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THE PRINCIPLES OF SPATIAL ORGANIZATION OF S. HEANEY’S POETRY

Key words: spatial organization; poetry; juxtaposition; rhizome; Seamus Heaney.

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ПРИНЦИПЫ ПРОСТРАНСТВЕННОЙ ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ В ПОЭЗИИ Ш. ХИНИ

В статье рассматриваются принципы пространственной организации поэтических произведений известного ирландского писателя Ш. Хини. Выявлены принципы изображения пространства в динамике, «принцип ризомы», заключающейся в ассоциативности связи между локусами, принцип сопоставления, высвечивающий контраст между образами пространства, а также создание особого пространственно-временного континуума индивидуальной и коллективной памяти, в котором личный опыт поэта переплетается с культурно-историческим наследием ирландского народа («хронотоп памяти»).

Ключевые слова: пространственная организация; поэзия; сопоставление; ризома; Шимус Хини.

To identify the principles of spatial organization in the poetry of Seamus Heaney (1939–2013), one of the greatest 20th-century Irish poets, a Nobel Prize winner, we shall analyze some representative poems that reflect both the evolution of Heaney’s work and the various shifts from materiality and physicality of places to their spiritual, cultural or philosophical meanings in Heaney’s poetry.

S. Heaney’s first poetry collection, *Death of a Naturalist* (1966), marked the beginning of his illustrious career and showcased themes related to his Irish heritage and the contrast between his family’s agricultural background and his own path as a poet. The poems in this volume (many of which contain micro-plots) can serve to illustrate what we shall term as the principle of *dynamic settings* in Heaney’s poetry. By the dynamic setting we shall mean a place, a locus that is characterized by change, adaptability, and interaction with the poetic persona. In Heaney’s poetry, many locations do change under the influence of human activities or nature’s elements

or in the inner perspective of the poet. The term «dynamic setting» also refers to the shifts within the locations featured in the verses, such as the movement from inside a cottage to the yard outside, or from the interior of a «home» out into the landscape. These shifts in the poems sometimes change the setting completely, affecting the picture in the mind of the speaker and creating, as a result, a «new» space imbued with fresh meanings.

The poem «Digging» can serve as an example of the poet's use of a dynamic setting. In its general content, it is a sort of declaration of Heaney's intent to use writing as his tool, paralleling the physical digging done by his father and grandfather. The poem opens with the lyrical persona at his writing desk, observing his father digging in the garden outside the window. This immediate environment, most likely Heaney's childhood home at Mossbawn, serves as a backdrop for the poet's reflections on his family's agricultural heritage, particularly the labour of his father and grandfather on the land. The descriptions are not static: they create a micro-story, starting with the speaker, pen in hand, contemplating his role as a poet while listening to the sounds of his father digging outside. As the poem progresses, the speaker recalls vivid memories of his father and grandfather engaged in their work on this same land. The setting, though firmly grounded and tangibly physical, nevertheless, transcends into the abstract metaphor of artistic creativity *The squat pen rests. / I'll dig with it* [1, p. 4]. This transition is abrupt and momentary.

The second principle is firmly connected with Heaney's use of geographic names within a specifically created context. This principle may be provisionally called *rhizomatic*, if we borrow the term from G. Deleuze and F. Guattari's theory of the rhizome as a way of understanding the world outside of the confines of the definite and the binary, which «ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles» [2, p. 7]. Similarly, Heaney's poetry often interconnects places through various associations rather than suggesting any linear and fixed approaches, allowing for a multiplicity of interpretations of each location, reflecting the fluid nature of identity in relation to space. This interconnectedness on several levels mirrors the rhizome's principle, where elements coexist without hierarchy, each contributing to the whole and creating a web of relations where no single element dominates.

To illustrate this rhizomatic principle, we can refer to Heaney's «The Stations of the West» written in lyrical prose [3, p. 105]. The sense of place in this poem is strong and is also related to the Irish landscape. The poem does not follow a traditional narrative arc but instead presents a series of reflections and observations that are interconnected. The poet describes his experience of learning Irish in the Gaeltacht (regions in the Republic of Ireland where the Irish language (Gaeilge) is spoken as the primary language by the majority of the population, including counties such as Donegal, Mayo, Galway, Kerry, Cork, Meath, and Waterford). The «stations» referenced in the title evoke both geographical locations (*Rannafast and Errigal, Annaghry and Kincasslagh*) and metaphorical points of reflection (*names portable as altar stones, unleavened elements*), suggesting a journey through time and memory. The references to those specific geographical locations in Ireland serve as nodes within the poem, connecting personal memory to broader cultural narratives. Phrases like *the fasting spittle of our creed* convey the idea of intuitive connection to language and religious belief, while those like *white sand, hard rock, light ascending* highlight the materiality of this connection. There is imagery that evokes sounds (*Incensus / I went*

disguised in it, pronouncing it with a soft church-Latin c), sights (the settlements themselves), and textures (hard, liquid or intangible), allowing readers to feel the weight of history and memory intricately tied to place. The rhizomatic principle here is realized through the poem's non-linear structure, interconnected themes, and the multiplicity of meanings associated with language and place. This aligns with the rhizomatic concept of having multiple entry points and pathways. Any point can be connected to another, the «stations» represent both concrete settings and metaphorical points of reflection on Heaney's relationship with his heritage, emphasizing the fluidity of identity and experience. Learning Irish, as the poem suggests, means that language is not fixed but rather evolves through context and experience, mirroring the rhizomatic idea that knowledge and meaning are dynamic and interconnected.

In his organization of poetic space Heaney also often uses *juxtaposition*. It is a common literary device that allows authors to make sharp contrasts between two different concepts, objects, or ideas. It can be used effectively for characterization, plot development and suspense. We shall consider it as the third principle of spatial organization of Heaney's poetry. In his narrative poems juxtaposition – besides dynamic settings – is often used to highlight the transformation evoked in the same place – through changing details and their perception or through the changing of the place. «The Strand at Lough Beg» (from *Field Work*, 1979) exemplifies this principle. The poem elegizes Heaney's cousin Colum McCartney, killed during the Troubles, and is set in the rural landscape of Lough Beg. The natural imagery evokes a pastoral, almost sacred space: «*The lowland clays and waters of Lough Beg, / Church Island's spire, its soft treeline of yew;*» «*Across that strand of ours the cattle graze / Up to their bellies in an early mist*» [3, p. 162]. The urban element, the violence of the Troubles, associated with town conflict in Belfast and Derry, invades this rural idyll. The poet's cousin's death by sectarian violence brings the urban political strife into the countryside through corresponding imagery: «*white glow of filling stations;*» «*the sudden brakes and stalling / Engine;*» «*your driving mirror, tailing headlights*» [3, p. 162]. The poem contrasts the tranquility of the rural landscape with the brutal intrusion of urban violence, using the natural setting to mourn and purify the loss caused by urban conflict. By placing seemingly dissimilar places (or spaces) side-by-side, Heaney can draw attention to their relationship and explore their nuances more deeply.

One more principle of the spatial organization of Heaney's poetry is the use of the chronotope of memory in a pervasive, all-encompassing manner. For Heaney, using W. Faulkner's famous phrase, «the past is never dead». This interplay of the memories of the past and the speaker's present concerns contributes to a sense of timelessness evident in poems like «Anahorish» (from *Wintering Out*, 1972). The poem opens with a vivid description of a rural landscape and is filled with sensory imagery, reflecting Heaney's deep personal ties to Anahorish, the place of his childhood in County Derry, Ireland. However, Anahorish is portrayed in more universal terms as a place of purity and innocence, and «of clear water» [1, p. 22]. The poem reflects on how memories associated with Anahorish transcend time: *the first hill in the world / where springs washed into / the shiny grass* [1, p. 22]. The imagery of water flowing through the landscape symbolizes continuity, linking current reflections with past experiences, blurring the distinctions between time and space. As noted by H. Vendler, «[t]he way of life of his father's rural family, as Heaney has remarked, differed little from medieval custom: and in 'Anahorish' his neighbours become indistinguishable from

their Neolithic ancestors» [4, p. 18]. Thus in the poem we find out that *With pails and barrows / those mound-dwellers / go waist-deep in mist / to break the light ice / at wells and dunghills* [1, p. 22]. The poem reflects on cycles of life and death, beginning with imagery associated with vitality – clear water – and transitioning towards darker themes towards the end, such as «dunghills». This progression symbolizes not only the passage of time but also the inevitable intertwining of life's beginnings and endings. Heaney captures this cycle through detailed descriptions that connect human experiences with natural processes. The Gaelic name «Anahorish» refers here to both a specific place and to personal memories of it, suggesting that language carries historical weight and personal resonance.

We also suggest that Edward Soja's concept of «Thirdspace» can be used in connection with the chronotope of memory on Heaney's poetry. Third spaces are the in-between, or hybrid, spaces, where the locations like home (first spaces) and social institutions (second spaces) work together to generate a new third space, rather a virtual one. This concept avoids the dualities of the social and the individual, of culture and nature, of the real versus the imagined. For example, in the poem «The Forge» (from *Door into the Dark*, 1969) Heaney employs the imagery of a blacksmith's forge to explore themes of creation and transformation. This imagery blends past and present, as the speaker reflects on memories associated with the forge while engaging with its sounds and sights, creating a sense of timelessness. The forge acts as a sort of «Thirdspace» where the physical act of forging metal parallels the creative process of writing poetry.

The principles of spatial organization of Seamus Heaney's poetry reveal a rich interplay between place, memory, and identity. Through such principles as *dynamic settings, rhizomatic structures, juxtaposition, and the chronotope of memory*, Heaney's poetic landscape invites readers to engage with the complexities of human experience within diverse geographical contexts. These principles cannot be separated and presented as single devices: they are united into the general spatial poetics where the space dynamics is not linear: the transition may be abrupt and momentary, the concrete detail employed in the depiction of settings may transit into abstract spaces opening up potential philosophical reflections.

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CONCEPTS OF MASCULINITY AND FEMINITY IN P. BARKER'S HISTORICAL NOVEL REGENERATION

Key words: historical novel, contemporary British literature, masculinity, femininity.