revival texts, so Kiberd's point is tenable across a broader range of literature; however, I examine these relationships' horizontal organisation, and by looking at these relationships as indices of struggles about juridical power and sovereignty. What emerges at the relationship's logical end – with fraternity replacing paternity – is the family as a sovereign unit and content of the modern Irish nation.

Where the mother-daughter section highlighted the inherent futurity in

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[5] Patrick Crotty, 'Fathers and Sons', in *New Welsh Review,* 17 (1992), 12-23 (17).
[6] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, p. 101.

women's potentiality, the father-brother relation stresses the contemporaneity of the political arrangement. Literature, using such images, also offers a new way of creating a nation, though it too accepts the formal constraints of the status quo: fathers must remain head of the family. However, the brother-father relation allows for a politics that relies on collapsed, anarchic forms of power in their establishment of patriarchy. The best, dynamic form of masculine control is when the father inherits from his son – a son who is more readily known as a brother to the father and to the rest of the family, rather than as inheritor of his father's legacy. That inheritance is the sovereign family unit, establishing that the family is the content of the nation-state form: the Constitution's circumscription of the family in Ireland comes true according to the logical transformation of the brother-father relationship.

In Pearse's short stories the author's commitment to the Fenian ethos of brotherhood is evident. Pearse's writings are often cited for their reference to the blood sacrifice that characterised the Easter Rising of 1916, which changed the shape of Irish history thereafter. The Rising showed that success against the British could come about not through victory in battle; it failed after all. Rather, the British execution of the sixteen martyred them. This meant the wider public sympathised with unrest and, ultimately, the War of Independence: 'a terrible beauty [was] born' out of their deaths which the entire nation shared, whether or not they endorsed the revolution.[7]

In Pearse's marshalling of the Irish Volunteers – and their secondment to the I.R.B. – his notions of martyrdom were made real; it was he and the other executed insurrectionists who marked Easter 1916 as a logical consequence of the list of dates peppering Irish independent movements: Wolfe Tone's 1798, the Young

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[7] 'Easter 1916' in Yeats, *The Major Works*, passim.

Irelanders of 1848, the Fenians of 1867 and the Manchester Martyrs of 1882. In this sense, Pearse entered into fraternal relations through collapsing time by bringing an immediacy to events that happened over 100 years previously – just one of the unintended consequences of his blood sacrifice. The Fenians – by which I solely refer to the men of the I.R.B. – similarly engaged with a fraternal spirit as they 'worked and drank together, helping each other out as friends do, bringing business, providing jobs and, no doubt, protection in a rough city. There was a hint of the mafia or the freemasons in their activities'.[8] It was a new method of organising people, one which periodically thrived after 1858 – notably in 1867 and again in 1916.

In short stories such as 'The Wandering Hawk' the fraternal impulse is keenly felt through education and a uniting of the schoolboys and their teacher, the eponymous 'Wandering Hawk'. Once the boys take the oath of the Fenians, the leader tells them in no uncertain terms: "'Ye may come with me now.'"[9] This is not the first time that the joining of the leader with the schoolboys has been expressed in literature. In *Love's Labour's Lost*, Shakespeare wrote about a similar organisation; we must pay attention to its links with contemporary politics. In *Love's Labour's Lost*, the King of Navarre engages his lords to join him in a vow of study and abstention. Berowne, Dumain and Longaville become the king's 'fellow-scholars'. In both works, fraternal camaraderie replaces the traditional patriarchal structure; in Shakespeare's carnival ensues and in Pearse's text revolution's foundations are built. A reversal of the king's court and the king's academy takes place, and the switch allows the two loci to share a space which is crucial to the emergence of modernity in *Love's Labour's Lost*. Pearse's paradoxical inheritance of a structure

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[8] M. J. Kelly, *The Fenian Ideal and Irish Nationalism, 1882-1916* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006), p. 20.

[9] 'The Wandering Hawk' in Pádraic Pearse, *The Literary Writings of Patrick Pearse*, ed. by Séamas Ó Buachalla (Co. Kildare: The Leinster Leader, 1979), p. 224.

that disavows inheritance indicates Pearse's own awareness of Shakespeare as an appropriate foundation for his own political affiliations – in spite of Shakespeare's undisputable English-ness – and proves the necessary relevance of Shakespeare to understanding Pearse, his writing and his politics. Pearse inherits from Shakespeare a notion of a fraternity that can found a modern space, independent of its previous links with a courtly code of ethics.

In Joyce's *A A Portrait* the father-brother relation evolves into the idea that the son becomes a better version of the father. This is most evident when Simon and Stephen visit the university in Cork, Simon's *alma mater*, to see whether Stephen will attend. Simon points out his 'S.D.' initials carved into a lecture-hall bench, exhibiting his own space in tertiary education. Simon wishes to see Stephen pass into Cork and become, like him, an 'S.D.' in the lecture hall. Simon gains authority from the actions of his son. Simon's concern – which I read as both familial and nationalist in its patriarchalism – is to share a contemporary space with his son in the university.

Simon wishes to collapse time; here we see connections with Pearse's taking on of Shakespeare's ideas. Simon's ethic is plainly expressed to Stephen at this point:

> I'm talking to you as a friend, Stephen. I don't believe a son should be afraid of his father. No, I treat you as your grandfather treated me when I was a young chap. We were more like brothers than father and son.[10]

Whereas we might expect to see Stephen dismiss his father's claim of fraternal authority, Stephen is unable to free himself from his father; in fact, Simon's claim to fraternity draws Stephen closer in kinship to the rest of his otherwise-distant family. What remains is a pernicious contemporaneity in which Stephen and Simon are

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[10] James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (London: Penguin, 1996 [1916]), p. 104.

temporally identical and Stephen is no longer able to separate himself from his father's grasp: Stephen inherits his father's fraternity.

If this is pernicious in the family, then it is pernicious also in terms of nationalist politics. The Stephen-Simon connection suggests the inability to shrug off the past, the abject failures of the fatherland, but also suggests that a possible escape may be effected after the political fraternal element is instituted by Simon. As Crotty writes, 'if Irish poets regard the past as a continuum, they see it as a broken one which it is their business to repair.'[11] Stephen's fraternal inheritance is that he must flee paternal inheritance. *Hamlet* is similarly concerned with nagging questions of the overlap between monarchic governance and filial piety. Hamlet's barbed reply to Claudius that he is 'little more than kin and less than kind' (I.ii.65) represents the beginning of my discussion on the matter. The staging of fraternal relations in the play also contests a type of monarchy and advocates, in the end, a break from filial obligation and a new rule based on brotherhood. In *Hamlet* Horatio tells Hamlet's story; I show how we might consider Stephen as akin to Horatio, rather than Hamlet.[12] But even Horatio is asked to tell Hamlet's story in the future: fraternity is passed on. In both literatures, fraternal contemporaneity is a new form of governance, which both admits the impossibility of shedding the relation, but also suggests an anarchic and lateral system of governance which obviates pernicious hierarchies. The collapse of the paternalistic hierarchy is liberating for Stephen, with fraternity freeing him from patrilineal inheritance.

In my final section I look at John McGahern's *Amongst Women* and how the nuclear family as the nation's content, under the aegis of the despotic father Michael Moran, actually descends from Moran's son, Luke. It is Luke's self-exile in

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[11] Crotty, 'Fathers and Sons', 14.

[12] In the next chapter I show how Hamlet and Stephen are commonly thought of together; in that chapter, I also displace Hamlet's ulyssean correspondence on to Leopold Bloom.

London which precipitates Moran's intensive investment in his other children and the construction of a nuclear family unit which is characterised by its privacy. Moran is a horrible father who institutes patriarchy in his family: 'Then, like a shoal of fish moving within a net, Rose and the girls started to clear the table[.]'[13] The cipher of the net not only demonstrates the enclosure of the Moran family, but it explicates the family's wholeness and holiness. I link this with the underlying Catholic element to the novel – 'Blessed amongst women' is a line in the 'Hail Mary' – and how Moran posits himself as Jesus; however, when we learn about the reason for Luke's departure from the family home at Great Meadow – after Moran has beaten him – Moran ensures that his other children will follow his rule. Luke's position as a brother in London outside the family unit brings about Moran's establishment of the holy/whole family. Moran's other children as a result are never fully able to leave Moran alone.

The political element here is visible in the tension between London and Leitrim, between the outside and the inside of the family; politically the father inherits from the son and the other children are conditioned in their relation with their father by their brother's behaviour from afar. If read politically, then this structure advocates standing outside formal arrangements in order to change them: the sovereign family in Ireland is located, as Luke, beyond Ireland. The content is managed from outside or afar. In *King Lear*, as I noted above, Edgar expresses a similar ethic at the play's end: 'The oldest hath borne most. We that are young / Shall never see so much, nor live so long.' (V.III.324-5) Edgar, like Luke, exits the family unit in order to influence it and reinstall proper patrilineal relations. He must act 'base[]' (II.II.178), adopting the alterity biologically given to his half-brother Edmond, before he can rescue Gloucester and restore his own place in

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[13] John McGahern, *Amongst Women* (London: Faber and Faber, 2008 [1990]), p. 79.

Gloucester's affections. What results is Edgar's assumption of the governance of Britain: a renovated polis in the present. This is the sovereign politics that Edgar hands on. Luke's fraternity restores the family as the sovereign form of the modern Irish state.

In short my argument in this chapter develops in three stages: in relation to Pearse's writing I show how fraternal relations are important politically as a means of creating the masculine and Christian revolution for which he longed and died; Joyce's fraternal impulse in *A Portrait* reveals Simon deriving legitimacy from his son – a reversal of tradition – which allows Stephen to escape patrilineal inheritance and make a break for freedom. However, these ideas reach their fullest evolution in McGahern's *Amongst Women* in which Luke, excepted member of the family, creates Moran's nuclear family beyond its boundaries. Luke is the sovereign in an outside that symbolises liberation, like the space to which Stephen flees in *A Portrait*; this outside is also a space that allows Luke to make the rules. Though Pearse and Joyce inherit Shakespeare in their own ways, McGahern adds to his Shakespearean inheritance another inheritance from Pearse and Joyce: Luke inherits Pearse's ideas of a fraternity as foundational to a nation-state, and inherits Stephen Dedalus' ideas that liberation comes from fraternity. Overall, the troubling form of the family as outlined in *Bunreacht na hÉireann* is allowed to stand, but only once fraternity has been privileged over and above paternity.

Pádraic Pearse: '"Ye may come with me now."'

The fraternal impulse is not extraneous to the analysis of Pearse and his writings. In his short poem 'To My Brother' (1916) the persona explains the importance of having only one 'familiar friend': 'Nor needed I another' (ll. 10-11). Here we understand that brothers are 'Moulded in one womb' (l. 2), and that they can be brothers through mere friendship. In this vein we read 'The Rebel' (1915) as a po-

em of brotherhood

> because I am of the people, I understand the people,
> I am sorrowful with their sorrow, I am hungry with their de-
> sire:
> My heart has been heavy with the grief of mothers,
> My eyes have been wet with the tears of children,
> I have yearned with old wistful men,
> And laughed or cursed with young men;
> Their shame is my shame, and I have reddened for it[.] (ll. 18-
> 24)

When we read this as a poem of brotherhood we consolidate Owen McGee's ar-

gument that

> Whether they be republicans, socialists or communists, this
> concept of fraternity was associated in revolutionaries'
> minds with a philosophical belief in the equality of all men
> and a conviction that political liberty could be 'made
> known' to men of the lower classes often through a mere
> process of socialization, despite the perpetual claim of the
> 'gentlemanly classes' to the contrary.[14]

As such, the poem is Fenian in character, as borne out by the deliberate and key

invocation of the family – the implied fraternal characteristic and the explicit refer-

ence to 'mothers' and 'children' – which alerts us to the ethical shape of the family

for Pearse in his writings: something around which to rally, something to be the

impetus and focus of political campaigns. The family is a nationalist, political me-

dium. In 'The Rebel', Pearse's persona 'say[s] to my people's masters: Beware, /

Beware of the thing that is coming, beware of the risen people, / Who shall take

what ye would not give.' (ll. 38-40) The use of the word 'risen' bears two distinct

references: the first is to Christ – God is on Pearse's side, coupled with martyrdom

– and the second to the coming rebellion which ultimately manifests itself in the

Easter Rising.

These images capture aspects of the values of the I.R.B. There are hints of

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[14] Owen McGee, *The I.R.B.: The Irish Republican Brotherhood, from the Land League to Sinn Féin*, 2nd edn (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), p. 17.

these values in 'Owen' (1915), in which the boys' teacher receives, like the Wandering Hawk in the story of the same name, a message via a travelling ballad-singer to begin to take arms. Just like the call to arms in 1867, the beginning of the revolution is at hand in Pearse's play 'Owen', even if it falls at the first hurdle. There are more suggestions of fraternity in the play, however, as the schoolboy Owen's assumption of the role as Master in the boys' games is preparatory for the moment when he takes on the mantle of defending the uprising's beginning. Owen announces, as his Master flees to join the massed ranks (we presume), that 'I must keep [the Royal Irish Constabulary] out until he's at the crossroad'. Owen assumes the rifle and imagines that 'If I fire a bullet at them they'll think the Master is here still, and they won't go after him'. Not unsurprisingly Owen is shot and killed by the police, his role as Master reaching its logical end. In this scenario Pearse employs the idea of brotherhood to show how Owen could (and did) assume the position of the Master in trying to protect him. Rather than thinking of the Master as a 'Master' – someone above him in the hierarchy with whom one shares no common, lateral relationship – Owen is a secret-sharer, a companion and an organisational brother to the Master who is 'captain of the boys that'll be rising in the countryside'.[15] Again, the many connotations of the notion of rising are manifest, and we also see how Owen collapses the hierarchical relationship between himself and his Master (and how the latter does not protest this): Owen becomes, in deed if not in word, an Irish Republican Brother.

The presence in 'Owen' – as in 'The Wandering Hawk' (1915-16), 'The Master' (1915) and 'The King' (1912) – of a schoolboy narrative merits attention. When discussing the notion of sovereignty in Pearse's writings, McNulty argues that the young schoolboy is 'the perfect Pearsean figure of Irish independence and

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[15] 'Owen' in Pearse, *Literary Writings of Pearse*, pp. 132-4.

the people'. The the boys in 'The King' for example 'discuss[] their own position in the hierarchy of the imagined nation'.[16] To put it in terms that better suit my argument, the boys have been discussing how they might be permitted to collapse or subvert the hierarchy currently in place; how they could be the content of the emerging nation-state. The play ends when Giolla na Naomh, though only a child, restores the kingdom's security and dies having taken the king's place on the battlefield. As the Abbot explains, 'Do not keen this child, for he hath purchased freedom for his people.'[17]

The schoolboy narratives offer Pearse the opportunity in the first instance to examine a society that is predominantly fraternal already, and in the second instance, to upset or collapse what little hierarchy remains. This accords with Deane's observation that 'all of Pearse's heroes are in service to a social group[.] […] He had less admiration for the lonely individual leaders like [Daniel] O'Connell and [Charles Stewart] Parnell'.[18] Fenian fraternity is found most coherently in the school; it is no wonder that Pearse founded St Enda's boys' school. In contemporary politics, fraternal relations are emphasised, such as in the *Irish Freedom* of November 1910. In an article entitled 'The Students and the State', a report quotes Micheal O'Ceallaigh's speech to the 'first meeting of the session of the Students National Literary Society':

> 'The objects of this society are to bring Irish students together to educate them, as far as the efforts of fellow-students can go in that direction, on affairs and matters pertinent to the nation's life, to imbue them with that spirit of comradeship and fellow-feeling which in happier circumstances would be natural to them, but which unfortunately present circumstances have not tended to

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[16] Eugene McNulty, 'Breaking the Law: Patrick Pearse, Cultural Revival, and the Site of Sovereignty', in *Journal of Postcolonial Writing,* 46.5 (2010), 479-90 (487).

[17] 'The King' in Pearse, *Literary Writings of Pearse*, pp. 79-80.

[18] Deane, 'Pearse: Writing and Chivalry', p. 70.

foster.'[19]

Given the newspaper's avowed political support for an Irish Republic,[20] it is not difficult to connect the fraternal, republican ideals with the comradeship to be bred in students. The impulse in both O'Ceallaigh's speech and in Pearse's schoolmaster literature is to render the schoolroom political: to make a *polis* of the academy. This is a political manoeuvre: what might have been considered an apolitical space becomes the prime political space, as it allows the knowledge transfer between teacher and student also to be a transfer of a discourse of power. Fraternity is passed down through the generations.

This intimate link between education and politics is, as we know, already evident in a previous cultural moment, as when Erasmus emphasised a child's education as a key facet of forming the family that was an important bearer of national sovereignty.[21] However, Pearse's nationalism specifically worked against that of the earlier period: instead of bolstering the unity of Ireland and Britain, Pearse's nationalism was inspired by ideals of Irish separation and independence. As Kiberd notes, Pearse's version of 'deanglicization' was 'much less ecumenical' than Douglas Hyde's:[22] Pearse wanted an Ireland without any vestige of England, and by passing on his ideas of fraternal equality he hoped to effect this revolution.

In light of this, it is important (and not a little bit ironic) to note that the first monarch to suggest the union of Britain with Scotland and Ireland shared this didactic ethic with Pearse. In *Basilikon Doron*, King James VI/I instructs his son Henry on how to be a good king. King James' tract opens with this shift to which I draw our attention, from a court to an academy:

> Since I the author [...] as your naturall Father, must be

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[19] 'The Students and the State', *Irish Freedom,* 1910, p. 7.

[20] 'Irish Freedom', *Irish Freedom,* 1910, pp. 4-6.

[21] Q.v. Sherry and Erasmus, *De pueris statim ac liberaliter instituendis*, sig. B11.

[22] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, pp. 141-2.

> careful for your Godlie and vertuous education as my eld-
> est Sonne, and the first fruites of Goddes blessing towards
> me in my posteritie: And (as a King) must timouslie
> prouide for your training vp in all the pointes of a Kings
> office[.][23]

The academy/court switch is dramatized and made comic in Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost*, a play written and performed prior to *Basilikon Doron*'s publication – the thematic consonance, however, would suggest that the ideas reflected in the passage below were more widely salient. The King of Navarre states that

> Our court shall be a little academe,
> Still and contemplative in living art.
> You three, Berowne, Dumain, and Longaville,
> Have sworn for three years' term to live with me
> My fellow-scholars, and to keep those statutes
> That are recorded in this schedule here.
> Your oaths are pass'd; and now subscribe your names,
> That his own hand may strike his honour down
> That violates the smallest branch herein.
> If you are arm'd to do as sworn to do,
> Subscribe to your deep oaths, and keep it too. (I.I.13-23)

Here, too, we see the court/academy reversal. Its purpose is to render Berowne, Dumain and Longaville, lords of the king's court, 'fellow-scholars' along with the king; the traditional governing hierarchy is collapsed into one of fraternal equality. Importantly, fraternities such as these were prominent in mediaeval England. Indeed, Keen notes their 'efflorescence' before the break with Rome, adding that religious fraternities were 'infinitely numerous' because of their dedication to 'less-well-off people' in their sickness and death: the fraternities were largely established to say mass on behalf of the dead after their passing. This is a Catholic endeavour notably because 'the ordained priesthood, and only the ordained priesthood, could celebrate the masses that could speed a soul's journey through purgatory'.[24] In this light, we see Navarre's institution of a religious fraternity as the adoption of a me-

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[23] 'Epistle' in King James VI/I, *Basilikon Doron Devided into Three Bookes* (Edinburgh: Robert Walde-graus, 1599).
[24] Keen, *English Society in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 296; p. 274.

diaeval, religious ethic, even in what appears to be a revolutionary moment of anarchy; this is certainly not modern at this juncture.

However, in *Love's Labour's Lost* this brotherhood also brings about the courtiers' downfall midway through the play, or so it seems. Ferdinand and his three courtiers are mutually discovered to have broken their oath of abstinence; Berowne proclaims their wrongs, declaring that 'He, he, and you, and you, my liege, and I, / Are pick-purses in love, and we deserve to die' (IV.III.204-5). This, however, works to bring about their reconciliation, with Berowne again the instigator:

> Sweet lords, sweet lovers, O, let us embrace!
> As true we are as flesh and blood can be:
> The sea will ebb and flow, heaven show his face;
> Young blood doth not obey an old decree:
> We cannot cross the cause why we were born;
> Therefore of all hands must we be forsworn. (IV.III.210-15)

Berowne's belief in the notion of brotherhood returns in this passage as he realises before all of the others that they are all in love at the same time, bearing a fellowship of romantic love between them.

Berowne makes sense of the friends breaking their oaths, determining that they need to make a new oath of brotherhood and officially break off their oath of abstinence: 'Let us once lose our oaths to find ourselves, / Or else we lose ourselves to keep our oaths.' (IV.III.335-6) In this passage a new notion enters the discourse surrounding the oath and the university: its aim is to 'find ourselves', or, in my terminology, its aim is the modern individual's content. That this is done through romantic – or affective – love suggests a close correspondence to Stone's arguments concerning affective individualism in which 'what is involved' in the mutating role of the family in the early modern period

> is a change in how the individual regarded himself in rela-

> tion to society (the growth of individualism) and how he
> behaved and felt towards other human beings, particularly
> his wife and children on the one hand, and parents and kin
> on the other (the growth of affect).[25]

In *Love's Labour's Lost*, the new (or perhaps renewed) oath which dedicates the men to self-discovery is, therefore, at the heart of brotherhood, and at the heart of the political contemporaneity that places academy and court in the same space. Moreover, where the oath of abstinence forwent futurity by resisting sexual relations, the new oath of brotherhood is founded upon the men's sexuality.

This suggests two things: one is the greater personal and familial endeavour of this fraternal ethic; the second is the growth of Protestant ideologies which politically assumed a pre-eminent role in modernising England. In Max Weber's (1905) terms, Protestantism brought about an individualistic work ethic.[26] In *Love's Labour's Lost*, the individual affectivity of the second fraternal oath is passed on as modern, introducing a new way of governing within the family and amongst peers; it replaces the previous fraternity that maintained the ritualised Catholic hierarchy. The Protestant fraternity in *Love's Labour's Lost* is, ironically, what Pearse advocates to his peers and schoolboys: an individualism that returns to fraternity as its source, and passes on fraternal equality as a privileged familial characteristic.

In this light, Kiberd summarises Pearse's political ideas about education in Ireland, noting that for Pearse 'A free child […] would not become a replica of his mass-produced teacher, but would rather achieve his innermost self: the state existed to fulfil the child rather than the child to fulfil the state'.[27] Here, also, is the inheritance of brotherhood and the self-discovery of Berowne's renewed oath. Just as in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Pearse's students can find themselves through a fraternity

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[25] Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 222.

[26] Q.v. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (London: Routledge Classics, 2001 [1905]).

[27] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, p. 283.

that draws them out of themselves and into the nation. We saw above how children were interchangeable entities with the nation-state, and in Kiberd's reading of Pearse that idea is recast. This is perverse given Pearse's avowed distrust of the English. Pearse explains that

> The central purpose of [St Enda's] School is not so much
> the mere imparting of knowledge [...] as the formation of
> its pupils' characters, eliciting and development of the in-
> dividual bents and traits of each, the kindling of their
> imaginations[.][28]

As with Berowne's comment to his colleagues, Pearse's concern is with the content rather than the form.

'Pearse's remedy was interesting', adds Kiberd, 'more, not less, English literature, as an instrument of liberation'.[29] We know that Pearse's literary education was underpinned by a love of Shakespeare, indicating that the fraternal ethic in *Love's Labour's Lost* would not have been strange to Pearse.[30] What we have, then, is a chain of paradoxical heritage. Pearse studies Shakespeare – he inherits its legacy in a vertical structure as of a father to son, an authority passing on its lessons. That lesson in *Love's Labour's Lost* is about rewriting authority and its structure horizontally, undermining the vertical structures of power that support the king, suggesting that instead authority can derive from lateral relationships with 'brothers'. The paradox is that Pearse's adoption (at St Enda's and in his stories) of an ethic visible in *Love's Labour's Lost* both acknowledges the power of a father-figure (Shakespeare, the King of Navarre) and advocates the absorption and distribution of that power horizontally, which in turn undermines the power of a father-figure; however, the

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[28] Pádraic Pearse, *A Significant Irish Educationalist: The Educational Writings of P. H. Pearse*, ed. by Séamas Ó Buachalla (Dublin: The Mercier Press, 1980), p. 317.

[29] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, p. 283.

[30] Q.v. Joost Augusteijn, *Patrick Pearse: The Making of a Revolutionary* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 73-4 esp. Augusteijn notes how at the meetings for the New Ireland Literary Society the seventeen-year-old Pearse would often quote Shakespeare in debates on the merits of Irish, and the demerits of British literature. This was much to the consternation of his fellow members.

father-figure's importance is reinstated in the process of inheritance. Thus Pearse's absorption of Shakespeare contemporises Shakespeare, making him relevant for Pearse's preparation for rebellion; but in creating a fraternal ethic that can sovereignly govern an independent Ireland, Pearse passes on Shakespeare's modern, Protestant fraternity in *Love's Labour's Lost*: Pearse gives Shakespeare back to modern Ireland. This is not to say that Pearse's texts are evacuated of meaning without knowledge of Shakespeare, but that the latter expands the understanding of how Pearse's texts operate.

These themes are exemplified in Pearse's 'The Wandering Hawk'. In a now-familiar narrative, the boys' favourite teacher turns out to be none other than the most renowned I.R.B. member, the Wandering Hawk, who has a £500 reward riding on his head. His teaching is described in flattering terms as 'He revealed to us beauty and wonder where we had seen only difficult words or dry facts', and even castigates the class for not supporting their peer Clery in his protest against the new master: "'You haven't shown up as well in this as Clery has. You ought to have joined in the chorus, you know.'"[31] The seeds of fraternal relations are, at this point, sowed and watered. Later in the narrative the boys jointly assume the role of leader when the Hawk is arrested. Their Fenian status is confirmed when they take the oath. 'When we had repeated the words after the captain,' narrates Dwyer, 'he gripped each of us by the hand. The other man did the same.' The captain's first words after the oath has been confirmed are simple, yet symbolically important: "'Ye may come with me now.'"[32] In this phrase – the centre to the youth, the Fenian to the inductee – brotherhood is formed and put into action.

Hereafter, as the adults follow the boys' lead when fleeing from the Royal Navy en route to The Eagle's Nest, site of the hidden guns, we read that 'It was

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[31] 'The Wandering Hawk' in Pearse, *Literary Writings of Pearse*, pp. 176-7.
[32] 'The Wandering Hawk' in Pearse, *Literary Writings of Pearse*, p. 224.

part of their trust in the Wandering Hawk that they trusted us, his pupils.'[33] This idea confirms McGee's point that the I.R.B. was an organisation 'whereby all members of the organization automatically became equal to each other in their political rights, irrespective of their social class';[34] that is, the I.R.B. collapsed hierarchical structures, instituting instead a lateral equality in evidence too in Pearse's text. Additionally, the centre's earlier command to the boys that 'Ye may come with me now' is always to be understood as a bipartisan statement and one that explodes subject and object constructions. If the phrase is reversed – 'All you Fenians may come with me, Clery, now' – then we see the deepseated power of the fraternity. The Fenians do follow Clery into the cave as they make their escape. This indicates that there is a shared, fraternal understanding of that specific phrase, one that accords with the themes and ideas present in 'The Rebel', as I showed above. 'The Wandering Hawk' can be considered a prime example of the inherited fraternity – teacher to students – that allows the schoolboys to develop into themselves, and to become leaders in their own right. Pearse's reader learns to (or inherits) trust in the equality of schoolboys, otherwise considered social inferiors. A society that follows Pearse's fraternal priorities is beginning now to upset the traditional hierarchies that govern society, and bring about a changed form of governance: revolution is in the offing.

We understand from these writings that the fraternal impulse is central to Pearse's ethical stance. That sentiment identifies with the I.R.B.'s own constitution, which, as I wrote above, put brotherhood at the heart of their republican and separatist concerns. For Pearse that represents a collapse of distinctions, occasionally stretching to the upsetting of traditional hierarchies; more importantly, however, men can fight alongside each other who have never met previously and who are

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[33] 'The Wandering Hawk' in Pearse, *Literary Writings of Pearse*, p. 230.
[34] McGee, *The I.R.B.*, p. 18.

solely bound by their commitment to the cause. In this, Pearse's literary writings assume a position similar to that of the early I.R.B., which forwarded a concept 'calling on the Irish people to [begin] propagating a great democratic republic amongst themselves'.[35] Spatial collapse – no longer men from different backgrounds and in different parts of the country, but just laterally-connected brothers – is at the heart of the I.R.B. and of Pearse's writing. This is consolidated by the idea that the I.R.B. are organised by circles in different parts of the country, with no ranks ascribed to any Fenian members.[36] So, too, is the potential of temporal collapse between elders and the young – in which all become equal – at the heart of this fraternalism. Additionally, the writings I have analysed are written in the year or two preceding the uprising, again confirming that even in the 1916 Rising, brotherhood preceded the action Pearse was taking. M. J. Kelly also links Pearse's work and the writings of the Fenians, thereby explicating Pearse's texts political nature.[37]

Colonialism – a political structure that makes certain that its content is unequal and hierarchical – is therefore disavowed in fraternity; in trying to iron out political differences through the ideals of equality and fraternity, the I.R.B. empowers the individual to set themselves on an equal footing with their brother, rather than be subject to hierarchized domination and passivity. This political motion starts in the schoolroom when the child becomes 'free', as Pearse desires, and becomes a citizen of the political court. Fraternity as a political organisation not only works in the schoolroom, but requires the schoolboys to take part in the Irish revolution that would overthrow the arch-hierarchy, the British. Concomitantly, by

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[35] McGee, *The I.R.B.*, p. 357.
[36] Q.v. McGee, *The I.R.B.*, p. 30.
[37] Kelly, *The Fenian Ideal*, p. 121. '[L]iterary Fenians implicitly depicted the union as a fiction. Ireland was not England's equal, but its colonial subject and increasingly separatists identified the British imperial dynamic as more than simply economic or social exploitation.'

adopting an anarchic mode of governance which has fraternal equality at its heart, Pearse figuratively inherits Berowne's second oath, the Protestantism of which has been shown. It means that Pearse's fraternity adopts ideas of a Reformed church, even while working within the framework of Catholicism. Pearse's revolution is also against his own religion and moral foundations.

Thus, this revolution uses the stable forms of education to create a new, unstable future content; it does so, perversely, by inheriting hierarchically as if from father to son, and by passing on in inheritance its emphasis on fraternal equality. But Pearse's strategy finds a forebear not in Ireland, it appears, but rather in the chief representative of English cultural hegemony: Shakespeare. The fraternity that King Henry V avowed on St Crispin's day is indeed passed on in stories of the battle. This is the first stage in the development of the fraternal relation which I am sketching: it involves a fraternal, anarchic foundation that has a correspondence in Protestantism. Faith remains with fatherland, but brotherhood models a new inheritance.

Joyce's A Portrait*: 'more like brothers than father and son'*

In the final chapter of Joyce's *A Portrait*, Stephen decides that he can no longer stand the struggles which he must face in Dublin. Talking with his university friend, Davin, from university, Stephen explains that 'When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. […] I shall try to fly by those nets.'[38] Stephen lists 'nationality, language [and] religion' as the three nets, but in this section I will add another: the family. The family is one of the restrictions of Irish life from and by which Stephen wishes to fly. In doing so Stephen implicitly seeks to reorient himself outside the confines of a family which is restrictive through its patriarchy, its enforcement of female passivity and its line-

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[38] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 231.

ar inheritance. Particularly in its relationship with inheritance (not to mention through the direct textual references), we see a connection with *Hamlet*, in that both narratives have inheritance as a (troubling) driving force: sons inherit from fathers. We shall see how brotherhood offers a chance of freedom from the binds of the fatherland; this is contrary to Pearse's notion of brotherhood – though no less modern – which has the means of founding the fatherland anew.

Whilst the common interest in *Hamlet* is its various filial relationships – Hamlet and the Ghost, Hamlet and Claudius, Laertes and Polonius, Laertes and Claudius – I am interested in *Hamlet*'s fraternal ethos, as evidenced more forcefully in the relations between Hamlet and Laertes and Hamlet and Horatio. Stone's recommendation is always to remember primogeniture when we consider any landed family of this period; it is worth considering *Hamlet* in this light.[39] Both in Hamlet's and Laertes' narratives, their filial inheritance as eldest sons is crucial: for the former, it is the Ghost's stipulation to 'revenge [my] most foul and unnatural murder' that drives Hamlet (and alters his narrative from one of mourning to a revenge plot), a fact which Kiberd notes:

> To a remarkable degree, the plot of *Hamlet* is dictated by the ghost. He sets the action up, directs his son on how to proceed, intervenes when the prince's resolve appears to weaken, prevents rough handling of his former wife, and sees to it that there is a bloody catastrophe.[40]

Meanwhile Laertes also admits to Claudius that 'I a noble father [have] lost […] But my revenge will come' (IV.II.26-30). [192] This implies that it is Polonius' death (and therefore his right to revenge) that Laertes takes on as his own narrative: Polonius' death is causally passed on to Laertes. I link this fraught inheritance in *Hamlet* with Stephen's inheritance, which ultimately becomes fraternal correspond-

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[39] Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 87.
[40] Declan Kiberd, *Ulysses and Us* (London: Faber and Faber, 2009), p. 336.

ence. From this position, Stephen is able to escape the confines of the family. An ethic results that is commensurate with the I.R.B. and early Fenianism, in which a vision of a new Irish state was predicated upon the belief in fraternity, rather than paternity; however, Stephen uses the framework of fraternity to escape from a father (and by extension fatherland) that has metaphorically imprisoned and restricted him. The polities in *Hamlet* and *King Lear* begin, much like the colonised, pre-revolutionary Ireland, predicated on paternal relations.

The problematic importance of paternity is cemented by its legal jurisdiction in early modern England; though primogeniture was considered the only way to pass on land and possessions, we see severally in Shakespeare the problems it causes. In *King Lear*, Edmond's bastardy causes his villainy; in *King John*, the bastard's exile from the family belies his more equitable status as inheritor of the king's legacy; in *Macbeth* (1606; adapted 1616), Donalbain and Malcolm realise that their position as inheritors makes them appear the most likely murderers of their father, and they flee as a result; and even in the comedy *As You Like It* (1599-1600) Oliver de Boys seems unfit to inherit his father's lands over Orlando. Nevertheless, these are juridical imperatives that take us back to the questions of authority and sovereignty. To see primogeniture questioned or (more forcefully) overturned is clearly revolutionary, especially given the lengths to which some used to go in order to secure their heirs' rightful inheritance.[41] In *Hamlet* and *A Portrait*, fraternity becomes a far more important idea, one which brings together brothers over sons and seeks to rid the world of hierarchical structures. It is not merely a question of challenging one's rights within a family, but also challenging the organisation of society in these two texts. The spaces under consideration – Shakespeare's drama-

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[41] Keen, *English Society in the Later Middle Ages*, pp. 58-9. 'A very common practice was for man and wife to come into court and surrender their holding in the lord's hands, and then to take it up again as a joint tenancy: this ensured that the whole would pass to the survivor and so in due course to the heir.'

tized courts and the pre-Saorstat Ireland – are both in transition between paternalism and fraternity.

In *A Portrait* the family interpellates Stephen. Equally, we know that Stephen models the idea of family on the Vances who live down the road. Theirs, like his, is a nuclear family, with parents and children determining the family's content. However, Stephen's intimate relation with his family is problematic, and Stephen is troubled by a fellow student mocking his ritual of kissing his mother goodnight. Stephen is impelled to question his relationship to his mother and more broadly to his family: 'What was the right answer to the question? […] Was it right to kiss his mother or wrong to kiss his mother?'[42] Stephen sees for a fleeting moment how the family relationship is a social construct and can therefore be deconstructed and re-thought. In this rethinking, Stephen centres himself as the beginning of the new family, thereby becoming the foundational child of a new nation – described at length above – but also puts the family at the centre of Stephen's own growth as artist: Stephen's coming-of-age takes place through and against the nuclear family. This confirms Christine van Boheemen's argument that *A Portrait* is a family romance.[43]

The opening and questioning of the coherent family takes several forms for Stephen. One of these forms is the growing distinction between his father and his mother, with Stephen coming to realise his greater inheritance – and therefore greater burden – from his father. This appears in two ways: first, the father appears active whilst the mother appears passive; second, fathers in the novel become litmus tests for familial status. That is, fathers appear to be symbolic of family status in society. Thus, in the opening pages when Stephen's parents drop him off at

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[42] Joyce, *A Portrait*, pp. 15-16.
[43] Christine van Boheemen, *The Novel as Family Romance: Language, Gender, and Authority from Fielding to Joyce* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987).

Clongowes for the first time, his father gives Stephen 'two fiveshilling pieces for pocket money. And his father had told him if he wanted anything to write home to him and, whatever he did, never to peach on a fellow'.[44] This contrasts with the comparatively passive and emotional valediction from his mother:

> The first day in the hall of the castle when she had said goodbye she had put up her veil double to her nose to kiss him: and her nose and eyes were red. […] She was a nice mother but she was not so nice when she cried.[45]

This passage signals the beginning of the decline of the mother's position in the text, as successive references are increasingly banal and damning, highlighting her passivity: 'Mother was sitting at the fire […] waiting[.]'; 'Stephen's mother and his brother and one of his cousins waited at the corner of quiet Foster Place while he and his father went up the steps[.]'; 'Stephen looked at his thinly clad mother and remembered that a few days before he had seen a mantle priced at twenty guineas in the windows of Barnardo's.'; '[H]e allows his mother to scrub his neck[.]'[46] Each of these examples exposes Stephen's mother's increasingly passive and servile relationship with him, and points us instead to Stephen's relationship with his father, Simon. Rather than struggling with the strictures of Mother Ireland, Stephen's problem is with what he inherits from his father and, by extension, his fatherland – the Irish Catholic institution.

Fathers, sons and legitimacy

Stephen's response to Cranly's questions about what Simon's vocation is causes a flurry of reaction from Stephen (even if it is all said 'glibly'):

> – A medical student, an oarsman, a tenor, an amateur actor, a shouting politician, a small landlord, a small investor, a drinker, a good fellow, a storyteller, somebody's secretary, something in a distillery, a tax gatherer, a bankrupt and at present a praiser of his own

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[44] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 9.
[45] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 9.
[46] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 11; p. 109; p. 110; p. 198.

past.[47]

Stephen's 'glib' response is still telling because of the question and Stephen's swift response. Cranly asks '*What* was he?' (my emphasis), and Stephen is said to describe his 'father's attributes'.[48] These comments indicate the nature of the father in Dublin society: the father is a figurehead or in a position indicative of something other than himself. That is, the father is important because of what he does, as in Cranly's question, rather than how he does it. We conclude that there are two fathers in the text: the real and the symbolic. Both of these fathers are sited in the figure of Simon, and yet they are different.

Part of that symbol is the idea of fatherland which is tethered inextricably to faith in Ireland. In symbolising Catholic Ireland, Simon doubly represents the burden that Stephen feels. The form of father is, therefore, multiple or fractured; this is one occasion on which we recognise Crotty's fractured inherited history in Irish writing.[49] This fractured inheritance allows Stephen to start to refigure his father in his imagination, such as in his fever-induced hallucination when 'His father was a marshal now, higher than a magistrate'. This responds to earlier conversations with other schoolboys where casting his father as a 'gentleman' loses Stephen important social currency.[50] These anxieties lead the young Stephen to question why he was 'sent to that place' with boys like that. The boys are distinct from Stephen because Simon 'was not a magistrate like the other boys' fathers'. Simon tells Stephen that he qualifies not through Simon's status but rather through his 'grand-uncle [who] had presented an address to the liberator [Daniel O'Connell] there fifty

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[47] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 274.

[48] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 274.

[49] In another formulation, the site of the father is shadowed or ghosted by another. I interrogate these ideas more fully in my next chapter on spectres, below.

[50] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 23; p. 9.

years before'.[51] We read this as an admission by Simon that though his own status is irrelevant for Stephen to survive at Clongowes, Simon's own father's status remains relevant for Stephen.

This atavistic relationship alerts the reader to two things: first, the now-strained coherence of the family, as it appears to have been stretched genealogically and temporally to include a third generation – this is a political concern; second, the inheritance that Stephen must bear from his father is vicarious living, rather than direct – a reading which relies on the first inference. Through Simon's grand-uncle's status as he-who-gives-speeches-to-the-liberator, it is Stephen who benefits, rather than Simon himself. Along with Stephen's 'constant companion[ship]' with Uncle Charles in the summer holidays, this inheritance therefore takes on aspects of vicariousness, appearing as a burden rather than a benefit;[52] the elder male's performance legitimises Stephen. Atavism is a problematic concept in Ireland, with Roy Foster criticising historians and literary critics for their use of the 'hoary cliché [… of] a verb-tense supposedly known only to the Irish language: "the continuous past"'.[53] Uncle Charles determining Stephen's entry into school falls into this negative atavism, notwithstanding Charles' genteel demeanour, suggesting that another type of inheritance needs to take place. Simon's reliance on Charles to determine Stephen's successes only cements this atavistic reliance, and reluctance to move beyond the 'continuous past'.

This continuous past is reflected in his father's tears at Stephen wearing an Eton jacket at Christmas dinner, because Simon 'was thinking of his own father'.[54] In this passage Stephen and his inheritance displace his siblings. In a rare passage

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[51] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 29.
[52] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 29.
[53] R. F. Foster, 'Something to Hate: Intimate Enmities in Irish History', in *The Irish Review,* 30 (2003), 1-12 (3).
[54] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 33.

where all of Stephen's living siblings are present, they are depicted in a strange and flat way, shown as a choir in unison, set against Stephen as a full, rounded character.[55] Stephen notes, too, his privilege in light of their relative destitution:

> All that had been denied them had been freely given to him, the eldest; but the quiet glow of evening showed him in their faces no sign of rancour. […] The voice of his youngest brother from the farther side of the fireplace began to sing the air *Oft in the Stilly Night*. One by one the others took up the air until a full choir of voices was singing. They would sing so for hours, melody after melody, glee after glee, till the last pale light died down on the horizon, till the first dark nightclouds came forth and night fell.[56]

Stephen's authority comes from inheritance, and it is his role as eldest son that accords him this privilege. But if Stephen inherits all, it also means that he inherits the instability and the uncertain status of his father. I have already quoted the passage in which Stephen 'glibly' lists his father's 'vocations', indicating his awareness of his father's unstable and insecure life, but another passage demonstrates even more directly how Stephen is aware of Simon's problems: 'In a vague way he understood that his father was in trouble and that this was the reason why he himself had not been sent back to Clongowes'.[57] Yet again, the father's status and performance pertain directly to the life experience of the son: if the father fails, so does the son.

Stephen is authorised or legitimised through his father; this is also the story of *Hamlet*, in which the Ghost, according to Jacques Derrida's schema in *Specters of Marx* (1993), *hauntologises* Hamlet and authorises his narrative in the play. *Hauntology* for Derrida is derived from *Hamlet* and the Ghost's repeated (and therefore expected) visits to Elsinore. The Ghost is uncertainly present, known only by his armour, and is in a privileged position: the Ghost can see the others without their

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[55] I borrow these terms, of course, from E. M. Forster's *Aspects of the Novel*.
[56] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 186.
[57] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 72.

necessarily seeing who is wearing the king's armour, and yet the Ghost commands

Hamlet to 'revenge [your father's] most foul and unnatural murder' (I.v.25).[58] The

Ghost prepares Hamlet for the end of history, and Hamlet derives his being – his

narrative of remembering and revenge – from his father's/the Ghost's injunction.

Given these parallels – and Stephen's overt references to *Hamlet* in *Ulysses*[59] – there

is no means of understanding Stephen Dedalus, in either *A Portrait* or *Ulysses*, with-

out reference to *Hamlet* and its Ghost. In what I have established above, Stephen

too derives his ontology from his father and patrilineal forebears. So far, then, we

have to read this in the same light as the common line of inquiry in *Hamlet*: that in

which filial piety dominates Stephen.

The coherent family writ large is strained, though it is much more to do

with Stephen's performance of his father's failures than the latter on their own. In

Hamlet Claudius urges Hamlet to abandon mourning for his father – an act which

he inherits from previous generations of fathers – so that he can act more 'manly'

by following yet another inheritance from his predecessors: not continuing to

mourn his father:

> 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet
> To give these mourning duties to your father,
> But you must know your father lost a father,
> That father lost lost his, and the survivor bound
> In filial obligation for some term
> To do obsequious sorrow; but to persever
> In obstinate condolement is a course
> Of impious stubbornness, 'tis unmanly grief[.] (I.II.87-94)

Claudius' ironising – deliberate or not – exposes the reality of inheritance, and its

inescapability, even for the subject. In line, furthermore, with Claudius' casting it as

'unmanly', there is a correspondence between Hamlet and his late father who is

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[58] Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. by Peggy Camuf (New York, NY: Routledge, 1994 [1993]), pp. 1-10 esp.
[59] Joyce, *Ulysses*. Q.v. chapter 9 esp.

undeniably 'unmanned' at this point, given his recent death, reinstituting Hamlet's inheritance from his father. Though 'unman' comes to bear two meanings, there is a similarity between Hamlet's performing his father's unmanning and Stephen performing his father's status.

This seems to adjust our understanding of inheritance: inheritance fails – just when Claudius destabilises then re-stabilises its importance in the above passage – if the inheritor fails to act independently, forging his own identity as distinct from his forebears. It is only in Hamlet's adoption of fraternal relations that he inherits: to choose not to inherit is true inheritance.[60] Kathryn Schwarz encapsulates this failure when she writes that 'Hamlet's compromised relationship both to the Name-of-the-Father and to the patronymic, a relationship of slippage, overlap, and breach, bequeaths him only an alienated will'.[61] In Derrida's reading this 'alienated will' forms the basis of the 'responsibility' and 'justice' inherent in taking an oath (an oath to revenge murder in *Hamlet*) – these two things that descend from a spectral elsewhere and compel the oath-taker to consider a spatio-temporal elsewhere:

> [T]his responsibility and this respect for justice concerning those who *are not there*, of those who are no longer or who are not yet *present and living*. […] To be just: beyond the living present in general – and beyond its simple negative reversal.[62]

To be just is therefore to 'fly those nets' as Stephen says, to 'forge the uncreated conscience of my race' – to reject inheritance, but from the position of inheritor: you can only inherit the opportunity to disinherit and change sovereign governance. It is from that position of alienation that Stephen and Hamlet must begin to shape their own identity, a position from which both can reject their respective

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[60] The structure of this idea is indebted to Agamben's idea on potentiality, which is that to shrug off impotentiality is true potentiality, implying that potentiality is best characterised as impotentiality *tout cort*.

[61] Kathryn Schwarz, 'Hamlet Without Us', in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 62.2 (2011), 174-9 (178).

[62] Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, pp. xix-xx.

inheritances.

Stephen's rejection of inheritance recurs when Simon takes Stephen to his old university and speaks with the waiter about his past contemporaries at the university; however, this is problematic as there is a question as to which generation to whom the two are referring: 'For the most part they spoke at cross purposes when a name was mentioned, the waiter having in mind the present holder and Mr Dedalus his father or perhaps his grandfather.'[63] Simon's apparent indifference with regard to the generation error signifies to Stephen and to the reader that genealogical differences can be erased; Stephen does not accept this erasure, which is why his interior monologue highlights the conversation at cross-purposes. Indeed, that shows how Stephen has decided that he must forge his own identity and not behave like his father; at the same time, however, Stephen must take into account the notion of collapsed temporality. This idea is intensified in what follows. Soon after this incident a porter leads Stephen and Simon into a lecture theatre where Simon once inscribed his initials;[64] though it is not remarked upon by the narrative or by any character, Simon's initials on the tables of the lecture theatre would, of course, be identical to Stephen's: S.D.

The vicarious living that is intimated in this university trip, and the problematic inheritance that pervades the novel, both collapse, leading to a third implication: Stephen is contemporary with his father. We are reminded of van Boheemen's psychoanalytic reading that declares from the opening page – and in my reading is clarified at this moment of the novel – that 'It is the father who tells the story. He is the source of language, authority, and order. [Stephen's b]eing a "he" like the father who tells the story, means that "he" will become a speaking subject,

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[63] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 101.
[64] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 101.

an "author" himself'.[65] This intensifies the notion of the coherent family, temporally collapses the generations, and is indicative of the contemporaneous political situation in Ireland, and the Revivalists' response to it: collapse temporal difference and instead create a familial brotherhood. (Cf. particularly, the I.R.B., the 1867 constitution of which declared that the 'Supreme Council of the I.R.B. is hereby declared in fact, as well as by right, the sole Government of the Irish Republic'.[66] This leads Charles Townshend to say that the Fenian, 'even without an actual rebellion, was a mental revolutionary.')[67]

Given that the Irish Republic was nearly sixty years away, the I.R.B. are here shown to enact a spatio-temporal violence, one which is nearly analogous with the performance of the family in *A Portrait* (and, in particular, Simon's inclination to collapse temporal distinctions in the family). Temporality becomes irrelevant, with space the remaining characteristic of the family: it is a version of the Irish nation living in and on the land of Ireland. Conversely, of course, Stephen's successes and failures denote Simon's successes and failures: if Stephen can get into university, then Simon can be revered as a good father. Not only is Stephen validated and authorised by Simon's performance, therefore, but Simon is also authorised and legitimised by his son's performance. Simon's movement services Simon, but not Stephen as yet; at this moment, the 'past continuous' tense about which Foster complained is in operation, and Stephen suffers as a consequence of the burden of his father's expectations.

Inheritance, vicariousness and brotherhood collide in this new type of familial coherence: Stephen and Simon are now temporally (and perhaps politically) identical (as emblematised, above, with their shared initials). In a political frame-

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[65] van Boheemen, *The Novel as Family Romance: Language, Gender, and Authority from Fielding to Joyce*, pp. 15-16.

[66] 'Constitution of the I.R.B. in 1914', Article 20.

[67] Charles Townshend, *Ireland: The Twentieth Century* (London: Arnold Publishers, 1999), p. 27.

work we forgo the 'continuous past' that Foster so vilifies, and instead see a persistent historicity that forges itself as present. Inheritance turns from its vertical form to a horizontal form of contemporaneity, all the while using inheritance to pass on this ethic. In this context Simon says that

> I'm talking to you as a friend, Stephen. I don't believe a son should be afraid of his father. No, I treat you as your grandfather treated me when I was a young chap. We were more like brothers than father and son.[68]

It is difficult to think of this idea without immediately reverting to *Hamlet*, in which Claudius first addresses Hamlet in a similarly-confused genealogical construction: 'But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son[.]' (I.II.64) The *Arden 3* editors note that 'cousin' was 'used loosely in this period to denote a number of kinship relations more distant than parent, child or sibling' (I.II.64n.) In this manner Hamlet is situated in both a close and distant familial relationship with Claudius, collapsing the temporal distinction between them at the same time that their strained relationship is made evident and further enunciated by Hamlet: 'A little more than kin, and less than kind.' (I.II.65) To be 'more than kin' is commonly understood as Hamlet complaining that Claudius is now both uncle and surrogate father to Hamlet; meanwhile to be 'less than kind' is recorded by *Arden 3* as meaning 'unkind' (I.II.65n.). However, we could also think of being 'less than kind' in a familial sense,[69] wherein Hamlet is declaring that Claudius' acting 'more than kin' has failed, leaving Hamlet in an indeterminate relation with Claudius.

Hamlet has not only gained a father figure, but is left in an uncertain limi-

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[68] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 104.

[69] Now obsolete definitions of 'kind' in the *OED* show it as a noun that refers to 'Birth, origin, descent' (I.1a); it also refers to the rights of birth (I.1b) meaning that Hamlet could be saying that though he is connected by more than merely blood ('kin') he is disenfranchised in what he ought to have inherited; this 'right to ownership' (or 'right to the nation', in my terms) is also evident in the noun's second meanings (I.2a and I.2b). Hamlet's complaint, in this light, acknowledges the frailty of familial connection, recognising the problems of power that circumvents or avoids the power of the family in the emerging modern nation-state. The Germanic hints in 'kind' (meaning 'child' in modern German) endorse this reading.

nal space within his family. As with Hamlet, Stephen's relation with his father does not please him as 'one humiliation had succeeded another'.[70] This line in particular can be reread not only as a comment on Simon's performance in the bar at the university, but also as a joke about Stephen's trailing Simon's coat tails. For Stephen, this signifies how 'His childhood was dead or lost and with it his soul capable of simple joys and he was drifting amid life like the barren shell of the moon',[71] leading him to excise himself near-completely from all of his family bar his father: 'He felt that he was hardly of the one blood with [his mother, brother and sister] but stood to them rather in the mystical kinship of fosterage, fosterchild and fosterbrother'.[72]

On first viewing, this appears to be a pre-modern account of the Dedalus family, in which the family is not tied together by affective relations. However, Foster reminds us that in early modern Ireland, fosterage was a common practice, and

> what struck observers was the exceptional depth of the bond created: foster-brothers owed each other a deeper commitment than natural siblings. The family could thus be extended in deliberate directions […]. The convention of tanistry, the election of leaders, might be interpreted in this context, too, with the organization of the family group strengthening itself through redefinition in every generation.[73]

Rather than and strangeness, a renewed kinship is established between Stephen and his family; in another version of Hamlet's 'less than kind' – in which Hamlet rejected Claudius' advances – we see a 'kinned' relationship between Stephen and his family. That is, 'to kin' might be the forging of aconnection between family members on a fraternal level, in *A Portrait* thought of as fosterage. In this the national

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[70] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 106.
[71] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 108.
[72] Joyce, *A Portrait*, pp. 111-12.
[73] R. F. Foster, *Modern Ireland: 1600-1972* (London: Penguin, 1989), p. 26.

family is re-established in *A Portrait*, even at the very moment that it appears beyond Stephen's care and interest. The family is, and remains, an important mechanism in Stephen's bid to personal glory as an artist.

Nevertheless, Stephen must still negotiate the contemporary relationship he shares with his father. It is that fraternity, however, that opens up Stephen's opportunity to escape patrilineal inheritance, as brotherhood supersedes patrilinearity. It is no different in *Hamlet* when the two chief revenge narratives – Hamlet's and Laertes' – meet in a final duel; they end in terms of brotherhood. Hamlet first calls Laertes his brother, before the latter dies by absolving Hamlet of the inheritance of Polonius' murder:

> Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil
> Free me so far in your most generous thoughts
> That I have shot my arrow o'er the house
> And hurt my brother. (V.II.218-21)[74]

> Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
> Nor thine on me. (V.II.314-15)

The implication here is that brotherhood supersedes inheritance, collapsing the generational weight in favour of lateral equality; but that brotherhood is passed on by Horatio and Fortinbras in their assumption of Hamlet's voice. Hamlet instructs Horatio:

> I cannot live to hear the news from England,
> But I do prophesy th'election lights
> On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice.
> So tell him with th'occurrents more and less
> Which have solicited. (V.II.338-42)

Linda Charnes also reads in this a way of surviving as if through inheritance, but in a way that refuses patrilineal inheritance. She writes that 'A wounded name' – the end of the patrilineal 'Hamlets', instead of a lateral transmission – 'is better than no

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[74] It is interesting to note that F has the word 'mother' in place of 'brother'. Shakespeare, 'Hamlet: the First Folio (1623)', V.II.191.

name at all'.[75] In Charnes' argument we learn that whilst *Hamlet* obstructs patrimony, it still offers the chance of living on, much like the Ghost. Only hereafter, the Ghost appears to a friend, and not to a son: Hamlet lives on in Horatio. As such, Horatio bears Hamlet's inheritance – that is, Hamlet's story as legacy – rather than any filial or familial body.

This lateral transference in *Hamlet* defies the spatio-temporal demands of traditional inheritance – the passing on from father to son in the same family which occupy an identical space (Elsinore, in this instance) – since there is no guarantee that someone of the same generation will outlive Hamlet. Instead, a lateral inheritance is initiated so that Hamlet can live on beyond time and in another extra-familial space, enacting a temporal *alibi*[76] of familial location. Hamlet's family of brotherhood is thus rent apart from the traditional spatio-temporal family, so that we may say that whilst the Hamlet family starts as one located in space and time (think of the permissions to leave given or refused to Laertes and Hamlet, respectively, and the inheritance narratives), it ends as a non-family located only in an extra- or non-familial space. A temporal collapse takes place that makes contemporary what had hitherto been restricted by a sequential temporality.

In *A Portrait*, we may not be able to see directly the brotherhood at work in Stephen's leaving Dublin, but certainly there is a spatio-temporal displacement at work. Ireland's future history – another verbal construct that might be the 'future past', or Terry Eagleton's 'archaic avant-garde' – is targeted:[77] 'Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the

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[75] Linda Charnes, *Hamlet's Heirs: Shakespeare and the Politics of a New Millenium* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006), p. 9.

[76] By this term I deliberately invoke its Latinate meaning of 'elsewhere', rather than its English usage of 'being elsewhere *at a certain point in time*'.

[77] Q.v. Terry Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture* (London: Verso, 1995), pp. 272-319. For Eagleton the archaic avant-garde combines tradition with modernity.

smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race.'[78] As with Hamlet, Stephen

seeks to employ an *alibi*, a spatio-temporal displacement where he can 'encounter'

and 'forge' simultaneously.[79] It is a space that is set distinct from inheritance, and

from paternal pressures, one in which Stephen can use 'silence, exile, and cunning',

obviously opposing Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson's argument that Stephen is the 'right-

ful inheritor of patriarchal structure'.[80] Instead, Stephen is the rightful inheritor of

Hamlet's fraternity; or, in another phrase, Stephen becomes Horatio, Hamlet's de-

fender and preserver. This is given another name in another space by Joyce, i.e.

'Scylla and Charybdis' in *Ulysses*.

It is also a space which can only be accessed by freeing himself from the

paternal pressures of inheritance – the double-bind of space and time; that is, Ste-

phen's gradual understanding of his relationship with his father as one that

replicates the politically-current brotherhood of equality (a notion that might have

had Joyce seething, if his essay 'Fenianism' (1907) is anything to go by)[81] opens up

a space in which Stephen no longer has to 'serve in that which I no longer believe,

whether it call itself my home, my fatherland, or my church'.[82] These three come to

represent the nets by which Stephen wishes to fly – and, most notably for my ar-

gument, contains the fatherland as an undesired pressure, connected to church and

home bilaterally – something which only becomes possible when inheritance is col-

lapsed into fraternal laterality.

Brotherhood frees Stephen, just at the moment it tethers Simon to Stephen

most forcefully. Simon's adoption of the fraternal framework – and his quest for

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[78] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 288.
[79] We are not accidentally reminded of Edna O'Brien's *Mother Ireland*, the narrator of which leaves Ireland in order to be able to write about Ireland, as discussed above; O'Brien clearly owes a debt to Joyce.
[80] Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson, *Writing Against the Family: Gender in Lawrence and Joyce* (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1994), p. 129.
[81] James Joyce, 'Fenianism', in *The Critical Writings of James Joyce,* ed. by Ellsworth Mason and Richard Ellmann (London: Faber and Faber, 1959), pp. 187-92.
[82] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 281.

legitimacy and authorisation from Stephen's actions – allows Stephen to escape the fatherland and inheritance which had hitherto burdened him. Becoming a brother, rather than a son, liberates Stephen from the paternal form; part of freedom is, as Henry V said, to talk about your brotherhood in the future. Far from Pearse's brotherhood that founds a nation state, brotherhood sets Stephen free from the constrictions of that fatherland.

John McGahern's Family in Amongst Women*: A New King Lear*

John McGahern's novels offer a new way of seeing the Irish family and its future in the Irish state, especially when related to the notion of modernity. Many of McGahern's novels are often read as reasserting conservative familial ideals through their social realism. Stanley van der Ziel notes that McGahern himself placed great emphasis on the family's structural position in Irish society: 'His famous comment after the publication of *Amongst Women* [was] that Ireland was not so much made up of twenty-six or thirty-two counties but of thousands of little "independent republics" called families'.[83] These families in McGahern's novels, though often missing a vitally important member, are nevertheless 'nuclear'; they are modelled on a family that is enclosed in its own domestic space and is limited to direct familial relations, such as parents and children, and not the extended family or kin.

This serves to establish the missing member as a genuine part of the family still present. This appears in the opening of *The Barracks* (1963), in which Elizabeth and the children are motionless and bored until Reegan's bike is heard on the gravel outside. *The Dark* (1965) is a troubled *Bildungsroman* that hinges on the familial system which the boy Mahoney leaves and to which he returns. Even in *The Pornog-*

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[83] Stanley van der Ziel, 'McGahern, Austen, and the Aesthetics of Good Manners', in *Essays in Criticism,* 63.2 (2013), 203-22 (204) <doi: 10.1093/escrit/cgt007>.

rapher (1979), which examines social mores and sexual desire, the narrator still returns (despite his own broken family) to the notion of a loving, heterosexual relationship with the nurse Josephine. We could add the Moran household in *Amongst Women* (1990) to the list of socially conservative, nuclear families, establishing the family as a functional unit in the novel, with the patriarch Moran as an effective father, little though we like him.[84]

Against this backdrop Moran's role as patriarch is only firmly established once the eldest son, Luke, has left the family and exiled himself in London. Oblique signs in the novel imply that Luke's absence makes Moran's rule stronger and the relations between the remaining children and their father more solidly cemented. Luke is, in fact, the familial sovereign, over and above Moran, permitting the creation of the patriarchal, nuclear family. Pearse used brotherhood as foundational in a modern, independent Ireland; Joyce's Stephen used brotherhood as a space of liberation from paternalism; and for McGahern, brotherhood is the *de facto* form of sovereignty in modern Ireland. Luke inherits from Pearse and from Stephen Dedalus in using fraternity as liberating, and as a foundation for a modern nation-state.

The notion of the sovereign is crucial in my analysis of McGahern's works, precisely because of the overlap between the roles of the father of a family and the father of a nation: if the citizen is a nation's content, and if the family is the citizen's access to the nation, then the father as head of the family ought to be considered the chief citizen of the family. The discussion below of Moran's masculinity hinges on that shift between nation and family, and on how Moran's failure in the macrocosmic nation is avenged in his role as despotic father. Luke's assump-

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[84] Though McGahern's novels can be read as offering such stable structures that accord with mid-century Ireland, we must always remember that his writing often uses them as a critique of the society in, from and about which he was writing.

tion of the role as the sovereign outside the law, an idea I borrow from Agamben's

analysis of modern sovereignty, shows how the Irish family can be a modern family

in a modern nation when it is conditioned by the fraternal, rather than the paternal,

ethic.

Returning to the Elizabethan and Jacobean period, we have seen already

how in a world in which the family is changing role the father can act as law-giver.

Michel de Montaigne, in an essay translated into English in 1603, discusses the po-

sition of the father in this changing familial organization. In the following, it is

evident that there is a conflict between individual sovereignty and that of the fami-

ly:

> As for me, who am the maker of your laws, I am of opin-
> ion that neither your selves are your owne, nor that which
> you enjoy. And both you and your goods, past and to
> come, belong to your familie; and moreover both your
> families and your goods are the common wealths.[85]

In this radical position the sovereign 'maker of the laws' re-establishes that the

family is a social unit in and of itself and that it is simultaneously situated amongst

other families. In many ways, Montaigne's essay stands like *Bunreacht na hÉireann* as

a marker of a break with the past and of a newly-conceived concept of family. This

early modern concern signals that the period may offer literature that, just like

McGahern's novels, questions the family in contemporary England; moreover, the

early modern literature relates to the way in which King James' reign was con-

cerned with sovereignty and the preservation of the absolute monarchy. Given that

this absolute monarchy laid the ground for the union with Scotland and ultimately

the union with Ireland, is enlightening, since we see in James' project the continu-

ing Irish subordination to the English nation-state. The early modern literature

both substantiates and critiques that subordination, providing the impetus and par-

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[85] Michel de Montaigne, 'Of the Affection of Fathers to their Children', in *Montaigne's Essays*, trans.
by John Florio, 3 vols, vol. 2 (London: Folio Society, 2006 [1603]), pp. 62-84 (p. 78).

adigm for McGahern's texts that also critique Irish society in their presentation of mid-century Ireland – a society that is trying to shed the weight of that English subordination.

Shakespeare's *King Lear*, a play also interested in shifting masculine authority and sovereignty, might more aptly be named *Amongst Women*. I base this on the sovereignty exhibited by *King Lear*'s Edgar, who excepts and absents himself from the family in order to find (and found) that family again, and his right to rule over it. Edgar becomes Agamben's sovereign who decides on the exception. The discussion's conclusion is that in *Amongst Women* the best form of familial governance is lateral, anti-inheritance. This type of inheritance comes from the outside and from brotherhood; it is not vertical, patriarchal power, which stems from fatherhood and familial inheritance.

In previous sections I have argued, sequentially, that Pearse's writing substitutes the academy with a *polis* and disavows linear, patrilineal inheritance in favour of horizontal, fraternal relations; and that in Joyce's *A Portrait* Stephen is freed from his father Simon's binds at the very moment that Simon tethers himself most strongly to Stephen as a brother – fraternity legitimises fathers and frees sons. In *Amongst Women* McGahern's 'familial republic' finds sovereignty in brotherhood, rather than fatherhood. In *A Portrait* Simon drew legitimacy from Stephen's actions, but in *Amongst Women* the father-son relationship is different: at once Moran draws legitimacy as a father, the family is created and Luke's own character develops independently, all because of this exceptional, fraternal relation. Through the brother-father relation the family becomes definitively the sovereign content of the modern Irish nation, and not merely its members. Brotherhood makes that possible.

My broad thesis in this section is to debunk the pervasive – if nonetheless

helpful – approach to fatherhood in McGahern's novels which considers it a show of power following a post-Civil War emasculation. Whilst that idea remains plausible, what I show is a deeper, more intrinsically historico-political concern with the shape of the family. I begin with the cipher of the net and consider the ontology and epistemology of the family in *Amongst Women*, to show how the private sphere subordinates the public; however, the public sphere, which is characterized by Luke, in fact precedes and creates the private. Without Luke in London, the Moran family at Great Meadow cannot be made nuclear and coherent; without Luke there is no Moran family. This new organization, especially in light of Shakespeare's play that precedes and underpins McGahern's novel, is paradigmatic of new types of governance in Ireland and in the modern Irish family.

The net, holy family and ritual

A focal point in the novel arises when the women clear up after dinner and the Rosary is recited: 'Then, like a shoal of fish moving within a net, Rose and the girls started to clear the table'.[86] This quotation amply demonstrates the family's male-dominated organisation with its in-control patriarch, whilst the women are passively engaged in their submission; in this we are immediately reminded of Simon Dedalus' activity and importance against Stephen's mother's passivity. However, this quotation is not only an analogy for a straightforward reading of the family, but also a cipher for the re-interrogation of the family undertaken below. This passage leads us to question: what is a net and what are its defining characteristics, who cast the net, and what is its relevance to the Holy Family?

The reference to the net reminds us – not accidentally, given the explicit Catholic reference in the novel's title – of a Biblical fishing analogy, offered by Je-

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[86] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 79.

sus: 'Do not be afraid. From now on you will be catching men'.[87] The net in this instance represents a way of spreading the gospel and of internalising in Christianity those currently outside it. The net is an enclosing space, but one whose boundaries are semi-permeable: people must be able to come in and go out. The net and its boundaries must be holy: hole-y because of the net's openings; whole-y, or else it does not enclose fully; and holy, because we're in the realm of the gospel and the Bible.[88] These characteristics render Moran's family not just an enclosed, private space, but also a holy family, a shadowed version of the Holy Family of the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost and Mary, the virginal mother of the Son: a paradoxical figure. This wholeness and completion must also therefore be part of the holiness of the family.

This family has an uneasy boundary. On the one hand, there is the freedom to leave the family space, signified by Great Meadow, to visit other spaces; on the other, Moran is the guardian of that boundary and what he says becomes the border's law. For the children when they are younger, the former is represented by Moran's active insistence that they visit Rose's family home before the two are married. The children are able to leave the site of the familial space, though only under their father's jurisdiction, as 'Moran encouraged them they could go without guilt. To leave the ever-present tension of Great Meadow was like shedding stiff, formal clothes or kicking off pinching shoes'.[89] This encouragement is matched by Moran's own stepping out to court Rose at the post office. What started as an excursion to wait for the mail van – a permitted departure from Great Meadow – soon turns into a regular courtship which risks ridicule, but results in Rose joining

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[87] Luke 5:10. That this quotation is found in Luke's gospel indicates a point which I explain below: that Luke, not Moran, is the figure of the angler and therefore the family's sovereign.

[88] The *OED* records that the pre-Christian 'holy' probably meant 'inviolate, inviolable, that must be preserved *whole* or intact, that cannot be injured with impunity'. Therefore, 'wholly' and 'holy' are cognate and relate to 'integrity', so my connection is not mere accidental wordplay.

[89] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 33.

the family as wife and step-mother: an adopted mother though not a biological one, yet a mother who completes the family and the home – a paradoxical mother, perhaps. Moran tells Maggie that 'After all these years it'll be a real house and home again. It'll be a place that will always be there for you to come back to'.[90] We learn that the external world beyond Great Meadow exists, but it appears only to exist as something to be brought inside, into the personal world at Great Meadow. 'Great Meadow', according to Antoinette Quinn, 'becomes a house hospitable only to his own family', which allows Moran to make Great Meadow 'his power base' and 'his castle'.[91]

The net, thus, is hole-y, but also creates a holy and wholesome space within, as Rose's incorporation completes the family making it a 'home' once again. A pertinent historical precursor is found in Stone's 'Restricted Patriarchal Nuclear Family', which is patriarchal in organisation and is sited within a home that is exclusive: '"boundary awareness" became more exclusively confined to the nuclear family, which consequently became more closed off from external influences, either of the kin or of the community'.[92] That Stone's argument refers predominantly to the period 1580-1640 is our first indication that Moran's family echoes something from elsewhere, temporally and spatially. It demands, also, that we consider the early modern family in relation to this modern Irish family which shares its ethical and aesthetical grounding.

From these two examples of the outer, public world being internalised we have also witnessed something else to which we must pay attention: Moran's rule of law in operation. He becomes, in terms that I borrow from Stone, the 'family

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[90] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 27.
[91] Antoinette Quinn, 'A Prayer For My Daughters: Patriarchy in *Amongst Women*', in *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies,* 17.1 (1991), 79-90 (82-3).
[92] Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 7.

despot'.[93] Thus, Moran 'encouraged' the children to go to Rose's place, and it was

also Moran who insisted on Rose joining the family. Siobhán Holland explicates

this as Moran's identification with 'his family and his inability to imagine moving

beyond his current role'.[94] We witness the same idea in the meetings which the

children's selected partners must suffer before they are accepted into the extended

Moran family: the exterior world calls upon the private familial sovereignty, the

former appearing inferior to the latter. Sean Flynn is accepted by Moran after the

two talk about Sean's family: 'Sean Flynn was flattered; he was used to pleasing.

They talked about […] his huge family and they both agreed that the family was

the basis of all society and every civilization. Moran enjoyed himself and felt cheat-

ed when the time came for them to head back to Dublin'.[95] For Moran it is clear

that the once-over he gives Sean is the required check to allow him entry into the

Great Meadow family. We see a similar example when Maggie asks for Moran's

permission to marry Mark.[96] Moran agrees, eliciting an interesting response from

Maggie, for whom 'in the weeks ahead this grudging approval would grow in her

mind into an ecstatic welcome of Mark by the whole family'.[97]

One final example of this order is also intriguing, as it designates the mo-

ment that the daughters consciously realise that their father's sovereignty is the

only sovereignty when cases of entry from the outside are reckoned: 'They had

been brought up to keep the outside at an iron distance and now their father was

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[93] Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 158.

[94] Siobhán Holland, 'Marvellous Fathers in the Fiction of John McGahern', in *The Yearbook of English Studies,* 35 (2005), 186-98 (195).

[95] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 117.

[96] Mark's name surely links to the gospel, again, suggesting that Moran is surrounding himself with or is surrounded by Biblical disciples; the sacredness of the family is highlighted.

[97] We are reminded of the endogeny at the heart of exogeny, here characterised as 'ecstasy', or a 'beyond or outside the stasis, the unity'. It suggests that Maggie's celebration of her father's 'grudg-ing approval' is a naïve one that perceives the outside as the arena of Moran's sovereignty; in fact, the ecstasy is secondary to the internal sovereignty that Moran establishes. McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 140.

welcoming it [Ann Smith, Michael's future wife] into the house'.[98] Partly through this collusion – which I discuss below – and through this control, Moran ensures that he 'and his house and farm [are turned] into interchangeable entities, a complex of person and place that constitutes a fatherland'.[99] Here again is the intrusive presence of the fatherland, dominated by Moran's patriarchy. In these successive examples, and the latter one most cogently, we assert that privacy is also a gloss for patriarchy and Moran's sovereignty within the family space. The net is truly whole and based on the Holy Family. Its holes, so to speak, are central to that holiness and completion. It assures us that this family is like the shoal of fish within Moran's biblical net, but also invites us to wonder what happens when those same members depart Great Meadow and try to leave Moran's sovereign authority behind.

In fact a similar narrative tracks those who leave Great Meadow without permission; Michael's experience of escaping twice is apposite here. In the first instance Michael's return is organised by those who have been granted permission to leave, Sheila and Mona, ensuring that Michael is returned to Moran's space: 'Sheila went back to Dublin and she and Mona brought Michael down a few days later.'[100] This advances Quinn's notion of Moran's 'vanity [that] demands that he be surrounded by dependents who will not flout or challenge his authority'.[101] The daughters are not only prevented from challenging authority, but they also become its tool. This idea is borne out by the fact that 'Rose and the girls smiled as the tea and the plates circled around him. They were already conspirators. They were mastered and yet they were controlling together what they were mastered by'.[102] Such a

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[98] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 172.
[99] Quinn, 'A Prayer For My Daughters', 81.
[100] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 117.
[101] Quinn, 'A Prayer For My Daughters', 83.
[102] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 46.

performance matches, in my terms, the notion of autonomy: conspiring and colluding with the system, rather than challenging the sovereign's authority.

By contrast Moran is permitted to eject people from his home and 'once he discovered that Michael was coming home late at night he acted decisively. Without a word of warning he bolted every door and window in the house and waited up'.[103] It is also Moran's decision to stop Sheila going to medical school; Holland writes that 'he effectively blocks her ambitions through his failure to provide support. Sheila's pursuit of a medical career would take her beyond his jurisdiction. Instead of being a proof of his authority, she would become a representative of his marginalised position in the new state'.[104] From these passages we discover that Moran's rule of law is supported through the collusion or complicity of others within the familial space. Sheila and Mona in this instance are co-conspirators, but there are other examples in Rose and even Michael; we also realise that Moran as patriarch – as controller of the private space – is broadly equivalent to the angler who has cast the net.

That the language of Christian angling in English is established in the King James Bible not long after the Reformation,[105] and that the notion of the familial patriarch was intensified in the early modern period, suggests that Moran as an archetypal patriarch symbolically inherited his power from that period: Stone writes how a 'beneficiary of the Reformation was the household and its head, which filled the vacuum left by the decline of the Church and its priests as the central institution for moral and religious instruction'.[106] Ariès' conclusion is not wholly

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[103] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 92.
[104] Holland, 'Marvellous Fathers', 195.
[105] We know, of course, that much of King James' authorized Bible was William Tyndale's language from his own English translation (1525-6); Tyndale's was also an endeavour to encourage Reform.
[106] Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 140. This idea obviously raises different questions in a country in which the Reformation never fully took hold, and in which pre-Reformation Christianity ('Catholicism') still dominates; however, in my ensuring arguments I show how Moran's role as despotic father marks his family out as a secularising force, even in a *de facto* Catholic society.

dissimilar on familial patriarchy, writing that 'Where the family existed […] it was a centre of social relations, the capital of a little complex and graduated society under the command of the pater-familias'.[107] That would make Moran a disciple in my sacred analogy, as well as in Stone's reading of the early modern period, bringing the (secularised) church into his home. This reading is consolidated when we re-member Moran's silent assertion in the face of the more commercially successful McQuaid that 'families were what mattered, more particularly that larger version of himself – *his* family'.[108] In this comment we are reminded of Genesis, of God's making man in His image; Moran, taking these strands together, transcends the role of disciple to become God himself.

In my continued reconciliation of Moran with early modern patriarchy, Moran as God usefully engages with Stone's point that 'the Word of God was to some degree removed from the parish church and transferred to the private home: the Holy Spirit was partly domesticated'.[109] Reconciling that with our quasi-Mary in Rose, and the Son figures of the children – those who spread the word about the Moran family at Great Meadow, shoring up and marshalling its borders – our pro-fane version of the Holy Family is complete and whole. The Holy Ghost is there, too, in its guise as spirit which connects the family together, drawing them back to Great Meadow and maintaining their belief in Moran's conception of family unity: 'No matter how far in talk the sisters ventured, they kept returning, as if to a mag-net, to what Daddy would like or dislike, approve of or disapprove of'.[110] Having established that the family in *Amongst Women* is centred around Moran's patriarchy, the Hail Mary – and its 'blessed art Thou amongst women' – no longer refers to the Mary-like figure in the novel – Rose in her paradoxical femininity – but to Mo-

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[107] Ariès, *Centuries of Childhood*, p. 360.
[108] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 22.
[109] Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 142.
[110] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 131.

ran: blessed is he amongst women. The Catholic fatherland is hereby internalised, and Moran displaces the divinity. Holland's argument endorses mine when she writes that

> when Moran assumes his place 'amongst women' […] he seems to derive his focality from the wrong part of the prayer. He does not entirely ally himself with the father but instead displaces Our Lady as the focus of the 'Hail Mary'.[111]

This would suggest that Moran's sovereignty is the driver of his family and, of course, the families subsequent to his, those of his children: they inherit his devotion to patriarchal control. In a similar vein, John Cronin highlights how the daughters' 'regular return visits to Great Meadow […] give meaning to their lives', while Quinn advances that the children 'need to return again and again to their origins to be affirmed and reaffirmed'.[112] We have now established that Moran and his ideas are located in his children – excluding Luke – and that their devotion to family is inherited from him.

We must also bear in mind the ontology which makes possible the whole, complete and privatised family: the family is brought together through ritual. We read this, for example, in the hay saving. 'All the girls were skilled at farm work', meaning that 'As soon as the dew had been burned off the grass, the whole house was in the hayfield.'[113] But we also see it, more saliently for my argument, in prayer. Indeed, Holland argues that 'this prayer cycle should easily bolster [Moran's] position, since from the 1950s onwards, the Rosary has been explicitly promoted as a

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[111] Siobhán Holland, 'Re-citing the Rosary: Women, Catholicism and Agency in Brian Moore's *Cold Heaven* and John McGahern's *Amongst Women*', in *Contemporary Irish Fiction: Themes, Tropes, Theories*, ed. by Liam Harte and Michael Parker (London: Macmillan Press; New York, NY: St Martin's Press, 2000), 56-78 (71-2) <doi: 10.1057/9780230287990>.

[112] John Cronin, 'John McGahern's *Amongst Women*: Retrenchment and Renewal', in *Irish University Review,* 22.1 (1992), 168-76 (170).

[113] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 83.

means of regulating the division of power within the Irish domestic sphere'.[114] Moran declares that 'They say the family that prays together stays together',[115] a phrase that Holland points out originated with Father Patrick Peyton of the 'Family Rosary Crusade' in the mid-twentieth century.[116] The family focalised around prayer is in evidence when 'The murmur of "Glory Be to the Father" followed "Hail Mary" and "Hail Mary" and "Our Father" was as smooth and even as the purr of the engine passing Dromon, Drumsna and Jamestown'.[117] That this passage appears as the family travel in the car returning from Sheila's wedding suggests the wholeness (and enclosure) to be found in holiness. This scene prefigures Moran's later assertion that, given this ritualised praying and closeness, 'Together [the family] were one world and could take on the world'.[118]

This quotation affirms that McGahern's creative and imaginative world was influenced by Donne's 'The Good-Morrow',[119] in which the persona explains how we should 'possesse one world, [since] each hath one, and is one'. This passage neatly explains the way Moran's sovereignty operates: Moran owns the little worlds that are his children, but they too are a world in and of themselves, repeating the founding familial image. We add to this enclosure by remembering the next line in Donne's poem, in which the persona notes that 'My face in thine eyes, thine in mine appears'.[120] This chiastic construction shows us the holiness – the χ cross-shape – of the line and the notion it implies.

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[114] Holland, 'Re-citing the Rosary', 70. We see something similar in another cultural reference, since, until very recently, the Angelus bell tolled every day, calling all people to prayer at regular, ritualised hours. This ritual is now domesticated, leaving the family to charge themselves with going to church and saying the Rosary in their homes.

[115] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 137.

[116] Holland, 'Re-citing the Rosary', 70.

[117] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, pp. 66-7.

[118] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 145.

[119] In a 2005 interview with Observer journalist Sean O'Hagan, McGahern quoted 'The Good-Morrow'. Sean O'Hagan, 'A Family Touched with Madness', *Observer* ('Observer Review'), 28 August 2005, p. 9.

[120] 'The Good-Morrow' in Donne, *The Complete English Poems*, ll. 14-15.

This indicates, again, the wholeness and the holiness of Moran's sovereignty. In his study of Renaissance chiasmus, William Engel argues that 'each example' of chiasmus

> bespeaks an inclination to represent the disquieting turbulence of human passion set against the backdrop of mortal strivings and played out within an overarching literary design that tacitly evokes, even while exhibiting a longing for, some higher order – perhaps of reason, perhaps of the spirit, and perhaps even, more rudimentarily, of the will to order itself.[121]

In the texts by Donne and McGahern, this 'will to order' becomes obvious; for Donne's speaker it resides in language and in relation to his lover, and for McGahern's Moran it describes his despotic order which descends from rituals venerating God and the Virgin Mary. Docherty also relates Donne's writing to the questions of control and authority. Docherty sets the stage for two types of 'authority' in the early modern moment: the 'anterior body of statements or propositions to which present activity must conform' set against the 'assumption or inauguration of some supposedly more spontaneous agency, which may even be in discord with the power of the [former] monumental "authorities"'. This differentiation should sound familiar, as it paraphrases what my argument about families has attempted hitherto: the former is the constitutional family in *Bunreacht*, defining the form as a means of control; the latter is the citizen as content of the nation, the individuals' determining the shape of the nation in which they take part and attempt to exist autonomously. Docherty proceeds to call the first of these authorities theological (*potestas*), and the second secular (*auctoritas*). Docherty asserts that Donne's writing, specifically in 'The Flea', 'conflate[s] these two' authorities.[122] In *Amongst Women*'s tale of a family both breaking from and engaging with the fa-

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[121] William E. Engel, *Chiastic Designs in English Literature from Sidney to Shakespeare* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2009), p. 2.

[122] Thomas Docherty, *John Donne, Undone* (London: Methuen, 1986), pp. 58-9.

ther's despotic control, combined as it is with a Catholic system of governance and ritual, McGahern's literature also attempts to conflate the two authorities: Moran's secular *auctoritas* with the state's Catholic- and theologically-inflected *potestas*. Moran's fatherland co-opts the national Catholic fatherland for Moran's own purpose.

Rituals other than the recitation of the Rosary fulfil a similar function, and as described at the novel's end the children's 'continual homecomings had been an affirmation' of their love and devotion to Moran and to Great Meadow and its 'unbroken presence, and now, as they left him [buried] under the yew, it was as if each of them in their different ways had become Daddy'.[123] Thus, Moran's patriarchal sovereignty finds its continuance in inheritance. Patriarchy continues here through linear temporality. Therefore a continuous temporal connection is established, signalling why Donne's poetry and his link to the English Renaissance – of course, French for rebirth - is so crucial. In that rebirth and in that chiasmus we must also contemplate the importance of the public sphere to the private sphere in the family. It is this criss-crossing of two different spaces to which I now turn.

Against this privacy, as I have already asserted, is an underlying public sphere, always at work in the Moran family. But we can also think about it differently, as a structure of reliance of the private sphere on the public, rather than the subordination of the latter to the former. For example, when Maggie leaves to go to nursing school, the family is united in her leaving as the 'whole house sat down after the Rosary one evening to pick the hospital she would go to'.[124] Similarly when Rose finally joins the family, the narrator explains how

> Another woman would come back with him into the house. It did not matter that it was the Rose they had grown to like. The life they had come to know so well for so long as it slipped by changelessly would be irrevocably

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[123] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 183.
[124] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 50.

altered.[125]

This possible fracturing – the irrevocable alteration – comes about through a public intrusion into the family space; but a united front greets both these intrusions. It appears that the threatening outside re-stabilises the personal patriarchy in its very de-stabilisation. We see the same phenomenon when Michael, in London visiting Luke, tells his elder brother that Moran is not as bad as he seems. The narrator reveals Michael's sentiment in this, describing how 'In the frail way that people assemble themselves he, like the girls, looked to Great Meadow for recognition, for a mark of his continuing existence'.[126] Michael's relationship with his family at home is as an ontological verification. Moreover, it is Michael's distance from Great Meadow that makes his relationship with his family possible.

What this reveals is a family, holy in form, if not in content, that acts like a church in keeping its members covenanted to its gospel. Like the fishermen disciples, the net secures the safety (religious and secular) of the family; however, the public sphere plays a larger role than we originally considered.

Beyond Ireland

Moran's eldest son, Luke, models the idea that the space beyond Great Meadow is more important to Great Meadow than the evidence hitherto has led us to discern. Cronin describes how 'the absence from the close family circle of the eldest son, Luke, who has left home after a brutal flogging by his father, runs like an open wound through the otherwise sanitive harmony of Great Meadow'.[127] As such, the novel opens with the family fractured as a result of Luke's departure, and Moran is particularly threatened when McQuaid draws attention to that open wound. Hav-

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[125] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 38.

[126] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 147.

[127] This absence and wounding echoes the early modern play, *Selimus* – discussed at greater length below – in which the eponymous character declares to his father: 'Selimus, once thy son but now thy foe'. Cronin, 'Retrenchment and Renewal', 171; 'Selimus, Emperor of the Turks', in *Three Turk Plays from Early Modern England*, ed. by Daniel J. Vitkus (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2000 [1594]), pp. 55-147.

ing done so, the narrator notes that Moran recedes from the outer world of friend-

ship into the internal world of the patriarchal family: 'After years he had lost his

oldest and best friend but in a way he had always despised friendship; families were

what mattered'.[128] This run of events – McQuaid's allusion to Luke's absence and,

by extension, the fractured family, followed by Moran's rejection of friendship –

exposes the nascent state of the family unit at that stage.

It is fair to say that the coherent, endogenous family only appears at the

moment of the excision of the outside world, and that moment is itself triggered by

Luke's absence. It is not that the external world is subordinate to the internal, but

rather that it creates its possibility, preceding it entirely. Luke's place beyond Mo-

ran's control and outside Ireland allows Moran to assert his authority over the

remainder of his family – Rose and the rest of his children. We may compare this

with Shakespeare's *King Lear*, where Edgar's self-exception from the family sets

him on his path to rescue it and inherit rightfully the title of Gloucester. So, though

Edmond is the one who laments being called a 'bastard' and 'base' (I.II.6),[129] Edgar

adopts that role performatively:

> While I may scape
> I will preserve myself, and am bethought
> To take the basest and most poorest shape
> That ever penury in contempt of man
> Brought near to beast. (II.II.176-80)

From outside the family, Edgar rescues the family, reassuring the coherence of the

Gloucester patriarchy.

Shakespeare's addition of the Gloucester brothers' storyline to the already

established daughters' narrative in *King Lear* was original. The anonymous play *King*

Leir that preceded Shakespeare's version introduces comedy into the narrative ra-

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[128] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 22.
[129] Edgar's decision to leave the family after his father's and brother's negative comments prefigures Luke's leaving Great Meadow after taking a beating from Moran, *Amongst Women*, p. 113.

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ther than adding a tragic subplot. Additionally R. A. Foakes argues that *King Leir*'s narrative 'effectively transforms the story from one that deals with a succession of civil wars to one that focuses on the intrigues and fortunes of Leir and his daughters, and this is what stimulated Shakespeare's imagination'.[130] If that is true then it is yet another signal of the cultural shift in the literature, as I indicated above, between Stone's 'Open Lineage Family' and his later 'Restricted Patriarchal Nuclear Family' that predominated at the turn of the seventeenth century. The former is characterised by the kin relations of the family in a looser sense of what family constitutes; the comic elements of *King Leir* help to divert our attention from the condition of the family in the play; the latter is characterised, instead, by the closer-knit family dominated by patriarchal inheritance, a topic which is intensified in Shakespeare's construction of the *Lear* narrative. I will now explore the evidence for this.

    King Leir itself drew on various historical references to the pagan king,[131] historical events temporally near to the production of the play,[132] and various literary enunciations of the Lear narrative. In Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, for example, the narrative history of Britain's royal lineage includes the story of Leyr:

> Next him king *Leyr* in happie peace long raind,
> But had no issue male him to succeed,
> But three faire daughters, which were well vptraind,
> In all that seemed fit for kingly seed:
> Mongst whom his realme he equally decreed
> To haue divided.[133]

In these latter two lines particularly we see how a story may be born based on the question of how a powerful male character continues to perform when 'amongst

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[130] R. A. Foakes, 'Introduction', in *King Lear,* ed. by R. A. Foakes (Walton-on-Thames: Nelson, 1997), pp. 1-151 (p. 76).
[131] From Geoffrey of Monmouth in the twelfth century to Holinshed's *Chronicles* in the late sixteenth century.
[132] Foakes, 'Introduction', pp. 91-2.
[133] Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, II.x.27.

women'. In *King Leir* and *The Faerie Queene*, however, the storyline of the brothers –
of Edgar and Edmond in Shakespeare's version – is missing. Though *King Leir* may
have fired Shakespeare's imagination, he must surely have found it wanting be-
cause by adding another tragic subplot Shakespeare counterpoints the daughters'
narrative with one concerning brothers; through the brothers Shakespeare's play
addresses far more salient issues of modernity, inheritance and familial importance
in Jacobean England.

There is a literary tradition of warring brothers – one bastard and one legit-
imate – with a blind father. In Sidney's *New Arcadia* (1590, with many subsequent
revisions and additions), Pyrocles and Musidorus happen across Leonatus and his
blind father, formerly prince of Paphlagonia. The prince has been blinded by his
bastard son, Plexirtus, and has subsequently asked his legitimate son, Leonatus, to
lead him to his death; Leonatus refuses outright. Ultimately the blind father praises
Leonatus for disobeying him and for exiling himself alongside his father: 'my mis-
chievous proceedings may be the glory of his filial piety'.[134] The story ends with the
prince's crowning of Leonatus and the latter's reconciliation with Plexirtus. It is a
story of a son's and brother's rightful claim to sovereignty and Leonatus' perfor-
mance as sovereign (the prince even talks about Leonatus 'perform[ing]' his duty),
in spite of his father's mischievous and murderous acts in trying to organise the
death of his bastard son.[135] The legitimate son Leonatus appears the true sovereign
in the relationship.

This accords with another play (from the same year as *King Leir*, 1594)
called *Selimus*, the anonymous play about the Turkish emperor. Selimus begins the
play as the son of reigning emperor Bajazet, and proceeds to murder all remaining

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[134] Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The New Arcadia)*, ed. by Victor Skretkowicz
(Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987 [1590]), II.183.7-8.
[135] Sidney, *Arcadia*, II.182.31.

family members on his rampage to become emperor. Foakes believes that Shakespeare may have read the play since there are reminiscences of *Selimus* in *Lear*: the story of three brothers seeking their father's crown (a conflation of the two sibling narratives in Shakespeare's play) and the blinding of a character on stage, all the while watched by another character called Regan.[136]

If Shakespeare had taken notes on *Selimus* and incorporated them into his later play, then two questions are foregrounded: first, the rights of any son within a nuclear family, and not only a legitimate son whose rights are prominent in an Open Lineage Family; and second, the question of the new monarchical construction.[137] Roger Lockyer describes the period of James' accession to the throne as one of 'reassessment', and the opening decade of his reign spawned debates and discussions on the question of sovereignty in early modern England. Absolute monarchy was openly questioned, as was the role of Parliament in executing the king's judgments.[138] Robert Zaller affirms that James was sensitive to the debates raging about the king's sovereignty and the role of the commons. Perhaps more importantly for our discussion Zaller also considers early modern politics to be structured like a theatrical stage, using phrases that might well refer to King Lear: 'Like the playwright-director, the ruler apportions the seamless text of his will to "characters" – a nobility, a magistracy, a rabble – and assigns these as speaking parts to actors'.[139] Just like Stone's characterisation of the 'family despot', Zaller's 'playwright-director' phrase could also stand as a definition of Moran.[140] In that link between the two periods we see how sovereignty came to be enunciated in

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[136] Whilst Shakespeare's Regan is female, in *Selimus* the character named Regan is male. There appears no concrete reason to explain this shift in genders.

[137] Foakes draws attention to the case in the Jacobean courts about an illegitimate son of the Earl of Leicester who is disenfranchised of his inheritance, 'Introduction', p. 92.

[138] Roger Lockyer, *Tudor and Stuart Britain: 1471-1714* (London: Longman, 1964), pp. 221-7.

[139] Robert Zaller, *The Discourse of Legitimacy in Early Modern England* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), p. 568.

[140] Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage*, p. 158.

identical ways. That the questions of sovereignty and absolute monarchy are being contested signals a tension around this issue that Shakespeare's *Lear* does not ignore. We conclude that Shakespeare's interpolation of the brothers' narrative is precisely motivated by a desire to examine the question of sovereignty and the shifting familial space; Edgar and Edmond comment on the nature of inheritance and on the manner in which a nation-state should stand in relation to its citizens. Such issues inform the figure of Luke in *Amongst Women*, as Shakespeare and McGahern respond to the same socio-political issue.

The more specific crossovers I wish to draw between *Amongst Women* and *Lear* are the following: first, Edgar's exception from the Gloucester family is perceived differently on either side, but always as an error of perspective: from Edgar's perspective it is from an already-fractured family which he seeks to restore to unity, but from Gloucester's point of view Edgar is the problem that fractures the family. Second, it is Luke's position as sovereign which opens the possibility for the restoration of the family by Moran, turning the family into a sovereign force. In this way, the family becomes dynamic, created in a space of instability or, as I have written above, finds its privatised stability in its recurrent instability. Third – and this follows on – we now think of the private family form as something strictly related to performativity in its dynamism;[141] its content is prioritised over its form.

Therefore the familial space must be dynamic, moveable and essentially mutable. Once again, we find a prior textual foundation for this idea in the early modern moment in Spenser's *Mutabilitie Cantos*, written at a time when the successor to Queen Elizabeth dominated contemporary political debate of choice:

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[141] At this point we recall Sidney's *New Arcadia* and the prince of Paphlagonia's compliment and thanks to his son, Leonatus, for 'perform[ing]' his filial duty.

> I [NATURE] well consider all that ye haue sayd,
> And find that all things stedfastnes doe hate
> And changed be: yet being rightly wayd
> They are not changed from their first estate;
> But by their change their being doe dilate:
> And turning to themselues at length againe,
> Doe worke their owne perfection so by fate[.][142]

Or, perhaps more interestingly, as is said in *Selimus*: 'When there's no shame, no care of holy law, / No faith, no justice, no integrity, / That state is full of mutability'.[143] For Spenser's Nature, change is essential and not extraneous to ontology, and this appears to be the true basis of Moran's family, having been established by Luke from afar; however, in *Selimus* Aga reports that mutability reigns in the struggle to establish sovereignty and modernity.[144] In both cases it is space beyond the family that precedes the family's internal coherence: Luke's absence and Edgar's self-excepting respectively create their families as unified forms. They do not emanate from unified family spaces, but rather the possibility of unification derives from their departure.

To return to the analogy of the net, Luke is now the angler, the external brother whose lateral anti-inheritance to the family and to – rather than from – the father is the founding performative principle in which the Moran family thrives. Anti-inheritance in *A Portrait* involved the rejection of Simon's patrilineal control (but acceptance and freedom in his position as 'brother' who can derive authority and legitimacy from Stephen) and in *Amongst Women* is the reversed inheritance from brother to father. That is, Moran inherits the nuclear, privatised family from Luke through the latter's absence; this happens precisely at the moment that Luke's absence is most keenly felt.

In many ways, this bears out what Deane argues about *Ulysses*, where Ste-

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[142] 'Two Cantoes of Mutabilitie' in Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, vii.58.

[143] 'Selimus', 14.54-6.

[144] Indeed, Zaller points out that '"mutabilitie" was one of the deep topoi in Elizabethan culture'. Zaller, *The Discourse of Legitimacy*, p. 224.

phen 'regards himself as a son who must create his own parents, and Ireland and Catholicism, his symbolic parents, are unsatisfactory'.[145] In *Ulysses* Stephen realises the need for inheritance, and therefore creates one for himself, whereas by the time Luke is sovereign creator of his father's family, the inheritance travels from the younger to the older generation; moreover, what is inherited is neither characteristics nor material objects, but the concept of a nuclear, sovereign family. For Holland this is a question of masculinity, which links also to the question of the I.R.B. (and its subsequent manifestations) and its role in founding a 'free' Irish nation. Writing about McGahern's novelistic fathers (i.e. not only Moran), Holland highlights how:

> McGahern's attention to [the fathers'] excessive, marvellous bids to resist, manipulate, or move outside their roles in the new state makes available for discussion the vulnerability of patriarchal aspirations, identities, and hierarchies: it exposes Irish patriarchy after independence as being performatively constructed and dependent on faithful repetition by fathers who lack faith in it.[146]

It appears logical that Luke's failed masculine performance – emigrating to England and rejecting an agricultural vocation – enforces Moran's commitment to masculinity.[147]

This epitomises that paradigmatic McGahern trope of the wheel, laid out in his short story 'Wheels': 'I knew the wheel: fathers become children to their sons who repay the care they got when they were young, and on the edge of dying the

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[145] Deane, 'Joyce and Stephen: the Provincial Intellectual', p. 84.
[146] Holland, 'Marvellous Fathers', 198.
[147] Holland, 'Marvellous Fathers', 196. '[I]n Amongst Women it is the emigration and refusal to return of Luke Moran, the family's eldest son, that represents the fullest sign of Moran's failure'.

fathers become young again[.]'[148] As with that story – when a son returns to Ireland from England to visit his father to find that he is now in charge – so is that the case in *Amongst Women*. Luke's removal to England posits him as the sovereign of the family, as it is his rule of law (coupled with his absence) that creates the vacuum in which Moran's despotism and family finds its own space. This echoes Agamben's idea of the sovereign exception:

> To refer to something, a rule must both presuppose and yet still establish a relation with what is outside relation (the nonrelational). The relation of exception thus simply expresses the originary formal structure of the juridical relation. […] In its archetypal form, the state of exception is therefore the principle of every juridical localisation, since only the state of exception opens the space in which the determination of a certain juridical order and a particular territory first becomes possible.[149]

In less philosophical and more practical terms, Quinn and Holland draw attention to the Rosary's Five Decades and their allocation in the Moran household to each member of the family.[150] Although these critics do not mention it, Luke's departure paves the way for the reestablishment of a mother figure at Great Meadow as we presume that his position in the recitation of the Rosary is taken by Rose. Luke's emigration thus creates the possibility of Rose's private welcome; or, Rose's internalisation in the family confirms that Luke is wholly excepted and externalised.

Taken together these ideas disturb our idea of the Holy Family as an operative formation, demanding that we focus on content or performance instead, and the dynamism inherent in those ideas: the family is the content of the national

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[148] 'Indeed the wheel would become the central motif of the subsequent fiction, developed in the imagery of many of the stories as well as in the variously cyclical, seasonal narrative structures of the novels'. See Patrick Crotty, '"All Toppers": Children in the Fiction of John McGahern', in *Irish University Review*, 35.1 (2005), 42-57 (43); 'Wheels' in John McGahern, *Creatures of the Earth: New and Selected Stories* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006), p. 9. It would be foolhardy to dismiss the oblique reference in this passage from 'Wheels' to *As You Like It* and Jacques' speech about the 'Seven ages of man'; this becomes important when we recall Maynard Mack's assertion that *King Lear* is a reversion of *As You Like It* into a tragedy from a comedy: *Lear* is thus 'the greatest anti-pastoral ever penned'. Foakes, 'Introduction', p. 110.

[149] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p. 19.

[150] Quinn, 'A Prayer For My Daughters', 86; Holland, 'Re-citing the Rosary', 71-2.

form. In this way, *Bunreacht na hÉireann* remains formally important, but the modern contest has resulted in its performance outside the nuclear family and beyond its designated *topos* at Great Meadow. Blessed is Moran amongst women, it is true, but now only as a secondary god, with Luke – the angler – the primary divinity. In this reading there is a flippancy about *Amongst Women*'s Catholicism; implicitly it offers a critique of the religious ritual and its place in society. The fatherland can no longer be considered prior to all other institutions, for it succeeds the secularised and anarchic fraternity that Luke represents. Of course it is no surprise that McGahern's novel offers this kind of critique; *The Dark* (1965), as well as *Memoir* (2005), affirm this view. By extension, we now read McGahern's critique of fathers in mid-century Ireland innovatively and differently: patriarchy is troubled, yes, but an answer is possible in a brotherhood sited beyond Ireland, rather than in an isolated, enclosing world.

We now read a connection between Edgar's drive to establish a modern Britain based on a dynamic and young family going forward, and Luke's success outside the family: a way of establishing a continuity driven by youth, novelty and mutability, and not patriarchy or land inheritance, for that is what brings about tragedy in *King Lear*. Edgar's final lines in the play demand such an ethic: 'The oldest hath borne most; we that are young / Shall never see so much, nor live so long.' (V.III.324-5) These lines prompt youth to take over, and not let stasis set in; however, the desire for dynamism in *Amongst Women* comes from the outside. The *King Lear* and *Amongst Women* stories are similar, though not identical. Luke's exception from the family and his permanent move away from Great Meadow signals a desire for a life that is not conditioned by patriarchy and linear temporality, nor a patriarchy so spatially-located and space-bound. Instead, London comes to represent a permanent site of novelty, of change and dynamism, and also a way of

establishing a community based not on vertical family forms but on lateral brother-liness and on exceptionalism; London politically influences Great Meadow. In this way *Amongst Women* critiques the construction of the nuclear family in *Bunreacht na hÉireann* at the very same time that the novel finds a way for it to operate as a dynamic, rather than static, institution; the same goes for the Catholic elements of the novel and the reliance on ritual, in addition to Mariolatry. The new content operates outside the form that had previously conditioned it. We re-read the constitutional line that dictates that the family is 'antecedent and superior to all positive law' as a strange confirmation of my argument that the positive Moran family can only exist after Luke's self-exception.

In short, just as *King Lear* was a modern play in the first decade of the seventeenth century – acting in part as a response to the changing monarchy – the play also shaped *Amongst Women* as the answer to contemporary Ireland's concern with how to live within an outdated and outmoded family ideal. As van der Ziel argues, we see in this a conditional rejection of the expected form, encapsulated by Stephen Dedalus' spirit of 'Non serviam' in *A Portrait*;[151] however, van der Ziel ascribes this sentiment to Moran, and grants him agency in the decision, notably when he tells his children to '*Shut up*!' and stop reciting the Rosary at the novel's end moments before his death.[152] By contrast, above Luke inherits Stephen's flight from the family and from Ireland, and the freedom it implies that rejects Catholic fatherland. Moreover, fraternity was the beginning of Stephen's freedom. In Luke, though, we see an inheritance of Stephen's liberating fraternity, coupled with an inheritance of Pearse's foundational fraternity. In an odd manner, we could argue that Luke has sacrificed his place in the family in order to restore the family to the

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[151] Joyce, *A Portrait*, p. 281; Stanley van der Ziel, 'Fionn and Oisín in the Land of Wink and Nod: Heroes, History, and the Creative Imagination in John McGahern's *Amongst Women*', in *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies,* 31.2 (2005), 10-18 (16).
[152] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 180.

nation: Luke disinherits inheritance as a son and becomes the brotherly sovereign to the Irish family. Inheriting, as he does, from Shakespeare, as well as Pearse and Joyce, Luke is the truly modern Irish sovereign.

Conclusion

In my examination of these three authors and texts I established the demand for formal relegation: the family form must exist, yes, but it also must be changed, avoided and stepped outside in order to establish individual sovereignty. The formal arrangement of father and son remains, but the performance changes how that relationship works by operating beyond those confines, outside the family. Just as mother-daughter relationships required the Mother Ireland figure, even if it was ignored as the performance of the mother changed in Stephens and Boland, the brother-father relationships need a perversion of the existing status quo in order to continue. The texts I examined, in so many ways canonical and conservative, all exhibit that controversial viewpoint.

For Pearse it was the establishment of a republican, fraternal ethos that shone through. This dedication to fraternity is a political manoeuvre, and as such forgoes much of the nuance of the later developments I outline in Joyce and McGahern. However, Pearse's understanding of how an anarchic organisation, free of the traditional colonial hierarchy, could form the foundations of revolution is key to understanding the latent political nature of the fraternal relations in the later literature I examine. Taking *Love's Labour's Lost* as an inextricable influence and forerunner, I also showed how the interest in new modes of monarchical and governmental organisation in late-Elizabethan England was central to society's mutations and developments. So too was it in early twentieth-century Ireland.

For Joyce in *A Portrait* it was the priority of Stephen as brother to Simon, and not as son, that allowed him to forgo inheritance as Simon's twin, and thereaf-

ter flee from the pressures of Ireland. Fraternity heralded Stephen's liberation, notably at the moment when Simon begins to use his son as a source of his authority and legitimation. Hamlet, too, authorised the Ghost's injunction – by following through on the Ghost's command, Hamlet confirmed the Ghost's truthfulness *a posteriori*; however, we know that Stephen goes on to fail – returning to Dublin before the beginning of *Ulysses* – implying that Simon also fails. This signals a failure of the modern nation to forge its own space in the world, and as such requires a further development in the shift from patrilineal to fraternal relations.

That development is visible in McGahern's *Amongst Women* in which the brother-father relation gives rise to the family: the nation's new citizen passes his sovereignty on to the institution of the family within a modern Ireland. For McGahern's Luke it was the ability to escape to Ireland that opened the possibility for Moran to create a family in his image in Ireland: Luke was the exceptional sovereign. Just as modernity in Shakespeare is read through the contested forms of brotherhood, I have shown how Irish modernity in relation to the male members of the family, by favouring fraternity over paternity, seems both to go against the grain and yet is in keeping with its literary antecedents. Shakespeare's Edgar may well have been left in control in post-Lear Britain, but that is the fullest development of the early modern scenario, in which form and content truly merge – Britain and families in Britain as the form, Edgar's proposed youth as the content. However, in Ireland the post-colonial, modern family form is allowed to prosper, but only by Luke, its creator, who must necessarily exist outside and beyond the family's reaches. The literature is modern, and is underpinned by an early modernity.

Fatherland in these series of readings is changed from a Catholically-inflected inheritance to something reconfigured and shrugged off. This is also one

of the key elements of moving from a primary organisation of father-son inheritance to brother-father inheritance; crucially inheritance does not disappear, as these ideas and stories are passed on. But, by using fraternity instead of paternity, the fatherland is renovated and renewed, providing a more dynamic and modern space for Irish citizens.

In the following chapter I examine another variant of the father-son relationship by looking at ghosts and spectres. We shall see initially that ghosts also demand action by the living, much as the father demands action from his son; however, the more pressing concern when considering ghosts is permissibility of representation. Therefore, the question that I address next is how the unrepresentable – i.e. the dead or death – remains central in modern Ireland.

'I hear that an actress played Hamlet for the fourhundredandeighth time last night in Dublin. Vining held out that the prince was a woman. Has no-one made him out to be an Irishman? Judge Barton, I believe, is searching for some clues.'
– from 'Scylla and Charybdis' in Ulysses *by James Joyce*

Ghosts are troublesome things in a house or in a family [...]. There is only way to appease a ghost. You must do the thing it asks you. The ghosts of a nation sometimes ask very big things; and they must be appeased, whatever the cost.
– from 'Ghosts' by Pádraic Pearse

Spectres and Ghosts: *Hamlet* and the Irish

In this chapter my argument is that the offstage and hidden space occupied by the sovereign Ghost in *Hamlet* models the ideal way of governing a national space, the latter described variously as visible, onstage or representable. Through three ideas of spectrality Synge, Joyce and Banville each figure spectral space as a positive space in which modernity takes place. The first spectrality cautions against insidious ghosts and urges the citizen to reveal the ghost as truthful; the second describes the relationship between the Ghost and Hamlet is asymmetrical, and relies on the Ghost's voice, invisible gaze and uncertain being to 'hauntologize' Hamlet; the third explains how ghosts and death are the origin for life. Ultimately, literature emerges as the paradigmatic spectral space, establishing that writing not only describes the modern nation, but that in texts, the nation itself is produced. Literature as a form of production, therefore, is itself the content of the modern nation.

In the first two chapters I examined how the connection between early modern English literature and modern Irish literature can be figured through the motif of family. In looking at mother-daughter and brother-father relations, I focused on the connection between the literatures as it manifests on personal and interpersonal levels. In this and following chapters, I look at the intertextual connections' importance on a broader level: how families interact within communities, how individuals act within society. My first interrogation of these broader aspects continues a pattern from my previous chapter: here I will look at more father-son relationships. However, my focus is on ghosts and spectres: those absent from the father-son relationship through their own unwanted

death or murder. My initial focus is on Shakespeare's *Hamlet*; my modern Irish focus is on Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907), 'Hades' in Joyce's *Ulysses* and Banville's *Ghosts* (1993).

My focus in this chapter develops my foregoing chapter in two key ways: first, as aforementioned, I look beyond the personal and interpersonal. I ask how fathers' and sons' relationships figure in their lives beyond the relationship. Second, I continue to look at the juridical question of sovereignty in the father-son relationship, as above. In my brothers-fathers chapter I established that the vertical relation of father-son ought to be read primarily as a horizontal brother-father relationship in certain modern Irish texts; however, here I return to the vertical construction and investigate how it operates when it is conditioned by the ultimate privilege of the sovereign: to be absent. Agamben's construction of the sovereign is as one above or outside the law from which she derives authority: a radical absence. This was evidenced above by Luke in McGahern's *Amongst Women*. This is the paradigmatic sovereign which I investigate more closely in this chapter.

I will show that from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* to Banville's *Ghosts* spectrality becomes a source of personal ontology; and that that ontology provides a base for the living individual to exist and survive fully within society as a modern citizen. The individual's form – father or son in this chapter – is fleshed out by their content. That content in *Hamlet* is Hamlet-as-revenger, in *Playboy* it is Christy as revolutionary-murderer, in 'Hades' it is Bloom as living-memorial and, finally, in *Ghosts* it is as Freddie as amanuensis. My conclusion is not only that each of these key Irish texts is ghosted by Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, but that they each ghost one another. Spectrality, which in *Hamlet* governs the plot, governs the relation of absent sovereigns in certain Irish texts. This leads to the conclusion that the sovereignty in modern Ireland is not a break away from colonising power, but descends directly from its paradigmatic text: *Hamlet*. Thus when

John Eglinton asked in the National Library of Ireland in *Ulysses* whether anyone had proved that Hamlet is an Irishman, he was clearly on to something; however, what I sketch in this chapter is the inverse, that in certain modern Irish literature Irish men appear Hamletic, with all that association entails.

Hamlet is a necessary paratext for several reasons. The first is its importance to western literature when considering the father-son relationship, as elaborated in my previous chapter; the second is *Hamlet*'s pre-eminence in its representations of ghosts, and we shall see how in *Hamlet* the Ghost is an active, fully-rounded and directorial character, contrary to many enunciations of ghosts in contemporary literature; a third reason is the Ghost's continued power. In Renaissance plays – *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar* (1599), *The Spanish Tragedy* – the Ghost is posited as outside or beyond the main plot, either not speaking, or only speaking as a choric character who explains the ongoing action; however, *Hamlet*'s Ghost is part of the action, and is inextricable from how the narrative unfolds, driving Hamlet on to his revenge narrative. With these three reasons, on which I elaborate below, we conclude that *Hamlet* is largely a play about absent power and its representation; it is also about questioning dubious sovereignty through the vessel of the unseen.

The unseen – the ghost or spectre – orders and orchestrates social change onstage: the Ghost is a revolutionary in an onstage space that is becoming a modern nation-state, showing that the stable forces of monarchy in Denmark can even be upset from the wings, and not necessarily through political upheaval. In my three modern Irish examples, the story I tell is one of perceived impotence leading instead to great power: the ghostly space is the ideal space to contest sovereignty. In *Ulysses* Stephen Dedalus explains to those in the National Library of Ireland how he sees Shakespeare as writing himself into the character of the Ghost:

> [H]e passes on towards eternity in undiminished personality, untaught by the wisdom he has written or by the laws he has revealed. His beaver is up. He is a ghost, a shadow now, the wind

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> by Elsinore's rocks or what you will, the sea's voice, a voice
> heard only in the heart of him who is the substance of his shad-
> ow, the son consubstantial with the father.[1]

Part of the Ghost's importance is his role in the father-son relation. Above I showed

how certain Irish literature uses the son to disabuse the father in creating a modern Ire-

land; however, we see it restored through the Ghost. The Ghost, probably played by

Shakespeare himself, is

> a ghost by absence, and in the vesture of buried Denmark, a
> ghost by death, speaking his own words to his own son's name
> (had Hamnet Shakespeare lived he would have been prince Ham-
> let's twin), is it possible, I want to know, or probable that he did
> not draw or foresee the logical conclusion of those premises: you
> are the dispossessed son: I am the murdered father[.][2]

In Stephen's reading *Hamlet* becomes a story not just about a ghostly father speaking to a

son, but a father using the Ghost as cipher to talk to a dead son: the Ghost empowers

Shakespeare, who is its sovereign author. Stephen feels himself the dispossessed son –

this we know – and so he sees in *Hamlet* his own story played out. However, if we recall

the importance of fatherhood to understanding the notion of fatherland, then Stephen's

reading reminds us that *Hamlet* is also about the pressures of a national ghost making its

presence felt. Shakespeare's use of the Ghost allows him to insert himself into a national

conversation about sovereignty and about the relationship between a father and son in

which one of the parties is absent. In Pádraic Pearse's ideas, heading my chapter, these

national ghosts must be appeased: the Ghost's call to "revenge" should not be ignored.

Moreover, in *Hamlet* one key idea is rendered lawful as murder is legitimised in

the foundation of a new, modern *polis*. The murder of the father figure (Claudius) is legit-

imised in Hamlet's seeking to found Denmark in his image. In Agamben's terms this

would be called the establishment of the *homo sacer*, the sacred man whose bare life be-

longs to the sovereign alone, and therefore whose murder cannot be legislated within the

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[1] Joyce, *Ulysses*, pp. 9.476-81.
[2] Joyce, *Ulysses*, pp. 9.174-9.

juridical system. Indeed, *Hamlet* is premised upon one death – King Hamlet's – and heads inexorably through two others in the middle acts, before climaxing with three further deaths in Act Five, Scene Two. The three Irish texts I explore inherit the legitimised murder but rewrite it: they kill in founding their own Irish nation-state, taking the form but adapting its substantive content. In modern Irish literature, like Hamlet, the murder of the surrogate father (i.e. Britain) can take place. *Hamlet*'s Ghost, perversely, is complicit in the murder. In *Playboy* Christy kills Old Mahon, a murder initially granted legitimacy by the shebeen community, but latterly deplored. Christy's rewriting of things aims to overturn the relationship between himself and his father: Christy becomes master, Old Mahon the slave. The only way, crucially, that this Hegelian reversal can be maintained is by Christy absenting himself from the stage: Christy's revolution lives on spectrally, though not actually onstage.

In 'Hades', the Christy-Old Mahon reversal takes on an added dimension, for Bloom is hauntologised – a word I take from Derrida's reading of *Hamlet* in *Specters of Marx* – by his dead son Rudy. Bloom's projected memories of Rudy growing up remind Bloom that he will want to be remembered in the Dublin community in which he lives. Bloom's strategy is fundamentally Hamletic: he seeks to be, and not to be, through technical forms of memory (the vinyl record and photograph). Rudy as absent sovereign allows Bloom to prepare himself for death by constructing his memorial in advance. Bloom is therefore aligned with Hamlet, but as a paternal Hamlet deriving authority from his late son.

Finally, in *Ghosts* Freddie takes these developments one stage further: he derives his new standing in society, after having been released from prison for murder, from falsely telling his fellow convict that his son, Van, is dead. Freddie's new ontology rests upon a lie, allowing Freddie to live on in a third space of imagination, while Van is condemned to the real. Freddie becomes the ghost: *Ghosts* is a novel about living as a ghost,

suggesting ultimately that modern Irish literature recognises that Hamlet is central to its nation-building project, but that the Ghost in *Hamlet* inhabits the space from which true, modern power descends.

These characters substantively alter their sense of self, their modern conscious-nesses that perceives themselves as objects of thought, in order to change their citizenship within society. In my conclusion I return to Stephen Dedalus' reading of *Hamlet* in *Ulysses*, in which he discusses the idea that Shakespeare played the Ghost which he had himself scripted. Shakespeare himself becomes the Ghost, and is ghosted by him-self: writers, too, are ghosts. I conclude by showing that not only is Shakespeare's *Hamlet* important to modern Irish literature, but that *Hamlet*'s Shakespeare – the authorial ghost and player Ghost – is also paradigmatic, showing how writing and embodying the sover-eign marginality inherent in authorial spectrality is inherited by these modern Irish writers. *Hamlet*, for these reasons, is the foundational text of the Irish citizen within their community.

In *Hamlet*, Hamlet is concerned with completing his father's injunction to 're-venge' his 'most foul and unnatural murder' and with voicing his concerns and meditations. Hamlet therefore discovers his formal role in the tragedy, and his content or presence is dedicated to fulfilling that role: Hamlet's form and content, certainly by the end of the play, are united. Hamlet is a fully self-conscious character. Additionally, the play addresses not only questions of individual agency and becoming, but is also con-cerned with questions of monarchic governance and succession. Claudius' assumption of the throne following his brother's death grants *Hamlet*'s opening a security that was longed for in Queen Elizabeth's dwindling years; however, as the play unfolds the securi-ty of Claudius' kingship is shaken and threatened – undermined even as to its legitimacy. The dramatized kingship bears political salience because it renders *Hamlet* a play not only of cultural production, but also of social and historical production. *Hamlet* is thus a play

that exceeds its script and offers greater cultural heritage.

My reading is contingent upon different understandings of the idea of spectrality. In my initial section investigating Synge's *Playboy* I examine a turn-of-the-seventeenth-century argument for spectrality. Barnaby Rich urges the Irish to watch out for ghosts, and to demythologise them and undermine their spectral power. Spectrality is thus both to reveal ghosts as false, and to rule and run riot as a ghost. I examine how this idea operates and is adapted in *Hamlet*, when Hamlet demythologises the Ghost but, as a corollary, reveals him as real. This type of spectrality, unique to *Hamlet* in the early modern corpus, is taken on board by the shebeen community in *Playboy*. My second spectrality descends from Derrida's ideas in *Specters of Marx*, which I apply to a reading of 'Hades'. The Ghost's *hauntologizing* of Hamlet – which prepares Hamlet for the end of history, or his own death – operates also in the imagined relationship between Leopold and Rudy Bloom. Finally, the spectrality I establish in relation to Banville's *Ghosts* emerges from my reading of Maurice Blanchot's arguments about double-death: the ability – or demand – to establish a positive relation with death, thereby becoming a creative force in life. I use these ideas to reveal Freddie's assumption of the spectral space created by deciding to live his life as if his son is dead.

'Go on from this': J. M. Synge's Playboy

It is clear that *The Playboy of the Western World* addressed questions of sovereignty. As such, the '*Playboy* riots', written about and recorded extensively,[3] are indicative of the internal struggles being waged between those in the metrocolonial[4] east in Dublin – where there were loud advocates for Revivalist principles – and differing, Modernist conceptions of contemporary Ireland. Synge draws our attention to a similar cross-fertilisation in his work in his Preface to *Playboy*:

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[3] Q.v. James F. Kilroy, *The 'Playboy' Riots* (Dublin: Dolmen Press, 1971).

[4] Joseph Valente glosses the metrocolonial as 'interval or remainder, a border zone both joining and dividing an imperialist and an irrendentist culture under the always contestable titles of "West Britain" and the capital of Ireland, respectively'. Valente, *The Myth of Manliness*, p. 194.

> When I was writing *The Shadow of the Glen*, some years ago, I got more aid than any learning could have given me from a chink in the floor of the old Wicklow house where I was staying, that let me hear what was being said by the servant girls in the kitchen. This matter, I think is of importance, for in countries where the imagination of the people, and the language they use, is rich and living, it is possible for a writer to be rich and copious in his words, and at the same time to give the reality, which is the root of all poetry, in a comprehensive and natural form.[5]

Several intrusions are admitted in this passage: the obvious eavesdropping; the inclusion of the 'language they use' in *Playboy*, in order to mollify his own 'rich and copious' language through the external introduction of 'reality'; finally there is the strange allusion to *The Shadow of the Glen*. As is self-evident, at the centre of these intrusions is the issue of language, couched in terms that immediately remind us of William Wordsworth's (1802) manifesto, to use the 'language really used by men' in their 'low and rustic life'. It is clear in Wordsworth's 'Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*' that, in writing a 'defence of the theory, upon which the poems were written', he is also writing a defence of the poet. For Wordsworth, the poet must use this language and act as a 'translator, who deems himself justified when he substitutes excellences of another kind for those which are unattainable by him'.[6] Wordsworth's work is not only to bring a language that is not his into poetry, but through this translation into 'poetry' he advocates placing himself in the material language that is closest to pure nature; Wordsworth's voice aspires to an immediate relation with truth, thereby achieving authenticity.

This is a political use of inheritance since Wordsworth, and Synge after him, takes what he inherits (the phenomenon of language), and makes it his own by placing himself in it as a natural constituent: Synge, too, aspires to political authenticity. Whilst it appears that Wordsworth is promoting this language that does not properly belong to him, he is actually claiming it as his own by inflecting it through translation: this raises the question

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[5] 'Preface' to J. M. Synge, 'The Playboy of the Western World', in *The Complete Plays,* ed. by T. R. Henn (London: Methuen, 1981 [1907]), pp. 173-229 (p. 174).

[6] William Wordsworth, 'Preface to *Lyrical Ballads, with Pastoral and Other Poems (*1802*)*', in *The Major Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000 [1802]), pp. 595-615 (pp. 595-608).

of sovereignty over language. We read Synge positively through a similar lens; Gregory

Dobbins notes that

> By representing [in *Playboy*] this version of the west in prose and
> on stage in the more metropolitan context of the Dublin-based
> Revival, Synge offered a seemingly alternative conception of the
> present that did not appear remarkably different from the past
> but was very distinct from the processes of modernisation identi-
> fied with both capitalism and colonialism which prevailed within
> more developed parts of Ireland.[7]

Dobbins' Synge wrestles with twin versions of history, aiming to own an authentic vision

of the past, and how these histories each continue to be relevant to modern Ireland: it is

a question of inheritance, and Christy Mahon represents the 'distinct […] processes of

modernisation'.

The *Playboy* riots manifested a tension between different versions of truth and

history; another way of talking about this is by drawing attention to the mode of inher-

itance of the past. Or, how do we treat ghosts of another space and another time? This

takes me to a contemporary Elizabethan treatment of ghosts and spirits to investigate

what spectrality means in early modern English literature. Importantly, we shall see that

Hamlet is not typical of contemporary treatments of ghosts in literature. This is mainly

because the Ghost is neither dismissed nor seriously suspected of trickery. This contra-

venes Rich's turn-of-the-seventeenth-century recommendation to the Irish to beware of

ghosts. The Irish should recognise the ghost and reveal it as spectral, belonging not to

this world:

> Take heede you bee not deceiued by any of these spirits, which
> shall seeke to abuse you, by pretence of reuelation, by visions, by
> dreames, by shew of holinesse: such spirits are walking and daily
> conuersant amongst vs in *Ireland*.[8]

Spectrality in these circumstances is twofold: first that ghosts are 'daily coneuersant

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[7] Gregory Dobbins, 'Synge and Irish modernism', in *The Cambridge Companion to J. M. Synge,* ed. by J. P.
Mathews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 132-45 (p. 134).

[8] Barnabe Rich, *A short Survey of Ireland, truely discovering who it is that hath so armed the hearts of that people, with
disobedience to their Princes. With a description of the Countrey, and the condition of the people, etc* (London: Printed by
N. O., 1609), p. 53.

amongst vs', and second that we should 'take heede' so that we are not 'deceiued'. That is, we must discover the ghost and prove its spectral falseness. For Rich, the devilish spirits are embodied in Catholic priests; Rich's advice is therefore salient to contemporary England and to an examination of contemporary literature. The dual acts – the ghost's insidiousness and our exposing the ghost as insidious – are part of early modern spectrality. We see elements of them in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and *Macbeth*. In the former, when Brutus sees the ghost of Julius Caesar, he questions the 'monstrous apparition' primarily about what it is, not why it appears. That is, Brutus tries to verify the ghost before believing anything that it says: '[A]rt thou anything? / Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil / That mak'st my blood cold and my hair to stare? / Speak to me what thou art!' [194](IV.III.276-9). Brutus' concern that the ghost is malevolent is proven true, with Brutus himself exclaiming, 'O Julius Caesar, thou art mighty yet! / Thy spirit walks abroad and turns our swords / In our own proper entrails' (V.III.94-6). Brutus lays his loss of the civil war squarely at Caesar's ghost's feet, but all that Caesar did was tell Brutus that he would meet him again at Phillippi. Macbeth, meanwhile, tries to find out who is mocking him when Banquo's ghost first appears, asking 'Which of you have done this?' (III.IV.48). Macbeth later commands it to leave by alleging its falseness, and seeing it then go: 'Hence horrible shadow, / Unreal mockery hence! – Why so; – being gone / I am a man again.' (III.IV.106-7) [199]

The spectrality of which Rich warns is salient here. In one instance Brutus follows Rich's line but is still undone by the ghost; in another, Macbeth realises his power from admonishing and dismissing the ghost. However, this also proves short-lived as Banquo's ghost reappears along with the future kings of Scotland, threatening Macbeth further. The connection, however, between Caesar's and Banquo's ghosts is their intimidating nature, and their inability fully to take control of the action onstage. Banquo scares Macbeth, and Caesar unsettles Brutus. But in neither case is the ghost the cause of what

follows onstage. Though both Brutus and Macbeth follow Rich's ideas, the results are fruitless: they may as well have ignored the ghosts, for the results would have been the same.

However, in another (earlier) play, Kyd's drama *The Spanish Tragedy*, one ghost is the narrative guide and another is being guided. The narrative guide also guides the audience: Dante and Virgil are transposed. However, the Ghost of Andrea and Revenge never converse onstage with anyone but themselves; similarly, neither appears onstage to instruct or scare any of the living characters. *The Spanish Tragedy* offers central ghosts who are not offered up for spectral roles. Between Kyd's play and *Julius Caesar* and *Macbeth* we have different versions of ghosts, but none of them truly rises to the level of threat or interest suggested by Rich's warning.

Hamlet is a different case, however. Both aspects of Rich's spectrality appear in *Hamlet*, such as when Hamlet asks Horatio about the Ghost's appearance. Hamlet is making sure that the Ghost is truly a representation of his father:

> HAMLET Armed, say you?
> HORATIO ET AL. Armed, my lord.
> HAMLET   From top to toe?
> HORATIO ET AL. My lord, from head to foot. (I.II.225-6)

We see here a connection between the Ghost onstage and the ghosts that were alleged to plague the Irish. Hamlet's response is typical of one who has heeded Rich's warning, just as the Irish were supposed to. We can already discern here a foundational connection between Hamlet and the Irish, therefore – it centres on this spectrality.

Moreover, the spectre connotes a certain offstage power – an idea visible in Rich's implication that the spirits are the devil's doing. Spirits are threatening, that is, because the source of their power is not of this world. Their power derives from hell, a place not visible on earth except through these spiritual visitors. These ideas are also evident in *Hamlet*, such as when Horatio and the guards assess from whence the Ghost

comes and why. Horatio says that the Ghost 'harrows me with fear and wonder' (I.i.43) and that its appearance 'bodes some strange eruption to our state' (I.i.73); it is clearly an 'extravagant and erring spirit', which means that it is 'wandering beyond its proper bounds' (I.i.153 and note). Spectrality in this vein is also to have one's power not in presence, but in absence. Spectrality is thus both the task to reveal the spirit's true nature – to uncover its deception, to make truth out of myth, to authenticate, to demythologise – and to have a power located offstage, or to be defined positively by absent presence. The latter is often glossed as 'representation', the power of which is double: both the substitutive 'representation' (or *Vertreten*) visible in art, from which symbols and metaphor derive; and 're-presentation' (or *Darstellen*) visible in politics, from which delegation and metonymy derive. In the Ghost the dual sense of representation allows for a political and artistic substitution; modern Irish literature inherits both of these senses of the Ghost's absent presence.

Hamlet, himself, is implicated in both the Ghost's demythologisation and the Ghost's absent presence: Hamlet derives his power from the latter, and his act of revenge proves the Ghost to be true. Hamlet's version of demythologising is critically inflected: Hamlet is not demythologising the Ghost in order to defuse its power; instead he does so to give the Ghost stronger power in its unambiguous relation to the real. Hamlet adapts Rich's recommendation. Perhaps most importantly, this spectrality gives to the play our sense of a modern sovereignty, as characterised by Agamben. Above I wrote how the modern sovereign is intimately connected to the exception in Agamben's thinking: the sovereign is situated outside the law which gives it power, and also decides on the exception – that which is excluded from the law. The Ghost in *Hamlet* fits this description; the Ghost is the play's modern sovereign, even though Claudius claims to be the unchallenged king of Denmark. We now have an overlap between the spectral and the sovereign. Furthermore, Hamlet's actions in the play – to prove the Ghost as true, to ef-

fect his law of revenge – leads Hamlet to sovereign power in deciding on the exception, Claudius. Spectrality and sovereignty are, in this modern moment it appears, sited in the same person. If modern consciousness is paradigmatically represented by Hamlet's soliloquizing,[9] and if Hamlet is devoted to spectrality (demythologising the Ghost, locating power offstage), then Hamlet's modern consciousness is to be found in this spectrality. Spectrality in this instance is a perverse inheritance from dead father to son.

These ideas are important not only because Rich pointed out their contemporary salience in Ireland in the early modern period. These ideas are also important in our reading of Synge's *Playboy*. Christy, like Hamlet, derives his onstage power from a dead father offstage, albeit in adapted circumstances. Rather than his father being murdered and asking Christy to revenge his murder onstage, Christy is the man who killed his father; from his father's absence, Christy is revered as a hero. Christy's inheritance, much as Hamlet's, is perverse: Christy inherits authority from his recently killed father. Clearly Christy's version of inheritance is personal and requires a definite break with the past. Christy explains how 'it was a bitter life [Old Mahon, my father] led me till I did up a Tuesday and halve his skull'.[10] Christy proceeds to explain to Widow Quin what triggered his murderous action:

> [T]here I was, digging and digging, and 'You squinting idiot,' says he, 'let you walk down now and tell the priest you'll wed the Widow Casey in a score of days.' […] [She was a] walking terror from beyond the hills, and she two score and five years, and two hundred-weights and five pounds in the weighing scales, with a limping leg on her, and a blinded eye, and she a woman of noted misbehaviour with the old and young. […] 'I won't wed her,' says I, 'when all know she did suckle me for six weeks when I came into the world, and she a hag this day with a tongue on her has the crows and seabirds scattered, the way they wouldn't cast a shadow on her garden with the dread of her curse.'[11]

Old Mahon was killed for two reasons. The first, obvious, reason was because he gave

[9] Margreta de Grazia, *'Hamlet' Without Hamlet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 7.

[10] J. M. Synge, 'The Playboy of the Western World', in *J. M. Synge's Plays, Poems, and Prose* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1961), pp. 105-67 (i, p. 124).

[11] Synge, 'Playboy', ii, pp. 131-2.

the law, or sovereign instructions, telling Christy to marry Widow Casey against Christy's wishes. Old Mahon as sovereign tries to control desire, refusing to grant Christy full modern status of being in control of his own future. In doing so, Old Mahon urged a quasi-incestuous relationship between Christy and the Widow Casey who nursed him: Old Mahon advocates a relation of circularity which prevents novelty and modernity. We might think of Old Mahon as a parallel to Claudius, whose marriage to Gertrude heralds his bid control the law of the *polis* but also the comings and goings of his now-son Hamlet. Christy, like Hamlet, has to kill Old Mahon in order to become a modern individual himself: the past must be overthrown in order for the present to thrive. In *Hamlet* this is legitimised through the Ghost's demand that Hamlet 'Remember me' and that that remembrance should come through his 'reveng[ing] [your father's] most foul and unnatural murder'; in *Playboy* Christy's murder of Old Mahon is legitimised by the shebeen community. Christy's power derives from offstage spectrality.

Hamlet, of course, is not the only drama which stages the murder of a father in order for the son to thrive; however, Sigmund Freud, in his comparison between *Oedipus Rex* and *Hamlet* points us to a chief difference: 'For it can only be the poet's mind which confronts us in *Hamlet*.'[12] Whilst I will not be following Freud's psychoanalytic approach, it is key that both he and Stephen Dedalus draw our attention to the ghostly relation between author and text, for it reveals to us the important inheritance in these Irish texts of the relation between the two. The audience of *Playboy* is required to consider who stands behind Old Mahon, or what Old Mahon represents, both politically and artistically.

The second reason for Mahon's murder is encoded within references to Widow Casey's being a 'walking terror from beyond the hills', and Old Mahon's role in making Christy dig the land. These characters are connected to the land, which I equate with an

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[12] Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams (First Part)*, trans. by James Strachey, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. by James Strachey, 24 vols, vol. 4 (London: Vintage, 2001 [1899]), p. 265.

old, pre-industrial Ireland; but this is no Revivalist pre-industrial Ireland. Instead, this is a negative spin on that latter version of Irish history, one which has at its heart the problem of Old Mahon: he seeks to replicate and to continue these ideas. By casting them as negative, Synge casts Old Mahon's claim to sovereignty adrift, given its roots in the land. The same is true for Shawn Keogh who offers a 'drift of heifers' and a 'blue sneem' as a dowry for his marriage to Pegeen Mike;[13] he, too, is dismissed as pre-industrial and undesirable, and it is Christy's arrival onstage that enacts the change in Shawn's connotation. In the first act, when the two are still betrothed, Pegeen Mike and Shawn discuss their forthcoming marriage:

> SHAWN [W]hen we're wedded in a short while […].
> PEGEEN You're making mighty certain, Shaneen, that I'll wed you now.
> SHAWN Aren't we after making a good bargain, the way we're only waiting these days on Father Reilly's dispensation from the bishops, or the Court of Rome.[14]

The procedure of the wedding is in full flow at the play's beginning; however, by the end of the first act, after Widow Quin adverts to Pegeen's and Shawn's upcoming marriage, Christy is concerned:

> CHRISTY What's that she's [Widow Quin] after saying?
> PEGEEN Lies and blather, you've no call to mind. […]
> CHRISTY And you're not wedding him at all?
> PEGEEN I wouldn't wed him if a bishop came walking for to join us here.[15]

Pegeen's denial condemns Shawn, thereby dismissing him from their relationship, ; this ends their betrothal.

Thus far I have shown how the dismissal of these two characters, Old Mahon and Shawn Keogh, has its impetus in the idea that both derive their existence from their relationship to the land, rather than their relationship to others; the former determines the latter. In Christy and Pegeen we have two characters able to dismiss these individuals

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[13] Synge, 'Playboy', iii, p. 159.
[14] Synge, 'Playboy', i, p. 110.
[15] Synge, 'Playboy', i, p. 127.

from the earth – manifest as 'this life' for Old Mahon and 'the stage' for Shawn Keogh. But this reading begs a question: if Christy is so powerful, and is the play's hero approaching modern self-consciousness, then how does it come about that he, too, is dismissed from the stage?

To answer this question, it is first important to outline how Christy comes to represent modernity in the play. We have already noted how Old Mahon and Shawn are connected to the land, and that this is the chief facet of their pre-industrial values. It is significant that Christy is severally described as having (temporarily) left the land through leaping: when he kills his father for the first time, Christy explains how he took a 'lep to the east' – he left the land in order to kill his father. This idea is complemented by Christy's success as a 'Grand lepper' in winning 'all in the sports'. Additionally, one of Shawn's most extreme comments about Christy is that the latter is a 'lepping savage', indicating his own maintenance of the normative land-association.[16] This leads to an adequation between Christy and modernity: his departure from the land reconfigures his, and by extension man's, relationship with the land. Instead of being rooted in the land, as Old Mahon and Shawn Keogh are, Christy is able to define himself as distinct from his relationship with the land: this is a revolutionary moment.[17]

Christy is initially accepted because one of the threats he represents is that he might steal some hens.[18] Christy is therefore read in the first instance as someone who is also linked with the land: someone who knows the value of stealing hens. Additionally, Christy's confession of murder locates his power in spectrality: his actions offstage have given him a mysterious, mythological power which derives from the spectral. Christy's relation to the land and his mysterious power are the reasons that he is invited to take

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[16] Synge, 'Playboy', iii, p. 153; iii, p. 157; iii, p. 159.
[17] Below I discuss how the ability to be modern in Ireland can be forged through one's roots in the land, but specifically with Seamus Heaney's poetry. Heaney, given this assessment, might be said to be working antagonistically with Synge's work, albeit heading to the same goal.
[18] Synge, 'Playboy', i, p. 114.

part in the games: the society considers that he is one of them. However, they mis-read Christy, not realising until later that he is a 'lepping savage', one who has not murdered an oppressive father but rather murdered a sign of the values they hold dear. In place of the old Ireland, Christy installs and implies his new sovereignty which allows him to dismiss the Law (sited in the father-figure) and renegotiate his own being from the position, offstage, of the murdered father-figure.

Christy's power is located offstage in his father's murder; however, with Old Mahon's reappearance onstage, Christy's spectral power is deflated. Pegeen tells Old Mahon to 'Take [Christy] on from this, for I think bad the world should see me raging for a Munster liar, and the fool of men'. The Crowd jeer accusingly, exclaiming, 'There's the playboy! There's the lad thought he'd rule the roost in Mayo! Slate him now, mister!' The way that Pegeen phrases it a few moments later is telling. She realises, as she tells Christy, that 'there's a great gap between a gallous story and a dirty deed'.[19] Pegeen now appears to take heed of Rich's advice from centuries earlier: she is uncovering the truth of the ghost, the one whose power lay offstage. The ghost of Mahon is revealed as living, undead, non-mythological: it returns us to truth, the demands of being and the real. Christy's sovereignty is undermined and disabused; sovereignty in *Playboy* returns to those whose relation to the land is their principal characteristic.

Christy is forced to leave the community. Old Mahon's second return to life heralds his and Christy's removal from the stage. But their departure is on Christy's terms, as he explains to Old Mahon:

> Go with you, is it? I will then, like a gallant captain with his heathen slave. Go on now and I'll see you from this day stewing my oatmeal and washing my spuds, for I'm master of all fights from now. Go on, I'm saying. […] Not a word out of you. Go on from this.[20]

Old Mahon and Christy leave the stage for a space in which Christy overturns the rela-

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[19] Synge, 'Playboy', iii, p. 161.
[20] Synge, 'Playboy', iii, p. 167; p. 165.

tionship with his father and is now in control. Another way of thinking of this relation, and the shift in the power dynamics, is through Hegel's notion of the dialectic: thesis, antithesis, synthesis. The father, the son, then their synthesis results in the new relation of the son leading father. With Christy and Old Mahon located offstage by the play's end, Pegeen has not merely lost the 'only Playboy of the Western World',[21] but the father and son have synthesised into a new, offstage law – what we might facetiously call the Holy Ghost. This Ghost is a modern sovereignty – once again located offstage. Pegeen's lament is not only that she cannot have Christy to sate her desire, but that she and her community have been cast adrift by modernity.

Nelson O'Ceallaigh Ritschel attributes the crowd's rejection of Christy's second murder of Old Mahon to the crowd's implied complicity, which is personal, rather than systemic violence:

> The second murder is rejected not because it is too close, but because it is attempted for personal reasons – violating the dominant theme of the pre-1916 Irish theatre of public duty to Ireland over private concerns.[22]

Whilst Ritschel's argument is helpful in drawing together the play and its historico-political context, the second murder alludes to the issue of sovereignty: the *Playboy*'s society cannot take part in the overthrow of an old regime. By doing so they would advocate modernity and assume the old society's sovereign mantle, and also undermine the old system still in place; that is, they would be supporting revolutionary politics onstage, the origin and power of which could not be deferred offstage, nor proven to be false as in spectrality.

Shaun Richards notes that through this Modernist play 'Synge demonstrates that the corollary of the overthrow of the past is its necessary reintegration into the future',

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[21] Synge, 'Playboy', iii, p. 167.

[22] Nelson O'Ceallaigh Ritschel, *Synge and Irish Nationalism: The Precursor to Revolution* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), p. 47.

but here the argument is, instead, that 'the corollary of the overthrow of the past is' the new sovereign's spectral presence 'into the future'. And, as we have seen, that spectrality is marked by its offstage-ness; or, as Richards writes elsewhere, the 'radical alternative occupies an ungraspable off-stage infinity'.[23] This ties in with my comment above, that Synge problematises the status quo by leaving it onstage, and by allowing a spectral presence from offstage; Dobbins glosses this by writing that 'Synge's plays emphasise the centrality of a recalcitrance which serves as an obstacle to progress'.[24]

What Synge poses is not an answer to a social problem (as Sean O'Casey's drama might be construed), but an explication of how the battle is being waged in revolutionary Ireland. The revolution is there, but offstage: it is out in the West if you are a metrocolonial, or it is in the city if you are in the West. The task of the Irish citizen – he who inherits his relationship to the land of Ireland from his forebears – is to recognise the existence of myths, or spectres. It is, like Hamlet, to demythologise myth by making it operative and bear a stronger relation to reality: it is to authenticate. Christy achieves this by absenting himself from the stage – by making himself and his relation with his father spectral: Christy asks us and Irish citizens as audience to make him real and to prove the reality of his revolutionary dialectic

'Remember me': Bloom, memory and poetry

I established above how early modern spectrality – notably in Ireland – cautioned against the insidious presence of ghosts who sought to converse with the subjects of Ireland on a daily basis. Rich instructed that ghosts should be found out, and their mythological elements revealed: they should be demythologised. I traced this impulse in *Hamlet* to show how Hamlet does demythologise, but not necessarily in the way Rich intended. Instead of revealing, and therefore disabusing, spiritual power, Hamlet authenticated spiritual

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[23] Shaun Richards, 'The Playboy of the Western World', in *The Cambridge Companion to J. M. Synge,* ed. by J. P. Mathews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 28-40 (p. 39).
[24] Dobbins, 'Synge and Irish modernism', p. 140.

power by another demythologisation: by confirming and strengthening the Ghost's relation to reality onstage in Elsinore. Hamlet needs the Ghost and confirms the Ghost's reality – it leads to Hamlet's claim to sovereignty. This was also true for Christy, whose relation to offstage, spectral power is pivotal. Through it Christy is legitimised and his 'lepping' revolution is forwarded. However, when Christy is dismissed alongside his revived father at the end of the play, Christy becomes spectre himself, synthesised with his father into a position of power. Synge's offstage, spectral revolutionary power owes something to *Hamlet* precisely in this setup, by asking his audience to make Christy real through demythologisation, but not to disabuse his power.

These ideas overlap with Rich's spectrality in the early seventeenth century. In this current section I look at *Hamlet*'s Ghost using a late twentieth-century theory from Derrida. I explain how Leopold Bloom's impulse in Joyce's 'Hades' to establish an immortality in communal and personal memory leads him to remember *Hamlet* and that play's meditations on becoming and memory; it leads, ultimately, to Bloom's self-authorship and self-consciousness. He is able to write himself as citizen into Irish history; formally preserved in technology, he is its citizen content. I explore how the Ghost's injunction to his son in *Hamlet* to 'Remember me' becomes an injunction descending from *Hamlet* to Bloom in the 'Hades' chapter of *Ulysses*; this becomes a way of explaining why 'Ireland' should remember 'Shakespeare'.

Bloom remembers *Hamlet* unconsciously in strategizing about how to survive death and become immortal. He wants to be remembered himself, both in the Dublin community and by those who knew him. Bloom's *telos* is to be in non-being: to live on in death. Of course this *telos* is a perceived modification of a central concern of Hamlet himself: 'To be, or not to be[?]' (III.i.55) [192]. Moreover, the methods of memorialisation that Bloom heralds as the answer to his conundrum are constituted by death and non-

being: his son Rudy's ghost, a 'disenflesh[ing]' photograph[25] and a record that stores voices of the dead. Bloom's turn to ghosts alerts us first that he derives his own being from a spectre, exactly that which Derrida argues in relation to *Hamlet*. Bloom is therefore *hauntologised* by the ghost, ontologised through its haunting absence and prepared for death.

Additionally, whilst Bloom's turn to the technological photograph and vinyl suggest a τέχνη (*tekhnè*), a creation or manufacturing of a representation of Bloom so that he may survive after his death, I explain how Bloom's commitment to memory through these technologies demonstrates a commitment instead to ποίησις (*poiesis*), or generative becoming. Bloom is remembered and becomes, because he is a poet. Much as Hamlet is a poet whose language explicates his own becoming, and who through language explores his own question about being and/or non-being, Bloom remembers the Ghost's injunction to be remembered. This is Bloom's modernity, and it is only fully comprehensible through remembering *Hamlet*.

'Hades', the sixth episode in *Ulysses*, charts Bloom's journey from the centre of Dublin to Prospect Cemetery in the northwest quadrant of Dublin. Bloom travels in a carriage with three other Dubliners – Martin Cunningham, Arthur Power and Simon Dedalus – from Sandymount to Glasnevin in order to attend Paddy Dignam's funeral. In the process the carriage crosses the four waterways in Dublin – the River Dodder, the Grand Canal, the River Liffey and the Royal Canal – thereby mimicking the epic trope of the ἡ νέκυια, the descent into hell. Odysseus' descent into hell in *The Odyssey*, as with Aeneas in *The Aeneid*, requires him to cross the four waterways of Hades, the underworld. Maurice Halbwachs argues that 'The "Nekuya," […] provides a background against which we can more clearly discern both Olympus with its misty lights and a society of

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[25] Maud Ellmann, 'The Ghosts of *Ulysses*', in *James Joyce's 'Ulysses': A Casebook,* ed. by Derek Attridge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 83-101 (p. 83).

men who are above all lovers of life'.[26] As with Odysseus, Bloom's journey to the ceme-

tery exposes him as a 'lover[] of life', though 'no external wisdom guides him'.[27] In

'Hades' we see Bloom's artistry. Though it is common to label Stephen the poet and

Bloom the citizen, in 'Hades' we see Bloom as the poet and hero of *Ulysses* the 'wisdom

literature'.[28]

Bloom achieves this wisdom and his status as poet through his engagement with

ghosts in 'Hades'. Not unsurprisingly 'Hades', situated in a mythological underworld and

site of afterlife, is a chapter coloured by death. R. M. Adams describes how Bloom is

'haunted throughout the chapter by an amazing assortment of ghosts, spooks, and hob-

goblin doppelgängers',[29] fearing even stories of ghosts returning after death: 'I will appear

to you after death. You will see my ghost after death. My ghost will haunt you after

death.'[30] The ghosts Bloom encounters make him worry about how he will be remem-

bered after his own death; he begins to wonder how it is possible to avoid oblivion.

Whilst Bloom believes in the power of memory, he worries that his narrative is not part

of the communal storytelling. It is not enough that he will continue to live within indi-

vidual or personalised memories, and so the community at large appeals greatly. This

community does not exclude the dead, and Shari Benstock notes that 'Bloom is haunted

by the ghost of his dead loved ones, is obsessed with his own dead past, is discovering

on this day that the 'spirit' world is very much a part of his everyday life'.[31] Additionally,

Bloom fears that the spirit world may leave his own – that he may be excluded from the

community of the dead.

There is a tension between communal and personal memory. When there re-

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[26] Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, ed. and trans. by Lewis A. Coser (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 85.

[27] Hugh Kenner, 'Joyce's *Ulysses*: Homer and Hamlet', in *Essays in Criticism,* 2.1 (1952), 85-104 (98) <doi: 10.1093/eic/II.1.85>.

[28] Kiberd, *Ulysses and Us*, pp. 18-31, *passim*.

[29] Adams, 'Hades', p. 99.

[30] Joyce, *Ulysses*, pp. 6.1000-1.

[31] Shari Benstock, '*Ulysses* as Ghoststory', in *James Joyce Quarterly,* 12.4 (1975), 396-413 (409).

mains only a personal memory of a person, then their memory is contestable; however, when there exists a communal consensus about someone then that opinion becomes a kind of truth. The spectrality of *Playboy* in which Christy is left offstage to be demythologised in order to carry a stronger relation to reality appears in 'Hades' as leaning to communal memory. Kerri Haggart's claim that 'Throughout [Hades] it is clear that Bloom's concerns lie within the domestic realm' needs to be tempered by Bloom's situation as a citizen in 1904 Dublin:[32] the public sphere is as important as the private one. A key worry for Bloom during the carriage journey to the cemetery is how his father Virag's death is remembered by the Dublin community: suicide or misadventure. Bloom's turn to Virag is prompted by his fellow travellers' chatter about suicide and how, according to Arthur Power, 'the worst of all […] is the man who takes his own life. […] The greatest disgrace to have in the family'.[33] Martin Cunningham senses Bloom's embarrassment, and is aware of the contested opinion of Bloom's father's death. For his part Bloom recalls the coroner's inquest:

> That afternoon of the inquest. The redlabelled bottle on the table. The room in the hotel with hunting pictures. Stuffy it was. Sunlight through the slats of the Venetian blind. The coroner's sunlit ears, big and hairy. Boots giving evidence. Thought he was asleep first. Then saw like yellow streaks on his face. Had slipped down to the foot of the bed. Verdict: overdose. Death by misadventure. The letter. For my son Leopold.
>
> No more pain. Wake no more. Nobody owns.[34]

This passage demonstrates the problems involved in remembering, and the pain Bloom feels in thinking about Virag, as 'These thoughts are individual to' Bloom.[35] The literal meaning of 'nostalgia'[36] may be called to mind here; it was described in 1843 by Søren Kierkegaard as 'the pleasant as a bygone […] which] has an intrinsic unpleasantness with

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which it can awaken a sense of loss'.[37] The 'Hades' passage also reveals the discrepancy between the *de jure* judgment on Virag's death, and the *de facto* understanding by the Dublin community: the former suggests misadventure, supported by Bloom, whilst the latter, the community's, is illegal suicide. The discrepancy between the *de jure* and *de facto* opinions on Bloom's father also opens a gap between a personal and communal memory. Looking forward, Bloom begins to wonder how he himself will be remembered, and whether there is anything he can do to remedy an untrue communal memory of himself.

The relation of memory to truth and law is as important in 1904 Dublin as it is in 1922 when *Ulysses'* was published. An Ireland in 1904 that was still seeking a Home Rule Bill in Westminster placed great emphasis on *de jure* judgements, while the cultural productions of the period focused more intently on *de facto* understandings of Ireland and its heritage. In 'Hades' the writing stages a contest between *de jure* and *de facto* truths. 'Hades' complicates those antipodes, suggesting instead that there is a way of illuminating the possibilities of both truths; Bloom's immortal existence *de facto* provides the basis for his entry into the juridical system as law-giver.

This process starts when we are encouraged to think that Bloom is learning from his father. Much as with Bloom and Virag, Hamlet likewise cannot escape the legacy of his father's death. Prior even to the Ghost's appearance to Hamlet, Hamlet tells Horatio that 'methinks I see my father':

> HORATIO Where my lord?
> HAMLET   In my mind's eye, Horatio. (I.II.183-4)

In addition to his father's death, Hamlet is disturbed by his mother's swift marriage to Claudius, complaining that 'the funeral baked meats / Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables' (I.II.179-80). Hamlet is upset by his father's sudden death, and announces to

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[37] Søren Kierkegaard, *The Essential Kierkegaard*, ed. and trans. by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 57. The turn to Kierkegaard here is useful not only in terms of what the philosopher says, but also because of the Danish philosopher's relationship to existentialism, that brand of philosophy that centres on how a being lives in the world; I return to Kierkegaard's useful ideas below.

Horatio that ''A was a man, take him for all in all, / I shall not look upon his like again' (I.ii.186-7). We thus see both Bloom and Hamlet nostalgically recall their respective fathers, never shirking their role as chief rememberers. Though we can draw this similarity between the two, this is often where the comparisons end. Instead, Stephen Dedalus and Hamlet are often drawn together partly because of their mutual visitation by ghosts. Stephen twice narrates in *Ulysses*' opening chapter how

> Silently, in a dream [Stephen's mother] had come to him after her death, her wasted body within its loose brown graveclothes giving off an odour of wax and rosewood, her breath, that had bent upon him, mute, reproachful, a faint odour of wetted ashes.[38]

Whereas Stephen's mother's ghost is 'mute', the Ghost of Hamlet's father will speak willingly only to Hamlet, giving him a Hobson's choice about the most appropriate way to remember him. Not only does the Ghost instruct Hamlet to 'Revenge [your father's] most foul and unnatural murder' (I.v.25) but it also enjoins him to 'remember me' (I.v.91). Here we discern the growing distinction between the communal memory of the late King Hamlet and Hamlet's personal memory of his father. The two only merge after Hamlet's death at the end of Act Five. Hamlet's being – his existence – is dedicated to a personal memory of his father that Hamlet seeks to make communal. For Hamlet, the making-communal is through the revengeful murder of Claudius who murdered King Hamlet; for Hamlet, that is, to 'remember me' is to 'revenge [… your father's] murder'. On the surface this could not be further from Stephen's memory of his mother and Bloom's embarrassment at the manner of his own father's death.

However, Derrida's reading of *Hamlet* offers another way of thinking about the Ghost. For Derrida the relationship between the Ghost and Hamlet is 'asymmetr[ical]', particularly with regard to the Ghost's hiding beneath his visor when he first enters, meaning that the Ghost can see who is looking at him, but others cannot see the Ghost:

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[38] Joyce, *Ulysses*, pp. 1.102-5. See also 1.270-2.

> A spectral asymmetry interrupts here all specularity. It de-synchronizes, it recalls us to anachrony. We will call this the *visor effect*: we do not see who looks at us. Even though in his ghost the King looks like himself […] that does not prevent him from looking without being seen: his apparition makes him appear still invisible beneath his armor. […] Another suggestion: This spectral *someone other looks at us*, we feel ourselves being looked at by it, outside of any synchrony, even before and beyond any look on our part, according to an absolute anteriority (which may be on the order of generation, of more than one generation) and asymmetry […]. Here anachony [*sic*] makes the law. To feel ourselves seen by a look which it will always be impossible to cross, that is the *visor effect* on the basis of which we inherit from the law. Since we do not see the one who sees us, and who makes the law, who delivers the injunction […] since we do not see the one who orders 'swear,' we cannot identify it in all certainty, we must fall back on its voice.[39]

A few elements from this extended passage need explication. First, the idea that 'giv[ing] the law' is involved in the relationship between the Ghost and Hamlet and others. This directly places the Ghost in the position of a sovereign, the one who decides the law and is beyond the law. The figure of the Ghost in *Hamlet* represents this sovereign topology nearly perfectly, most notably when the Ghost disappears beneath the stage from where he commands Horatio and Marcellus to 'Swear' their oath of secrecy to Hamlet. The discussion of sovereignty and the giving of laws is important at the time of *Hamlet*'s genesis and original production (c. 1599), since England was rapidly heading towards the unknown as Queen Elizabeth's successor was yet to be named. When King James VI/I did ascend the throne, one of the first public discussions he had with his parliament was about the king's right to divine and absolute rule. On the one hand James wanted a union of sorts, preceding the Act of Union by a century:

> James asked the judges to rule whether Parliament might alter the royal style without abrogating the laws of England. They replied that a union of laws must precede a union of crowns. The King […] fell back on the expedient of issuing a proclamation in October assuming the style of 'KING OF GREAT BRITTAINE, FRANCE [and] IRELAND …' for purposes of all 'Proclama-

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[39] Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, pp. 6-7. The French phrase, 'un regard qu'il sera toujours impossible de croiser' is translated as 'a look which it will always be impossible to cross'; however, it ought to read, "the gaze that it will always be impossible to meet".

tions, Missives forreine and Domesticall, Treaties, Leagues, Ded-
ications, Impressions, and in all other cases of like nature.' […]
These jurisdictions were within the King's prerogative, but James
went further to declare that they rested on his 'Imperiall Pow-
er.'[40]

King James suggested a revolution in common-law power in England. As late as 1610,

Thomas Headley explained to parliament how form and content were married in parlia-

ment's power, even to dispute with the king's right to dismiss English common law:

> But then you will say, the parliament, which is nothing else in ef-
> fect but the mutual consent of the king and people, is that which
> gives matter and form and all complements to the common law.
> […] But form logic to law, the king by his prerogative may dis-
> pense with a statute law, so he cannot with the common law.
> Also, the common law doth bind, and lead or direct the descent
> and right of the crown.[41]

Here the law is ghosting the law-giver, standing outside and lending power to the bearer

of the crown. This English common law reflects also a marriage of form and matter.

That, too, is my concern in this chapter: how *Hamlet*'s Ghost might allow Hamlet, and

his erstwhile-descendant Bloom, to author themselves – to create themselves as coherent

citizens in the emergence of the English and/or Irish modern nation-state. The form of

the law is married to the sovereign who acts as content to the law, endowing it with

meaning and power. Any literary instantiation in this period of how a monarch might

rule therefore keys into contemporary politics and questions surrounding monarchical

governance. In *Hamlet* we see that most visibly in the contest between the Ghost's and

Claudius' claims to sovereignty.

The second point I draw from Derrida's passage is the notion of asymmetrical

and blind specularity: the Ghost sees Hamlet, but Hamlet is denied full view of the

Ghost. For Derrida, specularity becomes spectrality through this asymmetry. The blind-

ness, or the visor effect, bears two important characteristics for my argument below: first

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[40] Zaller, *The Discourse of Legitimacy*, p. 316.
[41] Thomas Hedley's speech to Parliament, 28 June 1610, in Elizabeth Read Foster, ed., *Proceedings in Parliament: 1610*, 2 vols, vol. 2 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 173-4.

is the focus on the ocular relationship between sovereign and subject; second is the impossible meeting of the sovereign's and subject's gaze. In Derrida's reading it leads to a governing uncertainty about the Ghost's identity – especially when the Ghost is offstage – despite the Ghost's ability to give the law. It means that *Hamlet* is premised on an undecidability. The implication is that the subject of the law is as responsible for verifying the law as the law-giver is herself. Hamlet, that is, confirms the law by seeking to effect it; in effecting the law Hamlet also confirms the veracity of the law-giver. Hamlet's 'To be, or not to be' soliloquy, which addresses being and non-being –living ghosts or dead people – also addresses the reality of Hamlet's injunction from the Ghost. Hamlet's existence as revenger is predicated on a potential non-being.

The final aspect of Derrida's ideas I explicate is the notion of anachrony. Derrida draws our attention to the mix of generations when the Ghost gives his instructions to Hamlet; but more than this the anachrony also bears another idea, that of the time being 'out of joint' (I.v.186).[42] The Ghost has breeched impropriety by returning to the stage after his death to give Hamlet his injunction. In a paradox to which Derrida draws our attention, though it is anachrony giving the law, it is Hamlet's task to set anachrony right and to put time back into joint: 'O cursèd spite / That ever I was born to set it right!' (I.v.186-7) What ails Hamlet, however, is not that anachrony is giving the law, nor that the time is out of joint, but that it is his task to effect the righting of time and the ending of anachrony. 'Hamlet curses the destiny', writes Derrida,

> that would have destined him to be the man of right, precisely [*justement*], as if he were cursing the right or the law itself that has made of him a righter of wrongs, the one who, like the right, can only come after the crime, or simply *after*: that is, in a necessarily second generation, originarily late and therefore destined to *inherit*.[43]

Derrida's reading reveals the collocation of inheritance and memory. Importantly it

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[42] These ideas are equally underpinned by Gilles Deleuze's idea of 'empty time'. Cf. Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. by Paul Datton (London: The Athlone Press, 1994 [1968]), pp. 88-91.
[43] Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, p. 21.

shows, as I explained in Chapter Two in relation to the fraternal elements of *Hamlet*, that to inherit is to decide with what inheritance one is burdened. This reasserts the notion I described above that Hamlet's role as effector of the law determines the veracity of the law and the law-giver or sovereign. In the case of *Hamlet*, Hamlet is the most important actor in terms of the Ghost's injunction and it is Hamlet's inheritance, which is as important as the Ghost's posthumous appearance, that defines anachrony.

Derrida usefully gives us a term to group these ideas together, '*hauntology*': 'Staging for the end of history.'[44] Hauntology, which is ghosted in French (and nearly in English) by its homonym 'ontology', is concerned with a becoming that is interested in absence and non-being. In other words, 'To be, or not to be' is an organising structure between the Ghost and Hamlet, and Hamlet's immediate injunction from an anachronic, posthumous spectre that commissions Hamlet to kill and to be killed. The Ghost hauntologises Hamlet, bringing him into being as an inheritor and prepares him for death, both as its wielder and sufferer. This hauntological idea is serviceable in our fuller understanding of Bloom's bid to avoid oblivion and to be remembered in communal and social memory. Bloom, too, remembers *Hamlet*'s Ghost.

Bloom and Hauntology

Bloom is in a hauntological relationship with his late son, Rudy, and in his imagination he restores an anachrony with Rudy that attempts to establish Bloom in an imagined future. He is prompted to think of Rudy by Simon Dedalus' desire to commit to setting his son, Stephen, on the right path, and to separating Stephen from the bad influence of Malachi Mulligan. Simon threatens to write to Mulligan's aunt since 'I won't have her bastard of a nephew ruin my son'.[45] Bloom's response confirms that Simon is right to worry about his son, particularly because Simon's own inheritance is at stake. Bloom wants to give his

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[44] Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, p. 10.
[45] Joyce, *Ulysses*, p. 6.70.

own son his due inheritance:

> Full of his son. He is right. Something to hand on. If little Rudy
> had lived. See him grow up. Hear his voice in the house. Walking
> beside Molly in an Eton suit. My son. Me in his eyes. Strange
> feeling it would be. From me. Just a chance.[46]

It would be easy to draw analogies between *Hamlet*'s Ghost and Bloom: both figures seek anachronic futurity in their sons; both are connected to the ocular or spectral blindness, as Bloom here sees not Rudy's eyes, but his own eyes in Rudy's (which also connects to anachrony). Both figures are also, in their connections with their sons, in a relationship with death or non-being: the Ghost is the return of a dead figure, whilst Bloom imagines the restoration of his own dead son. In this last idea, the homological connection between the Ghost, Bloom and Hamlet breaks down, however, for Bloom is never able to give the law to his son: Rudy is dead while Bloom lives. Nevertheless, if we reverse the anachrony, the hauntology reappears: Rudy hauntologises Bloom, the former preparing the latter for the end of history and for his death.

Rudy's appearance in Bloom's imagination awakens Bloom to his own coming demise: Bloom is alerted to the end of his personal history. In this way, thinking about Virag orients Bloom to the communal aspect of memory, but Bloom's imagined Rudy with 'Me in his eyes' reminds Bloom that death heralds the end of his own life. For Kimberly Devlin, this ocular focus 'conveys a desire for recognition from the son, an insistent need for paternal self-reflection in the offspring's look'.[47] Through this reading, we more readily see Rudy hauntologising Bloom by giving him the law through anachrony, a failed ocular connection and a failed inheritance. The law of the son compels Bloom to create for himself a future after death – a future in memory that avoids oblivion. Though none of this is explicit, Bloom's concerns with personal and communal memory stem from

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[46] Joyce, *Ulysses*, pp. 6.74-80.
[47] Kimberly J. Devlin, 'Visible Shades and Shades of Visibility: The En-Gendering of Death in "Hades"', in *'Ulysses' – En-Gendered Perspectives: Eighteen New Essays on the Episodes,* ed. by Kimberly J. Devlin and Marilyn Reizbaum (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1999), pp. 67-85 (p. 75).

this imagined moment. Critically, the imagined encounter with Rudy's ghost gives us a temporal structure which Bloom deploys later in the chapter: Bloom marries the past via analepsis or flashback, with an imagined future, or prolepsis. The present in this dynamic is effaced, with existence erased or deferred into non-being. Politically, modern Ireland can be forged in the future by using the past; though not, as Roy Foster argued, by using the 'continuous past'. Bloom finds a more profitable modernity which, in adopting spectral ideas, marries the historical inadequacy of past fathers with the potential futurity typical of daughters. And he manages it through death.

After the funeral rites and burial of Paddy Dignam, Bloom first considers how he may effect his injunction. He worries about 'How many' graves and bodies there are in the cemetery and is anxious about the potential failure of communal memory: 'Besides how could you remember everybody?'[48] Bloom's first answer relies on relatively new technology and centres on the authority of the voice – much as Hamlet asserted the authority and veracity of the Ghost's voice beneath the stage. Bloom considers:

> Eyes, walk, voice. Well, the voice, yes: gramophone. Have a gramophone in every grave or keep it in the house. After dinner on a Sunday. Put on poor old greatgrandfather Kraahraark! Hellohellohello amawfullyglad kraark awfullygladaseeagain hellohello amrawf kopthsth.[49]

Here too we see the analeptic – thinking of the past – with the proleptic – encoding in the future. The introduction of technology here is crucial as Bloom's suggested use of the gramophone record is identical with some of the earliest analogies of memorial storage. Plato's Socrates asks us in *Theaetetus* to envisage our mind as 'wax' on which we imprint memory 'as we might stamp the impression of a seal ring'.[50] Just as the wax tablet is a representation of the space for memory, so the waxen record is a technological storage

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[48] Joyce, *Ulysses*, p. 6.960; 6.962.
[49] Joyce, *Ulysses*, pp. 6.692-6.
[50] 'Theaetetus' in Plato, *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 191c-191e; Cf. Cicero, *On the Ideal Orator (De Oratore)*, trans. by James M. May and Jakob Wisse (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001 [55 BCE]), p. 219. Cicero also uses the wax-impression analogy.

space; the difference lies in the personal accessibility of the former and the communal accessibility of the latter. Fritz Senn criticises Bloom's choice of gramophone,[51] but I see these deficiencies as exactly why Bloom is encouraged by the technology, because its adoption avoids absolute oblivion. Through this Bloom successfully links the classical view of personal memory with his own interest in communal memory.

After Bloom begins to think about the record he offers another technological solution to the problem of oblivion: the record would 'Remind you of the voice like the photograph reminds you of the face. Otherwise you couldn't remember the face after fifteen years, say'.[52] As with the record the photograph is a mediated form of memory which is both distinct from that which or whom it memorialises; and yet its mediated nature renders it immemorial because it relies on no living being in order to exist. The obviation of living being – of presence – reinforces my notion that the analepsis-proplepsis structure avoids the present tense completely. To give Bloom's strategy a name, it might be called a technological analepsis-prolepsis;[53] this corroborates Ellen Carol Jones' argument that 'Joyce's texts examine how public "memory" is created by projecting a future not yet realized – a projection that is, paradoxically, also a 'retrospective arrangement'".[54]

Maud Ellmann, highlighting the deathly aspect of the photograph, writes that 'Through the photographic image we survive the grave but also die before our death, disenfleshed before our hearts have ceased to beat'.[55] Roland Barthes' (1980) meditation on

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[51] Fritz Senn, *Annotations to James Joyce: Hades ein Kapitel aus dem 'Ulysses' Englisch-Deutsch* (Mainz: Dieterich, 1992), pp. 233-4. 'The inconsistencies are grotesque. Also, the greatgranfather [sic] could neither have hoped to see his listeners nor take any pleasure from this communication, since he was already dead.'
[52] Joyce, *Ulysses*, pp. 6.966-8.
[53] I use this terminology in order to reveal the persistent link between Bloom and Homer's *Odyssey*. For example, see Jonas Grethlein, 'Homer and Heroic History', in *Greek Notions of the Past in the Archaic and Classical Eras: History Without Historians,* ed. by John Marincola, Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones, and Calum Maciver (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), pp. 14-36 (p. 32). '*The Odyssey* also features prolepses which contrast the characters' expectations with their future experiences.'
[54] Ellen Carol Jones, 'History's Ghosts: Joyce and the Politics of Public Memory', in *Journal of Irish Studies,* 25 (2010), 3-17 (4).
[55] Ellmann, 'The Ghosts of *Ulysses*', p. 83.

photography corroborates this idea of the photograph's intimate relation to death. Not only in the photograph 'taken of me' does Barthes reveal that 'Death is the *eidos*', but also any photograph that acts as replacement for the monument has as its *punctum* – 'A photograph's *punctum* is that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me).' – the idea that

> *he is going to die*. I read at the same time: *This will be* and *this has been*; I observe with horror an anterior future of which death is the stake. [...] Whether or not the subject is already dead, every photograph is this catastrophe.[56]

The photograph's mediation, therefore, allows memory to flourish paradoxically in non-being; this, too, is a kind of anachrony, through which death comes prior to dying, encapsulated by Barthes' 'catastrophe'. Commenting on this double-death of the photograph, Ellmann's 'disenfleshing' strengthens the commitment to posterity: the technology thus encodes its own necessity within it. This accords with Derrida's understanding of the gramophone; he argues that 'The gramophone reproduces [the most-living voice] *a priori*, in the absence of all intentional presence of its verifier'.[57] This is not only what Bloom recognises, but what he demands. It leads Ellmann to conclude: 'To be or not to be is no longer the question.'[58] With this assertion – returning us again to *Hamlet* – Ellmann attempts to show in 'Hades', how Joyce wrestles with *Hamlet*'s central problem. Her equivocation leaves what I consider the remaining statement: 'to be *and* not to be', which is when being alive and not alive are simultaneous states.

Bloom's task to avoid communal oblivion, and to have a place in communal memory, leads him to this point: to be remembered in a non-living way. We know that Hamlet's 'To be, or not to be' soliloquy contains an '"or" [that] is not exclusive'. This means, as Thomas Docherty argues, that

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[56] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, trans. by Richard Howard (London: Vintage [1980]), p. 15; p. 27; p. 96.

[57] My translation: 'Elle la [la voix la plus vivante] reproduit *a priori*, en l'absence de toute presence intentionelle de l'affirmateur ou de l'affirmatrice.' Jacques Derrida, *Ulysse Gramophone: Deux Mots pour Joyce* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1987), p. 90.

58 Ellmann, 'The Ghosts of *Ulysses*', p. 83.

> Hamlet wonder[s] whether there is a certain being in not-being;
> and thus his speech is a meditation not about the possibilities of
> suicide but rather of being dead and alive both at once, a medita-
> tion on 'surviving oneself' or 'living on'[.][59]

In relation to Hamlet, Docherty suggests that we might consider this 'the Christ ques-

tion':[60] resurrected, Christ is at once dead and living. Thinking of Christ in relation to

Bloom is profitable: because Bloom is figured as Christ in his ascension to heaven at the

end of 'Cyclops';[61] and because Bloom also thinks about the resurrection in 'Hades' ofa

different member of the undead community: 'The resurrection and the life. Once you are

dead you are dead. That last day idea. Knocking them all up out of their graves. Come

forth, Lazarus! And he came fifth and lost the job. Get up! Last day!'[62] Though Bloom

mocks the idea in this passage, it is analogous with his proposal: though death comes,

resurrection remains possible. Or, rather – just as with the photograph's and record's

double-deaths – because death comes, resurrection becomes possible. These ideas eluci-

date a crucial aspect of my argument: that the commitment to being in non-being heralds

Bloom's becoming. Rudy's ghost, the record and the photograph hauntologise Bloom,

much as the Ghost hauntologises Hamlet. The lack of presence (or present tense) pro-

duces the possibility of presence. This logic also underpins Agamben's relation of

impotentiality to actuality.[63]

Thus far in this section we have seen that Bloom's self-authorship is contingent

on his satisfying both the communal and personal memories at work in the Dublin of

1904, and that hauntology is key in preparing Hamlet for death through the making-

communal and through memory. Bloom's self-authorship, then, remembers *Hamlet* when

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59 Thomas Docherty, *Confessions: The Philosophy of Transparency* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), p. 14.
60 Docherty, *Confessions*, p. 14.
61 Joyce, *Ulysses*, pp. 12.1910-18.
62 Joyce, *Ulysses*, pp. 6.677-9.
63 Q.v. Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p. 32. 'The potentiality that exists is precisely the potentiality that can not pass over into actuality (this is why Avicenna, faithful to the Aristotelian intention, calls it "the perfect potentiality" and chooses as its example the figure of the scribe in the moment in which he does not write). This potentiality maintains itself in relation to actuality in the form of its suspension; it is capable of the act in not realizing it, it is sovereignly capable of its own im-potentiality [impotenza].'

he seeks being in non-being, a 'to be, and not to be', exemplified in his adversion to technological forms of memory in the record and the photograph. However, the idea of becoming might seem at odds with the process of technological analepsis-prolepsis I have sketched out, particularly because technology presupposes mediation: there is a buffer between Bloom and the event. However, a closer interrogation of the use of the technology, aided by some ideas from Kierkegaard, will show how the technology is less a mediated *tekhnè* than an immediate *poiesis*.

Poetic Memory and Immortality

John Frow explains how any turn to memorialising technology presupposes mediation, writing that 'To speak of memory as *tekhnè*, to deny that it has an unmediated relation to experience, is to say that the logic of textuality by which memory is structured has technological and institutional conditions of existence'.[64] Technology means that memory is of the order of *tekhnè*. *Tekhnè* is a creation or craftsmanship that, as Aristotle explains in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, is concerned with the end product. The emphasis on the product, rather than its purpose or the process that leads to the product, is telling. *Tekhnè* is not interested in dynamic presence or becoming, but rather in static, formal being. In Frow, that formal being manifests itself in the material record of memory – the record or photograph of 'Hades' – and represents a fixed, stable point; we equally think of Yeats' 'Monuments of unageing intellect' in 'Sailing to Byzantium' as a different poetic version of this eternal and static monumentalisation.[65] However, Bloom is a poet who relies on the making and creating that is *poiesis*, instead of the static creation inherent in *tekhnè*. In Plato's *Symposium* Diotima schools Socrates in *Eros* and the love of absolute beauty. An analogy for erotic love is *poiesis*, through which Diotima explains how '"There is poetry, which, as you know, is complex and manifold. All creation or passage of non-being into

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[64] John Frow, '*Toute la mémoire du monde*: Repetition and Forgetting', in *Time and Commodity Culture: Essays in Cultural Theory and Postmodernity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), pp. 218-46 (p. 230).
[65] 'Sailing to Byzantium' in Yeats, *The Major Works*, l. 8.

being is poetry or making, and the processes of all art are creative; and the masters of arts are all poets or makers'".[66] Put simply: Bloom does not need to write poetry in order to be considered a poet, and to be a poet is to engage in the process of generative creation.

'To be, or not to be' is fundamentally a meditation on making a decision: Hamlet has arrived at a moment of κρισις (*krisis*), of decision-making between two clear alternatives. He is in a moment of nascent (im)potentiality, as Agamben would have it. Though we consider this moment of decision beyond just 'yes' or 'no' exclusives, we can go further. Hamlet's contemplation itself is the moment or the process that ought to be explored; he is thinking through 'the question'. This is also true when Kierkegaard's 'A' considers his 'Either/Or' conundrum. 'A' analogises it through agricultural cultivation, claiming that when the land's potential for growth and harvest is considered, 'every particular change still falls under the universal rule of the relation between *recollecting* and *forgetting*.'[67] 'A' suggests that growth – my *poiesis* – is always 'universal[ly]' connected with memory and oblivion; the connection between *poiesis* and the memory/oblivion dynamic is not just particular to my argument, but needs to be reckoned more widely.

Memory's and oblivion's intimate relation is proved through the ages, from Plato to Kierkegaard. For the former, it is more directly related to immortality which, much like Bloom's quest to avoid communal oblivion, is a function of memory: 'to the mortal creature, generation [read *poiesis*] is a sort of eternity and immortality'.[68] In Kierkegaard, remembering poetically is praised and equated with amnesia, as

> The more poetically one remembers, the more easily one forgets, for to remember poetically is actually only an expression for forgetting. When I remember poetically, my experience has already undergone the change of having lost everything painful'.[69]

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[66] Frow, 'Repetition and Forgetting', p. 230. Plato, "Symposium," 164 [205b-205c]. I use this edition here and below for its clearer enunciation of poetry's intimate relation to non-being and being.

[67] Kierkegaard, *The Essential Kierkegaard*, p. 56. Emphasis in original.

[68] Plato, 'Symposium', in *The Portable Plato*, trans. by Benjamin Jowett, ed. by Scott Buchanan (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1978 [385-70 BCE]), pp. 121-87 (p. 166).

[69] Kierkegaard, *The Essential Kierkegaard*, pp. 56-7.

To remember poetically is to prevent nostalgia. We recall that Saint Augustine related memory and forgetting dynamically, rather than seeing them as a binary opposition.[70] It means that *poiesis* is not to be restricted to enunciations of poetry, and can also include 'writing something in the book of oblivion',[71] which is what Bloom's imagined waxen record and photograph resemble.[72] If this relates to Christian resurrection and rebirth, then Kirkegaard's Judge William's ('B') reference to 'inner history' that 'bursts into leaf' is immediately relevant.[73] Leaves and trees, of course, are an archetype of rebirth, recirculation and death that herald life.

If inner history is related to the actualisation of nature, which is equally tied to the poetics of non-memory, then Bloom's poetry is precisely creating not something that is remembered *per se*, but something that *is* in non-being. *Poiesis* takes over from Frow's *tekhnè* in deploying hauntology. In advancing the potential of *poiesis* it is as if the either/or of the proposition is never resolved – Bloom choosing memory *and* oblivion, memory *in* oblivion and *vice versa* – the *poiesis* instead emanating from the choice of the construction itself:

> But what is it, then, that I choose – is it this or that? No, for I choose absolutely, and I choose absolutely precisely by having chosen not to choose this or that. I choose the absolute, and what is the absolute? It is myself in my eternal validity.[74]

That eternal validity is both the sense of never being forgotten – of being forever a part of the community that will always fail to forget you – and also of never being misre-

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[70] E.g., 'When now the memory itself loses anything, (as it falls out whenas we forget anything, and seek out forth recovery of it); where at last do we search, but in the memory itself?' Saint Bishop of Hippo Augustine, *St Augustine's Confessions*, trans. by William Watts, 2 vols, vol. 2 (London: William Heinemann; New York, NY: Macmillan, 1912 [397-8 CE]), p. 127.

[71] Kierkegaard, *The Essential Kierkegaard*, p. 58.

[72] We should now recall Hamlet's response to the Ghost's command to 'remember me'. Hamlet responds: 'Remember thee? / Yea, from the table of my memory / I'll wipe away all trivial fond records, / All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past / That youth and observation copied there / And thy commandment all alone shall live / Within the book and volume of my brain / Unmixed with baser matter. […] Meet it is I set it down[.]' (I.v.97-107) Hamlet is therefore the precursor for Bloom much more than he is for Stephen, inasmuch as Hamlet's commitment to archived memory – also called in this chapter history which avoids memory – connects him intimately with futurity and his coming death. It means that Bloom cannot be understood without recourse to his modern prefiguration: Hamlet.

[73] Kierkegaard, *The Essential Kierkegaard*, p. 67.

[74] Kierkegaard, *The Essential Kierkegaard*, pp. 79-80.

membered. Bloom can never be forgotten if he is never committed to memory; in choosing neither, he chooses both. Not only is this important in Bloom's trajectory in *Ulysses*, but it is central to what *Ulysses* achieved in the Irish *polis*: that a 'human being's eternal dignity lies precisely [… in] that he can gain a history' which moves from 'necessity to freedom'.[75] Bloom's achieved freedom in 'Hades' leads to his return to 'warm fullblooded life' as 'The gates glimmered in front: still open'.[76]

This ethical element, in its commitment to freedom (which we might otherwise have missed in 'Hades') is central to Bloom and leads to his becoming the hero; it is also emblematic of the Saorstat, the Irish Free State that was the first juridical step on Ireland's path away from Britain. In this collocation between Bloom and Ireland, useful ideas present themselves if we substitute one for the other. As such, 'For a person to live ethically it is necessary that he become conscious of himself';[77] or, that is, his becoming free includes setting aside his impotentiality, and uniting his form as outsider, with his content of eternally remembered citizen. Ireland is also the outsider country that, taking itself seriously and revolutionising its form and content, allows it to be remembered eternally. Bloom's becoming modern entails a fullness of character, his becoming self-conscious, much as with the Irish *polis*.

It allows Bloom to have both a personal life and a communal memorial. Bloom becomes the individual in both senses of the word:

> In one sense […] an 'individual' is one who is entirely representative in that they cannot be distinguished from […] the group that gives them an identity; yet, in another sense […] an individual is individual precisely to the extent that each *is* distinguished from their community. The simplest way to consider such distinction is to think of the individual as being in some way out of place or out of time[.][78]

Out of time or anachronic, his commitment to posterity and communal memory through

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[75] Kierkegaard, *The Essential Kierkegaard*, p. 80.
[76] Joyce, *Ulysses*, p. 6.1005; 995.
[77] Kierkegaard, *The Essential Kierkegaard*, p. 80.
[78] Docherty, *Confessions*, p. 94.

hauntology evidences Bloom's own flourishing existence; he blazes a trail for modern Ireland. Much like Hamlet establishes himself as the modern hero in Elsinore because the time is out of joint, so too does Bloom rank alongside Hamlet as one of literature's great, immortal heroes. Hamlet and Bloom must both die in order to be remembered; out of a spectrality that demands a preparation for death, Bloom intends, when his time comes, to follow Hamlet's lead.

Hamlet and *Ulysses* belong to the canon of Western literature; their heroes, Hamlet and Bloom, are iconic figures. But their heroism is never paralleled. Margreta de Grazia summarises that 'by speaking his thoughts in soliloquy, by reflecting on his own penchant for thought, by giving others cause to worry about what he is thinking, Hamlet has been hailed as the inaugural figure of the modern period'.[79] By contrast, W. B. Stanford rejects criticism of Joyce 'for [the] unheroic elements in Bloom' by noting that Bloom 'is all the more clearly in the traditional succession' of Odysseus' own questionable, tricky and adulterous heroics; by contrast, Suzette Henke asserts that 'There is little resemblance between Leopold Bloom and the brawny titans of ancient Greece and Rome'.[80] Against Hamlet's intense meditations on the debasement of the flesh and interrogation of the nature of a piece of land which cannot hold in its bosom the number of men fighting to their death to win it,[81] Bloom is a 'realist' who decides in 'Ithaca' that 'his best course is to go to bed' instead of departing on itinerant adventures:[82] 'The lateness of the hour render[ed him] procrastinatory.'[83] In this regard Hamlet and Bloom are heroes of different orders entirely.

We have seen, however, that they are both poets, thinking through the most radical possibilities of eternal life, with personal and political freedom the net result. In this

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[79] de Grazia, *'Hamlet' Without Hamlet*, p. 7.
[80] W. B. Stanford, 'Ulyssean Qualities in Joyce's Leopold Bloom', in *Comparative Literature,* 5.2 (1953), 125-36 (7).
[81] See Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, I.II.129; IV.IV.25 ff.
[82] Stanford, 'Ulyssean Qualities in Joyce's Bloom', 130-1.
[83] Joyce, *Ulysses*, p. 17.2029.

they are both compelled by dead male relatives: Hamlet's father and Bloom's son. 'Bloom's moral weight and stature in our eyes are reinforced', writes Robert Bell, since in 'Hades' for the 'first time we view Bloom […] to assess his responses to both the petty indignities of life and the larger challenges of morality'.[84] The *poiesis* that follows, visible in Hamlet's 'To be, or not to be' meditation on potential and in Bloom's seeking afterlife via technology, amounts to the same end: being in non-being, eternal becoming. To return to de Grazia's characteristics of Hamlet, we are reminded that Hamlet's potentiality constitutes his modernity; so too is this the case for Bloom, for he is able to open up an independent 'line of thought […] from within the horizons of the community'.[85] Moreover, in *Hamlet*'s sovereign contest between King Hamlet and Claudius we see the importance of contemporary political debates in early modern literature. In *Ulysses'* pre-revolutionary, though certainly political, Dublin, a different politics emerges through the hauntology described above. Bloom emerges no more a mere citizen, but rather a potential, becoming sovereign.

Bloom, as bearer of sovereignty, is not just a citizen who becomes the hero of *Ulysses*, which may be seen as wisdom literature. More (importantly) than that, in Bloom is sited the future of the Irish state over which he holds sovereign power, particularly in his maintaining potentiality, rather than actualising his potential. 'Potentiality', writes Agamben, 'is that through which Being founds itself *sovereignly*, which is to say, without anything preceding or determining it […] other than its own ability not to be.'[86] Bloom becomes in 'Hades' the father of the modern Irish republic, at the very moment that we learn most forcefully of the pain he suffers at his son's premature death. Hamlet is situatede at the start of modernity, and Bloom at the beginning of Ireland's political

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[84] Robert H. Bell, '"Preparatory to anything else": Introduction to Joyce's "Hades"', in *Journal of Modern Literature*, 24.3/4 (2001), 363-499 (364).

[85] Andrew Gibson, *Joyce's Revenge: History, Politics, and Aesthetics in 'Ulysses'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 58.

[86] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p. 32.

renovation; Bloom remembers Hamlet, and we cannot forget Bloom.

'Someone wholly other': John Banville's Ghosts

In the first section of this chapter I noted how Hamlet and Christy Mahon both herald an adaptation of early seventeenth-century spectrality. Instead of revealing the ghost's falsehood, they reveal the ghost's spectrality and plant the ghost firmly in reality. The spectral becomes an option for living a modern life. Christy is dismissed from the stage, albeit in a position of relative power over his father, Old Mahon, to live his modern life elsewhere. This life cannot be presented onstage in Dublin in 1907. In the second section I considered Derrida's version of spectrality which links to *hauntology* – staging for the end of the world. Derrida's Hamlet achieves this by revenging his father's murder, both confirming the Ghost's veracity and also deriving a becoming existence from it. Bloom, too, prepared for his own death by seeking immortality in communal memory.

As Blanchot (1995) writes about these 'traditional dreams' of eternity, in a description befitting Bloom's actions of finding immortality through poetry, they

> are linked to the development of a humanist art, where man looks to be celebrated in his works and wants to act on them in perpetuating this action [of confronting death and rendering it hollow]. But in such a moment as this, art is nothing more than one way of uniting against history. The greatest people in history, the heroes, the great soldiers and generals, no less than the artists, also take shelter from death; they enter communal memory; they are the models, the active presences. This form of individualism soon stops being satisfying.[87]

Bloom represents Blanchot's individualism that seeks immortality in communal memory. We shall now see how that aspiration to public acclaim can help the national endeavour to modernise, but reduces the individual citizen's modernity.

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[87] This, and all other translations, mine: '[C]es rêves traditionnels […] sont liés au développement d'un art humaniste, où l'homme cherche à se glorifier dans ses œuvres et à agir en elle en se perpétuant dans cette action. Mais l'art, à un tel moment, n'est plus qu'une manière memorable de s'unir à l'histoire. Les grands personnages historiques, les héros, les grands homes de guerre, non moins que les artistes, se mettent aussi à l'abri de la mort; ils entrent dans la mémoire des peuples; ils sont des exemples, des présences agissantes. Cette forme d'individualisme cesse bientôt d'être satisfaisante.' Maurice Blanchot, *L'éspace Littéraire* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1968 [1955]), p. 112.

In both cases, Christy and Bloom commit to a spectral space – the space of off-stage sovereignty for Christy, space of being in non-being for Bloom. Freddie, *Ghosts'* narrator, is interested in other worlds. He retreats to an island to serve his parole. Mark O'Connell claims the island 'is both a place of self-imposed isolation from the world and a new territory in which Freddie can reinvent himself'.[88] The island represents a liminal space which welcomes natives (through Licht), self-exiles (through Professor Kreutznaer) and those shipwrecked. Freddie's interest in these liminal, other worlds extends when he considers the mirror:

> Worlds within worlds. They bleed into each other. I am at once here and there, then and now, as if by magic. I think of the stillness that lives in the depths of mirrors. It is not our world that is reflected there. It is another place entirely, another universe, cunningly made to mimic ours. Anything is possible there; even the dead may come back to life. Flaws develop in the glass, patches of silvering fall away and reveal the inhabitants of that parallel, inverted world going about their lives all unawares. And sometimes the glass turns to air and they step through it without a sound and walk into *my* world.[89]

For Freddie this mirrored world is in a relationship of interfluence with his world: mutually visible and mutable. This is not merely spatial, but temporally conditioned too, 'For is it not possible that somewhere in this crystalline multiplicity of worlds, in this infinite, mirrored regression, there is a place where the dead have not died, and I am innocent?'[90] Time becomes unstable, and the past something that is both central to the narrator's current being, but also that which cannot be relied on: Freddie's time is out of joint.

When Derrida reads *Hamlet* this line forms a crucial point of criticism, since Hamlet's railing against the Ghost's injunction is directed against time, not the Ghost. Hamlet also laments that it is a 'cursèd spite / That ever I was born to set it right' (I.v.186-7). Not only is time out of joint, but Hamlet's existence rests on his task to stabi-

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[88] Mark O'Connell, 'On Not Being Found: A Winnicottian Reading of John Banville's *Ghosts* and *Athena*', in *Studies in the Novel,* 43.3 (2011), 328-42 (334).
[89] John Banville, *Ghosts* (Basingstoke: Picador, 1998 [1993]), p. 55.
[90] Banville, *Ghosts*, p. 173.

lise time, or events in time. This 'cursèd spite' is owing to the Ghost: spectral time is unstable time, rocking the real and living present. Spectral temporality, in other words, allows a life to be lived differently from the now: imagined worlds can become real.

We see an explicit example of this near the end of *Ghosts* when Felix, one of those shipwrecked on the island, is heading with Freddie to embark on the ship that will take Felix and the other passengers back to the mainland; Freddie is to stay on the island. In this scene the mirror is breached, creating a new space of potential existence:

> It was as if all along we had been walking side by side, with something between us, some barrier, thin and smooth and deceptive as a mirror, that now was broken, and I had stepped into his world, or he into mine, or we had both entered some third place that belonged to neither of us.[91]

Joseph McMinn's reading is apposite here; he signals that for Banville's narrators, 'Imagination and memory are their only escape routes';[92] imagination and memory become a third space of spectrality.

This third place shows that ontology in *Ghosts* can be and is governed by something that ghosts the narrative and haunts the narrator. The third space is also a space of no time, when things are no longer out of joint; it is a space of resolution. The dynamic between Freddie and Felix is separate to the main strand of the novel: Felix threatens to bring Freddie's secrets into the open. As such, Felix nearly disrupts Freddie's existence on the island; however, the 'third space' into which Felix and Freddie enter is not new to Freddie, but Freddie has instead supported and resided in a third space throughout his stay on the island, co-inhabiting with the art expert Professor Kreutznaer. My argument corroborates O'Connell's idea that 'for much of the novel [Freddie] is a kind of spectral, omniscient god presence'.[93] Only when Felix threatens Freddie is Freddie's potency temporarily destabilised. In the above passage, however, Freddie's equipoise is re-established

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[91] Banville, *Ghosts*, p. 241.
[92] Joseph McMinn, 'An Exalted Naming: The Poetical Fictions of John Banville', in *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies,* 14.1 (1988), 17-27 (23).
[93] O'Connell, 'On Not Being Found', 335.

and he is able, at the end of the novel, to continue living in the third, spectral space. Freddie's appeal is to *Hamlet*'s Ghost, the directorial, modern sovereign who nevertheless remains offstage; in this Banville's text advocates a private, personal modernity that is contingent upon a modern space that permits a spectrality, but which nevertheless privileges the individual citizen. Whilst Bloom's sovereignty could be nationalised, Freddie's underpins the personal sphere.

Freddie initially enters one of these worlds in his preparation for leaving the mainland and going to the island. While narrating how he turned up on the island Freddie tells the story of his release from prison, and the journey he takes with a fellow convict, 'Billy the butcher'.[94] Billy takes Freddie via his childhood home, Coolgrange, in which Freddie's estranged wife and son now live. Entering Coolgrange, Freddie is confused, recognising his own absence as an uncomfortable presence, as though he sees himself as ghost in a space to which he does not truly belong. He implores someone in reality to help him, starting:

> And now as I stood in the midst of my own absence, in the birthplace that had rid itself of me utterly, I murmured a little prayer, and said, O, if you are really there, bright brother, in your more real reality, think of me, turn all your stern attentions on me, even for an instant, and make *me* real, too.[95]

Freddie's prayers are answered in the arrival of his son, Van. Van's arrival forces Freddie to live two moments simultaneously. The man and his double exist in these moments, when Freddie either does or does not embrace his son, Van:

> In my imagination I got up out of myself, like a swimmer clambering out of water, and took a staggering step towards him, my arms outstretched, and pressed him to my breast and sobbed. [...] In reality I am still sitting on the window-sill, with my hands with their whitened knuckles clamped on my knees, looking up at him and inanely, helplessly smiling; I never was one for embraces.[96]

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[94] Banville, *Ghosts*, p. 157.
[95] Banville, *Ghosts*, p. 181.
[96] Banville, *Ghosts*, p. 184.

As one version of Freddie gets up 'like a swimmer clambering out of water', we are reminded of Freddie's own analogy of the mirror, above: the site for another world which resembles our own but differs in its reality. This shows Freddie entering the third space of the spectre.

The result of this moment is of huge importance. When Freddie returns to Billy, the two talk of Freddie's son. Freddie responds tersely to Billy's questioning: '"I told you," I said, "I have no family. I had a son once, but he died."'[97] Freddie metaphysically (and perhaps poetically) kills his own son. Much like *Playboy* and 'Hades', Freddie's son is dismissed from the narrative permitted onstage and centre stage – but the space that Van enters is not the spectral world of the Ghost and Rudy. Instead, Van is dismissed from the narrative of *Ghosts* on to the centre stage of the real; Freddie, instead, is left to play protagonist in his own story characterised by the very things the real rejects: Christy Mahon, Rudy Bloom, *Hamlet*'s Ghost. Here we have a representation of the unrepresentable, the undecidable that conditioned *Hamlet*'s narrative. In Agamben's terms, we are presented with the 'nonrelational', 'the principle of every juridical localisation'.[98] This is our first indication that this story, too, is to do with sovereignty as much as it is to do with ghosts.

Death is productive for Freddie here, much as for Claudius in *Hamlet*: 'A bloody deed – almost as bad, good mother, / As kill a king and marry with his brother.' (III.IV.37-8) Blanchot also writes about the productive death and its relation to art and artists, dually applicable here to *Hamlet* and to *Ghosts*:

> Yes, you have to die during dying, truth demands it; but you have
> to be capable of being satisfied by death, of finding, in the su-
> preme dissatisfaction, a supreme satisfaction and being capable
> of maintaining, in the exact instant of dying, a clarity of look

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[97] Banville, *Ghosts*, p. 187.
[98] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p. 19.

which comes from such an equipoise.[99]

Here Freddie assumes the equipoise of one who has rendered death possible, assuming sovereignty over death and benefiting from what ensues; Hamlet, too, decides that he must also commit to oncoming death in order to configure it as freedom, and not imprisonment. 'If it be, 'tis not to come. If it be not to come, it will be now. If it be not now, yet it will come', says Hamlet. 'The readiness is all, since no man of aught he leaves knows what is't to leave betimes. Let be.' (V.ii.198-201) From the death towards which Hamlet's father did not know he was heading, Hamlet now makes of death a liberty and a possibility – specifically through words. Hamlet is satisfied by death.

In this (non-)encounter at Coolgrange Freddie not only engages with Van, but also with the past father-son relationships that are operative in Irish literature: such as those between Christy and Mahon and Rudy and Bloom. Christy saves his father but only to overthrow and tame him in offstage, spectral space, and Bloom derives his future immortality from his late son's mortality. And at this juncture in *Ghosts* Freddie considers the possibility 'of being saved through [Van], as if the son by his mere existence might absorb and absolve the sins of the father'.[100] *Ghosts* is itself ghosted by these earlier literary ghosts and their father-son relationships; *Ghosts* inherits the linear progression from *Hamlet* through *Playboy* and *Ulysses*.[101] *Ghosts* inherits from these texts the notion of the son as a means to establish the ground for giving the law.

Having entered the spectral space Freddie is able to wield his law, such as it is. Critically, Freddie's negotiation of the world also requires a full acceptance of the doubles which he experiences. When I consider doubles, I urge us also to think about the double-death outlined by Blanchot:

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[99] 'Oui, il faut mourir dans le mourant, la vérité l'exige, mais il faut être capable de se satisfaire de la mort, de trouver dans la supreme insatisfaction la supreme satisfaction et de maintenir, à l'instant de mourir, la clarté de regard qui vient d'un tel équilibre.' Blanchot, *L'éspace Littéraire*, p. 108.
[100] Banville, *Ghosts*, p. 185.
[101] J. Hillis Miller would no doubt argue that *Ghosts* plays parasite to these earlier 'hosts' (a cognate of 'ghost'); he would equally argue, I imagine, that the earlier texts also cannibalise *Ghosts* as host to their inheritance.

> [T]he one death circulates in the words of possibility, of liberty, and which has at its extreme horizon the freedom of death and the power to risk fatality; the other death is elusive, that which I do not know how to grasp, which is not linked to *me* by a single relation of any sort, which never arrives, towards which I never head.[102]

For Blanchot, these double-deaths are linked intimately to art and the artist. This sense of the double-death – one of assailable freedom, the other of elusiveness – conditions Freddie's relation to society. The question of doubles is also visible in *Hamlet*. The Ghost confirms to Hamlet that 'I am thy father's spirit, / Doomed for a certain term to walk the night' (I.v.9-10). Critically, this is not Hamlet's father, but rather his spirit, a representative, an emissary. Hamlet's decision to believe the Ghost or not is not only conditioned by Derrida's argument of asymmetry; it is also conditioned by the idea that the Ghost is separate from King Hamlet. King Hamlet is doubled, in short. Hamlet's decision to believe the Ghost leaves the play underpinned throughout by a perpetual uncertainty: *Hamlet*, the most modern of early modern plays, hinges and is built on an undecidability. Kiberd explains how it is the Ghost – the spectral sovereign – who governs the play's plot, but Freddie gives another version of this:

> Hamlet's father made what I cannot but think were excessive calls on filial piety. Yet, for myself, I know I would be grateful for any intercourse with the dead, no matter how baleful their stares or unavoidable their pale, pointing fingers.[103]

Freddie's slippage between father and Ghost reveals his view that the Ghost can indeed be a living, and not a dead figure. His desire to 'intercourse with the dead' suggests that

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[102] 'Cela revient à penser qu'il y a comme une double mort, dont l'une circule dans les mots de possibilité, de liberté, qui a comme extreme horizon la liberté de mourir et le pouvoir de se risquer mortellement – et dont l'autre est l'insaisissable, ce que je ne puis saisir, qui n'est liée à *moi* par aucune relation d'aucune sorte, qui ne vient jamais, vers laquelle je ne me dirige pas.' Blanchot, *L'éspace Littéraire*, p. 126. Derrida, in his reading of Blanchot's *The Instant of My Death*, notes the fractured subject of one who experiences death and the other who relates the experience of death: 'There are two deaths, and the two die as much as they make or let die. Just as there are two subjects – two "I's", an "I" that speaks of a young man, an "I" that is divided by what happened there – so there are two, concurrent deaths. One ahead of the other, in countertime, one making an advance to the other, an advance that it demands be returned by returning itself. They run toward one another, into one another, one running to encounter the other. […] What remains for him of existence, more than this race to death, is this race of death in view of death *in order* not to see death coming.' Jacques Derrida, *Demeure: Fiction and Testimony*, trans. by Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. 95.

[103] Banville, *Ghosts*, p. 83.

Freddie's belief is in living spirits, and that it is dead people who walk the earth, and not their emissary or ghost. Hamlet's father, in Freddie's reading, controls Hamlet and makes the stage his own. The play is called *Hamlet*, but it is the father's 'excessive calls on filial piety' that give rise to Hamlet's revenge story, and as such the father is the giver of the laws. This is but another way of establishing that Hamlet's father's Ghost is the true, modern sovereign in *Hamlet*.

Freddie does not wish to die himself, keeping mortality at arm's length; and yet his existence is premised on a death which gives him life. This death is his son's verbalised murder: it does not happen in 'reality', but 'circulates in the words of possibility, of liberty'. But the double that first assails Freddie is one he is unable to control. In *The Book of Evidence* (1989), the narrative of which ghosts and precedes *Ghosts*, Freddie calls himself 'bifurcate'.[104] Though Freddie initially claims that his Other is an 'invented [...] grotesque version' of himself,[105] he later concedes that he houses an Other within himself named Bunter. This internalised other governs Freddie, most notably when Freddie commits the murder of Josie Bell in *The Book of Evidence*. Freddie wonders:

> Perhaps that is the essence of my crime, of my culpability, that I let things get to that stage, that I had not been vigilant enough, had not been enough of a dissembler, that I left Bunter to his own devices, and thus allowed him, fatally, to understand that he was free, that the cage door was open, that nothing was forbidden, that everything was possible.[106]

Bunter is evidence of Freddie's dual-personality; Bunter is Freddie's psyche let loose, an equivalent of Freud's *id* controlling the *ego*. Hedwig Schwall corroborates that Banville's protagonists 'are utterly dividual, their split is their essence'.[107] Bunter is Freddie's doubled, ghostly Other that inheres in Freddie, rather than existing outside him. Since Bunter governs Freddie, Bunter is threatening because he removes from Freddie his sov-

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[104] John Banville, *The Book of Evidence* (London: Picador, 1998 [1989]), p. 95.
[105] Banville, *Ghosts*, p. 176.
[106] Banville, *The Book of Evidence*, p. 151.
[107] Hedwig Schwall, '"Mirror on Mirror Mirrored is all the Show": Aspects of the Uncanny in Banville's Work with a Focus on *Eclipse*', in *Irish University Review,* 36.1 (2006), 116-33 (120).

ereignty over himself – his ability to control his own actions. If Freddie is to be a God, then Freddie must somehow tame Bunter in order to become a modern citizen in full self-control. As we know, the ability to conceive of himself fully as an individual is one of Hamlet's chief, modern characteristics; Bunter destabilises Freddie's ability to control himself and, therefore, Freddie's existence in the modern world. 'Perhaps,' Freddie wonders, 'this is how I shall go mad in the end, perhaps I shall just fly apart like this finally and be lost to myself forever.'[108] The internal ghost, in other words, is lawless according to the law of the conscious; however, it gives its own law, and decides on the exception like any sovereign must: Freddie's spectral Other within, Bunter decides to kill Josie Bell.

As outlined above, Freddie learns to control Bunter by entering into the third space of the liminal island. Early in *Ghosts* Freddie notes how he had changed since spending time in prison (another liminal space):

> I was not at all the same person that I had been a decade before
> (is the oldster in his dotage the same that he was when he was an
> infant swaddled in his truckle bed?). A slow sea-change had taken
> place. I believe that over those ten years of incarceration – life,
> that is, minus time off for good, for exemplary behaviour – I had
> evolved into an infinitely more complex organism.[109]

Whatever Freddie was is no more, for he has learnt to live in the imagined world of ghosts and spectres. He has realised that he has other options open to him:

> This objectless liberty is a burden to me. Forget the past, then,
> give up all hope of retrieving my lost selves, just let it go, just let
> it all fall away? And then be something new, a sticky, staggering
> thing with myriad-faceted eyes and wet wings, an astonishment
> standing up in the world, straining drunkenly for flight.[110]

Freddie indeed does become something new in the third space, and the new Freddie is characterised by his ability to control the doubled Other, by being able to target and head towards Blanchot's death that exists in words of possibility and liberty.

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[108] Banville, *Ghosts*, p. 176; p. 177.
[109] Banville, *Ghosts*, pp. 21-2.
[110] Banville, *Ghosts*, p. 195.

Bunter is the first of three doubles. In the two remaining doubles, Freddie carries his relation with death even further, tying it almost completely to sovereignty. Both of those for whom he acts as double are sovereigns in their own way. Professor Kreutznaer is an art expert for whom Freddie ghostwrites; Jean Vaublin is the painter on whom the Professor is expert and who has painted the contested painting *Le monde d'or*. In *Ghosts* Freddie depicts his own (doubled) version of *Le monde d'or*, thereby becoming ghostpainter. Kreutznaer is sovereign because he is charged with authenticating art – giving the law of authenticity, just as Hamlet authenticates the Ghost; Vaublin is sovereign because he is the painter, the divine creator who produces something from nothing. Vaublin is the Dutch master who, in his later years, feared that someone was following him around the city, haunting him and badly impersonating his paintings, exaggerating his flaws and inadequacies in technique. This impostor becomes Vaublin's double:

> All the experts, Professor Kreutznaer included, agree that it was
> all a delusion, a phantasm spawned by fever and exhaustion in
> that last, desperate summer of the painter's brief life. […] I seem
> to hear mock laughter, he wrote, and someone is always standing
> in the corner behind me, yet when I turn there is no one there.[111]

In the figure of the painter-as-sovereign we must hold the notion of the doubled painter in our minds, his being haunted by something outside himself which is also a version of himself; Vaublin is alleged to be ghosted by his own double. Moreover, if Vaublin the painter is our sovereign, we need to see in the *Le monde d'or* – the work that emanated from the final throes of Vaublin's painting – the arche-work of sovereignty, its fullest mark. And yet *Le monde d'or* is the painting under scrutiny in *Ghosts* for its inauthenticity; *Le monde d'or* might be the product of Vaublin's double. Freddie conjectures that it might even have been painted by the Professor, the expert Vaublinian; having said that, we might pin the true Vaublinian expert as the novel's painter – Freddie himself. Given the short third part of the novel in which the visitors to the island are described in terms of

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[111] Banville, *Ghosts*, p. 128.

figures in *Le monde d'or*, we could venture that the novel *Ghosts* charts Freddie's ghost-painting *Le monde d'or* himself.

In the idea that Freddie ghostpainted *Le monde d'or*, it is important to remember the characteristics of a painter in relation to their painting. Given the novel's fascination with doubles and liminality, the painter is also spectral because, as Freddie notes, 'The painter is always outside his subjects […]; he holds himself remote from these figures, unable to do anything for them except bear witness to their plight.'[112] This description, in addition to reminding us of *Hamlet*'s Ghost, also overlaps with the painter's paratextuality: neither inseparable nor definitively related to the text he paints. The painter reminds us of Derrida's parergon, situated neither fully inside nor outside the work of art, which the painter nonetheless enframes:

> There is always a form on a ground, but the *parergon* is a form
> which has as its traditional determination not that it stands out
> but that it disappears, buries itself, effaces itself, melts away at
> the moment it deploys its greatest energy.[113]

From the inside the painter looks like an external constriction, marking where the painting ends and reality begins; from the outside the painter seems an internal figure, his name inscribed on the painting itself. The painter, in short, disappears into the third space. Freddie, assuming the role of doubled painter, firmly cements his place in the third space: he spectralises the painter already hiding there.

In connection with Freddie's relation to the Professor, we might analogise the painter-*parergon* relation as follows:

> My name will not appear on the title page; I would not want that.
> A brief acknowledgement will do; I look forward to penning it
> myself, savouring in advance the reflexive thrill of writing down
> my own name and being, even if only for a moment, someone

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[112] Banville, *Ghosts*, p. 35.
[113] Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, trans. by Geoff Bennington and Ian McLeod (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 65.

wholly other.[114]

This sums up Freddie's happiness at being the Professor's amanuensis. Just like the painter whom he doubles, Freddie looks forward to ghostwriting the Professor's books and refusing most of the recognition he arguably deserves. Like the parergon Freddie both enframes the work and is the work enframed. If the sovereign remains in the spectral space outside the law, then Freddie as the ghostwriter hidden amongst the acknowledgements also ought to be considered sovereign. Blanchot comments that 'You can only write if you remain master of yourself in the face of death; only if you have established relations of sovereignty with death'.[115] This becomes true no more obviously for Freddie than when he is the Professor's amanuensis.

There are three sovereigns now present. Freddie's mastery of death makes him sovereign over his life, replacing Bunter:

> Death, in the human horizon, is not that which is given to man, but that which it is to do: a task, of which we actively grab hold, a task which becomes the source of our activity and of our mastery. Man dies – that is nothing – but man emerges from his death, and he is strongly linked to his death by a link of which he is judge[.][116]

Freddie thus tames his own death by living in the spectral space of imagination, and 'kills' his son, dismissing Van's life to the real. The result is Freddie's mastery over death, yes, but Freddie is also 'made mortal and, through this making, he is given the power to create and to give to the creation its meaning and its truth'.[117] Freddie's creationism manifests in his doubling of the sovereign-painter – Vaublin – and the sovereign-author-authenticator – the Professor. The writer and the painter are both sovereign, and both

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[114] Banville, *Ghosts*, p. 33.

[115] '[L]'on ne peut écrire que si l'on reste maître de soi devant la mort, si l'on a établi avec elle des rapports de souveraineté.' Blanchot, *L'éspace Littéraire*, p. 107.

[116] 'La mort, dans l'horizon humain, n'est pas ce qui est donné, elle est ce qui est à faire: une tâche, ce dont nous nous emparons activement, ce qui devient la source de notre activité et de notre maîtrise. L'homme meurt, cela n'est rien, mais l'homme *est* à partir de sa mort, il se lie fortement à sa mort, par un lien dont il est juge[.]' Blanchot, *L'éspace Littéraire*, p. 115.

[117] '[I]l fait sa mort, il se fait mortel et, par là, se donne le pouvoir de faire et donne à ce qui'il fait son sens et sa vérité.' Blanchot, *L'éspace Littéraire*, p. 115.

bear a relation to death since 'death, the happy death, is the cost of art, it is art's aim and justification'.[118] Freddie doubles their sovereignty, in being a doubled double: 'It is not enough to be mortal,' adds Blanchot, 'man understands that he must become mortal, that he has to be mortal twice over, sovereignly, extremely mortal. It is there where the human vocation lies.'[119] Man's chief sovereignty, in other words, is over the law that governs human mortality; here we see the full absorption of sovereignty into the private realm, in which humanity is concerned with biopolitics, as Agamben described it. Here Freddie finds his vocation and tames his own internalised double. He becomes the private citizen of a modern world.

Conclusion

The three stories that I have exsamined each has its own indelible link to *Hamlet*. The chief connection that governs all of their relations is – not coincidentally – one of inheritance. *Hamlet* is bookended by death, with Hamlet the hero tasked with revenging the first death by bringing about another, and proving true the Ghost in between. Hamlet is commanded by his father's Ghost, and Hamlet proves it is his father's Ghost in completing the revenge. Hamlet inherits the task of vengeance. He inherits power from the death of his father, and the Ghost whose space is liminal according to his dress and place: either in the innermost closet, on the battlements or beneath the stage. This story is played out in the 1900s Dublin polity in Synge's *Playboy*, in which Christy Mahon relies on his father's death to wield his power as playboy in the shebeen community. When that power is defused by Old Mahon's rising, Christy must eventually leave the stage. Christy's 'lepping' modernity is carted offstage, albeit with his own revolution between him and his father intact. The spectral relationship that demanded that ghosts or myths be demythol-

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[118] '[L]a mort, la mort contente, est la sallaire de l'art, elle est la visée et la justification de l'écriture.' Blanchot, *L'éspace Littéraire*, p. 110.

[119] 'Il ne lui suffit pas d'être mortel, il comprend qu'il doit le devenir, qu'il doit être deux fois mortel, souverainement, extrêmement mortel.' Blanchot, *L'éspace Littéraire*, p. 115.

ogised is proven true, but only because it grounds Christy's modernity in the real, rather than undoing its offstage power. Christy's modernity cannot see the light of day onstage as it threatens the traditional, landlocked community. It threatens their relation to their Ireland, and offers an alternative future.

Hamlet, as Derrida showed us, also relies on the Ghost to hauntologise: to prepare Hamlet for the end of the world. Hamlet inherits the life of being in non-being through the spectral relationship. Leopold Bloom also inherits that interminable, eternal existence from *Hamlet*, but also from another ghost: that of his late son, Rudy. Rudy hauntologises Bloom, eventually leading him to the poetic ideas of technological memory. Both living and dead in the photograph and the record, Bloom will be able to enter communal memory through this poetic technology, taking to heart Hamlet's meditation on being and non-being simultaneously. Bloom also prepares for the end of the world, but his preparation entails surviving regardless. Like *Hamlet*'s Ghost, Bloom commits to living in a spectral space between the two worlds of the living and the dead (or, in fact, both at once); he does so through *poiesis*. Bloom's modernity is representative of Ireland's as he becomes free through the procedure of technological analepsis-prolepsis, and so through Bloom Ireland can attain an outsider's perpetual modernity.

Finally, Freddie presents us with the personalised spectral space. This is the dead future to which Bloom committed, but which Freddie takes on. It is a 'third space', liminal in the frame, and allows him to play the doubled version of the novel's key sovereign figures. Freddie doubles Vaublin the painter in sketching *Le monde d'or* in *Ghosts* and Freddie doubles Professor Kreutznaer in the book about Vaublin. These doubles emerge from Freddie's commitment to the double-death as outlined by Blanchot; this double-death also describes the framework of *Hamlet* in which Hamlet seeks to make his death tolerable and possible, while fleeing from his own father's fatal death. Freddie lives on in the shadowy world of his own son's imagined death: he commits Van to the real, while

Freddie continues to live in an imagined world of liminality and of the *parergon*. Across each of these, the Ghost is *Hamlet*'s most important character.

According to Stephen Dedalus in the 'Scylla and Charybdis' episode in *Ulysses*, we should not be surprised to think of Shakespeare preferring the Ghost to Hamlet. Stephen tells his audience in the National Library of Ireland how Shakespeare played the part of the Ghost in his production of *Hamlet*. Stephen's not unfounded allegation of Shakespeare's playing the original Ghost leads us to see in Shakespeare, at least for a short while, Freddie: ghosted by his own words, giving flesh to his own ghost, deriving a dead future (as Ghost) from his son's (Hamnet's) own death. In this vein, the triad of Christy, Bloom and Freddie not only inherit from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, but also from *Hamlet*'s Shakespeare. It signals that an Irish citizen can also serve their biopolitical sovereignty by living spectrally, much as Shakespeare did himself through writing and in and through *Hamlet* itself. Synge, similarly, was intent on placing himself in his drama through borrowing others' language: he ghosted Christy, much as Wordsworth informed his own poetry; Bloom became a public poet in his generative becoming through the record and the photograph, and in his forerunning of the ne Irish state; and Freddie enjoyed existing in the third space of spectrality in order to tame his own double, and to become other sovereigns' privatised and personal doubles in turn. To live spectrally is, in fact, to write literature and to live in and through that literature.

In my first two chapters I examined the importance of family to modern nation-states. In both the mother-daughter and brother-son relations the private and the public spheres were important to the citizen: sometimes the one, sometimes the other was privileged in the drive towards modernity. This reflects the growing importance of the public and private spheres in early modern England, as much as in post-industrial Ireland. In this chapter the public-private contest has not disappeared, this time joining in how ghosts are perceived and treated: in both public and private, ghosts are important to mo-

dernity. Above it resulted in modern families and modern nations; in this chapter it results in citizens' becoming modern outside families, but in and amongst other social organisations. Literature was the net result of those engagements. In the next chapter, I examine the object which is the most public and yet the most personal belonging to any individual; in its public nature it is formal, in its personality it relates to content. My object, the body, will be shown to be the site of absolute liberation, but only through alienation: to be Other will be shown to be a free citizen.

Once the idea of a nation influences the perception of a woman, then that woman is suddenly and inevitably simplified. She can no longer have complex feelings and aspirations. She becomes the passive projection of a national idea.
— from 'Outside History' in Object Lessons *by Eavan Boland*

Bodily Ruins in Samuel Beckett and Edna O'Brien

My argument in this chapter is that the alienated, ruined and anatomised body can be the source of political futurity. In readings of O'Brien's *Country Girls Trilogy* and Beckett's *Trilogy*, the body is a central problem, for women and men alike. Owing to the dominant sentiment of 'theatricality' in the early modern period, and from its enunciations in political formations of the queen's bodies natural and political as well as in Shakespeare's drama (*Measure for Measure* [1603-4; adapted 1621], *Troilus and Cressida* [1602] and *Coriolanus* [1608]) and Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (performed 1605-6; published 1607), bodies become primary bearers and producers of meaning in society. However, the necessarily alienated form of the body, according to Jean-Paul Sartre, means that it is adapted in performance in order to obviate it or turn it to advantage. The key element of all successful articulations of corporal sovereignty is the control of the present and the future. Kate Brady's sterilisation and the Unnamable's existence as a *Jetztzeit*-like tympanum represent such successes. This argument suggests for my overall thesis that the issue with forming the nation is not restricted discretely either to the public or private spheres, but that the body, which can be in both at once, also constitutes modernity in these nations. In an age of growing biolotics, the ability to use the body as a force for increased agency and the sovereign establishment of laws is critical – even if these ideas are first evidenced in literary texts.

In the foregoing chapter I established that the spectral space is a sovereign space – a space from and in which a ghostly figure can make the law. I also established how, in the Irish literature, the sovereign act is best defined in writing: Synge's Wordsworthian creation in *Playboy*; Bloom's creative *poiesis* in 'Hades'; Freddie's doubled creations in *Ghosts*, notably as ghostwriter and ghostpainter. I linked this also to Agamben's concept

of biopolitics. This concept shows the importance of the *bios*, bare life, in the modern political sphere. It leads Agamben to prove that modern sovereignty is popular, and not reserved for a divinity or a divinity's secular representative. In my argument, biopolitics is evoked through the idea that writing and artistic creation represent a sovereignty over death – and death is suffered by all; death, too, is popular. By the end of this chapter, I will carry these ideas forward, proving that, as expressed in Shakespeare's Sonnet 126, to be 'sovereign mistress over wrack' is bound up with the body's relationship in and with time.[1]

Two consequences follow from the above. The first is the importance of the body to sovereignty; the second is the importance of imagination and creation to the body-world relation. The first is straightforwardly evidenced: Agamben's concept of modern sovereignty, and its biopolitical feature, is essentially tethered to the body of the citizen. Quoting Michel Foucault, Agamben states:

> [A] society's 'threshold of biological modernity' is situated at the point at which the species and the individual as a simple living body become what is at stake in a society's political strategies. […] In particular, the development and triumph of capitalism would not have been possible, from this perspective, without the disciplinary control achieved by the new bio-power, which, through a series of appropriate technologies, so to speak created the 'docile bodies' that it needed.[2]

These docile bodies become, in modernity, the bare life that makes up the biopolitical. The living body is docile at first, yes, but becomes the bearer of modern sovereignty purely by living life. Agamben's sketch of transfer of power from political life, *zōe*, to bare life, *bios*, relies wholly on the material body. If Christy, Bloom and Freddie are to be considered sovereign, then we cannot ignore the fact of their bodies. This is certainly un-avoidable when we consider the relation to mortality and death which appeared in each of the formulations I established in my previous chapter. Mortality is a fact of the body,

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[1] William Shakespeare, *The Complete Sonnets and Poems*, ed. by Colin Burrow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 126.5.

[2] Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p. 10.

and mortality was the starting point for each of the characters' becoming sovereign.

The second consequence can now be adumbrated: the importance of imagination and creation to the body-world relation. Writing and artistic creation dominated Christy's, Bloom's and Freddie's narratives. We can prove the inevitability of this in two specific ways. The first is through Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* when Theseus – Athens' sovereign – considers the sleeping lovers in Act Five. His monologue begins by considering the 'lunatic, the lover and the poet', stressing how the three are 'of imagination all compact' (V.I.7-8). Theseus proceeds to think through the implications of imaginative creation:

> And as imagination bodies forth
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
> Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name. (V.I.1[190]4-17)

Theseus asserts that imagination converts unknown forms – what we might consider 'potential' – and actualises them through poetry. The result is temporo-spatial specificity. Critically for my argument, moreover, is that the transition from (im)potentiality to material production is metaphorically invoked through the body. Imagination makes ideas material through the body; the body is the entry point for creative imagination into the world. In many ways, this was proved by the link between spectres, sovereignty, biopolitics and writing in my previous chapter.

But this is also a position more forcefully considered by Elaine Scarry in her *Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*. Scarry's broad argument is that pain has a dual role in the world, but it always manifests in the body: in terms of war and torture, the pain the body feels serves to unmake or de-construct the world in which the body is situated. Scarry writes:

> [T]hat torture and war are acts of destruction (and hence somehow the opposite of creation), that they entail the suspension of civilization (and are somehow the opposite of that civilization),

> are things we have always known and things one immediately apprehends even when viewing these two events from a great distance; the only thing that could not have been anticipated from a distance but that is forced upon us as self-evident once we enter the interior of these two events is that they are, in the most literal and concrete way possible, an appropriation, an aping, and reversing of the action of creating itself.[3]

The effects of war and torture on the body are relevant below. Against these ideas, Scarry explains that there remains, through the body in pain, the possible remaking or creation of the world. This is done through imagination and creation. Crucially, this not only appears in art for art's sake, but is also a political concern:

> Because the deconstruction of creation takes a specifically political form (torture, war), it might seem most appropriate to trace the outlines of the opposite event again in a specifically political form, such as the moment when a new country is being conceived and constructed (made-up, made-real), or when an already existing country, having been partially destroyed, is being re-imagined and re-constructed (remade-up).[4]

When Scarry writes in these terms we cannot fail to see the pertinence of her argument to mine: forming the nation of Ireland takes place through the body and its pain. We might summarise Scarry's argument by turning Theseus' comment on imagination on its head: Scarry argues that the body imagines forth the form of things unknown.

I have established two things at the start of this chapter: first that the body is implicated in sovereignty; second that the body is implicated in poetic creation that foreruns the formation of a nation. To create the nation, as I have explained above, is also an act of sovereignty. The body, imaginative creation and sovereignty are inextricable. The imagination bodies forth the nation, and the body imagines forth the nation; this chapter is dedicated to analysing the lines that join these three into a triad.

Before proceeding further it is clear that I need to define what I mean by 'body'. In my argument the body is a material object that discloses itself to others in the world.

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[3] Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 21.
[4] Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, p. 177.

Writing about other human beings, Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1948) writes that 'I only know them through their glances, their gestures, their speech – in other words, through their bodies'. There are a 'host of possibilities contained within this body when it appears before us'. What the body discloses is not just possibility, but a combination of its materiality along with its being. Merleau-Ponty's is 'the idea that rather than a mind *and* a body, man is a mind *with* a body, a being who can only get to the truth of things because its body is, as it were, embedded in those things'.[5] This material body is coincident with its being and with the world. In 'The Extasie' Donne asserted something similar, asking

> Our bodies why doe wee forbeare?
> They are ours, though not wee, Wee are
> The intelligences, they the spheares.
> We owe them thankes, because they thus,
> Did us, to us, at first convay
> Yeelded their senses force to us,
> Nor are drosse to us, but allay.[6]

The persona proceeds to explain that when heaven dispenses souls, they must 'to body first repaire'. The 'extasie' – which Donne described in a letter as 'a departing, and secession, and suspension of the soul'[56] Docherty more or less equates this Augustinian approach to that of the Unnamable's 'tympanum' existence, both temporally and spatially. In this, I follow Docherty's line; however, Docherty reads in this a link to macrocosmic European modernity, whereas I link it to a microcosmic liberation of the body from social constraints, below.[7] – is the reducibility of living consciousness to the body. Or, in terms which accord with the argument above, the body and 'The intelligences' (or consciousness) are inextricable; without the body to house consciousness, and without consciousness to think of and look at others' bodies, there is no love. In this poem Donne uses pre-modern science to tell his story of love and lust, but the ideas still

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[5] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The World of Perception*, trans. by Oliver Davis (London: Routledge Classics, 2008 [1948]), p. 62; p. 43.

[6] 'The Extasie' in Donne, *The Complete English Poems*, ll. 49-56. The alchemical references in 'drosse' and 'allay' also point us towards Ben Jonson, whose relevance is outlined above.

[7] 'The Extasie' in Donne, *The Complete English Poems*, l. 57; p. 100, 29n.

pertain. This encourages us to think seriously about the link between body and con-

sciousness.

Another profitable way of thinking of this relation is through Sartre's philosophy.

Sartre (1943) explains that

> Being-for-itself must be wholly body and it must be wholly con-
> sciousness; it can not be *united* with a body. Similarly being-for-
> others is wholly body […] There is nothing *behind* the body.[8]

Sartre considers the body in two modes, either in the being of agency, the For-itself, or in

the contested being, the For-others. In both cases, however, being and the body are in-

separable.

Simultaneously, we need to understand that for Sartre, the body is the contingent

relation with the world: just as there is no world without consciousness, there is no world

without 'consciousness (of) the body':

> Thus to say that I have entered into the world, 'come to the
> world,' or that there is a world, or that I have a body is one and
> the same thing. In this sense my body is everywhere-in the world
> […] My body is co-extensive with the world, spread across all
> things, and at the same time it is condensed into this single point
> which all things indicate and which I am without being able to
> know it.[9]

The body is central to our being-in-the-world at all, contends Sartre. But troublingly, my

body is 'inapprehensible' to me, the being coincident with the body. So the body is both

the world and the 'center of reference' of objects in the world – everything eventually

refers back to the body, is given to the body and the body is 'my very adaptation to tools,

the adaptation which I am' – and yet the body is never visible except as object for con-

sciousness.[10] The body presupposes its being-for-others and what we might want to call

'theatricality'.

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[8] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, trans. by Hazel E. Barnes
(London: Routledge, 2003 [1943]), p. 329. Emphasis in original.
[9] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 342.
[10] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 351; p. 348.

The body For-others has several ramifications in Sartre's philosophy, which are important when we think of our own body-for-others, and of the Other's body for us. Both of these bodies are not only sites, but intentional objects of consciousness, and they are each a 'body-which-points-beyond-itself; it is at once in space (it is the situation) and in time (it is freedom-as-object). The body For-others is the magic object *par excellence*'.[11] But, in assuming a role as object of intentional consciousness, and in entering time and space, the risk of one's own body For-others is that the consciousness of that body becomes alienated – this is even more troubling than its inapprehensibility:

> My body as alienated escapes me toward a being-a-tool-among-tools, toward a being-a-sense-organ-apprehended-by-sense-organs, and this is accompanied by an alienating destruction and a concrete collapse of *my* world which flows toward the Other and which the Other will reapprehend in *his* world. [...] My body is designated as alienated.[12]

Here we have two, obverse sides to the being-for-others coincident with body, resulting from its 'theatricality': its existence in time and space, and its betrayal of the consciousness (of) the body. Consciousness, for Sartre, is left to know its own body purely as a 'quasi-object' perceivable only through the Other's body. To exist temporo-spatially, the body and its consciousness must admit its own alienation: 'the perception of my body is placed chronologically after the perception of the body of the Other'.[13] A perceptual circle is conceived in which to know one's own body – which gives rise to and is given to by consciousness[14] – is to think of it theatrically, as observer. Body consciousness and passive perception are necessities of existence; alienation is a necessary evil attendant on freedom.

It is right to ask what use these theories of the body have for my argument. Ini-

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[11] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 374.

[12] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 376.

[13] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 382.

[14] In Sartre's arguments consciousness is always consciousness of something, the intentional act of which gives being to consciousness. In this instance, the body gives rise to consciousness. Conversely, there is no world without the Being-for-itself directing its consciousness outward and surpassing itself: consciousness gives rise to the world.

tially I turn to a late mediaeval notion of bodies to show Sartre's salience in that much earlier argument. In the idea of the King's Two Bodies, argued by Ernst Kantorowicz (1951), the body natural complements the body political. The former is tied to mortality, the latter to eternal sovereign rule on earth. According to Kantorowicz, the theory of the distinct bodies became prevalent with regard to royal versus personal ownership of the land of the Duchy of Lancaster, as it was argued that the Crown continued to own the land even after Edward VI, who had asserted royal possession, had died.[15] The body politic was one characterised by '*corporate perpetuity*'.[16] In this relation to immortality, the sovereign political body avoids entirely the necessary dangers of alienation as outlined by Sartre.

This is both the success of the sovereign body politic – that it can never be betrayed – but its weakness since it is never made available to others as an object of consciousness. However, Elizabeth I cannot wholly commit to the body politic and in her speeches to parliament we see her oscillate between her natural and her political body as sovereign. Ascending to the throne in 1558, her first speech to her politicians that November openly aligned her with the mediaeval notion of the king's two bodies: 'I am but one body naturally considered, though by His permission a body politic to govern[.]'[17] It appears that the queen shares the burden of these two bodies, though all the while maintaining their discrete separation. When, on another occasion, parliament asks the queen to marry, focusing its attention on her 'want of heirs of her body', parliament clearly invokes the fear of her mortal, natural body:[18] what will happen to England when the queen dies? Elizabeth's responses never vary, and her consternation is clear through-

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[15] Q.v. ch. 1 'The Problem: Plowden's Reports' in Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957).

[16] Marie Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977), p. 12. Emphasis in original.

[17] 'Queen Elizabeth's First Speech Before Parliament, February 10, 1559 (BL, MS Lansdowne 94, art. 14, fol. 29)' in Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, p. 57.

[18] 'The Commons' Petition to the Queen at Whitehall, January 28, 1563 (PRO: State Papers Domestic, Elizabeth 12/27/35[B] fols. 139r-142r)' in Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, p. 74.

out. The key message is that parliament need not worry:

> Think not that I, that in other matters have had convenient care
> of you all, will in this matter touching the safety of myself and
> you all be careless. For I know that this matter toucheth me
> much nearer than it doth you all, who if the worst happen can
> lose but your bodies. But […] I hazard to lose both body and
> soul.[19]

Elizabeth's deferral of parliament's concerns on to the topic of her body politic (through

her 'soul') is telling. This could be construed as a conflation of thebodies two (and that

Elizabeth is trying to make the alienable body natural a non-alienated political body), but

instead this ought to be understood as Elizabeth's concern for her soul as an appropria-

tion of the body politic to the body natural. Elizabeth comes to privilege the

phenomenon of the body – its visible theatricality – in her concern for her sovereign,

political body.

In Elizabeth's first speech to parliament, she also thinks of ways of securing her

theatricality in perpetuity. She declares that "'if when I have expired my last breath, this

may be inscribed upon my tomb:

> Here lies interred Elizabeth,
> A virgin pure until her death.'"[20]

Though this was pronounced forty-four years prior to her death, Elizabeth is already an-

ticipating the form her memory will take and what it will have to cherish: chastity and

virginity. At the same time, Elizabeth is seen as running against the early modern mood,

noted in Shakespeare's Sonnet 12. The lyric voices a sentiment that accords with many of

the sonnets concerned with reproducing the male friend's beauty: 'And nothing 'gainst

Time's scythe can make defence / Save breed to brave him when he takes thee hence.'[21]

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[19] 'Queen Elizabeth's Answer to the Commons' Petition that she Marry, January 28, 1563 (PRO, State
Papers Domestic, Elizabeth 12/27/36, fols. 143r-144r; fols. 143r-154v)' in Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, p.
71.
[20] 'Queen Elizabeth's First Speech Before Parliament, February 10, 1559 (William Camden's printed Latin
translation (1615); English retranslation in Annales: The True and Royal History of the Famous Empress
Elizabeth (London: for B. Fisher, 1625))' in Elizabeth I, *Collected Works*, p. 60.
[21] Shakespeare, *The Complete Sonnets and Poems*, 12.13-14.

To sum up Elizabeth's corporal concerns, it is evident that for her even the political body eternal is reducible to the phenomenon of the body: she must be theatricalised, deriving her being from her body For-others. Critically, the body is also situated in place and time, just as Sartre noted. Elizabeth's world – control over an emerging sovereign nation-state that is at war or in contest with other nation-states – is given by her body in space (in England) and in time (daughter of Henry VIII, sister of Protestant saviour Edward VI and Catholic villain Mary I, and with a questionable future to which her life inevitably heads). As will be developed below, we see in Elizabeth a crucial exception to Julia Kristeva's women who are excluded from the male time of linear history ('*cursive time*') and from '*monumental time* […] which englobes these supranational, sociocultural ensembles within even larger entities'.[22]

In Shakespeare's Sonnet 81, we also read the impulse to make phenomenal in a monument that which is metaphysical: 'Your monument shall be my gentle verse, / Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read[.]'[23] We have seen above how Bloom committed to the idea of communal memory through monumental time and becoming a poet; Elizabeth's and Shakespeare's persona's impulses are not too dissimilar with their proclivity to monumentalisation. The monument, too, links to the idea of immortality, but for my argument in this chapter I stress the ideas of theatricality – the demand for a body For-others – and temporality – the body revealing its place in time, and the importance of time to the body's theatricality. Holger Syme persuasively argues for a reconsideration of the model of theatricality in early modern politics, suggesting that the period did not suffer a crisis of representation, as many have argued, but instead a crisis of primary presence.[24]

Syme (2012) argues that in the realms of politics and law, for example, theatricali-

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[22] Julia Kristeva, 'Women's Time', trans. by Alice Jardine and Harry Blake, in *Signs,* 7.1 (1981), 13-35 (14).
[23] Shakespeare, *The Complete Sonnets and Poems*, 81.9-10.
[24] Holger Schott Syme, *Theatre and Testimony in Shakespeare's England: A Culture of Mediation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 2 (2n).

ty – or mediated re-presentation – was the *modus operandi*. An initial example is the manner in which Elizabeth's speech to her second parliament, quoted above, was actually pronounced 'by Lord Keeper Nicholas Bacon, with Elizabeth present by his side':

> The Lords and Commons thus witnessed a complex orchestration of presences and representations: seeing both the monarch and her officer, hearing his voice speaking her words, grammatically adopting her person as his own persona.[25]

When this trope is replicated throughout England in different arenas, then there is a 'very precise' logic of 'theatricality', the form of the period's predominant literary representation in the theatre. 'There, too,' Syme writes, 'the *script* was the source and locus of authority, at least state authority: the playtext, not its enactment, was "seen and allowed" by the Master of the Revels[.]'[26] The extended implication of Syme's argument is that early modern theatre's preeminence was no historical accident, but accorded with the dynamics and authority of the polity.

Consequently, we need to pay as much political attention to the theatrical literature (both literature *qua* theatrical, and the theatrical in the literature), as we do to the politics; the two, via the medium of the body, are inextricable: 'In the theatre, the body bears the brunt of performance; it is the material Shakespeare's text works on, works through. No body in the theatre is exempt[.]'[27] We must also consider within this framework the operability of theatricality to promote self-knowledge. Nancy Selleck argues that selfhood in early modernity was concerned with the perception of the self by others – what we might gloss as theatricality – in order to grasp self-knowledge:

> Renaissance usage characteristically defines selfhood as the experience of an *other*. For instance, when Shakespeare's Henry IV tells his lords, 'I will from henceforth rather be my Selfe, / Mighty, and to be fear'd', the 'Selfe' he speaks of is constituted not in his own inward experience but in his outward manifesta-

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[25] Syme, *Theatre and Testimony*, p. 3.
[26] Syme, *Theatre and Testimony*, p. 5.
[27] Carol Chillington Rutter, *Enter the Body: Women and Representation on Shakespeare's Stage* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. xii.

> tion – in *their* experience of him. The fact that Henry posits this
> as something that *he* controls, that he can choose to be or not to
> be, certainly makes his own will part of the picture, but it also ties
> that will to the other's perception.[28]

Here we can read another version of Sartre's body For-others, and the consciousness that can perceive its own body only as quasi-object looking through the instrumentality of others' bodies.

In linking this point with Syme's the conclusion is that theatricality is both a feature of our perception of others and, through this same structure, our perception of ourselves through the theatricalisation of ourselves for others. As with Sartre, all bodies, through theatricalisation, are alienated from the audience (i.e. parliament, or the Globe's patrons) appropriating the bodies to themselves as objects of their intentional consciousness; but this alienation is a governing principle of Renaissance bodies. Additionally since bodies were the principle site of early modern signification – be it in the theatre or in parliament – then bodies do provide the world as Sartre alleges; bodies are everywhere. Moreover, bodies are everywhere implicated in time and in space.

How the necessary alienation manifests, however, is crucial to the work of this chapter. I will explore how bodies are problematic for the protagonists in Beckett's *Trilogy* and O'Brien's *Country Girls Trilogy*. They are not only problematic because the protagonists are not in full control of them – as in Beckett's Molloy and O'Brien's Kate, at various points – but also because others' perception of the protagonists as bodies-in-the-world changes how the protagonists act. This manifests in the protagonists' theatricality; co-extensive with the theatricality is the bodies' heterosexuality and temporality: how the protagonists' relation with others leads on to their sexual relation with others, and how ultimately their bodies are turned towards the future, where there is a conditional freedom. *Molloy*'s Moran finds that his future potential deteriorates as his body

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[28] Nancy Selleck, *The Interpersonal Idiom in Shakespeare, Donne, and Early Modern Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 8.

disintegrates, and Kate discovers that in losing her virginity, her body's future is no long-er her own. Her future belongs to her son, Cash, and he is primarily his father's instrument of power, initially rejecting Kate's motherhood. These stories are not con-fined to the books in which they appear and in addressing the issue of bodies-in-the-world, the novels are also addressing the state of the world. Queen Elizabeth, too, ad-dresses the state of the world when she seeks monumentalized immortality; she acknowledges that her body is a centre of reference for the world, and that the world ex-tends from how her subjects perceive her body.

In historical terms, bodies have always been implicated in the world – both indi-vidually and collectively. Foucault, for example, charts in his *Surveillir et Punir* the shift away from approved, public spectacles of torture to a time only seventy-five years later when 'The public execution is now perceived as a fireplace in which violence is reignited. […] The punishment itself tended to become the best kept secret of the penal procedure'. Moreover, 'In the disappearance of the public torture, it was therefore the spectacle which disappeared; but it entailed the unravelling of the judgment on the body'.[29] But of course, Foucault's history shows that the body is not left alone; instead, the body is the focus of the punishment of incarceration. In the panopticon, the body is immediately and always verifiable in time and space. By using the method of surveillance in the run up to punishment (or indeed as punishment itself), the body of the citizen is always suscep-tible to punishment, not only in prison, but in wider society.

This is an analogical version of Agamben's biopolitics in which all citizens take part in the modern nation-state; in Foucault's history, all bodies are punishable in the process of being in the modern nation-state. To be seen is to be liable to punishment; the spectacular body is no more, but the surveyed body has taken its place. This trajectory represents the domestication of punishment; to draw a parallel with early modern theatri-

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[29] Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et Punir: Naissance de la Prison* (Paris: Gallimard, 1993 [1975]), p. 16; p. 17.

cality would suggest that the visible, public body of the queen is reduced or removed to a lesser visibility of a simple citizen in the modern era. For this reason at least, Kate Brady in O'Brien's trilogy is as important to the Irish polity as Queen Elizabeth I is to England's. Moreover, Kate's importance is not merely because she has a personal body, but also because she has access to the political body as well. That is, Kate can be politically representative, verifiable in the idea that O'Brien's texts are 'scandalous', as Kiberd has written. By the same token, Beckett's characters bodies are also political. Molloy is pursued by Moran because he is an undesirable in that fictional world: politically Molloy's body is unwelcome, regardless of the personal use to which his body is put. Bodies, descending from spectacular moments of punishment, remain punishable due to their mere appearance in the eyes of others.

These body questions are not side issues in the modern Irish literature. As many have argued, Beckett's *Trilogy* is best considered as a response to the postwar French environment. This is evident when the novels' war-torn landscapes is shown to echo the Gaullist purges and reprisals against collaborators and even against former Vichy supporters. Andrew Gibson notes, for example, that 'The *Trilogy* is everywhere haunted by a vocabulary and images that call modern warfare and its consequences to mind […]. The protagonists of the *Trilogy* all make halting progress over featureless or shattered terrain'.[30] The novels are marked by war and its aftermath, though no explicit references are made to France, nor to the Second World War itself: the landscape is marked by what Scarry calls the unmaking of the world through bodies.

And yet Gibson's analysis also offers us a way of considering these characteristics as features of something larger than France or that specific war:

> [T]he point par excellence, of course, is that history in the *Trilogy* exists as rubble, as debris strewn across its pages. The historical deposits in question constitute much of Beckett's imaginative

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[30] Andrew Gibson, *Samuel Beckett* (London: Reaktion Books, 2010), p. 119.

raw material during this period. The *Trilogy* presents us with a (suitably distant) mode of treating and transmuting them.[31]

In line with Scarry's argument, this world of debris and rubble is the result of warring bodies trying to outdo each other; equally, consciousness emerges from this world into the body that experiences it. This is relevant when the *Trilogy*'s characters present themselves: Molloy is disabled, Moran becomes disabled, Malone is incarcerated and the Unnamable is only able to verify his existence empirically through elements of his body. In this postwar world, these characters are unmade along with/because of/co-extensively with the landscape.

Beckett's bodies, just as with the early modern bodies I have thus far sketched, are also given over to time. James McNaughton's describes Beckett's perennial delays:

> Beckett arrived late to the Irish revival and late to modernism; he came of age after the First World War and was 16 during the civil war in Ireland. Perhaps we should not be surprised that his predominant literary signature is aftermath: all of Beckett's work seems locked in some version of the 'said before.'[32]

This passage connects Beckett's own belatedness with its manifestation in his texts. Accordingly, Alvin Jackson's comment on Kevin O'Higgins' assassination is useful: 'One of the last of the killings related to the war, and one of the most sensational, came as late as July 1927, when Kevin O'Higgins was shot on his way to mass[.]'[33] Beckett was studying at Trinity College, Dublin between 1923-7, in the same city and the same period during which Higgins had become a prominent Cumann na nGaedheal politician in the Dáil. Through Scarry's ideas, we see in this incident a paradoxical political situation: on the one hand the new Ireland is being created and imagined through bodies – of people and political organisations – but this 'making' keeps coming up against the unmaking inherent in war and torture. Kevin O'Higgins' assassination stalls the creation of modern

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[31] Gibson, *Samuel Beckett*, p. 122.

[32] James McNaughton, 'The Politics of Aftermath: Beckett, Modernism, and the Irish Free State', in *Beckett and Ireland,* ed. by Seán Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 56-77 (p. 56).

[33] Alvin Jackson, *Ireland 1798-1998: Politics and War* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999), p. 272.

Ireland through the very medium of that creation: bodies.

Jackson inadvertently characterises the beginnings of the Civil War at the Four Courts in a word that has later been used to describe Beckett's writing, labelling the Treatyists' bombardment of the republicans holed-up in the Four Courts as 'tragi-comic'.[34] The effect of the tragicomedy on male bodies and masculinity in Ireland is well charted. Ferriter explains how 'Disillusionment was a preponderant sentiment of the era'.[35] Historian Ferriter seeks to explain this through McGahern's Moran in *Amongst Women*, subject of my analysis above. Moran exclaims of the state of Ireland post-War of Independence and post-Civil War: "'Look where it brought us. Look at the country now. Run by a crowd of small-minded gangsters out for their own good. It was better if it never had happened.'"[36] Whilst Holland reads in this a crisis of masculinity,[37] we must also highlight Moran's insistence that the time before is better than the future in which he now lives: the making of the world has not met the promise made in its unmaking through war. Modern Ireland is a failure. Perhaps the crisis of masculinity is best summarised in the career of Jack Doyle in the early-1930s an Irish soldier in the British army turned heavyweight boxer. Though 'a hero for many of his generation' for his successes in the ring, his life ended in 'destitution and acute alcoholism'.[38] Doyle's pugilism – the sport in which we might be able to see a lacuna in Scarry's argument since boxing allows intercorporal battle without conceding the unmaking of the world – is itself a form of making of Ireland, with Doyle's common heroism both lauded in his successes and lamented in his failures.

Finally, we must take account of Beckett's Protestant heritage; as such, Beckett's class was excluded from much of the political wranglings, though not wholly. The issue

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[34] Jackson, *Ireland 1798-1998*, p. 266.
[35] Ferriter, *The Transformation of Ireland*, p. 431.
[36] McGahern, *Amongst Women*, p. 18.
[37] Holland, 'Marvellous Fathers', 198.
[38] Ferriter, *The Transformation of Ireland*, p. 428.

of the boundary was critical in Beckett's life, particularly as he was a Dubliner but schooled at Portora School in Enniskillen in the north. The Boundary Commission legislated for in the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 was one of the more controversial elements, though Treatyists saw it as a concession. The boundaries could be redrawn in due course to make Ireland a whole nation once again:

> Many nationalists […] believed that if faithfully carried out [the Boundary Commission] would remove the counties of Tyrone and Fermanagh, where there was a particularly large Catholic and nationalist population, from Northern Ireland to the Free State. The remaining four counties, it was contended, would not find themselves a viable political entity, and would be forced to join the Free State.[39]

However, the Commission in the mid-1920s failed to restore the coherence of the island of Ireland:

> Indeed, the failure of the Boundary Commission was a failure for the Treaty settlement, and it was a humiliation for those who, like [Michael] Collins, believed that the Treaty had brought 'the freedom' to achieve more: this was the first great test of the Treaty as a vehicle for national aspirations, and it was an embarrassing failure.[40]

It means that Beckett's life, marked as it already was by a quasi-separation from society, was further divided by the arch-symbol of Irish division. If the body is given in its situation and time, as Sartre argues, then we see a restricted body in a world that is bounded within arbitrary fences – fences, indeed, that fracture the life that Beckett had hitherto lived. Even though Beckett arrived late to this politics, as McNaughton suggests, he cannot have failed to be cognisant of his class' marginality within a dysfunctional society, the (self-)divisions of which were everywhere inscribed, and where failure was characterised as a problem borne out in time.

Women's roles in the Irish Free State and its eventual republican successor were ambiguous. They were active contributors during the wars, and Jackson notes that

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[39] Robert Kee, *Ireland: A History* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980), p. 192.
[40] Jackson, *Ireland 1798-1998*, p. 271.

> women certainly contributed extensively to the republican cause
> during the civil war, as they had done in the struggle against the
> crown forces […]. Aside from formal military activity, a Wom-
> en's Prisoners' Defence League was formed, which – riven by the
> unflagging energies of Hanna Sheehy Skeffington – raised money
> in the United States for republican internees.[41]

Women's agency was actively promoted and upheld in the Free State and the republic.

Several even had roles on Fianna Fáil's first executive, the political party that led the gov-

ernment from the early 1930s to the late 1940s unceasingly, and also partly in the 1950s –

the decade that forms the backdrop to O'Brien's *Country Girls* trilogy. Countering this

agency was Eamon de Valera's construction of the Constitution in 1937, Article 41 of

which expressly prescribed women's roles in Éire as confined to the home. 'Mothers' is a

designated vocation for women, whilst 'fathers' in the Constitution is only used to carry

reference to Christ's support for mankind. Jackson writes that 'the constitution embod-

ied the gamut of Catholic social teaching, emphasizing the centrality of the family within

society, prohibiting divorce and locating women firmly within the home'.[42] Rather than

being 'active agents of political change', writes Ferriter, 'it depicted ideal women as self-

sacrificing and passive mothers who nurtured a deep patriotism in their children'.[43]

This was the historical context which fuelled O'Brien's imagination and her writ-

ing. Kiberd describes her early novels – *The Country Girls* trilogy (1960-4; *Epilogue* in 1987)

being her first – as the product of an author 'who made many of the subsequent advanc-

es in Irishwomen's writing possible'. This came at a cost, however, as she was known as a

'scandalous woman'.[44] The scandal was partly because of her imaginative reconstruction

of women's lives in mid-century Ireland (and particularly in rural west Ireland), and her

fanciful constructions of women who liked sex for the act itself, and not as something

that helps women fulfil their true vocation as 'mothering the continuation of the Irish

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[41] Jackson, *Ireland 1798-1998*, p. 269.
[42] Jackson, *Ireland 1798-1998*, p. 297.
[43] Ferriter, *The Transformation of Ireland*, p. 327.
[44] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, p. 566.

nation', as Helen Thompson puts it.[45] Veneration of proscribed acts and negative descriptions of prescribed ones were what O'Brien's novels appeared to offer, though I will show they are but another way of describing Sartre's alienated bodies. We expect to read in O'Brien's novels a positive spin on the 'alienated' female body; in Scarry's terms, and adapting Kiberd's idea, we will see how O'Brien's works make through imagination a new Ireland that allows a scandalised woman to forge her own future.

History has shown that O'Brien's fanciful imagination was falsely accused. Instead, Kate's and Baba's move to Dublin and subsequent emigration to England forms part of a mid-century phenomenon that is well recorded. The Commission on Emigration sat between 1948-54, and Ferriter writes of some of its findings:

> It was no surprise so many women were leaving; according to the 1946 census one third of all 'occupied girls' under the age of 20 and one quarter of all occupied women were employed as domestic servants, indicating a severe lack of career options. […] More interesting was the widespread contention that young women leaving was humiliating for the country.[46]

In defence of women's emigration, the Country Women's Association offered the fact of domestic servants' better treatment in England that made emigration to London an obvious move.

Though neither Kate nor Baba work as domestic servants, the attraction of the liberation and freedom of movement that Dublin and London offered is plain to see. For example, the debacle of the 'Mother and Child' healthcare act in the 1950s made it clear to all that women's bodies were, politically, bound by the ethics of the Catholic Church. Health minister Noel Browne's failure to institute what critics labelled 'socialised medicine', was also a failure of secularisation and modernity writ large. The nation's making through the body stopped at the door of the Church. For Jackson, 'the "mother and child" affair, far from being a crisis in Church-state relations, highlights the solidity of the

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[45] Helen Thompson, *The Role of Irish Women in the Writings of Edna O'Brien: Mothering the Continuation of the Irish Nation* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2010).

[46] Ferriter, *The Transformation of Ireland*, pp. 473-4.

consensus on social and religious values within the Ireland of the early 1950s.'[47] As Kiberd explains, 'The so-called Mother and Child Scheme would long be cited by disappointed radicals (and by caustic unionists) as further proof of the contention that "Home Rule is Rome Rule".'[48] Taken altogether, we read in the failure of the Mother and Child Scheme at the beginning of the 1950s a condemnation of secularised, political creation intimately associated with the body – and, in particular, women's bodies.

O'Brien's novels acted both out of and against this backdrop of alienated women's bodies in constitutional and legislative society. For these reasons, it is important to examine the figure of the body in O'Brien's texts, especially because it often seems as if in seeking cultural and sexual freedoms, Kate falls back on romance narratives that often connected the Irish Kathleen Ni Houlihan figure with the male '"pillars of society"'.[49] Thus, though it appears that O'Brien's women's freedom comes at the expense of Irish Catholic mores, it actually emerges that their freedom can only take place in and through those mores, however much they seek to resist and go beyond their restrictiveness. Though in a novella such as Stephens' *The Charwoman's Daughter*, discussed above, the John Bull figure of the Dublin Metropolitan policeman's 'double inscription' as 'chevalier' and coloniser 'straddles the line between the Imaginary and the Symbolic registers of the novel, between his placement within Mary's inner fantasy frame and his social reality as defender of the established regime'[50] – such that the novel dispenses with the need of alien interference in authoritative positions – in O'Brien's early novels the male figures (Mr Gentleman and Eugene Gaillard) are republicans whose exoticism and foreign provenance indicate the international standing of the Republic in the 1950s. As such, these idealised figurations ought to be heroicised in order that *The Country Girls* trilogy might become novels that venerate the Irish Republic. Instead, however, they become vessels in

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[47] Jackson, *Ireland 1798-1998*, p. 311.
[48] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, p. 479.
[49] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, p. 566.
[50] Valente, *The Myth of Manliness*, p. 131.

which Kate must invest emotionally, symbolically investing herself in the republican successes – in order to found the possibility for a new generation of Irishwomen. Kate must pursue her alienation through others' bodies – the heterosexual Other, in fact.

Given the similarities between Elizabethan England and modern Ireland – how bodies contribute to the making and unmaking of society – it would be easy to draw parallels in the remainder of this chapter. However, I will not be arguing, for example, that in *The Unnamable* we can see Queen Elizabeth, and thereafter use her as model to explicate the issues at stake in *The Unnamable*. I will, however, contend that theatricality – the body For-others – which is a dominant principle of Elizabethan England, is also dominant in modern Ireland; moreover, I will argue that theatricality is a necessary feature of the creation of nation-statism. Foucault's domestication of spectacular bodies also privileges those bodies in the modern polity. This is proved by Scarry who contends that the body-in-pain is coterminous with the making of the world. Literature takes part in making the world in early modern England and modern Ireland through the contestable body Without a full appreciation of how England came to be a coherent political space after Elizabeth's death, we cannot fully appreciate Ireland's nascent growth into an intelligible nation-state. What we discover is that modern Ireland emerges from the body's inextricable relation with the world. This discussion of bodies will inevitably lead me on to the topic of my final chapter: the land of Ireland.

My discussion is structured in two parts. I first examine female bodies. Looking at Elizabeth I's reign, I examine the importance of theatricality to a female body. Charting the importance of Elizabeth's uniting monumental with cursive time, I show how the queen becomes an important figure not only in her own polity, but also those polities that came after hers. By figuring her chastity as a positive attribute, she allows the female body that refuses or obviates the future still to have a future through monumentality.

Along with Elizabeth, I examine Julietta and Mariana in *Measure for Measure*; these

women's bodies are politicized as agents of Angelo's justice, though they also provide the Duke with the means to restore his own sovereign rule of law over Vienna. That narrative is heralded by Julietta's obvious pregnancy, showing how women's bodies bear considerable importance as a body For-others, since pregnancy is always visible. As complement, I examine Cressida's character in the inter-nationalist politics of *Troilus and Cressida*, in which Cressida's body is visibly ruined after spending a night with Troilus. Her ruined body is a political impetus to the final act's battles, leading eventually to the Greeks' victory. In all of these early modern texts, the body bears a personal and political weight; and in all but one, patriarchal control is the victor. The exception is Queen Elizabeth. As such, when we look at *The Country Girls Trilogy* we see in Kate Brady many of the problems the early modern characters faced: social expectation; male betrayal; and corporal alienation, both to herself and others. Kate is also described as 'ruined' by her husband once he has taken her virginity. This ruin is what deprives Kate of control over her own future – freedom is denied to her. Ultimately Kate finds a solution, so radical that at first glance it appears instead as an acceptance of failure: Kate has a hysterectomy. The hysterectomy is not medically demanded, but rather socially necessary for Kate. By avoiding the social future demanded of her as a daughter of Mother Ireland, Kate instead adopts a monumental strategy seen in another sovereign woman: Queen Elizabeth I is a more explicable mother-figure to Kate. Kate's ruined body – but this time ruined by herself – leads no doubt to Kiberd's recording of 'scandal'; but it is an acceptance of the necessary alienation of the body, returning Kate's future to her and her body.

In my second section I look at male bodies in Beckett's *Trilogy*. In *Molloy*, the two characters react differently to their bodies. Molloy accepts his alienation, and enjoys the freedom which it gives him; Moran by contrast lives in Bad Faith, rejecting his body's failings. This is political since, as I mentioned above, Moran is employed to track down Molloy because he is an undesirable. Molloy's successes celebrate those who accept their

disabled bodies in a war-torn landscape. Moran, on the other hand, has as a forebear Coriolanus, whose body could have provided him with access to sovereignty over Rome. Coriolanus' rejection of his political, theatrical body, and preservation of his body as something purely personal, leads to his tragic demise. In politics, you need to accept the theatricality of your body, and Coriolanus failed in that: he, too, lived on in Bad Faith. Pre-Imperial Rome and Beckett's *Trilogy* landscape both rely on an acceptance of theatricality and alienation.

But, in both Moran and Molloy, their trajectories are turned toward the future. I ask, however, if that future can be had now in the present. Through a reading of Jonson's *Volpone* I show how future freedom can be had now by deliberately acting theatrically. Volpone, for much of the play, is able to live the life he would after his death, but in the now. This is a form of *Jetztzeit*, a now-time filled with content, and appears also in the ruined and partial body of the Unnamable. The Unnamable's becoming merely the 'tympanum' is an adoption of *Jetztzeit* and represents a moment of revolution, as Walter Benjamin's analysis explains. In this way, the Unnamable's seemingly useless state of being, in a body that is reducible to the merest fact of the body, is actually a body of origin, from which revolution can be launched now. The modern Irish polities that emerge from the bodies of Kate Brady and of the Unnamable start with ruin.

'"You're a ruined woman now"': Female Bodies

Theatricality works in two ways. On the one hand it is the representation of the body to an audience – Elizabeth to parliament, or Burbage to the Globe's patrons, for example – whilst on the other it is the re-presentation of the body to itself – Selleck's idea that the known self is that which is presented to others. Theatricality is also bound up with self-knowledge, if, as Syme argues, it is a mediated re-presentation. We find both types of theatricality in the two periods.

I have mentioned Elizabeth's tendency to monumentalisation above, but it is

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worth developing the point further, linking Queen Elizabeth's theatrical body to time and to an afterlife. The idea in question is that of the queen's avowed chastity, which is not only theatrical in that it is presented to her subjects and politicians, but also because it locks the queen's body within a certain temporality which refuses a future after death: by refusing reproduction, the queen's body in one chief sense can no longer enter historical or cursive time. However, John King points to the monumentalisation of the queen after her death through the propagation of the cult of chastity and virginity surrounding Queen Elizabeth. We see this in the final conception of the Elizabeth-as-virgin-queen image propagated in Camden's *Annales*. For King, it is important to establish how Elizabeth's afterlife forged an anachronistic reading of Elizabeth's body, because it points towards Jacobean collusion in the cultivation of that image. Camden's version of virgin Elizabeth is undoubtedly successful as it 'has passed into modern scholarship through many retellings'.[51] Contrary to its propagation as an Elizabethan myth, King demonstrates how

> An awareness of the anachronistic processes at work in the first history of Elizabeth's reign throws light on these earlier phrases of Elizabethan iconography and demonstrates how the entire Gloriana cult was defined by the practicalities of Elizabethan *and Jacobean* politics.[52]

The 'anachronism' presented by King is the logic of afterlife that is important to this chapter: after the material phenomenon of the body disappears, its meaning lives on. This accords with the living though chaste body, the theatrical image of which was 'fashioned dynamically'. The paradox of the Virgin Queen is in this dynamic stasis: though futurity is denied (implying stasis), the body is still dynamic. And, thereafter, in its futurity – its posthumous revivifications – its dynamism is radicalised for political use and read as the static image that predominated during Elizabeth's reign; the world that Elizabeth

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[51] John N. King, 'Queen Elizabeth I: Representations of the Virgin Queen', in *Renaissance Quarterly,* 43.1 (1990), 30-74 (36) <doi: 10.2307/2861792>.
[52] King, 'Representations of the Virgin Queen', 36. Emphasis in original.

creates through her body is read back in time to sixteenth-century England, and lives on in the time after her death. In this way, Elizabeth's body unites cursive with monumental time. This is important because in the character of Cathleen 'Kate' Brady in *The Country Girls Trilogy*, we read a young woman who struggles with the cursive time which is owned and directed by the male sex (as Kristeva points out).

That struggle occurs because for much of the narrative of the novels, Kate does not realise that the chief symbolic mother figure that governs Kate's life is created asymmetrically by a patriarchy that circumscribes women's role in politics. Mother Ireland, descending as it does from the Virgin Mary, is a Catholic figure coloured by certain Irish values. Mother Ireland is the female Irish figure of alienation *par excellence* in the way it makes quasi-secular the Virgin Mary (only quasi- because it never severs relations to the figure of the Virgin Mary and, as such, constantly points back to the mother of Christ; Mother Ireland offers us an Ireland that is only quasi-modern), and also makes an appearance in both revolutionary literature (cf. Yeats' *Cathleen ni Houlihan*) and in constitutional literature (cf. the prescription of a woman's place in the family at home in *Bunreacht*).

Critically, Kate Brady finds her secularised Mother Ireland in romance figures who fall in love with the male hero. These romance narratives depict women's bodies that theatricalise the idealised heterosexual desires of women in Ireland; Kate seems at first to be a romance figure in *The Country Girls Trilogy*. Charlotte Nunes points out the overlap between the Catholic Virgin Mary and women in Romantic texts, and Kate's concomitant commitment to both: Kate's 'resolve to live with her lover is not necessarily an act of rebellion against Catholic social mores, but the desperate manifestation of her *commitment* to the social imperative to establish her identity through a romantic linkage.'[53]

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[53] Charlotte Nunes, 'Return to the Lonely Self: Autonomy, Desire and the Evolution of Identity in *The Country Girls Trilogy*', in *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies,* 33.2 (2007), 39-47 (42).

Though much critical attention is paid to the romance strand of the *Trilogy*, I want to move beyond this to show how this is a social bind on Kate, but also how the monumental aspect of romance narratives and their feminine figures descending from Mother Ireland can be turned into a positive corporal alienation, as offered by Queen Elizabeth.[54]

To suggest that Elizabeth I is Kate's true revolutionary forebear could seem an affront to the modern Irish polity (we cannot imagine, for example, that either Mary Robinson or Mary McAleese would declare Elizabeth I their political inspiration); however, in suggesting so I want to draw an important link between the emerging polities of early modern England and modern Ireland concerning the biopolitical. We have seen how Elizabeth negotiated the problem of the sovereign's two bodies by prioritising her natural body; it follows that if Agamben's modern polity is founded upon a greater emphasis on the politicisation of bare life – those who are born automatically become citizens – and if that bare life is situated in the body, then Agamben's modernity follows on from a society in which theatricality was a governing principle. Elizabethan England, as we know from Syme, was such a society, thereby providing a foundation for Agamben's twentieth-century modern polities. Ireland is also 'theatrical', and through this we know that Elizabeth is behind Kate, as it were; in the remainder of this section, I will show how theatricality operates in Kate's world, which will then lead me on to explaining the necessity of sexual relations for Kate. I finish by showing how Kate's strategy to wrest back control of her life finds its logical conclusion in a near-identical fashion to Queen Elizabeth: Kate monumentalises herself as a woman with no future. This radicalising potential paradoxically secures Kate her future.

From the beginning of *The Country Girls Trilogy* we see Kate's and her friend Ba-

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[54] We have a list of woman critics who write about the romance elements and the *figure* of the woman of O'Brien's *Trilogy*: Kristine Byron, Eileen Morgan, Rebecca Pelan, Grace Eckley and Amanda Greenwood. The most diverse readings are Shirley Peterson's sadomasochistic reading and Helen Thompson's psychoanalytical lens through which she reproduces André Green's concept of the Dead Mother complex. In any and all these instances, the role of the woman's body is either elided or reduced, as if it neither exists nor matters.

ba's concerns with how their bodies look to one another. The body is one of the secrets traded between Kate and Baba: 'Baba and I sat there and shared secrets, and once we took off our knickers in there and tickled one another.'[55] The allure of secrecy is obliquely present in Kate's narrative, and it appears that she is unconsciously aware of the effect or meaning of a girl's body in society: its theatricality and appearance for another's consciousness. In an Irish Catholic setting, this exploration is brought into relief against the strictures of the convent that the two girls enter for their schooling. On encountering their first nun at the convent school, Kate observes that

> She wore a black, loose-fitting habit and a black veil over her head. Framing her face, and covering her forehead, her ears, and her chest, was a stiff white thing which they call a wimple. It almost covered her eyebrows, but you could just barely see the tips of them. […] Her face was shiny.[56]

That the single distinguishing feature of the nun is her shiny face is bathetic.

The loose-fitting habit, too, demonstrates the extent to which the nun's body is considered shameful as it is made amorphous and indiscernible. Shame about the body continues for the girls, too, who are told by another nun:

> 'The new girls won't know this, but our convent has always been proud of its modesty. Our girls, above anything else, are good and wholesome and modest. One expression of modesty is the way a girl dresses and undresses. She should do so with decorum and modesty.'[57]

Instead of the female body's equivalence amongst the students, they are told that they are different to those outside the convent and therefore their bodies should not be disclosed to one another. The nun tacitly acknowledges that the female body is something which 'speaks': it offers itself as an object to others. Clearly the nuns in the convent are under the impression that the female body exists purely as object of consciousness for others,

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[55] The Country Girls in Edna O'Brien, *The Country Girls Trilogy and Epilogue* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1987 [1960-87]), p. 8. All further references to The Country Girls, The Lonely Girl and Girls in Their Married Bliss will be to this edition.
[56] O'Brien, *The Country Girls*, p. 65.
[57] O'Brien, *The Country Girls*, p. 68.

from which the female consciousness should derive the feeling of shame; there is little in the nun's description to suggest any subjective or biopolitical agency for the female with regard to her body.

However, Kate and Baba seek pride in her body's appearance. On the girls' first return home from the convent, Baba seeks to mature physically more than she already has. Baba scours her father's veterinary medicine cabinet and picks up a tube the label of which reads 'FOR UDDER INFUSION'. "'Make us look females,'" says Baba. "'We'll rub it into our bubs and they'll swell out[.]'"[58] Baba understands that the Other's perception of you filters their feelings about you: by looking more 'female' through her body, Baba believes that she can be more 'female'. By contrast, Kate is impressed by her appearance. In the first of two mirror-stage identification[59] scenes Kate derives 'pleasure' as she 'looked in the wardrobe mirror at myself and admired my legs a thousand times. My calves had got fatter and my legs were nicely shaped. I was grown-up'.[60] In the second, Kate enjoys the time when she prepares for going out, specifically on a date with a man.

> It is the only time that I am thankful for being a woman, that time of evening when I draw the curtains, take off my old clothes, and prepare to go out. Minute by minute the excitement grows. I brush my hair under the light and colors are autumn leaves in the sun. I shadow my eyelids with black stuff and am astonished by the look of mystery it gives to my eyes. I hate being a woman. Vain and shallow and superficial. Tell a woman that you love her and she'll ask you to write it down so that she can show it to her friends. But I am happy at that time of night. I

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[58] O'Brien, *The Country Girls*, pp. 99-100.

[59] The mirror stage is defined by Lacan in the following psychoanalytical terms. I am, of course, borrowing it and applying it to a literary figure, so the infantilism of Lacan's object of inquiry is negligible here: 'It suffices to understand the mirror stage in this context *as an identification,* in the full sense analysis gives to the term: namely, the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes *[assume]* an image— an image that is seemingly predestined to have an effect at this phase, as witnessed by the use in analytic theory of antiquity's term, "imago."

The jubilant assumption *[assomption]* of his specular image by the kind of being—still trapped in his motor impotence and nursling dependence—the little man is at the *infans* stage thus seems to me to manifest in an exemplary situation the symbolic matrix in which the *I* is precipitated in a primordial form, prior to being objectified in the dialectic of identification with the other, and before language restores to it, in the universal, its function as subject.' ('The Mirror Stage as Formative of the I Function as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience' in Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. by Bruce Fink, Héloïse Fink, and Russell Grigg (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Co., 2006), p. 76.)

[60] O'Brien, *The Country Girls*, p. 86.

> feel tender toward the world, I pet the wallpaper as if it were white rose petals flushed pink at the edges; I pick up my old, tired shoes and they are silver flowers that some man has laid outside my door. I kissed myself in the mirror and ran out of the room, happy and hurried and suitably mad.[61]

Kate here is intimately aware of the social expectations for a woman, and the particular clichés that surround women's behaviours. Indeed, Amanda Greenwood affirms that '"Woman" is a role which [Kate] adopts whilst recognizing its shallowness and being conscious of the extent to which she is "playing"';[62] Simone de Beauvoir (1949) explained that 'One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman', an existential idea that holds sway here.[63] Kate possesses this making up, giving her body a mystery – much like the nuns' bodies became mysterious in a religious sense – and thereby creating a world beyond her.

This bears out the creative possibilities of the imagination through the body that Scarry outlined; however, it comes at a cost, for Sartre would argue that Kate is not perceiving her own body, but is viewing it as a quasi-object of consciousness. By thinking of her body as a fixed object of her consciousness, Kate is making her body-as-object an instrument for her own consciousness: Kate is fixing herself as object for the Other (including herself-as-other) creating a theatrical body that alienates Kate from herself, just at the moment of her closest proximity to her own body. 'If I am to judge the Other's body as an object similar to my body', writes Sartre, in a situation that I am analogising with a mirrored-encounter, 'then it is necessary that he has been given to me as an object and that my body has for its part revealed itself to me as possessing an object-dimension.'[64] This is a fatal strategy, as we see when examining the girls' sexual desires, and the girls' offering their body to the Other: to men.

On the first occasion of going to dinner with Eugene, along with Tod Mead and Baba, 'I had that paralyzing sensation in my legs which I hadn't felt since I'd parted from

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[61] O'Brien, *The Country Girls*, pp. 160-1.
[62] Amanda Greenwood, *Edna O'Brien* (Horndon, Tavistock: Northcote House Publishers, 2003), p. 25.
[63] Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. by H. M. Parshley (London: Vintage, 1997 [1949]), p. 297.
[64] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 377.

Mr. Gentleman.' This 'sensation' signals the beginning of a heightened sensuality for Kate, which is also registered physically by the 'new boned brassiere [which] had made red welts on my skin'. The latter is symbolic of the social demands placed on women in an increasingly image-sensitive society, but also registers Kate's position in that society and the way in which her body partakes in it. For example, while waiting hopefully to see Eugene near somewhere they once took afternoon tea, 'I could almost smell him, see the black hairs on his hands, his proud walk'. In another example Eugene flirts with her about her rosy cheeks, as Kate records that 'My cheeks were always pink, no matter how much powder I used'.[65] Her body, beyond and outside her control, feels: it is a theatrical text that registers sensations and is read.

Sartre explicates the feeling of shyness – though it is equally applicable to any perceivable emotion about the self – as a feature of alienation:

> To 'feel oneself blushing,' to 'feel oneself sweating,' *etc.*, are inaccurate expressions which the shy person uses to describe his state; what he really means is that he is vividly and constantly conscious of his body not as it is for him but as it is *for the Other*. [...] I can not be embarrassed by my own body as I exist it. It is my body as it is for the Other which may embarrass me.[66]

From the beginning we need to consider the female body For-others in O'Brien's novels as alienated. If, as Kiberd writes, O'Brien laid the foundations for a new *écriture féminine*, then we cannot avoid thinking of Kate's bodily relation with others as a political problem. In terms of my argument, I have so far shown the importance of a theatrical body For-others to O'Brien's literature; moreover, this is not a literature about a queen or a sovereign, but about a country girl. Kate is supposed to represent the common woman of Irish citizenry; however, that does not mean she is outside politics. Rather it means that she resembles the majority of citizens in the Irish republic.

Returning to the early modern period, the political dimension of Cressida's body

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[65] O'Brien, *The Lonely Girl*, p. 186; p. 192; p. 198; pp. 198-9.
[66] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, pp. 376-7. Emphasis in original.

in the Trojan and Greek camps is important. It is not uncommon to see in *Troilus and Cressida* a rebalanced version of the earlier *Romeo and Juliet*. In the former, the love plot between Troilus and Cressida becomes a cause of tribal (and, by modern extension, national) concern, rather than originating as a controversy. At the heart of the transition from love story to national politics is Cressida's crossing the battle-lines drawn between the Trojans and Greeks. Fundamentally 'The play is not a history but a sceptical analysis of history-making, an emptying out or undoing of the work of the chronicles'. Cressida's switch from Troilus' to Diomedes' forms part of a larger 'fragmentation of national identity' in the play.[67] Critically for my argument, it takes place amidst a backdrop of warring bodies – the contested unmaking of the world, be it the Greeks' unmaking of Troy, or the Trojans' unmaking of the Greek factions' coherence – of which Cressida's female body plays a central role. Her trading Troilus for Diomedes, symbolically shown through Cressida's giving Troilus' tokenistic sleeve to Diomedes, compels Troilus to want to kill Diomedes: 'That sleeve is mine that he'll bear in his helm. / Were it a casque composed by Vulcan's skill, / My sword should bite it.' (V.II.172-4) This is the unmaking of the Greek world because of Cressida. This follows Troilus' earlier commitment to generative becoming in his tryst with Cressida: '[I]n the birth of our own labouring breath.' (IV.V.37)

There is yet more that ties Cressida's story to Kate Brady's. In Cressida's relation to the unmaking/making of warring worlds, her body theatrically speaks, becoming a body For-others, thus alienating her from her own body. As Carol Rutter states, Cressida's body emblematises the activity that Shakespeare's text enacts on the body.[68] Cressida's body can be read as 'not virgin' by Pandarus on the morning after Troilus and Cressida consummate their relationship. Pandarus sees post-coital change in and on

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[67] Matthew A. Greenfield, 'Fragments of Nationalism in *Troilus and Cressida*', in *Shakespeare Quarterly,* 51.2 (2000), 181-200 (187; 193).
[68] Rutter, *Enter the Body*, p. 111.

Cressida's body: 'How now, how now, how go maidenheads? Here, you maid! Where's my cousin Cressid?' (IV.II.25-7) The legibility of the theatrical body is here underlined. It should be considered nothing new that bodies can be read thus; but we should emphasise the relation of the woman's sexual activity to its performance onstage. Cressida is also read disparagingly by Ulysses, as he confirms 'There's language in her eye, her cheek, her lip; / Nay her foot speaks. Her wanton spirits look out / At every joint and motive of her body' (IV.VI.56-8). Cressida's is a treacherous body for Cressida herself, belying any 'motive' she may wish to hide; it raises a question of nationalist politics, suggesting that wherever Cressida's emotions are tied to a person or nation, her body can betray those ties.

This political dimension, in a world of theatrical bodies, is central to how we understand Kate Brady. Eugene Gaillard, purloiner of Kate's virginity and father to her child, challenges Kate. He tells her that '"you're like a red, swollen washerwoman"', and Kate hides that she 'blushed and […] hated him'. The first of these extracts occurs not long after Kate has lost her virginity, with Eugene scathingly telling Kate that '"You're a ruined woman now"'. These fears of and attacks on Kate's character are inseparable: they are manifestations of the same problematic phenomenon. That is, Kate's phenomenal body For-others is a source of her alienation from the society in which she has matured. Eugene's attacks represent a failing of the romance narratives that Kate has longed to replicate, with the supposed hero dismissing the now-failed Mother Ireland figure as embodied in Kate. Crucially, this figure is a failed one because Kate has achieved her desire, has been 'inspired' by the pain,[69] and her body has materially changed in losing her virginity. Mother Ireland, and by extension the Virgin Mary, are no longer attainable, representative figures.

Eugene's dismissive comment about Kate's physical – and by extension social –

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[69] O'Brien, *The Lonely Girl*, p. 360; p. 332; p. 317; p. 316.

ruination must be seen in the same light as Ulysses' derogatory comments about Cressida: both Eugene and Ulysses distance themselves from someone who is a 'daughter[] of the game' (IV.VI.64). The Catholic mores that underpin Mother Ireland's aspirational figure impelled Kate to seek romance; however, Catholic mores about women's sexuality then disbars her from polite society and from the nation. The 'ruin' is the instant of transition which seems to be formal only, but which signifies a substantive change; what comes after the 'ruin' is always to be thought of as future – post-ruin, as it were; post-lapsarian – but when Kate has been 'ruined' then she is to be considered to be living something that can only be considered future. The aspirational element of her trajectory is thus collapsed through a temporal shift and a sociotemporal regulation. The arrival of the future in the present is negatively construed. Eugene divorces her and seeks (and gains) custody of their child, Cash. We see here the troubling elements in my argument about a woman's body; this moment represents Kate's '*loss of identity*' which becomes a feature of how 'linear temporality has been almost totally refused [to women], and as a consequence there has arisen an exacerbated distrust of the entire political dimension'.[70] Kate's removing from her own time and her own future shows how, despite women being the inevitable source for reproduction in this modern Ireland, women's bodies are themselves refused entry to the new, emerging Ireland.

This social exile has early modern forebears in *Measure for Measure*. *Measure* is a play about (il)legible and (il)legitimate bodies. The opening scene sees the Duke absent himself from Vienna and pass his sovereign power temporarily on to Angelo, his deputy. The Duke explains this to Escalus:

> For you must know we have with special soul
> Elected him our absence to supply,
> Lent him our terror, dressed him with our love,
> And given his deputation all the organs
> Of our own power. (I.I.17-21) [200]

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[70] Kristeva, 'Women's Time', 14; 19.

The Duke, in lending Angelo 'terror', gives him the power to deconstruct the world of Vienna. Angelo takes on the role with verve, almost immediately condemning Claudio to death on the basis of his impregnating Julietta, whose 'plenteous womb / Expresseth [Claudio's] full tilth and husbandry' (I.IV.43-4), but whose sexual relationship to Claudio is illegal without having had a church-sanctioned wedding: 'I got possession of Julietta's bed. / You know the lady; she is fast my wife, / Save that we do the denunciation lack / Of outward order.' (I.II.135-8) Angelo derives the power for his condemnation of Claudio not only from Julietta's theatrical body For-others, but also from her relationship to time through her body. Now ruined, as it were, Julietta is a very visible bodily sign of a woman who is no longer a virgin: her pregnant body is made an instrument of Angelo's power and deconstruction of Viennese society. Julietta's body that is given in time and space is shown to be in the wrong time and is deemed to be outside the regulated space of Viennese sovereignty by Angelo.

This situation is only rescued on the Duke's return. The bed trick performed by Isabella and Mariana which the Duke organises relies upon two delays. The Duke narrates the first, in which Mariana slips into bed with Angelo several years too late, as an offstage scene:

> With Angelo tonight shall lie
> His old betrothed [Mariana], but despised:
> So disguise shall by th'disguised
> Pay with falsehood false exacting,
> And perform an old contracting. (III.II.271-5)

The neat poetics of rhyme and metre in this passage, with two rhyming couplets (including a feminine couplet), holds at a distance from the action the poetry describes, and unites in much the same way that rhyme operates: dissembling and difference are the first movement, and the return movement is to bring two things close together that were thought separate. This is the work that the Duke enacts, by bringing an anachronism – Mariana's betrothal to Angelo – together with a corporal dissembling in order to restore

the marriage and resolve the play's iniquities. What was before (the betrothal) is restored after the act (the consummation in the bed trick). By changing the way that Mariana's body is read by Angelo, the Duke bodies forth a new world.

The second delay is the revelation of the bed trick to Angelo, exposing Mariana as the woman with whom he slept:

> DUKE You say your husband.
> MARIANA Why just, my lord, and that is Angelo,
> Who thinks he knows that he ne'er knew my body,
> But knows, he thinks, that he knows Isabel's. (V.I.200-3)

Mariana's linguistic play reverses knowledge and thought, and thereby establishes that Angelo, who admits that 'five years since, there was some speech of marriage' (V.I.216), has committed all the same sins that led to Claudio's imprisonment. Thus Angelo and Mariana are sexually joined long after their betrothal, and legally married even after that; moreover, Angelo's and Mariana's sexual-though-illegal marriage is created by the Duke in order that he might mete out justice "'Measure still for Measure'" (V.I.409). By affecting the distance between Angelo's thought and knowledge, the Duke has changed the way that bodies make and create; this scene is importantly about making and creating a legal bond. The Duke's sovereign potential finds its fullest enunciation through bodies and their being For-others. In this way the Duke unites the *de jure* status of relationships in Vienna with their *de facto* existence: from the meeting of bodies comes the force of law.

The central difference between Angelo and the Duke is the precedence of the law: for Angelo the law comes before everything; for the Duke, however, the law emerges from the world that bodies make and create. The Duke, it appears, is from the school of philosophy that Sartre and Scarry inherit. Sovereignty, then, can emerge from bodies, even female bodies whose relation to time is also a relation of negative characteristics: ruined, pregnant. In this light, success for Kate would be to create a law from her own body with which to govern Irish society, rather than being subject to law, social or oth-

erwise. In what follows, I will explain how Baba attempts (though fails) to do just that, but how Kate succeeds in that revolutionary endeavour.

When Baba becomes pregnant and attempts an abortion on her own, she attempts to create her own biopolitical sovereignty. First, we must look at Baba's reaction to becoming pregnant, notably not by her husband, but through a one-off fling with another man. Baba's vocabulary is scarcely able to express the truth that the body wears so brazenly theatrically. First: 'Well, curiosity killed the cat and information made her fat.' Second: 'That little salubrious interlude with the drummer had its results.' Third: 'In other words, the months went by and I did not have my regular visitor and could not eat a breakfast.'[71] The circumlocution represents the inability to grasp what the theatrical body is communicating For-others.

Baba's response seems to bear out the following passage from de Beauvoir:

> [W]omen who are primarily interested in pleasing men, who see themselves essentially as erotic objects, who are in love with their own bodily beauty, are distressed to see themselves deformed, disfigured, incapable of arousing desire. Pregnancy seems to them no holiday, no enrichment at all, but rather a diminution of the ego.[72]

De Beauvoir's ideas lead us to consider, again, Baba's impression of herself as an object of her own consciousness; again, de Beauvoir's ideas point us in the direction of alienated female bodies, to which we can add the complication of time. Baba's infidelity indicates another twist of the problem of time, since the future she bears inside her womb is not her husband's, Frank: her shame stems from how she will be seen by him. Baba's first response is a homemade abortion: she swallows a cup of castor oil in order to initiate a miscarriage:

> I had cramps and pains, and I began to shake all over. The whole place looked weird. The mirror was all fogged up, and steam all over the place, so that I couldn't see my own makeup and stuff

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[71] O'Brien, Girls in Their Married Bliss, p. 459.
[72] de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, p. 520.

on the various glass racks.[73]

Baba's inability to see herself in the mirror stresses the Bad Faith to which Baba is resort-

ing:[74] even through the mirror Baba cannot take herself as object of her consciousness.

Baba is entirely alienated. Her abortion fails and she proceeds to have the child, suggest-

ing that Baba's future has got out of her control, and sovereign agency does not emerge

into the world from her body: Baba is not the novel's hero, not the proof for O'Brien's

radicalism. Irish society cannot use Baba as a founding mother.

By contrast, Kate performs something so violent to her body that she is able to

effect several things simultaneously. First, she takes control of her time of ruination; this

then becomes a biopolitical law which temporally succeeds her body in the world; finally

she moves, like Elizabeth I, into a monumental time which presages Kiberd's remark of

O'Brien's *Trilogy*. The latter cements Kate Brady's place as a radical feminist *post hoc*. For

her monumental act, Kate has herself sterilised. She tells Baba that she did it so that

"'I've eliminated the risk of making the same mistake again'",[75] or in Thompson's words,

so as 'to make space for a new sense of self';[76] that is, a renewal of the body as sensual,

but now a body outside time. Neither Baba (the narrator, here) nor Kate fully compre-

hends Kate's action: 'all the expected responses were missing, the guilt and doubt and

sadnesses, I was looking at someone of whom too much had been cut away, some im-

portant region that they both knew nothing about.'[77] Baba suggests here that at root

neither of them knew the secrets of their bodies, that, in fact, they were alienated from

their bodies all along.

If this is a response to sexual politics and woman's position in Catholic Ireland,

then there could be nothing more damning than sterilising oneself. This is Kate's attempt

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[73] O'Brien, Girls in Their Married Bliss, p. 463.
[74] Cf. Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, pp. 70-94, *passim.*
[75] O'Brien, Girls in Their Married Bliss, p. 508.
[76] Thompson, *Irish Women in the Writings of Edna O'Brien*, p. 46.
[77] O'Brien, Girls in Their Married Bliss, p. 507.

to control the way her body is theatricalised and sexualised; it relies, importantly, on controlling the passage of time. Kate steps outside time in order to control it and her theatrical body. 'Prey to a cultural paradox that puts proper motherhood against sexuality,' writes Nunes, Kate 'sees no option other than to surrender all potential for future maternity.'[78] It is a reaction against ideological prescriptions for women, 'the force' of which is an 'unwanted pregnancy'.[79] The sterilisation represents a way of refusing the future, of rejecting ruination in the social sphere; Kate's reappropriated ownership and control of her body represents Kate's anguished acceptance of her freedom, as Sartre would explicate it. She assumes bodily alienation as a foundation for agency.

By seizing the future in its rejection, we see in Kate a different Mother figure being absorbed: Queen Elizabeth I. Elizabeth, as noted above, took control of her future by offering a monumental version of herself as chaste and virginal; though this exact path is inaccessible to Kate, the idea that a woman's future can be controlled through limiting or removing the female-corporal future is salient. This political space, in which east is promoted over west,[80] and in which women can face an increasingly disenfranchised future as *Bunreacht* and symbolic order join forces in the female mother-figure, is radicalised by Kate's actions. Kate 'rejoins, on the one hand, the archaic (mythical) memory and, on the other, the cyclical or monumental temporality of marginal movements'. But critically, the previous measure for joining these two temporalities is Elizabeth I, a mother whose history has been derided and has neared extinction in Ireland – the same process that feminist discourse has itself challenged in restoring the '*loss of identity* which is produced by [the] connection of memories which escape from history

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[78] Nunes, 'Return to the Lonely Self', 45.

[79] Grace Eckley, *Edna O'Brien* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1974), p. 44.

[80] There is something to be said for the movement from west to east in Kate's migration to Dublin. It unavoidably recalls Synge's *Playboy of the Western World* and its reception in cosmopolitan Dublin and the subsequent riots, which acted as a reaction to the stereotype offered of the rural west of Ireland. The Dubliners took exception to this. In the example of Kate, the reverse trajectory and reaction is being offered: the west reacting negatively to the east's offered cosmopolitanism and liberation.

only to encounter anthropology'.[81] But, in restoring this connection between Elizabeth and Kate we also see a chance for a new Ireland to emerge away from Catholic mores and a stultifying vision of what women ought to look like. From Kate's body comes the possibility of novelty, based entirely on a restored women's time.

'[T]he partition': Male Bodies

In the previous section I outlined the resourcefulness of Kate Brady in the face of a social ruin laid upon her body. By uniting monumental with cursive time, she also joined histories with Elizabeth I, linking their biopolitical, female agency in worlds that placed equal (political) value on bodies. Ruin was forced to become, for Kate, a site of reorientation for her body: after ruin emerged a new woman whose wombless body was her radical legacy. It might seem strange to suggest that there is a beneficial comparison to make between the Ireland that is variously made possible by Kate's legacy, and by Beckett's *Trilogy* characters. In the first instance, all of Beckett's first-person narrators are male; second, Beckett is writing out of a different, European tradition and for a different 'market' as it were. Beckett, of course, is the Nobel Laureate; O'Brien is the scandalised woman writer.

However, through the notion of 'ruin' we can plot Beckett's response to a ruined world as it is visited upon the body of his characters Molloy, Moran, and the Unnamable. The Unnamable describes the experience he has with the world through the idea of it being both a 'strange pain', but one that is equivalent with a 'strange sin'.[82] That is, the intense personal experience of pain is matched by a socio-religious understanding of that pain as sin. Since 'physical pain […] actively destroys' language, it must find an '*analogical verification*'.[83] The latter allows one's personal pain to emerge into the world of language and signification. Interestingly, Scarry spends some time discussing the idea that

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[81] Kristeva, 'Women's Time', 20; 14. Emphasis in original.
[82] The Unnamable in Samuel Beckett, *Three Novels: Molloy, Malone Dies, The Unnamable* (New York, NY: Grove Press, 2009 [1951-3]), p. 407. All further references to the Trilogy will be to this edition.
[83] Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, p. 4; p. 14.

> at particular moments when there is within a society a crisis of belief – that is, when some central idea or ideology or cultural construct has ceased to elicit a population's belief either because it is manifestly fictitious or because it has for some reason been divested of ordinary forms of substantiation – the sheer material factualness of the human body will be borrowed to lend that cultural construct the aura of 'realness' and 'certainty'.[84]

In this section my focus is on the certainty of the body. The Unnamable's allocation of his pain to a sin might at first seem like a confirmation in and to the world that his pain is real, but along with Scarry's developed ideas, we see that the Unnamable's bolstering of religious discourse through his pain serves not to make 'real' or 'certain' Christianity; rather, it reveals the emptiness of a Christian discourse that is forced to defer from metaphysical to absolute physical and material reality. The Unnamable's pain becomes a marker of secular modernity and a shift away from Christian, political governance. In this regard, Beckett's characters' pain unmakes the Irish, Christian world, leaving open the possibility of making it anew. This accords with Sartre's ideas of the world emerging from the body.

I will argue that through the dyad of Molloy and Moran – their differing relationship to their bodily pain – we see two approaches to the problem of ruin. Molloy pursues his trip regardless of his disability, whilst Moran discovers his world reducing in size and possibility around him when his body is hit by pain and disability. There are clear links between Moran and a political sphere in the novel – his being tasked to track down an undesirable – which gives us a sense of a modern polity in which power is descended from deciding on the exception. Molloy is the exception, from whom Moran derives his authority; Molloy's biopolitics threatens the stronghold that Moran represents.

To this relationship, Caius Martius-Coriolanus is a salient forebear, as his relation to ruin and politics questions the notion of sovereign authority in early modern England. Martius' body emerges into the world of language as 'Coriolanus': he bears the scars of

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[84] Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, p. 14.

victory of the Romans' enemies. Two options emerge from his painful body: either to share his scars with the plebeians in the marketplace – become an object of their collective consciousness – and thereby become consul; or to deny his necessary alienation and remove himself from Rome completely. The latter is a version of Bad Faith that Moran later practises; the former is more aligned with Molloy's accepting pessimism about his place in the world. *Coriolanus* stands in early modern England as a warning about the dangers of rejecting the political body in favour of the personal body. To choose the latter is to act in Bad Faith. *Coriolanus*' political importance is clear.

What we see with *Volpone* is a doubly valent idea of ruin: ruin as in the body, and financial ruin. The two merge in the idea of economy as a law of the home; since the history I have charted shows a domestication of political involvement, either through Agamben's biopolitics or Foucault's commonplace surveillance, a law in the home is equally important in the political sphere. Volpone's mastery over his economic interests through his theatrical body pits him as a great actor where Coriolanus is a lousy one. Moreover, Volpone's strategy is to control future time now. Whilst Molloy is able to live with his body because it provides access to a future freedom, Volpone represents a different kind of political freedom if it is one that can be enjoyed now. I see in Volpone's actions a *Jetztzeit* – a now-time filled with content – in which revolution can happen. Volpone's plan fails, but when I show the Unnamable's corporal relationship to society, also through a *Jetztzeit*, we can see in the Unnamable a personal body that is also able to commit to 'corporate perpetuity' – the body political. Whilst Kate's body gave her back control over her future, the Unnamable's body becomes the original site of revolution in Ireland.

We already know that the logic of theatricality is also the logic of self-knowledge, both in Sartre's modern philosophy and in early modern England. For both Molloy and Moran, their experiences of their respective bodies is circumscribed by 'coenaesthesia', a

word given to us by Molloy. It means to know one's body:

> [C]oenaesthetically speaking of course, I felt more or less the same as usual, that is to say, if I may give myself away, so terror-stricken that I was virtually bereft of feeling, not to say of consciousness, and drowned in a deep and merciful torpor shot with brief abominable gleams[.][85]

Molloy's alignment of truth here with his body and his coenaesthesia is instructive.[86] It allows us to consider the textual body as a true testimony of Molloy and, conversely, that his body also speaks true of himself. It is important to foreground the so-called truthfulness of the material body. For Molloy that material body is disabled and is one of the reasons why he falters on his journey to his mother. He mentions early on that he uses crutches, followed shortly by his announcement that 'crippled though I was, I was no mean cyclist, at that period'. His disabled body is restricted, but not something to dismiss. Later, Molloy aptly labels his body a 'nuisance'.[87] For Sartre, coenesthesia comprises 'some privileged experiences in which [affective qualities] can be apprehended in [their] purity, in particular what we call "physical" pain'. Feeling pain, 'the translucent matter of consciousness, its *being-there*, its attachment to the world', is the point at which 'we come close[st] to touching that nihilation of the In-itself [i.e., the world and the Other] by the For-itself [i.e., consciousness] and that re-apprehension of the For-itself by the In-itself which nourishes the very nihilation'. 'Pain-consciousness' is a nihilation and surpassing of the world, but which 'constitutes the very consciousness which surpasses it'.[88] We must say that the pain-consciousness emerges from a world of pain and gives that pain to the world.

In short: a ruined landscape co-exists with a ruined body-consciousness. Molloy's

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[85] Beckett, *Molloy*, p. 49.

[86] It is also worth noting, though there is no time to explore it here, that Molloy also disdains those who are not coenaesthetically aware of their own bodies. The case in point is his mother who cannot remember how many times Molloy has knocked on her head in his attempts to communicate with her. By extension, we can certainly think that Molloy would not be a fan of Moran, as my points below will explicate.

[87] Beckett, *Molloy*, p. 12; p. 71.

[88] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 355; p. 357.

body is a 'nuisance' through and because of the world through which it is difficult to travel; a war-torn landscape of rubble, following Gibson, gives us a body that struggles to navigate the potholes and mounds of upturned earth, and *vice versa*. In a political landscape of continuing strife, be it Treatyists versus non-Treatyists, or republicans versus unionists, the idea that the body struggles to navigate the problems is not strange; however, to suggest that the body is making that world implies that the possibility of change (if not the idea that the body can make of that world an easy passage) is liberating. Here Molloy offers us, in spite of all problems, a man capable of becoming a new Irish hero.

There are moments when the coenaesthetic relationship between the narrative subject and his body is strained. When in the police cell, for example, Molloy is unsure whether he wishes to sit down, 'remembering what I had learnt in that connexion, namely that the sitting posture was not for me any more, because of my short stiff leg'.[89] This is succeeded by the bathetic epiphany in which Molloy recalls his name: 'And suddenly I remembered my name, Molloy. My name is Molloy, I cried, all of a sudden, now I remember.' The link between self-knowledge of the body and memory – more specifically, the past – is thus central to *Molloy*. We also read analogously the body as the body of text presented to the reader, suggesting the past-ness – Sartre's facticity – of the body; the text is also an attempt to express Molloy's coenaesthetic knowledge of his body.

But here we encounter a problem associated with theatricality: the mediated past-ness of the body as against the immediate coenaesthesia. Just as Syme reads theatricality as a shift between presence and re-presentation, so too can we read Molloy's body as partaking of that deferring presence: the past body is read in the immediate coenaesthetic body which is re-presented in the text. Herbert Blau's reading, ventriloquizing Sartre, thus aptly describes that past-ness by arguing that since the body is presently 'surpassed' in consciousness, it is also left in, to and as the past:

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[89] Beckett, *Molloy*, p. 18.

> We may think of the body as the thing most real to us, what gives immediacy to any truth, but it is only in the surpassing, according to Sartre, that it becomes the sensible datum or center of reference[.][90]

We begin to see here the role of time in relation to the body. Molloy's textual, mediated and theatrical body is to be linked with the passage of time from the past – the events narrated – and the present – the moments of narration and reading. Molloy's knowledge of his body and its faults – its ruins – gives him a semblance of freedom: 'I did not fret, other scenes of my life came back to me. There seemed to be rain, then sunshine, turn about. Real spring weather.'[91] However, as concerns my argument, if the body is left to the past, then the opportunity for future freedom recedes; something radical must happen in and to the body in order for political upheaval and a new modern polity to take hold.

Caius Martius, like Molloy, is aware of the scars on his body. Martius says to Lartius at the gates of Corioles that the 'blood I drop is rather physical / Than dangerous to me' (I.v.18-19).[92] Undoubtedly we see Martius' freedom in this pain; however, Martius later confirms to Cominius that 'I have some wounds upon me, and they smart / To hear themselves remembered' (I.IX.29-30). Here we see Martius' strained relationship with his own body, as he accepts the body's role in conflict as a given (even as a positive aspect of battle), but disdains the alienation necessary of a consciousness in society; this alienation is compounded, of course, for a man of public duty and service. Though for Martius coenaesthesia allows him to configure the world of destruction around him as a marker of his relation with the world, the necessary surpassing of his body and its instrumentality for others' consciousness troubles him.

Martius is awarded for his exploits at the city of Corioles against the Volsces with

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[90] Herbert Blau, 'The Surpassing Body', in *TDR*, 35.2 (1991), 74-98 (80) <doi: 10.2307/1146090> <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1146090>.

[91] *Molloy*, p. 85

[92] Peter Holland, editor of *Coriolanus*, glosses 'physical' as 'curative, remedial; restorative to the body, good (for one's health) (*OED a.* 5.b). Bloodletting was a standard medical treatment[.]' (I.v.18n.)

a new name: Coriolanus. In the battle he is wounded, making his wounds the trophies that win him his new title. In order to stand as a consul in the city-state of Rome, he must show his wounds to the plebeians as a matter of ritual. Coriolanus' mother, Volumnia, explains to the senators prior to her son's homecoming that 'there will be large cicatrices to show the peoples, when he shall stand for his place' (II.i.143-5); however, Coriolanus is set against this, as Brutus reports prior even to Coriolanus' own onstage declaration:

> I heard him swear
> Were he to stand for consul, never would he
> Appear i'th'market-place nor on him put
> The napless vesture of humility. (II.i.225-8)

This rejection of his body's necessary theatricality – its obligatory For-otherness – represents an adoption of Bad Faith by Coriolanus. By seeking to reject the social mores, and by seeking to avoid the marketplace, Coriolanus tries to keep himself to himself; this is itself a rejection of a body politic in favour of only having a body personal. Though he does eventually wear the clothes of humility and walk in the marketplace, he never follows up on his promise to show his wounds to certain plebeians. The latter view this as disrespect for their voice and their contribution to the burgeoning Roman republic. But Coriolanus protests to Volumnia that she 'Would have me / False to my nature', whilst he wants to 'play / The man I am' (III.ii.15-17). The latter is done in Bad Faith, rejecting the freedom to which Coriolanus, via his body, is condemned.

The contest over his body and their wounds thus swings between two points: either his body is committed to social discourse which would provide Coriolanus access, via the plebeians' voice, to a political role in the city; or his body remains personal and private and restricted from social discourse:

> CORIOLANUS Must I go show them my unbarbèd sconce?
> Must I with my base tongue give to my noble heart
> A lie that it must bear? […]
> I will not do't

> Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth
> And by my body's action teach my mind
> A most inherent baseness. […]
> Mother, I am going to the market-place:
> Chide me no more. I'll mountebank their loves,
> Cog their hearts from them, and come home beloved
> Of all the trades in Rome. (III.ii.100-35)

Here we see Coriolanus' vacillations between the two positions. However, Coriolanus believes that he is being true to himself by rejecting theatricality in the marketplace, not fully realising (or perhaps accepting) that he cannot avoid that public alienation. Rather than realising that truth and theatricality coexist, Coriolanus sees in theatricality a 'base tongue'. As Martha Diede argues, Coriolanus 'is the worst actor'.[93] It is here we see that the theatricality at the heart of Syme's construing of early modern England is not a uniformly positive phenomenon.

Through *Coriolanus* we are able to see how the mortal body as a figure caught between personal and political spheres can be damaging, as well as a productive mode of discourse (his visible wounds would have brought Coriolanus the role as consul). Though we can view the early modern body as liberated through its theatricality, we must also view it as constrained by the same phenomenon. Coriolanus' rejection of his body For-others constrains his political body; the latter is contingent on the former. With Elizabeth I above we saw how important it was for a sovereign to take account of her political body; Coriolanus loses his sovereign right given by the plebeians when he chooses to ignore the theatrical, body politic. Coriolanus' ruins ruin Coriolanus. I read in *Coriolanus* a warning not to ignore the inevitable alienation of the body in public and political discourse; in this light we can see Foucault's panopticism emerging. In this way, if modern politics is reliant on the surveyed-body, the body For-others, and if Coriolanus stands as a marker for failure, then we can see that a different path must be taken. In *Molloy*'s Moran I believe we see a descendant of Coriolanus. Coupled with the approval

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[93] Martha Kalnin Diede, *Shakespeare's Knowledgeable Body* (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2008), p. 132.

of Molloy, as I outlined above, the negative connotations associated with Moran are tell-

ing, for it suggests that Gaullist reprisals – or indeed Civil War – are vehemently criticised

in Beckett's novel.

Like Coriolanus, Moran is similarly ruined by his untrustworthy body; it too car-

ries political ramifications. Though Moran's knee problems begin as he prepares to leave

to track down Molloy, they recur on the journey itself: 'One night, having finally suc-

ceeded in falling asleep beside my son as usual, I woke with a start, feeling as if I had just

been dealt a violent blow.' This blow is a 'fulgurating pain […] through my knee'. Moran

concludes hopefully that 'It's a touch of neuralgia brought on by all the tramping and

trudging and the chill damp nights.[94] Here Moran's attempt to reduce physical pain to its

mental reception in the brain takes an extra step. In the first excerpt, the physical pain is

reduced to a simile of its cause: 'as if […] a violent blow'. In the third excerpt, Moran

reconciles the pain with an earlier assertion of neuralgia as the only source of pain in the

body. Crucially, the second excerpt implies that it is not that the pain is metaphorically

inflected through its fulguration, like 'flashes of lightning'; rather, Moran uses a word

which has through metaphor been redeployed as a word to describe bodily pain.

This shift accords with Scarry's understanding of the analogical description cou-

pled with what Scarry labels the 'language of agency': the idea that, in speaking of pain,

one necessarily

> encounters an 'as if' structure : it feels as if …; it is as though ….
> On the other side of the ellipse there reappear again and again
> […] two and only two metaphors, and they are metaphors whose
> inner workings are very problematic. The first specifies an exter-
> nal agent of the pain, a weapon that is pictured as accompanying
> the pain. Physical pain is not identical with […] either agency or
> damage, but these things are referential; consequently we often
> call on them to convey the experience of the pain itself.[95]

Scarry's reason for outlining the issue of analogical verification and the language of agen-

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[94] Beckett, *Molloy*, pp. 132-3.
[95] Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, p. 15.

cy is because of the language's easy slippage into an instance of absolute power, as wielded by someone or something else in situations of torture. Though in Moran's example no agent is specified, there is a clear causal link between Molloy's 'massive and hulking, to the point of misshapenness' body, and the changes Moran's body undergoes: 'He panted. He had only to rise up within me for me to be filled with panting.'[96] Molloy is the agent implied in Moran's analogical statements about his pain. Moreover, Molloy so threatens Moran because the latter longs to 'remain a solitary'. Turning Moran away from his isolation, Molloy brings Moran into a world For-others; Moran's Bad Faith or refusal of his own freedom can be read as bringing about his disabling body. In Moran's isolation – also a political statement, suggesting exclusion and exclusivity – his world is unmade by Molloy's political openness and accepted alienation.

Moran begins by making of his journey a world of easy passage. In understanding this aspect of Moran we must pay attention to his treatment of time. Moran is initially committed to the future, 'For how can you decide on the way of setting out if you do not first know where you are going, or at least with what purpose you are going there?'[97] This future commitment indicates that for Moran there is no obstacle that cannot be overcome if the correct planning is set in motion: his functioning body-in-motion removes obstacles from his path. Through Sartre we can understand Moran's self-comprehension as a version of taking himself as object. An example Sartre gives is apposite:

> Pierre's gesture which is revealed to me in the present I always apprehend temporally from the standpoint of the future goals toward which he is reaching. Thus I make known to myself the present of the body by means of its future and still more generally, by means of the future of the world.[98]

Moran is both consciousness and object in this analogy. Following this, we must consider Steven Connor's assertion that 'Moran solidifies and spatializes time, making it part of

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[96] Beckett, *Molloy*, p. 108.
[97] Beckett, *Molloy*, p. 93.
[98] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 369.

the visible world rather than a formless process'.[99] That is, Moran's actions begin to make

a world emerge from his body as it is. Moran's is an act of territorial creation.

However, later in his testimony, the tense and mood of Moran's narration shifts:

> I seemed to see myself ageing as swiftly as a day-fly. But the idea
> of ageing was not exactly the one which offered itself to me. And
> what I saw was more like a crumbling, a frenzied collapsing of all
> that had always protected me from all I was always condemned
> to be.[100]

Here, we read Moran's reluctance to accept his facticity, instead conditioning his exist-

ence as something that 'I was always condemned to be': acceptance of his body

confronts him, the future moment to which his body has inevitably carried him, and Mo-

ran resists. Moran's body's temporality is emphasised through the blind and

unremembered moment of its excesses: Moran loses control and coenaesthetic

knowledge of his body. Just as Molloy was accosted on his travels, so too is Moran:

> What is your business here? he said. Are you on night patrol? I
> said. […] I do not know what happened then. But a little later,
> perhaps a long time later, I found him stretched on the ground,
> his head in a pulp. I am sorry I cannot indicate more clearly how
> this result was obtained[.][101]

Moran's fight here, far from being remembered in minute detail as was Molloy's in its

corresponding situation,[102] is null. Moran later admits to not recognising his own face,

noting that the 'face my hands felt was not my face any more, and the hands my face felt

were my hands no longer'.[103] Here we read Moran's absolute alienation from his body,

accompanied by his surprise at the objectality of his body parts to his consciousness.

Whereas Molloy accepted his body, Moran's disconnect with his own body shows Mo-

ran's body as being disabling compared to Molloy's disabled body. We might go as far as

to say that Molloy – though writing chronologically before Moran in the novel – is a de-

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[99] Steven Connor, *Samuel Beckett: Repetition, Theory and Text*, revised edn (Aurora, CO: The Davies Group, 2007), p. 59.
[100] Beckett, *Molloy*, pp. 142-3
[101] Beckett, *Molloy*, p. 145.
[102] Q.v. Beckett, *Molloy*, pp. 78-9.
[103] Beckett, *Molloy*, p. 164.

scendant of Moran.[104] McNaughton considers Beckett's lateness as a motif of the author's life and work, and we can see a version of that here: 'Beckett's work seems locked in some version of the "said before."'[105] So in its delay Moran arrives after Molloy on a number of levels: he is trying to follow Molloy's trail, and he becomes disabled after Molloy has already gone through the process. As part of that transformation, Moran seeks to preserve and save his body, now trying to feel his body's sensation as much as possible: 'I slapped and rubbed every part of my body within its reach, in order to keep the blood trickling freely[.]'[106] Moran, in this way, precedes Molloy; Moran is followed by Molloy, rather than following him.

The body, yet again, is conditioned by temporality – and a temporality that privileges afterwards-ness and reconfiguration of consequence. Aftermath becomes an operative function of Beckett's characters' bodies: time afterwards is of positive value if, and only if, one accepts the destiny and fate of one's body. Or if we accept alienation (and by extension alterity itself), a healthy and sustainable new polity can be created; this is in Molloy's image, and not Moran's. Exclusivity is thrown out in favour of an inclusive modern polity.

In terms of my argument, we see here how the life-after, or the future, is as important to how the body acts now as the present itself. I have established that Moran is a version of Molloy's future; consequently Molloy's acceptance of his body's disability allows Molloy to accept the freedom to which he is condemned, unlike Moran. This future freedom we saw in Elizabeth I and Kate Brady as opportunities for sovereign, biopolitical judgement. There is no reason to think differently about Molloy: he, amid a war-torn landscape, has a ruined body; but his bodily ruins are by no means restrictive. Instead,

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[104] The idea of Moran's preceding Molloy is voiced by various critics in differing contexts. Steven Connor argues this in his monograph on repetition, and John Harrington suggests that *Molloy*'s principal parts appear to be in reverse' (q.v. Connor, *Beckett: Repetition, Theory and Text*, p. 58; John P. Harrington, *The Irish Beckett* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1991), p. 157.)

[105] McNaughton, 'The Politics of Aftermath', p. 56.

[106] Beckett, *Molloy*, p. 165.

Molloy is the hero of the novel. Here we have a modern Irish hero who, in the aftermath of conflict (in which Beckett perpetually lived) still manages to imagine a new world through his world-body relation. Molloy's political body as 'undesirable' avoids the clutches of Moran's proto-fascist advances, incorporating the world as a new political space. This is Beckett's legacy in *Molloy*. Ruin can be configured positively in the nascent nation-state that looks to the future.

Though this position is useful in looking to the future, it still renders the present as difficult; it empties the present of possibility except for the future of freedom. This in turn makes political decisions in the present impossible: postponement becomes the only option. An analogical way of thinking this is through the idea of desensitised sex. Rather than enjoying the act, Molloy endures his relationship with Lousse. The first part of the exchange is Molloy's use of Lousse's body as a tool to edify his knowledge of the female body. Molloy realises that he must silently correct his earlier assertion that he came into this world through his mother's 'hole in her arse if my memory is correct'.[107] In this instance, neither his memory nor his knowledge of the body in question is correct; however, the alterity of the body appears to be the reason why his ignorance obtains, since no one or nothing corrects him until Lousse:

> She had a hole between her legs, oh not the bunghole I had always imagined, but a slit, and in this I put, or rather she put, my so-called virile member, not without difficulty, and I toiled and moiled until I discharged or gave up trying or was begged by her to stop.[108]

Here Molloy learns about the Other's body by becoming its instrument: Molloy is himself fixed in his body by Lousse's consciousness.

In an equivalent political sense, it is as if Molloy is colonised, suggesting that a body emptied of gratification – and emptied of knowledge of that gratification with the

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[107] Beckett, *Molloy*, p. 12.
[108] Beckett, *Molloy*, p. 51.

Other – is one that is politically fixed by a body with greater power. Here we can read, in micro, a problem that colonialism offers up to the colonised country: the fixing of the Other (Molloy; Ireland) by the subject consciousness (Lousse; England). This is the most damning aspect of the Being-for-others. We also see in this anecdote the introduction of a corporal economy, with Molloy's body becoming a figure in the trade; initially the trade is financial with Lousse giving Molloy money, but an abstracted understanding of the events reveals that the trade is also with alterity itself. Nevertheless, the relation between the body (personal or political), memory/the past and the troubled knowledge of the Other's body can also be read as a political idea, especially when the geography of the body comes into question. Molloy even describes their relationship as 'commerce', and the two exchange corporal preening: 'with trembling hands she cut my toe-nails and I rubbed her rump with winter cream.'[109] The link between the economic exchanges and heterosexual desire imply that heterosexuality is socially regulated and controlled, much as Kate discovered in *The Country Girls Trilogy*: a predetermined object covered by the chimeric liberation that is heterosexual desire. Molloy's actions with Lousse parodically reveal this sorry state of affairs.

To say that the body is in an economy – and is the economy – also suggests the law of the home (οἶκος νόμος) and thereafter the sovereignty that underpins Molloy's body in this novel. To share one's body is to invite migration and exchange and is about expanding the space that that sovereignty governs. It is intrinsically political: it makes the body natural into a body political. This is what Elizabeth I was negotiating in parliament, and is also what modern Ireland was seeking to do by making a new Irish political body out of Irish – and not English or United Kingdom – bodies. What we find is that in the bid to a future freedom through bodies, an emptied present must be negotiated. The ruined body of the now looks to the future; but the ruined body of the now, when in

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[109] Beckett, *Molloy*, p. 52.

relation with other bodies, is revealed as empty. These bodies For-others are ultimately hollow. Whilst the political strain in Beckett might promote an inclusive future, we still have to wonder about the present.

In *Volpone* we see another version of this political body linking the present to aftermath; but Volpone's body manages to brook the future freedom with the hollow present by having his future in the now. The future that Volpone attempts to possess relies wholly on his ruined body. This future also importantly links to another type of ruin: Volpone posits his body For-others as ruined in order to avoid financial ruin; here we see the link again to the economy, just as with Molloy. Capital is important to an emerging modern state for two reasons: one is the international status it accords to the nation-state that is financially healthy. England was a wealthy nation following Elizabeth's reign, with John Guy commenting that, for example, 'the wider case for "national" finance was sustained by Elizabeth's assumption that "extraordinary charges", *however incurred*, should be met by taxation';[110] similarly, if we look at the terms of the Home Rule agreement,[111] right up to the importance of the Celtic Tiger to the Irish nation-state, we see the importance of capital. Second, financial health links intimately to the law of the home, as I stated above. Reading *Volpone* in this way shows us strategies of living the future freedom – which was so important to Elizabeth I and Kate Brady – in the present.

Unlike Coriolanus, Volpone is (mostly) a good actor. Volpone, appreciating the need for a theatrical body For-others, veers from being on death's door, to a mountebank, to dying, to a *commendatore* knight before bringing himself back to life. The acrostic prefacing the play summarises its story:

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[110] Guy, *Tudor England*, p. 382.
[111] Jackson records the agreement's first parliamentary appearance: 'The bill was introduced into the House of Commons on 8 April [1886], followed by the Land Purchase Bill on 16 April. Home Rule was at last given a definition […] Irish customs revenue would, it was proposed, be used to fund Ireland's "imperial contribution" of just under £4.25 million and an Irish contribution of £360,000 to the United Kingdom national debt. Any remaining balance might be returned to Dublin, where, together with any direct taxes levied by the new assembly, it would constitute the revenue of the Home Rule administration.' Jackson, *Ireland 1798-1998*, p. 130.

> V OLPONE, childless, rich, feigns sick, despairs,
> O ffers his state to hopes of several heirs,
> L ies languishing; his parasite receives
> P resents of all, assures, deludes; then weaves
> O ther cross plots, which ope themselves, are told.
> N ew tricks for safety are sought; they thrive, when, bold,
> E ach tempts th' other again, and all are sold.[112]

Volpone's acting is the centre-piece of the play with him convincing three others that they might each, individually, inherit his wealth; his failing health (through his dissembling body) encourages their belief in the likelihood of their inheritance: 'Now, my feigned cough, my phthisic, and my gout, / […] Help, with your forcèd functions […] / Wherein this three year I have milked their hopes'.[113] This commitment to his theatrical body For-others represents the obverse of Coriolanus' avowal to 'play / The man I am'. Alexander Leggatt writes that Volpone

> sees life as a play, and himself as an actor-playwright improvising
> and manipulating the scenario for his own amusement. His real
> outrage against nature is not that of treating money as a god, but
> that of treating people as puppets.[114]

This cultured theatricality shows that through Volpone's commitment to trickery, he accepts his corporal alienation, and also manages to wield power over time: Volpone's actions allow him to continue living his afterlife in the present. This fills his present with the future freedom which I have severally outlined above. The ruse fails only when his parasite Mosca refuses to confirm legally that Volpone is indeed alive:

> VOLPONE Mosca, I was almost lost; the advocate
>   Had betrayed all; but now it is recovered.
>   All's o' the hinge again. Say I am living.
> MOSCA What busy knave is this?[115]

Volpone comes unstuck because he cannot uphold the lie of his death; he seeks a return to life which, concomitantly, means that he can no longer live his afterwards-ness in the

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[112] Ben Jonson, 'Volpone, or the Fox', in *Three Comedies: 'Volpone', 'The Alchemist', 'Bartholomew Fair'*, trans. by Michael Jamieson (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1966 [1607]), pp. 34-171 (p. 39).
[113] Jonson, 'Volpone', I.ii.124-7.
[114] Alexander Leggatt, 'The Suicide of Volpone', in *UTQ*, 39.1 (1969), 19-32 (22-3). Given this description, are we also to see in Volpone a Shakespearean characteristic?
[115] Jonson, 'Volpone', V.xii.52-5.

now. Volpone ruins himself financially when he returns to life, no longer able to ruin those who sought to inherit his own accumulated wealth. Volpone loses in the battle over the law of his own home – a battle he waged in and through his body For-others.

Nevertheless, Volpone offers a theatrical body which, for a time, attains the freedom of afterlife in the present which, for the time that it is lived, turns the emptiness of the present into a fullness. This makes political freedom possible now, and not only as a possibility created in political bodies that have passed. In short, Volpone, for a fleeting moment, makes Venice his world following his laws. If the same can be achieved in modern Ireland, another world which values a body's theatricality, then we could see a new Irish nation emerging from the body; this is what we see in the Unnamable's body.

As with Volpone, the Unnamable is intimately aware of his own theatricality and he extrapolates his existence from his coenaesthetic knowledge of his senses. When we regard the visual sense, we must also take into account the impossibility of not seeing, especially for someone whose eyelids are unable to blink. There is instead an inevitability and unavoidability in seeing what is put directly in front of the Unnamable. For this reason, the Unnamable admits that 'In a sense I would be better off at the circumference, since my eyes are always fixed in a certain direction', but is nonetheless aware that he is not at the circumference because he is not able to see that which does not pass in front of him, and being in the centre means that much passes outside his line of sight. The Unnamable's sight is negatively confirmed: he knows he sees because things happen to pass in front of his eyes; by extension, he knows that he lives because his eyes function: 'I, of whom I know nothing, I know my eyes are open, because of the tears that pour from them unceasingly.' The Unnamable later confirms the interlinking of his sight with his mortality when announcing that 'ceasing to be, I ceased to see'.[116] The logic of this in fact seems to confirm the structure of the theatrical body: to be seen is to be, a philo-

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[116] Beckett, *The Unnamable*, p. 289; p. 298; p. 334.

sophical logic that links inevitably with Sartre's ideas of consciousness and being. The same is true for the aural sense. 'That I am not stone deaf', writes the Unnamable, 'is shown by the sounds that reach me.'[117] Taken together – the inevitability of the aural and the visual, and their subsequent employment as evidence of vitality – demonstrates the body For-others that the Unnamable perceives in himself, and his thriving consciousness.

Accepting his alienation, the Unnamable is open to future-freedom in spite of his ruined body; however, when we consider the following passage, we begin to encounter a now-time filled with content; this is what Benjamin labels *Jetztzeit*, a moment in which the 'revolutionary classes' 'make the continuum of history explode'. This is important since 'Thinking involves not only the flow of thoughts, but their arrest as well'.[118] We must bear this in mind when we read the following. The Unnamable becomes

> neither one side nor the other, I'm in the middle, I'm the parti-
> tion, I've two surfaces and no thickness, perhaps that's what I
> feel, myself vibrating, I'm the tympanum, on the one hand the
> mind, on the other the world, I don't belong to either, it's not to
> me they're talking, it's not of me they're talking, no, that's not
> it[.][119]

The logic of this position, as the wafer between two spaces and temporalities (past and future), is also materially identical to the temporo-spatial hymen: the physical division that has, on the one side, past-ness, and on the other, ruinous future. In living as the tympanum, however, the Unnamable is able to end with a defining statement: 'I can't go on, I'll go on'.[120] It is not that the second supersedes the first, but that both of these ideas are lived simultaneously. This *Jetztzeit* in which the 'now' is liveable in the body without necessarily attending the future, represents the strength of failure or of ruin.

In 'Three Dialogues' (1949) Beckett thinks about inability as the 'fidelity to failure,

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[117] Beckett, *The Unnamable*, p. 289.
[118] Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p. 253; p. 254.
[119] Beckett, *The Unnamable*, p. 376.
[120] Beckett, *The Unnamable*, p. 407

a new occasion, a new term of relation, and of the act which, unable to act, obliged to act, [… is made] an expressive act, even if only of itself, of its impossibility, of its obligation'.[121] This is the moment of eternal dynamism; it is never rescinded because, with the Unnamable, it never ends. It is what Fredric Jameson (1991) labels the schizophrenic condition of the 'perpetual present' or 'temporal unification of past and future with one's present'.[122] It is also the moment of transaction in an exchange economy since, commenting on the growing use of the metaphor of economy in Beckett (and inversely the economy of metaphor), Connor explains its applicability:

> [A]n economy is a *dynamic* structure, which allows and obliges the critic not only to order and distribute the elements of his field of study in inert relationships of equivalence and distinction, but also to show the processes of exchange, circulation and interested negotiation which bring these relationships dynamically into being.[123]

In this way *The Unnamable* represents a point of origin for consciousness and for body, as well as for the economy which implicates both the health of the nation-state and the authority of the home.

Like Volpone, the Unnamable is in control of financial and bodily ruin; but furthermore, like Elizabeth I, the Unnamable is living the future-freedom in the present. Ireland as a modern nation-state is made possible in this commitment to ruin. From Beckett's *Molloy* we could see the power of accepting one's ruined body for the safe and free future of a national body politics – think of the hobbled Irish state that emerged

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[121] 'Three Dialogues' in Samuel Beckett, *Disjecta: Miscellaneous Writings and a Dramatic Fragment* (London: John Calder, 1983), p. 145.

[122] Q.v. Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, Or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), p. 25.

[123] Steven Connor, 'Absolute Rubbish: Cultural Economies of Loss in Freud, Bataille and Beckett', in *Theory and Cultural Value* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), pp. 57-101 (p. 57). Blanchot offers us another reading that includes the notion of 'ruin': 'Maybe we are not in the presence of a book [when reading *The Unnamable*], but maybe it is about much more than a book: about the approach of pure movement whence come all books, the pure movement of this original point where: without doubt, the *oeuvre* is lost; which always ruins the *oeuvre*; which restores in it its failure [*désoeuvrement*] without end; but at which it is also necessary to entertain a relationship always more inchoate, under pain of not being' (Maurice Blanchot, *Le Livre à Venir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1959), p. 260. Translation mine). See also Charles Krance, 'Beckett and the Literature of Ruin', in *Chicago Review,* 33.2 (1982), 79-83. In these readings, the moment of dynamism, as I term it, is also the moment of origin and of death.

from the Treaty with the United Kingdom; and from Beckett's *Unnamable* we can see how that future can be lived in the now, a *Jetztzeit*, by enjoying failure and inability. Sartre's comments in the following are salient:

> [T]he body is the contingent form which is taken up by the necessity of my contingency. We can never apprehend this contingency as such in so far as our body is for us; for we are a choice, and for us, to be is to choose ourselves. Even this disability from which I suffer I have assumed by the very fact that I live; I surpass it toward my own projects, I make of it the necessary obstacle for my being, and I can not be crippled without choosing myself as crippled. This means that I choose the way in which I constitute my disability […]. But this inapprehensible body is precisely the necessity that there *be* a *choice,* that I do not exist all *at* once. In this sense my finitude is the condition of my freedom, for there is no freedom without choice; and in the same way that the body conditions consciousness as pure consciousness of the world, it renders consciousness possible even in its very freedom.[124]

As we accept our body's inability, so do we make it free to act in the world; and the world, as we know, emerges from our body's relation with it. Freedom to make a new world comes in the present acceptance of our ruin. In Benjamin's terms 'we shall clearly realize that it is our task to bring about a real state of emergency' – a state and moment of ruin – since the *Jetztzeit* offers 'a revolutionary chance in the fight for the oppressed past'.[125]

Conclusion

If we follow the path of Kate Brady's modernity, we will find society's demands on the female body wanting. We will see in Kate's tragic response the opportunity for monumentality and woman's time in history. Kate's body stands as a promise to the future to take control of one's own time, even if it means rejecting society as it now is. Can we see in Kate's body a source of inspiration in response to the tragedies of the 1992 underage 'X'-case girl, who was not allowed to abort her child; or perhaps a riposte to the unnecessary death of Savita Halappanavar in 2012? This idea may appear far too glib for what

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[124] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 352.
[125] Benjamin, *Illuminations*, p. 248; p. 254.

were real tragedies in Ireland; nonetheless, if Kate Brady's scandal is to represent a new modernity in Ireland, then these connections are open for forging, in the hope that women's bodies remain firmly in the hands of those whose consciousness is housed within.

Beckett's corporal modernity, though interested in the same tropes of theatricality and time, has a different twist. Beckett's modernity is phoenix-like and existential at the same time. In Molloy we see a hero whose acceptance of his body's 'nuisance' does not close doors, but rather opens them – albeit the life he leads is different to what most would consider normal. Molloy stands as an answer to a fascist body politics that builds its respective modernity on exceptionality, rather than a positive inclusiveness. The Unnamable, by contrast, is not looking to the future, but wants to have modernity now. The Unnamable's body is Martius' 'physical' wounds, rather than 'dangerous'; that is, it is a purely personal body in which society originates, rather than finding itself an object in a world of intentional consciousnesses. From the Unnamable's body, a 'center of reference', Ireland can emerge in the here-and-now, committing to ruin as a project of modernity, and seeking in that failure the opportunity to disrupt the idea of historical progress, instead jump-starting the revolution from the body.

I started this chapter by suggesting that in the artistic creation that started in death, we could think of Shakespeare's sonnet in which Nature is 'sovereign mistress of wrack'. That sonnet ends peculiarly: its couplet is replaced by two sets of italicised brackets, at each end of the line:

$$(\hspace{6cm})$$
$$(\hspace{6cm})^{126}$$

The sonnet itself is about the futility of resistance for the male lover against the flow of time; the sonnet is the last in the sequence before the Dark Lady becomes the focus. In

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[126] Shakespeare, *The Complete Sonnets and Poems*, 126.13-14.

those parentheses I see a moment of *Jetztzeit*, when time is momentarily arrested, and possibility reigns in its place. A corporal version of this image would be a womb or a tympanum, both of which are bodily spaces of potential, waiting either to be filled with new life, or transformed by outer or inner forces. To wrest control from the 'sovereign mistress of wrack' is the challenge of these last lines, and in Elizabeth I, we have a figure who was able to achieve what might seem possible. In modern Irish literature, we now have two figures who have achieved the same: Kate Brady and her ruined body incapable of bearing any more children, and the Unnamable who at the very moment of being unable to 'go on', can in fact 'go on'.

Surely the hope is a story can stay open
with its anthem of small details singing
[…]

and all of it unfinished in this form
that needs little enough to become a hymn
to the durable and daily implement, the stored
possibility of another day. And nothing more.

– from 'An Irish Georgic' in Eavan Boland, A Woman Without a Country

Modern Land: Forming an Irish Poet

My argument in this chapter is that land does not need to be owned in order to be national. Re-territorialized land, if anything, slows the progress of a postcolonial nation such as Ireland. Instead, as per Yeats' and Heaney's poems, land finds a home in poetry. Land in Yeats' poems is important when characterised by intermittent contact with bodies. Dance models this relationship, and allows a discussion about Yeats' Tower, the scars of which are generative rather than markers of dead history. This descends from the comic ethic in *As You Like It*, in which a dance celebrates the proprietorial return of land to Duke Senior – a perverse reward for nomads. In Heaney's poems, the body-land relationship is characterised by rootedness and the underground. Even wounds are turned to positive ends, and unruly disease is the marker of modernity. *Hamlet* precedes Heaney's poems, especially as a politics of the underground is articulated by Hamlet himself. In both Yeats' and Heaney's poems, a secular time is shown to replace messianic time, with modernity the result. This land chapter establishes that though the land was the centre of many early and long-lasting anti-colonial struggles as Ireland sought independence, it ought not to have been a question of territorial appropriation. Instead, these two poets were elevated in popular discourse to 'national poets' through their poems' creation of a dwelling space for the land of Ireland. Poetry as form houses land as its content in a modern nation.

In the last chapter I established the importance of bodies to my investigation. I explained the female body that looks towards a future freedom, and a male body that be-

comes revolutionary in its disability. A modern nation results from these bodies: in a Sartrean framework, the bodies give the world into which the bodies' consciousnesses emerge. In Kate Brady and the Unnamable, I showed how Ireland has new forebears. In this chapter, I look again at bodies, but by developing the foregoing argument, my interest is the interaction between bodies and Ireland – more specifically the land of Ireland. I will show how a national poet can emerge in intimate relation with the land: this land both gives rise to the poet, and the poet reconfigures the land in his image. I prove this in both the early modern period in reading Spenser and Shakespeare, showing how these writers contributed to the sovereign's claim over their territory; this contribution in turn elevates these writers to a status of 'authority'.

'Authority' here represents the shared, middle ground between a sovereign's elevated sovereignty and a writer's lowly state of authorship. The shared ground is the space in which the sovereign's – Elizabeth I here – sovereignty is created and expressed in literature, and also when the sovereign and her attendant objects of sovereignty are topics of the literature. The inhabiting of this space, in condescending the sovereign toward the author, and elevating the author toward the sovereign, serves a crucial function in this chapter: to make secular that which has previously been made sacred. I will show how this is a feature of the modern, establishing how in this period of literature and history England is becoming modern. The making secular of the sacred is also a critical manoeuvre in modern Ireland. The Land Wars of the late nineteenth century tore Mother Ireland from her heritage in mythical culture, and brought the land firmly into the realm of economics and politics.

The Land Wars led, ultimately, to the Home Rule Bills in Westminster, leading finally to a ratified bill in 1914. The Home Rule Bill's passage into law, however, was stalled by the First World War; this false start cast Ireland's independent sovereignty adrift in the process. The subsequent Easter Rising, War of Independence and Civil War

moved from the realm of the sacred – from Easter and the idea of blood sacrifice – to that of the secular when the Irish citizen turned the gun on their neighbour. These wars hinged on the idea that Irish land should be Irish territory under the aegis of an Irish sovereignty. The two poets under investigation in this chapter, Yeats and Heaney, wrote poetry which engaged in different though important ways with the interaction of bodies and land. Critically, the land which Yeats and Heaney make modern is the same land on which Spenser had built his own laureateship in the late sixteenth century. Both Yeats and Heaney, having won a Nobel prize, are considered national poets for their exploits. Their writing venerates the land of Ireland; however, I will show that there is a resistance to territorialisation on the part of the poets, instead they create a protean, nomadic Ireland which finds home periodically in the poetry. The land is configured as Irish in their poetry, and through their poetry the land of Ireland gives rise to these two modern poets.

I will show how the land of Ireland is given a home through Yeats' veneration of dancing. This dancing reveals the importance of human impressions on the land, directing our attention to building and buildings in Yeats' poetry. I will show how Yeats' poetry looks to monumentalise these impressions as a means of secularising the land of Ireland. For Heaney the topic is not a body's impressions on the land, but the body's 'dithering, blathering' in the land, as if a root. This muddiness reduces the mythical land of Ireland to a site of disease and rot. Nevertheless, through this rotten land, Heaney is able to show us an Ireland that reaches far back into its undeniable, archaeological history in order to be modern now and in the future. It elevates Heaney from his 'dithering, blathering' to a poet laureate for the entire land. Like their forebears in Elizabethan and Jacobean England, Yeats and Heaney become national poets through their secularising of the territorial land; this secularisation, a form of modernity as I will show, in turn serves to elevate the poets. They become not merely citizens of this land, but its authoritative autochthonic authors.

In this chapter I will first outline the historical struggles of control over Irish land – this will show that the struggle has been about territory. However, this land also appears in Spenser's literature, and gives Spenser the opportunity to make himself more intimate with the sovereign; his treatment of Ireland allows Spenser to become a national 'authority'.

After setting out the stakes in the early modern period, I turn to Yeats' poetry and the politics that lurks in the background of his career, namely the Land War. I show how the Irish Land War was a sovereign contest, in which Yeats' poetry took part, coming out on both sides of the argument. However, Yeats' ideas show that his poetry can act as a monument, even as buildings on the land crumble and are destroyed. In his poetry emerges a nomadic Ireland, periodically finding a home. This logic is best characterised by Yeats' dancers whose indeterminate relationship with the land is the ideal modernity that Yeats seeks. Connecting this with Davies' 1596 sovereign discourse *Orchestra*, I show Yeats moving away from the traditional, linear inheritance of King Lear and towards a more egalitarian proposition visible in *As You Like It*. Modernity takes place through a renovated, poetic time in which Ireland moves and is rediscovered in each poem: this is Ireland's dance.

In Heaney, I show how the poet's interest in what lies under the land is matched by Hamlet's concerns. For both, it is a question of disease – this is undeniably negative in *Hamlet*, but for Heaney disease's positivity emerges as something unruly. The muddy land becomes a modern land in contesting British sovereignty without ever turning Ireland into an Irish territory which, for Heaney, would be a step towards a religious discourse which he wants to avoid. By using disease positively – both as an illness and in the idea of de-seizing land – Heaney's Ireland is a muddy, secular site of becoming; as with Yeats before him, Ireland is modern in Heaney's poetry. When he turns towards the underground word-hoard, there he finds and founds his Ireland.

I conclude by showing how Yeats becomes national poet by having Ireland find a home in his poetry, which thereafter allows Heaney to become his own national poet by taking that home underground. Away from territory, Yeats' and Heaney's Irelands become 'stored possibilit[ies] of another day'.[1]

Early Modern Irish Land

Between Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (1590; 1596; 1609), *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe* (1595) and *A View of the Present State of Ireland* (written c. 1596; published 1633), Ireland was transposed from the writer's landscape to part of the landscape of the epic, to the topic of debate and correction. Richard McCabe describes the landscape in *The Faerie Queene*: 'Throughout the poem the landscape functions not just as a scenic backdrop but as a formidable agent which may, at any moment, assimilate person to place through some bizarre stroke of Ovidian metamorphosis [...] thereby realizing the colonists' deepest fears.'[2] Those fears were realised during this period in the Tyrone Rebellion (1594-1603). The Tyrone Rebellion was the result of a long history of deterritorialization of Ireland at the hands of English governance. John O'Beirne Ranelagh explains that as early as 1541 King Henry VIII had instituted Surrender and Regrant legislation, which entailed Irish lords surrendering their clan lands to the king, and waiting in line to be re-granted land by the king; this depended on the terms of their land-surrender and their relationship with the monarch. 'This', writes Ranelagh, 'was a final body-blow to the Gaelic customs of Brehon Law and the common ownership of property. In return for surrendering their lands to the king and swearing fealty, Irish chiefs would have their lands regranted to them personally.' The grandson of one of the lords who surrendered was Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone who became the 'unexpected rebel' and 'renegade Elizabethan'.[3]

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[1] 'An Irish Georgic' in Boland, *A Woman Without a Country*, ll. 43-4.

[2] Richard A. McCabe, *Spenser's Monstrous Regiment: Elizabethan Ireland and the Poetics of Difference* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 57.

[3] John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *A Short History of Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 49; p. 52; Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 4.

Hugh O'Neill had assumed the title of The O'Neill by the Gaelic ritual of standing on 'pre-Christian stone at Tullahogue'. When Lord Mountjoy eventually put down the Rebellion, he was known to have smashed 'into pieces' the stone at Tullahogue, a symbolic abuse of the piece of Irish land that gives rise to its chieftain.[4] When the Earl of Essex fought Hugh O'Neill, he wrote to the Privy Council about the desperate state of the land: 'the rebels fight in woods and bogs, where horse are utterly unserviceable; they use the advantage of lightness and swiftness in going off';[5] moreover, 'To the average Elizabethan, Ireland was a soggy, savage wilderness where no sensible person would willingly set foot'.[6] 'Wood bog, lake and mountain concealed and sustained resistance, and Elizabethan soldiers hated the terrain with vehemence'.[7] Famine was one tactic used to counter the rebels' knowledge of their own land, according to Ranelagh.[8] Not only is land important at the outset of the Tyrone Rebellion when Surrender and Regrant was instituted, land is also crucial in determining the outcome of the Rebellion, either as symbol (the stone at Tullahogue) or in actuality (Ireland's difficult terrain). Roy Foster adds that 'local [Irish] realities can only be understood in terms of the Irish landscape' and that 'In traditional bardic culture, the terrain was studied, discussed and referenced: every place had its legend and its own identity'.[9] To the Irish the land was known, understood and exploited; to the English, the land was an obdurate obstacle and weapon used against them.

The Tyrone Rebellion's failure, coinciding with the end of Elizabeth's reign, nevertheless gave birth to the idea of the Janus-faced Irishman in Hugh O'Neill. Similarly Janus-faced, as will be shown below, is the land itself. For the English it was a site in

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[4] Foster, *Modern Ireland*, pp. 4-5.
[5] Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, writing to Privy Council from Kilkenny, 20 May 1599 in *Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland, of the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth, 1509-[1603]*, ed. by Ernest George Atkinson, vol. 8 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1899), p. 36.
[6] Alison Plowden, *Elizabeth Regina: The Age of Triumph, 1588-1603* (London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 141.
[7] Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 6.
[8] Ranelagh, *A Short History of Ireland*, p. 53.
[9] Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 5.

need of conquest, with planters instructed in 1609 to outnumber natives.[10] Since this dis-

enfranchised the Irish from their own land, the Irish were unable to maintain their

mastery and ownership of the land, characterised by the '*tuath*, a tribal or kindred unit of

land […]. Within the *tuath*, chieftain, freemen and serfs sustained a mobile structure of

client relationships'.[11] The land of conquest was predicated upon a land of contest be-

tween the two peoples, out of and against which emerged certain literature.

Spenser's was writing during the Tyrone Rebellion and the Earl of Essex's armed

response. Additionally, we know that Spenser's concern in the *Faerie Queene* was intimate-

ly bound up with the question of Elizabeth's sovereignty. Spenser uses 'continued

Allegory, or darke conceit', telling Sir Walter Ralegh that in the figure of the 'Faery

Queene I meane glory in my generall intention, but in my particular I conceiue the most

excellent and glorious person of our soeuraine the Queene, and her kingdome in Faery

land'.[12] For Spenser the poet, sovereignty and the land are intertwined. The landscape

plays a central role in Spenser's writing, McCabe outlining its central importance above.[13]

McCabe's description emerges from reading Spenser, but would not sit out of place with

the historical descriptions outlined above. In art as much as in reality, Irish land was cen-

tral. This is visible in *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*, in which Colin – Spenser's self-

representation – explains that he returned to Faery Land (i.e. Elizabethan England) be-

cause he feared that he had been left to rot in the land where he now lives:

> When thus our pipes we both had wearied well,
> (Quoth he) and each an end of singing made,
> He gan to cast great lyking to my lore,
> And great disliking to my lucklesse lot:
> That banisht had my selfe, like wight forlore,

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[10] Q.v. Ranelagh, *A Short History of Ireland*, p. 55.

[11] Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 9.

[12] 'A Letter of the Authors Expounding his whole intention in the course of this worke: which for that it giueth great light to the Reader, for the better vnderstanding is hereunto annexed' in Edmund Spenser, *Poetical Works*, ed. by J. C. Smith and E. de Selincourt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), 407-8 (p. 407).

[13] See note 2, above.

Into that waste, where I was quite forgot.[14]

A sort of wish-fulfilment for Spenser, this passage explains Colin's travels back to England as a result of his piping (i.e., his poetry); it is indicative of what McCabe describes as the 'geographical distance from court [that] has bred a new political consciousness'.[15] The 'waste' is the Ireland in which Colin lives, and to which Spenser was sent on a diplomatic mission in 1580, resulting in his involvement in the Munster Plantation. His role as Elizabethan emissary, therefore, is bound up in the question of English sovereignty, and Elizabeth's assertion of that sovereignty over Ireland in the latter half of the sixteenth century; out of Queen Elizabeth's sovereignty comes Spenser's 'authority'. Colin's adversion to that Irish land as 'waste' indicates the central importance of the land in his role in Ireland, but also figures it negatively. As opposed to the land of sheep that is England, tended by shepherds like Colin, Ireland is barren and overrun by wolves, for 'The shepheards there abroad [England] may safely lie / On hills and downes, withouten dread or daunger', whilst in Ireland 'rauenous wolues the good mans hope destroy, / […and] outlawes fell affray the forest raunger'.[16]

In Book 6 of *Faerie Queene* the wolvish, illegal behaviour of the Irish is recalled as Serena ends up in 'wylde deserts' where 'dwelt a saluage nation':

> In these wylde deserts, where she [Serena] now abode,
> There dwelt a saluage nation, which did liue
> Of stealth and spoile, and making nightly rode
> Into their neighbours borders; ne did giue
> Them selues to any trade, as for to driue
> The painefull plough, or cattell for to breed,
> Or by aduentrous marchandize to thriue;
> But on the labours of poore men to feed,
> And serue their owne necessities with others need.[17]

The negative characterisation of the 'saluage' nation here is wholly consistent with other allegations made about the Irish, not only in *The Faerie Queene*, but also in the *View*. Sav-

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[14] 'Colin Clovts come home againe' in Spenser, *Poetical Works*, 536-545 (ll. 178-83).
[15] McCabe, *Spenser's Monstrous Regiment*, p. 170.
[16] 'Colin Clovts come home againe', ll. 316-19.
[17] Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, VI.viii.35.

agery in this mode is, according to McCabe, not merely a description of Irish behaviour,

but also a register of its remoteness on the map of the British Isles.[18] The distance from

the palaces of Westminster and Hampton Court indicate the Irishman's exteriority to the

law. Irenius in Spenser's *View* says that

> with Ireland yt is farr otherwise: For yt is a nacion ever acquaint-
> ed with warrs though but amongst them selues, and in theire
> owne kynde of militarie discipline trained vpp even from theire
> youths which they haue never yet bene taught to laye aside, nor
> made to learne obedience vnto the lawe, scarselye to knowe the
> name of lawe, but insteade thereof haue always preserued and
> kepte theire owne lawe which is the B*rehon* lawe[.][19]

Their extra-juridical existence is condemned here by Irenius as he explains to Eudoxus

about Irish savagery. This savagery is unruly because they not only start outside the law,

but they resist law's work and function as they cannot be made to 'learne obedience vnto

the lawe'. But, more critically for my argument, the Irish are rendered close to the savage

nation that terrorises Serena in two passages from the *View*. First, the Irish invade neigh-

bouring 'countries':

> seinge now theire [landes] so dispeopled and weakned, came
> downe into all the plaines adionyninge, and thence expellinge
> those fewe Englishe that remained, repossessed them againe,
> since which tyme they haue remayned in them and growing
> greater have brought vnder them manye of the English, which
> were before theire Lordes.[20]

Second, Ireland is described as a wasteland and wild dessert: 'Thus was all that goodlie

Countrie vtterlie waisted and lefte desolate, and as yet remayneth to this daye which be-

fore had bene the cheif ornamente and bewtie of Ireland[.]'[21] The relation for Irenius

between lawlessness and a desolate landscape is inevitable in these two passages; similar-

ly, the relation between this savage Ireland and the landscape of the *Faerie Queene* is clear.

In its wildness and its giving rise to lawlessness, Ireland is irretrievably immoral and wor-

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[18] McCabe, *Spenser's Monstrous Regiment*, p. 58.
[19] Spenser, *A View*, p. 7.
[20] Spenser, *A View*, p. 19.
[21] Spenser, *A View*, p. 25.

thy only of colonising: it needs to conform to Court norms; the 'saluage nation' and 'saluage land' are interwoven. The Spenserian crossover between real Ireland and the 'darke conceit' of allegorical land gives force to the reading of land as something more than mere background or hinterland: land means and gives character. Spenser's poetry enacts and consolidates a link between the so-called 'real' Ireland and its 'textual' counterpart.

This overlap is in one of the dedicatory sonnets to the first edition of the *Faerie Queene*. It was dedicated 'To the Right Honourable the Earle of Ormond and Ossory', indicating the politicisation of the author and the authorial space – Spenser intrudes into the realm of sovereign authority:

> Receiue most noble Lord a simple taste
> Of the wilde fruit, which saluage soyl hath bred,
> Which being through long wars left almost waste,
> With brutish barabarisme is ouerspredd:
> And in so faire a land, as may be red,
> Not one *Parnassus*, nor one *Helicone*
> Left for sweete Muses to be harboured,
> But where thy selfe hast thy braue mansion;
> There in deede dwel faire Graces many one.
> And gentle Nymphes, delights of learned wits,
> And in thy person without Paragone
> All goodly bountie and true honour sits,
> Such therefore, as that wasted soyl doth yield,
> Receiue dear Lord in worth, the fruit of barren field.[22]

There is much bound up in this sonnet. As Andrew Hadfield explains, the dedicatee merits our first attention, as

> Ormond was a member of the incumbent colonial group, the Old English, whose ancestors had come over with the Anglo-Normans in the twelfth century, so that his seemingly privileged relationship with the queen was much resented by the upwardly mobile New English who came to Ireland on the back of the renewed Crown interest under the Tudors.[23]

This sonnet is therefore in intimate relation to the English sovereign's power abroad,

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[22] 'To the Right Honourable the Earle of Ormond and Ossory' in Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, p. 28.
[23] Andrew Hadfield, *Edmund Spenser's Irish Experience: Wilde Fruit and Salvage Soyl* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 4-5.

though most specifically in Ireland. As with any dedication, the sonnet also bends the work which it prefaces to the authority of the dedication, whilst underscoring the writer's authority. *The Faerie Queene* is in part dedicated to, and thus partly stands as a representation of, Queen Elizabeth's sovereignty in Ireland: Spenser's poetry is a *via media* – sovereignty is established through *The Faerie Queene*.

In this, *The Faerie Queene* and its greatness are generated by the demand to civilise the land. Or, as Irenius declares, there are 'other like defectes' in Ireland,

> amonge which there is one generall Inconvenience which rayneth almost throughout all Ireland: that [is] of [the] Lordes of lands and freholders doe not there vse to sett out theire landes to farme or for tearme of yeares to theire tennantes, but onelie from yeare to yeare and some duringe pleasure, neither indeed will the Irishe Tennant or husband otherwise take his land then so longe as he list him self'.[24]

The land's mistreatment at the hands of the Irish, alleged in *A View*, is tamed by Spenser's great poetics. And yet, Ormond must be the recipient of the 'fruit of barren field' for it is his house in Tipperary that is the only equivalent of an Irish Parnassus or Helicone. In fact, it means that Ormond has tamed the land (and its inhabitants, those who live on the land), the same feat that Spenser has achieved in rooting his epic in Ireland and harvesting its fruit above the surface for Ormond to digest. As Hadfield explicates,

> the giving of culture, *The Faerie Queene*, to Ormond, is portrayed as dependent upon his success in spreading English civility, yet also as an independent creation of the poet's, the 'fruit' which must be harvested if the bad nature of Ireland is to be civilized. It suggests that *The Faerie Queene* serves an Orphic function [i.e., poetic authority] in its ability to transform the wilderness left by the natives; that it is at once congruent with a political authority and simultaneously aware of a potential to undermine what it ostensibly relies upon.[25]

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[24] Spenser, *A View*, pp. 105-6.
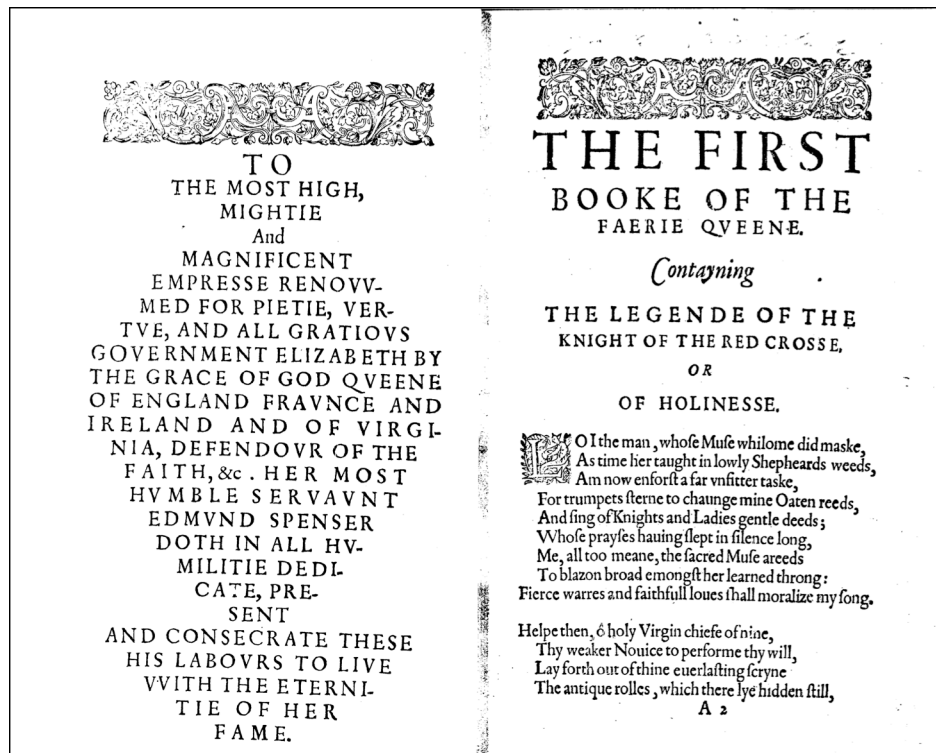[25] Hadfield, *Edmund Spenser's Irish Experience*, p. 5.

Figure 3: Title pages of Edmund Spenser's Faerie Queene, *2nd edn (1596). Anchor dedication sig. A1v.*

This is not merely about land as a site of genesis for the poetry, but also as poetry as genesis for the land and the poet as author of sovereignty itself, if Orphic Spenser is accurate.

We now establish the following: first, *The Faerie Queene* is portrayed as the 'wilde fruit, which salvage soyle hath bred', a civilised text emerging from an uncivilised land. Second, *The Faerie Queene* tells stories of savage lands made civil – the virtue of Book 6 is 'courtesie' – and so it acts as an instance of the sovereign, colonial act. *The Faerie Queene* turns savage lands civil, and is the logical product of civilised lands: it is a text which modernises and represents modernity. This is most clearly visible in the poem's relation to land. This means that the productive land, paradoxically, is the fruit of Spenser's verse. The land is therefore rooted in the poetry, in a dialectical anchoring that indicates the reliance of Spenser's English epic on Irish land, and Irish land on English epic. The reciprocal anchoring of one within the other is important, not only in our twenty-first century opinion, but also within the iconography of the original *Faerie Queene*. On the

verso page facing the beginning of *The Faerie Queene* in the 1596 edition (and second in-stallment) is the poem's arch-dedication to Elizabeth, in the form of an anchor (Figure 3).[26] The dedication details not only Elizabeth's claim to the kingdoms of England, France, Ireland and Virginia, but also praises her 'PIETIE, VERTUE, AND ALL GRA-TIOVS GOVERNMENT'. Elizabeth's sovereignty is tethered to this anchor; Spenser, by contrast, posits himself in the lower part of the anchor – the part that would be sunk into the seabed to keep the ship in its place. Though of course this anchor is a reference to New World explorations and the growth of the colonial enterprise through seafaring (and Virginia was a direct acquisition through Ralegh's sailing across to what became North America), it also indicates steadfastness and control through a contiguous link with land. The latter returns us to the idea of colonialism and the inherent modernity of the colonial enterprise: to possess a land as territory is secular and modern.

In imagistic terms, the celebrated portrait that intersects the two editions of *The Faerie Queene* is the Ditchley Portrait in 1592. The Portrait's famous use of the map is analogous to my argument: Elizabeth's sovereignty is represented through her foot's placement on the map on the floor; she is anchored to her nation which signifies her modern rule over territory. Similarly the nation is tethered to Elizabeth: Elizabeth and England are mutually endowed by one another. Critic Albert Labriola argues that the portrait's depiction of vessels is also important, proposing that

> The process and progress of discovery are suggested by the ring
> of vessels in the painting, a few traveling toward England, some
> away from it, and still others entering or departing its rivers.
> Elizabeth oversees the intercourse between sea and land, on the
> one hand, and sea and rivers, on the other.[27]

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[26] In the 1590 edition, which included only books 1-3, the dedication to Elizabeth also appeared verso to the beginning of the first book's proem; however, its text is shorter and simpler, presented in the form of a paragraph: 'TO THE MOST MIGHTIE AND MAGNIFICENT ELIZABETH, BY THE GRACE OF GOD QVEENE OF ENGLAND, FRANCE AND IRELAND DEFENDER OF THE FAITH &c.'
[27] Albert C. Labriola, 'Painting and Poetry of the Cult of Elizabeth: The Ditchley Portrait and Donne's "Elegie: Going to Bed"', in *Studies in Philology,* 93.1 (1996), 42-63 (46).

The Portrait thus takes part in 'enforc[ing] the royal cult',[28] whilst also depicting and endorsing the protocolonial enterprise. Labriola goes further when he explains how 'Like a monochord, [Elizabeth] traverses the distance between materiality and divinity'. It means that in the Portrait, 'hers is the celestial body on which explorers direct their compasses or other navigational instruments as they travel to uncharted lands and seas, then return home'.[29] In thinking of Elizabeth not as merely anchor in the Ditchley Portrait, Labriola considers Elizabeth a map herself, partaking of the growing chorographic discourse during her reign, while also offering herself as governing centre-point of the protocolonial world. Elizabeth, additionally, is a secularised divinity – she is not creating Eden, but rather an English empire with her as its origin. It means that we have, in different media, to consider Elizabeth not only as the metaphorical anchor of Spenser's dedication, but also as the owner of the map that demands further exploration. Secularised Elizabeth is, endows, and gives rise to land and its configuration as English territory. The logic dictates that to colonise America, for example, is also metaphorically to colonise Elizabeth: to move from a state of sovereign endowment (Elizabeth directing the sovereign colonisation of other lands) to metaphysical intimacy with the queen. Here is the growth of the poet into a position of 'authority' in relation to the sovereign. If the sovereign is modern in claiming a land as her territory, then so too is this poet who moves into an intimate relation with the sovereign in taking up his national 'authority'.

In terms of literature, this can be represented by the production of a dedication-as-anchor, for if the dedication riffs on the chorographic iconography of the Ditchley Portrait, then Spenser's subsequent verse can be read as metaphorically colonising. 'The entire political order is subsumed in the iconic figure of the queen,' writes Anne Fogarty, disclosing that 'Spenser in the *View* resorts to similar totalising metaphors in order to

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[28] Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, p. 112.
[29] Labriola, 'Painting and Poetry of the Cult of Elizabeth', 46.

project the mythic goal of social harmony which lies at the heart of the colonial dream'.[30] That is, *The Faerie Queene* and the *View* are, like the vessels in the Ditchley Portrait, l;ike English sovereignty exerting itself across borders in order to colonise. *The Faerie Queene* therefore represents a new colonial map, even in its obfuscation and its 'darke conceit' of allegory; it is in intimate relation with land as re-presentation as well as material land. Between the two is the idea that land becomes owned and colonised territory. *A View* and *The Faerie Queene*, in this vein, are in a reciprocal relationship of paratextuality, with each inscribed in the other and able to explain the other, one as a verse map, as I explained, and the other as a prose dialogue explaining the map and what can be done to change and to fix it. Fogarty describes this connection as a 'continuum' which exposes 'mutually defining intertexts, rather than [… two texts] of conflicting expressions of a divided mentality'. In this, 'both these texts are vitally concerned with constructing and working out the internal contradictions of a discourse of colonialism.'[31] Modernity here is not merely the execution of modern colonialism, but also justifies it; John Milton would famously later express this same sentiment as 'justify[ing] the ways of God to men'.[32] In that expression we see what is at stake: Milton's rhetoric was partly bound up with contemporary English politics and the recent English Civil War: to justify the ways of God to Englishmen was also to legitimise the secular acts of political agents to those others who suffered during the War. In other words, Milton's rhetoric is partly about explicating modernity through poetry. Returning these ideas to Spenser reveals to us what Fogarty also wants to explicate: that we should warn against the 'false separation of aesthetics and politics' lest we forget the 'vital interconnections in the *oeuvre* of [Spenser,]

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[30] Anne Fogarty, 'The Colonization of Language: Narrative Strategy in *A View of the Present State of Ireland* and *The Faerie Queene*, Book VI', in *Spenser and Ireland: An Interdisciplinary Perspective,* ed. by Patricia Coughlan (Cork: Cork University Press, 1989), pp. 75-108 (p. 87).

[31] Fogarty, 'The Colonization of Language', p. 77. Fogarty also explains how in the *View* Irenius 'literally writes the map of Ireland anew' which is representative of a 'new means of objectifying knowledge and of gaining control over the world'. Fogarty, 'The Colonization of Language', p. 89; p. 88.

[32] 'Paradise Lost' in John Milton, *The Major Works*, ed. by Stephen Orgel and Jonathan Goldberg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), I.26.

this Elizabethan functionary'.[33] Spenser's poetry is his politics, and *vice versa*; Spenser creates Ireland both as a political and poetic endeavour, offering the space as colonisable and showing that his poetry can result from that very colonisation. Spenser's poetry and politics are undecidable, yet both point towards the quest of modern sovereignty to control (another's) land. Colonisation, too, is also the goal and expression of this modernity. To colonise is to make an Other space one's home, or to make that Other space obey the laws of one's home; poetry other than Spenser's exhibits that impulse.

In the above, nomadism and the search for a new home provide a common thread: Spenser and Colin Clout were re-housed in Ireland; and Queen Elizabeth's colonialism was also concerned with travelling and the search for a new space to call 'home'. In both of these analyses, and those below, 'nomad' is a useful term to use in opposition to exile and migrant: the term exile is 'based on an acute sense of foreignness'; the term migrant denotes ideas of 'missing, nostalgia, and blocked horizons', whilst nomads make their home wherever they settle, opening up the space to hospitality through their perpetual travel.[34] Nomadism creates Eden wherever it goes, and is thus a motif of the secularising process of modernity that is important in the remainder of the chapter. The other early modern nomads that concern me are Shakespeare's King Lear, Orlando, Duke Senior and Hamlet. Each of these characters is looking for a new home; for some of them, the same space as their previous home is on offer, though it belongs to someone else instead. To search for a home also means that we are searching for locations to turn into sites, etc.: this is sovereign territorialization. The two Irish poets to whom I also turn are also on the lookout for a home. Yeats tries to find it in Revival Ireland, first, before lamenting the land agitation and its effects on the houses he holds dear; Heaney is a

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[33] Fogarty, 'The Colonization of Language', p. 77.

[34] Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1994), p. 24. Above I showed secondarily why Spenser cannot be considered an exile, because Elizabeth is re-housed in his poetry of Ireland: Spenser moves England across the Irish Sea.

nomad who moves from the north to the south of Ireland, and is 'lost, unhappy and at home' when abroad in Denmark. The former's consciousness of the ageing process and his future legacy ties his story to King Lear's; the latter's concern with the roots of and in a homeland link him to Hamlet. In all of these cases, the characters and poets are national heroes because they persistently address their homelessness. An acknowledgement of secularised modernity, its persistence ultimately leads to Yeats' and Heaney's coronation as national laureates. We will see Yeats' secularised modernity manifest in the renovation of time as a nomadic Ireland periodically finds a home in poetry, and Heaney's secularised modernity in an unruly, diseased land.

Yeats: Ageing and the Surface Touch

In this section I examine Yeats' poetry as a recasting of the discourses of nomadism visible in *King Lear* and *As You Like It*. Yeats' strategy tacks against the logic of *Lear*, but figuratively recapitulates ideas from *As You Like It*'s pastoralism (along with *The Faerie Queene*) in poetry. The nomadic motif in Yeats' poetry contributes to creating a new Ireland out of an old one. The texts create it, moreover, within poetry, through the images of dancing and dancer, a nomadic Ireland. Dance and nomadism connect through the repetitive motions of leaping and landing, in which the dancer disconnects and reconnects with the land; I see in this repetition a leaping homelessness that periodically finds a new home in landing. Yeats' texts write a modern Ireland; the image of dancing and dancer is critical to this reading. This new Ireland is modern in its establishment of an Irish space between the dancer and the land. What results is a kind of homelessness discussed above; however, in Yeats' poetry it appears as the nomadism linked with the land itself, periodically finding a home in the poetry. Two other ideas attend this: the renovation of time, which is secularised in its removal from a messianic Christian time to a modern Irish time; and the modern space that emerges in the gap between dancer and land. The indeterminate wavering and wandering of the dancer creates a changeable and

mutable space in which Ireland emerges and re-emerges out of its own homelessness. Homelessness is also central in both *King Lear* and *As You Like It*. In both plays there is a story of land deterritorialized (either by due process or usurpation) and reterritorialized. Sovereignty links the two: in *Lear*, the king gives away his land to his daughters, relinquishing his claim to English territory so that he may 'Unburdened crawl toward death' (I.i.40); and in *As You Like It* Duke Senior is exiled to the Forest of Arden and 'lands and revenues enrich the new Duke' (I.i.102-3). Sovereignty in these plays is dependent on territorial possession. However, Lear and the Duke, to varying degrees of voluntarism, are divested of their land by others: Goneril and Regan, and Duke Frederick. Lear and Duke Senior (along with Orlando) become nomads; their trajectories are to find new homes. In this, and in Lear's and Duke Senior's sovereign control of the territories they call 'home', we see modernity: the transformation of land into territory.

In Shakespeare's plays Lear loses and Duke Senior wins back control over their respective lands. That both contain a version of civil strife is indicative of the modern struggle of sovereignty over land: quite often the enemy is within rather than without. To be sovereigns of their respective jurisdictions requires a return to their initial territorial spaces: Lear's land is ultimately owned by Edgar as Lear, aided by Cordelia, wins the war, and Duke Senior receives his lands back from his brother Duke Frederick. Tragedy and comedy depart at this juncture: the tragedy ends with alien forces territorializing Britain, while the comedy ends when the rightful owners regain control over the courts. Nomadism in the comedy returns to its original site of departure. I will argue that the specific demands of nomadism do not disappear in this final reterritorialization, but that nomadism characterises the new and modern relationship with the land for the sovereigns. A paradox emerges: to call their jurisdictions 'home', sovereigns must first have no home,

either by choice or by violence.[35] I will think about these ideas through in connection with homelessness and landlessness in modern Ireland.

When the necessary homelessness of modern nation states is borne in mind, first the work of the planters in the Munster and Ulster plantations presents itself, and second the nineteenth-century land agitation. As I noted above, the planters were urged to out-number the Irish in order to seize control of the land, and make sure that insurrection and rebellion could be halted at root: the planters deterritorialized the land and took it from the Irish. Though the English did not maintain their superiority of numbers in the following centuries, their descendants, in addition to the Ascendancy class, did maintain large swathes of control over the land as landlords. In this, landlordism in nineteenth-century Ireland modelled a classic hegemony: a control of a minority who held the power over the majority; the resultant Land War was so potent because of the numbers of people involved. Looking at the strategy of boycott in the 1870s and 1880s, Foster explains that 'Above all, rent was witheld [*sic*], evicted farms were kept empty, and landlords ost-racized by the traditional weapon of excluding the transgressor from all transactions within the community'.[36] Clearly the boycotts were effective partly because of their popu-larity. Land was the political focus in this period of Irish nationalism, with even Yeats criticising his countrymen: 'A trumpery dispute about an acre of land can rouse our peo-ple to monstrous savagery'.[37] The Irish, via the Land League and other like organisations, were starting to take back their land as their own territory, finding a foothold for modern Ireland. As at the start of Ireland's colonisation at the end of the sixteenth century, so

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[35] Another line of thought would follow Paul Delaney's research into Travelling communities in Ireland. Delaney writes that in Yeats' play *Where There Is Nothing*, Yeats stages a version of a member of aristocratic Ascendancy class, Paul Ruttledge, giving up his landlordism in order to subvert the social order by becom-ing a tinker, a wanderer. Delaney overtly compares this to Yeats' and Gregory's own restlessness and rejection of their inheritance as representative of colonialism. Paul Delaney, 'Representations of the Travellers in the 1880s and 1900s', in *Irish Studies Review,* 9.1 (2001), 53-68 (57).
[36] Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 406.
[37] W. B. Yeats, 'William Butler Yeats – Nobel Lecture'
<http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1923/yeats-lecture.html> [accessed 1 June 2012], para. 2.

with its removal from the British Empire at the beginning of the twentieth century: those who sovereignly control the land control the drive towards modernity.

This was the period that marked the beginning of Yeats' career. If Yeats is a national poet, it could be expected that Yeats would approve of the movement towards sovereign independence and modernity. However, his membership of the Anglo-Irishness initially took precedence. Thus Yeats appears sceptical early on in his career, but comes to understand that there is something useful to be found in the scars and traces of history on the land. The prime instances of this in Yeats' poetry are buildings and houses. We see that first of all in 'Upon the House' in which the memory and history of Coole Park were prioritised over the sovereign rights of the Irish tenants. The history of land agitation is important here. The Land League was founded in 1879, though that merely cemented the unification of those who were striving for a reterritorialization of the Irish land from British landlords, Anglo-Irish landlords and, above all, absentee landlords. 'The more obvious outcome of the Land War', writes Foster, 'was Gladstone's Land Act of 1881.'[38] This was the first of a series of Acts and Bills passed in Westminster, indications that the locus of British power and its representatives were beginning to cede control to Ireland. The 1881 Act was followed by the 1887 Land Act, the 1885 Ashbourne Act and the 1903 Wyndham Act; these contributed, along with the land agitation, to the attempts to pass a Home Rule Bill for Ireland, with failed iterations in 1886 and 1893 before a Bill was passed in 1912. Amidst all this parliamentarianism, Foster records that 'the Land War created the Irish Parliamentary Party as accredited national leaders'.[39] The link between land agitation – certain Irish people's attempts to reterritorialize Ireland as their home, and win it back from the English – and parliamentary politics also joins modernity with sovereignty. In this framework, we would expect Yeats to support the work that the Land League accomplished (not least because much of Yeats'

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[38] Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 412.
[39] Foster, *Modern Ireland*, pp. 415-16.

writing was itself concerned with the autonomous and sovereign Irish state). And yet, Yeats was outspoken here in his condemnation of the havoc that the Land War was wreaking on the landed gentry, specifically on his friend Lady Augusta Gregory:

> How should the world be luckier if this house,
> Where passion and precision have been one
> Time out of mind, became too ruinous
> To breed the lidless eye that loves the sun?
> And the sweet laughing eagle thoughts that grow
> Where wings have memory of wings, and all
> That comes of the best knit to the best?[40]

Collected in the 1910's *The Green Helmet and Other Poems*, this keys in to the War which had been raging since the 1870s. The clearly conservative Yeats is stressing the immortality of Coole Park, the site that generated much of his poetic creativity. The adversion to the timelessness aspect of Coole Park indicates that at this juncture Yeats' poetry is gesturing to an older, mythical Ireland. Yeats' lauding of the house at Coole Park has nothing to do with his politics, however; rather, something that sits on the land itself is what merits his praise, and he laments its demise. Yeats' relation to the land is important precisely because he is not concerned with the agrarianism of the land – how to cultivate it and produce food – but because he is concerned with the physical impressions made on the land. In 'Upon a House' it is the house on the land's surface that merits his poetic attention, but elsewhere it is Yeats' tower, the sídhe, or dancers. In 'Solomon and the Witch', for example, the witch is compelled by the trace she and Solomon left on the grass:

> 'The night has fallen; not a sound
> In the forbidden sacred grove
> Unless a petal hit the ground,
> Nor any human sight within it
> But the crushed grass where we have lain;
> And the moon is wilder every minute.
> O! Solomon! let us try it again.' (ll. 38-44)

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[40] 'Upon a House Shaken by the Land Agitation' in W. B. Yeats, *The Major Works*, ed. by Edward Larrissy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). Unless otherwise stated, all references to Yeats' poetry and plays will be to this edition.

The crushed grass compels the witch to ask Solomon to re-enact what they just complet-ed; their impression on the grass, rather than Solomon's impression in the witch's mind. In his concern with the surface of the earth, we see Yeats' drive towards territorialization – the sovereign ownership of the land's surface.

We must connect the concern with the mythical in Yeats' poetry, with his privi-leging the land's surface. In his Nobel acceptance speech, Yeats praised his own, Lady Gregory's and Synge's work for this reason: these writers brought 'the imagination and speech of the country, all that poetical tradition descended from the middle ages, to the people of the town'.[41] Furthermore, Richard Ellmann usefully quotes Yeats' thoughts on meeting Joyce for the first time; in the passage Yeats comments that 'When the idea which comes from individual life marries the image that is born from the people, one gets great art, the art of Homer, and of Shakespeare'.[42] Yeats' own relationship with Shakespeare is characterised as 'appropriation' by Adam Putz. This attitude privileges vertical forms of inheritance: 'Yeats saw himself as situated at the end of one era and the start of another in history [which] qualified him as Shakespeare's heir, a poet well placed for putting the pieces of fractured subjectivity back together'.[43] Not only does this place Yeats as the receiver of culture predating his own, but also as the medium and sender of the culture before him. As King Lear would explain, ''tis our fast intent / To shake all cares and business from our age, / Conferring them on younger strengths' (I.I.3[197]7-9). Yeats and Lear, especially in their publicly visible ageing, and in their relation to their re-spective territories, share a trajectory: to pass on to later generations the land that they have made their own.

Lear's relationship to territory is also inextricable from his valuation of tradition and inheritance. Lear explains to his daughters the transfer of his lands to them, on the

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[41] Yeats, 'Nobel Lecture', para. 11.
[42] Yeats quoted in Richard Ellmann, *The Identity of Yeats*, 2nd edn (London: Faber and Faber, 1983), p. 88.
[43] Putz, *The Celtic Revival in Shakespeare's Wake*, p. 96.

condition that they declare the extent of their love for him:

> Tell me, my daughters –
> Since now we will divest us both of rule,
> Interest of territory, cares of state –
> Which of you shall we say doth love us most,
> That we our largest bounty may extend
> Where nature doth with merit challenge. (I.i.48-53)

King Lear's divestment particularly involves losing his territory. Stuart Elden, commenting on Shakespeare's two plays that use the word 'territory', says that Lear's use here is about 'political control of and stake in' this land.[44] Divesting himself of political interest in the land leaves King Lear a nomad on the land he previously commanded; Lear is hosted by his two daughters, Goneril and Regan, who benefit from his gift. They reduce his train and entourage as their tenant, until he is left as 'houseless poverty' (III.iv.26) like Old Tom: Lear becomes nomadic. In this way, Lear's giving away his territory – and relinquishing thereby his claim to sovereignty over England – leads to his displacement, or deterritorialization. This happens at the same moment that Goneril and Regan reterritorialize England in their own image. The civil war that ensues, and its tragic outcome in the play, is in part a consequence of this territorial violence. The unnatural reassignment of territory (which is another way of saying the modern reassignment of territory, moving as it is away from inheritance and towards gift) is the cornerstone of tragedy in *Lear* and manifests itself in the civil war. The civil war in the play may be connected with Yeats' contemporary Ireland. What results for the Anglo-Irish Yeats if the Big House falls and landed gentry are deterritorialized can only be civil war, following *Lear*'s lead.[45] We need to read Lear to understand Yeats because of their shared interest in tradition and inheritance, and because of their roles as national icons. In both situations, however, civil war ensues because of this insistence on temporal succession with regard to land; even

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[44] Stuart Elden, *The Birth of Territory* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), p. 275. The only other play in F to include the word 'territory' is 2 Henry VI.

[45] In this impulse, Yeats would appear to be correct; however, as we know the Irish civil war raged between competing factions of revolutionaries in the Free State: the treatyists against the non-treatyists, rather than between the Anglo-Irish and the Irish.

though Lear's story is fictional, a structural logic underpins this sequencing. The Irish Civil War took place as a reaction to the Anglo-Irish Treaty which secured most of Ulster as a British satellite state, resisting the radical break with Britain that the rest of Ireland was to enjoy. Yeats' promotion of maintaining what existed on the land 'Time out of mind', as in 'Upon this House', resembles some people's opinion that part of Ireland must remain British in order to secure the rest of Ireland for the Irish; however, as his career evolved, Yeats changed his opinions on these topics – sometimes out of necessity and sometimes out of desire. This change also signalled a move away from territorialization, just as Lear was forced away from thinking of the land as his territory, becoming instead nomadic.

One of these evolutions revolves around the figure of perhaps the most important building to Yeats: the tower that gave its name to one of his later collections of poems. The following excerpt is from the title poem, 'The Tower':

> I pace upon the battlements and stare
> On the foundations of a house, or where
> Tree, like a sooty finger, starts from the earth;
> And send imagination forth
> Under the day's declining beam, and call
> Images and memories
> From ruin or from ancient trees,
> For I would ask a question of them all. (ll. 17-24)

In this excerpt the foundations, those that scar the landscape, are the poetic source for the speaker. The speaker is searching for a way of expressing his imagination since 'Decrepit age […] has been tied to me' (l. 3), yet 'Never had I more / Excited, passionate, fantastical / Imagination' (ll. 4-6). The remains of this building enters as the way in which the speaker can find a content for the waning imagination and his quest for a topic about which to write. It is not the tower itself, but its remains that give the persona his creative space. Something similar is discernible in the sequence of poems *Meditations in Time of Civil War* (this title indicates to us again the link between Yeats' changed point of view and

the fact of the civil war). In the poem 'My Descendants', the speaker asks:

> And what if my descendants lose the flower
> Through natural declension of the soul,
> Through too much business with the passing hour,
> Through too much play, or marriage with a fool?
> May this laborious stair and this stark tower
> Become a roofless ruin that the owl
> May build in the cracked masonry and cry
> Her desolation to the desolate sky. (ll. 9-16)

In this, the speaker understands the necessary pitfalls in relying on inheritance, which may lead to a kind of homelessness and ensuing nomadism, and instead calls on the tower to become poetry itself. This tower is a strange kind of space, in which the scars are generative, rather than symptoms of an end. Indeed, writing about the next stanza which ends with 'These stones remain[ing] their monument and mine' (l. 24), Edna Longley suggests that ambiguously, either 'maximum or minimum traces will survive' – but traces nonetheless – and that '"monument" underlines the poem's own memorial function'.[46] The stones on the land's surface, and the poem, are interchangeable entities in this reading. Much as with the problems associated with a restrictive cosmological system, the poet seems to use this degradation as an opportunity to create, rather than a sign that creation is ended.

This gathering space recalls Martin Heidegger's example of a bridge in 'Building Dwelling Thinking' (1951), in which a location (such as Yeats' land), opens up to a space (the tower) in which dwelling (poetry) can take place. Yeats' tower seems to be a space epitomising the following statement: 'Building and thinking are, each in its own way, inescapable for dwelling.' This is relevant to Yeats particularly because of the notion of homelessness: 'however hampering and threatening the lack of houses remains, the *real plight of dwelling* does not lie merely in a lack of houses. The real plight of dwelling is [...] that [man] *must ever learn to dwell*'; however, 'as soon as man *gives thought* to his homeless-

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[46] Edna Longley, *Yeats and Modern Poetry* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 133.

ness,' writes Heidegger, 'it is a misery no longer'. Heidegger concludes that 'Rightly considered and kept well in mind, [our homelessness] is the sole summons that *calls* mortals into their dwelling'.[47] In that spatial thinking of homelessness lives Yeats' legacy through his poetry. Yeats' poetry first laments the potential failing of a house upon the Irish land; the poetry then allows the ruined building to become a space for imagination and poetic freedom. The new, renegotiated relationship with the land, which also brought Lear to madness before finding himself anew naked on the heath and in Old Tom's hut, is something which Yeats' poetry finds apt for creating a modern Ireland: Lear becomes 'Unaccommodated' (III.IV.105) just as Yeats turns profitably towards 'desolation'. Nomadism leads Yeats to decide ultimately that the land agitation is worth pursuing, even if civil war is the net result.

These ideas change 'Upon a House' (published in 1919) to 'Coole Park, 1929', a poem which considers 'form as legacy, legacy as form':[48]

> Here, traveller, scholar, poet, take your stand
> When all those rooms and passages are gone,
> When nettles wave upon a shapeless mound
> And saplings root among the broken stone,
> And dedicate – eyes bent upon the ground,
> Back turned upon the brightness of the sun
> And all the sensuality of the shade –
> A moment's memory to that laurelled head. (ll. 25-32)

The neo-Romantic tone that comes to the fore is descended from Shelley's 'Ozymandias' in which a traveller is implored to '"Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair"' – poetic sovereignty encapsulates a territorial, modern relation with land. In the poetry the land becomes a space in which we can access modern Ireland. Longley explains that 'Although Gregory's actual house may end up as "a shapeless mound" (it did), her symbolic house has achieved permanent shape'.[49] But the end-point of this trajectory in Yeats' po-

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[47] Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. by Albert Hofstadter (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 158; p. 159.
[48] Longley, *Yeats and Modern Poetry*, p. 206.
[49] Longley, *Yeats and Modern Poetry*, p. 195.

etry comes in 'Under Ben Bulben': 'Irish poets, learn your trade / [...] Sing the lords and ladies gay / That were beaten into the clay / Through seven heroic centuries.' (ll. 67, 78-80) Here, not only does the land and its impression provide the impetus for poetry, but the poetry becomes the land's impression: the land is impressed into the poetry itself. The poem is the mode of thinking that turns the land into a space of dwelling. As the poem survives and continues to be read, Yeats maintains his position as poet of Ireland – not least because Ireland dwells in his poetry. By writing about a secular Ireland – one that bears the scars of territorial battle – Yeats has made his Ireland modern.

To summarise, in the considerations of the land's passage from the older to the younger generation, we must think of it in terms of territory: ownership of the land turns it into territory. However, Yeats, in relation to Lear's valuation of tradition, sees eventually the potential result of that inheritance: the land could well be lost or destroyed. The answer is to move away from territorialization and instead to render the land in poetry; this suggests that as the poem is read and new poems are written, a new Ireland is perpetually created; the Irish land travels nomadically in poetry. What results is a renewable Ireland in the poetic space between poet and surface of the land. Time, therefore, is also implicated in this modernised and secularised Ireland.

In negotiating a new treatment of the land, Yeats' poetry and Duke Senior in *As You Like It* share a deep cultural connection to their respective countries/terrains, establishing that modernity takes place in that renovated relationship. *As You Like It* is also a drama conditioned by failed inheritance. Charles the wrestler tells Oliver the news from the court of the Dukes:

> There's no news at the court sir, but the old news. That is, the old Duke is banished by his younger brother the new Duke, and three or four loving lords have put themselves into voluntary exile with him, whose lands and revenues enrich the new Duke, therefore he gives them good leave to wander. (I.I.98-104)

The usurpation of Duke Senior by his younger brother, Duke Frederick, is an act of defi-

ant sovereignty. This act is intimately linked to the appropriation of the Duke Senior's lands – their reterritorialization – and Frederick's assertion of his sovereignty over those lands. Similarly, as Orlando makes clear in the opening lines of the play, he is sad because his brother has denied him his dues: '[I]t was upon this fashion bequeathed me by will but poor a thousand crowns, and, as thou sayst, charged my brother on his blessing to breed me well[.]' (I.I.1-4) The dual fraternal storylines in this way start from the same point at the play's beginning: what is due to one brother has been taken and commandeered by another. We might think this a counter to *King Lear* in which generational succession causes a problem. Here, lateral appropriation of the land takes place, a different kind of land transfer. Duke Senior and Orlando, whose lands have been appropriated, become homeless nomads; they wander in the Forest of Arden.

When, in the play's final throes, Duke Frederick confers on Duke Senior the lands that were his legally, and when Oliver marries Celia and gives Orlando what was his due, comedy rather than tragedy ensues: the nomads are restored to a fixed place. Most importantly for my argument, a dance celebrates the return of the lands, which I examine below. But also importantly, the lands are secularised as Frederick heads off to a religious life. Duke Senior responds to Jaques de Boys who reported Duke Frederick's religious conversion to the group in the forest:

> Thou offer'st fairly to thy brothers' wedding;
> To one his lands withheld, and to the other
> A land itself at large, a potent dukedom.
> First, in this forest, let us do those ends
> That here were well begun and well begot:
> And after, every of this happy number
> That have endur'd shrewd days and nights with us
> Shall share the good of our returned fortune,
> According to the measure of their states.
> Meantime forget this new-fall'n dignity,
> And fall into our rustic revelry.
> Play music, and you brides and bridegrooms all,
> With measure heap'd in joy, to th' measures fall. (V.IV.166-78)

This passage serves two functions. First, it makes secondary the issue of the land which

was the main topic of Jaques de Boys' speech a few lines previously. [191] Second, it embraces the 'new-fall'n' state, labelling it a state of 'dignity' – a secular space – rather than rejecting it or trying to convert it into a sacred space. In this way, Orlando's helpmate Adam, whose old age and fatigue is renewed in the Forest – a symbolic and perverse (new) Eden – becomes the chief figure identifiable with this new treatment of the land. What was old becomes new; this is the opposite of Jaques' 'Seven ages of man speech', which perhaps partly explains why Jaques seeks out Duke Frederick, rather than staying with Duke Senior. A land without territory, though yet with a sovereign, is not something that Jaques can brook. The renovation is also the opposite of the treatment of land by Elizabethan and Jacobean courtiers, as Wilson points out severally: enclosure preserved rather than renovated the land. Duke Frederick thus absolves himself from his role as modern sovereign: in seeking out a sacred, holy future, he rejects the secular future of modernity.

Modernity is here bound up with time and its recirculation: modernity can reinvent, whilst pre-modern ethics are locked into Christian time in which renovation is restricted to the messiah. In the work of the ageing Yeats we also saw a secular modernity which sought temporal renovation of the land. In 'Coole Park' Yeats let Ireland dwell, such that it could be a new home to every new reader or reading. In the earlier Yeats we discern an identical logic, but this time in the turn towards Irish myth – what we would otherwise have considered Yeats' traditional imperative. As with the tower, above, the land's surface is key to this temporal regeneration. In Yeats' early *The Wanderings of Oisin*, Niamh takes Oisin to Tir na nÓg, where 'the days pass like a wayward tune / […] And the blushes of first love never have flown' (I, ll. 83-5). Eventually homesick after several journeys to other lands, 'the lure of earth persistently summons him home'.[50] When Oisin

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[50] Frank Kinahan, *Yeats, Folklore, and Occultism: Contexts of the Early Work and Thought* (Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman, 1988), p. 114.

is permitted by Niamh to return on her horse Niamh stipulates that Oisin is not allowed to dismount from the horse and touch the ground: "'for if only your shoe / Brush lightly as haymouse earth's pebbles, you will come no more to my side'" (III, ll. 127-8). However, when Oisin returns to the mainland and dismounts to help some passing men, time comes upon him like a curse:

> when divided the girth,
> I fell on the path, and the horse went away like a summer fly;
> And my years three hundred fell on me, and I rose, and walked on
>   the earth,
> A creeping old man, full of sleep, with the spittle on his beard never
>   dry. (III, ll. 189-92)

Oisin's encounter with the surface of the earth is enough to bring him permanently back to the temporality of mortals, and the 300 years of his absence ages him quickly, ultimately killing him. Of course, the stresses on Oisin's contact with the earth in his story was not Yeats' creation; nevertheless, I see Yeats as understanding that contact with the earth as important more broadly than in the poem itself, or even the poem's relation to nascent theosophical ideas that Frank Kinahan points out.[51] There are two inferences I wish to draw: first, Oisin's world (which is our world) is of a mortal temporality, which suggests its temporal restrictions and reluctance to achieve renovation or modernisation; second, Oisin's world is not encountered by crossing its borders, but rather its rules apply when in contact with the earth's surface. This recalls 'the lords and ladies gay / That were beaten into the clay' in 'Under Ben Bulben'. It indicates that mortal temporality only takes effect when contact is made with the land. It also indicates that whilst Yeats is interested in Oisin's world – in which Yeats himself lives – he is attracted to a modernity that is not just about claiming territory, nor a land that changes who Irish citizens are at root (hence Oisin's death). Instead Yeats privileges the modernity of reinvigoration and eternal youth, a Tir na nÓg, but admits its impossibility in the civilised world. In Oisin's

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[51] Q.v. Kinahan, *Yeats, Folklore, and Occultism*, pp. 88-125, passim.

retelling Yeats also rejects the idea that permanent territorialization by anyone is positive. Between these two positions Yeats' ideal modernity can be summarised: a secular land away from myth, giving rise to perpetual renovation. The sovereign of this land will, by necessity, change, but the land will always dwell nomadically in memory and poetry. *King Lear*'s Edgar is this sovereign in the earlier period, privileging youth ('We that are young / Shall never see so much, nor live so long' [V.III.324-5]) and changing form.

Yeats invents characters who fit the description of this sovereign. In 'The Wanderings of Oisin' Yeats presents us with the Druid dancers:

> And now, still sad, we came to where
> A beautiful young man dreamed within
> A house of wattles, clay, and skin;
> One hand upheld his beardless chin,
> And one a sceptre flashing out
> Wild flames of red and gold and blue,
> Like to a merry wandering rout
> Of dancers leaping in the air[.] (I, ll. 247-54)

We soon learn that the reason they are dancing is so that they can '"mock at Death and Time with glances / And wavering arms and wandering dances"' (ll. 274-5). This, much as Oisin's falling to the ground in our world, is the equivalent treatment of making an impression on the land.[52] In Tir na nÓg, dancing and immortality are linked, just as in our world contact with the earth and mortality are connected. This, by contrast to Oisin in our world, is the modern relation with the land that Yeats wants to promote. Much the same is evident in the earlier period under study, notably in *As You Like It, The Faerie Queene* and Davies' *Orchestra* in which dancing celebrates and constitutes a freedom and an open contact with the land. Yeats' modern Ireland is characterised by the leaping and dancing that perpetually reterritorializes, rather than the English colonial planting that set out to obtain and fix and permanent English-Ireland.

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[52] To draw a comparison where dancers make a sincere mark in the earth, Rory Ryan writes about Yeats' introduction of the Faculties in *A Vision* through a poem that describes dancers marking the Great Wheel in the sand. Rory Ryan, 'The Is and the Ought, the Knower and the Known: An Analysis of the Four *Faculties* in Yeats's System', in *W. B. Yeats's 'A Vision': Explications and Contexts,* ed. by Neil Mann, Matthew Gibson, and Claire V. Nally (Clemson, SC: Clemson University Digital Press, 2012), pp. 22-54 (p. 22).

The important of dance develops further in early modern literature: between the dancer and the land a space emerges (as in Heidegger's dwelling) which also allows for a changed relation between land and dancer, as well as between dancer and land. That is, not only does the dancer restate her control over the land in the act of dancing, but the land also exerts some measure of control on the dancer. What this gives to my argument is the idea that the dancer emerges from the land which the dancer herself has territorialized. We see this in Davies' *Orchestra*:

> Sometimes [the Sea] his proud green waues in order set,
> One after other flow vnto the shore,
> Which when they haue with many kisses wet,
> They ebb away in order as before;
> And to make knowne his Courtly Loue the more,
> He oft doth lay aside his three-forkt Mace,
> And with his armes the timerous Earth embrace.[53]

Davies' Antinous sets up Love as conductor and composer of music which Antinous sees evident in all relations between two bodies; here it is the Sea on the Land. The Sea, having flowed on to the Land, is then compelled 'the timerous Earth [to] embrace'; Sea is turned to loving the Land. Dance links determinedly with Time, since 'if you judge them Twins, together got, /And Time first borne, your judgment erreth not'. Additionally, dance 'in lustie youth for euer flowers' and, like Time, is 'preserue[d] in his infancie'. This kind of dance is modern in its constant renovation of the two bodies locked together in motion; dance is never stationary but rather is protean, finding perpetually new forms because Proteus 'daunc'd with such facilitie'.[54] Skiles Howard asserts that Davies' 'defense' of dancing allows him to 'choreograph a nation', with the poem becoming ultimately a 'sovereign discourse'.[55] In the dancing relationship dwells a nation, to frame it in Heideggerian terms, here emerges a modern nation.

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[53] John Davies, *Orchestra or A Poeme of Dauncing Judicially Proouing the True Obseruation of Time and Measure, in the Authenticall and Laudable Vse of Dauncing*, 2nd edn (London: Robarts, I, 1596), stanza 50.
[54] Davies, *Orchestra*, stanza 23, ll. 6-7; stanza 24, l. 2, l. 7; stanza 81, l. 5.
[55] Skiles Howard, 'Rival Discourses of Dancing in Early Modern England', in *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900,* 36.1 (1996), 31-56 (45; 50).

As You Like It evidences the same point when Duke Senior recommends a dance – his new dwelling place is anarchically organised and pastorally inflected. Additionally, in Book VI of *The Faerie Queene* Calidore sees the Graces and maids dance:

> Vnto this place when as the Elfin Knight
>   Approcht, him seemed that the merry sound
>   Of a shrill pipe he playing heard on hight,
>   And many feete fast thumping th'hollow ground,
>   That through the woods their Eccho did rebound.
>   He nigher drew, to weete what mote it be;
>   There he a troupe of Ladies dauncing found
>   Full merrily, and making gladfull glee,
> And in the midst a Shepheard piping he did see.[56]

When we pay attention to Colin Clout, the 'Shepheard piping', we also discern the importance of the poet in this dancing. Colin, noted above as Spenser's version of himself in his poetry, is bid to pipe by the 'fourth Mayd' of the Graces; Colin tells Calidore that 'She made me often pipe and now to pipe apace'.[57] Fogarty explains that the fourth maid is a variant manifestation of Queen Elizabeth in this scene, and that the *Faerie Queene* as a whole uses Elizabeth as the

> absence upon which the text is predicated. While she is responsible for the fissures in the poem's surface, it is through probing such insufficiencies and through highlighting the struggle of language both to express and to contain desire that *The Faerie Queene* performs its complex act of homage to the incontrovertible right of authority.[58]

The relation here is between Queen Elizabeth bidding the poet to compose for her, and the sovereign Elizabeth dancing to the piper's tune. Here, as above, is the shared 'authority', with the poem or dance opening up the location as a site for a dwelling space. The poet's responsibility in creating the nation that reacts to the sovereign's dancing, as Davies urged us to consider, is of the utmost. From the poet's pen also comes the dwelling space of a new, modern nation – a secular dwelling space no longer circumscribed purely by the queen's divine sovereignty. To dwell in this argument is possible only after danc-

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[56] Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, VI.x.9.
[57] Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, VI.x.25; 27.
[58] Fogarty, 'The Colonization of Language', p. 174.

ing begins and a mutual reorganisation of power between the dancers is effected: land and dancer combine to construct a new territory in the space between. The land is also homeless and nomadic in this schema, finding a temporary home in the dance. Simultaneously, the poet becomes the composer or dance-master who allows for the renovated land-sovereign space; through their art Spenser and Shakespeare both aspire (and reach) status as national poet.

The Irish land that Spenser delineates in his poetry becomes the basis of his poet laureateship; it is also an Ireland that Spenser sought to destroy through a scorched-earth policy. Yeats seeks to retrieve his modern Ireland from Spenser's planted and scorched land in order to create himself as Irish poet laureate-designate. We have already seen the dancers Yeats creates, who 'waver' and 'wander' in 'The Wanderings of Oisin', and the 'in between' dancing of *A Vision*. But we also see it in Yeats' most famous drama, 'Cathleen ni Houlihan', in which the Old Woman introduces herself to Peter as someone who has been searching for someone or something for a while:

> PETER It's a pity indeed for any person to have no place of their
> own.
> OLD WOMAN That's true for you indeed, and it's long I'm on the
> roads since I first went wandering. (ll. 129-31)

Here the Old Woman's indeterminacy is, as we know, not aimless without reason. Instead, the wandering allows her to find Ireland's true hero to reclaim her 'Four beautiful green fields' (l. 146). As such, indeterminacy – here wandering, dancing above – is the task of sovereignty in modern Ireland, much like the nomadic wandering in the forest in *As You Like It* which actually serves to resolve all of the play's muddles. Rosi Braidotti usefully explains the benefits of examining nomads and thinking nomadically, writing that 'It is the subversion of set conventions that defines the nomadic state' in which 'alternative forms of agency can be engendered'.[59] The latter in Yeats is the agency given

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[59] Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 5; p. 7.

through writing poetry. As such perpetual nomadism is a central part of modernity as it opens up a new dwelling space in which modern Ireland can emerge and re-emerge, constantly questioning other stable versions of Ireland as given in Mother Ireland, the Catholic Church and even *Bunreacht na hÉireann.*

Yeats gives us another form of dancing which first seems to work against the ideas established above. In 'Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen', a poem bound up with the parliamentary politics associated with the beginning of the War of Independence, and with artistic representation, we read how 'All men are dancers and their tread / Goes to the barbarous clangour of a gong' (ll. 57-8). Connected with Yeats' *A Vision* and the role of the cycle, the 'gong' indicates a tempo and rigorous metre according to which everyone is dancing. The idea suggests a tension between the wavering of the dancing and its restricted, if not predicted, form, according to the gong. However, Yeats refutes such ideas; instead, Yeats believes that dancing is precisely the manoeuvring that allows man to exercise some agency or independence within the restrictive world of the cones and gyres. Though humankind is restricted, there remains hope.[60] In fact, in the poem 'The Double Vision of Michael Robartes' – a character created by Yeats who features heavily in the second version of *A Vision* (1936) – dancing becomes a transformative act, since 'little did they care who danced between, / And little she by whom her dance was seen / So she had outdanced thought. / Body perfection brought' (ll. 37-40). In this, dancing allows the girl and the two watching her (a sphinx and a Buddha) to have 'time overthrown' (l. 47). So, far from being restricted by the strict motion of the Phases of the Moon, or the Great Year, the gyres and cones, dancing instead overthrows time. Like the inhabitants of Tír na nÓg, those who dance overthrow time and turn Ireland into a space that constantly finds a new home at each renovation. This territorialization is about the

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[60] This is in contrast to T. S. Eliot's 'dead sound on the final stroke of nine' ('The Waste Land' T. S. Eliot, *Collected Poems 1909-1962*, (London: Faber and Faber, 2002).), in which there is little hope for escaping the malaise of the modern world; Edna Longley draws our attention to the parallels between the poems. Longley, *Yeats and Modern Poetry*, pp. 50-3.

surface of the land: this sovereign territory is made in Ireland by renovating it and having

time overthrown and restarted. This secularisation of time is the becoming of a new,

modern nation. As Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari write:

> The constituents of the nation are a land and a people: the 'natal,'
> [...]. The natal or the land, as we have seen elsewhere, implies a
> certain deterritorialization of the territories [...] and the people, a
> decoding of the population. The nation is constituted on the ba-
> sis of these flows and is inseparable from the modern State that
> gives consistency to the corresponding land and people.[61]

Against this there is one key example worth foregrounding in which a Yeatsian character

does not approve of dancing and wandering. In *On Baile's Strand*, the Blind Man tells the

fool what Conchubar thinks of Cuchulain: Cuchulain 'ran too wild, and Conchubar is

coming to-day to put an oath upon him that will stop his rambling and make him as bid-

dable as a house-dog and keep him always at his hand' (ll. 40-3). Conchubar then tells

Cuchulain that a young man arrived in an act of war while Cuchulain was away: 'He [the

young man] came to land / While you were somewhere out of sight and hearing, / Hunt-

ing or dancing with your wild companions.' (ll. 178-80) Conchubar's disdain for

Cuchulain is clear, positing Conchubar in opposition to Cuchulain. Since Cuchulain is

one of the heroes of Ireland, so Conchubar becomes Ireland's foe. Conchubar is a repre-

sentative of British imperialism:

> I am High King, my son shall be High King;
> And you for all the wildness of your blood,
> And though your father came out of the sun,
> Are but a little king and weigh but light
> In anything that touches government[.] (ll. 214-18)

Conchubar's drive through inheritance to dominate Cuchulain and Ireland is akin to

England's domination of Ireland; and at the heart of Conchubar's domination is his fear

of Cuchulain's dancing – the act that constantly renovates the relationship between the

land and the sovereign, opening up a new, secularised modern Ireland.

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[61] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. by Brian Massumi (London: Continuum, 1988 [1980]), p. 456.

To summarise, the argument contains three chief strands. First is Yeats' concern with the surface of the land – from this we read the importance of turning Ireland into territory by taking control of the surface. The second is the role of dancing in that relationship with the land's surface. Dancing reveals the renegotiated relationship between poet, sovereign and land which turns the land-site into a space for a modern Ireland. The poet writes poems in which a new Ireland is created for every reader. This is possible because of the third strand which is secularised time, moving from Christian, messianic time to a secular time created by poetry that can be overthrown in the reading of the poetry. We have seen that the sovereign discourse of dancing in Davies' *Orchestra* and the Duke's recourse to dancing when returned to his lands in *As You Like It* are all important in creating a new relationship between sovereign and land. Further, the result is a national poet who has written about the land, but has also seen the land impressed into his poetry – territory is no longer the concern, but the emergence of the land in art. Yeats as national poet is sovereign because wherever his poetry is, the land of Ireland accompanies it; Yeats is a national poet of his own Ireland, which he has authored through the secularisation of time and the modernisation of a deterritorialized, nomadic land. Irelands finds its home in Yeats' poetry, and in any new poem that writes about Ireland; Yeats poems author Ireland, and author the possibility for future poems to rewrite Ireland.

Hamlet *and Heaney: Lying Down in the Diseased Word-Hoard*

Yeats' poems herald the birth of a modern, secular Irish land in his poetry. Through the concentration on surfaces, Yeats' texts explore the possibilities of dance which exemplifies a new relation between dancer and land, as between poet and dancer. The nomadic land periodically dwells in poetry, as each new poem and poet of Ireland emerges. Time moves away from messianic time instead to poetic time which renews it in the name of modernity and secularisation. Modern Ireland becomes a product of Yeats' poetry, creating Yeats as a sovereign poet of Ireland. We learnt this from the surface of the land, on

which sits the scars of past conquests and even Yeats' Tower. But another salient relationship with land is readily present in language: to be rooted, or to have roots in a nation. In this section I examine rootedness and how Heaney's poetry, which is often about being in the depths of Irish land, allows Heaney to become a national poet. In order to explicate fully this position, I will explore his poetry's relationship to disease and thereafter to a secular modernity that is conditioned and signified by muddiness, rather than characterised as a sacred, edenic land. In Heaney's 'Viking Dublin: Trial Pieces', the persona explicitly 'follow[s] into the mud', confidently declaring 'I am Hamlet the Dane, / skull handler, parablist, / smeller of rot // in the state' who comes 'to consciousness / by jumping into graves, / dithering, blathering'.[62] Becoming in this poem is intimately linked to the muddy, modern land – that which is often thought of as backward and rotten. I will show, via an interrogation of *Hamlet*, how Heaney's poetry opens the possibility of becoming a modern, national poet in the muddiness and unruliness of the land.

De Grazia argues cogently that *Hamlet* is a modern play not just because of its eponymous hero but because of his introspective soliloquies. De Grazia notes that to be called 'modern' in early modern England was a slight, given the label directly opposed 'ancient': 'For two centuries, Shakespeare's drama had been deemed *unruly* and *wild* by the biases of the ancients.' De Grazia suggests that the notion of unruliness had to be thrown off before *Hamlet*'s true greatness could be appreciated. If, however, we take unruliness as a positive attribute – a resistance to sovereign appropriation – then we can see in *Hamlet* a discourse of resistance to territorialization. Furthermore, de Grazia has noted that 'The critical tradition that has identified *Hamlet* with the onset of the modern period

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[62] 'Viking Dublin: Trial Pieces' in Seamus Heaney, *Opened Ground: Poems 1966-1996* (London: Faber and Faber, 1998), iv, ll. 1-16. Unless otherwise stated, all references to Heaney's poetry will be to this edition.

has ignored the centrality of land'.[63] According to de Grazia, that 'centrality' is visible

throughout the play:

> The play dramatizes one conflict over land after another: Fortinbras I and Hamlet I over crown lands, Hamlet I and Claudius over the garden kingdom, Gonzago and Lucianus over the 'bank of flowers' or 'estate', Norway and Poland over a 'patch of ground', the boy and adult companies over the commercial stage, the Crown and the Church over the churchyard, Laertes and Hamlet over Ophelia's flowered body, and the actor who plays Hamlet and any actor whose role challenges Hamlet's command over the stage.[64]

It is clear from de Grazia's analysis that land in *Hamlet* is as much about sovereignty and

sovereign territory as it is about the inert soil. In terms of territorialization, we see a ten-

dency to appropriate the surface of the land (just as with the texts I analysed above). This

is not only true of sovereigns – the kings who choose to have this land called 'Denmark'

or 'Norway' – but also of those who amass land as a means of wealth: 'This sequence of

hypothetical persons [in the graveyard scene] – statesmen, courtiers, landlords, lawyers –

now disintegrating into earth, in life strove to acquire and retain tracts of land.' In this

sense land is something available for appropriation, particularly as it elevates in social

terms those who appropriate. De Grazia also tells us that the question of land and law –

and by extension sovereignty – are intimately tied together in *Hamlet*'s history, with Q1's

'landless' becoming 'lawless' in F (I.i.101). Similarly in the graveyard scene, de Grazia

wonders whether 'Hamlet [is] supposed to handle one skull (the lawyer/landlord's) or

two (the lawyer's and the landlord's)?'[65] [96]'The salient points for my argument are that

Hamlet's modern unruliness – its resistance to territorialization and appropriation – is in-

extricable from its land discourse.

But de Grazia's analysis takes us one step further in this, for at the heart of her

analysis is the label that Hamlet gives the Ghost upon the latter's insistence on Horatio's

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[63] de Grazia, *'Hamlet' Without Hamlet*, p. 18; p. 43.

[64] de Grazia, *'Hamlet' Without Hamlet*, p. 43.

[65] de Grazia, *'Hamlet' Without Hamlet*, p. 32; p. 141.

and Marcellus' sworn secrecy. Hamlet thanks the Ghost: 'Well said, old mole, canst work i'th' earth so fast?' (I.v.161) Correcting Hegel's and Marx's later deployments of the teleological mole that burrows to the surface like the *Geist* (Hegel) or like the workers' revolution (Marx), de Grazia instead observes the indistinguishability between the mole and its etymological cognate 'mold' – the earth – which it throws up in looking for food. This embeddedness is a feature of the land throughout *Hamlet*: the mole, the Ghost's descent into the beneath-the-stage space, the skulls that the clown surfaces, Ophelia's death (albeit in water) and Ophelia's burial. The territorial battle – the sovereign contest *over land* – thus appears to be about rooting *in the land*, and the subsequent resurfacing or *rupture*: the Ghost returns, skulls are thrown up. The modern unruliness of *Hamlet* is about what is in the land, and what returns from beneath the surface. Rather than holy burials – 'What ceremony else?', asks Laertes during Ophelia's burial; the Priest replies that Ophelia's burial in the churchyard is more than Ophelia is due since 'She should in ground unsanctified been lodged' (V.I.214-18) – there is instead 'a violent rivalry' contested in 'units of acreage' with two men wrestling in a hole in the ground.[66] This is the kind of muddiness that exemplifies *Hamlet*'s modernity, and it relies not on the surface of the land, but on what is held in the bosom of the land. Moreover, this land is no longer sacred but now secular, having been driven away from the holiness of the church. This, in part, is what provokes Hamlet's soliloquising, not least when he despairs over Fortinbras' going 'to gain a little patch of ground / That hath in it no profit but the name'. Hamlet laments that

> I see
> The imminent death of twenty thousand men
> That for a fantasy and trick of fame
> Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
> Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
> Which is not tomb enough and continent

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[66] de Grazia, *'Hamlet' Without Hamlet*, p. 150.

To hide the slain?[67] (IV.IV.58-64)

These bodies that will rupture the land are the signs of unruliness –sovereign appropriations of territory cannot be fully accomplished in *Hamlet* without resistance. This, too, is *Hamlet*'s secularised modernity.

Given Heaney's explicit turn to *Hamlet*, it is no surprise that his poetry is also interested in land, and in what remains in the bowels of the land. Susan Sailer Shaw reminds us that in Heaney's early poetry 'bogs preserve centuries-old artifacts and corpses and then yield them to the present'.[68] The land is coordinated with time, which also coordinates it with modernity:

> [T]he rootedness of the present in the past and the presentess of the past names a world which seems to operate independent of time: corpses yielded up by the bog have been preserved by it; farmers might be planting their potatoes in the fourteenth as well as in the twentieth centuries. […] The world of these poems teems with forces that constantly threaten to overwhelm it.[69]

As these bog-bodies emerge from the land's depths, Heaney's poetry records and stores them in language, taking part metaphysically in the history housed in Ireland's land. This joins him, Mary Brown argues, with modernity, since 'By going down into the bog and backwards in time Heaney has found an identity for Ireland'.[70] Thus far the arguments seem both incontrovertible; however, we can also see how Heaney finds himself in the depths of the land. In an early poem, 'North', Heaney writes about the word-hoard:

The longship's swimming tongue

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[67] A large part of Act Four Scene Four is absent from Q1 (which appears as Scene Twelve in the Ard³ edition of Q1), almost as if the notion of bodies rupturing the land's surface, and its subsequent treatment, could not be permitted initially; instead, the scene irrupted into the play's fuller second version, poking its own body above the land of Q1's nine lines which were not 'tomb enough and continent / To hide the slain'. There is no equivalent passage in F.

[68] Susan Shaw Sailer, 'Myth in the Poetry of Yeats and Heaney', in *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies,* 17.2 (1991), 54-63 (54-5). Potatoes are, of course, tubers, and therefore rootless in the ground; potatoes are nomadic in this vein, but also because of their history of travel from the New World to Ireland. This journey took place in the early modern period. Q.v. Tomás O'Riordan, 'The Introduction of the Potato into Ireland', in *History Ireland,* 9.1 (2001), 27-31.

[69] Sailer, 'Myth in the Poetry of Yeats and Heaney', 56.

[70] Mary P. Brown, 'Seamus Heaney and *North*', in *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review,* 70.280 (1981), 289-98 (293).

was buoyant with hindsight –
[…]
It said, 'Lie down
in the word-hoard, burrow
the coil and gleam
of your furrowed brain.

Compose in darkness.' (ll. 20-33)

I see this 'word-hoard' operating in two ways. First, the instruction to the poet-speaker is not only to connect with the land, but also to 'burrow' into the land and to 'compose in darkness': poetry is found beneath. The second is that the underground changes the poet into a poet of land – of *this* land in fact. The land precedes the poet as the poet turns the land into poetry. The Gaelic name for the study of place lore *dinnseanchas*; the role is a pre-modern one, described here by Roy Foster: '*Dindsenchas*, the celebration of place-names, was a feature of this poetic topography; what endured was the mythic landscape, providing escape and inspiration.'[71] This poetic sensibility, like the lifestyle that turns to the bogs each winter to fuel the fire, has been incubated in the land and is taken up by Heaney in his poetry. The word-hoard hibernates underground where the poet can burrow to find it, but equally in the burrowing the poet is writing the land anew in the present. The word-hoard is notably reified in Heaney's poetry, emerging on to his page in words that point to the poet's earthwork. Words such as digging, roots, opened ground, irruption, vowel, wound, sore, fault, the underground and earthworm all appear and demonstrate the poet's 'burrowing'. Sophie Hillan writes that 'In the many-layered language that we all share […] we have to dig, sometimes quite deeply, to find our buried treasure'.[72] Like the objects found that 'overwhelm' the poetry, in Sailer's terms, the poet becomes modern by tapping into the word-hoard and writing the land anew in those reified terms.

And yet much of Heaney's writing is contaminated by disease. In 'At a Potato

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[71] Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 5.
[72] Sophie Hillan, 'Wintered into Wisdom: Michael McLaverty, Seamus Heaney, and the Northern Word-Hoard', in *New Hibernia Review,* 9.3 (2005), 86-106 (88).

Digging', a poem about the famine of 1845, oblique links tie the health of the nation to that of its food supply – a food supply, importantly for my argument, that is deeply settled in the ground, albeit rootless: 'The new potato, sound as stone, / putrefied when it had lain three days in the long clay pit. / Millions rotted along with it.'[73] The rotten land, manifest in the potato plight, is matched by those who farmed and fed off the land: they too are rotten. A tension emerges between the *dinnseanchas* poet, who elevates the land to mythical status by venerating its places and place-names, and a poet who writes about rot, disease and death. The land in the latter is secularised and removed from myth and religious discourse, except of course if you are using the rotten land as a measure of the people's proximity to God, their civility and their intelligence:

> [A] most ritch and plentifull Countrye, full of Corne and Cattell that yow would have thought they would have beene able to stande longe, yett err one yeare and a half, they were brought to such wretchedness, as that any stonie harte would haue rewed the same [… and] in shorte space there were none almost left and a most populous and plentyfull Countrye suddenlie lefte voyde of man or beast, yet sure in all that warr there perished not manye by the sworde, but all by the extremitye of famyne, which they themselues had wrought[.][74]

In this passage Spenser accuses the Irish of immorality because of the way they farmed the land. Spenser's role in admonishing the place of the bards in Irish culture stands in opposition to the *dinnseanchas* tradition. A question emerges: why would Heaney align his ethics with Spenser's, when Spenser is clearly anti-Irish independence? Furthermore, Heaney knows the easy transition from debate about a piece of land to sovereignty, commenting that in the contemporary land question, the land's 'sovereignty has been temporarily usurped or infringed […] What we have is the tail-end of a struggle in a province between territorial piety and imperial power'.[75] In this latter opposition, howev-

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[73] 'At a Potato Digging' in Seamus Heaney, *Death of a Naturalist* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006 [1966]), ll. 34-7.

[74] Spenser, *A View*, p. 135.

[75] 'Feeling into Words' in Seamus Heaney, *Preoccupations: Selected Prose 1968-1978* (London: Faber and Faber, 1980), p. 42; p. 57.

er, we are offered a view of Heaney's thinking in this debate. On Spenser's side is imperial power, and on the side of Northern Irish politics is a deplorable 'territorial piety'. Heaney's words express his frustration at the return of the land to a sacred discourse – at least imperial power removes that and accuses those involved of de-sacralisation (or indeed of secularisation). This crucial link between disease/rot and secularisation provides Heaney with the opportunity to turn Irish land into his modern Ireland; and this modern Ireland will, in turn, engender Heaney an Irish national poet, a poet of *dinnseanchas*. Disease is the entry to modernity.

Hamlet, Heaney's reference for 'dithering' and 'blathering' and 'coming into consciousness' in the dirt, also contains a narrative of rot and disease; and Hamlet, it turns out, is coterminous if not identical with disease. Unruly modernity will be shown to be disease. First, Horatio explains that the Ghost's return 'bodes some strange eruption to our state' (I.i.68). Inasmuch as the Ghost has come from purgatory and returns to the symbolically demonic space of the cellar, this is a material description by Horatio: the Ghost has erupted out of the stage-beneath and irrupted on to the stage-above. This is also an unruliness, as by rupturing the surface of the land the Ghost is challenging whoever politically lays claim to the land, resisting the sovereign control currently in place. The Ghost's unruliness is matched by Fortinbras' traipsing to claim the 'little patch of ground' explored above. In Horatio's concerns here, and Hamlet's concerns having spoken to the Norwegian Captain, we realise that the task of the sovereign is not merely to control the surface of the land, but to stop the *re*surfacing of those things that ought to be housed in the land's depths.

For this reason a 'strange eruption' represents a modern unruliness which troubles present sovereignty, but also makes the land secular: religious discourse has no hold here. There is one other use of the phrase 'strange eruption' in Shakespeare's canon. In *1 Henry IV* Hotspur responds to Owen Glendower's tale of his mythical birth:

GLENDOWER   At my nativity
          The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes,
          Of burning cressets; and at my birth
          The frame and huge foundation of the earth
          Shaked like a coward.
          […]
HOTSPUR [T]he earth shook to see the heavens on fire,
          And not in fear of your nativity.
          Diseasèd nature oftentimes breaks forth
          In strange eruptions[.] (III.I.12-27)

For Hotspur 'strange eruption' implies 'disease'. Turning back to Hamlet, we are remind-

ed of Marcellus' 'something's rotten in the state of Denmark' (I.IV.90) as well as

Horatio's 'strange eruption'. To tie into this story of diseased eruptions we need to recall

that Hamlet was born on the day that King Hamlet won the Norwegian lands from King

Fortinbras.[76] De Grazia writes:

> The annexing of [Norwegian] land and the birth of a prince are a
> dynastic dream-come-true. One event complements the other.
> Indeed the legal instruments drawn up at the time of the combat
> seem designed to assure that the territorial gain will be passed on
> to the victor's descendants. […] On the very day that Denmark
> won these inheritable lands, a prince to inherit them was born.
> Like a happy astrological convergence, the coincidence seems
> prophetic: Hamlet was born to rule.[77]

It strikes me that, like Glendower, Hamlet was born out of the land. As John of Gaunt

would say in *Richard II*, the land in *Hamlet* seems to be a 'teeming womb of royal kings'

(II.I.51), and Hamlet is the baby bursting forth at a crucial point of established sovereign-

ty. The battle between the two kings, an unruly battle that was unseating one of the kings

from their land, gave birth to Hamlet. Strange eruptions are diseases; Hamlet, too, can be

considered diseased (if not the disease itself). Unruliness and disease are two sides of the

same coin.

And so, when we consider Heaney's turn to the diseased and rotten land, we

must also remember his turn to Hamlet's 'coming to consciousness', even if it is attended

by 'dithering, blathering'; the latter would now appear as direct responses to the 'murders

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[76] Q.v. Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, V.i.138-9.
[77] de Grazia, *'Hamlet' Without Hamlet*, pp. 81-2.

and pieties' (l. 13) which closely resemble Heaney's complaint about 'territorial piety'. To dither, to blather, to follow the worm into the mud: all of these may well lead to disease (or be symptoms of disease), but they are also an unruly modernity emerging from the land in a non-sacred 'strange' modernity. The unruliness of disease is cemented finally by another key observation by de Grazia. Noting Horatio's discussion about King Hamlet's victory against King Fortinbras made the latter 'forfeit with his life all these his lands / Which he stood seized of' (I.I.87-8) to King Hamlet, Grazia reminds us that if to be 'seized' is to have legal possession of land, then to be 'diseased' is 'to be illegitimately dispossessed of lands'.[78] Thereafter we have to think of disease as both a medical and legal ailment, and in *Hamlet* both connect to the land; moreover, the legal iteration accords with our modern idea of unruliness. To be diseased, or at least to be in the bosom of the land or divesting others of possession of that land, now becomes desirable; to be holy or to aspire to divinity is dismissed as a pre-modern, anti-progressive idea. This is contrary to Brown's idea that Heaney's persona privileges Hercules over Antaeus: 'To be a man is to act, and if your form of action is to create let it be the art of direct political statement.'[79] Instead it is clear that Antaeus, 'cradled in the dark that wombed me' and the 'mould-hugger', is much closer to the ethic of poetry and its medium of creating political messages.

There are, of course, many other underground, diseased elements in Heaney's poetry and, having established the twisting of the negative disease to a positive, let us now look at its other diseased underground elements. In the early 'Veteran's Dream', the poem enacts a shift between body and land for the First World War veteran whose wound becomes contaminated: 'Where he lies / On cankered ground, / A scatter of

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[78] de Grazia, *'Hamlet' Without Hamlet*, p. 157. De Grazia also confirms that 'Until the eighteenth century, diseased shared both spelling and pronunciation with diseized'.

[79] Brown, 'Seamus Heaney and *North*', 295.

maggots, busy / In the trench of his wound.'[80] Here the displaced trench in which the veteran, Mr Dickson, would have fought finds its place on the body. In this instance the land-memory coordinate shifts on to the body, such that the memory of the land is what fills Mr Dickson's dream. A similar disease is evident in 'Augury', in which 'The fish faced into the current, / Its mouth agape, / Its whole head opened like a valve. / You said "It's diseased" // A pale crusted sore / turned like a coin / And wound to the bottom, / Unsettling silt off a weed.'[81] Here it is the fish that has been caught in the depths of the river, whose diseased body is itself given depth and interiority through the sore that pierces the skin. The shift from body to land (here, water) is important, I argue, in asserting the positive value of sores and disease and, ultimately, of plumbing the depths of water or burrowing into the ground. In the prevalence of bodies in Heaney's poetry I want to connect this chapter with the previous one in which I examined bodies exclusively; in Heaney's poetry, it is evident that modern Ireland's emergence is contingent upon the associative qualities of bodies and/in land. Thus, in 'Augury', the fish's corporal disease allows the speaker and his friend to look to the future, and no longer resort to the past that was previously ossified in the ground. Linking again with the becoming consciousness, the ruptured surface enacts that process of modernity.

To understand how the veteran's wound is similarly positive, I want to turn to other wounds in Heaney's poems. One of the most famous wounds is in 'The Grauballe Man', one of Heaney's many bog-bodies. The 'cured wound' of 'The Grauballe Man' 'opens inwards to a dark / elderberry place' (ll. 22-4). I understand this wound as working in two ways: first, it opens up to ambiguity and imagination as the Grauballe Man cannot be determined exactly: 'Who will say "corpse" / to his vivid cast? / Who will say

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[80] 'Veteran's Dream' in Seamus Heaney, *Wintering Out* (London: Faber and Faber, 1993 [1972]), ll. 13-16.
[81] 'Augury' in Heaney, *Wintering Out*, ll. 1-8. There is an argument to be developed elsewhere that this fish is analogous with Ophelia who seems to drown to escape the world of mediaeval land-wrangling. In line with my idea that modernity emerges in the roots of the land, Ophelia would have to be the most heroic and most modern of characters. Similarly, it is she, in light of Heaney's poem, who permits augury, as opposed to Hamlet's 'We defy augury' (V.II.197).

"body" / to his opaque repose?' (ll. 25-8) This indeterminacy is also a feature of Hamlet in the land 'dithering and blathering', as well as the indeterminacy that heralded modernity in Yeats' poetry, above. Second, the wound enacts a fractal spatiality, in which the bog-body – itself a wound in the opened, ruptured bogland – becomes Irish land. The interchange I mentioned above between bodies and land here reaches its apotheosis: the wounded body is the wounded Irish land. That wound is both injured and sexualised: disease leads to desire. Modernity happens perversely – it is unruly – and is completely secularised in its muddy disease.

The dual possibilities of that wound wend their way into 'Kinship' and 'Act of Union' (discussed below). In 'Kinship', contra Yeats, the poet-speaker digs a spade into the land and discovers that 'This centre holds / and spreads' (IV, ll. 1-2). Raphaël Ingelbien is astounded by Heaney's assertion here, and writes that

> Few contemporary poets have dared to contradict the opening of 'The Second Coming' […] so boldly. Heaney fuses a vision of origins with the vowel of primeval Irishness and offers the rough beast of his Celtic primitivism as the center that holds *North* together. Heaney's synthesis reverts to a full-blown organicist nationalism and also consecrates the naturalization of language that is a hallmark of his early poetry.[82]

The 'centre' is the place where a spade has been pushed into the bogland by the speaker. Instead of a dissolving modern world, this is a stabilising modern world: it is the generative locus of poetry at which the poet grasps sovereignty, and from which the nation becomes. The sexualised crack in the earth is suitably fruitful. 'This', the speaker continues,

> is the vowel of earth
> dreaming its root
> in flowers and snow,
>
> mutation of weathers
> and seasons,

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[82] Raphaël Ingelbien, 'Mapping the Misreadings: Ted Hughes, Seamus Heaney, and Nationhood', in *Contemporary Literature,* 40.4 (1999), 627-58 (649).

> a windfall composing
> the floor it rots into.
>
> I grew out of all this
> like a weeping willow
> inclined to
> the appetites of gravity. (IV, ll. 14-24)

As in the first of my conclusions about the Grauballe Man's wound, that which is rotten and rooted in the earth – and linked to dreams, such as the veteran's – is indeterminate, becoming: imagination. From this 'I grew', the speaker tells us. In 'Kinship' we see 'vow-el' become one of those words from the 'word-hoard' that describes the ruptured and embedded earth, the 'vowel, springing from the earth of Heaney's native landscape, [that] is crucial to his vision of Ireland'.[83] With this in mind, we read 'The Grauballe Man' as a source of imagination which has its roots firmly in the earth. But the imagination is de-pendent not upon anything emanating from the earth, but something that 'lies / perfected in my memory', 'tanned and toughened' ('The Grauballe Man', ll. 37-8, 21). This, like the Viking Dublin pieces, is an ossified past on which the speaker is calling. Whereas Yeats sought the tradition that was impressed upon the land, Heaney's poetry seeks roots that are preserved and conserved in the earth on which to build his poetic imagination, and through which to make history happen; Heaney's speaker unearths that which Prospero buried: 'I'll break my staff, / Bury it certain fathoms in the earth, / And deeper than did ever plummet sound / I'll drown my book' (*The Tempest* (1610-110, V.I.54-7) [204] . That is, historical becoming is enacted when the earth is ruptured. In turn-ing burial in the land – normally left only to those who have died – into a space for dwelling (as in Antaeus), Heaney's poetry repeats the motion already identified in Yeats: the location under the land's surface is turned into a site by the presence of bodies and unruly disease makes it a dwelling space. What was a site of sacred burial is now a mod-ern, but secular, land.

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[83] Ingelbien, 'Mapping the Misreadings', 636.

Heaney's collected poems in the late 1990s was subtitled *Opened Ground*. This phrase, which appears severally in Heaney's poetry, is sourced in the underground word-hoard. It is also the phrase which connects most readily the poetic and the political. Its first appearance is in *North*'s 'Act of Union', the poem that most readily connects the sexualised body to the sexualised land: 'No treaty / I foresee will salve completely your tracked / And stretchmarked body, the big pain / That leaves you raw, like opened ground, again.' (II, ll. 11-14). Heaney's adversion to the political union between Great Britain and Ireland that formed the United Kingdom in 1801 connects both the land metaphor – 'opened ground' – and the body to which it refers to the political metanarrative. If we read this in relation to 'At a Potato Digging', in which the health of the Irish nation is reflected in the blight that afflicted the food embedded in the land, then the 'opened ground' metaphor can be read as not only a metaphor, but also as a direct signifier of the land's rupture and the rupture of the island itself. Indeed, just as Heaney did, Brown writes that the land is Erin herself in *North*, or 'Mother Ireland, Kathleen Ní Houlihann, the terrain itself; but she is also a subject people and by association the Irish Catholic consciousness'.[84] 'Act of Union' is made up of two sonnets, in which the male first-person narrator talks to his lover about the child they have conceived who is growing in the lover's womb. The speaker is cast as the coloniser, an idea cemented at the beginning of the second sonnet: 'And I am still imperially / Male, leaving you with the pain' (II, ll. 1-2). That the poem ends with a proclamation that no political treaty could repair the land, and that the body of the lover, as the land of Ireland, will be irreparably open is suggestive. It implies that Ireland *is* 'opened ground' as long as the nation is 'half-independent'. Along with the intimations of messianism – the birth pangs of 'the big pain / That leaves you raw' (II, ll. 13-14) – this poeticised colonisation structures an Irish revolution through the coming messiah out of the body that is Irish land – a 'strange

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[84] Brown, 'Seamus Heaney and *North*', 293.

eruption'. But now this body is not the Judeo-Christian messiah, but instead a secular, diseased body whose unruliness threatens to break the Act of Union.

In Heaney's poetry I have shown how modern Ireland gives birth to an unruly/diseased body. This unruliness is in itself secular as it threatens the stable control of religious discourse, also as that discourse manifests in colonial and imperial discourses of power. I have established that Heaney's preferred hero was Antaeus, and not Hercules, particularly because of the former's birth in the land. But we also see what happens when, like Antaeus, or indeed like Hamlet having to resort to the duel, deracination takes place in Heaney's poetry. Hamlet's removal to the duel-hall is accompanied by his famous resignation that 'the readiness is all' and 'Let be' (V.II.200; 201-2); removed from the scuffle in the grave in Act Five Scene One, Hamlet knows he is less likely to win in a courtly duel where unnatural, socialised laws apply. Heaney's poetry shows a similar reluctance to being taken out of the land. In a more recent poem Heaney returns to one of the bog-bodies about which he writes in *Wintering Out* (1972). In 'The Tollund Man in Springtime', the speaker takes home from Jutland some Tollund rushes, hoping to keep them alive so as to plant them back in Ireland.

> Through every check and scan I carried with me
> A bunch of Tollund rushes – roots and all –
> Bagged in their own bogged-damp. In an old stairwell
> Broom cupboard where I had hoped they'd stay
> Damp until transplanted, they went musty.
> Every green-skinned stork turned friable,
> The drowned-mouse fibres withered and the whole
> Limp, soggy cluster lost its frank bouquet
> Of weed leaf and turf mould.[85]

Out of their environment and context, deracinated from the land, the plants die; this is tragedy. This is the danger awaiting in Heaney's conception of sovereign Ireland if it fails to recognise the power of that which is rooted and underground. This advocacy of the underground is also the reason why Heaney's poetry promotes a secular return to Station

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[85] 'The Tollund Man in Springtime' in Seamus Heaney, *District and Circle* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006), ll. 71-9.

Island (in *Station Island* (1984)), in which the poet-speaker encounters figures of the past, held in the no-space of St Patrick's entrance to purgatory (a space of no-time, as well). As he leaves Station Island, the speaker is urged by Joyce – 'wintered hard and sharp as a blackthorn', i.e. immortally preserved – to '"write / for the joy of it. Cultivate a work-lust"' (XII, ll. 22-4). As if completing the task of writing, in *Human Chain* (2010) 'Herbal' ends with this declaration that the history of the speaker's relationship with the land resulted in 'Me in place and the place in me'.[86] This is what Heaney's poetry constructed during his career. It is the 'dithering' and 'blathering' of Hamlet in 'Viking Dublin', the becoming that happens when the land is pierced, and the ossified bodies that provide the platform for future modernising that Heaney discovered – uncovered, perhaps – and wrote into his poetry. In doing so, Heaney's poetry both harnesses *Hamlet*'s modernities, but also departs by learning a lesson from those texts. Land is both the moment of historical becoming and the link between early modern England and modern Irish literature.

In *Hamlet* this concentration on what is in the land serves a different topology of sovereignty: instead of being from above – from God in heaven – this is sovereignty from below. In instituting this type of sovereignty, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* advocates a great common sovereignty, or authority wielded not by divinely appointed monarchs, but instead something that ascends from those working on the land. The Clown becomes the prime representative for this, as his knowledge of the bodies in the earth and the history of Danish sovereignty are intimately linked together. But, this is not a pure elevation of the lower social classes, for what the Clown talks about is purely the monarchy and the upper echelons of Elsinore's society. In this way, the Clown is seen elevated to the level of intimate relations with the locus of power. Helgerson writes about Shakespeare that his histories worked in a similar way, rejecting 'the ruled', but by 'Identifying [Shakespeare] himself, his plays, his company, and his audience with the problematics of early

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[86] 'Herbal' in Seamus Heaney, *Human Chain* (London: Faber and Faber, 2010), l. 142.

modern kingship, he left out of consideration the no less pressing problematics of sub-jecthood'. This strategy 'was designed to elevate Shakespeare and his art out of the company of the base mechanicals with whom playwriting had inevitably associated him'.[87] Read in this way, the ruptured land's sovereignty is emblematic of the author's growing 'authority' in early modern culture, a representation of the secularisation of modern power. It is about a changing dynamic between the land, the ruler and ruled – with the latter also being populated by those who script the ruler and the land. Bursting forth from the land, both Shakespeare and Hamlet challenge that authority whilst never fully escaping its relationship with the land. In Heaney's poetry, the writer who wanted to escape the binary of 'territorial piety and imperial power' does so by harnessing the pow-er of the diseased underground in *Hamlet*. Heaney's poetry also follows Shakespeare's play in making the poet one of place and space, related to the land but, crucially, never leaving its 'darkness'. Heaney becomes the poet of 'dinnseanchas', the 'writer of poems and tales which relate the original meanings of place names and constitute a form of mythological etymology'.[88] Heaney's lying-down in the word-hoard allows him to recon-stitute these places through the 'mythological etymology' as he becomes the poet of place which elevates him to author of Ireland. But his is an unruly, muddy and diseased (de-seized) modernity. That Heaney does so out of the land, rather than from on top of its surface, indicates not only his deep understanding of Ireland's past but also how his po-etry can structure the future, and how Hamlet could have avoided tragedy.

Conclusion

Modernity, I have shown, is secularising. Irish land as scripted by Yeats is modernised in his poetry through a secular temporality, in which renovation occurs in every poem or every reading of a poem. Ireland is made new in the poetry, with the land nomadic and

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[87] Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood*, p. 239; p. 240.
[88] 'The Sense of Place' in Heaney, *Preoccupations*, p. 131.

periodically finding temporary home in the poetry. This nomadism, characterised by Yeats' description of dancing, is not mere aesthetics, but also takes part in a sovereign discourse, just as with early modern dancing in Davies' *Orchestra*. Alongside the dancing in *As You Like It*, we saw that dancing designates a relationship of power between dancers (people, land), and that power is renewed in a protean fashion. By removing power from messianic time – waiting for the Messiah's return to the land – and instituting a renovated time, a secular temporality emerges. Here modernity – the land's nomadism in Yeats' poetry – and secularisation – non-messianic, renovated time – are inextricable. As with the dwelling space of 'authority' – the space shared by author and sovereign – so too Yeats' poems create a dwelling space for Ireland in his poetry.

In Heaney's poetry we have seen a similar secularised modernity of the land. In Heaney's poetry, being in the land is privileged, and its concomitant association with disease and unruliness. The latter allows the figures in the poetry to act as rebels against the status quo; but the unruliness and disease also turns the land, which needs holy farmers to tend it, into a secular space. Coupled with the idea that 'disease' is not only a biological phenomenon, but also intimately tied to possession of land – to territory, therefore – we see that Heaney's poetry rejects this 'territorial piety' as well as 'imperial power'. What remains is persistent unruliness from which poetry emerges: the word-hoard is symptomatic of unruly, secular modernity. Where *Hamlet* ended in tragedy in Hamlet's resignation to 'Let be', Heaney wants 'Me in place, and place in me'. Like Yeats' persistently nomadic Ireland, Heaney's Ireland is perpetually unruly. Both poets become, in their own ways, national poets, and do so by moving away from the idea of land as territory.

In writing about both poets, Michael Cavanagh states:

> This idea of the poet as important unconscious receiver and
> voice of the culture proves to be enormously useful to Heaney,

> plagued as he has been ever since 1969 by pressure to become a more politically explicit and polemical writer. If Heaney were not the conscientious public-minded writer he has become, such pressure would not bother him. As it is, much of his critical writing since the 'Troubles' has concerned itself, directly or indirectly, with the defense of disinterested lyrics poetry, a defense that nevertheless seeks to justify poetry's public 'place.' Yeats' example and the prestige that goes with it have offered him support and this support has had much to do with his advocacy of Yeats.[89]

In Cavanagh's reading, Heaney inherits the public voice of poetry from Yeats, though he recognises that the tribulations he must face are different, though no more nor less challenging, than those that Yeats confronted. Yeats and Heaney, after their poetry, become those authors of Ireland and help to reclaim its modernity. When, in 'Kinship', Heaney's speaker sees the 'centre / Hold[] and spread', I suggested that Heaney was *contra* Yeats. But another way of reading this is to suggest that now Heaney has dug the spade into the land, he can develop Yeats' centre that could not hold, and is giving it stability through its roots. To dig, as I wrote above, is to make history happen, to become. Heaney thus actualises Yeats in the second half of the twentieth century in Ireland.

Heaney wrote the following about Yeats:

> Although it has long been fashionable to smile indulgently at the Celtic Twilight, it has to be remembered that the movement was the beginning of a discovery of confidence in our own ground, in our place, in our speech, English and Irish. And it seems to me undeniable that Yeats' sense of the otherness of his Sligo places led him to seek for a language and an imagery other than the ones which were available to him in the aesthetic modes of literary London.[90]

Heaney here praises Yeats for finding solace *in the land* – associating him with the dinnseanchas that I argued Heaney practised – but also for finding in it an othernesss, what I characterised as a persistent nomadism. It all indicates that Yeats' poetry authors the land which Heaney takes up in his poetry of Ireland. Yeats is the sovereign author

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[89] Michael Cavanagh, 'Tower and Boat: Yeats and Seamus Heaney', in *New Hibernia Review,* 4.3 (2000), 17-38 (24).
[90] 'The Sense of Place' in Heaney, *Preoccupations*, p. 135.

who has endowed the land as Irish in poetry, allowing Heaney to take up the baton. In both instances I have shown their underpinning in early modern literature, whether it be Spenser or Shakespeare. Just as these were, to varying degrees, national poets of England, so too have their Irish successors become national poets of Ireland. Yeats' and Heaney's 'authority' derives from the land, but allows them to create in cultural and artistic terms an Irish land for the Irish.

Conclusion

In the past five chapters I have established that a foundation of modern Irish literature is found in early modern English literature.[1] Through the motif of 'mothers and daughters' I established the importance of a maternal figure both in public and private politics: Queen Elizabeth, and her mothering of the Protestant English nation, modelled the necessary space for mothers in modernity, which Stephens' novella and Boland's poetry restaged. Maternity becomes the driver of modernity in the present, rather than a purely futuristic endeavour.

Another problem with futurity is the notion of inheritance, and in my Brothers and Fathers chapter I established that inheritance is adapted in Irish modernity: instead of father-son inheritance, an ethic of fraternity is passed on between the generations. This undoes the violence of patrilineal inheritance whilst also securing a political space through time. As with Shakespeare, so with Pearse, Joyce and McGahern. The result is the family model of national politics: Ireland's modernity is established.

Whilst the two chapters that made up the family section argued that the private institution of the family remained important in the national and public political realm, in my Ghosts and Spectres chapter I proved the importance of absence and invisibility to modern sovereignty, ranging from *Hamlet* to Banville's *Ghosts*. Through a steady evolution from Synge to Banville, we saw how the adoption of the spectral space permitted the creation of a sovereign from the margins: literature becomes the paradigmatic modernising force.

When thinking about the body, we moved from the invisible to the visible. This also made the body, as Sartre had it, a sign of alienation. And yet, through a collocation

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[1] There are of course limitations to my project. For one I have not examined texts from writers from Ulster (Heaney, who mopved to Dublin and became a citizen of the Republic, is the exception). I have, also, looked at only twelve separate Irish writers, which undermineds my claim that this is a survey thesis with breadth at its core; however, I maintain that it stands as a broad collection of writers both in theses, and in comparative pieces between two disctinct periods.

of Queen Elizabeth's biopolitics with Edna O'Brien's, we saw how the social negativity surrounding women's virginity and unwanted child-bearing could be turned positively – by accepting the necessary alienation. Static monumentalisation becomes potential futurity. Beckett's bodies in the *Trilogy* were also propped up by their theatricality and, through an intimate awareness of the body's visibility, the Unnamable was able to open up the ultimate space of possibility by exploding time.

The family models the nation: ghosts model the writer that scripts the nation; the bodies carry out the script and are the individual citizen in the nation; all of which leads us to the central topic of all of the literature: Irish land. Each of the sovereign discussions in the earlier chapters was premised on the idea that the land of Ireland could be returned to Irish governance. In my final chapter I show how two Irish poets make a home of the land in their writing. As with land in Shakespeare's dramas and Spenser's poetry, land is the possible site of novelty. Heaney's anchoring in Irish land takes place through Hamlet's own digging – and modernity is the corollary.

Taken together, my thesis is that modern Irish literature contributes to the form of the Irish nation in the same way that early modern English literature takes part in national formation. In both polities, literature is the foundational force behind sovereignty and nation-statism. All of which begs the following question: why does modern Ireland not look like modern England?

Kiberd answers that in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Irish writers had taken on the task of asking what and how 'Ireland' was; Kiberd adds that the English have yet to address the same issue.[2] Since the Irish did not engage with Enlightenment[3] discourse on a level nearly as intimate as the English,[4] then perhaps we could see in this

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[2] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, p. 24.
[3] The term Enlightenment is here used to refer to the period of the religious Civil Wars in seventeenth-century England, as well as the European Enlightenment predominantly of the eighteenth century.
[4] It is important to note that critics such as Michael Brown are establishing how an Irish Enlightenment might have looked.

absent discussion the reason why Irish writers were able – or perhaps forced – to think more carefully about what their nation might look like. Conversely, perhaps the English failed to address such elementary questions because they took part in a globalising philosophical discussion, at the cost of their own relationship with one another in the same nation-state. That Macmorris, Shakespeare's only speaking Irishman, is able to pose the national question so obviously, forthrightly and directly, suggests that this bluntness and directness were not available to those from other nations. In short, if early modern England leads on to Enlightenment Britain – imperialist, expansionist, scientist – then the Enlightenment would appear to be something other than the untrammelled vessel of historical progress.

Crucially, we have to take note of England's expansion into another, altogether different nation-state: the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Between the two periods under examination, the space currently occupied by modern Ireland also constituted part of the 'United Kingdom'. First, the logic of my argument perhaps suggests that Ireland will now, like the United Kingdom, seek global expansion beyond its shores (and perhaps the narrative of the Celtic Tiger with its reliance on foreign capital flowing into the Irish economy matches this logic). Second, nation-statism has become a tired and irrelevant term, with the nation-state of 'England' disappearing into the folds of the United Kingdom and its various iterations of devolution. The Commons vote in October 2015 on 'English votes for English laws' symptomizes a growing and belated concern with England's place in the Union. This suggests that the concern with modern Ireland as a nation-state is anachronistic and needs adjusting. Finally, a question arises as to whether the tension between 'England' and 'Ireland' is as forceful as I have suggested; perhaps tension arises after the early modern period, and during the seventeenth-century religious wars, including the Glorious Revolution, the impact of which is still keenly felt in Northern Ireland every 12 July when marches

commemorate the 1690 Battle of the Boyne. That is, perhaps England and Ireland will always be more complementary than oppositional, with the true tension only arising when Britain emerges out of England.

Contributing to this imperial expansion is another substantive omission from this thesis: capitalism. Several moments above have touched on elements of capitalism, but without a full exploration of its importance to modernity. That is not to say that capitalism is dismissed as a modernising force – maybe the predominant modernising force – but the arguments here offer a parallel, and not antagonistic, articulation of modernity. There is no doubt that England grew into Britain because of its desire for capital ownership and control, and that Ireland was stymied in its modernity because of not being able to control its capital as independently as it would need. The nineteenth-century famine is a case in point. Another thesis, either completely new or an extension of this one, could usefully look at the role capitalism plays in the modernisation of these two 'nation-states' in the periods under discussion.

Returning to the question of Enlightenment we must consider Ireland. In Ireland, where either no, or a different, Enlightenment conversation took place, the question that attends the revolutionary impulse of the United Irishmen, the Young Irelanders, the Fenians and the Irish Parliamentarians is persistently: *what ish my nation?* The French Revolution brought up important questions regarding an individual's place in society, and the shape and governance of society – but the national formation soon returned to autocracy under the Directory and Napoleon's imperialism.

In this argument, Ireland would not be belated in its questions of national formation, but rather *avant-garde*: Ireland has, and continues to make, greater progress than

the British in its overt addressing of the national question.[5] In this vein, my thesis establishes that the question surrounding national formation continues where early modern English writing left off; meanwhile, England ignored some of the most powerful political and sovereign topics that lie beneath the best of its early modern literature. This adjusts my notion of reclaiming West Britonism as a positive perspective: to be a West Briton is to see the early modern English heritage in its logical conclusion, answering the most important demands of a modernising nation. The form of the family and its relations between parents and children is therefore the form of the nation; the form of the invisible sovereign – the writer – is also about the shape of the nation; a citizen's body, equally personal and public, also emerges into a national political epistemology; all of which are premised on the central tenet that the land on the island to the west of England ought to be Irish. This last topic, too, also asks, *what ish my nation?*

It is now apparent that to say that modern Irish literature follows on from early modern English literature is not a neo-colonialist argument that subordinates Ireland's uniqueness beneath English genius. Instead, it is to say that the cultural heritage and potential that English-speaking nations share in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England have been most fully realised in modern Ireland.

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[5] After the United Kingdom's 2015 General Election, the Conservative majority government secured a mandate to establish a 'British Bill of Rights' which would supplant the European Bill of Human Rights. In this, the Westminster government is reacting to the Scottish independence referendum of 2014: Scotland's own self-questioning seems to have pushed the English into asking themselves the same question – nearly two centuries after the United Irishmen.

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