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Singing exile: Music in Irish emigration literature

Christopher McCann
The University of Notre Dame Australia

Singing Exile: Music in Irish Emigration Literature

by

Christopher McCann

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Contents

Abstract

Ireland possesses a cultural heritage that is particularly literary and musical. The island is also renowned for its extensive and ongoing history of emigration, and imagery of exile and return is as intrinsic to conceptions of Irishness as the island's artistic lineage. The impact on the creation of a modern Irish identity by exilic Irish writers and musicians is testament to this relationship.

The act of emigration can be conceived as a narrative of individual identity framed by a wider cultural discourse. It is therefore natural that the themes of exile and departure are a frequent presence in Irish art, especially literature and music. Literary expressions of the complex negotiation of self within culture that exile entails are enhanced by the connotative power of music.

This thesis assesses the vital role music plays in framing shifts of identity within Irish emigration literature. Individual migration events occur alongside developing biographies of the self and the nation, and music provides crucial insight into the mechanisms of identity formation within social constructions of exile.

This research analyses musical devices in the prose works of a series of Irish authors, focusing on the period between the commencement of the Gaelic Revival, circa 1880, and the middle of the twentieth century. Drawing on a variety of theoretical bases, including literature, geography, musicology, and history, it examines how musico-literary portrayals of emigration reflect and mediate the multiplicities inherent in narratives of exilic Irish identity.

I, Christopher John McCann, certify that this thesis is entirely my own work and does not contain any material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other institution.

To the best of my knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Christopher John McCann

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Introduction

Ireland is renowned for its long cultural heritage of literature and music, as well as the breadth of its worldwide diaspora. Each of these has its place in the construction of a modern Irish identity, and in what it means to be Irish. Indeed, the only nation with a musical instrument as its national symbol has produced four Nobel laureates in literature, almost all of whom lived outside of Ireland for large portions of their lives. Six Irish authors also feature in the literary halls of fame of Britain or France.[1] Indeed, aligning with John Dahlberg-Acton's assessment that exile is the "nursery of nationality," the Gaelic and Literary Revivals of circa 1880-1920 that were crucial in revitalising nationalism in Ireland originally found impetus abroad.[2] The early momentum for the movements came from London, as influential nineteenth century exiles such as W.B. Yeats and W. P. Ryan "distilled the elements to make a modern Ireland" from an ancient literary and musical inheritance.[3]

Particularly since the Flight of the Earls in the early seventeenth century, imagery of exile and return has been as intrinsic to conceptions of Irishness as the island's literary and musical lineage. In the period between 1801 and 1921, at least eight million people departed for North America, Great Britain and Australia, and more left Ireland between 1856 and 1921 than in the preceding two and a half centuries.[4] In 2002, President Mary McAleese estimated a worldwide Irish diaspora of 70 million, a figure that will only rise in future generations.[5] The heaviest periods of emigration have occurred during economic and humanitarian crises such as the Great Famine, but the persistence of emigration even during times of relative prosperity speaks of the pervasiveness of departure on the Irish cultural psyche.

This relationship between exile and culture is more complex than it first appears. As Jacques Derrida asserts, "national rootedness … is rooted first of all in

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[1] R. V. Comerford, *Ireland* (London: Hodder Arnold, 2003), 180.
[2] Benedict Anderson, "Exodus," *Critical Enquiry* 20, no. 2 (1994): 315.
[3] Aidan Arrowsmith, "Photographic Memories: Nostalgia and Irish Diaspora Writing," *Textual Practice* 19, no. 2 (2005): 298.
[4] Enda Delaney, "Transnationalism, Networks and Emigration from Post-War Ireland," *Immigrants and Minorities* 23, no. 2-3 (2005): 425; Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 345.
[5] Ann Schofield, "The Returned Yank as Site of Memory in Irish Popular Culture," *Journal of American Studies* 47 (2013): 1178.

the memory or the anxiety of a displaced—or displaceable—population."[6] Artistic representations of Irishness in music and literature have both shaped and been shaped by the conditions of exile. For example, after the cultural Revival had rather dissipated in the early years of the Free State, proscriptions such as the Censorship of Publications Act 1929 (while not explicitly aimed at native literature) effectively ostracised a generation of Irish artists and writers who had concluded that "Ireland was no longer an interesting place to live."[7] Many writers chose exile rather than remaining in a censorious climate, and the development of Irish cultural consciousness that should have continued in a free Ireland was instead undertaken overseas in the "free zones of art."[8] This is, according to Declan Kiberd, an unsurprising phenomenon: "to write—as to read—is to enter a sort of exile from the world. But to go into exile … may well be a signal to write."[9] James Joyce is the paradigm in this regard. For him, exile was a "strategy of combat" closely connected with the act of writing:

> In later life Joyce told his friend Claude Sykes that, so long as he could write, he could live anywhere, in a tub, like Diogenes. Writing was itself a form of exile for him, a source of detachment . . . Only in writing, which is also departing, is it possible to achieve the purification which comes from continual rebaptism of the mind.[10]

The concept of "rebaptism" aptly describes the constant renewal of Irish collective identity in each individual act of exile. Physical departure from home prompts a spiritual reevaluation of one's own placement within the wider discourse of preexisting cultural narratives.

The terms used to describe Irish emigration reflect this interrelation: in 1990 the Irish President Mary Robinson called Ireland's history of emigration a "great narrative of dispossession and belonging," and added that it had become "one of the

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[6] Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The state of the debt, the work of mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994), 83.
[7] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland: The literature of the modern nation* (London: Vintage, 1996), 264.
[8] Ibid., 266.
[9] Declan Kiberd, *The Irish Writer and the World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1.
[10] Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 114.

treasures of our society."[11] Similarly, author John Banville opined that the "violent poetry of leave-taking is ingrained in the Irish consciousness."[12] These inherently literary conceptions of exilic nationalism are supported by concurrent musical representations. Kerby Miller extensively catalogues the musical and literary expression of attachment to native place through generations of Irish-American communities. Irish people at home and abroad have created articulate musico-literary expressions in conceptualising emigration as involuntary exile caused by British oppression.[13]

The act of migration can be conceived as a narrative of identity, with an exposition, conflict, and (attempt at) resolution. As Paul White asserts:

> …realignments of identity may both precede migration (and in a sense, therefore, "cause" it), and they may also occur as a result of movement to a new location. Migration "events" therefore occur within personal biographies that neither start nor end at those events, but which provide the context for them.[14]

This reflects the notion that identity is not a fixed entity but an experiential process, one that Simon Frith asserts is "most vividly grasped as music."[15] Both creative literature and music provide vital explorations of what it means to be Irish within the social construction of exile.[16]

This research demonstrates music's vitality in defining and transforming Irish identity within the cultural narrative of migration. It is the contention of this thesis that permutations of Irish identity are positioned in relation to a cultural narrative, of which exile is not just an underlying element but indeed a vital expression. Though consistent tropes exist within the Irish culture of exile, there is no singular emigrant experience, particularly as the pain of leave-taking contrasts with the challenges of

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[11] Elizabeth Cullingford, "American Dreams: Emigration or Exile in Contemporary Irish Fiction." *Éire-Ireland* 49, no. 3-4 (2014): 65.

[12] John Banville, "The Grim Good Cheer of the Irish," *New York Times,* 18 December 2011, in Cullingford, "American Dreams," 62.

[13] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles,* passim; Cullingford, "American Dreams," 63.

[14] Paul White, "Geography, Literature and Migration," in *Writing Across Worlds: Literature and Imagination,* eds. Russell King, John Connell, and Paul White (London: Routledge, 1995), 2.

[15] Simon Frith, "Music and Identity," in *Questions of Cultural Identity,* eds. Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (London: Sage, 1996), 110.

[16] Paul White, "Geography, Literature and Migration," 2.

freedom.[17] The "Irishness" that is represented through musico-literary portrayals of emigration reflects and mediates the multiplicities inherent in exilic identity. It is music's role, then, to give form and meaning to vacillating conceptions of "Irishness" where contradictory experience threatens what was previously taken to be *donnée.* Authors use music to place characters in positions relative to the discourses of Irish exile, portraying cultural constructs as well as giving form to unspoken emotions.

This dissertation identifies musical praxes used by Irish individuals and communities between the late-nineteenth century and the mid-twentieth century to engage with the cultural heritage of emigration. The prose works of several Irish authors will be analysed for uses of music that position characters in relation to constructs of "Irishness" when emigrating from Ireland is either a prospect or a reality. The study's importance lies in the understanding of how the coalescence of artistic forms assists in the creation and maintenance of a recognizable Irish identity in the context of migration.

At this point it is pertinent to note that an area beyond the immediate scope of this thesis is the performance of identity in migration literature of Northern Ireland. This is largely because of the problematic process of defining a common "Northern Irish" identity. Indeed, the modern Northern Ireland is largely a political construction, subject to political wrangling to this day. In his analysis of musical traditions in the Northern Irish diaspora, David Cooper notes:

> Despite the extraordinary success of the peace process, Northern Ireland remains a divided country in which traditional culture in all its manifestations is still widely used as a marker of religious affiliation and ethnic identity.[18]

Indeed, the subtitle of the monograph is "Community and Conflict." Cooper observes that Unionist musical manifestations of sectarian division are still taken by the Catholic Republican community to be "means of intimidation," while a "sizeable

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[17] Cullingford, "American Dreams," 63.
[18] David Cooper, *The Musical Traditions of Northern Ireland and its Diaspora: Community and conflict* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 1.

proportion" of the Protestant community regard Irish traditional music as "alien".[19] Where some cultural symbols, such as music, are highly contested and represent difference in Northern Ireland, they more often represent unity and a sense of communal identification in the southern twenty-six counties.

As a result, especially after the partition years, this thesis is limited to the Republic of Ireland, where a common cultural identity is more readily definable. Nonetheless, a future study of music in Northern Irish diasporic literature would be inherently valuable, particularly given that Irish emigration prior to partition included a proportional number of both Protestant and Catholic emigrants from what is now Northern Ireland. Where reference is made in this thesis to Ireland prior to 1921, pre-partition geopolitics should be taken into account, particularly in terms of the island-wide cultural Revival that sought to unify the Irish polity based on cultural inheritance. In this respect, music and literature are crucial elements of memorial heritage that includes the colonial period.

As Harry White has observed, "the relationship between music and Irish cultural history is often at its most intense between that intersection which Irish literature has repeatedly provided."[20] To the present day, the tradition of literature expressing Irish identity through musical symbolism has persisted. The metaphorical presence of music in literature elucidates how the histories of each form are "enmeshed with the wider question of national identity."[21] It is not entirely chance that the greatest periods of out-migration from Ireland have coincided with an ongoing politicisation of music and literature. The richness of Irish music and literature in the diaspora is testament to the consistency, yet adaptability, of Irish national imagery in the creation of cultural identity.

Walter Pater's famous assertion that all arts aspire to the condition of music is particularly true in Irish music and literature.[22] This is certainly the case both in Ireland and the diaspora, where music has been an important socio-political marker since the turn of the nineteenth century. In this period, Irish music (or as Harry White argues, an "image of Irish music") became definitive of Irish identity itself, yet attained a symbolic strength of cultural regeneration in terms that were extensively

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[19] Ibid.

[20] Harry White, *The Keeper's Recital: Music and cultural history in Ireland, 1770-1970* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press and Field Day, 1998), 159.

[21] Gerry Smyth, *Music in Irish Cultural History* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2009), 106.

[22] Walter Pater, *The Renaissance: Studies in art and poetry* (London: Macmillan, 1925), passim.

literary.[23] The national emblem of the harp, a powerful symbol of Irish identity since at least the thirteenth century, was coopted as an emblem of a renascent Ireland from the last years of the eighteenth century. This coincided with the beginning of concurrent nationalist and musical antiquarian movements. The harping tradition, and its historical reality of silence at the hands of the English, was prefigured as the metaphor representing the silencing of the nation.[24] Hence, in 1791 the Society of United Irishmen adopted the insignia of a harp with the motto "It is new strung and shall be heard," while the organisers of the Belfast Harpers' Assembly of 1792 "gleaned their concepts of national identity and of the Irish harper bard from … contemporary literature."[25] A generation later, the Young Ireland movement overtly politicised music as a distinctly nationalist resource, in a milieu in which the musical and literary fields were seen as important "battlegrounds" in the fight against the coloniser.[26] In fact, whether in the form of literature or the musical notation of airs, text emerged as the primary medium through which Irish music would be symbolised for succeeding generations.[27]

Community and national identity is a cultural construct, in which there is a will to perpetuate common memories, practices, and beliefs. The arts are key to representations of community identity by acting as public articulations of adherence to communally held values.[28] As Foley has observed in her analysis of identity negotiation in Irish traditional dance, a large variety of conceptions of community and national identity are possible, from Anderson's (1983) "imagined community" to Turino's (2008) "cultural cohort."[29] Traditions are often adapted or even invented within such environments to affirm the extant or perceived values of the group. The creation of *céilí* dancing during the Gaelic Revival is an example of adapting or inventing tradition to validate a cultural cohort's values. What is more, just as in the

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[23] Harry White, *Music and the Irish Literary Imagination* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 5, 8.

[24] Sean Williams, *Focus: Irish Traditional Music* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 51; S. C. Lanier, "'It is New-Strung and Shan't be Heard': Nationalism and Memory in the Irish Harp Tradition," *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 8 (1999): 1.

[25] Lanier, "Nationalism and Memory," 1, 5-6.

[26] Ibid., 13; Martin Dowling, *Traditional Music and Irish Society: Historical Perspectives* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 153.

[27] Lanier, "Nationalism and Memory," 3; Harry White, *Keeper's Recital*, 151.

[28] Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: The politics of participation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 106.

[29] Catherine E. Foley, "The Irish Céilí: A Site for Constructing, Experiencing, and Negotiating a Sense of Community and Identity," *Dance Research: The Journal of the Society for Dance Research* 29, no. 1 (2011): 43, 57.

literary aspect of the Revival, the impetus for *céilí* dancing came from the diaspora. The first *céilí* was organised by the London branch of the Gaelic League, held in London on 30 October 1897, and attended by middle-class Irish immigrants. The dances codified as canonical the popular set dances, actually based on imported French quadrilles, which were part of the vernacular dance practices in rural Ireland. Their recourse to Irish authenticity lay more in the accompaniment by traditional dance music. For what they were intended to represent, the *céilí* events were immediately popular:

> The success of this Irish *céilí* and its subsequent dissemination throughout Ireland and the diasporic locations of England, Scotland, America, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, produced a new meaning of the word: an Irish social dance where Irish people, as members of a club, could interact socially and culturally, and through their dancing bodies assert and express a common cultural identity and demonstrate their cohesion as an Irish community.[30]

In communities whose social identities are based on the recognition of shared practices and beliefs, music is both a "private, affective action and a public, social ritual" in which the participants are able to perform their Irish identity.[31] Within Ireland, musical performance is an opportunity to reaffirm connections between culture, people, and place. It is a means to communal identification because it permits an appreciation of the self in relation to others, of "the subjective in the collective;" it is an experience of identity that is at once "a social process, a form of interaction, and an aesthetic process."[32] As Frith puts it, music "constructs our sense of identity through the direct experiences it offers of the body, time and sociability, experiences which enable us to place ourselves in imaginative cultural narratives."[33]

Identity, as an ongoing process of social construction, is mutable. According to Homi Bhabha, pedagogical and literary discourses position individuals as

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[30] Ibid., 45. The term *céilí* itself changed as a result of these events, as traditionally, a *céilí* merely involved friends visiting a house to converse and exchange stories.
[31] Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 102; Smyth, *Music in Irish Cultural History*, 4.
[32] Frith, "Music and Identity," 110.
[33] Ibid., 124.

historical objects, while they are subjects of culture as part of an ongoing affirmation of meaningful symbolic practices:

> The scraps, patches and rags of daily life must be repeatedly turned into signs of a national culture, while the very act of the narrative performance interpellates a growing circle of national subjects.[34]

In communities of the Irish diaspora, this process of identification is destabilised by physical and psychological dislocation from revered home places. Edward Relph describes home as the "point of departure from which we orient ourselves [and the] foundation of our identity as individuals and as members of a community," and we remain subordinate to the sensation of home even after many years away.[35] Yet after a migration event, the "scraps, patches and rags of daily life" are no longer within their original performative context. In these circumstances, the praxis of the symbolic arts is vital when the daily enactment of cultural identity is not reaffirmed by the place that helped produce it. The act of performing music in a foreign locale is one of reaching out to a lost home place, an attempt at continuity and retrieval of identity in the face of change.

Being subject to two places—previous home and new host—results in a hybrid emotional state, akin to Bhabha's "cultural inbetween" or Soja's "thirdspace."[36] If cultural identity involves the dual actions of unifying oneself with one group and differentiating from another, then in migrant communities these actions are made problematic by the need to adapt in an alien culture.[37] The result, as Salman Rushdie has observed, is that such exiles experience "strange fusions … unprecedented unions between what they are and where they find themselves."[38] The result of these fusions is altered and evolved representations of the self within culture. This manifests alternately as new forms of music and literature or political

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[34] Homi Bhabha, *Nation and Narration* (London: Routledge, 1990), 297.
[35] Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1976), 40, 39.
[36] Johanne Devlin Trew, "Diasporic Legacies: Place, politics and music among the Ottawa Valley Irish," in *Celtic Modern: Music at the Global Fringe*, eds. Martin Stokes and Philip V. Bohlman (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, 2003), 97.
[37] Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 105.
[38] Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism, 1981-1991* (New York: Granta, 1991), 124-25; Declan Kiberd, "Literature and Politics," in *The Cambridge History of Irish Literature: Volume 2, 1890-2000*, eds. Margaret Kelleher and Philip O'Leary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 29.

ideology, or in the strengthening of one's conception of home and culture in spite of dislocation.[39] Emigration results in both clear and indefinable shifts of identity: the function of art is to give shape and visibility to these shifts, complex experiences and inchoate emotions.[40]

The question of what occurs when music is represented through literature is the subject of a burgeoning field of study, particularly in terms of extra-musical literary modernism. In these terms music is most often a means of articulating the subtleties of human experience.[41] In this way, literature and music are valuable secondary texts in giving form to the insights of migration. The literary expression of both commonplace and elusive experience is enhanced by music, which naturally conveys a wider variety of sensory and perceptual experiences. Music is able to publicly perform identity by creating "spatial illusions" and a means of physically, aurally, and orally expressing that which is ineffable.[42] This phenomenon also includes dance, which for the purpose of this study, is assumed to be an extension of the musical act with which it appears. Indeed, Jane Desmond stresses that the codified and affective bodily movements of dance are equally important social texts in exploring social identities "in all their continually changing configurations."[43]

The social settings under analysis in this research commence at the beginning of the Gaelic literary revival, circa 1880, and conclude at the end of the 1950s in the Republic of Ireland. This era saw the collision of tradition and modernity in an Ireland attempting to solidify cultural nationalism, while emigration continued largely unabated. The relative permanence of emigration during this period underpins the continuity of the Irish exilic narrative. After Ireland began to modernise in the 1960s, the increasing possibility of return changed the face of Irish emigration. The scope of this research therefore concludes at mid-century, assessing the continuity and change of emigration themes until this point. The commonality between the literary texts under analysis is that in each, the action is set within the period and emigration is an immediate concern of the characters. This applies even to texts such as such as Keane's *The Bodhrán Makers* (1986) that were written after its

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[39] White, "Geography, Literature and Migration," 1.
[40] Yi-Fu Tuan, "Place: An Experiential Perspective," *Geographical Review* 65, no. 2 (1975): 161.
[41] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The perspective of experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 7.
[42] Ibid., 15.
[43] Jane C. Desmond, "Embodying Difference: Issues in Dance and Cultural Studies," *Cultural Critique* 26 (1993-1994): 57 and passim.

conclusion. Three particular themes will be examined, with music central to the expression of each: individuals' desire for either leaving or returning to Ireland; memory practices and retention of cultural identity; and public musical expressions of Irish cultural memory.

For two main reasons, this thesis focuses on Irish emigration to the United States and Britain. Firstly, these are the most common destinations for Irish emigrants, and they have certainly taken the majority of Irish people over many centuries. Irish diaspora literature most commonly deals with these locations. Other Anglophone diaspora communities such as Australia, New Zealand, and Canada have evolved similarly, but within their own unique contexts. These communities, and non-Anglophone diaspora communities, are deserving of their own musico-literary studies taking into account sociopolitical differences. Secondly, owing to limitations of space and scope, demonstrations of the relevant themes are most readily observable within particular texts that address American and British emigration.

While the relationship between music and Irish poetry is well established, this thesis focuses on prose literature. This is mainly because musical symbolism in prose often occurs in a carefully constructed analogue of life as it is lived, as compared to the more allusive qualities of poetry. The narrative element of prose also aligns with the developments of identity over the course of emigration events. However, poetry is used as a supporting text to the primary prose works.

The research draws on a variety of theoretical bases from musicology and hermeneutics, to geography and history. Emigration in Ireland is a complex combination of a variety of sociopolitical and historical forces, with recurring themes that adapt to changes in time and place. The five chapters of this analysis are thus organised thematically: they are structured to represent the narrative of the emigrant's journey, aligning with the different identity shifts that take place in the act of emigration. For example, it will be demonstrated that emigrants can be identified by their willingness or reluctance to leave Ireland, and their relative desire to return. Identity shifts encountered by Irish migrants appear relative to economic, artistic, and political forces behind the continuing cycle of Irish emigration.

In the exposition of the emigration narrative, the first two chapters address the forces that lead to identity shifts prior to departure. Chapter one establishes the importance of the Gaelic Revival's framework in the construction of Irish identity at

the turn of the twentieth century, and outlines how the contradictions of the movement laid the cultural foundation for the decades that followed. In this chapter, the protagonists in George Moore's *The Untilled Field* (1903) and James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) are prompted to seek self-fulfillment through emigration after encountering difficulty in adhering to the essentialist ideologies of Revival-era Dublin. The interaction between traditional Irish music and European art music in the period forms the background to the epiphanic musical escapes of the respective protagonists.

The second chapter examines how the contradictions of the Revival had consequences for the reception of traditional Irish music in the early years of the Irish Free State and Republic. In Patrick Kavanagh's *Tarry Flynn* (1948) and John B. Keane's *The Bodhrán Makers* (1986), clerical and governmental control over morality in the new State combines with socioeconomic neglect in rural areas. This takes place within the context of the post-independence exodus to Britain. In Kavanagh's County Cavan and Keane's County Kerry, the fervent cultural nationalism of only a generation prior is attenuated, to the detriment of those to adhering to long-valued musical tradition. This combination of sociopolitical factors results in a necessary reevaluation of Irish identity by the emigrant characters in the texts.

The third chapter analyses music's role in the ritual of the American wake, where the emigrant on the verge of departure participated in an expression of communal attitudes towards emigration. In a reflection of the American wake itself, this chapter is placed as the liminal boundary between the respective states of identity prior to and after departure. The connotative power of music in the ritual permits an active participation with discourses of emigration, as well as providing a conduit for the communication of liminal emotional states when words alone are insufficient. The literature of Liam O'Flaherty, Frank McCourt, and Máirtín Ó Cadhain is analysed for music's role in cultural interactions during the American wake, which prefigure shifts of identity that occur after departure.

The desire to return, either actually or in the imagination, is a common theme in migration literature.[44] Chapters four and five address identity shifts that occur after the act of emigration. Specifically, each chapter looks at the musical praxes utilised

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[44] White, "Geography, Literature and Migration," 14.

by Irish migrants to reconnect with culture after arriving in their new locale. In each of the last two chapters, the problematic identity politics of the Revival actually become attractive to the emigrant wishing to reconnect. Drawing on theories of place, space, habitus and identity, chapter four analyses the role of *sean-nós* singing as a site of memory for Irish-American emigrants in Colm Tóibín's *Brooklyn* (2009). In the text, the traditional performance dynamics of *sean-nós* address desires for return by placing individual emigrants within a wider cultural narrative.

Chapter five builds on the theoretical framework of the previous chapter, but turns attention to communally held sites of memory. In this chapter, the willingness of individuals to subordinate themselves to a particularly geographical conception of Irishness appears in musical sites of memory available to entire communities. Referring mainly to Seán Ó Faoláin's *Come Back to Erin* (1940), this chapter analyses the power of imagined geography in musical representations of Ireland, and the way in which emigrants are able to use these images to outwardly identify with the Irish nation. In this way, elements of Irish cultural history are embodied in geography and music, aligning with the aspect of the emigration experience that is undoubtedly communal.

In all of the chapters, music is able to speak for the Irish identity of a given emigrant protagonist. Whether wishing to depart from or return to Ireland, each of the emigrants musically engages with the ongoing discourses of Irish emigration. Musical reference within the texts gives air to the unique experiences of migration within the context of a communal cultural narrative. In this way, the consistency of particular tropes of Irish identity is made apparent between times and places, and the identity of individual emigrants can be traced to a communally held cultural narrative.

Chapter One

The Revival Cultural Field and Exile: George Moore and James Joyce

The complex and multifaceted Gaelic Revival of *fin de siècle* Ireland contained essential contradictions that laid a template for succeeding decades of Irish art and culture. In his discussion of anthropological modernism within the movement, Gregory Castle notes that many Anglo-Irish Revivalists were forced into ambivalent positions "suggestive of those taken by ethnographers who stand both inside and outside the culture they investigate, striving for a balance between participation and observation."[1] The significance of this statement in terms of the life of an exile cannot be overlooked. A main contention of this chapter is that the inability to balance participation and observation within the Revival movement is pervasive, particularly in terms of music, and reveals an affinity with the discourses of emigration such that departure was a logical conclusion to a contradictory cultural field.

Martin Dowling asks, "what need had the Anglo-Irish for songs of emigration, songs celebrating place from a position of displacement?"[2] The answer lies in the Revival's unwillingness to countenance hybridity: to acknowledge music of emigration would be to endorse ambivalent understandings of Irishness, or a "condition of estrangement."[3] And yet, the impetus for the Revival came from abroad. When Stephen Dedalus declared that the "shortest way to Tara was *via* Holyhead,"[4] or Frank O'Connor echoed that sentiment by stating that "an Irish person's private life begins at Holyhead,"[5] he asserted that to be in a position of distance and ambivalence is a valid expression of Irishness and connection. It accepts the power of belonging to culture, and yet hints at exile as a form of individual freedom.

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[1] Gregory Castle, *Modernism and the Celtic Revival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 6.
[2] Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 237.
[3] Castle, *Modernism and the Celtic Revival*, 6.
[4] James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* [1916] (New York: Penguin, 2003), 273.
[5] In Kiberd, "Literature and Politics," 24.

Music was politically coopted in the Revival's effort to foster homogeneous cultural nationalism. The Revival's constructs of musical nationalism, featuring an essentially dichotomous view of musical identity, resulted in impingements upon individual aesthetic freedom that could either be accepted or challenged. This chapter assesses the works of George Moore and James Joyce, two literary exiles during the period whose experience of music celebrated art's variety and ability to freely exist in a place of ambivalence. In the literature of each author, music is used to illuminate cultural contradictions in Revival-era Dublin. Departure—exile—is their means of fulfillment, and music assists in their escape (albeit to differing extents). In Moore's *The Untilled Field* (1903)[6] and Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916), musical epiphany is used as a device for the texts' protagonists to realise self-agency in the face of a limiting cultural field.

Cultural Fields and Music in the Revival

The Revival's aim of cultivating allegiance to cultural institutions that would legitimise a renascent Irish Ireland included the appropriation of music. Traditional and popular musical forms competed for currency in the years of the Revival, leading to a perception that Irish traditional music was in terminal decline. Douglas Hyde lamented:

> Our music … has become Anglicised to an alarming extent. Not only has the national instrument, the harp … become extinct, but even the Irish pipes are threatened with the same fate. In the place of the pipers and fiddlers, who even twenty years ago, were comparatively common, we are now in many places menaced by the German band and the barrel organ.[7]

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[6] I refer to the 1903 first edition of *The Untilled Field* in this chapter. Moore re-worked the collection several times—often markedly—over the course of several succeeding decades. With the passage of time both Moore's ideological intensity and also the fervor of the Revival itself progressively cooled. As a result, the 1903 edition tells us most about the prevailing attitudes at the Revival's zenith.

[7] Douglas Hyde, "The Necessity for De-Anglicising Ireland," in Dowling, "'Thought-Tormented Music': Joyce and the Music of the Irish Revival," *James Joyce Quarterly* 45, vol. 3/4 (2008): 438.

For Hyde, the solution to this problem was that "the revival of our Irish music must go hand in hand with the revival of Irish ideas and Celtic modes of thought."[8] The Feis Ceoil Association was founded in 1895 from "a committee representative of the National Literary Society, the Gaelic League, and the Musical Profession" with a view to taking up Hyde's call.[9] In a circular letter from Annie Patterson, musical advisor to the Gaelic League, four main objectives of the Association were outlined:

a. the public performance of Irish music, "with every effort being made to interpret the old tunes or melodies in strict accordance with the traditional manner of performance";

b. the collection, recording and publication of Irish airs "which have hitherto baffled the efforts made to record them by collectors";

c. "in accordance with the expressed wish of the members of the Gaelic League, to render many of the items in the Irish language"; and

d. "to offer such inducements as would give a stimulus to the rise of a new Irish School of composers, who, by their works, may prove that it is possible for Irish musicians to be truly National in their art as Dvořák and Greig have been."[10]

These aims amounted to an attempt to define an essential Irish musical character. Of the first three objectives, a clear endeavour was made to "distil from available performers and the old collections the essential Irish forms."[11] Figures like Patterson were instrumental in giving preference to music of "archaeological interest," representing a renewal of the antiquarian movements of a century earlier.[12]

However, this was problematic in a number of ways. One issue lay in the reception and composition of art music pursuant to the Association's fourth stated aim.[13] The popularity of ballad opera in petit bourgeois Dublin circles, particularly of

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[8] Ibid.
[9] Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 161.
[10] Ibid., 161-162.
[11] Ibid., 236.
[12] Ibid., 163.
[13] "Art music" may be broadly defined as music which is cultivated for largely formal, aesthetic or artistic purposes, rather than for vernacular or popular consumption. In the Western tradition, "art" music is synonymous with "classical" music, although boundaries between musical styles are often not as simple or clear. As in the Irish Revival period, a certain level of elitism continues to surround discourses of what music is "Art," and therefore "high" music, and what music is "Popular" and therefore "low." This is problematic as the two definitions frequently overlap, particularly in the

the Irish composer Michael William Balfe, was regarded as insufficiently "Irish" to represent the national school of composition. The perception was that the musical philistinism of these classes was a product of English influence, for "any new ideas that reached us came to us from England."[14] This view led to stagnation in original Irish classical composition, for anything remotely "English" could not by that fact be "Irish." In the Feis Ceoil competition, for example, art music was gradually removed from the original composition section to be replaced by exclusively Celtic modes in "recourse to the ethnic past."[15]

Such a perspective led to the rejection of Irish-born composers such as Charles Villiers Stanford; by his choice to work from London and incorporate German classical influences into treatments of the Irish traditional repertory, he was denounced as a "West Briton… that class abominated by Irish Ireland."[16] The same mentality saw the fall of the previous national poet Thomas Moore's star, and "what to do with or about" his *Irish Melodies* was a persistent theme during the Revival.[17] This was in spite of the enduring popularity of his ballads in bourgeois Catholic households, due to their effectiveness in providing a means of expression for marginalised Catholics during the nineteenth century.[18] Joyce made light of this contradiction by his own treatment of Thomas Moore—he celebrated and derided him in equal measure throughout his fiction.

Within this schema, hybridity was anathema. This ultimately stunted the growth and appreciation of Irish art music in the period, for to create an art music in the style of the Eastern European composers necessarily entailed incorporating at least some touchstone of European classical music thought. A divide existed in the Revival ideology between "high" and "low" musical culture, as well as between formal and vernacular traditions:

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modern context where sampling of classical music is common in popular recordings. Philip Tagg (1982) argues that in terms of scholarly analysis, art music should be placed within an "axiomatic triangle" that also includes "folk" and "popular" musics.

[14] Ibid., 160.

[15] Susan Motherway, *The Globalization of Irish Traditional Song Performance* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2013), 7; White, *Keeper's Recital*, 113-114.

[16] Lillis Ó Laoire, "Irish Music," in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Irish Culture,* eds. Joe Cleary and Claire Connolly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 276; White, *Keeper's Recital*, 107.

[17] Ó Laoire, "Irish Music," 276; Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 226.

[18] Emer Nolan, "'The Tommy Moore Touch': Ireland and Modernity in Joyce and Moore," *Dublin James Joyce Journal* 2 (2009): 66.

The particular structuring of the artistic field during the Irish revival [resulted] from a shared belief in a particularly national aesthetic substance. This essential substance is, of course, constructed to be ineffable and unattainable… High brows castigated the Gaelic Leaguers for allowing foreign vernacular practices to distort the pure tradition of Irish song, while Gaelic Leaguers involved in the Feis Ceoil Association objected to the presence of foreign competitors, performers, adjudicators, and compositions.[19]

Arriving at a mutually agreeable "national" art music—such as had been achieved by composers in Eastern Europe—was an impossible task. Under this model, "high" culture, or art music, could not be reconciled with the "peasant" musical traditions that the Revival sought to valorise. There was a concomitant rejection of even the finest of foreign composers as models for Irish art music:

In Annie Patterson's words, without the ability to tap into "the Irish genius, with its love for exquisite and symmetric melody, and bright dainty rhythms . . . something wholly apart from the contemplative depth of J. S. Bach and also the long drawn-out thematic development of Beethoven", there will never be an Irish Antonin Dvorak, Edvard Greig, or Bela Bartok.[20]

Another problem in the musical field of the Revival was the habitual casting of music's narrative in a "tragic mode," with its perceived decline representative of the state of the nation itself.[21] Dowling has observed that in describing the essential character of Irish music in this way, it becomes an example of the Lacanian *objet petit a*, an object of desire that postulates its own cause and is always perceived in distortion since in itself it does not exist.[22] The desire for an unattainable essence is in psychoanalytic terms a "desire for unsatisfaction, the desire for desire itself."[23] Setting up additional hindrances, such as strict claims on possible representations,

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[19] Dowling, "Thought-tormented Music," 439.
[20] Annie Patterson, "Notes," 1909, in Dowling, "Thought-tormented Music," 440-441.
[21] Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 158.
[22] Ibid., 177.
[23] Ibid., 176.

heightens the value of the object—in this case, an essential Irish music. The Revivalist musical discourse "supplants the absence of the essential music of the nation by feigning that it is us who put the obstacle in the way."[24] The claim in the Feis Ceoil manifesto that previous attempts at transcription had "baffled" collectors is an example of such an obstacle, and it is one that fetishises the object it obstructs.

A discourse such as this that promoted an unattainable perfection actually ignored vibrant musical practice occurring in many places. Dowling argues that those who saw "only decline and debasement" missed the vibrancy of musical practice in the towns and rural hinterlands.[25] The "soul" of Irish music, as we may call it, was evolving alongside developments of mass-produced instruments as well improvements to the indigenous uilleann pipes. When this musical practice was noticed, it was almost exclusively in terms of preservation and recording in "strict accordance with the traditional manner of performance." Vernacular tradition that did not cohere with the perceived "essence" of Irish music was deemed incorrect or too difficult to categorise and was thus antithetical. Instead of acknowledging the variety of musical practice around the island, including in the larger cities, classifications of authenticity remained essentialist.

Homological models of cultural practice assert that social groups agree on assumed values which are then expressed through cultural activities, in this case music.[26] However, as Dowling has stressed, traditional music was "developing and changing much too quickly to be fixed in discourse."[27] By rejecting the possibility that music is in fact a living, changing tradition, Revival politics also ignored the possibility that for its practitioners, Irish music was a way of living and understanding themselves. The musical process through which identity is often realised is in its actual performance, and in this respect there is no practical difference between high and low music.[28] Essentialism demands that the individual is completely subject to tradition, rejecting volition and personal taste. Yet, personal interpretation of tradition is important. The aesthetic practice of music includes a

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[24] Ibid., 177.
[25] Martin Dowling, "Traditional Music in the Irish Revival," in *Music and Identity in Ireland and Beyond,* eds. Mark Fitzgerald and John O'Flynn (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 47-48.
[26] Frith, "Music and Identity," 111.
[27] Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 184-5.
[28] Frith, "Music and Identity," 111.

relationship between the group *and* the individual, "on the basis of which ethical codes and social ideologies are understood."[29]

While the Feis Ceoil Association was apparently aware of these concerns, it negotiated them with difficulty. Consider its manifesto from 1901:

> The [Feis Ceoil] Association believes in the universality of music, and also in its nationality … It seeks to induce and assist people of all classes to understand Irish music, to play and sing Irish music … But it does not want to sink into provincial philistinism. Much less will it adopt the absurd notion that our standard of art and our theories of progress are to be fixed by the views and practice of the itinerant musician when caught wild.[30]

Yet at the same time, the Association was indeed attempting to catch wild itinerant musicians. From 1899, it was using the phonograph to record and preserve the airs performed by previously unknown instrumentalists and singers alike.[31] While variation and improvisation is valuable within performed traditional music, early manual transcribers found individual expression a hindrance to their methods. The phonograph was a tool for disembodiment and dehumanization of performance, for distilling and fixing essence from flawed human actuality into precise transcription and analysis.[32] The perfect notation of music in this context continued the privileging of written and musical text over actual performance, "related to a politically motivated rejection of the present—of the actually existing state of culture—in preference for the past and for the future."[33] Foregrounding text over performance aesthetic not only rejects the agency of the individual performer (or listener), but tends towards extrapolating cultural preconditions from performance alone. John Miller Chernoff's comments relative to a study of drumming in Ghana are applicable within the present context: "The aesthetic point of the exercise is not to reflect a reality which *stands behind it* but to ritualise a reality that is *within* it."[34]

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[29] Ibid., 110-11.
[30] Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 184.
[31] Ibid., 194-5.
[32] Ibid., 195, 199.
[33] Ibid., 236.
[34] John Miller Chernoff, *African Rhythm and African Sensibility: Aesthetics and Social Action in African Musical Idioms* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 36.

Music became a form of "cultural capital," subject to a prescriptive discourse, commodifying the musical act as aligned either with or against the aims of cultural nationalism.[35] However, this did not necessarily reflect the vernacular musical practices of the emerging middle class—indeed, the Revival attitudes to these practices even went so far as expressing hostility towards the hybridised vernacular music they enjoyed.[36] Valorising traditional music as a marker of homogenous, idealised culture ignored its diffusion through a number of classes, and in Dublin it existed alongside other popular musical forms in a "complex field of experience."[37] Indeed, early twentieth century Dublin had an intensely varied musical schema. In the city that Moore and Joyce knew, "the cheap, the bawdy, and the popular coexisted side by side with the classical, the cultured and the refined," with each its place within the entertainments of urban life.[38] Even the repertoires of traditional musicians were broad enough to incorporate a wide range of contemporary genres so as to remain pliant for different audiences.[39] This was a reflection of the socio-economic conditions of the period. Declan Kiberd argues that Ireland was ambivalent, caught between the ideas of "citizen" and "*homo economicus*" after the Famine;[40] culturally, this manifested as a clash between the idealism of national form and the realities of urban existence. Music was in many ways democratic and linked to fluid socio-economic strata, yet some musical styles were so linked to obstacles of class division that it has been argued this led to an outright stagnation of culture.[41]

Musical performance was brought from the halls into the home: improved printing technology meant sheet music was more readily available, and cheaper prices for instruments such as pianos made class distinctions less marked. At the same time, music-hall and classical concerts became more accessible, so that middle class musical tastes became democratic and incorporated a wide variety of styles.[42] This was not something caused by inherently class-bound tastes, but was an effect of the social activities within those environments.[43] But for some cultural elites, the

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[35] Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 152.
[36] Ibid., 204.
[37] Ibid., 151, 204.
[38] Zack Bowen, *Bloom's Old Sweet Song: Essays on Joyce and Music* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1995), 92.
[39] Ó Laoire, "Irish Music," 267.
[40] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, 115; Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 155.
[41] Ó Laoire, "Irish Music," 267; White, *Keeper's Recital*, 104.
[42] Dowling, "Traditional Music in Irish Society," 46; Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 211.
[43] Frith, "Music and Identity," 112.

popularity of non-traditional styles and instruments was a symbol of "national debasement," to be eradicated in the movement towards de-Anglicization.[44] Hence, links between class, musical taste and national belonging became entwined within political movements that did not represent what was for average Dubliners a largely democratic cultural field.

The origins of this musical milieu are located in powerful forces of social and economic change, including the dissipation of Parnellite politics in the early 1890s.[45] After the disestablishment of the minority Church of Ireland in 1869, the already prominent Catholic Church was able to capitalise on the opportunity for political gain. Economic capital in a rural system of inheritance was contingent on controlling marriage, and in turn, sexual relations. The Church was able to establish a moral monopoly even under British union, which fed into social and cultural aspects of Irish life. The Church's moral politics of "bodily discipline, emotional control and [an] ethos of self-denial" were equated with national character—later to be enshrined in de Valera's constitution.[46] The influence of the Catholic Church in social and political life is clear in the fall of Parnell. Within this moral schema, Parnell's private and public lives were morally inseparable, and his infidelity was the death knell to his political career as well as the momentum that the Home Rule movement was gathering. His former colleagues, political opponents, and indeed, the clergy and church hierarchy overwhelmed Parnell's resistance.[47] As will be made clear, the influence of religion on the cultural field is evident in both Moore's and Joyce's fiction.

In the post-Parnell political vacuum an environment arose in which "cultural practices did not so much displace political activity as continue it by other means."[48] Revival politics became centered on difference to England and asserting the Irishness of cultural pursuits. The Church was also influential, as some members of the clergy were even actively involved in promoting traditional music as an essential element of cultural nationalism.[49] Art, including music, became entrenched in a political climate

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[44] Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 212.

[45] Ibid., 152.

[46] Tom Inglis, "Religion, identity, state and society," in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Irish Culture*, eds. Joe Cleary and Claire Connolly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 65.

[47] Frank Callanan, "The Parnellism of James Joyce: 'Ivy Day in the Committee Room'," *Joyce Studies Annual* (2015): 74.

[48] Terry Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture* (London: Verso, 1995), 232; Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 155.

[49] Ibid., 165.

that stressed authenticity and to some bordered on extremism. Musical events such as the crossroads dance and music-hall were now political events, just as performing a chosen music to an audience could be construed as a political statement.[50] The political commodification of music, particularly in so-called "Irish concerts" featuring nationalist musical selections, is satirised in Joyce's "A Mother," in which the successful running of the concert—and the expression of the artistes—is secondary to the political aims of the fictional "Éire Abu" society.

In essence, "the musical aspect of the Revival was marked by an abstracting and dehumanising search for form," removing individual agency from musical production.[51] Within the overall conservative Catholic ethos, resistance to the politicising of cultural pursuits was limited mainly to artistic and literary urban elites, stifling any possible large-scale opposition.[52] We have Joyce and Moore as models of this artistic and literary resistance. For these authors, the creation of art was itself a means of escape from oppression, a way to critique the contradictions of musical Revival politics and reclaim the self from a homogenous essence.

Joyce and Moore: Perfect Wagnerites

Joyce and Moore were both critical of the cultural status quo that precluded individual artistic exploration. In this regard, the aesthetic of the German composer Richard Wagner (1813-1883) was influential in each author's thinking. Wagner's artistic philosophies embodied the "spirit of revolution, self-realization, vitality, and personal freedom," perhaps best encapsulated by the artist-hero Siegfried from *The Ring Cycle* operas. This made him "amenable to easy translation in artistic terms" by a number of Irish Wagnerites including Moore and Joyce.[53] In embracing this philosophy, they sought to surpass the contradictions in the artistic climate of the Revival.

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[50] Ó Laoire, "Irish Music," 276; Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 156, 219.
[51] Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 236.
[52] Inglis, "Religion, identity, state and society," 65.
[53] Timothy P. Martin, "Joyce, Wagner, and the Artist-Hero," *Journal of Modern Literature* 11, no. 1 (1984): 71. George Bernard Shaw was another notable Wagnerite.

The influence of European music is clear in each man's work, not least in the appropriation of Wagner's thematic developments.[54] In an echo of the musical and artistic life of Dublin and Ireland, Wagner reserved the following criticism of modern art:

> If we consider the relation of modern art—so far as it is truly *Art*—to public life, we shall recognise at once its complete inability to affect this public life … The reason hereof is, that our modern art is a mere product of [modern] Culture and has not sprung from Life itself.[55]

In Moore's "In the Clay," the iconoclastic sculptor Rodney finds it impossible to create his commissioned sculpture of the Virgin Mary in his own vision due to intolerable interference in the artistic process by a local priest.[56] In a more subtle and bathetic way, Little Chandler in Joyce's "A Little Cloud" dreams of striking "the Celtic Note" in a volume of poetry, but lives a mundane existence and lacks true imagination. He concedes that he has little chance of success unless within the circle of the "English critics."[57] In each text, the socio-politics of Dublin prevents the protagonist from attaining self-fulfillment. For Joyce and Moore, in the mould of Wagner, "artistic freedom meant resistance to those aspects of culture which impinge upon the artist's individuality and prevent his self-actualisation in art."[58]

The solution to these restrictions for the authors was to create an exilic artist-hero figure, *à la* Wagnerian opera, affirming the power of art to reach self-actualisation. Each borrowed at some stage the motif of the "artist-smith" in a reworking of Wagner's Siegfried. In Joyce's *Portrait*, after Stephen Dedalus has decided on his artistic career, across the University College quadrangle "the birdcall from *Siegfried* whistled softly followed them from the steps of the porch."[59] This references the third of the four *Ring* operas, in which the eponymous hero hears

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[54] Joyce was particularly innovative in drawing inspiration from Wagner. For example, it is worth noting the extensity and effectiveness of his linguistic adaptation of Wagner's *leitmotif* technique in *Ulysses*.

[55] Wagner, *Prose Works* I, 182; in Martin, "Joyce, Wagner, and the Artist-Hero," 82.

[56] In later editions, Moore combined "In the Clay" and "The Way Back" into a new story entitled "Fugitives." He placed it last in these collections, rather anticlimactically diminishing the impact of "The Wild Goose" which is the final story in the 1903 edition.

[57] James Joyce, "A Little Cloud," in *Dubliners* [1914] (London: Penguin, 1992), 68-69.

[58] Martin, "Joyce, Wagner, and the Artist-Hero," 84.

[59] Joyce, *Portrait*, 258.

birdcall that he cannot understand; after slaying the dragon Fafner using the sword he forged himself, he can now understand the birdcall as augury.[60] Joyce uses this to parallel Stephen's journey, for shortly before this, upon seeing birds in the sky he wonders the answer to "the augury that he sought": "Symbol of departure or of loneliness? The verses crooned in the ear of his memory composed before his remembering eyes the scene of the hall on the night of the opening of the national theatre."[61]

The reference to the national theatre recalls the riots on the opening night of Yeats's *The Countess Cathleen* at the Abbey Theatre in May 1899. The protest at Yeats's dramatic depiction of peasant Ireland reflected a general suppression of artistic freedom in the pursuit of nationalist rhetoric. Joyce noticed the irony, and supported Yeats on the issue.[62] This, in conjunction with the bird augury, indicates that Stephen has understood that they represent the symbol of artistic freedom and departure.

Moore, in his autobiographical *Hail and Farewell* (1912-1914), used the image of the Wagnerian artist-hero with a forged weapon in a somewhat self-indulgent assessment of his ability to write the "national epic":

> "… I have come into the most impersonal country in the world to preach personality—personal love and personal religion, personal art, personality for all except God"; … and to heighten my inspiration I looked toward the old apple-tree, remembering that many had striven to draw forth the sword that Wotan had struck into the tree about which Hunding had built his hut. Parnell, like Sigmund, had drawn it forth, but Wotan had allowed Hunding to strike him with his spear. And the allegory becoming clearer I asked myself if I were Siegfried, son of Sigmund slain by Hunding, and if it were my fate to reforge the sword that lay broken in halves in Mimi's cave.

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[60] Martin, "Joyce, Wagner, and the Artist-Hero," 78.
[61] Joyce, *Portrait,* 245.
[62] Seamus Deane, "Notes," in Joyce, *Portrait,* 322.

It seemed to me that the garden was filled with tremendous music, out of which came a phrase glittering like a sword suddenly drawn from its sheath and raised defiantly to the sun.[63]
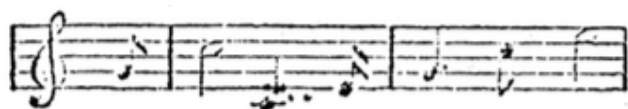
Moore invokes the memory of the fallen Parnell as a symbol of the stagnation of Irish art, and sees in himself the potential to defiantly create the Irish national artistic aesthetic.

Joyce also appropriated this imagery. He apparently read the first volume of Wagner's *Prose Works* around 1899, in which the composer describes a sketch he had completed for an opera entitled "Wieland the Smith":

> In this sketch a master smith is captured, lamed, and imprisoned by a king who recognises Wieland's ability to create weapons and finery. Wagner describes his plight as follows: "He, the free artist-smith, who of very joy in his art, had forged the most wondrous of smithery…— here must he, spurned and spat upon, smite out the chains for his own body, and swords and trappings to adorn the man who cast him into shame" … The sketch concludes as Wieland, like Daedalus, forges himself a pair of wings and flies to freedom.[64]

Two scenes in *A Portrait* affirm this connection. When discussing his aesthetic theory and artistic freedom with his university colleagues, Stephen argues: "'When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets.'"[65] Stephen is a Wieland-like character, refusing to debase his art in servitude to the forces that had lamed him. And, in the culmination of *Portrait*, the famous conclusion to the novel hearkens once again to *Siegfried* and the Wieland sketch:

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[63] Moore, *Hail and Farewell*, III, 306; in Martin, "Joyce, Wagner, and the Artist-Hero," 77. Musical figure reproduced as it appears within the text.
[64] Martin, "Joyce, Wagner, and the Artist-Hero," 73.
[65] Joyce, *Portrait*, 220.

"Welcome, O life! I go to encounter in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race."[66]

For Joyce and Moore, art was a form of exile, and exile was the affirmation of artistic freedom; for that reason, Wagner was but one of their many European influences, and there are similar musical ideas within their works. Embracing diverse musical influences within the cultural field was vital to the epiphanic devices each used to tie together their exploration of escape and the Revival.

Connections: Joyce, Moore, and Epiphany

There is considerable evidence of artistic influence between the two authors. They had much in common in their overlapping careers—both were lapsed Catholics who believed in and sought exile, and shared Wagner and Ibsen as artistic inspiration.[67] Joyce was well acquainted with Moore's fiction, and Ellmann has demonstrated the influence of Moore's *Vain Fortune* on the writing of "The Dead."[68] Moreover, common imagery of seaward journeys is used to represent impending departure in their literature of exile.[69]

The similarities between the authors are interesting, because Joyce equally derided and lauded Moore's abilities. Part of this may be attributed to professional jealousy that Moore was already exploring themes close to Joyce, and partly also—in typical Joycean fashion—to an occasion in which Moore had ignored the younger writer in Dublin. Joyce, ever the aesthete, also objected to Moore's lack of artistic polish, a fair criticism.[70] But at the same time, Joyce was clearly influenced by Moore. He "overpraised [*Vain Fortune*] as 'fine, original writing'" in his broadside "The Day of the Rabblement"; he once referred to Ireland as an "untilled field"; and his allusions to Moore's *Parnell and his Island* (1886) within the "Rabblement" indicate that Joyce had the elder writer's work in his mind during the period in which he was developing his epiphany technique.[71]

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[66] Ibid., 275-276.
[67] Paul Jones, "'A Tame Bird Escaped from Captivity': Leaving Ireland in George Moore's *The Lake* and Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*," *Joyce Studies Annual* (2012): 155.
[68] Patricia Ann McFate, "Gabriel Conroy and Ned Carmady: A Tale of Two Irish Geese," *College Literature* 5, no. 2 (1978): 133; Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 260.
[69] McFate, "Gabriel Conroy and Ned Carmady," 136.
[70] Jones, "A Tame Bird," 154-155.
[71] McFate, "Gabriel Conroy and Ned Carmady," 133; Phillip L. Marcus, "George Moore's Dublin 'Epiphanies' and Joyce," *James Joyce Quarterly* 5, no. 2 (1968): 144.

The Untilled Field has been compared to Joyce's *Dubliners* as a rural precursor to the later urban stories; Kennelly has called *Dubliners* a "more sophisticated and cleverly organised version of *The Untilled Field*."[72] Indeed, Moore's first edition of *The Untilled Field* was far more bombastic than later editions—he frequently revised his work (sometimes to its detriment), and some of the iconoclasm of its agitator characters had disappeared by the 1931 edition that rather resembles *Dubliners*' structure. Both authors' works share the theme of paralysis and escape, and they each use epiphany as a stylistic device in plot development (although Joyce tends to be subtler, which will become apparent below).

Epiphany is a common literary technique, though every writer uses it differently. Essentially, an epiphany is a "sudden illumination produced by apparently trivial [or] arbitrary causes … a sudden spiritual 'manifestation.'"[73] James Joyce arguably used the technique more frequently and more ingeniously than any comparable writer. For him, epiphany was a sudden clarity achieved by the illumination and integration of all of the story's previous trivial events, such that meaning became crystallised.[74] While *Dubliners* has been most frequently praised for its execution of epiphany, it is also present in his other fiction (such as Bloom's sudden realization of the "Throwaway" Gold Cup connection in *Ulysses*). It is a crucial element of *Portrait,* and what is notable in this text is the use of music in epiphanies. This illuminates the self-affirming act of leaving Ireland with a critical light, framed by the contradictory cultural field described previously. Likewise, the momentous epiphany in Moore's "The Wild Goose" is also musical. Indeed, there are wider links between the authors' uses of epiphany, as Richard Ellmann has observed: "The Wild Goose" and *The Lake* bear similarities to Joyce's motif in *Portrait* of the sea, birds, flight and exile.[75] In essence, there is a desire and a need for escape, and musical epiphany assists in its attainment.

Moore's "The Wild Goose"

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[72] Jane Roberts, "George Moore: A Wild Goose's Portrait of His Country," *Irish University Review* 22, no. 2 (1992): 306.

[73] Morris Beja, *Epiphany in the Modern Novel* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1971), 13, 15.

[74] Irene Hendry, "Joyce's Epiphanies," *The Sewanee Review* 54, no. 3 (1946): 452. Of course, Stephen expounds his theory of epiphany in great detail in terms of Aquinian aesthetics in *Portrait*, Chapter V.

[75] Jones, "A Tame Bird," 156; Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 234.

The artist escaping into exile is a common motif in *The Untilled Field*—the sculptor from "In The Clay", for example, "look[s] upon Dublin as a place to escape from" and eventually emigrates to London.[76] However, "The Wild Goose" gives the theme its most thorough treatment by addressing "the agonies of the exilic impulse born from tensions surrounding 'Irishness.'"[77] Indeed, *The Untilled Field*—intended as Moore's contribution to the Revival syllabus—conveys a sense of realism uncomfortable for those in the movement. Whether this was in the depiction of the deprivation of the rural west that challenged Revival illusions of Ireland's "inspirational and spiritual centre," or in the critique of nationalism in the Dublin political sphere, Moore cast a critical eye over the foundations of Revival "Irishness."[78] Moore affirmed his intention in this aim in *Salve*, emphasising emigration as the inevitable outcome:

> This story seemed to me so representative of Irish life … it was while writing *The Wild Goose* that it occurred to me for the first time that, it being impossible to enjoy independence of body and soul in Ireland, the thought of every brave-hearted boy is to cry, "Now, off with my coat so that I may earn five pounds to take me out of the country."[79]

In "The Wild Goose," the impossibility of "independence of body and soul" is portrayed through the relationship between Ned Carmady and his wife Ellen. Ned is a returned emigrant from America, an accomplished musician and journalist, who wishes to advance the Home Rule movement by secularising government. He is initially thoroughly excited about the Revival's cultural politics. However, he sees the influence of the clergy as a cog in the machine that prevents true cultural rebirth, and feels that this undermines the mythology behind the Revival: "They talk of

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[76] George Moore, "In the Clay," in *The Untilled Field* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1903), 16.
[77] Karl Beckson, "Moore's *The Untilled Field* and Joyce's *Dubliners*: The Short Story's Intricate Maze," *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* 15, no. 4 (1972): 300; Neil R. Davison, "Representations of 'Irishness' in *The Untilled Field*: Deconstructing ideological ethnicity," *Textual Practice* 12, no. 2 (1998): 314.
[78] John Wilson Foster, "The Irish Renaissance, 1890-1940: Prose in English," in *The Cambridge History of Irish Literature: Volume 2, 1890-2000,* eds. Margaret Kelleher & Philip O'Leary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 120.
[79] George Moore, *Hail and Farewell!: Salve* (London: W. Heinemann, 1933), 125.

Cuchulain … but they prefer an archbishop, and at every turn in their lives they are paying the priest."[80] Ellen's character is symbolic of the state of Ireland as Moore saw it, and she is an embodiment of the Revival itself. She resolves to "speak the language of her country," and "abandoned her studies and professors for politics and politicians."[81] She is also devoutly Catholic, and combines her politics and religion such that she initially refuses any form of physical intimacy with Ned, and tells him "I should like you better if you were a good Catholic."[82] He is reluctant, and Ellen's Unionist father puts further doubt into Ned's mind about the clergy's influence. He tells him that a Father Egan had taught her Latin and Irish, "but he might have left the Irish alone, and politics, too. We keep [the priests] as fat as little bonhams, and they ought to be satisfied with that."[83] Ned begins to sympathise with this view, which ultimately derails his political aspirations.

During their courtship, Ned thrills Ellen by describing his first impressions at the hill of Tara, and "every moment it seemed to her that she was about to hear a great secret."[84] When he plays violin beautifully for her shortly afterwards, Ellen is enraptured by the music not because of her understanding of it ("Ellen was not a musician"), but because Ned's discussion of ancient Irish mythology has wooed her: "that night the music said something more to her than it had ever said before."[85] However, over time their political and religious incompatibilities become clear to the detriment of their relationship; Ellen even begins to resent his music. Ned's interest in the arts of Europe compared with Ellen's love of land (apostrophised by her gardening hobby) and religion later comes to symbolise their differences.

Shortly before their engagement, Ned "affected an interest" in Ellen's flowers, for "he had already begun to associate Ellen with her garden."[86] Ellen appreciates his effort, but sees through his affectation. Not long after this scene, Ned is happy and hums "beautiful music as he went along the roads," specifically duets from operas by Schumann, Wagner, and Gounod.[87] Ellen is well aware of his love

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[80] George Moore, "The Wild Goose," in *The Untilled Field* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1903), 278.
[81] Ibid., 280, 279.
[82] Ibid., 292.
[83] Ibid., 282.
[84] Ibid., 283.
[85] Ibid., 283, 284.
[86] Ibid., 288.
[87] Ibid., 294.

for music, and tries to indulge him in his pursuit, but after they are married and have moved to Dublin, it becomes clear that neither shares the other's passion:

> Ellen always took Ned round the garden before they went into dinner, and after dinner he went to the piano; he loved his music as she loved her garden. She would listen to him for a while, pleased to find that she liked music. But she would steal away to her garden in a little while and he would go on playing for a long while before he would notice her absence; then he would follow her.
>
> […] Ned tried to feel interested in [her flowers], but he … could not remember which was Honesty and which was Rockit, and the difference had been pointed out to him many times. … He sometimes mistook one [flower] for the other just as Ellen mistook one sonata for another, but she always liked the same flowers.[88]

Meanwhile, Ned is rapidly ascending the political ladder, but his incendiary speeches on the socio-political climate do not endear him to the establishment. In one speech he gives to a large audience that includes members of the clergy, he denounces the influence of the Church in denying personal freedom to the laity. Ned sees this state of affairs as detrimental to the arts, pointing to the artistic cultures of foreign countries in comparison with Ireland:

> "Every race," he said, "has its own special genius. The Germans have or have had music. The French and Italians have or have had painting and sculpture. The English have or have had poetry. The Irish had, and alas! they still have their special genius, religious vocation."[89]

There is a suggestion of the Wagnerian motif in the connection with Germany and music. The differences between Ned and his wife, and by extension, the establishment, are artistic as well as religious; Ellen cannot stand her husband's denigration of her religion, and Ned continues to associate her lack of concern for his music as an extension of their disagreements over the clergy's influence on politics.

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[88] Ibid., 288-289.
[89] Ibid., 350-351.

Indeed, after an argument between them, Ned wonders the effect of playing music given her heated mood; when he decides to read a book instead, he injudiciously chooses "the book out of which he drew the greater part of his doctrine … that he had called the Gospel of Life."[90] Ellen recognises the book, becomes angry and scolds him; Ned retaliates by using music to express his freedom and mock what he perceives to be her lack of it:

> He wondered awhile and went to the piano. She had gone out of the room very rudely. Now he was free to do what he liked, and what he liked most was to play Bach. The sound of the piano would reach her bedroom! Well, if it did—he had not played Bach for four weeks and he wanted to play Bach. Yes, he was playing Bach to please himself. He knew the piano would annoy her. And he was right.
>
> […] It annoyed her that he should go to the piano the moment she left him, and that he should play dry intellectual Bach, for he knew that Bach did not interest her.[91]

Ellen's characterisation of Bach as "dry and intellectual" is instructive. Few would classify Bach in this way—indeed, to Annie Patterson his music had "contemplative depth." Yet the statement belies not only Ellen's distrust and lack of understanding of art music, but also the general apathy of the Revival establishment towards the canon. Even Patterson's praise of Bach came in the context of rejecting the composer's influence in Ireland, as well as denying the possibility that the Irish musical mind could be represented through such an idiom.

The climax to Ned and Ellen's disagreements occurs when Ellen withdraws her substantial funding from her husband's political career (on the advice of her priest) as a result of his attitudes to the clergy. Almost overnight, Ned's other donors withdraw their support, and he is left with few options. Taking a long walk through the hills, Ned observes the outline of Howth Head and ruminates on the history of Catholicism and politics in Ireland (despite, as Davison has noted, the "island's years of Danish and English domination").[92] His beliefs about Irish culture and politics,

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[90] Ibid., 322.
[91] Ibid., 322-323.
[92] Davison, "Representations of 'Irishness'," 316.

and his course of action, become clear in an epiphany. He looks to the sky and sees "three great birds flying through the still air, and he knew them to be wild geese flying south. …"[93] He takes this as a sign that he will depart Ireland to fight in the Boer War, joining other Irishmen "to fight the stranger abroad when they could fight him at home no longer."[94] The traditional image of the Jacobite Wild Geese, who left Ireland after 1691 to fight abroad with hopes to return and expel the coloniser, is "used to caustic and provocative effect to champion the struggle for new freedoms…[the stranger is] not now England but Catholicism."[95]

This is not the end of Carmady's epiphany, however, and a musical device ties his thoughts together. Having decided that he will leave, he sees the outlines of Howth and recalls pagan Ireland, thinking of "Usheen and his harp," and declares, "The land is dolorous":[96]

> …as if in answer to his words the most dolorous melody came out of the mist. "The wailing of an abandoned race," he said. "This is the soul-sickness from which we are fleeing." … After a while the shepherd began to play his flageolet again; and Ned listened to it, singing after him, and he walked home quickly, and the moment he entered the drawing-room he said to Ellen, "Don't speak to me; I am going to write something down," and this is what he wrote:—

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[93] Moore, "The Wild Goose," 352.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, 327; James H. Murphy, "The Wild Geese," *The Irish Review* 16 (1994): 27. As Kiberd notes, more than coincidentally James Joyce jokingly referred to himself as the most recent of the Wild Geese.
[96] Moore, "The Wild Goose," 353.

THE WILD GOOSE.

"A mist came on suddenly, and I heard a shepherd playing this folk-tune. Listen to it. Is it not like the people? Is it not like Ireland? Is it not like everything that has happened? It is melancholy enough in this room, but no words can describe its melancholy on a flageolet played by a shepherd in the mist. It is the song of the exile; it is the cry of one driven out in the night—into a night of wind and rain.... A mere folk-tune, mere nature, raw and unintellectual; and these raw folk-tunes are all that we shall have done: and by these and these alone, shall we be remembered."[97]

In this epiphany, Ned characterises the tune much as Joyce's Gabriel Conroy describes "The Lass of Aughrim" in "The Dead"—an essentialist, authentic "old

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[97] Ibid., 353-355. The image is taken as a facsimile from where it appears in the text.

Irish tonality."[98] For Ned Carmady, the melody *is* Ireland: "the song of the exile," a symbol of an "abandoned race." As Martin Dowling has pointed out with regard to "The Lass of Aughrim", such essentialist characterisations of Irish song involve an "illegitimate symbolic projection onto the melody".[99] Carmady's assessment of the melody—and by extension, George Moore's—is complex. He suggests that a constant harkening back to the past towards some essential characteristic is stifling and "unintellectual," and calls it "a mean ineffectual atmosphere."[100] Yet, by his illegitimate projection of an essential melody, he refers to the music in a "tragic mode" and unwittingly affirms the Revival's own attitude. As a result, Ned's departure is fully realised in the epiphany as a "traditional response to the disastrous polemic at the heart of modern 'Irishness'"—to look back, or to look forward?[101] The irony is that this response is *so* traditional, for Ned unwittingly falls into the same fallacies of categorization that exist within the very system he rails against. His recording of the anonymous shepherd's performed melody as text confirms a politically motivated rejection of the present, and by denigrating "raw folk-tunes" as the sum total of a cultural inheritance, he places another obstacle in the way of its development. One crucial difference, however, is that by admiring foreign art, he certainly equates artistic freedom with an individual expression of cultural freedom, a theme even further developed by Joyce.

Criticisms of Cultural Nationalism in "Cyclops"

The musical pedigree of James Joyce has been well established by numerous scholars, and needs no further examination here other than to briefly reiterate the vitality of music in his life and work. Examining his fiction reveals a great deal about his use of musical literary techniques to critique the Dublin Revival cultural field. A gifted musician himself, Joyce was well placed to comment on the prevailing musical life of Dublin: he enjoyed ballads and *bel canto* alike, reflecting a Catholic bourgeois existence "brilliantly characterised and exploited" in his fiction.[102] *Ulysses*, in its minutiae, contains hundreds of musical references: the "Sirens"

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[98] James Joyce, "The Dead," in *Dubliners* [1914] (London: Penguin, 1992), 211.
[99] Dowling, "'Thought-tormented Music'," 441-442.
[100] Moore, "The Wild Goose," 353.
[101] Davison, "Representations of 'Irishness'," 316.
[102] White, *Keeper's Recital*, 105.

episode not only makes use of musical techniques transliterated linguistically, but is also a sound reflection of the musical hybridity of the middle-lower classes. Simon Dedalus sings "*M'appari*" from Flotow's *Martha* shortly before the nationalist ballad "The Croppy Boy," each to great appreciation from those present in the Ormond Hotel. The "Cyclops" episode, however, reveals greater insight into the contradictions of music in the Revival.

The musical soundtrack of "Cyclops" is one in which the national and the international exist side by side, contesting the constructs of cultural homogeneity at the heart of Revival essentialism. When the Citizen is introduced, he is described in one of the episode's narrative "incursions": the satirised mythology describes "a row of seastones …dangled [from] his portentous frame," featuring images of "many Irish heroes and heroines from antiquity."[103] The extremely long list, that begins with Cuchulain and ends with the soldier Philip O'Sullivan Beare, is adulterated by an assortment of songs, ballads, and musical figures including Ludwig Beethoven and *The Rose of Castille* (an opera by Balfe). This serves to highlight immediately the "absurd condition of cultural integrity which the Citizen pursues from the moment he orders his first pint."[104] Later, when the Citizen and Bloom argue about sport ("hurley and putting the stone and racy of the soil and building up a nation once again")[105], the exchange is portrayed in another incursion, in the style of a "priceless piece of Gaelic League propaganda" reporting the proceedings of a meeting.[106] Bloom's voice of argument is drowned out; where "Mr Joseph M'Carthy Hynes made an eloquent appeal for the resuscitation of the ancient Gaelic sports and pastimes, practiced morning and evening by Finn MacCool," Bloom is "met with a mixed reception of applause and hisses, having espoused the negative".[107] At this point, the Citizen is transformed into "The Irish Caruso-Garibaldi" and sings the "immortal Thomas Osborne Davis' evergreen verses … *A nation once again* in the execution of which he may be said without fear of contradiction to have fairly excelled himself."[108] The style of reportage of the song is especially ironic given that

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[103] James Joyce, *Ulysses* [1921] (London: Penguin, 2000), 383.
[104] White, *Music and the Irish Literary Imagination*, 173.
[105] Joyce, *Ulysses*, 410.
[106] White, *Music and the Irish Literary Imagination*, 173.
[107] Joyce, *Ulysses*, 411.
[108] Ibid. "A Nation Once Again" is a nationalist ballad composed by Thomas Osborne Davis (1814-1845), the founder of the Young Ireland movement. Enrico Caruso (1874-1921) was an Italian dramatic tenor. The irony of Caruso-Garibaldi singing the song in the Italian tradition is that Davis

he sings a nationalist ballad under the guise and performance of an Italian operatic star. Hence, Joyce undermines the "complex chauvinism" of the nationalist musical movement, where the Citizen repudiates England and, by extension, Europe in general.[109]

Finally, in the comic melodrama of the episode's conclusion, as Bloom is chased out of Barney Kiernan's:

> The departing guest was the recipient of a hearty ovation, many of those who were present being visibly moved when the select orchestra of Irish pipes struck up the wellknown strains of *Come back to Erin*, followed immediately by *Rakoczy's March.*[110]

It is fitting that Bloom is chased off by the Citizen to an immensely hybrid soundtrack. The sentimentally Irish "Come Back to Erin," which we will encounter further in chapter five, is itself an approximation of "Irishness." It is followed by Miklos Scholl's military march in honour of the Hungarian revolutionary Francis Rákóczy, and yet it is incongruously played by Irish pipes. Moreover, the Hungarian farewells that follow further adulterate the musical scene and see Bloom off in the direction of the continent.[111]

Like "The Wild Goose," there is evidence of chauvinism from both sides of politics, for while the Citizen rails against the domination of Britain and Europe, he utterly denigrates those cultures in order to promote the Gaelic. Joyce was no apologist for Britain's imperialism, but he was suspicious of the Revival cultural icons that merely replaced British myths of hegemony with Irish ones.[112] Indeed, as Declan Kiberd has argued, Joyce "may well have left Ireland because he sensed that it was a country intent on using all the old imperialist mechanisms in the name of a national revival."[113]

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was hostile to European music as a symbol of colonial oppression (White, 2002, 144; 2008, 177). As Bowen notes, "Joyce surely did not want his readers to miss the allusion" (1974, 219).

[109] White, *Music and the Irish Literary Imagination*, 178.

[110] Joyce, *Ulysses*, 445.

[111] Zack Bowen, *Musical Allusions in the Works of James Joyce* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1974), 225.

[112] Adam Woodruff, "Nobody at home: Bloom's outlandish retreat in the 'Cyclops' chapter of *Ulysses*." *European Journal of English Studies* 3, no. 3 (1999): 277.

[113] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, 333.

Departure and Musical Epiphany in *Portrait*

Kiberd has called *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* Joyce's "exploration of the revivalist illusion."[114] More than simply exploring the illusion, Joyce's *künstlerroman* provides an alternative to acceptance of its deficiencies, and his treatment of music is no exception. In the text, Stephen Dedalus finds himself alternately caught between the nets of religion and cultural revival (particularly in the form of his friend MacCann), and music helps him to find the freedom he seeks.

During his period of self-repression and religious fervor, Stephen limits his senses, including denying himself music: he "neither sang nor whistled."[115] However, over time he sees the folly in this way of life and doubts his religious calling for its artistic and bodily restriction. This is confirmed in an epiphany in Chapter IV. Having left the meeting with the Jesuit who has attempted to convince him of his vocation, the priest holds the door open to Stephen and offers his hand "as if already to a companion in the spiritual life."[116] Stephen feels the "caress of mild evening air," and looking towards Findlater's church he sees four young men "striding along with linked arms, swaying their heads and stepping to the agile melody of their leader's concertina."[117] In an instant, the music passes "over the fantastic fabrics of his mind, dissolving them painlessly and noiselessly as a sudden wave dissolves the sandbuilt turrets of children."[118] In a single moment, Stephen realises that the towers he had built to hold himself in thrall of religion and revival alike were mere "sandbuilt turrets," destined to fall. His realization is confirmed by looking at the priest:

> Smiling at the trivial air he raised his eyes to the priest's face and, seeing in it a mirthless reflection of the sunken day, detached his hand slowly which had acquiesced faintly in that companionship.[119]

As he has only "faintly acquiesced" to such companionship, Stephen has so far only decided to abnegate the responsibilities of the tenets of Irish culture. In the next

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[114] Ibid., 334.
[115] Joyce, *Portrait*, 163.
[116] Ibid., 173.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid.

major epiphany of the novel, he concludes more firmly that he must surpass abnegation by escaping to freedom.

Stephen walks along Clontarf strand towards Dollymount, rejoicing at his upcoming attendance at the university as a triumph of the self:

> So he had passed beyond the challenge of the sentries who had stood as guardians of his boyhood and had sought to keep him among them that he might be subject to them and serve their ends…. The end he had been born to serve yet did not see had led him to escape by an unseen path.[120]

He knows that he is seeking to escape the thrall of the institutions of Irish life, but how is unclear. It is at this moment that his path to freedom becomes clear to him through music:

> It seemed to him that he heard notes of fitful music leaping upwards a tone and downwards a diminished fourth, upwards a tone and downwards a major third, like triplebranching flames leaping fitfully, flame after flame, out of a midnight wood. It was an elfin prelude, endless and formless … it grew wilder and faster, the flames leaping out of time…[121]

The melody, if starting at a nominal tonic of C, can be visualised thusly:

or

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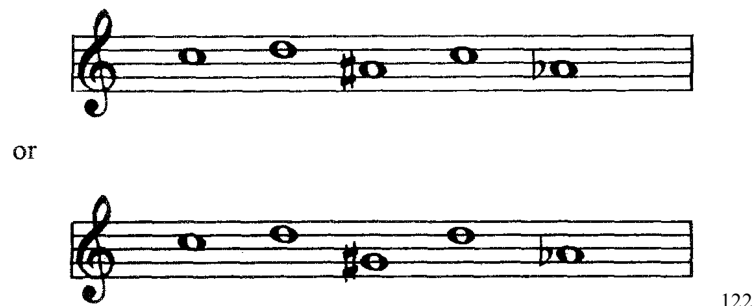
[120] Ibid., 178.
[121] Ibid., 179.
[122] D. M. E. Gilliam and R. W. McConchie, "Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*," *Explicator* 44, no. 3 (1986): 44. Image reproduced from this page.

The music that Stephen hears is intricately symbolic: the melody contains an interval of the augmented fourth, otherwise known as a tritone. The augmented fourth is a dissonant interval, difficult to sing and not particularly pleasing to the ear. In ecclesiastical music between the fourth and sixteenth centuries, it was given the name *diabolus in musica* ("devil in music") and its use in composition was forbidden and avoided—as was its inversion, the diminished fifth. [123] A musician as accomplished as Joyce undoubtedly knew of the history of ecclesiastical disavowal of the tritone, and as such it is an apposite musical construction in the wake of his rejection of holy orders.[124]

Though in Joyce's time, music pupils were still discouraged from using the tritone in counterpoint exercises, modernist composers were beginning to make greater use of such intervals in polytonal works.[125] The tritone is an interval within the whole tone scale, which was used so systematically in the late nineteenth century by the impressionist composer Claude Debussy (1862-1918) that it is often associated directly with him. Stephen's "elfin prelude" distinctly calls to mind Debussy's "*Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*" ("Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun", 1892) in a number of ways.[126] While hearing the music, Stephen "seemed to hear from under the boughs and grasses wild creatures racing … the feet of harts and hinds and antelopes."[127] This is redolent of the impressionism of the piece, in which the musical palette attempts to convey the dreams and desires of an awakening faun in a forest during a blissful afternoon; the accents, tempo and dynamics all increase and decrease in a display of tonal and harmonic power. Stephen's melody grows "wilder and faster, the flames leaping out of time," which mirrors the fluctuation within Debussy's piece between tempos, rhythms, time signatures (such as 9/8, 12/8 and 6/8), and ambiguous tonality. Debussy's piece is reliant on the whole tone scale for its thematic development. It has a home key of E major, but it is often obscured and only seldom realised as the atonal structure leaps between different permutations of the whole tone scale and the tritone. Its harmonic progression frequently settles on

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[123] Percy A. Scholes, "Tritone," in *The Oxford Companion to Music*, 10th ed., ed. John Owen Ward (London: Oxford University Press, 1977): 1042.
[124] Gilliam and McConchie, "Joyce's *A Portrait*," 45.
[125] Scholes, "Tritone," 1042.
[126] Don Gifford, *Joyce Annotated: Notes for* Dubliners *and* A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 218.
[127] Joyce, *Portrait,* 179.

B-flat dominant seventh—the home key's augmented fourth—just as the opening melodic theme descends from C# to G natural, another tritone. Just as the faun in the piece is awakening within the context of a previously disavowed tonality, so is Stephen, and his path becomes clearer.

Debussy was closely associated with the Symbolist poets of literary Paris, and "*Prélude à l'aprè- midi d'un faune*" had for its inspiration Stéphane Mallarmé's symbolist poem "*L'après-midi d'un faune.*"[128] Joyce was influenced himself by the Symbolist poets, and as Gifford has noted, aspects of the latter half of Chapter IV in *Portrait* see Stephen thoroughly immersed in the "avant-garde aesthetic climate of the 1890s".[129] Hence, his musical epiphany here is a yearning for Europe and Paris, harmonising with his awakening sense of artistic vocation, aligning with the author's preference for European music, Ibsen, and the Symbolists.[130]

Confirming his repudiation of the Revival's contradictions, Stephen subsequently speaks softly to himself a phrase: "A day of dappled seaborne clouds."[131] He then attempts to quantify his understanding of what he has just experienced:

> The phrase and the day and the scene harmonised in a chord. Words. Was it their colours? … No, it was not their colours: it was the poise and balance of the period itself. Did he love the rhythmic rise and fall of words better than their associations of legend and colour?[132]

Previously in the text, colours had been associated with political legends—the God-fearing Dante has a maroon velvet brush for Michael Davitt and a green one for Parnell, but discards the latter after Parnell's affair. Of course, the famous Christmas dinner scene explicates the influence of the clergy on Parnell's political decline. By loving the "rhythmic rise and fall"—a synecdoche for the act of music itself—Stephen distances the moment, "harmonised in a chord," and frees it from political associations. Also, whereas Carmody in "The Wild Goose" writes the music down, effectively depersonalising it, Stephen allows the music of his epiphany to exist of

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[128] Peter J. Burkholder, Donald J Grout, and Claude V. Palisca, *History of Western Music* (London: Folio Society, 2008), 611.
[129] Gifford, *Notes for* Dubliners *and* A Portrait, 218.
[130] Gilliam and McConchie, "Joyce's *A Portrait*," 44.
[131] Joyce, *Portrait,* 180.
[132] Ibid.

and for itself. The production of music, and art, *in the moment* and separate from political ideals is thus given privilege.

Finally, completing the musical aspect of the epiphany, Stephen raises his eyes to the sky and observes clouds scudding westward: "The Europe they had come from lay out there beyond the Irish Sea, Europe of strange tongues…"[133] Music appears again, melting away his indecision, calling him towards exile:

> He heard a confused music … then the music seemed to recede, to recede, to recede: and from each receding trail of nebulous music there fell one longdrawn calling note, piercing like a star the dusk of silence. Again! Again! Again! A voice from beyond the world was calling.[134]

Stephen feels a "lust of wandering in his feet that burned to set out for the ends of the earth [and] show him strange fields and faces."[135] While his final conclusion of a life of creation is confirmed to him through his vision of the bird-like girl at Dollymount strand, music leads him to the point where he is able to make sense of that vision. After all of the music symbolising rejection of the Irish aesthetic, he sees the famous bird-girl in all her latent sexuality and understands "the advent of the life that had cried to him."[136]

Conclusion

In the works of George Moore and James Joyce, the cultural symbols of the Gaelic Revival are undermined in an effort to achieve self-actualization. This took the shape of physical and spiritual exile. Both authors recognised the lack of "independence of body and soul" that held individuals within the "nets" of Revival politics. Their characters are faced with a cultural field that struggled to countenance hybridity, the choice of the individual, and artistic endeavour free from prevailing cultural ideology. As a result, they experience shifts of identity linked to impending departure.

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[133] Ibid., 181.
[134] Ibid., 181-2.
[135] Ibid., 184.
[136] Ibid., 186.

Moore and Joyce used musical epiphany to allow the characters of Ned Carmady and Stephen Dedalus to become Wagnerian "artist-heroes" and seek artistic and individual freedom. While each flees from clericalism as well as culture, there are subtle differences between the protagonists' escapes. Ned Carmady and his wife taken together represent the inability for the movement to countenance hybridity. Carmady's essentialist reading of the melody means that he can never fully escape, and must remain in a state of flux like the proverbial Wild Geese. Stephen Dedalus, on the other hand, transcends the musical modes of the Revival entirely in his freedom. He rejects the conditions of a milieu that prioritises the system itself over individuals within it, and requires an "abdication of self-assertive volition."[137] Moreover, in his epiphany that features the tritone, Stephen makes use of the "discredited materials" of his culture in order to escape from it.[138] The environment from which he departs is illustrated in "Cyclops," which questions the "processes of national identification which allow certain citizens, but not others, to feel *at home*."[139]

The intertwining of the artistic field with religious-moral politics of self-abnegation doubly limited the artistic and personal freedoms of those who did not neatly fit into the Revival aesthetic. Musical liberation could effectively stand for freedom from all of the limitations of the Revival era. Through engagement with European musical and literary modes, Moore and Joyce provide their eagerly exilic characters with a means of escape from what they perceived to be a limiting nationalism.

Yet, towards the end of the Revival in the second decade of the twentieth century, the island's violent movement towards independence changed the focus of cultural independence. As the Free State became reality, the need to assert the nation's culture in the southern twenty-six counties became less important than a stable polity in the wake of years of conflict. While the valorisation of traditional culture did not cease, its political relevance was altered and the Revival's lingering identity politics led to unintended inverse realignments of identity in rural areas. The following chapter looks at the effect of these changing cultural priorities on continuing emigration in newly independent Ireland.

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[137] Kate Harrison, "The 'Portrait' Epiphany," *James Joyce Quarterly* 8, no. 2 (1971): 146.
[138] Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland*, 341.
[139] Woodruff, "Nobody at Home," 277; emphasis in original.

Chapter Two

Traditional Music and the Post-Independence Exodus to Britain

After the heady years of the Revival, the prescriptive cultural ethos that saw traditional music divorced from its performative context resulted in long term effects upon musical practice. The church's efforts to cement Free State Ireland's Catholic moral identity also diminished the power of Revival cultural symbols in a population desiring to modernise in an economically oriented world. The focus of this chapter is on music in the social fabric of rural areas, where emigration's narrative exists in the gaps between tradition and modernity, wealth and poverty.

Emigration, much to the concern of successive governments, continued unabated in the years after independence. However, Britain received almost 80 per cent of Irish emigrants in the decades immediately following the Great Depression, replacing the United States as the primary destination for Irish emigrants. In 1957 60,000 people left for Britain, and almost three in five Irish children growing up in the 1950s were destined to emigrate.[1] This represented a contradiction between postcolonial idealism and the reality that Ireland still depended on Britain to a large extent. Despite Ireland's independence the period was again marked by contradiction; economic stagnation increased pressure to modernise, yet the official ethos still firmly focused on rural idyll and ancient continuity. These conflicting pressures ultimately led to a denigration of traditional forms, for the social dissatisfaction that emanated from economic malaise altered the role of traditional music in social exchange in rural areas. Revival cultural politics faded, and economic growth prevailed as the national imperative over the protection and propagation of traditional values and customs.[2] Church-imposed proscription and official legislation, such as the Dance Halls Act 1935, further suppressed traditional modes of musical expression.

This is apparent in the texts under analysis in this chapter, Patrick Kavanagh's *Tarry Flynn* (1948) and John B. Keane's *The Bodhrán Makers* (1986).

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[1] Patrick Fitzgerald and Gerald Lambkin, *Migration in Irish History, 1607-2007* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 244.
[2] Terence Brown, *Ireland: A Social and Cultural History, 1922-2002* (London: Harper Perennial, 2004), 202.

These novels are set at each end of the period—the former in the mid-1930s, the latter in the mid-1950s—and provide a representation of music's role in social organisation in Irish rural life. In each text, music is denigrated as a result of the social pressures that ultimately led many to emigrate. In Kavanagh's novel traditional music is superseded by modern forms and commercial interests, while in Keane's text music is rejected and suppressed as an archaic vestige of an economically irrelevant social heritage. In each case, the state of music is used as a measure of competing social forces during the extended period of emigration to Britain.

Postcolonial Nation-building and Economic Forces

The Great Depression, which arrived during the formative years of independence, was chief among a wide range of factors responsible for Britain becoming the new destination for emigration. Irish-America was largely centered in the vulnerable industrial and public service sectors, leaving emigrants expendable in the budget cutting of the Depression. Not only did this tarnish the American Dream for Irish people, but it also greatly affected a rural Irish economy that had depended for many years on the subvention of the "American letter."[3] The lack of a subsequent reinvestment in Irish rural industries meant that emigration continued unabated, only now the preferred destination was Britain. British emigration was effectively a "safety-valve" in the first four decades of independent Ireland, for it was recognised that conditions of widespread unemployment and dissatisfaction throughout rural Ireland could easily have led to significant social unrest or even revolution.[4]

This coincided with a period in which the newly independent Ireland needed to consolidate its social values. The idealism that gave rise to political movement and placed great importance on traditional Gaelic culture would be vital in maintaining Ireland's social currency in a Europe troubled by competing ardent nationalisms. A

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[3] Fitzgerald and Lambkin, *Migration in Irish History*, 202, 215. The term "American letter" refers to the fact that when emigrants to America sent home correspondence, they usually included some sum of money intended to support the family. The poorest rural communities relied heavily on these remittances for survival.

[4] Ibid., 244; Enda Delaney, *Demography, State and Society: Irish Migration to Britain, 1921-1971* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 15.

sense of control was needed, and the belief in Irish life of the period's ideologues reflected what should have been a secure national identity.[5]

However, Irish people were receiving conflicting messages about the state of progress in the country. Nationalist politics emphasised cultural symbols as an important distinguishing feature of the new Ireland that allowed it to join the ranks of more established world nations, as well as distancing itself from its previous British colonisers.[6] This idealism, though, ignored the "dismal facts of emigration, economic stagnation, individual inhibition, and lack of fulfilling opportunity" on the island.[7] Standing in the face of the Saorstát's idealised rural economy was the desperate need to modernise in order to compete economically with the rest of Europe.[8] Even with the onset of World War and the Emergency in Ireland, the Irish industrial economy was not stimulated by the war effort—largely due to Ireland's neutrality, but partly due to the economic security that individuals could attain by leaving the island and seeking employment in Britain. Large numbers of Irish left during the Emergency to take up positions on military and civilian projects across the Irish Sea. The ongoing emigration in support of the old oppressor was not just at odds with de Valera's vision of the nation as "home," it was an outright rejection of the rhetoric underlying it.[9]

The exodus continued after the war, as great numbers of unskilled labourers were needed to rebuild Britain. This indicates a disbelief in official rhetoric surrounding the security of rural life and the traditional forms that accompanied it. The country was "lying in the stagnant sidestreams of history," while industrial, modernised Britain represented greater opportunity.[10] Patrick Kavanagh summarised this position in 1952 when he railed against the mediocrity he perceived in rural nationalism:

> From … Independence Day there has been a decline in vitality …
> There is no central passion [and] all this is horrid when you believe in

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[5] Brown, *Social and Cultural History*, 142.
[6] Rachel C. Fleming, "Resisting Cultural Standardization: Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and the Revitalization of Traditional Music in Ireland," *Journal of Folklore Research* 41, no. 2/3 (2004): 232.
[7] Brown, *Social and Cultural History*, 142.
[8] Fleming, "Resisting Cultural Standardization," 232. Saorstát Éireann was the official Irish name for the Irish Free State (*saor* "free," *stát* "state") until 1948. Since leaving the Commonwealth at that time, the nation is officially the Republic of Ireland (*Poblacht na hÉireann*).
[9] Fitzgerald and Lambkin, *Migration in Irish History*, 222.
[10] Brown, *Social and Cultural History*, 199-200.

People as distinct from the Nation, when you believe that Pat and Micky and Tom on the edge of the bog have potential as great or as little as a group of people anywhere.[11]

The irony is that these problems had been recognised in the earliest years of the Free State. In the 1927 election campaign, Éamonn de Valera claimed that "unemployment and emigration, if allowed to continue, will so cripple this nation that there can be little hope for it," before declaring that "the producing part of our population is being driven out by emigration."[12] Statements such as this did not address the true causes of emigration, and belied the failure of the ideologues' much-promoted ideal agrarian economy. In the 1926 census, 61% of respondents lived outside towns and villages, but a romantic view of Irish rural society was at odds with the reality of crippling poverty in these areas.[13] Nonetheless, misinformation about the health of the countryside persisted.

In August 1951, de Valera showed a great lack of understanding when he attempted to dissuade potential emigrants by stating that they had far better prospects for work in Ireland "and in conditions infinitely better from the point of view of health and morals."[14] This flew in the face of the reality of the situation: the Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems was at that very time compiling its report, which was finally published in 1954. The report concluded that government should be decentralised and the supplies of running water and internal sanitation be improved. Yet at the same time, the overall tone of the report reflected an anti-urban governing elite out of touch with the problems of rural inhabitants.[15]

It was not that Irish people who left did not love the land, merely that opportunities for economic and social advancement were slim as a result of elemental wants. The usual counties were present in emigration figures, such as Galway, Mayo, Cork, and Kerry; in Galway, respondents to a survey said that while their small family farm holdings provided them with plentiful occupation, almost none of it was remunerated. Hence, many chose to seek a livelihood in Britain,

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[11] Ibid., 201. Brown provides this quote from Patrick Kavanagh's periodical *Kavanagh's Weekly*, "which he edited with his brother in 1952 for several iconoclastic months."
[12] Delaney, *Demography, State and Society*, 59.
[13] Ibid., 63.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Fitzgerald and Lambkin, *Migration in Irish History*, 245.

where income was freer.[16] This is precisely the situation that Kavanagh's eponymous Tarry Flynn faces: he is keeping the family's County Cavan farm running, but is completely without disposable income. "Indeed [he] could not very well afford a ha'penny," affecting his ability to socialise, "for cigarettes and dances and an occasional Saturday evening in the town required every penny and ha'penny [he] could rap or run."[17] When one evening he decides to venture into the town of Drumnay to relax, his mother gives him a shilling. Tarry "went out singing. The shilling made all the difference between a man who hated the parish and a lover of it."[18]

Concomitant socio-economic barriers arose during the period in rural regions. The lack of economic opportunity affected young people's marriage prospects, which in turn led to further emigration. Many unmarried young people had already emigrated, leaving fewer prospective partners for those who remained. Consequently, sons otherwise due to inherit family holdings renounced their claims, and young women were unwilling to be farmers' wives when there was far greater personal opportunity in Britain.[19] As the eldest son of a deceased father, Tarry Flynn faces this problem. Over the course of the novel, he ruins his chances with Mary Callan, whom he truly desires, as stunted social skills and his great insecurity over money and his position in society drive a wedge between them. When he thinks of his other prospects, he can only think of "the practical girls he knew and whom he had up to this point ignored." While he convinces himself that he could be satisfied with this, his indecision is apparent when he "raise[s] his eyes to the eastern horizon and he [sees] the queer light" that represents emigration as the alternative to marrying purely for maintaining roots at home.[20]

A widening gap between classes—essentially, a divide between the urban and the rural—was another result of the socioeconomic situation. In *Tarry Flynn*, the resources of the parish are often considered in terms relative to larger towns and cities such as Dundalk. When considering his own inferiority to the professional artistes of these towns who are to visit Drumnay to perform in a dance that he cannot

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[16] Delaney, *Demography, State and Society*, 171-173.
[17] Patrick Kavanagh, *Tarry Flynn* [1948] (London: Penguin, 2000), 12.
[18] Ibid., 31.
[19] Delaney, *Demography, State and Society*, 170, 174.
[20] Kavanagh, *Tarry Flynn*, 102.

afford to attend, Tarry finds himself "choked with grief and humiliation."[21] The continuing poverty of the rural classes was matched by an increased affluence in towns and cities. The new Irish state had quickly won the support of merchants, shopkeepers, clergymen, middle-class professionals, and larger, wealthier farm owners who all had a vested interest in the status quo. The lack of economic development in Ireland was perversely beneficial for this "bourgeois cadre," who promoted a "zeitgeist of social and cultural conservatism" that persisted throughout the first few decades of the Free State and Republic.[22] In this kind of environment, opportunities for social advancement were restricted for rural dwellers by a seemingly rigid and impenetrable class structure. This situation gave poor farmers further incentive to emigrate.[23]

This is apparent in *The Bodhrán Makers*, where there is an ongoing distrust between the bourgeois residents of the fictional town of Trallock and the pastoral residents of Dirrabeg, which is ultimately detrimental to the latter group. The divide is captured microcosmically through Fergus Whelan, who runs the Trallock general store in a miserly fashion, watching every penny and never failing to collect a debt. He despises his brother Monty, who is a teacher and sides with the Dirrabeg farmers. Monty chooses to engage in the traditions of the Dirrabeg folk, despite his otherwise "respectable" occupation. Alienated by his cultural choices as well as his affair with Kitty Smiley, Monty sees no alternative but to leave the country.

Essentially, for many Irish people, ongoing periods of unemployment and lack of opportunity at home contrasted with the well-paid and steady employment that could be found in Britain. Those who stood to gain most—rural dwellers—left in droves, while white-collar and urban industrial employees stayed to continue the conservative climate of the Free State and early Republic.[24] In both pre- and post-war Britain, young Irish emigrants were able to find a reasonable standard of living, even if it came at the expense of "simple" life at home.[25] The class and rural-urban divide was exacerbated by the diminishing traditions at the heart of nationalist ideology and identity, as well as an overwhelming desire for moral control by the state and the clergy. This ultimately led to a decline in traditional music during the period.

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[21] Ibid., 150.
[22] Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin, "Dancing on the Hobs of Hell: Rural Communities in Clare and the Dance Halls Act of 1935," *New Hibernia Review* 9, no. 4 (2005): 9.
[23] Delaney, "Transnationalism, Networks and Emigration," 431.
[24] Delaney, *Demography, State and Society*, 172.
[25] Ibid., 63; Delaney, "Transnationalism, Networks and Emigration," 430.

Music, Moral Control, and the Dance Halls Act 1935

The early years of the Free State saw a focus on defining the moral character of the nation in the wake of the Civil War and a perceived decline in moral standards.[26] Just as in the Revival, the island's changing taste in music was particularly under scrutiny from the ruling elite, particularly Irish Catholic bishops and clergymen who were pessimistic about the state of the nation. They perceived a decline in sexual morals which they attributed to the influx of foreign, modern art forms. The partition of Ireland had coincided with the arrival of radio and recorded music, and by the late twenties these media were bringing a wide variety of modern musical styles and socialising forms to rural areas.[27] Modern music such as jazz was exciting for young people, and the proliferation of such styles was perceived as an undermining of the Irish character and the moral control systems of the new state.[28] Bishop McNamee of Ardagh, for example, complained that widespread cinema would show "very vivid representations of foreign matters and customs; and the radio would bring foreign music and the propagation of foreign ideals." All of this was apparently causing a "danger to our national characteristics."[29]

While foreign written publications and dramatic forms came under censorship, by far the most worrisome influence for the clergy was the craze for jazz music and dancing. Pastoral statements and sermons frequently addressed the issue and priests, although finding it difficult to speak bluntly on the issue, gave firm orders to their parishioners to avoid the late night dances that were becoming more frequent in public dance halls.[30] Dance halls of the 1920s were one of the only public spaces in which women appeared unsupervised by either clergy or gardaí, and this was regarded as a danger to chastity and reputation.[31] What worried the clergy more, however, was what occurred on the way home from the halls. In a statement on the

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[26] Una Crowley and Rob Kitchin, "Producing 'decent girls': governmentality and the moral geographies of sexual conduct in Ireland (1922-1937)," *Gender, Place & Culture* 15, no. 4 (2008): 355-357.

[27] Ó Laoire, "Irish Music," 277; Fintan Vallely, "Dance Halls Act," in *Companion to Irish Traditional Music*, ed. Fintan Vallely (Cork: Cork University Press, 2011), 200.

[28] Vallely, "Dance Halls Act," 200.

[29] J.H. Whyte, *Church and State in Modern Ireland, 1923-1979,* 2nd ed. (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1980), 24-25.

[30] Crowley and Kitchin, "Producing 'decent girls'," 363; Whyte, *Church and State*, 25.

[31] Barbara O'Connor, "Sexing the Nation: Discourses of the Dancing Body in Ireland in the 1930s," *Journal of Gender Studies* 14, no. 2 (2005): 92; Vallely, "Dance Halls Act," 200.

"dance hall evil" in 1925, the hierarchy warned that the "surroundings of the dancing hall, withdrawal from the hall for intervals, and the back ways home have been the destruction of virtue in every part of Ireland."[32]

Religious forces lobbied publicly and privately to governments to use legislation to impose moral control on the people. The Catholic Church pointed out to the politicians that "this is a Catholic State and has a right to what is called a Catholic Morality."[33] The strong religious homogeneity of the South of Ireland— 92.6% Catholic in 1926—lent the Church bargaining power, and successive governments from 1923 tacitly agreed to cooperate to produce a "mutually reinforcing vision" of Catholic values despite the constitution defining an officially secular state.[34] However, concerns persisted. Ineffectual moral instruction by the clergy to the faithful was highlighted in the 1931 Carrigan Report on morality, and it became clear to those in power that legislation would be needed to restore control over public morality.[35] In response to concerns over the jazz craze, and through lobbying from the Church, the Public Dance Halls Act (1935) was passed. The Act provided that a licence was required from the local district court in order to hold a public dance; a fee was applicable, and criteria were stipulated which the justice was to follow in deciding who to grant a licence.[36] The effects of this Act were to stifle the cultural life of many towns and rural areas—although in many ways, the Dance Halls Act only formalised a crusade against dancing that had been underway for several years.

Tarry Flynn is set in 1935, the year that the Act came into effect. Early in the text, there is a scene that is instructive in the attitudes prevailing among the hierarchy. Father Daly, Priest of the Dargan Parish containing the village of Drumnay, delivers a withering sermon in which he rails against indecency. "'Good god, good God,'" he says, "'what is this country coming to?'" According to the priest, a girl was allegedly "set upon by a crowd of blackguards … and the clothes torn off her back."[37] During this tale, the "ordinary members of the congregation

[32] Whyte, *Church and State*, 25-26.

[33] Sandra L. McAvoy, "The Regulation of Sexuality in the Irish Free State, 1929-1935," in *Medicine, Disease and the State in Ireland, 1650-1940*, eds. Greta Jones and Elizabeth Malcolm (Cork: Cork University Press, 1999), 253-4.

[34] Crowley and Kitchin, "Producing 'decent girls'," 355-57.

[35] Jim Smyth, "Dancing, Depravity and All That Jazz: The Public Dance Halls Act of 1935," *History Ireland* 1, no. 2 (1993): 52.

[36] Whyte, *Church and State*, 50.

[37] Kavanagh, *Tarry Flynn*, 16.

took the priest's words with a grain of humourous salt and peasant doubt, knowing what wonders Church and State can make out of the common affairs of life when seen in their official mirror."[38] However, the class divide in the church is clear:

> The respectable people, like the police and the stationmaster and the schoolteachers, and the miller and the publican and his wife all put on mouths of righteousness and narrowed eyes. This was not good enough in a Catholic Country. This was not good enough for County Cavan in the year nineteen hundred and thirty-five. And the men leading the revolt against decency and authority were Tarry Flynn and Eusebius Cassidy [and] that whole bunch of half-chewed idiots from Drumnay…[39]

And yet, after naming and shaming the rural villagers and decrying moral outrage, the priest

> …broke off suddenly and began to read out a list of notices, including one that a grand carnival dance would be held in the hall on that same evening, the charge for admission – gentlemen three and six, ladies half-a-crown. And furthermore, the right of admission should be strictly reserved.[40]

The Effects of the Anti-Jazz Crusade on Traditional Music

Traditional music and dancing had long been vital elements in a larger social framework within rural communities. Music would be played regularly in local houses, as neighbours gathered to dance, gamble, court, exchange gossip and tell stories.[41] Country house kitchens were the most frequent location for such interaction, but residents of neighbouring villages would also gather to dance and

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[38] Ibid., 16-17.
[39] Ibid., 17.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Adam R. Kaul, *Turning the Tune: Traditional-Music, Tourism, and Social Change in an Irish Village* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), 33.

converse at crossroads between them.[42] Music within this space was considered a craft, one with a distinct social purpose closer to a skilled occupation than a mere artistic form. Kaul notes that the term "musicianer" is still used in some areas of the rural west, describing the musician's role as one of action and contribution.[43] As part of this, codependent folkways relied on the skills of traditional music players, particularly those that began to die out in the face of modernity.

A prominent example of this is the Wren Boys tradition of St. Stephen's Day, in which members of the community would gather to symbolically hunt a wren; drums, flutes, and other instruments would sound music as the rest of the community offered donations for a celebration at the end of the day.[44] In Keane's *The Bodhrán Makers*, this mode of social organisation is central to the plot: the key characters are Wren Boys, and within the Wren party, each member had specific musical and non-musical roles. The acts of music-making and dancing themselves were designed to conform to the "complex rules of role and status that governed all aspects of social and economic life."[45]

Within rural communities populated by what were essentially subsistence farmers, the coexistence between social and economic life was especially clear. During the leanest years of the Depression and the Economic War with Britain which followed it in the mid-1930s, country house dances were often a way to collect funds for destitute farming families.[46] As a result, music was a means of escape from oppression and helped maintain the spirit of villagers during depressing times. In the face of destitution with no foreseeable end, music maintained the unity of the district. One County Clare villager described the role of music in such communities:

> Music was loved … for the reason that it was nourishment. It was all they had. It was their upkeep in life. It was their spirit. It kept them alive. It kept their minds right, and it kept them going … Sometimes tears were shed. Sometimes there was hugging going on. All this stuff happened at a musical event. And the music was the—at the end of all that—they'd let free and they'd dance and they'd sweat. And, let's

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[42] Ó hAllmhuráin, "Dancing on the Hobs of Hell," 10.
[43] Kaul, *Turning the Tune*, 35.
[44] Ibid., 39.
[45] Ibid., 33.
[46] Ó hAllmhuráin, "Dancing on the Hobs of Hell," 10.

say, after the stories being told, that's where they got their healing to go on the next day. And that's really what music was about in Ireland.[47]

This view of music is clear in *The Bodhrán Makers*. The poor farmers of Dirrabeg rely on music to get them through hard times, foreshadowing the effect on their spirits when the iron-fisted Canon Tett later silences their music. Before the Wren on St. Stephen's day, Donal Hallapy is "ponder[ing] his position at the year's end":

> It had not been a great year … Somewhere he would have to find the money to buy a pair of bonhams. Otherwise the household would be without meat across the Autumn and Winter. His turf reek and potato pit were at an all-time low. The future did not bear thinking about. Still there was the wrendance, always the most enjoyable night of the Dirrabeg year with no shortage of food and drink.
>
> "No shortage of anything, eh Donal!" Bluenose had confided to him at the previous year's dance as they sat by the fire and watched the dancing girls whirl and leap, prance and pause…[48]

Kitty Smiley also speaks to the shared cultural heritage of the community as well as the anticipation of the release that the music and dance of the Wren will bring: "It's the one night of the year I could not do without, seeing all the old friends and neighbours and listening to that lovely wholesome music, our own songs and our own dances."[49]

In both texts, the characters are linked to a shared heritage bound in the land and in lived memory, as well as in established systems of belief. Tarry Flynn lives in Cavan, and shares an almost mystical bond with the land; early in the novel he climbs a local hill, and "[w]alking backwards up its daisied slope he gazed across the valley right across to the plains of Louth, and gazing he dreamed into the past."[50] Meanwhile, in *The Bodhrán Makers,* mythological geography and music combine in

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[47] Kaul, *Turning the Tune*, 34.
[48] John B. Keane, *The Bodhrán Makers* [1986] (Dingle: Brandon, 2002), 98-99.
[49] Ibid., 145.
[50] Kavanagh, *Tarry Flynn*, 19.

the symbol of the bodhrán. Early in the text in the Bus Bar, the favourite of the Dirrabeg folk, a musical session is underway:

> The beat of the bodhrán was the dominant sound but fiddles, concertinas, melodeons, and accordeons were in no way subdued by the many drummers beating out the age-old throbbing timbre of the bodhrán, thunderous when demanded, gentle and muted too…[51]

The association between the drum and "age-old" mythology is embodied by the symbol of the drum made by Bluenose, the master bodhrán maker, especially for Donal Hallapy. After finishing this drum, he takes the instrument to a revered fairy fort at the end of his property, where he tests out its range. He lilts, or "diddles" a tune along with his rhythmical accompaniment, and "as he diddled the drum spoke without impediment, its clear tones racy, uninhibited and vigourous."[52] When Bluenose finishes and returns to the house, Katie Hallapy appears and asks him whether he heard the bodhrán coming from the fairy fort as she did. He pretends to be ignorant, and assures her that the sound emanated from "the good people … for they are possessed of magic bodhráns and all those that hear their sound will never be without an ear for music."[53] Thereafter in the text, the drum takes on an almost magical, ritualistic quality that does not fail to imbue those that hear it with an appreciation of its power.

This link between music and heritage is an essential part of Irish rural identity, and clearly music was more than a mere diversion for impoverished rural people. It is a tragic irony, therefore, that the Dance Halls Act and the general anti-jazz crusade of the Church occurred during the 1920s and 1930s when the State was still attempting to enshrine traditional values in nationalist ideology.[54] While foreign music was the primary target of the crusade, it seems the Church either could not or would not differentiate between styles, and traditional music became caught in the crossfire. Most of Ireland has folklore about "local puritans" whose enforcement of

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[51] Keane, *The Bodhrán Makers*, 90. The *bodhrán* (pronounced "bow-rawn") is a shallow frame drum with a single skin, usually about 18 inches in diameter. The non-striking hand can be placed on the reverse of the drum's skin so as to alter its pitch as desired.
[52] Ibid., 178-179.
[53] Ibid., 179.
[54] Kaul, *Turning the Tune*, 37.

official and unofficial proscriptions on dancing went to extreme lengths, such as this example from Kerry:

> Wooden roadside platforms were set on fire by curates: surer still, the priests drove their motorcars backward and forward over the timber platforms; concertinas were sent flying into hill streams, and those who played music at dances were branded as outcasts.[55]

In *The Bodhrán Makers*, Canon Tett sets out in the early hours of the morning with a blindsided Father Donlea to disrupt the Wren dance in Bluenose's house. He makes a menacing entrance, which brings the dancing to an immediate stop and sends the attendees into a "frantic scramble to escape the eagle eye of the Canon."[56] He admonishes those that remain as "ungodly wretches" and commands them to go home as "'the first mass is only five hours away … you'll be entering the Church of God in a few short hours. Do not, under pain of excommunication, enter my church with the sign of drink on you.'"[57]

As this scene indicates, links to pagan histories did not help endear traditional music to irascible clergymen during the period. Indeed, as Canon Tett continues to lecture the attendees of the house dance, Donal Hallapy continues to play his bodhrán out of spite towards the priest—"[f]rom the stairs the drumming increased in volume":

> … The Canon turned, anger flashing in his eyes, his face contorted.
>
> "Stop that infernal sound," he shouted. "Stop it at once or I'll put God's curse upon you."
>
> Donal Hallapy placed the cipín behind his ear and placed the palm of his right hand on the surface of the bodhrán. Still the sound persisted, infinitely fainter now, almost inaudible.[58]

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[55] Whyte, *Church and State*, 28.
[56] Keane, *The Bodhrán Makers,* 229.
[57] Ibid.*,* 230-231.
[58] Ibid.*,* 231. A *cipín* ("little stick," pronounced ki-*peen*) is the stick used to strike the drum.

The drum continues to play, magically, even though Donal does not appear to strike its surface. The Canon is enraged by what he perceives as impertinence as well as the apparent magic of the drum:

> "Throw that barbaric instrument away from you at once," he called out to Donal.
>
> "It is not a barbaric instrument," Delia Bluenose flung back. […]
>
> "It is barbaric," he thundered, "and as well as that it is the devil's drum."
>
> […] It was here that Bluenose intervened for the first time: he stepped into the middle of the kitchen and faced the Canon.
>
> "Listen to me, Father O'Priest," he cried with his fists clenched. "Listen wren-dance wrecker and joy-killer. Just as sure as your Christ and mine is the King of Kings so is the bodhrán the drum of drums!"[59]

Father Donlea, however, who was not aware that he was breaking up a dance when the Canon summoned him from bed, is ashamed at what he has done and appreciates the damage to the community that the raid has caused: "I was party to a monstrous intrusion into the private activities of a whole community of people," he thinks to himself. "I participated in their humiliation in the name of the Church…"[60]

Overzealous, "vigilante-style" enforcement of the Act by some quarters of the clergy damaged social, informal house dancing. Young people were diverted from house dances under close supervision of their elders, and moved towards attending public dance halls.[61] There was a more insidious aspect to this change than purely moral concern, however. As house dancing declined, and licensed dance halls began increasing in number, the commercial potential of social dancing was becoming more evident.[62] Hence, what was previously a private social space became increasingly public and commercial, causing the poorest farming communities further economic suffering. Given legal backing by the Act, priests "began tramping along country lanes … occasionally accompanied by police, looking and listening for

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[59] Ibid., 232-233.
[60] Ibid., 234.
[61] Vallely, "Dance Halls Act," 201; Whyte, *Church and State*, 50.
[62] O'Connor, "Sexing the Nation," 91.

dances to thwart."[63] A kitchen dance for fundraising was deemed "public," resulting in the prosecution of numerous rural dwellers whose need to "raise a few shillings to feed one's family was … a matter of survival … obtaining a licence to do so was only a minor item in the order of priorities."[64]

Despite its outwardly moral basis, commercial interests were undeniably a factor in the enforcement of the Dance Halls Act. The Catholic Church was heavily involved in the construction of local parish halls, and after the passing of the Act the Church and state "combined to eliminate the organisation of any dances outside these halls."[65] Moreover, most of the licenses issued under the Act went to Parish Priests, and so profits from the dances went directly to the church as well as the government.[66] Recalling the dance in *Tarry Flynn* advertised in the priest's sermon, the cover charge was a sum far greater than a farmer like Tarry could afford. As he searches his pockets for the remaining fourpence he needs to get in, Tarry laments that "fourpence wasn't much when a man had it but when he hadn't twopence was as hard to get as two pounds." As a result he is excluded from what is essentially a bourgeois affair—all the "respectable" folk attend while village boys clamour at the windows trying to get merely a look.[67] The dance itself contains two portions: an early concert for a half-crown entrance, and then the remainder of the charge for the rest of the dance. Early on in the night, the priest is seen in the porch of the hall counting the evening's takings, and someone estimates that he "must have thirty five quid."[68] Later, when the concert portion has concluded there is an announcement that the floor must be cleared for the dance, "and only those with the special green tickets could regain admission without paying an extra half-crown."[69] What is more, it is announced that those loitering around the hall without a ticket "will be forcibly driven off by the police."[70] In addition to ensuring the Church's upkeep, moral policing was as much about excluding undesirables as changing behaviour.

There is conjecture over the effectiveness of the Dance Halls Act— clergymen themselves lamented the lack of uniformity in its application—and it is

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[63] Kaul, *Turning the Tune*, 37.
[64] Ó hAllmhuráin, "Dancing on the Hobs of Hell," 13.
[65] O'Connor, "Sexing the Nation," 91; Kaul, *Turning the Tune*, 37.
[66] Kaul, *Turning the Tune*, 37; Fleming, "Resisting Cultural Standardization," 232.
[67] Kavanagh, *Tarry Flynn,* 151.
[68] Ibid., 152.
[69] Ibid., 155.
[70] Ibid., 153.

generally agreed that it was not a great success.[71] Indeed, throughout the period, moral standards in the country remained a concern to the bishops just as they had been immediately after independence. The Dance Hall "evil" reappeared in episcopal announcements in the early 1950s, and the same tactics were used to maintain control, from direct instruction to the people to disrupting dances.[72]

A fine example of instruction occurs in *The Bodhrán Makers,* when the irascible Canon Tett delivers a stinging sermon denouncing the Wren which was to take place the following day. In it, he appeals to the "respectable" members of the parish not to support "'these wretches [who] spend every last copper on drink [at] these drunken orgies… Do not go to their so-called dances. Support your own parochial hall on Saint Stephen's night where you have fine orchestras and wholesome dancing and where the profits made go to the upkeep of your church.'"[73] His curate, Father Butt, is shocked by the tirade and thinks of the reasons why Canon Tett is so opposed to the Wren tradition, which "had been part of Saint Stephen's Day since time immemorial."[74] Father Butt concludes that the two main reasons are economic. Firstly, the penny-pinching Canon refuses to give, as per tradition, a pound to the Wrenboys; and secondly, attendances at parochial dances were "slightly reduced" at the time of the Wren:

> It had not taken the senior curate all that long after his arrival [in the parish] to realise that anything likely to reduce the parochial income was complete anathema to the Canon no matter how worthy or ancient that custom might be.[75]

While the crusade against jazz largely failed—improved technology only increased the proliferation of American jazz and other foreign styles in the 1940s and 1950s—traditional music suffered in material terms as well as in public perception.[76] The main aspect of the decline was the separation of traditional music and social interaction. Whereas music and dancing and community socialisation had previously been inextricable elements of the total social framework, the outlawing of house

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[71] Whyte, *Church and State*, 50.
[72] Ibid., 303-4.
[73] Keane, *The Bodhrán Makers*, 56.
[74] Ibid., 57.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Fleming, "Resisting Cultural Standardization," 232-33.

dances had the effect of moving private realms into the public. This was physical, as previously dances had taken place in small spaces such as kitchens; it was also psychological, as dancers were separated from the process of music making, and the choice of music at public dances lacked the spontaneity, personality, and fluidity of kitchen dances.[77] The "culture of surveillance" in these public spaces changed the dynamic of couples in dances intended to be performed in close proximity to the partner: dancers "assumed a fixed stare and avoided eye contact" and held their bodies such as to "avoid frontal bodily contact."[78]

The lack of personality in music making was also apparent in the choice of repertoire. The concert that Tarry Flynn cannot afford to attend, for example, features hybrid ballad styles seen in songs such as "Does Your Mother Come From Ireland?" There is a "patriotic hush" as this song is sung, and "everyone except Tarry [thought] it patriotic in the extreme."[79] This kind of song fits with Father Markey's taste—when he lectures the congregation on morals earlier in the text, he quotes directly from "Rich and Rare Were the Gems She Wore" by Thomas Moore, a definite symbol of bourgeois ascendancy nationalism that would appeal to the audience present at the dance.[80]

As previously mentioned, traditional dance music also began to be superseded by jazz and other popular styles, and for younger people, traditional music lost social relevance. Indeed, even haggard old farmers, also not inside the hall for the dance, "stood in the roadway chewing tobacco [as] through the open windows of the concrete hall the blare of the latest dance tunes came … [they] declared that the music was 'damn good.'" Again, they defer to the larger towns' superiority:

> "And why wouldn't it [be good] and it after coming from Clones? Every man jack of that band gets a pound and a kick for his night."
>
> "A week's wages," said someone else. "Easy earned money."[81]

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[77] Vallely, "Dance Halls Act," 201.

[78] Reg Hall, "Irish Music and Dance in London, 1890–1970: A Socio-Cultural History," (PhD dissertation, vol. 1, University of Sussex, 1994), 37, in Dowling, "Traditional Music in the Irish Revival," 49.

[79] Kavanagh, *Tarry Flynn,* 155. See Appendix, pages 151-52, for details on a recording of this song.

[80] Ibid., 15.

[81] Ibid., 151.

In a further indication of the urban-rural economic and social divide, many musicians who left their homes for life in larger Irish cities found that opportunities for traditional music were scarce. Musicians lost their value in local social frameworks and became discouraged.[82]

After a time, some rural people faced with ongoing economic hardship were eager to modernise and divest themselves of the "traditional" Ireland—a phenomenon already taking place in the cities.[83] Music was a casualty of this transition; far from the foundation of de Valera's vision, Irish citizens began to associate music (and the Irish language) with vestigial elements of a backward way of life.[84] One traditional singer from the era compared the rejection of traditional music to a crisis in national identity: in an ironic inversion of nationalist ideology, "the music became associated with the Irish-speaking population [and] the language being redundant … [the music] was regarded as not being of any use or backward."[85] Another man said "you'd look at a fellow if he was going to a céilí as backwards, you know," while a flute player who moved to Dublin found that there it was considered "peasant music."[86] Yet, this perspective on the irrelevance of traditional music was very recently acquired, given the vital cultural role it had played only a generation before in many places. In *The Bodhrán Makers* this attitude of obsolescence was particular to the town-dwellers who resented the Dirrabeg residents. Kitty Smiley aptly sums up its incongruity:

> [She] had been always hard put to comprehend the attitude of the townspeople, her departed husband included, to the traditional songs and dances of Dirrabeg. The country singers were frequently mimicked in the town's public houses and distorted imitations of the reels and jigs which had been the pride and joy of country people for generations were the source of great amusement to townie onlookers. Kitty would not have minded so much but those who mocked the

[82] Fleming, "Resisting Cultural Standardization," 232-33; Vallely, "Dance Halls Act," 201.

[83] Kaul, *Turning the Tune*, 39.

[84] Fleming, "Resisting Cultural Standardization," 232; Crowley and Kitchin, "Producing 'decent girls'," 363.

[85] Fleming, "Resisting Cultural Standardization," 232.

[86] Sean Shanagher, "A dancing agency: Jazz, modern and ballroom dancers in Ireland between 1940 and 1960," *Irish Journal of Sociology* 24, vol. 2 (2016): 189; Fleming, "Resisting Cultural Standardization," 232-33.

most were those who were themselves no more than a generation removed from the traditions they endeavoured to degrade.[87]

The Drabness of Rural Life

All of this added up to an atmosphere of stagnation and austerity in rural Ireland, which was highlighted by the Commission on Emigration as a frequent reason for emigrating.[88] An interconnection of crippling poverty, dearth of modernization, lack of access to economic and social advancement, and hounding from the clergy left many rural Irish people with no outlet for their frustrations. Whereas previously, music was a way of connecting socially and forgetting one's problems, the proscriptive nature of Irish authority worked to seal off that avenue of pleasure for music's devotees, practitioners, and observers.

Many at the time were aware of the effect this was having on Irish social life. One writer to *The Bell*, Seán Ó Faoláin's publication, saw that the uncoupling of music and social interaction had caused a "complete and awful chastity of the people … so searing has this iron morality become that even the pleasant and wholesome social intercourse of young people has been banned and killed."[89] Another correspondent described the situation in his own village. Its encapsulation of much of the period in question means it is worth extended quotation:

> During 1929 to '32 there were at least twice as many boys and girls between the ages of 19 to 25 years in this village as there are to-day. There was less employment and less money but we had plenty of enjoyment that cost us very little … We had a choice of four or five kitchen dances every Sunday night within a two mile radius of home. One in every four was able to play some instrument, one in ten was able to sing [and the] rest were able to dance…
>
> In 1931 we got a new [Parish Priest]. He condemned dancing in every form, even the kitchen dances were sinful and against the wishes of our Church …

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[87] Keane, *The Bodhrán Makers,* 145.
[88] Delaney, *Demography, State and Society*, 175.
[89] Whyte, *Church and State*, 27.

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One night in 1947 I … attended a dance in Caighwell in St. Michael's Hall … On the right just inside the door was a civic guard in uniform. On the left was the [Curate]. Along the wall on the left side was a row of girls sitting up straight with their hands crossed on their knees. There wasn't even a genuine smile on any of them. On the walls on both sides were large official-looking notices: Don't Throw Cigarette Ends or Lighted Matches on the Floor. Don't Leave Hats, Caps, etc., on Seats. Don't Stand on the Seats. Respectable Girls Don't Sit on Gentlemen's Knees, etc.

… I took a chance and picked what I thought was a fairly lively partner. As far as dancing went we got on all right, but I couldn't even get her to smile… Most of the dancers went round the hall one way and that meant that she was facing the P.P. going one way and facing the C.C. going the other, so I tried going across in the middle. It actually worked. When she found that she couldn't be seen from the stage or the door she began to laugh and chat just as if she was at a real dance. I heard afterwards that if a girl appeared to enjoy herself at any of these dances she could be accused to having taken drink.

… [We] had more fun and freedom at the Corpus Christi Procession in Esker.[90]

Clearly, young people with aspirations found this environment stifling, and it provided little motivation to remain at home. If they left for Britain, they found a more tolerant society where many traditional musicians had already emigrated. One survey respondent noted that she attended dances at Catholic clubs twice a week and had "a better life in Croydon than in Sligo."[91]

Emigration in the Texts

All of these factors combine in both *Tarry Flynn* and *The Bodhrán Makers*, and at the conclusion of each text, the protagonists emigrate eastwards. Tarry Flynn

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[90] Ibid., 29-30.
[91] Delaney, *Demography, State and Society*, 175.

follows his uncle east, and many of the rural dwellers of Dirrabeg head to Britain to join the many locals who have already left. Indeed, there is a well-established chain of migration in each text. In the former, "[m]ost of the other neighbours' daughters had gone off … to be nurses in England";[92] in the latter, generations of poverty have seen scores of young people from the village depart for England. At the time of the eagerly awaited Wren, there is a fear that a "number of disillusioned boys and girls would follow" the previously emigrated locals who "were resident for the most part in the English midlands where … wages were good, astronomical by Dirrabeg standards."[93] Bluenose wonders, after the teacher Monty Whelan has been fired and is forced to emigrate, "'What would our boys and girls do but for England I ask you. Where would they go but with their caps in their hands begging for work[?]'"[94] Hence, there is an obvious economic incentive to leave Ireland. Even Tarry Flynn is induced to leave by his uncle's promise: "'I could get you a job and I could get you what's better, a living. It's not what you make but what you spend that makes you rich.'"[95]

But what is clear in each text is that music was limited as an outlet of pleasure across the island, and in the face of economic and social stagnation, emigration was an obvious choice. For Tarry Flynn, exclusion from musical events in the town causes him to reflect on his prospects and the likelihood that he will never climb the social ladder. The influx of modern musical styles such as jazz, and the money they bring through dances, only exacerbates the insecurity he feels at the hands of the wealthier classes. Tarry, who is a "product of the semi-human Gaelic enthusiasm which had swept the land in his father's day" and considers himself a "romantic idealist,"[96] sees himself becoming socially isolated and culturally obsolete. Indeed, "[o]nce a girl in a dance hall had called him 'an oul' monk'. [That was] the last thing he wanted to be…"[97]

In Keane's novel, the transition from tradition to modernity is more jarring. The combination of religious, legislative, and economic suppression of music sounded the death-knell for an interconnected culture that had spanned countless generations. For example, the Dirrabeg folk keep the date of the Wren dance under

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[92] Kavanagh, *Tarry Flynn,* 62.
[93] Keane, *The Bodhrán Makers*, 119.
[94] Ibid., 266-67.
[95] Kavanagh, *Tarry Flynn*, 186.
[96] Ibid., 11.
[97] Ibid.

secrecy so as not to be interfered with by the clergy. Mattie Gillooley, the son of Mossie the "Dirrabeg wrenband's outstanding fiddler," has a respectable job in the town. When his father asks him to keep the date of the Wren under wraps, the son asks about the likely reaction of his pious boss:

> "And if he sacks me?" the fiddler's son had asked.
>
> "If he sacks you," said the fiddler, "all it means is that you will be joining your brothers and sisters across the water sooner than any of you thought."[98]

The way in which each novel ends is also revealing; both texts conclude with music seeing the characters off as they emigrate. As Tarry Flynn walks off to his lift with his uncle, he attempts to memorise as best he can the land that he loves despite its hardship. "O the beauty of what we love! O the pain of roots dragging up!" he thinks, and he "was visualising a scene that took shape as a song."[99] Essentially, he goes out singing, and the long song that he imagines is an attempt to come to terms with departure; he eulogises the landscape, but the song itself is an act of freedom symbolic of his escape from the drudgery of rural existence.

In Keane's novel, effectively all of the Dirrabeg characters are left with little choice but to emigrate. As they all meet at the Bus Bar for one final drink before leaving, Donal thinks of what he will miss:

> Donal knew from experience that he would sorely miss the dawns and the sunsets, the freedom of fields and boglands, the sound of the tiny rippling streams, the songbirds' chorus in the mornings and the incomparable sense deep in one's belonging to a place. He knew that wherever he went or however he might fare he would always be a part of what he was leaving.
>
> "Last night," he turned to Bluenose, "I secured the bodhrán you made for me to make sure it travels well."

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[98] Keane, *The Bodhrán Makers*, 188.
[99] Kavanagh, *Tarry Flynn,* 188.

Bluenose smiled and slapped his thigh. "It will remind us," he said proudly. "Yes," Donal voiced his agreement. "It will remind us."[100]

This is a tacit acknowledgement that whereas previously music was an inextricable element of a daily social framework, at the point of departure it takes on an entirely different function. Now that realignments of identity are complete and have forced him into imminent departure, the emigrant occupies a liminal position between past and future until he arrives in a new home place. The next chapter examines how music ameliorates the tension of this liminality and engenders lasting memory of home through the ritual of the American wake.

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[100] Keane, *The Bodhrán Makers*, 353.

Chapter Three
Between Two Worlds: Music at the American wake

In the opening paragraph of Liam O'Flaherty's short story "Going Into Exile," the scene is set: "Patrick Feeney's cabin was crowded with people … On the cement floor three couples were dancing a jig," accompanied by the music of Pat Mullaney, "his red face contorting as he played a tattered old accordion."[1] In this boisterous atmosphere, where there is "music and dancing in the kitchen and singing in the little room to the left," there is nonetheless a "haunting melancholy in the air."[2] The "boisterous gaiety" of the people in the crowded cabin "failed to hide them from the real cause of them being there … For the dance was on account of Patrick Feeney's two children, Mary and Michael, who were going to the United States the following morning."[3] This scene is an example of an American wake, the party held the night before the departure of an Irish emigrant or emigrants, where in the midst of drinking, dancing, and singing, the community gathered to farewell the departed and mourn the symbolic death of the individual's communal ties.

The pervasiveness of migration in Irish culture is such that for a significant portion of Irish history, emigration was synonymous with dying. Both death and migration are liminal events framed within narratives of continuity and change. Ascribing metaphorical death to the crossing of geographical boundaries demonstrates the Irish view of emigration as a rending akin to actual death.[4] Ceremonies devised for liminal events such as birth, marriage, emigration, and death are an attempt to place permanent change within the context of cultural and temporal continuity. Traditional Irish funerary customs were reworked in the ritual of the American wake to acknowledge the passing of the emigrant across boundaries both real and symbolic, just as in the mourning of the dead.[5]

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[1] Liam O'Flaherty, "Going into Exile," in *Irish Short Stories,* ed. Valentin Iremonger (London: Faber and Faber, 1960), 102.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Grace Neville, "*Rites de Passage*: Rituals of Separation in Irish Oral Tradition," in *New Perspectives on the Irish Diaspora,* ed. Charles Fanning (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 120.

[5] Eileen Metress, "The American Wake of Ireland: Symbolic Death Ritual," *Omega: Journal of Death and Dying* 21, no. 2 (1990): 152.

The modelling of the American wake on the wake for the dead illustrates the acute awareness in Irish communities that the thresholds crossed in the act of migration were frequently permanent.[6] Particularly in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the vast distances many migrants needed to cross in order to reach their new homes was significant in communities where permanent separation was normally occasioned by death. The American wake was effectively a full funeral exercise for the departing person, and afforded the community a mechanism for the relief of grief associated with this "sorrowful event."[7] The person's departure could then be framed within a cultural narrative that ascribes a perversely comforting sense of continuity in each single act of emigration.

Music was a vital part of the expression of community at the American wake, and emigrants would depart with their final moments at home indelibly recorded through song and dance.[8] However, another vital role of music in the ritual was in the communication of emotions that were difficult to express in words. In this chapter, Liam O'Flaherty's "Going into Exile," Frank McCourt's memoir *Angela's Ashes* and Máirtín Ó Cadhain's "The Year 1912" ("*An Bhliain 1912*")[9] exemplify the way in which music is used as a device to position the emigrant within discourses of exile and explore the fallibility of verbal language in effectively communicating complex emotion. Each text uses music to bridge the gap between what is felt and expressed by the narratives' protagonists during the liminal environment of an American wake.

The American Wake in Irish culture

The American wake is symbolic of not only individual loss and separation, but also of the whole community's attitude towards migration and exile.[10] From the early nineteenth century until the mid-twentieth century, emigration became an accepted part of Irish society and was viewed with a degree of inevitability. Particularly in rural areas, emigration was so frequent that it was almost entirely

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[6] Bernadette Whelan, "The 'Idea of America' in the New Irish State, 1922-1960," in *The Irish in the Atlantic World*, ed. David T. Gleeson (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2012), 80.
[7] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 567; Metress, "The American Wake of Ireland," 147.
[8] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles,* 556.
[9] I use Eoghan Ó Tuairisc's 1981 translation of Ó Cadhain's original Irish text. While the cultural significance of the original Irish should not be forgotten, for this analysis the language itself is less important than the music in the narrative.
[10] Paul White, "Geography, Literature and Migration," 7.

expected. In 1925, after dining with a family that included several children, an American visitor to Ireland observed: "there came to my mind the bizarre notion that they were waiting to grow up and go to America."[11] Yet, the American wake "seemed almost purposely designed to obscure the often mundane or ambiguous realities of emigration."[12]

In his analysis of migrant literature, Paul White has noted the frequency of literatures that equate migration with death, a theme readily available in the Irish literary tradition.[13] For Máirtín Ó Cadhain in "The Year 1912," this inexorable view of emigration was "typical of a race whose guardian angel was the American trunk, whose guiding star was the exile ship, whose Red Sea was the Atlantic."[14] One opinion writer described Irish emigration as "something that [had] the appearance of a national doom," while the *Irish People* lamented that as the island was emptied of its youth, the country was fast becoming "one vast 'American wake'."[15]

The performance of a single American wake was a tacit acknowledgement that emigration was as national as it was local in its effects and such rituals were being repeated across the countryside. An indication of this lies in the variety of names that the ceremony took across the island. The term "American wake" became widespread during the latter half of the nineteenth century, but regionally it was also known as a "live wake," a "convoy" (a reference to the crowd that would accompany the emigrant's carriage to the port or train station following the wake), a "bottle night" or a "bottle drink."[16] Nonetheless, the name "American wake" was the most common, and despite the regional differences in nomenclature, the enactment of the ritual remained substantially similar throughout Ireland.[17] Although the term "American Wake" usually referred to American emigration, the distance required to reach one's new destination seemed to be the deciding factor as to whether a wake

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[11] Patrick Duffy, "Literary Reflections on Irish Migration in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in *Writing Across Worlds: Literature and Imagination*, eds. Russell King, John Connell, and Paul White (London: Routledge, 1995), 22.
[12] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 556.
[13] White, "Geography, Literature and Migration," 6.
[14] Máirtín Ó Cadhain, "The Year 1912," in *The Road to Brightcity,* trans. Eoghan Ó Tuairisc (Swords, Co. Dublin: Poolbeg Press, 1981), 31.
[15] Arnold Schrier, *Ireland and the American Emigration, 1850-1900* (New York, NY: Russell and Russell, 1970), 85.
[16] Ibid., 86.
[17] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 557.

was necessary: emigrants to places such as Canada and Australia were also given an "American" wake.[18]

Testimony supplied to the Irish Folklore Commission indicates the repetitive and repeatable nature of the ritual. One informant said, "I was at plenty of bottle nights, but the one I remember best was my own."[19] That a single American wake could be taken to represent all others is apparent in testimony from a mother who remembered the departure for America of the eldest of her fourteen offspring. This marked the "start of the unravelling of [her] little clan, and that this one wake would be repeated thirteen times (rather than thirteen new wakes taking place)."[20] For people who saw many departures, individual wakes merged into an archetype, reinforcing a communal understanding of emigration. Hence, the wake was an opportunity to impress upon the emigrant the extent of communal sorrow, project anger towards the traditional English foe for causing the conditions that led to exile, and to send the emigrant forth as "unhappy but faithful and vengeful 'exiles'."[21]

Death, Emigration, and the American Wake

> Mam says we'll have a bit of a party the night before I go. They used to have parties in the old days when anyone would go to America, which was so far away the parties were called American wakes because the family never expected to see the departing one again in this life.[22]

Before intercontinental travel became sufficiently affordable and convenient, the feeling that someone would never return was very real. Aside from epistolary contact, emigrants were usually never seen or heard from again. As such, they were effectively "dead" in the community from which they had emigrated.[23] Indeed, for those travelling to America (or anywhere of such a distance), people "made very

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[18] Neville, "*Rites de Passage*," 117.
[19] Ibid., 129.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 556.
[22] Frank McCourt, *Angela's Ashes* (London: Harper Collins, 1996), 418.
[23] Gerald Porter, "Grief for the Living: Appropriating the Irish Lament for Songs of Emigration and Exile," *Humanities Research* 19, no. 3 (2013): 21.

little difference between going to America and going to the grave."[24] Emigrants were most often young persons in their teens or early twenties, and so grief was exacerbated by the unnatural "death" of someone so young.[25] There is abundant evidence of this attitude in testimony collected for the Irish Folklore Commission. One young emigrant for whom an American wake was held in the 1890s said, "You would know … that they never expected to see you again. It was as if you were going out to be buried."[26] The same emigrant did what so few managed to do by returning home, and remarked: "When I came home they were as glad to see me as if I had come from the grave."[27] In her autobiography, Peig Sayers recalled her neighbour Muiris's American wake. While pouring whiskey Muiris said, "Drink my health! We'll never drink another glass together on this side of the grave!"[28]

American wakes featured complex emotions: they were mournful, but they also contained elements of happiness, as the emigrant's departure could provide relief from oppression. In the material terms of Irish life in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, both death and emigration freed the departed person from interminable poverty, particularly when emigration occurred during periods of intense privation in rural areas.[29] The ritual also outlined the inextricability between geography and spirituality in Irish cultural tradition. The equation of death, geography and migration is rooted in ancient Irish folklore—for example, in voyage tales which equated travelling west with "earthly dissolution."[30] In Irish tradition, the Afterlife was situated in the Isles of the Blest, over the Western Ocean; this helped to reinforce beliefs relating to American migration as a journey to an "earthly paradise," "the great land beyond the sea," or "God's own country."[31] As such, the act of migration to the west continued the Irish worldview of migration, disrupting linear time in the fulfillment of mythological death. This can be seen in Frank McCourt's *Angela's Ashes*; after he has agreed to be given an American wake, Frank

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[24] Schrier, *Ireland and the American Emigration*, 85.
[25] Neville, "*Rites de Passage,*" 118.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Christina S. Brophy, "Keening Community: *Mná Caointe,* Women, Death, and Power in Ireland" (PhD thesis, Boston College, 2010), 284.
[29] Patrick O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia* (Kensington, NSW: New South Wales University Press, 1986), 58-9; Metress, "The American Wake of Ireland," 148.
[30] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 557.
[31] Neville, "*Rites de Passage,*" 118.

cannot stop associating his upcoming voyage with death and those who have already passed away:

> I sit at the graves of Oliver and Eugene in the old St. Patrick's Burying ground and cross the road to St. Lawrence's Cemetery where Theresa is buried. Wherever I go I hear voices of the dead and I wonder if they can follow you across the Atlantic Ocean.[32]

Arnold van Gennep has noted that in such mythologies the deceased must "make a voyage," and that rituals associated with these beliefs attempt to "assure [the voyager] of a safe journey or crossing … as they would a living traveller."[33] One such assurance in funerary rites was the equipping of the departed with talismans to ensure a safe journey.[34] Echoing the practice of burying the dead with a collection of personal items, Irish emigrants often took objects with them in order to safeguard the journey. This occurs in O'Flaherty's "Going Into Exile," when immediately before his departure, Michael takes a piece of whitewash from the wall and puts it in his pocket before the people in the room file out after him "like a funeral procession."[35] Similarly, in "The Year 1912," Ó Cadhain's Máirín keeps a tress of her mother's hair in an envelope in her pocket.[36]

Death is often described in euphemistic terms, such as taking a "passage," or the deceased being "departed."[37] Many emigrants crossing from Ireland to America used euphemisms such as "taking the boat" or "crossing the water" to downplay the risks of the journey and remove associations of possible death with the passage.[38] Indeed, the possibility of shipwreck on overloaded and unseaworthy vessels, the extensity of the open Atlantic, and the frequent outbreaks of disease on the infamous "coffin ships" bound for America meant that the perils of the journey could not be ignored.[39] The formalities of the American wake came to reflect knowledge and

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[32] McCourt, *Angela's Ashes*, 418.
[33] Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* [1908] (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1960), 154.
[34] Ibid.
[35] O'Flaherty, "Going Into Exile," 112.
[36] Ó Cadhain, "The Year 1912," 29.
[37] Porter, "Grief for the Living," 15.
[38] Duffy, "Literary Reflections," 25.
[39] Porter, "Grief for the Living," 24-25.

anticipation of the danger of the crossing; the possibility that the emigrant was the "walking dead" was clear to all at the wake.[40]

Van Gennep has also observed the essential structural analogy of all rituals that mark the passage across equally defined life stages.[41] This is true for Irish emigration wakes and wakes for the dead. The presence of the living emigrant in the American wake had little bearing on either the content or the structure of the wake, attributable to traditional Irish beliefs regarding the continuity of a person between life and death.[42] If anything, the presence of the live emigrant only served to enhance the symbolism of the ritual. In the traditional wake, the deceased was laid out in the house and watched ("waked") throughout the night until the burial the following day, to prevent evil from entering the body prior to interment.[43] Similarly, the emigrant at the American wake was feted and attended to throughout the night. Each type of wake began soon after nightfall, and continued until first light the following morning. The symbolism of the association between nighttime and the otherworld heightened the awareness that the emigrant now "belonged less to the realm of the living than the dead."[44] The daybreak that marked the end of the wake represented the emigrant's passage into a new state of being.

Those for whom funeral rites have not been performed are symbolically unable to enter the world of the dead, but nor are they "reincorporated into the world of the living."[45] In such circumstances, the idea that the emigrant could be waked on home soil before departure was appealing. Waking the emigrant in a ritual death meant that the departing migrant remained spiritually "incorporated" in Ireland:

> This I would argue, is one sense of the famous drinking toast of Irish emigrants—*Bás in Eirinn*, "to die in Ireland." For the waked immigrant, returning to die in Ireland rejoins what has been separated.[46]

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[40] Ibid., 21-22.
[41] van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage,* 3.
[42] Metress, "The American Wake of Ireland," 152.
[43] Schrier, *Ireland and the American Emigration,* 84.
[44] Neville, "*Rites de Passage*," 125.
[45] van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage,* 160.
[46] Lawrence J. Taylor, "*Bás In Éirinn:* Cultural Constructions of Death in Ireland," *Anthropological Quarterly* 62, no. 4 (1989): 183.

If the emigrant never returned to home soil, to have been waked in Ireland was the next best outcome. In an account from June 1840, a County Cork emigrant bound for Australia was overheard requesting a promise "not to let my bones rest in the strange country … send me home when I'm dead to my own people in Kilcrea—that's my consolation."[47] In Ó Cadhain's "The Year 1912," when Máirín's mother is fretting over her daughter's imminent departure, she mulls over the notion that the emigrant blessing "God speed her" has "for its undermeaning 'God have mercy on her soul'"; departing to America comes "without a decent laying-out and a bier to be carried, and with no passionate keen."[48] She then bemoans the fact that there would be "neither name nor surname on a rough bit of board in the churchyard by the Fiord for generations to come... The voyage—that immensity, cold and sterile—would erase the name from the genealogy of the race."[49] That one's lost progeny would be invoked indicates the extent to which the concern for the emigrant was individual and communal, spanning generations. The involvement of the entire community was a crucial part of the American wake; much as in a funerary observance, public participation in the process allowed the community to grieve collectively over the loss and reaffirm family and group connections to the departed.[50]

Keening and music in the grieving process

Another characteristic common to both forms of the wake was the presence of keening and music. Keening (from the Irish *caoine*) has age-old origins in Irish funerary custom, and was performed in the presence of the dead: the high-pitched, chanting, poem-like wails of the keen were believed to be able to be heard by the deceased until they were buried.[51] The traditional keen was a long, extempore lament in poetic style, composed in the *rosc* meter, which dates to prior to the eighth century and was used especially for lamenting the dead.[52] Keening was performed by women, frequently by the mother of the deceased, or by another woman from the

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[47] O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, 54-56.
[48] Ó Cadhain, "The Year 1912," 28.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Miguel Hernandez and Monica McGoldrick, "Migration and the Life Cycle," in *The Expanded Family Life Cycle: Individual, Family, and Social Perspectives*, 3rd ed., eds. Betty Carter and Monica McGoldrick (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1999), 170.
[51] Porter, "Grief for the Living," 16.
[52] Patricia Lysaght, "'*Caoineadh os Cionn Coirp*': The Lament for the Dead in Ireland," *Folklore* 108 (1997): 71.

community renowned for her ability to keen. The long, sorrowful elegies were usually delivered in Irish, praised the virtues of the dead person (or the emigrant) and lamented the impact on families and communities that the absence of the departed would have.[53] Many *caoineadh* were improvised*,* but in the nineteenth century laments from the oral tradition began to be recorded and published.[54] Patrick Dinneen gives an example of an emigration keen in Irish in his 1905 publication *Muinntear Chiarraidhe roimh an droch-shaoghal*:

Mo ghrá is mo stór tú!	My love my darling!
Ba bhreá is ba chórach	'Twas fair and shapely
Tú ag gabhail an bhóthair	You'd walk the roadway;
Do b'álainn fónta	'Twas right and seemly
Do thráchtfá ar eolas	You'd have the knowledge
Na ndámh 's na ró-fhlaith.	Of scholars and grand ones.
Ní fhágfad póirse	I'll not leave a corner
Ón Máigh go hEochaill	From Maigue to Youghal
'S ó Thrá Lí an óir bhuí	From rich Tralee
Go hArd na gCoisreach	To Ardnagoshra
Gan tráchtadh I d' dheoidhse	Without talking about you.
Do cháil ba mhór é	Your fame was widespread
'Measc mná do pharóiste	Among all the women
Ar aird is ar eolas	For wisdom and knowing;
Mo chrá mo scóladh	My grief my scalding
Tu ag gabháil chun streo uaim	That you should leave me
I mbláth na hóige	In the flower of youth.
Ochón m'ochlán guirt	Ochone my sorrow
Is mo chumha ná tráchtfainn	And my grief no telling
Is tinn an lá san	Woeful the day
Is duairc do d' mháthair	And grim for your mother
'Tá buartha cráite	That's heartsick and woeful

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[53] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 559.
[54] Lysaght, "'*Caoineadh os Cionn Coirp*,'" 65.

'S a leanbh grámhar	For her darling child
Gan maoin gan fáltas	Without means or profit
Dá luascad ar lán-mhuir	On the ocean tossed
Inniu 's amárach	Today and tomorrow
'S go ceann leath-ráithe	And for half a three-month.
…	
A bhán-chnis bhéasach	My own fair lady
Na malaí gcaola	Of the slender eyebrows
Go bhfuil ciall is éifeacht	Having sense and reason
Agat in éineacht	Together blending
A'bhfágfair féin mé	Will you leave me now
I d' dhiaidh I m'aonar	Behind you lonesome
'S an bás do m'éileamh	And death demanding
Gach lá de m' shaols?	Each day I live?[55]

The effect of the prolonged wailing and lamenting was to provoke others into paroxysms of elemental grief—in the American wake, this often included the emigrant herself, who sometimes even contributed lines.[56] The emigrant being keened was often reproached for deciding to depart, and the keen particularly emphasised the loss of a son or daughter from the family so as to project guilt on the departed.[57]

A short extempore keen appears in O'Flaherty's "Going Into Exile," when the emigrants' mother suddenly bursts "into wild tears, wailing: 'My children, oh, my children, far over the sea you will be carried from me, your mother.' And she began to rock herself and she threw her apron over her head."[58] This sudden outburst of grief has been bottled up throughout the wake, and manifests in an contagious, unprompted, individual expression of emotion that conforms to keening custom:

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[55] In Brophy, "Keening Community," 283-84.
[56] Schrier, *Ireland and the American Emigration*, 87; Brophy, "Keening Community," 284.
[57] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 559.
[58] O'Flaherty, "Going Into Exile," 111.

> Immediately the cabin was full of the sound of bitter wailing. A dismal cry rose from the women gathered in the kitchen. 'Far over the sea they will be carried,' began woman after woman, and they all rocked themselves and hid their heads in their aprons.[59]

While the keen was not explicitly musical, the inherent poetry of the form and its manner of delivery (set to a loose rhythm and sung in the manner of Latin plainsong) meant that it had definite links to musical form.[60] The songs that grew from the keening tradition possessed similar elements, and also took on the form of poetic laments. The authors of popular emigration songs incorporated images and phrases from earlier traditions such as the keen, particularly as the Irish language was overtaken by English: internal rhyme, scarcity of narrative, and Irish and Anglo-Irish words (such as "acushla" and "mavourneen") were appropriated from the earlier tradition.[61] Other links between keening and emigration ballads included the "repetitive, intertextual nature" of each form, incorporation of farewells to family, and the use of the forms as means of "leave-taking from the beloved native land."[62]

These similarities meant that as keening slowly declined in practice during the nineteenth century, songs began to become more commonplace as an accessible expression of grief at American wakes. Lament poetry had never been solely restricted to eulogising the dead, and lament songs became adapted to express the condition of emigration.[63] In the early nineteenth century, American wakes were generally solemn affairs, with an absence of music and dancing. However, over time the American wake began to mirror the wake for the dead in its reputation for "merriness."[64] In many instances, music was an essential part of the waking process both for lightening the mood and drawing attention to grief. An informant to the Irish Folklore Commission recalled that the music of American wakes "followed the one pattern … there was usually a flute player and a fiddler and perhaps an accordion or

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[59] Ibid.
[60] Lysaght, "'*Caoineadh os Cionn Coirp*,'" 71.
[61] Porter, "Grief for the Living," 20. "Acushla" comes from the Irish *a chuisle (mo chroí)*, "pulse (of my heart)". "Mavourneen" is transliterated from *mo mhuirnín,* "my beloved."
[62] Ibid., 21.
[63] Porter, "Grief for the Living," 18-19.
[64] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 559.

concertina player."[65] Music, singing, dancing, and even games were a prominent part of the affair, and typically a wide variety of musical styles and dances were aired:

> Lively jigs, reels and hornpipes were played as young people danced; their elders sitting around the kitchen walls and next to the hearth. Ballads were sung; many were laments articulating the torment of leaving one's land or of the longing to return to the native soil.[66]

As the reference to laments indicates, song and music were not used purely for entertainment; they were called to perform a number of roles, including distraction from grief and the communication of emotion. This included emotions that were expressed with ease, and also those conveyed with difficulty. Essentially, the songs that were sung at American wakes represented a "stylised dialogue" between the emigrant and those who remained at home, a dialogue centering on the acknowledgement and affirmation of Irish attitudes to migration, as well as the bridging of physical and psychological distances between the emigrant and the community.[67] Many popular songs were inherently political, and reflected the essential cause of mass migration as the Irish saw it: emigration was involuntary exile, resulting from various manifestations of English Protestant tyranny. Many songs were well known compositions that could be found in periodicals like *The Nation's Penny Readings* or *The Harp of Tara Songbook*; by singing these songs of the "reluctant emigrant," communities tapped into the ongoing national discourse on migration.[68] Other songs emphasised the darker features of emigration, including the danger of the sea crossing and the life of toil that might await an unlucky soul. An example of such a song is "Erin's Lovely Home," which mentions a voyage in which "fever seized the crew" and the "ocean's waves they rolled o'er our graves…we'll ne'er return to Erin's lovely home."[69]

These songs were invariably unsettling to the emigrant. One man recalled, "That was the thing about the songs on the night of a Bottle Drink, they were all

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[65] Neville, "*Rites de passage*," 121.
[66] Metress, "The American Wake of Ireland," 151.
[67] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 562.
[68] Ibid., 560-568 and passim.
[69] In Porter, "Grief for the Living," 21. See Appendix, page 152, for details of a recording of this song.

about shipwrecks and it would scare you."[70] To emigrants who may have previously travelled only barely beyond the boundaries of their own parish, such imagery impressed upon them the gravity of their departure. More morose ballads, which held links with the keening tradition, were those that reminded emigrants of how lonely their parents would be without them. These songs contained familiar tropes: family members abandoned at home; mothers grieving for children (particularly sons) who were far away; and eviction from land as a result of poverty exacerbated by the departure of a family member of working age.[71] Of such songs, one informant noted "imagine if you were going away the next morning and heard a song like that: wouldn't it put you out of your mind with longing!"[72]

In an indication of the ambiguity of the ceremony, not all of the music that was heard was intended to bring the listener to tears. Indeed, happiness also had a role in the ritual, particularly as a means of re-establishing a sense of community vitality in the face of loss.[73] A number of songs portrayed the emigrant as being better off in adventurous America, particularly ballads that celebrated the release from poverty or political oppression. Others that were a great deal less common even urged the Irish to emigrate as soon as possible without remorse for the land left behind. Indeed some, far from foisting guilt on the departing person, could be considered downright unpatriotic: "The Green Fields of America," for example, contains a narrator who declares, "little I'd care where my bones should be buried."[74] Unsurprisingly, though, given the general purpose and sentiment of the American Wake, songs that portrayed emigration in a categorically positive manner were very much in the minority and could even be considered inappropriate:

> …those occasions were designed not to celebrate departures but to lament them, not to extol the emigrant as an ambitious and carefree individual but rather to impress upon him or her the full burden of a communal opinion which demanded grief, duty, and self-abnegation as the price of departure.[75]

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[70] Neville, "*Rites de Passage*," 122.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 562-563.
[73] Lysaght, "'*Caoineadh os Cionn Coirp*,'" 69.
[74] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 561.
[75] Ibid., 561-562.

While American wakes could be jovial, joy was "never separated by more than a membrane" from sadness, guilt, defeat, and other emotions of loss.[76] The balance between humour and sorrow was an essential feature of both wakes for the dead and the American wake; at first glance, this dichotomy may seem disrespectful or incongruous, but it reflected the sense that freedom from suffering and a happier existence would await the emigrant. Moreover, humour and frivolity can be an effective grieving strategy, as in Bakhtinian terms humour makes death easier to live with, while in Freudian terms it makes grieving wholesome and healthy.[77] Emotional boundaries were frequently transgressed at the American wake, as pleasure, pain, joy, and mourning interacted fluidly to reflect the ritual's liminality.[78]

However, if one emotion could be said to predominate, it was undeniably sadness. Even in wakes with a great deal of singing and dancing, there would be a "mournful look on all within."[79] Frank McCourt describes the scene after a song has been sung at his own American wake:

> The Abbot ends his song, opens his eyes, wipes his cheeks and tells us that was a sad song about an Irish boy that went to America and got shot by gangsters and died before a priest could reach his side and he tells me don't be gettin' shot if you're not near a priest.
>
> Uncle Pa says that's the saddest song he ever heard and is there any chance we could have something lively. He calls on Mam and she says, Ah, no, Pa, sure I don't have the wind.[80]

Songs of sadness and anger were an expression of the essence of the American wake, and the testimony of many Folklore Commission informants supports this view. One emigrant recalled:

> [At] the Bottle Drink … you would think that they were trying to see who could sing the oldest and saddest songs … and if you were going away yourself and hear them it would break your heart.[81]

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[76] Metress, "The American Wake of Ireland," 151.
[77] Ibid.; Porter, "Grief for the Living," 16, 19.
[78] David Lloyd, "The Memory of Hunger," in *Loss: The Politics of Mourning,* eds. David L. Eng and David Kazanjian (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 211-212.
[79] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 560.
[80] McCourt, *Angela's Ashes,* 419.

The effort by singers to inspire melancholy was concerted, and there are a few apparent functions for this. Neville argues for two such functions: anaesthesia and catharsis. In the former function, the songs would serve to put the emigrant "out of their mind," dulling some of the emotion that would have been flowing, distracting the mind from painful realities.[82] However, this does not really support the evidence pointing towards a deliberate implication of sorrow as a reminder of communal obligation. Another excerpt from *Angela's Ashes* is instructive in this regard. Following the Abbot's song, Frank's mother has had her arm twisted and agrees to sing a song that is "more lively," but it is no less mournful than the previous one:

> *A mother's love is a blessing*
> *No matter where you roam.*
> *Keep her while you have her,*
> *You'll miss her when she's gone.*

> Uncle Pa says one song is worse than the one before and are we turning this night into a wake altogether, is there any chance someone would sing a song to liven up the proceedings or will he be driven to drink with the sadness.[83]

In this instance, Frank's mother can only draw on a song that will inevitably make the atmosphere even more melancholy. She is not anaesthetising or distracting from grief, but exacerbating the guilt that Frank may be feeling at leaving his mother behind. The song is therefore an opportunity to indirectly communicate her feelings to her son.

The latter function Neville posits is therefore more likely as an effective form of grieving: the sad song as catharsis. Songs that acted cathartically were an appropriate musical stimulus to grieve openly, allowing participants to convey their grief through the characters in the songs rather than foist sadness onto the real people

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[81] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 566.
[82] Neville, "*Rites de Passage*," 123.
[83] McCourt, *Angela's Ashes*, 420. The song is "A Mother's Love Is a Blessing"—see Appendix, page 152, for details on a recording of this song.

around them.[84] This aligns with the notion of a stylised dialogue between the emigrants and those who remain: emigrants participated in the ongoing fulfillment of stable tropes which "satisfied the demands of the exile convention and effectively deflected both communal and self-accusations of selfish and non-traditional behaviour."[85]

Music and Dance and the Expression of Emotion

The ventriloquising of grief through song reveals a fundamental inadequacy of language: namely, the lack of an effective and direct emotional vocabulary to convey feelings accurately in difficult or liminal circumstances.[86] Song, music, and dance at American wakes were able to cross emotional boundaries and act in place of words where they were insufficient to describe emotions. Indeed, one of the essential aspects of Irish song is its ability to function as an "instrument for the direct expression of emotion … on occasions when feelings [are] such that ordinary speech [is] inadequate."[87]

Words that describe emotions often do not do justice to the complexity of particular emotional circumstances. At the American wake, the sadness at seeing a loved one depart was a complex sadness: the person was not dead, but their long absence may as well have been death; they could conceivably return, but it was highly unlikely due to factors largely beyond control. Hence, dissonance between realities meant that the unique sadness of departure was difficult to put in words. Moreover, the emotions felt were not necessarily reflected by outwardly exhibited expressions and behaviours.

The way in which we behave relative to our inward emotions is dependent on culture, personality, temper, and circumstance; expressions, particularly facial, are therefore not entirely reliable as an indicator of emotion.[88] Thus, there is a difference between a sad expression and an expression of someone's sadness.[89] In "Going Into

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[84] Neville, "*Rites de Passage*," 123.
[85] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 565.
[86] Neville, "*Rites de Passage*," 122.
[87] Breandán Ó Madagáin, "Functions of Irish Song in the Nineteenth Century," *Béaloideas* 53 (1985): 144.
[88] Elina Packalén, "Music, Emotions, and Truth," *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 16, no. 1 (2008): 46.
[89] Jenefer Robinson and Robert S. Hatten, "Emotions in Music," *Music Theory Spectrum* 34, no. 2 (2012): 74.

Exile," Patrick Feeney, the father of the emigrants, suffers from a failure of expression for his own restless emotional conflict:

> [He was] urging the people to sing and dance, while his mind was in agony all the time…He kept talking to everybody about amusing things, shouted at the dancers and behaved in a boisterous and abandoned manner.[90]

However, he cannot seem to put his emotions into words:

> His mind struggled with vague and peculiar ideas that wandered about in it. He could make nothing at all of his thoughts, but a lump always came up his throat…[91]

When he is eventually able to say something, he fails to summon any real semantic accuracy: "Then he would sigh and say with a contraction of his neck: 'Oh, it's a queer world this and no doubt about it. So it is.'"[92]

Words may be both denotatively and connotatively semantic, but emotions are difficult to describe in purely denotative terms; words that are connotative also require a context for symbolism to be fully understood. As Susanne Langer has theorised, there is "a kind of symbolism peculiarly adapted to the explication of 'unspeakable' things," and while it lacks the denotative powers of language, the "most highly developed type of such purely connotational semantic is music."[93] At American wakes, songs with sad lyrics were already within a denotative and connotative context of a mournful departure; music with words attached can both express *and* awaken emotions.[94] However, the denotative power of words often falls short, even in the case of a sad song at a wake, for the particular circumstances of the emigrant may not have a lyric which exactly matches the details of his or her life. The power of music, in both its lyric and instrumental forms, is that the music itself is a "purely connotative semantic, which … conveys meaning without attachment to

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[90] O'Flaherty, "Going into Exile," 103.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Susanne K. Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key: a Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite, and Art*, [1942] 3rd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), 101.
[94] Robinson and Hatten, "Emotions in Music," 72.

objects."[95] The space between the denotation of the words and the connotation of the music is filled by the *persona* of the music, which enables the singer to displace grief onto the characters in a song. Participants can engage with the emotion of the persona in the song because "we can also imagine ourselves to be the persona of the music and feel yearning, despair, resignation, and so on, just like the persona."[96] Consider Angela McCourt's song discussed above; in that case Frank McCourt describes that after a time, everyone present "join[ed] in the chorus" with her.[97] The other participants in the song are not mothers, and they are not singing from direct experience; nevertheless, they can engage with the emotion of the persona in the song, because they can imagine themselves to be the persona and feel all of the same emotions.

Music, and indeed dance, has the ability to embody ineffable thoughts and expressions. Most musicologists and philosophers of music agree that musical meaning is not usefully comparable with linguistic meaning, though not to the denigration of either.[98] One of the advantages of music as a conduit for emotion is that the basic parts of music do not need to be learned and memorised in the same way that the words of a language do in order to understand their meanings.[99] The immediacy of visceral responses to music, even among persons with no knowledge of musical theory, suggests that there is an innate connection between emotional response and music; it has been suggested that this connection occurs alternatively at physiological, cognitive, and symbolic levels.[100] At a physiological level, a hymn may be slow in tempo and soft in dynamic, calming the nervous system; a military march may be of medium to fast tempo and loud dynamics, eliciting an excited response. At the symbolic level, emotions aroused by music are influenced by cultural constructions of both the auditory and symbolic properties of the piece. For example, hymnal music inspires reverence, while military music inspires pride; these are cultural constructions of both the auditory and symbolic properties of the piece.[101]

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[95] Packalén, "Music, Emotions, and Truth," 48.
[96] Robinson and Hatten, "Emotions in Music," 79.
[97] McCourt, *Angela's Ashes*, 420.
[98] Robinson and Hatten, "Emotions in Music," 80.
[99] Malcolm Budd, *Music and the Emotions: The Philosophical Theories* (London: Routledge, 1992), 123.
[100] Packalén, "Music, Emotions, and Truth," passim; Zbikowski, "Music, Emotion, Analysis," passim.
[101] Robinson and Hatten, "Emotions in Music," 84.

Langer explores the possibility of a "supra-linguistic" sense which she calls "insight," a form of non-discursive reasoning "different from verbal expression only by peculiar characteristics of its symbolism."[102] Content is subservient to form in these "peculiar characteristics," meaning that objective representations are superseded by the symbolic patterns through which they are realised. In Langer's view, "music is the purest of symbolic media" as it does not employ any literal meaning; it can convey meaning with less obstruction than those media that "must work through a distracting specific subject."[103] The musical act, even in programmatic music, has no specific referent other than the musical systems that it employs because it does not attach to a material object. Consequently, listeners create analogy between musical sound and emotional feeling. This is an advantage that music has over language, for when we listen to music we recognise our emotion in a "conceptually inaccessible way."[104] As Langer puts it:

> Because the forms of human feeling are much more congruent with musical forms than with the forms of language, music can *reveal* the nature of feelings with a detail and truth that language cannot approach.[105]

Music is also able to represent dynamic states of emotion more aptly than language, as it makes sense of situations in which an expressed emotion is in conflict with another, or with observable events in the actual world.[106] Indeed, musical works often feature multiple textures that develop, change, blend, or even conflict with one another; a single piece of music can encompass a wide variety of keys and modes, tempos and accents, conveying a variety of emotional palettes.[107] Hence, music can exemplify situations in which an expressed emotion "blends… or conflicts with another [emotion] or with events in the actual world."[108] On a broader scale, music reflects the fact that life itself can be reduced to a process of continuous change. The

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[102] Susanne K. Langer, *The Practice of Philosophy* (New York: H. Holt, 1930), 152, in Zbikowski, "Music, Emotion, Analysis," 37.
[103] Langer, *The Practice of Philosophy*, 160-1, in Zbikowski, "Music, Emotion, Analysis," 37.
[104] Albert van der Schoot, "Kivy and Langer on Expressiveness in Music," *Muzikologija* 13, no. 14 (2013): 195.
[105] Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, 235; emphasis in original.
[106] Zbikowski, "Music, Emotion, Analysis," 43.
[107] Robinson and Hatten, "Emotions in Music," 78.
[108] Ibid.

dynamic elements of music, which symbolise change, are significant to people because they are "analogues of life as [it is] physically experienced."[109] Music at the American wake is therefore able to flow with variable, changing emotions.

One of the expressive aspects of music is in suggesting the movement, carriage, posture, and comportment of the human body.[110] In this analogy, the physical and symbolic expressiveness of dance is called to mind, in that "someone who skips and leaps quickly and lightly, makes expansive gestures, and so on, has a happy bearing, so music with a similar vivacity and exuberance is happy sounding."[111] Bearing in mind that expressed emotions are not always the same as felt emotions, there is nonetheless an obvious parallel between dance and music that extends beyond the mere fact that music accompanies dance. Dance is largely symbolic, and is usually performed in accordance with the emotion of the particular style of music that accompanies it. Music and dance are together able to take the place of words in the expression of emotion:

> …One old woman recalled that at a "bottle drink" in Donegal a father turned to his son and said, "Get up here son and face me in a step for it will likely be the last step we'll ever dance." "At that," she remembered, "there wasn't a dry eye in the house."[112]

In this example, the dance takes the place of an entire conversation between the father and the son. The "last step we'll ever dance" is symbolic of all of the physical realities that will be sundered by the son's departure, and embodies an entire future of face-to-face interaction between the two men. Compare this encounter to the one described in O'Flaherty's "Going Into Exile," where Patrick Feeney and his son Michael have their final "heart-to-heart." They leave the kitchen to talk, departing a lively scene where "the floor was crowded with couples … stamping on the floor and going to and fro."[113] They walk outside "in silence and yawn[ing] without need, pretending to be taking the air"; after a stilted conversation where neither truly conveys his feelings, they stand:

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[109] Packalén, "Music, Emotions, and Truth," 46.
[110] Robinson and Hatten, "Emotions in Music," 76.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 560.
[113] O'Flaherty, "Going into Exile," 103.

> …in silence fully five minutes. Each hungered to embrace the other, to cry, to beat the air, to scream with excess of sorrow. But they stood silent and somber, like nature about them, hugging their woe.[114]

There is not only a failure of words between the father and his son, but also a lack of context for the physical contact they long for. One senses that had they remained indoors with the dancers where the music and dance did not need a context for its expression, a failure of words would have been recompensed by a final dance.

Another example of a dance taking the place of words in a scene of departure was observed by John Forbes in 1854, watching emigrants at Killaloe about to depart for Australia. While it did not occur within the confines of a kitchen hosting an American wake, it is nonetheless a poignant example. A "strong, rough, long-coated fellow" was farewelling his sisters, and "he set to, with right good will and with all his might, to dance jigs before them! … [It] was at once laughable and melancholy to see the mingled grotesque and sorrowful expression of his countenance."[115] Despite his outward emotions of sorrow, the "right good will" expressed by his body in the dancing of the jigs represents an attempt to comfort both himself and his sisters at the moment of their relationship's sundering.

"*An Bhliain 1912*/The Year 1912"

Music's powerful symbolism at the American wake is apparent in Máirtín Ó Cadhain's "The Year 1912" in the interaction between Máirín and her mother. Máirín is both excited and nervous at her upcoming departure; her mother resents being separated from her daughter, leading to a tension between them. Máirín's trunk and American clothes are symbolic of her upcoming departure, and her mother resents them as symbols that Máirín is "already elsewhere," making "satisfactory communication of emotion impossible."[116] This is essentially a semantic failure, and the mother's attempt to reveal her distress in words during the course of the American wake fails: "as soon as she thought to break the crust of speech she

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[114] Ibid., 105.
[115] In O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, 56.
[116] Aisling Ní Dhonnchadha and Máirín Nic Eoin, "Ar an gCoigríoch: Migration and Identity in Twentieth-Century and Contemporary Irish-language Literature," *The Irish Review* 44 (2012): 62.

couldn't find a word to say but stood stockstill staring at her daughter."[117] Similarly, the daughter "felt an urge to say something to her mother, [but] she didn't quite know what."[118] Máirín seeks reassurance and encouragement, but while looking searchingly into her eyes, remains "unconscious of her mother's seething emotions, locked within."[119]

Following this stilted encounter, the daughter goes to the kitchen to show off her American clothes, where there "was a swirl of dancing":

Tom Neile with his back to the closed door was singing *The Three Sons* in a drunken voice drowning the music –

There's many a fine spa-a-rk young hea-a-rty
Went o'er the wa-a-ter and ne-e-e-r return'd.

—Tone yourself down, said the mother to Tom, but she'd have given just then to have a tune like he had in order to release the load of her love in a spilling song.[120]

This is the mother's first acknowledgement of the ability of music to take the place of words in fully encapsulating the emotions she feels. Despite her earlier "idea … to wait till her tongue could contrive a proper speech, then … embrace and kiss"[121] her daughter, she is unable to contrive words and envies Tom Neile for her own inability to "release the load of her love" without a "spilling song." Moreover, Tom Neile's song, through its typical lyrical content, conforms to conventions of expressing community attitudes towards emigration through song.

Máirín, by now captured by the excitement of the occasion and the attention lavished on her, allows herself to be led onto the stone floor to dance by Pádraigín Pháidín, with whom she has a love interest. While she is tongue-tied in speech, the sound of the music and the movement of the dance excite emotion in her in a surreal, extra-sensory way:

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[117] Ó Cadhain, "The Year 1912," 29.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid.
[120] Ibid., 30-31.
[121] Ibid., 29.

> She began to dance in a lackadaisical way, but the pulse of the music
> – that music to which they were beholden even in the fairyplace –
> excited an impulse in herself, and soon in her dappled outfit she was
> like a young alien deer, fullblooded, with the common young animals
> of the herd prancing about her, inciting her to show what she was
> made of, what she could do, while the elders sat around in sage
> contemplation.[122]

She is utterly transformed by the music and dance, while simultaneously her mother observes and thinks that "if she was ever to see her again the hard experience of life would then be a dead weight on that lust for dancing."[123] In these two simultaneous experiences is the contradictory emotion of the American wake: Máirín's mother is consumed by a sense of loss, and the stultifying effect of emigration; the daughter, on the other hand, is consumed by the joy of the dance. The mother confirms for herself the power of music and dance in the interplay between her daughter and Pádraigín Pháidín, as she observes them in the dance and senses their chemistry. The inadequacy of words to effectively convey emotion, and the effectiveness of music in its stead, becomes clear:

> There and then [the mother] guessed the whole story. Easy to see.
> Very likely the pair had never said a word of love to each other. Very
> likely they hadn't said a word tonight. And they were never likely to
> say a word in their lives. But she realised they would be married in
> South Boston in a year's time, in five years' time, ten years even …
> She was vexed. That's what lay behind Pádraigín's wild dancing fit.
> What she had failed to say in words he was saying in dance.[124]

No words are sufficient or necessary as Pádraigín dances, his "[body] and limbs … enacting as perfect poem."[125] That "they were never likely to say a word in their lives" summarises the connection between Máirín and Pádraigín. Even though

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[122] Ibid., 33.
[123] Ibid., 33-34.
[124] Ibid., 34.
[125] Ibid.

Pádraigín's marriage to Máirín in America is apparently a *fait accompli*, the dance that they have shared is powerful enough to eclipse any speech that may have, or will one day, come between them. It is fitting that Ó Cadhain has chosen "word" as a synecdoche for "speech" or "conversation"; in the moment of the dancing, and in future moments, words will be largely inconsequential compared to the immediacy of the emotional exchange in this farewell dance. Furthermore, the mother realises more firmly that her own attempted expression of love in words cannot reach the efficacy of a dance or a song, having already bemoaned Tom Neile for his singing.

Moreover, Pádraigín, "hardly waiting to be asked while still breathless from the dance … began with easy power to sing."[126] Pádraigín sings the old Irish folk song, '*Caisleán Uí Néill*':

> The garden's a desert dear heart, and lonesome I be,
>
> No fruit on the bough, no flower on the thorn, no leaf,
>
> No harping is heard and no bird sings in the tree
>
> Since the love of my heart, white branch, went to Cashel O'Neill.[127]

The use of this song is poignant in many ways. "*Caisleán Uí Néill*" belongs to the traditional song category of the *chanson de jeune fille*—in which a girl laments the loss or desertion of a lover she believed to have been true to her.[128] By singing this song, Pádraigín identifies with the persona in a way that re-appropriates the original meaning of the song. Lillis Ó Laoire has observed that "folksong is, for its practitioners, a powerful means for interpreting and representing shifting contemporary situations, contexts, and meanings."[129] Meaning, as it is applied to Gaelic folksong, is not always "confined to one specifically situated, normative reading," but is able to be reinterpreted and reapplied to even tenuously analogous

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[126] Ibid.

[127] Ibid. A note on translation: "*chraobh bhán*" of the original Irish song text is literally "white branch," but may be more appropriately rendered as "fair scion." The translation of Irish song texts into English (and vice versa) lends additional and problematic layers of polysemy when conveying metaphor, which alters the reader's reception of the text. "White branch" is certainly an awkward phrase in English, while "fair scion" accords with the text's overall sentiment in terms of a genealogical branch.

[128] Lillis Ó Laoire, "Parallel Songlines: James Joyce's 'The Dead' and Tomás Ó Criomhthain's *An tOileánach*," in *Anáil an Bhéil Bheo: Orality and Modern Irish Culture*, eds. Nessa Cronin, Seán Crosson and John Eastlake (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Northumberland: Cambridge Scholars, 200), 193-194.

[129] Lillis Ó Laoire, "*Údair Úra*/New Authorities: Cultural Process and Meaning in a Gaelic Folk Song," *New Hibernia Review* 3, no. 3 (1999): 132.

situations.[130] In the Irish folk song tradition, multiplicities of narrative are common within the one song as it comes into different contexts; songs may acquire multiple "stories" in different times and places, particularly within a performance context, and the "emotional value of a song only deepens when it becomes associated with multiple times and contexts."[131] Indeed, *chansons de jeune fille* were frequently re-appropriated to commemorate the departure of an emigrating son or male sibling.[132]

The song's original persona is female, but Pádraigín's identification with and reinterpretation of the persona speaks of multiple changing states. Most prominently, it represents a vocalization of his affection for Máirín, which until the song, we understand as implicit and unspoken. It inverts the lament from a female to male persona, with the commonality of a broken heart at departure of a sweetheart. Furthermore, he is speaking for others at the wake—the actual words of the song are not taken literally, but indeed represent a stylised dialogue of grief between the participants, an affirmation of community grief. Finally, in the narration that occurs immediately after the song, there is a sense of the communal attitude towards the sociopolitical conditions of emigration: Pádraigín is "a young spirit trying to crack the shell of the universe that shut it in, so fierce was his song."[133] Máirín's mother recognises the processes occurring during the song, but she is envious of his ability to communicate his feelings when she cannot: "By now the mother had come to hate him," seeing him as an "evil being, fingering her own proper treasure…"[134] She has recognised that through his song, Pádraigín has laid claim to her daughter in a way that she, relying on language alone, has been unable to.

Immediately after this, the sign that Máirín must depart comes when "horse's hooves and the clatter of a sidecar were heard from the cart-track outside. Music and merriment ceased suddenly."[135] From this point, the wake takes on a far more morbid texture, as the sidecar has come to commence the funeral-procession-like convoy to the city. The convoy "had all the appearance of a sacrificial procession: the sidecar like a funeral pyre ahead" replete with Máirín's "graveclothes"; and her trunk which

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[130] Ibid., 133.

[131] Steve Coleman, "'Nonsynchronism,' Traditional Music, and Memory in Ireland," in *Irish Studies: Memory Ireland, Volume 2: Diaspora and Memory Practices*, ed. Oona Frawley (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2012), 165-6.

[132] Ibid., 166.

[133] Ó Cadhain, "The Year 1912," 34.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Ibid., 34-35.

her mother thinks has the colour of "the face of a corpse after a long wake."[136] After the music has ceased, the realities of emigration as death have become weightier; the music and merriment were not only distracting the participants at the wake, but they were allowing the healthy expression of emotion. This is clear when at the very conclusion of the story: as the community's women begin keening, "the sobbing lift[ing] into a loud wail of words," Máirín's mother feels that the words express "no real anguish…beyond voice and tears."[137]

In the texts discussed in this chapter, the American wake appears in all its emotion and ceremony. The ritual served to reaffirm community values, remind the emigrant of communal obligations, and commemorate the irreversible changes of life-state heralded by the act of emigration. For Máirtín Ó Cadhain, the process of exile was "worse than the spoiling of a church or the wreck of a countryside."[138] With the associations between death and emigration, and the "spoiling" of community and countryside being a widely accepted view, a rite of passage was necessary to recognise the permanence of the crossing and its effect on those who remained. Because of the fallibility of language in describing the complex emotions that arose at the American wake, music and dance acted as a conduit for emotions, revealing them with a fidelity and variety that language could not approach. The ability for participants in the wake to express complex emotions through the persona of a song allowed them to displace the burden of the occasion into the act of singing and deflect the incredible sorrow that may have otherwise made the emigrant's departure an all-too-sullen affair.

Crucially, the use of music at the American wake also functioned as a site of memory for the emigrant, who could recall the faces and places of her lost homeland simply by recalling the song or dance and its context of performance. Memories of home could be awakened from abroad by recalling the music and dance of the final night in Ireland. Emigrants would depart with their final moments at home "burned indelibly into their memories, recalled by parents' letters [or] old songs" in their new locale.[139] Moreover, Collins has suggested that dancing inscribes a "kinesthetic sense

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[136] Ibid., 36; 28; 26.
[137] Ibid., 39.
[138] Ibid., 26.
[139] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 556.

of place" in the body, able to be "awakened" by re-enacting the dance in the emigrant's new locale.[140]

Crossing the threshold of departure brought a further realignment of cultural identity through separation from kin and country. The songs performed at the American wake signalled the new function that music would perform for the emigrant upon arrival in the new world. The emigrant was now positioned outside the culture that had shaped her identity, a culture that had nonetheless forced her into departure through poverty and unbending homogeneity in many cases. From this outside position, music became vital in retrieving memories of lost home places and asserting cultural collectiveness in a new, alien world of difference.

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[140] Tim Collins, "'Tis Like They Never Left: Locating 'Home' in the Music of Sliabh Aughty's Diaspora," *Journal of the Society for American Music* 4, no. 4 (2010): 493.

Chapter Four

"Os comhair lán an tí": *Sean-nós* as a site of memory in *Brooklyn*

The cultural identity that the American Wake attempted to protect required constant maintenance when, after departure, that identity was divorced from the environs that originally produced it. Though the wake signified a severing of the familiar practices of home, the song and dance of the occasion left "a vital cultural trace in the emigrant's memory."[1] These cultural traces accompanied the emigrant in the long journey and served as a reminder of communal obligations in a new locale. However, the pressing exigencies of relocation meant that many practices useful in Ireland were marginalised by more contemporary demands. For Irish emigrants an almost inevitable clash between existences occurred – homes and places of past, and the cultures attached to them, became less immediate and were relegated to the fringes of consciousness.

From the point of departure onwards, emigrants suffered an identity crisis brought on by crossing "formerly impenetrable geographical, occupational, and social boundaries."[2] In leaving Ireland, emigrants also left behind fragments of identity inextricable from the rhythms of their previous lives. Music was able to militate against subsequent insecurities: it was an important part of the "portable, intangible, infinitely expandable mesh" in which Irish emigrants and diaspora communities retained their cultural identity in new, alien environments.[3] Traditional music has a vital role in maintaining cultural identity in these communities. By transporting music across spatialities, it provides memorial links to specific places, cultural practices, and social organisations.[4]

This chapter analyses the musical memory praxes utilised by twentieth century Irish-American emigrants to prevent the fragmentation or loss of cultural memory. Specifically, the focus is those aspects of cultural memory intrinsically tied into localised places, and the significance of music as a vitally placialised social

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[1] Collins, "'Tis Like They Never Left," 493.
[2] Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 154.
[3] Jennifer Gall, "Laments in Transition: The Irish-Australian Songs of Sally Sloane (1894-1982)," *Humanities Research* 19, no. 3 (2013): 46.
[4] Sally K. Sommers Smith, "Landscape and Memory in Irish Traditional Music," *New Hibernia Review* 2, no. 1 (1998): 136; Ian McBride, *History and Memory in Modern Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 9-10.

custom. Drawing on theories of space, place, and memory, crucial scenes in Colm Tóibín's novel *Brooklyn* (2009) will be examined for the use of traditional music as a marker of cultural identity. In the text, music occurs within a paradigmatic example of a mid-century Irish-American diaspora community. In these circumstances, the traditional form of *sean-nós* singing is vital in retrieving memorial routine and reminding oneself of lost home places in the face of a new, alien world.

Place, Space, Meaning

Social memory that is defined by historical relationships to particular places necessarily invokes questions on the nature of place, space, and peoples' relationships with these concepts. The fundamental difference between place and space is important in understanding how people interact with them. Edward S. Casey defines place as that which is "experienced by human beings," whereas space is abstract and "discourages experiential explorations."[5] Space is the "encompassing volumetric void in which things (including human beings) are positioned," as compared to place, which is "an arena of *action* that is at once physical and historical, social and cultural."[6] Space and place require each other for definition, for as Yi-Fu Tuan puts it, "if we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place."[7] Undifferentiated space exists between places— it becomes place "as we get to know it better and endow it with value."[8]

But how do people infuse space with value so that it might become a *place*? The answer is in the symbiosis that results from places and people leaving traces upon one another. Placiality, being of a place, is achieved through the "enactive vehicle" of the body, which is the intermediary between the physical world and the psychological self.[9] This manifests in two main ways. *Outgoing* interaction between body and place refers to the effect that people have on a place by means of settlement and continuing behaviour; *incoming* interaction is the body's "bearing of traces of places," where the body is effectively placialised by continual engagement with

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[5] Edward S. Casey, "Between Geography and Philosophy: What Does It Mean to Be in the Place-World?" *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 91, no. 4 (2001): 683.
[6] Ibid.; my emphasis.
[7] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 6.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Casey, "Between Geography and Philosophy," 687.

place.[10] The *incoming* action is what allows the identity of individuals and communities to be so captivated with a particular place.

Incoming action has two dimensions. Firstly *subjection*, in which "we are not the masters of place but prey to it; we are the subjects of place, or, more exactly, *subject to place*"; and secondly *tenacity,* in which places

> come into us lastingly; once having been in a particular place for any considerable time—or even briefly, if our experience there has been intense—we are forever marked by that place, which lingers in us indefinitely and in a thousand ways, many too subtle for us to name…[11]

Thus, the importance of events for a person in a particular place is "more directly proportionate to their intensity than their extensity."[12] Places that are embodied tenaciously are able to remain in the memory long after people have left them, waiting to be "revived and re-enacted whenever circumstances permit."[13] The embedding of places within the body means that a person's identity can be a product of the place or places that they are most attached to through ongoing inhabitation. However, the particularly memorable events in that person's life are those which contained intense emotional engagement—hence the effectiveness of the American wake, usually held in the emigrant's own kitchen. Social boundaries are formed based on where certain actions are performed; the dislocation experienced by migrants is placial, enforced by a voluminous and difficult-to-define space.

Human relationships with place can be defined in terms of "home" and "away" places. Such places are hierarchical, and home places tend to have greater significance to us than away places. If place is "a center of meaning constructed by experience," then greater experience of a place leads to greater meaning. [14] Home places, of which we have both more extensive and intensive experience, therefore carry greater significance for individuals and communities. For the Irish diaspora, the dislocation of place meant that the solidity of home places became attenuated;

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[10] Ibid., 688.
[11] Ibid. Emphasis in original.
[12] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 184.
[13] Collins, "'Tis Like They Never Left," 493.
[14] Tuan, "An Experiential Perspective," 152.

"home" and "away" even "swapp[ed] places and becam[e] interchangeable over time."[15]

In diaspora communities, memory of physical places is continually shaped by social influences at home, quite some distance away.[16] In other words, the cultural space of the Irish diaspora was irrevocably dependent on the memory of home places, in spite of a new physical locale that could not be ignored. The very concept of diaspora stresses the links between emigrant communities and places of origin or home places; disparity between the importance of places results in an "imagined geography, a spatiality that draws on connections across oceans and continents."[17]

By remembering and actively participating in music in the New World, Irish migrants transcended the limitations of place and established a spatial link between the communities of old and new. Music and dance, as Martin Stokes has observed, are not merely reflections of a given culture: rather, for those for whom they have significance, "they provide the means by which the hierarchies of place are negotiated and transformed."[18] This active negotiation of place and memory is at the heart of communal music practice in Irish-American communities, as it is a means of coming to terms with a disruption of the lifestyle and rhythms associated with a tenaciously embodied but now lost home place.

Placial Memory and *Lieux de Mémoire*

Generations of Irish chain migration to America resulted in well established socio-political, religious, and familial networks in Irish-American communities whose capacity to absorb new emigrants lessened the insecurities and strangeness of American life. Nonetheless, there was a disparity between Ireland and the New World:

> … Irish-Americans remained in figurative, if not literal, "exile," increasingly divorced from Ireland by time and circumstance, eagerly embracing the opportunities which the New World afforded, yet still

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[15] Oona Frawley, "Introduction," in *Memory Ireland*, 4.
[16] Martin Stokes, "Introduction: Ethnicity, Identity and Music," in *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The musical construction of place,* ed. Martin Stokes, (Oxford: Berg, 1997), 3.
[17] Devlin Trew, "Diasporic Legacies," 97.
[18] Stokes, "Introduction," 4.

remarkably estranged from the dominant culture of their adopted country.[19]

The incompatible and estranged existence that greeted emigrants in industrial centers like New York, Boston, and Philadelphia meant that homesickness was a constant threat. In *Brooklyn*, Eilis struggles with a particular homesickness in her early time in America. For her it takes the form of daytime reveries, remembering dreams involving particularly Irish landscapes:

> She was flying, as though in a balloon, over the calm sea on a calm day. Below, she could see the cliffs at Cush Gap and the soft sand at Ballyconnigar. The wind was propelling her towards Blackwater, then the Ballagh, then Monageer, then Vinegar Hill and Enniscorthy.[20]

These incidents are numerous for Eilis, and they are particularly geographical in their manifestation. Eilis imagines such actions from the general (the "parish hall anywhere in Ireland when the young people were all elsewhere dancing or standing at the bar")[21] to the individual and specific ("the rooms in the house on Friary Street belonged to her, she thought; when she moved in them she was really there.")[22] Her memories are tied to the usual practices that took place in specific places that are no longer available to her.

The obligatory grieving and promises of return and chain migration at the point of departure "did not fully erase or alleviate … tensions between desire and duty."[23] This is particularly the case for Eilis, whose father is deceased and whose mother will eventually need a carer. Her brothers have emigrated to England and it is down to Eilis or her sister Rose to stay with their mother, sacrificing a career; Rose stays, and Eilis departs. Her obligations at home are never far from her mind, and eventually cause a calamitous problem when her sister Rose dies. Eilis had begun to assimilate, and suddenly her cultural obligations become weightier. A concomitant cause of alienation was thus the imbalance between the need to assimilate and the

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[19] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 493.
[20] Colm Tóibín, *Brooklyn* [2009] (Sydney: Picador, 2010), 68.
[21] Ibid., 89.
[22] Ibid*.,* 67.
[23] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 492.

need to retain cultural memory. Integration in the host society while retaining Irish social memory was possible for many because social memory was not acquired and fixed in Ireland and taken abroad unaltered. Rather, it was "an active search for meaning [seeking] to integrate the received knowledge of past times and spaces with the realities of contemporary place and necessity."[24] This active search for meaning was a healthy response to the migration event. However, not all migrants easily found meaning, and for some there were undeniable problems faced in the process of assimilation; the dislocation from home places where meaning was greatest was largely to blame.

For rural and agricultural migrants, place was a structural element of social memory, and painful dislocation was exacerbated by settlement in new urban, industrial metropolises in the United States.[25] Unsurprisingly, feelings of unhappy exile engendered at the American wake negatively shaped the emigrants' perceptions of their new environs. This was particularly true for western Irish-speakers and those such as farmers whose experiences ill equipped them for urban-industrial life.[26] The values of rural emigrants whose behaviours and worldviews had previously been compatible with traditional communities were "often dysfunctional in a ruthlessly competitive and individualistic America."[27]

Living by the rhythms of agrarian culture was antithetical to the complexities of urban-industrial life prevailing in most Irish-American communities. One returned emigrant from west Kerry declared that many from those parts "had no business in America," for "they had no experience at keeping watch on a clock" or the kinds of work that such habits demanded.[28] The daily, seasonal, and annual rhythms of rural life were no longer valid in the metropolis, yet some migrants were far too ingrained in their practices to be able to totally remove themselves from those rhythms. Hence, they were forced to live simultaneously in multiple placial and temporal worlds, moving between them and the cultural practices they embodied.[29] The emigrant could not simply re-enact the rhythms of a previous life in Ireland, for the physical

[24] Kevin O'Neill, "The star-spangled shamrock: meaning and memory in Irish America," in *History and Memory in Modern Ireland*, ed. Ian McBride (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 122.

[25] Ibid., 121.

[26] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 512.

[27] Ibid., 508.

[28] Ibid., 504.

[29] Paul White, "Geography, Literature and Migration," 3.

places that those rhythms depend on were no longer extant in the emigrant's experience. Through migration, the *habitus* of the individual had been disrupted.

For Bourdieu, habitus is a system of ongoing deposition of actions into the community memory such that certain behaviours are considered "natural" within that group. The community's pride and loyalty to place is part of this definition.[30] However, it does not fully account for the importance of actual places on the ongoing enactment of habitudes themselves. Casey provides a more nuanced definition by defining habitus as the "mediatrix of place and self": the individual and collective practices that are the product of history (the temporality of continuing practice) and geography (the practice occurring within a place).[31] Habitus is therefore the continual putting into action of practices within particular places, a more exacting understanding than the "solidified deposit of past actions" of Bourdieu's definition.[32] By living in a home place and continually engaging in social and occupational activity, individuals ingrain ways of life that are tied into the community's use of a place: a given habitus is always enacted in the same place, and hence a habitude cannot be enacted in exactly the same way in the absence of its usual place. In the emigrant experience, habitudes must (and can only) be lived with reference to the constantly changing spatiality of the places successively but differently encountered.[33]

This is problematic where a particular habitus has become so ingrained in a community by its ongoing enactment in a place of significance. By removing the emigrant from the places with which their habitudes have become entwined, they are forced to encounter a disarray of place: even though a given habitus is ostensibly an internalization of social practices, cultural meaning gained thereof cannot be fully realised in the absence of that place.[34] If the habitudes of rural Irish life involved daily and seasonal rhythms not reliant on accurate timekeeping, the migrant ingrained in that habitus would encounter a "scattered self" within an industrial environment that demanded, for example, punctuality.[35] Consequently, the emigrant longs for a return to the *place* in which his or her community's attitudes and

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[30] Lillis Ó Laoire, *On a Rock in the Middle of the Ocean: Songs and Singers in Tory Island* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2005), 179.
[31] Casey, "Between Geography and Philosophy," 692, 686.
[32] Ibid., 687.
[33] Ibid., 686-87.
[34] Ibid., 684; 687.
[35] Ibid., 684.

practices had been internalised through the habitus that was deficient in the new locale. This has potentially dire consequences. As Casey posits, if the result of moving between places that have suffered an attenuation of their "habitudinal density" is not countered by a "significant reinvestment in place and self, then we are left with the sobering prospect of a redoubled loss: loss of place, loss of self."[36] An emigrant without strategies to deal with lost habitudes after emigrating would begin to feel a homesickness that threatened their very sense of self. Whereas once life was lived in communion with particular places, the emigrant now becomes an outsider to them, and can only reconnect by concerted acts of memory.[37]

Accordingly, migrant individuals and communities sought new praxes to ameliorate the effects of the removal from habitudinal rhythms. One such praxis was the use of cultural artefacts—in this case, music—that sought to restore cultural identity: *lieux de mémoire*, or sites of memory. For Pierre Nora, memory is problematic where historical continuity exists when an individual is removed from *milieux de mémoire*, "real environments in which memory is a real part of everyday experience."[38] *Milieux de mémoire* are places in which habitudes are enacted and cultural meaning has developed. These *milieux* have not necessarily been abandoned through the act of emigration, but instead, drastically and often irretrievably altered. For the rural emigrant in particular, the loss of the environment in which the habitudes of socialisation and occupation are bound means the need to establish *lieux de mémoire*: "any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community."[39]

According to Nora, *lieux de mémoire* are "fundamentally remains, the ultimate embodiment of a memorial consciousness … that calls out for memory" because the places where memory finds its actuality have been lost.[40] Migrants whose cultural memory is no longer spontaneous due to loss of place must deliberately create reminders and enact rituals of communal identity because "such activities no longer occur naturally."[41] For the migrant, there is both a need and a *will*

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[36] Ibid., 686-687.
[37] Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, 31.
[38] Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*," *Representations* 26 (1989): 7; McBride, *History and Memory*, 11.
[39] In McBride, *History and Memory*, 10.
[40] Nora, "Between Memory and History," 9.
[41] Ibid., 7.

to remember the past, for "without the intention to remember, *lieux de mémoire* would be indistinguishable from *lieux d'historie*."[42] In other words, memory would become static, unchanging fact. By consciously reenacting lost habitudes even in the absence of their original *milieux*, history becomes *lived* memory, "a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to the eternal present."[43] Even objects that are apparently purely material may become *lieux de mémoire* if there is a will to create a symbolic reminder of a place of the past.[44] The recovery of the habitudes and rhythms of lived memories is the essential function of *lieux de mémoire*.

Even in the absence of their original contexts, things including gestures, images, and objects can represent habitudinal memory: those who desire it will assign significance that transcends immediate associations.[45] This can take the form of anything concrete: a song, a book, a statue, a parade, a day in the calendar. Nora, in the context of French historical memory, suggests the famous children's book *Tour de la France par deux enfants* (1877) as a classical French *lieu de mémoire* because of its symbolic association with the traditional French ways of rural life.[46] As was introduced earlier, the hearkening to previous rural folkways is a common theme in Irish history and like Nora's example is a common origin for diaspora sites of memory. Works of art, because of their inherent symbolism, are apt forms of *lieux de mémoire*, as they are materialised within the context of a particular culture.

Nora further suggests that "[t]he less memory is experienced collectively, the more it will require individuals to undertake to become themselves memory-individuals"; that is, individuals have an "inner voice" that tells them "you must be [Irish]."[47] Where the relationship between individual and collective memory is torn by spatial separation, the rural migrant is forced to create sites of memory that reflect lost memorial routines. Indeed, in order to retain a strong sense of self, the past and its attendant associations need to be rescued in a readily accessible way.[48] This "rescuing" is an essential function of *lieux de mémoire*, which, by investing symbolic significance in a concrete cultural object, "stop time [and] block the work of

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[42] Ibid., 12.
[43] Ibid., 8.
[44] Ibid., 19.
[45] Ibid., 9.
[46] Ibid., 20.
[47] Ibid., 16.
[48] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 187.

forgetting."[49] But *lieux de mémoire* do more than block forgetting: they bring once lived social realities and graft them onto new, displaced realities as a living reminder of the former way of life. The act of making music evokes memories and organises them within the context of one's present experience of place, giving it great power as a site of memory in a diaspora environment.[50] The Irish emigrant community's use of musical traditions from the Old World is vital to the maintenance of Irish identity in unfamiliar *milieux,* because temporal and placial history is given context as it is re-imagined or reconstructed in the present moment.[51] This can be achieved both as a collective and as "memory-individuals."

The present moment bears discussing the life and work of the famous Connemara *sean-nós* singer Joe Heaney, himself an emigrant to America. Indeed, the character of the old singer at the Christmas dinner in *Brooklyn* bears some similarity to Heaney. Born in Carna, Connemara in 1919, Heaney experienced hardship in the impoverished rural west. Despite renown in Ireland as a singer in Ireland by the early 1940s, he emigrated to Scotland in 1947 and England in 1951. Finding fame as a traditional singer in the folk revivals there, he nonetheless struggled to achieve a regular income even after briefly returning to Ireland. Finding it difficult to make ends meet at home, Heaney left for America in the mid-1960s. There the folk movement embraced him for his powerful singing, and also because he was a "nonassimilated, nonassimilating maverick asserting his Gaelic identity through its expressive culture."[52] In terms reflective of the mystery surrounding the singer in *Brooklyn*, according to Williams and Ó Laoire, "the more that is said or written about [Heaney], the more mysterious and puzzling he becomes."[53] Emigration was "virtually forced upon him" and he carried the hardships of his life with him; though he finished his life in relative comfort as a teacher, he lived hand-to-mouth for long periods.[54] However, he remained determined and devoted towards his singing as an

[49] Nora, "Between Memory and History," 19.
[50] Stokes, "Introduction," 3.
[51] Devlin Trew, "Diasporic Legacies," 97-98.
[52] Virginia Blankenhorn, "Joe Heaney – 1919 to 1984," *The Joe Heaney Archives*, 2017, http://www.joeheaney.org/en/saol-agus-saothar/1919-go-1984/; Sean Williams and Lillis Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West: Joe Heaney, Irish Song-man* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 4-5.
[53] Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 3.
[54] Virginia Blankenhorn, "Joe Heaney – Man and Artist," *The Joe Heaney Archives*, 2017. http://www.joeheaney.org/en/saol-agus-saothar/fear-agus-fonnadoir/.

expression of his culture, and his skill as a performer drew audiences to him "as though [they] were in perfect communion with him."[55]

This is what occurs in *Brooklyn* during the Christmas Dinner scene, in which an old emigrant notably similar to Heaney performs a *sean nós* song. In the text, a dinner is provided for the poor Irish emigrants of the neighbourhood. Once the meal has concluded, music begins to play – at first, instrumental music of two fiddles and an accordion. After Father Flood, the parish priest, interrupts the proceedings to thank Eilis and the other volunteers for assisting to put on the dinner, he introduces a "great singer" who has apparently made several recordings. Father Flood mentions that "we're delighted to see him this year again," indicating that the man has been in New York for some time and gives a hint at his likely older age.[56] His circumstances are apparently deprived, for Eilis notices how bad his teeth are. She had already seen him earlier in the evening, and somewhat propitiously mistaken him for her deceased father; the man beckons her to join him while he sings his song. What follows is an example of a paradigmatic Irish *lieu de mémoire*, in the disparate setting of an American industrial town's parish hall.

Sean-nós as a *Lieu de Mémoire* in *Brooklyn*

As we have seen, an idealised rural life in the west of the island was presented as a picture of authenticity in the first half of the twentieth century. This saw a continuation of the vision of "rustic dignity and rural virtue" in the west that stood for Ireland itself as a pastoral nation.[57] The modes of life in the west, particularly the Gaeltacht regions, were valorised in such a way as to form a metaphor of social cohesion in the face of modernization and, even before Éamonn de Valera expressed it publicly, an amalgam of Irish language, songs, and sports was fixed alongside humble Catholicism as the quintessence of Irishness.[58]

Artistic forms of this period emphasised the virtue of an unspoiled rural existence as an essential element of an unchanging Irish identity.[59] Of course, as

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[55] Ibid.
[56] Tóibín, *Brooklyn*, 90.
[57] Brown, *Social and Cultural History*, 72.
[58] Ibid., 81; Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 29. The term *Gaeltacht* (plural *Gaeltachtaí*) refers to regions where Irish is the primary spoken language of the majority of the population.
[59] Brown, *Social and Cultural History*, 73.

chapter two demonstrated, this representation was full of contradiction. Nonetheless, music was still regularly couched in Hydean rhetoric, cast as "an expression of the nation's mind … in terms that echoed Irish Ireland's attachment to the Irish language."[60] As Eamonn Ó Gallchobhair put it in 1936:

> That set of values which makes the Irish mind different looks out at us clearly from our old music – its idiom having in some subtle way the idiom of the Irish mind, its rhythms, its intervals, its speeds, its build have not been chosen arbitrarily, but are what they are because they are the musical expression, the musical equivalent of Irish thought and its modes.[61]

The association of these musical idioms with western rural Irish geography was also tightly fixed in place. Pádraig Pearse, writing in *An Claidheamh Soluis* in 1906, discussed the conditions associated with the performance of traditional song:

> We hope that traditional singing and traditional recitation, exactly as we know them, will always be heard in Ireland – by cottage fires in the winter evenings. We would not have them on the stages of great theatres; we would not bring them into the brawl of cities. Not that they are not worthy to be heard in the high places of art: but that they demand for their fitting rendering and their fitting appreciation an attitude of mind on the part of both artist and audience which is possible only in the light of a turf fire blazing on the earthen floor. They are of the countrysides and for the countrysides: let us keep them *in* the countrysides.[62]

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[60] Ibid., 135.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Pearse, in Róisín Nic Dhonncha, "Emigration, Oral Discourse and Traditional Song in Connemara," in *Reimagining Ireland: Narratives of the Occluded Irish Diaspora: Subversive voices*, eds. Mícheál Ó hAodha and John O'Callaghan (Bern: Peter Lang AG, International Academic Publishers, 2012), 194; emphasis in original. Aside from his status as a hero of the Easter Rising, Pearse also contributed his own poetry and prose to the Gaelic Revival's literary movement, most famously the poem "*Mise Éire*" ("I Am Ireland").

Pearse refers to *sean-nós*, the canon of unaccompanied traditional singing almost exclusively sung in Irish.[63] It is often represented as an idealised form of traditional song exhibiting an "unbroken continuity with [Ireland's] Gaelic past," encapsulating Irish cultural identity.[64] The irony of Pearse's assertion that traditional singing would not be on the stages of great theatres is that a music such as *sean-nós*, so deeply embedded in cultural identity, is a greatly effective site of memory in supposedly antithetical settings. This sense of unbroken identity is central to the power of *sean-nós* to transcend one's immediate surrounds; Irish music, so linked with cultural identity, becomes even more powerful in an emigrant setting. Indeed, consider how Joe Heaney drew his "enormous" audience at the Sydney Opera House in 1981 into the tradition:

> This is a huge shiny place and ye are all out there sitting all over the place. What I'd like to do is to bring ye all into an Irish setting, a kitchen in a country cottage, and we'll have a céilidh, and listen to the songs and stories of Ireland and its people; songs and stories that come from mother earth and our Gaelic language and nowhere else.[65]

While the form may carry "inordinate burdens" of cultural identity, it serves different purposes when far from its original milieux; for Williams and Ó Laoire, "this identity function marks *sean-nós* as an important cultural icon, beyond its purely musical status."[66]

The usual setting of *sean-nós* singing is, as Pearse noted in general terms, in an informal environment, usually at an evening gathering of neighbours at a house. The singers will be seated within the audience, and each member takes turn to sing a song; if someone does not sing, they may tell a story, a riddle, or local gossip.[67] In its usual setting those present will know the words and backgrounds to songs as pieces

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[63] *Sean-nós* (pronounced "shan-nohs") is Irish for "old-style," but the term itself was popularised only in relatively recent memory. Williams (2010) notes that it is an early twentieth century coinage. *Sean-nós* dancing is also an established form.
[64] Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 28.
[65] Liam Mac Con Iomaire, *Seosamh Ó hÉanaí: Nár fhágha mé bás choíche* (Indreabhán, Conamara: Cló Iar-Chonnachta, 2007), 352, in Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 90. Note Heaney's use of the word "céilidh [céilí]" in this context of informal song and story within a house.
[66] Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 29.
[67] Sean Williams, "Melodic Ornamentation in the Connemara Sean-Nós Singing of Joe Heaney," *New Hibernia Review* 8, no. 1 (2004): 126.

of community folklore. The environment is one of participation; attentive listening and supporting the singers is reflective of the reciprocity inherent, and necessary, in local rural communities. In the act of singing there is a sense of shared place and social history, and the audience may even occasionally offer encouragement or approval during the song.[68]

While there is some debate over the relative rigidity, or otherwise, of classifications and descriptors of *sean-nós* singing, there are several musical and extra-musical characteristics undeniably associated with *sean-nós* that explicate the form's power as a symbol of traditional Irishness. The first is the unity between music and words in the tradition. It has been suggested, for example, that the importance placed on unity of words and music can be attributed to the end of the bardic tradition; the merging of the bard and the itinerant musician following the numerous British incursions on Irish culture meant a combination of the roles of harper and poet.[69] The ability of music to tell the plight of the common, exploited rural Irish is embodied in the expression "*abair amhrán, inis scéal*" – "say a song, tell a story," which also illuminates attitudes towards performance.[70] A quiet, intimate environment for singing is like that of story-telling, and while some singers will close their eyes while singing, others will engage with particular audience members "as though they were narrating a story."[71]

The relationship between music and word can also be seen in the ornamentation applied by *sean-nós* singers. While there are indeed regional differences in both delivery and ornamentation, in general, *sean-nós* is sung with a nasal tone and frequent, often highly decorative ornamentations (particularly melismas).[72] Because the words of the song are as important as its melody, ornamentation is a highly symbolic connective feature in that it unifies the melody and the text by foregrounding and attending to both.[73] Aside from purely musical and performative concerns, melodic ornamentation allows the singer to accentuate the meaning of certain words or phrases. Because the melody is sung in a loose rhythm,

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[68] Liam Mac Con Iomaire, "Song: Song in Irish: 'Sean-nós'—performance," in *Companion to Irish Traditional Music*, ed. Fintan Vallely (Cork: Cork University Press, 2011), 630; *Williams* and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 58.
[69] Williams, *Focus*, 162.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Mac Con Iomaire, "'Sean-nós—performance," 630.
[72] Melisma is the singing of several notes to a single syllable of text.
[73] Williams, "Melodic Ornamentation," 134.

free from fixed time signature, the singer has freedom to lengthen and ornament those passages deemed to be of greater importance.[74]

Williams, in her discussion of melodic ornamentation in Heaney's singing, allows the possibility that Irish-language *sean-nós* songs inherently reflect the Irish condition.[75] Increased ornamentation in meaningful songs reflects both a personal significance and an appreciation that the individual's situation lies within the framework of a cultural narrative. Ornamentation at appropriate moments, in carefully chosen songs, is an important outlet for the singer's own feelings.[76] Heaney himself often reserved his richest melodic ornamentation for songs that he felt reflected aspects of his own experience, yet these songs exist within the context of a wider cultural experience.[77] As will become clear, the expression of individual feelings within a framework of the cultural collective is vital in the performance of the *sean-nós* song in *Brooklyn*.

As the old man sings in the scene, there is a connection between him and another time and place, and another habitus, which is beyond the immediacy of the American hall in which he sits. The singer "pronounced each word carefully and slowly, building up a wildness, a ferocity, in the way he treated the melody."[78] Then, "each time he came to the chorus he looked at [Eilis], letting the melody become sweeter by slowing down the pace."[79] This "sweetening" of the melody reflects the practice of ornamenting phrases of greater personal significance, and foregrounds the song's power for the old man. This is confirmed when the singer "[puts] his head down then, managing to suggest even more that he had not merely learned the song but that he meant it."[80] At this point, the tight constellation of language, music, and memory in the act of singing has become clear.

As Eilis listens to his "loud and strong and nasal" voice, she recognises the man's Irish as the Connemara dialect, "because she remembered one teacher from Galway in the Mercy Convent who had that accent."[81] Connemara, in County Galway, is recognised as the foremost region for *sean-nós* singing in Ireland. One of the corollaries of the gradual decline of the Irish language was the seclusion of Irish-

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[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid., 145.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 135.
[78] Tóibín, *Brooklyn*, 90.
[79] Ibid., 91.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.,, 90.

speaking populations almost entirely to rural pockets, with Connemara being one example. This assisted in the valorisation of Irish-language song as representing links to a Gaelic culture that was romantically rural.[82] For Eilis to notice his dialect of Irish conforms to politics of identity intrinsic to song in the Irish language. A practical application of this perception was in the early years of the Oireachtas singing competition, where rules were established to limit entry to the *sean-nós* category to first-language Irish performers from the Gaeltachtaí.[83] As a result, Eilis sees the man as the embodiment of a rural Gaelic identity in which song and language were entwined, and contained within small rural villages. Eilis only recognises actual words of Irish, though, when he reaches the chorus. The fragment that she understands is "*Má bhíonn tú liom, a stóirín mo chroí*" ("If you'll be mine, treasure of my heart").[84] This is from the chorus of the song "*Casadh an tSúgáin*" ("Twisting the Rope").

The sentiments expressed in the text of *sean-nós* songs are an inherently symbolic feature of the genre. In performance, *sean-nós* songs are occasionally prefaced by an extended explanation, as a way of introduction, regarding the story behind the song's meaning (*údar an amhrán*). This explanation is used to clarify the progress of the song's narrative in otherwise obscure texts, or where the audience is unfamiliar with its story.[85]

The *súgán* of the song in the text is a kind of straw rope used in rural communities. To make the rope, a person holds one end still, while another holding the far end slowly moves further away as more material is added and the rope is wound. The words of the song tell of a man whose advances towards his fancied sweetheart are rebuffed by her mother, who cannily forces him out the door of her house by tricking him into twisting a rope with her. In a traditional Irish community, well-known songs would not have needed such an introduction, but when Joe Heaney performed the song for American audiences he described the *údar* in this way:

> Well, this fellow was in love with this particular girl, and there was
> only the girl and the mother in the house. And people say the mother

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[82] Motherway, *Globalization*, 65; Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 29; 47.
[83] Motherway, *Globalization*, 66.
[84] Tóibín, *Brooklyn,* 90.
[85] Ó Laoire, "*Údair Úra/*New Authorities," 137. *Údar an amhrán* means "authority of the song."

was a bit jealous because he fancied the daughter; the daughter fancied the fellow, and the mother fancied the fellow, and the fellow fancied the daughter and he didn't fancy the mother—let me put it that way. But anyway, he was going around from place to place, you know, moaning his loss, 'til one night he says to himself, "I may as well make a bee-line for this house again."[86]

Upon entering the house, the man professes his desire to the mother of the girl. The mother is secretly angered, and contrives to eject him from the house without being brusque or impolite:

She said, "The house outside—" and there was nothing in the world wrong with the house—"The scraw," she said, "the thatch is rising up with wind. Would you twist a little rope for me until we tie down the house?" And he said, "Surely!" Now he thought she had turned to him. … And he got a stick, and he started twisting the rope. And she told the daughter, "Open the door, Mary," she said, "for I want to make a long rope." And he was going out, and out. … And he went out, and out, and when she saw him well outside the door, she cut the rope, and closed the door and locked him out.[87]

The male persona of the song, therefore, laments the fact that this rope came between him and the girl of his desire. The meanings, however, can be interpreted on a far wider scale.

Despite the introductory explanation, it still lies with the listener to identify with the story and song as they feel appropriate, just as the singer will choose the particular song because of its personal meaning and applicability to the mood of the occasion. It is therefore interesting that the song in *Brooklyn* is not prefaced by a story, as it leaves the context less clear and gives greater scope for any participant in the performance to form their own understanding based on their individual context.

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[86] "Casadh an tSúgáin (1)," *Cartlanna Sheosaimh Uí Éanaí*, 2016, http://www.joeheaney.org/en/casadh-an-tsugain-1/; Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 53.

[87] "Casadh an tSúgáin (1)," *Cartlanna Sheosaimh Uí Éanaí.*

Leaving the meaning to the imagination allows the audience to speculate on hidden meanings and participate in the song's communal understanding.[88]

Each participant in the performance may interpret the song's text differently. The understanding of the text is dependent on the participant's experience, and relies on relationships between the possible meanings in the text itself, the performer, and the listener. It is up to each participant to navigate between extremes of meaning so as to reach the fullest understanding of the text; this is dependent on the participant's own placement within the song tradition and the resultant cultural understandings they take from it.[89]

This is particularly true when multiple texts exist for the same song, as is the case for "*Casadh an tSúgáin.*" The version immediately below is one performed by Joe Heaney and recorded for posterity.[90] While in *Brooklyn* we are not given more than a single line of the chorus, it can be assumed that as the singer is from Connemara, the entire lyric would be substantially similar to Heaney's:

Casadh an tSúgáin	**Twisting of the Hayrope**
Ó, thíos is Sligeach a chuir mé eolas ar na mná	It's down in Sligo that I first became acquainted with women
Agus thiar i nGaillimh a d'ól mé leo mo sháith	And back in Galway that I drank my fill with them
Ach dar bhrí mo mhaide mar a ligean siad dhom feasta seachas mar atá	And I swear that if they don't leave me alone from here on out
Ó déanfaidh mise cleas a bhainfeas siúl as na mná!	I'll play them a trick that will have them running!
Má bhíonn tú liom, bí liom de ló geal is d'oíche	If you're with me, be with me by day and by night
Má bhíonn tú liom, bí liom os comhair lán an tí	If you're with me, be with me in the presence of all in the house

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[88] Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 52.
[89] Ó Laoire, *On a Rock,* 213-214.
[90] See Appendix for details on the extant recordings of Heaney, and other artists, performing this song.

Má bhíonn tú liom, is gur liom gach órlach in do chroí
Is é mó thrua le fonn nach liom Dé Domhnaigh thú mar mhnaoi.

Agus rinne mé cleas i dteach Uí Dhonaill aréir
Is an dara cleas i dteach a bhí go dtlúth lena thaobh
Ach a tríú cleas – nach náireach le aon fhear a insíonn mo scéal
Chuir an chailleach amach le casadh a tsúgáinín mé.

Agus churfhinn is threabhfainn is chaithfinn an síol go domhain sa gcré
Agus sheolfainn gamhnaí ar an tamhnaí is aired a bhfásann féar
Chuirfinn crú ar an each ba deise ba lúfar a shiúil ariamh féar
Is go n-éalódh bean le fear nach ndéanfadh é sin féin.

Tá mo cheann-sa liath, is ní le haois a liath sé
Ach mo chaired gaoil do mo lua le bean gan aon spré
Ó, táim i do dhiaidh le bliain, is níl fáil agam ort féin
Is gur geall le fia ar shliabh mé a mbeadh gáir con 'na déidh.

Má bhíonn tú liom, bí liom ós comhair

If you're with me, and if you're with me in every inch of your heart
It's my regret that you're not with me on Sunday as my wife.

I played a trick in O'Donnell's house last night
And a second one in a house close by

But the third trick, shameful for any man to relate,
The old woman put me out with the twisting of the hay-rope.

I'd plant and plough and sow the seed deep in the ground
And I'd drive the cattle on the uplands with the tallest grass
I'd shoe the finest, lithest steed that ever trod grass
And there's women who'd elope with a man that didn't do any of that.

My head is gray, and it's not age that's made it so
But my nearest and dearest mentioning me with a woman of no dowry
I've been after you for a year, without getting you
Until I'm like a deer on the mountain with the baying of hounds after it.

If you're with me, be with me in the

lán an tí	presence of all in the house
Má bhíonn tú liom, bí liom de ló geal is d'oíche	If you're with me, be with me by day and by night
Má bhíonn tú liom, is gur liom gach órlach in do chroí	If you're with me, and if you're with me in every inch of your heart
Is é mó thrua le fonn nach liom Dé Dohmnaigh thú mar mhnaoi.	It's my regret that you're not with me on Sunday as my wife.[91]

Other versions of the song elucidate more clearly the reason for the persona's reason for being in the house in the first place. In another version, one stanza in particular is pertinent in making clearer the nature of the "third trick" he performed:

A Rí na bhfeart cad do chas ins a' dúiche seo mé?	King of miracles [God], what turned me into this district?
'S gur mó cailín deas a gheobhainn im' dhúthaigín beag féin	When it's many a fine girl I'd find in my own townland
Gur casadh mé isteach mar a raibh searc agus rún geal mo chléibh	That I turned in because my true love was there
Is chuir an tseanbhean amach mé ag casadh an tsúgáinín féir.	And the old woman put me out by twisting the hay rope.[92]

This paints the man in a different light. Whereas in the first version, he is apparently a drinker and womaniser with a great deal of confidence, the second sees him as gentle and lovelorn. He is drawn to the house of his love by an almost supernatural force, and his loss is palpable. In a similar variant, the persona does not become "acquainted" with *women* in Sligo, implying roguery, but instead meets his true love: "Ar thíos a Sligeach chur mé eolas air mo ghrá,/ Ar suas i nGaillimh d'ól mé *léi* mo sháith" ("Down in Sligo I first met my love / Up in Galway I drank my fill *with her*").[93]

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[91] "Casadh an tSúgáin (2)," *Cartlanna Sheosaimh Uí Éanaí*, 2016, http://www.joeheaney.org/en/casadh-an-tsugain-2/.

[92] "Casadh an tSúgáin," (1), *Celtic Lyrics Corner*, http://www.celticlyricscorner.net/bothyband/casadh.htm. This text is a transcription of a recording made by The Bothy Band. See Appendix.

[93] "Casadh an tSugáin (The Twisting of the Rope)," in *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing*, ed. Seamus Deane (Derry: Field Day, 1991), 80; my emphasis on the words "*léi*/with her." This is a

In yet another variant of the song, the general sense of the song remains the same. However, the persona makes no reference to any "tricks" or *súgáin*, and speaks of his lost love in highly symbolic and metaphorical terms. The chorus is the same, but two of the stanzas are markedly different:

Dhá mbéadh spré ag an cat, nach deas mar a phógfaí a bhéal	If the cat had a dowry, how nicely his mouth would be kissed
Mura mbeadh nach fada ó bhaile a sheolfaí é	And if he didn't, a long way from home he would be driven
Tá iníon na caillí gioblaí casta pósta ó aréir	The twisted, ragged witch's daughter is married since last night
'S tá mo chailín ag baile 's gan duine aici a phógfadh a béal	And my girl is at home with no one who would kiss her mouth.
Agus cén cat mara a chas in san áit seo mé?	And what misfortune turned me to this place?
Nach iomaí cailín a d'fhaga mé i mo dhiaidh	There is many a girl in the village I left behind
Mar gheall ar throid 's ar bhruíon 's ar rud éicint nárbh fhíor	Because of a fight and a quarrel and something that wasn't even true
Muise, óinseach caillí 's iníon aici a bhí gan chiall.	Musha, a foolish hag and her daughter who was without sense.[94]

Despite differences in the song's texts, the tune and the crux of the song's meaning is the same. While different versions may arise from regional variation, the *údar* draws them together in a readily identifiable meaning. The participant places his or her own understanding of the song within a wider communal narrative of experience. As was noted in the previous chapter, the text of the song is reified as it comes into contact with multiple times and circumstances. This is because song

version recorded by Edward Walsh (1805-1850). For the purpose of consistency, I have taken the liberty of modernising the spelling of a few words in this variant. I have also provided my own English translation to give a better sense of the original. Walsh's translation diverts significantly from the Irish meaning so as to provide a neat end rhyme. For example, instead of "drank my fill with her," he gives "I spent with her my gold."

[94] "Casadh an tSúgáin," (2) *Celtic Lyrics Corner,* http://www.celticlyricscorner.net/chonaola/casadh.htm. This text is a transcription of a recording made by the Aran Islands singer Lasairfhíona Ní Chonaola. See Appendix.

texts, as Timothy Rice observes, have an "excess of meaning and the potential for widely varying interpretations" by anyone hearing them in the present, and "at the moment of performance new meanings may be generated by ostensive reference to the performer, the audience, or the situation."[95]

The live performance of music is also important. The physical act of hearing and processing familiar music—an element of a lost habitus—in disparate physical circumstances results in the re-encoding of memories associated with previous experience:

> Through the experience of live music, history is retrieved from a distant past and becomes included in an immediate present, where "traditions live as they are realised in performance" … This means that live musical performance holds within it the potential of quite literally re-membering history.[96]

Like the "stylised dialogue" present at the American wake, in this circumstance a "constant interplay" exists between present and past times and places that allows "participants to fuse their own horizons with others'."[97] A single *lieu de mémoire* is able to encompass a wide variety of individual experiences within a shared cultural memory. As a result, the singer is "not merely singing the story but attempting to do much more … [by] giving expression to the shared experiences and hopes of the audience."[98]

The drawing together of multiple meanings in one site of memory can be observed in the participants during the *sean-nós* scene. The old man, by focusing on Eilis so intently during his performance, evidently mourns the loss of a love in his past prior to (or as a result of) emigrating. Indeed, as he sings "*má bhionn tú liom, bí liom, a stóirín mo chroí,*" he looks at Eilis "proudly, almost possessively."[99] As we saw in the previous chapter, meanings of folk songs are often reappropriated in unexpected ways; with Eilis standing for the girl whose love he lost, as a corollary the man laments the act of emigration as a physical and psychological separation

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[95] Timothy Rice, *May It Fill Your Soul: Experiencing Bulgarian Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 115.

[96] Lanier, "'It Is New-strung and Shan't Be Heard,'" 22.

[97] Ó Laoire, *On a Rock*, 214.

[98] Tomás Ó Canainn, *Traditional Music in Ireland* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 80.

[99] Tóibín, *Brooklyn,* 90.

from home places. The trope of Ireland symbolically represented by a woman goes back to the earliest literature, and she is typically depicted in thrall of the occupier and lamenting her losses. Songs about women and loss are thus frequently metaphors for Ireland; Joe Heaney explained that such songs would elicit emotional responses because "no one would lament so strongly about a woman."[100] For the old man, Eilis embodies everything that he has lost in the separation from his home place. The song, at all its levels, is effectively standing in for the nation.[101] Even Eilis herself has a similar understanding, for her own loss and exile comes to her in the way that the singer reminds her of her deceased father.

All of this is heightened by the symbolism of the song itself; even well into the twentieth century, ropes were still twisted by hand in rural places using straw and rushes.[102] Other actions described in all three versions of the song are inherently placialised and within a rural existence. Lines such as *"chuirfinn is threabhfainn is chaithfinn an síol go domhain sa gcré"* ("I'd plant and plough and sow the seed deep in the ground"), or *"chuirfinn crú ar an each ba deise ba lúfar a shiúil ariamh féar"* ("I'd shoe the finest, lithest steed that ever trod grass") are connected to agricultural labour far from the industry of metropolitan America. The persona's request that his love would be with him "in the presence of all in the house" (*"os comhair lán an tí"*) calls to mind a communal encounter of the family unit, the *teaghlach*, within the cottage such as Pearse envisaged.

This is at odds with the placiality of all of the participants in the hall in an industrial American city with no need for such practices. There is a parallel in the *sean-nós* form itself in America at the time. While *sean-nós* was still active in those rural places in Ireland, *sean-nós* did not particularly thrive in Irish-American communities until the folk revivals of the 1950s and 1960s saw an interest in performers like Joe Heaney. This was partly due to the inaccessibility of the Irish language, but also due to the loss of its traditional environment.[103] The lack of the previous performance spaces that were once inextricable from the tradition would be distressing—the Brooklyn parochial hall, surrounded by cold and hungry converts to urbanity, is hardly a propitious surrounding. The symbols of Irish community are

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[100] Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 53.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Brown, *A Social and Cultural History*, 75.
[103] Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 28; Rebecca S. Miller, "'Our Own Little Isle': Irish Traditional Music in New York," *New York Folklore* 14, no. 3-4 (1988): 107.

therefore heightened by the need to acknowledge the absence of local, habitudinal places.

The interaction between singer and audience is not only symbolic; the performance of *sean-nós* is as physical as it is auditory. In *lieux de mémoire*, communal and individual pasts connect and interact without breaking, and these symbols are vividly present when given form through objects that are visible, audible, or tactile—that is, directly experienced.[104] The act of singing is part of this direct experience: the physics of singing engage the body itself, the "enactive vehicle of place," as a musical instrument. Zumthor has described the voice as having the capacity to reach "deep into a region of lived experience where it escapes conceptual formulas and where prescience alone operates."[105] The creation of sound through the engagement of the lungs, larynx, vocal cords is as from a lyric instrument "with pinched cords fixed to a resonating box";[106] the creation of notes in a song that has been sung before takes on a physical aspect of memorial routine which can be relived instantly by recreating those notes.

Another example of this in accepted performance practice is the holding, gripping, and moving of hands between the singer and an audience member. Tomás Ó Canainn describes this phenomenon as "interesting," because:

> …it often happens that one of the audience comes forward to hold the hand of the singer at some high point in the song and will even emphasise either the rhythm of the song or an important sentiment by grasping the hand more firmly and moving it up and down.[107]

This occurs between Eilis and the old man in *Brooklyn.* After willing Eilis over to join him, the singer "did not greet her or acknowledge her arrival but closed his eyes and reached his hand towards hers and … [gripping] her hand tightly … began to move it in a faint circular motion as he started to sing."[108] This action makes them physically and psychologically connected, and Ó Canainn has noted that the person

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[104] Tuan, "An Experiential Perspective," 164.

[105] Paul Zumthor, *Oral Poetry: An Introduction,* trans. Kathryn Murphy-Judy (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 6.

[106] Elizabeth Brodovitch, "The Phenomenon of Singing in the Study of Troubador Poetry," *Sharing the Voices: The Phenomenon of Singing International Symposium I,* vol. 1 (1997): 46-47.

[107] Ó Canainn, *Traditional Music in Ireland*, 79.

[108] Tóibín, *Brooklyn*, 90.

holding the hand during a song "speaks for the whole audience and is conveying to the singer the sense of participation in the song that they all feel."[109] However, the reversal of roles in the handholding (the singer seeking to clasp the audience member) is symbolic of the old man's desire to *re*connect to a shared cultural history, and the habitus which will return him home in his mind. The act of singing, therefore, transcends the impersonality of history (as in *lieux d'histoire*) and recovers a way of life bound in *milieux de mémoire*, for example, sitting by a turf fire in the rural west described by Pearse. Ó Canainn summarises this neatly when he says: "If we regard song as an expression of something which goes beyond mere words, then *sean-nós* is an expression of something which goes beyond mere singing."[110]

Conclusion

In the act of singing, place and time become malleable. For Ó Laoire, singing is "an attempt to create an alternative time in which past and future coalesce into one extended present which may reverse the passage of ordinary time."[111] This accords with the notion that the essential function of *lieux de mémoire* is to stop time and block the work of forgetting, and is evident within *sean-nós* performance practice. Singers, sitting in a circle in a country home, will take turns in a counterclockwise direction; Joe Heaney once said, "You do this when you want to turn back the clock."[112] But in the absence of the milieu that produced such a habitus, the turning back is also towards a lost place—indeed, the performance of a given habitus is the act of reaching out to a place.[113] Nowhere is this more evident than in the *sean-nós* scene in *Brooklyn*. Even Eilis, who is apparently unfamiliar with the tradition, is aware that the song is a mediator of place as well as time. During the song, when the man closes his eyes and leans against the wall, "he did not seem like an old man at all."[114] Then, as the song finishes:

> Eilis knew how sorry this man was going to be, and how sorry she
> would be, when the song had ended, when the last chorus had to be

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[109] Ó Canainn, *Traditional Music in Ireland*, 79.
[110] Ibid., 80.
[111] Ó Laoire, *On a Rock*, 184.
[112] Williams, "Melodic Ornamentation," 126.
[113] Casey, "Between Geography and Philosophy," 687.
[114] Tóibín, *Brooklyn*, 90-91.

sung and the singer would have to bow to the crowd and go back to his place and give way to another singer as Eilis too went back and sat in her chair.[115]

When Joe Heaney worked as a doorman in the 1960s in New York, he was said to be singing in Irish constantly as it was "one of the only ways to remove himself from his circumstances and take him back home."[116] Clearly, he was not in a traditional performance place, just like the singer in *Brooklyn*, and the absence of *milieux de mémoire* required a reinvestment in place and self. In each case, the singer has lost the bond of the "eternal present" and is embarking upon a journey of retrieval, reaching out through song to the lost placiality he is desperate to recover, or rather not to lose. The singer in *Brooklyn* is airing his "inner [Irish] voice" that connects him to a lost memorial routine. But the song in the scene is a *lieu de mémoire* for *all* of the participants, for the inextricable politics of Irish authenticity bound in *sean-nós* make it a symbol of the memorial heritage of the entire Irish community.

Traditional music provides symbolic resources to preserve and "reinvest territory, landscape, soil, and region with a content that has been lost."[117] Navigating through the multiple possible interpretations of the song's text, each participant is able to use the site of memory to retrieve what each has lost, for "those who desire will assign significance to [the song] that transcends its immediate associations."[118] There is an inherent placiality to those associations inextricable from the habitus that produced them.

The singer in *Brooklyn*, and even Joe Heaney, had a particular musical form at his disposal to achieve personal retrieval of the past. But not every Irish person was a skilled *sean-nós* singer, nor did every migrant have a home place which contained such archetypal cultural products as *sean-nós* singing. In this case, the emigrant required a more generalised representation of home. For some, this took (and takes) the form of an *imagined* placiality, emphasising the national over the local in popular musical forms. The following chapter turns to the romanticising of

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[115] Ibid., 91.
[116] Williams and Ó Laoire, *Bright Star of the West*, 180.
[117] Dowling, "Rambling in the Field of Modern Identity: Some Speculations on Irish Traditional Music," *Radharc* 5/7 (2004-2006): 129.
[118] Nora, "Between Memory and History," 9.

the rural in terms separate from the daily habitudes of individuals, and moves to the resolution of the exilic narrative.

Chapter Five

Imagined Geography and Communal Memory in *Come Back to Erin*

The previous chapter demonstrated how individual migrants used music to return "home" when separated from places of habitudinal memory. Yet, departure was more than simply removal from memorial routine. When migrants were unable to recreate the idiolocality of previous habitudes that had previously held the weight of an identity, they relied on commonly held symbols of community that fused the local, regional, and national. Within diaspora communities, a unifying narrative of Irish nationality was important for the maintenance of identity.

But what did the "national" mean for diaspora communities in this era? Declan Kiberd has observed that emigrants "took with them something the stay-at-homes seldom bothered to shoulder: *an idea of Ireland*."[1] This is because familiar places, in which people are daily participants, find their histories spontaneously embodied in the enactment of habitudes. In times of spatial dislocation, when these places are unable to be retrieved, they are replaced by an "imaginary 'elsewhere' that dwells in memory."[2] These imaginary representations of home are a result of habitudinal disruption that is not countered by reinvestment in the place-self through an appropriately personal and locally placialised site of memory.

In this case, alternative sites of memory are required to reflect shared images of home. As discussed previously, the rural geography of Ireland has often been appropriated in the cause of cultural nationalism. Geography and community frequently reinforce each other, as the use of a landscape is an "expression of communally held beliefs [and] interpersonal involvements."[3] This chapter looks to the intermingling of local and national geographies that frame rural landscapes as inherently national, without reference to the ongoing lived experience of their inhabitants. Geography once again acts as the nexus between music and the memory of home, but in this case, the pastoral is appropriated in terms of the "imaginary elsewhere." This chapter draws primarily on Seán Ó Faoláin's *Come Back to Erin*

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[1] Kiberd, "Literature and Politics," 24; emphasis in original.
[2] Sarah Dynes, "The Musical Construction of the Diaspora: The Case of Reggae and Rastafari," in *Music, Space and Place: Popular Music and Cultural Identity,* ed. Sheila Whiteley, Andy Bennett, and Stan Hawkins (London: Ashgate, 2004), 25.
[3] Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, 34.

(1940) to demonstrate how musical sites of communal memory rely upon these tropes of imaginary rural geography, particularly in popular songs. Furthermore, it is shown how subsequent layers of cultural meaning emanate from the invocation of the rural to describe the national within such musical references.

National Consciousness, National Geography

In the relatively modern phenomenon of the nation-state, national consciousness is raised and maintained by symbolic means. It is largely conceptual and is known through symbols such as the flag, an ethnocentric history, and indeed, a geography too vast to be known intimately by all of its citizens.[4] Proximity to the physical national land is not necessary to participate in an ongoing symbolic discourse. The nation, and national identity, can be conceptualised from abroad because each citizen does not possess the exact same *a priori* understanding of the physical nation. Hence, those who are physically separated from the soil of their nation can easily engage with a symbolic representation of it that is also accessible to others.[5]

The migrant develops a "consciousness of what has been lost, what is pined for, what has been gained, [and] what will never again be the same."[6] Those who remain at home have no need to develop the same consciousness of the idea of one's homeland, let alone on a daily basis like the emigrant. The "stay-at-home" is still in daily contact with those habitudes, lived ethnocentric histories, and geographies that form the basis of the nationalism of which they may only be passingly familiar. Indeed, overt symbolic nationalism may be largely unnecessary for such people. The testimony of Batt O'Connor, who returned from America to his native east Kerry, makes this clear:

> To leave Ireland does not make one love Ireland more, but it does make one aware of the strength of that love. While we are at home, Ireland is a part of ourselves. Its landscape is as familiar as the face of mother and father. We take it for granted, and are not conscious of the

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[4] Tuan, "An Experiential Perspective," 160.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Frawley, "Introduction," 4.

strong hold it has upon us. But when we are withdrawn from the familiar horizon and find ourselves in a new setting, we realise that however fine and splendid it is, it is not home. It has no associations.[7]

There is a sudden realization by the migrant of the need to embrace a national sense of Irishness that had not been acknowledged. When Ireland is not a physical presence, or even a possibility, the migrant must convert a previously tacit nationalism into a tangible reality. Thus, the absence of nationalism within everyday life in Ireland contributed to a "supreme ability [for Irishness] to be symbolised and remembered [once] abroad."[8]

The focus on the landscape of Ireland in O'Connor's testimony is a common element of the fixed imaginings of Ireland for exiles. Commonly experienced symbols of landscape maintain a "collectively conditioned place consciousness," so that individuals from a place form their communal identities around the identity of the place.[9] In such a geographical nationalism, local and national landscapes become conflated and interchangeable in the search for a satisfactory symbolism of home. As discussed previously, the body and the senses provide the means through which the place-world can be experienced and tenaciously embodied. This is easier at the scale of local places, where a home place is small enough to be touched, heard, and seen; large places, such as national-scale geographies, are too large to be directly experienced and thus depend "far more on indirect and abstract knowledge for [their] experiential construction[s]."[10] This becomes especially true for the migrant, who is cut off from the experience of personal places. Hence, *lieux de mémoire* that are inextricably linked to personal places may not always be appropriate, and they must be supplemented or superseded by more abstract representations of home. This is where the nation becomes unifying—where abstract knowledge of place is more immediately accessible than concrete or physical understanding. As Horace Plunkett opined, the Irish concept of "home" was one that embraced a social order in which human and physical landscapes had organic, intimate relationships: "these are the

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[7] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 515-516.
[8] Frawley, "Introduction," 6.
[9] Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, 34.
[10] Tuan, "An Experiential Perspective," 153.

things to which [an Irishman] clings in Ireland," Plunkett wrote, "and which he remembers in exile."[11]

Both real and imagined geographies of the nation make it the center of meaning and attachment when abroad. For those physically separated from this national place, the nation and the region become conflated and the former surpasses the latter as the primary means of identification.[12] This is particularly true for Ireland, where regional pride is equivalent with the national: a person from Kerry can only be from Ireland as well, and a person who has never been to Kerry can still claim its geography as representatively Irish. Such tropes are common where national consciousness depends on maintaining the "potency of shared symbols and concepts, and less on direct experience with objects and people."[13] This process is exacerbated by emigration.

This is where art forms, especially music and literature, are a powerful symbolic force as a communal form of *lieu de mémoire*. Art forms, for Tuan, provide "an image of feeling, [giving] objectified form and visibility to feeling so that what is powerful and inchoate can lead a semipublic life."[14] In this respect, Ann Schofield has observed the "productive interplay of history—a professionally created narrative of the past—and memory—the past that emerges from or is created by oral histories, fiction, songs, and other cultural material."[15] Geography must be included in this list of cultural materials, as it not only works in conjunction with these other artefacts, but also acts as a nexus between culture, reality, and "professionally created" narratives of the nation.

The power of music in this context is its ability to preserve place in an ideological sense.[16] Professionally created geographical ideologies are, in the words of Jacques Derrida, a "*conceptual phantasm* of community, the nation-State, sovereignty, borders, native soil and blood."[17] This schema is what Derrida calls an "*ontopology* … an axiomatics linking indissociably the ontological value of

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[11] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 515.
[12] Tuan, "An Experiential Perspective," 159.
[13] Ibid., 160.
[14] Ibid., 161.
[15] Schofield, "The Returned Yank," 1177.
[16] Dowling, "Rambling in the Field of Modern Identity," 129.
[17] Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, 82. Emphasis in original.

[existence] to the stable and presentable determination of a locality, the *topos* of territory, native soil, city, body in general."[18]

The "Conceptual Phantasm" of Irish Rural Mythology

In the Irish ontopology, the value of the national body is placed in imagery of localised western rural Ireland. This is apparent in a variety of cultural forms. For example, the Kerry poet Seán Ruiséal "sang not of 'Ireland' but of his native parish, 'bright, lovely Ventry' on 'the borders of Dingle,'" yet as Miller notes, this locality ties into nationalist rhetoric as the area is "rich in historic and literary associations with the legendary Fianna of pre-Christian times and with the 'gallant' Pierce Ferriter, seventeenth-century poet and Cromwellian martyr."[19] Even Seán Ó Faoláin, who was often critical of Irish post-independence ideologies, was prone to such mythologising of rural landscapes in this manner:

> Nobody who has not had this sensation of suddenly "belonging" somewhere – of finding the lap of the lost mother – can understand what a release the discovery of Gaelic Ireland meant to modern Ireland. I know that not for years and years did I get free of this heavenly bond of an ancient, lyrical, permanent, continuous immemorial self, symbolised by the lonely mountains, the virginal lakes, the traditional language, the simple, certain, uncomplex modes of life, that world of the lost childhood of my race where I, too, became for a while eternally young.[20]

This sentiment is echoed in Ó Faoláin's novel *Come Back to Erin* (1940). The characters in the text represent a connection to land and landscape which transcends locality and verges on mythological national geography. The character of St. John Hannafey, a returned emigrant, feels that "Ireland was where you lived, had a home, rooted yourself; or, even if you could not live in it, where you got the sap that you

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[18] Ibid. Emphasis in original.
[19] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 553.
[20] Ó Faoláin, 1941, in Brown, *A Social and Cultural History*, 82.

felt rising up in your tiptopoutmost veins."[21] This belief reflects the longstanding notion of Irish nationalism that connection to the land is a fundamental aspect of being Irish. This can be seen in Gaelic Revival ideology, in such places as the slogan of *The Nation* ("To create and foster public opinion in Ireland, and make it racy of the soil")[22] and Douglas Hyde's famous 1892 speech to the National Literary Society: "We must strive to cultivate everything that is most racial, most smacking of the soil, most Gaelic, most Irish."[23]

This soil, inherently rural, forms the basis of geographical symbolism in the Irish diaspora. Many emigrants, "conveniently forgetting" the hardships of rural life, expressed deep nostalgia for the "physical beauties and social amenities" of their local parishes in an act of memorialization that aligned with official rhetoric.[24] There is a more subtle aspect to this than simply regarding the reclamation of previously lost lands. Such fixations act as unifying symbols that can be appropriated in sites of memory. This is because, as Tuan posits, "nature and countryside offer the visitor peak experiences that can be captured in coloured slides and popular verse."[25] Rural landscapes are snapshots that bring up a host of associations when they appear in the mind's eye.

Such sites of memory are invariably pictorial, or in the case of music and literature, lend themselves to associated visual imagery. One emigrant to America wrote of his longing: "I can picture everything so vividly as I write … the hills and the fields, the bogs and the turf combined with a charming simplicity and hospitality which is not to be equalled any place in the world."[26] Indeed, the visual element of the rural cottage landscape held great power in emigrant communities as a symbol of the familiar, and paintings depicting these landscapes found an enthusiastic audience in Irish diaspora communities.[27]

The work of the painter Paul Henry is extremely pertinent at this point. Henry's rural landscapes and cottage imagery "coincided with nationalist views of the rural west and its peasantry," and the proliferation of his works in postcard reproductions and tourist brochures enshrined him as "one of the painter laureates of

[21] Seán Ó Faoláin, *Come Back to Erin* [1940] (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1972), 72.
[22] Nic Dhonncha, "Emigration, Oral Discourse and Traditional Song in Connemara," 206.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 515.
[25] Tuan, "An Experiential Perspective," 156-157.
[26] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 515.
[27] Tricia Cusack, "A 'Countryside Bright with Cosy Homesteads': Irish Nationalism and the Cottage Landscape," *National Identities* 3, no. 3 (2001): 227.

the Free State."[28] However, Henry's manner of composition raises questions regarding realism and delusion, authenticity and inauthenticity. Martin Dowling's definition of "authenticity," coincidentally originally referring to music and drawing on the work of Zizek, is apt in this respect: "Authenticity is a hazy spot on the landscape, the grey mist in the middle distance at which one must 'look awry' in order to identify a true aesthetic somewhere between the outmoded and the contemporary, the primitive and the civilised."[29]

Henry's landscapes are representations only, for they contain more than a hint of impressionism in their construction, and the "hazy" spot may well thus refer to the entire painting. This can be extended to the paintings' propensity to show only a small portion of a landscape—such as a single mountain—that is taken to be the "authentic" Ireland, ignoring varieties in landscape and reflecting the way in which the local has been taken to represent the national in Irish thought and art. One of the art critic Dorothy Walker's criticisms of his work was that Henry created a version of "pop" landscape, both capturing *and* creating it, "to give the people what they were longing to believe was the windy west of Ireland."[30] For Walker, such landscapes are "the equivalent of stage sets," and have the effect of "bringing about the phenomenon which Oscar Wilde has described in *The Critic as Artist* as nature imitating art, rather than art imitating art: that is, in making the landscape look like his painting."[31]

Memories centered on such imagery oscillate between the real and the imaginary in the way that life is depicted. The crux of this reality or unreality lies in the veracity of landscape imagery relative to its referent. A picture or a photograph of a landscape necessarily must have a boundary, and its careful composition indicates a desire on the part of the artist to retain or emphasise some essential element through the construction of the image. Landscape art such as Henry's depicts the cottage, for example, in "romantic harmony" with natural physical settings. However, these cottages were frequently cramped and insanitary.[32] Nonetheless the romantic harmony of the landscape and the cottage is given precedence, and if humans are featured, then so is the honest and willing labour of

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[28] Ibid., 222.
[29] Dowling, *Traditional Music*, 238.
[30] Dorothy Walker, "Paul Henry, an Alternative View," *Irish Arts Review* 20, no. 1 (2003): 61.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Cusack, "A 'Countryside Bright with Cosy Homesteads'," 227.

the peasant within an implied ancient geography. These images depict the kinds of geographies that are taken to represent the nation itself, despite their inherent locality. Such landscapes, argues Simon Schama, are always a product of culture:

> Landscapes are culture before they are nature; constructs of the imaginations projected onto wood and water and rock . . . But it should also be acknowledged that once a certain idea of landscape, a myth, a vision, establishes itself in an actual place, it has a peculiar way of muddling, categorising, of making metaphors more real than their referents; of becoming, in fact, part of the scenery.[33]

Even for a rural emigrant who once had daily interaction with bogs, hills, and fields, rhetoric eulogising a lost idyll ignores the mundane realities of Irish rural life just as it bears no resemblance to the emigrant way of life in America. Indeed, as a comparison, Paul Henry's cottage landscapes have drawn criticism for the manner in which they "elided large areas of Irish experience, including the constant factors of labour, migration and emigration."[34] Fintan O'Toole has argued that the sense of absence in Henry's work means "the landscape lied about itself. It concealed all sorts of absences, especially the absence of those who had disappeared ... In the absence left by emigration, the aesthetics of emptiness took hold."[35] Nostalgia is often remarkably free from memories of hardship, and even the act of emigration is altered in a wave of sentimentality. This allowed exiles to reduce attachments to Ireland to symbolic, ceremonial purposes: Frank O'Connor wrote that "a few drinks in they sang sentimentally of 'the valley near Slievenamon' or 'the hills of Donegal,' but next morning saw them return cheerfully to office and shop."[36]

Ó Faoláin's *Come Back to Erin* features a scene in which tropes of authenticity and inauthenticity intersect. In the scene, the fugitive republican Frankie Hannafey is in a New York bar, attempting in vain to solicit funds for the republican movement notwithstanding the fact that the heyday of American subvention for Irish nationalism had long since passed. Frankie notices an old Irish Republican Army

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[33] In Oona Frawley, *Irish Pastoral: Nostalgia and Twentieth-Century Irish Literature* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005), 2.
[34] Cusack, "A 'Countryside Bright with Cosy Homesteads'," 228.
[35] Fintan O'Toole, *The Lie of the Land,* exhibition catalogue Dublin, 1995, in Cusack, "A 'Countryside Bright with Cosy Homesteads'," 229.
[36] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 537.

comrade from the Civil War named Kearney, and senses the "old ghosts [of] twelve years of exile":

> There it all was, written on his face—the mountains, the hedges, the tramps across night moors, the bursting bud of love for land, the heart-thumping, triumphant belief, and over it all the comradeship of fighting beside your fellows, your friends, almost your loves. Everything was there that exile means to the exile—those images upon images upon images that haunt the heart like a lust, and which you satisfy, or better deceive, with the perversion—like a sexual perversion—of work, and more work, in order to be let live and forget.[37]

These visual "images upon images" are powerful for the Irish-American community and speak of the opportunism present in nationalist sites of memory. Kearney's identity as an Irishman in exile has been shaped by a subconscious geography, which is satisfying yet perverse. Indeed, as Frankie and Kearney converse, "the more they remembered, the more it became like the unrolling of an old map that sends its dust into the throat."[38] Here, the past is represented in geographical—specifically, cartographical—terms that understand Irish identity as a readable product of history, memory, and geography. Yet, the map is not totally adequate as a metaphor to describe their experience together, which is *lived*, unlike the inanimate map.

Shortly after this, Frankie enters another room in which a play is being rehearsed, replete with props depicting an Irish rural scene. The woman directing the play, aware of Frankie's struggles to raise subscriptions, suggests to him a method by which he may melt the resolve of the disillusioned exiles who refuse to give him money:

> "I could show you how to get money," said the girl.
>
> "Yes, she runs lots of shows for us. She'll run you a concert and you can have a talk in the middle with lantern slides—a cinematograph would be better."

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[37] Ó Faoláin, *Come Back to Erin,* 181-182.
[38] Ibid., 183.

"Slides? Of what?"

"Blarney Castle. The Lakes of Killarney. The Rock of Cashel. Everything."

"Christ!"—with contempt.[39]

It is noteworthy that the proposal includes coloured slides, "pictorial clichés … suitable for public display and social exchange."[40] Even around the hall that the play is being rehearsed in, there are examples of mythologised landscapes on the walls: "photographs of Killarney, Slievenaman—the romantic face of life".[41] Frankie, frustrated with his earlier lack of success and clash between his and others' ideas of Ireland, wonders whether people "always need to turn reality into a myth before [they] can adore it?"[42] However, he begins to recall his own experience and concludes that the most "real thing in Ireland to [him] … was the whitewashed cottages and the rain [and] the scent of the countryside."[43] What Frankie had come to realise is that the myth-making of the diaspora that he observed was not a measure of "presence and connectedness [but] an acknowledgement of absence, desire, and mediation … a necessary fiction" used to ameliorate the tensions of spatial dislocation.[44] It indicates the realness of metaphors in diaspora communities, where home places are reconstructed "through an alchemy of memory and imagination … that no longer relies upon daily physical interaction with a landscape and a people."[45] Memory of that place is a means to an end, but because it "distorts and stretches, invents and alters, it constructs a new Ireland, one that never was, and passes it on to descendants for whom Ireland never was."[46] In the absence of home places that are individually and physically attached, emigrants must seek sites of memory that can be made more real than their referent—nature imitating art—taking the individual back to connect them to a shared cultural heritage that is the product of the real and the imagined.

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[39] Ibid., 193.
[40] Tuan, "An Experiential Perspective," 156-157.
[41] Ó Faoláin, *Come Back to Erin*, 195.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Aidan Arrowsmith, "Imaginary Connections? Postmemory and Irish Diaspora Writing," in *Irish Studies: Memory Ireland, Volume 2: Diaspora and Memory Practices*, ed. Oona Frawley (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2012), 23.
[45] Frawley, "Introduction," 4.
[46] Ibid.

There exists a particular relationship between the Irish and the landscape that is inherently related to narratives of dispossession. Nostalgia for place and space is symbolic within these narratives, and images of Irish geography are plentiful in Irish art, certainly in music. Relationships between the Irish people and geography are an integral aspect of many diaspora songs across a wide range of musical styles. These relationships are tinged with loss, both at the personal level of displacement and also at the cultural level in terms of previous land confiscations.[47] The imaginary geography in much of this music reflects the fact that often, the "cult of the past calls for illusion rather than authenticity," and as such, geographical imagery may be more important for what it represents than any physical entity.[48] This is perhaps one reason why artworks, such as emigration songs or Paul Henry's landscapes, are attractive for people longing for an image of home, authentic or inauthentic. Certainly, it is difficult to define "authenticity" and "inauthenticity" in terms of Irish landscapes, for the lushness of the east of the island differs greatly from the rockiness of the west.

Songs, like all art forms, are a reflection of the culture in which they are produced, meaning that they are an accessible site of memory for exiles.[49] Hence, songs of emigration that include geographical imagery are in effect a closed loop of Irish cultural memory. In *Come Back to Erin*, an example of this occurs in a crucial scene at Cobh. This town is significant for its long associations with exile as the departure point for generations of emigrants to America, and is an apt setting for a powerful constellation of history, geography, and music. Frankie Hannafey and his returned emigrant brother St. John are in Cobh to greet the latter's wife as she arrives on a liner: "So much of Irish life had passed through this small town that Frankie, for whom (no matter what he might think or say) Life and Ireland were still two words for one experience, could not take his eyes from the view before him" as he looks down to Spike Island where he had been interned during the War of Independence.[50]

In this passage Ó Faoláin signposts the association between geography, history, and the lived memory of the Irish people. That one person's experience can be interchangeably referenced to that of an entire nation also echoes the transition from the micro- to the macrocosmic already hinted at in this chapter. "Life" and "Ireland" are embodied in one specific, local geography that is indelibly linked to a

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[47] Nic Dhonncha, "Emigration, Oral Discourse and Traditional Song in Connemara," 205.
[48] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 194.
[49] Ó Madagáin, "Functions of Irish Song in the Nineteenth Century," 177-178.
[50] Ó Faoláin, *Come Back to Erin,* 91.

vast cultural memory. Frankie looks upon the harbour of Cobh and muses: "The roofs of the town itself had sheltered not thousands but hundreds of thousands of emigrants … ever since the forties the little town had seen them pouring out of Ireland, away from famine, away from brutality, to hope, to life…"[51] The reference to the town's role in emigration during the Great Famine indicates the permeability of geography with local and national histories.

In response to his thoughts, Frankie "was so moved he could not speak," but his drunken brother, "in answer to some maudlin association" finds the expression he needs by "wailing out the old song 'Youghal Harbour'":

"In Youghal harbour, and in your keeping,
Awake or sleeping, I left heart and mind . . .

"Thash Willie Rooney's song," he said. "He said good-bye down there to Mitchel when they were taking him to Van Diemen's Land."
"'Twas Ned Walsh," corrected Frankie, "who said good-bye to Mitchel. He taught the convicts on Spike."
"Maybe 'twas, Frankie. I sang that shong every week o' my life in New York."

" 'Twas not your hair to the breezes blowing
Or lips red-glowing caused me unrest . . .
'Twas some sweet charm beyond expressing . . ."[52]

St. John's feelings of unhappy exile are ameliorated by a *lieu de mémoire*, in which "heart and mind" are left in Youghal, through the familiar trope of the lost love. For St. John, who has lived most of his life in New York, the song depicts departure from Ireland into the diaspora and all its associations: the geography of Youghal Harbour stands for "the old familiar who had tormented him for years with thoughts of home

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[51] Ibid., 92.
[52] Ibid. A member of the Celtic Literary Society, William Rooney (1873-1901) is best known for his patriotic writings in Arthur Griffith's United Irishman newspaper. He long suffered from sickly health and died of tuberculosis in 1901 at only 28, whereupon Griffith published his poems and prose in 1902 and 1909 respectively (Kelly, 2007). See Appendix, pages 154-56 for information on "Youghal Harbour," including recording details—note that St. John sings slightly different lyrics to Rooney's original in *Come Back to Erin*.

… a revelation of a place where the clock was stopped, a place where he might have been young forever."[53] Not only does this echo Frankie's equation of life and Ireland, but it is also redolent of Ó Faoláin's own reminiscences of being "eternally young" on the Aran Islands.

Songs such as "Youghal Harbour" that conflate the local and the national, history and geography, are common expressions of Irish nationalism. There is an overlap between songs in which pride of place is a theme, or a place is mentioned in the title, and songs commonly understood as "songs of emigration." Songs such as "Skibbereen," "The Banks of the Lee," "Lovely Leitrim" and "Spancill Hill" are lyrics which instigate reflection on Ireland and emigration "in fine local terms" which were "affirming of the land of Ireland itself."[54] Another example of such songs in literature appears in Colum McCann's *TransAtlantic* (2013), where in the opening scenes, the first trans-Atlantic flight by Alcock and Brown is described. As their plane is in the air over the Atlantic—that great symbol of migration between Ireland and America—Brown begins to look for land and associates his own knowledge of Irish geography with sentimental tunes about emigration and return to Ireland:

> He has studied the geography of Ireland: the hills, the round towers, the expanses of limestone, the disappearing lakes. Galway Bay. There had been songs about that during the war. The roads to Tipperary. The Irish were a sentimental lot.[55]

This paragraph references two songs of emigration with local titles: "Galway Bay" and "It's a Long Way to Tipperary." The latter song is particularly symbolic of both the pain of distance in emigration and the longing to return, and also the local terms used to describe a national condition. It is worth noting that the song was composed as a military song for to boost morale during the Great War, hinting at the ability of these sentiments to be appropriated based on knowledge of the effect on the listener.[56]

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[53] Ibid.*,* 45.
[54] Nic Dhonncha, "Emigration, Oral Discourse and Traditional Song in Connemara," 199.
[55] Colum McCann, *TransAtlantic* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 32.
[56] "Tipperary," *Brewer's dictionary of Irish phrase and fable*, 2009,
http://search.credoreference.com.ipacez.nd.edu.au/content/entry/orionirishpf/tipperary/0

Oona Frawley has noted that when "nostalgia extends beyond the individual, it can become a sociological phenomenon that revolves around a longing for lost culture or theoretically unrecoverable past."[57] This phenomenon was capitalised upon in twentieth-century America, where a sizeable Irish emigrant population desired a mechanism to bridge places of past and present during times of significant change.[58] Indeed, nostalgia for lost place appeared as a theme from the mid-nineteenth century until the mid-twentieth century in "quasi-Irish ballads, often penned by Tin Pan Alley composers whose roots were anything but Irish."[59] These songs were played in the numerous Irish dance halls in American cities in the first half of the twentieth century. While some of these halls were named for symbols such as shamrocks and harps, others sought to assert Irishness by way of localised names. In New York, for example, were halls such as The Mayo Hall, The Kerry Ballroom, and the Longford Ballroom.[60]

Irish dance halls in American cities replaced the parish as the locus of socialisation within Irish communities; music became a tool for bonding and a reminder of communal ties in foreign urban society.[61] Dance halls were the places for a newly arrived immigrant to be introduced to the expatriate community, and to encourage cultural and social continuity.[62] The halls also supported Irish *céilí* events, which provided an ideal locus for enacting communal identity and "the actual dances provided a site where … unity could be experienced and felt."[63] Moreover, the selected dances were relatively short and easy to learn, conducive to constructing ready familiarity among participants belonging to the community.[64] Within these places, sites of memory invariably included imagery and symbolism of geographies indistinguishable between local and national. In *Brooklyn*, Eilis attends a dance hall where "Pat Sullivan's Harp and Shamrock Orchestra" has a repertoire which includes "everything from Irish tunes to waltzes and foxtrots and American tunes."[65] Their sets are delineated into a modern dance section and a traditional Irish section:

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[57] Frawley, *Irish Pastoral*, 3.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Sommers Smith, "Landscape and Memory in Irish Traditional Music," 138.
[60] Mick Moloney, "Irish Dance Bands in America," *New Hibernia Review* 2, no. 3 (1998): 130.
[61] Sommers Smith, "Landscape and Memory in Irish Traditional Music," 138.
[62] Moloney, "Irish Dance Bands in America," 131.
[63] Foley, "The Irish Céilí," 45.
[64] Ibid., 48.
[65] Tóibín, *Brooklyn,* 104.

the "man playing the saxophone [introduces] the best part of the evening … some céilí tunes," before making jokes about the number of tunes from County Clare.[66]

During the Irish section of the dance, a man with a microphone instructs the dancers how to perform the steps of the *céilí* dance, "The Siege of Ennis." This dance was within the construct of Gaelic League canonical dances, intended to promote cultural nationalism. "The Siege of Ennis" comports with other céilí dances such as *Ballaí Luimní* ("Walls of Limerick") named to conjure imagery of places in Ireland alongside historical events of cultural significance. This localised imagery reiterated the importance of place in Irish culture, especially for emigrants in diasporic locations such as America.[67]

In contrast to the céilí bands in Ireland, dance bands in America eschewed regional names in favour of those representing "an image of solidarity in the new homeland," such as The Four Provinces Orchestra or the Harp and Shamrock Orchestra.[68] The dances "served up fare deliberately designed to evoke an unreal and sentimental picture of Ireland in the minds of their patrons."[69] In *Come Back to Erin*, this is the sort of hall that Frankie enters in order to solicit funds for the nationalist cause, and it is the environment that Eilis uses to reconnect socially in *Brooklyn.* Irish traditional music survived in these halls, providing cultural continuity to ease the transition into life abroad.[70] But by the same token, by the mid-twentieth century a "vast topography of performance spaces awaited traditional Irish musicians who were willing to eschew their regional sensibilities, don tuxedos, and share the stage with 'unionised musicians wielding saxophones and trumpets.'"[71] As such, Irish emigrants were ripe for having their sentiments exploited by a mixture of traditional music not "imported wholesale [but developing a] curious hybridity" as new songs were "grafted onto old musical rootstock."[72]

Through an amalgam of Irish balladry and American popular genres, an image of Ireland emerged in contemporary Irish-American thought which was a "rural idyll shrouded in a perpetual Celtic mist," always within the framework of the

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[66] Ibid., 128-129.
[67] Foley, "The Irish Céilí," 46.
[68] Moloney, "Irish Dance Bands in America," 130.
[69] Sommers Smith, "Landscape and Memory in Irish Traditional Music," 138.
[70] Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 522.
[71] Collins, "'Tis Like They Never Left," 498-99.
[72] Frawley, "Introduction," 4; Gall, "Laments in Transition," 46.

pastoral landscape and tropes such as the "Shamrock Shore."[73] In Ó Faoláin's novel, an example of this kind of music—which lends itself to the title of the text—takes place as Frankie and St. John wait for the elder brother's wife to arrive on the liner at Cobh. As the brothers stand at the water's edge,

> … they could hear the liner's band playing softly across the water, the old sentimental tune, cheap, almost music-hall level, familiar to every Irishman who has ever emigrated to America, that stupidly cruel, but well-wishing ritual of all departures:
>
> > Come back to Erin,
> > > Mavourneen, mavourneen,
> > Come back to Erin the land of thy birth.
> > Come with the shamrock, and springtime, Mavourneen …[74]

The chorus concludes: "And its Killarney shall ring with your mirth."[75] There is a conflation between a local place—stereotypically Irish in landscape—and the national—Erin—in the words of the song. The song itself was written in England by Charlotte Alington in 1866, and later popularised on the American vaudeville circuit—far from an ancient Celtic continuity.[76] The tune is described as "cheap" and "stupidly" cruel, yet this does not diminish its impact. Instead, it arguably increases its power as a *lieu de mémoire* because it carries the weight of the community's history of departure, "familiar to every Irishman who has ever emigrated to America." Indeed, the brothers notice a grieving elderly couple, whose family member had been on the tender that had left the dock to meet the liner and depart Ireland. At this moment the song is of significance to both returned and departing migrants. Ann Schofield has emphasised that songs such as these infuse sites of migration memory with additional valence, for sentiments of nostalgia satisfy "the intense longing of the exile for the homeland."[77] Moreover, the images within such

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[73] Schofield, "The Returned Yank," 1186; Sommers Smith, "Landscape and Memory in Irish Traditional Music," 138.
[74] Ó Faoláin, *Come Back to Erin,* 96.
[75] Claribel, "Come Back to Erin Song," [1872-1876] *Frances G. Spencer Collection of American Popular Sheet Music,* http://contentdm.baylor.edu/cdm/ref/collection/fa-spnc/id/5601.
[76] Schofield, "The Returned Yank," 1186.
[77] Ibid., 1186-87.

songs also act as a commentary on the frequently harsh industrial environment of the Irish in America.[78] The "plaintive refrain" of the song is part of a national identity which "inexorably includes loss."[79]

The "Ontopology" of Loss in Irish Emigration

Part of the identity of loss is the synonymity of exile with the dispossessions experienced through centuries of British colonization. This is one manifestation of the ontopology of Irishness, where exile is framed in terms of separation from the *topos* of territory. Indeed, continuing emigration bolstered the ongoing Romantic nationalist perception towards Irish deterritorialization.[80] The symbol of the map is utilised once again in *Come Back to Erin* late in the text, when as it happens, the characters are discussing music and migration. Again the lines between local and national are blurred by interchangeable reference to constituent parts. What this metaphor reveals is the complex relationship between Irish culture and the Irish landscape, and the role of music as an effective *lieu de mémoire* ameliorating dislocation and its kin in dispossession. There is also a disconnect between modes of cultural memory and the written form of memory that a map represents.

As Angèle Smith has argued, "maps, as representations of landscape, are political tools for controlling the sense and meaning of that landscape by claiming authority in the presentation of one perspective and heralding it as 'real' and 'true.'"[81] This reality may be perceived as either positive or deleterious based on the perspective from which one sees it. Prior to the large-scale efforts of the British Ordnance Survey in the nineteenth century, the Irish had "their own means" of remembering and recording places, and there are no known early native-Irish produced maps of the island.[82] Irish patterns of remembering places both at home

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[78] Sommers Smith, "Landscape and Memory in Irish Traditional Music," 138.
[79] Schofield, "The Returned Yank," 1195.
[80] Arrowsmith, "Imaginary Connections," 14.
[81] Angèle Smith, "Landscape Representation: Place and identity in nineteenth-century ordnance survey maps of Ireland," in *Anthropology, Culture and Society: Landscape, Memory and History: Anthropological Perspectives*, eds. Pamela J. Stewart and Andrew Strathern (London: Pluto Press, 2003), 71.
[82] Ibid., 71-72. The Ordnance Survey of Ireland commenced in 1825 under the control of three corps from the Royal Engineers and Royal Sappers and Miners of the British Army. The entirety of the island was mapped at six inches to the mile, "standardising and Anglicising the landscape" under the control of a vast number of red-coated surveyors (see Smith, 2007, 83). Brian Friel's play

and abroad are based on sites of memory, such as song and story, rather than maps. In doing so, places were ritualised, for as Smith observes, the act of "remembering a place … makes place sacred in the shared memories of the community."[83] Recalling the example from *TransAtlantic* above, Brown, an Englishman, is emotionally detached from the geography of the cartographical study he has in his memory. He "knows" Ireland for its geographical features, but that is the extent of his knowledge. His understanding of the Irish landscape is not lived, and nor is it a cultural symbol that has any depth to him; it is unsurprising that there is a quizzical note in his comment about the Irish being sentimental.

The ritualization of place does not depend on mapped representations of landscape, which are symbolic of colonial control of that landscape. The creator of a map preferences the written over the oral, and invalidates the cultural forms at work that are most accessible to the people in creating sites of memory. Indeed, this is the problem addressed in Eavan Boland's "That the Science of Cartography Is Limited," which itself laments loss in terms of the Great Famine and criticises the inability of a two-dimensional map to chart the actions and sufferings of a people within the landscape. Boland argues that a map can never say: "here is / the masterful, the apt rendering of / the spherical as flat, nor / an ingenious design which persuades a curve into a plane," and on the map, "the line which says woodland and cries hunger … and finds no horizon / will not be there."[84] As the act of mapping is one of claiming land, for the people whose interaction with that landscape is not represented, a site of memory that is oral or aural gives immediacy to an occluded or lost history.

In *Come Back to Erin*, Frankie Hannafey, who has now been in America for some time, is in conversation with his brother's wife Bee (with whom he is now romantically involved). They are driving through the Connecticut countryside when Bee mentions the town of Westport. Frankie leaps into life—"Westport? That's a town in County Mayo"—and when Bee asks him if he knows the west of Ireland town, he once again falls silent, thinking deeply:

> The map of Ireland, recording all the indentations of the Atlantic, made the Connaught coast a laced and wormy land, its lakes and

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Translations (1980) addresses the cultural concerns associated with the Ordnance Survey's incursion into the folklore of Irish place names.

[83] Ibid., 73.

[84] Eavan Boland, "That the Science of Cartography Is Limited", lines 17-28.

lochs, and rock-pools, and veining rivers fraying into a transparency.
It was a sodden-edged manuscript, half its story fallen into decay.[85]

The geographical imagery here is distinctly redolent of loss and exile. The map is focused on the province of Connacht, and the local geographical features such as lochs, rockpools, and rivers are depicted as "fraying into a transparency" on the map in Frankie's mind. The Atlantic coastline, recalling so many years of emigration, looks westward to the very location in which Frankie finds himself. Frankie is from Cork, yet the locality of Mayo and Connacht adequately stands for Ireland to him. The map is a "sodden-edged manuscript, half its story fallen into decay," and without appropriate sites of memory, the landscape features that represent Ireland itself will continue to become attenuated and eventually disappear. This mirrors the gradual loss of language and oral culture that colonization effected, and the county of Mayo in the fabled West is symbolic of the surrounding exile. The map cannot record Irish engagement with the landscape in the same way that cultural custom can. Because of this, Frankie's thoughts turn to music in order to fulfill memory:

… There was a song called "County Mayo," by the poet Raftery, who sang to blind eyes and empty pockets, with his ragged back to a wall.

"There's a song called 'County Mayo,' " he remembered.[86]

The invocation of the blind poet Anthony Raftery (c. 1784-1835) extends the theme of decay and loss. His poetry is symbolic for "recaptur[ing] a lost age, not wholly mournful and full of a rough energy that was lost with the Great Famine and never totally recovered."[87] Raftery, whose poems were in Irish and most often took lyric form, was held up by Gaelic revivalists at the turn of the twentieth century such as Douglas Hyde and Lady Gregory (who each edited translated anthologies of the long-deceased poet's work) as "an emblem of the fading Gaelic literary culture".[88] In

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[85] Ó Faoláin, *Come Back to Erin*, 232.
[86] Ibid.
[87] "Blind Raftery," in *Brewer's dictionary of Irish phrase and fable*, online edition, eds. Sean McMahon and Jo O'Donoghue (London, UK: Chambers Harrap, 2009). Retrieved from http://search.credoreference.com.ipacez.nd.edu.au/content/entry/orionirishpf/blind_raftery/0.
[88] Seamus Deane, "Antoine Raftery," in *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing*, ed. Seamus Deane (Derry: Field Day, 1991), 723.

his reference to "blind eyes and empty pockets", Ó Faoláin paraphrases "The Poet Raftery" ("*Mise Raifteirí an file*"), the "signature tune" of the poet:[89]

Mise Raifteirí an file	The Poet Raftery
Mise Raifteirí an file	I am Raftery the poet
Lán dóchais agus grá,	Full of hope and love,
Le súile gan solas,	With eyes without light,
Le ciúnas gan chrá.	With silence without torment.
Ag dul siar ar m'aistear	Going west upon my journey
Le solas mo chroí,	With the light of my heart,
Fann agus tuirseach	Feeble and tired
Go deireadh mo shlí.	To the end of my way.
Féach anois mé	Look at me now
Agus m'aghaidh ar bhalla,	And my face at the wall,
Ag seinm ceoil	Playing music
Do phócaí folamh'.	To empty pockets.[90]

The poem contains the familiar tropes of the westward journey, themes of dispossession, and music as a release from circumstances. In recalling the song "County Mayo," Frankie invokes a musical site of memory powerful in its evocation of home place. Though the song is not actually sung in the scene, it is crucial in illuminating Frankie's chain of thought in musically memorialising geography.

The first two stanzas of "County Mayo" are still heard today in English and Irish versions.[91] Chriostoir Ó Floinn's English translation only provides these two stanzas, for as he puts it, "[Raftery] gives seven further stanzas . . . containing little more than lists of the marvelous flora and fauna that make an earthly Paradise of

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[89] There is some debate over the true authorship of the poem, with suggestion that Seán Ó Ceallaigh wrote it in homage. However, the spirit of the poem renders the debate largely inconsequential insofar as it is taken to express an essential Irish condition.

[90] "Mise Raifteirí an file," in *Blind Raftery: Selected Poems,* ed. Chriostoir Ó Floinn (Indreabhán, Conamara: Cló Iar-Chonnachta, 1998), 74-75.

[91] Ibid., 73.

Raftery's native place – even including the tortoise!"[92] Nonetheless, the first two stanzas contain imagery crucial to the trope of the displaced Irish:

Contae Mhaigh Eo	**The County Mayo**
Anois teach an earraigh, beidh an lá ag dul chun síneadh,	Now with the springtime the day will be stretching,
Is tar éis na Féil' Bríde ardóidh mé mo sheol,	When Bríd's day has gone by then I'll run up my sail,
Ó chuir mé im cheann é ní stopfaidh mé choice	Since this notion I've taken I'll never be resting
Go seasfa' mé thíos i lár Chontae Mhaigh Eo.	Till to County Mayo I have made my safe way.
I gClár Clainne Mhuiris a bheas mé an chéad oíche,	Claremorris the first night is where I'll be nesting
'S i mBalla taobh thíos de 'thosós mé ag ól,	And not far off in Balla my first drink I'll take,
Go Coillte Mach rachad go ndéanfad cuairt mhíosa ann,	To Kiltimagh then, there a month I'll be spending,
I bhfogas dhá mhíle do Bhéal an Áth' Mhóir.	From Ballinamore just two miles away.
Fágaim le huacht é go n-éiríonn mo chroíse	I solemnly swear that my heart fills up with joy
Mar éiríos an ghaoth nó mar 'scaipeas an ceo	Like the wind rising up and the fog far off blown,
Nuair a smaoiním ar Chearra nó ar Ghaeileang taobh thíos de	When my thoughts turn to Carra or to Gallen close by,
Ar Sceathach a'Mhíle nó ar phláinaí Mhaigh Eo.	To Sgahaghaveela and the plains of Mayo.
Cill Aodáin an baile a bhfásann gach ní ann,	Killeadin is the place where all fruits you can find,

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[92] Ibid.

Tá sméara 's sú craobh ann is meas ar gach sort,	Blackberries, raspberries, there everything grows,
Is dá mbeinnse 'mo sheasamh i gceartlár mo dhaoine	And if I could be standing there among my own kind
D'imeodh an aois díom is bheinn arís óg.	The years would drop off, I'd be youthful once more.[93]

The return to the home place after involuntary exile is the most prominent theme of the song; Raftery is said to have written it in response to banishment by his landlord, Frank Taaffe, whereupon he wandered off to County Galway, remaining there as an itinerant poet and fiddler until his death. Regardless of the exact origins of the song, and "in spite of the nostalgic wish expressed," Raftery never returned to County Mayo.[94] He eulogises his home place by the employment of romantic tropes of the natural features of its landscape. While the poet never left Ireland, his longing for home places is appropriated as a site of memory for all those displaced from their home place. Douglas Hyde tells of the story of a girl who emigrated to Chicago from Killeadin, and on her first tram ride in her adopted city, she "heard a young man who was sitting on his own singing Raftery's song 'go binn agus go hard'."[95] This calls to mind Bee Hannafey's maid Mary, from Mayo herself, whom Bee has heard singing in the kitchen.

In *Come Back to Erin,* "County Mayo" acts as a *lieu de mémoire* for Frankie Hannafey, even though it is not sung; it represents the reclamation of lost land, language, and culture that is symbolised by the map of the Connacht coast. However, he does sing a different song immediately after this. The final song in this scene is the English-language "The Emigrant's Return" (also called "The Irish Emigrant" or "Lament of the Irish Emigrant"). Bee Hannafey prompts Frankie to sing it, and he sings two of the stanzas he remembers, though there are more in the song, as Frankie admits ("There's more. I forget it."[96]). The two most pertinent to the condition of Irish emigration appear in the text: the song describes a man about to depart to America, and rationalises exile from Ireland in the familiar terms of lost love. However, in the first stanza the remembrance of the narrator is distinctly local: "I'm

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[93] Ibid., 78-79. See Appendix, page 155, for details of a recording of this song.
[94] Ibid., 76.
[95] Ibid., 76-77.
[96] Ó Faoláin, *Come Back to Erin*, 233.

sitting on the stile, Mary, / Where we sat side by side."[97] In the second stanza that Frankie sings, the persona of the song sings of the promise of American life but declares that "I'd not forget old Ireland/Were it fifty times as fair."[98] Again, this song deals with loss on multiple levels, in the loss of land and the loss of a romantic or physical attachment. The allusion fits appropriately within the scene for its discussion of exile, geography and music: there is a progression of symbols which accord with the wider patterns of *lieux de mémoire* in the diaspora. The local and personal blend into national and symbolic geographies from the first to the second song, representing the understanding that personal loss and displacement fits into a wider cultural memory.

Earlier, I raised Derrida's concept of an "ontopology" as an expression of Irish consciousness. The term is apt: in the last two chapters, it has been demonstrated that geographical concerns form a crucial element in the understanding of *being* Irish. Indeed, sense of place and Irishness are inextricable. The binding of geography to the self and the community becomes even more important when one is exiled from the national land. The ontopology of Irishness is negotiated through visual landscape imagery, which is then diffused through other expressions of identity such as music.

The imagery of the decaying and fraying map in *Come Back to Erin* is another expression of an Irish ontopology. It represents the history of colonial occupation, loss, and displacement central to identity in Ireland and the diaspora, and it has extra significance for Frankie: a former IRA fighter from the Civil War, he is well aware of the power of geography to impose control and order on the landscape, and claim authority over places. Yet, the map does not have the same power as the mythological landscapes he has come to accept as valid during the course of the novel. When claiming or reclaiming those landscapes is not possible, remembrance is the only available option, and in the scene described Raftery acts as a unifying symbol of the coalescence of music, geography, exile (and return) and loss. In *Come Back to Erin*, as well as the other texts, the conceptual phantasm of imaginary or remembered geography that binds the nation is aired through music and all its attendant associations. Songs thus become *lieux de mémoire* of a national geography

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[97] Ibid., 232.
[98] Ibid., 233.

and a national ontology, allowing the mediation of the place of the self within a diaspora community construct.

All geographical representations witnessed in this chapter create an inherently occlusive ontopology that is prominent in music: from "imaginary" Irelands in song, to Henry's impressionism, to the fraying map in *Come Back to Erin*. Participants in musical sites of memory must "look awry" in order to perceive an authentic Ireland that is nonetheless effective for its creation of cultural unity. In such circumstances, the identity shifts that preceded emigration have come full circle. Those things that precluded a full existence prior to departure become crucial markers of identity in the diaspora. The desire to leave Ireland that once shaped prospective emigrants' identities now manifests in art that seeks return. In the absence of physical repatriation, musical sites of memory local and national, traditional and commercial, become accessible resolutions to personal and communal narratives of exile.

Conclusion

In the narrative of Irish emigration and culture, one key attitude is apparent: emigration, such an inherent part of Irish identity, is always in concert with the notion of return. Even as Stephen Dedalus disavows his Irish life for the continent, he does so in terms of writing the unwritten conscience of his race. In all of the characters we have seen is a sense that after both willing and unwilling emigration, Ireland is an inescapable presence to which one must constantly return, either actually or spiritually.

The act of creating art is itself both a form of exile and the creation of a memorial ideal. Even the Dedalian disavowal of a particular reality is an acknowledgement of its existence for others: all perspectives of the reality of Irish cultural identity are merely points on a continuum of experience. Like Henry's rural paintings, art captures selections of reality with certain experiences occluded. Music in literature, through its connotative presence, fills in the gaps of occluded experience. In the context of migration literature, music's presence is symbolic of the state of culture in the face of an exilic national identity that is inherently narrative.

The first two chapters assess the identity changes that lead to the decision to emigrate. In the opening chapter, the musical epiphanies of Joyce and Moore suggest music's connotative semantic, which is examined more thoroughly in chapter three. In two instances of purely aural music, the protagonists are able to understand that the music represents a means to understand one's position in relation to home, away, and a collective cultural identity. Though Carmady and Dedalus are desperate to leave, they are by no means unencumbered by cultural baggage; even in abjuring their cultural inheritance, they acknowledge its power. In this way they can be seen in relative terms to the characters from the other texts.

In chapter two the survival of music is positioned within the context of the wave of British emigration, and the limitations on personal liberties in the period that were in themselves an attack on traditional music's livelihood. Dashed hopes for post-independence Ireland are a cause of the continuing heavy emigration until 1950. The disillusioned characters in *Tarry Flynn* and *The Bodhrán Makers* accept the inevitability of departure; the identity shifts they undergo prior to departure are coloured by the contemporaneous state of cultural nationalist discourses.

The third chapter, in occupying a liminal place within this thesis, reflects the identity shifts occurring at the moment of crossing the physical and psychological thresholds of emigration. By participating in an American wake, the emigrant is acknowledging the continuity of tropes of emigration in terms of the unhappy exile, and is primed to respect communal obligations and seek return to home physically or spiritually. As the texts analysed in the chapter attest, music is a crucial element in the ritual to establish memorial links. It also has a vital role in communicating ineffable emotion.

The fourth and fifth chapters then examine the identity realignments occurring after emigration in musical praxes of psychological return, specifically within an American context. Personal sites of memory in *Brooklyn* attempt to recover a lost memorial routine bound to meaningful home places. This concept is extended to the nation itself in the following chapter, where the Hannafey brothers in *Come Back to Erin* personally identified with Ireland through hybrid, communal musical expressions. Moreover, the text returns to the exilic expression of loss touched upon in previous chapters as evocations of the poet Raftery conform to communal attitudes towards emigration. In each of the last two chapters, the narrative of exile comes to its conclusion in terms of a spiritual return to Ireland.

What does this say for Irish identity within the context of seemingly inexorable emigration? In effect, physically residing in Ireland is not a prerequisite for an identity of "Irishness." Rather, engaging with traditions by enacting or merely acknowledging them is. Tarry Flynn's uncle has this idea in mind when he questions the "necessity" of living in Ireland:

> …But there's no necessity to live in this sort of place, is there? The best way to love a country like this is from a range of not less than three hundred miles.[1]

Even in departure, the emigrant is enacting stable tropes of the Irish identity. Musical sites of memory are an attempt to bridge physical and psychological dislocations, and are themselves participation in tradition. For emigrants, whether in listening or performing, the musical act is seen as part of an ancient ongoing tradition in which

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[1] Kavanagh, *Tarry Flynn*, 185.

the validity of the nation and the self is affirmed with each participation.[2] Certainly, its tropes of remembrance are consistent throughout time and space. In the cyclical movement of the chapters, from early in the twentieth-century to the 1950s, the positioning of characters in relation to emigration is consistently framed by music. Regardless of the circumstances, each single act of Irish emigration is placed within a wider context of national identity and dichotomies of exile and return.

Declan Kiberd has noted that emigration assists with the construction of Irish identity through its very distance from the cultural source. In an echo of Dahlberg-Acton, he states that "exile is indeed the cradle of nationality," for no culture can "fully define itself from within."[3] Indeed, Oscar Wilde asserted that a modern Irish literature could only be shaped through contact with the art of other nations.[4] This is true for music, as well. In the Irish-American diaspora, the regional stylistic elements of the Sligo fiddle "dialect" gained prominence through the famous Michael Coleman and others. Through recordings of Coleman and those such as Paddy Killoran which were sent back to Ireland, playing styles, repertoires, and performance practices were undoubtedly influenced at home. These recordings became "coveted cultural commodities" in Ireland and were important in establishing a "more global conception of the art form."[5] The region, the nation and the self are simultaneously affirmed, by creating Ireland's uncreated conscience. Each art form has its own place in mediating identity; in concert, they form a paradigm of expression.

It is instructive to return to James Joyce in this coalescence of literature, music, and cultural identity in the emigrant experience. Harry White has noted, for example, the apposition of Joyce's literature and the Polish composer Frédéric Chopin's music as quintessential "national" expressions of art. Each artist composed from exile, permitting the contemplation of their respective homelands from a distance, "an opportunity at once to cultivate and to objectify" their Irish and Polish nationalism respectively.[6]

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[2] Gerry Smyth, *Music in Irish Cultural History*, 4.
[3] Kiberd, "Literature and Politics," 24.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Scott Spencer, "Wheels of the World: How Recordings of Irish Traditional Music Bridged the Gap Between Homeland and Diaspora," *Journal of the Society for American Music* 4, no. 4 (2010): 437; Collins, "'Tis Like They Never Left," 498.
[6] White, *The Keeper's Recital*, 72.

Joyce's sense of Irishness on the continent was directly informed by musical and placial memory, and in this respect he conformed to the archetype of the emigrant Irish. While he never returned after 1912, he "sent his characters back [to Ireland] and shared vicariously their presence in the Dublin scene as well as their partial estrangement from it."[7] In response to a question from Hannah Sheehy-Skeffington about why he did not return to Dublin, Joyce replied, "Have I ever left it?"[8] Or, rather, as Luke Gibbons suggests, it may be the case that it is Dublin that never left Joyce.[9] During times of difficulty in Trieste and Rome during 1906-7, Joyce's earlier antipathy to Ireland softened, and it is noteworthy that Ellmann has called "The Dead," written during this period, Joyce's "first song of exile."[10] This illustrates the identity shifts that occur both before and after departure—a conflict of identity, and a resolution of identity.

Of course, as we have seen, Joyce was not alone among Irish literary exiles in his relationship with homeland. Kiberd has posited that it is "as if Irish writers found that they had to go out into the world in order to discover exactly who they were."[11] For example, Seán Ó Faoláin's *Come Back to Erin* is crafted from his own experience of exile in America and London, which gave him an opportunity to come to terms both with his own nationality and also the Irish literary inheritance. However, while he grew artistically and emotionally abroad, he was "not of America" and like Frankie Hannafey, returned to the land of his heritage.[12] Similarly, Colm Tóibín's *Brooklyn* is the product of the emigrant experience. After arriving in America himself, Tóibín was terribly homesick, and said that "I could not have written the novel … had the emotions surrounding exile and loss not been close to me at that time."[13] These are the tensions of exilic nationalism that are embodied in a variety of musical sites of memory.

For those separated from Ireland, the very act of separation and the resultant agony of loss allows them to appreciate what has been lost and solidifies identity. Whether the emigrant chooses to embrace hybridity, such as St. John Hannafey, or

[7] Ibid., 349.
[8] Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 717.
[9] Luke Gibbons, *Joyce's Ghosts: Ireland, Modernism, and Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 23.
[10] Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 263.
[11] Kiberd, *The Irish Writer and the World*, 1.
[12] Paul A. Doyle, *Sean O'Faolain* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1968), 22-23; Lawrence J. McCaffrey, "Sean O'Faolain and Irish Identity," *New Hibernia Review* 9, no. 4 (2005): 146.
[13] In Cullingford, "American Dreams," 78.

attempts to reclaim an adulterated habitus in less than conducive surrounds like the *sean-nós* singer in *Brooklyn*, choosing music as a site of memory is a valid experience. From the inculcation of community obligation at the American wake onwards, emigrants' own means of expressing Irishness through music is one of necessity. Living abroad among competing influences is a mere extension of what it *is* to be Irish, as seen in the "complex field of experience" of Revival-era Dublin in chapter one. The complexity of the migration experience means that abstract praxes such as *lieux de mémoire* represent not only a communal expectation of Irishness, but also whatever the individual migrant wishes. All manifestations of this cultural identity can be traced to a cultural narrative with commonly held beliefs, values, and symbolic systems.

There are still a great number of musico-literary emigrant experiences to be analysed within this framework. This work only focuses on texts that were either written or set in the period between the turn of the twentieth century and the middle of the century, due largely to the permanence of emigration during that period. However, increasingly complex musical technology has also made music an increasingly immediate, private, and affective experience that is reflected in literature. In the opening scene of Dermot Bolger's *Father's Music* (1997), during a sexual experience in England, the Irish emigrant protagonist listens to fiddle music through headphones:

> I listen to a gale blowing across a treeless landscape, see a black huddle of slanted rooftops and drenched cows dreaming of shelter. The beat is inside my head from childhood, imagining an old shoe strike the stone flags and the hush of neighbours gathered in.[14]

This example illustrates that the tropes of Irish emigration and memory remain stable even in the modern age. The images of the wild rural west and its mythology, and the master of traditional music craft (this time a fiddler) are of the same origin as *Brooklyn* and *The Bodhrán Makers* alike. It is a deeply complex, personal musical act, but its imagery ties into consistent tropes of national cultural identity.

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[14] Dermot Bolger, *Father's Music* (London: Flamingo, 1997), 1.

It is my belief that the consistency of these tropes can be attributed to the unchanging needs and desires of the human condition. In the postmodern, globalised world, the desire to belong is arguably more important than ever, and the Irish exilic narrative persists. Irish emigrants will continue to turn to praxes the inherent stability of which is a source of comfort and indeed, a means of returning to lost places and practices. In the literature of the period under consideration in this thesis, the narrative of Irish emigrant identity was consistently framed by musical bridging of psychological space through public performance. In the modern day, the ability to electronically summon any piece of music at an instant allows an instantaneous return to a lost homeland and also a means of immediate psychological escape. Just as writing is a form of exile so is music, and the two will doubtless continue to be inextricably linked with the expression of the Irish emigrant experience.

Appendix: Annotated Discography

Music is made to be heard; one of the central ideas of this thesis is that active participation in music reifies abstract musical texts. To that end, this list of suggested listening brings to life the music that is analysed within each chapter. In the absence of a live performance, the chosen recordings bring the reader into a state of participation with the action in the fictional literature, as the music disrupts linear time in a mimetic act.

The pieces have been included in the order that they appear in each chapter. As I have not discussed every single reference to music within the primary texts, the same applies here. I have chosen those with most relevance or importance to the understanding of the musical moment. These particular recordings have been selected to replicate as closely as possible the conditions of the music as it occurs within the fiction.

Any recordings not listed below can be easily sourced through online applications such as iTunes, Spotify, and YouTube. This also gives the reader the opportunity to compare renditions of particular songs.

Chapter One:

The Revival Cultural Field and Exile: George Moore and James Joyce

Pages 31-33: Melody heard by Ned Carmady in "The Wild Goose." Available from the University of Notre Dame *Research Online* archive.

This piece is in the key of E♭ major. While Ned Carmady is quick to ascribe the melody an essential meaning, it is not wholly "un-Irish." Indeed, compare the key, melody, and rhythm of the "Wild Goose" melody with "Iníon Ní Scannlain," an original piece recorded by the contemporary traditional band Lúnasa (*The Merry Sisters of Fate*, Green Linnet, released 2001). It is composed by the band's guitarist, Donogh Hennessy. The recording is available from iTunes at: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/inion-ni-scannlain/id264302333?i=264303103.

Pages 34-35: "A Nation Once Again." The Dubliners, *Original Dubliners*, Parlophone Records (1993). Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/a-nation-once-again-1993-remastered-version/id691987326?i=691988568]. One can imagine, on hearing this rendition of Thomas Davis's nationalist ballad, the absurdity of its setting in a *bel canto* style.

Pages 37-38: "Elfin prelude" heard by Stephen Dedalus in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Available from the University of Notre Dame *Research Online* archive. This recording is a simple rendition of the melody as it can be interpreted from the text and the notation on page 38. The prose in the epiphany is akin to directions on a score, so that we may be able to imagine it in its full flight, leaping and quickening.

Pages 38-39: "*Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune.*" Géza Novák with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra and Serge Baudo, *Debussy: Prélude a l'apres-midi d'un faun, Images, Jeux - poeme dansé, Dances for Harp and String Orchestra*, Supraphon (2000). Composed by Claude Achille Debussy. Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/prelude-a-l-apres-midi-d-un-faune/id366574802?i=366574912.

Page 39: Demonstration of a whole tone scale, commencing on middle C-natural. Available from the University of Notre Dame *Research Online* archive. The major and minor scales that follow the whole tone scale demonstration are also played for reference. These latter scales are the most common in popular music.

Chapter Two:

Traditional Music and the Post-Independence Exodus to Britain

Page 58: "Did Your Mother Come From Ireland?" Bing Crosby, *Ritzy: Popular Music from the 1930s*, Hot Record Society (2003). Words and Music by

Michael Carr and Jimmy Kennedy, 1936. Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/did-your-mother-come-from-ireland/id151977720?i=151978038. This song is known by both titles, "*Does* Your Mother Come From Ireland?" and "*Did* Your Mother Come From Ireland?" While Kavanagh's reference to the song uses the former, Crosby's version takes the latter. The song's cheap appeal to sentiment is clear in lines such as "Sure, there's something in you Irish."

Page 58: "Rich and Rare Were the Gems She Wore" – John Elwes and Yoshio Watanabe, *Thomas Moore's Irish Melodies*, ALM Records/Kojima Recordings, Inc. (2007). Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/rich-and-rare-were-the-gems-she-wore/id458527100?i=458527115. This song, one of Moore's *Irish Melodies*, is set to the air of "The Summer is Coming." An electronic format of the song's printed score, arranged by Charles Villiers Stanford in 1895, may be found at http://www.libraryireland.com/Irish-Melodies/Rich-and-rare-were-the-gems-she-wore-1.php.

Chapter Three:
Between Two Worlds: Music at the American wake

Page 76: "Erin's Lovely Home." Karan Casey, *Ships in the Forest*, Crow Valley Music (2008). Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/erins-lovely-home/id283320164?i=283320224.

Page 77: "The Green Fields of America." The Chieftains and Kevin Conneff, *The Essential Chieftains*, BMG Music (2006). Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/the-green-fields-of-america/id305094947?i=305094977.

Page 79: "A Mother's Love is a Blessing." Bridie Gallagher, *The Very Best of Bridie Gallagher (60 Great Irish Songs)*, K-tel (2009). Available from iTunes:

https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/a-mothers-loves-a-blessing/id313007968?i=313008304.

Page 88: "Caisleán Uí Néill." Líadan, *In Am Trátha: Well-timed*, self-published (2015). Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/caisle%C3%A1n-u%C3%AD-n%C3%A9ill/id994753522?i=994753528. This recording, by the all-female group Líadan, is performed in accordance with the female persona of the song. A version recorded by a male singer, such as in "The Year 1912," is supplied below. In each case, note the melismatic treatment of the melody.

Page 88: "Caisleán Uí Néill (Sean Nós)." Jimmy Ó Ceannabháin, *Ceol Agus Foinn Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy,* RTÉ (2008). Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/caisle%C3%A1n-u%C3%AD-n%C3%A9ill-sean-n%C3%B3s/id1038910246?i=1038911492.

Chapter Four:
"*Os comhair lán an tí*": *Sean-nós* as a site of memory in *Brooklyn*

Pages 106-113: "Casadh an tSúgáin." Below is the recording of each of the song's variants described on pages 106-113.

"Casadh an tSúgáin." Iarla Ó Lionard, *Brooklyn (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)*, Lakeshore Records (2015). Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/casadh-an-ts%C3%BAg%C3%A1in/id1063899316?i=1063899797. This recording, by the Kerry singer Iarla Ó Lionard, was used in the film adaptation of *Brooklyn* (Ó Lionard himself played the old singer in the film). Ó Lionard's performance is noteworthy for its melismatic ornamentation. It is also worth noting that his voice is softer, and less nasal, than Joe Heaney's.

Page 111: "Casadh an tSugáin," from Lasairfhíona Ní Chonaola's album *An Raicín Álainn,* self published (2003). Recorded 2002. Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/casadh-an-tsug%C3%A1in/id453460375?i=453460382. Note the instrumentation in the recording – like the Bothy Band (below), Lasairfhíona's rendition has a clearly discernible beat and time signature. As a result of this and the instrumentation, the vocal delivery of lines is contingent upon the timing of the other instruments. Also, compare the colour of the accompaniment between the two versions.

Joe Heaney, "Casadh an tSúgáin." A recording of Heaney performing the entirety of the song can be sourced at *Cartlanna Sheosaimh Uí Éanaí*, http://www.joeheaney.org/en/casadh-an-tsugain-2/. Heaney sings the song with greater urgency and bounce than the other recordings supplied here—his description of two styles of singing the song can be found at http://www.joeheaney.org/en/casadh-an-tsugain-1/.

The Bothy Band, "Casadh an tSúgáin." *The Best of the Bothy Band*, Compass Records Group (2008). Originally released 1988. Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/casadh-an-tsugain/id272543263?i=272543368. This version is performed with instrumentation, as a popular-style song rather than *sean-nós*. The instrumentation is, however, sympathetic and appropriate to the melody and the song's sentiment.

Chapter Five:

Imagined Geography and Communal Memory in *Come Back to Erin*

Page 131: "Youghal Harbour." Rooney's song is composed to the air of the same name. In the posthumously published *Poems and Ballads* (1902), Rooney gives the following introduction to the poem:

The air to which this song is written is one of the most popular amongst our peasantry, and has numerous sets of words to it both in Irish and English. One of the former versions has been translated by Ferguson, and will be found among the "Lays of the Western Gael." The present version retains the opening lines of one of the Anglo-Irish songs to the tune. The metre is after the fashion of the Gaelic songs of the last century, other specimens of which, in English, will be found in Dr. Hyde's translations from the Connacht poets or Mr. Flannery's version of Comyns' "*Laoidh Oisín air Tír nan Óg.*"[1]

Rooney's full poem is slightly different to the one sung by St. John Hannafey in *Come Back to Erin*:

Near Youghal harbour I met my charmer
     Long, long, unharmed or unblest by love,
O'er hill and valley my way I'd taken
     But naught to waken, in town or grove,
My heart to loving I'd met, till, *stóirín*,
     That lonely *bóithrín*[2] I chanced to find
Near Youghal harbor, and in your keeping,
     Awake or sleeping left heart and mind.

'Twas not your eyes' bright resistless sunlight
     Your forehead snow-white or swan-soft breast
Your night-dark hair to the breezes blowing,
     Or lips red-glowing caused me unrest.
'Twas not your step's almost fairy fleetness
     Your voice's sweetness or whisper low,
That filled my soul with the glow, my treasure,
     This mingled measure of joy and woe.

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[1] William Rooney, *Poems and Ballads,* edited by Arthur Griffith (Dublin: M. H. Gill, 1901), 189. *Laoidh Oisín Air Tír na nÓg* is "The Song [Lay] of Oisín of the Land of the Young." The modern spelling of *laoidh* is simply *laoi.*

[2] *Bóithrín*: a country lane, especially a narrow one (pronounced *bow-reen*). *Bóithrín* is the diminutive form of *bóthar*, "road" (*bow-her*).

>’Twas some sweet charm beyond expressing

>Some secret blessing attending thee,

>That stirred my being while careless roaming

>That summer gloaming beside the sea.

>*A mhuirnín, mhuirnín*, shall fancy's seeming—

>Shall hope's fond dreaming be false to me?

>Shall Youghal harbour be shoal or haven,

>Be night or Heaven, *a stóir mo chroidhe*![3]

The words are sung to the air of the same name, a recording of which may be heard by Margaret Knight (with Peter Acty and Paul Hutchinson, *Folk melodies of the British Isles*, Beautiful Jo Records [1997]). Available at: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/youghal-harbour/id1190746056?i=1190746936.

Page 132: "Come Back to Erin." John McCormack, appears on the compilation *The Coen Brothers – Music From Their Movies*, Ideal Music (2014). Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/come-back-to-erin-from-millers-crossing/id874290590?i=874290606. This recording has been selected for the band that accompanies the famous Irish tenor John McCormack. The ship's band that is described in *Come Back to Erin* would sound similar.

Pages 137-138: "Cill Aodáin." Gearóidín Breathnach, *Grá mo Chroí an Óige*, Móc Music (2013). Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/cill-aod%C3%A1in/id654684711?i=654684757. Breathnach's version takes a common title for the song, "Cill Aodáin," as opposed to the "Contae Mhaigh Eo" as entitled in Ó Floinn's translation.

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[3] Rooney, "Youghal Harbour," 189-190. *A stoir mo chroidhe:* Rooney uses the pre-standardised spelling for "heart"; as seen in Chapter Four, the modern spelling is *chroí. Stoirín* is the diminutive form of *stoir.*

Page 138-139: "The Irish Emigrant." John McCormack, *My Wild Irish Rose*, BMG
Music (1997). Available from iTunes: https://itunes.apple.com/au/album/the-irish-emigrant-alternate-take/id358394858?i=358394951.

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