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Source: *Irish University Review*, Autumn - Winter, 2003, Vol. 33, No. 2 (Autumn - Winter, 2003), pp. 279-290

Published by: Edinburgh University Press

Stable URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/25504930

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Claude McKay is almost invariably and often exclusively categorized by his North American critics as a participant in the Harlem Renaissance, the extraordinary burgeoning of African-American cultural expression of the 1920s and early 1930s. *Harlem Shadows*, McKay's 1922 collection of poems, and *Home to Harlem*, his novel of 1928, appear to situate him in the vanguard and then in the centre of Harlem literary life, yet he spent the greater part of the twenties away from Harlem and the United States, his prolonged stays abroad — in England, Soviet Russia, France, and North Africa — earning him the moniker of 'Playboy of the Harlem Renaissance'.[1] Born a British colonial subject in Jamaica in 1889, McKay was not a native Harlemite, nor even an African-American. Represented as he is in numerous anthologies of African-American literature, however, McKay's Jamaican identity and the poetry he wrote in Jamaica have been occluded by the 'Americanness' which is only one component of his multivalent and intranational literary identity. The intention of this essay is to explore a neglected dimension of that identity: the links between McKay and Ireland.

McKay's first two books of poetry, *Songs of Jamaica* and *Constab Ballads*, both published in 1912 and written in Jamaican dialect, would routinely be ignored by his American critics until the mid-1990s.[2] These early dialect books deserve re-examination on two related counts: as the founding texts of the Caribbean vernacular or 'nation language' tradition, and therefore as precursors to the work of contemporary poets from the region; and as early examples of a demotic and provincial poetics of modernism also practiced by Hugh MacDiarmid in Scotland and John Millington Synge in Ireland.

Throughout his career, McKay, like MacDiarmid, looked to the model of cultural renaissance and colonial resistance proffered by Ireland. MacDiarmid was fascinated by the ideals of the Irish Literary Revival which — beginning in the 1880s with the work of Standish O'Grady and the early poetry of W.B. Yeats and continuing into the twentieth century with Synge and his *Playboy of the Western World* (1907) — he saw as a model for the Scottish Vernacular Revival.[3] MacDiarmid frequently emphasized Scottish affinities with Ireland, cultural and

otherwise, even envisaging 'a sort of Celtic Union of Socialist Soviet Republics in the British Isles',[4] a notion rendered in poetic form in his 'Cornish Heroic Song for Valda Trevlyn' in which 'the hideous khaki Empire' of imperialist England is countered by 'young Celts' who 'arise with quick tongues intact / Though our elders lie tongueless under the ocean of history'.[5] Claude McKay was likewise preoccupied with concepts of cultural renaissance, commenting in his autobiography that '[t]he Arabian cultural renaissance ... [t]he Russian literary renaissance and also the Irish had absorbed my interest'.[6] Indeed, a chapter in that autobiography, 'Hail and Farewell to Morocco', echoes and adapts to McKay's own peripatetic circumstances the title of George Moore's memoir of his role in the Irish Literary Revival. McKay's first articles of journalism for Sylvia Pankhurst's paper the *Workers' Dreadnought* in London and for Max Eastman's *Liberator* magazine in New York are specifically to do with the Irish, whom McKay analogizes to the rural Jamaicans of his youth and in whose negotiations with literature, language, and the colonial experience he could find a parallel for the situation of West Indian writers.

Harlem Renaissance leaders like James Weldon Johnson and Alain Locke would likewise advance the Irish Literary Revival as a precursory exemplar for the New Negro Renaissance in the United States. Locke would compare the Irish peasantry with the African-American population, offering Ireland as a model for the kind of cultural conservation in which black America should also engage, chiding his compatriots that

> [in] Ireland now some of the greatest literary men of our time are hard at work, visiting the lumber cabins of the Irish peasants collecting their folk tales, their stories, and writing them into literature.[7]

It is perhaps beside the point that Irish peasants didn't live in 'lumber cabins': what is noteworthy here is that the conserving activities of Yeats, Augusta Gregory, and others are seen as exemplary, and not as the suspect and ultimately reactionary indulgence for which some contemporary critics have castigated Irish Revivalist folklorists and McKay's mentor in Jamaica, Walter Jekyll.[8] In the introductory essay to his seminal anthology *The New Negro*, Locke states unequivocally that in cultural and ethnographic terms 'Harlem has the same role to play for the New Negro as Dublin has had for the new Ireland'.[9] Irish literary adaptations of folk heritage are again adduced as enabling paradigms in Johnson's *Book of American Negro Poetry*, which insists that '[w]hat the colored poet in the United States needs to do is something like what Synge did for the Irish; he needs to find a form that will address the racial spirit'.[10]

The numerous suggestive connections as well as the many and substantive differences between the Harlem and Irish Renaissances have been documented elsewhere.[11] The recourse to and creative adaptations of Irish models in Caribbean literature, however, remain relatively understudied, this despite the striking and persistent influence of the demotic speech of Irish drama, evident in Trinidadian playwright Errol John's use of a folk idiom adapted from Sean O'Casey and in Mustapha Matura's *Playboy of the West Indies*, a Caribbean reworking of Synge's seminal play. *The Playboy of the Western World* and the controversy it spawned are invoked by McKay in his 1929 novel *Banjo*, where the example given of the blight of 'Anglo-Saxon standards [on] some of the world's most interesting peoples' is that of '[t]he Irish objecting to the artistic use of their own rich idioms'.[12] McKay would find in the voices of the international black population celebrated in his novel a 'rich reservoir of niggerisms', the 'finer nuances of the necromancy of language' of the kind Synge had conjured from the speech of the Aran islanders. Irish analogues may also help us to read McKay's pre-Harlem Jamaican writing, a body of work that was largely ignored by the cultural architects of the Harlem Renaissance. The provocative description of 'the deliberate assertion of the Irish dialect of English as ... a nation language' suggests that synthetic discourses such as Kiltartanese and 'Synge-song' may legitimately be read alongside McKay's dialect poetry as versions of a regional, vernacular modernism.[13]

Kiltartanese — an Irish dialect of English and as such distinct from the Irish language itself — is Augusta Gregory's literary recreation of the vernacular speech of Co Galway. The discourse of her own plays, Kiltartanese, would be co-opted by Yeats in his Red Hanrahan stories, and in the nationalist play co-authored with Gregory, *Cathleen ni Houlihan*. The language of Synge's plays is similarly synthetic: as Declan Kiberd has shown, Synge's dramatic discourse is a composite which blends the dialect of Wicklow with that of the Aran Islands.[14] Synge's poetry returns to Irish folk rhythms and traditional ballad forms: at the same time, the poet's declaration in the foreword to his 1909 *Poems and Translations* that his intention is to 'make poetry brutal' is a quintessentially modernist gesture and one which alerts Donald Davie to the 'poetic diction' and artifice according to which this 'folk' material is recreated and rendered.[15] A comparable tension between innovation and tradition, which is most striking in the contradiction between conventional form and vernacular voice, characterizes Claude McKay's early poetry. The poem 'The Hermit', from *Songs of Jamaica*, is an example of what Charles Bernstein has disparagingly described as McKay's 'pentameter dialect'.[16] A Caribbean version of Irish pastoral, the poem echoes and adapts to its own indigenous environment Yeats's

'The Lake Isle of Innisfree', thus initiating an intratextual tradition in Caribbean poetry which extends to the verse of contemporary poet Lorna Goodison, whose 'Country, Sligoville' is a recent Jamaican invocation of 'The Lake Isle': 'I arise and go with William Butler Yeats / to country, Sligoville / in the shamrock green hills of St. Catherine'.[17] 'The Lake Isle' and McKay's 'The Hermit' are, according to the classic trajectory of pastoral, written from capitals — London and Kingston, respectively — to the countryside. McKay's poem retains and adapts to the exigencies of the Jamaican climate the practical provisions which foreground Yeats's island retreat: where Yeats has his honey and his Thoreauvian bean-rows, McKay ensures that his cabin has a 'Roof strong enough to keep out season rain', the heavy rains of the West Indian May and October.[18] The quiddity of the Jamaican scene is further underscored by the presence of local flora: the roses which bloom beside the hermit's home are 'tropic roses', and these subsist alongside 'de wild cane' (p. 41). 'The Hermit' again stresses its Caribbean difference from its Yeatsian original in its diction which, moving between standard and Jamaican or creole, offers an early example of the 'code switching', or moving between linguistic registers, which characterizes the language of Caribbean poetry from McKay to Lorna Goodison: the concluding line of the penultimate verse of the poem tells us in creole that the birds which make their nests 'by de woodland' do so 'Widouten have de least lee t'ought of fear' (without having the smallest or least thought of fear), while the poem's final line is phrased in conventional and standard poetic diction with the poet-speaker 'Sad, yet contented in my lone retreat' (p. 41).

The received critical verdict upon McKay's dialect poems is that 'these early efforts mirrored the limits of McKay's provincialism. Above all, they revealed his thoroughly British orientation'.[19] Yet McKay's provincialism, if looked at in another light, offers suggestive analogues with other poetries of the modernist period which also reject a 'British orientation'. As Bernstein has argued, 'the construction of a vernacular poetry was a major project for many poets, black and white, during the modernist period': indeed, 'the exploration of dialect traditions by Basil Bunting and Hugh MacDiarmid and in the Caribbean by Claude McKay ... became a source of shared language resources among English language poetries'.[20] Tapping the resources of their respective dialects, McKay, MacDiarmid, and Synge all produce what may be termed a synthetic vernacular: in so doing, all contribute to the provincial, demotic variant recuperated from the dominant model of modernism by commentators such as Bernstein, North, and Robert Crawford.

Synge's 'Ballad of a Pauper' and McKay's 'A Midnight Woman to the Bobby' are both examples of what Synge called 'vital verse' and 'the poetry of real life', broadside ballads in which the subaltern speaks.[21]

Both poems record encounters between representatives of the law and marginal personae, and both proceed, through the medium of the subversive, vernacular voice, to undermine establishment values. In Synge's poem, the relationship between illicit activity and law enforcement is perturbed when the pauper is advised by the 'Horney' — a Dublin dialect word for policeman — not to seek alms in the poorhouse but instead to commit a crime in order to 'be taught a dacent thrade' in Glencree prison. The pauper concludes that 'It's deuced stiff a cove must steal / To grow an honest man'.[22] The pauper, although he 'nivver stole', is culpable of a linguistic version of the duplicity which he discovers in the Horney's logic when he is referred to as 'double phrase' by his interlocutor.[23] His vernacular identity is subversive of lexical and legal authority, as is that of the Spanish Town prostitute, the speaker of McKay's 'A Midnight Woman to the Bobby':

> No palm me up, you dutty brute,
> You' jam mout' mash like ripe bread-fruit;
> You fas' now, but wait lee ya,
> I'll see you grunt under da law
> (*Dialect Poetry* I, p. 74).[24]

The Midnight Woman reverses the power-relation from the outset in refusing to address the Bobby in the proper form: creole speakers control a span of the spectrum of the language continuum in Jamaica and so her choice of the basilect, the furthest extreme from standard Jamaican English, is strategic. At the end of the poem, the Midnight Woman confounds the Bobby with her superior knowledge of the workings of the judiciary:

> Say wha'? — 'res me? — you go to hell!
> You t'ink Judge don't know unno well?
> You t'ink him gwin' go sentance me
> Widout a soul fe witness I?
> (*Dialect Poetry* I, p. 76).[25]

The pun on 'sentance' in the penultimate line, in its linkage of lexical and legal wordplay, is an early example of what the Barbadian poet-critic Kamau Brathwaite would later call the 't/reasonable English' of Caribbean language. Written as it is in iambic pentameter, 'A Midnight Woman to the Bobby' calls into question Bernstein's argument that in McKay's Jamaican poetry, 'iambic pentameter is made the metrical mark of colonialism, the chains around a corrosive dialect'.[26] The poem, like the Midnight Woman herself, works within a framework — metrical and legal — as well as subverting it: the woman knows that

the Judge will not sentence her. Here, as in other of McKay's dialect poems, the tension between inherited forms and the local expression of the vernacular voice is consciously deployed and manipulated.

The coexistence in Synge's poetry of the constructed and the synthetic with the traditional and the demotic produces an effect of defamiliarization of the kind also sought by another Irish writer, Thomas MacDonagh, one of three poets who were also leaders of the Easter 1916 Rising.[27] MacDonagh, who shared with Synge and with his near-contemporary Claude McKay a British colonial education and who, like them, adapted the ballad form in his poetry, promulgated what he called the 'Irish Mode'. This Irish Mode is English-language poetry which attempts to reproduce the sound-patterns of Irish-language poetry. The Irish Mode is, then, differentiated from that which MacDonagh calls the 'vague and illogical Celtic Note', which involves a recognizably English-language lyricism, employing as its subject matter Celtic motifs. In contrast to the Celtic Note, the Irish Mode produces a dissonance which MacDonagh compares with that of the avant-garde practices of Marinetti's Futurism. In the introduction to his *Literature in Ireland*, MacDonagh states that

> [t]he poets [of the Irish Mode] have till now been ignorant of the parallel movement; they have taken little or no note of the new writers of free verse or of the futurists. Yet their work to the coming age may appear one with the work of these.[28]

Indeed, Ezra Pound would praise Irish Mode translations as imagistic, and thus as modernist, if not Futurist, texts. 'The Yellow Bittern', MacDonagh's translation of Cathal Buidhe Mac Giolla Ghunna's Irish-language original, is arguably his most successful poem in the Irish Mode:

> The yellow bittern that never broke out
> In a drinking bout, might as well have drunk;
> His bones are thrown on a naked stone
> Where he lives alone like a hermit monk.
> O yellow bittern! I pity your lot,
> Though they say that a sot like myself is curst —
> I was sober a while, but I'll drink and be wise
> For I fear I should die in the end of thirst.[29]

His translation preserves the internal rhyme of Irish language poetry, bequeathing this formal characteristic of the Irish Mode to Austin Clarke, MacDonagh's pupil and then successor as lecturer in English at University College Dublin. Clarke's 1929 *Pilgrimage and Other Poems* is poetry which 'takes the clapper from the bell of rhyme'.[30] Assonance

and rhythm define this mode of verse, of which 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree' is in MacDonagh's opinion an example. Refusing to scan according to English metrics, the rhythm of Yeats's poem conforms in his analysis to 'the true quality of this mode in Anglo-Irish poetry'.[31] MacDonagh's prosody conjoins his nationalism, anticipating the rejection of the iambic pentameter and the rediscovery of indigenous measures in other anticolonial poetries. Kamau Brathwaite has explained that in a Caribbean context,

> [i]n order to break down the pentameter, we discovered an ancient form which was always there, the calypso ... It does not employ the iambic pentameter. It employs dactyls. It therefore mandates the use of the tongue in a certain way, the use of sound in a certain way. It is a model that we are moving naturally towards now.[32]

In Brathwaite's view, Claude McKay 'allowed himself to be imprisoned in the pentameter; he didn't let his language find its own parameters'.[33] The formal confines of the iambic pentameter are metonymic of other imposed colonial structures; in capitulating to the pentameter, McKay practices literary colonialism. If we consider McKay's dialect poems with MacDonagh's theories in mind, however, the placing of Jamaican dialect within standard poetic forms has a greater affinity with the dissonant Irish Mode than with the more decorative Celtic Note practised by certain Revivalists in that both MacDonagh and McKay roughen the texture of the language of poetry, MacDonagh by reproducing in English the sound patterns of another language, and McKay by infiltrating the pentameter with Jamaican English. Both thus produce a poetics the hybridity of which is the conscious result of strategy and not the inevitable fate of the writer who has experienced the fractured colonial condition.

Tendentious as it would be to align McKay's dialect poetry with an avant-garde praxis like Italian Futurism, his Jamaican poetry may still be seen as modernist or proto-modernist according to Robert Crawford's formulation of modernism *as* provincialism. As Crawford argues, '[a] cursory account of modernism stresses its cosmopolitanism and internationalism ... But there is another, equally important, side of modernism that is demotic and crucially "provincial"'.[34] It is in the context of this other and heretofore overlooked 'side of modernism' that McKay's dialect poetry may be read. To rephrase the Barbadian novelist George Lamming, it is because he is provincial that the Caribbean writer is cosmopolitan.

In his post-Jamaican writing, McKay would consistently champion the provincial Celtic fringe at the expense of the English imperial centre, comparing the Anglo-Saxon English unfavourably with the

Celtic Bretons, and claiming to understand the people of Ireland more profoundly than the left-wing thinkers and activists with whom he associated during his residency in London in 1920. In 'How Black Sees Green and Red', his 1921 article for the *Liberator*, McKay declares,

> I suffer with the Irish. I think I understand the Irish. My belonging to a subject race entitles me to some understanding of them. And then I was born and reared a peasant; the peasant's passion for the soil possesses me, and it is one of the strongest passions in the Irish revolution.[35]

Blood and soil are constant concerns in McKay's *oeuvre*; his characteristic metaphors are agrarian and organic. Notwithstanding this, his imaginative investment in the earthy doesn't blind the McKay of the dialect poems to the harshness of rural life. 'Quashie to Buccra', the opening poem in *Songs of Jamaica*, is the riposte of the black Everyman, Quashie, to buccra, the generic white man or master:

> You tas'e petater and you say it sweet,
> But you no know how hard we wuk fe it;
> (*Dialect Poetry* I, p. 13).

The trenchant antipastoralism of *Songs of Jamaica* anticipates that of Patrick Kavanagh in an Irish context. Indeed, the antipastoral stance of *The Great Hunger* has been linked to a decolonizing impulse, a combination of elements also found in McKay's poetry and fiction.[36]

One of the principal frustrations of McKay's experience as a political journalist in London and in New York was the persistent inability of his peers to understand the connection between the principles of anticolonial nationalism and socialism. In his first article for Pankhurst's paper, McKay castigated English communists who had turned their backs on the Irish and Indian independence movements because these were nationalistic; the radical New York editor Max Eastman, too, dismissed 'the Irish and Indian questions' as mere 'national issues'.[37] During his stay in England in 1920, McKay met another prominent socialist, George Bernard Shaw. Given that he had long idolized Shaw as 'the wisest and most penetrating individual alive', McKay was understandably devastated when Shaw asked him, 'why didn't you choose pugilism instead of poetry for a profession?'[38] Wayne Cooper and Robert Reinders comment that '[t]o have one of his idols inform him that he should have been a boxer must have been a crushing blow and an indication of the "place" assigned immigrants by even the wisest of Englishmen'.[39] Shaw was of course an Irishman and not an Englishman; but even as such he proved in his conversation

with McKay to be disappointingly obtuse about national issues. McKay would later recall that Shaw

> told me about a Chinese intellectual who had come all the way from China to visit him, and wanted to talk only about Irish politics. He laughed, thinking it was funny. And I laughed too, yet I could understand a little why an educated Chinaman could have the Irish situation on his subtle Oriental mind.[40]

McKay himself frequently had the 'Irish situation' and its international resonance on his mind, commenting in 'How Black Sees Green and Red' that he had 'heard from an Irish communist in London that some Indian students had been to Dublin to study ... the art of revolution'.[41] In the same article, McKay recalls that

> [l]ast summer [1920] I went to a big Sinn Fein demonstration in Trafalgar Square ... I was there selling the *Worker's Dreadnought*, Sylvia Pankhurst's pamphlet *Rebel Ireland*, and Herman Gorter's *Ireland: The Achilles Heel of England*; I sold out completely. All ... were wearing the shamrock or some green symbol. I also wore a green necktie and was greeted from different quarters as 'Black Murphy' or 'Black Irish'.[42]

'All Ireland was there', says McKay. The English avant-garde artist and writer Wyndham Lewis was there too, at this demonstration in support of Terence MacSwiney, Mayor of Cork, who was then dying on hunger strike in London's Brixton Prison.[43] Lewis would subsequently record his own impressions of the event as part of a discussion of the myth of the 'Celt' in his controversial study of American race-relations, *Paleface: The Philosophy of the Melting Pot*:

> [d]uring the martyrdom of the Mayor of Cork I had several opportunities of seeing considerable numbers of Irish people demonstrating among the London crowds. I was never able to distinguish which were Irish and which were English, however ... they all looked extremely depressed.[44]

The Sinn Fein rally provoked a very different response from Claude McKay, whom Lewis evidently did not 'distinguish' amidst the crowd: 'For that day at least I was filled with the spirit of Irish nationalism — although I am black!'[45] This solidarity with the Irish cause, and the bestowing of the affectionate soubriquet 'Black Murphy', recall Frederick Douglass's dealings with the Irish some seventy-five years earlier. Douglass, too, had made common cause with the Irish, for which Daniel O'Connell christened him the 'Black O'Connell'.

During his year in London McKay actively supported the struggle for Irish independence, as well as the mass movement for black self-determination led by his fellow-Jamaican Marcus Garvey, his endorsement of Garveyite black nationalism existing in a symbiotic relationship with the internationalism for which McKay was accused of a 'lack of common loyalty' to the 'American negro situation'.[46] One response to this charge is to reiterate that McKay was not an American negro. As Harold Cruse has argued, Garveyism was not an African-American nationalist movement, but was 'Afro-British nationalism functioning outside its historical British Empire context'.[47] McKay, as an 'Afro-Britisher', offers an interesting case-study of Afro-British nationalism functioning *within* its historical context. Indeed, in his time in England, McKay would signal the beginning of the black colonial revolt against British imperialism that would peak after the Second World War. Twenty years before Nkrumah, Nyere, and Kenyatta, McKay argued that socialism and black nationalism were interdependent. His political position owed much to his association with Irish radicals, just as his writing, from the early dialect poems to his later novels, demonstrates his cultural affiliation with Ireland. As Ray, McKay's mouthpiece, says in the novel *Banjo*:

> if this renaissance we're talking about is going to be more than a sporadic and scabby thing, we'll have to get down to our racial roots to create it [and] turn for example to the Irish cultural and social movement (p. 201).

NOTES

1. Wayne F. Cooper, *Claude McKay: Rebel Sojourner in the Harlem Renaissance* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987), p. 319.
2. The first significant American reappraisal of the dialect poems is Michael North's chapter on McKay in his groundbreaking *The Dialect of Modernism: Race, Language and Twentieth-Century Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).
3. MacDiarmid, however, disparaged the Celtic Twilight of the fin de siècle in favour of what he called 'The Celtic Sunrise', the harder and in Yeats's term more 'masculine' Irish writing which, from the turn of the century on, superseded the 'feminine' and dreamy qualities of Twilight literature. The poet born Christopher Murray Grieve would assume the pen name of 'Hugh MacDiarmid' in 1922, the year of the formation of the Free State and of the publication of James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Joyce's novel, which marks with its mockery of Revival touchstones the endpoint of the Irish Literary Revival, is hailed by MacDiarmid in his manifesto-essay 'A Theory of Scots Letters' as the blueprint for a Scottish cultural renaissance which, perhaps paradoxically, would also take its bearings from the Revival.
4. Hugh MacDiarmid, *Lucky Poet: A Self-Study in Literature and Political Ideas* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1994), p. 26.
5. Hugh MacDiarmid, *Complete Poems* I (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985), p. 709.

6. Claude McKay, *A Long Way from Home* (London: Pluto Press, 1985), p. 321.
7. Quoted in Tommy L. Lott, *The Invention of Race: Black Culture and the Politics of Representation* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1999), p. 91.
8. Michael North disparages what he regards as 'the conservative bias of the very act of preservation' in the work of Jekyll and other folklorists. See his *Dialect of Modernism*, p. 101. Jekyll, who encouraged McKay to write poetry in the Jamaican dialect, published his *Jamaican Song and Story* in 1907, under the auspices of the Folklore Society of England.
9. *The New Negro*, edited by Alain Locke (New York: Touchstone, 1997), p. 7.
10. *The Book of American Negro Poetry*, edited by James Weldon Johnson (New York: Harcourt, 1922), p. xl.
11. See Tracy Mishkin, *The Harlem and Irish Renaissances* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998).
12. Claude McKay, *Banjo* (New York: Harper, 1929), pp. 164-5.
13. *Imagined Commonwealths: Cambridge Essays on Commonwealth and International Literatures in English*, edited by T.J. Cribb (London: Macmillan, 1999), p. 107.
14. See Declan Kiberd, *Synge and the Irish Language* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1993).
15. J.M. Synge, *Poems*, edited by Robin Skelton (Gerrards Cross and Washington D.C.: Colin Smythe and the Catholic University of America Press, 1982), p. xxxvi; Donald Davie, 'The Poetic Diction of John M. Synge', in *The Poet in the Imaginary Museum: Essays of Two Decades* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1977), pp. 6-10 (p. 7).
16. Charles Bernstein, 'Poetics of the Americas,' in his *My Way: Speeches and Poems* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp. 113-137 (p. 127).
17. Lorna Goodison, *Turn Thanks* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), p. 47. Yeats chafed against being over-remembered for 'The Lake Isle', recalling with dismay a recitation of the poem by some 2,000 boy Scouts. See R.F. Foster, *W.B. Yeats: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), I, p. 557, n. 90.
18. Claude McKay, *The Dialect Poetry of Claude McKay* (Plainview: Books for Libraries Press, 1972), I, p. 41.
19. Wayne F. Cooper and Robert C. Reinders, 'A Black Briton Comes Home: Claude McKay in England, 1920', *Race* 9.1 (1967), 67-83 (p. 67).
20. 'Poetics of the Americas', p. 119, p. 118.
21. *Poems* I, p. xvi, p. xiv.
22. *Poems* I, p. 8, p. 9.
23. *Poems* I, p. 8.
24. 'Don't put your hands on me, you dirty brute, / Your big mouth is mashed up like a ripe bread-fruit; / You are officious now, but wait a little, do you hear, / I'll see you grunt under the law'.
25. 'What's that? Arrest me? You go to hell! / Do you think the Judge doesn't know your tricks? / Do you think that he will sentence me / Without a witness?'
26. 'Poetics of the Americas', p. 131.
27. MacDonagh was duly executed by the British, along with his fellow poet-revolutionaries Joseph Mary Plunkett and Padraig Pearse.
28. Thomas MacDonagh, *Literature in Ireland* (Tyrone: Relay Books, 1996), p. 4, p. 6.
29. *The 1916 Poets*, edited by Desmond Ryan (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1995), p. 80.
30. Austin Clarke, *Collected Poems* (Dublin: Dolmen Press and Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 547.
31. MacDonagh, *Literature in Ireland*, p. 48.
32. Kamau Brathwaite, *History of the Voice: The Development of Nation Language in Anglophone Caribbean Poetry* (London and Port of Spain: New Beacon, 1984), p. 17.
33. Kamau Brathwaite, *History of the Voice*, p. 20.
34. Robert Crawford, *Devolving English Literature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), pp. 218-19.

35. *The Passion of Claude McKay: Selected Poetry and Prose, 1912-1948*, edited by Wayne F. Cooper (New York: Shocken, 1973), p. 59.
36. See Antoinette Quinn's introduction to *The Selected Poems of Patrick Kavanagh* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1996), p. ix-xxxvi.
37. Quoted in Wayne F. Cooper, *Claude McKay*, p. 163.
38. Claude McKay, *A Long Way from Home*, p. 61.
39. Wayne F. Cooper and Robert C. Reinders, 'A Black Briton Comes Home', p. 81.
40. Claude McKay, *A Long Way from Home*, p. 61.
41. *The Passion of Claude McKay*, p. 62.
42. *The Passion of Claude McKay*, p. 57.
43. The eventual death of Terence MacSwiney on 25 October 1920, after 75 days on hunger strike, elicited the solidarity of other Afro-Caribbean and African American writers and activists. The Harlem Renaissance poet, Anne Spence, wrote a poem in his honour, and the Mayor of Cork faced his death no doubt comforted by the assurance he received in a telegram from Marcus Garvey that he had the support and sympathy of no fewer than 400,000,000 black people.
44. Wyndham Lewis, *Paleface: The Philosophy of the Melting Pot* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1929), pp. 284-5.
45. *The Passion of Claude McKay*, p. 58.
46. See *The Passion of Claude McKay*, p. 319. Garvey himself supported the Irish cause. At the 1920 convention of his United Negro Improvement Association in New York, Garvey read out another of his telegrams, to be sent to the provisional President of Ireland, Eamon de Valera, urging him to 'Keep up the fight for a free Ireland'. See Tracy Mishkin, *The Harlem and Irish Renaissances*, p. 19. McKay would later renege on his support for Garvey, calling his back-to-Africa movement 'stupendous vaudeville'. See *The Passion of Claude McKay*, p. 68.
47. Harold Cruse, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* (New York: Quill, 1984), p. 124.