a special affinity as he considers himself a European, a belief which Herbert expresses for example in his volume of essays entitled Barbarian in the Garden. However, we shall be interested here with the impact such interests had on Heaney's poetry for example on his Station Island (1984) with its wealth of cross-references.

When we look upon Heaney's oeuvre over forty years after his literary debut, it seems obvious that the poems chart his development towards a place in European literary tradition, one which he refers to so often in his interviews and prose writings. Yet this is a conclusion we can draw only from the complete work. His way to Europe of ideas and culture was very long and started in Mosbawn, a small village in Northern Ireland. Major part of our analysis shall constitute an attempt to retrace it.

The very first Heaney's poem that directly draws upon mythology “Antheus” published in 1966 (Heaney returned to the theme in 1975 in his poem “Hercules and Antheus” — Jerzy Jamieiewicz comments on this preoccupation and calls this myth one which is constantly on Heaney's mind) suggests a theme which shall reverberate throughout his works: a vivid interest in and connection with his native land. Rita Zoutenbier commented best upon this preoccupation in the following words:

The fact that Heaney's poetry is so much tied up with a particular locale may seem a limitation, but his feeling for his own territory is a source of emotion for the poet, and makes it come alive.

The first volume of Heaney's poems Death of a Naturalist, published in 1966, shows the world from the point of view of a "big-eyed" child that starts describing the world around him. The themes are taken from the little "townland" of which the dam "is the heart". The world described in these poems is limited as much as it is a child's world. Yet the perspective is not at all childish — the lyrical subject observes his own childhood from a distance of both space and time, understanding after many years what then seemed incomprehensible. This distance is stressed by the complex language of the poems.

A theme which will become so typical for Heaney's later works appears in the poem "The Diviner" — that of seeking things under the surface of water or under ground which turns metaphorically into constant digging for the past — one which shall be developed most fully in the volume North.

In the very end of the volume the lyrical subject finds out that "to stare into some spring is beneath all adult dignity". These words may suggest rejection of any spring, also the Hebron from the title of the poem, the spring of invention, the spring of Muse, yet the poet shall return to it many times just as he shall return to the springs and wells of his childhood. It is also important to read this poem in specifically Irish context — springs, rivers and wells were for the pagan Celts places of worship. He lifts up his eyes from the water though what he sees around himself is still only the most imminent reality. As for the map-making process, Death of a Naturalist leaves...
us not so much with a map as with a rough plan of hometown drawn from memory after many years.

The second volume of poetry *Door into the Dark* which Heaney published in 1969 opens not just a door but many doors leading to a variety of subjects which shall occupy the poet in the following years and which add still new details to his personal map of the world. The poem "Peninsula" marks the beginning of his literary voyages which allow the poet to see his native island more closely and represent it in his poetry. Later on such voyages shall take him to more distant lands. The voyages, usually in a car, can be read also as a search for personal mythology, a mythology "with a human face" as it is in the poem "Girls Bathing, Galway 1965" where the myth of the birth of Venus is recalled. "Requiem for the Croppies" marked the poet's interest in places connected with Irish history such as Vinegar Hill, the location of the crucial battle in the Irish Rebellion of 1798. "Night Drive" is the first poem to allude to Heaney's voyages beyond Ireland, yet the impression he gets of France is only that of "ordinariness".

Poems included in "A Lough Neagh Sequence" also from the volume *Door into the Dark* introduce two symbols which shall later reappear in Heaney's works. The poem "Relic of Memory" mentions lake water which like the bog can petrifry wood and thus becomes a storage of the past. "Beyond Sargasso" introduces the symbols of cel and salmon - fish which regardless of all possible difficulties return to their native waters. The latter fish is also an Old Irish symbol of wisdom, featuring prominently in several Irish myths.

Poem "Shoreline" marks a change (a very rare one) of the poet's point of view. The level of vision in the poems is usually kept on normal eye level or that of windows of a car. The two early exclamations are "Digging" (the poet is here situated above the described events which, as he puts it, take place "under his window") and "Outlaw" (the lyrical I observes things "from my lofty station"). In "Shoreline" we are able to see the whole island at once. Later poems, however, return to the normal level of vision. The poem is also important because it introduces for the first time references to the Viking past of Ireland. Yet the most important is the big finale of the volume, poem entitled "Bogland" - the first effect of Heaney's search for history and mythology which shall be continued in the "Bog Poems" included in the following volumes.

The two volumes concentrate almost exclusively on Ireland. Heaney adds still new places to his mental map yet whenever he mentions anything that came from outside Ireland, it is only because of the traces that were left in his native country. The third volume *Wintering Out* published in 1972 initially seems to continue earlier themes as if regardless of the promises given by *Door in the Dark*. A new theme, though still within his preoccupation with Ireland, is the poet's "interest in place names as recordings of the past". This interest which brings to mind the play *Translations* by Brian Friel can be seen in such poems as "Anabaishe", "Toome Brough" or "A New Song" (Derrygarve). It can be exemplified by a quotation from the following volume *Field Work*, a poem entitled "The Singer's House"

When they say Carrickfergus I could hear
The frosty echo of saltminers' picks...
So I say Greenvale.
And its music hits off the place.

The poet attempts to dig out the history of his country from the names of places. It is striking that the interest in history of the language (visible for example in "Bone Dreams") is rendered in terms taken from geology and geography which are also used in "Act of Union" and which remind one of the famous poem of W. H. Auden "In Praise of Limestone".

It is the digging that finally provides the poet with new themes and makes him transcend the boundaries of his native island - that of the bog people and the bog itself. These themes are first approached in "The Tollund Man". The poem was an effect of reading a book by a Danish archaeologist P. V. Gobaent entitled *The Bog People.* From the point of view of our map-making process these works mark a departure from an Irish-centred optics - from this moment on Ireland is finally perceived by the poet as a part of Europe. The first European connections in Irish history that Heaney presents in his poems are these of the Viking states established on the island in the Middle Ages.

These themes are continued in the 1975 volume *North*. Before publishing the volume keeping the promise made in the opening line of "The Tollund Man", [Heaney] had in fact visited Denmark, in October 1973, and had seen in the museum at Silkeborg there the preserved bodies described in *The Bog People.*

*North* finally opens a wider vision of Scandinavia and the Vikings, a vision which surprisingly aims not at a presentation of the glorious or more often gory past. The Viking past becomes for Heaney a source for contemporary violence.

The Viking past in this poem becomes not only analogous situation to the present, but one from which contemporary combatants could learn a valuable lesson - only as through an act of imagination can the current cycle of vengeance be broken.

In the volume, also according to Thomas Forster:

Heaney looks more typically to Iceland, lying as it does only a few degrees west of the north from Ireland, rather than to Norway or Denmark for the Viking heritage yet the fact is that the very poem "North" as well as other "Viking" pieces draw upon all the Scandinavian countries. Placing Ireland on his mental map in reference -

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6. Ibid., p. 63.
to these countries, Heaney attempts quite successfully to escape from the established system of reference within which Ireland seems to be bound: Gaelic past and British or English today. Ireland is "only a few degrees west" of Ireland just as Great Britain is only a few degrees east.

This interest in the Medieval past with Scandinavian roots was completed most fully in the translation of Beowulf, published in 1999. Ironically, the poem the hero of which comes from modern Sweden and the action of which takes place in contemporary Denmark and Sweden is also the national English epic. Escaping from Ireland to Scandinavia, Heaney found a circuitous way back to England.

In 1969, Heaney made a tour of France and Spain with the money from the Somerset Maugham Award. Memories of this voyage return in the poem "Summer 1969" (from "Singing School" sequence also included in the 1975 volume North). In this poem the poet is

at a remove from the actual situation, watching television during a holiday in Spain, and hearing the news from home, the post retreats to the Prado to look at "Shootings of the Third of May", a painting by Goya, which is a more real representation of violence than the impersonal "real thing" on television.

Consequently, Heaney remembers Spain (in itself not very interesting just as "ordinary" France he had described few years earlier) as the place where the news of the events of August 1969 first reached him. This place is put on his mental map, just as those mentioned before, only as such, as its actual (at least from Heaney’s point of view) connection with Ireland is nil.

Only when such a connection is more pronounced as it is in "The Wool Trade" – a poem concerning Ireland and Flanders and their common place in the economy of the Renaissance Europe – a country starts to deserve a closer look. Similarly the Alps that appear in Field Work (1979) deserve a few words only because of Irish oysters which were transported across these mountains.

This attitude towards other geographic locations dominates Heaney’s works of this period. Gradually, direct connections with Ireland are supplemented as a source of descriptions by memories of visited places. It can be brought back by animals (in "The Other" that of Tuscany and in "The Skunk" that of California) where Heaney first lectured in 1970 which work just as souvenirs shall in the "Shell Life" sequence from the volume Station Island (1984).

The poet visits still new places and countries yet for his poetry their importance is limited either to their connection with Ireland or by bringing to his mind Irish themes. Heaney, with an impressive knowledge of history, culture and literature, as a poet remains an Irishman to the bone – like his favourite Anteus he can draw strength only from his native soil. Non-Irish themes appear quite exclusively in his non-poetic works or

his translations. It is probably quite advisable to compare him to James Joyce with his almost insanely intense interest in Irish matters which continued for decades after the novelist had settled down in Paris. He is an Irishman, born of Ireland – an island which is "looking outward to sea, and inexcusably in upon itself".

In the volume Sweeney Astray published in 1983 a free translation of the medieval Gaelic poem Buile Suibhne finally makes this personal map of Ireland complete. Mad escapes of the desolate king cursed by an offended saint and transformed into a bird make him travel all over the island and commemorate each place where he stops with a lay. The myth is also referred to in the next volume of Heaney’s poems Station Island (1984) even though the number of sources here is largely by far. Bernard O’Donoghue claims that:

Obviously there is textual cross-reference to the Sweeney myth in the Station Island sequence but in addition the book contains quotations from or references to Greek myth, Hannel and Greed, the Bible, the Church liturgy and catechism, Milton, Chekov, Dante, Hamlet, Brian Moore’s Catholic, Hardy, Daniel Cokery, Joyce, Edith Nesbeth, Paul Muldoon, John Montague, T. S. Eliot and no doubt more.

Such a wealth of reference suggests quite obviously that the fairly limited interest Heaney ever revealed in Europe as a geographical entity was by the early 1980s almost thoroughly replaced by an interest in Europe understood as common cultural heritage.

An effect of such a development may be found in the 1987 volume The Haw Lantern where the poet returns to his personal cartography. This, however, is a cartography of ideas and not of actual places. This new arrangement of his personal map of Europe became Heaney’s way of speaking up about current political subjects. Even though he had been well known because of his political poems concerning the situation in his native Northern Ireland, in several poems in The Haw Lantern collection he found a more allusive and probably more successful way to tackle problems especially of the Eastern part of the continent.

Lack of directness serves here as a powerful political statement. Europe of Heaney’s fictional map is not divided, quite on the contrary, it is united by common heritage that goes beyond current political situation. As this vision was still a thing of the future when the volume was published it opens up a new map of Europe instead, a map which consists exclusively of ideas and not of territories and boundaries. Only such a map may include places like "Parable Island", Republic of Conscience, Land of the Unspoken and Canton of Expectation.

From 1990 on, European themes have appeared directly only in Heaney’s translations. The use of the word "only" is quite obviously unjust as the list of these translations includes The Cure at Troy (1990) – a version of Sophocles’ play Philoctetes, Jan Kochanowski’s Lamenti (translated by Seamus Heaney and Stanislaw Baranczak)

9 H. Corcoran op. cit., p. 250. The award is a literary prize awarded to the best writer under the age of thirty-five of a book published in the previous year. The prize was instituted in by William Somerset Maugham; the award (currently £6000) is to be spent on foreign travel.

What map emerges from the works of such an unconventional cartographer? It is not "the official map of the moon" he wrote about in the poem "Westerling" nor that of any other planet, it is a personal map of a poet. A map drawn in a way any cartographer would laugh at but yet they all at least agree that shapes of countries on different maps vary greatly if we change the point of reference. For Heaney the centre is always Ireland, not specifically his native village of Mossbawn.

In his case Ireland forms the first circle where even the smallest village deserves a mention if only it is personally important to the author. The second circle are neighbouring countries, and a strange map it is, as it includes small Danish towns and almost completely forgets England. The third circle includes the lands that are beyond, but this part is mostly blank space dotted here and there by places remembered from the author's life or places where his friends live.

It is a map drawn with something of a child's perspective – where what is near seems great and what is distant seems small and unimportant. A map which reflects Heaney's life, first the sheltered and rather poor life in an Ulster village, then Belfast, a gradual widening of scope both in physical sense (when publications and prizes allowed him to travel first to Europe and then further on) and earlier and probably more important when education and reading opened to him the landscapes of Europe understood as a cultural heritage.

Heaney's mental map of Europe seems to consists of two separate and yet overlapping maps. The first of them is an Irishman's map governed by Irish interests where Ireland always comes first, then there are the British Isles, followed by parts of Europe with direct connections to Ireland – such as Scandinavia or Flanders. This is a map in which politics plays an important role and the poet finds it his duty to take a stand on political matters. The most important issue is naturally the division of Ireland and conflicts it generates. The second map is that of an educated European at the beginning of a new millennium, it is a map of cultural connections rather than political divisions. One which includes the roots of European culture such as Greece, Rome or Tuscany, combined with a map of Europe of personal experience and literary friendships – such as the East: Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Russia. They differ and yet they show the same continent. They combine to make a single personal map of Seamus Heaney. On the first of them Tara and Holyhead play the most vital part while on the other Helicon and the Mount Olympus are by far more important.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


