IRELAND AND ITALY: LITERARY ENCOUNTERS AND POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

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Abstract: This article explores the dynamic literary and political connections between Ireland and Italy during the nineteenth century, highlighting how Italian experiences, particularly the Risorgimento, and Romanticism influenced Irish literature and nationalist movements. It examines how figures such as Lady Morgan, James Clarence Mangan, and Thomas Moore drew parallels between the Italian and Irish struggles for independence, using Italy's revolutionary fervor as a metaphor for Ireland's quest for self-determination. The study also considers the impact of Italian nationalist movements and intellectual traditions on Irish writers like William Butler Yeats and John Millington Synge, showing how Italian Romantic ideals and mythmaking offered models for cultural and political unity. By analyzing these transnational influences, the article reveals the profound effect of Italy's political and cultural experiences on Irish literary and nationalist development. It underscores shared themes of resistance and unity, illustrating how both nations utilized Romantic and mythological frameworks to articulate their aspirations and struggles. The article emphasizes the interconnectedness of Irish and Italian literary traditions and their mutual impact on shaping modern national identities, including the influence of Italian culture on the early seeds of Irish modernism and the founding of the Abbey Theatre. Ultimately, it demonstrates that the literary encounters between Ireland and Italy played a crucial role in fostering a cultural dialogue that transcended national boundaries and shaped modern Irish literature and thought.

Keywords: Transnational and cultural exchange, Risorgimento, Romanticism, Modernism

1. Introduction: My Italy, Our Ireland

The nineteenth century was a period of profound political, cultural, and intellectual change for Ireland and Italy. As both countries grappled with issues of national identity, self-determination, and colonial subjugation, Irish literature increasingly drew from Italian experiences, particularly from the Risorgimento—the movement for Italian unification. This chapter explores how transnational themes emerged from the cultural exchange between Ireland and Italy and how Italian influences contributed to developing modernist tendencies in Irish literature. The relationship between Ireland and Italy in nineteenth-century literature is not merely incidental. Both nations, united in their fight for independence – Italy against the fragmented rule of foreign powers and Ireland under British colonial control – shared a common struggle. The Risorgimento, with its revolutionary fervor, deep historical roots, and aspirations for unification, provided Irish writers with a powerful parallel to their political situation. Figures such as Giuseppe Garibaldi became symbols of heroism and resistance, inspiring Irish nationalist writers to imagine similar narratives for their country.

Any discussion of Irish literature cannot be separated from the issue of nationalism and the struggle for self-determination. In Issue 6 (2016) of *Studi Irlandesi*, titled "Italia Mia: Irish-European Entanglements in the Nineteenth Century," the editors explore "the transnational dimension of the Irish story" and emphasize "the importance of recognizing alternative dimensions to the lives of important figures of the nineteenth century," promoting an understanding of the transnational world that many Irish people inhabited during this period (O'Connor & Badin, 2016, p. 19). They highlight the complexity of the title *Italia Mia*, suggesting that the plural form, "My Italies," might be more fitting due to the historical context—the multiple states that made up nineteenth-century Italy and the political upheavals

that swept Europe. Regarding the Irish, the editors confirm that "the Irish people were present in Italy during these times, both as participants and as observers, and were influenced by their experiences in Italy" (Idem, 2016, pp. 20-21). However, their accounts offered anything but a uniform, homogeneous picture of the country, as they reacted differently to the nationalism they encountered, showcasing the diversity of Irish perspectives: "Paul Cullen despised Francis Mahony; Francis Mahony regularly attacked the work of Lady Morgan; Lady Morgan's view of the Vatican was diametrically opposed to that of Paul Cullen" (Idem, 2016, p. 21).

2. Irish Nationalism – An Italian Import?

There is ample evidence to support the claim that Sydney Owenson, better known as Lady Morgan (1776-1859), a central figure in Irish Victorian literature, viewed the Italian cause as reflective of Ireland's own struggles. In her travelogue *Italy* (1821), Morgan draws striking parallels between the two nations, advocating for Italian unification. As Donatella Abbate Badin notes in the introduction to *Lady Morgan's Italy: Anglo-Irish Sensibilities and Italian Realities*, Morgan's *Italy* was written "at the dawn of a rush of interest about the country," and, being one of the first post-Napoleonic Grand Tour accounts, offered "something new to say to a new kind of audience" (Badin, 2007, p. 1). The Grand Tour was a traditional journey through Europe undertaken mainly by upper-class young men as a rite of passage before the advent of industrialization. While objective in many respects, Morgan's prior engagement with Irish nationalism lent her a unique perspective, transforming Italy into a "highly subjective text" and adding originality and depth to her insights (ibid.).

Lady Morgan's advocacy for political and social reform in Italy resonated deeply with her Irish readership, as both nations shared histories of foreign domination and resistance. Donatella Abbate Badin highlights this connection, observing that "Italian history particularly lends itself to Irish applications," with Morgan's reflections on Naples, especially the Jacobin revolution of 1799, drawing clear parallels to Ireland's own 1798 rebellion (Badin, 2007, pp. 69-70). By weaving together the Italian and Irish struggles for freedom, Morgan enriched her literary work and contributed to the broader Irish nationalist discourse. Badin further explains that, much like other nineteenth-century ideologists, Morgan sought to construct "a primordial national identity" through her writing, exploring the "periods of vitality of those past centuries." This approach, which shaped her antiquarian research into Ireland's past, also led her to center the Italian nation's emerging identity in her historical narrative (Badin, 2007, p. 88). Morgan's exploration of both nations' histories helped foster a collective memory that strengthened nationalist movements, creating a deep emotional connection with her Irish readers.

Similarly, James Clarence Mangan's nationalistic and patriotic poem "Dark Rosaleen" serves as a manifesto of Italy's struggle for independence, using it as a metaphor for Ireland's own fight against British rule:

> "O! the Erne shall run red
> With redundance of blood,
> The earth shall rock beneath our tread,
> And flames wrap hill and wood,
> And gun peal, and slogan cry,
> Wake many a glen serene,
> Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,
> My Dark Rosaleen!
> My own Rosaleen!
> The Judgment Hour must first be nigh,
> Ere you can fade, ere you can die,

My Dark Rosaleen!" (Mangan, 1897, p. 115)

In her essay, "Colleens and Maidens: Representing and Performing Irish Femininity in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries" (2009), Barbara O'Connor highlights the role of idealized female figures in shaping Irish cultural identity. She notes, "Idealized women have long played a central role in the Irish cultural imagination," pointing to figures such as Queen Maeve, Mother Ireland, the Virgin Mary, and Hibernia. Alongside these iconic representations, O'Connor emphasizes the presence of "more anonymous sisters, colleens, and comely maidens" as models of Irish femininity (O'Connor, 2009, p. 144). An interesting detail is that Mangan translated an old Irish poem titled "Roisin Dubh" and then provided two different translations in English, the language of Ireland's oppressor.

"Dark Rosaleen" was a covertly nationalistic poem, artfully disguised as a love song during a period when the British government outlawed overt expressions of Irish nationalism. The poem, written by James Clarence Mangan in the 19th century, personifies Ireland as "Dark Rosaleen," a beloved figure for whom the speaker expresses deep devotion and willingness to sacrifice. This allegory allowed Mangan to channel the nation's yearning for freedom into the language of romantic love, thereby masking the revolutionary message from censors. The poem's translation into English further intensified its subversiveness, as it repurposed the oppressors' language to communicate a defiant call for Irish independence. By cloaking nationalist sentiment in the guise of a love song, "Dark Rosaleen" became a powerful symbol of resistance, maintaining its emotional and political potency while evading the censorship that sought to suppress the Irish desire for self-determination.

The Irish poets of the Young Ireland movement also looked to Italy for inspiration. Writers such as Thomas Davis, whom Gerald Massey called "the great man of the Young Ireland party," and James Clarence Mangan, who "had the key to the Celtic heart," wove Italian revolutionary fervor into their poetry, drawing on themes of cultural revival, national unity, and the pursuit of freedom. Italian nationalism became a vehicle for Irish authors to express their frustration with British rule, using Italy's cultural and political struggle as a metaphor for Ireland's quest for identity and independence. According to Irish poet and literary critic Gerald Massey,

> "Nearly twenty years ago, there arose in Ireland a band of young men, passionate lovers of their country, and jealous guardians of her proudest traditions. They conceived the idea of awakening this deliverer, who should stretch forth his hand and take the sword they would forge ready for his clutch. They would breathe a new breath of life into Ireland. 'Ireland for the Irish' was the motto on their banner." (Massey, 1861, np)

Michael Huggins, in his exploration of the ideological connections between Giuseppe Mazzini's "Young Italy" and the "Young Ireland" movement, underscores the profound significance of their shared vision of nationhood. He clarifies that, like Mazzini, Young Ireland perceived the nation in political terms, striving to transcend historical disunity by constructing a new political identity. Huggins notes that the Young Irelanders embraced "discursive flexibility" in defining the nation, allowing factors like language, territory, and ethnicity to signify nationhood. However, these factors needed to be harmonized within a political structure that guaranteed "citizenship, democracy, and formal equality for all" (Huggins, 2013, pp. 19-20). Both movements, despite the formidable challenges they faced in achieving the political unity they aspired to, were united by their shared vision of nationhood, their efforts often thwarted by historical realities that made such unity a daunting task.

3. Romanticism and Mythmaking

Romanticism, a cultural and artistic movement of the 19th century, played a pivotal role in shaping national identities through mythmaking and the use of national legends. Both Irish and Italian literature drew on Romanticism not only to forge and reinforce their national identities but also to foster a sense of unity and solidarity. By utilizing myths and historical figures, these literatures articulated their unique cultural narratives and aspirations, creating a shared understanding of their national struggles. For Ireland and Italy, Romanticism was more than just a cultural and artistic movement; it was a powerful framework for exploring and expressing national experiences. This movement, transcending art and literature, became a crucial tool for addressing each nation's cultural and political challenges. Its influence extended beyond aesthetics, shaping how these societies perceived their past and envisioned their futures.

In Ireland, Romanticism was instrumental in articulating the nation's struggle for identity and independence. Writers and poets such as James Clarence Mangan and Thomas Moore embraced Romantic ideals to celebrate Ireland's rich cultural heritage. They drew on Celtic myths and legends to create narratives reflecting themes of resistance and resilience. This approach fostered a sense of unity among the Irish and offered a lens through which to view their national struggles as part of a grand historical continuum. Mangan's evocative use of myth and Moore's poetic reflections provided a cultural framework that unified Irish identity amidst political turmoil.

A few years earlier than Lady Morgan's travelogue, Irish poet Thomas Moore (1779–1852) had published *Lalla Rookh: An Oriental Romance* (1817) in which he subtly wove an anti-imperial message, engaging with broader transnational concerns of liberty and national independence. In the poem, the theme of "freedom" resonates deeply not only with the Irish fight for national independence from British rule but also within the larger Romantic tradition of liberty and resistance against tyranny. In the two passages cited, Moore presents freedom as a transcendent and universal ideal, a concept that transcends national boundaries and resonates with all who have experienced the degradation of oppression and servitude:

> "Soon as he heard an Arm Divine was rais'd
> To right the nations, and beheld, emblaz'd
> On the white flag Mokanna's host unfurl'd,
> Those words of sunshine, 'Freedom to the World,'"
> (Moore, 1817, pp. 14-15)

Freedom is portrayed as a divine, almost messianic force transcending national boundaries. The figure of Mokanna, though complex and ambiguous in the poem, is associated with a revolutionary movement that promises "Freedom to the World." This language mirrors the aspirations of oppressed peoples, including the Irish under British rule, who sought freedom and justice through uprisings and revolutions. By likening freedom to "sunshine," Moore elevates it to a source of light, hope, and life—a sharp contrast to the darkness of subjugation. This vision of freedom is global and righteous, a moral imperative to "right the nations" and a call to action for all who value justice and liberty.

And the poet continues:

> "Oh! he would rather houseless roam
> Where Freedom and his God may lead,
> Than be the sleekest slave at home
> That crouches to the conqueror's creed!"
> (Moore, 1817, p. 201)

Moore contrasts the spiritual and moral nobility of "houseless roam" in pursuit of freedom with the shame of subjugation and complicity with the "conqueror's creed." The speaker would prefer exile, poverty, and hardship, as long as he retains his freedom and spiritual integrity, rather than live comfortably as a "slave" who has capitulated to the oppressor. This sentiment reflects the Irish nationalist ethos that prized autonomy and resistance over the material security of submission to British rule. The reference to "Freedom and his God" highlights the importance of political and religious freedom, a powerful theme for Irish Catholics, who were denied full civil rights under British Protestant rule. The poem's exploration of freedom is deeply intertwined with the theme of religious freedom, a significant issue for the Irish Catholic community during the period of British rule.

Through these verses, Moore parallels the Eastern-inspired world of *Lalla Rookh* and Ireland's political struggle. As portrayed in these lines, freedom is not merely the absence of physical chains but also the spiritual and moral agency to reject tyranny and maintain one's integrity and values. This echoes the Irish nationalist view that true freedom involved self-governance and the ability to follow one's own religious and cultural path, even at the cost of personal suffering. This deep, spiritual understanding of freedom adds a profound layer of significance to the struggle for independence.

In an explanatory note, Moore anticipates potential criticism of his use of the term "Liberty" in a context that might seem foreign to the Eastern settings of his work. He acknowledges that the concept of liberty, as understood in contemporary Western thought, may not traditionally apply to the historical and cultural realities of the East. However, he asserts that this does not diminish the term's relevance when it is framed in the context of national self-determination:

> "Objections may be made to my use of the word Liberty, in this and more especially in the story that follows it, as totally inapplicable to any state of things that has ever existed in the East; but though I cannot, of course, mean to employ it in that enlarged and noble sense which is so well understood at the present day, and, I grieve to say, so little acted upon, yet it is no disparagement to the word to apply it to that national independence, that freedom from the interference and dictation of foreigners" (Moore, 1817, p. 379).

Moore's argument highlights a critical distinction between personal liberty in an abstract sense and the concrete fight against foreign domination, in which "both Hindoos and Persians" demonstrated bravery against their oppressors. By framing this within the romantic and exoticized setting of the East, Moore indirectly addresses imperialist oppression in a way that resonates with his Irish readership, who were keenly aware of their own struggles for national independence.

He clarifies that, while he does not employ the term in "that enlarged and noble sense" understood in the West, it is still relevant to the idea of "national independence"—the struggle for freedom from foreign interference. As Moore writes, this independence is essential because "without which, indeed, no liberty of any kind can exist" (Moore, 1817, p. 379). He further notes that both Hindus and Persians fought bravely against their invaders, embodying the spirit of resistance against oppression. This passage highlights Moore's alignment with broader anti-imperial sentiments, linking the struggles of Eastern nations with those in Ireland and Italy during the same period.

Critic Chris Murray offers a nuanced interpretation of *Lalla Rookh*, suggesting that Thomas Moore's use of Orientalist themes complicates efforts to read the work purely as a reflection of Anglo-Irish politics. Murray notes:

> "Moore's play with Orientalist devices complicates the attempt to discern a representation of Anglo-Irish politics […]. This obscurity is consistent with Moore's vacillation over the value of revolutionary activity: more than it describes particular historical figures, *Lalla Rookh* encodes Moore's anxiety over the Irish question" (Murray, 2018, p. 106).

Moore's engagement with revolutionary ideals and his sympathy for oppressed peoples serve as a subtle framework for expressing Ireland's aspirations for independence. Through this lens, *Lalla Rookh* becomes not only a romantic narrative but also a reflection of the poet's complex feelings about Ireland's struggle for freedom.

In Italy, Romanticism was closely tied to the *Risorgimento*, the movement for Italian unification. Writers like Alessandro Manzoni and Giacomo Leopardi infused their works with Romantic elements, romanticizing historical figures and events to inspire national pride and unity. By addressing Italy's fragmented past and envisioning a unified future, these writers played a crucial role in rallying public sentiment around the cause of Italian unification. Manzoni's portrayal of Italy's historical and cultural legacy, and Leopardi's exploration of national aspirations, helped galvanize support for the unification process and shape a coherent Italian national identity.

Both Irish and Italian literatures engaged in mythmaking, reinterpreting historical and legendary figures to symbolize national ideals. In Irish literature, mythmaking served to revive and reframe figures like Cú Chulainn as symbols of heroism and resistance. Similarly, the Fenian cycle was adapted to reflect contemporary struggles for independence and cultural revival. This mythmaking constructed a national narrative that resonated with Irish aspirations, intertwining historical struggles with literary heritage.

Italian writers also employed mythmaking to support nationalist aims. Heroes of the Risorgimento, such as Giuseppe Garibaldi, were elevated to mythic status in literature. Their achievements were framed as part of a grand historical narrative, emphasizing the righteousness and inevitability of Italian unification. This Romanticized portrayal bolstered public support for the unification process and consolidated a sense of Italian national identity. By mythologizing figures and events, Italian writers created a narrative that reinforced the collective identity and aspirations of a unified Italy.

The Romantic and mythmaking traditions of Ireland and Italy did not develop in isolation. There was significant cross-pollination of ideas between the two nations. Irish writers often drew inspiration from Italian models, while Italian writers looked to Irish narratives for influence. For instance, the idealized portrayals of Italian national heroes may have impacted Irish writers in their own mythologizing efforts. This interaction underscores the interconnectedness of their cultural and historical experiences and highlights the mutual influence of their literary traditions.

Romanticism and mythmaking were crucial in shaping the national identities of both Ireland and Italy. Through the use of myths and legends, writers from both countries articulated their cultural struggles and aspirations, contributing to a broader discourse of national identity. This shared literary approach not only emphasizes their intertwined experiences but also highlights the role of Romanticism in shaping modern national narratives. The cross-influences between Irish and Italian literatures reflect a rich interplay of ideas and ideals that continue to resonate in their respective national identities.

4. Italy's Role in Shaping Irish Modernist Tendencies

The influence of Italy on Irish literature extended beyond thematic parallels of nationalism and resistance. Italian cultural and intellectual movements significantly shaped

the early seeds of modernism in Irish writing. The Italian Renaissance, with its emphasis on individual genius, creativity, and the revival of classical traditions, provided a model for Irish writers seeking to break away from the constraints of Victorian realism. The Risorgimento, with its revolutionary fervor and aspirations for unification, inspired Irish writers to embrace a more symbolic, mythological, and experimental approach to literature, mirroring Italian cultural movements.

One key figure illustrating this influence is William Butler Yeats. Though a central figure in the early twentieth century, Yeats was deeply influenced by nineteenth-century Irish literary traditions and Italy's cultural renaissance. He was particularly fascinated by Italy's mythological past and its integration of art with politics. The Italian Renaissance's emphasis on individual genius, creativity, and classical traditions provided a framework for Yeats's exploration of Irish folklore and mythology. His fascination with Italian culture, particularly its blend of aesthetics with politics, allowed him to transcend Victorian literary conventions and contribute to the burgeoning modernist movement in Ireland.

The search for unity lies at the heart of Yeats's work—an absolute quest. He believed that the primary function of poetry was to discover the underlying order in life and then impose that order on life itself to overcome its incoherence and randomness. Yeats was preoccupied with "moulding vast material into a single image." According to him, the unity Christianity provided to the Western world until the Renaissance, both in the religious and secular spheres, had been disrupted by the triumph of science, rationalism, and materialism. This disruption marked a significant turning point in Western thought. During the Renaissance, artists still found order in Christianity, which offered symbols for expressing their vision – whether from the New and Old Testaments or classical mythology. In the secular sphere, this order was represented by the doctrine of correspondences, symbolized in the Chain of Being, which linked man to God. For Yeats, the essential task was to reconstruct this broken chain and diligently search for the lost ideal of unity.

The Italian Renaissance, a pivotal period in the history of art and culture, plays a significant role in Yeats's quest for unity. In *Dove and Swan*, a key chapter of *A Vision*, Yeats presents his theory of personality and humanity, dividing history into 28 phases corresponding to the lunar phases and segments of the "Great Wheel." The "Great Wheel" represents the cyclical nature of history and human experience, with each phase symbolizing a different aspect of subjectivity and objectivity. Phase 15, which corresponds to the full moon, represents complete subjectivity, while the waning moon phases emphasize an objective dimension, reaching its peak at the moment of the "black moon."

In 1909, Yeats formulated a poetics characterized by excluding the "character" of idiosyncratic experience, allowing the artist "to create tragedy out of his own soul, that soul which is alike in all men." The Italian Renaissance helped him develop this concept because, in its artists and poets – particularly Dante and Castiglione – Yeats saw the need to cultivate style, personality, and discipline. Through a process he called "subjective objectivity," the artist could view their personal experiences objectively, stripping them of idiosyncrasies to find universality within. The Italian model not only provided an ideal society for the 20th century, capable of containing "all reality and justice in a single thought," but also a personal model of the Renaissance artist, aiding Yeats in reuniting the fragmentation of contemporary art and society.

Dante was central to Yeats's system, representing a figure of profound admiration. In *Autobiographies*, Yeats states, "As a young man I thought constantly of Homer and Dante." Unlike Eliot, Pound, and Joyce, Yeats had not studied Dante in depth but respected him as a master creator. His knowledge of Dante's works was mediated through translations, including H. F. Cary's *Divine Comedy*, Charles Lancelot Shadwell's *Purgatory*, and Laurence Binyon's *Inferno* and *Purgatory*. Yeats's view of Dante was shaped by Walter Pater, who anticipated

the idea of Dante as both a poet of subjectivity and objectivity, possessing a deep religiosity and involvement in life's affairs.

Yeats's initial view of Dante was filtered through the Romantic idea of the Florentine poet, influenced primarily by Blake's illustrations of the *Divine Comedy* and Rossetti's paintings. At that time, Yeats considered Dante the first of the Romantics, sharing ideals with Shelley and Coleridge, such as exile, devotion to an unattainable woman, and political engagement in a country torn by conflict. Romanticism had transformed Dante from the Augustan image of a perverse and obscure figure into a great visionary, worthy of standing alongside Milton and Shakespeare.

John Millington Synge also engaged with Italy's cultural revival. When Yeats first met him, Synge was in Paris attending courses in Celtic languages and literary criticism at the Sorbonne. Synge lived in financial difficulty, but his potential as a literary figure was unmistakable. Yeats suggested Synge return to Ireland, but instead of settling in a city, he urged him to go to the Aran Islands. These rugged islands represented the most primitive and unchanged part of Ireland. Synge's time on the Aran Islands and works like *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907) reflect a modernist reaction against Victorian realism, paralleling broader European trends, including those from Italy.

Synge's engagement with Italian culture is also evident in his translations of Petrarch and Leopardi and his familiarity with Italian writers like Dante. Italian nationalism's emphasis on *il popolo* as the repository of national identity resonated with Irish writers like Synge, who sought to recover Irishness through folklore and peasant traditions. This led to a rejection of Victorian conventions and an embrace of modernist aesthetics rooted in myth and symbol.

The Abbey Theatre, co-founded by Yeats, Lady Gregory, and Edward Martyn, stands as a testament to Italy's influence on Irish modernism. Much like Italy's Risorgimento, the Abbey Theatre sought to use art and culture to unite a nation. Inspired by Irish and Italian mythology, Yeats's plays rejected bourgeois realism in favour of a symbolic, spiritual theatre, signaling the emergence of Irish modernism that was both nationalist and avant-garde.

The cultural exchange between Ireland and Italy in the nineteenth century was dynamic and multifaceted. Italian nationalist movements gave Irish writers a model for their aspirations, while Italy's rich artistic and intellectual traditions helped develop modernist tendencies in Irish literature. By engaging with Italy's history and culture, Irish writers not only found inspiration for their nationalist ideals but also contributed to the emergence of modernist experimentation that defined early twentieth-century Irish literature.

Conclusions

The literary and political exchanges between Ireland and Italy in the nineteenth century provide a compelling narrative of cultural symbiosis that underscores the deep connections between these two nations. Both countries, marked by struggles for independence and identity, found in each other's histories a source of inspiration that shaped their respective national movements. Italian nationalism, through the lens of the Risorgimento, offered Irish writers and thinkers a model for uniting cultural and political aspirations. In turn, Ireland's push for autonomy echoed Italy's desire for unification, creating a dialogue of mutual influence that transcended national borders.

The role of romanticism in the cultural exchange between Ireland and Italy was pivotal and empowering. It served as a shared intellectual platform for Irish and Italian writers, enabling them to delve into mythmaking and national identity. The Romantic imagination, with its emphasis on folklore, mythology, and the power of the individual, provided a common ground for Irish writers to align their national cause with broader European intellectual movements. By engaging with Italy's mythological past and Romantic

ideals, Irish writers like Yeats and Synge were able to reinterpret their own cultural heritage in ways that fostered a stronger national identity. This use of myth, not merely as a literary device but as a political tool, demonstrates how the Romantic movement empowered writers to lay the groundwork for modernist experimentation.

Italy's influence on the Irish literary modernist movement also reveals a nuanced layer of transnational literary development. The intellectual currents of the Italian Renaissance and the Risorgimento's emphasis on unity and identity resonated with Irish writers seeking to break free from the constraints of Victorian realism. Figures like Yeats and Synge incorporated Italian ideas of symbolism, aesthetics, and the fusion of art and politics, all of which helped shape the distinct voice of Irish modernism. The Abbey Theatre, as an emblem of this cultural revolution, stands as a tangible testament to how Italy's artistic legacy provided a model for Irish national theatre and modernist literature.

In conclusion, the literary and political encounters between Ireland and Italy in the nineteenth century reveal the powerful and enduring role of transnational cultural exchange. Italy's revolutionary spirit and artistic achievements not only influenced Irish writers but also contributed to shaping Ireland's own journey toward literary and national identity. This exchange, deeply rooted in shared struggles and aspirations, demonstrates how literature can transcend national borders, creating a lasting and profound impact on the intellectual and political landscapes of nations in search of their place in modern history.

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