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Musicalised language and the evolving landscape: Towards an aural
articulation of the poetical Irish soundscape in W.B. Yeats' poetry

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Introduction

Unlike pure noise capable of startling a person, deliberate sounds can evoke a musical universe by forming growing movements only fathomed by the ear (Valery 85-7). Certain postures and motions inside a poet's mind, therefore, affect both the position of his own voice and the rhythms within the poem's language (*Yeats' Poetry* 67). In this manner, only a vividness of speech capable of sustaining a state of awareness and drowsiness can move the poet to gaze upon reality and beauty alike (*Yeats' Poetry* 275-310). Consequently, as the poet's work is contained within a hypothetically meaningful world, we claim the musicalisation of a symbolic poetical language reflects the poem's self-contained verbal patterns causing nature to be reflected in its own form (Ricoeur 72; *Anatomy* 73-84). To this end, as every poet wishes to transform words into harmonious resonances, musical compositions must be translated into signs emerging from those melodious ideas detached from the universe of noise (Valery 79-204). In other words, to make poetry is to musicalise language.

By disposing its classical distance during the twentieth-century, the notion of landscape becomes a visible expression of the social factors which had contributed to its production (Besse 1). In this sense, having broken with Classical objective aesthetics and allowing the emergence of the poet's identity as the main reality, the outer world turns itself into an inner mirror ('Estructura Inflexible' 274; Paz 95). Thus, poetry embodies the possibility of extracting reality from experience eventually humanising nature alike the human body ('Estructura Inflexible' 274; Paz 60). Hence, with the transition into the new century, the subject begins to inhabit and construct a self-sufficient reality as the natural world begins to intervene upon reality itself (Paz 58-94). Modern mentality, therefore, divides the word between the outer recognition of creative experiences and the inner capacity of realising reality through composition ('Estructura Inflexible' 272-3). In this sense, the true value of poetry lies therein the indissolubility of sound and meaning as Modern poetry ultimately acts as a self-destructing creation developing its own sense of tradition (Valery 95; Paz 18-21). For this reason, we believe W. B. Yeats' career depicts a privileged perspective unto his personal style's evolution from Romanticism to Modernism following Northrop Frye's thematic fracture between archetype and metaphor.

Beginning in 1889, W.B. Yeats' poetry not only embodies a nationalistic interest on reviving pre-Christian Irish culture but also refers to a condensation of past and present interconnected sensibilities (Eliot 39). According to T.S. Eliot, W.B. Yeats represents a man capable of finding himself in a different world in every decade of his life, seeing with different eyes the continuously renewed available artistic materials (*Yeats' Poetry* 330). For this reason, we argue in the present dissertation how Yeats' transition from one temporal location to another of his life constitutes the creative driving force behind his articulation through sounds of the Irish landscape. In this sense, the realisation of an imagery through *musicalised* language constructs a landscape constantly fluctuating cultural, imaginary, and natural elements characteristic of his Celtic heritage and evolving cultural reality. Thus, Yeats constructs a poetical landscape where the interconnection of different levels of mobilities—such as syntax, dialogues, sound-producing actions and actors—implies a musical interweaving within the poems' centripetal meaning alike the faceless Modernist urban landscape. Consequently, the realisation of a multi-layered musical soundscape across Yeats' career illustrates the link between poetry and the production of music therein a paradigm where landscapes are realised within the subject as a human and cultural dimension formation.

In this manner, by examining a selection of W.B. Yeats' poems beginning with *The Wanderings of Oisín and Other Poems* (1889) and culminating with his *Last Poems and Two Plays* (1939), we aim to examine both the confluence of Celtic imagery within the rise of a sonorous landscape and the configuration of his life's work as a figurative landscape of poetical decisions. Thus, the primary sources have been selected as they further portray the aforementioned musical mobilities in Yeats' career to better illustrate the confluence of Irish nationalism and music. To this end, "The Wanderings of Oisín" (1889) and "The Stolen Child" (1889) delineate the creation of other-worldly settings via the presence of fairies within traditional Irish folklore. Similarly, "Fergus and the Druid" (1893) provides additional insight as to how unbalanced dialogues procure a continuous back and forth across the poem. Moreover, "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" (1893) portrays the poet's inclination of reviving pre-Christian Ireland by creating a convergence of past and present sensibilities within one natural location.

Likewise, the poem “The Everlasting Voices” (1899) characterises not only the adaptation of the Symbolist method and William Blake’s influence by presenting the poet as a medium but also Yeats’ relationship with the constant reformulation of past mythologies. Additionally, as Yeats’ poetry is said to have created both a unified and not exclusive definition of Celticism (North 388), the poet’s historical awareness loses its Celtic predominance by erasing the borders between Christianity and Druidism (*Yeats’ Poetry* 303). Consequently, “The Second Coming” (1921) illustrates the reimagination of a mythical creature capable of producing sounds as well as the merger of Celtic influences with Yeats’ personal theories of cycles and spiritualism. Along these lines, “Sailing to Byzantium” (1928) exemplifies the possibility of articulating a natural mythical landscape therein a recognisable backdrop altered by the poet’s reaction to ageing. of decay. Furthermore, “The Tower” (1928) depicts the presence of fortified constructions as landscape artefacts by inscribing the titular tower as the architectural manipulation of natural resources. Lastly, “The Man and the Echo” (1939) provides a final examination of Yeats’ politics and dialogues within the articulation of a cultural and ideological Modernist perspective to his life. In addition to the presented primary texts, the following poems will be considered as secondary sources to further our discussion: “To Ireland in the Comings Times” (1893) and “Red Hanrahan’s Song about Ireland” (1904).

Theoretical Considerations

Perspectives on landscapes During the Enlightenment, the eighteenth-century Cartesian individual consolidates his autonomous and intellectual status by understanding objects to be the product of a latitude between himself as spectator and his confronted reality. Consequently, with sight and vision as the centre of classical landscape perception by establishing the land as a profitable spectacle for the gaze, art must act as a finished imitation of nature with the subject implementing fundamental control over the representation of images (Besse 2; Roger 15). During the 19th century, however, by regarding landscapes as the activation of a determined use of space, to be part of one begins to mean finding a sense of identity in order to determine a sense of being-in-the-world (Besse 4). Hence, as the artist *denaturalises* nature instead of repeating it by producing models of his ownership instead of disconnected models, the space of the landscape becomes the place with no places to be lost in (Roger 16; ‘Geografía y Paisaje’ 139-45). The landscape, thus, envelopes the human being within unfolding distances and orientations inciting movement through the participation and prolongation of a radical atmospheric disorientation (Besse 11).

Contrary to the Enlightened artistic totality of representation, by depicting the landscape as all the experiences to the proximity of things, this new perspective establishes the subject as an inhabitant of the landscape by foregrounding his sensible presence (‘Geografía y Paisaje’ 148; Besse 3). Additionally, being one with the outer world entitles the subject into transgressing social order, the exaltation of nature becoming moral and political criticism of the subject’s civilisation (Paz 60). Contact with the surrounding world, accordingly, transforms physical poly-sensory experiences into the main articulator of the landscape for to perceive it means exposing the living body to a composite environment of interacting sensual dimensions (Besse 5-7). For this reason, the landscape does not constitute a display closed on itself but a passage which has opened the eyes towards another place as an expression of existence (‘Geografía y Paisaje’ 168).

Along these lines, with the rise of the Romantic movement, the modern subject slowly begins to show dissatisfaction for his own modernity. Thus, with Modernity standing for a tradition of interruptions signalling new beginnings, the 20th century seeks to promote man’s particularity as an illustration of the rising metropolitan mode of existence

(Paz 17; Simmel 9). Hence, by not being imposed from the outside, the city authorises the enunciation of location—I am *here*—over personal experience—I am (*Ciudad* 48). In this sense, life is composed through a series of impersonal cultural moments that aim to suppress idiosyncrasies which generate in return a series of overexaggerated extremities brought into awareness for the sake of the individual (Simmel 11). As a result, stemming from this agglomeration of different interests, the typical metropolitan residents intertwine themselves into a many-membered organism with Modernity, ultimately, condemned to a ceaseless plurality and self-sufficient heterogeneity (Simmel 4; Paz 18).

Tough an implicit equivalence between the city and the soul rests on the notion of mutual perfection (Tangney 1), one cannot reach its fulfilment without the other as the diffused and dispersed atmosphere of the city embodies the urban landscape as an unfinished construction site unable of self-sustentation (*Ciudad* 80). Whilst its machinery dilated itself unto every space and temporality as both a defined and undetermined object, Modernism transforms the concept of space into an interweaving of mobilities brought to life by a combination of unfolding movements (*Ciudad* 82; De Certeau 129). Reading, under this guise, symbolises a conjunction of different present moments within a single experience (Cuadra 21). Such awareness of simultaneously living under divergent planes articulates the Modernist subject into a congeries of worldviews ultimately resulting in a non-linear conception of time as a *constellation* of interconnected historical moments (Bell 13; Cuadra 21). The employment of myths and legendary figures by William Butler Yeats, in this sense, represents a poetical structure more concerned with developing a spatialised rather than chronological history (Bell 15).

By utilising classical Irish mythology, Yeats aims to empower his homeland folklore beyond idle folk stories of a long-since crumbled culture mimicking how the most individual and creative parts of an artist's life's work are those asserting most vigorously his ancestors' immortality (Welch 2; Eliot 26). Yeats' historical sense, therefore, needs not only a perception of the past's *pastness* but its unremitting presence surrendering itself unto a continual extinction of personality in the same manner in which a writer becomes the spirit of a region, his writing infused with a certain emotional atmosphere (Eliot 27; *Yeats' Poetry* 423). To that end, unable to be captured by an identity but left to be appraised by prints and sketches (*Ciudad* 45), the depersonalisation of Yeats emerges similar to how

Modernism creates a faceless urban landscape—blind yet with several looks. Poets, ultimately, capture this fleeting scenery into a figurative literary landscape throughout time by merging their culture and tradition into a biographical atmosphere, not unlike the way in which the instantaneous nature of the city is entrapped by photography. In this sense, Yeats' predilection for articulating his lyrical poetry within a mystical, pre-Christian, pre-English Ireland illustrates his personal conviction of making poems based on familiar landscapes over unknown ones.

Soundscape As the visible landscape stems from an ensemble of human acts which allow the application of iconological methods to its study, nature becomes descendant of our intelligence instead of a giving mother ('Geografía y Paisaje' 140; Roger 15). Nonetheless, by also being invisible and unrepresentable, the landscape can only be grasped as an excess of representation for the more conquered by outer elements, the more one gets lost within it ('Geografía y Paisaje' 145-60). For this reason, the most direct form of contact with the surrounding world, as a confirmation of the subject's territorial identity, comes from exposing the body to the landscape for it is through the inhabited body that one can live in the world (Besse 4-6). Along these lines, we claim that instead of sight being the only way of being involved with the landscape, all five senses must be simultaneously involved in one poly-sensory engagement.

As a *smellscape* stands for the discontinuous organisation of a landscape's specific odours and a *tactile space* represents a palpable and smooth space (Besse 7), we account for the notion of *soundscape*. Soundscapes, respectively, are defined in relation to the natural world's capacity to generate certain identifiable sounds characteristic of their identities (Besse 7). Under this guise, soundscapes—acoustically speaking—depict the totality of all sounds within a location by including the subjective component of the relation between the individuals' perception and interactions with a sonic environment (Cain et al. 232-3). Consequently, de Coensel and Botteldooren define soundscape as the combination between physical characteristics and perception within a specific context and from a specific point of view, additionally including quiet areas for their representation of distinct quietness (887-8). Nevertheless, we believe that a more fitting definition must consider the sources behind the particular sounds. Therefore, soundscapes should be understood as the music

produced by both vocalising and stridulating animals as well as sounds of non-biological origin such as water and wind (Pijanowski et al. 2004). In this sense, we include the concept of *biophony* when enclosing the composition of sounds created by living organisms, *geophony* for non-biological ambient sounds, and *anthrophony* for the sounds caused by humans (Farina et al. 2004). Under these circumstances, we consider the concept of soundscape to represent the summation of different living and non-living performances as they create a unique acoustical pattern across a distinct landscape.

Along these lines, although the meaning of a poem creates a static pattern derived from its structure of imagery (*Anatomy* 158), as the musicalised elements which have been shaped into verses are transformed into a verbal dance a poem is language in movement (Valery 185). Accordingly, rhetorical figures such as rhymes and inversions represent the linguistic possibilities for creating a particular universe as a privileged location for dancing (Valery 188). Consequently, we account for the appearance of actions directly connected to the articulation of music such as *dancing*, *fighting*, and *dreaming*. Additionally, we analyse the presence of actors involved in the production of melodies and distorting sounds such as *fairies*, *creatures*, and *birds*. Finally, we evaluate the presence of dialogues and singing as secondary elements within the poem in the manner in which they illustrate the figure of the poet as an orator.

Aural diction Nevertheless, when analysing the articulation of Yeats' soundscapes as different condensations forming a unique acoustical sequence, it is necessary to account for how musicality is approached beyond figurative representation. In this sense, although several authors have discussed the topic of poetical musicality and melody, there is not an encompassing concept defining what makes a poem *musical* but a wide range of notions discussing the relation between music and lyrics such as *melos*, *quality*, *recurring rhythm*, and *babble*. Respectively, by presenting these concepts dealing with the production of aural articulation, we will reach a condensed version that, for the purposes of this dissertation, we will deem *aural diction*.

According to Northrop Frye's Theory of Genres, all literature presents a lexis stemming from the combination of *opsis*—or plastic arts—and *melos*—music with lyric being the internal mimesis of sound and imagery producer beyond metric of invariably

poetic rhythm (*Anatomy* 244-50). Thus, to delight the reader equals to a sense of movement too frail to be kept on sight but easily regulated by auditory cadences where the sensible characters of language, sound, rhythm, accents, tone, and motions generate a *voice in action* (Valery 92-3). In this sense, a poet will only find his poetic voice once he has placed his own feelings into his own words, his natural voice being the echo reverberating each time he composed lines inside his head ('Feeling' 40-1). Along these lines, a poem could either be an indivisible, self-sustainable piece within a larger discourse or the fragment of a musical piece such as the human voice—either the manipulation of language or the remembrance of elocution (Valery 30; *Anatomy* 273). However, as this apparent division can be merged into a conception of poetry as both a form of pure departure and object of deep study, the study of poetry comes to rely on how differently the poet disposes common language to communicate the impression of a growing state of creative emotion (Valery 38-72). From this innovative employment of language, poetry thus conveys both a flow of sounds akin to music as well as an integrated pattern of imagery approximating the pictorial (*Anatomy* 78).

Nonetheless, by allowing the poet to obtain an affirmative musical quality capable of controlling the ear, the poetical creative force must respond to a disciplined mastery of its energies instead of following an original generative rhythm (*Yeats' Poetry* 68). To understand a poem, consequently, involves listening it drift from beginning to end, tracing its *mythos*—as the sense of movement caught by the ear—and discerning its sonorous irregularities from real music, before assembling it as a whole in a way the mind can decipher it (*Anatomy* 77; Valery 85). In this manner, musical poetry does not stem from a sequence of harmonious vowels and consonants but from a sharpness of accents, obscure language, and poly-syllabic words—or *recurring* rhythm—in the sense that a poem's predominating stress accent resembles its contemporary music (*Anatomy* 255-63).

Moreover, Frye states that *unmusical* poets represent a pictorial artistic sense, more interested of the language's *opsis* accordingly, using meditative rhythms to minutely build up a static picture (*Anatomy* 258). Musical poetical language, on the other hand, constitutes a mixture of mutually incoherent sensual and physical stimulation, the images behind each word's different meanings liberating a set of verbal faculties capable of reproducing the harmony of a living person (Valery 144-52). Taking this into account, we believe that a

poem's *aural diction* in terms of its musical quality has a direct correspondence to both the poem's historical background and the poet's involvement with history. Accordingly, it is not only a certain sense of *linguistic quality*—the patterns of assonance made by vowels and consonants—distinguishing poets from one another but an understanding of how their verbal personality shines through their writings (*Anatomy* 262-8). As a poet's personal *style* and *voice*, in terms of his preferences for certain vowels or images, equals to the development of a personal rhythm, his sense of identity will depend on how his individual talent is capable of translating pre-verbal stimuli into musical poetry based on the melodies that appeal him (*Anatomy* 268; *Yeats' Poetry* 68). Thus, a poet unconsciously develops a skilful habit of thinking around his style to create from a rough sketch of verbal design—*doodle*—the final display of every rhyme, assonance, and alliteration originated from sound associations—*babble* (*Anatomy* 271-8). Lastly, having considered these concepts, we conclude that *aural diction* represents the juncture between a poet's *style*, his relationship with his historical backdrop, and his ability to stimulate the ear through poetical language.

According to Bowra, the essence of Symbolism lies on believing in a world of ideal beauty realised through art by promoting a mystical sense of poetry which emphasises both the poet's self and the musicality of art (6-12). Having transcended its country of origin, the Symbolist ideas of conveying supernatural experiences beyond the realm of sense reached the figure of William Blake who believed true artistry as the one capable of creating something within the invisible dimension of existence (Bowra 5; Picón 60). In this sense, by enjoying a constant intercourse with the world of spirits, Blake embodied the Symbolist merger of poet and mystic portraying a dreamer of dreams who gave bodily form to spiritual beings (Picón 24; Simpson 173). Accordingly, Blake's *Illuminated Books* illustrate Mallarmé's poetical theory around the creation of a certain atmosphere in the form of audible harmonies (Bowra 9-11) with poetry and art being a visionary language of truth (Ellis & Yeats xix) via a joint appreciation of spirituality and recitation.

However, despite having acquired with time a reputation of literary outcast, misunderstood by his peers as an impenetrable poet whose readers must decode within a saturation of language and image (Simpson 178-9; Eaves 5-15), Blake's aesthetic ideals affected W. B. Yeats' own identification with Symbolism. Thus, fascinated alike by magic

and occultism, Yeats sought to disclose the organic symbolic system hidden within the complexity of Blake's writings (Picón 42). In this manner, inspired by Blake's role of outsider as the creator of his own private symbolism (Simpson 173), Yeats attempted to systematise and explain to his public his own spiritualistic experiences in *A Vision* (1925). Believing poetry to be a form of communication with the spiritual world, Yeats abided to Blake's notions of imagination as the only faculty capable of overcoming outer reality (Bowra 185-7; Picón 44) providing his readers with a guide into how he saw and classified the world. Ultimately, by being both background information and a source of imagery for himself, *A Vision* illuminated Yeats' path into the limitless symbolic opportunities of the universe in need of labelling (Ellis & Yeats xlv).

Along these lines, in order to act as more than an extension of literature, criticism would become a systematisation of symbolism decades after Yeats' endeavour (*Anatomy* 71). However, although according to Northrop Frye's *Theory of Symbols*, when treated as a distinct element of critical analysis any word, phrase, or image used to express a special meaning can be a *symbol* (*Anatomy* 70), such widespread regard can easily open itself up to confusion. Thus, although Yeats believed words to inevitably call for different associations, he limits the use of symbols to the expression of emotions only represented by sounds, colours, and forms (Bowra 185). The critical study of literature, thereby, should equal to the bestowing of critical attention to units presenting the potential of being isolated within a specific literary scope—in this particular case, the aural realisation of soundscapes in Yeats' poetry. In this manner and as previously mentioned, in order to develop the inward meaning of a poem's verbal pattern, we need to place it therein a sequence of contexts or relationships according to its mythos and meaning (*Anatomy* 73). To systematise the symbols found in a poem and, subsequently, to understand in what manner the poem's aural diction has been articulated requires identifying its pertaining *phase*. For the purposes of this dissertation, we have considered Frye's classification in order to discuss the evolution of W. B. Yeats' figurative musical landscape from his early Romantic—his *archetypal* phase—to his later Modernist work—his *anagogic* phase (*Anatomy* 99-119).

Archetypal phase Although some critics distinguish the presence of poetry from ordinary language depending on how poets employ certain images out of *pure convention*

or whether they have made a deliberate attempt at novelty or unfamiliarity (*Anatomy* 103), it should also be considered the presence of subconscious allusions brought forth by tradition. In this same light, the literature of every country is derived from foreign models that, combined with the presence of a personal element, conceive a sense of literary nationality (*Yeats' Poetry* 283). Poetry on its *archetypal phase*, therefore, ceases to be an aggregate of artefacts imitating nature (*Anatomy* 99) but the conscious or unconscious product of human artifice in action. Consequently, by having conventional images backgrounded in favour of both intentional and accidental originality, emphasis must be placed on how the poet's selected words mirror his individual experience (Brooks 12)

However, originality must address in direct consonance with the purposed use of common images, the evolution of personality being naturally linked to the development of a self-conscious importance of native models (*Yeats' Poetry* 283). Accordingly, we understand an *archetype* as a symbol capable of connecting poems in order to develop an integrated literary experience (*Anatomy* 99) always bearing in mind a certain distance from mere stereotypes, themes, and motifs. To this end, archetypes behave like associative clusters representing specific learned correlations communicated due to the familiarity a large number of people in a culture have with them (*Anatomy* 102) mimicking, up to a point, Yeats' Irish Literary Revival. Respectively, as Yeats discusses the relevance of Irish mythology and legends in comparison to other European countries (*Yeats' Poetry* 306), he illustrates the same type of self-awareness for the message's immortality behind those mythological figures over their originating language (*Yeats' Poetry* 262) that have defined poetry at its archetypal level as the artefact of human civilisation.

Hence, even though they can also be radicalised versions of metaphors obsessing a complete section of human discourse, by having certain human experiences constituting an immediate source of symbolism inevitably makes archetypes fundamental within specific symbolic paradigms (Ricoeur 78-80) Thus, as was the case with Irish myths and lore for Yeats and most of his contemporaries, the symbolist poet refuses to resign the subtlety behind the origin of his symbols for his total vision of reality (Brooks 59). Along these lines, I.A. Richards—as seen in Brooks—classifies poetry according to how it either excludes the discordant qualities of an experience or manages to imaginatively resolve these discords for the sake of unity (41). In this sense, as it is the moral attitude of the

Romantic poet to depict a sense of ambiguity between himself and the outer world, a poem from the second category reflects the heterogeneous disparity of archetypes as they can simultaneously account for the repetition of certain common images and the work of art as its own singular object ('Estructura Inflexible' 283; *Anatomy* 99-113).

Finally, poetry on this phase imitates the cyclical process of nature through a desire of shaping a total human form from civilisation, recurrence and rhythm mimicking the seasonal changes of the natural world (*Anatomy* 105-11). For this reason, archetypes usually stand for natural objects given human meaning, civilised products born from a human vision (*Anatomy* 113). Bearing in mind these notions, the concept of *archetype* will be considered for analysis when confronting the central imagery derived from the natural world of each poem, either still in its primitive form or having been embraced by a civilised perspective, representing in both cases a subliminal association between tradition and originality.

Anagogic phase If archetypes are said to represent a given community, the next level should present literature through a set of universal symbols of an unlimited communicable power common to all men (*Anatomy* 118-9). Upon entering this new *anagogic phase*, by not being bound to the sense of latitude between ideas and discursive writing anymore, human thought evolves towards *dianoia* where typical thoughts are conveyed through images, metaphors, diagrams, and verbal ambiguities (*Anatomy* 83). Nature, in this manner, is no longer a repository for archetypal symbols but an element contained alongside the desirable forms man has constructed inside of it (*Anatomy* 119). Along these lines and, as previously discussed, to be involved with the surrounding world in this point entails an immediate sensation of belonging (Valery 94), proper thoughts and feelings becoming productions of absent figures by saying as little while simultaneously meaning as much as possible (*Anatomy* 40).

Accordingly, notwithstanding its possible source for inspiration, the Modern ironic poet values every instance in which a figure has been generated, the act of recognition and understanding involving a universal range of possible functions (Brooks 15). Just as the ear separates between the rumble of noise and those particularly relevant sounds that signify an instantaneous reunion with meaning (Valery 85-8), poetry proceeds under the conception

that *all* poetic images are enclosed within a single universal body (*Anatomy* 125). Yet, unlike archetypal images intentionally stemming from tradition and being articulated via human action, it is not the duty of the poet but of the critic to narrow down the centre of the literary universe at play into a poem being read at a specific moment. If the poetical anagogic language is said to represent an infinite and boundless universe of hypotheses, then anagogic criticism takes a single poem as a microcosm encompassing all possible symbols, ultimately becoming the individual manifestation of the total order of words in literature (*Anatomy* 120-1).

However, despite considering the biographical evidence behind Yeats' methodical construction and elaboration (*The Autobiography of William Butler Yeats*) in which he consciously tested different voices before deciding which one produced a greater sense of resonance ('Construcción' 82), the analysis of his poetry should not be about seeking the text's meaning but letting it speak for itself. Respectively, by considering the conception of literature as its own self-containing universe with its own system of verbal relationships, this widespread approach allows anything to be a subject fit for a poem, the literary universe holding no boundaries separating its elements, everything being potentially identical with everything else (*Anatomy* 121-4). Just as the critic narrows down his scope analysing one poem at a time, the poet must make his way before translating these sounds into musicalised language through a shifting order of possible relations of which he can only perceive fugitive effects (Valery 37). Conscious and unconscious action, ultimately, become necessary for as much as a registered catalogue of decisions is unwanted, knowing beforehand a certain amount of mastery has been implemented upon the words selected is a given fact. Therefore, despite having initially discussed the concept of symbols as elements isolated for critical analysis, the limitless universality of anagogy requires us to consider on equal ground the relationship between two symbols (*Anatomy* 123). Hence, we consider the representative model for the anagogic phase—and, respectively, for the Modern ironic poet—to be the *metaphor*.

According to traditional rhetoric, a metaphor classifies the variations of sense in the substitution a literal world for a figurative one (Ricoeur 60-1). By acting on a literal level as simple juxtapositions while describing the double perspective of verbal structures, metaphors depict the abridged version of a transference of meaning (Ricoeur 59-60;

Anatomy 123). Consequently, poetical language depends on the use of metaphors as calculated errors of ordinary language for the tension represented creates not only an authentic relationship of singular meaning (Ricoeur 63-4) but an instance of semantic innovation therein a totality of endless possibilities (*Anatomy* 124). Considering, then, how anything can be taken as the subject of a poem, to possess limitless options of poetical creation means that there are no metaphors which a reader can contest. Therefore, due to its endless supply of meaningful choices and in the same way poetry strives for authentic creativity, a metaphor will always state something new and genuine about reality (Ricoeur 66). Thus, bearing in mind this discussion, the concept of *metaphor* will be considered for analysis when confronting the central imagery derived from the junction of two meanings—or two figures, actions, or locations—illustrating the union between semantic possibilities and human experience, unlike the concept of archetype which can only be originated from the natural world.

Perspectives on literary theory According to reader-oriented theories, a poem has no real existence until its meaning has been discussed by a reader (Brooker 46). In this sense, even though the text itself contains a meaning placed by the author, it demands the reader to actively participate on its processing not as a self-formulated object but as a textual material capable of producing meaning through a secondary agent (Spikes 127; Brooker 47). For this reason, literal or normative meanings have been overridden by wilful interpreters, the author's personal message merged with the reader's comprehension of it into a unified interpretation (Fish 1; Spikes 127). Considering consciousness to be an actual entity, interpreting a text phenomenologically speaking requires the reader to access the author's consciousness by turning the truths it provides into something meaningful only once he has reached a conclusion of his own (Brooker 49; Spikes 129).

Understanding literature, under this guise, stems from an assumption that texts cannot speak for their own, the reader being forced to overcome an asymmetrical relationship about the intentions of an author he will never know (Ricoeur 87). What the reader experiences, therefore, will never be what the author has already encountered for it is not about the reading but the material presenting itself as a motionless version of the author's fresh experience (*Yeats' Poetry* 126). Hence, the act of interpretation represents

the application of the written expressions of life to what has been said as well as whatever sense can be extracted from it having the experience of reading on equal ground with the reader's existing consciousness (Ricoeur 85; Brooker 54). Furthermore, as the reader's sense of historical and personal awareness both subjects and is subjected to his nature of experience, the only form of constraint to the act of interpretation are the understood practices and assumptions of the reader's present perspective (Brooker 50; Fish 2). To reader-oriented theories, in the end, considering how each age demands something different from literature ('Modern Mind' 141), the interpretation of a text is a social phenomenon, proper of a specific interpretive community (Spikes 138).

Along these lines, by working alongside a dynamic recreation of anticipations and questioning where the reader is in charge of establishing the levels of interpretation behind a text (Iser 293), Fish begins to approximate the notion that there are no different reading strategies separating literary from non-literary sentences (55). Accordingly, although what one can grasp from a text is only a series of changing viewpoints, by reflecting a subjective individuality, interpretations cannot be duplicated, anyone in full possession of semantic knowledge as a competent speaker being predisposed to construct the meaning of any text (Brooker 53-9; Spikes 130). And, just as sentences cannot be found in isolation, all informed readers are also part of a larger interpretive community where certain specific ways of seeing the world are represented to elicit the creation of meaning (Spikes 132) in the same way archetypes are said to encompass a self-awareness for the sake of native models. To be an active participant of meaning, in this manner, one only has to possess an internalised linguistic knowledge in order to apply their interpretive community's principles as they illustrate their particular paradigms (Brooker 55; Spikes 146-7). Thus, for example, in the beginning only educated Irish writers well versed in mythological and fairy lore would have been able to understand Yeats' early poetry without resorting to foreign sources for explanation.

Nevertheless, despite other authors claiming that, eventually, words do have fundamental senses of a more absolute nature and not completely open to interpretation, it is impossible to distinguish between the reader's contribution to the text and the original piece of work (Spikes 135; Fish 131). As a consequence, Fish's greater criticism is his reduction of the process of meaning by ignoring the gap between actual experience and its

understanding (Brooker 56). Thus, although it might have been possible to attest for a certain narrow niche of Yeats' readers due to his more obscure references, the distance—as seen through his popularity today and the focus of this dissertation—was not completely insurmountable in the end. As the assertion of a single predominant interpretive community excludes the possibility of deviating from the norm (Brooker 56), Fish ultimately fails to consider the notion that if criticism mirrors what time demands, every interpretive community will always be invariably subjected to the changes brought by the course of time—for instance, the popularisation in time of Irish lore elicited, to some degree, by Yeats himself through his *Mythologies* (1959).

Although it also encourages readers' participation through close-readings, the current of New Criticism provides a more scientific approach than reader-oriented theories in the sense that New Critics believe on literary texts as autonomous verbal artefacts whose meanings are completely embedded in their words (Spikes 127). Therefore, the reader is no longer an active co-participant in the process of understanding but an impersonal medium of experience where the sole object of real interest is the text (Brooker 16). Considering how words in poetry are normally ambiguous and ambiguity multiplies itself through context, New Criticism approaches literature analytically (Tindall 26). In this sense and as previously discussed, New Criticism consists of the systematisation of symbols as isolated verbal components which constitute the analysable structure of texts (*Anatomy* 47). Criticism should be, accordingly, the study of the poetic pattern of meaning as both a self-contained lexical texture and an ambiguous structure of interlocking motifs (*Anatomy* 82).

As a result, New Critics emphasise an impersonal and scientific objectivity, emulating the precision and scrupulousness of science, where contextual information such as historical, biographical, or intellectual contexts is not necessary to the reader (Brooker 17-9). The experience of art, in consequence, differs from other forms of experience based only on its higher sense of organisation being the ultimate object of criticism to consider the order of nature imitated by literature through a certain sequence of words (Tindall 15; *Anatomy* 96). Hence, New Criticism traces the inward associations between the parts of a text as they achieve a sense of poetical harmony contained within a perpetual feeling of ambiguity by, all along, being objective and detached to achieve an unbiased analysis (Brooker 19; Tindall 15). However, to remain objective when dealing with constant

ambiguousness is not entirely possible if one takes into account the limitless possibilities offered by metaphorical language. Just as the case with archetypes pertaining to an articulation of a certain interpretive community, the impersonality envisioned by New Critics cannot be accounted for without finding a way to circumscribe the endless alternatives of meaning. Thus, in the case of Yeats' poetry, in order to emulate the higher sense of order required, it is necessary to sacrifice up to a point the level of involvement of contextual information. For, just as the passing of time can transform today's interpretive community of Yeats' poetry by bridging the gap between his more obscure references and possible meanings, the systematisation of Yeats' own ideas and visions has also helped to limit the level of ambiguity founds in his work.

In the end, we believe that the joint employment of these literary theories is a matter of finding a link between shaping a theory of literature based on the most moving poetry and basing the selection of poetry on a specific theory seeking confirmation ('Modern Mind' 141). As it has been argued, although reader-oriented theories claim any reader with basic linguistic knowledge is competent enough to interpret a poem and New Criticism demands a detached and scientific examination of poetry without considering any form of contextual information, this cannot always be completely achievable. In this sense, although New Critics take poetry for a structure defined by its fixed emotions, its interrelated meanings and sense of completeness can also provide a precise emotive report on customs and experiences (Brooker 21) in the same way reader-oriented theories advocate for an active form of reader's participation at the moment of constructing meaning. Literature, respectively, is not mere communication but the verbal organisation of the author's feelings using tone, emotion, and intention (Tindall 21-5). Consequently, we believe that reader-oriented theories and New Criticism share a common ground from the assumption that poems, ultimately, require someone else to help them speak. Thus, for the purposes of this dissertation, we believe it is necessary to consider not only the role tradition and emotionality play in the formation of each reader but also how the systematisation of symbolism and imagery can aid to a better understanding of the realisation of the musical landscape in Yeats' poetry.

Chapter One: The musical archetypes of Yeats' early poetical period

Most critics who have discussed William Butler Yeats' early mythological poetry have focused on the poet's idealised pre-Christian representation of Ireland as a means of promoting his nationalistic identity (Ameer; Foster; Fraser; Krans; Welch; Zhao & Liu). An example of such endeavour is "To Ireland in the Coming Times" seen as a manifesto poem and a political statement (Larrisy xviii) with Yeats writing "Know, that I would accounted be | True brother of a company | That sang, to sweeten Ireland's wrong" (1-3), comparing himself with other earlier nineteenth-century poets (18) and placing himself into posteriority for his own contributions. Therefore, eager to discover his badge of identity yet conflicted by his Anglo-Irish and Protestant roots, Yeats' Irish Literary Revival sought to create a new national poetry—patriotic, occultist, and Celtic—by moving towards a sensibility of love of country and magic (Karim 54-5). Accordingly, Yeats' cultural construction of a mythical landscape not only embodies the culture of his own kind but also works as an ideological concept *presenting* more than *representing* the poet's belief system through evocation (Zhao & Liu 93-4).

In that sense, Yeats' cultural articulation represents a way in which certain people have signified themselves and their worldviews through their imagined relationship with nature (Cosgrove 15) with signification being the longing for a sense of an essence as a temporal reiteration of a memory (Cosgrove 15; Cuadra 88-9). Thus, by borrowing from national melodies and Celtic realistic naturalism, Yeats' early poetry illustrates within his own time the ancestral communion of man with his origins. Consequently, artistic expression for Yeats not only symbolises literal national intent but being aware of a convergence between historical and personal time as both the realisation of the present and a remission of previous images (Cuadra 88). Hence, although the action in Yeats' earlier poems occurs in a far-removed time from his present age, their meaning takes place in a landscape within reach.

Accordingly, beginning in 1889 and ending in 1902, Yeats' first period portrays not only the poet's eagerness to interest his peers with the cardinal virtues of Celtic romance (Krans 53-4) but also a mythological landscape articulated therein a late Romantic world by centralising habits and ideals in need of contemporary relevance. Along these lines, these poems convey with an external, descriptive manner a collection of images of wandering

and longing therein a dreamy environment (Bowra 183; Fraser 13). Yet, despite his artistic ambitions towards a communal corpus of belief, his earlier symbols are nonetheless occult in nature—a trait which often prompted bafflement from contemporary critics (Karin 54; Tindall 269). Having been influenced by a general occult revival during the 1880s, Yeats required as an Anglo-Irish Protestant a system of symbolism to bridge the gap between himself and Catholic Ireland. As a consequence, by taking an element of legends in order to express his personal state of mind he overcame their air of remoteness and otherness by transforming the impersonality of classical magical symbols in order to.

Even though he is not usually included alongside other exemplary figures, chronologically speaking, William Butler Yeats can be regarded as a Romantic poet. In that sense, he is an heir to the Romantic appreciation for ancient customs and the mysticism of the natural world placed within a dream-like atmosphere typical of Keats and the pre-Raphaelites (Barnes 2; Welch 1). For this reason, we believe that therein a body of five poems the predominant archetypes¹ present in Yeats' early period are *the act of travelling*, *other-worldly islands*, *unbalanced dialogues*, and *fairies*.

According to some critics, as realisations such as Oisín and Fergus go through great lengths in order to achieve their dreams without gratification, Yeats' Irish characters struggle with their sense of place, longing for a spiritual form of satisfaction that ultimately fails (Shin 68; Welch 3). To this end, Yeats structures his early poetry around a journey or quest into a country of everlasting youth derived from classical Celtic imagination—an archetype seen for the first time in *The Wanderings of Oisín and Other Poems*'s titular poem. In a nutshell, "The Wanderings of Oisín" tells the story of the legendary warrior Oisín as he recounts his adventures to St Patrick after leaving his own time and place alongside the fairy princess, Niam. He then first spends a hundred years in the company of her kindred, the Fenians, singing and dancing in the Island of Dancing before leaving to the Island of Victories for another century fighting a regenerating mythical monster until finally reaching his journey's end in the Island of Forgetfulness. After three hundred years away from his original home and moved by nostalgia, Oisín revisits his homeland under the

¹ From this point forward, *archetypes* will be considered as previously defined as "the central imagery derived from the natural world" on page 12

condition of never properly setting foot on land; yet, upon his return, he accidentally touches the ground condemning himself to be stranded forever. At the very end, although St Patrick commands the poet to pray for the salvation of his soul from his heathen past, the poem concludes with Oisín portending a future reunion with Niam and the friends lost in death.

The poem encompasses the act of travelling within different interconnected levels of musical landscapes by following their sequential unravelling as Oisín journeys across various representations of fairyland. Respectively, we have in first place the poem on its own as a concrete lyrical production mimicking the traditional Irish delivery of tales with Yeats as a bard (Welch 1). Secondly, the songs being told and passed on in parallel to the narrative, either from poets who have sung about Oisín’s legend before his return (I. 1-4), Oisín himself taking on the role of poet of his own story (I. 11-2), and characters engaging on singing a communal tune in order to prove their nexus with the land (I. 201-3).

Nevertheless, we believe that the central focus of emergence for the audible landscape does not depend on the poem’s characters nor its lyric speaker’s retelling—as an example of *anthrophony*—but on the natural elements’ property of producing their own sound—as an instance of *biophony*. As Oisín explains when arriving to the first island, “To that low laughing woodland rhyme (..) | Round every branch the song-bird flew, | Or clung thereon like swarming bees (I. 175-81)” the natural landscape that surrounds him, due to its supernatural quality, is also capable of being the creator of its own melody. Consequently, by traversing from pre-Christian Ireland to three isles before returning to modern Ireland—each one depicting a separate soundscape level—Oisín becomes a secondary participant in the articulation of the poem’s soundscape. In this sense, beyond finding transcendence from re-traversing the boundaries of two worlds and meeting old age (Tangney 2), he depicts a wandering figure that defines himself in the setting of motion.

Along these lines, the poem “Fergus and the Druid” presents a conversation between Fergus and a nameless druid priest able to turn himself into different creatures and elements². Unlike Oisín who leaves his native land intrigued by the call of adventure, Fergus seeks out the druid’s magical assistance in order to reach a state of renunciation

² The subject of liquid identity first introduced in this poem will be further on discussed in Chapter 2 (p. 36)

from earthly desires having unsuccessfully searched for a sense of existential fulfilment after forfeiting his royal title. Despite his initial warnings concerning the consequences of such decision, the druid eventually allows Fergus to experience the world through his magic of dreaming. The poem concludes with Fergus regretfully admitting “But now I have grown nothing, knowing all” (39) for an existence without a fixed identity, although initially capable of procuring a sense of belonging with the world, only brings sorrows and further dissatisfaction.

Alike “Oisín”, Yeats employs legends to build up the poem’s identity, contrasting warrior culture with the religious undertones of druidical magic. However, differing from the first poem, Fergus’ journey does not consist of various natural locations; instead, the Irish landscape is mainly comprised of the incorporation of mythological Irish characters over places. In this sense, the act of traveling in “Fergus and the Druid” does not represent a physical journey but, as the main character narrates “I see my life go drifting like a river | From change to change; I have been many things” (31-2), a sensual experience stemming from a lack of control over the symbolic reality of the druid’s magic. Thus, as the story unfolds due to the active character participation narrating Fergus’ travels, four distinct levels of landscapes emerge. In first place, the actual point of encounter between Fergus and the druid where the poem begins (1-8; 15-6; 21-31; 40-1); secondly, Fergus’ former court, Emain Macha³ (9-14); thirdly, Fergus’ different natural locations of rest: a hill, the woods, and the seashore (16-20); and, finally, Fergus’ ethereal state of dreaming where he is capable of adopting multiple forms and inhabit several places simultaneously (32-9). Respectively, by presenting the main points of the story through the characters, the poet guarantees every symbol and image to be the direct result of spoken speech.

To this end, by establishing a causal sequence of events having embraced a narrative form, the act of travelling allows these poems to orderly present each landscape’s distinctive musical mobilities in the same manner in which the main characters encounter them. Accordingly, upon first meeting the Fenians, Oisín discovers the elemental and overpowering physical quality of music seemingly emerging from the fire inciting the landscape itself to feel it too (I. 165-8). However, as the action presupposes a constant

³ Only identifiable by the folkloric connotations behind the character’s name alike the case with Thoor Ballylee, the titular tower in Yeats’ poem “The Tower” discussed in the second chapter.

change of setting and inhabitants, following his arrival to fairyland, Oisín becomes strange and supernatural. As the harp he has been playing with is taken away to be cast aside from the remaining musical instruments (I. 231-6), objects not only prove to have their own sonorous qualities—going one step further from the original conception of soundscapes as the result of natural sound production—but music regarding human themes taints their supernatural resounding properties into uselessness. Moreover, Oisín’s journey is set back into motion by another apparently lifeless object when encountering “a staff of wood | From some dead warrior’s broken lance | The stains of war (...) on it” (I. 365-9) carrying the echoes of previous battles on its surface.

Considering the soundscape in “Fergus” to have been primarily realised through an anthroponic quality, each musical element found within every landscape-level depicts a filtered representation of the poem’s overall aural mobility. In this manner, as the poem begins with Fergus directly addressing the druid’s shape-shifting abilities, three different living forms capable of producing sounds are accounted for by direct recollection:

First as a raven [then]
 A weasel moving on from stone to stone,
 And now at last you wear a human shape,
 A thin grey man half lost in gathering night (2-7)

—all being representations of physical powerlessness. As Fergus continues to recount the pressureless activities of his new life, although the satisfying musicality derived from each one—*feasting* with his people on a hill (17) like Oisín *danced, pacing* in the woods (18) like Oisín *slept*, and *driving his chariot* by the murmuring sea (18-9) like Oisín *fought*—freely flows through on the poem’s syntax, allowing the reader to journey alongside Fergus’ narration, he cannot leave behind the weight of his former role. Consequently, having been instructed by the druid into opening his “little bag of dreams” (30) to unveil his magic, the remaining musical mobilities of the poem become a fragmented assemblage of multiple forms and creatures: a drop, meaningless to all accounts, falling into the sea (33); a gleam in a sword, unsubstantial to a warrior’s life (33-4); a fir-tree standing on a hill representing truthfulness (34); a slave working without a choice (35); and a king sitting on a throne (36). Respectively, the soundscape at this level of dream-reality is articulated through a plethora of different actors reverberating across their actions, simultaneously

occurring inside Fergus' mind and through his speech alike the New Critical organic understanding of poetry.

Accordingly, the act of travelling in Yeats' early poetry—either physical or metaphysical—symbolises a stream of dynamic musical mobilities therein changing landscapes, portraying a natural quest, not as a victory of man divided against himself (Fraser 38) but as the Romantic archetype for yearning and misplacement. Subsequently, a more concrete manner of encapsulating the folk-centred aspects of his country in contrast to Ireland's current events is to determine the destination of his poems' journeys as a separate land altogether. To this end and responding to the new emerging modernities of his time, Yeats articulates a Thoreau-like desire for solitary life within a catalogue of mythical and utopian islands representing seclusion, wisdom, and, most importantly, freedom from societal restrictions and expectations (Jeffares 34; Pettijohn 80-3). Therefore, we believe the second archetype in Yeats' early poems are his other-worldly isles.

As Yeats recorded on his preface to *The Collected Poems*, he had begun around 1893 to simplify his syntax, writing for the first-time poems following the rhythm of his own personal music (Jeffares 33). In this sense, compared to the previously discussed poems, "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" illustrates a simplified version of Yeats' symbolic representation in terms of structure. Furthermore, although some critics characterise Yeats' early period under the guise of impersonality as an instrument for Romantic success (Tindall 77), the poem's declarative and apostrophic style depicts Yeats' version of the utopian landscape as a direct expression of the self. Accordingly, the lyric speaker declares "I will arise now, and go to Innisfree, | And a small cabin built there, of clay and wattles made" (1-2), the enunciation of his speech constituting a conscious desire to shape the isle of Innisfree into a personal refuge from civilisation. To this end, the poem establishes several levels of landscape to contrast his present situation—"While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey" (11)—with the future landscape he envisions based on the little islet he used to walk pass during his childhood (Jeffares 33).

Moreover, alike "Fergus and the Druid" being an example of a metaphysical journey instead of a physical one, the actual island of Innisfree is only articulated within the lyric speaker's mind. Thus, even though it is also represented through a series of physical

musical mobilities—“Nine bean-rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee, | And live alone in the bee-loud glade” (3-4)—to grant the concept of peace a substantial quality—

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings;
There midnight’s all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet’s wings (5-8)

—remodels the island into an idealised version of itself. Accordingly, by basing the musical articulation of this otherworldly soundscape unto a fusion of silence and light games, the poem not only contrasts the deafening of urban sounds by the soft-spoken sounds of water—“I will arise and go now, for always night and day | I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore; | While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements grey” (9-11)—but also the predominance of bee-buzzing being no one else to talk to. In this manner, the poem establishes the figure of a hermit-like magician, self-removed from modern technology and urban industrial civilisation, within a mythical island where the visible world is capable of vanishing in favour of its music.

Along these lines, as arriving somewhere new entails leaving another place behind, the three main islands in “Oisín” are as much defined by their musicality as much as their differences with both pre- and post-Christian Ireland. Respectively, the Isle of Dancing, Victories, and Forgetfulness are not only more musical and physical than in “Innisfree” but their identities have been more firmly uprooted from reality. Nevertheless, even though both poems differ significantly in style—one declarative, the other dialogic—they are still equal representations of Yeats’ melancholy inclination for reviving an ideal version of pre-Christian Ireland by creating a convergence of past and present sensibilities within one unique location. Thus, in “Oisín” Yeats only articulates the first level of landscape—Oisín’s original Ireland—through a sequence of dialogues and gloom descriptions—“[We] came to the cairn-heaped grassy hill (...) | And found on the dove-grey edge of the sea | A pearl-pale, high-born lady” (l. 17-20)—before immediately breaking into fairy world. Such decision, hence, illustrates Yeats’ mystification of symbolic islands as the embodiment of transcending mortal nature over magical immortality.

However, and considering “Oisín” precedes “Innisfree” in terms of the poet’s maturity, each isle’s musical mobilities bear a more corporeal resonance. To this end, as

Oisín narrates “And in a wild and sudden dance | (...) We flung on high each waving hand, | And sang unto the starry broods (I. 290-326)” the Island of Dancing is primarily articulated through the Fenians’ supernatural dancing and singing; “(...) and for a hundred years | (...) an endless feast, | An endless war (...) (II. 221-3)”, the Island of Victories by the endless repercussion of clashing weapons resounding among the tower’s walls;

Then he swayed in his fingers the bell-branch, slow dropping a sound in
faint streams

Wrapt in the wave of that music, with weariness more than of earth,
The moil of my centuries filled me (...)

And a softness came (...) and filled me full to the bone (III. 67-72),

and, finally, the Island of Forgetfulness by the joint resonance between the natural world and a dream of oblivion. Yet, having Oisín embracing the main habits of each isle allows him to articulate the most essential features at the core of each landscape as well as consolidating a temporary sense of belonging. Furthermore, despite having characterised Oisín as someone incapable of finding complete gratification in the land of youth, Yeats concludes his poem with a transparent preference of fairyland over modern-day Ireland. Thus, as Oisín describes his bafflement at seeing

(...) upon all hands, of wattles and woodwork made,

Your bell-mounted churches, (...)

And a small and a feeble populace stooping with mattock and spade,

Or weeding or ploughing with faces a-shining (...) (III. 161-5),

having this new-old world being articulated through the sounds of menial labour and Catholic edifices resolves any form of disparity Yeats might have held regarding which landscape should be valued in poetry.

Accordingly, by constituting a mythological predilected version removed from his 1890s Ireland, Yeats designs an idealised destination for his escapism from reality. For this reason, Yeats adapts the cultural landscape represented by peasants, ennobling it with legendary nobles and warriors lacking historical contemporaneity, ultimately idealising not only his daily world but also his role as poet. In this sense, even though we can believe on Yeats’ Irish Revival as a renaissance and glorification of his culture past, we cannot deny either his earlier poems to be speeches in a long noble drama starring himself as the titular

bard. Nonetheless, despite his declaratory speech being more dramatic in a stage-like mimicry (Parris 14-5), at this early stage of his career Yeats constructs an imbalanced dialogic pattern between leading and secondary characters. Thus, for instance, from a total of 41 verses in “Fergus and the Druid”, only nine are said by the druid with three being the variation of a single refrain—“What would you, king of the proud Red Branch kings?” (8; 15; 21)—while on “Oisín” St Patrick speaks only 13 verses from a total of 889. For this reason, we believe the third archetype in Yeats’ early poems to be unbalanced dialogues.

Having, in this manner, a disproportionate exchange as a conversation ensures the articulation of each poem’s landscape to primarily depend on the main character’s perspective. As a consequence, despite the inclusion of specific examples of biophony and geophony on each poem, the soundscape in Yeats’ early poetry is mainly realised through an anthroponic quality. Consequently, in addition to Fergus describing the natural forms the druid is capable of adopting as well as himself when dreaming—as previously discussed—he is also responsible of referring to the third character in the story, his son Conchubar, through the filter of a retelling. Moreover, beyond establishing disproportionate conversations, Yeats’ unbalanced dialogic poems rely on the association of deafness with silence. To that end, as St Patrick provides mild encouragement to Oisín’s narration (I. 360) or recrimination that falls on deaf ears (I. 31) and the description of the druid’s personal sorrow and his warnings (25-7) is constantly ignored by Fergus, the poems’ soundscapes become articulated around a dichotomy of reverberation on one side and silent reception on the other. Nonetheless, although by definition a dialogic poem illustrates a dialogue between two characters, the presupposed imbalance in the conversation can extend the boundaries of such definition. In this sense, the poem “The Everlasting Voices” depicts a lyric speaker’s request for silence to a group of nameless voices around him. As he goes “O sweet everlasting Voices, be still; | Go to the guards of the heavenly fold | And bid them wander obeying your will (1-3),” even though the apostrophic beginning alike “The Lake Isle of Innisfree” assumes the presence of an interlocutor and an audience, the poem distinguishes itself from other dialogic poems by not presenting a traditional replying counterpart.

With the publication of *The Wind Among the Reeds* in 1899, Yeats’ style had become a detached version of his initial collective identity, the poems’ richness surpassing

the less systematic use of occult symbolism with most critics agreeing on this collection to represent Yeats' symbolist flourishment (Tindall 271; 'Yeats as' 183). Thus, having restricted the presence of his subjects, Yeats uses Irish mythology no longer as background information to tell the story—as seen in “Oisín” and “Fergus”—but as a subordinated theme to the poet's experience (Bowra 188). In this sense, having found a more direct source of inspiration on Blake's aesthetics of the imagination, the poems in this collection illustrate the poet's abandonment of his original simplicity over a more studied adaptation of the original symbolist French method (Bowra 184-93; Tindall 11). However, although a poem as “The Everlasting Voices” marks a moment of division in Yeats' career, consciously dividing the boundaries between dream and action, the inclusion of an otherworldly atmosphere and the implicit presence of a conversation still characterises a poem whose borrowed imagery functions as a continuation of Irish lore.

Accordingly, “The Everlasting Voices” breaks the mould by articulating its secondary discursive counterpart implicitly yet stills depicting the musical potential within certain natural mobilities. To this end, the voices' speech is described through the filter of the lyric speaker's request as he bids them to return to their place of origin and command their own will through the elemental force of fire (3-4)—a less direct version of Oisín's discovery of the musical quality of the Fenian's fire (I. 165-8). Furthermore, via this anthrophonic retelling, the lyric speaker demands “Have you not heard that our hearts are old, | That you call in birds, in wind on the hill, | In shaken boughs, in tide on the shore? (5-7)”, contrasting the mortal sounds of old age—alike Oisín's melodies of exile: the racking of bones, rasping of throat, and withered memories (III. 216-7)—with the overpowering presence of the voices therein the natural world. Respectively, by establishing the voices' calling behind the birds' song, the wind making the boughs shake, and the force pushing the tide forward, Yeats articulates the poem's unique level of soundscape around a naturally-derived musicality meant to imitate the supernatural force of these nameless creatures. Nevertheless, with the final repetition of the first verse in the form of a refrain, Yeats represents a declarative lyrical approach to the poem embraced by the fact that, according to Yeats himself, these voices are meant to represent the Sidhe (Jeffares 52). The poem, therefore, portrays two levels of ironic signification within a single landscape-level: in first place, a voice demands silence from an indirect source of sound and, secondly, a

poet requesting quietness from the traditional sources of poetical inspiration of his culture—ultimately becoming himself an inspiration through his own poetry.

Along these lines, Yeats articulates his mythological soundscapes around the necessity of spoken exchanges capable of bridging the gap between the boundaries of mortal reality and the inhabitants of the otherworldly islands. For this reason, being able to sing the right notes in “Oisín” opens a dialogue with the natural landscape that creates a boundless space between the land and the Fenian people. Being the embodiments of this mythical island, the sounds this race produces echo the properties of their own natural setting, music becoming a device to incite affiliation and camaraderie between himself and the Fenians (I. 225-30) in the same manner in which the sounds of lapping lake water blurs the boundaries between the lyric speaker’s current urban setting and his idealised utopian dream in “Innisfree”. In this manner, this form of interrupted conversations not only constructs a bridge between two characters but also sustains a distance from the poet’s contemporaries, building a gap between the traditional Irish culture of his preference and the modernising force of contemporary Ireland. Yeats’ archetypes, correspondingly, are meant to represent an explicit voice for the unconscious cultural symbolism of his own making—the act of travelling to otherworldly islands where a dialogue is sustained with supernatural creatures depicting the necessary opposition himself as poet and the receptive world around him. For this reason, we believe the final archetype in Yeats’ early poems to be that of fairies.

In that sense, Yeats’ early poetry deals with the presence of fairies as guides of those crossing to fairyland, personifying to an extent the main traits of the idealistic world of Irish mythology (Shin 63-9). Belonging to an ethereal world, the Sidhe are usually portrayed as holding a balance between pleasantness and displeasure as well as deceivers capable of completely enrapturing a man’s sense leading him to death (McLaughlin 137; Pokorná 71). Hence, the musicality in Yeats’ fairy poems is said to render a sense of antinomian identity as an inclusive vision based on a tension between opposite ends of the same spectre (Bornstein 382). Nevertheless, in most cases Yeats’ initial fairies are one-sided and benevolent, personifying the timeless and the perfect—as seen in “Oisín” with Niam’s introduction, “A pearl-pale, high-born lady (...) | And like a sunset were her lips, | A stormy sunset on doomed ships” (I. 20-3)—unlike the contemporary urban world of

“pavements grey” (11). To Yeats, therefore, fairies usually symbolise the keepers of the realm of natural imagination and fairyland a sojourning place for the soul.

Notwithstanding, the poem “The Stolen Child” describes the tale of a child being lured away by fairies back to a natural and apparently ideal world. As the lyric speaker explains “Where dips the rocky highland | Of Sleuth Wood in the lake, | There lies a leafy island” (1-3), the poem articulates a twofold musical landscape as a direct result of comparing the alluring fairy world with the unappealing mortal one, borrowing from real locations in Ireland—Sleuth Wood—as entrances to an invisible place beyond the world of reason. Yet, as “The Everlasting Voices” illustrates a dialogic dimension without an explicit secondary interlocutor, Yeats compares this otherworld of mystery, dance, and joy—“We foot it all the night, | Weaving olden dances, | Mingling hands and mingling glances (16-8)—with an unsatisfying reality only put forward through the fairies’ perspective. In this manner, by having a supernatural version of an anthroponic filter as seen in “Voices” and “Fergus”, the poem’s refrain (1-4; 24-7; 38-41)—

Come away, O human child!

To the waters and the wild

With a faery, hand in hand,

For the world’s more full of weeping than you can understand

—not only represents a means of exposition to the differences between both levels but also resembles a magic spell a faery might cast to dominate a human.

In comparison to previous poems dealing with a main character traversing into a mythical island, by establishing the protagonist of “The Stolen Child” as an infant guarantees a direct conflict in terms of agency. Unlike the case with Oisín and Fergus, the child is left speechless even without the possibility of articulating a voice of his own through natural musical mobilities—as seen in “Fergus”, “Innisfree”, and “Voices”—ultimately embodying the escape to fairy realm as both a physical and egotistical death. As the child, in the end, eventually acquiesces without a struggle—“Away with us he’s going | The solemn-eyed” (42-3)—the poem interrupts Yeats’ traditional vision of the Sidhe’s world as a perfect realm of no pain for a land without the rural comforts of traditional Ireland—“He’ll hear no more the lowing | Of the calves on the warm hillside | Or the kettle on the hob” (44-6).

Nevertheless, the twist on the final version of the refrain—“For he comes, the human child, | With a faery, hand in hand, | From a world more full of weeping than he can understand (50-4)” —manages to create a double sense of antinomic sense, presenting the comforting symbols of the mortal world in a balanced opposition with its counterpart as the Sidhe, despite having snatched a child through enchantments, promise a haven without weeping for his comfort. Conclusively, this poem represents the contrasting nature of not only Yeats’ evolving mythological symbolism but, due to its story of a journey into a supernatural island where an asymmetrical conversation is sustained by fairies, we also believe “The Stolen Child” best portrays the four main archetypes of William Butler Yeats’ early poetry.

Chapter Two: The musical metaphors of Yeats' middle-period poems

To Seamus Heaney, W. B. Yeats represented the ideal example of a poet approaching middle age as he established a domineering rather than grateful relation to place and country after having reached the age of fifty in 1915 ('The Place of' 424; 'Yeats as' 189). Thus, at the moment of entering into Yeats' middle period, his themes have begun to progress from his initial Romantic wandering into the search of wisdom, surpassing his early meandering rhythm in favour of a more colloquial yet direct phrasing (Stokes 23; Tindall 76; Bowra 197). Having become more concerned with Irish cultural and political advancements between the years 1903 and 1928 (Barnes 2), Yeats acquires a more popular style by attempting to blend his fascination with dreams and legends with ordinary life. In this sense, although upon first impression his poems appear to be more dependent for reference on external and concrete images (Tindall 167; Barnes 3), we believe W. B. Yeats' middle-period poetical landscapes stem from a harmonisation of imagination and reality.

Accordingly, Yeats writes *A Vision* (1925) in an attempt to merge science and poetry into a form of personal religion as well as to illuminate the symbolism derived from his spiritualistic seances to his public (Brooks 176; Bowra 205). To this end, considering sincere poetry—such as Blake's *Illuminated Books*—to be inevitably obscure due to its subtleties of meaning, he seeks to bridge the gap between his own work and popular literature (*Yeats' Poetry* 365). Within this symbolic taxonomy, for this reason, he introduces the notion of 'Unity of Being' as the integrative state of human nature in order to contrast the degradation of social values characteristic of Modernist society (Meihuizen 183; Sharmin 20). As the Modernist subject exists as a finite being within a fragmented landscape, Yeats portrays the nature of modern civilisation as a quest to salvage Ireland's organic communion with its own essence (*Comunidad* 26-57) by deriving his personal *metaphors*⁴ from the merger of abstract and concrete concepts. Consequently, we believe that therein a body of three poems the metaphors present in Yeats' middle period are *resurrection, the tower, the Sphinx, and the act of declaration*.

⁴ From this point forward, *metaphors* will be considered as previously defined "the junction of two meanings—or two figures, actions, or locations—illustrating the union between semantic possibilities and human experience" on page 14

As the community presents itself across its finite mortal truth, revealing its essence through its own death, the spirit of the world—or *Anima Mundi*—flows within a great pool where one sequence begets another in eternal regeneration (*Comunidad* 33-5; *Yeats' Poetry* 418-9). To this end, by depicting the cyclical rebirth of the self in which the soul's plastic power reshapes the body by an act of imagination (*Yeats' Poetry* 413-6), the act of *resurrection* in Yeats' middle period articulates a poetical landscape constantly turning. Along these lines, the poem "The Second Coming" (1921), as the title suggests, portrays the arrival of a new era having the old one reached its cycle's end in the form of an apocalyptic vision within an expanding gyre in motion (1). Considering the qualities of an era to be the manifestation of both historical and psychological sources (Meihuizen 189), by establishing the main level of landscape therein the lyric speaker's interior force creates a resounding soundscape only capable of uttering statements over the articulation of "real" mobilities. Accordingly, as he states "The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out | When a vast image out of *Spiritus Mundi* | Troubles my sight" (11-3), unlike in Yeats' early period, the lyric speaker establishes a single monologue in order to convey a personal approach therein his mental soundscape.

In this sense, Yeats' metaphors not only convey individual speech as the product of communion and singularity (*Comunidad* 129) but also his personal approach to growing old. Having reached the age of 63 at the time of their publication, both "Sailing to Byzantium" and "The Tower" (1928) evoke the anxiety of physical and intellectual ageing halting him from realising his dreams (Mahato 37). Thus, the lyric speaker states "That is no country for old men (...) | An aged man is but a paltry thing, | A tattered coat upon a stick" (1-10), the traditional view of Ireland as "land of the young" becomes disjointed from his own physical body. For this reason, in "Byzantium"⁵ the speaker must travel to a new land for refuge created in the likeness of a real location—"And therefore I have sailed the seas and come | To the holy city of Byzantium" (15-6)—that unlike former geographical reference loci directly connected to his childhood town—Cummen Strand, Knocknarea, Clooth-na-Bare—only constitutes an idealised state of mind. Yeats' mental

⁵ For editorial purposes only "Sailing to Byzantium" will be shortened into "Byzantium"; not to confuse with Yeats' 1933 poem "Byzantium"

soundscapes, consequently, represent a desire for his soul to transcend the assailing mortal boundaries of his physical body in the same manner in which resurrection blends the limits between age and spirit.

As art remains perfect whilst the body dies and decays, by ennobling craftsmen instead of legendary figures (17-20) due to their absorption in their subject-matter, Yeats creates an abstract landscape in which the soul can live through physical manifestations of art. Hence, the lyric speaker proclaims “Once out of nature I shall never take | My bodily form from any natural thing” (25-6), yearning to become a golden mechanical bird (27-8) that unlike those lost to an ephemeral sensual existence in Ireland—“birds in trees | — Those dying generations—at their song” (2-3)—will live forever producing wondrous music to other people’s ears (29-32). As a result, the typical forms of soundscape articulation—anthrophony, biophony, and geophony—become undesirable for music must emerge from abstract artefacts of both intellect and art. Nevertheless, his longing to immortalise his spirit within beauty illustrates an awareness of his creative poetical power as his poems must have a similar alluring quality to the bird’s artificial music. Accordingly, Yeats looks back on his literary accomplishments in “The Tower” (90-6) to revive his younger self, creating a literary mental landscape inhabited by collective memories and fictions.

Along these lines, as the lyric speaker narrates “And I myself created Hanrahan | And drove him drunk or sober through the dawn | (...) I thought it all out twenty years ago” (57-64), by resurrecting both past self and a character of his own creation⁶, the inside becomes the outside as memories reshape his external world. Furthermore, the symbolic revival of fictional characters, past influences (49-50), and Classical references (51-3) helps to nourish his soul, compensating his elderly body—“Old lecher with a love on every wind, | Bring up out of that deep considering mind | All that you have discovered in the grave” (105-7)—with his refuelled imagination and accumulated wisdom. Thus, considering the soul’s ability to acquire different forms of liquid identities⁷, his memories correspond to his mind inhabiting somebody else’s body and essence by articulating and charting a “labyrinth

⁶ Originally published in *Stories of Red Hanrahan* (1897) and later on revisited in *Red Hanrahan’s Song About Ireland* (1904).

⁷ As first introduced when discussing the poem “Fergus and the Druid” (p. 22).

of another's being" (112). In this manner, within a unique, all-encompassing mental soundscape, the poetical soul is capable of freeing itself from his body in order to create illusions moulded, as the poem asserts, alike "a superhuman | Mirror-resembling dream" (164-5).

Nonetheless, although the soul is granted total freedom to occupy different physical realisations of the outer world, the articulation of every inner soundscape is only possible through visions capable of blurring the lines between each external and internal element. To this end, as the lyric speaker announces "a vast image (...) | Troubles my sight (12-3)", the Second Coming is materialised through spiritual revelations within which concrete forms of natural landscapes—"(...) in sands of the desert | (...) while all about it | Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds" (13-7)—are placed in contrast with his chaotic reality. Respectively, although barren of natural life, the visionary lyric speaker reverses the limits between reality and imagination by displaying the *seen* landscape through tangible musical mobilities whilst his *material* reality—"The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere | The ceremony of innocence is drowned" (5-6)—is only inhabited by turbulent abstractions⁸.

Moreover, by providing a physical articulation of the abstract, the lyric speaker rejects not only his surrounding elemental imagery but also his own tangible form. In "Byzantium", accordingly, he resents the natural world's unawareness of the passing of time—"Whatever is begotten, born, and dies" (6)—as well as its ignorance of artistic beauty—"Caught in that sensual music all neglect | Monuments of unageing intellect" (7-8). However, being a literal inner representation of his mortal flesh, he mainly condemns his own heart to be consumed—"sick with desire | And fastened to a dying animal | It knows not what it is" (21-3)—for its ignorance and wild passion hinders his connection to the artificial world of his mind. Its lack of restriction and excess of humanity, as a result, paints an oxymoronic portrait of his present age prompting him to directly question his heart (2) in "The Tower". In this sense, even though the lyric speaker cannot attune his physical shape—"this caricature, | Decrepit age that has been tied to me" (2-3)—to his still

⁸ Along these lines, "The Second Coming" becomes an ekphrastic poem in which a vivid, visible, and visual representation of an absent entity—in this case, the Antichrist—inhabits a visionary landscape, not as the evocation of a memory, but as the announcement of a creature without a reference point.

youthful mind and spirit—“Never had I more | Excited, passionate, fanatical | Imagination” (4-6)—he ultimately agrees that—like a fading horizon or a bird’s cry (193-4)—the only death that counts is the end of natural beauty. Having populated these inner mental landscapes, consequently, with resurrected memories and past fictions articulates a blended space in which mind and artistic value surpasses the body’s inevitable decay. Nonetheless, Yeats cannot completely detach himself from the consequences of ageing as he erects legendary monuments only to revisit them as ruins.

Under these circumstances, although some critics have considered it a symbol of his Anglo-Irish caste and loyalties (‘The Place of’ 429), the figure of the *tower* in W. B. Yeats’ middle-period poetry—unlike its representation in “Oisín”⁹ as only an echoing chamber—also illustrates a magnificent yet derelict monument to define the world from within. Hence, by no longer being limited to a detached contemplation, beyond representing ornamental features thus surpassing the traditional limits of architecture (O’Keeffe 76; Whelan 529), the tower and its adjoining parts become landscape artefacts from which the mind can look out of itself. For this reason, by harmonising man-made constructions with the uncivilised natural world, Yeats’ tower—in likeness to his mechanical bird—depicts a blended soundscape simultaneously inhabited by body and mind. In this manner, the lyric speaker in “The Tower” narrates “I pace upon the battlements and stare | On the foundations of a house, or where | Tree, like a sooty finger, starts from earth” (17-9) establishing a hybrid setting where the boundaries between natural and fortified landscapes merge into one.

Nevertheless, similar to how the act of resurrection favours the younger soul over the aged body, as the speaker asks himself “Did all old men and women, rich and poor, | Who trod upon these rocks or passed this door (...) | As I do now against old age?” (97-100), the presence of the tower is, regardless of its real counterpart in Ireland¹⁰, primarily rooted therein his mental landscape. By being populated with previous fictional characters and memories of past life, the tower therefore articulates an idealised inner soundscape in which the mind can both contemplate from outside the figures it creates and interact with

⁹ See “The Wanderings of Oisín” part II, 34-7.

¹⁰ Although never explicitly stated in the poem itself, according to W. B. Yeats, the tower in question is Thoor Ballylee near his hometown, Sligo (*The Major Works* 481).

itself from within. Accordingly, he explains “[I] call | Images and memories | From ruin or from ancient trees” (21-3), natural elements and constructions being indistinguishable sources of creativity, in order to revive the tower unto its former glory from its ruins alike his own physical shape. Furthermore, as the Modernist inoperative society mourns the loss of fraternity and conviviality proper of a more archaic community (*Comunidad* 27), W. B. Yeats occupies his mental landscapes with fragmented abstractions of his own spirit. Calling for younger generations, respectively, to inherit his pride and faith (173-4), he hopes to resurrect Ireland’s essence in the same manner in which he admires Byzantium’s ability to honour its “monuments of ... magnificence” (14).

Along these lines, with the deepening of its functions the tower has slowly transcended its original archetypal conception (Barnes 4) becoming the junction of nature and materiality regardless of aspect. The metaphorical articulation of the tower across Yeats’ middle period, as a result, extends itself unto any form of construction be it either the Byzantine church with its golden mosaic (17-8) or the city of Bethlehem towards which the beast approaches in “The Second Coming” (22). Moreover, with the lyric speaker correlating how noble knights from ancient times ascend the tower’s stairs to enter his vision—“for centuries, | Rough men-at-arms (...) | Climbed the narrow stairs” (81-3)—with how younger generations prove their worth by climbing—“I leave both faith and pride | To young upstanding men | Climbing the mountain-side” (173-5)—mountains become circumscribed therein the tower’s metaphorical breadth as naturally-formed landscape artefacts. Lastly, with the ruinous present appearance of the tower mimicking his elderly appearance the speaker describes

Till the wreck of body,
Slow decay of blood,
Testy delirium
Or dull decrepitude (184-7),

his aged body becoming the tower’s final metaphorical continuation as a biological ruin of his own humanity.

However, with the titular tower never being explicitly labelled nor mentioned throughout the poem, the metaphorical structure dilates itself towards a synecdoche of its original meaning. In this sense, as the lyric speaker describes his visit only through

characteristic sections—such as “battlements” (17) and “rocks” (98) for exteriors; “dark mahogany” (27) and “narrow stairs” (83) for interiors—he creates a concrete soundscape via fragmentation mimicking the constant cacophony of fictional voices within.

Nonetheless, unlike the fractured landscape in “The Second Coming” deafened by its chaotic order—“The falcon cannot hear the falconer | Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold” (2-3)—its disconnection does not compromise the landscape’s harmonious union by establishing a balanced synchrony between its adjacent natural scenery (48) and constructions (65).

Furthermore, by projecting the speaker within the tower’s mental walls, its circular and ascending structure warrants the cyclical regeneration of previous voices therein an echoing soundscape. In this manner, as the lyric speaker states “Go therefore; but leave Hanrahan, | For I need all his mighty memories” (103-4), due to the gyrating motions he is capable of encountering himself as well as inciting the soundscape’s movements by being aware of his echoing projections. To this end, the tower not only extends itself as a unitary space but contracts its form to a rotating core inhabited by a single voice facing itself with each turn of the stairs. Thus, the tower’s winding stairs and narrowing tops become a contracted metaphor for the constantly turning gyre found in both “The Second Coming” (1) and “Byzantium” (19) capable of regenerating each mental landscape through its motions. Nevertheless, unlike the former’s landscape encompassed within a turbulent cycle’s end, as the lyric speaker pleads

O sages in God’s holy fire (...)
As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
Come (...) perne¹¹ in a gyre
And be the singing masters of my soul” (17-20),

the latter’s inner revolving motions are the result of art contemplating art regardless of authorship.

For this reason, although Nancy claims artists do not contemplate leaving something behind for the benefit of their communities or themselves (*Comunidad* 129), Yeats’ middle-period mental landscapes stem from a symbiotic appropriation of art. Accordingly, by both

¹¹ *Slang*. To spin or gyrate.

being indistinguishable articulations of the “artifice of eternity” (24), he can nourish his soul by either contemplating a Byzantine golden mosaic (18) or through his own fictions and memories. In this sense, with the world only existing as a cautionary tale for future generations’ ears (Jeffares 256), Yeats uses his community’s cyclical recurrence to mobilise his soundscapes beyond wild sensual music (7). Hence, as the gathering of eternity constitutes the most supreme form of art (Jeffares 256), the lyric speaker employs the constant repetition of life—“Death and life were not | Till man made up the whole | (...) Out of his bitter soul” (148-51)—in hopes of rejuvenating and immortalising his spirit. By not being the poet’s invention but the locus within which the poet and his community invent themselves (*Comunidad* 111), art consequently embodies the soul’s “singing-school” (13) through which dream and reality peacefully inhabit a single blended space. To this end, belonging to a society capable of producing inadequate creations—“The best lack all conviction, while the worst | Are full of passionate intensity” (7-8)—constitutes in “The Second Coming” an added reason for a new era.

However, although upon losing its harmonious bonds society has become an inoperative community (*Comunidad* 26), not everyone is capable of producing a maddening poetical music according to Yeats. In “The Tower”, therefore, despite the speaker dreading the death “of every brilliant eye | That made a catch in the breath | Seem but the clouds of the sky” (190-2), Raftery’s appropriated story (49) about a peasant girl chosen by the Muses (96) is worse than a brilliant intellect’s death. Along these lines, as the lyric speaker proclaims “being dead, we rise, | Dream and so create | Translunar Paradise” (154-6), Yeats’ faithful and creative community is not a mirror of his collective reality but another element of his personal and idealised mental landscape. As a result, unlike other Modern writers emphasising personal myths in order to portray their post-war realities (Sharmin 20), W. B. Yeats resurrects Classical mythology by making it his own.

In this manner, having already found inspiration in folk literature during his early period, Yeats refashions his knowledge of Celtic immortal models in order to illustrate and caution against the ethical degradation of human behaviour (*Yeats’ Poetry* 373; Sharmin 20). As modern Irish poets must reject any folk art unrelated to Classical tradition (*Yeats’ Poetry* 374), by uprooting it from its ancient origins Yeats thus converts the figure of *the Sphinx* in “The Second Coming” into the metaphorical harbinger of his visions. Under these

circumstances, alike the foreboding wind announcing the coming of chaos in “Red Hanrahan’s Song about Ireland”—“The old brown thorn-trees break in two (...) | Under a bitter black wind that blows from the left” (1-2)—Yeats reimagines this beast as an inevitable herald of pitiless destruction—“now I know | That twenty centuries of stony sleep | Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle” (18-20). This mythical creature, respectively, by illustrating the language and speech through which reality continuously manifests itself (*Comunidad* 95) allows him to use its prophetic essence to resurrect the present era through a resumption of the past.

For this reason, as the lyric speaker states “what rough beast, its hour come round at last | Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?” (21-2), the beast’s return articulates the never-ending cyclical nature of the poem’s inner landscape by reversing the present’s essence towards an unknown new era. Accordingly, unlike the Romantic yearning for reuniting with the origins of its elemental force (*Comunidad* 87), Modern society reshapes its founding myths in order to reconnect its finitude with their sense of place. In this sense, as his idealised world with mechanical birds singing of the fluidity of time (32) has replaced the temporary inhabitants only concerned with their day-to-day existences in “Byzantium”, Yeats’ mental landscapes must be overturned by a creature bearing “a gaze blank and pitiless as the sun” (15) before resurrecting from the ashes. This re-foundation, consequently, articulates a blended mythological landscape derived, as the speaker describes on his vision “a shape with lion body and the head of man” (14), from the harmonious merger between animalistic strength and human wisdom. Hence, as the falcon stands for ordinary man out of touch with Christ’s call—“The falcon cannot hear the falconer” (2)—by fusing into one portentous figure the Sphinx’s bestial qualities slouching “its slow thighs” (16) with anthropoid intellect sacraments such as baptism—“and everywhere | The ceremony of innocence is drowned” (6)—will ultimately be restored from society’s decadent corruption.

Nonetheless, in the same manner in which Yeats’ metaphorical tower differs in extent from the edifice found in “Oisín” (II. 34-7), he reinvents his mythological creature from both Classical tradition and an existent archetype. Although both creatures portray the continuity of the mythical perspective, with its lack of legendary titular figure “The Second Coming” differs from Oisín battling his regenerative foe for a century—“(…) and for a

hundred years | (...) an endless feast, | An endless war” (II. 221-3)—as the Sphinx’s arrival is not only inevitable but welcomed. Therefore, Yeats’ beast creates its own echoing soundscape through his cyclical arrivals within the gyre having discarded the continual issuing forth of war-like sounds amongst the tower’s walls—“We trampled up and down with blows | Of sword and brazen battle-axe, while day | Gave to high noon and noon to night gave way” (II. 170-2). Moreover, unlike the initial creature’s undecipherable language—“A dusky demon dry as a withered sedge | Swayed, crooning to himself an unknown tongue: | In a sad revelry he sang and swung” (II. 158-60)—capable of communicating only with itself in an obscure melody, this new rendition utters no sound at all. To this end, contrary to its archetypal representation voicing riddles to those passing through its lair (Meihuizen 185), the only sounds accompanying the resurrected Sphinx’s silent arrival are discontented birds of prey (19) acting as an ominous chorus for the future.

Nevertheless, even though the figure of the Sphinx becomes a necessity to the rebirth of each new cycle, as the world employs myths to reveal itself through a declaration or decisive revelation (*Comunidad* 93), Yeats’ mental landscapes require the production of sounds to fulfil its intellectual and artistic capacity. In this manner, by blending abstract concepts with concrete elements Yeats articulates his idealised mental landscape through the vocalisation of his visions as a declarative act. The lyric speaker in “The Tower” thus connects the ideological entities structuring his will (121)—pride, faith, and peace—with different naturally-derived mobilities within a mental landscape mimicking a testimony upon paper. As a result, he pronounces

Pride, like that of the morn,
 (...) Or that of the fabulous horn,
 (...) Or that of the hour
 When the swan must fix his eye (...)
 And there sing his last song (134-44)

the act of declaration, be it either through visual elements such as morning light or the sonorous productions of both man-made instruments and animal life, relies upon the articulation of a harmonious soundscape.

Furthermore, without disregarding how throughout this middle period Yeats has been consciously proclaiming his dissatisfaction towards his ageing body, he presents his

will as a final testimony prior to death under the same light as the swan's song. Along these lines, as he has peopled his mental landscapes with past fictions and memories, Yeats derives these abstract entities from a storehouse of archetypal images called the Great Memory (85). Under these circumstances, despite originally holding the characteristic archetypes inhabiting Yeats' earlier mythological landscapes, this mental repository of symbols is transformed during his middle period into a blended space between imaginative and real associations to events, moods, or persons (*Yeats' Poetry* 349). The lyric speaker, accordingly, is capable of seeing those who have walked upon the tower's ruins—"And certain men-at-arms there were | Whose images, in the Great Memory stored, | Come with a loud cry and panting breast" (84-6)—as they announce in a secondary declarative act their disruptive arrival within his dreams—"To break upon a sleeper's rest | While their great wooden dice beat on the board" (87-8)¹².

We believe, consequently, Yeats' middle-period mental landscapes stem from a harmonious merger between past and present, nature and manufacture, imagination and reality, the abstract and the concrete, and youth and old age. In this sense, by articulating a blended soundscape out of the ruins of his past and ageing body in order to resurrect his community's essence through mythology, W. B. Yeats ultimately presents a poetical declaration exulting the need for Modern society to rejuvenate its spirit through the appropriation of intellectual and artistic beauty in an echoing cycle of birth and death.

¹² As Yeats records in his own notes: "The persons mentioned are associated by legend, story and tradition with the neighbourhood of Thoor Ballylee ... The ghosts have been seen at their game of dice in what is now my bedroom" (*The Major Works* 481)

Conclusions

Although for the purposes of our dissertation we have attempted to reach a middle ground between reader-oriented theories and New Criticism, we must also critically assess how our analysis has been conducted so far by bearing in mind the divergent elements within each one. In this manner, despite having focused on Fish's *informed* reader as any competent speaker (Spikes 130), we must also account for Iser's *implied* and *actual* readers, one created by the text, the other supported by the reader (Selden 53). Respectively, by merging these three readers into one when analysing these poems therein a process of revising expectations (Selden 52-6), we require a unified interpretation between the author's textual message and our involvement in decoding the mental images received when reading. On the other hand, as the construction of poetical meaning can be taught enough to dismiss stock responses and preconceptions at the time of facing unfamiliar poetry (*Practical Criticism* 294-5), New Criticism should be a matter of being aware of the possible conditions that might hinder our analysis. Nevertheless, although we can strive to become Richards' conception of the 'good critic'—adept at experiencing different states of mind, distinguishing significant experiences from shallow ones, and being a sound judge of values (*Principles* 114), we can only attest the value of a passage by turning our attention to any thoughts or feelings that have been stirred by the words. Ultimately, it is imperative to overcome any sense of bewilderment at the lack of contextual information by understanding how the verbal expressions of everyday life are used in the poetical world. Under this guise, we will conclude this dissertation by briefly examining Yeats' final poetical phase.

Unlike his archetypal period of Romantic wanderings and other-worldly islands and Modernist one filled with harmonious oppositions, Yeats' final years represent both a continuation and revivification of his life's work. Accordingly, having brought back some of the characteristic archetypes presented in his earlier works across the last ten years of his life, Yeats' late poetical landscape illustrates a more mature sensibility for realism. "The Man and the Echo" (1938), in this sense, articulates a final soundscape where Romantic musical mobilities allow for a man to confront his historical worth within an indifferent natural world without success. Respectively, the poem revolves around an ordinary old

man—no longer the hermit-mage of “Innisfree”—seeking a rock-shaped oracle for answers—instead of the shape-shifting druid in “Fergus”—only to obtain a meaningless repetition in return. Nonetheless, although resembling the unbalanced dialogues proper of his earlier poetry, “The Man and the Echo” portrays a dual sonorous landscape occurring, firstly, between a man and a naturally-produced echo inside a chasm—“Under a broken stone I halt | At the bottom of a pit | (...) And shout a secret to the stone” (2-5)—and, secondly, between his thoughts and doubts against themselves reverberating inside his own mind—“What do we know but that we face | One another in this place?” (39-40).

Moreover, written a year before his passing, despite dealing with a man in a journey of self-discovery alike both “Oisín” and “Fergus,” Yeats dismisses legendary figures in favour of inhabiting this barren landscape with an uncertain fictional version of himself. Thus, as the speaker admits “All that I have said and done | Now that I am old and ill, | Turns into a question” (6-8), every past declaration—and, consequently, every preceding poem—has lost permanency in time. Hence, he questions not only the influence of his writings therein the greater political context of his country—“Did that play of mine send out | Certain men the English shot?” (11-2)—but those idealised blended concepts such as intellect and beauty previously defended—“Nor can be there a work so great | As that which cleans man’s dirty slate” (23-4). Under these circumstances, as the poem conceives man “all work done, dismiss[ing] all | Out of intellect and sight | And sink[ing] at last into the night” (34-6), Yeats’ final soundscape deconstructs the harmonious merger between soul and body, having confronted the limitations of human existence, in favour of everyday life. To this end, Yeats’ efforts to influence the national scene through the Irish Literary Revival as well as to clarify his personal symbolism through *A Vision* are discarded—“And all seems evil until I | Sleepless would lie down and die” (17-8)—for the more real and tangible cry of nature—“But hush for I have lost the theme | A stricken rabbit is crying out | And its cry distracts my thought” (41-6). In the end, the journey first undertaken during his Romantic years—searching for a new magical land—that had conducted him into a Modernist conception of the landscape stemming from an assimilation of both the abstract and material culminates in a return to the natural elements characteristic of his native land calling out to him.

As the purpose of our dissertation has been an approximated aural articulation of William Butler Yeats' poetical Irish soundscape, we have presented a condensed analysis of his evolution as a poet through time. In this manner, having selected nine different poems over a span of 50 years, we have sought to provide a succinct glimpse into Yeats' evolving symbolic landscapes from his early Romantic archetypes to middle Modernist metaphors until his late Realistic poetry. Moreover, although we could argue for the evolution of Yeats' figurative landscape through time in the form of a crescendo—progressively increasing before reaching a climax by selecting one period as his most accomplished one—we believe his work's transcendency lies as a poetical three-movement symphony. Thus, it begins with a rondo—refrains alternating with more contrasting themes without missing the focus of the main speaker—before moving to a sonata—exposing and developing before recapitulating and going back to the beginning—and finishing with an adagio—a tempo slowed by time carrying great expression.

Nonetheless, we have encountered throughout this investigation with certain implications unaccounted for at the beginning of our work. Having based our conception of soundscape as mainly the result and interaction of three main musical mobilities derived from nature, animals, and people, we realised along the way the presence of new forms of aural articulation. Thus, we had no academic framework for the apparition of inert objects given musical properties through magical or supernatural influences—such as the druid's "little bag of dreams" in "Fergus"—as well as having no theoretical background dealing with the acoustic qualities of abstract concepts—such as Pride, Faith, and Peace in "The Tower"—capable of mobilising the poems' soundscapes. Along these lines, by conceiving our theory on landscape as the body being sensually immersed and experiencing it from within, we did not consider the possibility of a landscape being articulated outside the present in the form of a dormant, visionary soundscape as seen in "The Second Coming."

We believe, in this sense, it will be for the best interests of this line of investigation to regard these implications and expanding our corpus in order to supply a more comprehensive discussion. However, although analysing the entirety of his life's work would depict a valuable asset to the study of Yeats' career, we consider it equally necessary to delve deeper into each period of his life. To this end, we propose to discuss more extensively how his earlier archetypes might have influenced the symbols put forward in *A*

Vision during his first period in order to examine the relationship between these images and his imagery; how he has articulated a political soundscape during his middle period against the backdrop of Ireland's fluctuating literary scene and whether this articulation acquired a visionary role during the most tumultuous years of the country's unrest; and, finally, how his relationship with the occult and private symbolism shifted during his final years once having been awarded the Nobel Literature prize in 1923. As making poetry stands for the musicalisation of language, the realisation of the aforementioned soundscapes in the present dissertation have dealt with an interconnection of musical sensibilities capable of creating a poetical world which the speaker can both inhabit and co-construct. Ultimately, future research on this topic should bear in mind the inevitable reciprocity between the sounds peopling the outside world of the poet and those implemented within his work as the artistic articulation of an all-encompassing sensual experience.

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