# シェイマス・ヒーニーと中期W.B.イエイツ及びブライアン・フリールの戯曲『フェイス・ヒーラー』の関係性について

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**キーワード**

シェイマス・ヒーニー　W. B. イエイツ　ブライアン・フリール　北アイルランド紛争　共同体と個人

（要旨）

北アイルランド出身のノーベル賞詩人シェイマス・ヒーニー（Seamus Heaney, 1939-2013）は北アイルランド紛争が激化する中、1972年に首都ベルファストを離れ、家族と共にアイルランド共和国のウィックロー州グランモアに移住する。1972年から1976年までの約4年間、ヒーニーは移住先のグランモアで自然に囲まれた山小屋で暮らし、紛争から離れた静かな環境の中で詩人の役割を模索する。この時期のヒーニーが先例として位置づけたのは20世紀のアイルランドを代表する詩人 W. B. イエイツ（W.B. Yeats, 1965-1939）であった。ヒーニーはデニス・オドリスコル（Dennis O'Driscoll）とのインタビューの中で、1970年代に最も必要とした詩人は「中期イエイツ」（'middle Yeats'）であったと述べている。ヒーニーが「中期イエイツ」の作品から学んだことは、個人の自由を抑圧する社会の風潮に逆らい、詩人が「個」を維持し、想像力の自由を確保する方法であった。共同体が内部の社会的結束を強める1970年代の北アイルランド情勢の中で、ヒーニーは「中期イエイツ」を手本としている。その結果、詩人はいかに個人の自由と自律を維持しながら、創作を続けることができるのかという問題に取り組んでいる。第５詩集『フィールド・ワーク』（*Field Work*, 1979）に収められた詩「死傷者」（'Casualty'）では、「中期イエイツ」の傑作「釣り師」（'The Fisherman', 1914）を模範としながら、共同体の夜間外出禁止令

を破り死亡した実在のカトリック系アイルランド人漁師を主題としている。ヒーニーはこの詩の中で、共同体独自の規範や偏狭な信条を超越し、個人の自由を追求する姿に「中期イエイツ」を重ね、理想とする詩人像を投影している。本論文では、「中期イエイツ」の作品が1970年代のヒーニーに及ぼした影響を考察する。さらに、ブライアン・フリール（Brian Friel, 1929-）の戯曲『フェイス・ヒーラー』（*Faith Healer*, 1979）の結末においてアイルランドに帰郷した主人公が死を目前に「内面の自由」を獲得する場面に着目し、ヒーニーの「中期イエイツ」観との結びつきを明らかにする。

# Seamus Heaney's Relationship with Yeats's Middle Period and Brian Friel's *Faith Healer*

Seamus Heaney（1939-2013）moved from Belfast to Glanmore, County Wicklow, in the Republic of Ireland in 1972 when the situation in Northern Ireland began to deteriorate into serious intercommunal violence, and in the mid-1970s, away from the violent and bloody conflict between Protestants and Catholics, he wrote the second part of *North*（1975）and prepared his next collection *Field Work*（1979）. During this significant period in Glanmore, Heaney keeps a certain distance from his Catholic community in Northern Ireland and withdraws into solitude while working as a freelance writer.(1) 'Biography of Seamus Heaney' in Harold Bloom's book brings out into clear view the important aspects of this period: 'In 1972 the Heaney's were offered a longer retreat by a friend of theirs who had a country cottage to rent in Glanmore, in the south of Ireland. Viewing it as a superb opportunity to dedicate himself to his writing, Heaney quit his post at Queen's University and the family packed their belongings'（19）.

Heaney reveals in a 1979 interview with James Randall that his chief concern during his Glanmore days, from 1972 to 1976, is 'to be alone with [himself]'.(2) In 'Exposure', for instance, a distinguished poem in *North* which is written during the period of seclusion in Glanmore for the purpose of poetic as well as spiritual renewal, Heaney is given to solitary meditation or silent contemplation and turns his thoughts inward enough to reflect on his poetic role in society, while he 'sit[s] weighing and weighing / [his] responsible *tristia*'.(3) In the poem Heaney lives in his own inner world

as an 'inner émigré' and asks himself why he writes a poem, saying 'For what? For the ear? For the people?' (*N* 73).

In the same period Heaney takes a particularly keen and active interest in W.B. Yeats, especially 'middle Yeats'.[(4)] In an interview with Dennis O'Driscoll, Heaney acknowledges that he was engaged in a 'serious reading of Yeats in the 1970s, which was when [he] needed [Yeats] most' (*Stepping* 192). The primary reason for this special interest is that in the midst of the 'Troubles', the period of violence and terrorist activity between Roman Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland since 1968, Heaney strives with immense efforts to keep himself aloof from community solidarity in his home and achieve artistic freedom and independence.[(5)] In his lecture *Among School Children* (1983), Heaney asserts that 'The kaleidoscope of our inner freedom of choice and vision should not be submerged in the element of slogan and prescription' (16).[(6)] Yeats's middle period means a great deal to Heaney at the stage of his creative development, mainly because it tackles a fundamental dilemma between ideals and reality, between the personal and the public, and represents a poet's constant search for imaginative freedom and solitude.

In his 'Introduction' to *W.B. Yeats: Poems Selected by Seamus Heaney* (2000), Heaney claims that Yeats's middle works, *Responsibilities* (1914) and *The Wild Swans at Coole* (1919), embody 'a poetry of singular clarity and detachment' and arise from 'the tension generated in him between his ideal of service to a new, imagined Ireland and his recognition of the demeaned standards actually preferred by the Ireland in which he was living' (xiii). Heaney takes 'middle Yeats' as a model for 'the claims of individual personality over every solidarity', since 'middle Yeats' marks a significant departure from his former commitment to 'a national purpose' and pursues his own ideals and dreams instead (xiii). In the 1970s Heaney uses this model in order to free himself from the strong political and emotional ties that bind him with other members of his Catholic community and to learn 'how to speak in the first person out of the self', because 'in this country [Ireland]', he thinks, 'the self is closely involved with the society that produces it, and it's bonded into a communal life' (Haffenden 72, 62).

The aim of the present paper is to illustrate how Heaney turns to Yeats's middle period in order to seek the freedom and independence of the individual during the critical period of the 'Troubles' in the 1970s, and also to show that Heaney's search for

self-discovery, personal growth and self-fulfilment free from the constraints of his community is concerned simultaneously with Brian Friel's play *Faith Healer* (1979). The first section of the paper will examine how Heaney interprets 'September 1913' and 'The Fisherman' not only as a series of Yeats's disappointments with Ireland during the 1910s but as a sign of the poet's inner yearning to move away from the harsh realities of the modern world in which he has his being. The second section will demonstrate that Yeats's solitude, creativity and detachment from reality clearly expressed in 'The Fisherman' are absolutely crucial for Heaney when he writes his poem 'Casualty' in *Field Work* (1979).[(7)] In 'Casualty' Heaney deals with a local eel fisherman named Louis O'Neill, who disobeyed the 1972 IRA curfew on the day of the Bloody Sunday funeral, and thereby presents a powerful image of personal freedom and individual autonomy as opposed to the traditional bonds of community that govern people's lives in Northern Ireland. The third section will prove that Heaney's concern with Yeats's middle period also leads to his own original interpretation of the final scene of Friel's *Faith Healer*, which focuses on the main character's remarkable discovery of his 'inner freedom' and contentment.

## I

In his essay 'Yeats as an Example?' (1978) Heaney considers 'September 1913' as the most outstanding manifestation of Yeats's 'finding a style for resisting his environment rather than a style that would co-opt it' (106). In his book entitled *Poetry & Responsibility* (2014), Neil Corcoran asserts that '"Yeats as an Example?" is one of the most spirited of Heaney's earlier essays', and that 'We witness in it his approach to another writer with the clear awareness that this is going to be a significant phase of self-development' (80). In 'Yeats as an Example?' Heaney emphasises that in 'September 1913', which refuses to accept 'the mind of Irish Catholic society', 'Yeats's style had evolved a tone for detaching rather than attaching himself, for saying "I" rather than "we"' (106). The poem 'September 1913' provides Heaney with an inspiring example of how a poet should cope with the society whose principles he rejects or disagrees with, stand aloof from the crowd and maintain a sturdy intellectual independence and integrity. In other words, Heaney learns from 'September 1913' how

to develop a sense of his own identity as an individual and keep his personal poetic life separate from the dominant values of his community, which all its members share to live together in unity.

'September 1913' is illustrative of how Yeats distances himself from the strictly materialistic aspects of middle-class Catholics in Ireland by viewing their way of life in a negative light. Yeats's refusal to accept the utilitarian side of Irish Catholics as being 'born to pray and save' can be found in the first stanza of 'September 1913', where the speaker addresses the people in modern Ireland by saying:

> What need you, being come to sense,
> But fumble in a greasy till
> And add the halfpence to the pence
> And prayer to shivering prayer, until
> You have dried the marrow from the bone;
> For men were born to pray and save:
> Romantic Ireland's dead and gone,
> It's with O'Leary in the grave.(8)

In the poem Yeats deplores the bleak condition of society in which the people are preoccupied with running a small business and handling money as they 'fumble in a greasy till'. The verb 'fumble' shows the extent to which Yeats abominates the people's mercenary spirit and scorns their money-dominated approach to life. Marjorie Howes confirms that Yeats portrays 'middle-class Irish Catholics' as 'grasping, timid materialists' since he has 'a special scorn and anger' for them (8).(9) In the poem Yeats observes that the core of the people's purpose in life is to 'add the halfpence to the pence', to 'save' money as they are absorbed in their daily routine. This everyday activity alludes to the way in which the ordinary people are busily engaged in accumulating money for their future existence. From the poet's point of view, the people's life purpose is so unimaginative and monotonous that the 'greasy till' epitomises the place in which they sacrifice each day for the sake of future peace and security.

Yeats also writes that in the same utilitarian manner, with a vague sense of fear and anxiety the people add 'prayer to shivering prayer' for the eternal salvation of the

soul. In Yeats's representation of Irish-Catholic society, the religious term 'pray' coexists with the materialistic 'save' because money and prayer are equally valuable and important in the people's preparations for the future life. Terence Brown argues that 'prayer' can be read as an 'insurance policy' the people need for the afterlife.(10) In Yeats's estimation, the people give priority to results and profit-seeking; as a consequence of such day-to-day devotional exercises intended for practical purposes, they descend into a state lacking in vigour and vitality, in which exhausted condition they mechanically pursue the same routine day in and day out 'until / [they] have dried the marrow from the bone'.

In the 1910s Yeats believes that the spiritual corruption of the Catholic middle-classes constitutes the major reason why the reality of modern Ireland provides a stark contrast to his idealistic vision of the country.(11) In 'Yeats as an Example?' Heaney refers to the famous line 'Romantic Ireland's dead and gone' and appreciates its symbolic significance for Yeats in the 1910s, who abandons his earlier view of the country and makes a phased withdrawal from public affairs as a poet (106). In his understanding of 'September 1913' Heaney stresses the importance of Yeats's poetic efforts to oppose the tide of the modern world and shift the emphasis from the collective to the individual in order to encourage his own artistic 'development' (106).

Heaney thinks of 'September 1913' as a vital starting point for Yeats's 'remaking himself', in which the poet takes a firm stand against social realities and seeks the artistic ideal on a more personal level (106). With a full realisation of the real-life situations which are unacceptable and intolerable to him, Yeats asserts his own importance and places great emphasis on the individuality and distinctiveness of the poet. This aspect of Yeats affords an outstanding example to Heaney in Glanmore, who becomes acutely aware of the dilemmas and difficulties he faces involved in writing on behalf of his people; as a result, Heaney grows withdrawn, introspective and 'thoughtful', so as to identify himself in the poem 'Exposure' as a lone hermit who does not attach himself to any group or 'a wood-kerne / Escaped from the massacre'.(12) Stan Smith refers to 'Exposure' and observes that 'In 1975, this was not a merely fanciful identification, since the poem, indeed the volume in which it appeared, is preoccupied with the intercommunal violence of his native Six Counties, from which he considers himself privileged to have escaped' (10). Heaney follows Yeats's example in writing as

an individual and not as a representative of the people and in displaying his independence of mind, so that he struggles to free himself from communal restraints in Northern Ireland and thereby aims to achieve what he calls 'the grown-up "I"'.[(13)]

In 'The Fisherman' Heaney finds a concrete example of the way Yeats detaches himself from the society in which he believes the people are uncultured, uncivilised and unpoetical so that they have no understanding of the value and meaning of 'great Art' (*CP* 148). In the poem Yeats figures himself as a solitary artist who becomes disillusioned with the realities of the situation in modern Ireland, which result in 'The beating down of the wise / And great Art beaten down'; furthermore, Yeats originates an imaginative fisherman in conformity with his image of an ideal audience so that he can write for a 'man who is but a dream' (*CP* 148-149). In 'Yeats as an Example?' Heaney appreciates Yeats's imaginative way of coping with what happens in the outside world, and asserts that 'The Fisherman' encapsulates the poet's 'self-conscious turning away from that in which he no longer believes, which is Dublin life, and turning towards that which he trusts, which is an image or dream' (109). John Dennison maintains that Heaney's 'account of Yeats's shift in trust mirrors his own development from 1973 onwards, as, in an effort to make his art more central to his life, [Heaney] left Belfast, its social demands and political impositions, for the risk and solitude of Glanmore' (93).

What is particularly influential in shaping Heaney's search for 'the first person singular' free from externally imposed limitations and constraints on his imagination is Yeats's 'will towards excellence', his 'solitude' and his 'courage', all of which form a major element of 'The Fisherman' (Heaney, 'Yeats' 108). For Heaney in the 1970s, the special attractiveness of 'The Fisherman' is that Yeats creates a whole new image for his art and aspires for the quality which satisfies his own high intellectual standards, not designed to meet the needs of the moment. 'The Fisherman' affords the key to the development of Heaney's poetry during which he takes a step forward towards the achievement of poetic independence, determined not to sacrifice his poetry to the immediate demands of his community in Northern Ireland.

In 'The Fisherman', for instance, the speaker conjures up a picture of what his ideal audience would be like and presents a visionary image of the 'man who does not exist', while rejecting 'this audience' in a contemptuous manner:

Maybe a twelvemonth since
Suddenly I began,
In scorn of this audience,
Imagining a man,
And his sun-freckled face,
And grey Connemara cloth,
Climbing up to a place
Where stone is dark under froth,
And the down-turn of his wrist
When the flies drop in the stream;
A man who does no exist,
A man who is but a dream;
And cried, 'Before I am old
I shall have written him one
Poem maybe as cold
And passionate as the dawn.' (*CP* 148-149)

The verb 'Imagining' forms a marked contrast to the word 'scorn', which demonstrates how Yeats devotes himself increasingly to developing his own imaginative powers and creativity in spite of his disillusionment with the actual Irish audience.(14) In the poem Yeats's self-created fisherman lives apart from the crowd and maintains a proud independence. Louis MacNeice comments that Yeats's dreamlike fisherman is 'a product of wishful thinking, an intellectual's projection' (122). Nevertheless, in the poem Yeats's 'sun-freckled' fisherman actually moves with effort towards a higher position by 'Climbing up to a place / Where stone is dark under froth'. This upward movement refers to the fisherman's vigorous strides and reflects his energetic physical activity; at the same time, it mirrors Yeats's own strenuous individual efforts towards the improvement and perfection of his art.

Heaney interprets 'The Fisherman' as a central poem which embodies not only Yeats's inmost desire to transcend the limitations of the present situation in the modern world, but the poet's solitary or creative activity to search for a realm beyond the

bounds of everyday reality where he feels at peace and lives up to his high artistic ideals. In the poem Yeats's imaginative fisherman transcends reality and lives inside the poet's own private dream world in order to represent his ideal. Yeats's conscious and deliberate effort to have a firm faith in his artistic possibilities provides a lifeline by means of which Heaney can deal more creatively with the realities of the political predicament in Northern Ireland. Consequently, Yeats offers to Heaney an illuminating example of how to be faithful to his artistic principles and beliefs in the face of adversity and to overcome 'the public crisis' by the exercise of free imagination.(15)

## Ⅱ

In 'Casualty' Heaney depicts the actual fisherman O'Neill as a lone creature who 'would drink by himself' and who acts on his own initiative without following orders; moreover, Heaney develops O'Neill into a symbolic figure who refuses to share the same values, ideas and attitudes with other members of his community.(16) By following Yeats's example in creating a poetic image of the fisherman isolated from others, Heaney allows his own fisherman to have both freedom and solitude, so that in the poem O'Neill lives a life of his own choosing and stands aloof from the sphere of political strife.(17) Although unnamed in the poem, Heaney's fisherman exemplifies an autonomous individual who decides how to live his own life despite opposition from his community.

In 'Casualty' Heaney treats O'Neill as an intrepid and self-reliant person, who has a strong natural tendency to seek freedom and act separately from the crowd. Michael Parker agrees that O'Neill 'embodies independence, wisdom, integrity − a refusal to submit to the will of the crowd' (164). Daniel Tobin also points out that 'drinking "like a fish", [O'Neill] follows the lure of his own impulses, and so his habits implicitly express his scorn for tribal boundaries' (154). The crucial point is that Heaney's fisherman bears a striking similarity to Yeats's 'The Fisherman'. Firstly O'Neill has the 'courage' to act contrary to the communal rules and principles and second, is a solitary person who enjoys his own company and values the freedom of being an individual; in fact, O' Neill 'was blown to bits / Out drinking in a curfew / Others obeyed' (*FW* 15). Stephen Regan confirms that O'Neill's 'solitary independence [⋯] has led to his death after ignoring a curfew' (601). Notwithstanding all the objections which could be urged

against it, on the night of the Bloody Sunday funeral for the 'thirteen men in Derry', who were 'shot dead' while protesting against the government's policy of internment, O' Neill acted independently, following his own way in defiance of others (*FW* 15). As a result of the tragic experience, the funeral plays a more important role in the Catholic community in Northern Ireland; therefore, in 'Casualty' it is called the 'common funeral' where the members gather in the 'packed cathedral' (*FW* 15). The experience of death strengthens communal ties, rather than acts as a dissolvent, so that the mourners revitalise the bonds of unity and are 'braced and bound / Like brothers in a ring' (*FW* 16).

On this very night of the funeral, Catholics were forced to stay at home under curfew, and 'Everybody held / His breath and trembled'; nonetheless, O'Neill relied on his own judgement and went outside, disregarding the established rules and conventions of his community (*FW* 15). Thomas C. Foster claims that the 'true poet, by definition, is a loner, a seeker of solitude' in the same way as Heaney's fisherman, who 'requires not society but his own' (78-79). In 'Casualty' Yeats exerts an immediate and vital influence on Heaney's creation of the fisherman; as a result, O'Neill is allowed to reflect the very image of a poet who is independent of his people and writes of his own free will, without being bound by communal ties. Jonathan Hufstader insists that 'Louis O'Neill, an obscure fisherman and the pub-crawling hero of "Casualty," is the first to represent Heaney's new (since *North*) ideal of the disengaged poet' (56).

Yeats follows his artistic impulse to pursue an ideal dream world in the face of overwhelming reality in 'The Fisherman'; similarly, when required to abide by the curfew, Heaney's fisherman can be a law unto himself and remain emotionally detached from the communal spirit in which the needs of the group are more determinant than those of the individual. In 'Casualty' O'Neill exercises his own independent judgement with disregard for the feelings and wishes of others:

> But he would not be held
> At home by his own crowd
> Whatever threats were phoned,
> Whatever black flags waved.
> I see him as he turned

In that bombed offending place,
Remorse fused with terror
In his still knowable face,
His cornered outfaced stare
Blinding in the flash. (*FW* 16)

In the poem O'Neill is not susceptible to influences from the outside and prefers his own way of doing things, which is strongly reminiscent of how Yeats refuses to accommodate himself to the actual audience and possesses a poet's pride, dignity and self-esteem that are not dependent on the opinion and approval of others. Heaney lays a special emphasis on the fact that O'Neill takes an independent course no matter how often 'his own crowd' warns him against breaking the curfew. Helen Vendler notes that the 'contrariness within a presumably unitary culture is most visible in "Casualty"' (64). In Heaney's poem O'Neill represents some of Yeats's 'will' to revolt against the single standard of shared values and customs on which society is based to exist as a unity, and to follow his own independent mind ignoring the prevailing local opinion. In his essay 'Seamus Heaney's Yeats' (1996), Jonathan Allison also argues that '[O'Neill's] turning his back on the IRA curfew is valorized by the poet and it seems to resemble Yeats's turning from "the reality" of modernity which would beat art down' (33).

From the perspective of his own people, O'Neill's uncooperative mentality can be criticised as 'culpable', for he commits a selfish act and offends against the social codes of his Irish-Catholic 'tribe' (*FW* 16). However, the central point of 'Casualty' is that O'Neill gives his personal life priority over his community life and acts against the unity and harmony of the group. The most notable example of such a determined attitude can be seen in the lines where O'Neill is killed in a reprisal bomb set by the IRA. Heaney describes the fisherman's 'stare' in the explosion as 'cornered' but 'outfaced'. In Heaney's portrayal of O'Neill, his 'still knowable face' shows signs of solitary defiance towards the present situation in which his people are united against their opponents and silently obey the IRA curfew, based on straightforward political hostility.[(18)] By using the word 'outfaced', Heaney stretches his interpretation of the actual fisherman to suit his imaginative needs; consequently, in the poem O'Neill is altered into the one who boldly confronts his difficulties, brave and confident enough not to submit to adversity,

and who goes beyond the restrictions imposed by 'his own crowd'.

By using Yeats's 'The Fisherman' as a model of creative power and free imagination, Heaney's fisherman becomes a man of strong and daring character who is uncompromisingly honest about his own motives to such an extent that he violates his 'tribe's complicity' with the IRA terrorists (*FW* 16). In an interview with O'Driscoll, Heaney regards 'O'Neill's transgression of the curfew' as a breakaway from 'a call for solidarity' (*Stepping* 215). The final section of 'Casualty' forms the most perfect representation of the individual's independence, free will and choice, where in his fishing boat the ghost of O'Neill takes the speaker into his 'proper haunt' – a region in which he can return to natural ways of being and behaving, display his real ability and come into his own, unencumbered by the restraints of his community:

> I tasted freedom with him.
> To get out early, haul
> Steadily off the bottom,
> Dispraise the catch, and smile
> As you find a rhythm
> Working you, slow mile by mile,
> Into your proper haunt
> Somewhere, well out, beyond . . . (*FW* 17)

In the solitude of O'Neill's boat the speaker is isolated from the political turmoil and violent conflict going on outside, so that he can feel an inward sense of release and 'tast[e] freedom'. It is because the speaker is guided by the fisherman who acts on his own authority and instincts that he can maintain critical distance from his community and shake off his worldly duties and cares. As a consequence of such a separation from his own people, the speaker reaches the stage where he can let his imagination run loose and be creative, so as to escape from subjugation of his personal desires to the needs of the group.

In 'Casualty' the unspecified place 'Somewhere, well out, beyond . . .' alludes to a mental state where Heaney can hold communion with himself and thereby examine the

uniqueness and singularity of an individual's inner life. In the mid-1970s Heaney experiences spiritual conflict between the inner psychic world and the outer world, between the individual and the group. The ending of 'Casualty' strikes out a new direction in his works, where Heaney attains a tranquil state of mind that is free from constraints imposed on him from outside, so that he enjoys his solitude and finds peace with his inner self, as released from his communal duties. This demonstrates how Yeats' s middle period helps Heaney to rise above the political cohesion and unity of his Catholic community, write independent of the outer world and find inner peace and contentment. Such a shift of emphasis from the 'outer' world to the 'inner', from the social unrest to the inward peace, can be viewed as one of the most striking manifestations of Yeats's influence on Heaney's works during the 1970s.[19]

## Ⅲ

Heaney's in-depth understanding of Yeats's middle period gives him a whole new perspective on Friel's play entitled *Faith Healer*. According to Richard Rankin Russell, *Faith Healer* is 'Friel's greatest and most challenging play', in which the 'themes of exile, homecoming, and community are all intertwined' (105). Heaney's clearer and firmer conception of 'The Fisherman' as a poem of the artist's yearning for detachment from reality and self-fulfilment leads him to turn the spotlight on the concluding part of *Faith Healer*, where the Irish faith healer Frank Hardy returns home after long years of wandering through Britain in order to settle the 'nagging tormenting, maddening questions' he suffers from all his life about whether his faith-healing gift is true or not (*FH* 334).[20]

In Friel's play, while travelling from place to place Hardy has been torn between the desire to have great faith in himself and the need to doubt his supernatural ability to heal sick people, and back in his old home Hardy attempts to acquire self-assurance in his '*unique and awesome gift*' and demonstrate that he is not '*a con man*' (*FH* 333). Seamus Deane emphasises that for Hardy the 'ultimate test of his gift is home, Ballybeg' (110). Contrary to his wishes and expectations, Hardy becomes fearful and fainthearted in Ballybeg when drunken local farmers abruptly pressurise him to prove himself really capable. In his home Hardy cannot adapt himself to the requirements of his people,

sinking into an inharmonious, negative state of mind. At the end of the play Hardy enters into a discordant and edgy relationship with the violent and dangerous men from Ballybeg, and he is therefore forced to face reality and accept the fact that his attempt heads for inevitable failure. In the last extremity Hardy gives up hoping for success in real life and finally finds inner peace and contentment, apart from the outside world. While seeing a new meaning in *Faith Healer*, Heaney directs his attention to Hardy's strained relationship with his home, and claims that it presents a remarkable parallel with Yeats's 'The Fisherman'.

In *Faith Healer* the main character Hardy stays in the pub in Ballybeg, County Donegal, where he drinks in a crowd with young locals around midnight. Returning home after a long absence initially gives Hardy a previous sense of 'a fulfilment, an integration, a full blossoming', positive feelings that he might be able to reach a long-hoped-for moment to retain a firm and unshakable belief in his preternatural ability to cure the sick (*FH* 372). In his monologue Hardy admits that 'in Ballybeg' he becomes 'disarmed by the warmth and the camaraderie and the deference and the joviality and the joy and the effusion of that home-coming welcome that night in that pub'; moreover, Hardy expects that 'at long last' his healing power will recover its former health and strength, and that he will eventually realise his long-cherished desire to restore his faith in his special gift (*FH* 372). However, when one of the young local farmers Donal challenges him to heal his disabled friend in a wheelchair named McGarvey and to demonstrate his marvellous gift in front of them, Hardy is suddenly gripped by the 'cold certainty' that there would be no hope of his success, conceding that the 'illusion' of his successful outcome 'quickly vanish[es]' (*FH* 340, 372).

Hardy's attempt to prove his worth in this unforeseen situation is doomed to disappointment; in fact, Hardy begins to expect failure and criticism and has a resigned attitude towards the fulfilment of his ability, repeating the phrase '[he] [knows] that nothing [is] going to happen, nothing at all' (*FH* 375). Hardy also becomes acutely aware that danger is threatening him, since the landlord has called McGarvey's friends 'savage bloody men' and warned him about their barbarity and brutality, saying that 'they'll kill [him]' if he does 'nothing for [McGarvey]' (*FH* 374). In his essay 'Cornucopia and Empty Shell: Variations on a Theme from Ellmann' (1988), Heaney views this final scene in a new light and asserts that Hardy's painful experience of returning home

bears a close similarity to the disillusionment Yeats expresses in 'The Fisherman', where the poet becomes alienated from 'an idea of tradition and community' and 'commits himself instead to "a man who does not exist"':

> These curtain lines of Brian Friel's *Faith Healer* are like a reprise of much that I have been concerned with. In the large simple scheme of the narrative, Frank Hardy, the Irish faith healer, is returning home to his original place. The reward for this commitment is a blank and hostile stare, the malignity of those he would embrace concentrated back upon him as the antithesis of the benignity he would exercise upon them. This is like the moment when Yeats, having committed his individual talent to an idea of tradition and community, burns off those lovely entrancing scales from his eyes and commits himself instead to 'a man who does not exist'. (65)

In Heaney's estimation Hardy's 'disappointed return to Ireland' forms a counterpart of 'The Fisherman', which springs from Yeats's disappointment with the uncultured Dublin audience and shows indefatigable energy in pursuit of his ideals and dreams ('Cornucopia' 63). Heaney's interest in *Faith Healer* centres chiefly on what he considers the 'heartbreaking conclusion' of the play, where Hardy 'walk[s] across that yard, over those worn cobbles, towards the arched entrance' in order to come face-to-face with the wheelchair-bound young man McGarvey and his friends waiting outside the pub ('Cornucopia' 63; *FH* 375). Without any real hope of success, Hardy 'walk[s] across the yard towards them' while feeling the approach of death (*FH* 375). Heaney observes that in 'the climax of Friel's play', which is 'devastating', Hardy is faced with a no-win situation in which 'the fulfillments' are 'no longer to be either hoped for or credited' ('Cornucopia' 63, 65). Heaney sees the Irish faith healer Hardy as being in some way analogous to the speaker in Yeats's 'The Fisherman' because in such a desperate situation Hardy detaches himself from worldly success and attainment, rises above petty rivalries in Ballybeg and discovers a more personal meaning the homecoming has for him. While focusing on 'Frank's relationship to the tightly knit Ballybeg community', Patrick Grant notes that 'Hardy returns to a cruel immolation by his own tribe, from which he departed long ago to explore and exercise his art' (87).

Despite the fact that he is facing almost certain death by his people's hands, Hardy is still able to overcome communal constraints and dedicate himself to attaining the inner strength which alone guarantees serenity and peace.

In the same way as Yeats's 'The Fisherman' which is keenly aware of the yawning gulf between aspiration and reality and seeks tenaciously to realise his own artistic ideals, Hardy not only resigns himself to the inevitable, accepting that there is no way out of the situation, but also withdraws into his own world, experiences his inner self, his inner spiritual energy, and attains a perfect serenity of mind, a real stillness and peacefulness. In his last moment Hardy liberates himself from his emotional bondage to the Ballybeg community and lives in his own inner world, so that he can no longer distinguish between imagination and reality and between the inner spiritual world of himself and the outer physical world around him; for instance, Hardy perceives that 'the whole corporeal world [⋯] somehow they [have] shed their physical reality and [have] become mere imaginings' (*FH* 376). Russell considers 'Frank's last monologue' as 'the dematerialization of the "whole corporeal world" and his satisfaction in apprehending the spiritual nature of himself' (108). In Heaney's view, Hardy's turn away from the real world to his own imaginary world, from the outer pressure to his inner reality, is almost identical to Yeats's transitional stage leading to maturity 'when the place of writing shifts its locus into psychic space' ('Cornucopia' 68).

In *Faith Healer* Hardy's last words form the conclusion of the play, saying 'At long last [he is] renouncing chance' (376). This last line refers to Hardy's abandonment of efforts to prove his outstanding gift in his dealings with reality. In the midst of insurmountable difficulties Hardy surrenders illusory hopes of success in the real world by throwing off the shackles of the community, rids himself of all worldly thoughts and moves into the internal realm of imagination. By virtue of such a marked shift away from the bitter realities of his life, Hardy becomes fully aware of his spiritual rather than material self and finds inner calm and tranquillity; as a result, Hardy reaches the certainty that 'Then for the first time there [is] no atrophying terror; and the maddening questions [are] silent' (*FH* 376). Deane affirms that '[Hardy] authors himself in a final act of authority' since 'just before he dies he articulates himself' (111). Giovanna Tallone also observes that 'the end of Frank's monologue and of his life coincide[s] with a new beginning, as he dies at dawn' (56).

In the end Hardy discovers a more honest self and achieves 'for the first time […] a simple and genuine sense of home-coming', that is to say, a sense of affirming his present self, gaining comfort from his inner convictions and possessing serene and imperturbable self-confidence (*FH* 376). In his essay 'For Liberation: Brian Friel and The Use of Memory' (1993), Heaney views the play's 'finale' as 'a cathartic brilliance' because 'the conclusion of *Faith Healer* […] carries its protagonist and its audience into a realm *beyond* expectation' (237).[(21)] At the climax of the play, when going to certain destruction Hardy is allowed to achieve calm resignation, feel really at peace with himself and experience spiritual awakening as a result of his renunciation of the expected role or the duty imposed by his people. Hardy's failure in his relation with the outer world, his native home and its people, offers Heaney another important example of how the poet is able to become more self-sufficient and less dependent on the views of his community, attain a state of mind that is free from external constraints and rely on his own inner resources in order to fulfil his imaginative and artistic requirements.

## Ⅳ. Conclusion

This paper has examined how Yeats's middle period exercises a great influence on Heaney in the 1970s. Firstly, 'September 1913' plays a crucial role in the development of Heaney's works, where the poet endeavours to achieve personal and artistic independence in the tumult of the 'Troubles'. Heaney left Belfast in 1972, when 'about 350' people died 'in the violence and the whole Northern Irish state was clearly breaking up' (Paulin 28). During this critical period of the Northern Irish violence Heaney believes 'middle Yeats' is a prime example of an Irish writer that keeps aloof from the madding crowd, registers dissent with the status quo and asserts strong individuality in a conformist atmosphere. Heaney learns from this example how to liberate himself from the constraints of 'political solidarity' and develop a strong sense of self-reliance and self-realisation. In short, Heaney turns to Yeats's middle period in his search for 'free creative imagination' which is not easily swayed by a sense of duty to serve the community, while realising the seriousness of the situation in Northern Ireland.[(22)]

Secondly, 'The Fisherman' serves as a precedent for Heaney because the poem

illustrates how an Irish poet has the imaginative freedom to pursue his or her own ideals without a social duty or worldly obligations. Heaney repeatedly mentions Yeats's significant artistic achievement in 'The Fisherman', where the poet feels an inner calling to withdraw from the real world and devotes himself to his own imaginary world and creation. This shift from the real to the imaginary, from the 'outer' to the 'inner', provides a model that Heaney follows in order to maintain his personal freedom, expand his wild imagination and creative energy and pursue self-fulfilment and poetic satisfaction.

'Casualty' in his fifth collection of poetry *Field Work* is the fruition of Heaney's devotion to the reading of Yeats's middle period. In the poem Heaney allows his imagination full play and creates the fisherman in his own image as the one who lives outside the close confines of community life. During the difficult and unsettled times when revenge leads to a self-perpetuating cycle of violence in Northern Ireland, Yeats permits Heaney to make imaginative use of the actual fisherman, whose life is somewhat removed from the realities of the political situation, not restricted by communal constraints; consequently, Heaney's fisherman becomes a symbol of the individual independence, freedom and liberation from community life.

'The Fisherman' demonstrates how Yeats survives the difficulties of the time by developing confidence and pride in his creative ability to present the ideal rather than the mundane and realistic. Heaney sees 'middle Yeats' as an important precursor of Irish writers, in particular for his use of free imagination and for his pursuit of artistic ideals. This aspect of Yeats serves as a model for Heaney in the mid-1970s who suffers spiritual conflict between the external laws of life and the needs of the inner being. Heaney's devotion to Yeats's middle period enriches his own inner life; as a result, Heaney finds how to protect and nurture his inner self and to express a desire for actively chosen personal freedom when his people unite in nationalistic sentiment against a crisis in Northern Ireland. In 'Casualty' the place described as 'Somewhere, well out, beyond …' epitomises the spiritual state of subjectivity and self-reliance that Heaney is allowed to attain under the influence of Yeats's middle period. In conclusion, reading 'middle Yeats' enables Heaney to go beyond the boundaries of his Catholic community in Northern Ireland and adopt an independent standpoint of view on the feeling of communal unity that his people share and develop in the middle of the

Northern Irish violence.

Finally, Heaney's full appreciation of Yeats's middle period offers him a deeply revealing insight into how the Irish character in Friel's *Faith Healer* achieves personal liberation from the bondage of his homeland and retains inner calm and freedom. Heaney observes that Friel's play shows a 'parallel with the Irish writer's problematical relation to his given ground' ('Cornucopia' 63). The ending of *Faith Healer* explores the inner workings of the Irish healer's mind when he passes through a severe crisis in his relationship with his homeland and when his people drives him into death. While standing in the worst predicament in his native village, the Irish faith healer is able to undergo a Yeatsian paradigm shift away from the real and into the imagined and come into spiritual harmony with his surroundings. This dramatic shift in values or attitudes to the outside world provides Heaney with a powerful means of breaking away from the bounds set by the requirements of his people and going beyond the limits of the community's ability to resolve disputes in Northern Ireland. Heaney follows the marked examples of men who can overcome adverse circumstances by drawing on their immense inner strengths and imaginative powers to handle the real-life problem, namely Yeats's middle period and Hardy in *Faith Healer*; as a consequence, Heaney affirms his faith in a poet's power and freedom to create the imaginary which does not adjust to the practical demands of real life and to turn up truths obscured by a pedestrian reality, thereby striving to survive the political crisis in Northern Ireland.

### Notes

（1）In an interview with O'Driscoll, Heaney admits: 'In 1972, I resigned from Queen's, withdrew from a thriving poetry scene and went full time as a writer in the more solitary conditions of Wicklow. Yet Glanmore was a retreat in more senses than one. It was like the spiritual retreat we'd always do at the beginning of the school year: on the last evening there would be a formal renewal of your baptismal vows' (*Stepping* 207).

（2）'I wanted to leave Belfast because I wanted to step out of the rhythms I had established; I wanted to be alone with myself' (Randall 8).

（3）Heaney, *North* (London: Faber, 1975), p.73; hereafter cited parenthetically, thus: (*N* 73).

（4）In an interview with O'Driscoll, Heaney reveals: 'And I had been reading Yeats more intensely at that stage [in the mid-seventies], middle Yeats especially' (*Stepping* 448). In his book *The Life of*

*W.B. Yeats: A Critical Biography*（1999）, Brown confirms that 'Heaney in fact has engaged as critic with the poetic achievement of Yeats more fully than any other Irish poet since MacNeice'（381）.

（5）In an interview with O'Driscoll, Heaney refers to the 'dilemma' that one faces between 'political solidarity' and 'complete solitude' during the 'Troubles': 'I did have one big uncertainty to explore, a dilemma that many people in the North were then experiencing very acutely, stretched as they often were between the impulse to maintain political solidarity and their experience of a spiritual condition of complete solitude'（*Stepping* 215）.

（6）In his book *Seamus Heaney as Aesthetic Thinker: A Study of the Prose*（2016）, Eugene O'Brien asserts: 'The kaleidoscope, with its changing pattern of colors, is a visual example of the field of force, as colors, shapes, and images are constantly changing and developing. It is the interplay of the colors and shapes in the kaleidoscope that is significant, and it is this interplay that he values when he brings this essay to its climax by quoting from the Yeatsian poem that gives the essay its name, "Among School Children"'（133）.

（7）In an interview with Adam Kirsch, Heaney acknowledges that his interest in 'middle Yeats' leads to the composition of 'Casualty': 'In the 1970s, for example, I found myself learning to relish the poetry of Andrew Marvell and Sir Thomas Wyatt, and getting a handle on poetry of plainer speech than I had dwelt with heretofore. Which led me into a new appreciation of middle Yeats, of the short three-beat line and forward-driving syntax, and that paid in, in turn, to a poem like "Casualty" in *Field Work*'（55）.

（8）W.B. Yeats, *The Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats*, ed. by Richard J. Finneran, revised second edition（New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996）, p.108; hereafter cited parenthetically, thus:（*CP* 108）. In the first line of 'September 1913', where the people are described as 'being come to sense', the speaker seems to accept that they have recovered their consciousness and reason after a period of vagueness, so that they are now able to think and behave in a sensible way. However, the phrase 'being come to sense' should not be interpreted in its literal sense as a recovery of their sanity or reason; on the contrary, it is open to different interpretations. For instance, in his essay 'Yeats and Politics' Jonathan Allison observes that the 'phrase "come to sense" connotes the caricatured shopkeeper's self-interested prudence'（192）.

（9）Howes explains the reason why 'after 1903 Yeats began to construct an increasingly elaborate mythology of class, in which he formulated his disenchantment with the modern world through ideas of middle-class corruption': 'The controversies over Synge's plays hardened his opinions

about the capacity of popular audiences for appreciating good art, and his various struggles over the theatre made him particularly hostile to artists and actors he perceived as pandering to popular tastes or propaganda' (8).

(10) Brown asserts that 'September 1913' is 'written in the heat of a polemical contempt for a sordidly pecuniary view of life after death (prayer as insurance policy)' (208). In 'Yeats and Politics' Allison also claims that the 'dutiful, shivering prayers imply a dubious combination of piety and mercantilism' (192).

(11) In his introductory rhymes to *Responsibilities* Yeats includes the line 'Only the wasteful virtues earn the sun', and Howes explains that Yeats develops a tendency to idealise 'a number of forces and examples' which are 'all firmly anti-utilitarian and anti-materialistic' (9). Brown points out that in the 'several poems' of *Responsibilities* 'Yeats celebrates Irish beggary as a metaphor of the spiritual freedom the Irish materially minded moneyed class so significantly lacks' (209).

(12) In 'Exposure' Heaney writes: 'I am neither internee nor informer; / An inner émigré, grown long-haired / And thoughtful; a wood-kerne / Escaped from the massacre, / Taking protective colouring / From bole and bark, feeling / Every wind that blows' (*N* 73).

(13) In a 1979 interview with O'Driscoll, Heaney refers to the main purpose of *Field Work*: 'It was like starting again in that I wanted to use the first person singular, to use "I" in the poems and make it closer to the "I" of my own life, the grown-up "I" that I use in my conversation and in my confidences with people' ('In the Mid-Course' 13).

(14) According to James Pathica, 'Yeats regretted that "Ireland's great moment had passed" for creating the "ideal Ireland" in whose service he had labored"' in 'Poetry and Tradition' (1907), an essay which was 'written in the wake of the protests against Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World* in 1907' (138-139).

(15) In an interview with Randall, Heaney observes: 'So, I think Yeats's example as a man who held to a single vision is tremendously ennobling − he kept the elements of his imagery and his own western landscape, the mythological images, and he used those and Coole Park, he used those as a way of coping with contemporary reality. I think that what he learned there was that you deal with public crisis not by accepting the terms of the public's crisis, but by making your own imagery and your own terrain take the color of it, take the impressions of it. Yeats also instructs you that you have to be enormously intelligent to handle it' (13).

(16) Heaney, *Field Work* (London: Faber, 1979), p.14; hereafter cited parenthetically, thus: (*FW* 14)

(17) In an interview with O'Driscoll, Heaney refers to the influence of 'The Fisherman' on his poem

'Casualty': 'That was the one time when Yeats was an actual tuning fork for a poem I was writing. "Casualty" commemorates the eel fisherman Louis O'Neill – whom I've mentioned – and I was counting out the metre to keep in step with "The freckled man who goes / To a grey place on a hill / In grey Connemara clothes"' (*Stepping* 194).

(18) In his book *The Poetry of Seamus Heaney: A Critical Study* (1998), Corcoran also focuses on 'the image of the "face"' and insists that O'Neill 'has attempted to "outface" the bomb by defiantly braving the curfew' (93). In 'Heaney and Yeats' (2009) Corcoran points out that 'this fisherman turns back into something much more like Yeats's ideal' because in 'his ghosthood, Heaney's fisherman too is a man who does not exist, a man who is but a dream' (173).

(19) In his reading of 'The Fisherman' Heaney gives attention to the shift from the outer world to the inner: 'I have said enough, I think, about the outer man and what he intended, so it is time to consider the inwardness of the poems instead of the outwardness of the stance' ('Yeats' 109). In his essay 'The Placeless Heaven: Another Look at Kavanagh' (1985), Heaney also refers to 'the change of focus from outer to inner reality' and asserts that Patrick Kavanagh's 'lyric celebration' epitomises 'a resource that maintained the artist's inner freedom in the face of worldly disappointments' (11-12).

(20) Brian Friel's *Faith Healer* is quoted from *Selected Plays* (London: Faber, 1984), and page numbers are in parentheses. Henceforth, *FH*.

(21) In the essay Heaney also writes: 'The conclusion of *Faith Healer*, in other words, is the ultimate manifestation of the convergence of opposites, the point of intersection between imperative vision and incontrovertible evidence, in that Hardy lives out to the death his own personal myth, fully conscious of the evidence that is there all the time, evidence which says that he will fail to cure McGarvey and the consequences will be fatal' (237). Russell thinks of 'Frank's epiphany' as what 'mingles the recognition of coming home with a lack of fear at his fate' (139). Tallone affirms that 'For the first time ever Frank has reconciled with his questions and his experience of "a simple and genuine sense of homecoming" (376) provides the sense of order that the words in his story have not managed to give' (58) .

(22) Heaney's search for 'free creative imagination' can also be found in *Sweeney Astray* (1983), which he begins to work on soon after he moves to Glanmore. In his 'Introduction' to *Sweeney Astray*, Heaney considers Sweeney as 'a figure of the artist, displaced, guilty, assuaging himself by his utterance' and sees 'the work as an aspect of the quarrel between free creative imagination and the constraints of religious, political, and domestic obligation' (vi).

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