James Clarence Mangan was one of a handful of nineteenth-century Irish writers to have held Joyce’s attention over time, serving both as an emblem of the Ireland from whose clutches he wished, as a young man, to escape, and as a personification and a victim of what he called in 1906 ‘my poor impoverished country’. Considered by many to be the first modern Irish poet, that Mangan was Catholic, poor, an ambivalent nationalist, a conscious European and a good Dubliner cannot have been lost on Joyce.

Within the paradox of Mangan’s symbolic importance within the Irish cultural pantheon and his still uncertain place in wider literary history, Joyce’s two visions of Mangan, written in 1902 and 1907 respectively, provide revealing, significant, and sometimes contradictory, early twentieth century images both of Mangan himself and of Joyce as critic and developing artist. Joyce’s first Mangan lecture was delivered on 15 February 1902 as his second invited paper given to the Literary and Historical Society at University College Dublin and it shows him largely swerve clear of contemporary nationalist issues and of John Mitchel’s canonical rendering of Mangan as an Irish patriot poet. As Joyce’s college contemporary, Sarsfield Kerrigan, recalled, ‘the notable thing was that Mangan was to him, Joyce, then nineteen years old, more European than merely Irish.’ Furthermore, and perhaps even more emphatically than Joyce himself, Mangan spurned the English literary world and sought to connect his country’s literature to writers and ideas circulating globally. Joyce emphasized Mangan’s status as a romantic, declaring that he was ‘little of a patriot’, and partially deflected attention away
from the national issue by embarking on a lengthy discussion of the conflict between classicism and romanticism – two ‘constant states of mind’ that should interest the poet and critic more than any contemporary events, political or otherwise. Identifying himself within the classical tradition, Joyce states that ‘the highest praise must be withheld from the romantic school’ – excepting only Blake and presumably, to some extent at least, Coleridge, Shelley and Mangan himself, whom Joyce describes as ‘one of the greatest romantic poets among those who use the lyrical form’:

Though even in the best of Mangan the presence of alien emotions is sometimes felt the presence of an imaginative personality reflecting the light of imaginative beauty is more vividly felt. East and West meet in that personality (we know how); images interweave there like soft, luminous scarves and words ring like brilliant mail, and whether the song is of Ireland or of Istambol it has the same refrain, a prayer that peace may come again to her who has lost her peace, the moonwhite pearl of his soul, Ameen.3

Mangan, identified as a romantic for his emphasis on the power of the imagination, for his reaching into himself as a source for his poetry, appealed to Joyce for his being isolated for his art, for his being an inner exile and the antithesis of the more popular and profitable Thomas Moore, who, in William Hazlitt’s words, turned the wild harp of Erin into a musical snuffbox (although Joyce would draw extensively on Moore’s melodies in his works):

But the best of what he has written makes its appeal surely, because it was conceived by the imagination which he called, I think, the mother of things, whose dream are we, who imageth us to herself, and to ourselves, and imageth herself in us - the power before whose breath the mind in creation is (to use Shelley’s image) as a fading coal.4

In 1903, in a controversial review of Stephen Gwynn’s Today and To-morrow in Ireland, Joyce dismissed most contemporary Irish poetry (except Yeats) and compared it negatively with what he felt was Mangan’s neglected output.
It is a work which has an interest of the day, but collectively it has not a third part of the value of the work of a man like Mangan, that creature of lightning, who has been, and is, a stranger among the people he ennobled, but who may yet come by his own as one of the greatest romantic poets among those who use the lyrical form.\(^5\)

Often in his 1902 lecture, Joyce played up the power of Mangan’s imagination and defined his Irishness as his ‘chief literary liability’. A ‘type of his race’, Mangan has allowed his imagination to become trapped by Ireland’s terrible history, and thus his poetry is often little more than a series of melancholy protests ‘against the injustice of despoilers’ written for ‘a public which cared for matters of the day, and for poetry only so far as it might illustrate these’\(^7\). At the same time Joyce partially exonerates Mangan in a comment that is as revealing of Joyce’s own plight as a budding Irish novelist in progress as it is about Mangan, who ‘wrote with no native literary tradition to guide him’.\(^7\) Even if this paper was not to the liking of the University College Dublin revivalists who hoped to summon Mangan’s inheritance to their cause, its showy, Pateresque prose was still appreciated sufficiently for the University magazine, \textit{St Stephen’s}, to publish it in May 1902.

The rather less stilted 1907 Trieste version of the lecture would probably have appealed more to Joyce’s college companions. It was prepared as one of three lectures to be delivered in Italian on Ireland at the Università Popolare – a cultural institution whose chief role was to promote Triestine \textit{irredentismo}. Stanislaus Joyce remembered that Joyce was to give ‘three lectures in the Università del Popolo. I suggested the subjects. The history of Ireland, his essay of Mangan (which I have) and the Celtic Renaissance’\(^8\). He went on to outline Joyce’s reading of ‘Duffy’s edition of Mangan’\(^9\) before summarizing Joyce’s views:

He said it was useless to compare Yeats to him. Yeats came next to him as an Irish poet but he hadn’t half the personality or power of the other. Mangan was beyond the shadow of doubt the national poet of Ireland (this is a claim that Jim has been first to make for him, or to make with any insistence). Who is there to put up against him? Moore, Darcy? Besides he had the whole part of the country at the back of his head.\(^10\)

Joyce’s antagonistic and, at the time, unwarranted and absurd rivalry with Yeats, who had already published, among other things, \textit{The...}
Wanderings of Oisin and Other Poems, The Countess Kathleen, The Land of Heart’s Desire, The Wind Among the Reeds, Diarmuid and Grania, 
Cathleen Ni Houlihan, On Baile’s Strand and founded the Irish Literary 
Theatre, evidently got in the way of his better critical judgement, 
which relegated Yeats to a poor second best to Mangan, judged to be 
beyond doubt the national poet of Ireland’. Stanislaus is, of course, 
incorrect in claiming that Joyce is the first to make such claims for 
Mangan. Yeats publicly held Mangan in the highest esteem and it is 
more correct to see Joyce’s voice as one of a chorus beginning to col-
lectively make a substantial claim for Mangan. Not for nothing, in 
1913, in an appreciative essay in his Irish Literary and Musical Studies, 
would Alfred Percival Graves go so far as to write of the ‘growing cult 
of James Mangan, or James Clarence Mangan, as he renamed him-
self’.11 Yeats, in fact, had publicly declared Mangan ‘the master of Irish 
song’, ‘our one poet raised to the first rank by intensity’ (quoted in 
CW1, p. xiii), a ‘strange visionary … who wrought … lyrics of inde-
scribable, vehement beauty’12 and described his best work ‘as near 
perfection as anything that has ever been written’.13 At the same 
time, however, Yeats more often favoured Samuel Ferguson whom 
he termed ‘the greatest poet Ireland ever produced’ and whose poetry 
he judged to be ‘truly bardic, appealing to all natures alike, to the 
great concourse of the people’.14 Mangan, on the other hand, like 
those who had gone before him … was the slave of life, for he had 
nothing of the self-knowledge, the power of selection, the harmony 
of mind, which enables the poet to be its master, and to mould the 
world to a trumpet for his lips’.15
So Joyce was far from alone among his contemporaries in holding 
Mangan, ‘the last of the bardic poets’, in high esteem.16 It also suited 
his purposes to see the poet as Mangan had seen himself, that is, as 
a poète maudit, as an abandoned and forgotten figure, another Irish 
genius spurned. Joyce chose to fashion Mangan as yet another figure 
betrayed by his people so he could have him take his place in the 
pantheon of such Irishmen that he assembled in his Italian journal-
ism and which included Parnell and Wilde. Not for nothing would 
Joyce, at this point in literary limbo, appreciate Mangan’s poem ‘The 
Nameless One’ with its strong autobiographical meditation on the 
themes of waste and betrayal:

Go on to tell how, with genius wasted 
Betray’d in friendship, befool’d in love.
Joyce’s Multiple Mangans

With spirit shipwreck’d, and young hopes blasted,
still, still strove.

It is not hard to imagine Joyce seeing himself in these lines. Like Mangan, all too often Joyce would feel the indifference of his fellow Irishman with regard to his own literary talent and would resent the acclaim given to contemporaries he considered mediocre.

In his Trieste Mangan lecture, Joyce follows fairly standard Catholic nationalist orthodoxy and makes his claim for the Catholic Mangan as the poet of the Irish Nation rather than, for example, two other founding fathers of the Revival, Samuel Ferguson (1810–1886) or Standish O’Grady (1846–1928). The only other poets Joyce considered discussing with his Triestine audience were both Catholics – Thomas D’Arcy McGee (1825–1868) and the Trinity educated Thomas Moore (1779–1852). To some extent at least, Joyce believed that in order to understand the Irish psyche and the Irish experience, a Catholic background was necessary. He did, after all, criticize James Stephens years later on the grounds that his ‘knowledge of Irish life was ‘non-Catholic and therefore non-existent’.17

What Joyce’s second lecture shows is his enduring interest in Mangan and his significant familiarity with his individual works. Stanislaus’ recollection provides a moving portrait of Joyce the exile in Trieste reading Mangan’s laments for the Irish Wild Geese:

He still stuck to the opinion he expressed in the College magazine that Mangan could be compared only with Shelley as a romantic poet. He read the poem ‘On the ruins of Donegal Castle’, which he said never weakens for forty verses, and his face sharpened with excitement at the way in which Mangan pours out the history of the castle. He read also the poem ‘To my native land’.18

For his Trieste lecture, Joyce cut quotations from ‘To Mihri’ and references to ‘Dark Rosaleen’ and the ‘Lament for Sir Maurice FitzGerald’, which he had used in 1902 and inserted instead two four-line stanzas from ‘O’Husseys Ode to the MacGuire’ (which he mistakenly describes as the ‘lammento per i principe di Tirone e di Tirconnell’ [the Lament for the Princes of Tir-Owen and Tirconnell]19 while praising their ‘forza tremenda’ [tremendous power].20 Despite this slip, Joyce put considerable effort into engaging with Mangan’s works for this second talk. However
the Università Popolare hesitated about how much Joyce was to be paid and eventually offered him a lower fee than had been originally promised. In the end Joyce decided to deliver just one, rather general lecture, which was entitled ‘L’Irlanda: isola dei santi e dei savi’ (‘Ireland: Island of Saints and Sages’). Before he came to this decision, he had already fairly extensively reworked the Mangan piece, and translated a great deal of it. He still hoped to be invited back in the autumn to finally deliver it at the Università Popolare and even told Stanislaus that if he managed to deliver the Mangan talk and then one more, he would then prepare the three lectures for publication. Again, his brother’s diary gives a sense of how intensely they discussed Mangan, although their opinions were not in accord. Both were summarily dismissive of Mangan’s prose which is, in Stanislaus’s words ‘frankly intolerable’.21 In his 1902 lecture, Joyce termed Mangan’s prose works ‘pretty fooling’ while admitting ‘a fierce energy beneath the banter’.22 By 1907, they are downgraded to ‘insipid efforts … their style is conceited … contorted and banal, their argument crude and inflated’.23 Joyce enjoyed Mangan’s humorous poetry and was deeply appreciative of the emotional power that emanated from his strongest poetical works and forgave him the occasional poor rhymes that Stanislaus felt were disruptive. While Stanislaus ‘disliked his way of using words – generally difficult big sounding words – his very Irish way’ and complained about rhymes like ‘Calm burgh’ and ‘Hamburgh’ and lines like “At home in your emerald bowers” or even “again in golden sheen”, Joyce saw the bigger picture and praised Mangan as ‘the last of the old bardic poets who sang of the deeds of their chieftains’.24

The textual changes and amendments made between ‘James Clarence Mangan’ and its Italian double ‘Giacomo Clarenzio Mangan’ provide us, as Eric Bulson has shown, with a rare moment in which to observe the young Joyce, budding translator and literary critic, laboriously translating himself and Mangan into Italian as well as revising his stance on the author to better suit his different audience. Much of the stylistic showing-off that almost occluded any real assessment of Mangan in the earlier version is replaced by a clearer approach. The biographical colour associated with all contemporary visions of Mangan is present in Joyce’s second lecture as it was in the first. Thus we find again the baggy pants, the high conical hat, the old umbrella shaped like a torch, the alleged love-affair with a student, the penury, the alcoholism, and, of course, the opium consumption. Particular attention is given to a dramatic detailing of Mangan’s health.
If, in his 1907 Mangan, Joyce seeks a less ornate and more immediate form with which to portray the drama of Mangan’s life, he also consciously provides a more conventionally nationalistic reading of the poet’s work (and this is in keeping with Joyce’s overall outlook during this, his most outspokenly pro-Irish period). If Joyce’s 1902 was something of a rebuttal of the views of Fenian rebel John Mitchel (who made Mangan into an Irish hero who opposed British imperialism), and of other nationalist readings of Mangan, his second version sought to engage more fully with that more political reading. While never approaching Mitchel’s stridently militant tones, Joyce assembles a range of bombastically nationalist references with which to magnify Mangan and Ireland. He calls Mangan ‘the national poet’, ‘the most significant poet of the modern Celtic world’, praises the Young Ireland movement (with which Mangan had a wavering relationship), and boasts of the ‘great library of Trinity College, Dublin, a rich treasure of books three times as large as the Victor Emmanuel Library in Rome’, quite a contrast, this to the evocation of Trinity in the final chapter of A Portrait: ‘The grey block of Trinity on his left, set heavily in the city’s ignorance like a dull stone set in a cumbrous ring’. 25

Some of this enthusiasm can be explained by Joyce’s intensifying national sense (a common enough phenomenon in recent expatriates not quite yet resigned to their fate), and by the fact that he is writing for an Irredentist audience in Trieste, which was always keen to see the parallels between Ireland’s situation within the British empire and its own within Austro-Hungary. Joyce’s ‘nationalistic’ reading of Mangan, indeed his nationalism in general, peaked in this year, 1907, the year of his ‘Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages’ lecture, the year he was reading Yeats and Synge with his Triestine students and composing the ‘The Dead’, which consciously revises much of the negativity and gloom of the earlier stories of Dubliners. At the same time, Joyce was very much aware of how Mangan’s belatedly assigned status as a national symbol was not the consequence of any clearly articulated and consistent political stance. More simply it was the result of a somewhat forced conflation of poet and nation in which those works that fitted that particular agenda were read as chapters in the struggling nation’s autobiography. In Bulson’s words: ‘The belated honors of being a “prototipo di una nazione mancata,” does
Significantly, Joyce chose to return to his original 1902 Mangan lecture and not the 1907 version, when, in 1930, he planned to have a 'deluxe edition' of the text printed by an American publisher. If nothing else, this is a sign that Joyce essentially stood over his earlier 'romantic' reading rather than his rather more strident 1907 'patriotic' version (although it might well also be argued that he could not have been bothered taking the trouble to re-translate the 1907 version into English or because the original manuscript copy was still in Stanislaus' keeping in Trieste).

Whatever about Joyce's identification of Mangan as a national poet, in Lloyd's words as 'explicitly the image of an Ireland outwardly oppressed but secretly, spiritually alive' and in his own subsequent attempt to convey the inner life of his people as a step towards 'the spiritual liberation of my country', Joyce saw Mangan as ultimately being oppressed by a tragic paradigm of Irish history, a version of what Joyce, in describing Stephen Dedalus's nationalist friend, Davin, in *A Portrait*, refers to as 'the sorrowful legend of Ireland'. Joyce paints the haunted figure of Stephen Dedalus of the opening chapters of *Ulysses* in the gothic shadow of Mangan's restless ghost. Stephen, as Gibson has commented, is a 'limited vehicle for liberation and revenge' because 'antagonism traps him in particular structures of thought and feeling; and melancholy, sullen hatred, spiritual violence, a Manganesque despair of soul, the intimate complicity born of polar opposition'. After the first three chapters, Joyce thus turns to Bloom instead and is careful to conceive of strategies that will allow him to avoid being similarly ingested into a Manganesque dead end. Mangan's error is to remain trapped as the increasingly feeble writer of mournful verses and obsessive lamentations and the error is as much his as his country's:

The history of his country encloses him so straitly that even in his moments of high passion he can but barely breach its walls. He, too, cries out, in his life and in his mournful verses, against the injustices of despilers, but never laments a deeper loss than the loss of plaids and ornaments. He inherits the latest and worst part of a tradition upon which no divine hand has drawn out
the line of demarcation, a tradition which dissolves and divides
against itself as it moves down the cycles. And because this
tradition has become an obsession for him, he has accepted it
with all its failures and regrets which he would bequeath just as
it is: the poet who hurls his anger against tyrants would establish
upon the future an intimate and far more cruel tyranny. In the
final view the figure which he worships is seen to be an abject
queen upon whom, because of the bloody crimes that she has
done and of those as bloody that were done to her at the hands
of others, madness is come and death is coming, but who will not
believe that she is near to die and remembers only the rumours
of voices challenging her sacred gardens and her fair flowers that
have become *pabulum aprorum*, the food of boars. Love of sorrow,
desperation, high-sounding threats, these are the great tradi-
tions of James Clarence Mangan’s race; and, in that miserable,
reedy, and feeble figure, a hysteric nationalism receives its final
justification.32

Thus, as Seamus Deane has commented, Mangan suffers
oblivion in his own land because he is, on the one hand, not
national enough, and, on the other hand, too national ever to be
appreciated for his own individual and remarkable qualities as a
poet. … The history of Mangan, his miserable life and the oblivion
Joyce claimed had descended upon him after his death, was a
carefully construed cautionary tale for the Irish artist who wished
to elude the fickle acclaim of his treacherous countrymen. The
portrait of Mangan is one of Joyce’s early fictions. It is his portrait
of the artist as a Young Ireland man.33

The concluding lines of Joyce’s 1907 Mangan essay would discourage
most critics from seeing Mangan as a model for Joyce and indeed it
is true that the issue of Mangan’s inheritance is a complex one. If
Mangan can be considered in any real sense, as a model for Joyce,
it is not in any clear-cut way but in a manner which necessarily
involves a selection of the various aspects of Mangan’s personal and
creative identity which provided a shadowy mirror in which Joyce
could see himself and could see the difficulties for an Irish author
that the poetry would not be seen for what it truly was as long as
two imperialisms, British and Roman Catholic, prevailed. Nor did
he believe that nationalism was anything other than an extension
of those imperialisms, despite its apparent antagonism to them.
Like Mangan, he could find no alternative to imperialisms and
nationalism other than an attitude of fierce repudiation.34

There were many other elements of Mangan’s poetic output that
would have appealed to a more mature Joyce and that attempted to
subvert the essentialist stranglehold of the two imperialisms, even if
Joyce, like most contemporary critics, does not give adequate voice to
these elements in his two early assessments. Joyce would surely also
have warmed to Mangan’s spirited description of himself not as ‘a
singular man’ but as ‘a plural one’ – ‘a Proteus’, one who wrote under
such a myriad of pseudonyms, such as ‘A Mourne-r’, ‘Clarence’,
in the Cloak’, ‘The Out and Outer’, ‘Peter Puff’, ‘Herr Hopandgoön
Baugstrauteur’, ‘Herr Popandoőn Tutchemupp’ and ‘Vacuus’ that his
assumed names alone had an adulterating effect and were a subver-
sive rebuttal of any narrow Irish enclosing of his works (put together,
they read like an interpolation in Joyce’s ‘Cyclops’). Mangan wrote
under so many counterfeit names that he managed to dilute the very
notion of original authorhood itself. All these names, together with
so many real or invented translations, emphasize the idea of hybrid-
ity, mixing, a denial of racial or linguistic fixity, as well as a generic
instability. Time after time Mangan flaunts the spuriousness of his
sources, especially his ‘oriental’ ones, thus undermining the idea of
originality and laying bare the facetiousness of the desire to return
to some pure source. In so doing with regard to oriental poetry,
he was also undermining the notion that it was still possible, in
the mid-nineteenth century, to recapture some lost, pure, primitive
Gaelic Ireland and in this, he clearly pre-empted the work of Joyce,
Flann O’Brien and many others that followed him. In his 1907 essay,
Joyce draws attention to his knowledge of many literatures as means to circumscribe his occasional contributions to the political cause propagated by the *Nation*:

He was well familiar with the Italian, Spanish, French and German languages and literatures, besides those of Ireland and England, and, it would seem, had some knowledge of oriental languages, probably Sanskrit and Arabic. From time to time he would leave this studious peace to contribute some song to the revolutionary journal.35

Joyce was intrigued by Mangan partly because he identified with a fellow Irish writer whose life only made sense when seen in terms of his own art, partly because he appreciated him as a uniquely Irish Romantic poet, a nomadic, gothic, homeless, outsider; a hybrid melancholic. He admired him as a linguist of considerable talent although one who was also capable of admitting that he had exaggerated his knowledge of oriental languages and who was never troubled by the fact that his knowledge of the Irish and the other languages from which he was supposed to translate was patchy at best (he worked from paraphrase). Not for nothing did he refer to his translations as melancholy perversions.36 Mangan is celebrated by Joyce for his very strangeness, for his personality – what Arthur Power describes as ‘his almost morbid singleness of purpose’,37 for his cosmopolitan reach, which combines with the almost primitive poetry he writes as one of the last of ‘the old Celtic bards’, for the multilingual and multicultural reach of his verse that attempted to unite Orient and Occident, East and West in poems translated not only from Irish, German, Italy, but also ‘from the Ottoman’, and ‘from the Coptic’. Like the prose of Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*, which draws so liberally on other writers, Mangan’s own technique was very often an equally audacious example of linguistic pilfering and playfulness, a revelling in multilingual intertextuality and translation, in writing and rewriting, in what he terms ‘the antithesis of plagiarism’ and Joyce calls ‘stolentelling’, that is, in the *jouissance* to be enjoyed from limitless raids on a vast variety of texts, sometimes real, sometimes invented, to be weaved into new patterns in poetry or prose, or, as was so often the case with Mangan, poetry written side by side with its own prose commentary.
This protean figure's influence on Joyce is itself protean too. Sometimes Joyce treats him reverentially, sometimes he parodies him, sometimes he lifts directly from him. Many critics have seen the Mangan piece in the *Vindicator*, which uses the complex multi-worded term ‘transmagnificandubandanciality’ (*Vindicator*, 8 August 1840), and his coinage of a similar ‘transmagnificanbandancial’ in a letter to Charles Gavan Duffy (15 September 1840) describing his translation of Eoghan Ruadh Mac an Bháird’s elegy ‘A bhean fuair faill ar an bhfeart’ as the source for Joyce’s coinage of the 36-letter word ‘Contransmagnificandjewbangtantiality’, which gives an interesting twist to Joyce’s treatment of the father-son theme, with Mangan and Stephen (and, by refraction, Joyce himself) consubstantial.

Joyce would have seen these usages in C.P. Meehan in his *Poets and Poetry of Munster* and probably imagined they were invented by Mangan. The fact that we now know that the term was not originally Mangan’s is of little import. It was here that Joyce found it as he did ‘The Man in the Cloak’, a version of which he later incorporated in *Ulysses* as the ‘Man in the Mackintosh’, the thirteenth mourner at Paddy Dignam’s funeral in Glasnevin cemetery where Mangan himself rests, his tombstone describing him as ‘Ireland National Poet’. What better example of the metempsychosis (also the title of a humorous poem by Mangan) and of the transubstantiation, which is so effectively explained by Bloom in *Ulysses*.

In his lecture, Mangan’s poem ‘Dark Rosaleen’, which both Joyce and Nora sang at home and which was successfully recorded by John McCormack in 1907, is celebrated as being ‘tremulous with all the changing harmonies of Shelley’s verse’; in ‘Cyclops’ this judgement is undermined when we find poem’s title perched in a list between Peter the Packer and Patrick W Shakespeare. It later reappears, suitably distorted in *Finnegans Wake*, as ‘dark Rasa Lane a sigh and a weep’. Joyce’s Mangan is always caught between the melancholic and the comic and the two are always interconnected. Of most immediate use to the young Joyce was Mangan’s linking of East and West. The early focus of this interest was in the *Dubliners* story, ‘Araby’, but it would later return with more prominence in *Ulysses*. In ‘Araby’, we find a reference to ‘Mangan’s sister’ yet as no Mangan family lived in North Richmond Street it is hard not to read this as an allusion to Mangan himself. In so far as ‘Araby’ is a partly autobiographical piece for Joyce — at least in the sense that the sensitive young boy seems to be, at least in part,
yet another Joycean self-image – it owes something to Mangan’s own fictionalized autobiographical sketches, which are set in Dublin and portray the poet himself as a sensitive young boy. Stanislaus recorded his brother’s interest in reading about Mangan’s life in the biography contained at the beginning of Duffy’s edition of his poetry.

Jim spoke of the Mangans here in Dublin, living alone in the Liberties, his companions there, none of the Irishmen of that day seems to have known him intimately or to have troubled himself about him, his death, the birthplace unmarked, without a monument, his name almost unknown, no good life of him and a few paltry and very incomplete editions of his works. No one knows what became of his family.40

In Mangan’s autobiography, the Ballad episode takes place after his adored older sister dies and seems to be a particular source for Joyce. In Mangan, the heartbroken young boy idealizes his sister as a ‘blue-eyed cherub, her image haunting him in his dreams’ but later she is replaced in his affections by the slightly older girl next door – a ‘little girl of curling sunny locks, a couple of summers his senior’.41 A childhood romance, this, not unlike the childhood romance of ‘Araby’: we find the same older neighbour girl, who is also identified as a surrogate sister in another tale of juvenile quest (Mangan goes out to look for a ballad and this ill- advised attempt results in eight years of almost blindness; the boy in ‘Araby’ goes out for a present at the fair and when he returns his ‘eyes burned with anguish and anger’). For good reason then, Ellen Shannon-Mangan claims that Joyce in ‘Araby’ is essentially repeating the formula of Mangan’s own story while Heyward Erhlich sees Joyce’s story as ‘another fictional biography of Mangan, the Irish Orientalist, or perhaps an early fictional autobiography of Joyce in the process of reinventing himself’, reinventing himself, we might say, in Mangan’s image.42 Mangan’s autobiography is ‘a cunning fabrication which invents his life far more than it reflects it,’ to cite Terry Eagleton’s phrase,43 itself perhaps a reworking of Mangan’s own description of his method, ‘I take a few facts, not caring to be overwhelmed by too many proofs that they are facts’.44 It also provides a precedent for Joyce’s A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, which is too often read as a reliable version of Joyce’s own youth rather than the stylized
and carefully manipulated forgery that it actually is. In a very down-
to-earth way, Mangan provided the young Joyce with an indigenous
literary paradigm for his own family’s decline into squalid poverty
at the end of the century. Like Joyce, Mangan was born into middle-
class Dublin respectability, as he himself recalls in the following
passage: ‘My father was a merchant of this city, and ruined himself
by speculation. He had a princely soul but no prudence. It was when
I was about fifteen years old that I awoke to a sense of the changes
that had come over our household.’45 All we would need to do
would be to insert ‘idleness and drinking’ in place of ‘speculation’
and reduce ‘fifteen’ to ‘eight’ and the lines could well have been
written by Joyce himself about his own domestic situation. Mangan
also provided material for another Joyce partial self-portrait – that of
Shem in Chapter VII of Finnegans Wake. As he did earlier in ‘Araby’,
Joyce here seems to revisit the miserable circumstances of Mangan’s
birth and youth as well as his childhood blindness: ‘the pleb was
born a Quicklow and sank allowing till he stank out of sight’.46
Mangan’s memorable description of his own father as ‘a human boa-
constrictor without his alimentive properties’, is also clearly echoed by
Shem in the phrase: ‘Mynfadher was a boer constructor’.47

Mangan’s autobiography also provided Joyce with an indigenous
point of entry into romanticism, as his was a native version of
the romantic tradition of spiritual biography that included major
works such as Coleridge’s Biographia Literaria, Thomas De Quincey’s
Confessions of an English opium eater, and Thomas Carlyle’s Sartor
Resartus, three works Joyce admired, all of which portray solitary
figures engaged in a long, elusive quest. In this sense, David Lloyd’s
claim, that the ultimate appeal of Mangan for Joyce lay in his hav-
ing made his life, or at least his own fictional accounts of his life,
into the first authentically Irish version of the myth of the romantic
hero, the Byronic self-inventing self, the wanderer and outcast from
society who savours memories of his sinful and gloomy past,48
seems all the more convincing. This romantic appeal served the
young, Joyce of Stephen Hero and A Portrait well but eventually
he would move beyond it and when he did, he could have found
precedents for his own increasingly accumulative, multilingual, sub-
versive techniques in the other Mangan, in the proto-post-modern
Mangan, a writer so ahead of his time that even Joyce struggled to
keep up with him.
Notes

2. Radio broadcast script of ‘Portrait of James Joyce’, ed. W.R. Rodgers, BBC Third Programme. February 1950, p. 8. This document is kept at the Harry Ransom Center (University of Texas at Austin), Box 7, folder 10.
3. OCPW, p. 52.
5. Ibid., p. 65.
6. Ibid., p. 56.
7. Ibid.
9. He is referring to Mangan’s Essays in Prose and Verse, published in Dublin by James Duffy & Co., Ltd., in 1884. Joyce appears to have purchased this volume in 1902 and still had it with him in the Paris years.
20. OCPW, pp. 266, 134.
22. OCPW, p. 56.
23. Ibid., p. 133.
27. This was intended to compete with Jacob Schwartz’s unauthorised Dublin edition of forty copies for private circulation. Schwarz’s version was,
in fact, the second printing of the lecture since it had already appeared
in the unofficial college magazine, St. Stephen’s, in 1902. See Joyce’s letter
to Harriet Shaw Weaver in which he briefly alludes to the possibility of

28. NML, p. 32.
31. Andrew Gibson, Joyce’s Revenge, History, Politics, and Aesthetics in Ulysses
32. OCPW, pp. 135–6.
Joyce, Derek Attridge, ed. (2nd edn; Cambridge: Cambridge University
34. Ibid., p. 31.
35. OCPW, p. 129.
36. Mangan is quoted in John Montague, The Figure in the Cave and other
essays (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1989), p. 120. The 1903 O’Donoghue edi-
tion of Mangan’s poem also contains a section entitled ‘Oriental versions
and perversions’.
37. Arthur Power, Conversations with James Joyce (London, Millington, 1974),
p. 52.
38. See, for example, Peter van de Kamp’s ‘Hands Off! Joyce and the Mangan
in the Mac’ in Configuring Romanticism: Essays Offered to C.C. Barfoot,
40. Triestine Book of Days, 19 April 1907.
Orientalism, and James Clarence Mangan’, James Joyce Quarterly, 35
43. Terry Eagleton, Crazy John and the Bishop and Other Essays in Irish Culture
45. This is in a letter of 22 September 1849 to James Price. The letter is quoted
in NML, p. 36.
47. Finnegans Wake, p. 175.3–4.
48. NML, p. 44.