

**T.C.**  
**ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY**  
**INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**IRISH IDENTITY IN SEAMUS HEANEY SELECTED POEMS**

**THESIS**  
**Hawnaz Ismail Ado ADO**

**Department of English Language and Literature**

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**Thesis Advisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Dr. Öz Öktem**

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İSTANBUL AYDIN ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ

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*To my lovely mother and whoever appreciates this work.*



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**November 2015**

**HAWNAZ ISMAIL ADO**

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## İRLANDALI KİMLİĞİNİ SEAMUS HEANEY'NİN SEÇİLMİŞ ŞİİRLERİNDE

### ÖZET

İşbu araştırma, Nobel ödülünü kazanan Seamus Heaney'nin şiirlerinde İrlandalı kimliğini analiz etmeyi hedeflemektedir. Birinci bölümde, Kuzey İrlanda'da siyasal krizlerin tırmandığı ile ırkçılık kavgaları yaşanan dönemde Heaney'nin yetiştiği ile biyografisi incelenmektedir. Bölümün ikinci kısmı ise İrlandalının tarihi ile kültürel arka planını ele almaktadır. İkinci bölüm, konusunda Edebi gözden geçirmeye odaklanmıştır. Üçüncü bölüm İrlandalı kimliğini, Britanyalı sömürgeciler ile Protestan ittihatçılar tarafından nasıl gizlendiğini ve biçimlendiğini incelemektedir. Dördüncü bölüm, Natüralistin Ölümü, Karanlığa Geçen Kapı, Kışlama ve Kuzey kapsamak üzere İrlandalı kimliği ile kavga meseleleri üzerinde duran Heaney'nin ilk dört şiir derlemesini kapsamaktadır. Bu dört şiir kitabından seçilen şiirler, bataklık şiirleri için bir zincire benzerler. Bataklık şiirleri, bataklık insanları üzerindedir, küreye göre, Danimarka ile Hollanda bataklardan kaynaklanan kuzeybatı Avrupa'nın şiddet meyilli kültürleri için arkeolojik delil olarak erkekler ile kadınlar öldürülmekte idiler.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kimlik, İngiliz Kolonizasyon, İrlandalı kimliği, Dini Çatışmalar, Bog Şiirler.



## IRISH IDENTITY IN SEAMUS HEANEY SELECTED POEMS

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyse the Irish identity in the poems of the Nobel Prize winner Seamus Heaney. Chapter One examines Heaney's biography, growing up in a period of intense political turmoil and sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland. The second section of the chapter is about the historical and cultural background of Irish. The focus of Chapter Two is a Literature Review on the topic. Chapter Three examines the Irish identity and how it was obscured and shaped by the impact of British colonisers and Protestant Unionists. Chapter Four covers the first four collections of Heaney's poems on Irish identity and the conflict, including *Death of the Naturalist*, *Door into the Dark*, *Wintering Out* and *North*. The selected poems of these four collections are like a chain for the bog poems. The bog poems are about bog people, according to Glob, archeological evidence, men and women were killed for the violent tendency of the cultures of northwest Europe from bogs in Denmark and Ireland. Heaney used them as a symbol to Irish identity by comparing them to the victims of Northern Ireland. Chapter Five is the conclusion of the thesis.

**Key words:** Identity, British Colonisation, Irish Identity, Religious Conflicts, Bog Poems.

## 1-INTRODUCTION

Irish identity was in a state of crisis from the nineteenth century up until the opting out of the Irish Free State Constitution Act of 1922 by the Parliament Northern Ireland. It then developed as a conflict between the Catholic and Protestant communities. The notion of cultural identity being “at the heart of the Northern Ireland crisis” (Lundy and Mac Polin, 1992: 5) became a part of conventional thinking. The fraught history of Ireland, marred by conflict arising from British imperialism and its impact on identity, became the subject matter which informed and influenced Seamus Heaney’s poems and made him a spokesman for Irish identity.

In his poems, Heaney shed light on the darker aspects of social and political violence in Northern Ireland. Although Heaney was not a political poet as such, his language became political as a result of Northern Ireland’s social and political turmoil. In an interview with Brian Donnelly in 1977, Heaney discussed the relationship between poetry and politics brought about by the Northern Ireland conflict. In his poems, he used the metaphors of ‘digging’ and ‘roots’ to represent the search for selfhood and identity. Heaney said that:

The Northern Ireland conflict forced the poet to reveal the roots of the conflict’ and to ‘speak up for their own side’ [...] forc[ing] every one of them, myself included, to quest closely and honestly into the roots of one’s own sensibility, into the roots of one’s sense of oneself, into the tribal dirt that lies around the roots of all of us. It has forced us to look back, and it has also forced us to do something even rarer - to look forward and say not so much ‘Who am I, who was I?’ but ‘Who really do I want to be, what kind of man do I want to be?’ (Donnelly, 1977: 60)

The issue of Irish identity arose alongside historical conflict following the British colonisation of Ireland, later turning into a matter of religious, social and cultural identity, and becoming a more intense focal point with the political violence of the early

1970s. For Catholics, it was important to define themselves as Irish and for Protestants, British. This conflict of identity prompted Seamus Heaney to search for Irish identity through his volumes of poetry, *Death of the Naturalist*, *Door into the Dark*, *Wintering Out* and *North*. The bog mixed with the work of Seamus Heaney as a usable subject for his collections of poetry and it became the subject matter of cultural identity. Heaney also tried to develop his own myth of Irish national identity and by using “our predicament” he refers to the Troubles in Ireland “a search for images and symbols adequate to our predicament” (Collins, 2010:54).

The first use of the ‘digging’ metaphor appears in his first collection, *Death of the Naturalist*. Heaney dug deep into the earth to search for the bog bodies. He ended his second collection, *The Door into the Dark*, with the ‘Bogland’ poem, a precursor of his following collections, *Wintering Out* and *North*, which were fully devoted to the subject of the bog people and the history of Irish. He showed that how their body preserve in the bog land by English invaders as Anglo-Saxons during the Iron Age and continue to his time. The relation between the first four collections and its emphasis on the bog bodies that have accumulated in Irish history to reveal the national identity of Ireland. Heaney thought, “I have always listened for poems, they come sometimes like bodies come out of a bog, almost complete, seeming to have been laid down a long time ago, surfacing with a touch of mystery. They certainly involve craft and determination, but chance and instinct have a role in the thing too”(Heaney, 1980:34). For Heaney the bog poems in his first four collections are a metaphor for the Irish identity. The poems are ‘Bogland’, ‘Tollund Man’, ‘Bog Queen’, ‘Grabualle Man’, ‘Punishment’, ‘Strange Fruit’ and ‘Kinship’ of the four collections *Death of the Naturalist*, *Door into the Dark*, *Wintering Out* and *North*, the latter is the most important one. In it, Heaney writes during the Conflicts in Northern Ireland. By using the bog people as the victims of ritual sacrifices in the Iron Age that are in a Danish museum, Heaney compared them to the sacrifices of Northern Ireland whom they killed for the religious victims. With use of history and myths Heaney employs the metaphor of digging to symbolise a search for his Irish identity. Whenever he talked about Irish history the point turned to political and British colonisers, so that through his poems Heaney can be seen as a personal poet that has

been changed into a political poet and rooted his 'Irishness' that searched for Irish identities and he used the bog people as a symbol of Irish identity.

### **1.1 Seamus Heaney's Biography**

The American poet Robert Lowell described Seamus Justin Heaney as "The most important Irish poet since Yeats". Heaney was born on April 13, 1939, on the family farm called Mossbawn, about thirty miles from Belfast, in County Derry, Northern Ireland. He was the eldest son of nine children, two girls and seven boys to Patrick and Margaret Kathleen Heaney. Although Heaney's family as a Catholic family was lived in an area in a very good relation with Protestant neighbours, Heaney felt the tension between the two groups and within himself as they had different views on politics and religion besides the difference of language and literary traditions. Heaney's formal education began with attending the local Anahorish School from 1945 until 1951, a mixed elementary school that had both Catholic and Protestant students. The school principal was Bernard (Mister) Murphy. He began to study Latin there with Mister Murphy, as he mentions in *Station Island*. (Parker, 1993:1)

The influence of his childhood on his poems cannot be underestimated. His mother and father in particular provided a source of inspiration for many poems. Heaney's childhood was mostly a happy one; he described it as 'den', like an enclosed life. As the eldest child and son of his family, Heaney carried with him much of his parents' aspirations and hopes. In an interview with Philip Larkin, Seamus Heaney was asked why he had chosen poetry. He answered, "I didn't choose poetry. Poetry chose me" (Hope, 2002: 12). So the situation of his area made him to be a poet. In the dedicatory poem of *Death of the Naturalist* Heaney wrote:

Between my finger and my thumb  
The squat pen rests; snug as a gun. (*Digging*)

Heaney didn't follow the way of life of his father; he chose a pen instead of a spade to dig.

In another way, Heaney could transform the use of pen for violence purpose to its use for cultivation instead of a spade. He just wanted to follow men like his ancestors

metaphorically by digging with pen. Helen Vendler as a critic valued Heaney's choice as a writer in which he refused the idea of writing as aggression. Vendler as a critical supporters of Heaney's poem said "The disturbing thing about Irish "Digging" is that the Irish Catholic child grew up between the offers of two instruments: the spade and the gun. "Choose", said the two opposing voices from his culture: "Inherit the farm," said agricultural traditions; "Take up arms," said Republican militarism" (Hope, 2002: 12).

Heaneys education might have stopped there if he had been born in an earlier period and followed in his father's footsteps, working on the farm. Perhaps he would have gone to become a priest, as it was the hope for the eldest son of many Irish Catholic families. However the Northern Ireland Education Act of 1947, as a scholarship made Heaney to continue his education. He passed his eleven-plus examination and won a scholarship to St. Columb's College in Londonderry, where he was a boarder for six years. Heaney absorbed many materials from A level Latin and English besides the love of reading comic books and great literature. His fellow pupils included John Hume and Seamus Deane. The latter first met Seamus Heaney at St. Columb's in 1950. Seamus Deane described his school in this way:

St. Columb's college is a diocesan grammar school for boys in the city of Derry, or Londonderry (as the official title had it). Derry is only a few miles from the border that separates Northern Ireland from the Republic of Ireland. It has a historical resonance for Protestants, because they endured a famous siege there in 1689 by the Catholic armies of King James II, and also for Catholics, because between 1922 and 1972 the city was notorious for discriminating against the local Catholic majority. (Hope, 2002: 11)

When Heaney was fourteen in 1954 his family moved to The Wood House, which was in the other end of the parish from Massbawn. It was the house his father had been brought up in and which he inherited from his uncle. This change of place was as a result of the death of one of his brothers (Christopher) in 1953 in a road accident close to the house. Heaney commemorated the accident in one of his earliest poems, 'Mid-Term Break'. Everything from the past appeared in his poetry - the innocence, violence and freighting of the past, but Heaney was still sufficiently self-conscious to avoid emotional representations of the past early days. The continuation of his success led to Heaney going to Queen's University, Belfast in 1957. He gained a first class honours in English

Language and Literature when he graduated in 1961. While he was there the department chairman, Peter Butter, encouraged him to go to Oxford for graduate study, but Heaney chose instead to study for a teacher's training diploma from St. Joseph's College of Education in Belfast which he took in 1962. His first published poem appeared in 1959 in the Queen's University student magazine. Patrick Kavanagh's achievement, which influenced Heaney, was "to make our subculture - the rural outback - a cultural resource for us all: to give us images of ourselves" (Corcoran, 1986:20). This character became a major literary reference for Heaney. Under this new influence, Heaney began to write his poem, 'Tractor', in November 1962 which was published in Belfast Telegraph. (Corcoran, 1986:20)

After graduating from St. Joseph's, he took a position at St. Thomas's Intermediate School as a teacher. There, the headmaster and short story writer Michael McLaverty reminded him to be aware of the poetry of Patrick Kavanagh. He was also drawn to Hopkins and Keats, and discovered many Irish poets like John Hewitt, Thomas Kinsella, John Montague as well as the Englishmen Ted Hughes. Kavanagh's poem made Heaney to find the countryside northern life. This gave him the idea that his own experience could support a subject matter for poetry. This encouragement made him write in the same year. The next two years after his graduation were very important to his development as a poet. In 1963, Heaney took up a post as lecturer in English at St. Joseph's. This brought him into contact with Philip Hobsbaum and the "Belfast Group". This group was part of the many efforts among Northern Irish intellectuals to protect and bring back Ulster's cultural tradition. One of the activities of the group involved poets reading and critiquing each other's work. Besides Heaney and Hobsbaum, the members of the group included Michael Longley, Derek Mahon, Stewart Parker and James Simmons, and later Paul Muldoon and Frank Ormsby. In the spring of 1963, "Mid-Term Break" was published by Kilkenny Magazine after the death of Heaney's brother Christopher. (Corcoran, 1986:24)

Heaney's first slim collection, *Eleven Poems*, was published for the Belfast Festival in November 1965. Heaney married Marie Divlin in 1965 and they went on to have three children. *Death of the Naturalist*, his first full-length poetry collection, was published by Faber in May 1966. This book received the Gregory Award for Young Writers, the

Geoffrey Faber Prize and lastly the Somerset Maugham Award. During the same period he began publishing essays such as in the *New Statesman*, the *Listener* and the *Guardian*. In these essays Heaney focused on political rather than cultural issues. (Bloom, 2003:19)

The 5 October 1968 saw a civil rights march in Derry City, the first major violent clash of the 'troubles'. The Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association was formed to call for "one man one vote" and to remove other objections against Catholics. After this situation, Heaney wrote a piece in the *Listener* entitled 'Old Derry's Walls' in sympathy with the marchers. In June 1969 Heaney's second volume, *Door into the Dark*, was published and won the Somerset Maugham Award. The same year British troops were sent into Belfast and Derry. *Door into the Dark* was a very important work for Heaney's career. In the autumn of 1966, Heaney was successfully worked as lecturer in English at Queen's University till 1970. Then he became a guest lecturer in 1970-1971 at the University of California in Berkeley. He returned to Northern Ireland in September 1971. In August 1972, Heaney moved with his family to a cottage rented from Saddlemyer in Glanmore, County Wicklow, where he began work as a freelance writer. (Bloom, 2003:18)

Heaney had already mentioned Bog Land in the last poem in *Door into the Dark* as the entrance of the bog poems. Then after on 30 January 1972 another tragedy held in Derry called Blood Sunday, where thirteen civilians were killed in clashes with the British army. To continue the bog poems and the tragedy of Blood Sunday, Heaney published *Wintering Out* in November 1972. He tried to search for Irish identity and symbolising the bog as the Irish identities. He received the Irish American Cultural Foundation Award for *Wintering Out*. Moreover he mentioned this tragedy in 'Casualty' in his fifth volume, *Field Work*. Prose-poetic sequence *Station* was published by The Belfast /Honest Ulsterman Press that competed in May and June 1974 as a pamphlet. (Bloom, 2003:19)

Heaney took up a position at Carysfort Teacher Training College in Dublin in 1975, and thereafter moved his family to Sandymount. Heaney's friendship with American poet Robert Lowell started when he was interviewing guests for a programme called *Imprint*.

In 1975 *North* was published, which was Heaney's first work to deal directly with the Troubles of Northern Ireland. After living in America, he started to publish *Field Work*, which was influenced by the poetry of Robert Lowell. Then Heaney became the Head of the English Department at Carysfort besides spending a semester teaching poetry at Harvard University as a visiting professor in 1979-1981. Heaney contracted with Harvard University for five years, one semester for each year teaching courses in British and Irish modern poetry, while in Ireland teaching a workshop in creative writing. In 1988, he was elected as a Professor of Poetry at Oxford. This position at Oxford was also for five years and required three public lectures each year. Seamus Heaney joined the Board of the Field Day Company<sup>1</sup> Heaney founded with his close friend, the playwright Brian Friel, in 1980. The same year 'Among Schoolchildren', a lecture, was published. Heaney published many works between 1984 to 1989. Heaney's publications continuous, he published *New Selected Poems (1966-1987)* and *The Cure at Troy*. In 1991, *Seeing Things* was published. With Ted Hughes he co-edited *The Rattle Bag*, which was a poetry anthology for older children. *Beowulf* was translated by Heaney in 1995. In December 1995, at a ceremony in Stockholm, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature, with the Nobel Medal presented by King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden. Mean after *The Spirit Level* was published in 1996 and he continued publishing till 2010.<sup>2</sup> His precious life ended in Dublin on 30 August 2013 in Blackrock Clinic, aged 74, after a short illness and he was buried in his native Bellaghy, County Londonderry. (O'donoghue, 2009: xv,xvi)

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<sup>1</sup> There he published *Selected Poems (1965-1975)* and *Preoccupations: Selected Prose (1965-1978)* in October 1980. Thereafter, in 1983 Field Day published Heaney's *Sweeney Astray*, which was a translation of the medieval Irish language Poem *BuileShuibhne*. Other works published by Field Day were a pamphlet poem, *An Open Letter as the Morrison and Motion's Penguin*, *Anthology of Contemporary British Poetry* called Heaney a British poet while Heaney objected to being called as British poet.

<sup>2</sup> *The School Bag* was another work he co-edited with Ted Hughes and was published in 1997, while *The Spirit Level* won the Whitbread Book of the Year Award. *Opened Ground: Poems 1966-1996* was published in the same year. The translation of *Beowulf* was finished and published in 1999 and Heaney won the Irish Times Literature Prize for *Opened Ground*. In 2001, *Electric Light* was published and in 2002 *Finders Keepers: Selected Prose 1971-2001*. *The Burial at Thebes* was published in 2004, a translation of Sophocles' *Antigone*. *Room to Rhyme* and *Anything Can Happen* were published then after. In 2006, *District and Circle* was published and won the T.S. Eliot Prize and Irish Times Poetry Now Award. His public interview 'Stepping Stone' by BBC Radio at Theatre, Dublin, was published in 2008. *The Testament of Cresseid* and *Seven Fables*, translated from Robert Henry, were published in 2009. His final and twelfth volume of poetry, *Human Chain*, was published in 2010.



## 1.2 Historical and Cultural Background of the Irish

From the early period till now Irish people have been divided into two communities. This can be understood from the history of the Irish. Strongbow, the second Earl of Pembroke<sup>3</sup>, in 1170 was the involvement of English invasion in Ireland. The medieval English monarch took his ships to Ireland. However, the English monarch could not overtake the rule of Ireland. In the sixteenth century, under the Protestant Queen Elizabeth I, Ireland was brought under English control, but still remained Catholic. Then after King James I that he was called 'Plantation of Ulster' took place. Protestant colonists from England and Scotland settled in Ireland. The aim was to strengthen the English government's rule. Since that time, Irish people have been divided into two communities, Catholic and Protestant. The conflict between them and Irish identity was continued through violence and massacre. Ulster Protestants celebrate the Battle of the Boyne on 12 July every year when, in 1690, the forces of the Protestant King William III defeated the army of the Catholic King James II. The turning point of British rule was during this period. The Protestant minority owned most of the land in Ireland, and the power over its government, both before and after the Act of Union of Great Britain and Ireland (cited in <http://www.sinnfein.org>)

After the French revolution of 1789 the Irish republican movement and failed rebellion by the United Irishmen was formed in 1790. Irish rebels tried to pull Ireland out of the United Kingdom between 1803-1848 and again in 1867, through force of arms. This conflict between Britain and the Irish continued in 1916 when a failed attempt was made to gain independence for Ireland with the Easter Rising. Moreover, in 1919-1921 the Irish Republican Army waged irregular forces for the Irish War of Independence. This fighting was intended to gain freedom. In July 1921, the Irish and British governments agreed to stop the war, and by December 1921 both sides had signed an Anglo-Irish Treaty. This Treaty created the Irish Free State, as a self-governing Dominion of the Commonwealth of Nations. Under the Treaty Northern Ireland was out of the free states in which it stayed within the United Kingdom. In 1922, both parliaments validated the treaty approving independence for 26 county Irish Free States in the South (which

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<sup>3</sup> Richard Strongbow, also called Richard De Clare (born c. 1130—died April 20, 1176, Dublin, Ire.), Anglo-Norman lord whose invasion of Ireland in 1170 started first English invasions.

renamed itself Ireland) while the other 6 counties out of the 32 Irish Free States, stayed as Northern Ireland, gaining parliaments of their own but remaining under the British government at Westminster (cited in <http://www.sinnfein.org>).

Nothing could stop the conflict which had taken root from the early period that caused the division into two communities. Following the Irish War of Independence from June 1922 till May 1923, a conflict broke out between two opposing groups of Irish republicans over the Anglo-Irish Treaty. The supporters of the Treaty as a Provisional Government forced and the Republican opposition didn't agree about this Treaty as a betrayal of the Irish Republic. Most of those who fought in the conflict during independence had been members of the Irish Republican Army. The Free State Forces won the Civil War because they were heavily supplied by the British Government with weapons. This war took many more lives than the War of Independence, besides dividing Irish society for generations. (Maillot, 2005:12)

Thereafter, the conflict of the two communities of Ireland and Britain was continued at the beginning of the 1960s that refers to three decades of violence. Northern Ireland's Irish nationalist community (self-identified as Irish or Roman Catholic) and its unionist community (self-identified as British or Protestant). This period was called the Troubles or the Northern Ireland Conflict. It lasted until 1998 with the signing of an agreement known as the Good Friday Agreement<sup>4</sup>. The conflict was mainly a political one, but it also had an ethical dimension. However, the conflict was the result of the discrimination against the Irish nationalist/Catholic minority by the unionist /Protestant majority, but still it was not a religious conflict. The British coloniser encouraged the unionist to uphold the conflict for its political aims like any other colonisers. (Maillot, 2005:12)

The violence was represented by the armed movements of Irish republicans and Ulster loyalist paramilitary groups. These movements included the Provisional Irish Republican Army of 1969-1997, which sought to free Ireland from British rule and reunite Ireland politically to create a 32 county Republic of Ireland. From the other side, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) of 1966 as a response to both the British character and the unionist domination of Northern Ireland. In 1968, the British army brought to

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<sup>4</sup> The Good Friday Agreement is also called Belfast Agreement held in April, 1998. It was the agreement between British government, most political parties of Northern Ireland and Irish government. It was about governing Northern Ireland and about the issues that had caused the conflict for previous 30 years.

Londonderry and Belfast and the Protestant paramilitary groups reinforced the conflict. The groups did many terrorism operations political conflicts against Catholics. This conflict gave rise to growing tensions and violence between the two communities. During the Troubles, about 3,600 people died on both sides, republican and loyalist, paramilitaries and security forces, and as many as 50,000 people were injured. The conflict continued till to 1990. The aim of the conflict of the Republican Ireland were the goals of the two communities as for the unionist and the over-powering Protestant majority was to remain part of the United Kingdom and the nationalist and republican as almost Catholics minority's goal was to become part of the Republic of Ireland (Maillot, 2005:12).

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

As the issue of identity has become a global matter and the object of controversy among nations throughout history it is important to know what identity is and how it is understood before discussing the issue of Irish identity. The nature of the term 'identity' is very hard to understand and has many aspects. As Robert Penn Warren has said, "On this word will focus, around this word will coagulate, a dozen issues, shifting, shading into each other" (Collins, 1951: 17). Psychologist Erik H. Erikson has explained identity as "a conscious sense of individuals uniqueness, a striving for continuity of experience, and a sense of belonging or solidarity" (Collins, 1951.17). The history and events of a nation affect the identity of a nation and are the most important relevant matters to identity, and cannot be overestimated. "Identities need to be analysed not only in their cultural location but also in relation to historical epoch" (Alcoff, 2003: 3). The issue of identity is very important for all cultures. As Collins said, "We derive our sense of identity from a sense of continuity or discontinuity, from our position in the larger culture, and from our sense of place". Madan Sarup lucidly explains,

When considering someone's identity, there is necessarily a process of selection, emphasis and consideration of the effect of social dynamics such as class, nation, race, ethnicity, gender and religion. I think we all link these dynamics and organize them into a narrative: if you ask someone about their identity, a story soon as appears (Sarup, 1996: 95).

In medieval Europe, identity did not exist as they were all peasants and grew in their cultures in outskirts of Geneva and Saxony in the English Midlands in 1500. Their identity subscribed by the surrounding society. No matter what religion did they have and who they marry, all these were not determined by the individuals to take. Modernism started to change the issue of individual identity especially after the two world wars and as Europeans moved towards post-national identity. About European identity the French writer, Edgar Morin, said "The European identity, like any identity,

can be a component of a poly identity” (Morin, 2004:13). However, national identity in the individual timers become political subjects as the spaces of European politics would include the relation of new society as sample to a different understanding of politics. It includes the matters of national, regional, linguistic, and religious identity. David Campbell argued that “the national identity is the instrument through which the state disciplines society, and the call for national identity is mechanism part of the strategy of differences” (Campbell, 1998:29).

Since Ireland is a European country, the matter of identity is difficult for Irish people. They must challenge an awkward cultural and historical tradition that consists of both their relation with England and the reality of the conflict of their political and sectarian homeland. David Lloyd pointed out that “the aestheticisation of Irish politics has brought about a connection between ‘Irishness’ and ‘Irish ground’ and ‘Kathleen Ni Houlihan, the motherland’ ”(Lloyd, 1993:17) According to the traditional view, language is a clear means of symbolising some identity which preceded language, such as self, nation, home and so on. A former Irish journalist, Polly Devlin, notes in *All of Us There* how the totalitarian Irish Catholic educational system affected children’s sense of identity:

In this prevailing ethos, the question asked of children differed only in their emphasis from the genuine questions asked in other systems. But emphasis makes all the difference. ”Who do you think you are ?” asked to wound, as a reprimand, or as the amazed response to what has been interpreted as conceit, immodesty or the dreaded boldness is very different from the genuine enquiry bent on genuine exploration: ”Who do you think you are?”... Why should our mentors, our teachers, our guides ask the question like this? We knew nothing of our history, of the reductive process of a way of life built on deprivation and poverty, nothing of the cruelty of a religion or a political system that made self-effacement the safest way to live and which took away from a race its ability to esteem itself... Effacement and quietness became equated with goodness, no new equation in Ireland, where effacement had once contributed to survival” (Devlin, 1994.38-40).

In the early 1970s the term identity was not enough popular in Ireland as the term national identity used by Richard Rose in one of the major academic studies in Northern Ireland. Then it became popular among nationalist and unionist political actors in Northern Ireland. Denis Haughey, in one of the Social Democratic and Labour Party in

1975, he started the party with “Those who ask us to abandon the Irish dimension are asking us to deny our identity; they are asking us not to be who we are” (Murray, 1998:27).

The twentieth century cultural crisis of Ireland was the conflict between the insistence of traditions and modernity. This was noted by Richard Kearney in his *Narrative of Modern Irish Culture* (1987) where he said “Today’s Irish must confront the prevailing sense of discontinuity, the absence of a coherent identity, the breakdown of inherited ideologies and beliefs, and the insecurities of fragmentation” (Kearney, 1988:9). The conflict between the two communities in Ireland raised the identity issue to religious identity as the identities of Catholic, Nationalist, Republican are characterised by the demographic, political and cultural confidence this is connected to the demographic of Catholic majority in the six counties with the consciousness of political or cultural interference, while the identity of Protestant, Unionist, is mostly about ‘not being Irish’ as they insisted that they are not Irish.

As if in obedience to the imperative of identity discourse from the Irish Republic, there has been no shortage of Northern Irish attempts from within the Protestant community to develop and express a distinctive Protestant identity in terms of historical and mythic interpretations of the past, a cultural shorthand put in the service of (sometimes sinister) politics (McDonald, 1997:83).

In accordance with Irish writers, the issue of identity has traditionally been of importance for Irish writers. “With no continuity, no shared history, no reliable audience, the Irish writer’s experience has typically been one of exposure and alienation. His is, as Thomas Kinsella says, a divided mind” (Collins, 2010:18). However, Erikson notes the hardness of identity for the artist who is in the middle of a cultural crisis, he listed the Irish exile writers, among those, writers who have become the voice of identity confusion.

One of the voices of identity was Seamus Heaney who tried to search for Irish identity throughout his work, especially his poems as bog poems, Richard Kearney thinks that “Heaney’s poetry embraces the modernist view that is language which perceptually constructs and deconstructs our given notion of identity” (Kearney, 1986: 554).

Place identity and language are integrated in Heaney, as in the tradition of cultural nationalism, since language is seen as naming so that naming is the cultural restructure to Heaney. Heaney used the place-name poems ('Anaharish', 'Toome', 'Broagh', 'A New Song') it is the culture of the poetic as the living speech of the land that led him to shape mixed patterns and identity. With regard to that, "Only the most gifted poets can start from their origin in a language, a landscape, a nation, and from these enclosures rise to impersonal authority. Seamus Heaney has this kind of power, and it appears constantly... Nationality becomes landscape; landscape becomes language; language becomes genius" (Ehrenpreis, 1981: 45).

Moreover, depending on an indirect return to the legendary past, is Yeats's resolution to design and fashion a national identity, as Heaney inspired by P.V. Glob Book about bog people. Yeats supported an eagerness for Standish O'Grady's *History of Ireland: Critical and Philosophical* (1881), in which the author desired the cultural importance of "Cuchulain and Emain Macha" over "Brian Boru and KIncora". In fact, O'Grady takes on that heroic myths represent "the ambition and ideals of people and, in this respect, have a value far beyond the tale of actual events and duly recorded deeds, which are no more history than a skeleton is a man" (Collins, 2010:58).

Heaney's poems from *Wintering Out*, and *North* attend to the foreword of the search for identity within a bigger cultural sphere. Metaphor which is justifying the mode of treatment became a feature of Heaney's poems since his early poem 'Digging'. This feature supported regional culture and made the identity. Besides Heaney's bog poems, the bog took the position of a controlling metaphor and the subject of poetry and a productive source of national identity. As Elmer Andrew notes, "the mythical and the mystical spring naturally out of the mundane and colloquial" (Collins, 2010:27). The 'bog people' function as symbols of the deep racial experience of the north, and allowed for further digging more than 'potato deep' into his own consciousness; they are the product of a continuous history. As Gregory Schirmer notes, "Heaney has developed the image of the bog into a powerful symbol of the continuity of human experience" (Schirmer, 1980:15).

With *Wintering Out* and *North*, Heaney made his archaeology of bodies from the bog speak about the personal, the national, aesthetics and ethics. In the words of Helen

Vendler, he became a “spectator or renewed archaic violence, symbolising by bodies long nameless” (Vendler, 1998:59).





### **3. IRISH IDENTITY AND BRITISH COLONISATION**

The Irish people, like any other nation, have their own origins and identity. According to archaeologists, Ireland has been inhabited for 9,000 years. The Irish people were ethnic groups in Ireland. The origins of the Irish people are Gaelic as a native people, as Hutchinson noted that “the character of the modern Irish state has been shaped by a cultural nationalism, which is agrarian, Catholic, and Gaelic in nature”(Davis,2003:18). Plantation in Ireland by King Henry II created current antagonistic ethnicities in Ulster as Protestants and Catholics. King Henry II in the late 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries was forcibly expelling native Irish from their land and planting loyal English and Scottish Protestants. The Irish Catholics became labourers and stayed in poverty. This was as a result of ethnic cleansing and population replacement. About Irish identity, the study of identity holds the issue of nations, nationalist, ethnics and culture. The two main ethnic groups raised the problem of identity as Catholics and Protestant communities. The Catholic northern region of Ireland continued to refuse English rule. (Davis, 2003:24)

Irish identity was composed of two communities or cultural traditions. This was the cause of the extreme political situation and conflicts of what were called the ‘Troubles’ in Northern Ireland that started since 1960s to 1990s. In the specific context of the Northern Ireland problem, the study of discourse and political actors, the matter of national, nationalist and religion became clear. The conflict between the two communities caused the clash of identity as a result of the British colonisers. The matter of Irish identity related to politics rather than the recognition of some common origins. Irish people like any other nation stated with their political movements for its rights and its identity. Many Catholic national groups raised in Northern Ireland and became a powerful groups. For instant Anthony D. Smith suggests that “National identity involves some sense of political community which implies at least some common institutions and a single code of rights and duties for all the members of the community”. (Smith, 1991:9)

Nevertheless, the attribution to cultural nationalism among the Irish society increased, and held many rebellious against British colonizers in the early decades of the twentieth century; this is under the value of nation's identity. The Irish nationalists as members of the Gaelic League organisations celebrated Irish language, sports, music, art and tradition. So the effective relationship between society, the nationalists and culture was realised while they tried to establish the distinctiveness between Ireland's culture from its British neighbour. The matter of identity arose from Northern Ireland where it is related to the conflict that continues to play out in terms of nationalist against unionist identification. For instant identify the Irish national identity by O'Mahony and Delanty (1998): "It is back-ward looking, seeking a return to traditional, Catholic Ireland". The two communities in Northern Ireland seek their identity by relying on religion and power. The unionist community, who are Protestants, identify themselves with Britain as their patron state. (White, 2010: 4)

However, by expressing the sense of Britishness through the social and cultural activities of the Orange parades and the commemoration of the two world wars, they intimate their loyalty to the British Crown and State. They look upon Britain as their homeland, as they work to achieve their goal in which Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom. Even though the dangerous of Protestant identity come through the power of British coloniser. They thought that their religion and traditions would be at stake within an Irish Catholic state. Regardless of the nationalist's identity that are Catholics, identify themselves as Irish Catholics in which focuses on Gaelic Athletic Association and the Irish language, with Republic of Ireland. The Irish politician, John Barry, thought that the idea of 'loyalty' is bound up with identity: "The relations that constitute one's loyalty to particular institution, places and people are constitutive of one's identity and membership of the valued community that shares that loyalty" (Barry, 2003:190). Moreover, Barry notes that the British state is not recompensed the unionist sense of Britishness, as this caused the unionists to feel insecure.

Unionist culture and collective identity are problematic to the extent that their sense of 'Britishness' required some recognition and acknowledgement of this from the British people and the British state. But since this recognition and affirmation is not forthcoming, the leaves the Ulster unionist identity are unstable and unsure (Barry, 2003:191).

So that the Irish identity interferes with the aspect of religion and politics between ethnic groups as a result of British colonisation. However, this non-recompense of British colonisation is worried the unionist to vow the confession of their identity by the British people and British state.

In accordance, the clinging to religious beliefs by the Irish people is not because of their faith; it is the means of political resistance to British imperial policy and as a symbol of their identity. As Wallis notes, religion is a sign of identity in the situation of inter-group conflicts. Basically the connection between Irish Catholicism and national identity becomes stronger to resist against the British colonisers. McCaffy adds ethnic origins as a new characteristic to Bromage's suggestion that "language, religion, and land are the central components of traditional Irish identity" (Davis, 2003:19). As at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century in conflict with the British Empire, the origin of Irish identity was linked to the use of Irish cultural nationalism. The development of Irish nationalism began to produce ideas of an ancient, ethnic identity before the colonial time. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, such a search for ancient identity and heritage gave birth to the Celtic Revival and the sense of being a unique people. So that the term 'Englishness' used for centuries by Irish identity, to define it is not. (White, 2010: 5)

### **3.1. British Colonisers**

The colonisation of Ireland was begun during the 17<sup>th</sup> century by the British. However, before that the British monarchs had tried many times to subdue Ireland. During the 1100s, in the reign of Henry II, the English had first begun the domination of Ireland. In the 1500s, the violence against Irish Catholics increased. Henry VIII established an official Protestant state church. Moreover, during the time of Elizabeth I, the first plantations were inflicted upon Irish landowners. As a result of plantation, the removal of Irish inhabitants and loss of lands in which they turned sold to the English colonists and speculators. In her reign, resistances up held in Ulster (the North), as she continued to fight against the Irish Catholics. The Irish Catholic leaders were able to escape and their land was distained by the British crown so as 10,000 Scots were sent to Ulster to colonise. The original Irish people were forced to leave their land. However, the Scots, as Protestants, were politically and economically dominant in the land of Ulster, while

the original population were labourers and tenant farmers and a form of underclass. From that time the conflict between Catholics and Protestants started till the recent decades, especially in the North of Ireland. (Hezel, 2006: 43)

Nevertheless, the Irish people suffered a lot during the time of King William of Orange after he dethroned King James II as the Catholic King as he opposed by Protestants in England. He had fled to Ireland as the Catholic King supported by the Irish people till the Battle of the Boyne in 1690 in which King William was victorious. He those who supported James and the rebellion against of his authority. According to the Penal Laws in 1691-1793 that decided for all Irish Catholic majority, in which they cannot have any rights as an Irish population including participating in the army, owning lands, being schoolmasters, practising law and so many others. In the eighteenth century this system of oppression caused Irish people to become very needy. The resources were drained from Ireland to Britain, helping finance the industrial revolution by colonial utilisation. There was a rising of the United Irishmen at the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century against the British colonisers in which both Catholics and Protestants were united behind the idea of freedom at the time of the American and French revolutions. The demands for economic and social freedom in which this construction gained by ending of British colonial usages. For this reason they rose up in arms against the British colonisers in 1798. Unfortunately, the rising was destroyed by the British army and the leaders were hanged in public. (Hezel, 2006: 45)

By the Act of Union in 1800, Ireland was completely integrated with Britain and the parliament in Dublin was closed. The seats of Irish politicians were in Westminster. British imperialism was not just about political control or economic dominance, but about transforming Ireland into a land much more similar to the values and practices of England, as it was argued that “the attempt to integrate Ireland into the United Kingdom after the Act of Union was destined to fail and the Catholic Church played an important role in motivating Catholics to resist British rule and seek their own separate political destiny” (Jenkins, 2006: 10).

The struggle for independence was the most important characteristic of the nineteenth century. Home Rule was a great support for the political movements in which they demanded the transferral of governance from Westminster to domestic parliaments

Ireland, under the Protestant leader of the movement, Charles Stuart Parnell. The independence of national and internal affairs was given to Ireland by the Home Rule Bill in 1912, which was signed by the British Parliament. This developed into another political movement are the Fenians supported by the military arms of the Republican Brotherhood of Ireland, by using force they demands for the complete independence of Ireland, unlike home rule. By the end of nineteenth century, it changed and developed to the Easter Rising of 1916. While the British were busy fighting Germany, the Fenians were able to occupy the General Post Office in Dublin and announce the formation of their government and the state Ireland a republic. This made the British send troops and hold a war against Ireland. It caused the destruction of Dublin and the rising was crushed by the British army. James Connolly, the Labour leader, and Padraic Pearse were executed. The effort of the Irish politicians and the resistance against British colonisation did not stop after World War I; in 1919, with the general election, the Irish public's idea about Ireland was changed. Refusing to take seats in Westminster by the Irish republican as Fenians and Sinn Fein, whom they worked for Irish independence. Instead they opened an illegal parliament in Dublin and continued their duration in Dublin. (Hezel, 2006:49)

So in the 1919-1920 War of Independence held between Britain and the Irish republic turned into a brutal affair. Negotiations between the Irish nationalists and the British government came to an agreement in 1921, in which they divided Ireland into a Northern part, which was still under British colonisers, and the Southern part as the Free State. However the republicans were dissatisfied with this division. This caused a Civil War in Ireland and the arms that fought British were Free State with Republican opposition, who represented the Anglo-Irish Treaty as a betrayal of the Free State by British colonisation. They took up arms against each other in the Civil War and the Free State won the battle. This battle claimed more lives than the War of Independence against the British. However, it caused more divisions of the land. After 1949, the Free State was given full independence from Britain and it formally became the Republic of Ireland. ((Hezel, 2006:50)

After the division of Ireland into south and north, the majority of Protestant was in Northern Ireland, which is about six counties, while the Catholics were the minority

there. The Catholics protested to demand their rights and for the discrimination against Catholics. In 1968, the Irish Catholics began to fight for their civil, political and economic rights in what is called the 'Troubles'. In the same year, in the Duke Street March, Catholics in the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association were attacked by the Royal Ulster Constabulary in which they were Protestants in Derry. The violence exploded by the Protestants march and was supported by the British military against the Catholic nationalist Bogside in Derry/Londonderry. In 1971, an attack by British troops killed 14 protesters in a violent as followed Bloody Sunday in 1972. During the civil rights march in Derry, British soldiers killed 14 of them and injured 14 others. Though thousands of people joined the IRA(Irish Republican Army)<sup>5</sup> to increase the violence and the Parliament of Belfast was closed, Northern Ireland was directly ruled by London. British colonisation changed the direction of its policy from a political conflict to a religious one in Northern Ireland. This was continued till of the twentieth century as in 1998 a Belfast Agreement which a political agreement between Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland, and the important groups in Northern Ireland. Aimed the peace to Northern Ireland, as it gained by re-establishing the Northern Irish Parliament, police reform and decreasing the British army's presence in Northern Ireland.(McEvoy, 2008:31)

### **3.2 The Impact of British Colonisers on the Catholic Religion and National Identity**

Identity is the most affected unite for a society as they colonised. The affects for the matter of Irish identity after British colonisers could not be neglected. Overcoming religious practices and people's beliefs through a dominant culture is a characteristic of much of the period of colonisation. For instance, it indicated that "this domination was based on a cultural predisposition or rationalisation for the subjugation of the colonies" (Bhabha, 1994: 4). In the Irish case, the connection between religion and politics was very strong as religious independence was connected to political independence. However, the attempt of Protestantism to overcome Catholics beliefs kept by the British

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<sup>5</sup> IRA was formed from the parts of Irish Republican Brotherhood with Irish Citizen's Army after the Easter Rising 1916. They fought for the freedom of Ireland against British army in the Irish War of Independence. After the independences of Republic of Ireland, the IRA spilt up and some of them continued their involvement and fighting against British army in the Northern Ireland.

colonisers. As Whelan points out, “the revival of Catholicism in the nineteenth century was a response to religious revival among Protestants in the early nineteenth century” (Whelan,2005: 4). The improvement of Catholicism makes the Catholics to have an important role in increasing the unity between national movement and religious movement as it was very essential step for nationalists.

Moreover, through nationalist movement which is typically a religious political movement and with integrate religion tried to break the power of the colonisers. So the Irish people could get used to this arrangement of both politics and religion. Even though it encouraged the nationalist and the political revolutionaries to involve with religion as a political reason. Besides the Church hierarchy, the religious groups like Christian Brothers joined Irish nationalism, they worked hard for emerging and enlarging educational system to resist against the British colonisers. The desire to be a powerful political actor among the Catholic Church was to resist the attempt to convert the Irish masses to Protestantism that began in the early nineteenth century. This British imperialism threatened Irish Catholicism with a loss of identity along with their original religion as their definition of their identity. So that identity was the reason behind connecting all the Irish people together to fight against colonisation and by the ability of the church to meet the needs of the public. For instance, De Beaumont contended that “the Irish response to British imperialism was due to the oppression of Catholics based on the penal laws” (De Beaumont, 2006: 209).

Nevertheless, losing Gaelic Ireland’s viability was another impact of the British colonisers. This mass of Irish identity needed a common bond that could unite to create Irish national identity. For this reason, Catholicism united the Irish majority to serve this issue, as the scholars agreed about this link of both Catholicism and Irish nationalism in the nineteenth century. Fahey argued, “Irish Catholicism revived as Irish society began to industrialise and link itself with the outside world, but even in rural Ireland during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century there was unity between priests and the people in Ireland that provided much deference to ecclesiastical figures” (Fahey,2001:231). However, Martin cites “a common pattern where a dominant religion fuses with nationalism to become a part of national identity” (Martin, 1978:5). Certainly the Church has its role in linking religious values and forms with the everyday life of the Irish majority.

The communitarian morality which was rooted in the Irish past encouraged the success of the combination of Irish national and religious identity. The Irish Catholics identify themselves as one ethnic group, however, of all their political masses and many settlers and invaders. The unity was to integrate their Catholic and national identity that built upon the sense of Celtic that altered from the aristocratic Gaelic order. O'Connell's founding of the Catholic Association and his achievement in "generating unity in Ireland around its traditional communitarian ethos was especially important in merging Irish nationalism and Roman Catholicism into an organic all-encompassing identity" (Larkin, 1989:99).

After the independence of the Irish Free State, the authority and order of the Church became more effective than it had been under the British colonisers. However the submissive role of the Church hierarchy in the Rising to the cause of violence as an active antagonism has a direct political in fluencies. But in the struggle for independence, the nationalist revolution's heroes did not pay any attention to the advice of the Church leaders about the use of violence, as the new states policies reflected their faith in the Church in most especially its social teaching. The Church tried to deny the menace of that saw in the city's situation. This situation for the Church was paradoxical to the traditional Irish national identity and it was a menace to the authority of the Catholic social order. To deal with it, the Church teamed up with those who are before convict the violence methods. Finally, the strained combination of Catholic and Gaelic identities after independence changed into the division of religious separation into north and south.( White, 2010: 8)

During De Valera's<sup>6</sup> time as the leader of the Irish state, the Catholic religion was guaranteed a special role in society, as the historic of relation of merging Catholic and Irish national identities declared organisation to be powerful in managing politics in post- independence Ireland. The constitution of De Valera presumed "an effective and formal merge between Catholic Church and Irish nationalist elites" (Kearney, 2006:67).

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<sup>6</sup> Edward George De Valera was born on 14 October 1882 in New York to a Spanish father and an Irish mother. At the age of two ,he moved to Ireland. He became an eager supporter of Irish language movement and mathematics teacher. He was a leader in the 1916 Easter Rising and he stood as a Sinn Fein Party candidate in the 1918 general election. He became a president of the Dail.



However there was no need to dissociate the two distinguished aspects of Irish political identity, therefore the Irish people continued to identify their national and religious identity. In the colonial period, the synthesis of Catholic and Irish national identities formed and became strong as the desire of a postcolonial state of the nationalist revolution. At the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, a British coloniser was a force that strengthened the Catholic nature of Irish society. According to De Valera and nationalists like him, seeking to leave far from the world of Western power and imperialists and isolating from economic policies. The economic must take part in the culture of real success and self-fulfilment in which spared the culture of the richest states. After weakening the power of the national independence era, Irish people were un comfortable for finding and realising that glorified past ever became difficult motion of those who rule postcolonial polities.( White, 2010:7)

Ireland, like many postcolonial states, has abandoned its effort to isolate itself and has increasingly sought to integrate with other societies beyond the narrow confines of a parochial national identity, and the church has been put in a defensive position attempting to maintain a postcolonial nationalism that is threatened by modernity (Kearney, 2006:69).

However, Irish people, like other colonised people, were distracted by the British colonisers, but this did not mean they could not be influenced by the British colonisers. The Irish people desired to combine with others despite the limitations of the conservative national identity. This can be defined for the church as a threat to national identity by modernity.

After the postcolonial nationalism, Catholic identity separated from Irish national identity. Ireland achieved economic growth in the 1970s, as it joined the European Community. This success was served to stop the appetite for economic problems of the Irish public. As a result, the government and the Irish public desired to increase their economic success by the so-called Celtic Tiger in 1995-2007. So that this integration of Ireland into this global culture threatened its historical nationalism as it was based on the narrow concept of national identity and merged with Catholicism and nationalism. With the rapid secularisation in Ireland, one of the most historic bases of Irish identity exploded as part of the threatened change. The refusal of the image and the power of the Church in Ireland denoted to that one of the theories of secularisation should apply. By

applying theories of secularisation the relation between religion and nationalist Irish identity started to split. The historical role of the Church ran out in both defining Irish identity and establishing the cultural value of Irish society. “By the late 1950s and early 1960s, the integration of Catholicism and national identity which had delayed or prevented the secularisation that had come to the rest of Europe finally yielded to those forces associated with the arrival of industrialisation and urbanisation” (Fuller, 1997:21). Scholars believed that the supremacy of science and reason in the Western world took control over the power of religion, as liberalism was in conflict with traditional religious faiths, such as Christianity. Regardless, modernity brings cultural and political pluralism.(White,2010: 9)

Ultimately, much of the integration of Irish culture was lost in comparison to the other colonised countries, as the imperial episodes were brief, only some decades, while for Ireland it had meant centuries of British colonialism. The historical relationship between religion and the national identity of Ireland related to Ireland’s confrontation with the British Empire. Catholicism could exercise its religious set of beliefs over the island; this was before the attempt of British colonialism to use political control. The relation between the two conceptual elements of identity, as religious identity and national identity became very strong as in the nineteenth century the religious identity and national identities merged. In the early part of the twentieth century, by the conflict over independence, Catholicism had become identified as Irish in the eyes of many. The postcolonial state of the Irish independence government aimed to know besides the ancient Celtic or Gaelic past, the development of policies that gave less attention to the traditional religion. The material comforts that were offered by modernity changed Irish society, as they distracted the aim of the mythical national past. As a result of that, Catholicism lost its relevance to politics, and more importantly than this it led to severing the connection between Catholic identity and national identity. (White, 2010: 9) Eventually, the history of colonizing Ireland returned back to the earlier period than any other colonised country. It was for a matter of centuries that the British government had political control while the English landlords had control over the economic part and their religion was controlled by the Protestants. This was followed by dominating their culture, tradition and identity by British colonialism. As Declan Kiberd has argued, “The

notion of 'Ireland' is largely created by the rulers of England in response to specific needs at a precise moment in British history" (Kiberd, 1985:20). The formation of a notable section of social and cultural components upon the struggle for identity in Ireland was to be founded and completed by the end of nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The intellectual leadership was taken by Catholicism, which unified through the eighteenth century repression of the Catholic Irish by the Penal Law. But still the colonisers failed to persuade the colonised to accept their lower ranking status. According to Irish circumstances, Fanon noted "the colonised were 'overpowered but not tamed". So Irish identity was preserved through centuries of colonisers and the Ascendancy and it assumed the people and Irish nation with their materials and cultural dominance conserved. Lastly, the Irish national identity integrated with religious identity as a result of the British colonisers by means of which it could resist through encounters with British colonisation and its violence against the Irish people. (White, 2010: 10)

#### 4. THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF IRISH IDENTITY IN HEANEY'S BOG POEMS

The landscape, history and myth of Ireland reflected through Heaney's poems. However, the history and political issues are the most powerful subjects for his poems. The aesthetic of his poems represented through social violence of Northern Ireland. Since Heaney grew up in a time of violence and political problems in Northern Ireland, most of his works are about his place, history, nationalism and the culture of Irish identity. Despite living in exile during his life, Heaney could not neglect the suffers of his society and homeland so he tried to cure his society's wound by his works. "An Irish poet has access to all this (English literary tradition) though his use of the English language, but he is unlikely to feel at home in it" (Kiberd,2005: 55).

Heaney's exploration of the troubling equivalence between sectarian killings in his own North and the ritual sacrifices to the goddess among early Iron Age peoples across other parts of Northern Europe is the most remarkable symbol of sorrow that can be found in the Bog Poems of 1970. The Bog Poems are 'Bogland', the final poem of *Door into the Dark*, 'Tollund Man' and 'Bog Oak', from *Wintering Out* and Part I of *North*, including 'Bog Queen', 'The Grauballe Man', 'Punishment' and 'Strange Fruit'. The origin of these poems in P.V. Glob's *The Bog People* is familiar, but it was to grow Heaney's account and the impact of his poems:

It [Glob's book] was chiefly concerned with preserved bodies of men and women found in the bog of Jutland, naked, strangled, or with their throats cut, disposed under the peat since early Iron Age times. The author, P.V. Glob, argues convincingly that a number of these, and in particular the Tollund Man, whose head is now preserved near Aarhus in a museum at Silkeborg, were ritual sacrifices to the Mother Goddess, the doggess of the ground who needed new bridegrooms each winter to bed with her in her sacred place, in the bog, to ensure the renewal and fertility of the territory in the spring. Taken in relation to the tradition of Irish martyrdom for that cause whose icon is Kathleen Ni Houlihan, this is more than an archaic barbarous rite: it is an archetypal pattern and the unforgettable photographs of those victims blended in my mind with photographs of atrocities, past and present, in the long rites of Irish political and religious struggles (Heaney, 1980: 57).

The *Bog People*, written by P.V. Glob and first published in 1969, contains photographs of the Iron Age men and women who were killed and whose bodies were then preserved by tanning agents. They go back to two thousand years. Many of them are the victims of

ritual sacrifices. As the Norsemen first invaded Ireland in the eight century and Heaney started to cultivate the open parallel between their hardy and violent culture and the one that divided contemporary Ireland as British colonisers.

Moreover, Heaney's love of the ground can be felt in his first poem, 'Digging', in *Death of a Naturalist*. He admires the green hills, rivers and creeks of Ireland, but his interest goes much deeper than that. Digging the ground, not as an archaeologist, but as a poet, could reach the Bog Bodies. Exploring the identity of the bodies in which he continues in his last poem of the second collection, 'Bogland', in *Door into the Dark*. The bog bodies become a symbol of Irish identity as he developed it in his third collection, *Wintering Out*, and fourth collection, *North*. The bog and the bog bodies offer Heaney a political language of consciousness about Ireland's Troubles, as religious and political conflicts between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland. It is a response to the Troubles in which he concentrates on history, myths and the bog poems. In an interview, Heaney told John Haffenden that:

I'm certain that up to *North*, that that was one book; in a way it grows together and goes together. There has been a good bit of commentary about the metaphor of digging and going back, but luckily that was unselfconscious... the kind of unselfconsciousness that poets approaching the age of forty know they won't have again! (Haffenden, 1981:64)

So Heaney planned from his first collection *Death of the Naturalist* how to find a link between his first four collections, as he used the bog with a metaphor of digging, in which the bog provides Heaney with a link to the Iron Age culture existing at the base of his imaginative ancestry. Heaney's bog, like Kavanagh's clay, is the great denier always deceiving by reminding us of the origin of our earthly born.

#### **4.1. Irish Bog Lands**

The bogs of Ireland are a beautiful natural resource that has been inherited by Ireland. They are classified as wetland green land along with Ireland's rivers and marshes. Ireland contains more bogs than any European country except for Finland. They are made up of the mouldering remains of dead plants which have accumulated on top of each other in soaked places. They were formed in the Ice Age, which is about 10,000 years ago. Few animals are able to live in the highly acidic bog environments. Peat lands

have become home for the Giant Irish Deer. Fossil fuel is one of the most important contributions of bogs to the Irish people, as naturally peat or 'turf' is about 90 per cent water and 10 per cent solid. It is near the surface, so they could easily harvest it. For centuries it was used as an economic source of fuel. One of the characteristics that have been discovered regarding bog lands is the true ecosystems that rely on a natural balance for preservation and renovation. Technically this comes from the highly acidic preserved plants and bodies without being decaying. Ireland's bog lands have become a subject for poetry, as for Yeats, bogs were simply coincidentally used as a part of the Irish landscape mentioning in the title of his poem 'The Tower', while for Heaney it is used as a symbol of Irish identity in more than one poem. (Cited in <http://www.irishenvironment.com>)

#### **4.2. Death of the Naturalist and Door into the Dark**

Heaney's study of his personal past in his first two collections *Death of the Naturalist* (1966) and *Door into the Dark* (1969) was gradually developed into the study of spirits past of Ireland. From *Death of the Naturalist*, Heaney deals with childhood experience and family relations and rural life, while *Door into the Dark* is still preoccupied with country matters, such as farming, fishing and rural life, and the concept of home as family, wife, two children and strengthening sense of his Celtic identity. He attempts to resolve such gaps that he could not follow in his ancestor's path, to ease the attendant feeling of discomfort, and to justify his chosen profession. Although the poems of these two collections are mostly personal, the bog poems of Heaney span from the first collection - which is 'Digging' as the first poem of the *Death of the Naturalist* - and the last poem of *Door into the Dark*. This continued with his third collection, *Wintering Out*, and the first Part of the fourth collection, *North*. "Heaney's bog poems which span the first four books, albeit in different forms, have formed a powerful symbol of the racial memory of the nationalist community, a memory which allowed violence to thrive in the thirty years of Northern Irish troubles!" (O'Brien, 2002:5).

Heaney's search for Irish identity is comes with desire of digging in the first poem of *Death of the Naturalist*. However, he is fascinated with nature and the landscape of Ireland. This fascination takes Heaney in another direction with secrets of the earth that

can be felt and smelt in some verses of this collection to the Bog poems for identifying the echo deep into the ground and suggesting for the other Bog poems. Heaney wants to dig the earth from his first poem 'Digging'. While he celebrates the earth and its beauty, he hears an echo deep in the ground. This seems to be very important for him as he deploys his new characteristic 'digging' metaphor. It is a perfect metaphor for Heaney to comment on and show the political and religious violence of Ireland. He seeks "to contain the aggravation of the young Catholic male, and to understand the historic deprivation of his people in more fundamental terms than those offered by the particular momentary strategies of politics" (Collins, 1951:54). As he decided to be a Bogman from his first step, he digs the ground to reach the echo and discover the accumulated layers of the ground. He creates a Bog-like world within himself. For it is not enough to comment only about Irish troubles and problems, but a new chapter and layer of hope and challenge to search for Irish identity which was effaced by the British colonizers. Therefore, the blew verses of *Death of the Naturalist* denoted to that the Bog poems are waiting, beneath the surface, to be dug up. The process of digging is required, he uses whatever tool is fitted to his talent.

When I lie on the ground  
I rise flushed as a rose in the morning. (Antaeus)

Summer's blood was in it  
Leaving stains upon the tongue and lust for  
Picking. (Blackberry-Picking)

I loved the dark drop, the trapped sky, the smells  
Of waterweed, fungus and dank moss.  
I rhyme  
To see myself, to set the darkness echoing. (Personal Helicon)

I wanted to grow up and plough,  
To close one eye, stiffen my arm.  
All I ever did was follow  
In his broad shadow round the farm. (Flower)

By God, the old man could handle a spade.  
Just like his old man.....  
But I've no spade to follow men like them.  
Between my finger and my thumb  
The squat pen rests.  
I'll dig with it. (Digging)

### 4.2.1 Bogland

This is the closing poem of the *Door into the Dark* and the formal initial poem of the Bog poem. It also reflects Heaney's close ties to the Irish landscape. The origin of the title comes from Ireland's swampy countryside and also from Heaney's childhood memory of the domestic desire generated by the exploration of an elk's skeletal remains in a bog near his hometown. "I began to get an idea of the bog as the memory of the landscape, or as a landscape that remembers everything that happened in and to it" (Heaney, 2002: 25). Thus, one of the universal themes of the Bogland poem is the search for national identity. It is more nationalistic and about the essence of Ireland, and its origin is in the digging metaphor. The poem begins with a nationalistic tone in the possessive pronoun 'we'. He uses this more than once to connect himself with his people and to convey the sense of unity with the land. Besides his people he wants to connect with history and the myths of Ireland. He emphasises in the poem the layers of the land, and the 'layers' 'crusts' which symbolise different periods of Ireland. The layers of history are a bog that keep crusting, continuously expanding, so that the land looks like it stretches forever in both dimensions, horizontally and vertically. The bog at first reveals nothing as the absence declaration, in which each layer is a page of history, yet like the encroaching horizon. (Parker, 1993:77)

By presenting culture as a landscape of permanent transformation, Heaney avoids the fundamental problems of Irish culture. Rather, they are the aggregation of thousands of years of history which becomes mixed and confused in many layers of collective cultural consciousness than Ireland and the Irish become simply an identifiable entity intent by political and religious affiliation. With 'Bogland', Heaney makes his first decisive move in the conflict with Yeats "reclaiming the bogs both as a subject for poetry and as a central metaphor that will organise that poetry" (Burriss, 1990:82). Moreover, Heaney dares to go back to the source of racial unconsciousness beyond the tribal memory. As the bog is the source of Irish memory and ancestry through the land that links the present to the past. To find the authentic root, which is hidden in Irish myth and history, one must work hard. The bog contains an organic record of each generation that has lived on it; however it serves as the landscape's archetypal memory, keeping everything that has occurred. (Parker, 1993:78)



The bog offers Heaney not only a span, but the depth with the full understanding that ‘digging’ may never end, while it brings the motif of digging and exploration to bring the treasure to light. The poem’s conclusion is neither positive nor negative. Heaney uncovers increasingly ancient levels of cultural and consciousness as he digs deeper. He could reach the edge of the mysterious origins of history itself. As a result of that, free from political and religious thoughts, he could explore his origins in the dark root of Ireland. He tries to find a core, a final centre, but it was “bottomless”. (Parker, 1993:78)

### **Bogland**

We have no prairies  
To slice a big sun at evening -  
Everywhere the eye concedes to  
Encroaching horizon,  
Is wooed into the cyclop’s eye  
of a tarn. Our unfenced country  
Is bog that keeps crusting  
between the sights of the sun.  
They’ve taken the skeleton  
Of the Great Irish Elk  
Out of the peat, set it up  
an astounding crate of air.  
Better sunk under  
More than a hundred years  
was recovered salty and white.  
the ground itself is kind, black butter  
Melting and opening underfoot,  
Missing its last definition  
By millions of years,  
They’ll never dig coal here,  
Only the waterlogged trunks  
Of great firs, soft as pulp.  
Our pioneers keep striking  
Inwards and downwards,  
Every layer they strip  
Seems camped on before.  
The bogholes might be Atlantic seepage.  
The wet centre is bottomless.

### **4.3. Wintering Out**

This was Heaney’s third collection, published in 1972. The title of the book of *Wintering Out* was ‘Winter Seed’ as it takes from the image in one of the book’s most famous poems ‘Tollund Man’, “His last gruel of winter seed/ Caked in his stomach” (WO 47).

From the duality and ambiguity of all the poems, 'winter seed' is comparatively optimistic. By *Wintering Out* Heaney attempts to view the crisis of Northern Ireland after 1969, however the book's title refers to an Ulster word meaning to 'survive crisis' and the features of this crisis become the subject of the poems. (Collins, 2003:57)

At the beginning of *Wintering Out*, Heaney is indicating his own political constituency in the inscription of the book, in which it introduces the themes of "disorientation, place, history, and the collective fate routes the drive from present to past, past to present, future to past" (Parker, 1993: 93). However, Heaney describes the continuity of political conditions where "we have to live with the army 'where we survive explosions and funerals, and where 'soldiers with cocked guns are watching you'" (Heaney, 1980:30). Besides that, he appointed the questions on people's minds as the identity of "the next target on the Provisional list, or whether the resultant reprisals won't strike where you are?" (Heaney, 1980:31). As well as Heaney is admitting the deep eagerness that allows people to kill each other in the name of sense of identity as an acceptable symbolic word which interacts with the social and cultural context. (Parker, 1993:79)

In addition, poems of a high degree of clarity are contained in the first part of *Wintering Out*, poems that deal with Heaney's early contribution to English letters. However, 'The Tollund Man' appears in Part One, where the difficulties and complexities of the personal and communal identity by Heaney searches the difficulties of personal through references of land, language, history and myths, as the corresponds of the more personal poems of Part Two, the 'winter seed' is a very optimistic part. As regards the bog poems in this collection, 'The Tollund Man' has created own master-ship in modern letter. It responds strongly to the photographs in Glob's *The Bog People*, as they alone cause wonder and curiosity. (Collins 2003:58) Explaining 'The Tollund Man' as the only bog poem in *Wintering Out* collection as example for chapter four which is about the Bog Poems.

#### **4.3.1. The Tollund Man**

The Tollund Man was a victim of Nordic fertility ritual who had been hanged to satisfy the mother goddess and to renew the fertility of the land in spring. He refers to almost preserved Iron Age body, he had been discovered in a Danish Peat-Bog in 1950. His

body was naked except for the cap, hangman's noose and a belt. 'The Tollund Man' shapes significantly in the development of Heaney's Iron Age mythology. By expanding the bog metaphor that was raised in *The Tollund Man*, Heaney deepens his search for identity through mythic and archaeological lines. The poem is divided into three sections. In the first section of the poem, Heaney promises to make a pilgrimage to the land of Aarhus:

Someday I will go to Aarhus  
To see his peat-brown head,  
The mild pods of his eye-lids,  
His pointed skin cap.  
In the flat country nearby  
Where they dug him out,  
His last gruel of winter seeds  
Caked in his stomach,  
Naked except for  
The cap, noose and girdle,  
I will stand a long time.  
Bridegroom to the goddess,  
She tightened her torc on him  
And opened her fen,  
Those dark juices working  
Him to a saint's kept body,  
Trove of the turfcutters'  
Honeycombed workings.  
Now his stained face  
Reposes at Aarhus.

Heaney sees the Tollund Man as an ancestor of the Irish people, a moderation of ancestral exorcism and injustices. This is parallel to the lives lost in Irish political and religious struggles, the sacrifice of Cathleen Ni Holihan, as he becomes an archetype for the Irish fight against injustice. In accordance, the Tollund Man is a victim sacrificed for the goddess Nerthus. There is an imaginary, direct relation between the body and goddess as a distance of the historical witness. The sense of describing him as 'Bridegroom' that cannot mean anything other than victim and that 'She lightened her torc' - the 'torc' is not only a rope at the bridegroom's throat, but also refers to the tribal collar of twisted gold worn by Celts, Saxons and Vikings. In origin it is a decorative-ring indicating faithfulness to the goddess Nerthus. In Heaney's poem, it expands to form a circle of violence that includes all the warlike communities in the North. (Burriss, 1990:98)

The violent love-making between the victim and the goddess - she 'opened her fen' - preserved the victim's body by absorbing it into her sexual 'dark juices'. This symbolises the transmission of the sacrificed man into the earth. After many centuries, Tollund Man is dug up as the turf cutter discovers the winter seeds that are caked in his stomach as he was a sacrificial victim to the goddess of germination. To Heaney the victim becomes a martyr whose blood works as a fertilizer for the land and whose death brings life to others. The victim keeps the gruel of the winter seeds within himself rather than in his pockets, like the younger fighters in the 'Requiem of the Croppies' as their grave sprouted from the seeds in their pockets when they fell.(Burris,1990:98)

In section two, the poet made a direct connection between the bog sacrifices in Iron Age Jutland and the victims of the Irish sectarian struggle:

I could risk blasphemy,  
Consecrate the cauldron bog  
Our holy ground and pray  
Him to make germinate  
The scattered, ambushed  
Flesh of labourers,  
Stockinged corpses  
Laid out in the farmyards,  
Tell-tale skin and teeth  
Flecking the sleepers  
Of four young brothers, trailed  
For miles along the lines.

Heaney regards this as 'risking blasphemy' in Christian terms, as he is devoting the bogs as holy ground and pleading for the involvement of the martyred Tollund Man. In addition, Corcoran emphasises the religious aspects of the poem, comparing the body of the Tollund Man with "miraculously incorrupt bodies of Catholic hagiology". This seen like a sign that the Tollund Man "may be petitioned as a saint". However, Corcoran feels the hope in this section in which such petitioning may make the recent dead germinate "as his killers hoped he would make their next season's crops germinate" (Corcoran, 1998:35). Molino stresses the role of the speaker in the poem, and focuses on the power of the poetry to transform "The Tollund Man into a transcendent power who may be able to transform modern-day victims into sacrificial victims as well" (Molino, 1994:91). About the second and third stanza of this part, Heaney derived from 'part of the folk-lore of where I grew up' an event in which the Protestant paramilitaries killed four brothers

in 1920, as their bodies ‘trailed along the railway lines, over the sleepers as a kind of mutilation’ (Parker, 1993:107). This illustration of the barbarity of inhabitants by some of the Christians of Ireland. So for Heaney the Tollund Man looks like an ordinary Irish man; therefore, every Irishman is Tollund Man, in which history comes back to undo the wrongs of the past.

For the final section of the poem, Heaney compared between the two imagined journeys with the feature of a split screen as he imagined his own journey to Denmark to see the Tollund Man’s head in Aarhus, with the last death journey of Tollund Man by ritual sacrifice. Both of them share the sad freedom:

Something of his sad freedom  
As he rode the tumbrel  
Should come to me, driving,  
Saying the names  
Tollund, Grauballe, Nebelgard,  
Watching the pointing hands  
Of country people,  
Not knowing their tongue.  
Out there in Jutland  
In the old man-killing parishes  
I will feel lost,  
Unhappy and at home.

Heaney, who has established the centre of this picture of identifications, returns to the beginning but with the sense of isolation and the link of language, in which naming the places Tollund, Grauballe and Nebelgard finally shows the exile that means ‘watching the pointed hands/of country but not knowing their tongue’, voicing what he could not communicate with any one of them, in which language is defined as the root of culture, of nationality. The victims of rituals like Grabulle, Tollund and Nebelgard are identified with the pain and torture gone through by the Irish labourers. Along with politics, religion and the sense of nationality, history and myths, language is the central idea of Heaney’s poetry. Heaney’s identification with the Tollund Man is with a sense of being ‘lost/unhappy at home’ after living in Belfast under the shadow of inherited death, ‘the old man-killing parishes’, these deep ruts lead to the Germanic earth goddess’s holy bog and the killing fields of Northern Ireland, as of Jutland, seem a familiar territory, where Heaney feels lost and unhappy at home. The final lines echo those of section one. In the depth of this decasyllabic division, instead of set at rest, we find ‘unhappy’ by which contrasting between the achievements and continual suffering of the Tollund Man and

Heaney. This represented the feeling of both isolation and an empowering sense of exile. Heaney concluded the Tollund Man with a reference to the contemporary situation in Ireland. (Burris, 1990:98).

#### **4.4. North**

Heaney's fourth collection, *North*, in 1975 received widespread critical acclaim. *North* is the most distinctive volume that he developed as a poet, who had a special view on the conflict of Northern Ireland that came from the past of the Irish. The argument is developed in both mythical and political dominance. In his imagination, he connected a kinship of the spirit more than of the blood, a lively link with the whole heritage of his race. This comes from the light of the past and not only from the Irish past, also the Western literature and historical past. Heaney knew through the truly ancient and his ancestor's distant kinsmen, just as Homer was connected with Troy, Virgil with Greece and Dante with Rome. In addition, identity, culture and personal issues are the most concerns in *North*. (Collins, 2003: 82)

The book divided into two sections, in terms of the historical and geographical Ulster connections to the Vikings and to the 'bog people', the individuals sacrificially buried in Danish bogs. This is examined in part one of the collection, while part two contains a powerful series of 'personal' poems which produced the poet's direct reactions to the violence and hopelessness that flooded his land. Although the technique, tone, approach and subject matter of *North* make the two sections appear as two separate collections placed in a single volume, there is still a unifying thread in *North*, in the sense that both sections deal with Northern Ireland. Heaney tries to realise and concern the violence and colonisation in his state beside his own reaction towards these problems. Heaney in the *North* collection gives birth to his society who has ambitious digging of both historical or traditional and racial heritage. Denmark's Iron Age, according to Heaney, provides the terrible model for the problems of Northern Ireland. He places the people of the Iron Age of Tollund Man at the central point of his backward glance, as he converts the defeated mythology of the Iron Age of Virgil's 'Eclogue' into the stony affirmable Iron Age of Ireland's remote ancestors. (Collins, 2003:84)

In Part I of *North*, Heaney achieved an expression of his feelings through the study of the connections between Northern Ireland and the bog-lands of Northern Europe. In his works 'bog poems', for his own desire he uses the Irish necessity for 'digging' as a metaphor for digging into the history of Ulster and into the Viking culture. Heaney finds sufficient symbols for the situation in Northern Ireland by connecting between these bog people and the matter of Northern Ireland. He is attempting to distance and universalise his imagery. As he told Edward Broadbridge:

There's a kind of sectarian conflict going on. Something that was repressed and held under, but which has forced itself to the surface again, and I've tried to make a connection lately between things that come to the surface in bogs, in particular in Danish bogs, and the violence that was coming to the surface in the North of Ireland (Broadbridge, 1977a:11).

Heaney connects the bogs of Northern Ireland with the Northern European bogs, where people were murdered as ritual sacrifices to the goddess of the earth. So Heaney tries to universalise the sectarian violence in his state where many Irish people were killed in the name of religion, race and identity.

In addition, Heaney - unlike a non-European reader who might think that there is an actual, physical connection between the bog of Ireland and the bog people - has set out a purpose for making these connections and using bog people such as the 'Grauballe Man' and the 'Bog Queen'. Heaney connected the revenge, casual violence and exclusiveness evident in the Viking culture, as he has a particular affection for the Viking period of Irish history. This can be seen clearly in Norse Sagas such as the *Njal's Saga*, which is similar to the cultural and political conflicts in Ulster. On this aspect of Heaney's works, Terrance Brown in his book *Northern Voices* writes:

Heaney has explored these parallels between pre-history's feminine territorial religion that demanded human sacrifice, and Ulster's contemporary violence, through a sequence of poems which relate the recently discovered bodies of sacrificial victims in a bog in Denmark (Heaney learnt of these in P.V. Glob's book *The Bog People*) to recent republican atrocities (Brown, 1975, 176-77).

On the aspect of Northern Ireland problems which suffers from the authority of the British colonisers, as they murdered many people in Ireland. Heaney, through a series of

sacrificial victims of the Iron Age, attempted to show the barbarity of the present in Northern Ireland.

As a result of this collection, North, it is clear that the two parts have a unifying thread as the conflict in Northern Ireland and the political situation in the state. Since the chapter is about the bog poems of Heaney, this section deals with bog poems in Part I of that book. The bog poems in this first part, as a continuation of the previous sections, are The Bog Queen, Gurabella Man, Punishment, Strange Fruit and the six collections of Kinship.

#### **4.4.1 Bog Queen**

Heaney's 'Bog Queen' a part of the 'Bog Poems' collection, is written as a monologue spoken by the Queen. The skeleton of a woman was discovered on land belonging to Lord and Lady Moira, a peat bog on Drumkeragh Mountain in County Down, South of Belfast, in the Spring of 1781. The body showed that she was an aristocratic lady of the Viking culture controlling Ireland in the tenth century. Heaney used the Bog Queen as a symbol of Northern Ireland, as Heaney's mythical connection between the current Northern Ireland and Iron Age Denmark was validated by her existence. By expanding the bog metaphor that was raised in the Bog Poems, Heaney intensifies his search for identity through mythic and archaeological sides. In accordance, Thomas Foster confirms that "the poem could be construed as the cornerstone on which Heaney builds the book [North], allowing the connection between the two cultures to be more than metaphorical fancy" (Collins,2003:91). Moreover, the body speaks about the decaying process that the body has been through till it was dug up and discovered. Due to English violence and the colonisers, the poem is about a geographical map of the body of Ireland, as it is taking and reciting history. The decay of the Queen's body is just like the decay of the Irish past, history and myths. The rise from the depth is the story of this poem. To gain strength and to claim dignity through Irish history, Heaney asks the people to depend on their past and see the beauty of the past and become strong enough to resist. Accordingly, the body is waiting and calling to be raised and woken up just like her. In the matter of Ireland, Heaney made a connection between the body and the land by 'creeping influences'. As a result of British involvement, Irish history and the decline



of Irish culture decayed just like the body as Heaney symbolised the decay of the body to Irish culture. That is why Heaney is trying to say, through history and the myths of Ireland, the Irish people could get back their strength and rise up, just like the body of a Queen. Although she is decaying, still there is hope of waking up.(Burris,1990:101)

In addition the body describes how she treated as she barbered and is stripped by a 'turfcutter's spade' and how she suffered, but after all she tried to wake up and rise up. She survived in order to bring the violence of the past to the attention of everyone. Although the marked violence cannot be erased from history, still resisting and standing up is Heaney's message for the Irish people to build what is destroyed again. The hope of freedom comes from solidarity and rebellion. Heaney described the beauty of the Queen which he compared her with the beauty of Ireland's myths and her people. The Queen survived like the Irish people. However, they were tortured and murdered, so much was lost in Ireland, but still there is much to gain if they try to gather strength and dig it up.(Burris,1990:101)

Furthermore, Heaney with 'a slimy birth-cord /of bog' suggests the sensory mixing of the Celtic genealogy and Germanic tribes of the North. It is no accident that the slow images 'hacked bone,/skull-ware, /frayed stitches' produced those fabulous invaders of *North* from a phantom restoration followers, who lie "hacked and glinting/ in the gravel of thawed streams". The importance of this parallel is emphasised by Thomas Foster as he notes:

The bog poems, and 'Bog Queen' more particularly, act as the pivotal point on which the volume turns. Most of part I to this juncture has concerned itself with Scandinavian history and instances of overlapping between that history and Ireland's. The remainder of the book concerns itself primarily with Irish history, especially the backgrounds and events of the Troubles in Ulster. The bog poems attempt to legitimise the bond between the two movements as something more than the poet's caprice or novel coincidence; rather, in demonstrating a common blood culture, the sequence insists on the historical nature of society's violence against its members, not as a way of sanctioning that violence but of comprehending it (Foster, 1989:58-59).

The Bog Queen belongs to the place of the specific world to the large wave of nature and human history as she puts on both the knowledge and the power of continuous

forces. Finally, the body becomes free as the English brutality has stopped now, she has risen up as a symbol of the new revolution to undo the mistakes of the history from the past. Just like the Irish people, the body is not giving up, no matter what is its current condition, there is no loss, the resistance is in the revolution. The Queen says in the last stanza “I rose from the dark, hacked bone”. She tries to rise as she resists and she did rise. However, she is not stable. With the raising of the body Heaney offers an aspiration for the rise of Irish cultural identity and nationality. So, if the Queen could rise after all her suffering and torture, then why should not the Irish people? Heaney challenges his countrymen to resist against the injustices of history by being extraordinary. In this poem, the image of the Motherland (Ireland) metaphorically materialises into the goddesses who ask for sacrifice, like Tollund Man, and calling for any new sacrifice to get their freedom and save their national identity. (Parker, 1993:121)

As a part of his ‘Bog Poems’ collection, Heaney’s poem ‘Bog Queen’ gathered the main themes of his Bog Poems, including religion and sacrifice, pain and suffering, conflicts within Irish society and the links between the past and the present. All this comes under the name of Irish national identity and it is resistance to survive against British colonisers. Heaney shows the importance of the Irish land as a Motherland, as he uses females to symbolise the Motherland. However, Heaney shows his anger towards the thought that Ireland is not learning from history. He uses the first person to identify himself with the Bog Queen. Through the Bog Queen as a symbol of Ireland’s history, Heaney shows that Irish history will never die, it is just preserved till one day it speaks out. (Parker, 1993:122)

I lay waiting  
between turf-face and demesne wall,  
between heathery levels  
and glass-toothed stone.  
My body was braille  
for the creeping influences:  
dawn suns groped over my head  
and cooled at my feet,  
through my fabrics and skins  
the seeps of winter  
digested me,  
the illiterate roots  
pondered and died

in the cavings  
of stomach and socket.  
I lay waiting  
on the gravel bottom,  
my brain darkening.  
A jar of spawn  
fermenting underground  
dreams of Baltic amber.  
Bruised berries under my nails,  
the vital hoard reducing  
in the crock of the pelvis.  
My diadem grew carious,  
gemstones dropped  
in the peat floe  
like the bearings of history.  
My sash was a black glacier  
wrinkling, dyed weaves  
and Phoenician stitch work  
retted on my breasts'  
soft moraines.  
I knew winter cold  
like the nuzzle of fjords  
at my thighs—  
the soaked fledge, the heavy  
swaddle of hides.  
My skull hibernated  
in the wet nest of my hair.  
Which they robbed.  
I was barbered  
and stripped  
by a turfcutter's spade  
who veiled me again  
and packed coomb softly  
between the stone jambs  
at my head and my feet.  
Till a peer's wife bribed him.  
The plait of my hair  
a slimy birth-cord  
of bog, had been cut  
and I rose from the dark,  
hacked bone, skull-ware,  
frayed stitches, tufts,  
small gleams on the bank.

#### **4.4.2 The Grauballe Man**

The dank lakes of Jutland provided Heaney with a source of common identity between past and present as 'ruminant ground'. The Grauballe Man was found in a peat bog near Jutland in Denmark on April 26, 1952. He is one of the best preserved bog bodies in

world, the body determined to be from around 290 BC. The poem is an artistic description of a body that was pulled out among bracken and peat, eleven miles east of Tollund, in the Nebelgard Fen. At the beginning of the poem Heaney compared the body with the landscape, and then he compared with tar as if it is the same because of the blackness of the face. His slashed throat was compared to the victims of Ireland as they were sacrificed. However, the body's spine is compared to the eel, but Heaney referred to the brutal life of the Irish people, who suffer from the brutality of British colonisers. No one knows the crime of Grauballe Man, just like the Irish victims, they were killed for no reason. Heaney forces himself to use the beauty of art against historical reality by using the metaphorical union between the man and the land. A finely drawn parallel can be seen in the poem between the victims of atrocities past and present, in which the sacrifices to Nerthus were often hooded, as well as recent victims of the Ulster Defiance Association: "Scores of young Catholics were found with hoods over their heads and bullets through their brain. Others were found in a condition better imagined than described, with mutilations, throat cuttings and every form of atrocity" (Coogan, 1987:341).

Moreover, Heaney's connection between Glob's archaeological discovery, the unnamed Grauballe Man, and centuries-old cycles of violence in northwest Europe is just like Hill arranged to relate Joyce's mythic method to the historical Offa of Mercia. Heaney could resolve the crisis of identity for an instant, within overtaking the boundaries of six northern counties of Ireland in which he places himself within a cultural and historical atmosphere. Heaney made a connection between the street violence of Ireland and the 'slashed and dumped'. However, the word dumped is not nice for the dead, but it is a hint of revolution and revenge. Nevertheless, it is a symbol of new birth and a new beginning. From the point of view of Irish resilience, Heaney sees cruelty as something normal. Irish people preserving their memories of the past and learning from it as well as Heaney. Heaney tells the Irish people that memory is there, it is the only thing to save them, and maybe it is buried underneath the atrocities. What Irish people need is digging to reach their freedom and continue to save their Irish national identity. (Hart, 1992:92)

Along with 'beauty' and 'atrocity', in the last three stanzas, Heaney measures the art and reality. For instance, much of the sense and imagination motivates Heaney to raise the

sufferer of religion to the sodality of the patrons, as the Grauballe Man suffered from a barbarous fate. This made Heaney to reach a heavier conclusion in which no one in the North can flee the load 'of each hooked victims/slashed and dumped', and the evidence of his eyes.

As if he had been poured  
in tar, he lies  
on a pillow of turf  
and seems to weep  
the black river of himself.  
The grain of his wrists  
is like bog oak,  
the ball of his heel  
like a basalt egg.  
His instep has shrunk  
cold as a swan's foot  
or a wet swamp root.  
His hips are the ridge  
and purse of a mussel,  
his spine an eel arrested  
under a glisten of mud.  
The head lifts,  
the chin is a visor  
raised above the vent  
of his slashed throat  
that has tanned and toughened.  
The cured wound  
opens inwards to a dark  
elderberry place.  
Who will say 'corpse'  
to his vivid cast?  
Who will say 'body'  
to his opaque repose?  
And his rusted hair,  
a mat unlikely  
as a foetus's.  
I first saw his twisted face  
in a photograph,  
a head and shoulder  
out of the peat,  
bruised like a forceps baby,  
but now he lies  
perfected in my memory,  
down to the red horn  
of his nails,  
hung in the scales  
with beauty and atrocity:  
with the Dying Gaul  
too strictly compassed

on his shield,  
with the actual weight  
of each hooded victim,  
slashed and dumped.

#### **4.4.3. Punishment**

The climax of the Bog Poems is 'Punishment'. This poem has been described as the central point in which the Windeby girl is a metaphor for Ireland. Heaney admits his own involvement in the way of a ruined culture, so it is a confessional poem. The poem is about a fourteen-year old girl of the first century A.D. She was punished for adultery and drowned in Windeby bog. At the beginning, the poem focuses on her body, similar to Grauballe Man, as it is described in anatomical detail. In the opening lines the victim reveals herself, this as Heaney's likelihood to identify and emphasise its identity. The reason that Heaney called the victim a Windeby girl is that he wants to compare the bog girl with the victim of a brutal punishment crime of the IRA against a woman who has an affair with a British soldier in Ulster. The conflict of the Troubles creates the difficult emotions of injustice with sense of brutality. (Collins, 2003: 95)

In the first three stanzas, the sympathetic imagination of Heaney is shown as he describes the way that the girl was brutally punished and tortured. They behaved as if she was not human. Heaney tries to create a physical picture of the girl when she was alive. She suffered a lot from pulling with rope as she was naked. As a sign of the humiliating cruelty which appears, Heaney compared her shaved head to 'a stubble of black corn'. Then, by saying 'My poor scapegoat', Heaney shows his sadness and pity for the girl while the boy is not punished; she alone is made a victim of the so-called crime of adultery. However, the crime is 'love', which not a crime, but they killed her. Showing his love for the girl was useless because he couldn't save her and do something for her life, just like her lover. In accordance with the issue of the artist's role in such a situation, Heaney raises this issue in which innocents are victimised, comparing them with the victims in Ulster, as the artists could do nothing. Here, Heaney's role is that of a 'voyeur'. How can he observe the scene in far away only to draw it artistically? Regardless of this issue, Longley stated:

This is all right if Heaney is merely being outrageously honest  
about his own reaction, if the paradox connive ...civilized is

designed to corner people who think they have risen above the primitive, if the poem exposes a representative Irish conflict between 'human reason' and subconscious allegiances (Campbell, 2003:119).

Heaney challenges the Troubles in 'Punishment' more directly than in 'Tollund Man'. He directly faces both his own cultural identity and its effects on his identity as an artist. Moreover, Heaney submits a paranormal continuity between Iron Age people and the failed psychology of Irishmen and Ulstermen who do the killing. The diminutive history effected the myth by showing different events which rooting continuity of identity. However, Heaney in this poem admits the shameful nature of his culture. This has been noted by Andrew as he says "It acknowledges Heaney's sense of guilt, or at least of complicity, about certain aspects of the present cycle of violence in Ulster" (Collins,2003: 97). Heaney accepted the conception of the 'the exact / and tribal, intimate revenge', although he identifies with the victims of violence.

In the last two stanzas, again as with the other bog poems, Heaney links the past with the present as he compares the brutality of the Iron Age committed by tribal men of the first century and the brutality of the Irish Revolutionary Army. As Henry Hart notes, "Catholic girls in Northern Ireland have recently been 'cauled in tar' for defying the taboos of the Provisional I.R.A. Chief. Among these is dating of British soldiers, particularly officers" (Hart, 1992: 92). Heaney, as an Irish poet, wants to show the dark side of the history of Irish culture, as the criminals of the past and present are different, but the brutality and cruelty are the same. Any Irish girls who married a British soldier were killed by Revolutionary Armies, viewed as having betrayed the cause they used the term "your betraying sisters". They give themselves all the rights to kill them brutally and savagely. So Heaney makes fun of the so-called modern and civilised men in Ireland. However, there is the claim of being civilised and modern, but it is based on cruelty, atrocity and brutality. (Collins, 2003: 94)

I can feel the tug  
of the halter at the nape  
of her neck, the wind on her naked front.  
It blows her nipples  
to amber beads,  
it shakes the frail rigging  
of her ribs.  
I can see her drowned

body in the bog,  
the weighing stone,  
the floating rods and boughs.  
Under which at first  
she was a barked sapling  
that is dug up  
oak-bone, brain-firkin:  
her shaved head  
like a stubble of black corn,  
her blindfold a soiled bandage,  
her noose a ring  
to store  
the memories of love.  
Little adulteress,  
before they punished you  
you were flaxen-haired,  
undernourished, and your  
tar-black face was beautiful.  
My poor scapegoat,  
I almost love you  
but would have cast, I know,  
the stones of silence.  
I am the artful voyeur  
of your brain's exposed  
and darkened combs,  
your muscles' webbing  
and all your numbered bones:  
I who have stood dumb  
when your betraying sisters,  
cauled in tar,  
wept by the railings,  
who would connive  
in civilized outrage  
yet understand the exact  
and tribal, intimate revenge.

#### **4.4.4. Strange Fruit**

Another description of the bog people, in 'Strange Fruit', as fruit is the ancient decapitated of a young woman that was accidently preserved. The 'Strange Fruit' denotes the bodies of blacks hanging gibbet without being executed for a crime, his metaphor is borrowed by Heaney from the title of an African American civil rights protest song<sup>7</sup>. As Heaney creates a poem which suggests a painting in 'Sunlight', so a decapitated referred a still life with its emphasis on colour, shape and structure. Heaney

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<sup>7</sup> The original song predated the Civil Right movement and was famously sung by Billie Holiday.



shows the similarity of the girl's death as with the useless old fruit that is thrown away, he used an 'exhumed head ground' and by the 'dark nose' reflects his view of the dark nature of death. The head is a suitable subject for an 'artful voyeur', involving the feeling of great respect for the head. Heaney's admires the beautiful human head which, through time and nature, has become a symbol of strength. The effect of the head's beauty on Heaney is a theme of history that causes the beheading of Northern Ireland. For instance, Dillion Johnston has suggested, Heaney is as "fascinated by his own embalming power as by the mummified victims, who also provide a metaphor for his art" (Johnston). Nevertheless, in his images of skulls and skeletons, the poet makes images of the violence in Northern Ireland and the whole of historical Northern culture within Ireland. Here the woman has simply become a victim without any justification of a ritual. Just like before, Heaney has dug up the head from its bog grave to restore it to life and beauty. Heaney adds a new note that refers to Roman historian: "Diodorus Siculus confessed / His gradual eases among the likes of this". This is a Sicilian historian who wrote during the 1st century B.C. The work is the preservation of Greek history. Diodorus was battlefield surgeons and admits that he became numb to the face of death, with each murder he became more desensitised it is one of his memories as he unmasked a dead body for a long time as he became different. However, Heaney (with help from the reference to Diodorus Siculus) indicates his terror for the Irish people. His fear is from the happiness of the tribes over the girl's murder and witnessing the murder in general. However, this will relate to the murder of the Irish people. Heaney shows his disgust at the 'reverence' by tribes towards the spiritual murder. So the last reference to 'reverence' is the author's view of worthless ritual murder. (Hart, 1992: 94).

Besides the British colonisers, Heaney traced also the invasion of Vikings and compared the violence of the Vikings with current violence that accrues in Northern Ireland. Heaney wants to give a message to the Irish people that Ireland cannot survive without its past and history, without these it will be a missing body. Surviving without a root (body) is meaningless. Any feeling of consciousness of Ireland, it is because its root and identity is missing. Heaney encourages his people to go back to their roots and their

original identity to move forward and gain their freedom. Digging is the gate to reach the root.

Here is the girl's head like an exhumed gourd.  
Oval-faced, prune-skinned, prune-stones for teeth.  
They unswaddled the wet fern of her hair  
And made an exhibition of its coil,  
Let the air at her leathery beauty.  
Pash of tallow, perishable treasure:  
Her broken nose is dark as a turf clod,  
Her eyeholes blank as pools in the old workings.  
Diodorus Siculus confessed  
His gradual ease among the likes of this:  
Murdered, forgotten, nameless, terrible  
Beheaded girl, outstaring axe  
And beatification, outstaring  
What had begun to feel like reverence.

#### **4.4.5 Kinship**

The final poem of the bog poem sequence, it consists of six sections. Each section contains six quatrains. As the climax of the bog poems and the centrepiece of the volume, Heaney's mythic North both repeats and denies in this poem. The title of the poem offers the search for cultural identity confronted by disunited culture, as the poem follows "the shifting and sucking of the bog itself" (Andrews, 96). Like the other bog poems, the sacrifices of the ritual victims take Heaney into the past. Heaney established a kinship between himself and his home bogland after returning from a long journey to the distant country of the bog poems. As before, men were strangled to death and offered to the Earth Goddess, their fertility oriented as they sacrificed to the peat. The oriented fertility is the cause of the existence and continuum of all living things, including the poet. For Heaney, the countless layers and levels of the soils of the modern world view centred by man must be removed, if one tries and wants to reach the past to establish kinship. The peat is a 'hieroglyphic' in which there is a hidden message to relate the victims and represent his closeness to the victims of Jutland, while 'kin' to the bog of Ireland are the 'strangled victims'. Despite the ritual and cruelty in this land, Heaney takes step through origins. However, the first four parts of 'Kinship' offer the bog as a very rich source of identity.(Collins,2003:96)

*I*  
Kinned by hieroglyphic

peat on a spreadfield  
to the strangled victim,  
the love-nest in the bracken,  
I step through origins  
like a dog turning  
its memories of wilderness  
on the kitchen mat:  
The bog floor shakes,  
water cheeps and lisps  
as I walk down  
rushes and heather.  
I love this turf-face,  
its black incisions,  
the cooped secrets  
of process and ritual;  
I love the spring  
off the ground,  
each bank a gallows drop,  
each open pool  
the unstopped mouth  
of an urn, a moon-drinker,  
not to be sounded  
by the naked eye.

In the second part of 'Kinship', Heaney feels his Gaelic roots in the taste of the bog. Concerning the relation of the lands of life, another important contrast is implied. With regard to the contrast between the different creatures referred to as 'Ruminant ground' and 'deep pollen-bin', in the world of bog, in which it's a living creature by itself. So that the bog is related to digestion and the organs indicating fertility. Such items like a killed fugitive, insatiable brides, sword-swallowers, refuse heaps, kitchen waste, icy historical dirt are preserved and well-kept by the bog as they find a fallow resting place, while for Heaney it is a resting and a nesting ground. He can feel the darkness only from one side, while from another there is life and light that they can start a new life in. This light is for rebirth, awakening and reproduction. So Heaney sees the bog as a life-preserving and life-producing resource. (Parker, 1993:139)

*II*  
Quagmire, swampland, morass:  
The slime kingdoms,  
Domains of the cold-blooded,  
Of mud pads and dirtied eggs.  
But bog  
Meaning soft,  
The fall of windless rain,

Pupil of amber.  
Ruminant ground,  
Digestion of mollusc  
And seed-pod,  
Deep pollen-bin.  
Earth-pantry, bone vault,  
Sun-bank, embalmer  
Of votive goods  
And sabred fugitives.  
Insatiable bride.  
Sword-swallower,  
Casket, midden,  
Flow of history.  
Ground that will strip  
Its dark side,  
Nesting ground,  
Outback of my mind.

The third section of the poem sheds light on Heaney's own poetic 'digging' in the bog. The spade as a winch works to unearth the past that has sunk into the bog, in which there is a hint of a sexual union with the goddess Nerthus. The spade in 'Digging' refers to the ancestral past, while here it is the symbolic past that unearths the nationalist memory of the wrongs that have been done. Heaney refers to the other bog poems as he comments on the historical viewpoint: "I stand at the edge of centuries / facing a goddess". Moreover, Heaney shows the fertility devotion of the Iron Age as a sign that to the goddess, the 'cloven oak-limb' as lying under a 'cairn', which is a mountain of stone indicates a burial place. By this Heaney points to Glob. This is the response of Mother Nature that no one could look into the secret of the living system. The land is a living organism. This concept is strengthened by James Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis, in which "Earth's living matter, air, oceans, and the land of surface form a complex system which can be seen as a single organism" (Lovelock's Gaia). Heaney significantly uses adjective, (green colour) which signifies republicanism, differing from the orange which signifies unionism. Creating the myth of Ireland, Heaney sees the myth of another land as a 'twin' to his own 'obelisk' of the spade. This allows for an analysis of Heaney's 'digging' to reach his origins and identity to survive. (Parker,1993: 140)

**III**  
I found a turf-spade  
Hidden under bracken,

Laid flat, and overgrown  
With a green fog.  
As I raised it  
The soft lips of the growth  
Muttered and split,  
A tawny rut  
Opening at my feet  
Like a shed skin,  
The shaft wettish  
As I sank it upright  
And beginning to  
Steam in the sun.  
And now they have twined  
That obelisk:  
Among the stones,  
Under a bearded cairn  
A love-nest is disturbed,  
Catkin and bog-cotton tremble  
As they raise up  
The cloven oak-limb.  
I stand at the edge of centuries  
Facing a goddess.

Moreover, Heaney reminds us of Yeats' 'Second Coming' in section four of 'Kinship'. Heaney's Bogland is different as the soft part of the bog is the hard basis, with 'This centre holds / and spreads'. The bog provides a suitable metaphor for the paradox of life itself, as here the crisis of identity is unsettled in the meantime. However, the bog is represented a world where death and life are seen as close as the bog itself is 'sump and seedbed, / a bag of waters / and a melting grave'. Till here everything is pleasant and the pictures are peaceful while the word 'rots' brings back again the dryness of reality into happy allusion. He describes the 'appetites of gravity', this line shows the relationship of Heaney with the world and his roots has been found and accepted as his origin is identified. He tells us "how I grew out of this"; Heaney traces his roots back to the origins of regional loyalty. However he was far from his homeland but he felt this sense of loyalty. The sense of the poet is looking for his earlier embodiment. Heaney was writing in a time when the Irish Republic Army (IRA) needed the support of the people in which many were joined the paramilitary organisations on both sides of the border. In the last stanza, by using 'I' Heaney gives the nationalist background of himself and it is a power of aesthetic idea imagined by the use 'I' shows the feeling gravity of his land as he grow in the middle of conflict of his land ,the North. (Collins,2003: 97)

#### **IV**

This centre holds  
And spreads,  
Sump and seedbed,  
A bag of waters  
And a melting grave.  
The mothers of autumn  
Sour and sink,  
Ferments of husk and leaf  
Deepen their ochres.  
Mosses come to a head,  
Heather unseeds,  
Brackens deposit  
Their bronze.  
This is the vowel of earth  
Dreaming its root  
In flowers and snow,  
Mutation of weathers  
And seasons,  
A windfall composing  
The floor it rots into.  
I grew out of all this  
Like a weeping willow  
Inclined to  
The appetites of gravity.

Heaney recalls for a hidden spade of Part Three and the sorrowful of the turf-cart sight in Part Five. He turns back to the myths of fertility in the poet's memory and needs Time to be perfected just like the spade. By turf-cart Heaney suggested the tumbrel of "Tollund Man" it was also used to carry the statue of Nerthus on her spring journey and turf-cart of Heaney great -uncle Hughie Scullion as Heaney celebrated a kinship of flesh and blood with the hand carved felloes. The cart took the victims to their deaths. Heaney integrates the bog victims and close relations with Northern Ireland's victims. Heaney imagines the bog victims as living participants in a rural culture and as his spiritual ancestors. The poet's close relationship to his uncle recalls the great respect for his grandfather in 'Digging' and for his father in 'Follower'. (Collins,2003: 98)

#### **V**

The hand-carved felloes  
Of the turf-cart wheels  
Buried in a litter  
Of turf mould,  
The cupid's bow  
Of the tail-board,  
The socketed lips  
Of the cribs:

I deified the man  
Who rode there,  
God of the wagon,  
The hearth-feeder.  
I was his privileged  
Attendant, a bearer  
Of bread and drink,  
The squire of his circuits.  
When summer died  
And wives forsook the fields  
We were abroad,  
Saluted, given right-of-way.  
Watch our progress  
Down the haw-lit hedges,  
My manly pride  
When he speaks to me.

Heaney uses the historical denomination of Romans for the British soldiers in the last part of 'Kinship' as Heaney calls for Tacitus as a historian of the Romans to witness the Northern Ireland sacrifices. Tacitus was the witness of a German sacred grove where human beings were sacrificed to the goddess Nerthus. Heaney calls him to witness the violence and the sacrifices of his land, and assist Heaney in write for the 'Troubles'. He refers to Bloody Sunday in Derry in 1972 when British soldiers killed fourteen unarmed protesters from the civil rights march. Heaney uses the metaphor to compare the contemporary killings of Northern Ireland with the ritual sacrifices of Nerthus or Mother Earth, then drowning the slaves who participated in the rituals. After the mother of autumn in Part Four come by nomination. He refers to a colonial situation in which the sectarian conflicts and violence made them kill each other in the name of religion as between the two divided communities, Catholic and Protestant, in Northern Ireland. As Heaney remarked:

It turns out that the bog in Northern Europe in the first and second centuries A.D. contained shrines of the god and goddess of the time, and in order that the vegetation and the community would live again after winter, human sacrifices were made: people were drowned in the bogs. Tacitus reports on this in his Germania ... Now in many ways the fury of Irish Republicanism is associated with a religion like this.... there are satisfactory imagination parallel between this religion and time and our own time. They are observed with amazement and a kind of civilized tut-tut by Tacitus in the first century A.D... (Heaney,1982: 851-853)

Heaney sees no difference between the human sacrifices for the god and goddess of the past and his troubled land's sacrifices by the British colonisers. However, besides the political matter for his land, there is a religious sacrifice parallel to the Tacitus time, in which they kill each other in the name of religion. He seeks Tacitus to observe and understand the endless cultural conflicts.

Moreover, by mentioning that 'nothing will suffice', Heaney answered Yeats' question in 'Easter 1916' after the bloody consequences of the Rising, when he says 'O when may it suffice'. Like their Iron Age ancestors nothing suffices. What seemed for Yeats untried after sixty years became a certainty for Heaney. With a use of irony he ended his poem in which the best for Ireland is from the hope of the Tacitus's witness and the distinction to analyse the patrician truth of this violence and butchery. This is a kind of irony and the evidence of confession of being scratched. (Collins, 2003:99)

#### VI

And you, Tacitus,  
Observe how I make my grove  
On an old crannog  
Piled by the fearful dead:  
A desolate peace.  
Our mother ground  
Is sour with the blood  
Of her faithful,  
They lie gargling  
In her sacred heart  
As the legions stare  
From the ramparts.  
Come back to this  
'island of the ocean'  
where nothing will suffice.  
Read the inhumed faces  
Of casualty. of victim;  
Report us fairly,  
How we slaughter  
For the common good  
And shave the heads  
of the notorious,  
how the goddess swallows  
our love and terror.

The bog poems of Heaney evoke the original Irish identity with the attachment to place. From the metaphor of digging in his first collection, *Death of the Naturalist*, to the Irish bog land as an Irish inheritress, in which the bog land could preserve bodies from being decaying. From his first works, Heaney foreshadows the way the bog poems deal with



Iron Age sacrifices for the goddess Nerthus. Heaney read Glob's book and also saw the photographs of these bog figures, especially the Tollund Man, who Heaney regards as his relatives and he would "write a poem about it" (Haffenden, 1981:57). Heaney's exploration of the victims of the Iron Age helps him to dig into his memory and see a national excavation and he symbolised the bog people of ancient Europe to the victims of Northern Ireland. The violence has come to the surface just like the bog bodies to reveal their identity and the violence is a sectarian conflict for identity. The bog to Heaney is a catalogue of Ireland's long past and featured as a kind of geological memory bank. Heaney says "The bog was a dark casket containing clues to our past and to our cultural identity" (Zuelow, 2009:214). The bog is the store house for the past of Heaney's ancestors, as the sense of Irishness rooted in the timeless past of his imagination and the struggle for Irish identity that was past and modern. From all the bog bodies there was hope and resistance just like Irish identity, which resists through the history of violence.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Through centuries the Irish nation was under the violence of British colonisers unlike any other British colonies . The concept of identity interferes with the history of the Irish people while the British colonisers tried to transform the origins of the Irish people through religion. The conflict of Irish identity continued to be an issue for the British colonisers. However, the Republic of Ireland as the free states get its independent from British colonizers. The Northern Ireland remains as the land of conflict under British colonizers beside the religious conflict between the two communities, Catholics and Protestants. From the land of the conflict, the voice of the Irish poet Seamus Heaney was raised to demand Irish rights through his poems. Travelling through his life which was spent in a troubled land, Northern Ireland as his motherland, he could feel the notion of the suffering of his land and it could not be overestimated. However, he noted that from his childhood he could feel the concept of there being Catholics and Protestants within politics. He spent a part of his life abroad, but this did not stop Heaney interacting with his homeland's conflicts. His relation with his land can be seen through his poems, using the names of his places and following his ancestors' footsteps by choosing another tool to dig and unearth his roots and his origins. So his roots and origins took part through his poems which depend on history and the myths of Ireland, while the reality of the conflict in Northern Ireland is the main source for most of his poems.

Through the history of Ireland, discriminations between the ethnic groups in Ireland can be observed. Since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the English Scots were settled in Ireland as the ancestors of the current Protestants in Ireland, while the original Catholic Irish were dispossessed of their land and became the labourers in their own land. Irish people could not stop demanding their rights. According to the traditional Irish nationalist exposition, the British colonists entered Ireland to create a single dominant tradition loyal to the British crown, but in return they created a religious tradition in Ireland that merged Catholic and nationalist identities. With the settling of the Protestant in Ireland, the

identity issue raised a problem under the name of religious. Catholics in Ireland looked to history to contend that Ireland was their homeland and they were its rightful inhabitants. Many national movements were established against British imperialism to ask for their rights and gain their independence. The Catholic Church was the first to resist against this reformation of British coloniser, as the British coloniser try through converting Irish Catholics into Protestant. The Irish Catholics integrated with Irish nationalists to preserve their identity and the Irish Celtic and Gaelic cultural tradition. As nationalist forces designed for breaking the British coloniser, the temporal political movements incorporated religion in many ways. For instance, an analysis of the mutuality between coloniser and colonised has shown that “colonial discourse establishes the colonised as the repressed and rejected 'other' against which the coloniser defines an ordered self and on which all potentially disruptive psycho-sexual impulses are projected” (Bhabha, 1983). In accordance British imperialism affected the Irish identity in which changes the matter of national identity into religious identity. Apart of Ireland of Ireland as Republican of Ireland got its independent in 1921. While the Northern Ireland with six counties, remained under the power of the British colonisation. Seamus Heaney was an Irish poet raised in a land of Troubles in Northern Ireland. Through his work, Heaney tried to engage with the suffering of his land. Most of his work deals with conflicts and political issues. To reach his origin and his national identity, Heaney started to dig into his past as a metaphor for his origins, digging into the past from his first four collections *Death of the Naturalist*, *Door into the Dark*, *Wintering Out* and *North*. The poems in these four collections deal with the metaphor of digging, searching for the identity of the Irish people through a collection of poems under the title bog poems.

The bog poems are about Iron Age victims in Denmark who were sacrificed to their goddess Nerthus. Many of the victims were from Denmark and others were from the bogs of Ireland. During the Troubles in Northern Ireland, Heaney visited a Danish museum and saw photograph of the victims. However, in his first poem, ‘Digging’, he refers to the bog poems as he digs the bog land of Ireland and mentioned that the skeleton of the elk was found by the neighbours. The bog poems are ‘Bogland’, ‘Tollund Man’, ‘Bog Queen’, ‘GrabualleMan’, ‘Punishment’, ‘Strange Fruit’ and ‘Kinship’. For

Heaney, Tollund Man is an ancestor. The bog poems reflect the sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland. For Heaney they are an adequate metaphor for its predicted time, by using predicted time he refers to Troubles. As the bog poems are related to each other, they form a sequence of corresponding the problems of Northern Ireland. The bogland is the introduction of the bog poems while the 'Tollund Man' and the 'Bog Queen' are the first ritual sacrifices of the bog people. While the 'The Guraballe Man' and the 'Punishment' are changing the direction of the poems, so they reach a climax in which the mythmaking turns to the reality of the life of the poet. The last two poems, 'Strange Fruit', and 'Kinship', are the fallen action however 'Kinship' can be regarded as the solution of the collection. The metaphor of the bog starts with the first poem, 'Tollund Man', which gives animation through the idea of supplication and this gives the motivation to the mythic dimension. As with the rebirth of the goddess, the whole world of the bog starts a new life. The bog involves less elements of the 'atrocious' that begins to balance beauty. The aesthetic consideration as the main element of myths is given the poem of 'Punishment', as it retains something of the mythical atmosphere. As the term of myths, the motif loses validity in 'Kinship' so it ended in the stage of the poet's form. The dimension of the myths is traced to the impossibility of the lending dignity of sectarian killing.

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