The Language of Empire and the Empire of Language: Joyce and the Return of the Postcolonial Repressed

Eugene O'Brien
5 keywords
Joyce, postcolonial, language, theory, Shakespeare
Abstract
This chapter examines the importance of language in the imperial project and the importance of language as a deconstruction of that project. It looks specifically at the language of James Joyce and argues that his work is profoundly deconstructive of much colonial discourse, specifically in his cultural emancipations of the proper name of Shakespeare from its colonialist associations.

That language is a structural factor in the politics of identity is very much a given in the context of postcolonial studies. The discourse of the postcolonial paradigm is one which is fraught with questions. In a Lacanian context, all subjectivity is defined in terms of what is called the symbolic order, and this order is the structural matrix through which our grasp of the word is shaped and enunciated.[1] For Lacan, the symbolic order is what actually constitutes our subjectivity 'man speaks, then, but it is because the symbol has made him man'.[2] It is the matrix of culture and the locus through which individual desire is expressed: 'the moment in which the desire becomes human is also that in which the child is born into language'.[3] The social world of linguistic communication, intersubjective relations, knowledge of

ideological conventions, and the acceptance of the law are all connected with the acquisition of language. Once a child enters into language and accepts the rules and dictates of society, it is able to deal with others.

The symbolic, then, is made up of those laws and restrictions that control both desire and the rules of communication, which are perpetuated through societal and cultural hegemonic modes. Lacan condenses this function in the term the 'Name of the Father'. Through recognition of the Name of the Father, one becomes a member of a society or culture. The symbolic is about language and narrative. Once a child enters into language and accepts the rules and dictates of society, it is able to deal with others. The symbolic is made possible because of the acceptance of the Name of the Father, those laws and restrictions that control both desire and the rules of communication: 'it is in the *Name of the father* that we must recognize the support of the symbolic function which, from the dawn of history, has identified his person with the figure of the law'.[4] Through recognition of the Name of the Father, entry into a community of others is made possible. The symbolic, through language, is 'the pact which links... subjects together in one action. The human action *par excellence* is originally founded on the existence of the world of the symbol, namely on laws and contracts.[5]

In the case of the history of empire, the consequence of imperial conquest is the gradual control of this symbolic order by the hegemonic imperial language, Greek, Latin, Spanish, and, of course, English. In the case of Ireland, the gradual attenuation of the Irish language, both through imperial policy and through economic necessity meant that in the mid eighteenth century, this symbolic order underwent a paradigm-shift from the Irish language to English. This was also true of the cultural code of the symbolic order, namely literature. In terms of a Habermasian social sphere, the language of that sphere

was now English, and the binary opposition English-Irish, which has bedeviled Irish history, was to achieve further valence in the linguistic idiom.

Seamus Deane has asserted the importance of language in the colonial process – in ways it is the ultimate ISA, in an Althusserian sense, as it interpellates subjects to see the world in its terms and gradually allows them to become enculturated into the culture of that language.[6] As Deane puts it, English is 'not merely the language of a country or of an empire or of an invading culture; it is the language of a condition – modernity'.[7] This of course means that the colonial and postcolonial encounter is rephrased in terms of the modern and traditional encounter. To be counter modern is to be allied with the forces of tradition, and in epistemological and political terms, this is to place the colonized culture in a classic double bind.

If the language of the colonizer is embraced, there will be a loss of differential indices of identity and tradition, and the whole concept of 'authenticity': if the original language is recuperated, or revived, then the associated connotative implications are an embracing of the past as opposed to the future, of tradition as opposed to modernity, and of ignorance as opposed to instrumental reason. Either way, the colonized is left disempowered, forever defining itself in terms of the Symbolic order of the colonized. Asserted independence form the colonial Symbolic order can only be achieved by espousing a nativist position, from which the colonized is seen as voluntarily embracing the more backward conditions of the colonized people, *de facto* justifying the whole process of colonization, which was often glossed by terms like 'protectorate'. If any proleptic 'enemy of empire' was to raise his or her head above the parapet, the issue of the language of empire needed to be taken into account.

And of course, the same is true for literature. As Gauri Viswanathen has put it:

> The importance of English literature for this process could not be exaggerated…as the source of moral values for correct behaviour and action, it represented a convenient replacement for direct religious instruction.[8]

Hence, language and literature formed a symbolic order for the colonized, created by the colonizer, within which the default position of the colonized was to be inferior. Thus literature serves an Arnoldian function by providing a form of transcendental instruction that avoids any direct political charge, but which creates an ideological symbolic order which must be faced by the speaking colonial subject. In all post-colonial conditions the issue of language is crucial and Ireland, anomalous state as it may be, is no exception.

There is the vexed issue of whether Irishness is intrinsically bound up with the speaking of the Irish language, for example. Many of the Irish Revivalists saw a clear connection between the Irish language and the essence of Irish nationalism and nation formation. However, if Irish writing can now be enunciated in the English language, the whole picture is transformed. Richard Kearney cites a comment of Pádraig Pearse's that underlines the seminal nature of the mode of enunciation of the Irish literary revival. Writing in *An Claidheamh Soluis* in 1899, Pearse said:

> Against Mr. Yeats personally, we have nothing to object. He is a mere English poet of the third or fourth rank and as such he is harmless. But when he attempts to run an "Irish" Literary Theatre it is time for him to be crushed.[9]

The inverted commas around the word 'Irish' speak volumes for the imperative that underwrites Pearse's opinions. For Pearse, and for many others, Irishness was defined in terms of the Irish language; the use of the adjective 'Irish' in connection with any mode of communication whose language of enunciation was English was an oxymoron which could not be tolerated. If Yeats wrote in English, then *ipso facto*, he was an 'English poet' in Pearse's terms. Hence the vitriolic dismissal of Yeats as someone of little

consequence, a dismissal that is undercut, however, by the telling final verb in the quotation as, if Yeats is of such little consequence, why is there a necessity for him to be 'crushed'? Possibly because of the importance of literature in the creation of a national symbolic order, a cultural frame of reference was to assume ideological and political importance in terms of naturalising and normalising . With the conquest of India by the East India Company, and the English Education act of 1835, the teaching of 'English' (as opposed to 'literature') became a political arm of the continuance and normalisation of empire.

The cultural and educational component of this 'making', in a colonial society, is synonymous with Shakespeare. The teaching of Shakespeare in India, for example, was predicated on the cultural dimension of Thomas McCauley's 'Minute on Education', published in 1835 which formed the basis for Lord Harding's policy, in 1844, of giving preference to English speakers for jobs in the government. McCauley's aim was to create:

> a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect. [He also claimed that] a shelf of a good European library is worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia.[10]

In terms of this exfoliation of English culture throughout the British empire, the teaching of the works of Shakespeare was of seminal importance; indeed, the proper name William Shakespeare functions as a transcendental signifier, as synecdoche for all things English and cultured. The subtle political message that is to be found, especially in the tragedies, namely that those who upset the hierarchy of institutionalised power do so at their and their societies peril, was not lost on colonized peoples. Macbeth, Claudius, Regan and Goneril, Oswald, politically, and Othello, racially, demonstrate the fate that befalls such resistance to the given socio-political order, both for the individual microcosm and the socio-political macrocosm. As Terence Hawkes has put it, 'Shakespeare is a powerful ideological weapon'[11] which is a central feature of the discipline of 'English', and by extension, a foundational plank

in the imperial *Weltanschauung*. *The Tempest*, for example, with its routing of the bestial Caliban by an enlightened Prospero can be seen as an allegory, and a justification, of the colonizing drive, and a *locus classicus* of the language of empire holding sway over its subjects. However, empires, by their nature, are transient and even as he embodied, in synecdoche, the zenith of the British empire, it is through the work of Shakespeare that another colonial subject began to invert the language of empire into the empire of language.

In the work of James Joyce, the language of empire becomes suasively transformed into the empire of language as the traditionally disempowering language of the other is deconstructed, in a Derridean sense, in order to become a transformational discourse which re-empowers the colonized subjects as they see themselves within a Symbolic order that is transformed. In *Ulysses*, in the Cyclops chapter, we find the following list of heroes:

> The figure seated on a large boulder at the foot of a round tower was that of a broadshouldered deepchested stronglimbed frankeyed redhaired freely freckled shaggybearded widemouthed largenosed longheaded deepvoiced barekneed brawnyhanded hairylegged ruddyfaced sinewyarmed hero...From his girdle hung a row of seastones which dangled at every movement of his portentous frame and on these were graven with rude yet striking art the tribal images of many Irish heroes and heroines of antiquity, Cuchulin, Conn of hundred battles, Niall of the nine hostages, Brian of Kincora, the Ardri Malachi, Art MacMurragh, Shane O'Neill, Father John Murphy, Owen Roe, Patrick Sarsfield...Goliath, The Village Blacksmith, Captain Boycott, Dante Alighieri, Christopher Columbus, Saint Fursa, Saint Brendan, Charlemagne, Theobald Wolfe Tone, the Mother of the Macabees, the Last of the Mohicans...Napoleon Bonaparte, Cleopatra...Dark Rosaleen, Patrick W. Shakespeare.[12]

This list of '*Irish* heroes and heroines of antiquity' is an example of a specific form of writing: that of a 'catalogue verse' wherein a list of entities is used to show progression, generation or, in this case,

commonality. The genre can be traced back to two of Western civilisation's canonical works: the genealogical list in the *Book of Genesis* and the list of Trojan War heroes in Homer's *Iliad*. In *Ulysses*, this catalogue is placed in the Cyclops chapter wherein Irish nationalism, in the persona of the monocular 'citizen', and by extension, the essentialist nationalist ideology of Irish identity, is being placed under critique.

However, in *Ulysses*, the trope of naming is used to create a different effect as 'William Shakespeare' becomes 'Patrick W. Shakespeare.' Here, the bard is appropriated into a new cosmos of identification; name is transformed into trope, with a 'turning away' (the original meaning of 'trope) from colonial associations into those of the postcolonial. That the name of Shakespeare undergoes a chiasmic transformation in the ongoing process of transcultural Anglicisation that has taken place in Ireland during British rule, is symbolic of Joyce's project: namely the redefinition and pluralisation of Irish identity. Joyce posits the notion of reciprocal interchange between cultures: just as Irish language and culture became Anglophone, so English, both the language and culture, was likewise altered by the interaction with Ireland. The 'Patrick' in this new nominal paradigm stresses the value of Shakespeare in the Irish context of Joyce's aesthetic theories, as well as in his mode of political identification, and it is the contention of this paper that this process of redefinition of Irish identity is achieved under the auspices of Patrick W. Shakespeare.

The transformation of 'William' to 'Patrick W.' could, at first be seen as a classic postcolonial reversal – the reappropriation of the synecdoche of Englishness through juxtaposition with a synecdoche of Irishness. However, the other non-Irish names in the list of heroes would seem to undercut this reading. Indeed, the catalogue verse in the *Cyclops* chapter functions as an antiphrasis,[13] with the Irish and non-Irish heroes interrogating each other and this economy displaces the Irish/English, colonial/post-colonial

binarisms, the central defining factors of Irish identity, and instead places the names of both nations in a broader world catalogue of verse. This catalogue emphasises the emancipatory function of Patrick W. Shakespeare with respect to essentialist notions of identity: this troped name validates neither Imperial Englishness nor nationalist Irishness; rather will it usher in reciprocality and plurality in terms of political identities.

In this sense, this text is deconstructive in the technically correct sense:

> Deconstruction cannot limit itself or proceed immediately to a neutralization: it must, by means of a double gesture, a double science, a double writing, practice an *overturning* of the classical opposition *and* a general *displacement* of the system. It is only on this condition that deconstruction will provide itself the means with which to *intervene* in the field of oppositions that it criticizes, which is also a field of non-discursive forces. Each concept, moreover, belongs to a systematic chain, and itself constitutes a system of predicates. There is no metaphysical concept in and of itself. There is a work - metaphysical or not - on conceptual systems. Deconstruction does not consist in passing from one concept to another, but in overturning and displacing a conceptual order, as well as the nonconceptual order with which the conceptual order is articulated.[14]

Joyce sees the nominal troping of Patrick W. Shakespeare as a liberation from that sterile Irish-English binarism, and as a displacement of the language of empire into the empire of language. In *Finnegans Wake*, he refers to Shakespeare as 'Shikispower...Anonymoses',[15] and later in the telling line 'all the rivals to allsea, shakeagain, O disaster! Shakelose'.[16] Here the name of Shakespeare is being invoked to empower the shaking loose (again) of the nets that Joyce feels Stephen must fly by:

> 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.[17]

Ironically, Shakespeare, as the synecdoche figure of Englishness would seem to be an unusual avatar in this quest, but the 'mirrorminded' man of *Finnegans Wake*[18] figures largely in Joyce's work. The

changed name of Shakespeare allows Joyce to shake up, and shake lose the influences of Irish nationalism and British imperialism; in other words, the troped name of Shakespeare introduces a political force into Joyce's writing, a force which liberates notions of Irish identity from the monocular vision of the Citizen, and instead introduces a European and world-based view 'anonymoses' of Irish identity. The composite name of Patrick W. Shakespeare, an example of *Finnegans Wake*'s view of the bard's ability: as 'Great Shapesphere puns it',[19] allows him to reshape the sphere of national identity, and hence is a constituent factor in the political dimension of Joyce's work.

Some literary detective work demonstrates the place of Shakespeare in the literary politics of Joyce, and this detective work begins with *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. The name of 'Shakespeare' is not to be found anywhere in this novel. However, Don Gifford has detected a ghostly Shakespearean presence in the genesis of Stephen Dedalus's aesthetic theory. Stephen's aesthetic theory is underpinned by Victor Hugo's *Préface* to his play *Cromwell*. Hugo here lays out the tripartite division of art in a manner similar to that of Stephen:

> These forms are: the lyrical form, the form wherein the artist presents his image in immediate relation to himself; the epical form, the form wherein he presents his image in mediate relation to himself and to others; the dramatic form, the form wherein he presents his image in immediate relation to others...[and where] he or she assumes a proper and intangible esthetic life... The esthetic image in the dramatic form is life purified in and reprojected from the human imagination. The mystery of esthetic, like that of material creation, is accomplished. The artist, like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails.[20]

Stephen's highest form - the dramatic where each person 'assumes a proper and intangible esthetic life' - is associated by Hugo with the poetry of 'Shakespeare, Dante and Milton'.[21] This Shakespearean-inspired aesthetic is in direct opposition to the 'old man' in a mountain cabin met by John Alphonsus

Mulrennan in Chapter V of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, who embodies insularity and reactionary nationalism: 'there must be terrible queer creatures at the latter end of the world'.[22] The fact that this man speaks Irish is important: English, which can be seen as the symbol of colonial oppression, can, by a chiasmic twist, also be seen as a world language, and the gateway to European and world literature through translation. Indeed, translation is a possible name for the transformation from *William Shakespeare* to *Patrick W. Shakespeare*.

Here, Shakespeare as trope is a figure of hybridity and syncretisation; he symbolises an embracing of world literature and also the emancipatory aspects of the English language as spoken in Ireland. The poetry of Milton, and translations of the poetry of Dante would not be so readily available to an Irish writer were it not for colonization, and the process of linguistic change that was coterminous with it. In this sense, Stephen's flight to Europe at the end of *Portrait* can be seen as inspired by the ghostly presence of Shakespeare, or as he is significantly termed in *Finnegans Wake* 'that favourite *continental* poet, Daunty, Gouty and Shopkeeper'.[23] The troped name of Patrick W. Shakespeare symbolizes the possibilities that arise between the transforming intersections of England and Ireland in terms of language and identity. It is important to note the transformative drive at work here. Shakespeare as British national bard has been transformed into what is beautifully termed in *Finnegans Wake* 'clasp shakers (the hand touch which is speech without words)'.[24] The name is the clasping of two cultures together, and the result of this clasping is to shake the essentialist notions of both cultures – 'Shikespower'.[25] This troped name is both an image of implied potential and a ghostly figure redolent of the past. That the Shakespearean presence in *Portrait* is mediated through the theoretical comments of the French writer Victor Hugo foregrounds the macrocosmic placement of Irish political identity in the Joycean aesthetic, and refers analeptically to the catalogue verse at the beginning of this paper where the list of 'Irish heroes and heroines' contains a macrocosmic definition of Irishness, with many of the works

being available only through English translations, ghosts of the originals, analogous to the ghostly presence of Shakespeare in *Portrait*. Like the vision of the artist in the final chapter of *Portrait*, the presence of Shakespeare remains 'within or behind or beyond or above' the text 'invisible, refined out of existence'.

This ghostly Shakespearean presence is foregrounded in Stephen Dedalus's theory of Shakespeare in *Ulysses*. As Buck Mulligan puts it: 'It's quite simple. He proves by algebra that Hamlet's grandson is Shakespeare's grandfather and that he himself is the ghost of his own father'.[26] This abstract theorising about Shakespeare, like the invisible artist of the earlier *Portrait* quotation, allows for the untangling of signifier and referent. Shakespeare is no longer the object of cultural, Anglo-Saxon bardolotary; rather he is symbolic of a breaking down of essentialist parameters of nationality and language.

The use of 'Patrick' demonstrates a linguistic and cultural mediation of Shakespeare in terms of Irish experience. Interestingly in *Ulysses*, chapter nine, 'Scylla and Charybdis', there is reference to a French production of *Hamlet*:

> *Hamlet*
> *ou*
> *Le Distrait Pièce de Shakespeare*
> He repeated to John Eglinton's newgathered frown:
> --*Pièce de Shakespeare*, don't you know. It's so French. The French point
> of view. *Hamlet ou...*[27]

Once again Shakespeare is mediated through a continental influence, this time Mallarme, again demonstrating the protean power of Patrick W. Shakespeare as an avatar of a macrocosmic placement of Irish identity. The verb '*distraire*' has the following meanings: 'to distract, amuse, separate, set aside' with the added connotation of 'absent minded'. The separation of Shakespeare from his position as

national bard, the 'setting aside' of the criteria of essentialist identity, the distraction from Englishness, and the transformation into Patrick W. Shakespeare, spectral presence over Joyce's pluralisation of Irish identity, proceeds a pace with that terminal '*ou*' ('or') which leaves the way open for polysemic connotations in terms of meaning. The ghostly presence in *Portrait* has become a ghostly image of the transforming of essentialist notions of Englishness into polysemic and polyglot images of Irish identity. Is Mallarme's *Hamlet* French or English? Is Victor Hugo's conception of Shakespeare French or English? Are Irish performances of Shakespeare English or Irish? What nationality is the Akira Kurisawa's Japanese production of *Macbeth*? For that matter, what is the language of Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*?

Joyce's interrogation of essentialist attitudes to culture and nationality reaches a climactic point in Leopold Bloom's answer to the question:

> What is your nation if I may ask? says the citizen asked
> Ireland, says Bloom. I was born here. Ireland.[28]

This is the ultimate emancipatory aim of the invocation of *Patrick W. Shakespeare*: the pluralisation of identity which allows a Hungarian Jew to claim Irish identity as almost an accident of birth. The troped name allows the dissemination of the singular, colonial image of 'Shakespeare' into the polylinguistic and multi charactered image of pluralism and difference. As Mr Deasy in *Ulysses* asks 'But what does Shakespeare say?' and then answers his own question, 'Put but money in thy purse', Stephen makes this very point by murmuring 'Iago'.[29] There is not one Shakespeare but rather, as Joyce notes in *Finnegans Wake* 'myriads of drifting minds',[30] and these drifting minds, these polysemic characters, allow for a new politics of Irish identity, as epitomised by Leopold Bloom's assertion of Irishness. Bloom equates such pluralistic identity with a certain view of language, prefiguring the postnationalist language of *Finnegans Wake*, and he again cites Shakespeare as a source of such a view: 'But then Shakespeare has

no rhymes: blank verse. The flow of the language it is'.[31]   This flow of language, inhabited by the ghostly figure of Patrick W. Shakespeare, is centrifugal in direction, and is the precise opposite of what has been valorized in the name of 'Saxon Shakespeare'.[32] This further complicates postcolonial notions of a simple binary oppositional discourse between coloniser and colonised.   If Shakespeare, as a supposed vehicle of ideological colonial hegemony is now being used to deconstruct and shake lose the motivated connections between English literature and English imperial power and instead he now serves as a synecdoche of the empire of language as opposed to the language of empire.

This view of literature as a specific linguistic discourse which deconstructs the ideological construct of language as domination, is further explored in Stephen Dedalus's theory of Shakespeare, where the spectral figure of Shakespeare is foregrounded:

> it is the ghost, the king, a king and no king, and the player is Shakespeare who has studied Hamlet all the years of his life which were not vanity in order to play the part of the spectre.[33]

In Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and in his other works, the definitive synecdoche of Englishness, Shakespeare, dissolves into a spectral presence, a process that has its culmination in *Finnegans Wake*. Here Shakespeare functions as a database of the language which the Joycean virus will infect and turn from text to hypertext. Each word becomes a point of departure for a linguistic voyage as signifier leads to signifier and meanings, like histories and identities, become plural in *a commodious vicus of recirculation*. This book cuts the umbilical chord between language and nationalistic insularity by freeing the Irish reader from the feelings of alienation in English experienced by Stephen in the funnel/tundish episode: 'His language, so familiar, and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech.'[34]   Hence, the book embodies the funeral wake of a nationalist linguistic ideology, and an

awakening to the possibilities of language as a gateway to pluralism and heterogeneity: through narration from nation to inter-nation and thence to international.

In terms of the troped name of Shakespeare, there are numerous diffusions of this name in *Finnegans Wake*. We see such transformations as We see such transformations as 'Shikespower';[35] 'bacon or stable hand';[36] 'shakeagain';[37] 'shakealose';[38] 'Chickspeer' ;[39] 'Bragspeer';[40] 'shakespill and eggs';[41] 'clasp shakers';[42] 'slowspiers';[43] 'Shakhisbeard';[44] 'Shake hands';[45] 'as Shakefork might pitch it';[46] 'As great Shapesphere puns it';[47] 'the curly bard';[48] 'Shivering William'.[49] This is not an exhaustive catalogue: the list goes on, as does the epistemological foundation underlying both this list, and that with which we began this discussion. That epistemology involves the troped name of Shakespeare, present and not present, ghost and non-ghost, English and non-English, refined out of existence, pairing his fingernails as he presides over the Joycean project which involves the shaking lose, and shaking again of essentialist notions of the politics of Irish identity.

Perhaps the most interesting conclusion that can be drawn from Joyce's project is that there can really be no simple either/or choice underlying the postcolonial paradigm if that paradigm is to perform any sort of transformative critique of current and past colonial enterprises. As Ania Loomba notes, the question is now being asked of postcolonial theory as to whether, in 'the process of exposing the ideological and historical functioning of such binaries, we are in danger of reproducing them'? [50] Instead of this either/or choice, what is needed is a more nuanced form of interaction between selfhood and alterity, between colonizer and colonized. This is a form of critique which has been advocated by Derrida, who, speaking about his early neologism, différance, notes that it is 'neither this nor that; but rather this and that (e.g. the act of differing and of deferring) without being reducible to a dialectical logic either'.[51] In terms of an investigation of postcoloniality, one can look no further than Joyce to problematize the

epistemological status of the postcolonial while at the same time enhancing the validity of postcoloniality as an informed mode of critique.

So, to quote another writer who has taken the language of empire, notably the earliest poem in the English canon, *Beowulf*, and made it part of the empire of language, writing can complicate the simplistic binary of the language of the coloniser as opposed to the language of the colonised.

There is not one Shakespeare but rather, as Joyce notes in *Finnegans Wake* 'myriads of drifting minds' (159.07), and these drifting minds, these polysemic characters, allow for a new politics of Irish identity, as epitomised by Leopold Bloom's assertion of Irishness, Jacques Derrida's deconstruction of the certainties of identity and Seamus Heaney's desire to go his own way and become, as he puts it in *The Cure at Troy*: "allthroughother".

Writing about translating *Beowulf*, Heaney makes a specific connection between his own work of translation and the epistemology of James Joyce:

> My sense of the hierarchical distinction that applied between the sounds of the sounds of Latin and of English obviously related to the distinction Stephen Dedalus intuits between the English spoken by an English-born Jesuit and his own Dublin, or rather Drumcondra, vernacular. The Joyce passage is prompted by Stephen's momentary feeling that his own speech is being demeaned. The Dean of studies is bemused by his use of the Dublin term "tundish" instead of the Standard English "funnel", and as far as Stephen is concerned, the bemusement downgrades not only his speech but also his nation. He felt, Joyce writes, / "with a smart of dejection that the man to whom he was speaking was a countryman of Ben Jonson. … My soul frets in the shadow of his words." / At the end of Joyce's novel, Stephen Dedalus is "cured" of his "fret" when he looks up the word "tundish" in his dictionary and discovers that it is not an Irish provincialism, as the Dean of studies had implied, but an English word, and, as he notes subsequently in his diary "good old blunt English too". Adding, post-colonially ahead of his time, "Damn the dean of studies and his funnel. What

[sic] did he come here for to teach us his own language or to learn it from us. Damn him one way or another."[52]

This caveat, that language is both similar and different, *Heimlich* and *Unheimlich*, part of the self, and part of the other, is central to the politics of writing that we have traced here through the work of Joyce as he deconstructs the language of empire with the empire of language.

Derrida, too, is part of such a project. Such notions of displacement and emigration also figure in Derrida's notion of selfhood. He, too, could be seen as a type of the colonised subject, living as he did in Algeria, but speaking French, and, as the following passage will indicate, this constitutes a further connection between the thought of both of these writers. In *Points*, Derrida speaks of similar notions of being pulled in two directions, namely those of place and those of culture. While living in the midst of an Arabic culture, Derrida was raised in a monolingual (French) *milieu*. Hence, French was his only language. However, in the 'culture of the French in Algeria and in the Jewish community of the French in Algeria' he points out that 'France was not Algeria…the authority of the French language was elsewhere.' He goes on:

> And in a certain manner, confusedly, we learned it. I learned it as the language of the other– even though I could only refer to one language as being mine, you see! And this is why I say that it is not a question of language, but of culture, literature, history, history of French literature, what I was learning at school. I was totally immersed, I had no other reference, I had no other culture, but at the same time I sensed clearly that all of this came from a history and a milieu that were not in a simple and primitive way mine.[53]

The similarity with Heaney's earlier points about being part of a culture and yet not part of it, are marked. Derrida's notions of *différance*, and his breaking down of seeming unities and totalities, has much in common with Heaney's view of poetry as the articulation of different forces within some form of structure which can reveal more aspects of the self to the self. In the passage just cited, Derrida tells

of how, despite speaking French, and being immersed in French literature and culture, 'the Frenchman of France was an other'.[54] Much of his writing stresses this feeling of being at home, and yet not at home, in French culture. In *The Other Heading*, he speaks of himself as someone 'not quite European by birth' who now considers himself to be 'a sort of over-acculturated, over-colonized European hybrid'.[55] He sees his cultural identity as 'not only European, it is not identical to itself'.[56] And it is this notion of an identity that is plural, spectral and floating that is the connecting thread between the thought of the writers examined here – Joyce, Derrida and briefly Heaney – and the contested discourse that is postcolonialism. They all demonstrate that there is another choice apart from the binary of speaking the language of the coloniser or espousing a nativist position. Instead, the choice is there to appropriate the language and use it to create alternative notions of identity that are not ideologically structured as hegemonic

Joyce and Heaney have both demonstrated the decentring and disruptive power of language and symbols to disrupt and dislocate fixed images of identity and of home. In common with the writings of Derrida, these writers have transformed notions of identity and language – they have made the language of empire subservient to the empire of language, and gestured towards alternate Irelands, where plurality and difference are no longer excluded from the centre. As Heaney has resonantly put it, speaking of Stephen Dedalus and his own linguistic discussion with the Dean of Studies:

> By finding that his Dublin vernacular is related to the old English base, Stephen discovers that his own linguistic rights to English are, as it were, pre-natal. He may not be a true born English man, but he is the new-born English speaker. And at this moment, he is also born as a writer, liberated from subject-people status, freed of the language question to become part of the language issue. He realises that his vernacular possessions are buried treasures, that his own wordhoard is the artist equivalent of a gold hoard.[57]

Endnotes:

[1] See Jacques Lacan, *Écrits - A Selection.* Translated by Alan Sheridan. (London: Tavistock, 1977) and *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis.* Translated by Alan Sheridan. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977).

[2] Lacan, *Écrits*, p.72.

[3] Lacan, *Écrits*, p.113.

[4] Lacan, *Écrits*, p.67.

[5] Jacques Lacan, *Freud's Papers on Technique 1953-1954. The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book 1*. Translated by John Forrester. Edited by Jacques-Alain Miller. (New York: Norton, 1991), p.230.

[6] Louis Althusser, *Lenin and philosophy and other essays*. Second Edition. (London: New Left Books, 1977).

[7] Seamus Deane, 'Dumbness and Eloquence: A Note on English as We write It in Ireland.' *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory.* Clare Carroll and Patricia King (eds.) (Cork: Cork University Press, 2003), pp.109-121, p.113.

[8] Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (*The Social Foundation of Aesthetic Forms*) Columbia: Columbia University Press, 1997), p.93.

[9] Letter to Editor of *An Claidheamh Soluis*, 13 May 1899, in Seamus Ó Buachalla, ed., *The Letters of P. H. Pearse*, with a foreword by F. S. L. Lyons (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1980)

[10] Macauley, Thomas 'Minute on Indian Education', *The Postcolonial Studies Reader* (1995) edited by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin. London: Routledge, pages 428-430. First published in *Speeches of Lord Macauley with his Minute on Indian Education*, selected with an introduction and notes by G. M. Young. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), P.430.

[11] Terence Hawkes. 'Swissir-Swatter; making a man of English letters', in *Alternative Shakespeares*, John Drakakis (ed). New Accents Series (London: Routledge, 1985), pp. 26-46, p. 43

[12] James Joyce, *Ulysses*. Eds. Hans Walter Gabler, Wolfhard Steppe and Claus Melchior. (London: Bodley Head, 1986), p.244.

[13] Antiphrasis means the ironic use of a word to indicate the opposite of its lexical meaning.]

[14] Jacques Derrida. *Margins of Philosophy*. Translated by Alan Bass. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982), P.329.

[15] James Joyce. *Finnegans Wake*. First published 1939. (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), p. 47. 19.

[16] *Finnegans Wake*, p. 143.22.

[17] James Joyce. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Edited by R.B. Kershner. (Boston: Bedford Books of St Martin's Press, 1993. First published 1916.), p. 216.

[18] *Finnegans Wake*, p.576.24.

[19] *Finnegans Wake*, p.295.04.

[20] *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, p.233

[21] Don Gifford. *Joyce Annotated: Notes for 'Dubliners' and 'A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man'*. Second edition, revised and enlarged. First published in 1967. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), p.254.

[22] *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, p.289.

[23] *Finnegans Wake*, p.539.5-9.

[24] *Finnegans Wake*, p.174.09-10.

[25] *Finnegans Wake*, p.47.19

[26] *Ulysses*, p.13.

[27] *Ulysses*, pp.153-154.

[28] *Ulysses*, p.304.

[29] *Ulysses*, p.23.

[30] *Finnegans Wake*, p.159.07.

[31] *Ulysses*, p.183.

[32] *Ulysses*, p. 149.

[33] *Ulysses*, p.145.

[34] *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, p.208.

[35] *Finnegans Wake*, p. 47.19.

[36] *Finnegans Wake*, p.141.21.

[37] *Finnegans Wake*, p.143.21.

[38] *Finnegans Wake*, p.143.22.

[39] *Finnegans Wake*, p.145.24.

[40] *Finnegans Wake*, p.152.33.

[41] *Finnegans Wake*, p.161.31.

[42] *Finnegans Wake*, p.174.9.

[43] *Finnegans Wake*, p.174.28.

[44] *Finnegans Wake*, p.177.32.

[45] *Finnegans Wake*, p.248.23.

[46] *Finnegans Wake*, p.274, note 4.

[47] *Finnegans Wake*, p.295.3-4.

[48] *Finnegans Wake*, p.465.28.

[49] *Finnegans Wake*, p.507.35.

[50] Ania Loomba. *Colonialism/Postcoloniaslism. New Critical idiom Series*. Editor John Drakakis. (London: Routledge,1998) p.104.

[51] Jacques Derrida. 'Deconstruction and the Other', in Richard Kearney (ed.) (1995) *States of Mind: Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981).p.161.

[52] Seamus Heaney. 'Translating Beowulf', *Times Literary Supplement*, 12 November, 1999, pp.14-15

[53] Jacques Derrida. *Points…Interviews, 1974-1994*. Edited by Elizabeth Weber. Translated by Peggy Kamuf and others. California: Stanford University Press, 1995), p.120.

[54] Jacques Derrida. *Points…Interviews, 1974-1994*. Edited by Elizabeth Weber. Translated by Peggy Kamuf and others. (California: Stanford University Press, 1995), p.204.

[55] Jacques Derrida. *The Other Heading*: *Reflections on Today's Europe*. Translated by Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), p.7.

[56] *The Other Heading*, pp.82-83.

[57] 'Translating Beowulf', p.15.