

**COMMUNAL FORMATIONS: DEVELOPMENT OF GENDERED IDENTITIES  
IN EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY WOMEN'S PERIODICALS**

A Dissertation by

by

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Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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May 2013

Major Subject: English

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## ABSTRACT

Women's periodicals at the start of the twentieth-century were not just recorders but also producers of social and cultural change. They can be considered to both represent and construct gender codes, offering readers constantly evolving communal identities. This dissertation asserts that the periodical genre is a valuable resource in the investigation of communal identity formation and seeks to reclaim for historians of British modernist feminism a neglected publication format of the early twentieth century. I explore the discursive space of three unique women's periodicals, *Bean na hÉireann*, the *Freewoman*, and *Indian Ladies Magazine*, and argue that these publications exemplify the importance of the early twentieth-century British woman's magazine-format periodical as a primary vehicle for the communication of feminist opinions.

In order to interrogate how the dynamic nature of each periodical is reflected and reinforced in each issue, I rely upon a tradition of critical discourse analysis that evaluates the meaning created within and between printed columns, news articles, serial fiction, poetry, and short sketches within each publication. These items are found to be both representative of a similar value of open and frank discourse on all matters of gender subordination at that time and yet unique to each community of readers, contributors and editors. The dissertation then discusses the disparate physical, political, and social locations of each text, impact of such stressors on the periodical community, and the relationships between these three journals. Ultimately, I argue that each journal

offers a unique model of contested feminist identity specific to the society and culture from which the periodical arises, and that is established within editorial columns and articles and practiced within the figurative space of poetry and fiction selections in each journal.

For Alexis, who sent so many texts and wakeup calls

For Allison, who always listened

For my mother, Becky, whose encouragement is unconditional

And for Jack, who married a graduate student anyway

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Kate Kelly, for her support and patience throughout the course of my research; your guidance has been insightful and useful in my progress towards the completion of, perhaps, one of the most important endeavors with which I have been engaged. Thanks also to my committee members, Dr. Marian Eide, Dr. Claudia Nelson, and Dr. Cynthia Bouton, for their invaluable feedback on my work. Special thanks go to Dr. Nainsi Houston for her tireless assistance and inspiration from archive to final draft; you will always be my mentor and preferred driver on the back roads near Galway.

I could not have completed this project without the support of the faculty and staff of the English Department, particularly Paulette Leshner, who always has an answer to my questions. I also want to extend my gratitude to the English Department, Women's Studies Program and the Melbern G. Glasscock Center for Humanities Research for financial support of archival research. I am also grateful for the assistance of Niall Bergin at the Kilmainham Gaol archives, Dublin, as well as the staff at the National Library of Ireland, and the British Library.

Much gratitude goes to the friends too numerous to mention whose assistance has eased the emotional, mental, and intellectual burdens throughout my graduate student career. I would not have imagined this project possible had it not been for the belief in me shown by Brad Thomas, Mariah Delmont, and Sara Meyer. My colleagues and writing group members have motivated and commiserated with me throughout the

dissertation process—Anna Hall, Rochelle Bradley, Claire Odom, Emily Hoeflinger, Sara Day, Sarah Peters, and Sonya Sawyer Fritz. You listened to my heartaches, validated my assertions, and gave me examples to follow. Anna and Rochelle, I marvel at your attention to format and clarity, and am so very grateful for your red pens. Thanks also to Jesse Rester for your editorial expertise.

It seems easy to say that without the love and support of my Janda, Carlson, and Owre families, I could not have pursued my academic and personal goals. To those that have gone before, I am grateful for the examples of hard work and determination set by my grandfathers, Burdette Carlson and Matthew C. Janda, Sr., and my grandmother, Elsie Janda, who may never know just how important her strength, love of knowledge, and support of all I endeavor is to me. To those still with us, you are a continued source of encouragement and challenge. Uncles Steve and Ismael, without your emotional and spiritual backing (along with your computer), this project may never have been finished. All of the positive thoughts sent my way from aunts and uncles, godparents, cousins and siblings have been deeply felt.

My parents never said my dreams were too big, too hard, or impossible. And so I am forever indebted to my mother, Becky, who taught me through example that I can do anything I put my mind to, that the only opinion that matters is my own, and that it's okay to read as much as I want, anywhere I want; and to the memory of my father, Michael, who I imagine would be quite proud of all I have accomplished.

And finally, I want to express my gratitude to my husband, Jack, who is the best part of Texas, who listened to me on both bad and good days. Thank you most of all.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE ROLE OF PERIODICALS IN THE FORMATION OF TWENTIETH-CENTURY WOMEN'S IDENTITIES

In 2010, Jean Marie Lutes presented an overview of the state of affairs for twentieth-century periodical studies. Her call to action is echoed in this study's assertion that literary scholarship would benefit from a reexamination of the literary and cultural merits of periodical publications. Lutes's argument follows reputable work by numerous historians, Communication scholars, and literary critics that calls for a reassessment of the periodical genre, exemplifying the intense need for interdisciplinary collaboration and studies that cross disciplines. Margaret Beetham, Ann Ardis, Lucy Delap, Simon J. Potter, and Chandrika Kaul, among others, have argued for this same position in the past fifteen years: periodicals are valuable texts in the analysis of communal identity formation. Despite the very vocal willingness on the part of literary scholars to develop interdisciplinary approaches to early twentieth-century texts, there is still resistance to the idea that an ephemeral publication carries the same value as a single-author publication such as a novel.

Scholars acknowledge the power the press maintained in this period, yet routinely dismiss women's periodicals as somehow less valuable than the more polished, financially backed, mainstream texts or the smaller modernist periodicals. Recent

scholarship has started to change these conceptions by focusing the critic's gaze on periodicals and the social formations of power latent in the genre.<sup>1</sup>

*The Validity of Periodical as Literary Text*

In prior studies of early twentieth-century British literature, scholars have examined the construction of gender roles in a variety of literary forms, such as the novel. The revolutionary narrative strategies of Virginia Woolf, for example, have satisfied countless literary scholars in their quest to explore the construction of gender during the pre-Great War and interwar periods (1890-1910, 1920-40). Feminist historians have also conducted numerous analyses of the role of gender barriers in cultural, social, and/or political movements, using evidence from literary works such as Radclyffe Hall's *Well of Loneliness*, Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, the works of George Bernard Shaw, and other texts. Critics have delved into the influence of commodity culture in popular periodicals representing the fashions of the time and have analyzed the way that such marketing is entangled with the development of the "new woman" and her transformation into the "modern woman."<sup>2</sup> Cultural ephemera traditionally associated with women, such as letters, diaries, and household guides, have been studied as evidence of women's thinking and living practices throughout the nineteenth and into

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<sup>1</sup> See Potter, ed., *Newspapers and Empire in Ireland and Britain*; Kaul, *Reporting the Raj: the British press and India c.1880-1922*; and Kaul, ed., *Media and the British Empire*.

<sup>2</sup> See Kaplan and Stowell, *Theatre and Fashion: Oscar Wilde to the Suffragettes*; Hanscombe and Smyers, *Writing for their Lives: The Modernist Woman 1910-1940*; and Garrity, *Stepdaughters of England: British Women Modernists and the National Imaginary*.

the early twentieth century.<sup>3</sup> However, periodicals devoted exclusively to women have received less attention, despite a significant increase in the number of such titles and their circulation in Britain by the late nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup> One goal of this study is to reclaim for historians of British modernist feminism a neglected publication format of the early twentieth century.

As an ephemeral text and a specific form of the periodical, the woman's periodical provides an intense representation of gendered identity formation within the inclusive communities created by such texts.<sup>5</sup> The connection between social conditions and gender codes is inscribed in periodicals with startling accuracy. In her broad study of women's periodicals, *Women's Magazines, 1693-1968*, Cynthia White states that

it is [this connection] which, more than any other, has influenced the character and functioning of the women's press throughout its history, so much so that women's magazines could be regarded as particularly reliable indicators of prevailing attitudes to women and accurate reflectors of the way of life of the feminine groups to which they catered: their beliefs, their interests, their hopes and their problems. These attitudes and patterns of life have always circumscribed the scope of those writing for women. (279)

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<sup>3</sup> See investigations into modernist women's reading appetites as well as investigations of women's ephemera in Flint's *The Woman Reader, 1837-1914*, Ardis's *New Women, New Novels: Feminism and Early Modernism*, and Whitlock's *The Intimate Empire: Reading Women's Autobiography*.

<sup>4</sup> David Reed has documented the increasing publication numbers of women's periodicals and the rise of weekly publications at the end of the 1890s, a phenomenon that he attributes to a steady increase in the number of middle-class families and to overall higher wages (93).

<sup>5</sup> A publication termed *women's magazine* published both entertainment and news for an intended audience of women readers.

White is clear in her assertion that women's periodicals can be accurate barometers of contemporary social, political, and personal issues for women and that all parts of such periodicals, from feature articles, columns, and advertisements to letters to the editor, are integral to identity formation. The journals selected for this study can be considered as such barometers because each text worked to stimulate and present discussion of topics that impact the lives of readers.

There are several genres of periodical publication popular at this time including fashion glossies, feminist journals, domestic magazines, periodicals aimed specifically at young girls, society papers, and religious publications.<sup>6</sup> The *Bean na hÉireann*, *Freewoman*, and *Indian Ladies Magazine* are considered general interest feminist journals in that they did not privilege discussion of suffrage above all other topics as a campaign journal would; and these journals also utilized all aspects of the periodical as opportunities for communal discussion.<sup>7</sup> Each periodical presented columns and correspondence as an available medium for debate, and also offered to readers and contributors the discursive space of poetry and fiction. It is because these three journals saw literature as an opportunity to practice identities posited in columns and correspondence that makes the *Bean*, *Freewoman*, and *ILM* such appropriate examples as to why the periodical, as a literary form, requires greater in-depth study today.

Margaret Beetham has positioned the periodical within the context of other publishing genres throughout the development of literature from those printed in early

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<sup>6</sup> Beetham and Boardman's *Victorian Women's Magazines* provides definitions for each of these categories of women's publication.

<sup>7</sup> I will refer to *Bean na hÉireann* as *Bean* and *Indian Ladies Magazine* as *ILM* hereafter.

modern newspapers to those printed in the early 1970s. She maintains that the periodical “developed from the eighteenth, through the nineteenth, and into the twentieth century as the characteristic modern form of print” (“Towards a Theory” 19). With greater demands on their time, as well as an increasing interest in the immediacy of such publications, readers were drawn to the periodical as an alternative to texts that required a greater investment of the reader’s time, such as longer prose. The success of many novels that began as serialized fiction in a periodical is also evidence of the popularity of this genre. Along with this issue of time-management, the increased role of reader feedback in periodical publishing means that these texts can provide us with an immediate and communal expression of identity formation, as mediated by issues of gender and nationalism. Beetham’s research focuses alternately on the development of nineteenth-century periodicals and twentieth- and twenty-first-century internet media, while her theoretical framework establishes the periodical as a print medium of great value.<sup>8</sup> Periodicals include both newspapers and magazines or journals.<sup>9</sup> For the purposes of this study, I focus primarily on women’s periodicals, as the chief purpose of newspapers is to relay news and current events with as neutral a tone as possible. The magazine format, on the other hand, can build a complex representation of contemporary values and develop identities using news stories, editorial columns, and literary selections that

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<sup>8</sup> See Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own? Domesticity and Desire in the Woman’s Magazine, 1800-1914*; “Towards a Theory of the Periodical as a Publishing Genre”; “Open and Closed: The Periodical as a Publishing Genre”; and “Periodicals and the New Media: Women and Imagined Communities.”

<sup>9</sup> While *periodical* includes both newspapers and magazines under its umbrella, I use the term specifically in reference to magazine-format publications.

reinforce specific manifestos.<sup>10</sup> In order to provide a consistent, coherent message to readers, a woman's magazine-format periodical in the early twentieth century presented continuing dialogues rather than static declarations (as is the case with book publications). Perhaps one of the reasons the periodical has long been an overlooked genre is because of its association with news-making and current events. However, the inclusion of these elements within a periodical is often strongly tied to the literary selections and editorials in each issue. It is within the creative manipulation of current events that representations of gender and identity found complete expression in the world of the periodical.

Building upon the work of Gary Peatling, this study views three examples of twentieth-century British woman's magazine-format periodicals as primary vehicles for the communication of feminist opinions. Further, as Peatling has expressed in his analysis of the influence of the press in British culture, this study also argues that periodicals guide, as well as follow, public opinion in constructing identity groups specific to each periodical.<sup>11</sup> Historian Lucy Delap offers a similar assertion in her work on London's the *Freewoman*, and suggests that, contrary to the claims of traditional social movement theory, the periodical often can function as a progenitor of collective identities and not just a recorder ("Individualism and Introspection" 159-60). From the gender theorist's perspective, Judith Butler also explores the simultaneous investiture of oneself into socially informed definitions. Butler expands on Simone de Beauvoir's

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<sup>10</sup> All three texts in this study offer an initial editorial statement that includes the specific goals of the periodical, the intentions of the editors, the role that readers and contributors shall play and defines the periodical as a dynamic project.

<sup>11</sup> See Peatling, *British Opinion and Irish Self-government, 1865-1925: From Unionism to Liberal Commonwealth*.

assertion that gendered identity is built after one enters society rather than appearing as an innate characteristic, adding that the social construction of gender is as powerful as personal choice in defining oneself (“Variations on Sex and Gender” 131). The woman’s periodical offers a concrete space in which such definitions are worked upon, such as the exchange of reader, contributor, and editor opinions in the Correspondence section of the three periodicals under analysis. Each of these three positions from across a range of disciplinary approaches informs the discussion of identity formation in this study. Thus, periodicals can be considered to both represent and construct gender codes, offering readers constantly evolving communal identities.

### *Methodology*

Much of the current research of early twentieth-century women’s periodicals generally engages texts through the lens of either textual or reception analysis, depending on the discipline of the scholar.<sup>12</sup> Such studies in the physical production, distribution, and access of periodicals to women readers often do not have time and space in which to engage analysis of the content of those. Likewise, studies that focus on content without regard to the greater context of each issue and journal also lack full expression of the social aspect of women’s periodicals. In order to understand the periodical as a means of social interaction within a community engaged in the formation

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<sup>12</sup> See content analysis in Fowler’s “True to Me Always: An Analysis of Women’s Magazine Fiction.” Gough-Yates’s *Understanding Women’s Magazines: Publishing, Markets and Readerships* focuses much of her study on physical construction of periodicals. Oates “Writing Women’s Magazines” provides analysis of reader participation within journals, whereas Beetham and Boardman’s *Victorian Women’s Magazines* attempts to connect both textual and reception analysis.

of identities, this study practices a method of critical discourse analysis that engages not just the content of the periodicals, but also the reader's position within the construction of the journal while developing the meaning of text within specific contexts, and as well as the relationship between texts within single issues of a periodical as engaged in a system of power dominated by patriarchal ideologies. The creation of communal identities within the periodicals selected for this study is a social act, one in which multiple actors communicate using unique local markers of culture, such as differences of idiom, to express unique communities bordered by nationalism, gender, sexuality, religion, class and caste. In *Transatlantic Print Culture, 1880-1940*, Ann Ardis and Patrick Collier call attention to the connections among articles, advertisements and other ingredients of a periodical, and assert the importance of the internal dialogue between parts of a journal (such as between a work of fiction and surrounding nonfiction editorials)(38).<sup>13</sup> This focus on the psycho-social positioning of ideas in a periodical also examines the intertextual relationships between text on a single page of a periodical, within a single issue, and then within the overall run of the journal, as well as the juxtaposition of various texts on a single page of an issue.<sup>14</sup> In the context of the *Freewoman* of Chapter II, the relationship between the arrangements of ideas is called further into question in an analysis of the periodical's lexicon. Along with lexical style, critical discourse analysis investigates the social meaning behind the placement and

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<sup>13</sup> It is important to note that while the study of advertisements and mastheads of a journal strengthen my assertion that periodicals are more accurate representations of communal identity, the inclusion of such images here would introduce a discussion on the production and commercial success of periodicals, which is not a focus of this study.

<sup>14</sup> For further discussion of the importance of intertextuality within discourse analysis see Fairclough "Intertextuality in Critical Discourse Analysis."

privileging of text in layout, and the importance of narratives within a text (such as fiction in periodicals) (van Dijk “Principles” 254-55). This study uses each of these methods to explain how the *Bean*, *Freewoman*, and *ILM* created unique communities that were developed through multiple levels of text within each journal. Following the procedures of critical discourse analysis, this study discusses the impact that juxtaposition of certain text on the page has on overarching themes of each periodical. As feminist journals that offered all aspects of the publication as a dialogic space for readers, contributors, and editors, the *Bean*, *Freewoman*, and *ILM* invite a critical discourse approach that develops these implicit textual arguments. The interdisciplinary nature of this study also serves critical discourse analysis as a natural lens through which to view these journals, as the discipline crosses boundaries between different schools of thought, including humanities and social sciences.<sup>15</sup>

### *Periodicals Function as Literary/Cultural Records*

In this dissertation, I argue that selected women’s periodicals published in Ireland, England, and India, between 1901 and 1912, advanced political causes and constructed gender roles in response to changing national identities. In making this argument, I examine how literary inclusions, such as the characters and symbolic metaphors in each periodical’s poetic and fictional content, created and responded to specific gender codes influenced by contemporary political and cultural surroundings.

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<sup>15</sup>van Dijk discusses the application of critical discourse analysis in humanities and social science disciplines in his introduction to *Handbook of Critical Discourse* (8-9).

These codes of gender were in part prescribed by the mission statements presented in the first issue of each journal; “practiced” within the confines of each literary text, whether a short story, serial fiction, or a poem; and refined throughout the course of the publication run. I analyze literary texts in *Bean na hÉireann* (Ireland, 1909-11), the *Freewoman* (England, 1911-12), and the *Indian Ladies Magazine* (India, 1901-12). I have chosen robust periodicals from these three geographic locations because our understanding of the literary production of gender within the imperial boundaries of the international stage is enriched when these populations are examined comparatively. While these journals represent distinct cultures, politics, religions, and social organizations, they do hold three goals in common: (1) to agitate against the control of women by patriarchal institutions; (2) to investigate and develop a more specific understanding of the woman’s body and all issues related to it (such as safety, sexuality, etc.); and (3) to break down the social constructs that bisect women’s identities in all areas of thought. These three goals parallel a working definition of feminism such as that provided by Padma Anagol: a feminist is one who seeks to uncover the subordination of women within all aspects of social thought and action, communicates to others concerning such activities, and attempts to make the situation better (13). Each journal develops these goals differently and prioritizes these goals according to the local culture in which the text arises. While these three values can be witnessed across all *Bean*, *Freewoman*, and *ILM*, I am not suggesting that *Freewoman* informed either *Bean* or *ILM* and vice versa. These journals share no common primary contributors, or directly acknowledge the other periodicals specifically. It is this disparate quality shared between these three journals that positions

these texts as appropriate for this study, in that by engaging these journals within in a similar manner, this study will demonstrate that periodicals positioned outside of the center of Empire, while they are connected intrinsically to the British cultural hegemony, formulate identity within unique and specific cultural spaces. However, this study is more than just a survey of colonial cousins and imperial relationships.

Along with surveys of specific, local nationalisms of each publication, I also examine the effects of empire on the peripheral countries of Ireland and India as manifested in these publications. Previous work in empire studies has established that independence movements often experience a hyperawareness and use of gender roles in developing nationalist rhetoric. Harold Innis's *Empire and Communications* and Kaul's *Media and the British Empire* build arguments for the close study of the British Empire's impact on the development of identity groups and their relationship to a national mythos. Within the context of the colonial state and the development of a gendered, nationalist identity, the motivations of those involved within each colony's respective struggles become significant. Kumari Jayawardena's *The White Woman's Other Burden: Western Women and South Asia During British Rule* considers these issues and posits a new understanding of stereotypes and the function of hybrid nationalisms within the colonial context. The effects of political, social, and cultural subjugation within the colonial sites place a unique stress upon the development of gender codes. These effects require integration in my study as a result of the complicated political relationship among Ireland, India, and Britain. A definition of the respective nationality of each text's community of readers is one of the problems that was actively

worked upon in each periodical. *Bean* and *ILM* both emphasized the struggle of marginalized nationalists to develop social and cultural unity and are representative of non-western feminist responses to colonialism. But *Freewoman* was also invested in the discussion of empire, and short fiction by B[lanche] A Smith that is further discussed in Chapter III, in connection with surrounding contextual articles, offers a conflicted, central position on the impact of colonialism on women within the empire.

The unique political situations present in India and Ireland, and the fact that these situations were brought about by a common colonizing force, provided an intriguing intersection of nationalism and gender within identity formation. Periodicals provided a dynamic representation of these communal discussions about identity formation. The nature of a periodical required its editors and writers to continuously shape and change their dialogue with each new issue published. Cyclic publication deadlines required the periodical and its composers to constantly formulate and clarify the agendas at play, as the next installment of the conversation was presented weekly, biweekly, monthly, etc. According to Benedict Anderson in *Imagined Communities*, “print media facilitates the emergence of national consciousness and the dissemination of national symbols and meanings. Printed media provides a means through which national community [can] be imagined” (44). The three periodicals I have selected demonstrate not just the development of national identities in light of the failing empire, but also new codes of gender specific to the communities of the *Bean*, *Freewoman* and *ILM*.

*Creation of Community in Periodical Studies*

In the early twentieth century, the periodical provided readers with access to a community of like-minded individuals. Readers, editors, and authors were involved in a continuously changing dialogue on contemporary issues and on forming individual and collective social identities. In examining a set of women's periodicals published during this period, we gain access to these dialogues and can witness the formation of gendered identities. In their 2001 anthology of Victorian women's periodicals, Margaret Beetham and Kay Boardman assert the importance of the development of identity through periodicals:

Magazines for women not only address women as consumers but also as readers. . . . From the start magazines which defined their readership as "women" also took on, more or less overtly, the task of defining what it meant to be "a woman," or what it meant to be a particular kind of woman; a mother, a London lady with time and money, a working woman, a "New Woman," or some other specifically female identity. (1)

Women's periodicals, which I define as weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly publications that contain articles and stories meant to educate and entertain (both news and literature), engage readers in a cycle of creation intent on defining specific identities that, in turn, are fractured and reinforced by their very creation as a collaborative event. As ephemeral products of culture, periodicals are relevant within a specific time period, based on a daily, weekly, or monthly production schedule. Within this time-sensitive loop, the act of writing for publication becomes a social practice, and the exchange of information,

from the editorial process to circulation to the reader responses in a following issue, enhances the communal aspect of each journal.<sup>16</sup>

The gendered aspect of each of these communal identity groups emerges from the political situations surrounding each periodical. For example, English identity, tied up as it was in the patriarchal aspiration of empire, was in crisis in the early twentieth century. While British citizens were dealing with domestic issues such as labor reform, women's suffrage, and the cultural implications of the new century, India and Ireland were agitating for emancipation.<sup>17</sup> Each of these populations was negotiating national identities in the twentieth century—identities that included gendered constructs. Louise Ryan and Margaret Ward's *Irish Women and Nationalism: Soldiers, New Women and Wicked Hags* expands on Ann McClintock's argument that twentieth-century nationalism is gendered and that the formation of cultural identity for a people is rooted not only within a masculine doctrine of political motive, but also within the use of the feminine as a symbol for the movement and as the vehicle that incorporates and includes women into the nationalist discourse. Pushing this argument further, Ryan and Ward cite Linda Connolly's 2002 *The Irish Women's Movement from Revolution to Devolution*, and assert that nationalist women held feminist values and agendas and that while they

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<sup>16</sup> Maria DeCenzo, Cynthia Comacchio, Susan Hamilton, Alison Lee, Linda Mahood, and Leila Ryan introduce this idea in the editors' introduction to a special issue of *Women's Studies International Forum* 227-30.

<sup>17</sup> Colonized by Norman forces in the twelfth century, the majority of Ireland was established as the "Irish Free State" in 1921. The process was not complete (and arguably still is not) until 1949, when a reformation of the constitution establishes Ireland as a republic. Meanwhile, in India, the "jewel of the empire," the Indian National Congress led a 40-year campaign for emancipation, culminating in the partitioning of India and Pakistan in 1947. India was not constitutionally republic, and hence free from British political rule, until 1950. Both of these colonial societies worked throughout the first half of the twentieth century to construct a national identity, mythos, and mission in their respective efforts to separate from Great Britain.

are not entirely separate from the motives of the nationalist movement, they should be examined as feminists as well as nationalists. In agitating for greater equality for women within the nation, those involved in these publications were also implicitly invested in the project to bring greater equity to the nationalist agenda of each publication's respective locations.

Nationalism, as Michael Mays argues, "is both the great enigma of modern political life and the solid ground of contemporary cultural identity" (1). Cultural identity is rooted in a communal identity, which can be transmitted and debated within the ever-changing texts of periodical media. Theorists and scholars continue to engage with the dynamic issues of nationalism, gender, and identity formation in part because they echo so strongly in our contemporary world. Over one hundred years ago, many nations tackled the multi-layered problem of developing a national community without sovereign borders. This work of social identity formation continues today, as much of early twenty-first century nations can no longer define community by landholdings and must construct cultural identities in an era that does not honor physical boundaries in a world made both larger and smaller by globalization. Many of today's readers, and those of one hundred years ago, share a common desire to maintain a sense of cultural independence, thus nationalism remains an important factor in social identity formation throughout the world. Anderson's theory of nation outlined in *Imagined Communities* stresses the role of periodical publications in developing a national culture and community for readers. In this context, a periodical's readers feel included within a culturally identified group because they can see themselves as members of a group on

the printed page. While each community discussed in this study is bordered by a specific nationalism, I am not suggesting that the periodicals are representative of the greater nationalist identity. Rather, the *Bean* offers a specific conception of Irish nationalism for Irish women, just as *Freewoman* does for British women, and *ILM* does for Indian and Anglo-Indian readers.

In conversation with Anderson's analysis, Ernest Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism* supports this need for a community to substantiate its identity in a print culture. Editorial columns of the *Bean*, an Irish feminist nationalist periodical, show leading organizers and activists such as Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, Constance Markiewicz, and their opponents debating issues that range from appropriate responses to British conscription into the Boer War, the legitimacy of women members in British Parliament, and the response that women activists should have to male counterparts.<sup>18</sup> One such exciting editorial that elicits reader feedback appears in the January 1909 issue of *Bean*. In this issue, the editorial board offers its manifesto, which embodies the feminist values previously discussed:

We must set about raising the present position of women in the social and political life of the country, and we must labour to make their present environment compatible with their moral and intellectual advancement, which incidentally means the development of the nation and of the race. Our desire to have a voice in directing the affairs of Ireland is not based on the failure of men

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<sup>18</sup> See letters published under Correspondence, Feb 1909: 11-12; Oct. 1909: 12-14; and another letter by Skeffington published under the masthead of Feb. 1910: 3-4.

to do so properly, but is the inherent right of women as loyal citizens and intelligent human souls. (“To Our Sisters” 1)

This column sets the terms by which the journal will interact with its readers, contributors, and critics. In declaring an image of what Irish feminism should look like, the editors consciously set their own rules of engagement for the following issues of the journal. In addition, if less obviously, they signal that models of womanhood will be expressed not just within the political or editorial columns but also in the literary endeavors of its contributors. Indicative of the selected periodicals in this study, *Bean’s* poems, serial stories, and character sketches exemplify a developing discussion of the manifesto’s prescribed codes of gender.

Serial fiction in the woman’s periodical can be considered a more timely representation of the evolving sense of gender within a culture than other popular literary formats of the day. Regardless of whether the original text is conceived as a whole or as episodic fiction, serial publications are greatly affected by readership numbers and editorial involvement. Due to the more immediate, more urgent need to maintain a healthy subscription from issue to issue, periodical editors function differently from book editors. While both print industries are responsive to audience and consumer interests, periodical editors have greater urgency in the day-to-day survival of their texts, which often translate into calculated cuts from a text, in order to finish up a serial fiction story that has received negative responses, or to create more column space for other articles. In some instances, such as Katherine Tynan’s serial “The Priest’s Gallows” of *Bean*, the promised context of a fictional serial received by the editorial committee in

installments can lead to surprise and panic when the installments start to suggest that the fiction is not representative of the ideals and aims of the manifesto of the periodical.<sup>19</sup>

Editorial choices concerning layout and, at times, the length of various pieces, also reflected the concerns of the editorial board in shaping the message of the journal.<sup>20</sup> For example, some poems included in *Indian Ladies Magazine* warrant a full-page spread, with ornate pictures and flourishes, while poems with more mundane subjects are printed in plain font. Poems by well-known writers such as Sarojini Naidu and Christina Albers, who wrote of abstract ideals of womanhood, are often emphasized in this way, while poems on more mundane topics are relegated to less prominent positions.

These stories of editorial influence are just a few examples of a larger issue. The passionate efforts of editors and contributors to shape a uniform message for a periodical, while still responding to and incorporating audience needs, provide scholars with a unique window into the collaborative development of gendered nationalist identities at a unique historical moment. This study analyzes the development of women's identities in the pages of these early twentieth-century periodicals and show how these identities are developed within the literary selections that appear in each journal. Models of desired behavior for women are presented in many of the fictional and poetic selections printed in these journals, and these literary models of social behavior have a tendency to overlap with the current events featured in the issue's news articles and editorial stories.

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<sup>19</sup> For example, the final installment of Katherine Tynan's serialized fiction, "The Priest's Gallows," was revised by the editorial committee of *Bean na hÉireann* without the writer's influence. See Czira 44.

<sup>20</sup> The relationship of advertisements to text is part of a much larger conversation that is not pursued in this study, which focuses on the literature of a periodical.

## *Chapter Outline*

In Chapter I of this dissertation, I survey the scholarship on women's periodical culture and establish the context for investigating selected women's periodicals as overlooked representations of communal identity formation performed within a print medium in the early twentieth century. The three titles under analysis offer unique developments of periodical communities created by feminist journals that value dialogic debate. In choosing one British journal to stand between two that are constructed within a colonial space deeply influenced by British culture and society, I offer a counterpoint to the development of identity in negation commonly found in burgeoning nationalist movements. The British periodical, *Freewoman*, was selected specifically because of its emphasis on discussion regardless of perceived propriety by contemporary readers (such as the discussion of female sexuality and pleasure).

I then introduce the Irish periodical *Bean* in chapter II as a way of grounding these ideas about identity formation in a concrete, non-centered example. I describe the genesis of *Bean*, taking into consideration changes in editorship and the sponsorship of the periodical by the women's organization, *Inghinidhe na hÉireann*. Starting with the periodical's first issue in January 1909 and ending with the final report of the anti-enlisting movement in the March 1911 issue, I examine the parallels between factual articles and fictional representations in literary selections. For example, in "The Deathmark," by Mary Barry O'Delany (serialized in March and April of 1909), aspects of the narrator's travels correlate to the code of gender specified in the journal's first editorial essay that functions as its manifesto, both negatively and positively. While

*Bean* is unique as the first Irish women's periodical of the twentieth century, a precursor, *Shan Van Vocht* (1896-1899) and its second incarnation as the *United Irishman* demonstrated the importance and popularity of cultural-nationalist journals at the time.<sup>21</sup> All three journals included fiction and poetry in line with the political and social goals of the individual texts. However, *Bean*'s focus on the position of women within Irish society distinguished it among other Irish cultural-nationalist journals. The relationship between *Bean*'s sponsoring organization, *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* and Arthur Griffith of *United Irishman* most likely inspired open communication between editorial committees of both texts, as is discussed in Chapter II. Other items examined in Chapter II include Katharine Tynan's "The Priest's Gallows," poetry by Fanny Parnell, Eva Gore-Booth, and Susan Mitchel, as well as the regular allegorical gardening column by Constance Markievicz. All of these texts focus on aspects of Irish society that the journal sought to change: religion, politics, home life, social practices, and work.

In Chapter III, I expand the geographical context of the discussion and introduce the English periodical the *Freewoman*. The community of the *Freewoman* was invested in multiple conversations regarding women's social position, with many issues striking similar chords as the *Bean*, such as the place of women in a nationalist narrative, but also developed discussions regarding the philosophical quandaries of feminism, British nationalism, marriage and so forth. Unique factors of place, class, religion, and politics helped shape identity in early twentieth-century London and by comparatively analyzing the communal identity formed in this London publication to the direction of its Irish and

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<sup>21</sup> See Innes, "A Voice in Directing the Affairs of Ireland" 146-58.

Indian counterparts, I show that these different publications offer clear touchstones for the analysis of colonial relations. While there are some similarities between the two publications in terms of approach to topics and periodical format, each journal is informed by a specific national identity that positions itself in opposition to the other. While the Irish (and also the Indian) woman's journal reveals a struggle to formulate identity in negation—as *not* British—the imperial center is also undergoing an identity crisis, working to establish a new understanding of what it means to be a British woman. Analysis of the literary inclusions of the *Freewoman* shows an evolving sense of gender codes, begun by an editorial manifesto and enacted within fiction selections. Poetry by E.H. Visiak provides a center point to a discussion of marriage roles that is also reflected in numerous letters to the editor published over a sixth month period.

In Chapter IV, I turn to the *Indian Ladies Magazine* and discuss this journal's role in the development of a middle-class ascendant women's community invested in building deeper connections across disparate class and caste groups. Readers of this periodical include Indian, resident British women, and subscribers in London and New York.<sup>22</sup> The translocation of British women citizens into India had a significant effect on the Indian women's movement in the early twentieth century, and the complicated relationships between Anglo-Indian and Indian contributors to this journal reveal the uncomfortably complex development of an Indian feminist nationalist identity. The case of the *Indian Ladies Magazine* challenges simplistic colonial vs. anti-colonial politics and helps to show how gender formations provide an additional political axis in the

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<sup>22</sup> This study uses the term "resident British" to denote English women living in India.

complex negotiations of social positioning. I show that analyses of literary selections are not complete without attention to the editorial discussions of marriage, woman's place in society, and nationalist politics. The *Indian Ladies Magazine* conveys a much stronger feminist viewpoint than the periodical outwardly acknowledges, in that the editor, contributors, and readers are heavily invested in breaking down the binary of public versus private spaces. In order to discuss the feminisms present within the issues of this non-western text, I employ Jaspir Jain's assertion that Indian feminisms prioritize the "integration of the public and private space and the collapsing of the divisions between two different kinds of sexuality and moral values" over the more militant or physical movements typical in England and Ireland to debunk patriarchal systems that is more prevalent in western societies such as the community of *Bean* and the *New Freewoman* (4). One story of primary interest is Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain's "Sultana's Dream," which was serialized in 1905. The story follows the journey of Sultana to a feminist utopian society in the land of Naristan, where men live behind the curtain of purdah and women roam freely. One primary reason for this reversal is offered in the explanation that men unnecessarily complicate the political and personal aspects of life and so must be restrained. While the author appears to offer a simple replacement of a woman for the male head of a patriarchal system, the theme of the tale focuses much more heavily on the desire to break down the barriers between the public and private for Indian women. This thematic concern is prevalent throughout the journal and not just this single text. The story is followed in the next journal issue by multiple readers' response letters as well as a new episode in Naristan titled, "An Answer to Sultana's Dream," along with

letters to the editor that discuss three thematic concerns in general of feminist fictions within the periodical: the attack on patriarchal institutions including political, educational and medical; the debate over cultural constructs of gender as defined by a multitude of religious, social, ethnic, and caste beliefs and traditions; and a focus on the politicization of the woman's body specific to the place, people, and culture from which an author is writing.<sup>23</sup>

In the concluding chapter, I show how the analysis of these periodicals broadens our understanding of print cultures during Britain's imperial century and discuss the relevance of this research for better understanding the ongoing formation of women's nationalist and gendered identities in the twenty-first century. The literary developments within these periodicals reveal the complicated roots of twentieth-century gender codes within specific identity groups shaped by the social, cultural, and political strain of empire. The unique historical and political relationships among the three sponsor nations of the periodicals that I examine are a basis for interrogating the development of women's identities within nationalist movements. While colonization provides a seemingly unequal experience for British women versus colonial subjects, the leveling effects of gender subordination in an era of global turmoil prove to be highly relevant to the development of female identities in each respective locale: Ireland, England, and India. Amid the nationalist divisions and the socio-economic class structures of the early twentieth century, converging elements in the developing communal identities of women are found within the pages of periodicals published thousands of miles apart.

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<sup>23</sup> These topics fall in line with the three-pronged goal of the working definition of feminism provided by Anagol.

## CHAPTER II

### “MOUSE-HEARTS AND MONKEY-BRAINS”:

#### THE FEMINIST-NATIONALIST *BEAN NA HÉIREANN*

The first periodical under examination in this study was sponsored by an organization of women agitating for a space for women in the nationalist movement of Ireland at the turn of the twentieth century. The *Bean na hÉireann* (Woman of Ireland) was sponsored by *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* (Daughters of Ireland) and formed during the tenth year of the organization. This periodical constructs a communal identity that questions not just the role of women within politics but also the social construction of women's roles within Irish society and culture. Fiction and poetry texts published within the journal are juxtaposed with articles and columns that invite the comparison of implicit and explicit statements of communal identity. The genesis of the periodical's sponsor, *Inghinidhe na hÉireann*, provides a springboard for the nationalist-feminist periodical.

On a rainy Sunday afternoon in April, 1900, a group of citizens gathered in the meeting space of the Celtic Literary Society to discuss frustrations with an Irish nationalist movement that afforded few positions of action and little voice within the dialogue for women. The women had gathered in the meeting area on borrowed time, and in the end had to surrender the rooms once male society members returned from an afternoon walk. At their beginning as a group, these women lacked even a physical

space within which to meet. They discussed two primary topics at this meeting. According to Margaret Ward, the women met to present a reward to Arthur Griffith, editor of *The United Irishman*. Griffith had assaulted the editor of a society paper, *The Figaro*, for publishing an article suggesting that Maud Gonne was a British spy and not an ardent nationalist (*Unmanageable Revolutionaries* 47). The women also met to organize a public demonstration for the impending visit of the British monarch, Queen Victoria, by enticing Dublin schoolchildren away from the spectacle of the Queen's parade in the city to meet instead at Clonturk Park for treats and entertainment. They aimed to teach children to shun the British monarchy, as well as send a message that Irish culture was far more important than British pageantry.<sup>24</sup> After the success of the event, members realized that the committee's activity on the Children's Treat had opened up a space for women, having begun the work of creating a physical presence and intellectual voice for women within the nationalist movement. Eight months later, in October 1900, many of the same women gathered again to call to order the first meeting of *Inghinidhe na hÉireann*, or Daughters of Ireland.<sup>25</sup>

Scholars have suggested that *Inghinidhe* formed in reaction to the refusal of nationalist groups (such as the National League, Celtic Literary Society, and others) to extend full membership to women, instead either allowing women members to attend only the closing ceremonies of the meetings, or delineating an auxiliary group that would provide hostesses, refreshments, fundraising events, and the like (Ward *Unmanageable Revolutionaries* 44). It is true that many of the dynamic personalities

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<sup>24</sup> "Inghinidhe na hÉireann: The Story of the First Meeting," *Bean na hÉireann*. July 1910: 3-4.

<sup>25</sup> I will refer to *Inghinidhe na hÉireann* as *Inghinidhe* here after.

involved with *Inghinidhe*, such as its president, Gonne, could not stomach being kept out of political participation, and had little patience for the gendered lines drawn around action and service for one's country (Gonne *Servant of the Queen* 119). The group set down four major goals of the organization in the inaugural meeting that directed every action undertaken by its members and would eventually guide the creation of the organization's sponsored publication, *Bean*.

The four pillars of the organization embodied in its ancillary publication included: (1) To encourage nationalist education in language, literature, art, music, and history; (2) To utilize purchasing power as a site of resistance (buy Irish goods, not imports); (3) To eradicate British cultural influence in Irish society via all methods mentioned in pillar one; and (4) To fund all activities that pursue the first three goals (*Second Annual Report* 6). These organizing principles embody the three elements of feminism common to each of the periodicals discussed in this study. The organization identifies acts of subordination of Irish women, as well as the greater Irish community, and communicates these acts with others through the periodical medium. The journal also places advertisements from wholly Irish businesses, as well as print articles that explain how the purchasing power of Irish households can be used to combat the hegemonic influence of British culture. Along with offering methods of colonial resistance to which most women have access such as buying local, the periodical also works to combat the subordination of women in politics, the work place, the home,

education, and social practices.<sup>26</sup>

*Inghinidhe* programs for children became the first focus of the organization, with many “treats” such as the one organized for Queen Victoria’s visit. These programs offered *Inghinidhe* the earliest opportunities to enact these four tenets. Well aware of the emotional appeal that a large assembly of children could have on an audience, *Inghinidhe* used each public spectacle to stage subversive displays of nationalist fervor, while also serving the purpose of educating children in Irish heritage. The occasional Children’s Treat evolved into regular classes for young people in the Irish language, dance, music, theatre, and literature. Within its first year, the group had enlisted the help of its talented members and like-minded nationalists to teach these courses, as well as to develop a hurling club. In an introduction to a paper on *Inghinidhe*, Gonne states that while the organization offered many educational pursuits, “*Inghinidhe na hÉireann* never lost sight of the fact that the objects of the society were not merely cultural and educational, but to work for the complete independence of Ireland” (6). To that end, all program participants signed pledges never to enlist in British forces, and were educated in the responsibility of a citizen to be vocal and active in government issues.

The educational programs led to cultural performances that emphasized two of the four pillars of the organization: to fundraise for the society, and to promote Irish culture in all the arts. *Inghinidhe* began to organize *tableaux vivants* for production and used these staging opportunities to present the Irish public with images from Ireland’s

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<sup>26</sup> Regular advertisements were printed citing “Buy Local, Buy Irish” as well as publicizing events that offered women opportunity to organize and educate one another concerning the subordination of Irish women in society and in British rule.

past that roused nationalist sentiment and inspired political action. In choosing to portray strong, female, mythic heroes such as Brigid, Maeve, Macha and the Fianna, *Gonne* and *Inghinidhe* “took images from the past to perform roles for women in politics in the present, performing the Irish nation with their bodies, adapting and modifying myths and stereotypes of womanhood” (Harwood 47). The players presented the audience with women who fought both politically and physically, who led religious and popular society.

The *tableaux vivants* were most often set in the peasant cottage, connecting them with the emerging tradition of the peasant play.<sup>27</sup> On Easter Monday, 1901, *Inghinidhe* presented a crossover piece that connected the tableau to a live-action play. After *tableaux* involving St. Brigid were presented, a *ceilidh* (dance gathering) occurred. Traditionally, rural peasants would gather for an evening of singing, dancing, piping and storytelling. Generally held at the home of whoever had the biggest open space (and often it was the local coffin-maker), a *ceilidh* was the social event of the peasant class. The playhouse audience listened to the songs and stories related in Irish, celebrating the mother tongue. The *ceilidh* provided a common heritage, inciting nationalism among the audience of both the playhouse and the players in the western cottage on stage. This success sparked the passion of the women players from *Inghinidhe*’s dramatic classes, which *Gonne* sometimes led, and inspired members to find more direct methods of communication with the Irish public, resulting in the creation of the feminist-nationalist

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<sup>27</sup> For further description of the aims and genres of the peasant play and how *Inghinidhe*’s tableaux connected to that tradition, see Katz-Clark’s *The Emergence of the Irish Peasant Play at the Abbey Theatre*.

publication that is the focus of this chapter, *Bean*.

Within the first two years of its inception, *Inghinidhe* was off to a rollicking start. After the publication of the society's first annual report in 1901, comments were published in the *United Irishman* lauding the group's actions. In his August 24<sup>th</sup> column, Arthur Griffith reflects on the power relationship between men and women, and the place at the table denied to female nationalists (reprinted under Griffith's oft-used penname for the *Bean*, Ier, in the October 1909 issue). Griffith walks readers through his perception of the failure of man to govern justly, the false justification that male nationalists used to keep women out (original sin), *Inghinidhe's* success in spite of these false justifications, and his embarrassment at being a part of such a male population. In closing, the author professes that he would prefer to live in a world governed by, or at least with, women. Griffith felt that the successes of *Inghinidhe* provided clear evidence that a future for women in politics was desired and inevitable, proclaiming, "I am weary of living in a world ruled by men with mouse-hearts and monkey-brains, and I want a change" (Griffith 4-5). Almost ten years later, the *Bean* reprinted this column in the July 1910 issue celebrating the tenth anniversary of *Inghinidhe*. Including a ten-year old column in the anniversary issue emphasizes the importance of Griffith's argument, as well as the relationship between Griffiths, Gonne, and other members of *Inghinidhe*.

I have given the history of *Inghinidhe* from its inception up until the first issue of the *Bean* in 1909 in order to establish an understanding of the group separate from the publication they sponsored. As mentioned earlier, *Inghinidhe* promoted four pillars of membership that were, indeed, practiced in concert with the journal. However, the *Bean*

separated itself from the organization with each ensuing monthly publication.<sup>28</sup>

*Inghinidhe* had begun with the intention of creating a space for women within the male-dominated nationalist movement. But in actuality, these women had to create their own distinct space to find equality—and even then, *Inghinidhe* practiced exclusion based on gender, as there were no official male members of the group. The *Bean*, on the other hand, was clear in its mission to present a nationalist-feminist message that presented both causes as equal and inseparable.<sup>29</sup> The periodical worked to communicate a unified philosophy and reveal how assertive action could, indeed, create a woman's place within the nationalist movement. The first editorial address of the November 1909 issue expresses the hope that women “in Ireland's struggles for national independence and prosperity... will be permitted to advance with the men on equal terms and in all good fellowship.”<sup>30</sup>

It is not a coincidence that *Inghinidhe* with editors Gonne and Helena Molony, turned to the periodical form, more specifically the journal, as a tool for their agenda. The journal as a form became popular in Ireland at the turn of the nineteenth century, providing a collaborative text that Richard Kearney suggests “refused the polarization of literature and politics into opposed discourses and believed that the struggle for a new

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<sup>28</sup> In *Women, Press, and Politics During the Irish Revival*, Steele offers a similar assertion that the periodical maintained separate goals from *Inghinidhe* and therefore should be seen as more than just a mouthpiece for the organization.

<sup>29</sup> In *The Years Flew By*, Czira comments that “although the *Bean na hÉireann* was meant to be a magazine for women, it was so well written and so outspoken on national and social questions, that it was soon circulating through Ireland, and even in the United States, and had as many or more men readers as it had women” (43).

<sup>30</sup> The *Bean* published articles in a similar order each issue; therefore regular columns such as “To Our Readers,” “Letters to the Editor,” and “Woman with the Garden” are consistently published with the same page number. For that reason, I will indicate title of column or author, month, year, and page number for each reference to the primary texts.

national identity was best served by combining imaginative creativity with a keen sense of social commitment” (“Between Politics” 73). Kearney asserts that the publication format of the Irish journal at this time fostered a more intense development of identity than other genres, as it provided both a place for the journalism of a newspaper and the creative space of literature. While other publication formats such as the novel show reactions to the shifting stages of a population in crisis, I agree with Kearney that the journal utilizes its very nature as a recurring, and in this instance monthly, publication to create action as well as to record reaction. This idea tracks with the periodical theory presented in the previous chapter, and locates the periodical press in Ireland as an Irish text. As a product of identity formation, the *Bean*, along with the two other texts analyzed in this study, was intrinsically connected to the location of its publication. Many scholars of decolonization and British post-imperialism, including Kearney, have recently paid more attention to the Irish cultural journal at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>31</sup> While this interest has brought to light relevant discussions of the cultural importance placed upon the periodical in Ireland during that time, it seems that, despite the *Bean*’s inclusive editorial staff, and its relationship with other “serious” publications of the time, researchers have relegated it to the stack of women’s periodicals that need little attention. Despite this bias in today’s research, it is clear that the *Bean* fulfills the definition and obligation of a cultural journal, as created by Kearney and then reinforced by Gerry Smyth in his 1998 text, *Decolonization and Criticism: The Construction of Irish Literature*. Taking Kearney’s idea that journal

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<sup>31</sup> See O’Dea 95-123.

publication provides a meeting place for the development of both literature and politics, Smyth explains that the journal creates:

Recognizable interventions in ongoing debates, responses and interjections and rejoinders that imply other subjects and other points of view... Irish cultural and political opinion was constantly [reacting] to rapidly changing circumstances...so the periodical press became at this time a sort of halfway house between the newspaper and the book—neither journalism nor monograph but incorporating aspects of both—as a means for the Irish intellectual to intervene in the debate over national identity.” (101-102)

As a genre, the journal found a distinct home within Irish publishing during the nineteenth century and developed a reputation for both literature and political coverage, in essence offering a more appropriate reflection of readers invested in the development of a national identity both within a government structure and also as a distinctly Irish population. As both scholars suggest, the ability to adapt to rapidly changing ideas of cultural identity rendered journals such as the *Bean* and its contemporaries (*The United Irishman*, *The Nation*, *The Irish Homestead*, and *Shan Van Vocht*) creative, as well as reactive. For instance, in providing the manifesto in the first issue of the *Bean*, the journal constructed the very space—at least for communication—that the editorial board sought within the larger political landscape.

*In the Beginning: A Manifesto*

On the front page of its very first issue, the *Bean* declared its intentions as a periodical celebrating and creating space for women in the political landscape and national imaginary of Ireland. As a manifesto, this first article delineated the periodical as a space for the discussion of all topics impacted by identity relations, preparing the journal's community for the dynamic nature of the periodical to come. In this direct address, "To our Readers," the periodical's primary editor, Helena Molony, described the journal's primary impetus in the gendered boundaries drawn by the nationalist movement. Many early critics suggest that this bedrock column established the *Bean* as nationalist at the expense of supporting suffrage ideals. In *The Women's Suffrage Movement and Irish Society in the Early Twentieth Century*, Cliona Murphy argues that the perceived choice women agitators had to make between the nationalist or suffrage movements presented them with a clear divide between the two groups, one not reconciled for many years. However, the *Bean*, as a nationalist-feminist publication, attempted to join these two causes. Drawing on the work of scholars such as Steele and Louise Ryan, this study argues that, in agitating for a place within the nationalist movement and whatever political nation resulted from the ensuing rebellion, women nationalists did not ignore the inequality of gender bias in various Irish societies.<sup>32</sup> Instead, in seeking a country governed by Irish people, the *Bean* requested to exercise "a voice and influence in matters concerning the economic welfare of [the] country, in the industries and the arts, the health and the wealth of Ireland; and above all, in the

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<sup>32</sup> See Ryan's "'Furies' and 'Die-hards': Women and Irish Republicanism in the Early Twentieth Century," and "A Question of Loyalty: War, Nation and Feminism in Early Twentieth-Century Ireland."

education of their children” (Molony, “To Our Readers” 1). The editorial did not identify education, health, and welfare as topics relevant to the marginalized “private sphere” of women. Rather, it treated these issues as, in fact, the basis of governing rather than as “feminine” interests of the nation. Such comments point out the *Bean*’s view of the colonial status of Ireland, acknowledging that, while addressing Irish readers specifically, it also intended to include women in not just the local government but also legislation coming from London. This position is held constant in future articles and published letters from readers, revealing that the community behind the *Bean* believes that, to gain a voice, women must be appointed to union organizations, school boards, and the political boards that existed in the colonial state.

In closing, Molony offered a call to arms for readers and participants in the periodical: “This little paper will serve, perhaps, as a rallying-point for those that believe it is well for women to take their part in civic and national duties.” This editorial trumpets *Bean*’s intention to present and mediate discussions of women’s involvement in social, cultural, and political areas, using nationalist discourse to create an equal grounding for all of those men and women agitating for change in the colonial state of Ireland. And while it is true that the inherent nature of periodical publishing reveals an evolution of ideology in the periodical, this study argues that this is a refinement process rather than a series of major adjustments. It is true that the refinement of ideals proffered by the publication can be traced from first issue to the last, and that the interdependent relationship between editors, authors and readers deepens through each successive issue’s article topics, letters to the editor, letters from the editor, and fiction and poetry

selections. While this evolution of ideology does happen, the thematic concerns and ideological suggestions of early literary inclusions mirror the same overarching themes of later poetic and fictional inclusions. As a result, *Bean* presents a consistent yet fluid sense of woman's identity specific to its Irish readers. For example, despite the differences of author, style, and form, the poetry selections included at the beginning of the periodical's lifespan are consistent with those presented in later issues. A similar use of poetry as political allegory is also present in the poetry included in *ILM*. These two colonial publications share a need to establish unique identities within the British Empire, and perhaps it is the urgency of such a nationalist project that helps to maintain this consistency. Unlike these non-centered publications, *Freewoman* shows a developing valuation of poetry over time as selections that appear merely representative of popular reading choices of that time are replaced with poetry laden with political and social critique.

Functioning as a women's periodical concerned with women's issues but widely read by men as well, the *Bean* prescribed a local conception of citizenship and womanhood as evidenced by the regular columns and feature stories ran over a span of issues. The dynamic nature of such a periodical requires the text to present an identity that readers will want to consume and aspire to, yet simultaneously encourage the readers to feel a connection between the prescribed ideal of womanhood and their everyday lives. Readers must want to be the woman in the column, as well as believe that it is possible to be that woman. Therefore, the woman reader who reads regular features such as the "Woman with the Garden" and the "Woman of the House" is also

the woman interested in the “Women’s Movement in [Scandinavia, France and other countries],” the labor union status of “The Irish Hospital Nurse,” the position of “Irishwomen in Sinn Fein,” and the position of “Republicanism in Ireland.”<sup>33</sup> These regular columns and featured articles run over a span of three or more months.

The editors and authors in charge of these columns are as illuminating as the rhetoric they produce. Embodying the ideals expressed within the pages of the periodical, the women and men involved in the editorial board espoused feminist tenets in life and in print. Led by chief editor Molony, the periodical attracted some of the best writers and high-profile activists at the time. James Stephens, Katherine Tynan, Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, Joseph Plunkett, Thomas MacDonagh, Patrick Pearse, George Russell, Arthur Griffith, James Connolly, and others contributed work, while regular features were written by Molony, Gonne, Countess Constance Markievicz, Madeleine Ffrench Mullen, Czira under the name John Brennan, and others (Fox 122).

As discussed in the previous chapter, recent scholarship has changed the way we view the collaborative enterprise of periodical publishing. In her recent study of women and the political press in Ireland, Karen Steele invokes the work of Jack Stillinger and Wayne Koestenbaum, and that of Holly Lairds, concerning concepts of collaborative authorship and partnership. She highlights the awareness that the participants in collaborative partnerships had for one another, such as the entwined relationship of nationalist columnists and journalists in and between contemporary periodicals, such as

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<sup>33</sup> This sampling includes regular columns and those essays and news accounts presented over multiple issues. “Woman with the Garden” issues 4- 17; “Woman of the House” issues 4-6, title and content separated into “Cookery Notes” “Fashion Notes” issues 7-9,11; “Women’s Movement in France” issues 1-4 ; “Women’s Movement in Scandinavia” issue 8; “Irish Hospital Nurse” issues 11-13; “Republicanism in Ireland” issues 18, 20-23.

the relationship between Griffith's *United Irishman* and the *Bean* (*Women, Press and Politics* 80-82). Steele discusses, at length, the relationship between Griffith and *The United Irishman*, and the *Bean*, its contributors, and Gonne, and how the "participating writers [valued collaboration] for the subversive potential of using and undercutting conventional expectations, whether about gender, sexuality, or national identity" (Steele 80). Laird examines the relationship between female collaborators and focusing on the act of collaboration; to the collaborators of the *Bean*, the act of creating a space from which to speak in a communal voice was of chief importance (qtd. in Steele 81). And while the individuals involved in the periodical all have personal interests in various topics, the combined presentation of each published issue projected the group's model of nationalist-feminist womanhood for readers both male and female.

After establishing the difference between the organization and its periodical, it is also important to understand the boundaries of each creator involved in the *Bean*.

Discrepancies between the unpublished memoirs and notes of various members make it unclear whether Gonne and Molony collaborated on the idea of the *Bean*, or Molony presented the idea to Gonne, president of *Inghinidhe* (Ward, *Maud Gonne* 95).

Regardless, Molony served as chief editor for the full run of the periodical, from 1908 to 1911. Her individual interests, as well as those of each primary contributor, coalesced each month into cohesive issues that recorded the ideological conversations between the writers. And while each contributor's ideological agenda may have been distinct, once articles, stories, poems, and reports found a place within the pages of the journal, they generated a communal theme that offered an ideal womanhood for Irish readers,

grounded in political and social equality for both sexes. But first, it is relevant to this discussion to understand just who these primary contributors were, and what the portions of the journal to which each of them contributed.

As editor, Molony led each editorial committee meeting and was responsible for much of the physical design and layout of the journal. It was through her research on the labour notes column that Molony became heavily interested in workers' rights and socialist organization, for which she continued to advocate throughout her life (Fox 122). Gonne supplied columns on political activism, and on occasion, moral support from exile in Paris. Markievicz, whose increasing interest and participation in armed rebellion eventually led her away from the periodical, contributed thinly veiled allegories and parodies of political issues in the guise of a gardening column. The Countess's sister, Eva Gore-Booth, provided poems and was already a well-known poet and burgeoning political agitator for women's rights and women's labor reform in England, where she lived with her life partner and fellow activist, Esther Roper.<sup>34</sup> Another primary contributor discussed in this chapter, Czira, had already contributed pieces to *Sinn Fein* before joining the *Bean*, and later went on to contribute to *Irish Freedom*, *Irish Citizen*, and numerous other nationalist, suffrage, or socialist publications (Hayes xvi-xl). Czira's mixed interests in armed rebellion, universal suffrage, and worker's rights are relayed through varying articles, perhaps reflecting the great influence that the other committee members had on the youngest writer. Many more influential writers and public figures contributed articles, stories, and poems—

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<sup>34</sup> Along with poetry, Gore-Booth also contributed a multi-part article on "Republicanism in Ireland" (May 1910:11-12; July 1910: 10-11; November 1910: 12-13; and December 1910: 12-13).

some of which will be examined in detail later in this chapter.

### *Poetry Developed as Cultural Revisionist History*

Every month, fictional texts in the *Bean* received equal if not more space as factual articles or editorial columns. Contributions from well-known poets as well as amateur lyricists figured prominently in the journal, as on average two to four poems appeared in each issue. The editors and contributors to the periodical were deeply invested in the Irish poetic tradition through relationships with former loves, sisters, and friends, therefore, it is not surprising that the transgressive power of poetry was frequently called upon to develop a number of the periodical's opinions. Many of these poems connect directly to the theoretical aims of the periodical as these poems offer space for exercising various social codes and values. Much, if not all, of the poetry included during the *Bean*'s entire publication run utilizes myth in arguing against the subordination of Irish women in a set of patriarchal structures including marriage, national history, and political participation in the nation.<sup>35</sup> One of the first poems included in the *Bean*, Gore-Booth's "Irish Marching Song," appeared in the same issue as the "To Our Readers" column mentioned above. Analysis of the poem suggests that it was chosen not only for its desirable nationalist message but also because of the relevance it had for that month, November 1908.<sup>36</sup> Drawing on her favored symbols of

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<sup>35</sup> Poetry in *Freewoman* and *ILM* also routinely employed myth as a means to discuss historical understanding of womanhood within each community.

<sup>36</sup> Each November there are numerous memorial celebrations in honor of Theobald Wolfe Tone. Considered the father of Republicanism in Ireland, he was captured by English forces and sentenced to death for his role in the 1798 United Irishman Rebellion. Wolfe Tone committed suicide in prison, rather than die at the hands of the British.

the West, Gore-Booth's poem utilizes a traditional motif that aligns Irish greatness with the cultural history of Celtic peoples. One of these traditions—of parading and marches—has roots in the religious processions of the Middle Ages. With the transplantation of British settlers during Cromwell's reign over England, the European tradition of marching as a sign of solidarity with a community and with a nation crossed over to the Irish colony. Marches during Gore-Booth's time served similar functions, as did the marches associated with the Children's Treats sponsored by *Inghinidhe* between 1900 and 1910, in which communities gathered together to commemorate and rededicate community myths and cultural histories.<sup>37</sup> Gore-Booth's poem envisages a massive parade of young agitators marching from the western, cultural heart of Ireland, across the Wicklow Mountains, over the hilltops of the prehistoric tombs of Newgrange, and down to the Boyne River.

Gore-Booth's Irish landscape is steeped in nationalist meaning, as the army walks above ancient soldiers who fought for Ireland's freedom in the past.<sup>38</sup> The constant refrain of "Irish skies above you, Irish earth beneath!" asserts the connection to the land felt by the speaker, and its symbolic importance in the poem. When her army marches "past the faery hillside where the ragweed gleams... where the heroes linger trancéd underground, / through the pale green twilight of the faery mound," Gore-Booth calls upon both historical and mythological heroes in her conclusive march to the Boyne

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<sup>37</sup> Fraser's study on the parading tradition in both Ireland and Northern Ireland establishes the practice of European religious and commercial traditions, and not just celebration of military victories. See *Irish Parading Tradition: Following the Drum* 3, 5-6.

<sup>38</sup> In 1641, Irish rebels besieged nearby Drogheda, trying to force English occupiers out. They failed. Then during the re-conquest of Ireland, Cromwell besieged the same stronghold. This siege has entered the national imaginary as a reminder of how brutal Cromwell was, giving no quarter to the remaining Irish and Royalist forces. Civilians and priests were also killed in the siege.

valley (lines 7-10). Cú Chulainn, the mythological hero of the Ulster cycle of Irish mythology, was purportedly born here. Emasculated in the colonization process, Irish men are reminded that great men are a part of the Irish tradition, and that those qualities are latent in the Irish culture, as “[a]ll the saints of Ireland once were Irish men” (line 4). The march also connects with historic battles of great cultural importance. In the early twentieth century and today, the July-August marching season focuses on a celebration of the victory of William of Orange over the Catholic King James II of England at the battle of the Boyne in 1690. While the battle was fought for control of the English throne, when viewed within the Irish context, the battle represented a failed attempt to regain land and power lost by Catholics through the institution of English penal laws throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. This ethnic and religious battle, won by Protestant forces, is often referenced to celebrate and reinforce English control in Ireland. For Irish nationalists during Gore-Booth’s time, the battle was a reminder of English brutality. The poet sends her rebel army on a mission of reclamation, gathering cultural capital as they march over the “spell-bound spirits of the faithful few,” and “spirits of dead heroes” that arrive at this historically important battleground with “kings and queens and heroes marching at our side” (11, 17, 22).

Despite the suggestion of physical battle, Gore-Booth’s poem carries an anti-militarist message that calls for agitation but not violence. The speaker urges its audience to “bear the standard onward down the sacred glen,” but not bear arms (3). As the crowd continues to the northeast, Gore-Booth imagines a great march of protest, but not violence. Unlike her sister Markiewicz, who eventually decreased her involvement in

Inghinidhe and its publication, the *Bean*, in favor of her own paramilitary scouting organization, Fianna Éireann, Gore-Booth followed the teachings of Gandhi, believing that violent confrontation was not a viable way to protest occupation of Ireland by Britain.<sup>39</sup> Her anthem of peaceful resistance echoes the inaugural editorial column of page one, which suggests that the publication opposes physical violence, stating that “with the entrance of women into responsible political life, at least a drag would be attached to the wheels of the War Chariot” (Molony “To Our Readers” 1).

Booth uses tradition and cultural myths to appeal to the nationalist fervor of her audience, and uses the context of battle and violence to suggest an overwhelming power of change that can be moved forward with peaceful resistance. At the poem’s closing, her rebel army numbers in the thousands, with a dissenting voice that can be heard across the sea.

Thousands march beside us through the land we love,  
Irish earth beneath them, Irish skies above,  
Over dead and dying, on the battle rolls,

All the winds of Ireland keen for Irish Soul. (“Irish Marching Song” 25-28)

The speaker suggests that the battle for freedom will continue indefinitely, as death does not stop the march. The call to action presented in this poem reclaims both historical and mythological heroic figures, in line with the burgeoning nationalist literary movement of which Gore-Booth and the periodical are a part. Three months later, in February 1909, Fanny Parnell’s poem “To my Fellow-women” presents a similar call to arms for the

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<sup>39</sup> See Fox’s *Irish Rebelwomen* for further discussion of Gore-Booth’s beliefs.

Irish populace, but focuses on women's involvement. Gore-Booth utilizes specifically Irish imagery in an effort to incite nationalist fervor, and Parnell also establishes connections between Irish women and local mythology, building a similar pride in national status (4).

Both poets interject myth into their work, which is a common turn in nationalist poetry of this time. Underneath the story and pomp of ancient heroes, Gore-Booth, Parnell and other revivalist poets such as W.B. Yeats incorporated myth into their work as a means to reclaim a sense of continuity to an Irish legacy. Nationalist writers of the time sanctified the use of myth, building upon a place of commonality for the current population, and worked to overcome the political fractures of Ireland's colonial memory. According to Kearney, poets "invoked narratives whose prehistoric integrity might compensate for the ruptures of Irish history" (*Postnationalist Ireland* 122). The use of mythic figures, such as Parnell's invocation of native and traditional female characters, furthers the development of a myth of the motherland. In creating a common mythic history, nationalist poets and activists recall a time when Irish populations were not divided by the current subordination of Ireland by the British Empire.

And in reading Parnell's work, the desire to connect to one primary flow of power throughout the ages is clear, as she works to seamlessly weave together figures from antiquity through the contemporary. "To my Fellow-Women" suggests that the heroic qualities of women are inherent in their (historicized) gender and figure and are enhanced when nationalist claims are added to the mix. The speaker alludes to strong women throughout native and European history and religion, beginning with parallels to

biblical figures, and then progresses to women from other western traditions before naming Irish heroines. Parnell goes on to establish a dichotomy of strength, suggesting that today's women are "playthings" and "dolls" compared to ancient queens, "heroes' guides," and leaders of civilization and religion in the past (lines 9-10). In reclaiming the ability to enter into a space of timeless strength—the past moment of these great heroines brought into the current moment—Parnell asserts that myth can be used as "an ideological strategy for inventing symbolic solutions to problems of sovereignty which remain irresolvable at [the current] sociopolitical level" (Kearney, *Postnationalist Ireland* 109). Once Parnell's readers accept and 'put on' the strength and conviction of these mythic female heroes, then perhaps the current subordination of Irish women as both Irish and women can find resolution.

The poem attempts to shame its female audience for betraying their ancestors. The first stanza draws on the Christian tradition, recalling the presence of women before, during, and after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ: "Oh last at the cross, and first at the grave/ and first at the Rising, too; / is there nothing left for your hearts to feel, / or left for your hands to do?" (1-4).<sup>40</sup> Enduring one of the hardest trials of Christianity, these biblical women are set opposite to contemporary women. The trial of faith in the bible implicates the religious sectarianism of the national struggle in early twentieth-century Ireland. The speaker then moves from biblical reference to mythological traditions from elsewhere, capitalizing on strong female role models from Norse and Greek mythology.

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<sup>40</sup> Matthew 27:55-56 places Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and the mother of Zebedee's sons as present. John 19:25 contains Jesus' final words to his mother, Mary before death. Luke 23:55 acknowledges women present at the tomb of Jesus. Mary Magdalene is the first to witness Jesus' resurrection in John 20:11-18.

Parnell questions whether the mythic traits of womanhood died out with Valas, Viking prophetesses and warrior-witches from Norse mythology, and sibyls, prophetesses in Greek mythology. The speaker then connects spiritual leaders to battle captains, recalling the warrior queens Scotia, Eire, and Maebh, who lived at a time when ‘the mothers of Erin fed their babes/ from the sword-point’ (21-22).<sup>41</sup> In connecting these ancient women, the speaker builds a profile of what contemporary women should be like, combining active participation in politics and freedom movements, with leadership in the spiritual and social hierarchies of community. The poem questions whether Irish women, emboldened by their reclaimed power, should become militant or join pacifist resistance movements.

Parnell offers an alternative possibility that can be seen in the poem’s spiritual theme. Parnell’s poetic argument suggests that the key to equal society is not as simple as joining militant activities; the answer lies in breaking down the divisions of society between public and private, which is a battle not often fought with guns and cannon. Likewise, passive resistance is not a viable option for Parnell because the movement is inherently reactive and too similar to submission. In using a shaming tone, she suggests that the need for women to be active participants in the political arena is not just a nationalist imperative but a moral one. Parnell returns to religious figures in the fourth stanza, where “Jewess, and Pagan, and Christian, / shrined in an equal glory meet” (27-28). It is in this stanza that Parnell solidifies her claim that female empowerment is a

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<sup>41</sup> Maebh was the Queen of Connacht in the Ulster cycle of Irish mythology, a strong ruler and fierce warrior. Eire is a proto-Celtic goddess associated with the land, and Scotia is the mythological daughter of an Egyptian pharaoh from early cycles of Irish mythology who is thought to be the matriarch for all Gaelic peoples, having settled in Ireland after the fall of the tower of Babel.

birthright, and that there is a strong tradition of female leaders. Parnell emphasizes this tradition, going on to suggest an eternal meeting of great women including Judith, Joan, and Miriam.

Each of the great women alluded to up to this point of the poem symbolizes political, social, and cultural activism and can be considered the mother of both movements and leaders. Judith, frustrated with the perceived disorganization and fear of the Jewish army, infiltrates the enemy camp and decapitates their leader.<sup>42</sup> Joan of Arc, a French patron saint and military leader from the fourteenth century, was beatified in 1909, of which Parnell would have been aware. And Miriam, sister to Moses, sent him down the river Nile to the Pharaoh's wife in the book of Exodus.<sup>43</sup> The speaker names more heroic figures, drawing on Roman history including the mother of the Gracchi brothers who had sponsored sweeping land reforms in second-century Rome. In the Irish nationalist tradition, a true Irish mother raised her children as soldiers, and did her duty by sending those children off to change the world, as these women did. This patriotic mother figure is one of the speaker's hopes, as she continues her focus on how the women of Ireland compare to these great women, asking, "[S]hall a woman's hand be the first to raise/ the banner that leads the free/ in every land that has rent its bonds/ save alone, O Erin, in thee?" (37-40). The speaker addresses Irish women, telling them that it is "no time for babbling or sitting still" and that they should cease being indecisive, divisive, and afraid (43). The poem posits the creation of community as a method of

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<sup>42</sup> Judith brings Holofernes' head back to the Jewish army, while the enemy camp disperses in confusion. Judith 6:11-15.

<sup>43</sup> Miriam is also considered a prophetess. Exodus 2:1-10.

action, calling readers to work together, seek a common position against British occupation; as the *Bean* offered such a space for a communal voice. The poem again connects political activity to religious and moral duty, stating “there is holiest work to do--/ the harvest of Fate is ripe this day, / And God and your country have need of you” (46-48). Parnell’s poem exemplifies the Molony’s editorial manifesto that was published on the first page of the same issue, as previously mentioned. Parnell’s poem exercises the mission of the periodical in its efforts to historicize political action by women within the Irish as well as global context.

A third poem of note is “To the Women of Ireland” by Susan S. Mitchell in the November 1911 issue.<sup>44</sup> Written for the tenth anniversary of *Inghinidhe na hÉireann*, Mitchell’s poem is couched in sentiment similar to the editorial column on the same page. Molony’s column does not recall the organization’s anniversary but rather the *Bean*’s second birthday. By placing both items on the same page, the editorial committee connects the two implicitly, while Molony’s column reestablishes the goals of the periodical, reminding readers that “[w]e want our voice heard in Ireland...the time will come when every woman in Ireland will believe as *Bean* does that National and Separate Independence is our heritage, and is to be won, and won only, by the courage of our hearts and the strength of our arms.” Molony continues by offering solidarity with those who seek freedom, “whether it is sex emancipation, repeal of the Union, Home Rule, or even what is now *called* Home Rule” (“Editorial Notes” 8). Molony’s column and

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<sup>44</sup> Susan Mitchell was well-known on the literary scene for her *Aids to the Immortality of Certain Persons in Ireland, Charitably Administered* (Dublin: The New Nation, 1908) as well as her involvement with another periodical, *The Irish Homestead*. She later joined the editorial staff of *The Irish Citizen* and regularly contributed articles, essays, and reviews.

Mitchell's poem brings the issue of armed resistance to the table, as well the role of women within such rebellion. Militant resistance is perhaps the most contentious issue discussed in the *Bean*, with these two selections offering a marked change from Gore-Booth's poetry. Mitchell's poem and Molony's column address readers with the same intent, employing a similar pathetic appeal to the hearts of Irish women.

Just as Booth and Parnell had utilized myth to embolden readers, Mitchell calls upon readers' connection to the mythic figure of Cathleen ni Houlihan. Yet while Parnell begins her backward glance in ancient moments of strong womanhood and the created myths of national fervor, Mitchell chastises her readers for the passivity and victimhood of contemporary women: "Year after year we raised the Keen/ For heroes of our name and race, / We knelt and wept for what had been—/ All Ireland was a keening place" (Mitchell 5-8). So ends the first stanza, reminding readers not only of the losses in prior battles against occupation, but also the reactionary position that women took—the gendered role of mother and mourner, not active participant.<sup>45</sup> In the second stanza, Mitchell focuses on the betrayal by Irish women of the mythic figure Kathleen ni Houlihan.<sup>46</sup> The lament is then answered by a third stanza which continues to feminize Ireland, but offers hope for women, suggesting it is not too late to sacrifice oneself and one's own for the nation.

Mitchell invokes the tradition of blood sacrifice through the myth of Kathleen.

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<sup>45</sup> Note that my use of "active participant" does not imply militant or passive resistance, merely activism across the board.

<sup>46</sup> Members of *Inghinidhe* were participants in Lady Gregory and W.B. Yeats's production of "Cathleen ni Houlihan" in 1902 at the Abbey Theatre, including Gonne as the title role. Mitchell would have been aware of this, as well as of the extensive use of the myth in nationalist rhetoric within the last century.

The blood sacrifice of Kathleen's (the nation's) sons combines a common motif used in nationalist literature, and the political tradition of martyrdom.<sup>47</sup> In the myth of Kathleen, a beautiful embodiment of the Irish nation calls upon her strong warrior sons to fight for her honor. It is assumed that these sons know that their duty will most likely end in personal sacrifice and not military success. Yet this martyrdom succeeds in resisting all aggressors, and recalls the lives and sacrifices of both Cuchulainn and Christ (Kearney, *Postnationalist Ireland* 110). The martyrdom of her sons is not the only sacrifice asked by Kathleen, however, as Mitchell ends her final stanza with language that suggests women are also implicated in the coming battle, when "Today shall be as yesterday, / The red blood burns in Ireland still!" (23-24).

Published on the same page as the "Editorial Notes," the poem complements the sentiments of Molony's column. Written on the second anniversary of the journal's inaugural issue, Molony takes measure of the past two years and the journal's impact on the cause of feminist-nationalists, stating, "We have benefited our own sex, inasmuch as that the expression of militant nationalism by women must do much to command the respect of men, and compel them to readjust their views on women as a possible force in the fight against foreign dominion" ("Editorial Notes" 8). In setting the poem on the same page as Molony's column, the periodical equally values the poem with the editorial column. The juxtaposition of the two texts builds connections between the poem and the editorial's sentiment, using traditional tropes of myth, sacrifice, and militarism of

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<sup>47</sup> See Kearney, *Postnationalist Ireland* 108-121. Kearney traces the republican connection from later twentieth-century hunger strikers to turn of the century revolutionaries, as well as to eighteenth-century prisoners who first established a myth of sacrificial martyrdom as the way to defeat the British.

nationalist literature. The poems exercises the ideals of Molony's column while suggesting to readers how action can be taken in the struggle for a national identity and for the position of women within an Irish nation-state.

### *The Trope of The Garden*

The use of figurative language, historical allusion, tone, and action to discuss political resistance articulates my claim that the community of the *Bean* utilized multiple literary devices available to discuss Irish concerns. As the editor and staff gained more experience and familiarity with the publication, the contents of the *Bean* began to reflect growing pangs, as the committee searched for the appropriate genre and voice with which to present their message. The first six issues include proposed regular programming on household fashion, clothing styles, and cooking notes; but subsequent issues break this pattern. Molony and her staff cut these columns, believing that they had exhausted these tropes in their campaign to promote Irish goods and industries and the realization that a periodical on women's issues need not include such domestic fare when larger conversations are to be had. In a way, this trimming of topics reflects the periodical's call to active participation within society, and not just the home space (the location where certain columns' knowledge of cookery and sewing would be employed). The home was still a politicized location for women and a viable topic for the *Bean*, while these changes reflect a developing need for a more "serious" tone, as articles carried increasing emphasis on socialism, nationalism, and feminism.

The first of the more utilitarian domestic columns to fall away from the standard

offerings of the journal was the “Woman with the House” column in its varying inceptions.<sup>48</sup> It would appear that there are only so many times one can be encouraged to buy Irish goods and produce rather than foreign. Molony addresses this change in her thirteenth editorial column, admitting, “We confess that month by month we were glad enough to cut our cooking recipes, millinery notes, etc., in order to help to arrive at some clear thinking on more important national issues”(“Editorial Notes” Nov. 1909: 8). There is one other domestic column was not cancelled, and actually gained presence, authority, and clarity. The continuous publication of “Woman with the Garden,” a column that used the garden to explore subversive rhetoric, implies the value placed upon this performative space by the editorial committee as well as readers. In the most consistent feature of the journal, “Woman with the Garden,” Markievicz doles out gardening advice for Irish women. Markievicz gains strength in her voice with each succeeding column as her prose adapts the trope of gardening to political allegory. This progression in her writing style shows the refinement of the author’s message, but also the collaborative anthem of the editorial committee and readership.<sup>49</sup>

Steele points out that previous scholars of the Irish Nationalist movement tend to gloss over the importance of Markievicz’s gardening column, putting it in line with the domestic concerns of the household column.<sup>50</sup> Numerous biographies of Markievicz also

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<sup>48</sup>The household column was published under the following titles and segments: “The Woman of the House” Nov. 1908; “Household Hints” Jan. 1909; “Woman with the House,” “Hints on Furnishing,” and “Cookery Notes” Feb. 1909; “Hints on Furnishing” Mar. 1909; “Woman of the House” Apr. 1909.

<sup>49</sup> The inaugural column of “Woman with the Garden” appeared in the fourth issue, Feb. 1909.

<sup>50</sup> According to Steele, scholars such as Anne Haverty, Declan Kiberd, and C.L. Innes do not read the columns deeply (“Constance Markievicz’s Allegorical Garden” 430-432).

describe her column in the *Bean* as little more than a footnote to her writing career.<sup>51</sup> However, Steele suggests that there's something more to the seemingly banal advice on when to prune bushes, as the column isn't "trapped by the opposing worlds of male militantism and female domesticity," and that Markievicz "used the garden as a field of multiple political struggles: against the suppression of women and the nation" ("Constance Markievicz's Allegorical" 431). That said, the column develops the trope of the garden in three different ways. First, readers encounter the living garden, for which practical gardening suggestions are made. In the second layer, Markievicz assigns meaning to the tender native buds and roses (Irish nationhood and spirit of Ireland in "Roisin Dubh"), and the encroaching enemies such as slugs (British occupying forces). The caretaker of this garden is given directives on how to keep foreign occupiers' influence and practices from taking root in native soil. This garden sets British and Irish culture at odds through parody and irony. But in a third layer, Markievicz complicates her parody of the domestic motif, using the column itself to contest received ideas of what an Irish woman and patriot should appear to be. All three levels of argument function within the trope of the garden.

Gardens in literature have long been used to call attention to the construction of empire, and the power dynamic of the colonial world. Markievicz's regular column on gardening offers yet another opportunity to examine both the explicit passages that criticize the homogenizing effect of British imperialism on Irish soil and the implicit underpinnings of the gardening trope. Shelley Saguaro's study of gardens in English

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<sup>51</sup> See Van Voris's *Constance de Markievicz: In the Cause of Ireland*, Acland's *Rebel Countess*, Steele's "Constance Markievicz and the Politics of Memory," and others.

literature discusses both the harmony of the growing space and/ or the garden as a failure.<sup>52</sup> One of the first gardens to be written about, the Garden of Eden, presents a space that represents both paradise and a fall from grace. This utopian ideal is often played out in western literature situated within the space of the garden, be it the ordered, managed space of a planned garden or the “native” gardens of rural spaces.

Regardless of the location of these gardens, the trope is used to discuss the social undercurrents of the story or essay. Gardens, in their physical space, bring order to seeming disorder, and attempt to tame and contain wild/ natural spaces, a parallel to the Western need to establish order, meaning, and power over others in colonial sites—to literally translate foreign soil into replicas of the colonizing motherland.<sup>53</sup> Markievicz’s use of this garden trope stems from a western desire for implantation and taming of what is regularly relegated to a feminine space. Two kinds of gardening exist—the plantation system of colonial occupation and agricultural production, and smaller-scale municipal, family and private gardens. Markievicz focuses on the ‘private woman’s garden,’ which is read as both a physical space and a metaphysical arena for the germination of ideas and identity. Both systems do have gendered aspects, rooted in one of the core concerns of gardening, the propagation of seed and sexual reproduction of plants. The two primary reasons for growing a household garden—to nourish a family and to create

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<sup>52</sup> See Saguaro’s *Garden Plots: The Politics and Poetics of Gardens*. Other studies that examine the trope of the garden and development of identity in literature and cultural production include Casid’s *Sowing Empire: Landscape and Colonization* and Helmreich’s *The English Garden and National Identity: The Competing Styles of Garden Design, 1870-1914*. Each text connects the garden to the implications of order and disorder in green spaces.

<sup>53</sup> Homi K. Bhabha expresses the importance and justification of mimetic representation within colonial holdings, which can be seen in colonists’ desires to replicate landscapes that represent England and English identity in *Locations of Culture: Discussing Post-Colonial Culture*.

beauty—connect with an essentially gendered space. And while Markievicz’s columns can be read for subversive arguments that contribute to an overall construction of a nationalist-feminist identity of the periodical, the intertwined relationship of memory and nationalism can also be seen in the form of the column, contributing to the three-tiered garden analysis.<sup>54</sup>

Gardening has a particular resonance in Ireland’s past, complicated by catastrophic famines, as well as by the plantation system of agriculture practiced by English tenants. Thus, the use of the garden as a metaphor for the development of self is doubly politicized in Markievicz’s columns. Markievicz connects the practical advice of when to plant that flower, or how to care for the roots of a rambling rosebush, etc., to national heroes and moments of their sacrifice for nationhood which, in turn, affects the development of identity inherent in the planning and planting of a reader’s cerebral garden of ideas. In her first column, Markievicz tours the natural garden of the Irish countryside. Taking readers on an ascent of Ben Bulbin, the author marvels at a green artistry that even “the most knowing of our gardeners could not hope to surpass” (“Woman with the Garden” Feb. 1909:3).

Markievicz’s choice to begin her inaugural column with a reflection on the ‘native’ garden of Ireland establishes her intention to use the garden as a metaphor for the nation in later columns. Past studies have briefly discussed the explicit nationalist overtones of many of her columns, but the importance of the garden as a trope in

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<sup>54</sup> Steele expands on Markievicz’s revisionism within the national imaginary in “Constance Markievicz and the Politics of Memory” 62-79.

Markievicz's column begins on a much deeper level of identity development.<sup>55</sup>

Markievicz motivates readers to both write on the land with plants, and also to read meaning and order into the landscape. The rhetoric of that February column, while it does celebrate the native value of the "garden of Ireland," also prescribes meaning using the language of gardening and cultivated landscapes. Markievicz uses contemporary and popular ideas of Irish landscape design to discuss the natural gardens wherein plants are "grouped with artistic carelessness," where rocks are "flung in picturesque groups," and "no two colours [of flowers] ever jar, or make an inharmonious note together" (Feb. 1909:3). Markievicz herself is reifying the tradition of the garden trope by suggesting that the disorder of nature can be read as an ordered and harmonious paradise akin to the storied paradise of Eden.

Markievicz continues to use the metaphor of Ireland as a garden, suggesting that nationalism is a plant that needs to be cultivated by the careful gardener. In October of 1909, "The Woman with the Garden" names two currently blooming flowers, golden rubeckia and purple asters, as the "golden sunburst of Ireland... throned in the purple glory of nationhood: a bright flower in the garden of the world." (Oct. 1909:12).

Markievicz further invests meaning in the metaphor of the "tender plant of nationality" that must be nurtured in its "struggle for existence, and to protect and arm it in the fight that is before it against the cruel frosts, the cold winds, and the bitter blight of English rule and occupation that has laid it broken and withered on the ground for so long" (Oct. 1909:12). In this instance, the garden trope works in two areas: Markievicz asks readers

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<sup>55</sup> See Steele's "Constance Markievicz's Allegorical Garden" 430-432;

to nurture nationalism within their own ideological spaces and also utilizes figurative language to vilify political conflict with the British.

One of the motifs often used within the trope of the garden, in an attempt to grow nationalist pride while defining the British as transgressors and enemies, is the invocation of communal histories. Markievicz uses figurative language of season, color, weather, and plant to recall and redefine Irish heroes who gave the ultimate sacrifice in the name of a unified country. Events immortalized include the escape from Dublin Castle by Red Hugh O'Donnell, the Rebellion of 1798, the execution of Robert Emmet, and the failed Polish revolution in November of 1830 (this provided an opportunity to suggest that the supposed failure of the revolution—indecisive and bickering leaders, also plagues the Irish nationalist movement).<sup>56</sup> Each of these historical moments can be read as failures, in that the Irish participants in them appear to lose, rather than gain, any political goals. Yet, within the cultural construction of nationalism, the collaborative development of a nationalist identity turns these seeming failures into moments of grandeur that connect Irish citizens each to each, and in effect, “win” because the moment becomes a unifying event further strengthening a developing collective identity; any opposing force cannot break down the indomitable Irish spirit.

### *Marriage as Metaphor*

Along with the development of the garden as a trope, the *Bean* also utilized other traditional metaphors in fictional and factual texts as both discussion and generation of

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<sup>56</sup> These historical events are paralleled in “Woman with the Garden” Aug. 1909: 6-7; Jul. 1909: 12; Nov. 1909: 7; Dec. 1909: 11; Jan. 1910: 7; Apr. 1910: 13-14.

communal values. The institution of marriage was scrutinized by all three periodicals in this study because it sanctioned the subordination of women within it. The *Bean* also scrutinized marriage because as a patriarchal structure that commented upon the political subversion of a colonial state. As a community, the *Bean* supported equality of gender in all relationships. Various characters presented in the fiction and poetry in the periodical represented various types of wives, investing in the debate concerning how women “lose” individuality in marriage. In the February 1909 issue, James Stephens’s poem “The Red-Haired Man’s Wife” takes as its topic the institution of marriage and uneven power relationship between men and women. The poem opens, “I’ve taken that vow/ and you were my friend/ but yesterday, now/ all that’s at an end/ and you are my husband and claim me/ and I must depend” (lines 1-6). The feminine speaker contemplates the drastic change to her life the day after the marriage celebration, and the possible changes to her individuality. The speaker works through all a woman gives up when she weds, such as her maiden name and “distinction of race,” revealing dismay at the loss of control she had not intended, asking “must I bow when you speak,” and noting that she hears her mate’s requests and commands with “an incredulous ear” (14, 25, 28). Finally declaring her intentions to remain an individual in spite of the social and cultural expectations of a wife, Stephens’s speaker states:

I am separate still,  
I am I and not you,  
And my mind and my will,  
As in secret they grew

Still are secret; unreached, and untouched,

And not subject to you. (49-54)

Stephens's poem takes a mimetic approach to espousing feminist views. Without directly instructing readers in a preferred understanding of wife, Stephens suggests that the development of identity comes from within—as the speaker develops her individuality through the internal monologue of the poem and not in context of conversation with another person. The fifth line of each stanza contains emotional appeals where readers can see the speaker gain power within the marriage relationship.<sup>57</sup> The *Bean* also echoes the development of the speaker in Stephens's poem, as the periodical's articles, poems, stories, and even advertisements continually weave together into a communal identity as a feminist-nationalist cultural journal. In the earliest issues, the editorial columns, poetry, and gardening columns define themselves as the Other, the “not” British, “not” suffragist, “not” strictly political or literary journal. But as the months passed, the unconscious subordination of the self as other slowly evolved into an affirmative, identity building activity.

Another category of text included in the journal offers an example of the impact of periodical publication on identity formation within the journal. Serial fiction such as O'Delany's “The Deathmark,” investigative reporting such as the three-part article on “The Irish Hospital Nurse,” and the conversation between readers and Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington in a series of letters to the editor / letters to readers published across a span of issues, all show refinement of the journal's sense of self over a period of time. One

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<sup>57</sup> McFate briefly comments on the use of metaphor and emotional development of “The Red Haired Man's Wife” (90, 117, and 144-5).

serial story in particular and discussed later in this chapter, “The Priest’s Gallows” by Katherine Tynan, was rewritten by the editorial committee because it failed to reflect the communal values of the readers or the periodical itself.

### *Serialized Development*

The *Bean*’s first serialized fiction that questions the power dynamic of patriarchal structures such as marriage, colonialism, religion, and the nationalist movement in Ireland, appeared in January-April 1909. O’Delany’s “The Deathmark” follows the adventures of Nora Sheehan, a widow seeking to end her life after her husband dies in the service of the Foreign Legion. On Christmas Eve, she leaves her father at the table to commit suicide by jumping off a cliff. However, instead of hitting the rocks below, Nora is transported to Lotusine, a land between the realms of reality and imagination.

Nora’s story flows from the cliff to Lotusine, where some citizens are born with a “deathmark,” and thus are assured of death, while the rest of the immortal society is left to mourn their passing. There is no concept of heaven or hell, just the grave. Nora encounters the queen of the Lotusines, who is mourning the death of her son, who had the deathmark. The Queen’s confusion at Nora’s attempts to explain why she should commit suicide yet was prevented from doing so because of her faith and society compels an interrogation of Nora’s nationalist sentiments and Irish authenticity. Nora is also set in contrast to her husband, who “was too patriotic to enter the English army.” While her husband has found a way to avoid British service, in effect privileging his Irish identity over colonial duty, Mrs. Sheehan has not learned how to speak Irish,

collaborating in the colonization of her people:

“Now,” the queen went on, “the word ‘suacade’ is quite unknown in Lotusine. What is it the Irish for?”

“Sure it isn’t the Irish for anything at all, please your majesty. Suicide is an English word.”

“But I thought you told me you were Irish, and that your husband had joined the Foreign Legion because he was too patriotic to enter the English army.”

“Yes, your majesty, that is so,” Nora answered while she blushed crimson. “But I only speak English. I never learned Irish.”

“Hem!” murmured the queen, as she elevated her eyebrows.

(Apr. 1909)

Through such conversations Nora grows into a more profound awareness of and commitment to her Irishness, embracing the importance of an Irish national language and code of conduct, as well as the importance of self-determination within the political landscape. Nora’s education correlates to the code of gender specified in the journal’s mission statement of the first issue, both negatively and positively. This somewhat utopian vision of Lotusine casts a greater critical eye on Irish society than on the mystical qualities of an immortal race. In the end, Nora realizes the error in her inward focus on the loss of a personal relationship, and turns her attention toward her role in the greater society. Nora has a duty as an Irish woman not just to the father she left at home but also to live authentically and with dignity.

In the issue that marked the second to last installment of "The Deathmark," an adjacent article picks up the topic of colonization of Irish language and its effect on the identity of Irish women. In "Free Women in a Free Nation," Markievicz attacks "our poor nationality-- tattered as it is, and its edges blurred and indistinct, a poor cloak indeed to cover us and to make us distinct from the English nation. What remains to us of it? We have let them almost blot out our language and only lately have we wakened to the sense of its importance in the national ideal" (8). Language provides users with a system of power with which one orders personal identity and mediates interaction with within a society. "The Deathmark" echoes Markievicz's frustration that in losing native language, Irish people must construct themselves using signs (words) that are not Irish, and therefore not able to express an authentic Irish self.<sup>58</sup> In her article, Markievicz goes on to assert that British women activists recently rumored to cross the channel in support of Irish activists should be turned away, as the agent of cultural formation needs be native to both the cause and the country. A British activist could not help but keep British interests at heart, in some form of cultural and social hegemony.

The final installment of "The Deathmark" was published the next month, April 1909. This spring issue also contains the first instance of an editorial column responding to a reader's letter published in a previous issue. The initial impetus for the dialogue was a letter to the editor from Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington on Irishwomen's suffrage. In the fourth issue, February 1909, Sheehy-Skeffington suggests that a current concern—a woman cannot run for the post of mayor of Dublin—is perhaps the fault of Irish women.

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<sup>58</sup> For further discussion of the eradication of native languages during colonial occupation, see Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*

On behalf of the Irish Women's Franchise League (IWSL) in Dublin, Sheehy-Skeffington points out that British women are allowed to run for county offices because the British government had offered that allowance in the Act of 1907 as an attempt to placate suffragists and end their agitation for the right to vote. The letter clearly instigates an argument on the perceived polemical issues of nationalism and suffrage, suggesting that "the Act was not extended to Ireland simply because there was no suffragette agitation in that country" (11). Co-founder of the Irish Women's Suffrage League with Margaret Cousins, Sheehy-Skeffington disagrees with the *Bean*'s disregard for the suffrage movement.<sup>59</sup> The IWSL resembled the *Bean* in that it did not want to be merely an appendage of the British suffrage movement, and felt that universal suffrage should be included in any local governance. The difference between the two entities is that the IWSL supported the Home Rule bill—with an amendment that offered women the vote—and the *Bean* did not (Cousins 164-65). Sheehy-Skeffington's letter to the editor was followed by Markievicz's aforementioned "Free Women in a Free Nation" article in March 1909, which coincides with another serialized piece of fiction, "The Priest's Gallows," that had a similar urgency for women to define "appropriate" gender codes. The timely occurrence of these separate texts exemplifies the periodical's ability to track contemporary social and political conversations, while at the same time acting as a space within which the periodical community could debate and enact developing identities.

By the time Tynan's serial short story "The Priest's Gallows" began its run in the

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<sup>59</sup> In *We Two Together*, a coauthored autobiography with her spouse, Margaret Cousins discusses her involvement with the IWSL and her knowledge of Sheehy-Skeffington's politics.

*Bean* in April 1909, she was already considered a popular author, with over thirty-eight novels, story collections, and poetry chapbooks in publication.<sup>60</sup> "The Priest's Gallows" reflects Tynan's sentimentalism and unwavering devotion to her Catholic religion, and her beliefs on women's position within a nationalist society.<sup>61</sup> Donna Potts suggests that, early in her literary career, Tynan was critically aware and responsive to the social, cultural, and political struggles around her; while she did not create plot lines that would directly connect to contemporary issues, Tynan's use of cultural markers, myths, and Irish tradition run parallel to her experience of Irish womanhood in turn of the century England and Ireland (82). Her involvement with the *Bean* provides evidence of this awareness.

The editorial committee of the *Bean* welcomed Tynan's submissions, as her popularity promised increased patronage of the journal. In fact, editor Molony, along with her advisory committee, originally accepted "The Priest's Gallows" without seeing the story in complete form, an uncommon practice.<sup>62</sup> This later proved to be a scandalous mistake, upon which I will elaborate in closing.

Set in a pastoral community and once-great house, "The Priest's Gallows" depicts the countryside as both regenerative and mysterious. The tale begins with a description of Agherdo House, a cliff-side home swallowed in danger and beauty on the coast of Ireland. Tynan's main character, a British officer in search of a rogue Irish terrorist, observes that the rugged seaside face of the house appears fortified and imposing, with

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<sup>60</sup> At the time of her death in 1931, Tynan had completed 100 works of fiction and poetry.

<sup>61</sup> Consider addressing the religion of the journal here

<sup>62</sup> See Czira 44.

access available only across a natural rock bridge named "The Priest's Gallows." But as Captain Charters ascends to the house, he describes a rich garden and warm expression of architecture, despite a somewhat impoverished appearance (Apr. 1909: 3). Tynan's depiction of the house extends a metaphor common in her work. Potts's attention to Tynan's earlier poetry highlights her wide-ranging use of the pastoral to present Ireland as "a sacred, magical land that diverges sharply from industrialized, secularized, profane England"; this use of setting and description parallels Tynan's nationalist belief that Ireland should gain freedom from England's imperial rule (82). "The Priest's Gallows" is no different, suggesting that occupying forces see only the proud, fortified, somewhat impoverished face of Ireland unless welcomed to the hearth. Once within the walls of the property, Charters, as an agent of British rule, romanticizes the space and conflating the landscape with Ireland and its people. (May 1909: 4). Tynan's continued use of the pastoral tradition connects with Gore-Booth, and Parnell's similar presentation of the metaphorical West of the Irish national imaginary—the heart of constructed cultural identity. This choice of location maintains the message of the periodical that the effects of colonization are felt on a deeper level of consciousness than just physical occupation. In writing conflict within the space reserved for the rebirth of Irish nationalism, the mythical West, Tynan also treats the occupation of Ireland as a romantic machination, one in which heroes and heroines must play their part appropriately.

Readers follow Charters through four installments in which he searches out Stephen Kildare, freedom fighter, while falling in love with an iconic Irish maiden. Predictably, the Captain's invitation to visit Agherdo House proves a subterfuge as the

resident family consists of smugglers in league with Irish revolutionaries. Tynan's representative characters include strong, wily women participating in both espionage and rebel strategy, and an apathetic British soldier that is “kindly affected” towards native Irish people, yet sworn to his duty to the English crown. As his stay at Agherdo House lengthens, the Captain falls in love with one of two daughters. Grania and Maeve are two sides of one coin. Initial appearances suggest that Maeve plays the loyalist, welcoming Captain Charters's appearance.<sup>63</sup> Instead, Charters falls in love with the stoic Grania, who refuses his advances. Viewing the tale through Charters's eyes, readers question whom to root for, the lovelorn British captain and agent of colonization, or the steadfast Irish maiden who sings "mournful ballads of her own unhappy country" (May 1909: 5). This story of occupation and star-crossed love is not without political intent. The narrator is opposed to British occupation of Ireland, a position that is implicit in the love plot, as well as contextualizing articles printed in the same issue as the story installments.

For instance, the same May issue in which “The Priest's Gallows” highlights the resolve of Grania, features an article by Markievicz that deals with the very real occupation of Irish home-space, similar to the romanticized situation of Tynan's tale. The Annual Army Bill of 1909 included a new clause that provided for the billeting of British military for negligible compensation. Penned under the name Maca, Markievicz's argument suggests that the “hysterical English Parliament representing a

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<sup>63</sup> Maeve is named after the mythological queen of Connacht, who is often invoked as a proud, national leader in nationalist texts. Grania is named after another powerful leader from Irish mythology, as well as the infamous pirate Grace O'Malley who opposed the English in the late sixteenth-century, giving added weight to her family's smuggling business.

hysterical English nation” needs to be protested against, something that the Irish press and citizenry had not done to Markievicz’s satisfaction (“British Soldier as a Paying Guest” 6).<sup>64</sup> She goes on to discuss the dangers to Irish youth if billeting were to commence, referring to the “scarlet fever” that attacks young women who socialize with British soldiers, and young Irish men who under false pretenses enter the British forces—when they should, in fact, be serving the Irish nationalist movement (7). Tynan’s story and Maca’s article should be read together, as the dynamic reality of the periodical requires scholars to acknowledge and engage the multifarious reality of the journal. The juxtaposition of these two texts adds depth to an already developing communal position on British occupation of Irish lands and homes.

In the same May 1909 issue, Molony’s “Editorial Notes” reflect a similar opinion of the Annual Army Bill, albeit with less figurative language. Molony echoes Markievicz’s concern that the billeting clause seems to be tailor-made for the “Irish situation,” as Molony also recounts part of the parliamentary conversation wherein legislators qualify the use of the clause only in cases of “imminent [English] National danger” (May 1909: 8). The placement of Molony’s column with Markievicz’s article and Tynan’s story exemplifies the interior dialogue present with the journal, as each piece builds together to present a unified message of the danger inherent in the English occupation of Irish homes and beyond. Along with the dangerous presence of British soldiers within Irish homes—the spaces most associated with qualities of Irish womanhood—the story suggests appropriate interactions between young Irish women

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<sup>64</sup> Markievicz used both “Maca” and “Armid” as pennames. See Innes 153 and 156. Czira also lists various authors and their pennames in *As the Years Fly By*.

and occupying English forces. Ultimately, the women in “The Priest’s Gallows” outwit Charters and foil his attempts to paternally control the home space. A letter to the editor published four months prior to the first installment of the tale shows similar animosity to soldiers as Markievicz’s article. In a January 1909 letter to the editor, a reader exhorts fellow readers to create a society and reading room for young Irish women, so that “these girls could be prevented from keeping company with these obnoxious Redcoats” on their night off (L. ni Ceardail “Our Servant Girls” 12). While the letter predates the publication of “The Priest’s Gallows,” the sentiment contained within is carried along within the periodical’s favor.<sup>65</sup>

In a sentimental love story, Tynan constructs a narrative that reveals the complicated relationship of power between Ireland and Britain that also touches upon the very real complications of relationships between British and Irish people on a personal level. As Charters questions his loyalty to the mission, Tynan suggests that personal connections can bring peace to the troubled land. In the July 1909 installment, Captain Charters resolves to marry Grania, modeling that through love, peace can return to the disrupted world of Agherdo House, and Ireland as a whole: “I came there as their enemy, but presently there would be peace, and I would make them forget that they hated me” (3). The marriage of British officer to Irish rebel posits an allegory of colonial occupation, one that is complicated by our inability to clearly attribute the denouement of the tale to Tynan, as it was actually revised by the Bean’s editorial committee.

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<sup>65</sup> Czira suggests that the editorial board’s concerns for the “troubled” ending of Tynan’s story took into full consideration the political and social implications of Charter’s occupation/usurpation of Irish home as well as union with an Irish woman.

Tynan's story had been accepted and had begun publication without the editorial committee seeing the resolution of the piece. Believing that Tynan's romantic triangle of a British soldier, Irish girl, and a rebel would end “appropriately” (in that the Irish rebel would win the girl, the day, and the battle for freedom), Czira recalls how, upon receiving the final section of the story for publication, the editorial committee “found to our horror that the insurgent was dead and buried, and that the gallant English officer led the blushing rebel maid to the altar” (44). This “bombshell” sent the editorial staff into a panic, as Tynan’s loyalist ending did not contribute adequately to the desired political identity of the periodical. In the end, Czira recalls that they chose to rewrite it without Tynan, so that the “appropriate” ending to such a tale would be shown in the *Bean*. According to the editorial committee, Tynan’s draft did not present the type of faithful, patriotic womanhood that the *Bean* maintained, as the original Grania was taken away by the British soldier. The death of the Irish hero in Tynan’s version also was problematic for the *Bean*. In the revision that was published, Kildare escapes with Maeve, who had play-acted British loyalties. Left within the framework of a romance, Charters does end up with Grania, but learns that the British should not get involved in Irish affairs. A symbol of British occupying ideologies, Charters is lame, and vows “never again [to] take up arms against my wife's people” (July 1909: 4). The revised ending appears to offer the only circumstance in which the *Bean* would allow an Irish maid to interact with an English soldier—in which he is injured and renounces his former British identity

In conclusion, it is clear that the various parts of the *Bean* joined together to

create a communal identity inclusive of gender, class, location, and nationalism. This nationalist-feminist identity is refined through the periodical process and the many voices required in its creation. The *Bean* is a cultural journal that upholds the three tenets of feminism expressed in Chapter I across and among various genres included in each month's issue. While periodicals have, until recently, often been dismissed by literary critics because of the ephemeral status of the text, it is that very status as ephemera that can concretize the political importance of a text which, I argue, provides a much more complete and true representation of the development of Irish women's identity at the turn of the twentieth century, as conceptualized in *Bean*.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE *FREEWOMAN*: A COMMUNAL SPACE FOR DIALOGUE AND DISSENT

In this chapter, I use the example of the *Freewoman* to develop my argument that the periodical form offers a more complete presentation of communal, early twentieth-century gender identity formation than other popular literary forms of that time. This journal reveals the impact of the reader on the publication cycle through Letters to the Editor and unsolicited contributions. *Freewoman*, similar to *Bean*, offered the dialogic space of correspondence columns that responded to other reader's letters as well as regular columns. While many of the critical analyses of the British journal the *Freewoman* focus on Dora Marsden, the chief editor of the journal, and read the text through the lens of her regular (and lengthy) editorial columns, I am suggesting that this periodical be considered the product of multiple authors.<sup>66</sup> An in-depth investigation of the *Freewoman* reveals three elements supporting a model of corporate production: (1) the complexities of communal identity formation through the analysis of lexical symbols, such as the change in title and gendered vocabulary of the periodical; (2) the increasing column space given to literary selections as well as the selections themselves, which demonstrate *Freewoman's* response to the localized need to redefine the national value of Britishness within a culture-producing enterprise such as the periodical

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<sup>66</sup> See Barash's "Dora Marsden's Feminism, The Freewoman, and the Gender Politics of Early Modernism," and Clarke's *Dora Marsden and Early Modernism: Gender, Individualism, and Science* 47-94.

industry; and (3) a further development of the cyclical relationship between reader-editor-contributor. All of these elements suggest that the periodical form offers a comprehensive example of shifting social values as it both leads and responds to contemporary ideologies. Through these three major topics, the *Freewoman* presented a communal identity that was understood as feminist by its contemporary readers. The *Indian Ladies Magazine* and *Bean* could also be considered in the same manner, as none of these periodicals are what Beetham considers a “campaign” journal, privileging one core issue, such as suffrage, above all other topics (*Victorian Women’s Magazines* 61). Instead, each journal engages women’s position in society within multiple contexts and facets of life through editorial columns, stories, and reprinted letters to the editor.

In discussing “gendered identity” in the *Freewoman*, I refer to a twenty-first century understanding that gender is social and develops according to external influences. Humans develop complex systems of gender performance that affect relationships not only between gender categories but also within those categories. These relationships are in constant flux as humans engage in various social practices. The ways we communicate, both verbal and written, are social practices. Written language in particular can reveal identity development of a group of individuals acting in concert. Maria DiCenzo’s work with suffrage histories utilizes social movement theory that focuses on the written narrative as a tool for developing communal identities. Citing the work of Gary Alan Fine, Jane Jenson, and Carol Mueller, DiCenzo establishes the importance of the written narrative in the construction of a framework for analyzing the rhetoric of suffrage movements (“Justifying Their Modern Sisters” 44-45). Fine claims

that a community's written creation of culture "contributes to organizational identity" (qtd. in DiCenzo 44). Taking this understanding of written communal identity further, in concert with the work of linguists Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet, we can consider the community of readers, editors, and authors of the *Freewoman*, as well as the unique communities of *Bean* and *Indian Ladies Magazine*, to be "communit[ies] of practice" that are "defined simultaneously by its membership and by the practice in which that membership engages" ("Think Practically and Look Locally" 464). Thus, it is possible to see how the identity of the periodical results from the social practice of writing. Assuming that the communal identity of a periodical becomes shaped by a community of practice, identifying those human actors involved in that community further reveals how and from what histories the shaping of the community takes place.

### *The Beginnings of a Journal*

At roughly the same time that the *Bean* closed its publication run in 1911, Dora Marsden developed a weekly publication that provided readers with a place to engage in constructive dialogue. Marsden began the *Freewoman* project together with Grace Jardine and Mary Gawthorpe. All three women had been active in the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), but broke ties with the organization in early 1911.<sup>67</sup> In fact, Marsden's resignation from the WSPU and her dislike of Christabel Pankhurst's bullish leadership practices and refusal to advocate on any issue but the vote became constant

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<sup>67</sup> Marsden and Jardine went on to join the Women's Freedom League (WFL). After the WFL declined to finance a feminist journal alongside their own suffrage newspaper, *The Vote*, the women joined Gawthorpe and publisher Charles Granville in creating the *New Freewoman*.

fodder for the *Freewoman* from the very first issue of November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1911.<sup>68</sup> In the first “Notes of the Week” column, the editors “condemn [Pankhurst’s] recent move without reserve as lacking political insight and even common-sense”(4). Jean-Michel Rabaté also points out this difference of opinion between Pankhurst and Marsden, explaining Marsden’s developing distaste for a movement that was predicated on the abstract idea of “woman” without fully engaging in all aspects of women’s lives (277). Inasmuch as the WSPU at that time championed universal suffrage, they did not prioritize the two additional goals discussed in chapter I: breaking down barriers between public and private life or the discussion of women’s sexuality and body issues. The community of the *Freewoman*, however, did champion these issues. Marsden and Gawthorpe, with Jardine assisting as sub-Editor, successfully edited twelve weekly issues together until Gawthorpe resigned due to health problems in February 1912. Marsden continued on as chief editor until October, when the *Freewoman* halted publication under the pressure of publishers and distributors who did not support the periodical’s theoretical views on women’s position in British society.

This chapter focuses on the development of communal values for British women within the pages of the *Freewoman*. The editors, particularly Marsden, did have strong personalities, and it is necessary to acknowledge how resolute they were in their mission to discuss self-determination, female sexuality, and criticize all organizations and institutions that did not allow frank discussions of organizational politics and power sharing. It is this imperative to expose subordination of individuals within larger

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<sup>68</sup> See Barash’s research on Marsden’s personal correspondence with Pankhurst and others (31-56).

communities that keeps the periodical true to its mission, and emphasizes the communal aspect of the periodical. Rather than noting one or two dominant opinions throughout the life of the journal, it is all the more instructive to see how such robust editors subsumed personal opinions in order to foster dialogue on these topics within a larger community. Helena Molony, as editor of the *Bean*, was also tempted with the editorial power to control the social and political agenda of the periodical. Molony did write many feature arguments for the *Bean* that aligned with her developing interest in workers' rights and socialist politics, but she also made express mention in editorial columns of disagreements with contributors and readers—disagreements that she printed because they were part of engaging discussions regarding social and political positions of the periodical, as well as editorial decisions made by the larger editorial committee and not just her and her absentee co-editor Gonne.<sup>69</sup> Molony and Marsden both sought transparency in their position as editor, so that readers were included in creation of the periodical. This investiture of readers into the creation of the periodical is explicated later in this chapter. The policy of welcoming multiple voices to the discussions throughout *Freewoman* is also reflected in the second and third generations of the project. While this study does not concern itself with the workings of the *New Freewoman* or the *Egoist*, it is important to note the evolution of the periodical from a feminist-motivated text to a more exclusive literary journal, as this trajectory lends credence to the value the editors saw in the fiction and poetry texts. Beetham and

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<sup>69</sup> In the “Editorial Notes” of *Bean*’s fifteenth issue, Molony proposed upcoming changes to regular columns in an effort to include a “more domestic tinge” requested by readers (thought not her), and asked for community approval before making such changes (Jan 1910: 8).

Boardman note that poetry was often included in early twentieth-century women's journals three reasons: as filler, because the text(s) adhered to specific literary values, or because the poem could be utilized as an ideological space in which a periodical could further engage its political and social agenda (*Victorian Women's Magazines* 145). The *Freewoman* project's inclusion of literary texts developed over time, increasing the number of texts published in an issue in its second incarnation as the *New Freewoman*.

After a short period spent searching for financial backers, new contributors, and editorial help, the *New Freewoman* debuted its first issue on June 15, 1913. According to Louis MacKendrick, the discussion circles previously established by *Freewoman* readers can be credited with keeping the spirit of the periodical alive until finances necessary for publication were secured (180). The 'new' periodical reflected a widening pool of readers and contributors. Many of the original contributors to the *Freewoman* took on a larger presence in this second incarnation of the periodical, including an increasing number of selections by Huntly Carter and Horace Holley, as well as new editorial assistance and articles from Rebecca West, Richard Aldington, and, briefly, Ezra Pound. While the first four issues of the *New Freewoman* followed the same content guidelines as its first incarnation, the next issue saw a distinct change in formulation leaning towards a more literary magazine, introducing the school of imagism to readers, as well as publishing multiple works by many of the imagists and authors selected by the acting literary editor, Ezra Pound. The *New Freewoman* continued as a bimonthly publication until July 1914, when another change of masthead occurred.

The third generation of the periodical was titled the *Egoist*, a change in title

called for by contributors in the last number of the *New Freewoman* marked the conceptual change of the journal as the egoist does not privilege one “cause” above others, as the previous title would suggest (Marsden, “Views and Comments” 15 Dec. 1913:244).<sup>70</sup> The *Egoist* was led by Harriet Shaw-Weaver, a subscription-holder of the *Freewoman* who had stepped in to finance the *New Freewoman* and acted as treasurer. In 1914, she became more involved in the publication as chief editor for the *Egoist* until 1919.<sup>71</sup> Shaw-Weaver’s leadership is an excellent example of the communal aspect of the periodical, and how the development of a journal’s identity could occur at both the individual and the communal levels. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet rightly assert that the “individual’s development of gender identity within a community of practice [such as the *Freewoman*] is inseparable from the continual construction of gender within that community of practice, and from the ongoing construction of class, race and local identities” (473). As a reader, then financial backer and editor, Shaw-Weaver both responded and worked to create the values inscribed within the *Freewoman*. The chronology of the *Freewoman* project demonstrates how a periodical is refined over time, and how the community of readers, editors, and authors contributes to the ideology of that periodical.

### *Title of Importance*

The evolving title of the journal indicates this developing definition. Kathryn

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<sup>70</sup> Marsden supported the name change. See Garner 118.

<sup>71</sup> Under this third title, Marsden is listed as contributing editor, but still maintained great influence over the operation.

Gleadle suggests that the feminist movement's focus on female consciousness transected other ideological shifts in British culture (such as socialism, egoism, religious movements, etc.) and that where these theories met constituted the "sources of ideological conflict within the movement" (166). Gleadle is right in suggesting that feminist movements were deeply invested in the emergence of a female consciousness—or what Marsden and Gawthorpe call "a free woman," which is complicated by the need for the free woman to realize and actualize herself within a variety of ideological contexts. In other words, to the editors of the *Freewoman* it was wrong to suggest that Woman could become free if only one aspect of her identity, such as suffrage, were to be developed. Therefore, the *Freewoman* became known by contemporary audiences for the "radical" voicing of opinion on sexualities, free love, marriage and divorce, prostitution, birth control, cooperative housekeeping, philosophy, etc. Within each of these topics, the free woman works to assert herself individually. But before investigating the constructed communal identity revealed in the various articles and stories of the *Freewoman*, the linguistic symbols of the title itself can be examined as indicative of how the lexicon of the periodical reflected identity formation in both content and construction.

Each of the periodicals in this study operated under titles that were chosen for specific reasons, chief among them was the opportunity to emphasize the possibility that any reader could become part of the journal's community as well as embody the soul of a "free woman," "woman of Ireland," or "Indian Lady." The lexical choices involved indicate the agenda of each periodical and the importance of that community. Marisol

del-Teso-Craviotto conducted a study of the lexicon used in three women's periodicals, working to investigate the conceptualization of gender within the printed space. Her results suggest that the use and development of certain words not only reflect but also create "particular discourses of femininity that are supported in the content and advertising of the magazines" (2009). Her theoretical approach to the development of lexicon within a periodical community supports this study's assertion that the gendered identities created within a periodical's pages have a direct and deep connection to the words used to relay those ideals. Thus, an analysis of the repetition of certain terms throughout the *Freewoman*, reveals that the collocates of such terms as "woman" and "Free(dom)" reflect the ideological argument of the periodical itself.<sup>72</sup> Dora Marsden's first editorial column, "Bondwomen," claims, "woman is an individual and that because she is an individual she must be set free"(1). Freedom from subjugation in a patriarchal society is not to be given by the government in universal suffrage, nor is it to be taken by militant activists. Freedom from the oppressive theories circulating in society, along with the requisite social mores and orders, is "born in the individual soul," thus moving the feminist movement in England into a theoretical space of debate ("Notes of the Week" 3). The choice to title the periodical *Freewoman* also reflects the periodical's aversion to single-issue activism, such as a focus on suffrage of which the *Bean* also avoided. "Bondwomen" identifies the difference between the suffragist movement and the goals

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<sup>72</sup> Del-Teso-Craviotto studied *Good Housekeeping*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Working Woman* and *Ms*. She discovered that the frequent use of key terms within each periodical, based on the contextual qualifiers of printed use of those terms, presents qualitative data indicating that each magazine developed a gendered identity, with specific reflexive connotations for those terms. For example, while a word such as "help" was used in all four periodicals, collocates of the term indicate that each magazine presented a distinct position on femininity and media (2006).

of the *Freewoman*, as previously mentioned, building a definition of the freewoman as an individual thinker, who is also free from the institutionalized patriarchy of British society. In “The Psychology of Sex,” also in the first issue, J.M. Kennedy separates feminists and freewomen from suffragists: “Suffragists are those women who want voting powers for the redressing of economic grievances and for the purpose of raising women to the level of man in a purely materialistic sense. The feminists are those who pay less attention to the securing of the vote—who are, indeed, not particularly anxious to vote at all—for the reason that their grievances are not of the economic but of the spiritual order. They wish... for sexual freedom” (14). Kennedy’s article is accompanied by several other arguments, along with “Bondwomen,” that laid down the gauntlet, as it were, at the feet of both conservative and progressive readers. The final quality of the first issue that is of note at this stage in our examination is that it contained no fiction or poetry. But the development of a communal identity happens over time; therefore, the increasing number of fiction and poetry selections that appeared over the next two years would come to reflect and model this freewoman. Much more than the compartmentalized woman of the suffrage movement, she would interact with and assert her individuality within all areas of theoretical debate mentioned previously. The development of literary elements of the periodical may appear discursive at first glance, beginning with short poetry selections that fall into generally received conventions of late-Victorian poets. But increasing interest in modernist authors of the period reflected the overarching idea that a freewoman must engage all aspects of her “spirit,” including philosophical and metaphysical beliefs, in order to be free. Thus, the literary selections

became as important as the editorial columns in identifying the themes and motives of the *Freewoman*.

### *Circle of Readers*

Evidence that the readers hold perhaps as much power over content as the editors and contributors appears in the short list of major themes that appeared throughout the run of the periodical; that is to say, as the periodical refined its processes with each new issue, the increased column space provided to fiction and poetry selections matched the increasing inches given to the Correspondence section, as well as resultant articles inspired by previous letters to the editor. The second major assertion of this chapter—that an increasing number of poetry and fiction selections came to address the community’s focus on redeveloping British women’s identity—and the third assertion, that the periodical offers evidence of the power sharing relationship of reader-editor-contributor, are deeply connected. Because these two categories are entwined, we can evaluate the textual evidence of the relationship between and among writers and readers at the same time as we analyze the fiction and poetry printed on those pages. While the journal discusses multiple major issues throughout its run, three major themes push the development of a definition of feminism to a deeper level. The periodical crosses lines already drawn on the subjects of suffrage and legal equality for women; articles, letters, poems, and short fiction discuss suffrage, the rights of women to form and join workers’ unions, and other issues of political participation by women regularly taken up by groups such as the WSPU. This study focuses on periodical publishing because the text itself

offers a unique record of the development of communal values as the community itself refines its views on independence, sexuality, and passion (for all women, not just wives), and uses fiction to disparage the traditional, patriarchal Britishness defined by colonization.

As previously mentioned, the journal sought to develop a very clear definition of a freewoman and the psycho-social development of feminist philosophy. Early poetry selections in the *Freewoman* also reflected the emphasis on philosophic development for the freewoman, despite the perceived literary quality of the texts. Rabaté dismisses the aesthetic value of the poetry in the *Freewoman* and early selections in the *New Freewoman* because he considers them late Victorian, published prior to Ezra Pounds first appearance in 1913; Rabaté considers the poetry valuable to scholars merely as a benchmark with which to measure the future work of Marsden and Rebecca West, the first literary editor (274). However, while the selections in early issues were not on a par with those of later contributors, such as H.D. and Pound, they have political and social value by virtue of their deliberate inclusion as early markers of the journal's evolving identity. The first poem included, E. H. Visiak's "Beauty," that appeared in the second issue, contains typical late-Victorian references to the standard tropes of beauty, Love, and distrust of organized religion. But when read in the context of the periodical issue and overall publication span, a new, more urgent meaning appears:

Aspire to beauty's self,

Nor shrine an empty token.

Beauty is no gem that glistens in the clod;

Beauty is no gleam, by sin and sorrow broken.

Lumen of the soul is she,

Flashed from the face of God. (33)

Visiak's contemplation of beauty defines it not as an outward marker of flesh worshipped by others, or a "diamond in the rough" that needs no polish. The woman who recognizes her soul as equal to God (and therefore not subordinate to other men) reflects the light of a soul beautified by true knowledge of the complete self. This poem does, in fact, reflect the periodical's focus on the individualism of a freewoman. The poem's location at the end of the issue's Correspondence section presents connections between the poem and nearby topics. It is possible that the poem was placed here simply to fill in unused white space, but readers not privy to editorial choices at this early stage in the periodical are justified to read it as positioned purposefully. The Correspondence section includes negative commentary on the previous issue's opinions concerning the Pankhursts and WPSU, as well as responses to Edmund d'Auvergne's article "A Definition of Marriage," in which the author defines marriage as the act of parentage, rather than a ceremony, thereby facilitating the virtual end of single motherhood and its accompanying financial and moral struggles (not including widows) (15 Nov. 1911: 5-6). Once a child is born, according to d'Auvergne, the parents should be considered joined in marriage and therefore held morally and financially responsible for the family that has been created.

The critique of the marriage contract as an economic issue prevails throughout the run of the periodical, and the dialogue that began within the Correspondence section

with a letter by H. F. Stephens applauds d’Auvergne’s address, despite the resulting implication of state sanctioned polygamy (30 Nov. 1911: 32). Both Stephens’s letter and d’Auvergne’s column refer to the “importance of motherhood,” the position of the single mother in society, and the enduring dilemma of prostitution. In opposition to both authors, another letter condemns d’Auvergne’s view of marriage as “state-licensed human incubating” (Pearce, “Marriage and Motherhood” 30 Nov. 1911: 32). The author, I.D. Pearce, takes aim at d’Auvergne’s suggestion that marriage as a contract occurs when a child is made, seemingly misreading the original column’s argument that couples who are married but have no children are “partners” and not spouses. Printing Visiak’s poem and these letters to the editor on the same page draws a line between the arguments asking for an egalitarian parental relationship to Visiak’s poetic argument concerning the empowerment of women in general.

D’Auvergne posts a response to Pearce’s letter in the following issue of the *Freewoman*, and the resulting exchange between readers, contributor, and even editors provides an interesting look at the dynamic nature of the periodical. In this response to a reader, D’Auvergne suggests that Pearce did not understand the initial article, clarifying that “[he] declined to say it was the duty of every individual to reproduce his species adding that the question was an economic one” (7 Dec. 1911: 52). But Pearce returns to the topic in another piece of correspondence printed in the next issue of December 14, suggesting that d’Auvergne should desist on the topic of single motherhood and childless mothers (based on his presumed understanding that all married women without children do not want children) because he is a man and therefore incapable of

understanding women's motivations (14 Dec. 1911: 71). This essentialist view of maternity does not go unremarked. D'Auvergne returns for his last letter to the editors under the "Marriage and Motherhood" conundrum and defends his position as the solution to an economic problem (14 Dec. 1911: 90).

In contrast to *Freewoman's* frank discussion of sexual freedoms for wives, *ILM* did not approach the topic of sexuality. Yet, both journals share a common interest in the rights of a wife both in marriage and after. In Chapter IV, *ILM's* approach to child widows, the stigma of remarriage, and a campaign to change the perception of a wife as chattel is discussed in detail. However, acknowledging this common topic is relevant to the discussion of *Freewoman* because both texts offer fiction that provides models of motherhood and marriage partners. These conversations regarding wives and mothers elicit great communal response through correspondence, such as the letters to the editor described above.

While the conversations begun in the first few issues of the periodical are interesting in themselves, we cannot separate the ideological content of those short texts from others presented in the journal. Each of these letters to the editor (and essentially each other) garnered space on the page because of the editors' insistence that this periodical reflect current dialogue ongoing in certain circles of society. In the seventh of December, 1911 issue, an "Editor's Reply" articulates the periodical's intention to publish as many perspectives as are received by the editors. As previously mentioned, the editors' willingness to publish dissenting views and harsh criticisms of the journal are evidence that the journal is not just a mouthpiece for one set of opinions. Marsden

states that

The *Freewoman* is not ‘bound’ to any opinions, ‘advanced’ or otherwise. It is testing opinion. It is quite true that we, as editors, express opinions, but then so do our contributors. We may surely be expected to have some views regarding the various problems with which we deal, and have as great a right as our contributors to maintain these views. Unlike other journals which have an editorial point of view, we do not endeavor to merely to secure opinions which support our own. (55)

This would not be the last time that the editor’s position on issues would be called into question, but for a time after this reply, much of the correspondence identified an intended audience both broad and specific. The *Freewoman*’s community of readers and authors desired even more debate than was allowed in the weekly issues; consequently, after just four months of weekly publications, a notice appeared alongside subscription information, calling attention to readers’ request for the forming of discussion circles to allow full debate on each topic broached in the publication (“Freewoman Clubs” 15 Feb. 1912: 244). This notice was followed by consecutive letters to the editor that answered this call.<sup>73</sup> The initial announcement and the emphatic responses of readers indicates the multiple conversations circling the community of freewoman subscribers, for to truly embrace the philosophical attributes assigned to the freewoman of the periodical’s title, and to be considered a part of the freewoman community, readers must be as active as

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<sup>73</sup> Requests for a discussion club are registered by B.L. (29 Feb. 1912: 291), Ethel Bradshaw (7 Mar 1912: 314), and Margaret Walker (14 Mar 1912: 334). The notice for the first London meeting appears shortly thereafter (28 Mar. 1912: 373).

the authors and editors of the text. The Correspondence section also reveals much about the content of these discussion clubs, including sexuality, nontraditional arrangements such as open marriage, sexual fulfillment for women, the complete celibacy of spinsterhood, and the revocation of the marriage contract in dysfunctional relationships. It is in this discussion of sexuality that *Freewoman* differs from *Bean* and *ILM*.

One aspect of sexuality taken up by articles, reader's letters, fiction, and poetry selections in the periodical is that of sexual fulfillment for women. During an extended exchange of correspondence concerning the discussion of sexual passion for women, married and unmarried, Louise Heilgers fictional sketch, "The Wife," opens a window on a woman's contemplation of the marriage arrangement and lack of physical passion between herself and her husband reinforced by the societal roles they each play. The wife longs for physical passion from her husband, who only expends his passion with a mistress. The main characters remain nameless, keeping these symbolic characters as accessible as possible. The only character individuated is Rosa, the mistress. The wife, tired of the traditional compartmentalization of passion and the husband's tepid attentions, finally speaks out with force and proclaims, "I want you to treat me for half an hour, an hour, all hours if you will, me, your wife, as you would—your Mistress!" (348).<sup>74</sup> This exclamation bred from an argument adds another layer to the thematic focus on what marriage denies women and on the duplicitous standards of monogamy.

After four years of marriage, the wife finally verbalizes what she wants from her

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<sup>74</sup> It is important to note that while much of the content of the periodical attempts to establish universal ideals of feminism, this fictional sketch along with much of the correspondence in the *Freewoman* reveals the audience and its makers to be middle-class in position and interest; we read both the husband and wife as symbolic characters of middle-class members of the reading public, much like many of the readers of the other periodicals under examination within this study.

husband, as sexual passion is not a topic discussed in proper marriages, nor is the topic of the husband's mistress. Rosa, unlike the wife, is given a name and while Rosa may not have the security of the marriage contract, she is not confined as "an ornament for the house and the head of the table, a doll to be expensively clothed and befurred and jeweled, so that she might do him credit when his friends came to see them" (348).

An attention to the mutuality of physical passion has often been considered part of the broader modernist agenda.<sup>75</sup> Three months prior to Heilger's fiction, in the article "Speculations on Sex War," the author suggests that anxiety over sexual relations should be understood and discussed, as "[t]he extreme lack of physical passion in modern Englishwomen is perhaps due to our national insistence on purity in wives without a similar purity in husbands...The point is to realize that this lack of passion tends towards a contempt for passion" (14 Dec. 1911: 65). Subsequent letters in response to this article take up two points: (1) the duplicity of public morality, rooted in marriage, must be struck down, and (2) the current public opinion of sex discussion is based on a lack of knowledge of both anatomy and psychology and those who disdain the debate do so because they themselves do not participate in physical passion. Helen Hamilton's "Spinsters in the Making" begins directly after the aforementioned article and offers possible roots for the development of "sex-aversion" or the rejection of physical passion (14 Dec. 1911: 68). Hamilton's suggestion that too much higher education breeds spinsters, and that college women grow to abhor physical passion, eliciting a wide range

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<sup>75</sup> Hanscombe and Smyers correctly assert that the *Freewoman* (and its future avatars the *New Freewoman* and the *Egoist*) is unique in its tenacity to discuss the "sex role" of a woman (166).

of responses by readers and regular contributors. Another article in the same issue contends that if marriage were not the only arrangement by which women could enjoy “sex intimacy” without public enmity, then perhaps fewer women would enter into ill-matched partnerships (Haynes, 14 Dec. 1911: 74). All three of these articles meet with praise and rebuttal in following issues, as readers engage in written debate between author and reader, reader and reader, reader and editor, and editor and author.<sup>76</sup>

The discussion spills outside of the Correspondence column, to which Heilger’s story can attest. The month before “The Wife” was published, Muriel Nelson-d’Auvergne’s poem “A Vindication” gives voice to a speaker horrified by how little sexual passion is valued. Having witnessed sex “sold” by both prostitute and wife, she curses passion and runs away from worldly society. In the midst of natural space, the speaker is visited by the vision of a god who reminds the speaker that the passion she had witnessed was not true passion, but “passion distorted, enslaved” (line 45). The god reminds the speaker that passion, both spiritual and physical, is attuned to the natural world, for “[l]ove’s wild ecstasies, with all that moves men deeply,/ are parts of nature’s mighty unity,/ and in their essence good” (52-54). The poet has taken the conceit further by supplying a lush, sexualized description of the natural world in which the speaker has taken refuge. Sensual verbs and imagery offer a natural lover to the speaker, as flowers “spread passionate arms” around her while “faint pink sheaths dropped from new budded beeches/ as they bent to kiss the wind” (21-25). The motion of the flowers

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<sup>76</sup> See letters by E.M. Watson and Cailin Dhu (21 Dec. 1911: 92); letter by Eric Gill (28 Dec. 1911:113); letters by “Grandmother,” “Scythion,” and F.M.P (22 Feb. 1912:270); letters by Kathlyn Oliver and “A Mother” (29 Feb. 1912: 290); letters by E.S.P. Haynes, “A New Subscriber,” and “A Would-be Freewoman” (21 Mar. 1912: 352-354); letters by S. Skelhorn and Coralie M. Boord (28 Mar. 1912: 376).

crescendos as crushed flower scent “shivers” and wind “sobs” around the speaker. The poem concludes that “the triumph of passion is this,/ when freed from bondage to gold—to be wedded to beauty and love” (93-94). Nelson-d’Auvergne’s “vindication” of passion argues that women must reclaim passion within the marriage bed, as well as allow for easy divorce, as marriage is the institution that supports prostitution. The periodical consistently ties these three issues to one another, both affirmatively and negatively.

Like this correspondence, poetry, and fiction, opinion columns provided by editors and contributors comments on the need to discuss sexual health for women. Ellen Gaskell provides an article asserting that the general public, particularly women, must be educated adequately about sexually transmitted diseases, as it is “imperative that there shall be no more silly silence” about these diseases because they destroy women, men, the family unit, and even the nation at large (“The Unspeakable” 176). Two readers who continue the debate concerning physical passion for spinsters through several issues offer that the sexually deprived unmarried woman could be the bane of the feminist movement or an important supporter. Deborah Cohler has also analyzed the letters published between these readers, Kathlyn Oliver and Stella Browne (under the pseudonym “a new subscriber”), and suggests that these exchanges posit the question whether a “freewoman was a sexual woman” (86).<sup>77</sup> Cohler refrains from answering this query, but I would argue that the freewoman is engaged in the debate. Above all else, the *Freewoman* reflects a communal discussion of the importance of physical passion for

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<sup>77</sup> A well-known activist, Browne was a prolific contributor to *Freewoman* debates on sexual freedom and sexuality. See Hall 227-235.

women, and while the periodical clearly argues for passion in the marriage bed along with fewer strictures on unmarried heterosexual couples, the publication does not fully develop an opinion on lesbianism.<sup>78</sup> The discussions of sexuality that circulate within the pages of the *Freewoman* are specific to that community of readers and contributors, but another side to the discussion of marital issues in the journal is very much connected to the other periodicals in this study.

As discussed in the previous chapter, James Stephen's "Red-Haired Man's Wife" used marriage as a metaphor in order to examine both the surrender of individual identity asked of a woman when she married, as well as a subtext that discussed the colonial relationship between the British and occupied, emasculated Ireland. The poem suggested that the power dynamics of marriage in Ireland in the early twentieth-century was found to be lacking equality. This power imbalance was also discussed within the pages of *ILM* in correspondence from readers, in widow-remarriage notices and reports from widows' homes, and also in fiction that offers representations of the positions that *ILM* readers held on the subject. All three periodicals offer a space to work through the dilemma of subordination of women in marriage unique to that society, but while all three periodicals acknowledge and communicate this problem to readers, they should not be read as having a common view of gender subordination in marriage. Rather, in comparing these selections, we learn more about the complicated realities of empire mediated in all three journals. It is through the analysis of two pieces of short fiction by

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<sup>78</sup> Cohler offers an explanation for the hesitancy to discuss lesbianism, as the periodical is printed in a time when the vocabulary and theory considering female same-sex relationships is still being formulated, and slowly divorced from discussions of homosexuality. An article that covers homosexuality but briefly glosses physical passion between women can be found in Harry J. Birnstingl's "Uranians" (4 Jan. 1912:127-128).

B[lanche] A. Smith in the *Freewoman* that we can engage with two texts, similar to Stephens's poem, that connected the political structure of marriage to colonial politics. This discussion falls under the final theme under discussion in this chapter: the publication of fiction seeking both to affirm the cultural hegemony of British women and also to condemn the imperial project as constructed by men.

The duplicitous attitude towards nation and empire reflects the need to redefine Britishness at a time when it is challenged by increasing colonial tensions throughout the empire, as well as strained relations with other European countries as World War One draws closer.<sup>79</sup> Ernest Gellner, as discussed in chapter I, has established that nations and nationalism are founded on the convergence of will, culture, and politics. According to Gellner, a population that asserts its will to control all those within its culture while also working to expand that culture (and thus population) within one political framework is a "nation" (55). What Gellner's work implies for this study of the *Freewoman* is that nationalism selectively appropriates local cultures. Nationalism isolates a few cultural values to stand as the symbols and cement for a larger, homogenous culture. This fusing of politics and culture, including fiction and poetry, makes a feminist periodical such as the *Freewoman* an optimal candidate for charting the development of a communal, British, feminist identity, as well as for legitimizing the changing valuation of fiction and poetry in the periodical as a nationalist text of resistance/ agitation.

As a British text, the *Freewoman's* community could not avoid discussion of

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<sup>79</sup> An example of the pageantry of nationalism, the "Festival of Empire" held at the Crystal Palace in London in the summer of 1911 can be seen as a stage of otherness against which the British visitors could affirm their "civilized" identity.

colonial politics and the attitudes towards others held by the center of the British empire. Selections from the journal suggest that the community questioned the propriety of British women to speak for all women in the empire, as well as the roles British women held in colonial societies. The western gaze of the periodical upon colonial spaces and women is apparent in a series of fictional texts set in foreign locations and narrated by non-western women. This study does not suggest that readers universalize these tales based on the nationality of the author, but rather, question the impact upon a these stories have upon the development of Britishness for the periodical's community.

Scholars such as Edward Said have asserted that a nation looks both inward to reaffirm core concepts while also reacting outwards, defining identity through negation of the other.<sup>80</sup> The imperial value of Britishness in the early twentieth century fractured as the colonial locations appropriated by British writers in this identity resisted this annexation, and in the vacuum left behind, many writers and cultural meaning-makers rushed in to reshape Britishness from the inside out.<sup>81</sup> Cohler also recognizes the self-reflexive quality of the various articles that purport to be focused on developments in freedoms from women abroad, but in reality function as implicit arguments concerning British culture and the position of Anglo-British women within that society (82-83). Along with a handful of reports on developments in other European or "civilized" women's movements, the following two fiction pieces by B[lance] A Smith offer commentary on paternalistic British imperialism, as well as different approaches to

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<sup>80</sup> Said argues that cultural identity within the context of Imperialism is not defined without opposition (52).

<sup>81</sup> In *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire and the Locations of Identity*, Baucom examines how nineteenth-century British identity was a conflation of material properties and physical spaces. As British territories reshaped borders in the early twentieth century, this core component of imperial identity shifted.

universal feminisms. In other words, while the *Freewoman* engaged in various forms of British nationalism, its gender critique was transnational as it crossed cultural and national boundaries (complicated as it was by a legacy of imperial domination).

The directionality of ideas can be called into question in regards to *Freewoman's* short fiction that offered representative colonial characters faced with gender disparity that, arguably, both existed in non-western cultures before the arrival of British imperialists and also was a product of the colonial project itself. Correspondents and columns alike consistently exposed marriage as an economic exchange in *Freewoman* as well *ILM*, so the equation of a spouse with her price tag in Smith's "An Expensive Wife" draws a parallel to similar shrewd value/cost analogies in marriage. This valuation strategy, it is implied, dehumanizes the female characters in Smith's story. Set in Siam, the story concerns a man who returns home to find his wife has taken their child and run off with another man.<sup>82</sup> The protagonist, Bawm, sets out after his wife, and knows that if he does not return swiftly, his employer, a member of the upper class and the head of the Bangkok armory, will imprison Bawm's mother, Mooala. Bawm does not return, and his mother is taken captive. Mooala is given relatively easy work in the kitchen, but is thrown into her cell when a white woman comes to protest her imprisonment, trampling all levels of propriety by demanding an audience with Bawm's employer. Instead of meeting the white woman's demands, Phra Teeam "teaches her a lesson" and locks Mooala in chain, sending her back to confinement. Mooala's son, Bawm, never returns

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<sup>82</sup> Siam doesn't change its name to Thailand until 1939. The country was never under direct rule of the British empire, but due to European colonial expansion in southeast Asia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it negotiated a tenuous relationship with the British.

to save her from this false imprisonment.

Bawm's valuation of both his mother and wife is at once "uncivilized" and yet similar to British social values. Bawm pursues his wife because she cost almost ten pounds and "it's a terrible waste of money to lose an expensive wife like that" (198). Mooala and Bawm are adequately romanticized for the time period, as the story asked readers to invest in characters that are stereotypical representations of the Other, while also suggesting that subordination of women is a phenomenon that transcends nation and state boundaries. But it is the "white-faced female farang" that offers the most interesting representation of the Freewoman's debate on the position of women within colonial societies (199). An attempt by a "well-meaning" foreigner who apparently does not understand the unique local culture and social structures of the area interferes, to the disservice of her perceived "sister in arms," Mooala.

Perhaps Smith, and by extension the *Freewoman*, is a bit ahead of the curve in suggesting that western women, in this case British, should not speak for all women of the world. This sentiment is also implied in Cicely Fairfield's [Rebecca West's] book review in the same issue, which explained that "there are two kinds of Imperialists—Imperialists and bloody Imperialists. The Feminist who belongs to the first variety, and considers blood to be an incident in Imperialism, and not its aim and glory, has long wanted some sort of description of Indian womanhood and how its conditions have been affected by British rule" (30 Nov. 1911: 39). Fairfield's review of *The Position of Women in Indian Life* by the Maharani of Baroda and S. M. Mitra, suggests that the brand of British feminism to which it appears the authors aspire is actually less

enlightened than the average Indian woman's position in life. Fairfield instead offers biting criticism of British economic and educational policies that continue to subordinate women citizens, and are not as advanced as the authors of the book appear to believe. Fairfield also points out the economic disparity between many Western feminist activists and the general female public, stating that "the authors[of the book] repeat over and over again that most malignant libel spoken by the rich against the poor—that the average housewife of the lower and middle classes is an ignorant incompetent" (39). Fairfield points out that there is class warfare involved in the battle for women's rights, both at home and abroad, and insinuates that Indian women should reconsider the assumptions of the cultural hegemony the British hold over its colonial populations. This criticism of British interference is also seen in another story by Smith.

The story of "Luang Sawat, B.A." functions as an allegory that criticizes the conventional belief in British superiority. Published over a stretch of three issues in February and March of 1912.<sup>83</sup> In the first installment, Sawat is otherized by his tutor and the author; in the third installment, Sawat has become the displaced other, perhaps with a new language and British proclivities, but still other nonetheless. The exotic locale and vocabulary of Smith's stories engage western readers, but just as Fairfield's review superimposes local issues onto the Indian ladies' position in life, Smith constructs a tale that says much more about Britishness than it does about Siamese culture. In the first installment, readers are introduced to the main character, Sawat, as he

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<sup>83</sup> "Luang Sawat, B.A." was first published in *The Independent Review* 5.18 (Mar. 1905):234-45 and then republished in *The Living Age* vol.245 (6 May 1905): 338-47. While the *Freewoman* publication uses Smith's initials only, *The Independent Review* identifies B.A. Smith as Blanche A. Smith. Smith published other stories in *The Independent Review* that include characters from her fiction in *The Freewoman*.

studies law at Oxford. Sawat has been sent to England in order to learn to be an “uncorruptive” judge like English judges (15 Feb. 1912: 258). Sawat attempts to avoid acculturation by western influences so he can one day work to improve his nation, as what is needed is justice “more than teacher—more than cricket—more than English good manners and English accent”(258). But his English tutor quickly disappears from Sawat’s education, just as Sawat’s plan to resist the trappings of English “civilization” disappears. In the second installment, readers are transported to Siam and to the family Sawat has left behind. Sawat’s mother is the head of the remaining family and family industry, and readers are introduced to the social stratification of the communal household. Sawat’s wife, Ying, is disliked by his mother, Mom Sabai, and suffers because of it. Ying puts up with the mistreatment by her mother-in-law as she believes that on Sawat’s return, her husband will see Mom Sabai’s faults and reorder the home. Ying shares Sawat’s idealistic view of the British: “He is farang [European] now; and farangs are always just” (15 Feb. 1912: 299). But after eight years in London, Sawat returns and sees his homeland through foreign eyes. His empathy for commoners and desire to be a fair judge for the people is replaced with self-interest and bureaucratic apathy as he becomes somewhat a caricature of the stereotypical British bureaucrat in colonial society.

Politically motivated literature such as Smith’s stories and others found in the journal should not be marginalized by today’s scholars based on the assumption that literary value lies only in texts with greater ambiguities. According to Glenda Norquay and Sowon S. Park,

The implied assumption that in such overtly political writing content predominates over any interest in form and therefore makes it unsuitable for textual analysis creates a pressure which resonates in the work of critics writing about women's cultural productions from the period, even when they seek to challenge it. (304)

In this study of the *Freewoman*, I have sought to demonstrate the literary and cultural value of the journal's fiction, poetry, and nonfiction selections by revealing their involvement in creating a poly-vocal communal identity, in which the number of perspectives on various important topics is as important as the ideas expressed by those voices. Produced at the center of empire, the *Freewoman* offers a glimpse into how the community utilized fiction to examine the imperial center. The journal prioritizes the discussion of women's body and sexualities along with the goal of breaking down the barriers between public and private spaces for women in British society, while still offering space to discuss suffrage and the relationships between women's activist organizations. The community of the *Freewoman* actively discusses these topics in articles, fiction and poetry, and in printed conversations between readers, contributors, and editors, while exemplifying the metaphysical discussion of selfhood through lexical symbols.

While Dublin's *Bean* is produced within a colonial space in an effort to push back against British cultural hegemony, a third publication offers an additional perspective on the development of a collective, nationalist-feminist gendered identity. The *Indian Ladies Magazine* also sought to develop a sense of community defined not

just in negation to the imperial center also sought to create a historical imperative for Indian feminism beginning with remediation of characters and storylines from ancient Hindu and Muslim cultural texts. Instead of a fear of British influence, the *ILM* sought to build bridges between Great Britain and India in order to foster dialogue concerning the position of Indian women within British colonial society. In the next chapter, we will explore the construction of Anglo-Indian identity in Madras, and will further investigate a journal's recording of the complications of imperial feminism at the turn of the century.

**CHAPTER IV**

**NEGOTIATING INDIA’S “NEW WOMAN”: A TRANSNATIONAL APPROACH  
TO THE *INDIAN LADIES MAGAZINE***

Eight thousand miles away from London, Kamala Sathianadhan began another women’s publication in 1901 that espoused a feminist agenda similar to *Bean na hÉireann* and the *Freewoman*—in publicizing the subordination of women within Indian society, the periodical offered a space for the discussion of gender codes while positing action that could be taken to better the status of women as well as celebrating events and advancements made by community members to that end.<sup>84</sup> The *Indian Ladies Magazine* addressed gender inequalities within the topics of education, marriage, female participation in a nationalist narrative and the position afforded to women in a gender-stratified society, thematic concerns that were also developed in the other two early twentieth-century periodicals in this dissertation.<sup>85</sup> And just as with those publications, the fiction and poetry included in each issue became a theoretical testing ground for the discussion of abstract ideals of womanhood. The Correspondence section of the periodical also reveals the power-sharing structure of editor, contributor, and reader within the creation of identity for a specific community of women in early twentieth century India.

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<sup>84</sup> Revisit the discussion of the three aims of a feminist in Chapter I.

<sup>85</sup> *The Indian Ladies Magazine* was a monthly publication that ran from 1901-1913 before ceasing for financial reasons. Sathianadhan restarted the journal three more times in 1918, 1919, and 1927-1934. I will refer to the *Indian Ladies Magazine* as *ILM* hereafter.

The feminist perspective at work in *ILM* must be understood through a definition of feminism that is not the same as that practiced by the British publication the *Freewoman*, nor the approach represented in *Bean*. Throughout this study, I have asserted that the communal identity offered by involvement in a periodical must be evaluated not in rigidly universal terms, but with a clear understanding of the unique stressors placed upon that periodical community at a particular historical moment and by local cultures; that is to say, each periodical is shaped within unique historical and cultural formulations of class, morality, sexuality, nationality, and gender. The practice of transnational feminisms claims that while each national community—Irish, British, and Indian—uniquely experiences these stressors, they are all impacted by gender subordination. Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan suggest that, within traditional modes of postcolonial critique, many scholars continue to put up walls between communities based on nationalism and the confining rigors of patriarchal politics. However, “race, sexuality and class [are] not only bounded categories but [are] concepts that “travel”—that is, circulate and work in different linked ways in different places and times” (par. 5). The periodicals in this study do have a political relationship mediated by colonialism, and the printed issues under analysis are from roughly the same decade. These periodicals also belong to different cultures, nationalisms, and societies, which leave us questioning why and how analyses of these three disparate texts can enrich one another when placed within a larger conversation. Yes, the political relationships between each country do pose interesting questions for researchers today, and analysis of *ILM*'s treatment of major themes supports this dissertation's assertion that the periodical genre

is a valid genre to be studied by interdisciplinary literature scholars for evidence of communal identity formation.

Transnationalism is often invoked in comparative studies of cultural difference, and does imply the flow of information/ goods/ theories/ etc. across national and state boundaries. However, some investigations into the relationship of colonial women's movements to women's movements in the center of the empire reify western assumptions about non-western societies. For example, "woman" is often used as a trope within nationalist poetry, fiction, and other propaganda and regularly symbolized as one of three variants: the chaste virgin needing rescue, the brave mother of the nation, or the siren that can dash a nation's hope to pieces; however, these variants come from a western perspective that privileges specific social codes that may not apply to all societies.

Each of these three variants is grounded in the reproductive capabilities of a woman, while the concept of chastity puts great value on conquering that which has not been conquered. Many western nations have at one time or another emphasized expansionist policies for land, power, and peoples, and this concept of domination is a part of sexual politics within these societies. The marriage of a virgin daughter is also historically seen as linked to commodity trading and women as goods that belong to the father. But is it responsible for readers to assume that the same value of domination is the only value attached to the image of a chaste virgin within the context of another culture's literature? When applying this lens to the representation of woman in a range of texts included in *ILM*, we should question whether the study of the symbol itself is an

exercise in cultural hegemony.<sup>86</sup>

A transnational approach to *ILM* must acknowledge that the act of analysis by an individual scholar is also caught up in questions of identity. This study views the act of analysis as a potential site for the subordination of nonwestern narratives by a western scholar. This awareness informs its position on the importance of colonial settlers' disseminating British values and the effects of this dissemination on the surrounding Indian populations. Barnita Bagchi has argued that "the transnational character of the British Empire facilitated the emergence of a strong women's movement (which paradoxically took an anti-imperial slant) campaigning for women's education in early twentieth-century India" (754). While I agree with Bagchi that the colonial project in India did introduce western values of democratic education, we should not read the history of women's movements in India as beginning only after the British arrived.<sup>87</sup> Issues of *ILM* tracked discussions of this question—how much does the Indian woman activist "owe" the British woman activist—and offers arguments that attempt to historicize the empowerment of women within an Indian cultural narrative. A fixed feature of the periodical, a column titled "What Has Been Done For and By Indian Ladies" inherently proves this assertion, as its impetus is to publicize acts of resistance by Indian women for Indian women, rather than by British people.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>The symbolic valuation of woman within the politics of marriage is discussed later in the chapter.

<sup>87</sup> For a discussion of western reductive readings of the development of social gendered identities in India, see Jain 1-23.

<sup>88</sup> A representative example of this column's contents includes posting of a widow remarriage, the results of the successful final examinations for women at Allahabad University, and a report of the International Congress of Women in Rome in April 1908 ("What is Being Done By and For Indian Women" 5: 92).

Remaining mindful of the potential dangers of reductive comparison between disparate periodicals, we can turn to the first of three themes found in *ILM*. The focus on a woman's experience of subordination in patriarchal society impacted by local religious beliefs and social stratification, a part of which is the development of cultural antecedents to contemporary socially constructed gender codes implicates such patriarchal institutions as education. Kamala Saththiadhan's first editorial column serves as a manifesto for the journal, and is published in entirety each year following a reassertion of the core ideals of *ILM*. Saththiadhan emphasizes the importance of education and social reform for Hindu, Muslim, and Christian women in Indian society, and states the goal of the periodical to work toward the advancement of education opportunities for Indian girls across sectarian lines.<sup>89</sup> This brief manifesto also shows an awareness that the periodical is continually shaping a communal identity that encompasses readers and contributors. Saththiadhan points out that "the Indian ideals of womanhood, as represented in the ancient literature of India" along with dedicated page space for short fiction, would offer a representative expression of Indian femininity at that time" (Saththiadhan 1:1). Feminist historian Padma Anagol suggests that the gendered construction of India—the segregation of spaces based on gender and class—actually aided in the creation of a feminist network within which the editor and contributors of *ILM* worked. Reformers "transform[ed] patriarchal constraints into empowering ties binding all women" (136). *ILM* represents this transformative moment; as the periodical connected women across caste, class, and religious barriers that would

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<sup>89</sup> The journal's manifesto was published yearly. See *ILM* 1.1 (July) 1901, 2.1 (July) 1902, 3.1 (July) 1903, and so on.

not find a place to discuss the larger questions of collective identity if it weren't for the printed text that could enter any Indian home. The segregation by caste and gender of schools, social spaces, and even home spaces (the practice of purdah) was treated by women as an opportunity to share collaborative space rather than as just an exclusionary tactic. Through publication in *ILM*, women entered the public sphere and built a community that was not physically possible in Indian society. According to Jaspir Jain, Indian feminists in the early twentieth century used *ILM* as a space to build connection by "compar[ing] their situation with women of other times, cultures and different castes, thus simultaneously building up solidarity (in terms of gender) and pointing out the possibilities of a more equal social system" (182-3). These practices can be traced through the journal's reports on other women's movements in countries such as Russia, the United States, Finland, and Great Britain; in poems and "Sketches" of strong women from ancient myth, articles that argue for broader social justice for the lower castes of Indian society; and in stories that emphasize the possibilities of greatness available to egalitarian fictional worlds.<sup>90</sup>

This awareness of other women throughout the world is also present in the development of a diverse intended journal audience of educated Indians, resident British, and subscription holders in Great Britain and the United States as indicated in the mission statement.<sup>91</sup> Aware of the communal platform periodicals fostered, Satthiadhan and the contributors to *ILM* sought publication of many of its articles in vernacular

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<sup>90</sup> See "A Rapid Survey of the Women's Suffrage Movement" *ILM* 8:5-6.

<sup>91</sup> The mission statement was published yearly, reasserting the core issues of the periodical. See *ILM* 1.1 (July) 1901, 2.1 (July) 1902, 3.1 (July) 1903, etc.

periodicals of the time, broadening their Indian audience to include those Indian women who were not educated in Western literature and languages. Unlike *Bean*, which irregularly published an Irish language column, *ILM* did not include vernacular text in the periodical. Sattiadhan, along with other Indian women writers of the time, had recognized that the lingua franca had become English, and the path to education for women in India lay in learning English. By embracing the language of the occupiers, local communities of women who would not otherwise have engaged with one another found a meeting-place in *ILM*.<sup>92</sup> In addition, many articles in *ILM* were reprinted from other periodicals from across the empire. *ILM* maintained a relationship with *Womanhood* magazine that saw simultaneous printing of articles on social discourse between Indian and British women, such as the winning essays from a contest in conjunction with *Womanhood* magazine in London, that were published in the December 1903 issue.<sup>93</sup> Contributors to the contest offered their thoughts on the topic, “How best to promote social intercourse between English and Indian Women.” *Womanhood*, which ran from 1898-1907, was edited by Ada Ballin. According to Catriona Parratt, the periodical was intended for an educated, middle to upper class female audience, with regular contributions from European and British aristocracy (141). *Womanhood* did share a common interest as *ILM*, as well as *Freewoman*, and the essay contest is evidence of this interest in women’s position in British society, and in this

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<sup>92</sup> Rokeya Hossain, a Muslim writer living in purdah, contributed to *ILM*. She would never have interacted with some of the other contributors if it hadn’t been through the avenue of written English in the journal. For further discussion of limited public interactions between Muslim, Hindu and Christian women, see Amin.

<sup>93</sup> The article “*Womanhood* (London) and the *Indian Ladies Magazine*” printed in the April 1903 issue introduced an intended dialogue between the two publications (2: 302-3).

instance, specifically colonial society.

Many Indian groups saw westernization, not just in language but also custom or religious conversion, as a viable option for social advancement. In swapping one set of patriarchal constructs for another, many women did find greater educational opportunity and freedom. But adopting some western practices does not equal the complete assimilation of a person. Saththiadhan stated in the periodical's manifesto that, "the future of the women of India rests largely with this educated class [of women]; and more especially with those belonging to it, who, without losing what is distinctly Indian, have come under the best influences of the West" ("Introduction" 1:2). Thus, *ILM* established itself as a periodical that acknowledged the subordination of women within a local society, communicating to others concerning the inferior social practices, such as the delineation of women's public versus private spaces, or the limits placed upon young women in education that were used to subordinate women, and lastly, attempting to better (if not remedy) the situation. All three criteria of feminist thought are present in the development of the three major themes under discussion in this study that intersect in the politics of the Indian woman's body, upon which the dominant British and Hindu society wrote their narratives of occupation, effectively "silencing" Indian women. These efforts began with the focus on redefining ideal Indian womanhood through the use of reclaimed cultural texts and the appropriation of that symbolic womanhood into a nationalist rhetoric.<sup>94</sup> Poetry selections, in particular, become vehicles for this

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<sup>94</sup> I refer to Gayatri Spivak's argument that patriarchal cultures silence subordinate members through exclusion from active participation in defining the self both communally and individually. See "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

discussion, similar to the reclamation of strong women from Irish myth that figured into implicit nationalist-feminist arguments in *Bean's* poetry.

### *Literary Gender Codes*

Unlike the patriarchal forces at work in colonial India, *ILM* wrote women into a voice through narrative. A number of poems and fictional sketches throughout *ILM's* publication run re-interpret female characters from the perspective of ancient cultural texts, and attempt to mediate those antiquated models of behavior within the contemporary social structure. The editor highly valued fiction and poetry's capacity for implicit argument for two reasons: female poets and singers had long been granted a place within the rich literary tradition of Indian cultures, and secondly, the nuances characterizing literary writing could be used to send coded messages to readers.<sup>95</sup> The appropriation of woman as cultural repository was based on some tradition: Indian social reformers (influenced by foreign missionaries) in the 19<sup>th</sup> century had begun to adopt the western critique of Indian traditions as savage and morally loose, resulting in greater educational access for elite girls—albeit in the home—to cultural texts such as the *Ramayana* and *Mahabhrata* for Hindus and the *Qur'an* for Muslims, while boys increasingly studied western texts and traditions (Raman 105). Quite literally, at the time of *ILM's* publication run, women knew more of their culturally rich literary heritage than their male counterparts. The contributors involved in *ILM* used this knowledge to

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<sup>95</sup> Poetry, stories, drama, and song are continually used for the dissemination of social and cultural reform throughout much of India. The Dalit Liberation Education Trust based in Chennai, Tamil Nadu continues to use these genres to “awaken” social justice change in local cultures throughout southern India (Delta School of Nursing, Mar. 2000). See also the discussion of women court poets in Raman, *Women in India* 51-52.

celebrate mythic representations of gender and to question the social and moral prescriptions of womanhood in these ancient cultural texts.

These representations of womanhood were often used to establish a precedent for developing roles for women within the Indian nationalist movement. Just as *Bean* sought to create a space for women that went beyond mere symbolism, *ILM* also worked to develop a feminism deeply connected to the local communities of Bengal. Similar to other patriarchal societies, Indian women were seen as cultural repositories and transmitters of social knowledge via ancient narratives both oral and written. Traditionally, ascendant women in both Hindu and Muslim homes received an education at the hands of these ancient tales of gods and goddesses. These epic tales, thousands of years old, exemplify social conduct rules and reinforce the woman's role as protector of culture. But the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw increasing numbers of ascendant Indian women (such as the group involved in *ILM*) benefiting from Western education at the hands of missionaries, foreign governesses, and studies abroad.<sup>96</sup> It is possible to trace the impact of Victorian ideals not just in poetry selections of *ILM* but also in the treatment of the symbolic feminization of the subordinated subject within colonialism. One of the prolific poets of *ILM*, Sarojini Naidu, contributed many poems that embody lonely heroines who remain strong in the face of struggle, and champion intellect and spirit over sheer force, and that parallel political rhetoric of the awakening Indian nation.

*ILM* celebrated Naidu's work, printing a three and a half page review of her first volume of poetry in 1905. Much of Naidu's poetry appeared in *ILM* during the first

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<sup>96</sup>See Banerjee, 127-179.

decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, tying her political presence to her poetic accomplishments. Naidu's verse "Damayanti to Nala" constructs an argument with a two-fold goal: to negotiate an approach to traditional stories of Indian femininity that capitalize on cultural identities without the subordination of feminine characters to masculine counterparts, and to utilize the trope of Mother/Goddess India to incite nationalist fervor that—while stereotypical in its feminization of the country—does not suggest that Indian womanhood is written by male nationalists alone. Thus, Naidu takes up the mythological relationship between Damayanti and Nala and expands the position and independence of Damayanti, while imbuing the tale with a revisionist approach to the subordination of women in Hindu Indian societies.

The mythical story of Damayanti and Nala appears in the *Mahabharata*, and tells the story of two lovers who seemingly escape tragedy multiple times at the hands of interfering gods. Damayanti, as an exemplum of wifely faith, holds similar traits to Odysseus' Penelope. Naidu focuses on Damayanti's address to Nala, who, after being cheated by a brother (with the aid of a jealous god), has lost the kingdom. Damayanti tells Nala that he has not lost his princely value; a king is not made by land but by spirit, and that he is still with power, "a power supreme,/ dazzling command and rich dominion,/ the winds thy heralds and thy vassals all/ the silver-belted planets and the sun" (10-13). The poem is not simply a retelling of the original storyline, but offers a political allegory for *ILM* readers. Where the god Rama tricks earthly riches and land from Nala, India has had its territories occupied in colonial rule. When Nala and Damayanti are separated, Nala lacks the power to control his own path; when Damayanti

is there alongside him, the couple is too powerful to break. Naidu offers the suggestion that Nala must have Damayanti at his side in order not only to construct a powerful common identity but also to regain the kingdom; the nationalist agenda, therefore, should include women equally. Ultimately, Naidu puts forward the assertion that what makes India a nation is not possession of lands but spirit inviolate. Naidu's poem calls readers to action in constructing nationalism as a common value held by a population.

Naidu's poetry regularly questions the role of women in society, and uses woman as symbols for political allegory. However, in her use of mythical figures and representational characters, Naidu also re-inscribes these traditionally perceived examples of Indian femininity while revising the original message. Another poem that mediates the use of woman as symbol within nationalist rhetoric, "The Indian Gipsy," represents the greater Indian culture, as "a daughter of a wandering race, / tameless with the bold falcon's agile grace, / And the lithe tiger's sinuous majesty" (3-5). Again, a landless woman is revered as full of spirit but is alone. Both the gipsy and Damayanti are in exile, and dispossessed by others. Just as Naidu's first poem ends in positive assertion of nationalist pride, "The Indian Gipsy" suggests that India personified is everlasting. The gipsy travels along and "drinks of life at Time's forgotten source" suggesting that India is eternal (15). Like the "twinborn" gipsy woman, with one foot in two worlds, Naidu also negotiates the in-betweenness allowed women artists in both Indian and British society. Sheshalatha Reddy reads Naidu as a "cosmopolitan nationalist" who drew no division between art and politics, a quality held expressed *ILM* at large.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> See Reddy 571-589.

Indian contributors to *ILM*, including Naidu, faced the complicated position of not just mediating a new construction of womanhood locally, but also representing constructed Indian femininities to the international audience of the journal. The previously mentioned winning essays for *Womanhood* magazine's contest "How Best to Promote Social Discourse between English and Indian Women" exemplify *ILM*'s frank approach to social debate, and engagement with British readers of not just *ILM*, but also readers that interact with *ILM* via republished selections in British magazines printed in London.

The winners of the essay contest included English, Indian, and resident English authors who are both male and female. The first essay to be reprinted in *ILM*, E.A. Manning's silver medal argument lists the problems facing Indian and British relationships. British author Manning faults Muslim Indian society for an orthodox view of the segregation of women from anyone outside of the family (in reference to *purdah*), as well as the language barrier created by *zenana* as Muslim women cannot freely converse with non-Muslim women for lack of a common knowledge; Hindu women are hindered by the social edicts on when and how one can spend time outside of housework and child-rearing (207). In her essay, Manning also identifies seven errors that are attributed to resident British that stem primarily from fear: the British are physically unfit for India, are irrationally afraid of infection, are unwilling to learn Indian social codes of conduct instead forcing British modes of proper behavior such as the protocol for calling on one's neighbors, are suspicious of any cultural practices that vary in any measure from those practiced in London, refuse to learn local languages, literatures and

histories, and are unwilling to venture out of the insular society of resident British neighborhoods that simply transplant British organization of spaces to a foreign location (207). Ultimately, Manning believes that the English have the incentive to establish greater social intercourse with Indian women; however, she has greater faith in certain Indian groups who, because of western education, are willing to converse (such as in *ILM*). Finally, Manning points out that the resident British shouldn't rely on Indian women to take the initiative of broaching cross-cultural relationships because the resident British are themselves a reflection of empire and shouldn't shut out the other, as the other is a necessary aspect of the British colonial self (208). Manning's essay supports the choice by fiction and poetry contributors to *ILM* to integrate Indian myth and history, a choice that not only historicizes Indian feminism, but also reaches out to British readers in need of this information.

The bronze medal and silver medal essays in the British author category identify two of the themes this study sees in the overall publication of the *ILM*: education for women and the subordination of women within Indian cultures. Mrs. Higgins, a former resident of India then in England, also pointed out that western-educated Indian ladies were the key to breaking down divisions between British and Indian women. She asserted that British women needed to learn the languages of India, and highlighted education rights for women, a major theme of the periodical, as a common interest between British and Indian women that could provide fruitful for dialogue. The silver medal winner, J.D.B. Gribble, Esquire, retired to India, and reads *ILM* as a resident British member. Gribble states that the lack of social intercourse between British, Hindu,

and Muslim women is based upon the cultural beliefs the groups have about women and their involvement in social life. Gribble's observation sees little hope for intercourse if men and women cannot meet freely (210). These three British perspectives on the interaction between resident British and Indian women are accompanied by an Indian medals winner as well. Mrs. B. S. Patel's essay states that it is the duty of British women to bridge the communication gap because their cultural values aren't as strictly relegated to the private space of the home; but British women should be wary of the "assumption of superiority" many feel towards Indian women's under-developed social institutions (210). Taken together, these five viewpoints offer a complicated meditation on the impact that colonial politics has on interactions between and among members of the *ILM* community and of the larger public community in India. The conversation does not exist in one issue of the periodical alone, as the printing of these essays is part of a much lengthier discussion of international relationships.<sup>98</sup>

Much of the literary and news articles in *ILM* are conscious of this dilemma, as the contributors continually struggle to combine the positive impact of colonization on women in India (via educational and social progress) while defending much of the traditions that are, at the very least, misunderstood by western audience members. Thus, while articles condemning purdah fill the pages of the journal, there are also many selections that celebrate and renegotiate mythical cultural examples of Hindu, Muslim, Parsi and others' Indian womanhood. These selections include fictional character

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<sup>98</sup> See C. Besley's "Response to 'Izetta' a Moslem Lady" 2 (1903): 302-3, "Response to 'Izetta' a Moslem Lady" by "A Parsi Lady" 2 (1903): 385-86, "Response to 'Izetta' a Moslem Lady" by "An Indian Lady" 2 (1903): 386-87, "India and Anglo-India" 6 (1906): 64, "Englishwomen in India" 6 (1906): 112-13, and Lady Benson's "India, Past and Present" 6 (1906): 117-120, among others.

sketches, translations of older texts by contributors, and poetry

In the October issue of 1902, Kamala Kishorilaul Kaul's short fiction "The Star of India," argues that the colonial emasculation of Indian society was made all the more easy for colonial occupiers because the traditionally patriarchal Indian societies had forgotten the strong women of ancient history. In the allegorical tale, Queen Luna presides over the astral court of the heavens, with cabinet members holding court. An unknown star arrives, and explains he is unrecognizable, having become "lost" when India's men were no longer great. The star says that he had "set" because men from the age of the gods are extinct and that their downfall lay at their own hands. The Star of India explains that "there have ceased to be mothers like Kaushallia and wives like Sita" (125). The poem argues that great women are gone because when women are refused education, lack social and legal freedoms, and the men have "despotically deprived their ladies of all the resources of physical, mental and moral development" (125). This chain reaction has made the setting of the Star of India requisite. The narrative offers connection to current events, in that the star had returned to Luna's court recently referring to the current influence of certain western ideals upon Indian societies that had begun to tie the social advancement of women to the prominence of the nation as a whole. The poem, while cherry-picking the positive impact of imperialism on women's education, also presents female characters from Indian cultural histories positively. As Satthiadhan has asserted in *ILM's* manifesto and echoed elsewhere in its pages, the journal holds early twentieth-century Indian feminists responsible for historicizing a call for social progress. The women of the *ILM* community, while grateful to western

educational opportunities and theory, presented arguments for social change as a latent idea within Indian culture that is *emphasized* by western influence, rather than merely a product of colonial occupation. Thus, Kaul's fiction presents a three-fold argument: (1) Western influence on Indian women's education and moderate social reform is good; (2) nationalist ideologies required the disparate societies of India's lands (collected and connected by colonization) to work together to create an inclusive All-India identity group; and (3) in order to convince reformers that the development of a nationalist dialogue inherently includes women, it was necessary to communicate that the idea of strong womanhood was latent in Indian society, rather than primarily "given" by the British and other occupying groups of India's colonial past.

While this study identifies *ILM* as a feminist periodical, it is important to note the historical importance of such terminology in Indian history. In the early twentieth century, most women activists preferred the term "women's movement" to "feminism" as the latter held such negative connotations in colonial society (Anagol 137). The very same stigma and stereotypes facing feminists in Britain pressed in on Indian women: hegemonic forces considered feminists to be sexually dangerous and champions of aberration that were destructive in an empire whose national identities are based on the forced homogenization of disparate peoples around the globe. As previously discussed in connection with the *Freewoman*, much of British society feared that feminists would destroy the family unit and unhinge moral codes (which they did, inasmuch as those codes were actually acts of subordination). Indian women who were considered feminist were also seen as unpatriotic for targeting men as the enemy. It was argued that they put

women's needs above the Nation, a similar dilemma faced by the ladies behind the *Bean* in Dublin. But Geraldine Forbes explains that the true enemy of these feminists was tradition and constructed customs entwined with the subordination of all Indians within the colonial state (529). *ILM* targeted customs such as those that fall under the institution of marriage: purdah, child marriage, child widows, property rights of women, and the role of the private and public binary in a woman's life.

### *Rights of the Married, Widowed, and Discarded*

The social and cultural practices regarding marriage form the second major category of discussion in *ILM*. One of these traditions shared by many of the different communities of India, and consistently scrutinized by *ILM* involved the young widows of arranged marriages. Often widowed as early as five years of age, these girls were regularly cast out on the streets because remarriage carried great social stigma and was often considered too costly. Just as other cultures construct marriage as an exchange of goods and/or wealth from the brides' families to the grooms', so do communities on the Indian subcontinent, regardless of class and caste.

The periodical argues that the age of marriage and age of conjugal relations (the first occurring even in infancy and the latter traditionally following a wife's first menstruation) be raised so that while a girl still lives with her parents, she has a greater chance at education. An educated bride held greater value in the setting of a dowry price than an uneducated one. Along with the new valuation of an educated bride, *ILM* also worked to remove the taboo on widow-remarriage. At the death of an intended husband,

regardless of a woman's age, her value to family and society was considered null because she could not perform the prescribed duties of wife and mother. These arguments were repeated through poetry selections, news briefs announcing events and successes at Widows' Homes across west Bengal, and postings of widow remarriage.<sup>99</sup> In the sixth volume (1906-1907), *ILM* increases the page space given to articles and short stories concerning young widows, such as an editorial titled "Indian Ladies and Their Future" that argues parents must stop looking at marriage as the "goal" of a girl's life, and instead use any dowry funds to pay for the daughter's education. The article claims that an educated daughter is a worker that contributes to income rather than debt (S.T.R. 322-3). This argument presents a moderate social advancement, wherein a daughter is still evaluated in market terms but also maintains the central primacy of education reform for women. Investing in a young daughter could potentially save family members and relief organizations from supporting a widow as well.

Hindu widow remarriage announcements also gained more publication space at this time, and now included a description of the event, praise for the progressive couple, and praise for their families. Arguably the first highly-visible remarriages involved the daughters of prominent legal leaders: the remarriage of the daughter of Rai Bahadour Debendra Chandra Ghose, a government lawyer, who was widowed at 13 and remarried at 20 to a prominent doctor; and the remarriage of Justice of the High Court Ashutosh Mookerjee's daughter, who was widowed at 10 and remarried at 13 (7: 59; 7: 335). Also

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<sup>99</sup> Regular reports on the Hindu Widow's Home, Poona began appearing in the December issue of 1902 (2:186-190) and continue irregularly throughout volumes 1-12. Widow remarriage announcements are posted as early as March 1903 (2:298).

published in the sixth volume, the short story “Lakshmi” dramatizes the struggle of young widows. Sri Krishnora Sarma’s tale follows a father who equates his daughter with a financial obligation. A young step-mother attempts to stop Lakshmi’s father from arranging an early marriage to a sick, elderly man, asking “are we to slay our girl with our own hand?”(164). Lakshmi’s step-mother transgresses convention twice—once in her argument that “the pangs of widowhood are infinitely greater than those of poverty” as widows lose the security of home and family (165). Secondly, in arguing with her husband, Lakshmi’s step-mother asserts herself, but is kicked in the head when the father proclaims Lakshmi his to deal with as he wishes. The story is rich with irony, as Lakshmi’s father is himself a remarried widow, and the man that seeks Lakshmi’s hand is seeking a second wife. The step-mother’s prophecy proves true, and Lakshmi’s father is left lamenting his greed as he is now no longer able to rid himself of his widowed daughter without suffering social condemnation. Sarma’s fiction functions as a call to arms for readers, and is followed by an article presumably written by Saththiadhan, herself a widow, calling for an evolution of womanhood.

In “Our Wives as They Promise to Be,” the editor argues that not only should women be educated so as to increase self-worth but also because increasing numbers of western-educated Indian men desire more in a wife than traditionally sought. The article also espouses the belief that the value of a wife be measured not in a dowry, but in accomplishments and education (166). Saththiadhan articulates that these advanced wives, much in demand, must also take seriously the responsibility to “incorporate the Eastern with the Western ideal of womanhood” (167). This appeal recalls the manifesto of *ILM*

and the tenuous position of early twentieth-century Indian feminist as mediators of culture on a global stage.

Along with the suggestion that a woman's worth be measured in attributes and not dowry, marriage reform in *ILM* also opens the dialogue on the changing values of love/ affection in familial relationships. Wendy Langford's 2002 study of romantic love examines love as a specific cultural experience scripted by society, and asserts that the western ideal of love as emotional partnership is not universal. For audiences of *ILM*, love was traditionally defined as an affection that grows out of marriage and not the result of choices made by either party, especially on the part of a woman. The community of women engaged in *ILM's* construction of identity was at the headwaters of western and eastern developments of womanhood, as its contributors continually worked to establish an identity that embraced some of the revolutionary aspects of western feminism while still maintaining some traditional aspects of Indian womanhood.<sup>100</sup> Heterosexual love is one of the topics accorded space in the narratives on early widowhood and infant marriage.

In an abridged novelette translated from the original Bengali, Swarnakumari Devi explores the emotional relationships between husband, wife, and adopted sister. The author of "Malati" is often considered the first Bengali woman novelist, and was a prolific writer on women's concerns in colonial India. With a husband involved in the Indian National Congress, Devi also participated in nationalist endeavors. Her interest in the plight of young widows and orphans translated into the creation of Sahki Samiti (the

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<sup>100</sup> For further discussion of how early feminists negotiated eastern and western values, see Raman's "Crossing Cultural Boundaries: Indian Matriarchs and Sisters in Service" 131-48.

Society of Friends), that sought to provide for such women outcast from their families. The namesake protagonist of “Malatí” comes from these ranks of women.

The text follows Ramesha, who is kind to both his wife, Shobané, and his adopted sister, Malatí. The orphan of a widow, Malatí had been adopted by Ramesha’s mother with the intent that the two would wed. But after his mother’s death, Ramesha is free to marry Shobané while maintaining Malatí as his sister. Competition for Ramesha’s affections leads to both female characters attempting suicide. Shobané rationalizes suicide as a kinder fate than divorce, believing that her husband will cast her off in favor of Malatí. Shobané see her position as defined solely by her husband: “When my own lord is so indifferent to me who else will take interest in me? This world has no need of me. Society does not mind me. Kinsmen care not for me. Why then should I suffer this hell fire?” (191). Ramesha saves his wife from drowning in a river, but Malatí’s reaction to the episode is to kill herself for much the same reason and in the same manner. She can no longer remain a third wheel to the marriage because of Shobané’s jealousy, and without Ramesha’s support, she is but the orphan of a widow. This abridgement of a popular Bengali novelette emphasizes the despair each woman feels about their place in society as defined by her relation to men. Ramesha’s love of each woman seemingly befits their station, but the text suggests that not only should contemporary stigma on widows and their orphans change but that contemporary views on love in marriage should progress.

The love between Ramesha and Shobané falls along the traditional lines of Hindu marriage. The figurehead of orthodox Hinduism is quoted in a popular Bengali

newspaper, *Bangabashi*, stating that love in Hindu marriage is of higher quality than the western ideal being spread by English reformers. Pandit Sasadar Tarkachuramani insisted that the “unification of two souls” is culturally superior to a system of marriage that “seeks social stability and order through control over sexual morality” (qtd. in Sarkar 204). While Tarkachuramani’s thoughts had been recorded in 1887, the sentiment remained constant in 1905, when Swarnakumari Devi’s “Malatí” was published in *ILM*. Hindu marriage contracted during the bride’s infancy and demanding loyalty from a woman long after her husband’s death was seen as a bind between two souls.<sup>101</sup> Despite her best efforts to trust the “spiritual connection” between herself and her husband, Shobané is plagued with jealousy for the perceived intimacy of Ramesha and Malatí.

Shobané also exemplifies the dilemma of “letting the bad in with the good” found in western education. As a character that holds expectations about marriage not typically allowed by tradition, she reflects a change in readership influenced by western literature—specifically of romantic love in literature—that finds many women readers “writing themselves into” romance narratives (Langford 31). Langford’s work on conceptions of love posits that woman readers see narratives of romance as personal storylines for reality, and thus force their reality to fit the perceived reality of favorite stories. In this view, the story of “Malatí” is a meta-narrative that sensationally comments on love. Ramesha himself tells Malatí that his love for her “is pure and everlasting [and that] Angels themselves cannot love each other better” (188). This love,

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<sup>101</sup> The practice of *Sati* requires wives to self-immolate with a husband’s funeral pyre. This practice can be perceived as the fulfillment of the infant-marriage bond. While this Hindu ceremony is often misunderstood by western viewers as common, it was not actually widely practiced throughout all castes and states of India. Instead, many more widows were cast out, as discussed in this chapter.

unlike the sort that grows out of Ramesha's marriage to Shobané, exists outside boundaries of time and reality. Both characters appear unaware that the affection they share appears more similar to romantic love than the prescribed affection between Shobané and Ramesha. Shobané identifies this love, and terms it "passion" despite Ramesha's objections. Malatí, as a character involved in a love narrative outside of tradition, dies much like other female heroines in transgressive love stories of the time. Unable to recognize that love does not *only* grow between spouses after marriage, Ramesha and Malatí are ill-quipped to see each other as marriage partners because the affection they do share began before marriage. The story, then, posits that passionate love needs to find a place within a society that defines "love" as post-conjugal affection and any other form of love as deadly.

#### *Educational Reform for Women*

Rokeya Hossain's story, "Sultana's Dream," falls under the thematic examination of marriage practices, and also contains arguments concerning gender stratification and the need for education reform. Born to an orthodox Muslim family, she entered strict purdah at age five. Hossain learned English and Bengali from her elder siblings against her father's wishes. She was fortunate to marry Khan Bahadur Syed Sakhawat Hossain; an older gentleman who encouraged his 16-year-old wife's literary interests (Ray 16-23). "Sultana's Dream," published in the September 1905 issue, is a feminist utopian narrative much studied in recent years. The story attacks contemporary views of

women's education, warfare, and more locally, Bengali Muslim practices of purdah.<sup>102</sup>

The protagonist awakens in Ladyland, a dream nation that offers unfettered freedoms for women.

Sultana is a purdahnashin woman who finds the bordered space of her bedroom has melted into the public space of a busy thoroughfare. This rupture of the zenana space exemplifies the reversal of gender roles in Ladyland, as Sultana's guide leads her away from the home space and into a bright, peaceful, verdant world run by women. In Ladyland, there is an inversion of zenana and "mardana," a male purdah practiced in Ladyland.<sup>103</sup> With men secluded in Mardana, scientific advancements by women have led to a cleaner, peaceful, and more just society. Unlike the zenana system based on Muslim faith, mardana is based on logic. Each time Sultana voices a "reason" for purdah in Bengali society, the guide counters with a logical rebuttal, such as the claim that women are protected in purdah because they are weaker than men, and as such cannot fight men who have greater physical strength. The guide responds that "a lion is stronger than a man, but it does not enable him to dominate the human race" (5:83). She also deconstructs the claim that public spaces are not safe for women in purdah, responding

'Suppose, some lunatics escape from the asylum and begin to do all sorts of mischief to men, horses and other creatures; in that case what will your countrymen do?'

'They will try to capture them and put them back into their asylum.'

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<sup>102</sup> Purdah, the confinement of women's bodies in various degrees, is based on verses 24 and 33 of the *Qur'an*.

<sup>103</sup> Zenana: the woman's space within the home

Purdah: the practice of segregating society based on gender and familial connection. In purdah, a woman must wear a hijab, covering her hair and chest, or a burkha, covering the full body.

‘Thank you! And you do not think it wise to keep sane people inside an asylum and let loose the insane?’

‘Of course not!’ said I laughing lightly.

‘As a matter of fact, in your country this very thing is done! Men, who do or at least are capable of doing no end to mischief, are let loose and the innocent women shut up in the zenana!’ (5:83)

The presence of mardana in the story condemns the current practice of purdah in Bengali Muslim society, a topic under continual discussion in various columns of *ILM* from its first volume forward. A two part article concerning purdah appears in the same issue as “Sultana’s Dream” and is completed in the following issue that also contains fictional representations of mardana. The essay “Something about India and its customs,” by a contributor identified only as Shahinda, offers explanation of the purdah system as it is practiced by many readers in 1905.<sup>104</sup> This article supports Anagol’s assertion that the zenana functions as a connecting force for women, as with each ascending class, zenanas grow to include from two to hundreds of females (in royal families) (117-118). While a positive product of systematic seclusion may be the development of a community among those confined, the readers and contributors to *ILM* are firm in their belief that purdah hurts not only Muslim Indian women, but all Indian women and Indian society as a whole. Another column published in the following month continues the conversation on purdah, as the author briefly recounts and then deconstructs a recent article in the *Madras Mail* suggesting women like zenana. The anonymous author refers to other

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<sup>104</sup> There are more anonymous contributions to *ILM* than not, with many contributors taking on pen names similar to the contributors of *Bean na hÉireann*.

contributors to *ILM* on the topic of purdah over the past 16 months, suggesting that the public discussion of purdah began in *ILM*, and that like those purdahnashin women agitating for greater freedom, that all of the readers of the periodical also “have learnt to put forward their claims for light and liberty in language which is unmistakable” (“The Mussalman, Purdah and Female Education” 156).

For most of the articles, letters to the editor, and literary selections in the first twelve volumes of *ILM* that discuss purdah, including the previous two articles and Hossain’s utopian fiction, seclusion is seen as a direct complication to the educational agenda of the periodical community. As a whole, the periodical argued for the dismissal of the practice, as is echoed in the translation of a Bengalese paper that was presented at the All India Ladies Social Conference of 1906, wherein Mrs. N.C. Sen states that in order to be a great nation, purdah must cease in India and all citizens need recognize the equal need for men and women in society—together—as the country moves forward. Sen argues at length that the confinement of women is unnatural and causes the degeneration of womanhood (393).<sup>105</sup>

The practice of purdah complicates the relationships between women in society. As with restricted movement outside of the home, a purdahnashin woman must establish connections with people unlike herself through written genres such as the periodical. There are many examples of the relationship between readers and contributors with regards to the topic of purdah and education in the Correspondence section of the

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<sup>105</sup> The term “All-India” implies combined community on a developing nationalist level. Within “All-India” there are also three primary groups discussed that fracture along religious lines- Christian, Muslim, and Hindu. It must be acknowledged that the segments of society participating in this periodical do not include those in the lowest castes, though the articles often speak of their welfare.

periodical. The above items, when taken together, present a call to action for the greater community of the periodical. The community does not remain static on this topic, however, but moves into emphasizing the way to bring about the end of purdah through the opening of schools for girls. In a practice much more common for ILM than *Bean* or *Freewoman*, an article from the *Indian Mirror* is reprinted in 1907 that celebrates the coming together of Parsi, English, Muslim, and Hindu women during the Stree Bodh and Social Progress Jubilee Celebration that focused on female education and removing purdah (“The Awakening of Indian Womanhood and the recent activity of Indian Ladies”).

Hossain’s utopian “Sultana’s Dream” is considered to fall under the genre of science fiction, with its flying cars, solar heating, and air-born water supply. But such a western paradigm cannot be placed on the text that champions educational and social reform. The fantastical elements do not mark the tale as science fiction alone, as Indian cultures are much used to the fantastic within the every-day world.<sup>106</sup> Rather, it is these technological advancements that support the thematic concern for education for women. Even the tools of science fiction theory reveal the transgressive nature of “Sultana’s Dream.” Non-western women’s identities resist traditional paradigms of science fiction literary theory, and instead can be examined through three “other” paradigms: interest in historical identity, interest in the collective of family, and interest in spiritual concerns (Milojevic S. Inayatullah 494). All three standards are present in “Sultana’s Dream”, and align with the development of communal identities present within the *Indian Ladies*

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<sup>106</sup> The co-mingling of the fantastic with the everyday is a continually popular literary technique.

*Magazine* on a larger scale. These paradigms drive the construction of the landscape of Ladyland. Gender asymmetry within Indian society, particularly Hossain's Muslim society, provides the impetus for "Sultana's Dream;" and in writing the story as a utopia, Hossain is not merely suggesting an alternative social structure of her reality, but also an indictment of colonial Bengal and Muslim patriarchy. Sangeeta Ray points out that Sultana's impatience to return to reality and share her observations of Ladyland with other secluded women employs a "strategy of defamiliarization" common to utopian fictions and other science fiction forms (123). That is to say, in constructing a parallel world that inverts patriarchal rules of Bengali society on a 1:1 ratio, Hossain's story can be seen as a satirical deconstruction of reality, rather than an imagined impossible realm. The science fiction genre proves popular—along with the argument contained in "Sultana's Dream," as readers of *ILM* respond in later issues of the periodical. Adopting the dream trope, another reader-contributor shared "An Answer to Sultana's Dream" in the next issue. The narrator of this tale presents her own dream visit to Ladyland, paralleling Hossain's text in form and setting, but the tone offers the author's clear opinion that Hossain's indictment of patriarchal society, while appropriate, is not harsh enough.

The narrator in the "Answer to Sultana's Dream" observes the stately Queen of Ladyland halting her parade to speak with female citizens along the main thoroughfare. The first few groups of women represent Indian women indoctrinated into the traditional beliefs of woman's limits, and offer a different reasons for their anguish: they are tired of all the work allotted to them in the matriarchal State, see no reason to dress prettily if

men can't admire them, and bemoan the absence of "equal men-friends," and fear that enemy forces will take over because they lack men's skill for warfare (Padmini 6:116). Equally upset with her subjects, the Queen responds to each complaint before moving forward to the remaining groups of loyal and exemplary Ladyland citizens. This dream presents not only the strong ideal woman of Hossain's vision but also the reality that though the gendered roles of society are flipped in Ladyland, it is not merely gender that reveals women as "better" people: patriarchal values still corrupt citizens regardless of sex. Women encompass all the stereotypical weaknesses that society says they have, but the narrator insists that weak women choose to be weak. When the queen's contingent originally took control in "Sultana's Dream," Hossain merely recasts the patriarchal government without considering that the entire structure is itself antithetical to the argument being made. Padmini's "Answer to Sultana's Dream" shows the next step in a developing communal belief regarding the flawed social and political structures of All-India.

In a battle scene with a foreign army, the weak women break rank and run from the battlefield just as the menfolk, having heard of the danger, arrive to fight alongside the remaining female warriors. After the battle, in great council, it is decided that all shall share equal rights and that men and women will do the jobs best fitted to them, as a citizen proclaims "let the women do what they are fitted for and the men what they are fitted for. And let us have equal rights in everything" (6:117). Thus, Padmini's interpretation of Ladyland becomes Gentleman-and-Ladyland and brings Hossain's utopian story in line with the periodical's desire for change and not just revenge.

It is as a mediator that the periodical functions, offering space for disparate women to work together in the creation of a communal identity. *ILM* presents debates about each of the three large themes encountered in this chapter—education, social, and marriage reform—through reader’s correspondence, editorial columns, and much more regularly through the inclusion of fiction and poetry that exemplifies the collective beliefs of the greater community. The qualities of a “cosmopolitan nationalism” seem to fit the tone of the periodical overall, as the contributors and readers come together from very different religious and social backgrounds, working together to create at least one inclusive brand of All-India womanhood. The themes of Hossain’s “Sultana’s Dream” marches in step with the responding reader Padmini’s dream vision of Ladyland, just as the rhetoric of Naidu’s poetry and other contributors maintains the foundational values of the journal’s manifesto that defines the periodical as a dynamic organ for debate and discovery. By analyzing the application of the periodical’s manifesto within the poetry and fiction selections of the periodical, readers today have a much clearer, consistent view of the gendered communal identity created in such a periodical, by a group of women from a specific set of cultural structures. Within early twentieth-century Indian society, the conversation on feminist topics was best orchestrated in literary rather than news writing. Perhaps because it was much closer to an escalation of militant resistance, *Bean*’s rhetoric regularly, and boldly, discussed news-making events that impacted the community of the journal. *The Freewoman* also wrote freely in regards to political and cultural events of the time. The *ILM* stands a pace away from these two journals, as the community privileged literature as the most valuable and viable space within which to

engage in dialogue concerning social, cultural, and political rights of Indian women. Through the comparative analysis of these three texts, this study has reinforced the importance of local cultures upon a publication, as well as those involved in such an endeavor.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation has traced the development of communal identities within three women's periodicals from the early twentieth century and emphasized the role of short fiction, poetry, and serial stories in the construction of these identities. These literary inclusions are valued for the discursive space they created for subordinated women in England, Ireland and India, in which they could discuss and refine their frustrations with contemporary social gender codes, as well as to fashion new values of womanhood.

Gendered identity is constructed by culture, while, at the same time, it constructs culture. This process is replicated in the periodical publication cycle.<sup>107</sup> By virtue of a demanding monthly (*ILM* and *Bean*) or biweekly (*Freewoman*) schedule, these periodicals present varied stances on a number of topics. First, a journal offers an article to its readers. Then following issues of the journal contain printed responses between readers and contributors, a choice that emphasizes the value of transparency for journals such as the *Freewoman* of chapter III. The *Freewoman's* Letters to the Editor section of the journal can be identified as one of, if not the most, important column of the journal based on a comparison of the length allocated to the section versus other articles in each biweekly issue. The *Freewoman's* debate regarding conceptions of marriage and wifely

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<sup>107</sup>See Butler's assertion that gendered identity is built after one enters society rather than born with it, adding that social construction of gender is as powerful as personal choice in defining oneself (131).

duty in 1911 shows the importance placed on communal debate by the editors, as reflected in the numerous letters from reader to contributor, reader to editor, and contributor to reader. In a reply to a reader's criticism that the journal was one-sided, Dora Marsden responded that, despite the precedent set by other journals of the time, the *Freewoman* prioritized the importance of an "even balance for the expression of all shades of opinion" ("Editor's Reply" 55).<sup>108</sup> This adherence to evolving debate—and to publishing that debate, not just as articles but as poems and stories—supports this dissertation's valuing of certain periodicals as more accurate reflections of evolving identities.

Periodical studies—specifically of women's publications—enrich scholars' studies of women's movements, identity formation, and nationalisms, once the bias towards ephemeral genres such as the periodical are broken. Many of the early twentieth-century best-known stories and poetry collections had their first incarnation in a monthly or bimonthly journal. In embracing the periodical format as a valid form of literature, we have added depth to our understanding of cultural history.

This treatment of *Bean*, the *Freewoman*, and *ILM* opens the way for several further studies on the topic. First, the study of communal identity formation and periodical cultures reinforces the need to examine ephemeral texts, while also providing opportunity to examine more material concerns of periodical publishing such as the relationship between advertisements and content. Journals with such clear ideological

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<sup>108</sup> In response to Mrs. Mary Higgs' indictment of perceived editorial practices at the *Freewoman*, Marsden explicitly lays down boundaries between editor and contributor, emphasizing that the editors do not share the same position as all contributors on purpose.

belief in “serious” topics present interesting arguments within the companies that are allowed to advertise within the pages of a journal. For instance, though it is not within the scope of this study, there is an interesting correlation between the graphic advertisement of Irish goods and the nationalist message of the *Bean*. A study of this aspect of the journal would offer further insight into materialist readings of twentieth-century women’s periodicals.

Second, the relationship between Ireland and India and the negotiation of Imperial politics between both nations are topics on which serious inquiry is continuing to develop. India and Ireland are often connected within studies of the British Empire and through the recovery of narratives that document a relationship between the two nationalist movements.<sup>109</sup> All three journals included here discuss similar (but not the same) topics, such as the *Bean*’s resistance to British hegemony. This comes clear within articles concerning the billeting of English soldiers, as well as the implied criticisms of stories such as “The Priest’s Gallows.” *ILM* also opens up conversation on British occupation through the discussion of the lack of social discourse between resident British and Indian readers.<sup>110</sup> India and Ireland are often connected within studies of the British Empire and through the recovery of narratives that document a relationship between the two nationalist movements. The application of a transnational approach to such a relationship can clarify the difference between developing social and political

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<sup>109</sup> See Kate O’Malley’s introduction to *Ireland, India and Empire* 1-12.

<sup>110</sup> Every issue of *ILM* contains at least one reader’s letter, or contributor’s position on the tensions between these groups of culturally different women. One exemplary article “A Right Relation between the British and Indian People,” set off a firestorm of reader response in ensuing issues (Chatterjee 8:14-17).

movements that are latent within a culture rather than the suggestion that the shared experience of colonization by Britain is the chief inspiration for some social ideals of progress.

Through examining how each periodical works to present a communal identity that is multi-faceted, we arrive at an understanding of commonality for the periodical: the adherence to four principles informed by the desire to create a space for women within the nationalist narrative presents *Bean* as a feminist-nationalist publication; the *Freewoman*, in maintaining an inclusive contributor policy, offers distinct lines of inquiry into early twentieth-century theoretical debates of a British “free” woman’s identity; while an examination of the *Indian Ladies Magazine*, when aligned with the two other texts in the study, calls into question our understanding and application of western assumptions on non-western texts, even by the most well-meaning of postcolonial theorists. Together, these three periodicals offer a clear representation of the value of periodical studies and of discourse analyses within such projects. Just as the items on the page of a periodical can be disparate in genre, they often accentuate or replicate one another’s argument. It is in the combined analysis of article, story, poem, and correspondence that one sees the greater development of argument in a journal, and the need for further collaboration between the disciplines.

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