CHAPTER 11

Rematriating Mid-Century Modernism
Carla Lanyon Lanyon

Moynagh Sullivan

> Ask her, do not snatch from her; the land likes
> Slow purposes, but where man defaces
> For quick gain, there angry spirit strikes.
> There come the deserts, the stony places.
> Who am I to fell the tree, to plaster
> The moor with slab concrete? Who gave me leave
> To mine and burn? I am not the master
> I am the servant. Mighty land, forgive.
>
> Carla Lanyon Lanyon, 'The Land'[1]

Carla Lanyon Lanyon (1906–71) published in plain sight for five decades.[2] Yet this elegant and accomplished poet has been more lost to history than any of the other women poets from this period.[3] Masculinist literary histories modelled on paternal agon and influence have not made room for her, or many women poets, and this in spite of the conspicuous material and cultural intergenerational links provided by Lanyon Lanyon's lineage. For Lanyon Lanyon had a flesh and blood poetic foremother in her mother, the poet Helen Lanyon (1882–1979), from whom she experienced extended early separation while at boarding school. Her mother's physical absence was to some extent expiated by her verse, and these circumstances were to pattern Lanyon Lanyon's poetry as much as the paternal losses and displacements that would also configure her compelling writing.[4] Described as 'capable of making a name for herself among the poets of our time',[5] Lanyon Lanyon published eleven volumes of poetry of considerable formal authority across five decades – she published her first collection at nineteen in 1926, and her last in 1968, three years before her death – as well as contributing to journals, magazines, and newspapers throughout the anglophone world. In 1959, John Hewitt wrote that 'Carla Lanyon Lanyon, an Ulster woman living in England, and author of eight books of accomplished verse and a novel,

has not yet enjoyed the reputation her work deserves',[6] and for seventy years that has remained the case.

Lanyon Lanyon wrote with an ecological eye for other-than-human and inorganic life as a site of vitality in and of itself, and for humans *as* the nature the white-settler patriarchal traditions had constructed merely as sympathetic background for human psychic drama and used as a resource for driving extractive capitalism. Her *topos* of earth, sea, and air, a 'revealing realisation of nature [that] recurs and recurs',[7] as well as the ships that traverse the oceans, maps onto the dramatic events of her own biography and the social and political events of the twentieth century, becoming ever more granular as her life unfolded. She was an early feminist and pacifist whose satyagraha was complicated by close family soldierly ties and transnational life in the colonial civil-military service. She wrote across two devastating world wars and the inter-war period, during the post-war and escalating Cold War period that saw the widespread hardening of the familist ideology of the companionate wife and mother, and during the feminist and civil rights movement of the 1960s. Her five decades' worth of poems respond to these upheavals through a deepening of her own rich inner repository of the observed natural world, the unseen otherworld, war, the sacred, and embodiment. She was described in 1963 as a 'consummate craftsman', who writes 'good, unpretentious, apparently effortless poetry, traditional in form, and modern in theme, not untouched with a quiet humour'.[8] The reviewer also noted that her work 'not being the fashion [. . .] should never be out of it',[9] and this was one of the factors that left her poetry betwixt and between most iterations of literary chronologies written in the second half of the twentieth century, which favoured either experimental directions or work in service of articulations of nation states or regions. An internationalist by experience, this left her without a signifying national identity, and as a middle-class white woman who lived in the home counties, her elocutory formal work was not favoured by the early post-colonial moment, which emphasised non-British poets, nor by the addition of male working class, vernacular, and regional voices to the pantheon of poetic Englands, the male Ulster Regionalists (despite Hewitt's praise), or the male Irish nationalists. Clearly gender is a significant factor here, for while a middle-class man writing formal poetry is assured a place in evolving male traditions, middle-class women remain representative of all that is most derivative, sentimental, and middlebrow about any culture. Moreover, her restrained lyric 'I' did not carry her with any ease into the more confessional and assertive feminist literary landscape that developed through the later years of the twentieth century. In

this essay, in the context of the literary fashions and social and political movements which rendered her work a casualty of history, I describe her fifty-two-year publishing history and the evolution of her intramural symbology in response to the extramural changes she lived through.

From her birth in the first decade of the twentieth century to her death in the early seventies, Lanyon Lanyon's life was as dramatic and varied as her fidelity to classical forms was unvarying. Born in Comber, a small town south of Belfast in County Down, Lanyon Lanyon was the great-granddaughter of Sir Charles Lanyon, Lord Mayor of Belfast from 1862, who was Conservative MP for the city between 1865 and 1868[10] and the architect of many of its iconic Victorian buildings, including the Belfast Custom House, Queens' University, and Linen Hall Library, and in addition Belfast Botanic Gardens, several churches and castles across Ulster, and the campanile of Trinity College Dublin. A 'great deal of public interest' was taken in her parents' very 'pretty wedding' on 23 August 1902, as they 'were both connected with families long and honourably known and highly respected in local circles', and the nuptials were reported in detail in *The Belfast Newsletter* on 25 August 1902,[11] and in *The Freeman's Journal* the following day. A 'special train was run from 12.15 pm [to Comber], and the gathering was representative of the elite of society in counties Antrim and Down'.[12] The 'elite of [Ulster] society' need to be understood as more middle than upper class, through fortunes earned from the trades and the professions. Her families were connected to the shipbuilding industry in Belfast as well as to the linen industries in the province. Lanyon Lanyon was more solidly middle class than Anglo-Irish, a social standing which was underscored when she married an English commissioned officer. Despite the apparent comfort into which she was born, her life unfolded as a series of challenges that began in tragic personal circumstances just before her birth, and were symbolised thereafter in the resonating double iteration of her name, under which Lanyon Lanyon chose to publish. On 3 September 1905, Lanyon Lanyon's father fell to his death at just 30 years of age while climbing the cliffside at Dunluce Castle, the imposing ruined ancestral home of the MacDonnell clan, built into the northern coast of Antrim, and her parents' favourite 'watering place'.[13] Her pregnant mother found him fatally injured on the rocks below the remains of the medieval fortress. When she was born five months later on 16 January 1906, 'Lanyon' was registered as her middle and a surname both, so that in the event of her mother's remarriage (as Helen was a young widow with two infants, it was presumed she would remarry) her father's family name would not be lost to her. Even after her own marriage Lanyon

Lanyon maintained this link, continuing to publish under this seeming tautology, although she used her married name, Hacker, for exhibiting her paintings and for her musical collaborations.[14]

Shortly after her husband's death and Carla's birth, Helen Lanyon published the well-received *Hill O' Dreams and Other Verses* (1907).[15] This context would strongly suggest that writing, and specifically writing 'good form', was powerfully imprinted early on for Lanyon Lanyon as a vehicle for dealing with seismic emotional shock and transition. Lanyon Lanyon's elder son, Bishop George Hacker, described his mother as belonging 'to a generation which regarded displays of emotion as bad form, and only occasionally did she let her innermost feelings show. But her poetry was an exception, and through it she was able to express her deepest feelings.'[16] She was to experience another early traumatic displacement after her mother's 1908 marriage to Herbert Carrington-Smith.[17] Lanyon Lanyon and her older sister Joan were sent to boarding school in England, after Carrington-Smith, a Canadian officer in the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, was posted to India in 1909. Her eldest son describes this period as 'not a happy time for her',[18] and more loss and uncertainty was to follow, when her step-father was one of the first men killed at Gallipoli,[19] the same year that Helen Lanyon published *Fairy Led and Other Verses* (1915). It is clear that Helen Lanyon published at times of emotional loss, but the timing of each publication implies that widowhood may have prompted her to write for financial reasons, a practice continued by her daughter, when Lanyon Lanyon also published for income during World War II.[20] Helen Lanyon married for a third time, to another army officer, Stephen Donovan, a major in the Royal Army Service Corps, who was also later stationed in India. This time sixteen-year-old Lanyon Lanyon went with her mother, and her first collection, *The Wanderer and Other Songs*, was written during this transition.[21] In India she met her husband, Major Edward Sidney Hacker MC, affectionately referred to as 'the Captain Hacker' in her diaries from the time,[22] whom she married on 30 July 1927, in Farnborough, Hampshire, where they intended to settle, as reported in the society pages of *The Belfast Newsletter*.[23]

Theirs was a very happy marriage, and they had two sons and a daughter: George, born in 1928, became sixth Suffragan Bishop of Penrith, Carlisle; daughter Carlotta, born in 1931, became a writer, editor, and filmmaker, publishing as Carlotta Hacker; and youngest son Arthur Hacker (1932–2013) was, like his uncle and namesake Arthur Hacker RA, an artist who then became Creative Director for Government Information Services in Hong Kong and an MBE.[24] But Lanyon Lanyon's travels were

far from over, and they moved to Gibraltar when her husband was posted there. In June 1940, she and the children evacuated to Canada to live with some 'distant relatives who didn't want them and were very unkind',[25] but this ensured that her children were not separated from her as many evacuees were from their mothers. During this difficult time Lanyon Lanyon 'earned a little through writing articles for magazines', returning with her children to England in February 1942 via Bermuda, by 'zig-zagging in convoy' through the Battle of the Atlantic which was at its height.[26] In 1942, she also published her only novel, the semi-autobiographical *Penelope*, set in North Antrim and Belfast during the air raids of World War II, where the titular protagonist was also a relocated military wife with three young children.[27] This transition to the novel suggests not only a necessity for long-form narrative to express the prolonged dislocation she was experiencing (for the first time she was not writing through radical separation and displacement as an individual with a duty only to oneself, but also as a mother with responsibility for three other lives – the novel form with its possibilities for multiple vantage points could give account of this), but also a practical orientation towards a medium more likely to generate income in the face of the widowhood threatened by her husband's active service. After this Lanyon Lanyon lived most of her married life in the south west of England, naming one home in Salisbury 'Comber' after her birthplace, but she continued to suffer untimely losses.[28] While she was still a relatively young woman, her husband had a paralysing stroke and died two years later when she was only forty-nine, and she lost her beloved older sister Joan in a car crash in 1964. She continued to care for her mother who 'became increasingly infirm',[29] but whom she predeceased in 1971 when she died of tuberculosis. Through all of the dislocations, losses, and caring commitments that shaped Lanyon Lanyon's life as a daughter and a mother, she continued to write poems 'invested with the gravity, the pathos, and the buoyant expectancy natural to one to whom a ship is like a soul bound for eternity'.[30]

By virtue of longevity and output, Lanyon Lanyon's career is most comparable to Sheila Wingfield's, who published seven collections to Lanyon Lanyon's eleven. Wingfield has attracted serious scholarship and a critical edition,[31] and the enthusiastic reception of Lanyon Lanyon's early work would have suggested a similar trajectory. Her first book of poems, *The Wanderer and Other Songs* (1926), was accepted by the first publisher to whom it was sent, and one of its reviews notes that it is 'by a young lady whose thoughtfulness and skill in versification is remarkable,

especially having regard to the fact that she was only sixteen when she wrote them'.[32] *The Manchester Guardian* asserted that 'almost all her poems are quotable', and observed the primacy of song (human and other-than-human), as well as the 'elegiac mood' that were to prevail across her work: 'for here is a new singer – she is right to call her poems songs – who sings in plaintive numbers, but of necessity, as a song bird sings. Yet the notes are not Wildwood notes. They come out of that imaginative experience in which emotion and thought are fused into a fabric of creative art.'[33] *The Second Voyage* (1928) which followed two years later confirmed to one reviewer that '[u]ndoubtedly her poetic gifts are of a high order, and the qualities which distinguished *The Wanderer* will be found in *The Second Voyage*'. This reviewer further contended that she 'seems to be able to choose the right word constantly, and several of the poems in this volume approach artistic perfection'.[34] *Far Country* followed in 1933 and *The Manchester Guardian* opined that 'Miss Lanyon has been before the public for seven years now and the best songs of her first two books – she is essentially a singer – ought to have sung themselves retentively into the consciousness of poetry readers'.[35] She published *The Crag* in 1935, which was misogynistically and witheringly reviewed in the modernist-inflected *Poetry*,[36] and with *Full Circle* (1938), a long poem divided into three parts, her work becomes more loosely experimental and its otherwise approving reviewer notes its 'irregular stanzas, which seem to vary too much in rhythm and metre' and avers that its 'technique is less sure than the vision',[37] echoing the comments about lack of mastery and control of form that also accompanied such formal departures in the work of Blanaid Salkeld and other women poets at that time.[38]

After the war and her foray into the novel she returned to poetry in 1947 with a moving long narrative poem in the voice of a soldier, exploring the destructive force of battle on men and the earth: *Salt Harvest: the Autobiography of an Englishman*, about which the reviewer wrote, 'I have seldom been so moved to admiration of a modern narrative poem as I have by *Salt Harvest.*'[39] This was followed by *Selected Poems* (1954); *Flow and Ebb* (1956); *Unfamiliar Mountain* (1958); *Trusty Tree* (1963); and *Uncompromising Gladness* (1968) which also included a one-act verse play, 'The Commiserators'. The richness of these later volumes, marked as they are by the deepening grooves of loss and maturing vision, can only be gestured to here. She published poems in papers, journals, periodicals, and magazines on both sides of the Atlantic, which included *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*; *Rann: An Ulster Quarterly of Poetry*; *Threshold*; *Envoi*; *The Canadian Poetry Magazine*; *Outposts: A Poetry Quarterly*; *The*

Abinger Chronicle; *John O'London*; *The Observer*; *The Sunday Times*; *Irish Independent*; *Country Life*; and *The Field*. She was the recipient of several poetry prizes including the Greenwood Prize of the Poetry Society,[40] and served on the editorial panel for *Envoi*, as an adjudicator for many poetry competitions, including the Crabbe Competition and the Poetry Day London competition of 1967, and read and lectured widely on poetry.[41] She had a keen interest in music and composition; she wrote the libretto for the composer Muriel Herbert's *Contentment No. 2* (1927)[42] and collaborated on *Memory*, with Donovan Meher in 1936. Also, in common with many other women poets of the time, including Brenda Chamberlain, Rhoda Coghill (who illustrated her unpublished manuscript, *Robin Spider's Book*[43]), and Eithne Strong, she was an artist.[44]

For all the enthusiastic reception her early work received and despite her publishing steadily through to 1968, interest in Lanyon Lanyon's work appears to wane from the 1950s onwards. The poet Hugo Williams included her in his first 'home compiled anthology' in 1956, but not in his 2001 *Curtain Call: 101 Portraits in Verse*.[45] While her work continued to crop up in niche collections,[46] this diminution of interest must surely have been painful to her, for it is clear that she took her poetry seriously, and that her turbulent life was 'the lived life of a poet', that quality Eavan Boland sought in a poetic foremother, but which she was unable to locate in the traditions in which she was educated. Lanyon Lanyon's sincerely lived commitment to her craft companioned her steadfastly throughout each loss she suffered. She was evidently ambitious, and she sought out women's writing groups[47] which also functioned as publishing collectives. The dust jacket for *Far Country* (1933) carried an advertisement for *The Writers' Club Anthology* (1933),[48] a collection by 'the poetry circle of the first women's literary club founded in England', in which Lanyon Lanyon's contributions were favourably reviewed.[49] In *Poems by Contemporary Women* (1944) she kept company with a host of well-known women writers, a number of whom[50] went on to be associated with Femina Press, the first feminist publishing press in England,[51] which in 1968 published *Without Adam: The Femina Anthology of Poetry*, that featured poems by Lanyon Lanyon; but much of the work by these prolific early to mid-century writers is still relatively unknown. These groups were bound by broadly shared feminine values (of the civilising female influence and moral motherhood sort) and feminist ideals, but it would seem that, despite some of their radical directions, by virtue of perceived gentility and class, whiteness, and in some cases imperial and (certainly in the case of Marie Carmichael Stopes) disturbingly eugenic sympathies, their work sat

uneasily with the later more political and diverse direction that women's poetry was to take – although offensive beliefs about race and disability seem not to have harmed the reputation and legacy of their male counterparts. Further, at a time when national or regional claims on the imagination became, increasingly, a key element in determining how relevant and useful a writer was to the larger purposes of creating a collective nationalist or regionalist canon, and while for some of these writers the extended nationalism of Empire and Commonwealth were a key allegiance, each was complicated for Lanyon Lanyon. Meanwhile, her continued use of regular metre and rhyme and her preservation of a restrained lyrical 'I' served to mark her work once again as 'not being the fashion', especially as younger women poets who foreshadowed the women's movement such as Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton (with whom she shared space in *The Femina Anthology*) became increasingly more confessional. So, while she appears in occasional feminist bibliographies – in the *Women in Modern Irish Culture Database*[52] and *The Women's Poetry Index*,[53] and *Penelope* is listed in *The Bibliography of Regional Fiction in Britain and Ireland, 1800–2000*,[54] she does not appear listed as a poet in any literary history that a culture has told about itself.

For all that she published in little magazines that were linked to England or Ulster she was intersectionally precarious and did not seem to belong properly to Ireland, Ulster, or Britain.[55] She does not appear in Jane Dowson and Alice Entwistle's *A History of Twentieth-Century British Women's Poetry* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), nor in any studies of Irish or Ulster poetry or the Ulster Revivals in the twentieth century. Although she enjoyed the admiration of Hewitt, the poet most responsible for mid-century consolidation of cultural Ulster exceptionalism, she is not mentioned in his 1950 survey of poets in the Ulster Issue of *Poetry Ireland*, despite him cleaving other Ulster-born expatriates to the Northern fold, and while *The Belfast Newsletter* had featured both Lanyon Lanyon and her mother under the headline 'Literary Families' in 1945,[56] neither writer was included in the 1953 'Rann Bibliography of Ulster Writers from 1900–1953',[57] despite meeting all of its inclusion principles.[58] The bibliography, sponsored by PEN, was explicitly intended to provide an index of notable working authors from Northern Ireland to an international community of anglophone writers and literary critics. Lanyon Lanyon's exclusion from a mid-century landmark bibliography on which future scholars would rely has helped keep her out of the literary historian's range of vision. The second Ulster revival and the subsequent building of the Belfast School tended to favour 'books on the ground', and the

bibliography includes May Morton and Freda Laughton, both of whom were also sufficiently attached to cultural groupings for their names to remain, at least cursorily, or even, in David Wheatley's term, talismanically,[59] in circulation. Laughton was in her earlier career loosely connected in Dublin literary circles, while Morton was a significant presence in mid-century Belfast cultural life. However, tangential affiliation has only ensured a recent dusting down of their work from the scholarly shelf, because the groups that cohered around literary magazines and clubs were structurally misogynist, as Anne Mulhall has shown.[60]

Mulhall notes how anxiety about virility, begetting, and birth was threaded through the critical language of these publications, and the advent of the 1950s appears to be a key time when the patriarchal conceptual birthing of public culture through forceptual extraction of cultural identities from the social body and the natural world is coded ever more emphatically, as demonstrated by this review of Rhoda Coghill's 1948 collection *The Bright Hillside*, broadcast on Radio Éireann, just weeks before the Irish Republic was enacted:

> She has not yet reached the stage when she can use the forceps to draw out the living organism from the background, she doesn't make one word do the work of ten, by fusing image and experience, she concentrates too much on the setting.[61]

This modernist focus on economy (replacing ten worker words with one), and the overlooking of the 'setting' – that is the maternal body or the maternalised natural world, is also tied to the emphasis on human innovations that characterised mid-century public life. In particular, 1951 appears to be a hinge year when the concatenation of binaried gender roles and the regeneration of national cultures cohered in ways that would shape the political and cultural reproductive landscape for decades to come. In Ireland, Noël Browne's Mother and Child Scheme was rejected that year, the one in which the Arts Council was established – events that seem unconnected at first glance, but which taken together highlight the discursive link between masculinist state-controlled funding for reproducing a national literature and the subsequent control of reproductive labour in Ireland. Also in 1951, the Festival of Britain underwrote the idea of a regenerative culture, landmarking the 1948 restructuring of local government spending on the arts. The Festival's post-war austerity-led regeneration of man-made habitat through science and technology, architecture and design was in concert with a deepening of the ideology of the companionate wife and the entrenchment of mothers in the home via,

among other actions, the 'war in the nursery',[62] which entailed the removal of the public crèches that had allowed women to work outside the home during the war (Morton's brilliant poem 'Spindle and Shuttle', which won the Northern Ireland poetry award in the Festival of Britain, powerfully highlights the natural and human cost of the dromological economic logic that buttressed Belfast's industrial progress[63]). Unlike the global aspirations of the Great Exhibition of 1851, a century later the focus had been narrowed from international to national innovations and regrowth. From 1955 the number of grant-receiving organisations grew, which meant that advantages and visibility were conferred on writers associated with groups or schools with definable characteristics or aims that were more likely to attract funding. In part because of this, the literary histories that were created after the 1950s were largely territorial affairs of the imagination collated under the auspices of masculinist nation states and the border patrols of perceptibility that depended on keeping women in their place, which was not, as feminist scholars and women poets have long pointed out, that of a national poetry.[64] So, although she was a poet of nature, Lanyon Lanyon's limning of landscape could not do the national service of representing the 'hidden England' that Seamus Heaney detected in Ted Hughes's verse or the 'hidden Ulster' he inferred from Montague's and Kavanagh's.[65] Her ruggedly rhythmed 1953 poem 'Northern Island'[66] is simultaneously a refusal of the arbitrary political lines of 'Northern Ireland' and a hymn to the deep oceanic and paleological history of an island scoured into being by northern seascapes, foreshadowing the symbology of Heaney's *North* (1975).

Any retrieval based on situating Lanyon Lanyon's work in only one, or even perhaps in *any* of these places – including any chronology identified as female, for 'woman' is also disputed territory as we open onto a more diverse gender non-binaried horizon – is an implied act of repatriation that furthers the logic of phallocratic literary lineages. This contestation of imaginal space tied to grants, status, and awards is the objective correlative of military, legislative, and religious contests and displays, battlegrounds about which Lanyon Lanyon's work remained deeply ambivalent. The complicated intersection between her elegiac critiques of war and her love for individual men who were soldiers, means that while her cultural patrimony is central to her symbology – the personal foundational loss of her father and then step-father resounds through her poetry – her work also casts a wry eye upon the props deployed by patriarchal power. In 'To my Godson', she warns him against 'the fancy-dress support / Of platform dignity, cocked-hat importance', the 'masculine magnificence, the pomp / Of epaulets and orders, mitre, / gown and wig',[67] and its tendency to self-

memorialisation, and wishes for him 'no obituaries at [his] death'.[68] This, along with many other poems including '1940 in Retrospect', and the prize-winning 'Postscript to Festival', suggest an equivocation about the act of commemoration, an impulse which underlies the naming of 'Lanyon Place' in Belfast in 2018.[69] Lanyon Place is a train station, previously misleadingly known as Belfast Central, but also, more controversially, the proposed new name for the Market district, long home to communities that would face displacement if the repurposing of the area were to go ahead. The displacement threatened by the continuing logic of settler capitalism in these expansionist business innovation plans[70] represents yet another 'snatching' 'where man defaces / For quick gain'.[71]

Additionally, while her poetry may resonate with her great-grandfather Sir Charles Lanyon's 'classical style',[72] it 'wrought no new technique'[73] of its own, unlike his, 'wrought in many forms'.[74] Her work eschewed the economic, innovating, 'make it new' logic of progressive modernity and avant-garde modernism, as well as the beating action involved in 'wrought'. Instead of the high-modernist vortex of extractive violence, she paid attention to another beat – she 'finely and subtly subdued an old [technique] to the creative needs of her singing'.[75] When we pay attention to this 'old' technique we use a rematriative focus which helps to parse her work into somatic fullness. Although Lanyon Lanyon's relationship with her mother appeared intact throughout her life, the biomorphic affects of early disconnection from her are carried in the body of Lanyon Lanyon's poetry, and are gestured to in 'Human Love': 'A babe in a motherless cot can feel / The empty moons of planets reel.'[76] Her work can be read as a series of lovingly sought attachments to maternal containment constituted in the world around her. Her publishing career, which was seeded at sixteen on a sea journey of restoration to her mother in India, appears as a dialogic identification and connection with her mother, metabolising and reforming the developmental trauma of early loss through the elaboration of verse into song and back to verse again.[77] She explores the earliest embodied experience of voice through the sound of the sea which forms an amniotic ancestral point for her, older than any land:

> No one has yet been born
> Out of the sound of the sea.
> It is older than land, the first unknown
> Of our lost ancestry,
> When, on a neap-tide night,
> Crawled out from the surf and stood upright
> We are not so far from gill and fin[78]

But poetry is not birthed from the sound of the maternal sea, but through the amphibious body through whose gill breath is pushed and shaped. Air, as wind, as song, pervades her work as powerfully as 'the rhythm / of the whole sea's surge and swell'.[79] In 1925, two years after her daughter had come to India, Helen Lanyon published 'The Mother' in *The Tipperary Nationalist*,[80] which, although ostensibly a folk-voiced expression of love for a houseful of noisy sons, can be read by virtue of its timing as a paean to the more manifest restoration of maternal ties. The 'bird [who] with rapture sings', whose song closes Helen Lanyon's much reprinted 'At Easter', recurs in many forms in her daughter's work. This chromatic interchange is located in the soundscape of the beating maternal heart, a hallmark of her mother's memorable folk poems and airs, and so pronounced a feature of Lanyon Lanyon's early work that Hewitt noted that while it displayed 'great variety of stanza form [it] seldom edged its syllables beyond the iambic beat'.[81] For Lanyon Lanyon, attachment to form, and to the iambic phrase, to regular formal rhyme schemes, regular stanzaic patterns, as well as gentle free verse was far from lacking metrical action and showing experimental timidity, but was instead relational, a precious attachment to her earliest echolalia, to maternal versification which was not to be broken, mastered, or innovated in the modernist style, but to be conserved with love. As we deep-map Lanyon Lanyon's work, this cellular conservation of the undulating rhythms that would hold her poems is also revealed as an aspect of her relationship to the earth, and it is to this end that I would also use the term rematriation in the wider valence it is accruing in the context of ecofeminism, environmental activism, Seed Sovereignty movements and the Gift Economy.[82] This restorative and healing term has been used specifically by North American indigenous activists whose ancestors were displaced and exploited by white-settler colonialists, many of whom were Ulster Scots, propelled by the very modernity that Lanyon Lanyon's family helped shape, maintain, and legislate, an awareness of which is not lost on her. So, while Hewitt praised her 'individual voice',[83] arguably, what makes her work distinctive, and difficult to place, is its formal resistance to the hyper-individualism that is the ideological claim flag of settler colonialism.

Lanyon Lanyon's concert with her mother is also carried into the other-than-human geophanies of the earth, sea, and wind. In the first of her two poems called 'Ancestors' (1926), a deeper ecological time meets the human history of settlement through haunting burial rituals on the liminal space of the coast. In the second 'Ancestors' (1968), this evocative encounter space is instrumentally demarcated when the sea is replaced by the trained

water of the canals that facilitated trade across empires, and the exploration of ancestry becomes tied to land and recent history. Set in Holland, 'Orange William' (a variety of tulip) clearly signals William of Orange's 'bewigged in Boyne water' campaign in Ireland and is linked to a rapacious coupling under a 'fuchsia' which brings forth issue. In contrast, the 'chopped heads' of the tulips, the genus's placenta, are piled up in barges, disconnected from the spring and renewal that the tulip usually symbolises. The 'bulb bourse [. . .] turned to a Dutchman's trade', is not linked to its natural cycles but to the linguistic derivation of its genus name from the Persian word 'delband', which means turban and signals imperial status, thus highlighting the central role it played in the 'tulipomania' that drove the early stages of speculative commodity capitalism and European expansionism. The tulips are thus reduced to reproducing the economy, and the dead heads also nod to the 'diamond brokers' of extractive capitalism. This becomes an issue of ecological and relational cross-pollination. While the 'lost-scent orient flower' can, loss of perfume notwithstanding, self-pollinate to reproduce itself, limiting its generational expression not only reduces intra-species variety, but also diversity across environments. Without the aromatised invitation to co-creation with insects, winds, humans, and animals, it cannot perform the cross-pollinating, regenerative, nutritive, mediating eco-symbiosis between air and soil that results in the wild and accidental flourishing and surprising innovation across ecosystems. The tulip recurs displaced again from its native humus in 'The Florist', where its inflorescence is imaged as a malnourished, overfed captive, its oversized leaves eclipsing the deprecated bell:

> I think the pale pink tulips fared the worst
> With their enormous, their anaemic leaves,
> Bound in elastic bands;[84]

The displaced cultivar is contrasted with the scented, rooted, living, companioned, wild ancestor:

> And tulips – oh, I have walked on them,
> So thick in a Himalayan wood, white and red,
> Striped and scented, short of stem,
> And I have heard the little lapping noise they make,
> Ground ripple-crimson, as dawn on the Dal lake.[85]

The earth is made aqueous in these lines that turn the tulips to a blood-lit tide, a ripplingly connected placenta-red lake-womb. Here earth and water meet, much like the cliffside where her father died, an event inextricably bound up with her own birth. Though she lived on soils claimed as Irish,

English, and Commonwealth, Lanyon Lanyon's filiations were not political but to her own embodied kinetic rhythms organically tied to those of the earth, air, and sea, where her stepfather remains to this day, his body never recovered from the waters at Gallipoli, and where her mother's shipbuilding cousin, Thomas Andrews Jr lies, the naval architect who designed and went down with the *Titanic*. Through the 'ungroined sea' of the 'northern island'[86] she honours her complex relationship to her patrimonial ancestors without restoring their historical displacing claims to land, while experientially singing the pelagic template of maternal bioneurological rhythm into being. The cadenced gap in the name she reserved for her poetry, Lanyon Lanyon, is unconnected by umbilical or linear hyphen, and incorporates both her mother's poetic name, and her patrilineage, representing the space where the rematriating sea washes through these pasts. This same sea that bore her on the many displacements that began in her infancy, simultaneously called her to a home she could never claim, while each returning tide had the 'slow purposes' the 'land likes'.[87] Slowly, imperceptibly, over the long durée, the neritic syntax between poets is shaped by connections across thalassic time that moves in waves, not in straight lines, a relational current soon to be seen in the work of a young Medbh McGuckian. Lanyon Lanyon published her last book in 1968, a year after Boland, another expatriate whose work was similarly marked by fidelity to form, deeply stable maternal care, and who also found an origin like water, published her first, *New Territory* in 1967.

Notes

1 Carla Lanyon Lanyon, *Flow and Ebb* (Poetry Publications Cambridge, 1956), 21.

2 I am deeply grateful for *The Ungrateful Muse*, an unpublished anthology of women's poetry in Ireland, compiled by Anne Ulry Coleman and Medbh McGuckian in the 1990s, where I first came across Lanyon Lanyon. Her children Carlotta and George Hacker collated her war letters to her husband in an archive called 'Carla to Ted, 1940–1941', held in the archives of the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa. Some of her poems are included on a website curated by her daughter, Carlotta Hacker, http://carlalanyonlanyon-collectedpoetry.blogspot.com/.

3 Including Elizabeth Brennan (1907–95); Rhoda Coghill (1903–2000); Brenda Chamberlain (1912–71); Temple Lane (1899–1978); Freda Laughton (1907–95); Winifred Letts (1882–1972); May Morton (1894–1965); Máire Mhac an tSaoi (1922–); Blanaid Salkeld (1880–1959); Eithne Strong (1923–99); Helen Waddell (1889–1965); and Sheila Wingfield (1906–92).

4 Born Helen Redfern in Kensington in 1882, her father was Clement Cotterill Redfern, a barrister, and her mother was Margaret A. B. Redfern. She was the great-granddaughter of Mr William Barbour JP, from the Barbour family.
5 *Belfast Newsletter*, 17 December 1926, 13.
6 John Hewitt, review of *Unfamiliar Mountain*, *Threshold* 3, no. 2 (1959), 95.
7 *The Manchester Guardian*, 24 April 1933, 5.
8 *Scrip: A Quarterly Magazine of Recent Poetry* 9, no. 6 (1963), review of *Trusty Tree*, 95.
9 https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/history/irishwomenwriters/database/#!/people/2062197970.
10 He also served on the Select Committee on Scientific Instruction, which laid the groundwork for the Education Act for Universal Education of 1871, and was a member of the Harbour Commissioners.
11 *Belfast Newsletter*, 25 August 1902, 9.
12 Ibid.
13 *Irish Independent*, 5 September 1905, 5; *Belfast Newsletter*, 5 September 1905, 5; *Freeman's Journal*, 5 September 1905, 9.
14 She exhibited at the Paris Salon 1934, and the Roy Cambrian Academy. *The Women's Who's Who 1934–5*, 199.
15 The well-known poem 'At Easter' is included in that collection, and was set to music by the composer Sir Herbert Hamilton Harty (1879–1941).
16 From 'Carla Lanyon Hacker – A Brief Biography', included in private correspondence with Lanyon Lanyon's son Bishop George Hacker, 2020.
17 'Wedding at Comber', *Northern Whig*, 1 August 1908.
18 Hacker, 'Carla Lanyon Hacker – A Brief Biography'.
19 'Colonel Carrington-Smith: Killed in Action at Dardanelles – A Presentiment of Death', *Belfast Newsletter*, 4 May 1915, 10.
20 Hacker, 'Carla Lanyon Hacker – A Brief Biography'.
21 She travelled from Southampton to Bombay/Mumbai, on *The Mulbera*. UK and Ireland Outward passenger lists, London 1922.
22 Hacker, 'Carla Lanyon Hacker – A Brief Biography'.
23 *Belfast Newsletter*, 6 August 1927, 6.
24 Hacker, 'Carla Lanyon Hacker – A Brief Biography'.
25 Private correspondence with Lanyon Lanyon's daughter, Carlotta Hacker Lemieux, 2020.
26 Hacker, 'Carla Lanyon Hacker – A Brief Biography'.
27 Carla Lanyon Lanyon, *Penelope* (The Woman's Book Club, Great Britain, 1942; repr. John Gifford Limited, London, 1948).
28 Addresses given in correspondence with Howard Sergeant, Papers of Howard Sergeant, Hull History Centre.
29 Hacker, 'Carla Lanyon Hacker – A Brief Biography'.
30 *Belfast Newsletter*, 26 July 1928, 10.
31 Lucy Collins, *Sheila Wingfield: Poems* (Dublin: Liberties Press, 2013); Alex Davis, 'From Samarkand to Switzerland: Sheila Wingfield's Demystifying

Modernism', *The Cambridge Quarterly* 46, no. 4 (2017), 325–43; '"Wilds to Alter, Forms to Build": The Writings of Sheila Wingfield', *Irish University Review* 31, no. 2 (2001), 334–52.

32 *Belfast Newsletter*, 17 December 1926, 13.
33 *The Manchester Guardian*, 7 December 1926.
34 *Belfast Newsletter*, 26 July 1928, 10.
35 *The Manchester Guardian*, 24 April 1933, 5.
36 Howard Nutt, review of *The Crag* in *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* 48, no. 1 (1936), 50.
37 W. F. J. K., *Western Morning News*, 6 July 1938, 6.
38 Moynagh Sullivan, '"I Am Not Yet Delivered of the Past": The Poetry of Blanaid Salkeld', *Irish University Review* 33, no. 1 (2003), 182–200.
39 William Kean Seymour, *Poetry Review* 39–40 (1948–9), 65.
40 'Postscript to Festival' also won the *English: Journal of the English Association* competition, 8, no. 45 (1950), 163.
41 Lanyon Lanyon, *Uncompromising Gladness* (London: Outposts Publishing, 1968).
42 Herbert also worked with Helen Waddell: 'David's Lament for Jonathan' (trans. Peter Abelard) [1936]; 'So by my singing am I comforted' (manuscript of 'Benedictbeuern') (from *Carmina Burana*, trans. Waddell) [1934]; 'The Lost Nightingale' (*Alcuin*, trans. Waddell) [1938–9].
43 Rhoda Coghill, *Robin Spider's Book: Poems for Children*, unpublished manuscript, Rhoda Coghill Collection, Trinity College Dublin Manuscripts and Archives Research Library. Kathy D'Arcy shared a digital extract with family permission.
44 She exhibited at the Paris Salon 1934, and the Roy Cambrian Academy. *The Women's Who's Who 1934–5*, 199.
45 *Curtain Call: 101 Portraits in Verse* (London: Faber and Faber, 2001).
46 She was included in *Happy Christmas*, ed. William Kean Seymour and John Smith (Burke Press, 1968); *The Evans Book of Children's Verse*, ed. Howard Sergeant (Evans Press, 1972); *The Laudamus Te: A Cycle of Poems to the Praise and the Glory of God*, *Manifold Magazine*, 1967; and her poem 'The White Moth' appeared in *Knowing Woman: A Feminine Psychology*, ed. Irene Claremont de Castillejo (Berkeley: Shambhala Press, 1997).
47 She belonged to the feminist and progressive Pioneers and Writers club for 'advanced women'. *The Women's Who's Who 1934–5*. She also belonged to another women's writing club, which included her work in *The Lyceum Book of Verse* (London: Methuen, 1931).
48 *The Writers' Club Anthology*, ed. Margaret L. Woods (Oxford: Blackwell, 1933).
49 *The Manchester Guardian*, 28 February 1933, 5.
50 Reviewed in *Belfast Newsletter*, 21 April 1944, 3.
51 Box was also the first woman to direct an Irish feature film, a screen adaptation of Louis D'Alton's play *This Other Eden* in 1959. See Ciara O'Farrell, *Louis D'Alton and the Abbey Theatre* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2004).

52 Ibid.
53 Patricia A. Guy, *The Women's Poetry Index* (Phoenix: Oryx Press, 1985).
54 Keith D. M. Snell, *The Bibliography of Regional Fiction in Britain and Ireland, 1800–2000* (London: Routledge, 2017).
55 She was included in the local collection *The Brompton Poets* in 1959.
56 *Belfast Newsletter*, 22 January 1945, 4.
57 'Ulster Books and Authors, 1900–1953', *Rann* 20 (June 1953).
58 'The authors represented were born in Ulster or were resident in Ulster during their effective period of writing. By "Ulster" is meant the Nine Counties prior to 1922, and thereafter the Six Counties constituting Northern Ireland: but qualification for inclusion in the first category involves an author's having been engaged in writing before partition. The emphasis is primarily on creative writing, although works of scholarship and books providing background material have been included.' Daphne Fullwood and Oliver Edwards, 'Ulster Poetry since 1900', *Rann* 20 (June 1953), 19–34.
59 David Wheatley in 'Lost Poets: Canons, Exclusions and the Quicksand of Oblivion', writes that 'Laughton's name has assumed a talismanic force in discussions of modern Irish poetry, yet no one, the last time I checked, has volunteered to republish her work.' *Poetry London*, https://poetrylondon.co.uk/lost-poets-david-wheatley-on-canons-exclusions-and-the-quicksand-of-oblivion/. Lucy Collins includes a selection of Laughton's poems in *Poetry by Women in Ireland: A Critical Anthology 1870–1970* (Liverpool University Press, 2012).
60 See Anne Mulhall, '"The well-known, old, but still unbeaten track": Women Poets and Irish Periodical Culture in the Mid-Twentieth Century', *Irish University Review* 42, no. 1 (2012), 32–52. Amy Smith analyses both Morton's and Laughton's work in a chapter in her Ph.D. thesis, 'On the Edge of a Crumbling Continent: Poetry in Northern Ireland and the Second World War', Durham University, http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/10945, and Emma Penny is working on a Ph.D. on Laughton – see www.rte.ie/culture/2019/0508/1048267-the-poetry-programme-rediscovering-poet-freda-laughton.
61 Padraic Fallon, review of *The Bright Hillside*, Radio Éireann, 1 February 1949.
62 See Denise Reilly's *War in the Nursery: Theories of the Child and Mother* (London: Virago, 1983), and 'War in the Nursery', *Feminist Review* 2 (1979), 106.
63 May Morton, 'Spindle and Shuttle', *Northern Ireland Prize Poems* (Belfast: HM Stationery Office, 1951).
64 As well as the considerable body of scholarship on the topic, more recently Christine Murray and Kathy D'Arcy have done inspiring work with Fired! which provides platforms for discussion of women's writing and feminist scholarship. D'Arcy writes that the 2017 'publication of *The Cambridge Companion to Irish Poets*, which featured four women out of a total of thirty

poets, inspired Christine Murray, founder of Poethead, to reach out to Irish women poets to look into starting an awareness-raising movement, and Fired! was born. Our mission has been twofold: firstly, to raise awareness about the many forgotten Irish women poets and their work, and to educate each other about them; and, secondly, to challenge gender inequality in modern-day Irish poetry publishing.' *The Honest Ulsterman*, June 2020.

65 See Richard Rankin Russell, *Seamus Heaney's Regions* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

66 *Rann* 18 (March 1953), 2. My thanks to Christian Dupont, Burns Librarian & Associate University Librarian for Special Collections, Boston College, for his help in locating this poem.

67 Lanyon Lanyon, *Unfamiliar Mountain* (Dulwich: Outposts Publications, 1958), 6.

68 Ibid.

69 'The Lanyon Place area has become a major hub of activity, with the "Lanyon" name being adopted by a range of neighbouring businesses, alongside Belfast City Council's exciting plans for the Lanyon Tunnels.' Translink Press Release, 8 February 2018.

70 'Approval for 55 Million Office Block in Belfast Market Area Quashed', *Irish News*, 31 May 2018.

71 Lanyon Lanyon, *Flow and Ebb*, 21.

72 Paul Larmour, 'Sir Charles Lanyon', *The GPA Irish Arts Review: Yearbook 1989–90* (Dublin: Irish Arts Review, 1989), 206.

73 *The Manchester Guardian*, 7 December 1926.

74 Larmour, 'Sir Charles Lanyon', 206.

75 *The Manchester Guardian*, 7 December 1926.

76 Lanyon Lanyon, *Unfamiliar Mountain*, 10.

77 For an explanation of how neural pathways are shaped by developmental trauma, and how cellular life is affected by the 'neurons that fire together wiring together', see Marian Dunlea, *Bodydreaming in the Treatment of Developmental Trauma: An Embodied Therapeutic Approach* (London: Routledge, 2019), and Daniela F. Sieff, *Understanding and Healing Emotional Trauma: Conversations with Pioneering Clinicians and Researchers* (London: Routledge, 2014).

78 Lanyon Lanyon, *Uncompromising Gladness*, 11.

79 Ibid.

80 *The Tipperary Nationalist*, 23 December 1925, 1.

81 Hewitt, review of *Unfamiliar Mountain*, 94.

82 See Rowen White, 'Planting Sacred Seeds in a Modern World', in *Indigenous Food Sovereignty in the United States: Restoring Cultural Knowledge, Protecting Environments, and Regaining Health*, ed. Devos A. Mihesuah and Elizabeth Hoover (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2019), 186–97. See also Winona LaDuke and Deborah Cowen, 'Beyond Wiindigo Infrastructure',

South Atlantic Quarterly 119, no. 2 (2020), 243–68, and www.seedbroadcast.org; www.seedhuntress.com/the-ecotype-project; https://sierraseeds.org/seed-rematriation/; https://emergencemagazine.org/story/reseeding-the-food-system/.

83 Hewitt, review of *Unfamiliar Mountain*, 94.
84 Lanyon Lanyon, *Trusty Tree* (London: Mitre Press, 1963), 32.
85 Ibid., 33.
86 'Northern Island', *Rann* 18 (March 1953), 2.
87 Lanyon Lanyon, *Flow and Ebb*, 21.