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Hannah Lynch and Narratives of the Irish Literary Revival

In June 1896, the *Freeman's Journal* published a brief account of a series of literary lectures delivered in Paris by Miss Hannah Lynch, followed by a transcription of her lecture on "The Irish Peasant: Fact and Fiction." It was prefaced with the observation that "One may not always agree with Miss Lynch's judgements, but her criticisms, free and at times perhaps extravagant, are always brilliantly and pointedly delivered."¹ The author, Hannah Lynch (1859–1904), a former executive member of the Ladies Land League, a writer of short stories and satirical sketches, *New Woman* and the author of *Land War* fiction, travel writing, translations, and literary criticism, was most assuredly not afraid to make judgements.²

1. Hannah Lynch, "The Irish Peasant: Fact and Fiction," *Freeman's Journal* 13 June 1896, 5; hereafter cited parenthetically, thus: (IPFF 5).
2. Lynch's writing, like the work of some of her contemporaries, Katherine Tynan, Jane Barlow, Rosa Mulholland and others, has become the focus of renewed critical interest. See: John Wilson Foster, *Irish Novels 1890–1949: New Bearings in Culture and Fiction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); James H. Murphy, *Irish Novelists and the Victorian Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Heather Ingman, *Irish Women's Fiction: From Edgeworth to Enright* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2013); Tina O'Toole, *The Irish New Woman* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Ciaran O'Neill, *Catholics of Consequence: Transnational Education, Social Mobility and the Irish Catholic Elite, 1850–1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014). For the fullest and most sustained attention to a diversity of Lynch's work, see Faith Binckes and Kathryn Laing, "Irish Autobiographical Fiction and Hannah Lynch's *Autobiography of a Child*," *English Literature in Transition*, 55, 2 (2012), 195–218; "A Vagabond's Scrutiny: Hannah Lynch in Europe" in *Irish Women Writers: New Critical Perspectives*, ed. Elke D'hoker, Raphaël Ingelbien, and Hedwig Schwall (Bern: Peter Lang, 2011), 111–31; "A Forgotten Franco-Irish Literary Network: Hannah Lynch, Arvède Barine and Salon Culture in Fin-de-Siècle Paris," *Études Irlandaises*, 36, 2 (Automne-Hiver, 2011), 159–60; "From 'Wild Irish Girl' to 'Parisianised Foreigner': Hannah Lynch and France," in *War of the Words: Literary Rebellion in France and Ireland*, ed. Eamon Maher and Eugene O'Brien (Haute Bretagne: TIR, 2010), 41–58. See also: Laing, "Intellectual Lives and Literary Perspectives: Female Irish Writing at Home and Abroad," in *Knowing their Place? The Intellectual Life of Women in the 19th Century*, ed. Brendan Walsh (Dublin: History Press, 2014), 66–84, and "'On Women, on Art, on Life': George Moore (1852–1933) and Hannah Lynch (1859–1904)," in *George Moore and the Quirks of Human Nature*, ed. Elana Jaime de Pablos and Mary Pierce (Bern: Peter Lang, 2014), 223–43.

Sweeping aside Douglas Hyde and Standish O'Grady on the basis that "the development in folk-lore or in the historical romance" will not interest French audiences, Lynch identified a female-centered canon to be of more relevance for her audience:

Instead we will examine the value of Irish local atmosphere and characters revealed in Miss Jane Barlow's really charming and masterly "Irish Idylls" and in the Honourable Emily Lawless's highly polished literary stories, "Grania" and "Hur-rish". These are undoubtedly the best stories the young school of Irish Celts has produced. (IPFF 5)

With these claims, Lynch placed herself in direct opposition to W. B. Yeats's devastating criticism of Lawless in 1895, when he declared that she was "in imperfect sympathy with the Celtic nature."³

Lynch's remarks about the still inchoate and emergent "Celtic Renaissance" culture of this period were not her first observations on the matter. She had also written two earlier satirical pieces, "A Dublin Literary Coterie Sketched by a Non-Prententious Observer" (1888) and the short story, "My Friend Arcanieva" (1895), published anonymously and then pseudonymously in the Dublin *Evening Telegraph* and *Macmillan's Magazine*, respectively. The real-world models for her satires were Katharine Tynan's Whitehall salon and the Contemporary Club, literary coteries that attracted and promoted some of the most prominent figures in what became the dominant movement within what Lynch identified as the "young school of Irish Celts," now generally known as the Irish Literary Revival.⁴ In both "My Friend Arcanieva," where the eponymous self-proclaimed Russian exile integrates himself into Dublin coterie culture before being recognized as an imposter, and in "A Dublin Literary Coterie," Lynch exposes snobbery, parochialism, insular self-regard, and in particular, the marginalization of women as features of these nascent Revivalist gatherings. That Lynch might have been a less-than-admiring observer of this new coterie culture and some of its emerging attitudes and ideas is suggested in the fiction she had already published during the mid 1880s, in which she scrutinizes themes, ideals, and

3. James Cahalan, *Double Visions: Women and Men in Modern and Contemporary Irish Fiction* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1999), 31. On women in the Revival, see also Ben Levitas, who comments on the significance of Jane Barlow's writing for the early Revival, subsequently obliterated due to "Yeats's decision to exclude her from his canon." Ben Levitas, "Reading the Irish Revival, 1891–1922," in *The Oxford History of the Irish Book, vol. 5: The Irish Book in English*, ed. Clare Hutton, et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 47.

4. The terminology is often problematic; this emergent cultural renaissance and the multiple terms used to describe it comprised a variety of movements including the Gaelic League, the Cooperative Movement, for example, as well the Anglo-Irish Literary Revival, the origins of which Lynch targets in her writing.

places later idealized by coterie members—masculinity and the heroic, for instance, as well as the mythical Irish West.⁵

Considered together, these Dublin-based satires and her Paris observations mark out an illuminating ambivalence in Lynch's attitude toward the shifting cultural and literary landscape of the early "Celtic Renaissance" period. Yet her ambivalences foreground broader possibilities for revisiting our understanding of the early Revival, and identify characteristics that came to dominate and arguably, to narrow, that landscape at the very point those characteristics were starting to emerge.

By 1896, Lynch was more or less settled in Paris. Her writing had been shaped by early, and often painful, engagements with national and gender politics of late nineteenth-century Ireland (especially through her membership in Anna Parnell's short-lived Ladies Land League) as well as by the multicultural and transnational perspectives generated by European education, travel, and residence. Giving her lecture as an exilic Irish writer and her insistence that "the foreign student of modern English literature be formally introduced to the Irish share in what has been called the Celtic Renaissance," Lynch does not include herself among that school. However, her political activism in the early 1880s as an executive member of the Ladies Land League placed her at the heart of the earliest stirrings of Revivalist culture. Lynch's position as critical observer and participant enriches the proliferating readings of this period, such as John Wilson Foster's identification of "a copious amount of first-rate imaginative prose" produced from the 1890s onward, either "written in furtherance of, or *in conscious reaction against*, the Irish Literary Revival."⁶ Lynch's earlier political affiliations and later generically diverse literary and critical interventions read instead as an example of an ambivalent voice from within the early manifestations of Revivalist culture, at once dissenting and supportive.

Literary histories of the Irish fin-de-siècle broadly, and of the Irish Revival more specifically, have been extensively revisited by scholars in recent years. Recovery work on and analysis of a range of "literary absentees"—primarily, Irish women writing and publishing during this period—has opened up rich seams of writing, many of which await further exploration.⁷ Re-appraisals of the

5. See Hannah Lynch, *Through Troubled Waters* (London, New York: Ward, Lock and Co., 1885) and *Defeated* (London: Beeton's Christmas Annual, 1885), 1–160.

6. J. W. Foster, *Fictions of the Irish Literary Revival: A Changeling Art* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1987), xiv.

7. See Rolf Loeber and Magda Stouthamer-Loeber, "Literary Absentees: Irish Women Authors in Nineteenth-Century England" in *The Irish Novel in the Nineteenth Century: Facts and Fictions*, ed. Jacqueline Belanger (Dublin: Four Courts, 2005), 167–86. In the same volume, see also Margaret Kelleher, "'Wanted: An Irish Novelist': The Critical Decline of the Nineteenth-Century Novel," 187–201, and Kelleher, "Writing Irish Women's Literary History," *Irish Studies Review*, 9, 1 (2001),

received narratives of the Irish Literary Revival with their “explicitly comparative and interdisciplinary perspectives” were introduced in a special edition of the *Irish University Review* in 2003 where, as Margaret Kelleher highlighted, “the cast of Revival authors, genres, texts, and subjects is richly and provocatively expanded.”⁸ In the light of this expansion and celebration of what Gregory Castle calls “the plurality at the heart of Revivalism,” the classic Revival narrative can no longer be seen as monolithic.⁹ Artists, activists, and initiatives have been buried beneath what one critic calls “the sediment of accreted myths” of the established and “familiar Revival narrative.”¹⁰ Recovery has become the focus of numerous projects, such as Catherine Morris’s *Alice Milligan and the Irish Cultural Revival* (2013).¹¹ Such projects provide helpful models and contexts for reading Lynch, whose overall oeuvre confounds any easy categorization. It needs, rather, to be considered in multiple contexts.

One of these contexts is the Ladies Land League and its links with the earliest formations of the Literary Revival, not least because the various accounts of the Revival published by those who were directly involved, such as Francis Fahy, W. P. Ryan, and Yeats, are invariably male-focused. Lynch’s activities during the early 1880s demonstrate an active engagement in some of the groups, debates, and discourses through which ideas of new Irish cultural, literary, and political

5–14. In recent years, a wealth of material has been published in the field of recovery, following such pioneering studies as Ann Coleman, “Far from Silent: Nineteenth-Century Women Writers” in *Gender Perspectives in Nineteenth Century Ireland*, ed. Margaret Kelleher and James H. Murphy (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1997), and since the appearance of the groundbreaking *Field Day Anthologies of Irish Women’s Writing*, vols. 4 and 5 (Cork: Cork University Press, 2002) and Rolph and Magda Loeber, *A Guide to Irish Fiction* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2006). See also *New Contexts: Re-Framing Nineteenth Century Irish Women’s Prose*, ed. Heidi Hansson (Cork: Cork University Press, 2008), and such broader studies as those of John Wilson Foster, and James H. Murphy, *Irish Novelists and the Victorian Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

8. “Special Issue: New Perspectives on the Irish Literary Revival,” *Irish University Review*, guest ed. Margaret Kelleher, 33, 1 (Spring–Summer, 2003), viii.

9. “The myriad ways in which Revivalist aesthetics and ideologies were expressed makes it impossible to regard Revivalism in monolithic terms and to restrict it to the literary Revival of W. B. Yeats, J. M. Synge and Lady Augusta Gregory.” Gregory Castle, “Irish Revivalism: Critical Trends and New Directions,” *Literature Compass*, 8, 5 (2011), 291.

10. Catherine Morris, “Becoming Irish? Alice Milligan and the Revival,” *Irish University Review*, 33, 1 (Spring–Summer, 2003), 79.

11. In addition to the essays in the *IUR* special issue that demonstrate aspects of “the plurality at the heart of revivalism” (Castle, 291) see also, for example, Clare Hutton, “Joyce, the Library Episode, and the Institutions of Revivalism” in *Joyce, Ireland, Britain*, ed. Andrew Gibson and Len Platt, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006), 122–38; “‘The Promise of Literature in the Coming Days’: The Best Hundred Irish Books Controversy of 1886,” *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 39, 2 (2011), 581–92; and *The Irish Revival Reappraised*, ed. Betsy Taylor FitzSimon and James H. Murphy (Dublin: Four Courts, 2004).

identities were being forged. She had been actively involved in the London Ladies Land League, in a period that also saw the establishment of the Southwark Junior Irish Literary Club, founded in the autumn of 1881 by members of the Ladies' and Men's Land Leagues based in South London.¹² As such, she was positioned at the heart of what many scholars have identified as the origins of the Irish Literary Revival.

To call this the period the origin, of course, differs from the chronology famously identified by Yeats, who saw the Revival's beginnings in the post-Parnell era later in the century.¹³ The Southwark Irish Literary club, established in 1883 by Francis Fahy in the wake of the success of the Junior Club, became, in Clare Hutton's words, "one of the most important early institutions for the development of the Irish cultural revival."¹⁴ There is no archival evidence (or at least, none has yet been discovered) of Lynch's membership of the Southwark Irish Literary Society—but as secretary of the London Ladies Land League, and moreover a secretary with literary aspirations, it is unlikely she was not involved, at least with the earlier established Junior Club, if not the Literary Society

12. The Southwark Irish Literary Society had its origins in the Southwark Junior Irish Literary Club. Frances Sullivan, wife of A. M. Sullivan, was president of the children's club until 1885. Riona Nic Congáil, "Young Ireland and the Nation: Nationalist Children's Culture in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Éire-Ireland*, 46, 3 and 4 (Fall–Winter 2011), 53. Frances Sullivan was also the president of the London branch of the Ladies Land League. In fact, Fahy felt compelled to write to the editor of the *Nation* to correct the details of an article about the Junior Club, stating that, "The merit of founding the Junior Irish Literary Club belongs not to me, but to the three patriotic ladies—Miss Thompson, Mrs Rae, and Mrs A. M. Sullivan, who founded it as a protest against the arrest of Mr. Parnell in 1881." Fahy, "The Southwark Junior Irish literary Club, To the Editor of *The Nation*," *Nation*, 12 January 1889, 7.

13. Peter van de Kamp's discusses the "original Revival orchestrators, journalists, civil servants, clerks, fathers of the band of men that people *Dubliners*, a professional class which had emerged all over Europe in the latter half of the nineteenth century as the nationalist intelligentsia." Peter van de Kamp, "Yeats and the Southwark Irish Literary Club," in *Tumult of Images: Essays on W. B. Yeats and Politics*, ed. Peter Liebrechts and Peter van de Kamp (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1995), 158–59. Ian Sheehy discusses the foundational significance of the Southwark Irish Literary Society, noting that for members such as Fahy and W. P. Ryan, "the Land League had been a catalyst not only for Southwark but for a more widespread cultural awakening as well." "Irish Journalists and Litterateurs in Late Victorian London, 1870–1910," D.Phil. Thesis, Oxford University, 2003, 205. Clare Hutton also highlights how, in outlining Yeats's account and the debate about "the relationship between the demise of Parnellism and the emergence of the force for cultural revival," a return to the events of the period offer the possibility of different interpretations. Hutton, "The Promise of Literature . . ." 586–87.

14. Clare Hutton, "Joyce and the Institutions of Revivalism," *Irish University Review*, 33, 1 (Spring–Summer, 2003), 119. The gathering in London during this period had a Dublin equivalent in those writers who formed the *Irish Monthly* circle in Dublin, which included such writers as Katharine Tynan and Rosa Mulholland. This might also be seen as an example of early literary "revivalism" of this period. See Murphy, *The Oxford History of the Irish Book*, vol. IV, 419.

itself.¹⁵ Although details are sketchy, Lynch was certainly a member and speaker after the Southwark Club was reincarnated as the Irish Literary Society in 1892. Her 1895 lecture on “Irish Men in the Service of Spain” in London was reported in the *Freeman’s Journal* and her name appears on a membership list in 1897.¹⁶ These connections underpin Lynch’s ringing endorsement of “the young school of Celtic writers,” where Lawless and Barlow are introduced as exemplars of the Celtic renaissance, and which proposes a female, rather than a male-dominated, body of writing.¹⁷ Her endorsement forms a striking contrast to her stinging attack on elements of Dublin coterie culture.

This satiric attack began in the pages of the *Dublin Evening Telegraph*, a paper later immortalized in Joyce’s *Ulysses*. This publication played host to another, but lesser-known immortalization of another canonical figure of Irish and modernist literature. In January 1888, W. B. Yeats and several other key figures of the Revival appeared in a thinly disguised satire of Katharine Tynan’s literary salon held at her home in Whitehall. Tynan (1861–1931) was a prolific poet and novelist who, as a young woman still living in Dublin, belonged to the Ladies Land League. Later in the decade the literary salon at her home in Clondalkin became an important venue for nascent Literary Revivalists. “A Dublin Literary Coterie Sketched by a Non-Pretentious Observer” begins by contrasting “happy Goths, Vandals, and philistines” with “the Representatives of the arts and culture”—the aesthetes—before drawing specific attention to some of the characters:

O’Reilly, an artist, allegorical and mystic, so very earnest and so preternaturally clever as to be enveloped in pretty pathos. . . . Augustus Fitzgibbon, considered by himself and his friends to be a poet of Titanic power, who may accomplish great things, and who may not, but whose boyish head is in the meantime being turned in the most delightful and most deplorable fashion by the circle which is fortunate to revolve round this elsewhere unappreciated star.

...

This is something like the conversation that will take place if it is Fitzgibbon who has read.

15. As van de Kamp notes, the Southwark club “offered several of its Land Leaguers and Ladies Land Leaguers the opportunity to go to the Muses without deserting their pragmatic aspirations.” Van de Kamp, 160–61.

16. *Freeman’s Journal*, 26 March 1895, 4. David Pierce reproduces a list of writers, which includes Hannah Lynch, who gave their address as the Irish Literary Society in the *Literary Yearbook, 1897. Yeats’s Worlds: Ireland, England and the Poetic Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 125.

17. There were other writers who suggested at this early stage broader understandings of the Revival such as W. P. Ryan, *The Irish Literary Revival: Its History, Pioneers and Possibilities* (London: Ward and Downey, 1894). Katharine Tynan’s *Cabinet of Irish Literature* (London: Gresham Publishing, 1902–03) was especially inclusive of Irish women writers.

“D-doesn’t F-Fitzgibbon r-read b-beautifully!” O’Reilly will stammer.¹⁸

Æ, the model for O’Reilly, at first “found it hard to laugh at the portrait of his own stammering admiration of WBW until ‘when I thought of what poor Willie Yeats would think, I began to scream with laughter and enjoyed it immensely.’”¹⁹ Hannah Lynch, the author of the satirical sketch and portrait of Yeats as Augustus Fitzgibbon, had met Katharine Tynan through their mutual involvement in the Ladies Land League earlier in the decade. She, along with her sisters, Virginia and Nannie Lynch, had been instrumental in introducing Tynan to literary and Bohemian Dublin, as Tynan recalls:

In their house I really entered the literary atmosphere. One of them was Hannah Lynch, whose novels appealed to the discriminating. She was one of the few people I have known who eat, drink, and dream books. . . . They were all literary in so far as devotion to literature goes; and the well-packed bookcases of the house filled with the great things were a wonder-world to me after my miscellaneous and very odd reading.²⁰

Lynch’s appearance at Katharine Tynan’s salon in December 1887 was recorded in the diary of another coterie member, Douglas Hyde:

After Chapel I brought Sheehan with me and we walked to Katherine Tynan’s. We arrived there about 3.30 and found Yeats and a friend of his, Russell, an art-student, there before us. There was also two sisters, Misses Lynch, from Dun Laoghaire, one of whom spoke intelligently enough. She had lived in the Aegean and in Greece for a long time, and spoke modern Greek. She had written a novel.²¹

The condescending tone of Hyde’s entry and the conclusion to Lynch’s coterie piece offer one angle on why she might have chosen to satirize this gathering of poets, writers, and theosophists, especially in the closing lines:

18. Anon. (Hannah Lynch), “A Dublin Literary Coterie Sketched by a Non-Preentious Observer,” *Evening Telegraph*, 14 January 1888 (hereafter cited parenthetically, thus: (“DLC”).

19. Roy Foster, *W. B. Yeats: A Life, Volume One: The Apprentice Mage 1865–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 73. On Russell’s response to Lynch’s satire, see: Peter Kuch, *Yeats and AE: The Antagonism that Unites Dear Friends* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1986) 28–29; Monk Gibbon, *The Masterpiece and the Man: Yeats as I Knew Him* (London: Hart-Davis, 1959), 58; Henry Summerfield, *That Myriad-minded Man: A Biography of George William Russell “Æ”, 1867–1935* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1975), 28.

20. Tynan, *Twenty-Five Years: Reminiscences* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1913) 76–77. Tynan suggests that it was one of Lynch’s sisters who was her particular friend, rather than Lynch herself.

21. Dominic Daly, *The Young Douglas Hyde: The Dawn of the Irish Revolution and Renaissance 1874–1893*, (Dublin: Irish University Press, 1994), 92. Hyde is equally scathing in his diary about his first meeting with Tynan and her sisters—“They all have a frightful brogue”—entry for 14 January 1887, Daly, 87. When they visit him at Trinity on January 25, 1887, he records that “I was terribly embarrassed lest anyone should see me talking to them. Katherine was all right but her sister was a sight.” Daly, 88.

It would be well if the men would condescend to bend their ethereal and Titanic minds to the acquirement of small attentions and small courtesies justly expected by ladies from men. Perhaps this is treading on Gothish ground, as it may be Goths only who are expected to be polite and deferential to women—for these young aesthetes, whatever may be their private opinion, would not grace a Parisian salon. A man loses nothing intellectually by studying to be gracious and well-bred; and Irish Corinnes and Sapphos will not be less fascinating for being cordial, sweet-mannered, and unpretentious. (“DLC”)

Clearly, an element of personal indignation sounds in Lynch’s critique, prompted by the sense of being the target of a barely disguised snobbery that may have sprung from assumptions about her class, gender, religious, and aesthetic differences at this particular gathering.

The piece, however, was more than simply an opportunity for revenge. It was also an act of literary and feminist self-assertion, in which Lynch actively and dangerously defined herself against or away from a nascent literary movement that was to become dominant by the end of the nineteenth century.²² As Foster has pointed out, the “talents of the revival supplanted extant Irish novelists as representers of significant Irish feeling and opinion. They did not dam the flow of native fiction; by forming an artistic mainstream themselves, they merely caused it to appear by comparison as a middlebrow tributary.”²³ Humorously siding with “the Goths” in her piece, Lynch also anticipates this divide opening up between “high” and “popular” literature and culture during this period.²⁴ And she perhaps betrays a sense of anxiety about her own place as a writer:

22. In her obituary of Lynch, the journalist Frances H. Low suggested that the critical neglect Lynch had suffered was “not the result of lack of talent. Rather, it was the consequence of her satirical and pugnacious style, which had made ‘cruel enemies’ among Ireland’s ‘literary gods’”; cited in Binckes and Laing, “Irish Autobiographical Fiction,” 195. Lynch’s outspoken criticism was not only leveled at the predominantly Anglo-Irish, or at least Protestant-dominated literary coteries. She had also already provoked hostility in the nationalist press, in particular *United Ireland*, the paper she had been involved in rescuing from suppression, with the publication of her first novel, *Through Troubled Waters* (1885). The novel offered a very unflattering portrait of western Ireland and the Irish, from the peasantry to the gentry. For a discussion of this spat, see Binckes and Laing, “‘Rival attractions of the season’: Land War Fiction, Christmas Annuals, and the Early Writing of Hannah Lynch,” ed. Heidi Hansson and James H. Murphy, *Fictions of the Irish Land War* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2014). 57–59.

23. Foster, *Fictions of the Irish Literary Revival*, xii.

24. Tynan’s sister Nora provides some insight into the possible source of Lynch’s terminology in her description of the salon at Whitehall, which she recalls as “enjoyed by everyone who was *anyone* in the artistic and literary or political life of the Dublin of that day. And we others, older or younger, who quite cheerfully dubbed ourselves ‘the Goths and Huns’ of the assembly, also played tennis, or croquet, or danced. . . .” Nora Tynan O’ Mahony, “Katharine Tynan’s Childhood,” *Irish Monthly*, 59, 696 (June, 1931), 361.

The Goths may be despatched in a sentence. Harmless young men of the ordinary type; fond of cards and horses, perhaps politically tintured, indisposed towards speech in the drawingroom or cultured sense, and left mildly amazed and inquiring by the talk going on around them. Gothish young ladies are only less hopelessly unsatisfactory by the charm of youth, of sex, of pretty hair, and pretty frocks, and our unconquerable belief in their greater adaptability and susceptibility to the influence of aestheticism. They always love Strauss, Miss Jessie Fothergill, and Rhoda Broughton, sometimes Miss Braddon, and sorrowful to relate, frequently Ouida. They care little for poetry, but they are deliriously grateful to all purveyors of light literature, and, being Irish, are full of innocent fun, and high spirits, and unconscious wit.²⁵ (“DLC”)

Her satire gives a glimpse, from another perspective, on the rapidly shifting world of letters in late nineteenth-century Ireland, and a comic slant on an emergent literary group whose members were already mythologizing themselves. Her satire of the aesthetes and their “determined self-promotion” is heightened by nods to earlier literary models of neoclassical satire and the eighteenth-century salon full of bluestockings and dandies.²⁶ Sappho and Aloëus read poetry to each other and Raphael and Angelica Kauffman compare sketches, while Fitzgibbon reads and O’Reilly admires.

The satire is significant in the context of Lynch’s own oeuvre as well, as it anticipates aspects of her later short stories and of a particular mode of comic writing that came to the fore in the 1890s Irish fiction.²⁷ In addition to making a point about literary and social snobbery, Lynch’s sketch observes and critiques gender inequalities already latent in the gathering:

Things may move a little less harmoniously if the editors and reviewers prove more kindly and more appreciative to Sappho than to Aloëus, and in defiance of the public, Aloëus will persist in privately thinking himself the greater poet. but for comfort he will fall back on his friend O’Reilly, or his fervent admirer Mr Horatio Blennerhauset, who coquettes impartially with Prose and the Muses and is remarkable in his set for an unfathomable profundity of mind. . . . (“DLC”)

Lynch raises this issue of gender and popularity in the press (“Sappho” is based on Katharine Tynan, whose poetry had already proved a great publishing success) in tandem with an interrogation of the re-inventions in progress of an Irish literary and national identity that she also observed during her salon visit. This identity, she suggests, is derivative and inauthentic:

25. To situate Lynch and her contemporaries in the context of debates about high and low art during this period, see Linda H. Peterson, *Becoming a Woman of Letters: Myths of Authorship and Facts of the Victorian Market* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

26. Roy Foster, *W.B. Yeats: A Life*, 73.

27. See Murphy, *Irish Novelists and the Victorian Age*, 229–30.

Aestheticism, read by happy Goths, and Vandals, and philistines as an inconvenient and extravagant pressure of enthusiasm, ventilated by curious adjectives, gowns out of fashion, and generally contorted tastes, may be fainting away in England, like the dying and much-exhausted century. But let us be thankful that such is not its condition on this side of the channel. It may not be exactly flourishing, and, in the present state of trade, it is hard to expect that anything should flourish here or elsewhere. (‘‘DLC’’)

Lynch’s objections to particular literary coteries that grew out of and shaped the gatherings of the Revival are explained further in her short story, ‘‘My Friend Arcanieva,’’ published pseudonymously in *Macmillan’s Magazine* in 1895.²⁸ Set in Dublin in the mid-1880s, it is narrated by ‘‘Paddy’’ who belongs to an all-male literary club, ‘‘The Atheneum,’’ one of whose members has recently ‘‘founded a new review which we fondly hoped would eclipse the famous EDINBURGH.’’²⁹ He is greeted enthusiastically by club member, Oldberry, who introduces him to a newly arrived ‘‘splendid Russian fellow,’’ Arcanieva, a Russian nihilist who dazzles the literary club with his offer to translate ‘‘Tourgenieff,’’ his talk of Russian politics, and his theosophical leanings: ‘‘It was impossible to be more cultured or more revolutionary than young Arcanieva; consequently our enthusiasm knew no bounds’’ (‘‘MFA’’ 141).

As the story progresses, it becomes clear that Arcanieva is an imposter, exploiting the naivet  of the literary enthusiasts and stealing from them. In addition, Paddy’s sickly sister, Bridget, who has been introduced to the wondrous Arcanieva, falls in love with him. Paddy is left at the end of the story to break the news to her of his sudden departure, prompted by a visit from an Inspector McCarthy and the revelation of the Russian’s true identity. Paddy returns home, after seeing off Arcanieva with provision of enough money to get to America, to ‘‘the terror of Bridget’s sorrow’’ (‘‘MFA’’ 148).

The story is a thinly disguised satirical portrayal of another literary coterie frequented by Yeats and other nascent revivalists—not Katharine Tynan’s salon, but the all-male Contemporary Club, established in 1885 by Charles Oldham, who, with fellow club members, also founded a new journal in the same year, the *Dublin University Review*.³⁰ Oldham, whose club ‘‘acted as a magnet for those

28. *Macmillan’s Magazine*, 73, 434 (December, 1895), 139–48. The story was published under the name E. Enticknappe but it is identified as having been authored by Lynch in the *Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824–1900*, vol. 2, ed. Walter Edwards Houghton and Jean Harris Slingerland (London: Routledge, 1989), 1211.

29. Lynch, ‘‘My Friend Arcanieva,’’ *Macmillan’s Magazine*, 73, 434 (December, 1895), 140; hereafter cited parenthetically, thus: (‘‘MFA’’ 140).

30. William Michael Murphy, *Prodigal Father: The Life of John Butler Yeats, 1839–1922* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2001), 144. On the formation and members of the Contemporary Club see: Mary L. Macken, ‘‘W. B. Yeats, John O’ Leary and the Contemporary Club,’’ *Studies: An Irish*

self-consciously determined to be raffish and to cross boundaries, against the background of Dublin's intimate and censorious provincialism," is the likely prototype for Oldberry and the new journal he founded is alluded to as the *Irish Review*.³¹ In fact, it was Oldham who first introduced Yeats to Katharine Tynan (Oldham also attended Tynan's Whitehall salon). The Contemporary Club fostered significant connections for Yeats, enabling him "to meet a host of writers, scholars, and politicians who in their different ways would set him thinking and cross paths with him in the future."³² Lynch's story of the imposter Aracanieva, and his easy penetration of Dublin literary and political circles is again clearly traceable to one Roman Ivanovitch Lipmann who presented himself as "a Russian of Jewish extraction who was a follower of the Paris-based Jewish Marxist Pyotr Lavrov, a close friend to the Marx family" and who became a member, and then secretary, of the Dublin Socialist League in 1886.³³ He was party to an invitation issued to William Morris to address a socialist meeting in Dublin, and joined the "Young Ireland Society" at the same time as Yeats. He also infiltrated Dublin's literary circles, including Oldham's Contemporary Club and his *Dublin University Review*, where he published articles on socialism and Ivan Tourgenieff, as well as a translation of one of his short stories.³⁴ Lynch works many of these details into her own fiction:

We all wrote poetry, essays, and short stories in those days. I have never been able to ascertain that the *Irish Review* seriously interfered with the reputation and circulation of the great Whig organ: indeed, I fear that, like most things Irish, it appealed too exclusively to local tastes; but we were proud of it, we were desperately in earnest, and we were exceedingly industrious. And when Aracanieva actually proposed to translate a short story by Tourgenieff and write an essay on

Quarterly Review, 28, 109 (March, 1939), 136–42; Roy Foster, *W. B. Yeats: A Life: The Apprentice Mage*, vol. 1, 39–45; Janet Egleston Dunleavy and Gareth W. Dunleavy, *Douglas Hyde: A Maker of Modern Ireland* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 120. Though male-centered at first, the club was in time frequented by such women as Ellen O'Leary, Katharine Tynan, Rose Kavanagh, and Maude Gonne. Maria O'Brien. See "Thomas William Rolleston: the Forgotten Man," in *The Irish Revival Reappraised*, ed. Betsey Taylor FitzSimon and James H. Murphy (Dublin: Four Courts, 2004), 154–66.

31. Foster, *W. B. Yeats: A Life*, 39.

32. David A. Ross, *Critical Companion to William Butler Yeats: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work*, (New York: Facts on File, 2009), 8.

33. Fintan Lane, *The Origins of Modern Irish Socialism, 1881–1896* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1997), 120–21.

34. Roman I. Lipmann, "The Progress of Socialism," *Dublin University Review*, 2, 4 (April 1886); "On the Eve" by Ivan Tourgeniev, transl. R. I. Lipmann and H. Rowlandson, *Dublin University Review*, 1, 10–11, 9 (November, 1885–September, 1886); "Ivan Tourgeniev," *Dublin University Review* 1, 9 (October, 1885); "Review of Les Artistes Célèbres: Herni Regnault, par Roger Marx, and of A Hero of Our Time, translated from the Russian of Lermontoff," *Dublin University Review*, 2, 10 (October, 1886).

Russian politics for us, we literally embraced him, toasted him in punch, and listened respectfully to his views expressed between continuous puffs of cigarettes. (“MFA” 140)

Katharine Tynan offers further details about Lipmann’s successful infiltration of Dublin literary circles in her memoir, *Twenty-Five Years* (1913). There, she recalls the various gatherings of poets, artists, theosophists, vegetarians, and others around Dublin, including the circle and séances of the Johnston siblings.³⁵ Others attending were the O’Learys, Rosa Mulholland and “a little Russian, with a small, wistful Calmuck face, named Lippman”:

Lippman was very small, very eager and apologetic for being alive. I have a vision, seen from a window, of a wet winter morning, and Willie Yeats and Lippman walking together, Lippman holding an umbrella over the poet’s head. Both were wearing straw hats, the insignia of summer; and Lippman was walking tiptoe, his hand extended as high as it would reach, trying to keep the streaming rain from the poet, who would have been scarcely aware of it if he were saturated.³⁶ . . . Poor little chap! He was a daring adventurer enough, but he was not able to get through with it. . . . Having successfully, or unsuccessfully, raided Morris and others for loans of money he disappeared.³⁷ In America he reappeared at a Fifth Avenue Hotel as Count Zubof, a Russian nobleman of immense wealth.³⁸

Tynan’s reference to William Morris and others losing money to Lipmann is elaborated on in the fullest, but not necessarily completely verifiable, account of Lipmann’s exploits in Dublin, London, and Boston, with illustrations, in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* in 1909. Here it was recorded that he forged “the name of Herbert Oldham, secretary of the Protestant Home Rule organization, to a check for \$100.” After this he left Ireland in a hurry “and turned up in London, where he became acquainted with people such as Kropotkin, Stepniak, W. H. Stead, Lord Weardale, and through the latter with members of the Athenaeum club.”³⁹

35. Tynan describes Charles Johnston as having “introduced Theosophy into Dublin” and his sister, Georgie, “started the first vegetarian restaurant in Dublin.” *Twenty-Five Years*, 246.

36. Yeats attended Roman Lipmann’s *conversazione* at the Russell Hotel along with Hyde, John and Ellen O’ Leary, and the Johnston siblings in December 1886, exactly a year before Lynch met Yeats, Hyde and others at Tynan’s salon. John S. Kelly, *A William Butler Yeats Chronology (1865–1939)* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 9.

37. William Morris visited the club in April 1886. Lane, 113.

38. Tynan, *Twenty-Five Years*, 245–46. Tynan offers another version of this tale in an early account of her friendship with Yeats. See “Abstracted in his dreams”: Katharine Tynan’s ‘W. B. Yeats’” ed. James J. McFadden and Daniel Kiefer, *Modern Philology*, 88,3 (February, 1991), 273.

39. A stacked headline in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 22 August 1909, synthesizes the “Count’s” subsequent career in the United States: “‘COUNT ZUBOFF’ THE PEDDLER’S SON: BEING THE FOURTH STORY OF BOGUS NOTABLES BY AN EXPATRIATE. ‘Zuboff’ Imposed Himself Upon Ultra exclusive Boston, Came within an Ace of Marrying an Heiress and Then Excoriated Society in a Novel Which Was Suppressed. Poses as Revolution’s Martyr. Taken Up by W. D. Howells. Lion of Boston Society. Stead

Lynch's story was published before the sudden denouement of Lipmann's colorful career as charmer, Russian exile, nihilist, political commentator, Irish Literary Revivalist, socialite, Russian count, author of risqué novels, imposter, swindler, and thief. Although the story is set in the mid-1880s, and is faithful to events Lynch was fictionalizing, it must have been written after 1890 when reports of Lipmann's retreat to America emerged in the press, following his exposure as a fraud in London. Lynch incorporated this latter element of the tale into her version by having the ironically named "Paddy" ensure that Arcanieva will travel far away, as far as America. It is possible, too, that the gentle Irish Bridget is a transmuted version of the near-swindled New York heiress.

The extraordinary exploits of Lipmann and his ability to con the intelligentsia and the wealthy across several capital cities would have provided an attractive subject for any writer with a satirical bent. For Lynch, it also offered the opportunity to revisit the critique of the intellectual and aesthetic pretensions she had already voiced in her "Dublin Literary Coterie" of 1888, and to take aim at several other features of Dublin literary society at the fin-de-siècle, in particular the Revivalists. For example, the fashion for all things Russian, in particular Russian revolutionaries and literature, gripped the Revivalists as much as it did the literati elsewhere in the same years.⁴⁰ In her short story, Lynch captures and parodies this enthusiasm; she depicts it both as a kind of intellectual snobbery and also an example of the very parochialism of Dublin literary life that the members of the Club sought to counter:

As an Englishman or a Frenchman, he would have interested us; as a Russian he simply captivated us. His slow lispings tones, his careful enunciation, the breathless magnitude of his views upon European questions, which we approached with provincial reticence and timidity, that queer black head of his and the impassable ivory face, - all combined to catch our fancy and mysteriously inflame our imagination. We in Dublin are insufficiently accustomed to foreign influences, and hence our awe of the foreigner. . . . We grew proud and ostentatious, and spoke with frantic volubility of Tolstoi and Lermontoff and Ivan Tourgenieff. ("MFA" 140)

The comedy rests partially in the portrayal of Paddy and his adored and doting sister Bridget's reading of Tolstoy, a task they undertake with earnest and dogged

Starts Exposure. Career in Dublin and London. Sent to Irish Prison. Returns After His Exposure. Dupes Two American Heiresses. Hangs Himself in Jail." The article also refers to several roman à clef novels he wrote under the pen name Robert Appleton, causing outrage among those who, having welcomed him into their midst, found themselves in his novels. His lesbian-themed novel, *Violet, the American Sappho: A Realistic Novel of Bohemia* (Boston: Franklin, 1894), provoked further ire.

40. See, for example *Russia in Britain, 1880–1940: From Melodrama to Modernism*, ed. Rebecca Beasley and Philip Ross Bullock (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

determination in order to discourse better with Arcanieva. Paddy confesses to being somewhat bemused in conversation by Arcanieva's theosophical leanings, which reintroduces the skepticism Lynch voiced in her earlier spoof. Both Paddy and Arcanieva are sources of comedy: "He was a theosophist, and discoursed in an odd vague way about the Elemental. I had a tremendous respect for his intellect, but for the life of me I could never get at his meaning when he mounted this particular hobby" ("MFA" 142).⁴¹

As the well-meaning, enthusiastic, and most naive of the Dublin literary club members, Paddy is an object of sympathetic satire throughout "My Friend Arcievena." In this story, Lynch fleshes out some of her satirical observations about the Revivalists made in her *Evening Telegraph* spoof, mocking their theosophical leanings specifically in connection with the issues of national, cultural, and gender identity. The narrator's name, Paddy, introduces the subject of national stereotypes and Stage Irishness at the very opening, evoking the multitude of comic images and prejudice common in the British press during the nineteenth century. He is introduced to Arcanieva as "our Paddy" by Lumley, and there ensues a conversation with the Russian about John Bull and Paddy; the latter, Arcanieva asserts, "is so sympathetic and humorous,—like the face of a good-tempered child" ("MFA" 140), introducing yet another common stereotype of the day, that of the Irish as childlike. Expounding on his theories of the elemental and national literatures, Arcanieva declares Russian literature to be the most potent. He suggests that in Ireland, "you will need to throw off the chains of imitation. You are at present neither Irish nor English, simply provincial. You copy the English,—may I say it and not offend?—badly, weakly. You have less of the Elemental in you than the savage races who breathe at least by themselves, until they, too, are spoiled by imitation" ("MFA" 140). Lynch uses Arcanieva to voice a similar accusation, that the Irish-based aesthetes were simply mimicking the behavior of London coteries; at the same time, his theories of the elemental and national identity are, in the end, those of an imposter and a thief, and are thus also targets of Lynch's critique. Arcanieva's fraudulence exposes and underscores the other sorts of fraudulence that she portrays.

Arcanieva's deceptions expose further the elements of misogyny that Lynch had touched on in her *Dublin Telegraph* spoof. As a veteran of Anna Parnell's Ladies Land League (she had been the London secretary and was involved in resisting the attempted suppression of William O'Brien's *United Ireland*), Lynch had already encountered the male exclusivity of one form of emergent Irish nationalism in the early 1880s, when the league was brusquely and ruthlessly dissolved

41. A sly reference to Madame Blavatsky as well as Lipmann is more than likely embedded in this and in Lynch's earlier satire on theosophical thought.

by Parnell.⁴² The homosocial Athenaeum Club that Paddy frequents—where matters of cultural and national identity provide a major topic for discussion—is depicted as another encounter with misogyny, especially through the way in which Bridget features in the story. Oldberry asserts of Bridget that “we all worship the ground she treads on” (“MFA” 139) but she is not part of the club. And it is Bridget, of course, who is the ultimate victim—not only of Arcanieva’s fraud, but also of the intellectual pretensions and vanity of the Contemporary Club members, including her brother’s.⁴³ Paddy describes Bridget as his “second self,” whose literary opinions and insights he values highly, and who argues vigorously against Arcanieva’s declaration identification of the Irish as childlike, “Yet Bridget found voice to make a spirited protest for the honour of her beloved land” (“MFA” 141–42). Her story is, in other words, Lynch’s story as well: she embodies the relegation of women’s role in the political and cultural transformations of Irish identity to a footnote in the history of the Irish Literary Revival.⁴⁴

In *Irish Literature Since 1800*, Norman Vance acknowledges that “More work needs to be done on possible links between the Ladies’ Land League and the Lit-

42. Michael de Nie notes, “The slighting of the Ladies League and its memory began almost immediately after the male leaders returned to power.” Michael de Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798–1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 241–42. Recent scholarship has begun to reverse the marginalization of the Ladies Land League and its neglect in the histories of the period. See: Margaret Ward, “Anna Parnell: Challenges to Male Authority and the Telling of National Myth’ in *Parnell Reconsidered*, ed. Pauric Travers and Donal McCartney (Dublin: Dublin University Press, 2013), 47–60; Adrian N. Mulligan, “‘By a Thousand Ingenious Feminine Devices’: The Ladies’ Land League and the Development of Irish Nationalism,” *Historical Geography*, 37 (2009), 159–77; Heather Laird, “Decentering the Irish Land War: Women, Politics and the Private Sphere,” in *Land Questions in Modern Ireland*, ed. Fergus Campbell and Tony Varley (Manchester: Manchester University Press 2013), 175–193; Tina O’Toole, *The Irish New Woman* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Diane Urquhart, “‘The Ladies’ Land League have [sic] a crust to share with you’: The Rhetoric of the Ladies’ Land Leagues British Campaign, 1881–1882,” in *Women and War: Ireland 1880–1922*, ed. Tina O’Toole, Gillian McIntosh, and Muireann O’Cinneide (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, forthcoming 2016).

43. In *Irish Nationalist Women, 1900–1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), Senia Paseta offers a different perspective, suggesting that there were “many women who flourished in the new literary and intellectual environment which grew out of the growing interest in Irish history, language and culture and which in turn encouraged the growth of newspapers, journals, debating circles and discussion groups.” Paseta, 27. Norman Vance has also argued against a narrative of the monolithic masculinity of the Irish Revival by illustrating Katharine Tynan’s involvement, specifically her inclusion in *Poems and Ballads of Young Ireland* (1888), as “the first flowering of the Literary Revival.” Norman Vance, *Irish Literature Since 1800* (London: Longman, 2002), 116.

44. Bridget’s marginalization and sorrow in this short story is also symptomatic not only of certain attitudes gaining prominence in Dublin coterie culture, but also of Irish life more broadly Lynch suggests, as when she speaks of the “loveless martyrdom of Irish women” (IPFF) in the concluding paragraphs of her Paris lecture. Lynch makes similar bitter observations about the lives of Irish women elsewhere across her fiction and nonfiction.

erary Revival.”⁴⁵ Hannah Lynch is, herself, one of those links. Her membership in the London branch of the League and its embeddedness in early cultural revival organizations; her introduction to Dublin literary coterie through Katharine Tynan, a Ladies Land League contact, as well as her satirical depictions of these coterie, provide an ideal starting point for examining those links. Like Alice Milligan who, as Catherine Morris has outlined, “represented an alternative to the dominant currents that fed and defined the Irish Renaissance,” Lynch’s political and cultural activities as well as diverse publications, enrich further the possibilities of plotting “a very different history of the period and its cultural priorities.”⁴⁶

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45. Vance, 116.

46. Morris, “Becoming Irish? Alice Milligan and the Revival,” 79.