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Breandán Ó hEithir's Use of Music in Constructing and Re-constructing Community in *Lead Us Into Temptation*

Music is an effective device in Irish fiction for symbolising community and the expression of collective values. As Gerry Smyth observes, the presence of music in the Irish novel elucidates how the histories of each form are often "enmeshed with the wider question of national identity" (106). Such formal complications emerge in Breandán Ó hEithir's novel *Lig Sinn i gCathú*, first published in Irish in 1976 and two years later in English as *Lead Us Into Temptation*.[1] Through a multifaceted approach incorporating musicological theory and comparative historical sources, this analysis interrogates the ways in which music expresses Irish sociopolitical identity in the novel.

Lead Us Into Temptation is a reconstruction of Easter Week 1949, culminating on the first day of the Republic of Ireland's existence. Under the guise of "Ballycastle," a fictional town modelled closely on his native Galway, Ó hEithir points out problematic mythologies of the nascent Irish nation. The catalyst for this in the text is lingering affiliation and disaffiliation from the long fight towards an independent Ireland, embodied in the tension between musical voices at the Ballycastle Republic commemorations. The analysis explores whether musical (dis)unity at such national celebrations occurs organically and incidentally, or whether it is a "precisely located goal" (Tuan 128).

Participating in music is both a privately affective experience and a public articulation of adherence to community values, fostering cooperation and coordination within a group (Smyth 4; Turino 106; Brown 4). In reinforcing shared ideologies and identities, music also delineates values and delimits lines of inclusion for social groups (Brown 2). Yet, if as Blacking says (32), music is "humanly organised sound," then it may also be disorganised. Indeed, it may even reveal "simmering conflicts hidden beneath a veneer of conviviality" (Dubois 235).

1 This analysis uses the English translation for reasons of linguistic consistency and proficiency, space and scope, and analytical consistency. Salient differences in musical symbolism occur in translation between the Irish and English texts, meriting a future standalone analysis. Some differences of immediate interest have been briefly pointed out as footnotes in this chapter. See also: Conchur Mac Giolla Eáin's study on the overall translation, *Lead Us Into Temptation: anailís ar an aistriúchán a rinne Breandán Ó hEithir ar Lig Sinn i gCathú* (MA Thesis, National University of Ireland Galway, 2008).

In *Lead Us Into Temptation*, where music ought to be a rallying point for cohesion it instead foregrounds division and simmering conflict, especially when portraying the new Republic's national anthem. Ó hEithir colours the commemorative celebrations with ambivalence and occlusion, and in the novel's climactic cacophony, the louder the voice is, the less it is truly heard. This analysis explores the role that music plays in collective myth and memory, political affiliation and expression, and the creation of *communitas* both within the novel and wider Irish society of the twentieth century.

Music as Text for Social Enhancement

Drawing on Paul Ricoeur and Steven Brown, this analysis considers music as a "readable" text used for persuasion and cooperation amongst group members. For Ricoeur, human actions form a discourse "the meaning of which is 'in suspense' [and] waiting for fresh interpretations" ("Model of the Text" 544). He states that human behaviour is symbolically mediated and thus able to be "recounted and poeticized [...] due to the fact that it is always articulated by signs, rules and norms" (*Reader* 141). The musical textual act also includes its attendant behaviours; viewing written, musical and socially enacted behaviours as texts means they may be deconstructed using the same processes (Ó Laoire 31). Furthermore, music is an effective text for understanding individual and community identity alike because music and identity are both performative and narrative processes (Frith 109-111).

This hermeneutic strategy is supplemented by Steven Brown's model of music as a form of social enhancement. Ethnographies of Irish musical communities have increasingly emphasised the understanding of cultural process, especially regarding performance, in the attainment of meaning (see Ó Laoire 27-28). Ó Madagáin, for example, argues that songs are "not an independent entity [but] a form of behaviour [with a] vital context in the social life and culture of a community" (132). Moreover, Brown argues that music is an "associative enhancer of communication at the group level" (1). John Miles Foley echoes this in the context of the oral tradition through an apt metaphor, stating that "texts or performances also serve as libretti for audience realization, [and] these 'scores' imply readers or listeners in a process" (43). These analytical strategies can be mapped through Ricoeur's theory of threefold textual mimesis.

The first stage of mimesis is the prefigured reality common to the creator, performer and receiver of a text, without which it would not be understandable (Ricoeur, *Reader* 143). This consists of the ongoing reification of community values by drawing pre-existing material from the *topoi* of the group, "the cultural treasure of meanings" understandable to each member (Ricoeur, *Reader* 79). In music of the Irish political sphere, the

mythology of the patriot dead features frequently—an aspect that will be developed below. The "formulaic devices" of the first stage constitute a "musical lexicon" that also defines the limits of communication between the senders and receivers of the text (Brown 17).

In the next stage of mimesis, these tropes are configured into a discernable narrative governed by the constraints of tradition—or, in other words, by "the ways in which structure and delivery contribute to meaning" (Dubois 235). The creator (or "sender") of the musical message must "effectively unite musical structure and semantic meaning" in what Brown calls "content matching" (17). The success of a musical text hinges at a nexus within the second mimetic stage: the instant of performance. As Ó Canainn has noted of *sean-nós*, for example, "[the song] is only completely at ease [...] where the singer and listener are in real communion" (132). The audience tacitly authorises the performer to transmit the song, and performer and audience are linked in what Lillis Ó Laoire calls a "shared communicative pact" (80), or in John Miles Foley's words, an "interpretive contract" (50; 53). In terms of function within the community, Brown describes this as a "cooperative arrangement in which the social rewards of the communication process—be they at the levels of emotion, motivation, or action—are shared more or less equally between the sender and the receiver" (21).

The third stage of mimesis arises where those who receive the text change their own actions as a result of what Gadamer has called "fusion of horizons" (301). The act of reading reveals indeterminacy as well as richness of meaning within the text (Ricoeur, *Reader* 401). Successfully negotiating between these states completes the "hermeneutical circle" where apprehension of the text leads to the expansion of self-understanding (Ricoeur, *Reader* 309). The process of "filling in" textual indeterminacy can include examining one's own and others' identities (De Nora 90).

The interpretive contract may be broken to reveal conflict in three main ways. The first is when the intended message is mismatched with content, and receivers misinterpret or ignore it (Brown 18). The second is the case of a poorly delivered or deviant performance, which negatively subverts the expectations of the audience and leads to the receiver of the text being "overwhelmed by [...] unrelieved indeterminacy" (Ó Laoire 82; Miles Foley 44). The third is where there is a lack of authorization from the audience, whether partial or total. This is further complicated where transmission is indirect, such as recorded music, or where the symbolic significance of the music is such that it "supersedes the individual text or performance, poet, [or] local tradition" (Brown 13; Miles Foley 46). In such instances, the original performance is spatially and temporally displaced, and the sender "will be not only the people who recorded the music but those who control the emission of the music" (Brown 13). The emitter(s) may have "interests, intentions, and agendas that differ greatly from those of the performers"

(Brown 13). As will be discussed later, this especially applies to the character of Councillor Macken in the novel.

Here problems of authorization arise where one purports to speak on behalf of another through a particular musical text. Brown argues that ordinarily music is a form of consensual persuasion, creating "compliance, conformity, and cooperation for [...] reinforcing group affiliations [and] justifying collective actions" (21). However, this is problematic when music is transmitted for manipulation, where the use of selfish or deceptive devices results in asymmetrical social rewards usually biased towards the sender (Brown 21-22). To account for this, Moore suggests that it is beneficial to ask who rather than what is being authenticated in performance. There are three possible responses: the performer (or sender), the audience, or an (absent) other (220). Thus, the participants and their values being affirmed or denied through transmission of the text must be analysed on a case-by-case basis (Brown 13).

The question in *Lead Us Into Temptation* is not only whether an interpretive contract has been broken, but also whether the multiple voices grappling for attention (and political positions they represent) have come to an agreement with their audience in the first place. As Morris observes, "Social cohesion can be threatened [...] if ambiguity gives way to open conflict over meaning" (*Our Own Devices*, 5). As a result, all participants can be overwhelmed by unrelieved indeterminacy until the interpretive contract is resolved. Musical expression of national and sociopolitical affiliation is understood here as a balancing act between cooperatively arriving at agreement for, and fighting over control of, the interpretive contract of musical participation.

The Irish National Anthem

Cerulo argues, following Durkheim, that national anthems are manufactured and distributed by political elites, who "'make over' these symbols with reference to the social conditions they face and the goals they wish to project to their constituents and observers" (80). However, the Irish national anthem has been a "source of some tension and confusion" since partition (Sherry 39), especially in the years between the Civil War and the inauguration of the Republic of Ireland. Similar to the Polish national anthem (the *Dabrowski Mazurka*) or the *Marseillaise*, "The Soldier's Song" originated as a revolutionary march that later developed a wider following (Mach 62; Morris, *Our Own Devices* 55). Peadar Kearney, a member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, wrote the words to "The Soldier's Song" in 1910, with music by Patrick Heeney ("Status, Treatment and Use").[2] The lyrics were first published in Irish Freedom in 1912, and its use among Volunteers increased as "it confirmed that they were 'soldiers' rather than 'rebels'" (Sherry 39). De Búrca argues that because of this

popularity, "by the end of that fateful year [1916] it was *de facto* National Anthem of Ireland" (55). While the song was undoubtedly popular, this represents only one position.

An anthem's popularity is not always necessarily a full expression of national will. *Topoi* that symbolise a particular aspect of the cultural past can be divisive since competing political or ethnic groups align with different pasts (Kolstø 679). Indeed, anthems born of political conflict can themselves become the focus of conflict, because the ascendancy of a particular anthem "signals that a particular view of the nation's history, culture and politics has triumphed over other, competing views" (Morris, "Anthem Dispute" 72-73). Sung in the GPO in Easter 1916, and a source of great unity among republican internees after the Rising, "The Soldier's Song" came to be widely used in republican circles (De Búrca 55; Sherry 40). However, after the Civil War, pro- and anti-Treaty nationalists each fought for possession of "The Soldier's Song." While in opposition, Fianna Fáil disputed the right of the government to use "The Soldier's Song," viewing it as a strictly republican symbol. Once in office, they not only continued to use the song as the State anthem, "but actually entrenched its official status by acquiring copyright" (Morris, Our Own Devices 51). The IRA newspaper *An Phoblacht* was more categorical, saying that "The Soldier's Song" was "but part of the Free State camouflage of its Crown-colony partitioned freedom" (Morris, *Our Own Devices* 47). At the same time, other groups such as former unionists and constitutional nationalists were alienated from control over this and other symbols of the state, such as the flag (Morris, *Our Own Devices* 68). For these latter groups, the powerful symbolism that the "The Soldier's Song" had gained was divisive because it embodied painful memories of revolutionary violence (Morris, *Our Own Devices* 48; 68).

Argument also surrounded the anthem's perceived lack of musical character. After the famous tenor John McCormack criticised the anthem for its musical quality in 1935, the song's author responded that the "adoption" of the anthem was "not as a compliment [to the song] but as an astute and very necessary political move" (Ó Cearnaigh 19). While this may be true, Morris argues that for "a number of Free State Citizens almost anything would have been better, both musically and lyrically" (*Our Own Devices* 53). A letter from "Minstrel Boy" on March 29th 1949 in the *Irish Independent* demonstrates the continuing debate at the inauguration of the Republic.

2 Some argue it was written in 1907 (for example De Búrca; Sherry). However, Peadar Kearney asserted in an affidavit in 1926 that it was written "early in 1910 or late in 1909" ("Status, Treatment and Use"). Though originally in English, Liam Ó Rinn's translation "Amhrán na bhFiann", completed in 1923, is now used almost exclusively (see Sherry, "Status, Treatment and Use"). For this discussion, it should be assumed that where the title is in English (or vice versa) then that is the version being referenced.

Despite having fought for independence himself, he writes that from "the point of view of national sentiment or resurgence ["The Soldier's Song"] does not mean a thing to me, and I fought through our struggles from 1919!" He asks for a new anthem "which would have no association with internal bitterness or strife and for which its sheer beauty alone the men of the north would stand in reverence" (8).

Early Free State leaders were concerned about issues of unrest and exclusion surrounding the anthem. The Northern Ireland government had repeatedly considered banning the song due to potential disturbance, but while it may have been considered an "offensive" expression of republicanism and a possible prosecutable breach of the peace it was never specifically proscribed (Morris, *Our Own Devices* 149; 151). Even within Northern nationalist groups, constitutional nationalists had continued singing "God Save Ireland" and "A Nation Once Again" rather than "The Soldier's Song" (Morris, *Our Own Devices* 138).

These competing forces were felt in Galway on July 23rd 1935 when in protest against attacks on northern Catholics, dock workers refused to unload the *S.S. Comber* owned by Sir William Kelly of Belfast. That evening the workers conducted a rally through town led by their fife and drum band, before marching back to the port and assembling opposite the *Comber*. There, they "stood to attention and sang Amhrán na bhFiann" (Hanley, "Galway's Wildcat Strike"). The anthem deliberately and publicly excludes, and the music proceeds through force rather than communion. Both this incident and the reference by "Minstrel Boy" to "men of the north" highlight the potential of performance of the anthem to divide, especially given the augmented symbolism of "The Soldier's Song" in the North.

Because of these factors, the Cumann na nGaedhael government did not confirm "The Soldier's Song" as the national anthem until 1926. Even then, it was not written into law, and "the government's failure to promote it left some people unsure of its status" (Morris, *Our Own Devices* 52-53). Although the anthem had closed Radio Éireann broadcasts since the station's inception in 1926, and theatres played it after performances from 1932 (Sherry 42), a sizeable portion of the public did not know its correct lyrics or music. Colonel Brase, leader of the Army No. 1 band and the arranger of the official score, observed this and suggested that newspapers publish the words and that it be taught in schools (Morris, *Our Own Devices* 62-63). This did not take place however, and problems of perceived disrespect for the anthem continued.

At a meeting of the Association of the Municipal Authorities of Ireland in January 1949, representatives discussed disrespect for the anthem they had observed around the country. The lack of standard performance was commonly reported: in theatres and cinemas it was being "played in a sort of rag-time or jazz, which is not recognizable by the audience", in "such a

strain that it could not be sung", or "by a dance band in dance music time when people were anxious to get home" ("National Anthem" 2). However, the Galway representative, Mr. Redington, claimed that "until they induced the public to have respect for the anthem there was no use getting the music standardised" ("National Anthem" 2).

A sixteen-year-old Breandán Ó hEithir was witness to these influences. He wrote from the Aran Islands to the *Connacht Tribune* in 1946:

> Dear Sir,—I was present last week at one of the Galway cinemas and I was disgusted to see the disrespect with which our National Anthem was treated. People who sat spellbound during the film rushed to the exits as the national anthem was being played. [...] The position in short is this—the idiotic acting of the so called film-stars is treated with breathless admiration, while our National Anthem is offered the greatest possible insult. Can anything be done to remedy this sad state of affairs? ("The National Anthem" 2).

Previously, governments had attempted to avoid inducing the populace to support the anthem by coercion or compulsion. On November 9th 1949, General Mulcahy answered a question in the Dáil concerning this issue by saying that:

> I have come to the conclusion that no useful purpose would be served by making and enforcing regulations such as they recommend. [Patriotism for symbols] so precious as the National Flag will naturally follow and be stronger and more deeply rooted than if their growth appeared to be dictated ("Flag and 1916 Proclamation").

As these sources indicate, issues of respect and acceptance for the anthem still lingered at the declaration of the Republic. Breandán Ó hEithir's use of the anthem in *Lead Us Into Temptation* was oddly foreshadowed by W.F. Trench, Professor of English Literature at Trinity College, who suggested in 1929 that if "The Soldier's Song" continued to be the National Anthem "we are liable to be regarded with scorn [since] the music suggests a rabble rather than a nation" (in Morris, *Our Own Devices* 54).

Lead Us Into Temptation – Political Climate and Commemorations

Like Emilie Pine has observed of Frank McCourt, Ó hEithir enhances remembrance with invention to (re-)construct the past in his novel (57). Ó hEithir wrote in 1985, "I cannot write dispassionately about Galway [whose] proudest boast is that it has slowed time to a virtual standstill" (Mac Con Iomaire, 412). In *Lead Us Into Temptation*, Ó hEithir projects Galway as "Ballycastle" ("*Baile an Chaisil*") in often unflattering terms. Pearse Hutchinson identified with Ó hEithir's portrayal of Galway in "those terrible medieval 'Forties'", saying that the "bleakness" of the novel was "not the author's own, but that of the society he's describing" (Mac Con Iomaire 392). Indeed, reviewers noted the combination of realism and imagination in the novel's atmosphere, conveying the "unique chemistry of Galway in the late 1940's" (Mac Con Iomaire 394-7).

This "unique chemistry" manifests as an ambivalent Ballycastle, which has "never made up its mind whether to become a country town or remain a medieval city" and possesses maze-like streets "always finishing exactly where they started" (Ó hEithir, *LUIT* 11-12). Ballycastle in fiction—and Galway in reality—struggles to decide on the meaning of being in the Republic, enhancing the significance of the Easter 1949 commemorations. In organised commemoration, the past is "both deadweight, but also ballast" (Brown and Grant 156). In Ireland's case, the violent associations of Easter Week embody the "'myth symbol' complex" comprised of heroes and martyrs (Brown and Grant 141). Countless songs of Irish nationalism arise from political martyrdom. This provides space for an unremitting "contest for possession of the Irish dead [...] providing a sharp focus for factional and political conflict" (Fitzpatrick 184-5).

Both real and fictional newspapers demonstrate this. In *Lead Us Into Temptation*, Mickey MacGowan, editor of the *Ballycastle Courier*, laments on the evening of Friday the 15th that the Board of Directors of his paper "come down on both sides of the fence" of the new republic. MacGowan tells the protagonist Martin Melody that the following day's edition will "emphasise the need for unity" and "stress community cooperation" throughout the weekend's commemorations (32). MacGowan will eventually publish an article stating that "Emmet will have to wait", but not before he drunkenly exclaims, "Fuck Emmet and his fucking epitaph!" (32). When Councillor Macken, the local Fine Gael leader, reads the final article he is apoplectic. He cries, "wait till I see that alcoholic editor! Even our own paper, that stands firmly behind the policies of our party, has to drag in this nonsense about Emmet's epitaph" (70). Macken's commentary on MacGowan's editorial choice echoes the *Connacht Tribune* edition of Easter Saturday 1949, which opined: "Belittling [the Republic] will not bring the unity of Ireland nearer" ("Fianna Fail Attitude" 5). Each demonstrates an underlying partisan agenda veiled by the apparent promotion of unity.

Preparations for the celebration for the incoming Republic in Galway did not even begin until the week before Easter. The *Galway Observer* report of the April 7th meeting of the Galway Corporation could easily be a scene lifted from *Lead Us Into Temptation*. It reports that Mr. James Redington (the same as above) asked whether the Corporation was intending to "ask the people to join in the celebrations", indicating that it was the second time he had raised the question ("Celebration For Republic Day" 3). Alderman Lydon answered negatively, saying: "It is more important to provide work for the people" ("Celebration For Republic Day" 3). The following exchange is then reported:

> "If you want to turn it down. It looks like you don't want a Republic at all" said Mr Redington.
>
> Al. Lydon—"We don't want a twenty six county Republic".
>
> Ald Miss Ashe—"We want a thirty two county Republic".
>
> There was no seconder for Mr Bedington's [sic] proposal and no action was taking [sic]. Mr Redington then left the Council Chamber ("Celebration For Republic Day" 3).

A public meeting was eventually held on Friday the 8th at which "a committee was formed to make arrangements for the celebrations" ("Republic of Ireland Act" 3) a mere ten days before Easter Monday.

Dublin's celebrations were grander as the nation's capital and focal point of the Easter Rising. The *Irish Times* reported:

> The cheers of the watching thousands, which had momentarily stilled while the guns went into action, broke out afresh. Men, women and children shouted "Up The Republic," while groups of young people with accordeons [sic] and other musical instruments joined in singing national airs.
>
> Open-air ceilidhthe had been arranged at various points, and dancing continued until early this morning ("Guns Salute the Republic" 1).

Similarly, the *Irish Independent* described a "fanfare of trumpets and a roll of drums", and as the ceremony concluded, "Cheering crowds joined in 'The Soldier's Song,' and from the North Wall came the jubilant clamour of the ships and tugs in the port" ("Cheering Crowds" 7). However, in spite of the seemingly spontaneous outpouring of national feeling, the "fanfare" and "clamour," and the various bands, reports from diplomatic observers indicate "there was a lack of genuine warmth among the crowds attending the celebrations" (McCabe 92). In this sense, Ó hEithir's portrayal of the

feeling at the weekend captures equally that which was factual, embellished, or ignored by press reports. While the relative size of the cities bears remembering, the *Irish Independent* assumed that ceremonies "on similar lines will be held at many centres throughout the country" ("Nation Preparing" 7). Yet, unlike Dublin, or even Ballinasloe, Galway did not have a midnight ceremony, except that "Vic Burgoyne's Orchestra played the National Anthem at one minute past midnight amid cheers at the dance in the Pavilion, Salthill" ("Galway Honours Republic" 1).

The relatively piecemeal nature of the commemorations in Galway is made apparent by local newspaper reports. The *Galway Observer*, for example, called the ceremony "simple" ("Galway Honours Republic" 1). In its preview on Saturday the 16th, the *Connacht Tribune* wrote that events would conclude "with a little ceremony on Eyre Square to commemorate the 1916 Rising" ("Plans to Honour Republic" 5). Moreover, a sense of distrust pervades the *Tribune's* piece, describing an appeal "issued to the citizens to display flags and bunting" while reminding the reader that "the national flag takes precedence over other flags and no flag should be displayed higher than the Tricolour on any building" ("Plans to Honour Republic" 5). Such a tone hardly engenders enthusiasm or complete cooperation. That unity was a pressing concern of the weekend is embodied by the headline of the report after the High Mass in the *Connacht Tribune*: "Bishop's Plea for Greater Concord" (5). Yet, a tenuous concord was made more difficult by the absence of Fianna Fáil officials from any celebrations other than the mass.

Music was a central element of the parade that immediately followed the Mass:

> After the Mass a parade of Old I.R.A., Cumann na mBan, F.C.A., Knights of Malta and the Red Cross accompanied by the Renmore Pipers' Band, the St. Patrick's Brass and Reed Band and the Labour Fife and Drum Band marched through the principal streets of the city and past a saluting base at Eyre Square, where Mr. Michael Donnellan, T.D., Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance, took the salute.
>
> The 1916 Proclamation was read by Professor Liam O Briain, U.C.G., after which the Last Post was sounded in memory of the Republican Dead followed by the Reveille heralding the new-born Republic, and the ceremonies closed with the playing of the National Anthem ("Bishop's Plea" 5).

The variety of music in the Galway parade represents a cacophony of voices competing for attention. Most immediately notable is the St. Patrick's Brass and Reed Band, formed in Galway in 1896 and still active to this day (Kenny, "St Patrick's Brass Band"). These troupes originated from British

military bands, and for many years provided social outlets and employment opportunities (especially in garrison towns).[3] Civilian versions were formed among memberships of trade unions and workers' clubs in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and as they became increasingly popular, the bands began to be associated with independence and nationalist movements far from their colonial origins (Mullaney-Dignam 16-17).

Ó hEithir's reconstruction of the parade features a heightened sense of disorder that parodies the original. Ballycastle has:

> [...] two marching bands, the St Francis Xavier Brass Band, from the Franciscan Sodality, and the Dockers Fife and Drum Band from Irishtown. The Brass Band was of very recent origin and had so far learned to play three tunes: *The Wearing Of the Green*, *The Three Flowers* and the theme music from the film *Message of Fatima* (*LUIT* 128).

The fictional St. Francis Xavier Brass Band parallels the St. Patrick's Band of the actual parade. Two of the only songs they know how to play are nationalist ballads, each of which draws from the myth symbol complex of the patriot dead. Yet, the third—the theme from a film—absurdly undermines the symbolic impact of their repertoire.

The Labour Fife and Drum Band of Galway becomes Ballycastle's "Dockers Fife and Drum Band." Illustrating the potential divisiveness of the Ballycastle parade, the Brass Band's "uniforms and instruments were brand new and for this reason Councillor Macken put them at the head of the parade, behind the army colour party" (128). On the other hand, the Dockers Band is consigned to "[bring] up the rear, for all that remained of their original uniforms were their greasy and tattered peak caps" (128). They are offended by this slight, and their leader threatens to "shove his fife up the Councillor's arse and play *The Geese in the Bog* through his earholes" (128). Crucially, they are described as "good musicians, although most of them boozed heavily and couldn't march in a straight line if the re-unification of Ireland depended on it" (128). This comic yet poignant description stands ironically against Merriam's conception that music is a focal point of group activities requiring cooperation and coordination (227). What occurs next bears out this non-cooperation:

> Just as Councillor Macken was about to give the order to strike up the music ... the Dockers Band struck up Roll Out the Barrel and drowned out everything else completely. Everyone took this to be a signal to march and the parade moved off. Councillor

3 See for example Fallon, pp. 47-56.

> Everyone took this to be a signal to march and the parade moved off. Councillor Macken had to gather his robes around his waist and sprint towards the Brass Band shouting at them to play for all they were worth (Ó hEithir, *LUIT* 129).

"Roll Out the Barrel" is a vernacular music-hall song (otherwise known as the "Beer Barrel Polka") popularised during the Second World War (Greene 131). Its chorus proclaims, "Roll out the barrel/we'll have a barrel of fun", and its use here disrupts the authority of ritual commemoration and foreshadows further chaos.

A crowd is gathered at Ballycastle's square for the ceremony, including a group of elites "whose dignity would not allow them to march with the Dockers Band" (Ó hEithir, *LUIT* 132). The congregation strains to "catch the strange music [...] negotiat[ing] the maze of twisting streets" (132):

> Such a mixture of music was never before heard in Ballycastle. In a fit of anger and spite the Dockers Band refused to play anything but *Roll out the Barrel* which they kept belting out defiantly. Councillor Macken finally succeeded in getting the St Francis Xavier Brass Band to strike up the theme music from *Message of Fatima* but their nerve was almost gone and for love, money or the new Republic they couldn't turn into either of the other two tunes they knew. When the crowd in the Square saw and heard what was happening they squirmed with delight. They hadn't come in vain! (132)

The Brass Band's failure to play their "other two tunes" again represents a subversive failure of the "patriot dead" mythology.

The crowd is less interested in the pronouncement of the Republic than in the spectacle before them. Councillor Macken unveils a memorial statue and announces, "Long live the Republic", but the "crowd around the platform clapped in such a half-hearted way that it annoyed the Councillor even more" (133). This recalls the diplomatic observations in Dublin and the "lack of genuine warmth". It also undercuts the lofty tone of the *Connacht Tribune* which reported: "As a bugler sounded the General Salute at the Elevation the wonderful significance of the great occasion was borne in upon the mind and many must have realised, perhaps for the first time, the long distance we have travelled from the Mass Rock of our ancestors" ("Bishop's Plea" 5).

As the University's Professor of Irish begins reading the 1916 Proclamation, his "mortal enemy" the Professor of Archaeology interrupts him with "a triumphant whoop", shouting: "'A mistake! A mistake! Upon my solemn oath there's a mistake!" (Ó hEithir, *LUIT* 134). The entire party descends into chaos while each examines the inscription on the

just-unveiled memorial, trying to decide whether it ought to read "fanned the flames of freedom alive" or "to life." Councillor Macken succeeds in calming the professors, but the mad Monsignor Blake "surprised everybody by catching the microphone and quavering in the most comic way: 'Alive, Alive, O! Alive, Alive O! [...] Crying cockles and mussels, Alive, Alive O!'" (135). Along with Mickey MacGowan's earlier exclamation, this bathetically recalls the adulteration of Emmet's last words amidst the musical wordplay of Joyce's "Sirens".

In frustration, Councillor Macken implores the Dockers Band to "Play the national anthem, for the love and honour of God!" (135). The leader of the band, still slighted, instead signals his men to turn on their heels and go to the pub. What follows encapsulates the disarray of the occasion:

> 'Sing it yourself,' roared the crowd. 'Rise it like a good man! Think of our patriot dead.'
>
> The St Francis Xavier Brass Band stood looking at one another sheepishly when the Bishop's secretary took charge of the situation and shouted to the young man in the broadcasting van to get a record immediately. The young man was enjoying the total confusion so much that he had to be twice nudged into action. He jumped into the back of the van and began to root among the records.
>
> 'Silence, you bloody jackasses!' shouted Councillor Macken. 'Silence for our National Anthem!'
>
> This had an immediate effect and for the first time that day the Councillor was in complete control of a situation. But it was certainly not his day!
>
> In his blind rush the young man slapped the wrong record on the turntable and the now silent crowd heard the opening bars of the Ballycastle Céili Band playing a lively jig. He whipped it off again but the damage was done. After that there was no possible recovery (135).[4]

4 In Lig Sinn i gCathú, the recording is named as "An Rógaire Dubh". Mac Giolla Eáin (73) points out that Ó hEithir was concerned that its associations would be lost on English target audiences, and instead rendered "a lively jig".

Brown argues that the most "salient target of control" here is "*the control of use* [...] a way of biasing use in certain directions by selectively favoring or disfavoring particular components of a music-culture" (12, emphasis his). At this second stage of mimesis, Councillor Macken's *use* of the anthem represents an attempt to force an interpretive contract. However, unity deliberately manufactured by musical ceremonies is problematic because it is a "'limited' form of power that ultimately relies on actions beyond musical performance itself" (Mattern 1998; in Parfitt 2). Macken and the other elites are additionally relying on the audience agreeing on the meaning and usage of *topoi* from the first stage of mimesis. The crowd is unlikely to enthusiastically agree, however:

> As was always the case in Ballycastle the crowd that waited at the square was composed of three main groups: those who came because of genuine interest, those who came out of curiosity and those who came out of seeing or hearing something outrageous. The first group was the smallest and the third group was by far the largest (Ó hEithir, *LUIT* 129).

Considering this imbalance of interest, the Dockers Band's refusal to play, and the crowd's heavily ironic calls for Macken to sing it himself, full authorization of the anthem is practically impossible. Macken's attempted transmission represents manipulation, in which there is a false expectation that the receiver will benefit "by acting in the interests of the sender" (Brown 21). Macken's self-serving motives are far from hidden: we learn earlier that spearheading the commemorations is the "pinnacle of his career in politics", and he declaims, "the memorial up at the Square is the most important thing ... apart from the official declaration, that is, and the whole ideal" (Ó hEithir, *LUIT* 70).

The crowd, however, rejects manipulation and creates spontaneous vernacular communion when the wrong record is played:

> The crowd cheered and began to dance, singly and in groups. The Pooka caught the Cook, swung him around and shouted, 'Another couple here for the Walls of Limerick! Around the house and mind the dresser' (135).

This represents what Joep Leerssen has called "community remembrancing"— "sub-elite and demotic" commemoration through "face-to-face means rather than mediatized in print or monuments" (215). On the other hand, Councillor Macken's official ceremony constitutes "society remembrancing" – "state-sanctioned public commemoration [...] which canonises the acts and personalities of individuals into an 'official' version of history" (Leerssen 215). Councillor Macken's emphasis on the official

commemoration surmises a historical trajectory that is ultimately "out of step with the rhythm of life" (Pine 146).

The fact that the crowd dances in this moment is important. For the same reasons music is a text, so is dance, as a behaviour codified by signs, rules and norms. Desmond observes that dance is a "primary social text" which through "highly controlled" parameters of acceptable movement "signals group affiliation and group differences, whether consciously performed or not" (36). While music and dance are invariably linked, Ó Laoire notes that dance "enacts a nonspoken, symbolic discourse in its own right" (127), and drawing on Jane Cowan emphasises the nonverbal nature of dance as crucial to its expressive power.

Here the specific codified context is *céilí* dancing which through the Gaelic League underwent a "process of formalisation" both musically and culturally in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Catherine E. Foley 48). Though *céilí* dances seemed "to express an unspoken political/cultural agenda, as if one could 'free' Ireland by dancing the High-Cauled Cap", according to Catherine E. Foley *céilí* events were as much about dancing as experiencing reaffirmation and renegotiation of the "sense of belonging to this *Irish* dance community" (49; 48; emphasis hers). Ó Laoire also points out (drawing on Judith Lynne Hanna) that dance can "provide a cathartic outlet for various tensions or divergence from a norm in a non-threatening way" (129). Where at Dublin's commemorations the *céilí* events were orderly but lacking "genuine enthusiasm", in Ballycastle they are disruptive but rejuvenating. The characters in Ballycastle highlight this by dancing even after the record has been removed. The Pooka who calls for "The Walls of Limerick" and those who dance without music are to some extent "freeing" Ireland from the weight of myth through non-threatening protest. The authorisation of *céilí* music instead of the national anthem suggests that a form of cultural rather than political nationalism is uniting the Ballycastle crowd.

While resisting, the crowd is not necessarily creating an alternate "nation", or solving problems of national disaffection. Yi-Fu Tuan observes that:

> Dancing, which is always accompanied by music or a beat of some kind, dramatically abrogates historical time and oriented space [by] allowing [participants] to live briefly in ... "presentic" unoriented space [...] The idea of a precisely located goal loses relevance (128).

Drawing on Aristotle, Ricoeur provides a modified theory of *catharsis*, which he defines as "the moment of communicability of perceptive understanding" (*Reader* 410). This occurs in the final stage of mimesis and assists in clarifying the positions of participants in the musical act. At the

Ballycastle ceremony, the cacophonic bands and the national anthem bring tensions to the surface, before the *céilí* music and the spontaneous dance authenticates the audience and creates a renewed sense of unity. Though Councillor Macken perceives the wrong record being played as a failure of content matching, the audience accepts the unexpected music as a legitimising act of social authenticity (Moore 215). As Pine as observed of Frank McGuinness's *Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Toward the Somme*, Ó hEithir's parodic recreation of commemorative events—"a version of a version"—questions the stability of myth and suggests that "certain forms of memory are divisive and destructive, and need to be dismantled" (133; 151). Indeed, the Ballycastle National Anthem debacle works to reverse the paradigm that Declan Kiberd sees of Ireland "not so much born as *made*, gathered around a few simple symbols [including] a flag, [and] an anthem" (101, emphasis his). The personal and communal is "constructed as an alternative myth that can be invested in instead" (Pine 135), and unity is no longer a precisely located goal.

Conclusion

Ó Laoire argues for song "as a veiled discourse, which may at once uphold the social system at the very moment it criticizes it" (208). Breandán Ó hEithir achieves this in *Lead Us Into Temptation* by recreating in parody the music of the 1949 Independence celebrations, especially in (non-)performance of the national anthem. In the commemorations, song and dance each occupy a contested space between tension and unity. Subversion occurs at each stage in the mimetic process. In the first stage, symbols selected from the "store of available elements" (*topoi*) are subject to "constant negotiation" (Honko 134). Brown notes that "internal cooperation is a necessity for groups to flourish" within and also in the face of external forces (3). However, the competition between musical voices blurs internal and external forces. While it may be seemingly obvious which participants constitute "us" and "them" within a group, if negotiation becomes a battle for control over ownership of symbols, then internal social cohesion can be threatened. At the second stage, vested interests and occluded voices inhibit the effective authorisation of the anthem. Fianna Fáil's refusal to partake in the Republic ceremonies, for example, constitutes a tacit refusal to grant authorisation on behalf of what the *Connacht Tribune* stated as "roughly half the nation" ("Fianna Fail Attitude" 5). However, in the final stage of mimesis the audience is affirmed by spontaneous music, and Councillor Macken's attempted manipulation is rejected. Though the *céilí* music is codified in an "official" sense, the crowd responds to the absence of coercion and achieves unity for the first time in the novel. After their ironic invocation of "our patriot dead" undermines the contested myth-complex of the anthem and its symbols, the authorisation of a spontaneous

musical community (the *who*) supersedes political affiliation (the *what*). Ó hEithir highlights the problematic nature of unity in the nascent nation, as control over symbols is momentarily but decisively wrested from the sphere of politics to be reinvested in the collective.

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