
Pearse Hutchinson's Ecopoetics on Spain (1950s-1960s)¹

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Abstract. The aim of this article is to examine Pearse Hutchinson's critical attitude towards the tourist development of Spain in the 1960s and 1970s through his poetic production. Hutchinson's poetic analysis of Spanish mass tourism will be divided into two separate phases of development and this article will pay particular attention to the second one, which was developed during his second sojourn in the country in the 1960s and 1970s. It will analyse how, during this period, Hutchinson's eco-poetics reveals an illuminating approach to the tourist industry, and how the latter intended to put a friendly face on a repressive military dictatorship. Tourism as a "mechanism of power" (Crumbaugh, *Destination Dictatorship* 20) was necessary for the regime in order to assure its authority. Hutchinson's poetry was able to reproduce a lament on the deleterious effects on the landscape. However, it will be seen how the poet avoids an idealisation of nature or the search of a pristine habitat. Certainly, in some cases, his poetry lampoons modern tourists' nostalgic search for an authentic place.

Key words. Pearse Hutchinson, Irish Poetry, Ecocriticism, Nature, Ecopoetics.

Resumen. El objetivo de este artículo es examinar la actitud crítica de Pearse Hutchinson presente en su poesía en referencia al desarrollo de España en las décadas de los sesenta y setenta. El análisis de la poesía de Hutchinson sobre el turismo masivo español se dividirá en dos fases, aunque el artículo prestará especial atención a la segunda (1960-1970). Se analizará el modo en que su ecopoesía revela un enfoque esclarecedor sobre la industria turística y el modo en que pretendía poner un rostro amigable a una dictadura militar. El turismo como un mecanismo de poder (Crumbaugh, *Destination Dictatorship* 20) era necesario para el régimen pues aseguraba su autoridad. La poesía de Hutchinson presenta un lamento en relación a los efectos nocivos del turismo sobre el paisaje. Sin embargo, se verá cómo el poeta evita la idealización de la naturaleza y en algunos casos, su poesía satiriza la búsqueda nostálgica de un lugar auténtico por los turistas modernos.

Palabras clave. Pearse Hutchinson, poesía irlandesa, ecocrítica, naturaleza, ecopoesía.

Seamus Heaney defined the sense of place in Irish identity as “a marriage between the geographical country and the country of the mind” (132). This assertion aligns with the post-war generation of Irish poets, collectively known as the Dublin Bay Renaissance (Bourke 158) in which Pearse Hutchinson (1927-2012) developed his poetic career. Hutchinson and his contemporaries, namely John Montague, Richard Murphy, Thomas Kinsella, Louis MacNeice and Patrick Kavanagh, questioned the collective religious morality by delving into the puritanism inherited from the 1940s, a progression which Michael Sheehy defined as “an inversion of Irish Ireland ideology” (qtd. in Goodby 19). Their poetry aimed at mirroring a nation moving forward and restoring a poetic succession that had broken down in the 1940s and 1950s, by reflecting on the past and exploring the new identity of a country struggling to discard ostracism, adapt to modernity and to a rampant capitalism. These authors also understood poetry as the expression of social anger together with the representation of a literary balance between a stereotypical and a mythical Ireland (Ní Chuilleanáin 34).

Ireland’s urge to integrate in the puzzle of the emerging European venture made these poets struggle to escape from the philistinism² of the Irish poetic tradition of this period. They developed a strong interest in poetic forms from abroad and they were “inquisitive about the activities of their foreign counterparts” (O’ Driscoll 48) as a response to the previous isolationist politics of Ireland. In fact, John Montague’s premise that “the wider an Irishman’s experience, the more likely he is to understand his native country” (qtd. in O’Driscoll 53), might be categorised as the motto of these authors. The liberal voice of the journal *The Bell* included contributions from these poets who “express[ed] emotions and ideas that [were] thoroughly modern but that [were] still informed with the strong muscle of ancient myth and lore” (Keefe 5).

Hutchinson’s kaleidoscopic image of Spain was also influenced by the transnational character of his poetic production. In fact, he recognised this having been stimulated by a range of poets and works from different countries like the mystical poet Jalal ad-Dan Rumi, the *Llibre d’Amic I Amat*, *The Bridge over the Drina* (1945) by Ivo Andric, and also Thomas Hardy, Wallace Stevens and Máirtín Ó Direáin (Coleman 228). In the vein of his Irish contemporaries, Hutchinson searched for a “post-war identity, [and he] saw the disillusionment of [his] contemporaries abroad an analogue for [his] own peculiar disillusionment at (and with) home” (O’Driscoll 59). As a result, Hutchinson’s sojourns in Spain intensely affected his identity as an “*Irish* poet, formed and informed, to a large degree, less by his experiences in Ireland or with Irish writers than by his encounters with European, particularly Iberian, sources” (Coleman and Johnston 9).³ Hence, in opposition to the basis of the Irish Literary Revival of early twentieth century, it was no longer possible for the Irish poets to establish the nation’s identity on the grounds of an “insular, nostalgic, rural, Gaelic-speaking past” (Matthews 76) in this period of transformation. Thus, this combination of the Irish tradition from the previous generation of poets, the English language and the openness to international influences provided a particular and renewed Irish poetic production that reflected the changes of Irish society. After travelling around different European countries in the 1940s, Hutchinson’s travels in Spain during the 1950s and the 1960s would be a determining element in his entire poetic production, as Spain was his “promised land” (Hutchinson, *Iberia*). The similarities in the modernisation of both Ireland and Spain were noticeable, and Hutchinson chose Barcelona as his residence between 1954 and 1957, and then from 1961 until 1967, and finally again during the summer of 1969.

Although Irish literature has historically had a relevant fondness for nature (Mcelroy 55), Hutchinson and the Dublin Bay Renaissance also reviewed the marked ruralism of the Irish literary tradition. However, in a territory whose identity is inextricably linked with dualisms (Ireland-England, rural-industrial, Celt-Saxon), pastoral poetry would still linger as a “means of establishing a national identity apart from England and addressing the consequences of English colonization” (Potts 7). Certainly, the presence of nature is abundant in Pearse Hutchinson’s poetry,⁴ especially about Spain. In fact, Keatinge (2011) mentions that

some of Hutchinson's poems would be a good example of contemporary ecopoetics (167); however, Hutchinson's poetic response to place, space and landscape has been unmapped so far. Accordingly, this article aims at analysing Pearse Hutchinson's poetry on Spain from the 1950s and 1960s from the perspective of ecocriticism and the way in which the Irish poet provides a literary image of Spain in the years of the regime's policy on industrial and tourist development. It will be conveyed how the rural-urban tension became a significant issue of his production. For this purpose, his collections of poetry (1963-2014) will be considered because allusions to Spain's *statu quo* of the 1950s and 1960s pervade his whole production. Additionally, some items belonging to Hutchinson's unpublished and partially uncatalogued material held at both Maynooth University and University College Cork, such as unpublished poems, letters, postcards and his personal memoirs, will also be considered.

In the 1950s, Franco's dictatorial regime was already settled, the development programme was at its peak and it continued promoting its "bombastic rhetoric of triumphalism, claiming victory on every hand, with Franco the true leader of all Western Civilization" (Payne 414). However, at the same time, the openness towards an international presence of Spain was fostered: Spain entered UNESCO in 1952, the United Nations in 1955, and signed the Pact of Madrid with the United States in 1953. By the mid-1950s, the tourist industry appeared profitable for the country; thus, the regime was determined to exploit this sector to attract wealth to the Iberian Peninsula. Manuel Fraga Iribarne, Minister of Information and Tourism from 1962 to 1969, allowed the reception of over 30 million northern Europeans a year by the end of the 1960s (Grugel and Rees 117). The former slogan "Visit Spain" was substituted by a more purposeful "Spain is Different" which put the emphasis on a romanticised ideal of the country.

However, simultaneously, the combination of self-censorship, exhaustion and fear that had kept most Spaniards acquiescent started to erode the regime. Opposition and social unrest grew during the last two decades of the dictatorship, together with a rise in the regionalist issue that had been considered by the regime a sporadic problem since the end of the Civil War in 1939. The end of isolationism was glimpsed. Encouragement of industrialisation through foreign capital, multinational investment and major economic development brought prosperity to the country, with the result of an "Americanization of life" (Grugel and Rees 146), implying the birth of consumerism. An improvement of the living standards was notable since travellers in the country had at their disposal new means of transportation, such as the airplane or car, and the inns were being replaced by hotels. Tour operators and new tourist guides to Spain flourished in Great Britain.⁵ The "sun and sand" type of tourism became the bait together with the promotion of the traditional attractions like the flamenco shows. Thus, the paradox of the "Spain is Different" slogan was exposed: a fictional pretension of "modernising" the country, but giving value to the old, commonplace, overused prejudices, the willingness to recuperate "traditional cultural stereotypes after years of embarrassed rejection" (Kelly 29).

Spain received mostly British visitors during this period and many travellers who wrote about the country depicted the territory in a vulgar and simplified way, which Carr devised as the "anti-Romantic vision of Spain" (19). If during the nineteenth century British representation of the country was entrapped within vocabulary and myth and romance and their narratives of encounter ensued a discourse based on their position as "Imperial Scouts" (Hooper xxii-xxiii), in the 1950s and 1960s, these travel writers rejected the glimpses of modernisation and industrialisation promoted by Franco. Authors such as Robert Graves, Laurie Lee, or Penelope Chetwode would encompass this literary image of Spain. Neil Evernden's concept of tourism and territoriality is particularly suitable to the British depiction of Spain since it delves into the relationship of the human being with the space, the territory and considers that:

The tourist can grasp only the superficialities of a landscape, whereas a resident reacts to what has occurred. He sees the landscape not only as a collection of physical forms, but as the evidence of what has occurred there. To the tourist, the landscape is merely a façade, but to the resident it is the outcome of how it got there and the outside of what goes on inside. (99)

As was the case with Ireland, where British travel writers “began to meditate it as a playground for sumptuous and unpolluted rustic leisure” (Flannery, “Ireland of the Welcomes 87), during this period Spain was depicted likewise. Conversely, the Irish literary representation of Spain conveys a non-properterian discourse, and Pearse Hutchinson’s poetry is an example.⁶ Hutchinson admitted in a letter from 1951 that he had come to Spain “with more than purely tourist effect” (Hutchinson 1951); thus, his poetry on the country aims at redrawing British travel writers’ notion of territoriality in Spain.

While it is true that the poet’s unpublished and uncatalogued letters and postcards from the 1950s disclose early remarks which may resemble British travel literature insofar as Hutchinson’s comments would give the impression of being especially focused on “the Spain of sun and beach”, the poetics of pedestrianism is clearly apparent in much post-war poetry. Furthermore, in a flâneur fashion, the poet discloses his reality after arriving in Spain: “I faced out to a penniless, foodless, friendless exploration of Barcelona, praying for benches” (Hutchinson, *Iberia* 2009). In 1950 he highlighted the “lovely beach and the usual charm of the people” (Hutchinson “Postcard to Cathleen Sara. 11 Sept”). Additionally, Granada’s Alhambra, a typical must-see for British tourists in Spain, was pictured as “the loveliest building in the world” (Hutchinson “Postcard to Cathleen Sara. 11 Sept”). Seville was another stop in Pearse’s Andalusian tour in 1950 and 1952; in a postcard sent to his mother, Hutchinson described the area as “the most wonderful place in the world. Everyday hotter than the one before. The Spanish the most vivacious people in the world. Saw bullfight yesterday. Very exciting, cruel on the horses” (Hutchinson “Postcard to Cathleen Sara. 4 Sept”). Hutchinson also depicted Spain during his visit to Toledo in 1952, when he described the lethargy and stagnation of the 1950s. He wrote, “we sat drinking coffee at a sidewalk café on the main square, at 10 o’c, watching the towns-people walk round and round endlessly in the age-old custom of the paseo=walk!, under a velvet blue sky that looked like a parody of the tropics” (Hutchinson “Postcard to Cathleen Sara”). Finally, the poem “Málaga”,⁷ praised the pervasive scent of jasmine that overwhelmed Hutchinson’s vision of the Andalusian city. Hutchinson was travelling in the tram and referred to the sea, the heat and the light. Málaga was described as a peaceful place:

The tranquil unrushed wine drunk on the daytime beach.
Or from an open room all that our sight could reach
was heat, sea, light, unending images of peace;
and then at last the night brought jasmine’s great release —
not images but calm uncovetous content,
the wide-eyed heart alert at rest in June’s own scent. (Hutchinson, *Tongue without Hands* 20)

Although his impressions during his first 1950 Spanish trips were more aligned with the British image of Spain, the act of walking invites digression, and his second, longer sojourn in Spain differs considerably from this insofar as a gradual proximity towards a more affectionate and sympathetic account of the implications derived from modernisation and development arises in his poetry. It was not until the early 1960s that this was reflected in his poetry, in which he avoids the “aesthetization of the landscape” (Byerly 53). This was because his enjoyment of the place became based more on the appreciation of the place itself than on a “secondary image” (54) similar to the one constructed by British travellers, which is

based on over-simplification of what is observed. His rejection of the mind-set of the archetypal holidaymaker was examined in the poem titled “A Man”. Here, Hutchinson criticised the foreign tourists’ tendency to focus on prejudices and generalisations when travelling to a different country:

A man is screaming in his bathroom,
and the neighbours mistake it for singing.
The door is locked, the windows barred,
but the noise goes through the walls,
and the neighbours mistake it for singing.
...
and a foreigner strolling in the street below
 marvels: “What exuberance, what brio
 these people have!
...
(Hutchinson, *Tongue without Hands* 13)

This excerpt might evidence Hutchinson’s dismissal of “idealising or moralising” (Hutton 58) when living in a foreign country. Thus, in his poetry about Spain (mostly published years after his Spanish experience of the 1960s) a deeper hindsight of the country was shown. In this second stage of Hutchinson’s Spanish experience in the 1960s, in which he “inhabit[ed] rather than visit[ed]” (M. Woods xv-xvi), the poet’s aim was to provide more truthful details about the places he visited because he focused on the effects of modernisation and tourist development on the Spanish place and population.

It can be claimed that Hutchinson’s poetry on Spain presents a notion of territoriality which is probably influenced by the identification of Spanish natural and also urban spaces with his native country. A significant example would be the poem “Belfry-Hunting”, in which Hutchinson branded 1960s British tourists in Palma de Majorca ironically as “Cockneys”, “belfry-hunters” and “lepidopterists” (*Watching the Morning Grow* 28), and despised their attitude towards the population for allegedly not disclosing any concern in creating a link beyond the tourist/place-of-interest dualism. In the poem, Hutchinson exposed by means of an epiphany the disruption of the peace he searched for⁸ (the exclamation “Prou, Recostracullons!”),⁹ which made him return to the unwanted reality of massive tourism. Similarly, Hutchinson’s poetry discussed Spain’s tourist affluence in “Eel”, which revealed his search of a hidden place in order to avoid the swarming tourists coming mainly from the United Kingdom or Germany:

That was in the mid-sixties, and in those days
many Catalan resorts, inundated for months by foreign
visitors, nonetheless contrived to keep, half-hidden away, a
real village, a native core. (Hutchinson, *Collected Poems* 272)

This excerpt shows how Hutchinson’s poetry is bereft of tourist objectification. His continuous interest in the history, culture, society and landscape of the land unveils his rejection to establish the visited country as a cultural other. Hutchinson stressed the negative vision of Spain uttered by British travellers due to their fascination with the search of a stereotyped and backward country. This idea would align with John Urry’s notion of tourist gaze as “socially organised and systematised” (1). The result would be a contrived and simplistic portrayal of the place. The substantial tourist development seemed to be designed by the regime with a two-fold aim: to banish the fame of a land hostile to foreigners and to undermine the idea of a country clinging to archaic traditions. This gave the false impression of a relaxation of the regime’s firm repression, and there was an evolution of the image of the

country since, being tourism central to the attempts to refashion Francoism, the tourist industry “put a friendly, hospitable face on a repressive military dictatorship” (Crumbaugh 5). However, tourism as a “modern mechanism of power” (20) was something necessary for the regime in order to assure its authority. During his second sojourn in Spain, tourism was regarded as a smokescreen by Hutchinson, who characterised it as the “grudging tambourine tourist prosperity” (*Expansions* 44). The erection of new public buildings and residences, part of Franco’s politics of *desarrollismo*,¹⁰ triggered the poet’s telling position against the subjugation hidden behind the curtain:

crumbs of truth from the rich liar’s table,
 flung to the cheated glaucoma’d heirs
 of men who told themselves ‘I’ve seen
 good people everywhere’,
 pre-signed referenda,
 all those paper facades
 of schools and hospitals camera’d fanfares opened,
 empty of desks, children, beds, sufferers,
 the children learning other things elsewhere... (Hutchinson, *Expansions* 44)

If literature of encounter on Spain previous to the 1950s and 1960s (specially from British authors) mirrored nature in the visited country with an anxious urge for restorative and purifying power, that was not the case after the tourist boom. Hutchinson conveys a dissimilar anxiety on the destruction of nature as a metaphor to talk about “society’s most general fears about its collective future” (Deitering 197). Buell’s idea of environmentalism as an instrument of social justice (643) aligns with Hutchinson’s poetry on Spain from the 1950s and 1960s insofar as he did not reflect on space and landscape as a “dehistorised spectacle” (Evernden 101). As an example, the significance of vernacular languages in Hutchinson’s poetry on Spain (in particular Catalan and Galician), which has been widely studied so far (Membrive, “‘Exiles at home’”; Alonso-Giráldez, “Scottish and Galician background”; Keatinge, “‘The Long-Banned Speech’”; Veiga, “‘Travelling South’”; M. Woods, “Jasmine and Lagarto”), relates to Jackson’s theory of vernacular landscape: “a folk landscape, attuned to the contours of the land and serving local needs. The official landscape, imposed upon the land without concern for local differences, is the only one we are usually able to see intellectually” (381-2). This landscape, usually destroyed by outside developers and economic forces, undergoes a process of obliteration similar to vernacular languages Catalan/Galician (in Spain) and Gaelic (in Ireland) by “imperial languages” (Spanish in Spain, English in Ireland). Thus, these heteroglossic territories are paralleled regarding a properterian use of the land.

If the poem “A Pity We’re Not Frogs” (*The Soul that Kissed the Body*) pictured frogs to represent oppression of the Catalan population during the 1960s: “The frogs in Spain/are doubtless well used to/nesting deep/deep” (Hutchinson, *The Soul that Kissed the Body* 63), the unpublished poem “Pedregalejos” (uncollected), reflects Hutchinson’s continuity with the cicada-chameleon-lagarto series.¹¹ This long poem is divided into two parts: the first part has a pastoral tone, and lavishes attention on simple details and elements of nature, such as jasmine smell (found repetitively in his poetry on the country), the river, the sea, and the sun. However, as the poem advances, the attention on the three animals increases and rejects sentimentalism as a representation of “a form of colonialism” (Elder 2):

When I had frothier illusions but no deeper love
 for that dry country your chameleon keeps
 renewing it my longing, for these restless people
 their compatriot, your chameleon, keeps renewing
 in my trust; the animal in your arm

burrowing towards the blue rough work-shirt
 your long flames of hair belied, flicking,
 hauling, gripping.
 Remember the five brothers all carpenters and all
 deaf-mutes, whose wit, whose crisp and lush
 of gesture humbled us; and your young Londoner
 who fused, with an apparent nonchalance,
 what Spaniards gawk at and pale tourists cringe from:
 the big red beard and the naked stump of arm;
 Zoe, when I invoke: not ever the senescent wrecks
 that summer showed among the foreign crowd,
 the rootless unaware that roots are false,
 their bridge, their brandy or their sad larguesse but
 chameleon, lizard, cicada – to keep reminding
 keep reminding me about a possible future,
 forget the jibes of those whose native north
 has never driven them further southward than
 their own groins, navels, or stoic mirrors,
 who, confident we cannot know strange countries,
 believe they know their own, or know themselves,
 quite adequately, who under greengage trees,
 taking root like men with a stake in the community,
 need no chameleons, or believe chameleons
 invisible. (Hutchinson, uncollected)

Cicada, Chameleon, Lagarto refer to different Spanish regions and this poem aims at praising the heterogeneity of the Spanish territory as a complex and multi-faceted place. This is, in line with Flannery's approach to Irish ecocritical literature in this period "re-enchants landscapes that have been evacuated of affective currency, but without retreating to ahistorical nostalgia" (Flannery, *Ireland and Ecocriticism* 5). The poem has an eco-political approach to tourism and constraints derived from the regime, and it describes the tension between modernisation and the manifest ruralism and backwardness. The poem also worships the cultural richness of the place, which was dispossessed for decades and presents a caustic criticism of the regime. Thus, Alexander and Cooper's (2013) theory on poetry and geography which claims that place functions "as a topic and tool, noun and verb, referent and representation" (3) can be applied to Hutchinson's poetry on Spain.

The poem "Like Trees, Like Islands" (*Watching the Morning Grow*) also delves into cultural diversity with a special focus on the proximity-remoteness paradoxical relationship between Ireland and England through the metaphorical use of trees and islands:

How near we seem –like trees, like islands.
 Like trees on their neighbouring islands
 That cannot uproot themselves and walk–
 No kneeling fingers–
 On water to meet. (Hutchinson, *Watching the Morning Grow* 37)

Similarly, Hutchinson's poetry on Spain is strongly related to the issue of naming because "the act of naming may itself be a part of the process of establishing a sense of place" (Evernden 101). Some of his poems emphasise the importance of naming particular streets or buildings in Barcelona in the Catalan language as an axiomatic statement in his plea for language freedom in the country as unnamings implied dispossession. His interest could be related to *dinnseanchas*, the traditional Irish poetry of place-names, "which imbue[s] place-

names with spiritual significance that resonates beyond the temporal” (Potts 139). This would evoke a precolonial past that extends to pre-regime Catalonia. Hutchinson’s geographical specificity is not conveyed to express a Romantic space-time situatedness but to assert the cultural and artistic validity of one-time marginalised places and traditions, as was the case of post-war poetry, and to show his attachment to the place.

The 1960s also brought a revival of the poetry written in Gaelic¹² as a demand of the historically displaced to use it as lingua franca. The persistence of English as the official and most used language was recognised and accepted by most of the population though. These bilingual writers “run the danger of being treated with suspicion by both traditions without gaining the entire respect of either” (Campbell 158). Although Hutchinson rejected the use of the Gaelic language when he left Ireland to travel around Europe, the poet, who became skilled at writing in Gaelic, published two collections of poems: *Faoistin Bhacach* (1968) and *Le Cead na Gréine* (1992). He later started considering Gaelic “the real world, a liberating world, mine” (Hutchinson, *The Soul that Kissed the Body* 15) after coming back to Dublin in 1969. The poem “Half-Truth” (*The Soul that Kissed the Body*) validates this idea:

(A part of my heart I gave to pride,
part in a sop I gave to sorrow;
in many beautiful ways I betrayed Ireland —
but lust for Gaelic herself destroyed my sense.) (Hutchinson, *The Soul that Kissed the Body* 19)

Hutchinson’s embrace of his native language would also shape his relationship with Spanish vernacular languages. The international openness of the new Irish government meant that most of Dublin Bay Renaissance poets also worked as translators, as was the case for Hutchinson. His first collection, *Tongue without Hands* (1963), alluded to the Spanish epic poem *Cantar de Mío Cid* (c. 1140-1207): “¡lengua sin manos, cómo osas hablar!” to refer to the disruption and sorrow caused when one culture imposes its ways upon another.¹³

The modernist desire to challenge tradition brought narratives in which the rural-urban divide positioned the city as a place of transformation, albeit fleeting. There is a convergence of “personal and public histories of a city” (Collins 92). This is applicable to Hutchinson’s poetry in general, and in particular about Spain and the issue of urban life. Initially, Hutchinson’s image of the difficulties resulting from the development of urban life and the growing transfer of the population from the country to the city was similar in his poetry on both Ireland and Spain. On the one hand, “Refusals” made a panoramic outlook of what he saw from the bus in Dublin, which exposed the clash between traditionalism and modernisation:

But now the lookers-right saw only light on water —
leading to patriot-plaque and playing-pitch,
and purchase-homes in acres of slum-clearance —
while we who turned our rain-soiled eyesight left,
towards Ultan’s hospital, the sunlit babies,
the locks where boys could bathe in better summers,
the film-censor’s office, and green trees down
the Leeson-Baggott vista proud as Europe, ... (Hutchinson, *Expansions* 28)

On the other hand, “Friday in a Branch Post-Office” depicted the difficulties of the Spanish population in confronting the social modernisation of the country, like bureaucracy:

Even young fingers are cold on winter mornings,
even young fingers may drop a stamp on a floor,

even old feet might stamp on a floor
 with anger.
 Old feet might need to walk out on a morning to feel
 still with it but don't give me that crap:
 if they sent the money to them they'd have more
 summer mornings to walk out on summer mornings.
 (Hutchinson, *Selected Poems* 34)

Hutchinson's urban poetics were refined in each collection. Contrary to British travellers from this period, who usually toured around the country to stop in cities generally recommended by previous visitors, Hutchinson visited unexplored places, as reflected in "Shanty Towns in Barcelona" (*Listening to Bach*), in which he provided an insightful description of the deprived areas of the city:

At the top, on level ground, we faced a street —
 unpaved but still a real street, with low-roofed, adobe-style
 buildings on both sides. And all these by-no-means detached
 small dwellings were blush-washed — in a lovely shade of blue,
 halfway between dark and light — a blue that was, or seemed,
 both tranquil and spectacular. More intense than the
 Mediterranean sky." (Hutchinson, *Listening to Bach* 34)

Pearse Hutchinson's deep understanding of Spain is exposed through his eco-poetics. It might be claimed that his image of the Spanish society of the 1950s and 1960s is utterly detached from the traditional authority of speech constructed by British travel writers. The similarities the poet found in both countries, in terms of historical subjugation and repression led to Hutchinson's close connection with Spain. His Iberian experience permeated his entire poetic production and influenced him in terms of identity as an Irish citizen and poet. This would match Wenzell's contention that "texts constructed in postcolonial nations must somehow reflect the post-coloniality of the subject" (*Emerald Green* 3).

Hutchinson's eco-poetics about Spain was especially dedicated to the illustration of an oppressed population, victim of a dictatorship formed by leaders who shaped a regime's collectivity. Hutchinson's transnational character and the openness to receive foreign influences in his poetic production, allowed for a representation of tourism in Spain that diverged from the traditional British depiction of the country. Although a premature representation of the territory initially showed a more superficial knowledge of the country, which bore resemblances to the British textual attitude, a second phase resulted in a sincere abhorrence of mass tourism derived from the regime's plan for *desarrollismo* and the implications of the politics of the motto "Spain is different". Hutchinson was able to comprehend the fallaciousness of the tourist boom and focused on unexplored places, as already mentioned, and everyday life situations. His poetry in general and his eco-poetics in particular pushed forward a strong attack on cultural and linguistic imperialism and defended the right of diglossic spaces to use their own language and promote their cultural inheritance. Thus, it could be argued that Hutchinson's particular interest in the issue of regionalism in Spain would also demonstrate a relevant separation from British narratives of encounter, which developed the generalised idea that the claim for independence of regions like the Basque Country, Catalonia or Galicia jeopardised a sense of patriotism and made the country ungovernable and fragmented.

Finally, Hutchinson's eco-poetics on Spain provided the representation of the foreign visitor whose experience is haunted by fragmentations of reality and a disintegrating natural space as the result of the policies promoted by the regime. His poetry is presented with a fresh lens through which he observes the interconnectedness of man and nature as well as the

emerging relevance of urban spaces, which are increasingly replacing natural spaces. Hutchinson's views towards Spanish rural and urban places is the justification for his criticism towards the final decades of Franco's dictatorship. This would unveil Hutchinson's importance among his Irish contemporaries from the Dublin Bay Renaissance as an eco-poet who prompted a new way of seeing and appreciating natural spaces. To sum up, Hutchinson's poetry about Spain is a call to reconnect the human being and natural spaces beyond the appreciation of Spain as an Arcadian spot or a dehistoricised location. As a result, his Spanish eco-poetics intends to present the value of environmentalism as a tool for social justice. Thus, this article may lay a building block to subsequent studies on Hutchinson's unpublished poems on Spain from an eco-critical angle.

Notes

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² This term refers to a lack of or indifference to cultural values, intellectual pursuits or aesthetic refinement.

³ This assertion is in line with the premise that the Irish poet of this period was frequently able to "reconstruct" his life and sometimes his roots in other places, and has a special ability to "invent", "imagine" or "rewrite" Ireland. In the words of Heaney, this is "the ability to live in two places at the same time, being in time or in space" (Praga Terente 280).

⁴ Actually, his first poem, published in the journal *The Bell* when he was just fifteen years old is titled "The Old Tree".

⁵ The tour operator Horizon Holidays flew the first charter-paneloads to the Costa Brava and the Costa del Sol and in 1954, and the guide *Everybody's Travel Guide to Spain* was published in London (Mitchell 165).

⁶ Other Irish writers who travelled to Spain during Franco's regime and avoided a simplified image of the country were Walter Starkie, Kate O'Brien, Maura Laverty or Aidan Higgins.

⁷ Originally published in *The Irish Times* in 1957.

⁸ Pearse Hutchinson recurrently used epiphanies in his poetry which broke the development of the poem and had a shocking effect on the reader.

⁹ A Catalan expression meaning something similar to "Stop, damn it!"

¹⁰ Franco's politics on the economic and social development of Spain was known as *desarrollismo*. This plan (implemented in three phases) included the promotion of foreign tourism, an intense rapid industrialisation of specific areas of the country, and a modernisation of the economy based on an unbalanced trade system.

¹¹ Pearse Hutchinson's poems titled "This Country" (first published in 1963) and "In Granite, in Curry, Cicada" (unpublished poem PP/10/2/1/21/10), focus on the same notion of linguistic, cultural and territorial dispossession of Spain in general, and of Catalonia and Galicia in particular.

¹² Taoiseach Lemass raised the question of compulsory Gaelic in the schools during his campaign to become the head of the government. The opening of the New Abbey Theatre in 1966 and the National Gallery, together with the economic investment in the film industry, were facts that contributed to the revival of the Gaelic language.

¹³ Another poem from the same collection, titled "Look no Hands", aligns to this idea. John Montague also delved into the notion of cultural and linguistic dispossession with the poem "The Grafted Tongue", included in his collection *The Rough Field* (1972).

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