"'What is past, or passing, or to come':
Transnational Modernism, Self-Transcendence, and the Rise of Ultranationalism (1884-1945)"

Kathryn Webb-DeStefano
Charlottesville, Virginia

M.A., English Literature, The University of Tulsa, 2015
B.A., English Literature, The University of Tulsa, 2012

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Department of English
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Abstract

"'What is past, or passing, or to come': Transnational Modernism, Self-Transcendence, and the Rise of Ultranationalism (1884-1945)" concerns the ways in which Lafcadio Hearn, W. B. Yeats and James Joyce engaged with Irish folklore, global mythologies, and the rise of ultranationalism during the early twentieth century. This study offers an exploration of modernist literature that emerged out of Ireland, but which was shaped by a wide array of global influences. In the hands of my three authors, these influences informed imaginative literary and philosophical spaces which transcended the global, creating portals of transnational expression. The rupture of modernity and the ways in which this rupture enacted new ways of thinking about the self and the nation are fundamental to this study. As such, I posit transnationality as a form of self-transcendence. The self-transcendent mindset seeks to transcend boundaries of self and other. Thus, transnational modernism enacts a transcendence rather than an erasure of these boundaries.

Acknowledgements

Robert Thurman's *The Jewel Tree of Tibet: The Enlightenment Engine of Tibetan Buddhism* (2005) offers the following exercise, adapted from the *Mentor Devotion* of the Fourth Panchen Lama:

> Turning to the Tibetan wish-granting jewel tree…we let ourselves dissolve, let our whole world picture dissolve…We arise on top of the world, at the crystal Lake Manasarovar, sitting on a grassy bluff, with all beings around us looking at us. We behold the jewel tree…filling the sky and the heavens…We see the wish-fulfilling jewels of all our mentors from all the cultures…We fill up with light ourselves and radiate the light and energy and hope and pleasure. Their gratitude comes back to us; our gratitude goes back to them and to the refuge tree. (217-218)

In the middle of writing this dissertation I adapted Thurman's meditation as a secular gratitude activity for students in my ENWR 1510 class "Imagining Academia." My adaptation, "Tree of Gratitude," consists of imagining teachers, mentors, family members, friends, acquaintances, even strangers from whom you have learned something, writing their names in a bubble, and offering them gratitude. As the activity draws to a close, we come to the realization that each name on our tree has a tree of their own, encompassing a network of teachers, mentors, family members, friends, acquaintances, etc. We visualize ourselves as supported by those in our tree, and those in their tree and so on. "We fill up with light ourselves and radiate the light," we express our gratitude to each being and, in turn, "their gratitude comes back to us; our gratitude goes back to them and to the refuge tree."

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The terminological framework of this study: “transnational modernism” has opened new venues of exploring the ways in which literary modernism enacts a boundary-transcendence. It is my hope that this work can propel more scholarship in this field from across cultures and languages.

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Introduction: Self-transcendence and Transnational Modernism

Literary modernism in the twentieth century arrived with a "bang" not a "whimper."[1] Inciting an explosion of new ways of thinking about literature, self, and nation, the modernist movement was a rupture across artistic mediums. As Susan Stanford Friedman observes: "Modernity is itself rupture: a paradigm shift, a geohistorical transformation on a large scale" (4). This project aims to establish transnational modernism as an essential framework for analysis of literature produced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Whereas previous studies of modernism centered around bounded conceptual frameworks and distinct binaries, transnational modernism brings the field into an expansive new phase. This analysis positions modernism as a project shaped by global movement and transcultural exchange. Questioning the "foundational concepts of modernism" by interrogating the "spatial markers" as well as "contemporary critical markers" (Hayot and Walkowitz 1) which have long served as the framework of modernist study, this project approaches all three of its subjects as active figures in a network of global exchange.

Rather than positioning my subjects, Lafcadio Hearn, William Butler Yeats, and James Joyce, as "Irish modernists," I offer an exploration of modernist literature that emerged out of Ireland, but which was shaped by a wide array of global influences. In the hands of my three authors, these influences informed imaginative literary and philosophical spaces which transcended the global, creating portals of transnational expression. Transnational modernism as a framework for the study of Irish authors is a particularly generative approach given Ireland's complex political history. That each of the authors in this study left Ireland (either permanently,

[1] The full quotation from T. S. Eliot's "The Hollow Men" (1925): "The is the way the world ends / Not with a bang but a whimper" (Eliot lines 98-99).

in the cases of Hearn and Joyce, or regularly, in Yeats's case), speaks to the necessity for a transnational perspective on their oeuvres. Indeed, Irish nationalism itself as it manifested through the Celtic Revival was informed by an ever-expanding global consciousness. The rupture of modernity and the ways in which this rupture enacted new ways of thinking about the self and the nation are fundamental to this study. As such, I posit transnationality as a form of self-transcendence. The self-transcendent mindset, like the "transnational consciousness" (Levenson 155) seeks to transcend boundaries of self and other. Thus, transnational modernism enacts a transcendence rather than an erasure of these boundaries.

Nationalism and the interwar period

For all three authors in this study, the "rupture" of modernity also entailed a rupture with Ireland. The modernist movement thrived in expatriate circles in Paris and beyond, attracting more than Irish authors seeking self-imposed exile. Given the international milieu in which modernism, as we know it today, took shape, it seems peculiar that the movement would co-exist so seamlessly with the rise of interwar fascism. As Roger Griffin observes, in theory "fascist modernism" is an "antithetical," even "oxymoronic" concept (*Modernism and Fascism* 1) given fascism's deep ties to traditionalism. However, the same impulse to "Make it New" applies to how the modernist mentality conceived of nation-states as well. To quote Griffin, a "key element" in the "genesis, psychology, ideology, policies, and praxis of fascism" was its "'sense of a beginning,' the mood of standing on the threshold of a new world" (1). Indeed, fascist ideology shares much in common with many hallmarks of modernism to the extent that Robert Scholes suggests fascism itself is "a form of Modernism" (*Paradoxy* 44). Much like literary modernism was shaped by fragmentation and wholeness, the fascist state must undergo a

fragmentation (a cutting off from the global) as a means of restructuring the nation toward a new wholeness.

This new wholeness does not exclude the individual but subsumes it. As the individual merges with the state their identity lapses into the whole. The absorption of the one into the whole places the individual into a nationalistic stream of consciousness wherein they become part and parcel of the authoritarian whole: the nation-state made anew. This new and highly aestheticized fascist state is also, in many ways, transnationally informed. The transnational nature of interwar fascism, and its dependence on the same global networks which shaped the aesthetics of literary modernism, has led Arnd Bauerkämper and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe to suggest that "fascism was both a national and transnational phenomenon, as it transcended national borders but was rooted in national communities" (2). The ways in which fascism and modernism transcended borders without erasing them, uniting the individual and the state, could also be a method of self-transcendence. Recent research in the field of psychedelic studies has noted that self-transcendent states often enact "prosocial" values and thus can act as a protective factor against authoritarian ideology (Kähönen). Conversely, this loss of self can also be felt as a merging of self into the group (or nation-state) and therefore has the potential to fuel an authoritarian ideology.[2] The rupture of modernism and the search for self-transcendence it instilled can be expressed through an individuating impulse or a merging into the whole.

Self-transcendence

Moments of historical significance (wars and revolutions, landmark moments of technological innovation, the closing of centuries) often induce a reexamination of selfhood.

[2] See Kähönen (2023) or Langlitz (2023) for further reading.

From the psychological innovations of William James, Sigmund Freud, or Carl Jung to the occult revival and the synthesis of LSD, the modernist period was also shaped by technologies of self-transcendence. I use the term "technologies" here deliberately because while the modernist period was certainly shaped by emerging technologies in engineering and applied sciences, it was also shaped by non-mechanical innovation such as the theoretical implications of splitting the atom, new theories of consciousness, and new social systems. What technology could *be* changed dramatically in the modernist era and into the digital age. How we conceive of the self and the borders of consciousness also underwent significant change. Technologies of self-transcendence, therefore, became of paramount importance to the modernist mindset.

Though I develop the term "self-transcendent" in the third chapter, the question of self-transcendence nevertheless applies to each of the authors. Beginning with Lafcadio Hearn's transnational moment of self-transcendence seeing himself reflected in the eyes of a Japanese child and continuing with Yeats's automatic writing in *A Vision*, each author enacts a degree of self-transcendence which propels them out of their respective textual, national, and perspectival boundaries. I chose to use the term "self-transcendence" explicitly in the Joyce chapter because, while it is apparent that both Hearn and Yeats approach self-transcendent states, textual self-transcendence only becomes fully manifest in Joyce's stream-of-consciousness.

Framing terminologies

As framing terminologies and methodologies, I am indebted to Eric Hayot and Rebecca Walkowitz's *New Terms for Global Modernism*, Joseph Lennon's *Irish Orientalism*, Roger Griffin's definition of fascism as a form of "palingenetic ultranationalism," David Yaden's

exploration of self-transcendent experiences,[3] Robert Thurman's notion of the "Enlightenment Engine" of Tibetan Buddhism, and Michael Levenson and Susan Stanford Friedman's work on modernism.[4]

"Transnational," as it is used throughout the dissertation, offers a counterpoint to the nationalism (and ultimately ultranationalism) of the interwar period, moving beyond nationalism while resisting the homogeneity of "globalization." "Hybrid" may be used insofar as it relates to the products of transnational boundary-crossing. As a whole, this project considers the development of modernist mythologies as emerging from the contradictory and ever-evolving Irish national identity as it wavered between global exchange and isolation during the early twentieth century.

Authors and texts

The first chapter posits Lafcadio Hearn as a proto-modernist author, considering Hearn within the tradition of Irish modernism, while simultaneously rejecting (or at the very least interrogating) the spatial and intellectual boundaries of such a contextualization. This analysis considers the ways in which Hearn's biography both clarifies and complicates the picture of the nineteenth-century exoticist: an intellectual wanderer and self-fashioned "hero" who, to quote Edward Said, seeks to "[rescue] the Orient from the obscurity, alienation, and strangeness which he himself had properly distinguished" (Said 121). I offer an examination of Hearn as, to quote

[3] Yaden, from whom I take my definition of self-transcendence, defines STEs in the following terms: An experience in which "the subjective sense of one's self as an isolated entity can temporarily fade into an experience of unity with other people or one's surroundings, involving the dissolution of boundaries between the sense of self and 'other.'" (Yaden et. al 2017). For more on STEs see Juuso Kähönen's definition on page 138 of this dissertation.

[4] To maintain consistency throughout the project, "modernism" and "modernist" is spelled with a lower-case "m," though in quoted materials it may at times appear with a capital "M."

Stephen Jankiewicz, a "cross cultural mediator" (Jankiewicz 347) and his exoticism more akin to Flaubert's innocuous *idée reçue*, "Orientaliste: Homme qui a beaucoup voyagé"[5] (Flaubert 544).

To accomplish this, I frame Hearn's particular way of experiencing the world through the terminology of "Elfish," a word he uses early in the narration of *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*. Hearn himself applies this term to Japan and its citizens. My application of the term frames Herm himself as part of the "Elfish" world through which he moves. Though the chapter is primarily concerned with Hearn's transnational boundary crossing as it relates to *Glimpses*, it also examines Hearn's fictional works and the ways in which reality and fantasy frequently weave together.

While the first chapter ends on a somber note, reflecting briefly on the ways in which Hearn's writing was co-opted for propagandistic and nationalistic ends, the second chapter takes up the question of how transnationalism could paradoxically be used for nationalistic ends. Using the later works of William Butler Yeats, I take Yeats as a crystalizing figure for an examination of the transnational threads of aesthetics, politics, and fascism tightly woven into the artistic consciousness of the modernist movement. In so doing, I offer a selection of Yeats's interwar texts as a case study for how modernist literature coexisted with (and potentially contributed to) the slow overgrowth of far-right nationalism leading to World War II. If interwar Europe was a space of ideological tension, I argue, Yeats internalized this conflict within himself and his art.

The second chapter considers how Yeats's transnationalism manifests in his esoteric interests and how these interests create a foundation for a spiritual elitism. This analysis

[5] Lit., "man who has traveled a lot" (translation my own).

considers Yeats's interest in fascism as an expression of a fascistic sensibility, a highly aestheticized ideology which seeks a form of "mystic membership" (Griffin 130) within a "rarefied and mythologized" (Pound and Kodama xv) nation-state, yet stops short at revolutionary action. Yeats's fascist aesthetics, I demonstrate, hinge upon a spiritually aristocratic authoritarian vision[6] like those found in much of the fascist mysticism and nationalist mythologies of the interwar period.[7] That these national mythoi were in ever-evolving conversation with literary modernism invites an analysis of both modernism and fascism as key components of a revolution on the artistic and the political stages of a world veering toward war. Each section of the chapter analyzes the artistic nexus between Yeats's transnational aesthetics and fascism at the height of the modernist movement, taking up George Orwell's 1943 suggestion that the "relationship between Fascism and the literary intelligentsia badly needs investigating, and Yeats might well be the starting-point" (Orwell 135-136).

My third and final chapter uses the works of James Joyce as a vehicle for investigating processes of transnational meaning-making through two obscure cross-cultural allusions embedded within Joyce's kaleidoscopic final novel *Finnegans Wake* (1938). These allusions, to the Finnish epic *The Kalevala* and to Tibetan Buddhism, invite new pathways of exploring the expansive manner through which Joyce approached the ever-shifting cultural and linguistic landscape of the *Wake*. Embarking upon an exploration of the physical contours of boundary transcendence, this chapter examines how, for Joyce, incarnation of the word through text and sound produced a collapsing of meaning and form, the visible and the invisible, the national and

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[6] To quote Orwell: "Throughout most of his life...[Yeats] had had the outlook of those who reach Fascism by the aristocratic route. He is a great hater of democracy, of the modern world, science, machinery, the concept of progress---above all, of the idea of human equality" (132).

[7] See René Guénon, *La Crise du Monde Moderne* (1927), Arturo Reghini, and others.

the global. Essential to this argument is the examination of the *Wake*'s transnational imagination as a perpetual motion machine in a constant state of creation and liberation.

The coda, "Re-Echo," transitions from the multilinguistic plane of *Finnegans Wake* to the post-apocalyptic desolation of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot.* I consider how mythologies from the Celtic Revival onward shaped a transnational space of expansive connection and potential destruction.

"The way the world ends"

From little magazines to atomic warfare, the modernist period altered conceptions of literary expression and execution. For each author in this study, modernity entailed a rebirth, either through *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, *A Vision* of cyclical history spinning beneath Ben Bulben, or the revivifying promise of *Finnegans Wake*. Transnational modernism exposes the ways in which the nexus of global influence in the early to mid-twentieth century fueled artistic, philosophical, and technological innovation while simultaneously propelling the world towards potential destruction. Like a mushroom cloud expands and flattens, the rupture of modernism dispersed into a fragmented desolation. Molly's dynamic "Yes" at the end of *Ulysses* (18.1609) becomes Vladimir's static "Yes, let's go" as the curtain falls on *Waiting for Godot* (87). The Celtic Twilight is replaced by the shadows on the steps of Hiroshima. "*They do not move*" (87).

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But the gyres spin on. And we propel ourselves backward. Shadows reattach, the atom reforms. And in our backtracking, the promise of modernity is felt again. Hearn's "re-echo"[8] or Joyce's "commodious vicus of recirculation" return us to "Howth Castle and Environs" (1.2-3),

[8] The title of Kazuo Hearn Koizumi's 1957 memoir about his father.

Ireland. It is June 27, 1850, and Lafcadio Hearn is born in Lefkada, Greece. In two years, he will emigrate to Dublin.

Chapter 1: Lafcadio Hearn: "Elfish" Glimpses of Transnational Modernism

Introduction

This chapter takes the works of Lafcadio Hearn as a prism through which to establish new terms for transnational modernism. Whereas previous conceptions of modernism centered around bounded conceptual frameworks and distinct binaries, transnational modernism brings the field into an expansive new phase. Lafcadio Hearn, I argue, stands as an obscured epitome of the transnational modernist, both in life and literary style. This analysis considers modernism as a project shaped by global movement and transcultural exchange, fundamentally a style without a country. If the emerging field of transnational modernism remains predicated upon an increasingly complex network of transnational exchange, Hearn must at last be recognized as an essential member of this network and a pivotal figure in the development of transnational modernist discourse. This new phase of modernist discourse takes on the dual aim of both theorizing modernism from a global perspective and "theorizing modernism's ideas of the global" (Hayot and Walkowitz 3), questioning the "foundational concepts of modernism" by interrogating the "spatial markers" as well as "contemporary critical markers" (1) which have long served as the framework of modernist study. In such a spirit, this chapter approaches Hearn as a figure of transnational exchange rather than a Western agent of Eastern artistic dissemination.[9]

This is also a chapter shaped by paradox and contradiction, considering Hearn within the tradition of Irish modernism, while simultaneously rejecting, or at the very least interrogating,

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[99] With regard to framing terminology for the current chapter, I have sought, to quote Jahan Ramazani, to "work with and between such inevitably tainted terms" as transnational, transcultural, and global, particularly, as Ramazani notes, given that "transnational has the liability of naming and hence perhaps reinforcing what it's meant to transgress" (Ramazani 21). The primary framing term for the chapter, as will be discussed, is "elfish," which speaks to the in-between state through which Hearn writes and into which Hearn's readers are thrust.

the spatial and intellectual boundaries of such a contextualization. Further, this chapter considers the ways in which Hearn's biography both clarifies and complicates the picture of the nineteenth-century exoticist, an intellectual wanderer and self-fashioned "hero" who, to quote Edward Said, seeks to "[rescue] the Orient from the obscurity, alienation, and strangeness which he himself had properly distinguished" (Said 121). Yet, in rejecting the "dominating, restructuring" (121) impulse of Said's Orientalist, we may consider Hearn more as a "cross cultural mediator" (Jankiewicz 347)[10] and his exoticism akin to Flaubert's innocuous *idée reçue*, "Orientaliste: Homme qui a beaucoup voyagé"[11] (Flaubert 544). Within the larger scope of the dissertation, this chapter represents the beginning of an analysis of the development of quasi-Celtic mythologies emerging from the contradictory and ever-evolving Irish national identity as it wavered between global exchange and isolation during the early twentieth century.

Hearn has long been recognized as a global citizen. Born in Greece and raised in Ireland, he traveled as a journalist throughout the United States and the French West Indies before ultimately settling in Japan. However, though this is crucially the case, Hearn's heritage was Irish. As Hearn himself wrote to W.B. Yeats, being from Dublin and raised on the Irish folktales taught to him by his "Connaught nurse," "I ought to love Irish things, and I do" (qtd. in Murray 33). This study, therefore, is predicated not on recontextualizing Hearn within the Irish literary

[10] The full quote is as follows: "Although Hearn was an informed and sympathetic observer of Japanese culture, he might be included in a critique of "Orientalism" as an imperial discourse. However, the benefit of considering Hearn as an "Orientalist" is not merely to mark him as a potential agent of empire or an expression of colonial discourse, but to note his self-identification as an expert on that region. His self-awareness as a cross-cultural mediator not only reflected, but actually shaped, his capacity for generating knowledge about Japan…Hearn's "Orientalism" was a negotiated process rather than a simple act of domination, and a complex social interaction rather than a self-generating act of imagination" (347).

[11] "Man who has traveled a lot" (translation my own).

canon but seeks to demonstrate the ways in which Hearn laid the foundation for future transnational Irish modernists, namely W. B. Yeats and James Joyce.

If the study of modernism has undergone substantial growth within the past decade, with the boundaries expanding well beyond the "initial construction of Anglo-American modernism as a realm of giants," namely, "the men of 1914" (Eatough and Wollaeger 8), it seems almost counterintuitive to begin an analysis of transnational modernism by returning to Ireland. Yet by focusing on Hearn, we are both returning to this "initial construction of Anglo-American modernism" while simultaneously pushing the boundaries further. Lafcadio Hearn is but the earliest figure in a tradition of Celtic transnational hybridity that shaped the Irish, and ultimately transnational, modernist style.

As recent criticism has demonstrated, all modernism is fundamentally global modernism. "The men of 1914" may have risen to acclaim under the meticulous gaze of New Criticism, but we can no longer limit the scope of scholarly research to the notion that these "giants" emerged from tradition and individual talent alone. The nineteenth century was a century of global expansion,[12] and when Japan opened its borders in 1853 the world was gripped by a new Japanese-centric Orientalism. In many respects, Japan represented a final frontier for Victorian exploration. Yet due to the strength of the Japanese empire and their continued wariness of the West, this exploration remained primarily artistic and imaginative in nature. For Lafcadio Hearn, however, unlike Oscar Wilde, or later, W.B. Yeats, Japan, though like a fairyland in many respects, was not merely a land "of pure invention" (Wilde 53).

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[12] To quote Lise Jaillant and Alison E. Martin in the January 2018 introduction to *Global Modernism*, "Transnational literary relationships in the early twentieth century worked in multiple ways…These literary ties shaped the nature of modernism as a truly international movement, and yet, for a very long time, scholars focused on the London/Paris/New York axis and neglected exchanges that did not fit in with this model" (1).

Lafcadio Hearn is the only one of these figures to move physically between these two disparate worlds: the realm of the "Anglo-American" modernist and the empire of Japan. Yet Hearn's transnationalism, though rooted in traditional Irish mythology and the Japanese fairy tales and ghost stories he himself shaped, is not limited to Ireland and Japan alone. The very ghost stories which would make Hearn famous in Japan are steeped in French decadence and the American gothic (primarily Baudelaire and Poe). Indeed, the bulk of Hearn's personal library at the University of Toyama is made up of French texts. Hearn's entire body of work, from "true crime" journalism and Creole culinary writing, travel narratives and spiritual treatises, to the ghost stories and fairy tales that he is best known for, situates him as the ultimate liminal figure.

The chapter begins with a biographical sketch of Hearn's life and travels, examining the impulse to situate Hearn within a certain national literary tradition (Japanese or Irish) and considering Hearn as a global citizen rather than a "Japanese Irishman."[13] I follow this with a close reading of Hearn's *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan* in which I analyze how Hearn imbues every text, from his travel narratives and spiritual treatises with an element which I will later define as "elfish:" a method of encountering the world that is simultaneously eerie, strange, and Éire, Irish but which, though its strangeness, fundamentally rejects the boundaries of nationhood. For Hearn, Japan represented "a world of strangeness" (Hearn v-vi) wherein the dual realms of the real and the imaginary coexist simultaneously. I follow this with an examination of Hearn's pantheon of *yōkai*, a bestiary of supernatural entities created through a merging of multiple folkloric traditions, which populate his oeuvre, demonstrating how the Hearnian *yōkai* function to merge the natural world with a transnational mythic Otherworld, thus producing the Hearnian "elfish" experience. I conclude the chapter with an analysis of Hearn's concept of invisible

[13] The title "Japanese Irishman" frequently follows Hearn's name with no indication of provenance. According to Joseph Lennon, it originated in M. Mansoor's *The Story of Irish Orientalism* (1944) (Lennon 184).

worlds, which I develop into an analysis of invisible spatial and stylistic boundaries. It is through these new parameters that I begin my analysis, examining the works of Koizumi Yakumo Patrick Lafcadio Hearn not merely as pieces of literature but as glimpses into a quasi-mystical method of experiencing reality personal to Hearn and created though a merging of the essential tenets of Japanese Buddhism, the liminal spectrality of gothic tradition, Creole hybridity[14] and the fairy lore of Ireland.

Part I: A "Distinctively Irish Imagination"?

Figure 1: Lafcadio Hearn in Japanese dress, 1891. Photo albums, *Papers of Lafcadio Hearn* (MSS 6101), Clifton Waller Barrett Library of American

Lafcadio Hearn: A Portrait of the Artist

"I will not serve that in which I no longer believe, whether it call itself my home, my fatherland, or my church: and I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defence the only arms I allow myself to use—silence, exile and cunning."[15]

In the West the name Lafcadio Hearn is nearly always qualified by the word "forgotten." Overlooked, erased, obscured, Hearn's kaleidoscopic oeuvre of travel narratives, spiritual writings, and ghost stories, though embraced by Japanese readers, has been nearly lost to Western audiences for over a century. Despite his reputation as a "forgotten" author, however, Hearn is on

[14] Valerie Loichot defines Hearn's "Créolité" as fundamentally hybrid in nature, founded on "praise for the culturally and racially mixed, a defiance of the pure"—with the notable caveat that, for Hearn, such a "praise" was founded on "a suspicious racialism under the cover of an embracing of diversity" (Loichot 57).

[15] (Joyce *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 218).

the precipice of a revival.[16] This recent revival has nevertheless seen his literary output consistently qualified by questions of national identity and, ultimately, national ownership; both questions antithetical not only to Hearn's oeuvre but to what scholars can gather of his personal philosophy. Forty-seven years before Stephen Dedalus would pronounce his infamous "non serviam," refusing home, fatherland and church in favor of "silence, exile and cunning" (Joyce 218), Lafcadio Hearn left what remained of his family in Ireland, turned his back on the church, and embarked upon an adventure of literary and literal discovery.

Born Patrick Lafcadio Hearn on the Greek island of Lefkada to an Irish father and a Greek mother, Lafcadio Hearn endured a turbulent childhood and adolescence. Uprooted as a toddler from the warmth and abundance of the Greek isles to the cold cliffs of Ireland, Hearn suffered personal shock on top of culture shock when he was abandoned by both parents and left in the care of his great-aunt in Dublin (Murray 15-16). In 1869, Hearn migrated to the United States and never returned to Ireland. In Cincinnati Hearn began to refashion himself for the first time. This process of identity shedding and shifting would continue in Louisiana, the West Indies, and, ultimately, in Japan.

Hearn represents a singular case. Despite being "claimed" by Japan, he did not wholly adopt Japanese culture. Although he became a Japanese citizen, adopting the name Yakumo Koizumi in 1896 (Murray 192), Hearn wrote in English and never became fluent in either written or spoken Japanese (202). He dressed in a mixture of Japanese and Western garments (Murray

[16] The summer of 2019 was a landmark time for Hearn, with two mainstream publishing houses, Princeton University Press and Penguin Random House, making Hearn's Japanese tales widely available to Western audiences though the publications of *Japanese Tales of Lafcadio Hearn*, and *Japanese Ghost Stories* respectively.

289), taught English literature at the Tokyo Imperial University,[17] and published almost exclusively for Western audiences. Despite his Irish heritage and his formative years in Dublin, Hearn dropped the "Patrick" from his name and registered at Ellis Island as a British citizen (Nagaoka 53).[18] In New Orleans Hearn published in French, in the West Indies he published in English. At each juncture of Hearn's extensive travels he simultaneously cultivated and rejected the potential security of a national identity.

The recent Hearn revival, however, insists upon Hearn's Irishness as integral to our understanding of the man. Irish journalist Paul Murray's 1993 Hearn biography *Fantastic Journey: The Life and Literature of Lafcadio Hearn* seemed poised to broaden Hearn scholarship within the framework of Irish studies, inviting space for a new Hibernian interpretation. Indeed, in the intro to Murray's text Sukehiro Hirakawa specifically calls for a redefinition of Hearn through an Irish lens, insisting upon Hearn's Celtic roots over his Greek origins, aligning his work with W. B. Yeats and stating that "it is almost certain that Hearn is going to be…revived with an Irish dimension" (qtd. in Murray 12). Though Aoife Assumpta Hart's examination of Hearn as a reluctant Celtic Revivalist in 2016's *Ancestral Recall: The Celtic Revival and Japanese Modernism*[19] approach the task, it has never been fully undertaken as a scholarly

[17] Though library editions of Hearn's lectures were published individually throughout the early twentieth century, a comprehensive collection of Hearn's lectures at Tokyo University was compiled and edited by John Erskine in 1922 and published under the title *Pre-Raphaelite and Other Poets: Lectures by Lafcadio Hearn*.

[18] As Nagaoka observes, Hearn originally registered as a Greek citizen. Upon his return from Martinique in 1887 he registered as British (Nagaoka 53). Hearn's deliberate shedding of his Irish citizenship did not stop at Ellis Island. As we will later note, "Hi-Mawari," the only semi-autobiographical short story in *Kwaidan*, takes place in Wales rather than Ireland and features a popular Irish folksong which Hearn recasts as Welsh.

[19] Hart's analysis of Hearn in *Ancestral Recall* explicitly positions Hearn as fundamentally Irish, referring to him as an "unwilling Celtic Revivalist," Hart cites Hearn as "the hub that linked Irish and Japanese authors" claiming that "Hearn is a major reason for the popularity of Irish literature in Japan, and its encounter with the ideas and works of the Celtic Revival" (Hart 196). While it may be true that Hearn was at least partially responsible for the introduction

project[20]. The apparent tension Hearn felt with his father's native country remains apparent even in scholarly analysis.

Further, while it may be true that Irish lore shaped Hearn's receptivity to the folk tales of Japan, Hearn's Japanese tales are not merely Western interpretations of the East. Hearn regarded the Japanese world with the curious eye of a supernatural entomologist, not the critical Orientalist. Even if Hearn's texts superficially promise a "cultural decoding" (Said 121) of the exotic Other, taken as a whole, Hearn's oeuvre complicates rather than elucidates. Indeed, these tales must be regarded as fundamentally transnational texts. Texts which, though they illuminate elements integral to both the Japanese and the Irish cultural imagination, are indebted to a wide array of cultural touchstones: merging Cuchulainn with Guy de Maupassant, Yeats with Baudelaire, New Orleans voodoo with the Japanese kwaidan. What emerged from this strange concoction is an idiosyncratic yet distinctly modernist style.

When considering Hearn's place within the Irish literary tradition, his oeuvre initially seems more suited to the Celtic Revival. In a 1910 article entitled "Ghosts and Their Makers," Benjamin de Casseres wrote:

> Hearn and Ibsen both saw the world with the eyes of the mystic—the closed eye that stares inward, downward and upward…Lafcadio Hearn's dreams were fashioned by the

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of Irish literature into Japan, I want to resist the narrowness of focus that designates Hearn as a "Celtic Revivalist," even an "unwilling" one.

[20] Joseph Lennon's *Irish Orientalism* approaches the issue, but Hearn is relegated to only a few of pages of direct analysis and is otherwise merely a casual mention throughout the book. Andrei Codrescu's introduction to *Japanese Tales* glosses over Hearn's Irish background in only a few sentences—and, outside of a few mentions of Dublin as a city, never speaks of Ireland as a country directly, instead referring to it pejoratively as "that dismal northern isle" (3). Only a few pages later, however, Codrescu contradictorily refers to Hearn's early writings as "drenched in the wounded sensibility of a writer…who had Greek myths and Celtic fairy tales in his blood" (5).

> thought: How may I escape the illusion called living? How can I be delivered from the Cosmic Goblin? How many aeons will it take me to unweave my ego? (de Casseres 3)

If Hearn, as de Casseres writes, indeed "saw the world with the eyes of the mystic," it was not the robed and crowned Yeatsian mystic of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. Nor were Hearn's depictions of Japanese country life emblematic of a sort of Japanese Celtic Revival. Hearn's texts, rather than embracing the traditional, exist in tension with the modern. Hearn's "escape [from] the illusion called living" manifested itself through his work. R. F. Foster notes in the foreword to Paul Murray's text, "Lafcadio Hearn presents us with a distinctively Irish imagination" (xi). However, while Hearn may have been shaped by Irish folklore as a young man, by the time he arrived in Japan in 1890 this "Irish imagination" was in fact a transnational modernist imagination: an imaginative refuge built on synthesis, Hearn's ultimate "escape" from "the illusion" of separateness.

"Elfish" *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*

We begin our analysis with the essential paradox that shapes Hearn's oeuvre: that of existing in a state of tension between the modern and the traditional, the industrial and the pastoral, the local and the global. Hearn's local study of Japanese life necessitated transnational exchange and can, therefore, only exist within a nexus of global movement. For Hearn, this paradox frequently asserts itself through juxtaposition of visible and invisible worlds. Opening his 1894 text *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan* with a quote from Algernon Mitford's 1871 anthology *Tales of Old Japan*, Hearn cites Mitford as claiming, "Of the inner life of the Japanese the world at large knows but little: their religion, their superstitions, their ways of thought, the

hidden springs by which they move—all these are as yet mysteries" (qtd. in Hearn v).[21] This mysterious "inner life," which Hearn renames "invisible life" (v) for the purposes of his text, is what Hearn promises "glimpses" of in his book.

Contrasting "Intellectual Japan," which Hearn describes as recently "agnostic" and "Europeanized," against the Japan of "the great common people" (vi-vii), Hearn expands upon the moral value of this "invisible life" stating:

> It has its foibles, its follies, its vices, its cruelties; yet the more one sees of it, the more one marvels as its extraordinary goodness, its miraculous patience, its never-failing courtesy, its simplicity of heart, its intuitive charity…That the critical spirit of modernized Japan is now indirectly aiding rather than opposing the efforts of foreign bigotry to destroy the simple, happy beliefs of the people, and substitute those cruel superstitions which the West has long intellectually outgrown…is surely to be regretted. (v)

Within the preface, therefore, Hearn establishes two Japans: an exterior, marked by modernization and Western influence, and an interior, the Japan of the common man. These distinctions, however, are not as simplistic as they initially appear. Hearn's vision of a dual Japan, uniting the visible and the invisible, the real and the imagined, the waking and the

[21] Though Algernon Mitford, later known as Lord Redesdale is best remembered as a Japanophile (perhaps best known for his work as a consultant for Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*) and English diplomat, his later work with Houston Stewart Chamberlain bears noting. Redesdale wrote the introduction to a two of Chamberlain's books, including the proto-Nazi text *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*. Further, he was the paternal grandfather of the infamous Mitford sisters, Diana and Unity Valkyrie Mitford (so named, at Redesdale's insistence, in honor of Wagner), both of whom actively promoted Naziism after developing close ties to the Third Reich. According to Robert Morton, "Hitler held [Redesdale] in high regard…when he was showing Diana and Unity the grave of Wagner, Hitler told them it was an honour to be visiting it with the great Lord Redesdale's granddaughters" (Morton).

dreamed, works subtly throughout *Glimpses* to establish an almost mystical method of experiencing the world which, for Hearn, represents the fundamental quality of "invisible" Japanese life.

For the purposes of this analysis, I will refer to this method of experience as "elfish," a term which Hearn uses to describe his initial impressions of Japan: "Elfish everything seems; for everything as well as everybody is small, and queer, and mysterious" (2).[22] This "elfish" experience remains markedly different from that of the dreamy Yeatsian Celtic Twilight. For Hearn the "elfish" is not the experience of returning to a secret commonwealth of elves, fauns and faeries[23] (a welcoming, if strange, native country, a sort of supernatural fatherland). Hearn's "elfish" experience is incumbent upon modernity, requiring exile aided by the mechanisms of overseas travel. The "elfish" experience is similar in nature to what Antony Goedhals, in his studies on Hearn's "Neo-Buddhist" philosophy, refers to as Hearn's "revsioned reality," a "quasi-scientific vision" which enabled Hearn to "change the way he conceives of the self—and also the way he understands the very fabric of reality" (Goedhals 96). Yet the essence of Hearn's "revisioned reality," though deeply indebted to Buddhist tradition, hinges upon the formation of a transnational mythology and pantheon of transcultural supernatural entities (what I will later refer to as the "Hearnian yōkai"). Hearn's transnational mythologizing enables both the author

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[22] This experience is akin to what Lewis Carroll, in *Sylvie and Bruno*, described as 'fairyish' or 'eerie' (Carroll 577). Hearn's admiration of Carroll and how it relates to his own philosophy may be gleaned from an 1893 letter to B. H. Chamberlain in which Hearn relates that 'these books of Carroll's have been offered to the world as nonsense books…but they are NOT nonsense books. They contain a profound psychological teaching. It is not nonsense that has made the supreme excellence and success of these books' (Hearn and Bisland 114). Though *Sylvie and Bruno* was not published until 1893, the excerpt 'Fairy Sylvie,' in which Carroll first describes the 'fairyish…eerie' feeling was published in *Aunt Judy's Magazine* in 1867. Hearn's remarks upon the 'profound psychological teaching' inherent to Carroll's works directly relates to this 'elfish' or 'eerie' experience—an experience incumbent upon duality, of living within paradox.

[23] The title of folklorist Rev. Robert Kirk's seventeenth century treatise on fairy lore popularized and republished by Walter Scott in 1815 and again by Andrew Lang in 1893.

and his reader to figuratively enter into a new imaginative space while literally experiencing a distinctly modern philosophical method of experiencing reality itself.

Although it is tempting to read Hearn's "elfish" experience as problematic exoticism in which the Orient itself becomes like a hallucinatory drug acting upon the western mind, the Hearnian "elfish" is deeply rooted in a variety of traditions: from the eerie/ Éire spiritualism of the Celtic Revival, the fashionable occultism of the French decadents, the Voodoo of New Orleans, and the Shinto and Buddhist traditions Hearn discovered after his move to Japan. And while Hearn's "elfish" is indeed quasi-mystical, it differs from the often-superficial spiritualism of the nineteenth century.[24] For Hearn, the "elfish" feeling is deeply paradoxical, a quality of being and not being experienced at once. Hearn is the observer but also a part of the world around him, simultaneously present and absent, awake yet dreaming.

This paradoxical experience, a merging of waking consciousness and dream, descends upon Hearn like an enchantment. "There is a romance," he writes on his first day in Japan, in the merging of the conscious knowledge of his location, what he deems a "commonplace fact," with the transformative beauty surrounding him (2). The "divine beauty" of the Orient works upon Hearn's consciousness until it is "transfigured inexplicably" and his senses completely altered (2). For Hearn, the specific beauty of the Orient alters his conscious experience, producing "an atmospheric limpidity extraordinary…though which the most distant objects appear focused with amazing sharpness" (2). Hearn writes of his first day in Japan as if it were a descent into fairyland: "bewilderingly novel," "beautiful and mysterious" full of "delightfully odd confusion"

[24] As Goedhals notes, Hearn himself explicitly rejected what he called the "Neo-Buddhism of the Theosophists" in an article entitled "Confused Orientalism" (1886). According to Goedhals, "the ungraciousness of Hearn's too-easy dismissal of two founding Theosophists is self-revealing, and may indicate a certain competitiveness on his part"

(3) yet ultimately intangible and illusory, available to the Western mind only through glimpses, hints, and echoes.

Glimpses through the Celtic Twilight

A brief comparison of *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan* and *The Celtic Twilight* establishes the paradoxical nature of the "elfish" or "Éire" feeling which permeates Hearn's text[25]. Published only one year after *The Celtic Twilight*, *Glimpses* is generally regarded as a cultural study or travel narrative, whereas *The Celtic Twilight* is considered fiction (explicitly rooted in myth and fantasy). Despite these apparent differences, however, the projects are similar in nature. The impetus of this comparison, however, is not to make a stark comparison and contrast between Celtic Twilight-era Yeats and Hearn. Rather, this comparison allows us to explore the ways in which the Celtic Revival wove itself into the fabric of Hearn's global form and how Hearn, purposefully untethered to Ireland, nationalism, or concerns about Home Rule, is an ideal figure to trace such a movement.

Though Yeats begins his text with a poem, "The Hosting of the Sídhe," he prefaces the tales by situating his text as something of an anthropological study of "the face of Ireland" (Yeats 1). As Yeats notes in the preface to the 1893 edition:

> I have desired…to show in a vision something of the face of Ireland to any of my own people who would look where I bid them. I have therefore written down accurately and candidly much that I have heard and seen, and, except by way of commentary, nothing that I have merely imagined. I have, however, been at no pains to separate my own beliefs from

[25] Hart also chooses to juxtapose *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan* with *The Celtic Twilight*, noting that both texts follow a "multi-vocal polyphonic format" which "take up the act of sympathetic listening as the principle of receiving, learning, and communicating with the past" (Hart 202).

> those of the peasantry, but have rather let my men and women, ghouls and faeries, go their way unoffended or defended by any argument of mine. (1)

Comparing Yeats's comments to the preface of *Glimpses*, we may note a distinctive similarity:

> But the rare charm of Japanese life, so different from that of all other lands, is not to be found in its Europeanised circles. It is to be found among the great common people, who represent in Japan, as in all countries, the national virtues, and who still cling to their delightful old customs, their picturesque dresses, their Buddhist images, their household shrines, their beautiful and touching worship of ancestors. (Hearn vii)

Both texts promise candid insight into the hidden world of the rural peasant, a world free from Imperialist influence, immersed in tradition, superstition and magic, and intricately bound to the past. By endowing the "invisible" worlds of Japan and Ireland with a magical quality, both authors suggest that their respective countries *are* fairyland, with the common man acting as a conduit to an ancient, ancestral, and fundamentally mythical past.[26]

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[26] This suggestion also hints at the nineteenth-century notion that Ireland and Japan were somehow mirror-twins of one another. According to Toshio Yokoyama, "It was in the fourth chapter of Kaempfer's *History of Japan* that many of the country's geographical characteristics were portrayed as similar to those of 'the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.' Among British writers who dealt with Japan in the early 1850s, this idea was reinforced and much generalised" (Yokoyama 15). Disturbingly, another nineteenth-century folklorist and Japanophile, William Elliot Griffis, posited a theory in which he claimed "Science" had "proven" the Japanese to be "white men of the Aryan, or Caucasian race" (Griffis 10). Griffis's claim, made in his 1907 text *The Japanese Nation in Evolution*, and asserted again in a 1913 letter to the editor of the *New York Times* (quoted in the previous sentence) bears eerie resemblance to the racialist theories of Houston Stewart Chamberlain, brother of Hearn's close friend Japonophile Basil Hall Chamberlain. Though Chamberlain doesn't assert Aryan origins to the Japanese, in his 1911 proto-Nazi text *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, he nevertheless states: "Mention should be made of Japan, where likewise a felicitous crossing and afterwards insular isolation have contributed to the production of a very remarkable race, much stronger and [within the Mongoloid sphere of possibility] much more profoundly endowed than most Europeans imagine" (Chamberlain 272). Interestingly, given the later use of Hearn's work in support of nationalistic ends during WWII, Chamberlain also claims that "the only books in which one gets to know the Japanese soul are those of Lafcadio Hearn" (272).

For Gregory Castle, *in Modernism and the Celtic Revival*, such an approach reveals the inherent tension within the Celtic Revival that helped shape the modernist movement, stating first that "the relationship between anthropology and the Celtic Revival is an important feature of modernism as it developed in the Irish context" (1). Further, Castle refers to Terry Eagleton's argument that:

> Irish modernism emerged in the estranging contact of modernity with a traditional or archaic culture finds support in a consideration of the role anthropology played in the development of the Celtic Revival's modernist aesthetic of cultural redemption. This aesthetic is one of the most controversial elements of the Celtic Revival, in part because the anthropological authority behind it renders it internally contradictory, at once complicit with and hospital toward a tradition of representation that sought to redeem Irish peasant culture by idealizing or essentializing its "primitive" social conditions...the Revivalist [unlike the English or European modernist] must contend with the possibility of colluding with a discipline that in significant ways has furthered the interests of imperialism by producing a body of authoritative knowledge about colonized peoples. (Castle 3)

In spite of his Irish heritage and upbringing, Hearn identified as English when first moving to Cincinnati and, despite his avowed "love" of "Irish things," it is clear that he had no interest in Irish politics and or sustaining any form of Irish nationalism. Hearn, therefore, was freer than Yeats to participate in this "modernist aesthetic of cultural redemption."

The scope of the Celtic Revival was plain: a revival of Celtic, specifically Irish, heritage and culture. Hearn could not be an "unwilling Celtic Revivalist" because he did not identify as

Celtic. The very fact that Hearn, to quote Hart, "was an Irishman who seemed not very fond of Ireland" (196) is what makes him most essential to the present study. If Hearn was an "unwilling" Revivalist, the very nature of his unwillingness and self-imposed exile makes him particularly suited to a study of transnational modernism. Returning to Yeats, we may note the way in which he further concretizes the spirit of his current text while also offering commentary on the nature of literature:

> What is literature but the expression of moods by the vehicle of symbol and incident? And are there not moods which need heaven, hell, purgatory, and faeryland for their expression, no less than this dilapidated earth? Nay, are there not moods which shall find no expression unless there be men who dare to mix heaven, hell, purgatory, and faeryland together, or even to set the heads of beasts to the bodies of men, or to thrust the souls of men into the heart of rocks? Let us go forth, the tellers of tales, and seize whatever prey the heart long for, and have no fear. Everything exists, everything is true, and the earth is only a little dust under our feet (Yeats 6-7).

With *The Celtic Twilight*, Yeats dares "to mix heaven, hell, purgatory, and faeryland together,"[27] as a means of depicting a vision of Ireland and, by extension, reality itself that is loosely tethered to the physical plane. Indeed, the physical world manifests as insubstantial "dust under our feet" and both Yeats and his reader now enter into the realm of gods, ghosts, angels, and faeries. Hearn, however, remains an outsider.

[27] A phrase Yeats repeats three times within one relatively short paragraph—first, referring to Paddy Flynn, second, referring to a mood, and third, referring to "great men" who aspire to become "tellers of tales" (Yeats 6-7).

For Yeats, Ireland and, by extension, fairyland, is the land of "my own people." Despite the strangeness of "heaven, hell, purgatory, and faeryland together," it remains "the face of Ireland." If the nationalism of the Celtic Revival sought to unite the Irish people with the mythos of their homeland, for Hearn there is a marked authorial isolation throughout his oeuvre. Life is imbued into the vibrant scenes of peasant life by the peasants themselves, never the author. Indeed, there is an almost-Joycean coldness which Hearn adopts throughout the seemingly warm depictions of life in these "elfish" realms. As if the author, as both a mortal and a foreigner, is welcomed but not quite home in these quasi-mythical lands.

While *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan* somewhat mimics the work of the Celtic Revival[28] (and that Hearn was familiar with the very Irish lore which inspired *The Celtic Twilight*) is without question.[29] According to Murray, Hearn, like Yeats, "believed that study of the peasantry was essential to understanding a country" and that Yeats "'who himself collected a great number of stories and legends about fairies from the peasantry of Southern Ireland'" had risen to a "'rare excellence'" through this endeavor (qtd in Murray 33).[30] Yet while Hearn's work, particularly in

[28] Further, while Codrescu remarks, "What makes [Hearn's] early Japanese observations a cut above the era's conventional travel writings are the anecdotes he collected and transcribed from his conversations with Buddhist monks, as well as from the ordinary people he met in daily life" (13), this project, of weaving together anecdotes from the common man as a means of capturing the magic still glittering in pockets of the world resisting English Imperialism, was also undertaken by Yeats and published as *The Celtic Twilight* in 1893, one year prior to the publication of *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*.

[29] In addition to remarking about his love of "Irish Things," in his letter to Yeats in 1901, as early as 1874, during his time as a journalist in Cincinnati, Hearn wrote what Paul Murray has deemed an "essentially non-malicious" satire of Irish mythology which reflects on "the great Irish hero Finn Maccuhail, founder of the benevolent society of Fenians, and father of Ossian, supported himself (he had no father) by eating delicate sea shells" (qtd. in Murray 34; original source *Ye Giglampz*, Vol 1 no 2, 1874).

[30] Despite Murray's insistence on the significance of Hearn's Irish upbringing and his interest in Yeats, however, he closes his brief reflection on Hearn and Yeats with the comment that, had Hearn remained in Ireland, "he would, in all likelihood, have earnestly immersed himself in the culture and folklore of the Irish peasant, like Yeats, Lady Gregory, and Synge…As it was, he found himself in Cincinnati" (36).

Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan, is certainly part-Hibernian, steeped in the myth and tradition of Ireland, its many global influences make it fundamental link in the development of transnational modernist style.

In considering *The Celtic Twilight* alongside *Glimpses*, I seek to emphasize how the Celtic Revival navigated the complexities of modernity through, to quote Castle, a sort of "anthropological modernism[31]" which sought to "transform indigenous materials into new cultural texts" (Castle 3). This approach, which T.S. Eliot deemed a "mythical method" (Eliot 167) and attributed primarily to Joyce (though he deemed Yeats the originator) is entirely apparent in Hearn's oeuvre. In the context of this chapter, we may consider this "mythical method" as bridging the modern present with a mythical past that exists alongside the authors' own, in tandem with reality, in the form of ghosts. These are not the looming specters of gothic literature calling out from a bygone past, but embodied ghosts drawn into the present.

Unlike early Yeats, Hearn's early Japanese texts are less preoccupied with the mystical.[32] His studies of Japan, though imbued with the supernatural, often verge on the anthropological. The folklorist, entomologist, or anthropologist is not exactly the Joycean artist "like the God of the creation…within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails" (Joyce 166), but they are nevertheless not fully part

[31] Matthew Schultz, in *Haunted Historiographies* further clarifies this "anthropological" element to the Celtic Revival, stating that Revivalist authors "cultivated direct relationships between literary texts, revolutionary political events, and constructions of national identity" (Schultz 28).

[32] To quote Goedhals, Hearn's "expanded sense of the ghostly…goes far beyond the reductionism inherent in the postulates behind spiritualism: its implications of a 'world beyond,' and some sort of continuity of identity, however faint, in that world. For Hearn, the dead are of this world" (135)

of the world they describe. They exist both within and outside their texts like Alice through the looking-glass, ghosts in the natural world or mortals in a ghostly realm.

Part II: *"All matter is not solid, but ghostly."*[33]

The ghosts that populate Lafcadio Hearn's Japanese tales have become fully established within the Japanese mythological canon; yet Hearn's Japanese ghosts are hybrid beings drawn from a diverse array of fantastic literature and oral tradition. While Hearn's preoccupation with ghosts began in Dublin with the folktales spun to him by his nurse before bed, his decade in New Orleans ignited his imagination for all things ghostly. Far from a mere personal eccentricity, Hearn's interest in the spectral realm was integral aspect of his philosophy, which, though it developed in New Orleans, deeply impacted his engagement with Japan.

Hearn's perspective on Japan, and what sets him apart from the leading English Japanologists and Japanophiles of his day, is his humanistic interest in the Japanese people rather than an aesthetic interest in Japanese objects. Hearn is nevertheless a complicated case study because while he has been hailed for seeking the soul of the Japanese people, such an impetus nevertheless belies either a racialized fetishization or a peculiar vision in which the Japanese exist, for Hearn, only as emanations from his own fantasy. This holds true not only for his Japanese texts, but his work in New Orleans and Martinique as well. Whether Hearn was a radical philosophical explorer, eschewing cultural appropriation and racialized objectification, or a man trapped in his own imagination, gazing Narcissus-like into other cultures eternally seeking his own reflection, we can never know. Still, throughout Hearn's texts, notably through his

[33] Full quote from Albert Mordell's summary of Hearn's lecture "The Value of the Supernatural in Fiction:" "Though we do not believe in ghosts, yet science shows all matter is not solid but ghostly. The universe is a mystery, a ghostly one; all great art reminds us of the universal riddle; all great art has something ghostly in it" (qtd. in Goedhals 134).

engagement with spectrality, there is a distinct sense that even if Hearn regards these fantastic emanations as insubstantial it is only because he regards all matter as such. For Hearn, the reflection and the reflected are one and the same; both time and place are consistently out of joint, and the effect this has on the psyche lingers throughout his oeuvre.

Hearn's interest in the occult isn't a contested aspect of his biography. Fascinated by voodoo, magic, and the imaginative borderlands between this reality and the next, Hearn inhabited a space that was both a creative throwback to the French symbolist past and the modern globalized future. As the turn of the century drew near fashionable occultism fell out of favor among the prominent authors of the day. However, Hearn's interest in the supernatural never waned. Hearn occupies an interesting proto-modern space alongside authors like Flaubert, Maupassant, and Ibsen, each of whom seamlessly merge realism and the supernatural. It seems perhaps incongruous to compare Hearn's nonfiction writing to the imaginative texts of the symbolists or the meticulous panoramas of the French naturalists.[34] And though first glance there doesn't appear to be a distinctive Hearnian style (in the same way that a text may be deemed undeniably Flaubertian or Joycean), this apparent lack of style is perhaps what has kept Hearn's oeuvre trapped in obscurity or deemed a Loti-esque exoticist shrouded by late-Victoriana. Yet while Hearn did not play with language to the extent of Flaubert or Joyce, his oeuvre is nevertheless idiosyncratic in both theme and style. One element distinctive to Hearn is his "fantastics," short supernatural tales written for the *Times Democrat* during his years in New

[34] Although this chapter focuses primarily on the nexus between Japan and Irish modernism from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth, we would be remiss to ignore Hearn's French influences. Whether or not Hern actually lived in France is a highly contested subject among Hearn scholars and, though there is no physical evidence for such a claim, it seems highly probable given Hearn's fluency in the French language and his talent as a French translator. Hearn's Japanese tales are infused with the very decadent sensibilities that informed Maupassant's "Le Horla," and the depictions of Hearn as a sort of supernatural flâneur moving through the bustling streets on his first day in Japan is decidedly Baudelaireian.

Orleans. Hearn defined his "fantastics" somewhat broadly (short sketches on the dual subjects of love and death) but as I will demonstrate, they speak to the essence of Hearnian style.

Fantastics and Other Fancies

In some ways, the majority of Hearn's oeuvre falls into this self-defined genre of "fantastics." From his *Creole Sketches* to the "stories and studies of strange things" that make up *Kwaidan*, Hearn's "fantastics" encapsulate not only his quasi-mystical worldview,[35] but prefigure imagism through their intense scrutiny of subject and economy of words. "I am conscious they are only trivial," Hearn wrote in an 1880 letter to H. E. Krehbiel, "but I fancy that the idea of the fantastics is artistic. They are my impressions of the strange life of New Orleans. They are dreams of a tropical city. There is one twin idea running through them all—Love and Death" (qtd. in *Fantastics and Other Fancies* 3). Hearn's "fantastics" also offer early insight into Hearn's transnationality, as they draw upon a variety of languages and folkloric traditions. It is in these "fantastics" that Hearn establishes the style that he would bring to Japan: a bridge between East and West, between gothic-tinged Victorian fancy and a modernist future.

In analyzing how Hearn navigates both the late-Victorian and proto-modern worlds through the lens of the "fantastic," I employ the symbol of the Hearnian ghost. Taking the Hearnian ghost as an extension of the specters of a variety of folkloric traditions leading up to the *fin-de-siècle*, I demonstrate how Hearn's ghosts function both within his own oeuvre and within the broader sphere of these traditions. Further, I analyze how the Hearnian ghost

[35] Goedhals expands upon the Neo-Buddhist elements inherent to Hearn's 'fantastics' in detail, opening his analysis stating that "Hearn needed a literary form…that could make Neo-Buddhist ideas his own in ways that went beyond the necessarily constrained analyses of Buddhism" we find elsewhere in his non-fiction (Goedhals 133). This notion will be expanded upon later in the present chapter.

represents a reimagining of Buddhist philosophy through the prism of these folktales.[36] As a means of accomplishing this, I utilize three supernatural figures: the shape-shifter, the vampire and the fairy, ultimately demonstrating how all three figures also function as ghosts (both in their respective folkloric traditions but also for Hearn). Further, I employ *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan* and *Kwaidan* (the title of which literally translates as "ghost story") to analyze how Hearn's supernatural ghosts function within his texts alongside his embodied ghosts. These embodied ghosts are most apparent in his representations of the Japanese and in the Hearnian "I," Hearn's narrator-self which haunts his works with the detachment of a roving spirit.

I begin by returning to *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan* as a means of demonstrating how Hearn's "elfish" or "Éire" experience is both Irish and ghostly in origin.[37] For a text presumably concerned with the life and culture of Japan, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan* is filled with ghosts. In volume one alone Hearn uses the term "ghost" or employs "ghostly" as a descriptor over one hundred times. Hearn's ghosts refer not only to supernatural entities but are often used in depictions of clouds, fog, trees, even of Mount Fuji.[38] Hearn's use of ghostly imagery serves to

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[36] Though not through the prism of folklore, Goedhals also briefly theorizes on the subject Hearnian ghost, stating that an analysis of "Hearn's Neo-Buddhist vision helps to explain why so many of his stories (particularly of the Japanese period) are ghost stories," noting that ghost stories center upon "the presence of the past in the present—the residues of karma (of, if one prefers, the emotions, the energies that persist from moment to moment, from state to state, from "life" to "life")" (Goedhals 108-108).

[37] Hart also chooses to juxtapose *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan* with *The Celtic Twilight*, noting that both texts follow a "multi-vocal polyphonic format" which "take up the act of sympathetic listening as the principle of receiving, learning, and communicating with the past" (Hart 202).

[38] Mount Fuji, the name of which, according to the "Tale of the Bamboo Cutter," a ninth century Japanese text, translates as "immortal" or "deathless," remains venerated as a gateway to heaven to this day. According to *Smithsonian Magazine*, "Many cultures hold mountains to be sacred…but nothing equals the timeless Japanese reverence for this notoriously elusive volcano…Fuji is venerated as a stairway to heaven, a holy ground for pilgrimage, a site for receiving revelations, a dwelling place for deities and ancestors, and a portal to an ascetic otherworld" (Lidz 2017). Further associations between Mount Fuji and ghosts may be found through investigation of the folklore concerning the surrounding Aokigahara forest said to be populated by yūrei (ghosts of Japanese mythology).

both distance and unite his Irish past with the land and people of Japan. In one instance Hearn encounters a child whose strange presence strikes him as unsettlingly familiar:

> All at once I become aware of a child standing before me, a very young girl who looks up wonderingly at my face; so light her approach that the joy of the birds and whispering of the leaves quite drowned the soft sound of her feet. Her ragged garb is Japanese; but her gaze, her loose fair hair, are not of Nippon only; the ghost of another race—perhaps my own—watches me through her flower-blue eyes. (Hearn 49)

This represents merely one example of how Hearn seamlessly weaves supernatural encounters into the fabric of his everyday existence in Japan. Just as Yeats's Paddy Flynn (functioning as both ghost and fairy[39]) dares "to mix heaven, hell, purgatory, and faeryland together," so Paddy Hearn merges the visible and invisible realms, almost a specter himself, silently gazing back at "the ghost of another race" beckoning him from behind "flower-blue eyes."

The paradox of the Hearnian "I," the ghost-self that gazes into and out of "flower-blue eyes," is a fundamentally Buddhist paradox complicated by the supernatural trappings of gothic tradition.[40] Hearn's representation of the interior experience of being and non-being at once, what

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[39] Paddy Flynn presides over *The Celtic Twilight* like a ghost—for, as Yeats, soon informs his readers, Paddy Flynn "is dead" (Yeats). Flynn's presence, even in death, functions to endow the text with a lively rural authenticity, as Flynn, who Yeats refers to as "a great teller of tales" who "knew how to empty heaven, hell, and purgatory, fairyland and earth, to people his stories" (Yeats), epitomizes the romantic rural Ireland that Yeats sought to encapsulate with his text. Yeats uses his reflection on Flynn's character as a method of commenting on the nature of literature and, in so doing, the spirit of his current text. With *The Celtic Twilight*, therefore, Yeats dares "to mix heaven, hell, purgatory, and faeryland together," as a means of depicting a vision of Ireland in which the physical world manifests as insubstantial "dust under our feet" and both Yeats and his reader now enter into the realm of gods, faeries, angels, and ghosts.

[40] Considering the gothic in relation to Japanese literary tradition proves a complicated case study. Closed to the west until 1853, Japanese literature was almost entirely insulated from the influences of Anglo-American Romanticism. To quote Katarzynan Ancuta, a study of Asian gothic literature initially seems like "a quest doomed to failure" as "Asia never experienced any grand-scale cultural movements…such as the European Renaissance or Romanticism, with many of its countries opting for relative isolationism instead" (Ancuta 208). Indeed, Ancuta

we have defined as "elfish," is a philosophical experience that Others both the viewer and the object thereby collapsing their identities into one ghostly being. Recent scholarship has sought to reconceptualize Hearn's distinctly Buddhist philosophy, with Goedhals referring to the "transcendently beautiful evocations of a Buddhist universe" within Hearn's work, which "deconstruct and dissolve categories of Western discourse and thinking about reality, and create a new language – a poetry of vastness, emptiness, and oneness that had not been heard before in English literature" (Goedhals XII).

While Hearn's Buddhist writings certainly evoke this "poetry of vastness," his spiritual writings encompass only a small portion of this "new language" of "emptiness and oneness." Hearn himself referred to his vision of a merging of Western and Eastern thought which might create "a Neo-Buddhism inheriting all the strength of Science, yet spiritually able to recompense the seeker after truth with the recompense foretold in the twelfth chapter of the Sutra of the Diamond-Cutter" (*Gleanings* 35) Goedhals refers to this "Neo-Buddhism" as that of "a revisioned reality" built upon "beauty and strange newness" (XII). I argue that this "revisioned reality" is analogous to the "elfish" and functions like a spectral fog, covering everything in its path in a ghostly haze. Before beginning this analysis, however, it is vital to define "ghost" in the Hearnian sense.

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notes, even the word "gothic" itself "is a foreign import, lacking equivalents in most Asian languages" and therefore "easily dismissed as referring to an aesthetic…alien to indigenous cultures[40]" (209). Interestingly, however, Ancuta observes that, out of all the Asian countries in her study, "only Japan has attempted to semi-internalize the label" and, with relation to Asian receptivity to western literature, "only Japan experienced modernism roughly at the same time as Europe" (208). These two anomalies, I argue, are largely due to the influence of Lafcadio Hearn. Further, although gothic literature would have been easily accessible to Hearn in Ireland, it is striking that both Japanese and Irish literary traditions are linked by their resistance to what Ancuta deemed the "very English" genre (218), inviting scholars to approach considerations of gothic literary influence in either country from a postcolonial lens.

The ghosts that haunt the pages of Lafcadio Hearn's *Kwaidan* are a strange breed, functioning in in a manner reminiscent to Derrida's notion of hauntology. For Hearn, like Derrida:

> Ghosts arrive from the past and appear in the present. However, the ghost cannot be properly said to belong to the past.... Does then the 'historical' person who is identified with the ghost properly belong to the present? Surely not, as the idea of a return from death fractures all traditional conceptions of temporality. The temporality to which the ghost is subject is therefore paradoxical, at once they 'return' and make their apparitional debut (Buse 11)

Hearn's ghosts, though they may reach out from the annals of gothic tradition, function within *Kwaidan* as active participants in the spectral world of the living rather than passive specters from a ghostly realm.[41] Although Hearn's ghosts (dis)embody his "elfish" experience, the "hauntological" nature of Hearn's ghosts is not unique *Kwaidan* or his Japanese texts.[42]

Part III: A Transnational Bestiary: The Hearnian *yōkai*

As we analyze Hearn's use of supernatural entities we find that each of them fulfills a similar function: a merging of a diverse array of folkloric traditions to create a near erasure of the boundaries between the world of the living and the dead. In Japanese literature these creatures

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[41]Referring to the ghosts of Hearn's "fantastics," Goedhals notes that the ghost stories "may be read at a deeper level as being meditations on past and future lives, or states, meditations on the intersection of worlds in the mysterious liminal spaces of the present—and meditations on metempsychosis, the transformation of the dead, of the nexus of the past-becoming-present-becoming future" (Goedhals 134).

[42] Again, to quote Goedhals once more referring to Hearn's "fantastics:" It will become clear that, almost invariably, the 'fantastics' are ghost stories, which play with Buddhist notions of the multiplicity of lives, and the relations of the dead and the living – metonymies, as will become clear, for a more philosophical examination of the presence of the past in the present which becomes central to the Japanese writings, with their deeply philosophical meditations on causation, the interrelatedness of phenomena, the nature of the self, and, indeed, the nature of reality itself (98)

are called the yōkai, in Ireland the sídhe, a class of otherworldly entities fundamentally distinct from humans yet who interact with humans in a variety of ways ranging from the benign or mischievous to the catastrophic. In the context of this chapter, however, it is important to note how the merging of these supernatural entities fulfills a purpose distinct to Hearn: creating an erasure not only of metaphysical boundaries, but national ones as well.

The dream-world of Lafcadio Hearn is not only a Looking-Glass Land of lovesick ghosts and vengeful spirits, but a modern globalized fantasy. This imaginative space is contingent upon what Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphaël Confiant referred to as "l'intuition de la Diversalité," or, the intuition of diversality[43] (qtd. in Gallagher). This "diversality" manifests for Hearn at the microcosmic and macrocosmic level, functioning as a distinctly modern method of conceptualizing nationhood and even race.[44] According to Michael Dylan Foster, "Hearn's contribution to the understanding of *yōkai* is rarely noted in books on the subject" (Foster 55), yet his contributions are significant not only in broadening our understanding of Japanese folklore in general but most essentially in understanding the ways in which Hearn ushered the

[43] Mary Gallagher offers an analysis of this diversality as it related specifically to Hearn's Creole texts, noting that such an "intuition" refers to "the notion of continuum as a denial or cancellation of borders" noting "that it is becoming more and more difficult to 'confine' writers of the contemporary age within a single, simple label. Their complex identities and their mobility defeat efforts to contain them within the boundaries set by a single national, ethnic or cultural tradition" (Gallagher 20). Further, Gallagher affirms that Chamoiseau and Confiant "claim Hearn for Creole letters, identifying him as having been almost a century ahead of his time. His refusal, or failure, to settle within (or for) just one place, culture, nationality, language etc. illustrates the extent of his engagement with cultural interrelation or 'diversalité', an engagement to which he may appear to have been predestined by the plurality of his mixed family origins and by the instability of his childhood and early life" (Gallagher 20)

[44] As Valérie Loichot notes, "Hearn creates a racial philosophy privileging "mixed race," and dismissing both black and white "races" as inferior and sickly respectively. Hearn fears not the disappearance of the pure but the disappearance of the mixed in an all-encompassing blackness" (Loichot 58).

yōkai into the modern era. Indeed, Foster notes, though Hearn scholarship often reflects upon the author's passion for an antiquated and rural Japan:

> In the Japanese context of modernization and Westernization, Hearn's interest in the strange and overlooked aspects of Japanese culture was particularly meaningful…he did not dismiss *yōkai* as impediments to progress; he celebrated them as an intrinsic and meaningful part of Japanese culture…[feeling] there was value in collecting and understanding them for the insight they might offer into fading beliefs and shifting worldviews and what it means (or meant) to be Japanese. (57-58)

We may thus consider Hearn's *yōkai* not as "impediments to progress" but as a modern pantheon of supernatural beings brough into being through Hearn's "intuition of diversality" and fully untethered to any territory, global or cosmological; ferrymen into the "elfish" realm.

In considering the function of the Hearnian *yōkai* we must first reject any sense of separation between an underworld and an earthly realm. Returning once more to the Yeatsian notion of "heaven, hell, purgatory, and faeryland all together," the Hearnian "invisible world" *is* the visible world. For Hearn all worlds are Other. Bordered by ever-collapsing invisible boundaries, the only world is the Otherworld. To quote Goedhals, for Hearn:

> We ourselves, our experience in the world of the present – is simply energy, eternally moving energy (whether this energy is expressed as karma, or as 'spirits', 'ghosts', 'ancestors' hardly changes the underlying conception), passing wave-like out of the deepest darkness of infinitely mysterious pasts, towards the infinite possibilities of states to be, worlds in the remotest futures. (167)

The emanations from this Otherworld, therefore, are not limited to traditional conceptions of supernatural beings, but may take many shapes, including humans, animals, and insects. In unpacking the function of specific Hearnian *yōkai* we may begin with the shape-shifter.

Ghost-foxes: Hearn's phantom shape-shifters

The figure of the shape-shifter features prominently across all folkloric traditions and myth cycles. Further, whether or not the shape-shifter constitutes its own category of supernatural entity remains unclear, as such a wide variety of mythical creatures possess shape-shifting abilities. In Japanese folklore, beings with the ability to change form at will are referred to as *bakemono* or *obake*, literally translating as "changing thing" or "thing that changes" (Foster 18). In traditional Japanese folklore, the *bakemono* differentiates itself from ghosts in that "*bakemono*, usually translated as 'ghost,' means literally 'a transformed thing' and does not refer to the dead. A *bakemono* is a living thing transformed temporarily for a specific purpose" (Mayer 89). This distinction between ghost and shape-shifter appears almost ubiquitously across cultures, however, Hearn's *kitsune*, or foxes, break somewhat with tradition.

Fox legends are not unique to Japanese folklore. Originating in China, fox tales feature prominently throughout East Asia. The basic structure of most fox legends is similar to the Celtic legends of the selkie, or seal wife, in that they describe a female shape-shifter who marries a human man before inevitably returning to her animal form.[45] However, foxes also appear in a variety of

[45] Foster makes a connection between another Hearn tale, "Yuki-onna" (Snow maiden) from *Kwaidan*, and the Celtic selkie, stating that "Hearn's yuki-onna tale also incorporates a variety of folk myths—particularly the notion of marriage between human and nonhuman…In Japan this motif…is found in the widely distributed legends "Hagoromo" (Feather mantle) and "Tsuru-nyobo" (Crane wife), and there are numerous examples of men who have married kitsune. The motif is also common in folklore of other cultures, such as the Gaelic legends of the selkie. Such diverse sources were likely an influence on Hearn as he successfully developed an evocative literary narrative

forms from tricksters to possessing spirits. Hearn's *kitsune* is unique in that he refers specifically to foxes as "ghostly," thus situating the *kitsune* not merely as a "transformed thing," or even as a demonic entity, but as another of his roving sprits. Yet Hearn's reconceptualization is not entirely without precedent. Hearn's description of foxes runs the gamut from the fox wife to the Inari (a Shinto spirit associated with foxes[46]). In fact, the majority of Hearn's foxes seem more closely related to Inari rather than *kitsune*. That said, according to Shinto tradition the Inari are not considered ghosts. According to Hearn, the origin of the foxes which populate his "ghostly zoology" (*Glimpses* 321) is complicated:

> There are curious contradictions involved in these beliefs, and other contradictions will be found in the following pages of this sketch. To define the fox-superstition at all is difficult, not only on account of the confusion of ideas on the subject among the believers themselves, but also on account of the variety of elements out of which it has been shapen. Its origin is Chinese [4]; but in Japan it became oddly blended with the worship of a Shinto deity, and again modified and expanded by the Buddhist concepts of thaumaturgy and magic. So far as the common people are concerned, it is perhaps safe to say that they pay devotion to foxes chiefly because they fear them. The peasant still worships what he fears. (318-319)

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and created an image that survives to this day, in Japan and abroad, as the most resonant image of the snow woman" (Foster 175).

[46] According to Foster, "The *kitsune* is not the Inari deity itself, but rather the messenger or attendant of Inari. And in this capacity, a pair of stone foxes typically stands guard in front of Inari shrines throughout Japan. The connection between Inari worship and the complex of beliefs associated with the *kitsune* of folklore in not straightforward, but it is clear that the two overlap and mutually influence each other, if not in religious doctrine then certainly in the popular imagination" (Foster 181).

As Foster notes, shape-shifters in Japanese folklore "are never fully what they appear to be…they are literally between—not really humans but not really furry little animals either," instead occupying a space he deems "interstitial," a site of "communication, combination, and contact" (Foster 88-89) similar to what I have defined as "elfish." In reconceptualizing the *kitsune* as "ghostly," Hearn once more evokes the "elfish," transforming the Asian fox legend into something both demonic, seemingly from another realm, and earth-bound. Hearn's foxes, in some respects, are more akin to the *púca* of Irish folktales (particularly given that *púca* literally translates as "ghost") or the *jumbee* of the West Indies. Situating Hearn's foxes within contemporaneous folklore, Hearn's foxes bear a resemblance to the "sooty, black animal" (LeFanu 53) of Sheridan LeFanu's *Carmilla* or even the eponymous villain of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

The Frog-Maiden: Mermaid Lore and the Hearnian Vampire

Like the shape-shifter, the vampire in classical folklore also changes shape at will. Unlike the shape-shifter, however, the vampire is tethered to the underworld. Zombie-like in its position as simultaneously dead and undead (and its need to feast upon humans), the vampire is more parasitic than the Zombie.[47] Further, and most significantly, there exists little to no precedent for classical vampires Japanese literature before the twentieth-century.[48] How can the vampire operate

[47] Though Hearn never used the term "zombie," it is nevertheless useful to consider the role of the zombie in the nineteenth-century American imagination. Ann Kordas offers a brief history of the figure of the zombie as it was disseminated to American readers: "Although Haitians believed in the existence of several different types of zombies, twentieth-century Americans recognized only one. According to Haitian belief, zombies could take many different forms. A zombie could be a soul stolen from a living person by a magician to be used to bring luck or to heal illness. A zombie could also be a dead person who had willingly, at the time of death, given his or her body to the Vodou gods to use as a receptacle. Finally, a zombie could be a reanimated, mindless, soulless corpse taken from its grave to serve the master who had awakened it. It was this form of the zombie that captured the American imagination in the early twentieth-century" (Kordas 15). Many of Hearn's ghosts, though they don't serve a master, seem to fit the quality of either a "captive soul" or a "reanimated, mindless, soulless corpse" which Kordas describes.

[48] As Matthew Bunson notes in *The Vampire Encyclopedia*, among the "vast pantheon" of yokai, "there are beings of exquisite goodness and a seemingly endless array of grotesque monsters of evil…they appear in art and literature

in the Hearnian Otherworld? If we have eliminated the boundaries between the dead and undead, what function does a vampire serve? For Sabine Metzger, the function of the Hearnian vampire is that of "a figure mediating between East and West," occupying a space similar to Foster's "interstitial" which she calls the "transcultural supernatural,"[49] defined as "a neutral territory unfolding between East and West, uniting them but at the same time defying any appropriation" (Metzger 2). Hearn's vampires, present in *Kwaidan* in "O-Kame" and in the short allegory "The Story of Chūgōrō," merge classical vampire lore of the Western European Gothic tradition, the myth of Melusine and Japanese blood-sucking or corpse-eating spirits to create his own hybrid of ghostly *kitsune*-vampire *yōkai*.[50]

In many ways, the vampire represents the epitome of *fin-de-siècle* anxieties. A symbol of late-Victorian xenophobia, homophobia, degeneration, and fear of industrialization, as the nineteenth century drew to a close the vampire emerged from the coffin of the gothic genre to loom over *fin-de-siècle* fantastic literature almost paradoxically propelling the genre towards modernity. Hearn's vampire figures, however, both in "O-Kame" and "The Story of Chūgōrō," necessarily break with Western vampire tradition as a means of introducing a supernatural entity into Japanese literature in a more palatable way. According to Sabine Metzger, "Hearn circumvents and shuns Transylvania terminologically," through a deliberate omission of "terms such as vampirism or

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with greater regularity that in any other country in the world. The Japanese initially did not need classical vampires, preferring instead bloodsuckers or children eaters" and the "classical" vampire did not fully become integrated into Japanese culture until after the 1950s—and even still, it was through cinema not literature (Bunson 162).

[49] It bears stating that both these terms, "interstitial" and "transcultural supernatural," however useful they may be as building blocks of the present analysis, refer simply to the creative space which Hearn writes out of, not the space into which Hearn plunges his reader, which is more akin to what de Casseres referred to as seeing the world "with the eyes of the mystic," simultaneously "inward, downward, and upward"—previously defined in this chapter as "elfish."

[50] The single classical vampire in Hearn's oeuvre is featured in his 1882 translation of Theophile Gautier's "La Morte Amoureuse."

vampire" as well as "the whole iconography specific to vampire fiction, such as teeth and bite marks, blood and bloodsucking as a means of reproduction, and gloomy castles and nights of full moons" (4). Instead, Metzger notes, Hearn "[evokes] a whole menagerie of figures from Japanese folklore" to account for the blood loss incurred during both stories, allowing the Western reader to easily identify the creature represented "by a terminological void" (4) while inviting Eastern readers to superimpose their own *yōkai* onto the story. Hearn's vampires, therefore, merge with the *kitsune*, the serpent-woman, and the *yuki-onna* of Japanese folklore to create an entirely new addition to the pantheon of Japanese *yōkai*. Notably, Hearn's vampires do not merely blend the vampires of Le Fanu or Stoker with Japanese shape-shifters, they are entirely modern *yōkai* created from a blend of transnational mythological influence and inhabiting the "interstitial" "transcultural supernatural" space we have established as distinctly Hearnian.

If, as Metzger suggests, Hearn's deliberate omission of the word "vampire" from either "O-Kame" or "The Story of Chūgōrō" serves to create a "terminological void" thus allowing a reader of any cultural background to superimpose their own entity into the text, we may consider that Hearn did not intend to evoke the Western Gothic vampire at all.[51] Further, the ambiguity of Hearn's vampires suggests that they are neither Gothic or Japanese in origin.[52] The essential feature of Hearn's vampires, like all of his *yōkai*, is that they are ghostly in nature yet operate within the natural world. To quote Leonard Wolf's introduction to "The Story of Chūgōrō," Hearn's tales "reflect the view that everything in the world, living or not, is sentient and capable of exercising will" (12). Such a view effectively collapses reality, merging the boundaries between being and

[51] Metzger suggests that Hearn's omission, not only of the term "vampire" but of "Gothic" as well, also served to distance his writing from the Western world he exiled himself from, stating that "Hearn's turning to and narrative recreation of Old Japan means, therefore, a second escape from the West" (6).

[52] Hearn's vampires are also indebted to depictions of the *Soucoyants* of the West Indies.

nonbeing thus creating the Hearnian "elfish." This state of imaginative and transcultural exchange is similar to the Celtic Otherworld yet is imbued with Buddhist and Shinto[53] philosophy and populated by transmogrifying Japanese *yōkai*. As a means of demonstrating this, I turn to an analysis of the many folkloric complexities folded into "The Story of Chūgōrō."

"The Story of Chūgōrō," first published in *Kottō: Being Japanese Curios, with Sundry Cobwebs* in 1902, is a short and relatively simple tale: a young man meets an untimely end after being deceived into marrying a vampiric frog who drains him of his blood. Yet further reflection on the elements which comprise the tale demonstrate the extent to which Hearn's *yōkai* are unique manifestations of his imaginative transcultural pantheon.[54] "The Story of Chūgōrō" begins with a familiar premise: a bewitched love-sick individual vanishes each night, returning every morning looking "pale and weak" (74). The seductive femme fatale of "Chūgōrō" is "finely dressed" appearing "like a person of high rank," "young and handsome" and with a "very soft and pleasant voice" accompanied by a smile which, Chūgōrō states, "was hard to resist" (75).[55] As the story draws to a close, Chūgōrō begins "trembling from head to foot, as if he had caught a chill," falls back "senseless" and "sick—deathly sick" (80) and is discovered to be void of all blood. On the

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[53] Through Buddhist philosophy makes up the bulk of my observations within this chapter, Hearn's engagement with Shinto is nevertheless worth noting—particularly given Roy Starr's observation that Hearn's "emphasis on the Gothic, "ghostly" aspects of Shinto…has been questioned by Japanese scholars who have suggested that it has more to do with Irish than with Japanese mythology and folk tradition" (Starrs 191)

[54] Though in the brief preface to *Kottō*, Hearn states that the following "Old Stories" (which include both "The Story of Chūgōrō" and "O-Kame") have been "selected from the "Shin-Chomon-Shū" "Hyaku Monogatari," "Uji-Jūi-Monogatari-Shō," and other old Japanese books to illustrate some strange beliefs," further clarifying that they represent "only Curios" (Kottō 1), there is little evidence to support "The Story of Chūgōrō" as originating from anywhere but Hearn's imagination.

[55] We may compare this description of a lovely young vampire to that of Bram Stoker's description of Lucy in *Dracula*: "All Lucy's loveliness had come back to her in death, and the hours that had passed, instead of leaving traces of 'decay's effacing fingers,' had but restored the beauty of life, till positively I could not believe my eyes that I was looking at a corpse" (Stoker 162). Here, also, Stoker coins a term decidedly Hearnian in nature "death-beauty," referring to the state of Lucy's corpse: "When he again lifted the lid off Lucy's coffin we all looked…and saw that the body lay there in all its death-beauty" (Stoker 211).

surface, "The Story of Chūgōrō" reads very much like a vampire tale. However, Hearn's description of Chūgōrō's time with his mysterious lover is what makes this tale a study a peculiar study in the Hearnian "elfish."

Unlike the classical vampire, which attacks while its (usually sleeping) victim lapses into a confused nightmare, the villain of "Chūgōrō" lures her victim to the edge of a riverside before beckoning him to descend with her into the deep waters. Once submerged, Chūgōrō marvels at "what seemed to be a great palace, full of light" as he follows his beloved "through room after room…so many rooms, all empty, but very fine" until at last they reach their destination, "a guest-room of a thousand mats" where "lights [are] burning, and cushions laid as for a feast" (76). It is here, in the elaborate "guest-room of a thousand mats" that "The Story of Chūgōrō" begins taking on the attributes of Western fairy lore. Further, the woman's solemn warning to Chūgōrō the following morning evokes the legend of Melusine with its solemn injunction:

> My dear one, you are now indeed my husband. But for reasons which I cannot tell you, and which you must not ask, it is necessary that our marriage remain secret…Remember, above all things, that our marriage must be a secret, and that, if you talk about it, we shall probably be separated forever. (79)

Chūgōrō, like so many doomed fairytale lovers, breaks his vow and dies soon after, his blood having been replaced with "nothing but water in his veins" (80). Though Chūgōrō's blood is missing, the descriptions of the palace of light beneath the water and the replacement of mortal blood with supernatural water is remarkable when compared to other vampire tales.[56]

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[56] Though the Frog-maiden's underwater palace bears little resemblance to the "vast ruined castle" (Stoker 18) of Dracula's ancestral home, Stoker nevertheless employs water imagery consistently throughout *Dracula* in relation to vampirism: Lucy writes of "long spells of oblivion, and the rising back to life as a diver coming up through a great press of water" (133-134), Mina describes the anemic Lucy as "weak as water" (95), then later recalls a dream in

Further complicating "The Story of Chūgōrō" is the revelation of the mysterious woman's true nature. As Chūgōrō's friend and the doctor reflect upon the situation following the young man's untimely death, the woman's true form is revealed to the reader:

> "Ah! I might have suspected as much!" exclaimed the doctor… "No power could have saved him. He was not the first whom she destroyed."
>
> "Who is she?—or what is she?" the ashigaru asked—"a Fox-Woman?"
>
> "No; she has been haunting this river from ancient time. She loves the blood of the young…"
>
> "A Serpent-Woman?—A Dragon-Woman?"
>
> "No, no! If you were to see her under that bridge by daylight, she would appear to you a very loathsome creature."
>
> "But what kind of creature?"
>
> "Simply a Frog,—a great and ugly Frog!" (81-82)

The revelation of this "very loathsome creature" as nothing more than "a great and ugly Frog" both complicates and demystifies the act of vampirism which has just taken place, thus subverting the reader's expectations while simultaneously collapsing the gap between the natural and the

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which she is overtaken by the sensation of slow drowning, "sinking into deep green water…a singing in my ears, as I have heard there is to drowning men" (97). Notably, Mina's psychic connection to the Count reveals itself through her perception of "darkness, lapping water, creaking wood" (340), "darkness, creaking wood and roaring water" (358) as the Count journeys home on the river. The Count, as Mina states in her journal, "is powerless except at night…were he wrecked, the living water would engulf him, helpless; and he would indeed be lost" (346).

supernatural. Frogs are harmless creatures (maybe even princes in disguise) but they certainly aren't vampires—or are they? Hearn asks.[57]

It is perhaps useful to read "The Story of Chūgōrō" not as a vampire tale at all. Considered through the lens of a Western fairytale, the story bears a striking resemblance to mermaid lore. In particular, the tale recalls the legend of Mélusine, in which the half-fairy Mélusine prohibits her husband from looking at her as she bathes. The trope of the hybrid female who intermarries with a human male is certainly nothing new to Hearn (many of his Japanese tales center around such a plot[58]) nor is the motif of the animal-bride, particularly a mermaid or water-associated bride, unique to Japanese folklore. According to *Melusine's Footprint*,

> The fascination with Melusine rests in large part on her parallels with other shape-shifting, water- or earth-associated females who have made persistent appearances in literature and legend worldwide. Women with ophidian, piscine, or other features reminiscent of dragon-kind slither through the foundational stories of any number of cultures, from the islands of Japan to the creation myths of the first peoples of the Americas. (Urban, et al. 2)

Yet what differentiates "The Story of Chūgōrō" from the mermaid motif is not the act of vampirism but the act which condemns Chūgōrō to his death.

While classical mermaid lore frequently includes an injunction prohibiting men from viewing their female companion in her aquatic state, "The Story of Chūgōrō" prohibits the husband

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[57] Though the vampiric Frog-maiden is unique to "The Story of Chūgōrō," there is precedent for a frog-like *yōkai* in Japanese folklore. Known as the kappa, literally translating as "river child" (Foster 158), the creature presents as "scaly or slimy…greenish in color, with webbed feet and hands and a carapace on its back" (157). Though the kappa does occasionally drag humans or horses beneath the water, it is more often mischievous rather than violent in nature and certainly does not shapeshift into the form of a beautiful maiden.

[58] As Hearn himself wrote in a September 1883 letter to his friend the musicologist H. E. Krehbiel, "The ghostly sweetheart is a universal idea, and the phantom palace also" (Bisland 279)

from the act of *speaking*. Further, the animal-bride motif often features an act of violence by the husband, usually finding and destroying the discarded supernatural skin which allows the woman to shapeshift back into her original form. "The Story of Chūgōrō" subverts this motif by centering the violence on Chūgōrō's body rather than the Frog-maiden's, and, notably, by making his silence (rather than his averted gaze) the necessary injunction. Chūgōrō's ability to exist, in either the natural or the supernatural realm, is contingent upon his refusal to disclose the maiden's story.[59] Such a contingency demonstrates a profound anxiety, on the part of the Frog-maiden, that she will be revealed not through the act of looking, but through the inward-gaze of imagination: storytelling. For Hearn, access to the "elfish" is mitigated by silence and preserved through an inner refuge or "palace full of light," which, rendered "evil…malevolent" (79) by language, ultimately vanishes.

Perhaps the very nature of Hearn's "terminological void" with regard to any overt vampirism stems from a fundamental misreading of the violence of "The Story of Chūgōrō" as vampiric at all. Though Chūgōrō is bereft of blood, his veins are not empty. Chūgōrō's mortal lifeforce is replaced with the very substance through which he accessed the maiden's supernatural kingdom. In many ways, Chūgōrō has more in common with Keats's "pale kings, and princes too," who, with "starv'd lips in the gloam" and cry out "La Belle Dame sans Merci Hath thee in thrall!" (Keats line 37-41). In this reading, the Frog-maiden of "Chūgōrō" presides over the story not as a vampire but as a fairy maiden: a hybrid force of supernatural creativity eternally waiting at the bridge between the conscious world and a vast subconscious, trading the blood of her "victim" for

[59] Further complicating a reading of "The Story of Chūgōrō" through the lens of the Melusine or mermaid legends rests in the fact that the vast majority of these tales feature a human male taking a supernatural wife to live with him in the mortal world. In stories featuring female water-creatures who take a human male into the underwater realm with them, such as the Greek Sirens or the Slavic Rusalki, the human generally dies. The motif of a supernatural female claiming a male husband who can inhabit both the surface and the underwater realms is relatively unique.

the magic waters of her immortal kingdom. Perhaps, as the doctor suggests, the "the whole experience was an illusion…produced by some evil power for a malevolent end," but such a reading implies a concreteness to the notion of reality (a notion that Hearn himself rejected). As Hearn suggests in *Kokoro: Hints and Echoes of Japanese Life*:

> Buddhism taught that nature was a dream, an illusion, a phantasmagoria; but it also taught men how to seize the fleeting impressions of that dream, and how to interpret them in relation to the highest truth…in the dying crimson of autumn foliage, in the ghostly beauty of snow, in the delusive motion of wave or cloud, they saw old parables of perpetual meaning. Even their calamities—fire, flood, earthquake, pestilence— interpreted to them unceasingly the doctrine of the eternal Vanishing. (23-24)

If the Frog-maiden of "Chūgōrō" functions as a reminder of this "doctrine of eternal Vanishing," such a reading blurs the boundaries between the natural and the supernatural, folding both into the realm of illusion.

The "World of Elves": A Transnational Otherworld

Fairy lore is remarkable among folkloric traditions in how vastly depictions of fairy-folk vary across history and cultures. Brightly-colored pastel fairies flit through the post-Victorian Western imagination with gossamer wings and flower-petal skirts. From the Cottingley Fairies who so fascinated Sir. Arthur Conan Doyle to J. M. Barrie's Tinker Bell, turn-of-the-century fairies were benign, if mischievous, female creatures whose entire existence revolved, ballerina-like, around light entertainment for the lucky mortal eye. Historically, however, fairies occupy a far more sinister role in folklore and folk superstition. For the purposes of this analysis, we consider the fairy as more closely associated with the Irish sídhe: a supernatural creature acting upon the

natural world. It is through this association, merging the yōkai with the sídhe, that we may best comprehend the function of the Hearnian yōkai. As a means of demonstrating this, we return briefly to *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan.*

If we consider Hearn's "elfish" vision as representational of Gregory Castle's "anthropological modernism" alongside Eliot's "mythical method," we must begin with the introduction to the Hearnian fairyland in *Glimpses*. For Hearn, evoking fairyland represents a process of resituating and ultimately blurring the boundaries of reality and fantasy as well as the binaries of East and West, signifying the very "doctrine of Eternal Vanishing" described in *Kokoro*. This process of material collapse is similar to what Hart has described in relation to the sídhe of the Celtic Revival as the "discourse of the vanishing" (Hart 168). The Hearnian yōkai speak through this "discourse of the vanishing" and the Hearnian fairyland functions as "a poly-communal dimension in which alternative forms of representation and dialogue can occur" (Hart 252).[60] This dimension is created and recreated in various iterations throughout Hearn's oeuvre, but most explicitly on his first day in Japan with the descent into what Hearn later establishes as the "World of Elves." We begin analysis of Hearn's intra-dimensional journey with the introduction of Hearn's charioteer Cha, described by Hearn as something of a human-horse hybrid[61] "dancing" through the streets crowned with a distinctive "white mushroom-shaped hat" (*Glimpses* 2).

[60] This description in Hart applies to a comparison between Akutugawa and Yeats but is nevertheless useful here.

[61] Notably, both *The Celtic Twilight* and *Glimpses* are deeply imbued with animism. Though the present chapter has focused on Hearn's Buddhism, a future study on animism as it relates to Shinto would undoubtedly prove fruitful. Cha's appearance alongside a reflection on compassion is likely a nod to baton kannon, the horses-head-crowned bodhisattva of compassion Hearn mentions later in the text.

Cha's role as charioteer into fairyland is apparent in the next paragraph, as Hearn remarks upon the "supremely pleasurable impression" of rolling with Cha "through…miniature streets" watching the "singular gentleness" of the faces he passes (6). The ultimate consequence, Hearn surmises, "of all these kindly curious looks and smiles is that the stranger finds himself thinking of fairy-land" (7). Briefly remarking upon the potential cliché of such an observation, Hearn nevertheless quickly reasserts the validity of his "elfish" experience:

> Hackneyed to the degree of provocation this statement no doubt is: everybody describing the sensations of his first Japanese day talks of the land as fairyland, and of its people as fairy-folk. Yet there is a natural reason for this unanimity in choice of terms to describe what is almost impossible to describe more accurately at the first essay. To find one's self suddenly in a world where everything is upon a smaller and daintier scale than with us—a world of lesser and seemingly kindlier beings, all smiling at you as if to wish you well—a world where all movement is slow and soft, and voices are hushed—a world where land, life, and sky are unlike all that one has known elsewhere—this is surely the realisation, for imaginations nourished with English folklore, of the old dream of a World of Elves. (7)

Hearn's use of "Elves" here is significant. Although potentially incongruous with his use of "fairy," the term "Elves" connects more explicitly to the legends of the Irish Aos Sí, a supernatural race of elves or fairy-folk who live alongside humans in an invisible world, rather than the traditional fairies of European fairy-tales.

As Hearn descends into the dream-like "World of Elves," inviting his reader along for the journey, we note the presence of mushroom imagery.[62] The mushroom functions as a physical object whose presence alerts the initiate of a subtle shift in reality thus allowing the seer to experience vast unseen worlds.[63] For the Victorians, this shift was not preceded by consuming the mushrooms, but rather though the presence of mushrooms as a fairy circle to indicate a slippage between the physical visible world of men and the "invisible" world of the faeries.[64] The image of the mushroom, therefore, indicates the presence of an otherworldly being and the beginning of a trip into an unknown world. Hearn uses the mushroom to invoke a quasi-hallucinatory collapsing of material reality, thus ushering the reader into this "invisible" world**.** This supernatural Otherworld, reminiscent of the Celtic island of Tír na nÓg, is far from the placid fairy-land of Andrew Lang.

Both paradise and purgatory, the land of Tír na nÓg represents a mix, to quote Yeats, of "heaven, hell, purgatory, and faeryland together." Hostile to humans, Tír na nÓg functions as a realm of gods and ghosts, a quasi-underworld ruled by Manannán mac Lir, Son of the Sea and God of the Otherworld, and accessible via burial mounds, caves, or deep beneath the waves. The

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[62] Yeats also employs mushrooms as a sort of shamanic invocation, describing Paddy Flynn as "cooking mushrooms" before falling "asleep under a hedge…smiling in his sleep" (Yeats 4).

[63] Mushroom lore in the Victorian period was nearly always associated with other realms, supernatural creatures, or superstition. In Richard Folkard *Plant lore, legends and lyrics* (1884), he refers to "the King of Fairies, Puck, has a plant specially dedicated to him. This is the *Lycoperdon*, or Puckfist. Dr. Prior points out that in some old works Puck, who has the credit of being partial to coarse practical jokes, is alluded to as no other than the Devil. His very name would seem to be derived from *Pogge*, a toad, which in popular opinion was the impersonation of the Devil: hence Toadstools, Pixie-stools, or Paddock-stools, were thought to be but Devil's droppings—the work of those Elves "Whose pastime / Is to make moonlight Mushrooms" (82). Further, Folkard later adds: "Porphyrius calls Mushrooms sons of the gods.——In Indo-European mythology, the Sun-hero is represented as sometimes hiding under a Mushroom. He also appears as King of the Peas, and in a Russian legend, in this capacity, gives battle to the Mushroom tribes.——In Wales, the poisonous Mushroom is called *Bwyd Ellyllon*, or the meat of the goblins.——In many parts of England it is believed that the changes of the moon influence the growth of Mushrooms" (451-452).

[64] Hearn himself references fairy circles in "Hi-Mawari," the penultimate ghost story in Kwaidan—which we will analyze presently.

legends of Tír na nÓg[65] possess an almost sinister quality which merge myth, fairy lore and ghost stories (evoking the same eerie/Éire quality which I have assigned to Hearn's idiosyncratic style). Though Hearn himself never explicitly ventures into Tír na nÓg, the penultimate story in *Kwaidan*, "Hi-Mawari," offers a fleeting glimpse into Hearn's Celtic Otherworld before transitioning back to Japan in "Horai," the final ghost story of *Kwaidan*.

Hi-Mawari: Involuntary Memory and the Goblin Harper

Figure 2: Unpublished Illustration for "Hi-Mawari" by Hearn's son Kazuo Koizumi. *Papers of Lafcadio Hearn* (MSS 6101), Clifton Waller Barrett Library of American Literature.

"Hi-Mawari," though featuring a Japanese title, is a purely Celtic dream-fantasy almost entirely removed from Japanese tradition. The story opens with a simple yet evocative statement: "On the wooded hill behind the house, Robert and I are looking for fairy-rings" (*Kwaidan* 165). Though the search proves unsuccessful,[66] the boys entertain one another with tales of goblins and "the old Welsh story of the man who went to sleep, unawares, inside a fairy-ring, and so disappeared for seven years" (165). Before long, a harper arrives on the road below the hill and the boys run down the hill to greet the "swarthy, sturdy, unkempt vagabond" who Hearn describes with revulsion as "not like the hoary minstrels of the picture-books," but "more like a bricklayer than a bard" with "black bold eyes under scowling black

[65] Murray expands upon this sinister element to Irish fairy lore in his introduction to *Japanese Ghost Stories*, reminding readers that: "It is important to remember that the fairies of the Irish tradition are man-sized, often evil beings, with grim characteristics also found in the Gothic literary tradition. At that time, a belief in fairies and ghosts as living phenomena with a real power to interact with humans was still common in the Irish countryside" (xv).

[66] Or so we are told.

brows" (166). The narrator's initial revulsion is transformed into an almost existential dread as the harper "clears his throat with a sort of angry growl" and, strumming the harp strings with "a sweep of his grimy fingers" (166), begins to sing.[67]

The narrator's initial "repulsion unutterable," however, begins to wane as "that deep, grim voice suddenly breaks into a quivering tenderness indescribable" (167). The change in the harper's voice instigates a process of supernatural fading wherein "the form of the singer flickers and dims;--and the house, and the lawn, and all visible shapes of things tremble and swim before [the narrator]" (167). This process unites the narrator, Robert, and the harper under the spell of the music but fills the young boy with fear, hatred, and shame.

The narrator's shame lingers throughout the afternoon. For both the narrator and Robert, "the spell of the wizard" remains. And though the boys eventually dismiss any supernatural origins of the harper, deciding he is no "wizard…goblin…or [fairy]" but "only a gipsy" (168), the readers themselves are not so certain—particularly given that, according to Robert, "gypsies," like fairies, "steal children" (168). The tale concludes twice: once with the boys, "in sudden terror" (168) realizing their vulnerability alone in the woods (with Robert assuring the narrator that they are temporarily protected by the daylight), and again in a bracketed reflection in which the narrative quickly shifts to present-day Japan. In the bracketed conclusion, the narrator finds himself once again transported as if by the lingering magic of the goblin-harper's tune:

[67] The song, though not explicitly named in the story, is Thomas Moore's "Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms," an Irish, not a Welsh tune (Moore, et al.).

> [Only yesterday, near the village of Takata, I noticed a flower which the Japanese call by nearly the same name as we do: Himawari, "The Sunward-turning;"—and over the space of forty years there thrilled back to me the voice of that wandering harper,—
>
> As the Sunflower turns on her god, when he sets / The same look that she turned when he rose
>
> Again I saw the sun-flecked shadows on that far Welsh hill; and Robert for a moment again stood beside me, with his girl's face and his curls of gold. We were looking for fairy-rings... But all that existed of the real Robert must long ago have suffered a sea-change into something rich and strange... Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend...] (168-169)

By the end of the tale, we gather that Robert is dead—or, at the very least, transformed. As a supplement to this reading, it may be useful to consider the illustration for “Hi-Mawari” in figure 3. Though the illustration was done by Hearn’s son and completed after Hearn’s death, it offers significant insight into the tale.

Featuring only two figures, the harper and Robert (both flanked by large sunflowers), the illustration evokes the merging of identities under the music’s spell. The harper, a Japanese man in Western dress, cut through by a swath of cloud or sea, plucks his harp with disembodied hands and gazes out of the illustration with a blank stare. Above him, Robert floats above a cloud and below a wave. Notably absent is the narrator. Koizumi’s deliberate omission of the narrator (alongside his choice to depict the harper as Japanese) suggests a merging of identities between the harper and the narrator. If we regard the harper as a proxy for the narrator (and ostensibly a proxy for Hearn himself, a Celtic man with rumored Romani ancestry and a Japanese identity) then who is the goblin and who is Robert? Perhaps it is Robert, not the harper, whose existence

suggests supernatural origins. Of all the characters in "Hi-Mawari" it is, after all, Robert who establishes himself as the authority on fairies and goblins. Further, as the narrator himself notes, it is entirely possible to fall into a fairy-ring "unawares" (165). If, as this reading suggests, "Hi-Mawari" depicts a child's accidental descent into fairyland, this fairyland functions as a supernatural portal which unites Celtic myth with Japan.

From "Hi-Mawari," Hearn shifts to the final ghost-story of *Kwaidan*, allowing the memory-spell of the goblin's music and the image of the ghostly sunflower to transport the narrative into a hybrid Otherworld Hearn calls Hōrai. It is here, in the brief dreamscape-narrative of the land of Hōrai, that Hearn's "elfish" vision of a hybrid transnational Tír na nÓg populated with distinctly modern yōkai, is fully articulated.

Hearn's Hōrai: "Vision of the Intangible"

Figure 3: Unpublished Illustration for "Hōrai" by Kazuo Koizumi. *Papers of Lafcadio Hearn* (MSS 6101), Clifton Waller Barrett Library of American Literature.

Following the dreamy, almost Proustian "Hi-Mawari," Hearn opens "Hōrai" with yet another invocation to dream. Describing the experience of gazing at a kakemono, a silk painting titled "Shinkiro, which signifies 'Mirage'" before him, Hearn notes that "the shapes of the mirage are unmistakable…the glimmering portals of Hōrai the blest; and…the moony roofs of the Palace of the Dragon-King" (*Kwaidan* 174). In his description of "the glimmering portals of Hōrai," Hearn evokes the legendary Mount Penglai of Chinese mythology, an island of immortal beings:

Thus much is told of the place in the Chinese books of that time:—

> In Hōrai there is neither death nor pain; and there is no winter. The flowers in that place never fade, and the fruits never fail; and if a man taste of those fruits even but once, he can never again feel thirst or hunger. In Hōrai grow the enchanted plants… which heal all manner of sickness;—and there grows also the magical grass…that quickens the dead; and the magical grass is watered by a fairy water of which a single drink confers perpetual youth. The people of Hōrai eat their rice out of very, very small bowls; but the rice never diminishes within those bowls,—however much of it be eaten,—until the eater desires no more. And the people of Hōrai drink their wine out of very, very small cups; but no man can empty one of those cups,—however stoutly he may drink,—until there comes upon him the pleasant drowsiness of intoxication" (175)

The Hearnian Hōrai, however, differs drastically from the idyllic Penglai described "in the legends of the time of the Shin dynasty" (175). For, as Hearn states,
"that the people who wrote down those legends ever saw Hōrai, even in a mirage, is not believable" (175).

In describing his vision of Hōrai, Hearn rejects both Chinese Penglai and Victorian fairylands. Envisioning the mythical paradise as a snow-covered wasteland with cold winds which "bite to the bone" and "monstrous" heaps of snow "on the roofs of the Dragon-King," Hearn describes a land bereft of the "enchanted fruits….magical grass," with magically refilling bowls of rice or fountains of "fairy water" (175). For Hearn, Hōrai is a land of the dead,[68] though not the shadow-land of the underworld. Hōrai, as Hearn describes it, is made of up "an atmosphere

[68] And, as we will soon note, a dying land.

peculiar to that place," an atmosphere which enables "an astonishingly clear…very soft" sunshine to cast "a milky light that never dazzles" (176) upon the land. This "peculiar" atmosphere, Hearn states, is made up not of "nitrogen and oxygen…but of ghost" (176). Indeed, Hōrai's atmosphere, according to Hearn:

> "[is] not of our human period: it is enormously old,—so old that I feel afraid when I try to think how old it is;—and it is not a mixture of nitrogen and oxygen. It is not made of air at all, but of ghost,—the substance of quintillions of quintillions of generations of souls blended into one immense translucency,—souls of people who thought in ways never resembling our ways. Whatever mortal man inhales that atmosphere, he takes into his blood the thrilling of these spirits; and they change the sense within him,—reshaping his notions of Space and Time,—so that he can see only as they used to see, and feel only as they used to feel, and think only as they used to think" (176)

The ghost-air of Hōrai and "the inhalation of that ghostly atmosphere" (177) is precisely that which creates the Hearnian "elfish." It is "the spell wrought by the dead is only the charm of an Ideal, the glamour of an ancient hope…the simple beauty of unselfish lives..." (177).

For Hearn, the land of Hōrai *is* Japan. Hearn's description of the fairy-folk who populate this ghostly paradise bears notable similarity to his descriptions of the Japanese people in *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*. Thus, when comparing the texts, a narrative reveals itself of a supernatural race existing within the realm of the natural world:

> —Because in Hōrai there is no knowledge of great evil, the hearts of the people never grow old. And, by reason of being always young in heart, the people of Hōrai smile from birth until death…and the speech of the women is like birdsong, because the hearts of them are

> light as the souls of birds;—and the swaying of the sleeves of the maidens at play seems a flutter of wide, soft wings…And because the people are fairies—though mortal—all things in Hōrai, except the Palace of the Dragon-King, are small and quaint and queer;—and these fairy-folk do really eat their rice out of very, very small bowls, and drink their wine out of very, very small cups..." (Hearn 176-177)

Hearn's specification that the people of Hōrai "are fairies—though mortal"[69] establishes the intermediate state of the "elfish" existence. The inhabitants of Hōrai are all and nothing, substance and immateriality, mortal and immortal at once, and with each ghostly inhalation they merge with the supernatural atmosphere which surrounds them. However, Hearn warns, a looming peril threatens the land, "the magical atmosphere, alas! is shrinking away before them" as "Evil winds from the West" (Hearn 178) threaten to disrupt the placid ghost-air.

Such a description, particularly given the appropriation of Hearn's work by Japanese nationalists during the second World War, inevitably gives the modern reader pause. Taken in context with Koizumi's illustration of Horai (figure 4), with its flags bearing the promise of "longevity,"[70] "happiness," and "wealth,"[71] in a post-WWII era the palace of Hōrai reads like a disturbing landmark of nationalist sentiment. Hearn's own engagement with Japanese nationalism is much debated, yet the evocation of "Evil winds from the West" speaks for itself.[72] Further, the

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[69] A description which recalls Robert's claim in "Hi-Mawari" that "gypsies" are "nearly as bad" (*Kwaidan* 168) as goblins or fairies.

[70] It is worth noting that the "longevity" flag uses an archaic Chinese script, rather than Japanese (Rodger Williamson)

[71] Translations by Rodger Williamson.

[72] To quote Roy Starrs on the engagement between Japan and nationalist discourse at the turn of the century: "The Japanese of this time created their own powerful ideology of imperialism— powerful enough to convince not only themselves but also some other Asian and Western sympathizers and Japanophiles. We must remember that this was long before the Imperial Army began its 1930s rampage across Asia—it was an age when even liberal opinion could be in favor of imperialism as a "liberating" or "civilizing" force. Many so-called pan-Asianists argued that it was

engagement between nationalist discourse and traditional folklore, not only in Japan but in Germany and Ireland, in the pre-war era is undeniable.[73] Yet, paradoxically, despite Hearn's insistence on its traditionality, Hōrai is representative of a certain modernity, a modernity which, though rooted in an isolationist past and accessible via traditional folklore, would assist in allowing the Japanese nation-state to become a global power. To quote Roy Starrs,

> Ironical and paradoxical as this use of "ancient tradition" as an ideological catalyst for "modern transformation" might seem, the fact is, of course, that it worked, and worked very well indeed—at least until the end of the Meiji period in 1912. Not surprisingly, in *Japan: An Attempt at Interpretation*, Hearn expresses his complete approbation for this tradition-based approach to modernity. (Starrs 199)

Hōrai, for Hearn, represents a merging of the traditional and the modern: a liminal space which, like the fairy-rings of "Hi-Mawari" offers connection to a hybrid Otherworld.

Despite the threat of Western winds, Hearn assures his reader that access to Hōrai remains. The realm of Hōrai, he states:

> lingers now in patches only, and bands,—like those long bright bands of cloud that train across the landscapes of Japanese painters Under these shreds of the elfish vapor you still

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Japan's mission to expand its rule to the continent to establish a Pax Japonica that would bring peace, freedom, and modernization to the other, more backward peoples of Asia—a classic imperialist argument…In short, the period when Hearn lived in Japan was a period when aggressive modern state nationalism was at its height (190)

[73] Again, as Starrs notes, "It might be added that Hearn's "revitalization" of Japanese folktales by an imaginative rewriting of them to appeal to modern taste—perhaps his greatest achievement as a creative writer—was also very much in the nationalist spirit of the day. As with earlier German romantic [sic] nationalists such as the Grimm brothers, turn-of-the-century Japanese romantic [sic] nationalists such as Shimazaki Tōson had begun to discover in folktales a popular expression of the "national soul." In a poetic manifesto written in 1904, the year of Hearn's death, Tōson proclaimed that: "Youthful imagination has awoken from its long slumber and adorns itself with the words of the common folk! Legends have come back to life!" (Starrs 191)

> can find Hōrai—but not everywhere... Remember that Hōrai is also called Shinkiro, which signifies Mirage,—the Vision of the Intangible. And the Vision is fading,—never again to appear save in pictures and poems and dreams... (Hearn 178)

This "magical atmosphere," which floats through the mortal realm like "bright bands of cloud," simultaneously revealing and obscuring the fading "Vision of the Intangible," generates the "elfish." And though the "Evil" modernizing "winds from the West" may threaten this vision, it is a modern vision in and of itself, incumbent upon transcultural exchange and complex, multivalent hybridity, and as such, remains safe—accessible to artists and dreams, preserved through its own intangibility. In the Hearnian vision, all is intangible. Within this intangibility, this ghost-atmosphere, Hearn also exists within what Robert Scholes has deemed the "paradoxy of modernism," a state which rejects binaries, flourishing instead in an ever-evolving state of non-duality. For Hearn, the fundamental paradox inherent to the "elfish" experience, that of being and non-being simultaneously, represents not merely the essence of his "Neo-Buddhist" philosophy, but the entirety of his modern transnational mythological vision.

Ultimately, for Hearn the "elf" functions as no-self and therefore the "elfish" as an enlightened experience which descends upon the reader like the ghost-vapor of Hōrai. This experience is made possible through the pantheon of the Hearnian yōkai which embody all-in-one and one-in-nothing. The "World of the Elves," therefore is the world of non-selves, the state of being and non-being simultaneously. To quote *Kokoro*, "All humanity is potentially the Buddha-to-come, dreaming through the ages in Illusion; and the teacher's smile will make beautiful the world again when selfishness shall die" (Hearn 88). For Hearn, the death of "selfishness," the "simple beauty of unselfish lives," is the awakening of the "elfish." Hearn not only blended "heaven, hell, purgatory and faeryland all together" but superimposed this creation onto our realm,

shaping a modern "interstitial" imaginary world. Hearn's texts must be read not merely as portals into dream realms, but as an exercise in experiential transnational philosophy accessible through the experience I have designated as "elfish."

Closing this chapter compels us to return to the tensions articulated in the introduction. Even the framing term for this study, "elfish," is one fraught with imperialist nuance. While this analysis has argued that the term "elfish" is one developed by Hearn to express a hybrid philosophical experience (similar in nature to what Metzger deemed the "transcultural supernatural") we must nevertheless return to Charles Wentworth Dilke's description of Japan as "Elf-land" in the 1876 article "English Influence in Japan" (443). From one angle we grapple with Hearn the exoticist, the late-Victorian Orientalist. From another, we praise Hearn the "cross-cultural mediator." Yet another disturbing perspective emerges as we approach WWII: Hearn the nationalist, Hearn the propagandist, dare I say Hearn the proto-fascist? The complexities of the life and legacy of Lafcadio Hearn multiply the more we analyze the man and the oeuvre. Perhaps one of the reasons Hearn has been forgotten is simply because no one knows what to make of him. To quote Rie Askew, the Hearnian scholar "can always advocate an alternative view by constructing another memorial to his complex personality" while "ordinary admirers of Hearn are not interested in the reality…they find in Hearn what they want to find" (Askew 138). And so perception of Hearn shifts, sometimes almost imperceptibly, sometimes dramatically, across time and across cultures. For a chapter concerned with ghosts and shapeshifters, it seems somehow appropriate that my opinion of Hearn, seems to shift every time I reopen this document.

In closing, let us consider Hearn's insistence on being photographed only in profile—a pose which appears to capture the artist-mystic deep in thought while but which merely compensated for what he considered the grotesque disfigurement of his "dead eye" (Starrs 182). In many ways, Hearn seems destined remain a liminal figure—much like the yōkai he created, or the ghostly atmosphere of his mythical Hōrai; Hearn remains phantom-heir to a complex legacy which hinges upon its liminality, one half of his face obscured, the unseeing eye eternally gazing into shadow.

Figure 4: Hearn and others outside of a shrine, 1893. Photo albums, *Papers of Lafcadio Hearn* (MSS 6101), Clifton Waller Barrett Library of American Literature.

Chapter 2: "The gyres run on"[74]

Introduction: "The Second Coming"

The first chapter of this dissertation introduced an exploration of the foundational tensions inherent to Lafcadio Hearn's oeuvre—the modern and the traditional, the industrial and the pastoral, the local and the global. This chapter expands upon these tensions in a geopolitical context, using William Butler Yeats as a crystallizing figure for an examination of the threads of aesthetics and fascism tightly woven into the transnational artistic consciousness of the modernist movement. As chapter one concluded with an invitation to consider the ways in which folklore may be co-opted for nationalistic purposes, I offer a selection of Yeats's interwar texts as a case study for how modernist literature coexisted with (and potentially contributed to) the slow overgrowth of far-right nationalism leading to World War II.[75] If interwar Europe was a space of ideological tension, I argue, Yeats internalized this conflict within himself and his art.

Before proceeding to an outline of the chapter as a whole, I propose a brief summary of my framing terminologies. "Transnational" offers a useful counterpoint to the ultranationalism of the interwar period. "Transnational" moves beyond nationalism but resists the homogeneity of "globalization." In Yeats's case, the physical contours of Ireland remain ever-present despite the vast currents of global literatures through which he often navigated. "Hybrid" may be used insofar as it relates to the products of transnational boundary-crossing. "Fascist aesthetics" or "fascist sensibilities" are used in place of "fascist" as a means of distinguishing the aesthetic

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[74] (Yeats "Under Ben Bulben" line 63)

[75] In many ways, this chapter is deeply indebted to George Orwell and his 1943 essay "W.B. Yeats." I have maintained Orwell's capitalization of "Fascist" and "Fascism" (and in the Yeats quote in footnote 11) in my citations but otherwise only use a capital "F" when referring to a specific political party.

from the revolutionary.[76] Rather than engaging in the familiar scholarly debate over whether or not Yeats was "a fascist," this analysis considers Yeats's interest in fascism as an expression of a fascistic sensibility. Such a sensibility represents a highly aestheticized ideology which seeks a form of "mystic membership" (Griffin 130) within a "rarefied and mythologized" (Pound and Kodama xv) nation-state yet stops short at revolutionary action. Yeats's fascist aesthetics hinge upon a spiritually aristocratic authoritarian vision[77] ideologically similar to much of the fascist mysticism and nationalist mythologies of the interwar period.[78] That these national mythoi were in ever-evolving conversation with literary modernism invites an analysis of both modernism and fascism as key components of a revolution on the artistic and the political stages of a world veering toward war. While such analyses have already been undertaken in the field of comparative fascist studies,[79] I propose a narrower approach focused entirely on Yeats. As a means of accomplishing this, each section of the chapter interrogates the artistic nexus between Yeats's transnational aesthetics and fascism at the height of the modernist movement, taking up George Orwell's 1943 suggestion that the "relationship between Fascism and the literary intelligentsia badly needs investigating, and Yeats might well be the starting-point" (Orwell 135-136).

Though I have structured this chapter chronologically, beginning in 1928 with the publication of *The Tower* as a focusing point and ending with Yeats's death in 1939, my

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[76] With a nod to Walter Benjamin's theory that fascism is itself an aestheticization of politics. Fascist aesthetics, in that context, would simply *be* fascism.

[77] To quote Orwell: "Throughout most of his life... [Yeats] had had the outlook of those who reach Fascism by the aristocratic route. He is a great hater of democracy, of the modern world, science, machinery, the concept of progress—above all, of the idea of human equality" (132).

[78] See René Guénon, *La Crise du Monde Moderne* (1927), Arturo Reghini, and others.

[79] Most notably, Roger Griffin's *Modernism and Fascism* (2007), which this chapter is greatly indebted to.

argument necessitates movement back and forth along the timeline of Yeats's life and work. The first section of the chapter considers Yeats's early leanings towards authoritarianism. Considering "Sailing to Byzantium," this section explores Byzantium's mechanical golden bird as an exemplary instance of how fascist aesthetics, through a merging of machine, man, and nation, contribute to Yeats's aesthetic vision in *The Tower*. This section explores how fascism contributed to the changing landscape of Yeats's aesthetics from the Celtic Twilight towards a modernist future.

The second section of the chapter juxtaposes the 1933 publication of *The Winding Stair* alongside two highly controversial events in Yeats's political life: his short-lived work for the Irish paramilitary group the Blueshirts and his acceptance of the Goethe-Plakette following a 1934 production of *The Countess Cathleen* in Nazi-occupied Germany. This section dovetails with the third section to focus primarily on two Indian spiritual influences in Yeats's life, Mohini Chatterjee and Shri Purohit Swami, while also considering the Western proto-fascist influences which informed much of Yeats's philosophy as outlined in both versions of *A Vision* (1925, 1937). This section examines the ways this idiosyncratic merging of esoteric Hindu and Buddhist philosophies with Western philosophies of race and history produced a mystico-fascist space of imaginative and elegiac refuge for Yeats as he stood at the precipice of a world on the verge of destruction and potential rebirth.

I conclude the third section with a meditation on "Lapis Lazuli" and "Under Ben Bulben," two of Yeats's final poems. My analysis of "Lapis Lazuli" takes the poem's evocation of the Chinamen seated "on the mountain and the sky," gazing down upon the "tragic scene" of the war-torn world below (lines 51-52) as symbolic of Yeats's disillusionment with the vicissitudes of the world. I end the chapter examining the ways in which transnational poetics

offered Yeats a path to both the heroic and the hermetic, a path drawing to an end simultaneously atop the unstable cracking mountain of "Lapis Lazuli" and in the earth "Under Ben Bulben."

Part 1: The Tower (1919-1928)

I begin this analysis in 1928 with the publication of *The Tower*, though my analysis will necessitate movement in and around that year.

Newly retired from the Senate due to ill health, Yeats left his beloved Thoor Ballylee and, along with his family, joined Ezra Pound in Rapallo, Italy. A decade had passed since the end of World War I and the threat of a new war loomed on the horizon. In Ireland, the Irish War of Independence ended in 1921 with the Irish Free State established the following year. Mussolini and the National Fascist Party had been in control of Italy for six years, Emperor Hirohito had been in power for four years, and far-right nationalist politics were steadily growing in Japan. Adolf Hitler, having published *Mein Kampf* in 1926, was steadily rebuilding the Nazi Party in Germany after his release from prison. A year later the stock market crash would set the global economy on a devastating course towards World War II. The political upheaval inspired radical reexamination of the notion of modernity, particularly as it related to war, liberty, race, and art. Yeats, for whom "art determine[d] social and political change" (Cullingford 129), saw the current global political moment as one at the precipice of disaster. In Yeats's philosophical system, however, disaster is unavoidable, even necessary. Like the tarot card alluded to in the title of *The Tower*, destruction is fundamentally linked to universal rebirth.

The Tower

For a poet who once roamed the emerald countryside of Ireland gathering the myths of fairyland, Yeats's twentieth-century work is preoccupied with artifice.[80] Many of the poems which make up 1928's *The Tower* are thematically concerned with the violence of weight and the heaviness of an imposed external order. Even the cover art of *The Tower* is a departure from the sinuous Kelmscott-esque covers of collections like *The Wind Among the Reeds* and others.[81] Yet this artificiality is not presented in a negative light. It is nature, transient and ephemeral, that has failed. Artifice and order have prevailed. "Once out of nature I shall never take / My bodily form from any natural thing" ("Sailing to Byzantium" lines 25-26), the narrator of *The Tower*'s opening poem states as he thinks back on the "dying generations" (3) he will leave behind. If "Sailing to Byzantium" encapsulates Yeats's vision of eternity—paradise, even—what exactly is that eternity?

In "Sailing to Byzantium," that paradise is artifice, "the artifice of eternity" (24) in which the narrator can live forever as a mechanical bird "of hammered gold and gold enameling" (28). Indeed, much of the eternity of Byzantium is hammered. The image "Byzantium" itself conjures is one of flattened artifice: mosaics fashioned from various tesserae which, once hammered firmly in place, bear the faces of late antiquity. For Yeats, the image of the hammer is one which speaks to his literary, philosophical, and political interests. To quote a 1919 article for the *Irish Statesman*:

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[80] We may also consider fairyland as embodying artificial qualities since it is constructed and unnatural (meaning not of the natural world). Further, we may also consider magic as a merging of both the natural and unnatural with the end goal of a magical ritual functioning to create an artificial super-reality within our own.

[81] The cover depicts the fifteenth-century Thoor Ballylee (a towering colossus antithetical to its serene surroundings, rooted in history yet almost futuristic in execution) emerging as if from its own reflection in the pond below.

> One day when I was twenty-three or twenty-four this sentence seemed to form in my head, without my willing it, much as sentences form when we are half asleep: "Hammer your thoughts into unity." For days I could think of nothing else, and for years I tested all I did by that sentence. I had three interests: interest in a form of literature, in a form of philosophy, and a belief in nationality. None of these seemed to have anything to do with the other, but gradually my love of literature and my belief in nationality came together. Then for years I said to myself that these two had nothing to do with my form of philosophy, but that I had only to be sincere and to keep from constraining one by the other and they would become one interest. Now all three are, I think, one, or rather all three are a discrete expression of a single conviction. ("If I Were Four and Twenty" 1)

The "hammered gold" of "Sailing to Byzantium," therefore, refers not only to the physical object of the mechanical bird but to the eternal hammered unity of Yeats's literary, philosophical, and nationalistic beliefs. In considering the conclusion of Yeats's article, however, we must pause at the nature of this unity. For Yeats, in 1919, "unity" is the weaving together of the political and the spiritual. As articulated in the conclusion of "If I Were Four and Twenty": "I would begin another epoch by recommending to the nation a new doctrine, that of unity of being" (21).

As Roger Griffin notes, the palingenetic mythos central to fascist ideology is not always concerned with a return to an idealized *ethnocentric* past, but a return to an idealized *mythic* past. The "unity of being" which Yeats espoused in 1919, therefore, does not merely represent nationalistic unity, but a spiritual unity with nationalistic ends. Yeats's "new doctrine" proposes a future epoch in which literature, philosophy, esoteric spirituality, and nationalism may be hammered into unity like the golden bird of Byzantium. Freed from the "tattered coat" ("Sailing to Byzantium" 10) and the soul "fastened to the body of a dying animal" (22) the golden bird

may sing out through antiquity and beyond. Yet this future of hammered gold is not a fixed "eternity." Yeats's vision of history is never a linear one. Whereas the Yeats of "Sailing to Byzantium" envisioned a possible eternity of artifice, the Yeats of *A Vision* would prophesy an eternity of liminal spaces constantly eclipsing one another.

Part 2: *The Winding Stair* (1928-1934)

Between the years 1928 and 1934 a massive geopolitical shift took form in Europe. With the Irish Free State newly established, Yeats ventured back and forth between Rapallo and Ireland, maintaining his role in the Irish Senate until he retired in 1928 (Mulhall). After battling a series of severe illnesses in the late 1920s and early '30s, Yeats, health fully restored by 1932, found a renewed motivation and enthusiasm for the radical politics which so sparked his heroic imagination in the '20s. In 1933, Yeats began working with a far-right paramilitary group called the Blueshirts. Though scholars debate whether or not the Blueshirts were truly a fascist organization,[82] it is clear that former IRA/Sinn Fein leader Eion O'Duffy organized and modeled the Blueshirts after other prominent European far-right ultranationalist groups.[83] In what would become one of the most highly debated collaborations of his career, Yeats wrote marching songs for the group before terminating his participation with them at the end of the year. The subject of numerous books and articles,[84] this period of Yeats's career is well-worn territory. Too frequently, however, scholars frame the entirety of Yeats's fascist leanings within this short period of time.

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[82] A longstanding debate. For more, see *The Irish Times* excerpt from *Saving the State* (2020).

[83] For example, using the term "shirts" to evoke Mussolini's Blackshirts and Hitler's Brownshirts, and even embracing the straight-arm Roman salute (see images in Manning's *The Blueshirts*).

[84] See Connor Cruise O'Brien's essay "Passion and Cunning," which Maddox refers to as "a harsh and unforgiving look at Yeats's flirtation with fascism" (233), and Elizabeth Cullingford's *Yeats and Politics in the 1930s*, among others.

Such a tidy approach also frames Yeats's break with the Blueshirts as evidence of a disavowal of fascism. However, when considered through the lens of Yeats's spiritually aristocratic authoritarian vision, a vision concerned with "heroic" politics ushering in a "despotic rule of the educated classes" (qtd. in Maddox 271),[85] the "Blueshirt episode" offers insight into an ever-unfolding engagement with fascist aesthetics throughout Yeats's career.

Whether or not the Blueshirts "count" as a fascist organization is a particularly generative question in relation to Yeats's fascist sympathies. "The Blueshirt Episode," as it has been called, is the fulcrum around which the oft-used term "flirtation" pivots. Yet an examination of Yeats's political interests post-Blueshirts[86] (including joining the Eugenics Society and heralding Raymond B. Cattell's *The Fight for Our National Intelligence*[87]) demonstrates a continued engagement with the same foundational ideology currently informing the politics of Mussolini's Italy and Germany's newly formed Third Reich. Might we consider, to quote McCormack, the unsettling implications that "one could despise the Blueshirts in the name of higher fascism" (McCormack 9)? As Brenda Maddox observes, Yeats left the Blueshirts after realizing that the party "neither could nor would achieve his ideals of a disciplined, cultured way of life" (Maddox 274). Maddox lays the blame on O'Duffy, evoking O'Duffy's blank stare as:

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[85] From a 1933 letter to Olivia Shakespear. The quote in full is as follows: "Politics are growing heroic… A Fascist opposition is forming behind the scenes to be ready should some tragic situation develop. I find myself constantly urging the despotic rule of the educated classes as the only end to our troubles" (qtd. in Maddox 271).

[86] Maddox, referring to Cattell's text, states: "Yeats loved it… Cattell's argument accorded with his own fears as a member of 'one of the great stocks of Europe,'" further noting that Yeats not only "loved" Cattell's text, but "wrote to compliment the author" (336).

[87] A text applauding Germany's 1933 eugenic sterilization law as a "positive emphasis on racial improvement" (qtd. in Maddox 336).

> [Yeats] fresh from publishing *A Vision*…launched into an eloquent lecture on the need to abolish parliamentary government…[and] outlined his scheme for a hierarchical state, ruled by the educated classes, each district to be in the hands of its ablest men. (272)

O'Duffy, Maddox concludes, could not follow the intellectual trajectory of Yeats's "eloquent lecture," thus halting any future collaboration between the two. "It was not a meeting of the minds," Maddox assesses, as "O'Duffy did not understand a word Yeats was saying" (272). Yeats, following the ill-fated meeting, would not be the "philosopher of the Blueshirt movement" (272). O'Duffy was not interested in Yeats's vision of the "creative freedom…a leadership drawn from an educated minority" (273) would provide. To quote Maddox, the "heart of Yeats's disagreement with democratic government was aristocratic" (273). We may therefore conclude that a similar disagreement was at the heart of his rupture with O'Duffy. Yeats's spiritual elitism, a complex philosophy that expanded beyond the nationalist interests of paramilitary groups in Ireland, may have ended his time with the Blueshirts, but it would continue to inform his work for the remainder of his career.

The contradiction between Yeats's fervor for the fascist cause and what scholars deem his subsequent disillusionment is powerfully exposed by the juxtaposition of two events in Yeats's life: the 1933 publication of *The Winding Stair* and the 1934 production of *The Countess Cathleen* in Nazi-dominated Germany. For Yeats, the early 1930s were a time of renewed vigor for both fascist aesthetics and Eastern spirituality.[88] As a means of exploring this transnational overlap of thematic interests, I propose an examination of two poems from *The Winding Stair*,

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[88] As Ragini Mohite observes, while "Yeats's interest in Eastern art and spirituality spanned the course of his life…his engagement with Indian spirituality burst forth most productively in the periods around his interaction with Mohini Chatterjee, Rabindranath Tagore, and Shri Purohit Swami" (Mohite 67).

"Mohini Chatterjee" and "Byzantium," while maintaining a critical eye on Yeats's brief yet troubling literary encounter with the Third Reich.

The Winding Stair

Yeats's next collection of poetry after *The Tower* (1928) was 1933's *The Winding Stair*. Poised between *The Tower* and Yeats's later, more cynical poems (discussed in the third portion of this chapter), *The Winding Stair* invites scholars to explore Yeats's shifting artistic and political ideologies at a time when his early interest in Mussolini transformed into a more "heroic" political vision. As Brenda Maddox notes, it was "midsummer of 1933" when Yeats "believed he had found a way to translate his vision into action" (Maddox 270) by aligning himself with the Blueshirts. "The Blueshirt Episode," however, represents only a small window into Yeats's maturing poetic vision. To analyze the period more fully, we may turn to *The Winding Stair*. Taking "Mohini Chatterjee" and "Byzantium" as examples of the transnationality of Yeats's evolving poetics, we also note the same preoccupation with violence, karmic rebirth, and artifice that characterize "Sailing to Byzantium."

"Mohini Chatterjee" represents one of Yeats's most direct reflections on karmic rebirth.[89] Though the poem was written in the late 1920s, Yeats's first encounter with the titular subject of the poem was far earlier in his career, at the height of his Theosophical and occult interests in the 1880s. According to Richard Ellmann, the Dublin Hermetic Society, which "met for the first time on June 16, 1885, with Yeats as Chairman," was "assembled to discuss the wonders of Eastern philosophy" (41). In the weeks following the initial meeting, the Society invited a "Brahmin

[89] In *Yeats and the Poetry of Death*, Ramazani quotes Ellmann as stating that Yeats's "'defence of reincarnation is scarcely that of a believer'" (qtd. in Ramazani 207). Though I disagree somewhat with this statement, in this chapter I approach Yeats's view on karmic rebirth in terms of his intellectual interests and how I read those interests mapping onto his poetry, rather than assuming anything concrete about his personal belief system.

Theosophist named Mohini M. Chatterjee" as a guest lecturer (41). Chatterjee had quite an impact on Yeats. The poem "Mohini Chatterjee," penned and published many years after Chatterjee resigned from the Theosophical Society and left Europe swathed in scandal,[90] speaks to Chatterjee's longstanding influence on Yeats's imagination. Yeats's decision to include the poem in *The Winding Stair* reveals a renewed interest in Indian spirituality sparked by his recent encounter with Shri Purohit Swami.[91]

Yeats's spiritual interests, particularly his time with the Theosophical Society and his encounters with Chatterjee, are well documented. However, comparatively little has been written about the poem "Mohini Chatterjee." First composed in 1928, the same year as the publication of *The Tower*, "Mohini Chatterjee" is situated in *The Winding Stair* directly preceding the poem "Byzantium" (an echo of *The Tower*'s "Sailing to Byzantium"). "Mohini Chatterjee," so named for the man whom Yeats credited for his "first meeting with a philosophy that confirmed [his] vague speculations and seemed at once logical and boundless" (*Autobiographies* 98) is a short two-stanza dialogic poem between a boy, presumably a younger incarnation of Yeats himself, and a Brahmin (Chatterjee). The poem opens with a short declarative statement: "I asked if I should pray" ("Mohini Chatterjee" line 1). What follows in the first stanza is a reflection on karmic rebirth, an "attempt" on the part of Chatterjee, as Ragini Mohite notes, "to provide a discursive place of comfort…to a young boy at a turbulent time of his life" (125). The remainder of the stanza encompasses only the Brahmin's reply to the speaker's question.

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[90] Chatterjee's resignation and return to Calcutta were considered a fall from grace. As Madame Blavatsky wrote to A. P. Sinnett, Chatterjee "was spoiled by male and female adulation, by incessant flatter and his own weakness" (qtd. in Sinnett 484).

[91] To quote Maddox, "Yeats fell for the wise man of the East with a characteristic lack of reserve" (283).

Though Yeats opens the poem without the question itself, merely a reflection in passive voice—"I asked if I should pray"—he nevertheless reproduces the Brahmin's reply in quotes:

But the Brahmin said,

"pray for nothing, say

Every night in bed,

'I have been a king,

I have been a slave,

Nor is there anything,

Fool, rascal, knave,

That I have not been,

And yet upon my breast

A myriad heads have lain.'" (2-11)

The poem ends by endowing the "I" of the poem with a voice. Notably, a matured voice results, disconnected through time from the boy who asked his guru if he should pray:

I add in commentary,

"Old lovers yet may have

All that time denied –

Grave is heaped on grave

That they be satisfied –

Over the blackened earth

The old troops parade,

Birth is heaped on Birth

That such cannonade

May thunder time away,

Birth-hour and death-hour meet,

Or, as great sages say,

Men dance on deathless feet." (16-28)

In both stanzas, Yeats presents his own meditation on Chatterjee with the Brahmin's voice mediated through the poet's own. "Mohini Chatterjee," with its Socratic dialectical exchange, the Brahmin-guru figure, and what Ashim Dutta refers to as a mix of "Nietzschean 'eternal recurrence' and Hindu liberatory reincarnation" (Dutta 28-29), should not be considered an attempt, on Yeats's part, to perfectly articulate Hindu philosophy. Rather, the poem elucidates the ways in which Yeats transmuted Eastern thought (mediated by Western Theosophy) into his own spiritual system. As Dutta notes, "Yeats seems to be more interested in the process of reincarnation than in its end-purpose in orthodox Indian theory: liberation" (Dutta 29). This longstanding interest in the cycles of reincarnation will be sustained for the remainder of Yeats's career.

That "Mohini Chatterjee" first appeared in the 1929 edition of "A Packet for Ezra Pound" further emphasizes that karmic rebirth formed an ever-evolving theme throughout Yeats's life.[92] As Dutta notes, "'Mohini Chatterjee' might be read as Yeats's creative appropriation of the Indian thoughts imparted by Chatterjee for his own system" (Dutta 28) as it developed in *A Vision*. It is unsurprising that "Mohini Chatterjee" would accompany the original and more explicitly authoritarian edition of *A Vision*. As Ellmann notes, "after occultism, the second direction in which [Yeats's] energies flowed was towards a vigorous nationalism" (Ellmann 44). Yeats's far-right political interests often coincided with a renewed enthusiasm for India. Rather, as Dutta astutely observes, around his own "internalized or self-projected, India," an India which "played a powerful role in [his] artistic as well as ideological self-construction at that formative phase of his career" (Dutta 36). This imagined India "of poets, philosophers, and rishis" also played a role in Yeats's political vision for "the Ireland of faeries, mystics, and bards that he imaginatively adored and desperately wanted to revive" (Dutta 36). This fantasy of India was not a collective of "poets, philosophers, and rishis" but a hierarchical society ruled by "the high-cultural, intellectual elitism implied in Brahmanite asceticism" (Dutta 36) and bears similarity to other mystico-fascist utopias of the interwar period.[93] Crypto-utopias were clearly on Yeats's mind when he published *The Winding Stair*, as evidenced by the poem which follows "Mohini Chatterjee" in the collection.

"Byzantium"

[92] Despite its thematic linkage to "A Packet for Ezra Pound," the poem did not find a permanent home until *The Winding Stair*, a decision which perhaps indicates an intuition, on Yeats's part, that the poem encompassed a spiritual truth separate from the psychical or speculative elements of 1925's *A Vision*.

[93] For further reading, see the works of Julius Evola.

Written only two years after "Mohini Chatterjee," "Byzantium" directly follows it in *The Winding Stair*. In title alone, the poem evokes "Sailing to Byzantium," the central poem of *The Tower*. Yet aside from the titles and five-stanza *ottava rima* structure, initially the poems bear little overt resemblance to one another. The thematic similarity between the poems begins with the reference to "The Emperor" in the first stanza of "Byzantium," but doesn't fully reveal itself until the third stanza in which Yeats overtly references the same mechanical bird "of hammered gold and gold enameling" of "Sailing to Byzantium":[94]

> Miracle, bird or golden handiwork
>
> More miracle than bird or handiwork,
>
> Planted on the starlit golden bough[.] (17-19)

The bird of "Byzantium," though it still seems to sing of "what is past, or passing, or to come," does so with a more sinister valence:

> Can like the cocks of Hades crow,
>
> Or, by the moon embittered, scorn aloud
>
> In glory of changeless metal
>
> Common bird or petal
>
> And all complexities of mire or blood. (20-24)

[94] Foster suggests that the mechanical bird of "Byzantium" may be a response to Sturge Moore's "querulous remark," regarding the bird of "Sailing to Byzantium," that "'a goldsmith's bird is as much nature as a man's body.'" According to Foster, the bird "reappears, defined (in deference to Sturge Moore) in clear contradiction to 'natural' life, but it rapidly gives way to the spellbinding supernatural image of a soul dancing in a purifying fire" (Foster 402).

Rereading the first two stanzas considering this revelation that the "miracle" bird "in glory of changeless metal" sings not of pretty fortunes yet to come, but functions "like the cocks of Hades" lends an even darker tone to the already elegiac poem.

Understanding Yeats's concept of the world of faerie as merged with the underworld is necessary for any analysis of a Yeatsian fantasy realm. While "Sailing to Byzantium" was replete with imagery of "holy fire," "gold mosaic," and the "Grecian goldsmith['s]…hammered gold and gold enameling" of the bird atop the "golden bough," "Byzantium" offers an inverse of these images: a dark reflection in which even a roaring fire appears ghostly, "flames that no faggot feeds… / An agony of flame that cannot singe a sleeve" ("Byzantium" 26). Although "Sailing to Byzantium" is itself a reflection on mortality and therefore not without its own moribund imagery—the "dying generations," the "paltry" "aged man" like a "tattered coat upon a stick," and most notably, the depiction of humanness as that of a heart "sick with desire…fastened to a dying animal" ("Sailing to Byzantium")—Yeats ends the poem with the promise of eternity, albeit an artificial one. As Jahan Ramazani notes, the physical structures of "Sailing to Byzantium" "promise transcendence of generation and decay" (*Yeats and the Poetry of Death* 159) but "Byzantium," once inhabited, evokes a ghost-realm rather than a paradise.

The ghost-realm of "Byzantium," however, may not be so far from our own. In *The Tower*, Yeats wrote of having "sailed the seas" before arriving at the "holy city of Byzantium." Such a description implies a slippage between the physical and astral realms as easily as it suggests a metaphor for death. As Foster observes, "Yeats argued that psychical researchers and anthropologists were confronting the same reality…he [thus] felt it equally important to assert the seriousness of spiritualist inquiry" and the notion that "as in folktales…the dead are all around us" (Foster 525). The shades of "Byzantium," therefore may surround us all, omnipresent

yet detached from the "fury and the mire of human veins" (8). "Byzantium," we gather, exists as an intermediary space. According to Joseph Lennon, the Tír na nÓg established by Irish Theosophists in the late 1890s "might be best understood as the mystical principle" analogous to the Tibetan bardo or, as Lennon notes (using Blavatsky's terminology), "the Tibetan 'Devachan,' or the 'Abode of the Gods,' where beings exist between incarnations" (Lennon 295). The metaphor of the intermediary state becomes more explicit when we consider Brenda Maddox's assertion that, in his notes, Yeats wrote of choosing Byzantium "in the year A.D. 500 as the time and place he would most like to have lived—that is, halfway between East and West and halfway between Christ and the first millennium" (Maddox 262-263). Indeed, the "halfway" state of the poem is palpable from the start.

Opening the poem at dusk, Yeats immediately establishes a transitional state, eschewing the glittering gold and "holy fire" of "Sailing to Byzantium" for ever-falling darkness. The poem is replete with echoes of Yeats's previous work. Readers re-encounter not only the golden bird and Byzantium itself, but the mummy-cloth of "All Souls' Night,"[95] as well as imagery of "winding stairs, golden boughs, religious mosaics, and transfiguring dances" (Foster 404). These echoes, however, exist in a distorted shadow-realm in which the difference between "man or shade" is not easily discernable:

> Before me floats an image, man or shade,
>
> Shade more than man, more image than shade;
>
> For Hades' bobbin bound in mummy-cloth

[95] The final poem of *The Tower*, "All Souls' Night" first appeared as the epilogue to 1925's *A Vision* (*AVA*) and remained as the epilogue in the 1937 revision (*AVB*). For my analysis of "All Souls' Night" in relation to *AVB*, see page 34 of this chapter.

May unwind the winding path[.] (9-12)

As the second stanza progresses, the mummy-cloth imagery becomes more visceral, calling to mind not only the mummy cloth but the gaping mouth of the mummy itself. Here, in the end of the second stanza, Yeats evokes a monstruous presence, an entity he refers to as "the Superhuman":

A mouth that has no moisture and no breath

Breathless mouths may summon;

I hail the Superhuman;

I call it death-in-life and life-in death. (13-16)

While the imagery of this stanza overtly calls to mind an Egyptian influence, the term "Superhuman" gives us pause. Despite the Nietzschean valence, Yeats's use of "human" rather than "man" is not insignificant.

Returning to the Tibetan tradition, we may consider the "Superhuman" of "Byzantium" in context with the use of the term in W. Y. Evans-Wentz's 1927 translation of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*:

> The minor deities, heroes, dakinis (or "fairies"), goddesses, lords of death, rakshasas, demons, spirits, and all others, correspond to definite human thoughts, passions, and impulses, high and low, human and sub-human and superhuman, in karmic form, as they take shape from the seeds of thought forming the percipient's consciousness-content. (32)

Evans-Wentz[96] refers to the notion of the "superhuman" multiple times throughout the text. In one instance he specifically uses the term in relation to the figure of the guru, which, in a footnote, he refers to as a "superhuman guru of the Divyaugha order" (161). This footnote appears in relation to movement through the twilight of the "after death realm" as the soul is instructed: "If thou hast a divine guru, pray to him" (161). Considering the "superhuman guru" in relation not only to "Byzantium" but also "Mohini Chatterjee," *The Winding Stair* demonstrates how the two poems are connected by evoking a "superhuman" guru or karmic rebirth[97] as well as through the imagery of men who "dance on deathless feet" ("Mohini Chatterjee" 28) and the spirits "dying into a dance" ("Byzantium" 29).

The Winding Stair's publication in 1933 functions as its own karmic return in which Yeats evokes images, themes, and figures from his younger years and revives them in his present context. The imagery of the title alone, that of a spiral staircase connecting the top and bottom of a tower, borrows from the gyres of *A Vision* and promises a passage from a lower state to a higher one (and the inverse). Further, the decision to evoke Chatterjee is interesting in more ways than one, for in the early 1930s there arose another echo from the past: a renewed interest in Yeats's *The Countess Cathleen*. While the connection between the inaugural play of the Irish Literary Theatre and the Brahmin may not seem explicit, Mohite nevertheless situates this play within the swirl of Yeats's first meeting with Chatterjee and interest in Vedantic spirituality, noting that while there may not be "an overt influence of Indian spirituality on *The Countess Cathleen*" (87), we may nevertheless "observe an element of *Advaita*, or non-dualism, in the

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[96] The term "superhuman" in reference to Tibetan deities or gurus persists in modern translations of the *Bardo Thodol* and appears (in multiple instances) in Robert Thurman's 2011 translation.

[97] The "Birth…heaped on Birth" of "Mohini Chatterjee" (23) and the "death-in-life and life-in-death" of "Byzantium" (16).

narrative of Cathleen's story" (88). Further, Mohite notes, "a concern with the soul of Cathleen at a time when the image and spiritual ideas of Chatterjee were relatively immediate in his mind would provide fertile ground for the development of Yeats's thoughts on spiritual aristocracies, hierarchies, and inheritance" (88). These "spiritual aristocracies" would continue to fascinate Yeats well into the 1930s.

By the mid-1930s, Yeats once again revisited these themes of spiritual hierarchies in his "introductory essays to *An Indian Monk* (1932), *The Holy Mountain* (1935), and *The Mandukya Upanishad* (1935)" (Mohite 93) and in his political life. A 1933 "special legislation" in Germany which would "enable old families to go on living where their fathers lived" (qtd. in Foster II 628) drew his attention. Five years later, in an interview with the *Irish Times*, Yeats referred to this legislation as a potential solution for avoiding what he deemed the "destruction of 'honored houses' taking place all over Ireland" (Foster II 628). As Foster confirms, the legislation to which Yeats referred was the Hereditary Farm Law (1933), which "reaffirm[ed] primogeniture in order to keep rural Aryan families on the land" (Foster 628). By the time the interview was given in 1938, Foster clarifies, "it had been joined by a series of infamous measures, involving the expropriation and persecution of Jews and others," making Yeats's statement "at best…unforgivably myopic" (Foster 628). Nevertheless, in the early to mid-1930s, with Yeats reevoking Chatterjee, and his work with Shri Purohit Swami fresh in mind, his thoughts on "spiritual aristocracies, hierarchies, and inheritance" would certainly have sparked an interest in legislation like the Hereditary Farm Law.

The currents of artistic exchange which shaped the modernist imagination inevitably also prompted exchange with politically radical ideology. While most scholars focusing on Yeats's interest in fascism draw specifically on the "Blueshirt Episode" and his praise of Mussolini,

Yeats's engagement with fascist aesthetics and ideology extended beyond Italy and Ireland. Yeats's interest in German literature, particularly Goethe, Nietzsche and Oswald Spengler, primed him for a late-in-life engagement with the Third Reich, a challenging moment in his biography which serves as a pivotal example of how transnational modernism, buffeted by an increasingly globalized world, ushered in an era of fascist intellectualism. Although Yeats terminated his work with the Blueshirts within the year, he did not disavow fascist politics. Indeed, the year 1934 presents scholars with an incident so troubling it has been frequently omitted from scholarly analysis and biographies.

The Countess Cathleen and the Goethe-Plakette

On 14 February 1934, in Nazi-dominated Germany, the Frankfurter Schauspielhaus hosted a production of a German translation of Yeats's *The Countess Cathleen* (McCormack 132-164). Only two weeks after the one-year anniversary of Hitler's ascent to the role of Chancellor, the production formed one of the early Nazi theatrical events overseen during the interwar period. *The Countess Cathleen* ran for five nights; on opening night, the city of Frankfurt-am-Main awarded Yeats, in absentia, the Goethe-Plakette, an honor which came with a substantial financial reward (McCormack 132-164). Little is known about the production, aside from the three "principal officers" involved, all of whom were "convinced Nazis [who] pursued a policy of strong antisemitism" (Jochum 284).[98]

The production of *The Countess Cathleen* and the Goethe-Plakette award remains, both within Yeats scholarship and the history of Nazi theatre during the interwar period, rarely, if ever,

[98] Jochum attempts to soften this statement by claiming that Krebs, Meissner, and Bethge, among Nazis, "were certainly not the worst of the lot" (Jochum 284), a statement which does little but distract from the previously aforementioned ultranationalist and antisemitic politics.

mentioned. Richard Ellmann, in fact, eliminates the event and the award entirely from his biography *Yeats: The Man and the Masks*. Roy Foster, in *W.B. Yeats: A Life*, relegates the incident to three sentences, briefly stating that Yeats "was vague about the provenance of the Goethe-Plakette medal," while concluding that Yeats's "views on National Socialism in the early 1930s are less easy to trace" (468) than his overt admiration of Mussolini. The only scholar to devote any substantial investigation into this event is W. J. McCormack in his study *Blood Kindred*, a text which Yeats scholars have either ignored or (as in the case of Jochum) attempted to refute on the basis that McCormack's text is both a misunderstanding of the events and "scurrilous allegation" (Jochum 281) alleging Yeats's ideological complicity with Naziism. However, in referring to Yeats's engagement with both Italian and German ultranationalism as "passing fascist sympathies" (Jochum 281) or as a "flirtation"[99] we do ourselves a disservice. Without analyzing the whole of Yeats's works (his thoughts, words, and deeds, literary, philosophical, and political, "hammer[ed] into unity" just as he himself suggested in 1919[100]), we cannot fully appreciate the complexity or the nuance of his oeuvre. Shielding our analysis from the troubling aspects of Yeats's biography reduces insight into the complex cross-cultural

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[99] Perhaps the single most overused word in all Yeats criticism. The most egregious example may be found in Brenda Maddox's *Yeats's Ghosts*: *The Secret Life of WB Yeats*, in which Maddox uses the word three times in two pages and pithily refers to "Yeats's fascist flirtation" as a "summer romance" (274). As McCormack notes, jokingly blaming the lure of alliteration for the word's persistence: "Among the metaphors for politics repeatedly applied by critics and biographers, none has been more tenacious than his 'flirtation' with fascism…it is the baptismal name under which the subject is rescued from original sin" (McCormack 67). Yet, as McCormack argues, the term is woefully misguided as it implies "an interest that is ultimately unsustained" and "[an interest] that has no intention of sustaining itself" (67). As this chapter argues, Yeats, both implicitly and explicitly, sustained his interest in fascism throughout his career.

[100] To quote Paul Stanfield's *Yeats and Politics in the 1930s*: "Poet, patriot, mystic: these were the three callings that Yeats claimed in 1919 to have hammered into unity, into a single conviction… Yeats's political beliefs, like his spiritual ones, were not auxiliary poses to the main pose, but hard-won out of much thought, experience and defeated hope, and in the end indissolubly part of his imagination. By reason of his own effort to hammer his thoughts into unity, any study of the poet's politics necessarily becomes a study of the poet's whole thought" (Stanfield 4).

exchange of ideas that both enhanced and muddied political discourse leading up to the Second World War.

Examining Yeats's position at this turbulent moment in history also invites commentary on the political landscapes of interwar literary modernism and of Ireland. As McCormack notes, in 1934 Yeats was the only foreign recipient of the Goethe award[101] (135). However, Yeats was not the only Western playwright (nor even the only Irish playwright) to have a play produced by the Third Reich. According to William Shrier's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, performances of a selection of George Bernard Shaw's plays also occurred in Nazi Germany, perhaps "because he poked fun at Englishmen and lampooned democracy" (Shrier 255). We must also consider the role of Irish politics in this delicate balance of interwar political alliances. Referring to an incident which occurred in April of 1939, Shrier quotes a speech by Hitler in which he sarcastically performs a "paunchy" rebuttal to a telegram from American President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Though the speech occurred on the 28th of April, a few months before the German invasion of Poland and a few months following Yeats's death, it nevertheless elucidates Hitler's position on Ireland in the late 1930s:

> I must draw Mr. Roosevelt's attention to one or two historical errors. He mentioned Ireland, for instance, and asks for a statement that Germany will not attack Ireland. Now, I have just read a speech by De Valera, the Irish Taoiseach, in which, strangely enough, and contrary to Mr. Roosevelt's opinion, he does not charge Germany with oppressing Ireland but he reproaches England with subjecting Ireland to continuous aggression. (Shrier 491-492)

[101] See *Blood Kindred* for the full list of recipients and their pedigrees (135).

Later Irish neutrality aside, in the early 1930s several Irish modernists, notably James Joyce and Oscar Wilde, were flagged by the Reich Chamber of Culture as decadent and, as such, an ideological danger to the Reich. Why Yeats was chosen for the Goethe prize, and why *The Countess Cathleen*, the inaugural play of the Irish Literary Theatre, was produced at all, is a fascinating and troubling moment in the history of Yeats's career and deserves a place in the scholarly conversation.[102]

We may consider for our present purposes this moment in Yeats's biography as the essential insight into a career formed by transnational exchange. The troubling fact that this exchange resulted in engagement, both active (writing marching songs for the Blueshirts) and passive (approving of the Nazi production of *Cathleen* and accepting the Goethe-Plakette in absentia) points to the mercurial nature of political ideologies at a such moments of profound geopolitical instability.[103] Is it possible that Yeats did not fully understand the implications of such an association? Might we consider, to repurpose Matthew Rose's observation of Oswald Spengler, that Yeats "thought he could see into the future, but in the summer of 193[4], he seemed blind to the present" (Rose 18)?[104] The 1930s also functioned as a time in which, as Caleb Johnson notes, "esoteric fascism" thrived in Europe[105] and abundant discourses of cyclical

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[102] McCormack suggests it was the "Faustian element" of the play which "[linked] it to Frankfurt's preoccupation with Goethe in 1933-1934" (159).

[103] Though, as McCormack observes, "Yeats's behavior challenges the accepted distinction between 'active' and 'passive,' unless one accepts that, in relation to Nazi Germany, he was mentally active and physically passive—an unsatisfactory interim solution" (163).

[104] Original citation as follows: "Oswald Spengler thought he could see into the future, but in the summer of 1933, he seemed blind to the present" (Rose 18).

[105] For further reading, see "A Dark Enlightenment: Julius Evola and the Temptation of Esoteric Fascism" (ProQuest Dissertations & Theses 2022).

histories prophesied an inevitable and catastrophic decline of the decadent West.[106] In large part, palingenesis lies at the core of all interwar mystic or magical systems.[107] It is easy to see, therefore, why such systems would appeal to the fascist eye.[108]

Decline and revivification preoccupied much of Yeats's thoughts in the 1930s. Both physically, with the restoration of his health and his virility via the Steinach procedure,[109] but also artistically and spiritually via his work with Shri Purohit Swami. Yeats underwent a personal revolution, reexamining earlier poetic themes and imbuing new life into his art. Both Indian and German spiritual and philosophical influences inspired this revolution. One of the many artistic restorations Yeats undertook during this period was a *re*vision of *A Vision*. Exploring the ways in which Nietzsche functions within both *AVA* and *AVB* may provide insight into Yeats's

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[106] Mark Sedgwick cites René Guénon's Traditionalist text *Orient et Occident* (1924) as "a call for saving the West from collapse by means of Oriental tradition" (25). Rather than a call to convert or Easternize the West, however, Sedgwick quotes Guénon as seeking to "'restore to the West an appropriate traditional civilization'" (qtd. in Sedgwick 25). The method through which Guénon hoped this would be accomplished was through the implementation of an "'intellectual'…spiritual, metaphysical" elite who, through the transmission of secret "'Oriental doctrines'" would transform the West, thus saving it from its current trajectory of decline (26). This notion of an intellectual spiritual aristocracy informed by "Oriental doctrines" as saviors of the West is alarmingly similar to Yeats's preoccupation with elite hierarchies, decline and rebirth, and Vedantic philosophy.

[107] As Claire Nally notes: "Aligning the history of decay and renewal with Spengler's palingenesis reveals a common ground with the politics of Nazi Germany: the myth of renewal, of rebirth" (331-332). While this revolutionary vision is more in line with Nazi politics, as Nally observes, the palingenetic myth at the core of fascist ideology "can be associated just as much with mystical…as secular realities (for example the New Germany).… [It is] a generic term for the vision of a radically new beginning which follows a period of destruction or perceived dissolution" (331-332). Indeed, much of Yeats's oeuvre can be described as palingenetic in nature.

[108] Further comparisons abound between Yeatsian philosophy as articulated in *A Vision* and mystico-fascism . All far-right esotericism roots history within myth, rather than myth within history, like *AVA*'s "history grown symbolic, the biography changed into a myth" (176), seeking to accomplish this mythologization of history through the use of duality and opposition by creating a system which unites symbolism, tradition, elitism, and magic to produce real effects on a global political scale. All fascist mythoi relies on the theme of renewal and rebirth, drawing inspiration from Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico and Oswald Spengler.

[109] A partial vasectomy which promised to renew sexual vitality (Kozminski).

engagement with the Third Reich, demonstrating how his time post-Blueshirts *shifted* rather than disavowed his already established fascistic aesthetics.

Nietzsche's influence is felt throughout Yeats's twentieth-century texts by way of both the symbolism of Yeats's poetry and Nietzsche's literal presence in *A Vision*.[110] In both editions of *A Vision*, Nietzsche first appears in the poem "The Wheel and the Phases of the Moon." In *AVA*, this poem is the first text appearing in "Book I: What the Caliph Partly Learned"; in *AVB*, it appears following the narrative poem "Stories of Michael Robartes and His Friends: An extract of a record made by his pupils." "The Wheel and the Phases of the Moon," a short dialogic poem between the spirits Michael Robartes and Owen Aherne, articulates the complex moon phases which Yeats will later fully elucidate in Book I. Nietzsche, representing Phase 12, appears as the only historical figure among a coterie of Greek mythological heroes:

> Athena takes Achilles by the hair,
>
> Hector is in the dust, Nietzsche is born,
>
> Because the hero's crescent is the twelfth (*AVB* 42-43)

Later in the text, Yeats specifies that Phase 12 "is called the 'Forerunner'" as it is "fragmentary and violent" (*AVB* 95). Phase 12 represents the end of "the phases of actions where the man mainly defines himself by his practical relations" and the beginning of "the phases where he defines himself mainly through an image of the mind" (*AVB* 95). Yeats continues to delineate the individual of this phase, echoing Nietzschean transvaluation of values in stating that "there is

[110] By all accounts, it was Irish American lawyer John Quinn who first introduced Yeats to Nietzsche in the early 1900s. According to Foster, "from 1902-1903 [Yeats] read the German philosopher intensively for the first time" after Quinn gifted the poet a copy of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (Foster I 272). That said, Yeats seemed to have been at least familiar with Nietzsche before 1902, perhaps "acquired second-hand" from Arthur Symons's article "Nietzsche on Tragedy" (Foster I 272).

now the greatest possible belief in all values created by personality" (*AVB* 95). Further, Yeats states, Phase 12 "is therefore before all else the phase of the hero, of the man who overcomes himself" (*AVB* 95).

When considering how Nietzsche functions within *A Vision*, it is pertinent to draw our attention to the differing ways in which he appears near the end of both *AVA* and *AVB* in the sections "Dove or Swan." In *AVA*, the Übermensch is evoked, if only in passing:

> When the new era comes bringing its stream of irrational force…it must awake into life, not Dürer's, nor Blake's, nor Milton's human form divine—nor yet Nietzsche's superman…but organic groups, covens of physical or intellectual kin melted out of the frozen mass. (*AVA* 176)

Interestingly, though the Übermensch is named, Yeats specifies that the "new era" requires "covens" rather than a "superman." "Covens," he clarifies, specifically "of physical or intellectual kin." Yeats's notion of "covens" of "intellectual kin" reflects his longstanding belief in the need for spiritual hierarchies, intellectual aristocracies, and rule by an "educated minority." Such a desire informed not only the occultism of his early years but continued to manifest through his later preoccupation with elitism and eugenics in the 1930s. By the time Yeats published *AVB*, however, he notably removed this statement from the revised text, evoking Nietzsche again, but this time to different ends.

AVB omits "Nietzsche's superman," alongside any mention of the "intellectual" covens which the new era must give rise to. Instead, Yeats reflects on a "new emotion" expressed through the "*Creative Mind*." In so doing, he replaces the "superman" with Nietzsche's eternal recurrence:

> Certain men have sought to express the new emotion through the *Creative Mind*, though fit instruments of expression do not yet exist, and so to establish, in the midst of our ever more abundant primary information, antithetical wisdom; but such men, Blake, Coventry Patmore at moments, Nietzsche, are full of morbid excitement and few in number… They were begotten in the Sistine Chapel and still dream that all can be transformed if they be but emphatic; yet Nietzsche, when the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence drifts before his eyes, knows for an instant that nothing can be so transformed and is almost of the next gyre. (*AVB* 217)

The differences between the sections are stark, with *AVA* tinged not only by the rise of "covens" but by the notion, articulated earlier on the page, that "a decadence will descend… [and] what awaits us, being democratic and *primary*, may suggest bubbles in a frozen pond—mathematical Babylonian starlight" (*AVA* 176). This descent of decadence, however, is not the end but the beginning of a new era, a new era marked by "new races, as it were, seeking domination…history grown symbolic, the biography changed into a myth" (*AVA* 176). And though Yeats does not refer specifically to Nietzschean tragic joy, it nevertheless permeates the conclusion of *AVA*.

Though much has been written on the explicitly authoritarian tone inherent to *AVA*, it remains important to draw our attention to it. As Yeats continues to delineate the conclusion of the cycle, his prophesy becomes strongly fascistic in tone:

> During the period said to commence in 1927…must arise a form of philosophy, which will become religious and ethical… It will be concrete in expression, establish itself by immediate experience, seek no general agreement, make little of God or any exterior unity, and it will call that good which a man can contemplate himself as doing always and

> no other doing at all… Men will no longer separate the idea of God from that of human genius, human productivity in all forms. (*AVA* 177)

Further, though the following statement remains only in the galley proofs, it is nonetheless pertinent to consider:

> Victory bringing control of the world's surface must come to those who have made life a preparation for war and so established life in the terror and sweetness of solitude that every act of war is an act of creation and the solitude of each the tribal solitude. (*AVA* 320)

In 1925, Yeats deeply entangled his vision for the future in tragic joy—the "terror and sweetness" of the coming phase. We will further analyze how this vision shifted between 1925 and 1936 in section three of this chapter.

For our present purposes, we may restrict Nietzsche's influence on Yeats to the three themes already articulated: tragic joy (the heroic joy which emerges from within catastrophe), eternal recurrence (the cyclic nature of history), and transvaluation (the re-evaluation of formally sacred values towards historical progress). While Nietzsche's influence on Yeats, particularly his influence on the cyclic system of *A Vision*, is undoubtedly significant, I also do not want to overemphasize any individual philosopher or philosophical tradition. As Maddox articulates, the writing of *A Vision* was a collaborative effort. The text took shape not only though collaboration between Yeats and his wife George Hyde-Lees, who supposedly channeled the text from spirits, but in the merging of "the rituals of the Golden Dawn, the symbols of the tarot pack, lashings of Blake and bits of Freud, Boehme, Swedenborg, and Nietzsche" (Maddox 89), among others. For Maddox, this effort culminated in the creation of a shared "religion" unique to Yeats and George.

This analysis, however, considers the system of *A Vision* not so much as a religion but as a thought-system in which "Superhuman" forces of creativity, forces beyond mundane worldly values, engage and reengage endlessly in the creation and dissolution of historical cycles. The poet, therefore, is not himself the Übermensch but rather a conduit of these "Superhuman" creative energies.

Part 3: "The End of the Cycle" (1934-1939)

A Vision

Regardless of whether scholars view Yeats's fascist interests as a "flirtation" or as a complex and ever-unfolding refinement of mystico-fascist aesthetics, the period between *AVA* and *AVB* aligns most explicitly not only with Yeats's developing political ideas but with his most fervent engagement with Eastern spirituality. The ideas developed in *A Vision*, therefore, also provide an opportunity to examine the intersection between fascist discourse and transnational esoteric philosophy,[111] allowing us to examine the ways in which Yeats employs Orientalism (primarily through Hindu and Buddhist influence) as a method of endowing his Irish system with an idiosyncratic transnational spiritual philosophy.

Fascist esotericism in the interwar period employed a distinctive blend of Eastern and Western philosophies of decline and regeneration. Whereas revolutionary ultranationalism sought to accelerate the fascist cause through action, interwar fascist mystics generally took a more passive approach, couching their ideas in spiritual or philosophical treatises.[112] For the

[111] Claire Nally, in her introduction to "The Political Occult," quotes George Orwell's 1943 comment on the "link between Fascism and magic," that those "who dread the prospect of universal suffrage, popular education, freedom of thought, emancipation of women, will start off with a predilection towards secret cults" (qtd. in Nally 329).

[112] Beginning with René Guénon and culminating with Evola.

purposes of this argument, I offer two terms employed by Yeats in both poetic and personal correspondence throughout the 1930s: "Superhuman" and "heroic." While these terms may have originated in the interwar Western imagination with Nietzsche, both carry a transnational valence through Tibetan and Indian traditions. In particular, we may draw our attention to the notion, borrowed from India, of heroism as being ascetic in nature rather than boots-on-the-ground militancy, as offering potential insight into Yeats's philosophical disagreement with the Blueshirts. Yeats's vision of a "disciplined, cultured" Irish fascist movement, the absence of which Brenda Maddox considers the heart of Yeats's break with O'Duffy, prized the ascetic over the pugnacious. Borrowing again from India, caste is a unifying point in esoteric far-right philosophy of the 1930s.[113] The "heroic," for Yeats, did not necessarily signify action; rather, it signified refuge or retreat from the "hysterical" masses. We may arrive at this notion by returning to the observation that Yeats's imagined India consisted of a fantasized "high-cultural, intellectual elitism implied in Brahmanite asceticism" (Dutta 36) coupled with his comment that "politics have grown heroic."

A great deal of scholarly effort has gone into the attempt to note exactly how, when, in which texts, and why Yeats distanced himself from fascist ideology. For some, Yeats breaking with the Blueshirts represents just such a rupture; others, pointing to the changes and inconsistencies between *AVA* and *AVB*, consider it a gradual process. If, as Catherine E. Paul and Margaret Mills Harper claim in the 2008 introduction to *AVA*, Yeats was in the process of backtracking his earlier fascist sympathies when he revised *AVB* in 1937,[114] we must also

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[113] Particularly in the works of Evola.

[114] Though the introduction acknowledges that "Yeats's interest in fascism continued to develop after the first printing of *A Vision* as his reading in fascist philosophy and awareness of international fascist movements expanded," they also argue that by the publication of *AVB* his idealism with regard to fascism "had shifted" (xliv-xlv). Further, they claim that *AVB* contains but "traces of his faith in many of the doctrines of fascism," namely,

question why he continued to espouse eugenicist ideas even as late as 1939. Anthony Bradley suggests that Yeats "appears not to have understood the real world [sic] consequences of his endorsement of eugenics as late as 1939" (Bradley 152). Bradley evinces Yeats's political myopia, citing the Steinach operation, his "misplaced faith in bad medical science," and his "preoccupation" with "some impending apocalypse that will bring into being a more heroic Ireland than the bourgeois republic the Free State was well on its way to becoming" (152). Notably, these three seemingly incongruous preoccupations (eugenics, a revival of masculine virility, and an "impending apocalypse" which will usher in a new political order) are not markers of willful naiveté or the cloud of old age. Rather, each are well-established hallmarks of fascist ideology.[115]

We turn now to the end of the second edition of *A Vision*. While *AVA*, with its conclusion heralding a new era of philosophy in which "Men will no longer separate the idea of God from that of human genius, human productivity in all forms" (*AVA* 177) bears thematic similarity to Oswald Spengler's notion of Faustian culture from *Decline of the West*, *AVB* marks a slight departure from this sentiment. Critics have often suggested a rupture, on Yeats's part, with the proto-fascist ideology that informed Spengler's text.[116] However, placing Yeats's final reflections in "The End of the Cycle" alongside the conclusion of *Decline of the West*, we see a startling

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"elitism…antiliberalism…corporativism" but simultaneously "hints at uncertainty about whether the fascist experiment can succeed" (xlv).

[115] Eugenics, medical misinformation, masculine virility, and political upheaval (as a particular cluster of commonly arising ideas) have made a strong resurgence in radical right-wing ideology post-2016, but particularly so following the Covid-19 pandemic.

[116] Per Yeats's own admission, in reading *Decline* he was shocked to find how closely his and Spengler's "thoughts run together" ultimately "[drawing] the same general conclusions" (qtd. in Nally 331).

similarity, one which speaks to a sense of submission to the cycles of history rather than a call to action. To quote Spengler:

> Life is alpha and omega, the cosmic onflow in microcosmic form. It is the fact of facts within the world-as-history. Before the irresistible rhythm of the generation-sequence, everything built up by the waking-consciousness in its intellectual world vanishes at the last. Ever in History it is life and life only—race-quality, the triumph of the will-to-power… World-history is the world court… The bright imaginative Waking-Being submerges itself into the silent service of Being, as the Chinese and Roman empires tell us. Time triumphs over Space, and it is Time whose inexorable movement embeds the ephemeral incident of the Culture….a form wherein the incident life flows on for a time, while behind it all the streaming horizons of geological and stellar histories pile up in the light-world of our eyes. (507)

We may compare Spengler's conclusions—that of "world-as-history," of "Time [triumphing] over Space," and "histories [piling] up in the light-world of our eyes"—to what many have deemed Yeats's disavowal of *AVA*'s fascist ideologies at the conclusion of *AVB*. In Part I of "The End of the Cycle," Yeats reflects:

> Day after day I have sat in my chair turning a symbol over in my mind, exploring all its details, defining and again defining its elements, testing my convictions and those of others by its unity… I have felt the convictions of a lifetime melt… I draw myself up into the symbol and it seems as if I should know all if I could…find everything in the symbol. (*AVB* 219)

Yet as he notes in Part II, "nothing comes—though this moment was to reward me for all my toil. Perhaps I am too old" (*AVB* 219). The statement which follows is frequently noted as the moment in which Yeats explicitly disavows fascism. As the symbol continues to evade him, Yeats asks: "What discords will drive Europe to that artificial unity—only dry or drying sticks can be tied into a bundle—which is the decadence of every civilization?" (*AVB* 219). Rather than taking this statement of a disavowal of fascism (as many scholars do[117]), I read this as a disavowal of the notion that the fascist state is cosmically fixed.

The fascist state, in this context, functions as a means to an end: spiritual palingenesis, an end to the Kali Yuga.[118] Fascism in its current state is the natural end to the present cycle of decadence, yet a new age will dawn again. As Spengler states at the end of *Decline*, "a task that historic necessity has set *will* be accomplished with the individual or against him… *Ducunt Fata volentem, nolentem trahunt*"[119] (507). Indeed, the gyres of *A Vision* run on, ages falling and rising, leading those who will, dragging those who won't, in a vortex of perpetual motion. Yeats closes "The End of the Cycle" by evoking the image of Heracles—both man and god—moving through darkness ushering in the dawn of a new age, before ending the text with the poem "All Souls' Night."

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[117] Nally, etc.

[118] The Hindu age of degeneration and cleansing violence, ushering in the next age of peace and order. Situating the decline of the West within the mythology of the Kali Yuga is a hallmark of interwar esoteric fascist ideology, most notably appearing in the title of Julius Evola's 1934 text *Revolt Against the Modern World: Politics, Religion, and Social Order in the Kali Yuga*.

[119] "The fates lead him who will; he who won't, they drag." Original Latin quote from Seneca, translation from Joseph Campbell's *Myths to Live By* (122).

First published in 1920, and later featured as the conclusion of both *AVA* and *AVB*,[120] the poem functions as "an elegy for [Yeats's] occultist friends" in which Yeats, as a means of articulating his message, "blur[s] the line between himself and the dead" (Ramazani *Yeats and the Poetry of Death* 36), evoking, as in "Byzantium," the figure of the mummy. Indeed, the final stanza of the poem closes on the monstrous Egyptian form:

> Such thought—such thought have I that hold it tight
>
> Till meditation master all its parts,
>
> Nothing can stay my glance
>
> Until that glance run in the world's despite
>
> To where the damned have howled away their hearts,
>
> And where the blessed dance;
>
> Such that, that in it bound
>
> I need no other thing,
>
> Wound in mind's wandering
>
> As mummies in mummy cloth are wound[.] (*AVB* 221)

The merging of the mummy and the mind-essence once more evokes a movement through darkness into light; a movement which does not end in the light but, as Ramazani notes, in an "overarching pattern…of decline" (36). That Yeats chose to close both *AVA* and *AVB* with the same text speaks to the continuity between the texts and the continual decline he foresaw within

[120] As previously discussed, it also appears as the final poem in *The Tower*.

Western civilization, simultaneously a revivification within decline, a *Book of the Dead* and a *Book of Emerging Forth into Light*, the cycle beginning anew.

Lapis Lazuli

By the time Yeats began writing "Lapis Lazuli" in 1936, the world was on the precipice of disaster. World War II loomed in the background of the Western mind yet Yeats, to quote Brenda Maddox, chose instead "to face East not West" (299). Yeats's Eastward gaze did not run counter to his previous transnational interests such as his Noh plays, the "esoteric transnationalism" (Dean 3) of Theosophy and his various investigations into the occult. However, by the late 1930s, these interests represent a more somber turn away from the world, an inward redirection of the poetic gaze via the east. Although the primary Eastern influence in Yeats's life in the late '30s was India (through his relationship with Shri Purohit Swami, with whom he translated *The Ten Principal Upanishads*, published in 1938), for the purposes of this chapter I turn to East Asia, examining Yeatsian tragic joy through the "ancient, glittering eyes" of the carved figures of "Lapis Lazuli" (line 56).

Yeats begins the poem with the passive reflection of having "heard hysterical women" bemoan "the palette and the fiddle-bow of poets that are always gay" (1). The "hysterical" mob, he reflects, demands something "drastic" be done else the "Aeroplane and Zeppelin will come out… / Until the town lie beaten flat" (7;8). The opening of the poem, passive in its voice yet active in its demands and the threat of potentially devastating consequences, seems rooted entirely in modern Western warfare and the threat of further chaos. However, the second stanza shifts from airships to Shakespeare, and from the threat of a second world war to a "tragic play" (9).

The third and fourth stanzas of the poem echo Yeats's own words from "The Second Coming," reaffirming, seventeen years later, that "[t]hings fall apart." In "Lapis Lazuli," however, there exists hope that though "[a]ll things fall" they are "built again / And those that build them again are gay" (35-36). The "tragic play" of "Lapis Lazuli" encompasses joy, the "gaiety transfiguring all that dread" (17). Rather than a "rough beast [slouching] towards Bethlehem," the poem promises a revivification of "[o]ld civilizations put to the sword" (27), a revivification through the very art the "hysterical" mob so derides. These four stanzas alone represent an interesting perspective shift in Yeats's artistic and political philosophies. Compared to the static, staid vision of the future Yeats presents in "Sailing to Byzantium," the promise of a civilization rebuilt through the *gaia scienza* offers hope in a way that previous Yeatsian futures do not. However, the fifth and sixth stanzas complicate this vision.

From the Western canon and cannons on the battlefield, Yeats suddenly pauses. Shifting his gaze Eastward, he describes a stone carving recently gifted to him, embarking upon what Ramazani calls a "modernist close reading of the artifact" (111):

> Two Chinamen, behind them a third,
>
> Are carved in Lapis Lazuli,
>
> Over them flies a long-legged bird
>
> A symbol of longevity;
>
> The third, doubtless, a serving-man,
>
> Carries a musical instrument. (37-42)

In some ways, the fifth stanza of “Lapis Lazuli” seems entirely disconnected from the previous three. That Yeats’s vision of a future rebuilt through art is inspired by a bit of carved stone before him provides interesting insight into the very notion of artistic revivification. Yeats, as alchemist-poet, enchants the stone, bringing both it and the future it promises to life, immortalizing stone with words.

However, in the final stanza, Yeats questions the poem’s earlier premise. In describing the figurine, Yeats distances himself further and further from the very civilization he hoped would be rebuilt. As the poem draws to a close, Yeats carefully juxtaposes the stillness of the stone with the imagined movement of the figures. The poem becomes a living stone—the stone, a poem. Yet the supposed immortality this suggests is cold, distant and fragile.

Every discoloration of the stone,

Every accidental crack or dent

Seems a water-course or an avalanche,

Or lofty slope where it still snows

Though doubtless plum or cherry-branch

Sweetens the little half-way house

Those Chinamen climb towards, and I

Delight to imagine them seated there;

There, on the mountain and the sky,

On all the tragic scene they stare. (43-52)

Like Hearn's Horai, the idyllic eastern mountain merging with sky is not a typical utopia. Cold, remote, and imaginary, the mountain on which the "Chinamen" are seated, gazing down at the "tragic scene" of the "tragic play" below, is an imperfect, cracking vision. As Ramazani notes, the "timeless, oriental world of order, harmony, and stability…begin[s] to collapse" along with the "East-West binaries" (111). As the final stanza comes to a close, Yeats evokes music: "mournful melodies" (52) reminiscent of the golden poet-bird's song of "Sailing to Byzantium," "of what is past, passing, or to come" (32). The poem, however, ends not on the melody, nor on the imagery of the "tragic scene" beneath the mountain and the sky, but on the eyes of three figures:

> One asks for mournful melodies;
>
> Accomplished fingers begin to play.
>
> Their eyes mid many wrinkles, their eyes,
>
> Their ancient, glittering eyes, are gay. (53-56)

In shifting the focus from the outward gaze of the immortal figures back inward, considering not what the eyes gaze upon but the eyes themselves, Yeats leaves his readers with a haunting image of eyes like "glittering" embers within which hold the promise of a new civilization. This new civilization, however, inevitably arises from the ashes of the current violent era.

We would be remiss not to note the similarities between the "glittering eyes" gazing out from lapis lazuli and Spengler's "streaming horizons of geological and stellar histories [piling] up in the light-world of our eyes" (507). The Yeats of "Lapis Lazuli," much like the Yeats of *AVB*, seems resigned to decline and destruction. Like Spengler's "bright imaginative Waking-Being [submerging] itself into the silent service of Being, as the Chinese and Roman empires tell

us," the cracks of lapis lazuli represent "Time [triumphing] over Space" (507). The "glittering eyes" call to mind *AVB*'s Nietzsche "when the doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence drifts before his eyes." If hope exists in "Lapis Lazuli," it is cyclic, contingent upon the inevitability of destruction.

Conclusion

W. B. Yeats died in January of 1939 at the age of seventy-three. He did not live to see the formal declaration of the Second World War. For a poet so preoccupied with the coming global catastrophe, he would be spared what by September of 1939 quickly became one of the darkest periods of the twentieth century. Though Yeats died in France, his remains were eventually moved to County Sligo where he was interred in a Drumcliff churchyard (Ellmann 289). For all his transnational influences, it is fitting that Yeats's body returned to Ireland and that the epitaph on his eventual resting place features a line from one of his last poems, the self-elegy "Under Ben Bulben":

"Cast a cold Eye

On Life, on Death

Horseman, pass by!" (lines 92-94)

The final artifact of Yeats's propensity towards "modernist close reading" was, in fact, his own gravestone.

"Under Ben Bulben," though it glitters with transnational mythological influence ("Egyptian thought" (43), Greek sculpture, Italian renaissance painting, the ghost of Hamlet's father, Shelley's Witch of Atlas, and early Christian mythos, among others), feels deeply Irish in

essence. From the title alone to the thematic echoes of Celtic Twilight-era imagery, the poem expresses, to quote Sean Heuston, "a geographic and thematic return" (Heuston 293) to the Ireland of Yeats's youth. This creative return, however, is not without connection to Yeats's philosophical interests of the 1930s. Evoking the "superhuman" once more, this time in a Celtic context, Yeats describes the "pale, long visaged" (8) Sídhe riding towards Ben Bulben:

> Swear by those horsemen, by those women,
>
> Complexion and form prove superhuman,
>
> That pale, long visaged company
>
> That airs an immortality
>
> Completeness of their passions won;
>
> Now they ride the wintry dawn
>
> Where Ben Bulben sets the scene. (5-11)

As Yeats established in *The Celtic Twilight*, the Irish Sídhe, the "pale, long visaged company" who ride "the wintry dawn" of Drumcliff in "Under Ben Bulben," function for one purpose: as psychopomps to the underworld. To quote *The Celtic Twilight*, "Those who are much admired are, it is held, taken by the Sídhe…for the Sídhe are the gods, and it may be that the old saying, which we forget to understand literally, meant…death in old times" (40). By evoking the Sídhe, yet compelling them to "pass by," casting "a cold eye" on both life and death, Yeats foretells his own end and his potential creative reincarnation.

While "Under Ben Bulben" does not explicitly refer to karmic rebirth in the same vein as "Mohini Chatterjee," the poems are united by the figures of the "sages." The "sages," evoked in

the opening stanza of "Under Ben Bulben" and the closing stanza of "Mohini Chatterjee" embody the thematic sentiment of willful death and rebirth, indicating that the dead may choose their next incarnation. As Ramazani notes:

> The famous exhortation,
>
> Cast a cold eye
>
> On life, on death…,
>
> wishfully establishes a relation of freedom with death, as if it were the poet's eye that actively chose or refused death, and not the unavoidable, inscrutable, cold gaze of death that chose the term of life. (Ramazani 147)

Rebirth is possible, then, and possible therefore not only for the individual but for all of Ireland. In the second verse, Yeats articulates the "gist" of what the "superhuman" horsemen "mean" (12):

> Many times man lives and dies
>
> Between his two eternities,
>
> That of race and that of soul,
>
> And ancient Ireland knew it all. (13-16)

Yeast's use of "superhuman" in context with the karmic implications of living and dying "between…two eternities" return us again to the bardo of the Tibetan tradition,[121] an

[121] It should be noted that although "superhuman" is not a term exclusive to Evans-Wentz's translation of the *Bardo Thodol* (nor is it a term exclusive to Tibetan Buddhism or Nietzsche), Yeats's use of the term in relation to rebirth seems deliberate. He does not use it in his earlier writings on Celtic folklore, preferring "supernatural" instead. "Superhuman," therefore, carries an Eastern valence mixed with Nietzsche's eternal recurrence.

intermediary space where cyclic destruction merges with the promise of rebirth as “the gyres run on.”

Chapter 3: James Joyce's Universal Vehicle

Introduction

This chapter uses the works of James Joyce as a vehicle for investigating processes of transnational meaning-making through two obscure cross-cultural allusions embedded within Joyce's kaleidoscopic final novel *Finnegans Wake* (1938). These allusions, to the Finnish epic the *Kalevala* and to Tibetan Buddhism, invite new pathways of exploring the expansive manner through which Joyce approached the ever-shifting cultural and linguistic landscape of the *Wake*. Embarking upon an exploration of the physical contours of boundary transcendence, this chapter examines how, for Joyce, incarnation of the word through text and sound produced a collapsing of meaning and form, the visible and the invisible, the national and the global. Essential to this argument is the examination of the *Wake*'s transnational imagination as a perpetual motion machine in a constant state of creation and liberation.

Though I take *Finnegans Wake* as my central focus, this argument invites analysis from across Joyce's oeuvre. Drawing from Stephen Dedalus's famed invocation to the muse of "Life" in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* ("Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul *the uncreated conscience of my race*" [224]), this chapter takes a comparative approach, utilizing scholarship from a variety of fast-growing fields. Drawing from consciousness studies and the emerging fields of neuroaesthetics and psychedelic humanities,[122] I explore the multifaceted "uncreated conscience" of the human race which Joyce forged in the pages of his texts.

[122] With the gracious support of the Johns Hopkins Center for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research, more work on this topic is forthcoming.

That *Finnegans Wake* is a transnational text is not a bold claim.[123] Unrestrained by national borders, the language of the *Wake* moves beyond nationalism toward the creation of a joyfully multilingual lexicon that embraces each culture it takes in. Unprecedented even by modernist standards, this transnational multilingualism paired with rich cross-cultural allusions remains entirely idiosyncratic to this day. As a result, however, *Wake* scholarship poses a particular threat of unintentional bibliomancy in which the enthusiastic scholar may open the text at random and happily find textual evidence to precisely fit their argument.[124] Should one be surprised to find *something* in a text that contains *everything*? Where to begin, therefore, and which paths to explore through the looking-glass of the *Wake* represents a journey akin to Alice beginning her adventures in Wonderland. If any path through the *Wake* brings its reader to a hidden treasure trove of language, global mythologies, music, and more, it inevitably also brings the potential danger of collapsing like a house of cards or, as the case may be, footnotes upon footnotes further concealing the text the more they reveal about its many multifaceted allusions. The question remains which path and which treasures to unearth? Most importantly, how may we approach the *Wake* in a way that does not bend the text to our will?

For the present analysis, I propose two separate paths: journeying northwards into Finland through the national epic of the *Kalevala*, next to the east and the philosophical influence

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[123] The transnational nature of the text and the question of whether or not *Wake*-speak should even be considered English has engendered many scholarly conversations about the text's ability to be translated. The most recent book on the subject is Patrick O'Neill's *Finnegans Wakes: Tales of Translation* (2022).

[124] Roland McHugh describes this process in *The Finnegans Wake Experience* (1981), stating: "My progress through *FW* was characterized by paroxysms of enthusiasm for some element in the text which seemed of paramount urgency when discovered, but which gave way to some totally different enthusiasm a few months later" (36). McHugh continues, "It seemed for a time that *FW* was all about Blake, but then my enthusiasm shifted, first to LeFanu…and then to Madame Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled*" (36). These "paroxysms" are not unfamiliar to the *Wake* scholar and his honesty (and "energy and enthusiasm" for embracing then discarding your own "false theory" [38]) are appreciated!

of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. In considering the oral traditions and musicality of both texts in relation to the *Wake*, we will explore how the myth cycles of both cultures employ the notion of a thought-technology: an imaginal object which functions as a vehicle through which something new is created out of apparent nothingness. Three examples of such a technology are the *sampo* of the *Kalevala* and the dharma wheel and the *vajra* of the Vajrayana tradition. Taking up Daniel C. Dennett's suggestion that the human brain encompasses a "Joycean machine" (172),[125] I consider this "machine" in relation to the mythic artifacts of the *sampo*, the *vajra*, and the *Dharmachakra*.[126] In closing, I offer the "squared circle"[127] of *Finnegans Wake* itself as such a technology: James Joyce's "Universal Vehicle."

Part I: Finn-ish: The *Kalevala* and Collective Song

In title alone, *Ulysses* is the most "epic" of all Joyce's texts. With its nod to Homer's *Odyssey* and its meticulous representation of Dublin, *Ulysses* captures the spirit of Ireland in a

[125] Two instances of the notion of *Finnegans Wake* as a technology or meaning-making machine already appearing in Joyce scholarship may be found in Daniel C. Dennett's *Sweet Dreams: Philosophical Obstacles to a Science of Consciousness* in which Dennett refers to "the Joycean machine in our brains" (172; qtd. in Conley 28), expanded upon in Tim Conley's 2014 article "'Cog it Out': Joyce on the Brain," and David Overstreet's 1980 article "Oxymoronic Language and Logic in Quantum Mechanics and James Joyce" in which Overstreet refers to Vico's cycles as "the perpetual motion machine" (54) powering the "freewheeling clockwork" (40) of the *Wake*.

[126] These terms shall be explained in detail *infra*. For the moment, I offer the following definitions given by the Oxford English Dictionary:

Vajra: "(Hinduism and Buddhism.) A thunderbolt or mythical weapon, esp. one wielded by the god Indra" ("Vajra, N.").

Dharmachakra: "In various religious, philosophical, and cultural traditions originating in India: a design or motif in the form of a wheel having many spokes, symbolizing dharma" ("Dharmachakra, N."). N.B. "dharma" meaning "Universal truth" according to Buddhist doctrine ("Dharma, N., Sense 1.b.").

Sampo: "In Finno-Ugric cosmology, a mysterious object often referred to in the mythological songs of the Finns" ("Sampo," N.).

[127] See an excerpt from Joyce's letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver on page 27 of this chapter for more on squaring the circle.

way that neatly fits the genre of national epic.[128] *Finnegans Wake*, with its foundation in an ancient, mythologized past, also embodies epic sensibility. Given the multitudinous transnational influences of the *Wake*, however, this mythologized past is not specific to any nation or peoples.[129] For such a linguistically complex text, *Finnegans Wake* is a relatively simple tale of one man's fall from grace and its impact on his wife and children. The characters of husband (Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker or "HCE"), wife (Anna Livia Plurabelle or "ALP"), and children (daughter Issy and twin sons Shem and Shaun) manifest in a plurality of forms as the tale is told. HCE's fall is recounted early in the text through musical notation in "The Ballad of Persse O'Reilly" which metaphorically recalls this fall in terms of the egg Humpty Dumpty. The ballad sings of "[H]eathen Humpharey" the "brave son of Scandiknavery" (46.27;47.21) who finds himself besieged on all sides by increasingly exaggerated allegations of misconduct in Phoenix Park. The *Wake*, initially published as short pieces as early as 1923 then in chapter-length fragments in Eugene Jolas's *transition* magazine between 1928 and 1937, achieved full publication in 1939. Despite the simplicity of its general plot, the *Wake* contains multitudes. To quote William York Tindall, "*Finnegans Wake* is about anybody, anywhere, anytime… At present or thereabouts the whereabouts of anybody in particular" (3). Beginning with the introduction of Adam and Eve, the *Wake* features a variety of characters including Jesus Christ, Oliver Cromwell, a hen named Belinda, Humpty Dumpty, Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, Isis and Osiris, Tristan and Isolde, and more.

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[128] As scholars such as Václav Paris, among others, have already noted.

[129] See James Atherton's *Books at the Wake* (1958) or Roland McHugh's *Annotations to Finnegans Wake* (1980) for more information on the wide variety of transnational sources.

In addition to its extensive list of characters, the *Wake* encompasses a wide array of linguistic, geographic, and geological features. According to Max Eastman, Joyce "liked to think about how some day way off in Tibet…some boy or girl in reading that little book would be pleased to come upon the name of his or her home river" (qtd. in Ellmann 598). From the *Odyssey* to the *Mahabharata*, Joyce drew from a variety of global epics. Yet each of these epics root their mythologies in the specific geographical milieu of their intended audience. *Finnegans Wake* is certainly indebted to the history (both cultural and geographical) of Ireland, but it is not limited by national borders. In choosing a global epic through which to examine the *Wak*e's transnational scope, I propose an exploration of the *Kalevala*. A comparison between the texts has yet to be undertaken as a scholarly project, but the *Kalevala*'s origin as a runic song and the various ways its imagery manifests in the *Wake* invite further analysis.[130] Significant to this project, I take the Finnish epic as a through-line into deciphering *Wake*-language, a language not literally Finnish but "Finn-*ish*."[131]

The *Kalevala* represents one of the most idiosyncratic forms of epic poetry. Known in the United States primarily for its influence on J. R. R. Tolkien,[132] it functions as a creation myth and adventure saga. Beginning with the world's genesis "from broken eggs" by the air goddess Ilmatar and detailing the hero Väinämöinen's subsequent journeys, the *Kalevala* mostly concerns the theft and recovery of a mythical object known as the *sampo* (*Kalevala* 2008). The plot of the

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[130] To my knowledge, the only article to delve into the Finnish allusions (including allusions to the *Kalevala*) in the *Wake* is Risto Miilumäki's "*Un commentaire bizarre*: Finnish Elements in James Joyce's Notebook VI.B.48." This short article appears in the 1991 anthology *Joyce-tick: Finnish Readings of Joyce's Major Works* and is difficult to find. I am grateful to Hannu Riikonen and Lauri Niskanen for sending it my way!

[131] As shall be noted *infra*, much in the same way that "Elfish" served as a framework for my analysis of Lafcadio Hearn's method of transnational boundary crossing.

[132] Both in the creation of the myth cycle *The Lord of the Rings* and for the influence of the Finnish language on Elvish.

Kalevala is, however, of less significance than its history and the method through which it was preserved. Passed down through generations, the *Kalevala* was formally preserved in written form in the nineteenth century by Finnish physician, philologist, and poet Elias Lönnrot through dictation from folk singers trained in the tradition of Finnish rune-singing. Its publication functioned as a pivotal cultural force for Finnish national independence.

As a result, the text spread among the Irish Literary Revival, with W. B. Yeats expressing interest, according to Joseph Lennon, in "developing an Irish equivalent" (Lennon 426). As Lennon notes, Yeats referred specifically to the *Kalevala* in *The Celtic Element in Literature*, stating:

> All old literatures are full of these or like imaginations, and all the poets of races who have not lost this way of looking at things could have said of themselves, as the poet of the *Kalevala* said of himself, "I have learned my songs from the music of many birds, and from the music of many waters." (qtd. in Lennon 280)

Though Joyce never publicly referred to the *Kalevala* as a source text, allusions to it populate *Finnegans Wake.* The only explicit reference to the *Kalevala* in the *Wake* is the word "Kalatavala" (178.33), a pun on the Finnish words "kala" (fish) and "tavala" (in a way). "Kalatavala," "translated" as "fish in a way," therefore, also means *Finn*-ish. Hidden within this allusion is yet another Finnish pun (Niskanen).[133] While "Kalevala" refers to the Finnish national epic, "kalavale" is the Finnish word for "fish story,"[134] i.e., "tall tale." This single reference not

[133] Many thanks to Lauri Niskanen in personal correspondence for bringing this additional pun to my attention.

[134] Fish story: "An improbable account, a tall tale" ("Fish Story, N.")

only reflects Joyce's ability to create Finnish puns but offers commentary on the nature of national epic as nothing but a "fish story."

Joyce's interest in Finland and its connection to the *Wake* is made explicit in a 1940 letter to Fritz Vanderpyl. Ellmann describes the correspondence as prompted by "the invasion of Finland by the Russians…for in the manful resistance of the Finns it seemed that the 'Finn again Wakes'" (Ellmann 730). Ellmann continues (translated from the French):

> And in this connection it is certainly odd that after the publication of my book, the title of which means at once the wake and the awakening of Finn (that is, our legendary Celto-Nordic hero), Finland, until now terra incognita, suddenly holds the center of the stage. (qtd. in Ellmann 730)

Finland's invasion, coupled with the awarding of the Nobel Prize in Literature to a Finnish author, seemed to Joyce "a quasi-mystical coincidence" (730) made all the more peculiar by his having received "a strange commentary…from Helsinki" shortly "before the opening of hostilities" from Russia (qtd. in Ellmann 730). As we gather from Joyce's correspondence, the "Finn" of *Finnegans Wake* is inextricably linked with the Finns of Finland.

The structure of the *Kalevala* is arresting. Known as a "runic song"[135] it utilizes a form of trochaic tetrameter now known as the "*Kalevala* meter." Exhibiting highly alliterative language, the Finnish epic feels almost outside of time, quasi-modernist in its inventiveness while simultaneously ancient. The Finnish language is also particularly noteworthy for its beauty and

[135] To quote Finnish folk musician Heikki Laitinen's 1985 article "Rune-singing, The Musical Vernacular": "Rune-singing, '*Kalevala* language,' was the language of the epic, the lyric and magic, the language that dominated at weddings, bear-hunting and annual festivals, the thousand-year code for oral high culture, crystallised, formularised knowledge, skill and belief" (Laitinen). In the article, Laitinen also credits folklorist Matti Kuusi for this definition.

strangeness.[136] The *Kalevala*, at its core, is highly experimental: a text, a song, and a national epic all at once. Lönnrot's task in compiling the *Kalevala* immediately invites comparison to Yeats's impulse to "show something of the face of Ireland" (Yeats 1) in traversing the Irish countryside collecting folktales for *The Celtic Twilight*. The construction of an Irish *Kalevala* would have been a distinctly Revivalist project, gazing back at a mythic past rather than forward toward a modernist future. A *Kalevala* for Ireland would not have suited Joyce's literary ambitions. By the time Joyce began work on the *Wake*, he was focused not on the national, but the *trans*national epic. Drawing influence from the *Kalevala*'s style, its musical origins, and the distinctive linguistic structure of the Finnish language would suit that project admirably.

In considering the *Kalevala* alongside the *Wake*, I am not proposing it as a potential source text or suggesting that the *Wake* maps on to Finnish mythology.[137] While the landscape of *Finnegans Wake* bears distinct geographical markers of Ireland,[138] it is not a purely Irish text in the same vein as *Ulysses*, *Portrait*, or *Dubliners*. Where, precisely, the *Wake* takes place—whether in Chapelizod, the Garden of Eden, the banks of the Liffey, the interior of a haunted ink

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[136] Lauri Niskanen's work on Finnish and Swedish translations of *Ulysses* is a recent development in Finnish Joyce scholarship. Niskanen's dissertation, *A Hubbub of Phenomenon: The Finnish and Swedish Polyphonic Translations of James Joyce's Ulysses* (2021), offers the clearest and most effective summary of the Finnish language and its many treasures and peculiarities that I have found. "Finnish belongs to a small group of languages known as the Finno-Ugric languages along with Hungarian and Estonian. A characteristic curiosity in the Finnish language, from an English language perspective, is the relatively rare use of prepositions. Instead of prepositions, morphemes are strung together at the ends of words through agglutination, creating the characteristically long Finnish words. Suffixes also make greater allowances for changes in the word order. Finnish is also gender-neutral, even in pronouns, a notorious crux for translators into Finnish" (Niskanen 3).

[137] It should be noted that modern day Finland is not considered a Scandinavian nation. However, as I will extrapolate upon further, Finland's geographical positioning between Sweden and Russia has meant that throughout history it has been considered either Scandinavian or Russian. HCE's Scandinavian origins, therefore, do not necessarily reflect Finnish origins but they certainly could.

[138] Howth Castle appearing in the opening sentence fragment, the river Liffey as the proverbial lifeblood of the narrative, etc.

bottle, and so forth—is as irrelevant as pinpointing Wonderland. A distinct lack of physical location frees the text from the confines of nationalism, allowing Joyce to transcend notions of place, race, and language, thus embarking on a project of distinctly transnational epic proportions. The "Finn-ish" language functions as a synonym for *Wake* language, much in the same spirit that "Elfish" provided a framing terminology for Lafcadio Hearn's distinctive style in the first chapter of this project.[139] How much Finnish Joyce knew is unclear. However, a stray comment by Eugene Jolas regarding Joyce's multilingualism is worth noting: "His knowledge of French, German, modern Greek and especially Italian stood him in good stead, and he added constantly to that stock of information by studying Hebrew, Russian, Japanese, Chinese, Finnish and other tongues" (Jolas 2). Given that the first English translation of the *Kalevala* was released in 1888,[140] Joyce could easily have read the epic in either its original or translated form. Regardless, it is not Finnish, technically speaking, that shapes this analysis, but Finn-ish as it relates specifically to the *Wake*.

For both the Finn-ish language of the *Wake* and the language of the *Kalevala*, words themselves feature prominently as a creative force. This creative linguistic force transcends the narrative of the text, functioning in a profoundly humanistic and collectivist way, linking singers,[141] listeners, and nature in the process of articulating the epic. To quote the original 1888 translation:

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[139] "Elf-ish" (not to be confused with Tolkien's Elvish) referring to its use contextually in chapter one of this dissertation.

[140] Translated by John Martin Crawford

[141] Plural as the *Kalevala* was traditionally sung in pairs.

Many birds from many forests,
Oft have sung me lays in concord
Waves of sea, and ocean billows,
Music from the many waters,
Music from the whole creation,
Oft have been my guide and master.
Sentences the trees created,
Rolled together into bundles,
Moved them to my ancient dwelling,
On the sledges to my cottage,
Tied them to my garret rafters,
Hung them on my dwelling-portals,
Laid them in a chest of boxes,
Boxes lined with shining copper.
Long they lay within my dwelling
Through the chilling winds of winter,
In my dwelling-place for ages. (3)

Words, for the rune-singer, are tangible entities "rolled" together by the trees into sentences: sentences into bundles, bundles into boxes, boxes in a copper-lined chest, chest into an ageless "dwelling-place." The process of expressing the myth, therefore, involves a complex procedure of unpacking:

Shall I bring these songs together
From the cold and frost collect them?

Shall I bring this nest of boxes,

Keepers of these golden legends,

To the table in my cabin,

Underneath the painted rafters,

In this house renowned and ancient?

Shall I now these boxes open,

Boxes filled with wondrous stories?

Shall I now the end unfasten

Of this ball of ancient wisdom,

These ancestral lays unravel? (3-4)

The tangibility of the "wondrous stories" and the notion that they are formed from various natural phenomena[142] able to be opened and unraveled through the art of rune singing imparts a magical fecundity to language and its creative capacities. It follows logically that the rune singer is not an "author" per se, but a *conduit*, not only of the legends but of the words themselves.

The presentation of language as transfigured bits of matter able to be incarnated through their *own* innate power maps well onto Joyce's use of language in the *Wake*. This linguistic approach, in which language in many ways transcends authorship, invites a plurality of languages, each melting seamlessly into others. As Joyce wrote to Harriet Shaw Weaver in 1924, the "Anna Livia Plurabelle" section of the *Wake* represents:

[142] The birds, the water, the air, the trees, etc.

> a chattering dialogue across the river by two washerwomen who as night falls become a tree and a stone. The river is named Anna Liffey. Some of the words at the beginning are hybrid Danish-English. Dublin is a city founded by Vikings. (qtd. in Ellmann 575)

Joyce's expansive vision of history, geography, and culture creates a genealogical linguistic landscape in which each word functions as its own ancestor and descendent, a cyclical process of language giving birth to itself in a myriad of potential iterations. Each word exists in an "in-between" state of understanding. A Finn-ish read of the *Wake* invites commentary on Finland's complex political history. A Nordic country, Finland has been occupied at various points in history by both Sweden and Russia. Finland's unstable borders meant that until its independence in 1917 Finland existed quite literally as an "in-between" state sandwiched between Sweden and Russia. Finland's geographical idiosyncrasies extend beyond its position as not-quite-Scandinavian and not-quite-Russian in that it also extends into the Article Circle. The Finn-ish language of the *Wake*, like Finland itself, exists in its contradictions and fundamental in-between-ness. In-between-ness, however, is difficult to conceptualize.

Finnegans Wake is a far less visually vivid text than *Ulysses*, in which Joyce replicates the cityscape of Dublin with painstaking accuracy. Conjured in dreamlike fragments, the images of the *Wake* work upon the reader's mind in more subtly evocative ways. I can picture Leopold Bloom with perfect clarity. HCE is a shadow in my imagination.[143] In many ways, the *Wake* is a text shaped by sound rather than image.[144] Given that Joyce was suffering from a variety of

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[143] As an interesting aside, a Google image search for artistic depictions of HCE produced no results.

[144] John Gordon put it well when he stated that there are many scholars "who feel that the last thing the world needs is another book about Joyce's symbols, and I understand their feeling" (2). Although this chapter necessitates analysis of symbols (the rainbow, the thunderbolt, the looking-glass, to name a few), I am more interested in the cultures from which these symbols derive and the transnational valences they bring to the language of the text.

ocular ailments[145] during the period in which the *Wake* was composed, sounds themselves were paramount to Joyce's writing process. As J. B. Lyons describes: "During the composition of *Work in Progress*…Joyce would sometimes ask one or other of his friends to read to him from some out-of-the way book, while he listened for words suitable for his text" (304). Joyce's love of music and the musicality of language is apparent throughout his work[146] and has been studied at length[147] yet still provides an entry-point into Joyce's transnational imagination.

The power of *Wake*-speak is incumbent upon an approach to language that transcends imaginative and national borders. We may consider Timothy Martin's observation that "whereas *Ulysses* borrows from music, *Finnegans Wake* aspires to *be* music" (150). Rather than aspiring "to *be* music," the *Wake* allows its readers to interact with the musicality of languages in a way that transcends typical monolingual structures. Joyce accomplished this by endowing sound with a power to shape language. In the same way that baby tuckoo's song melts into Uncle Charles's voice in the opening pages of *Portrait*, the voices of the *Wake* merge into one another in a stream of both voices and consciousness.[148]

The process by which Joyce composed the *Wake* offers insight into translingual narration. As Eugene Jolas describes, Joyce referred to his linguistic process as a "Big Language":

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[145] According to Robert M. Kaplan, these included "iritis…conjunctivitis, glaucoma, episcleritis, synechia and cataracts" and eventually "partial atrophy of the retina and optic nerve of the right eye" (668).

[146] To name only a handful of examples, starting with 1907's *Chamber Music*, , we have the many songs which populate *Dubliners*, baby tuckoo's song at the opening of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Molly Bloom and "Love's Old Sweet Song" (*Ulysses*), etc.

[147] At the time of writing, Gerry Smyth's *Music and Sound in the Life and Literature of James Joyce* (2020) is the most recent addition to this field of inquiry.

[148] Hugh Kenner describes the "Uncle Charles Principle": "*the idiom of the narrative need not be the narrator's*" (18). Unlike the "Uncle Charles Principle," which Kenner later clarifies as a narrative style that entails "applying the character's sort of wording to the character" (35), the lack of distinguishable characters or single consciousness in the *Wake* means that the "wording" changes as quickly as the potential consciousness being represented.

> ‘I am using a Big Language…I have discovered that I can do anything with language I want.' His linguistic memory was extraordinary and he seemed to be constantly on the look-out, listening rather than talking. 'Really, it is not I who am writing this crazy book,' he said in a whimsical way. 'It is you, and you, and you, and that man over there, and that girl at the next table.' (Jolas 167)

It is clear from Jolas’s recollection that the “Big Language” of Joyce’s *Work in Progress* was a collective endeavor rather than another “Portrait of the Artist.” Further, the collective nature of the writing process is not tied to any specific person or personality. Joyce did not seek to replicate a particular dialect or idiolect in the same way he mimicked Nora Barnacle’s idiosyncratic speech patterns (Maddox 38; 200) in giving voice to Molly Bloom. Rather, the collectivist nature of the “Big Language” endows sound itself with creative potential.

We may consider once more the notion that *Wake* language aspires “to *be* music.” Richard Ellmann recounts an incident in which “a visiting Englishwoman listened to [Joyce] reading a passage from [*Work in Progress*] and sternly remarked ‘That isn’t literature.’ ‘It was,’ Joyce replied, meaning that it was when she was listening to it” (702). Reflecting on the “musical aspect of the book,” Ellmann notes that Joyce wrote, in a letter to Lucia, “‘Lord knows what my prose means… In a word, it is pleasing to the ear’” (702). The musicality of the prose, and Joyce’s suggestion that it “was” literature when spoken aloud recalls the bardic tradition of ancient Ireland, an attempted resurgence of which had been taking shape with Yeats and the Revivalists.[149] In considering the *Wake*’s musicality, alongside the folk song origin of its title,

[149] For more on this see Ronald Schuchard’s *The Last Minstrels: Yeats and the Revival of the Bardic Arts*.

Joyce's use of song within the text, and Joyce's own interest in the bardic arts,[150] we may also consider the epic, a form of literature born out of oral tradition, generally passed from one generation to the next through song, and regarded as "an ancient and anachronistic genre" (Dentith) by the turn of the twentieth century. It is clear, however, that Joyce's inspiration derived from the genre's musicality in addition to its scope.

Joyce did not write this "Big Language" by himself as "The Artist" but by selecting text from those around him, from songs, bits of poetry, scraps of newspaper. We may even consider the text itself as "*being*, written." In such a case, the text of the *Wake* enacts a recapitulation of what it means to *be* (to exist) cast in language so prismatic it shifts before your eyes. The author of this text, therefore, is but a conduit of the language as it pours through him. Unlike the "automatic" writing much derided by Joyce, yet so popular with Yeats and the fashionable occultists of the day, the text is not channeled from spirits, ghosts, or even a muse. In the Joycean sense, we must consider the words themselves as living and the author as a conduit of this living language. Stephen Dedalus invokes "Life," not the muse, when he proclaims his mission to encounter "the reality of experience," thus forging "*the uncreated conscience of [his] race."*

Positioning the author as conduit of this living language returns us to the Kalevala. In the opening line of the poem, the words "melting" and "gliding" seem to force themselves out of the singers' mouth:

> Mastered by desire impulsive,
> By a mighty inward urging,

[150] Joyce's interest in the bardic arts not only evokes Shakespeare as "The Bard," but also Stephen Dedalus, referred to as a "bard" by Buck Mulligan in the "Nestor" episode of *Ulysses*, though in a mocking manner as the "bullockbefriending bard" (2.431).

I am ready now for singing,

Ready to begin the chanting

Of our nation's ancient folk-song

Handed down from by-gone ages.

In my mouth the words are melting,

From my lips the tones are gliding,

From my tongue they wish to hasten;

When my willing teeth are parted,

When my ready mouth is opened,

Songs of ancient wit and wisdom

Hasten from me not unwilling. (1)

"Finn-ish" in this context represents a specific type of argot, a living language evolving alongside humans, codified in a modernist text.[151] Joyce's language, however, is not merely crowd-sourced from the working class or picked up on the street. *Wake* language is heavily allusive, almost continuously drawing on references to classical texts, contemporary authors, and, notably, a variety of global sources. The result of such a mélange of voices creates a peculiar state of transnational textual consciousness. This transnational consciousness is not limited to wordplay, however, and a recent discovery from Shakespeare and Co. offers insight into one of the *Wake*'s many transnational philosophical influences.

Three Tibetan Mysteries

[151] Argot is classically referred to as the "language of the birds." The creation myth of the *Kalevala* describing the cosmic egg as laid by a duck on the knee of Ilmatar thus furthers our exploration of Finn-ish as a methodology of reading that considers the creative force of language as ever-evolving, pulled from the air seemingly from nothing.

An extensive analysis of *Finnegans Wake* through the lens of Buddhist philosophy has yet to be undertaken. Most scholars have assumed, as Darrin Douglas Mortson notes, that the majority of Joyce's knowledge about Buddhism came exclusively from the fashionable occultism of the day which so attracted fellow Irish authors W. B. Yeats and George Russell.[152] Recent scholarship (notably from Eishiro Ito, Lidia Szczepanik, and Mortson) demonstrates the ways in which Buddhist thought influenced Joyce more than previously assumed.[153] Even so, the majority of analyses on Joyce and Buddhist philosophy seems to reflect, as Mortson claims, that "while Joyce did have a basic understanding of Buddhism, his main objective was to fashion it for his own artistic purposes"; though similarities between Buddhist doctrine and the philosophy of the *Wake* abound, the central precepts are "better traced back to Renaissance philosophers like Giordano Bruno and Nicholas of Cusa than Buddhism" (Mortson 137). While I don't disagree entirely, a recent discovery in the newly published borrowing records of Shakespeare and Co. illuminates a new dimension to Joyce's understanding not only of Buddhism but of the Tibetan tradition specifically. According to Princeton University's *Shakespeare and Co. Project*, which digitized the borrowing records from Shakespeare and Co.'s lending library, in February of 1924 Joyce borrowed the book *Three Tibetan Mysteries: Tchrimekundan, Nasal, Djroazanmo, as Performed in the Tibetan Monasteries*. Notably, the book not only features the three *Mysteries* but a glossary of Tibetan Buddhist terms appended to the end of each play. According to the

[152] Ellmann remarks that Joyce "joined the rest of intellectual Dublin in taking an interest in occultism" (Ellmann 75), noting that Joyce owned a copy of Theosophist H. S. Olcott's *A Buddhist Catechism* "dated May 7, 1901" (76).

[153] As Szczepanik unequivocally states: "Joyce had a working knowledge of Indian and Buddhist ideology which he employed in abundance in *Finnegans Wake*, enriching the work with another layer of complex meaning. Book IV does, in fact, bring to the foreground the transcultural vision of James Joyce" (310).

borrowing. records, it doesn't appear as if he ever returned the book ("James Joyce: Borrowing Activity"*)*.

Three Tibetan Mysteries is a useful text for exploration of the Buddhist-influenced transnationality of the *Wake*. The publication history of the original text, *Trois Mystères Tibétains* by Tibetologist Jacques Bacot, however, is difficult to ascertain. How or where Bacot encountered these Mysteries is unclear in the introduction to the text as a whole, though he does offer insight into the provenance of each play in their respective introductions.[154] What we can glean is that the English edition, translated from the French by H. I. Woolf and published in 1924 (Bacot's original edition having been published in 1921), includes a variety of Buddhist terms with accompanying English definitions. In many ways, *Three Tibetan Mysteries* is a transnational document in itself, particularly given that the glossaries which accompany each of the *Mysteries* contain (in addition to Tibetan) Sanskrit terms and phonetic pronunciation guides. Joyce's only explicit encounter with Tibetan Buddhism, therefore, was mediated through Woolf's English translation of Bacot's French. It's easy to see why such a text would have appealed to Joyce, whose particular form of Orientalism is not easily contained within the standard post-Romanticist glow of incense and opium dens.[155] Though ostensibly the plays described in *Three*

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[154] As an example, in the introduction to *Tchrimekundan*, he states: "The *Tchrimekundan* is the most played of all the Tibetan dramas. I have found two printed editions; others possibly exist. The text I have translated is manuscript. It was given to me and commentated by a Tibetan lama of the monastery of Ourga (Mongolia) in 1912. At the same time Mr Denison Ross found the printed text at Darjeeling in the Himalayas, and published it in Tibetan characters at Calcutta, in the Bibliotheca Indica. In the following year Mr Denison Ross, seeing that I was making a complete translation…forewent publishing the abridged translation which he was announcing with his text, and was so kind as to send it to me. It has been very valuable for throwing light on more than one doubtful point or confirming the interpretation." The translation that follows appeared in the *Asiatic Journal* (September-October 1914). It should be noted that the translation process described in this citation refers to Bacot's original translation from Tibetan. The copy Joyce owned was then translated once more into English. I have reproduced this citation in full as a means of demonstrating the translational and profoundly collaborative nature of the text.

[155] While Orientalism acts an antidote to paralysis in "Araby," it functions differently in *Ulysses*. Each time Bloom begins to fantasize about the East he stops and turns his gaze inward. This inward turn, while physically paralyzing Bloom, inspires a somatic experience of synesthesia which activates Bloom's imagination, propelling it outside of

Tibetan Mysteries would have been produced in Tibetan, the use of Sanskrit terms in the glossaries also invite an analysis of the *Wake* through a Sanskrit lens.[156] However, the written languages of *Three Tibetan Mysteries*, whether Tibetan, Sanskrit, French, or English, are of less significance to the *Wake* than their oral resonance.

In examining the transnationality of *Finnegans Wake* alongside both the *Kalevala* and *Three Tibetan Mysteries*, we situate ourselves once more in oral tradition. As H. I. Woolf describes in the English introduction to *Mysteries*, the collective song of Tibetan mystery plays is often focused on the final syllable:

> The king, always a sort of king of kings, is he who sings most slowly… The end of his sentences is in some way stammered. The last syllable (in Tibetan the verb which contains the idea) cannot leave his mouth vulgarly and in a rush; but it falls, separated, precious, like an anxiously awaited beneficence. And the whole court, in suspense during the speech, picks up the king's last word and sings it with him. (4)

Dublin. Bloom may be stopped in his tracks, and later he may be motionless in the bath or in bed asleep, but, much like the Buddha in repose, he remains in a state of active stasis, his dream gaze turned inward: the closed eye which sees.

The "Lotus Eaters" episode contains the first of three mentions of the Buddha in *Ulysses*. Notably, the Buddha appears primarily through the memory of a statue Bloom and Molly saw in the National Gallery: "Buddha their god lying on his side in the museum. Taking it easy with hand under his cheek" (5.326-329). Later, as Bloom reclines in the bath, his body merges with the memory of the Buddha statue as he slips into yet another "eastern enchantment," a reverie or waking daydream in which his dream-body, "buoyed lightly upward" in his mind, becomes the Buddha statue, the floating corpse, the lotus flower.

[156] It is useful to consider that Joyce opens Book IV of *FW* with an eastern invocation: "Sandhyas! Sandhyas! Sandhyas!" (593), thus laying the foundation for a fourth and final book influenced by Sanskrit and Indian thought. As with any instance of *Wake* language, however, the triple invocation of "Sandhyas!" contains multitudes. At first read, "Sandhyas" means "twilight" in Sanskrit ("sandhya, n."). "Sandhya" may also refer to the interstitial period that precedes the end of an age (or *yuga*) in the Hindu sense ("sandhya, n."). We may also read it as an allusion to T. S. Eliot's "Shantih Shantih Shantih" of *The Waste Land* or the "Sanctus" of the Roman Catholic Mass. In my current reading, I consider "Sandhyas" in phonetic terms as "Sandy eyes." Thus, the "sandy-eyed" HCE rouses from his slumber as the cycle of night into day begins once more. For more on Joyce and Sanskrit see Lidia Szczepanik's "'Sandhyas Sandhyas Sandhyas!' Indian Thought in *Finnegans Wake*" (2014).

The imagery of the "king of kings" slowly incanting the final syllable as the rest of the court, in a state of suspense, "picks up the king's last word and sings it with him" (4) recalls not only the communal song of the *Kalevala* but also the description of the "Eastern enchantment"[157] (23) which falls in discrete syllables upon the ears of the narrator of "Araby" in *Dubliners*.[158] The recitation and the resonance of the sound is a shared experience engaging multiple modalities.

Though the *Kalevala* was not performed in the same theatrical manner as the Tibetan Mysteries, there was nevertheless a ritualistic element to its recitation. Arthur Zajonc, in *Catching the Light: The Entwined History of Light and Mind*, describes the communal world-building song of the *Kalevala* in the following terms: "Like Homer, the old wandering minstrels of north Karelia around the Baltic Sea would rock, eyes closed, sitting upon a log bench, arms locked with those of a peasant, chanting antiphonally their ancient epic, the *Kalevala*" (11). Zajonc continues:

> According to the Finnish folk epic the *Kalevala*, the world was sung into existence. Before sound could become the referent for a mechanical image of light…it had to empty itself of its own spiritual nature, it had to become a body and not the eternal reverberation of the Word. (102)

The word, liberated from the mouth of the Finnish poet or Tibetan "king of kings" in individual syllables, embarks upon a process of creation and destruction as the images it conjures take

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[157] The full quote from "Araby" reads: "At night in my bedroom and by day in the classroom her image came between me and the page I strove to read. The syllables of the word *Araby* were called to me through the silence in which my soul luxuriated and cast an Eastern enchantment over me" (23).

[158] The "Eastern enchantment" of "Araby" positions Orientalism as simultaneously an antidote to paralysis and a process of disillusionment. Much like a flash of lightning illuminates the darkness before the thunderclap, the narrator's disillusionment functions to cast the reader into a state of unknowing or beginner's mind.

shape within the mind of the listener. The listener *partakes* in the song in both the recitation of the *Kalevala* and the *Tibetan Mysteries*.. The world-building of the *Wake* through the lens of the *Kalevala* and *Three Tibetan Mysteries* transcends national and linguistic boundaries through its communal resonances.

Liberation Technologies

Global mythology is replete with tales of the blacksmith demigod forging enchanted weapons, shields, or magical technologies. In the *Kalevala*, this technology (forged by the blacksmith Ilmarinen) is the mythic rainbow-lidded *sampo*, a device with the power to grind wheat, make salt, and create money. In the Tibetan tradition, the *vajra* or *dorje* (the lightning-bolt of wisdom,) is also a magical technology. While these technologies are often physical objects, they embody shape-shifting qualities allowing them to exist as imaginal objects: the *sampo* as world tree and the *vajra* as a weapon, a lightning bolt, a symbol of the Vajrayana tradition. In both examples (though there are numerous others) the mythically forged artifact is a thought-form rather than an object. The imaginal or liminal existence of this thought-form in no way diminishes its power. Even in our modern era, we may consider recent advancements in A.I. and machine learning (such as natural language processing and large language models) in similar terms.[159] Notably, all these technologies ultimately function with one goal: liberation from the confines of physical or worldly existence.[160]

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[159] Scholarly discourse surrounding the *Wake* as a hypertext which prefigures the internet is outside the purview of this analysis but worth noting. We would also be remiss to not comment on the similarity between Joyce's "Big Language" and the "large language" of large language models (Levenson).

[160] While such an observation may seem overblown in relation to machine learning, recent developments in A.I. have initiated a good deal of conversation surrounding the potentially "God-like" powers of A.I.

In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Stephen Dedalus, forgoing God and country in the name of "silence, exile, and cunning" (218), embarks upon a quest of artistic self-initiation, himself the blacksmith, his soul the smithy, and "the uncreated conscience of my race" his intended product. Pericles Lewis, among others, considers such a statement reflective of the *Irish* race, with *Portrait* "[telling] the story of Stephen's emergence into consciousness as an entrance into Irish history" (Norton *Portrait* 452). Indeed, such a reading shouldn't be discounted given Stephen's use of "my" and the particularity of location not only in *Portrait* but in all of Joyce's works. However, considering this statement in tandem with Stephen's complex, often troubled, relationship with Ireland, alongside his claim that "history is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake" (*Ulysses* 2.377) gives us pause. As Lewis notes, while "Stephen's entrapment in the nightmare of history…makes him the potential author of an Irish national epic," why does he leave Ireland (453)? Stephen's desire to be liberated from the "nightmare" of Irish history requires the forging of a technology which could endow both a physical and a spiritual liberation.

While it borders on speculative to consider a novel as a technology in and of itself, there is precedent for such a comparison from Joyce's personal correspondence. In an April 1927 letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, Joyce famously stated: "I am making an engine with only one wheel. No spokes of course. The wheel is a perfect square" (qtd. in Ellmann 597). While many scholars, Ellmann included, focus on the notion of the "wheel [as] a perfect square" (thus, a squared circle in mathematical terms), the description of "an engine with only one wheel" is intriguing given what we now know of Joyce's exposure to Tibetan Buddhism at least three years prior. In many ways, the Universal Vehicle of Tibetan Buddhism, with the *Dharmachakra* as its one wheel, is,

within the Buddhist tradition, an "engine with only one wheel."[161] Robert Thurman notes that the "enlightenment engine" of Tibetan Buddhism is fueled by the impulse toward Buddhahood. As such, the individual "conceives a mind that aspires to become a buddha for the sake of all beings" (Thurman 146). Thurman then shifts from the singular mind to the universal, stating:

> Our mind then turns the heart into a purposeful engine of evolution. We become determined that, through the continuum of future existences, whether through the system of reincarnation, or transmigration…every atom of consciousness…will not rest until we have become the engine of liberation and the freedom and the happiness of all beings. (Thurman 146)

Thurman's observations regarding the "engine of liberation" as functioning not merely for individual liberation but for the "liberation and the freedom and the happiness of all beings" compares favorably with Joyce's follow-up letter to Weaver in May of 1927 in which he clarifies:

> My remarks about the engine were not meant as a hint at the title. I meant that I wanted to take up several other arts and crafts and teach everybody how to do everything properly so as to be in the fashion. (qtd. in Ellmann 597)

Though not a Joyce scholar, Thurman has remarked on the overlap between Buddhist philosophy and Joyce's humanistic vision, reflecting that in an age when "broad-scale contemplative insight" is "necessary for survival" these contemplative interventions can take a variety of unexpected forms (1768). Thurman offers the *Wake* as one example, stating: "There are many ways to make society more contemplative. James Joyce wrote *Finnegans Wake* to make unthinking

[161] We may also consider the depiction of the wheel on the cover of *Our Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress*.

embeddedness in words more difficult to maintain" (1768). Much like Stephen seeks to forge the "uncreated conscience" of his "race," Joyce's own "engine of liberation" offers "broad-scale contemplative insight" intended to help "everybody."[162]

In exploring liberation technologies as they relate to both the Tibetan tradition and the *Wake*, the wheel and the lightning bolt (*vajra*) both function as symbols of an imaginal technology. Let us turn our attention to the description of a dream from the first of the *Three Tibetan Mysteries*, *Tchrimekundan*:

> During my sleep a happy dream appeared to me.
> By the three hundred and sixty little veins of my body,
> I dreamed that the wheel of great happiness turned above my head.
> I saw come out of it a golden thunderbolt in flames.
> And I saw its point turned toward the Zenith.
> And its light radiated in the ten directions.
> A rainbow surrounded me like a canopy of light.
> And a conch whispered in the three thousand worlds of space.
> Such were the presages of my dream. (Woolf 18-19)

Within the narrative of the play, the dream indicates to the virtuous Princess Gedanzannmo that "a son will be born to her" (18). The dream itself functions as a meaning-making technology by way of the imagery of the wheel, the thunderbolt, and the rainbow as dream-engines of liberation.

All three symbols, the wheel, the thunderbolt, and the rainbow, also feature prominently in the *Kalevala* and the *Wake*. For the purposes of this analysis, I offer the *sampo*, the mystical

[162] Within the text, HCE not only stands for the individual name Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, but also "Here Comes Everybody."

circular grinding apparatus, as the wheel: the engine of the narrative which keeps the story spinning. The thunderbolt of the *Kalevala*, wielded by the sky god Ukkonen (the "uk" and the end of the first "thunder word" of the *Wake*), announces the simultaneous fall of Tim Finnegan, HCE, and, in a Miltonian sense, mankind:

"bababadalgharaghtakamminarronnkonnbronntonnerronntuonnthunntrovarrhounawnskawntooho ohoordenenthurnuk!" (*FW* 3.15).[163] The rainbow, which appears throughout the *Wake* (notably in the form of Issy's rainbow companions) also appears in the *Kalevala* in many manifestations, notably in the depiction of the "Rainbow Maiden," the daughter of the witch Louhi.[164] In the Tibetan tradition, the rainbow body is a phenomenon which occurs to the physical body once the practitioner has achieved liberation through enlightenment. In each of these examples, the symbol exists on the page as a means of reaching out through the text to connect the author's and reader's imaginations.[165] As such, each of these symbols, with their transcultural valences, offer a transnational liberation as they liberate from the page.

"Which Dreamed It?"

[163] See Fweet database for "Finnish," or McHugh's *Annotations to Finnegans Wake* (23).

[164] The description of the maidens in Lönnrot's introduction evokes Issy and the rainbow girls: "The daughters of the Sun, Moon, Great Bear, Polar-star, and of the other heavenly dignitaries, are represented as ever-young and beautiful maidens, sometimes seated on the bending branches of the forest-trees, sometimes on the crimson rims of the clouds, sometimes on the rainbow, sometimes on the dome of heaven. These daughters are believed to be skilled to perfection in the arts of spinning and weaving, accomplishments probably attributed to them from the fanciful likeness of the rays of light to the warp of the weaver's web" (Lönnrot xiv-xv).

[165] In *Man from Babel*, Eugene Jolas notes how, as Joyce composed *Work in Progress*, he became fascinated by Coleridge's definitions of Imagination and Fancy. As Coleridge states in Chapter 13 of his *Biographia*: "The primary Imagination I hold to be the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM" (295-296). The Imagination, therefore, as "living power and prime agent of all human perception," is in an eternal process of liberation through the creation and dissolution of images.

As Tim Conley notes, "Joyce's own 'new science' of the *Wake*…constitutes an experiment in modeling the mind" (27). Such a statement inevitably prompts the question of which mind is being modeled or, in the Carrollian sense, "Which dreamed it?" (Carroll 237). Though I do not seek to position the *Wake* as a dream, we must nevertheless acknowledge the long-standing theory, started by Joyce himself, that the *Wake* represents a dream with *Wake*-language as dream language.[166] Joyce repeatedly referred to the text of *Work in Progress* as dream-*like*, telling Edmond Jaloux that the text would "suit the esthetic of the dream" (qtd. in Ellmann 546) and Ole Vinding that "It's like a dream. The style is also changing, and unrealistic, like the dream world" (qtd. in Ellmann 696). As Louise Gillet recalls:

> He told me about the language he had adopted in order to give his vocabulary the elasticity of sleep, to multiply the meaning of words, to permit the play of light and colour, and make of the sentence a rainbow in which each tiny drop is itself a many-hued prism. (qtd. in Hutchins 178)

The dream-*like* nature of the *Wake* speaks to the border-crossing fluidity of the narrative and its language. Rather than an interpretive key, the "dream theory" can be applied as a scaffolding for further inquiry into the representation of consciousness within the text.

If we are to take Jolas's observations into consideration, exploring the formulation of the *Wake* through Joyce's crowd-sourced "Big Language," no single mind is being modeled, notably

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[166] John Bishop's commentary on the fallibilities of the "dream theory" echo my own feelings: "One of many reasons why Joyce's repeated claims about *Finnegans Wake* have seemed so improbable for so long is that people have customarily treated the book, at Joyce's invitation, as the 'representation of a dream' doing so, however, as if dreams took place only in theory, and without concretely engaging the very strange and obscure question of what a dream is… *Finnegans Wake* is not about a dream in any pedestrian sense of that word; treating it as a book about a 'dream' is like treating *Ulysses* as a book about 'human experience': both terms are far too broad to be useful" (6)

not even the mind of the author. Within the framework of consciousness studies, we may consider the novel *Finnegans Wake* as provoking "novel" ways of exploring consciousness that transcend boundaries. In the same way that the multilingualism of the text offers transnational border-crossing, the multitudes of voices represented within the narration suggest a form of consciousness-expansion. Such an approach to the text would certainly explain the popularity of the *Wake* among famed psychonauts like Timothy Leary or Terence McKenna.[167] Much like a psychedelic substance prompts a "perspectival widening" and an epiphanic self-transcendence (Kähönen),[168] so do the collective voices which inform the "Big Language" of the text.

We can only speculate to what end Joyce embedded a potentially entheogenic or consciousness-expanding structure to his text. Scholars have often resisted political interpretations, but it is useful to consider Joyce's political stance among literary modernists during the interwar period. [169] During an era of ever-increasing nationalism in Europe and isolationism in Ireland, the universality of the *Wake* reflects a vision of culture, language, and consciousness as transnationally informed, moving across borders and boundaries to unite its readers (or listeners) in a profoundly humanistic self-transcendent experience.[170] For some

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[167] Marshall McLuhan's observation that "LSD is just the lazy man's *Finnegans Wake*" (qtd. in Anton 49) elicits both amusement and intrigue.

[168] My use of the term "self-transcendence" is borrowed from David Yaden's definition (see footnote 3 in the introduction) and further clarified by Juuso Kähönen's 2023 article "Psychedelic Unselfing: Self-Transcendence and Change of Values in Psychedelic Experiences" in which Kähönen defines "self-transcendence" as "experiences and developmental processes of moving beyond one's immediate self-boundaries and egocentric perspective, as well as developmental stages, motivation, personality traits, worldview and value orientations which emerges as a result of this process" (Kähönen 2023). Kähönen cites (Garcia-Romeu, 2010) and (Kitson, 2020) in his definition of "self-transcendence."

[169] Compared to other modernists, notably Ezra Pound and Wyndham Lewis. As Joyce once wrote to Harriet Shaw Weaver: "I'm afraid poor Mr Hitler-Missler will soon have few admirers left in Europe, except for your nieces and my nephews, masters W. Lewis and E. Pound" (Letters III 311).

[170] Kähönen defines transcendent experiences (STEs) as "experiences where salience attributed to self is reduced and felt connection to the world and others is enhanced (Yaden et al., 2017). Self-transcendent experiences

scholars, such an approach may be read in direct conflict with fascism to the extent that Philippe Sollers once posited the *Wake* as an explicitly "antifascist text" (qtd. in Carnell). While many scholars find such an interpretation overblown,[171] it is nevertheless useful to consider the ways in which the fluidity and universality of the novel and its multiplicity of voices may enact an anti-authoritarian methodology of reading.

Such a plurality of voices is not, however, anarchic. The careful structure of the *Wake*'s apparent "chaosmos" (118.21) and the *trans*national nature of "Big Language" seeks not an erasure of boundaries, but a transcendence of them. Such an approach, which speaks to a representation of the multitude, is appropriately democratic.[172] Without going so far as to call the *Wake* a democratic text (as in a text actively seeking to promote certain political agendas), it is nevertheless useful to consider Joyce's democratic perspective as it compares to Yeats's vehemently *anti*-democratic ideology. Despite the increasingly fragmented and nationalistic landscape of the interwar period, Joyce actively sought to represent more cultures, languages, and voices within the narrative of his text.[173] In direct contrast to the authoritarian style of Yeats's

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encompass experiences ranging from states of flow, to peak-experiences, awe, and mystical experiences" (Kähönen 2023).

[171] See Simon Carnell's "*Finnegans Wake*: 'The Most Formidable Antifascist Book Produced Between the Two Wars?'".

[172] In political terms, we may differentiate this "democratic" approach from a Surrealist or Dadaist approach, which I would call anarchic.

[173] Further, the active involvement of Joyce and his circle (notably Samuel Beckett, who worked for the French Resistance, and Eugene Jolas, who worked for the United States Office of War Information following Joyce's death) in the Allied cause speaks to the practical application of this authorial perspective. As Morris Beja reflects, Joyce not only assisted in Hermann Broch's escape to the United States but "seems to have helped at least a dozen others as well" (Beja 122). Richard Ellmann specifies "Joyce had friends in the French Foreign Office and elsewhere whose help he enlisted, with his usual energy, in behalf of about sixteen refugees in various stages of flight or resettlement" (Ellmann 709). Beja quotes Dominic Manganiello as stating that Joyce's actions "exemplify a commitment which 'took the form of humanitarian actions so typical of Bloom'" (Beja 122).

system of history in *A Vision*, Joyce endowed the *Wake* with a fluidity and playfulness,[174] with an openness not only to a wide variety of representation but of potential meaning that renews itself with each reader and each successive (re)reading. Stephen Dedalus wishes to escape the nightmare of history; within the schema of Yeats's highly structured *Vision* such a wish is an impossibility.

Research within the fields of consciousness studies and psychedelic humanities have much to offer in considering the *Wake*'s prose as border-transcending. How consciousness-expanding experiences often enact anti-authoritarian perspective shifts is of particular significance. A variety of research within the field of psychedelic studies has noted that self-transcendent experiences, whether spontaneous or prompted by a mind-altering substance, are often associated with a shift in values toward a more "prosocial" or anti-authoritarian perspective (Kähönen 2023). As Conley (among others) suggests, the "modeling of the mind" which Joyce undertakes in the *Wake* represents not one, but many minds. To quote Conley, "if we look at Joyce's work as a continuum, we notice that the trajectory is a gradually more radical disintegration of selfhood and subjectivity" (31). Taken as whole, Joyce's oeuvre, moving from the singular *Portrait of the Artist* to the plural *Ulysses* to the multitudinous *Finnegans Wake*, in some ways represents this "psychedelic" self-transcendence.[175] Exploring self-transcendent states in relation to the *Wake* is particularly generative when considered within a transnational

[174] As Morris Beja notes, "above all [Joyce] wished *Finnegans Wake* to be seen as *fun*… If he expressed his ironic intention, as we have seen, to keep the professors busy for centuries, he would also provide the academy of letters with 'acomedy of letters' (*FW* 425.24)" (Beja 91). We may also consider Timothy Leary's observation that "Joyce's playfulness made it impossible from then on to take seriously the corseted limits of grammar and linear thought. In the two decades to come I spent much time analyzing how Joyce stripped words from their prudish structures and let them spin like charged particles. It was in part the long training with Joycean relativity that prepared me for the psychedelic experience" (Leary 123).

[175] My current research related to Joyce's influence on post-1960s psychedelia is forthcoming.

context given the feelings of universal oneness which frequently occur alongside self-transcendent experiences (Yaden). The transnational self-transcendence inherent to Joyce's personal philosophy was in place years before he began his *Work in Progress*. To quote a 1910 lecture given in Trieste:

> Our civilization is a vast fabric, in which the most diverse elements are mingled… In such a fabric, it is useless to look for a thread that may have remained pure and virgin without having undergone the influence of a neighbouring thread. What race, or what language…can boast of being pure today? (*CW* 166; qtd. in Carnell 20)

While such a statement, as Carnell observes, predates the rise of fascism, it nevertheless conveys Joyce's humanistic philosophy. Rather than seeking the "pure" tread, Joyce sought to represent the fabric itself.

More specifically, Joyce sought to represent the pattern of the individual interlocking threads. Although Joyce never explicitly asks who is "dreaming" the *Wake* in the same way that Carroll poses the question at the end of *Through the Looking-Glass*, the question nevertheless lingers. If no answers present themselves, the reader is left in a peculiar state of unknowing. Inducing a state of unknowing seems entirely at odds with the purpose of reading itself (to gain knowledge, follow a narrative, etc.). It is only by lingering in such a state that we may appreciate the art before us. As David Yaden notes, this form of aesthetic experiencing is essential to Joyce's artistic philosophy and is "defined by its capacity to produce a stillness in the mind" (Yaden 249). Yaden offers the following quote from *Portrait*:

> The instance wherein that supreme quality of beauty, the clear radiance of the esthetic image, is apprehended luminously by the mind which has been arrested by its wholeness

> and fascinated by its harmony is the luminous stasis of esthetic pleasure, a spiritual state. (qtd. in Yaden 249)

That a "luminous stasis of esthetic pleasure" (or, as Yaden refers to it "a stillness in the mind") could be produced by a text as raucous as the *Wake* seems contradictory, but perhaps the essence of Joyce's aesthetic experience lies within the apparent contradiction.

Considering the technology of *Finnegans Wake* in the context of the Tibetan tradition invites commentary on liberation in the following potential terms: liberation as freedom from a particular nation-state, liberation as a spiritual path (freedom from reincarnation in the physical realm), or, finally, liberation as freedom achieved through a text: *liber*-ation.[176] In political terms, the circular text of the *Wake* liberates humanity from the concentric confines of nationalism. As Joyce stated to Georges Borach in 1919: "The state is concentric. Man is eccentric" (qtd. in Ellmann 446). In spiritual terms, the liberation of the *Wake* implies an "awakening" or enlightenment, the achievement of nirvana and final release from the cycle of birth and death (i.e., the transmigration of souls or "met him pike hoses" [8.12] which so preoccupies Leopold and Molly Bloom in *Ulysses*[177]). Liberation as freedom achieved through text is a more active concept. The "liber" of this textual "liber-ation" can refer to both a text *and* the action of reading the text. As a suffix, "-tion" refers to "an action or process," "the result of an action or process," or "a state or quality."[178] The *Wake*, therefore, remains an eternal "*Work in Progress*," existing in

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[176] With "liber" (n.) here functioning as a homonym for the "liber," or freedom, of "liber"ation. The following commentary on liberation perceives definitions through Joyce's "linkingclass" approach, moving between the "liber" (v.) of freedom and the "liber" (n.) of a text.

[177] One of the many reflections on metempsychosis/reincarnation in *Ulysses* occurs in the "Calypso" episode: "Some people believe, he said, that we go on living after death, that we lived before. They call it reincarnation. That we all lived before on the earth thousands of years ago or some other planet. They say we have forgotten it. Some say they remember their past lives" (4.362-365).

[178] This process of creation and dissolution recalls the ill-fated egg Humpty Dumpty. As an egg, Humpty Dumpty is naturally round. As a character in a nursey rhyme and in *Through the Looking-Glass*, or "linkingclass" as it appears in the *Wake* (459.4), he is destined to a circular fate: to shatter, undergo a communal attempt at reconstruction, then

a perpetual state of being written and being read. Much like the *Bardo Thodol* functions as a "Book of Liberation in the Between," the *Wake* enacts a textual metempsychosis.[179] While the text is not physically rewriting itself, the multilingual intricacies and transnational influence of *Wake* language allow the meaning of the text to "rewrite" with each successive reading. Thus, the text exists in a circular state in which revisional meaning-making occurs simultaneously alongside reading and re-reading. The *trans*nationality of this meaning-making process manifests during the transtemporal/trans-spatial "between state."

In once more attempting to locate ourselves squarely on the decidedly non-local riverrun of the *Wake*'s circular landscape we may consider two notions: first, that the land, so to speak, of *Finnegans Wake*, in *Wake*ian terms would be "Finn-land"; second, that in Carrollian terms (or "linkingclass" language) we may also consider "Lap-land" as "ALP-land," or the realm of Anna Livia Plurabelle. While these designations point to real places, Finland and Lapland, they *reflect* rather than root the reader in the real. "Finn-land" is a place where "Finn-ish" language sings the world into existence, where the dream state merges with the waking realm in a circular liberation "a long the…riverrun" (628.15-16;3-1). Much like a rainbow exists only insofar as sunlight reflects off water droplets in the air, the particles which produce the whole are in a state of constant flux, rearranging or disappearing with the subtlest change of perspective. Significantly,

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shatter again with the next retelling or rereading of his tale. Yet, though Humpty Dumpty exists within the pages of *Through the Looking-Glass*, as a symbol he functions as a hyperlink to other sources, his presence acting as a "linkingclass" through which meaning across culture and language links endlessly to each new word, engendering new meaning as you read. Significantly, however, each new link both destroys and creates; like Humpty Dumpty on the wall, or Earwicker's fall and resurrection, the meaning is broken, put together again, and so on in an endless cycle of liberation and return.
Humpty Dumpty as a symbol of the cosmic egg, imagery shared by both Finnish and Tibetan mythological traditions (among others), invites the reader to consider the fall of Humpty Dumpty, like the fall of HCE, as a transnational liberation.

[179] Though this idea of "textual metempsychosis" applied to the *Wake* is my own, it seemed too obvious a phrase to never have been used in a Joycean context. A quick Google search later and I must credit its earliest use to Sam Slote's 2005 "A Eumaean Return to Style" which applies the phrase to the "Oxen of the Sun" episode of *Ulysses*.

we may draw our attention to a phonetic peculiarity contained within the opening fragment of the *Wake*. When spoken aloud, the words "riverrun past Eve and Adam's" (3.1) reveal a familiar name: Stephen.[180]

James Joyce's "Universal Vehicle"

If history is the nightmare from which Stephen Dedalus is "trying to awake," his whispered name hidden in the opening fragment of *Finnegans Wake* indicates that he has succeeded (or, just as easily, that he has failed). Is Stephen's name whispered *into* or *out of* existence? Stephen Dedalus, as with Humpty Dumpty's process of reformation and fragmentation in the "Ballad of Persse O'Reilly," exists in a fragmented state of continual creation and dissolution. Considering once again Stephen's desire to "forge in the smithy of [his] soul the uncreated conscience of [his] race," by embedding the name "Stephen" into the opening of *Finnegans Wake* (sandwiched between Eve, the all-mother, and Adam, the all-father), Joyce endows Stephen, the artist, with a revivifying power akin to imaginal "technologies" such as the *sampo* of the *Kalevala* and *vajra* of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. The name "Stephen" reverberates when spoken but doesn't exist on the page. Languages collapse, mix, syllables and letters blending and shifting, linking and fragmenting.

The "Universal Vehicle" of *Finnegans Wake* lies in the meticulous conveyance of the doctrine of impermanence. The title betrays the circular nature of the text: the "fin" or "end" merging immediately with "again" ("Finn, Again!" [628.14]). Within the broader scope of this project we have considered Lafcadio Hearn as a transnational author—the globe-trotter, the man without a country—and W. B. Yeats as a transnational seeker. *Finnegans Wake* alone offers a

[180] Notice that "past Eve and Adam's" transforms into "pa-*stephen*-adam's" when read aloud. As far as I can tell, I discovered this. But I don't presume to be the first, so more investigation is surely needed.

fully realized modernist transnational text. The guiding principle behind such a concept takes it shape from the Buddhist bardo, the intermediate state between living and dying described in the *Bardo Thodol* (literally "The Book of Liberation in the Between)." By approaching the *Wake*'s transnational liminality as not only an "in-between state" (like Finland) but a *textual* state of being "in-between" states, we may regard transnational modernism as functioning in a constant state of self-liberation. Considering the writing processes of *Finnegans Wake*, the *Kalevala*, and what we can surmise from Bacot's mythology in compiling *Three Tibetan Mysteries*, we may consider all three texts as occupying transnational liminal spaces. Each text has been spoken into existence, mediated by translators, and now exists on the page. The true meaning, however, exists in liberation *from* the page. As ALP herself laments, "you're changing, acoolsha, you're changing from me, I can feel. Or is it me is? I'm getting mixed…I pity your oldself I was used to. Now a younger's there" (626.35-627.6). Moving through the bardo the karmic cycle can never "Finnish"; the "riverrun[s]" on.

Coda: "Re-Echo"

ACT I

A country road. A tree.

Evening.

Estragon, sitting on a low mound, is trying to take off his boot. He pulls at it with both hands, panting. He gives up, exhausted, rests, tries again. As before.

Enter Vladimir.[181]

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As the song goes, the hod carrier Tim Finnegan, after falling from a ladder and breaking his skull, arises from the sleep of death at his own wake when a bucket of whiskey flies at his head. Anointed by the liquor, Tim resurrects. Jumping from his deathbed, he joins in the festivities of his own funeral.

The song from which Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* takes its title is a rousing comic ballad. To quote the refrain, there's "lots of fun at Finigan's Wake" (Glover).[182] Death, in both the song and the novel, is as a practical joke, resurrection a party trick. *Finnegans Wake*, for all the dedicated scholarship since its publication in 1939, remains a playful book, jam-packed with music and scribbles and children's games and rainbows. The geopolitical milieu in which the writing of *Finnegans Wake* occurred, however, still sends shockwaves into our present era.

By the time the atom bomb detonated over Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945, all three authors in this study were dead. Lafcadio Hearn, passing in Tokyo in 1904, never saw the First World War. W. B. Yeats died in France in 1939, mere months before the German invasion of Poland. James Joyce, who fled Nazi-occupied Paris to Switzerland, spent the final years of his

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[181] (Beckett *Waiting for Godot* 3).

[182] The original 1864 sheet music spells Tim Finnegan's surname "Finigan," though it is now generally accepted as "Finnegan."

life in a desperate attempt to keep his mentally ill daughter Lucia, left behind in a sanatorium in France, from harm. For Joyce and his circle of expatriate friends, including Paul Léon who died on a march from Auschwitz to Birkenau, the implications of fascist modernity closed in. Technologies of death formed a pressing and immediate threat.

Joyce and his immediate circle, the few who stuck by him through his many illnesses, familial dramas, and the full seventeen years it took to complete the *Work in Progress* that became *Finnegans Wake*, functioned as active figures in the war effort. While James Joyce authored *Finnegans Wake*, the transnational group who helped in its composition remains significant: Paul Léon and his wife Lucie, Jewish Russian exiles who met in Finland and who braved the Gestapo to retrieve thousands of pages of manuscripts from Joyce's flat in Paris (Marlowe); Eugene Jolas, the American polyglot who founded *transition* magazine and later worked for the United States Office of War Information and the French Resistance following Joyce's death (*Critical Writings* 513); Samuel Beckett, another Irish ex-pat living in Paris and writing in French, who worked for the French Resistance.

We cannot understate the essential fun at the heart of the *Wake* and the humanitarian spirit of those who took such immense efforts to help Joyce finish the book. Joyce's transnational circle of friends viewed literature and revolution as one and the same. The "Revolution of the Word" (1929), published by Jolas in *transition*, makes the potential for world-impacting art through a transnational literary philosophy clear with its first tenet: "The revolution in the English Language is an accomplished fact" (Jolas, et al.). The second and fourth tenets elucidate points of particular interest to this study of transnational Modernism: "The imagination in search of a fabulous world is autonomous and unconfined… Narrative is not mere anecdote, but the projection of a metamorphosis of reality" (Jolas, et al.). For Joyce's circle, the "metamorphosis

of reality," when confronted with the Nazi war-machine, took the revolution of language as fuel for humanitarian resistance.[183] The final chapter of this study presented *Finnegans Wake* as a technology of self-transcendence: a perpetual motion machine or engine of enlightenment. With each successive rereading the reader "awakens" to a spontaneous and raucous celebration of cultures and languages. The engineering schemas which fueled the gas chambers of extermination camps or the physics that informed the atomic bomb constituted technologies of death: an imposed ending, a "final solution." The circular *Finnegans Wake* is a technology of life.

Much of this project revolves around the dual depiction of fairyland as both a heaven and an underworld: Hearn's ghostly Hōrai, threatened by the "Evil winds from the West" (Hearn 178), shrinks away; the "pale, long visaged" (Yeats 8) Sídhe hastening towards Yeats's grave under Ben Bulben. Transnational modernism invites exchange across all borders—including the real and the imagined, the realms of life and death. Despite Joyce's wildly optimistic view of what his *Work in Progress* could accomplish, no novel can save the world, no matter how idealistic.[184] The camps were built. The bombs were dropped. And the literary landscape of the post-war world was forever changed. Transnational modernism moved from a space of imaginative refuge to a desolate purgatorial dreamland. No text typifies this more than Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*.

The static, stationary tragicomic turmoil of *Waiting for Godot* unfolds outside of both time and space. As Vladimir himself states: "Time has stopped" (30). The curtain rises and falls;

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[183] Joyce himself interceded on the behalf of "about sixteen refugees" through his connections "in the French Foreign Office and elsewhere" (Ellmann 709).

[184] As Benjamin Boysen notes, "Joyce is said to have claimed that World War II need never have happened if Europeans had read his last book, *Finnegans Wake*" (Boysen 403).

in between, characters await the titular Godot, who never arrives. There is no river Liffey rushing the reader towards liberation, no hope for karmic rebirth as the gyres spin on, no revivifying power of the ghosts of Hōrai. *Waiting for Godot*, first published in French as *En Attendant Godot* before being translated by Beckett himself, stands as heir to the transnational modernist tradition, yet its post-apocalyptic atmosphere situates the audience in an entirely new (non)locale. There is no fairyland in *Godot*, nor is there an underworld. Destruction, not revivification, results in the transcendence of borders in the post-atomic space of *Godot*'s transnational liminality. In the opening of his essay "Dante... Bruno. Vico.. Joyce," Samuel Beckett warns: "The danger is in the neatness of identifications" (3). Despite the argumentative "neatness" of this assertion, in *Godot* an apparent shift from transnational modernism to postmodernism occurs. The last words of the play ("Yes, let's go") imply an action. The stark stage directions, however, maintain the stasis: *They do not move* (Beckett 87).

In 1957, Lafcadio Hearn's son Kazuo Koizumi published a memoir in his father's honor titled "Re-Echo." In the Postmodern era, the echo of the past may be lost amidst the roar of the nuclear age, but each time we open *Finnegans Wake* we encounter the "reechoable mirthpeals and general thumbtonosery" (253.28) and the cycle begins anew, the "[Horsemen] pass by!" (Yeats "Under Ben Bulben" 94). In the introduction to Lafcadio Hearn's *Kokoro: Hints and Echoes of Japanese Inner Life* (1896), he reflects: "The dead never die utterly. They sleep in the darkest cells of tired hearts and busy brains, —to be startled at rarest moments only by the echo of some voice that recalls their past" (46). Hearn's sleeping dead, like Tim Finnegan at his wake, or Yeats beneath Ben Bulben, await not the voice but the echo, and in arising become the re-echo. Until then,

[They do not move.]

Curtain.

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