Q. and A. come back. They “Formed my mind.”
“Who is my neighbour?” “My neighbour is all mankind.”

-Ten Glosses, Electric Light.

Conclusion

The end of art is peace.
Conclusion

Heaney’s poetry mirrors the plight of the marginalization of Irish people and the impact of colonization on the culture, traditions, identity, language and economy of Northern Ireland and throws into relief the attitude of hegemonic societies. His negotiations are based around the binaries of metropolis/periphery, self/other, colonizer/colonized, England/Ireland. The major impact of centuries of colonization on Ireland has been the fragmentation of the Irish identity. Despite the noble veil of cultural and moral missions, one of the basic motives of colonial enterprise is economic.

Heaney, with the use of these postcolonial strategies, dismantles the hegemony. Heaney opts to be a ‘digger’ who digs through the layers of history, literature, culture and language to expose the truth. As a ‘digger’ he digs down the layers of history, language and literature of his own nation to find that English literature is filled with misrepresentations of Irish people and that Irish language is looked down upon and that history is are full of amnesia.

The desire and need for a single reliable version of the past, the rehabilitation of Irish identity and redemption of Irish dignity are the missions of Heaney. He re-writes history and scrutinizes the misrepresentations of Irish culture and traditions in hegemonic records. Heaney rewrites history through his poetry. Heaney seems to be preoccupied with the notion of digging. In the very first poem of the first anthology *Death of a Naturalist* (1966) he makes his agenda clear. He announces that would ‘dig’ through the layers of memory, history and literature. In the first anthology *Death of a Naturalist* (1966), in the first poem ‘Digging’, the fragmentation of individual as well as community identity is a major theme. Owing to this inheritance of loss the poet could not follow his ‘spade’ or farming tradition of his family and turns to the ‘pen’. He compromises with and breaks the long hard-labour tradition of his family and decides consciously to ‘dig’ with the pen. To settle for peace, he makes sociological compromises by not advocating ‘gun’ against ‘gun’. The theme of ‘digging’ and ‘exposing’ continues throughout his poetry.
In the anthologies which Heaney published in the later phase of his career such as *The Spirit Level* (1996), *Electric Light* (2001) and *District and Circle* (2006), the childhood memories are littered with the imagery of the World War II and the wars of contemporary times. In ‘A Sofa in the Forties’ (*SL*), ‘Polish Sleeper’ and *Anahorish 1944* (*DC*) the poet remembers the impact of World War II, in ‘Known World’ (*EL*) the ethnic cleansing of Balkan region is recalled and in ‘Anything can Happen’ (*DC*), the terror strike of 9/11 is projected. The shocking and shameful violation and torturous and traumatic violence compelled the poet to write about the absolute degradation of
mankind. Heaney’s concerns widen with the encapsulation of the problems of the world. His poetry moves from the domain of ‘parochialism’ to ‘universalism’. Heaney has always stood for universal brotherhood and for a free and independent world which is not fragmented by the evil force of caste, creed, and colour. Through his vision, he compensates for hatred and breaks down the walls that divide the world. He struggles for to bring global harmony. He propagates the sustenance of a noble system and standards of justice, peace, harmony and truth.

Identities are deeply rooted in culture. They emerge out of cultural history. In the postcolonial era, the role of culture in the construction of identity has become significant. Colonialism is responsible for manipulating, fracturing, imposing and negating the identities of the natives. The stripping of identity occurred at individual as well as community levels. The experience of colonization, with all its harmful manifestations, is shared by all colonies of the world. Postcolonialism restores the right of every individual on this earth. Hence in a postcolonial text the question of identity is recurrent within the frame and space of representation. The original identity of rural Ireland was threatened by colonialism. The figure of the father becomes a kind of signifier for the fractured identity of ‘Everyman’ in rural Ireland. In ‘Follower’ and ‘Digging’, the image of the father becomes a signifier for the dilapidating original rural Irish identity. He has a desire to follow his father but is unable to do so. Hence he compensates through memories and recollections. He returns to his own childhood and native place in his memory. Restoration of the social and original identity is one of the concerns of Heaney’s poetry.

He evokes his original rural identity through out his poetic career. Identity is inherited with the traditions and culture. Heaney experiences comfort in the rural belongings. He loves fodder in ‘Fodder’ (DD) and celebrates the Irish hearth in ‘Keeping Going’ (SL), rejoices in his culture in ‘From the Canton of Expectation (HL). The impact of cultural domination of the colonizers on the Irish culture is central to the poem ‘Oysters’. In Field Work (1979) food and drinks are represented as a part of a culture. Food contributes to the construction of cultural narratives. The poet, unable to compensate for the subjugation of Irish culture, feels angry.
The desire to engineer his own identity persuades Heaney to recollect the pieces of rural identity through the description of the agricultural and rural landscape in ‘The Barn’ (DN). He explains that the purpose of his poetry is ‘to pry into roots’ in order to set ‘the darkness echoing’ in the poem ‘Personal Helicon’ (DN). Heaney recreates the old forgotten Ireland in all its myriad splendour in the poem ‘The Diviner’ (DN). Heaney revitalizes the old Ireland which had been blurred by the dominance of colonization. The diviner becomes a symbol of his community. Similarly the poet promotes the notion of attachment to his community and compensates the loss with the rehabilitation of real Ireland through his poetry.

In the process of rehabilitating of rural identity, the poet glosses rural skills in Door into the Dark (1969). Rural trades were over shadowed by the glitter of industrialization. Heaney praises the skills of the roof-maker in ‘Thatcher’ and of the blacksmith in ‘The Forge’. In the decaying order the rural craftsmen symbolize the secluded spaces where they continue to survive. Heaney, as compensation, provides them with a proper literary space by praising them in his poetry. Similarly the Croppies, the historically muted victims of the hegemonic records have been remembered and given a proper literary space in Heaney’s poem ‘Requiem for Croppies’. Heaney lends his voice to these silenced subalterns, so, that they can expose the wrongs done to them and fills the voids of historical amnesia. The postcolonial writers across the globe have embarked on the task of re-representing the colonial period in their writings. Writers such as George Lamming, Chinua Achebe, Wilson Harris and V.S Naipaul have attacked the hegemony of the Empire.

Heaney removes the noble veil of enlightenment from the civilization mission of the colonizers. He talks about the real economic exploitations of native resources in ‘A Lough Neagh Sequence’ and ‘The Plantation’. For the redemption of Irish pride, the Irish people will look back into the history in the ‘bottomless’ center of ‘Bogland’. The bog preserves the past which the colonizers tried to distort. The poem ‘Bogland’ becomes a manifesto for the bog poems of coming anthologies. The first bog body to emerge from the bog, is Tollund Man. The local murder of a young Catholic is woven with the
sacrificial death penalty of the Iron Age Victim. Heaney’s failures in making the bog body reciprocate to his appeal and failure in compensating for the murder of the young Catholic, unleashes waves of unhappiness. The Tollund Man becomes a heralder of other bog bodies.

The Tollund Man makes his reappearance in ‘The Tollund Man in Springtime’ in DC. Tollund Man returns to the contemporary world of 21st century where he experiences sense alienation as the world has metamorphosed from natural to virtual. The resurrected Tollund man in springtime is not ready to compromise with the ‘sad freedom’ of his earlier poem ‘The Tollund Man’. He compensates for the unhappiness of Heaney by breaking his silence. He fulfills the poet’s desire by coming out his passivity from the ‘display case’ of the museum and actively participating in the 21st century.

The main impetus behind the bog poems was the P.V. Glob’s The Bog People. In North (1972), Heaney resurrects the ancient bodies. The bogs have been silent witnesses to atrocities wreaked upon generations of the Iron Age people. Hidden in its depth were the dark secrets of human history that were unearthed by the ‘digger’ Seamus Heaney. One of the vital concerns of postcolonialism is the search for truth. Heaney investigates their stories in order to establish an amnesia free perspective. He resurrects and returns their voice so they can tell their stories to the whole world. He gives them literary space in his poetry like any other thing of beauty. The Grauballe Man, The Tollund Man, The Windeby girl, and the Bog Queen, return from the Iron Age to tell their stories. In ‘The Bog Queen’, the compensation transcends any ordinary compensation; Heaney exhibits erotic passion for the corpse of the girl. In ‘Punishment’, Heaney suffers from guilt for compromising with silence, for just being a silent observer and for his failure to stop the vengeance of IRA.

Postcolonialism is a process of resistance and reconstruction. As resistance to the hegemony Heaney evokes the historical, political, linguistic and cultural genocide of the Ireland in Wintering Out (1972). He talks about the linguistic colonization of Ireland in ‘Midnight’ by equating the disappearance of Irish language with wolf hunting in Ireland.
and in ‘Tradition’, where he claims that the ‘guttural muse’ was bullied by the ‘alliterative traditions’ of English. Heaney compensates for the bullying through the mention of Leopald Bloom to claim compensation through literature for stereotyping and branding Irish people as ‘other’ in the colonial English literature. Edmund Spender and Shakespeare, for Heaney, were the masters who misrepresented Irish people in their works. One of the concerns of the postcolonialism is to critically analyze the representations of natives as ‘other’ in a colonial text. The natives have always been presented in negative shades in the works of colonizers. In ‘Stations of the West’ (S), the poet is unable to compensate emotionally to the loss of Gaelic language in the Gaeltacht region. Heaney also compensates for the linguistic hegemony of English through poems such as ‘Anahorish’, ‘Fodder’, ‘Toome’ and ‘Broagh’ of Irish ‘dinnseanchas’. It is a tradition about the sounds of a word, its pronunciation and usage, and the people who use it.

The relationship between Ireland and England is like the relationship between a victim and a rapist. Poems such as ‘Ocean’s Love to Ireland’ and ‘Act of Union’ present the marginalization of Irish civilization through the forceful imposition of masculine strength of England over Ireland. The psychological scars of colonial neurosis are dealt with in the poems. Heaney exposes the real motives behind the White man’s burden. In ‘Orange Drums, Tyrone, 1966’, Heaney exposes the divide and rule policy of Orangism which created divisions among the Protestants and Catholics in Stations (1975). The sectarian violence and the ideological divisions are dealt with in ‘July’ which carries forward the theme of psychological pressure on the minority community by the Protestants through the Orange Drums parade. However the position of the speaker-poet is somewhat compromised with the awareness of his being of the minority community and hence no endeavour is made for compensations in the poem. The parades remind the poet of their defeat. The poet feels like a ‘double agent’ among the political big concepts in ‘England’s Difficulty’ suggesting the colonial politics of divisions between the unionists and nationalists. His prayer is for a peaceful society where the world is not choked with blood and gore and decaying dead bodies.
Heaney is never ready to surrender to the colonial oppression but his plight is that there is no body to share his nationalistic consciousness in ‘Toome Roads’ (FW). In the elegies written for the people who were killed in the contemporary violence his attitude is sympathetic. The elegies, such as ‘The Strand at Lough Beg’ and ‘Causality’, discuss no plan for revenges or retaliations. Heaney believes in peaceful compromises rather than revenges. He advocates peaceful compromises and suggests combating violence through non-violence, as done by the apostles of peace like M.K Gandhi, Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela.

Heaney deals with the themes of parental indifference and unsupervised childhood in poems such as ‘Blackberry-Picking’ (DN), ‘The Railway Children’ (SJ). The impact of colonial violence was there in every aspect of Irish life. The Irish children left unsupervised gained premature knowledge of sex. Heaney’s poetry brings these conditions before the world. Through his futuristic vision Heaney believes that things will change with the education of Irish children in ‘From the Canton of Expectation’ (HL). He provides the deprived children with hope of a better future. He believes that the properly supervised and educated child can utilize his caliber in re-structuring and re-shaping the world. It was the concern for the importance of education that made Heaney joins hand with Ted Hughes to bring out co-authored works such as The Rattle Bag and The School Bag. Thus, Heaney compensates for the failure of the society in shaping the lives of the deprived Irish children.

Colonization has many manifestations in postcolonialism. The exercise of power by the dominant over the weak can also be termed as colonization in postcolonial terminology. Thus, the ‘other’ of the society can be the ‘weak’. The theme of paternal rejection is dealt with in ‘Limbo’, where the mother drowns her illegitimate child, ‘Bye-Child (WO), deals with a dumb boy, whose mother was indifferent to him because of his disabilities, ‘Ugolino’, where Heaney blames the father for the death of his children. ‘Station Island’ is peopled with the ghosts of ‘inhabitants of actual Irish world’ known to Heaney personally or writers through their works. There is a journey through Irish literature, through the poetry of Sweeney to the prose of William Carleton to James Joyce.

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and finally to Heaney himself. Dante is exemplary for Heaney as both of them reanalyzed and re-imagined traditions. The confessional self-reflexive writing of Heaney shows that deep in his heart he is conscious of the guilt of his dumbness and wants to provide compensations and compromises through his poetry. These confessions are the compromises which he makes to himself, to unburden his heart, to compensate for the loss and to cleanse his soul in the hypothetical purgatory.

Heaven is a place of blessings, glad tidings and the rewards and compensations of the sufferings in the earthly life whereas hell is a place of punishment where there are no compromises. Purgatory is a place where there is some possibility of transformation through repentance which can cleanse the soul. Heaney as a noble soul concerned with the betterment of his people in the life hereafter as well. Hence he wishes them to see in the purgatory.

Heaney is sensitive to the psychology of the whole humanity. Heaney peoples his poetry with men, women and children, young and old, farmers and soldiers, saints and gods. He paints the canvas of his poetry with the people living in different and contradictory worlds. He outlines the compromises and adjustments that people have to make to understand the ‘other’. With the presentation of two different worlds of binary oppositions- the rural and military, ‘The Visitant’ (S) suggests the adjustments and compromises which both have to make in order to understand the ‘other’. In ‘Guttural Muse’ (FW) he depicts that the morals of older generation has not to be despised. There seems to be no compensation for the loss of human values. Modernization has increased the generation gap. The older generation feels outcast, unable to come to terms with the new generation. The loss of human values is always a primary concern for Heaney. In ‘Singer’s House’ (FW), he wishes that the singer’s voice would compensate for the loss of refinement. The poem carries the emblem of hopes and possibilities. In ‘The Otherside’ (WO), certain ideologies of a particular sect gain colonial dimensions and force the neighbours to be indifferent to each other.
Heaney pleads for the revival of a value-based vision which will encompass all humanity. The ‘others’ of the society may be physically challenged people, women, the people from the lower strata of society, unlettered rustics or the colonized natives. Heaney as compensation, presents the dumb boy of ‘Bye-child’ (WO), praises the stamina of the epileptic brother in ‘Keeping Going’ (SL), praises the will power of wheel chaired women in ‘Field of Vision’ (ST) and acknowledges the firm determination of blind neighbour-singer in ‘At the Wellhead’ (SL). Societies often fail them and misjudge their potentials and promises because of some preconceived notions. A revised and renewed vision will serve as a compensation for their long, deprived position. Looking through the lens of post colonialism, the weak often become the colony of the strong- women in patriarchy turn out to be colony of men, the unprivileged become the colony of the privileged. Heaney, as a post colonial poet takes up the task of reclaiming the rights of all humanity.

Heaney’s poetry is of visions. He seems to believe that the concrete realities of the world are established on the foundation of visions. M.K Gandhi had a vision of free India, Parnell had a vision of free Ireland and beside them there are thousand of unsung heroes, who remained anonymous, but who were endowed visions to make the society a better place. Heaney too, joins the bandwagon, with his vision of a better Ireland. He appeals to humanism for a renewed vision of the society. He returns to his roots to revive society.

Writers such as Spenser and Shakespeare wrote for the imperial court and glorified the royal family. Heaney seems to subvert the strategy and weaken the dominance of the hegemony on the literary canon. He glorifies rural Ireland in his poetry and praises the people who are associated with the land. The miker of ‘Montana’ (EL), the journeyman tailor of ‘At Bangher’, the yardman of ‘Whit-sur-Moyola’ and the bricklayer of ‘Damson’ (SL), the gypsies of ‘Tall Dames’ and the blacksmith of ‘Midnight Anvil’ (DC) all are glossed in poetry. The appreciations serve as a redress to these people.
The ‘Glanmore Sonnets’ (FW) mark his move from the violence-ridden Belfast to peaceful environs of Co. Wicklow. He moved to the serene environment to refresh his poetic imagination and to compensate for the chaos of violence-ridden Belfast. Heaney wishes to spread the values of love and peace which he learned in the natural world. He revisits Glanmore in ‘Glanmore Revisited’ (ST) and turns to the place again in ‘Glanmore Eclogue’ (EL). The move to the rural world can be regarded as compensatory.

Heaney rehistorizes and localizes mythologies and chronicles to suit the circumstances of Northern Ireland. Through these stratagies, the poet frames a moral and political critique of violence. The sectarian violence of Northern Ireland, ranging from Irish genocide from by Saxon oppressors, famine victims to the political divisions of Northern Ireland is discussed. Heaney gives his own version of history and mythology. He juxtaposes the past and the present in his poems. ‘Antaeus’ (DN), ‘Hercules and Antaeus’ (N), ‘Ugolino’ (FW), ‘The Stone Verdict’ (HL), ‘The Golden Bough’ (ST), ‘Mycenae Lookout’ (SL), ‘Sonnets from Hellas’ (EL) etc. amalgamate the contemporary scenario with the past.

The influence of the great masters of the past such as Dante, Wordsworth, Eliot and Larkin can be located in Heaney’s works. He adopts and adapts their works to suit his context. The influences and intertextualities persist in his work. He invokes Homer and Hugh MacDiarmuid, quotes from the works written of Dante, Homer and Milosz, resurrects Aesylus and Virgil, translates Martin Sorescu, Rilke and Eoghan Rua and cites the example of Hans Memling, pays reverence to Osip Mandelstam, Ted Hughes and Eliot and alludes to James Joyce and other poets.

Heaney transcends the frontiers of a national literature and creates the world literature for which these intertextualities, influences and translations are indispensable. His poetry will serve as a literal compensation to the Irish people who were misrepresented in the literature produced by the hegemony. Heaney deploys a postcolonial tactic of softening the supremacy of the English literature.
The wish fulfillment of being with the dear ones is achieved through the compensations of memories in the sequences ‘Clearance’, ‘The Wishing Tree’ and ‘The Stone Verdict’ of *The Haw Lantern* (1987), in the imaginary encounters with the familiar ghosts in *Station Island* (1984). Heaney subsumes the immortality of the soul and hopes for celestial compensations. His poetry crosses the boundaries of death. He never contemplates his own death. His own death never seems to trouble him in the elegies he writes. Heaney celebrates his relationship with the deceased family members and acquaintances. Heaney has always remained emotionally involved with the familiar and filial. Family bonds are vital in his life. As a filial compensation he recollects and commemorates his relatives in the elegies. The transfigured memories identify significant adult consciousness in childhood memories and certain childish aspects in adult behaviour.

Heaney’s poetry is for all of mankind in its holistic magnitude, prospective of peace as the ultimate destiny which is the inscrutably sacred, inalienably sublime and integrally woven with the examples of virtues of saints and Christ. In the contemporary dehumanized world, Heaney harks back to the value-laden jurisprudence and spiritual paradigms which will cure the ills of humanity. The perception of Heaney expresse the jurisprudential values more than the legal jurists.

The current vices and threats to the human race are voiced through poetry. The scientists across the world are trying hard to warn the people of the natural calamity of global warming, Heaney too, as an ecologist, presents the threat of global warming in *District and Circle*. In ‘Hofn’ and ‘The Blackbird of Glanmore’ he presents the impact of the natural threat and suggests the cure through planting of trees in ‘Planting the Alder’. Heaney is aware of the gender bias against the girl child. Heaney exhibits a concern for the marginalization of girls and desires for them. His reassurance is a redress against the gender politics still prevalent in many parts of the world.

Heaney’s poetry is against all such divisions. He dreams of a healthy society sans the narrow division. He pleads for compromises, ask for compensations, stands for the
abolition of the divisions, so, that humanity can come to term with itself and live peacefully.