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**Joint Turbary:  
Heaney’s “Digging”  
and Eoghan Rua Ó Súilleabháin’s “A Shéamais, déan dom”**

**Cóilín Owens**

“Digging” is Seamus Heaney’s most quoted, most anthologized poem (*Death of a Naturalist*, 1966). To millions who never read another line of his work, proceed past the first pages of any selection, or go phishing for his name on Google or YouTube, the cadences of “Digging” are familiar. Despite the scores of critical commentaries on the poem during almost five decades since its appearance, there has been but one brief reference to its radical relationship with an estimable lyric among the Irish-language poems of the iconic eighteenth-century Munster poet, Eoghan Rua Ó Súilleabháin.<sup>i</sup> This may not be all that surprising since Heaney is generally recognized as a Northern Irish poet whose literary antecedents (Yeats and Kavanagh aside) are English or European. A three-way comparison / contrast of Eoghan Rua’s “A Shéamais, déan dom” (‘Seamus, make for me’), Heaney’s published translation, “Poet to Blacksmith,” and “Digging” produces some intriguing mutual illumination and offers a mildly corrective view of his affiliation with what Thomas Kinsella calls “the broken tradition” of Irish poetry.<sup>ii</sup> Moreover, perusing Heaney’s debt to this particular Irish-language source supports the contention that “Digging” is an expression of a discreet nationalist political resistance.

The poem famously musters three contrasting patrilineal scenes: his father’s “straining rump” among the flowerbeds; his father’s pressing with his coarse boot a lugged garden spade; and his grandfather’s deft handling of a honed turf slane.<sup>iii</sup> The recollected images of the slane’s slicing the black turf bank and the spade’s opening of the potato drill and flower bed return the persona to the tool of the trade of which he is an apprentice: pressing the splayed nib of his fountain pen as it discharges its ink into the white, absorbent writing paper. Piously deferential to “men like them,” he engages in the less strenuous activity of inditing an ostensibly self-deprecatory but finally self-elevating poem.

The modal repetition moves from the service of beauty, to food, to heat, and back to beauty: via the flowers, the cool potatoes, the black turf, and the freshly indited words. It inscribes a circular symbolic relationship between agricultural and cultural effort, between the material essentials of life and their celebration in art. While the distance and difference between art and nature are reflected by the intervening window pane through which the persona views his working father, the creative tension in the poem is inflected by the gender contrasts which attend upon its action.<sup>iv</sup>

An image in the first lines—“snug as a gun”—has drawn much fire.<sup>v</sup> As Michael Molino observes, the implications of the military images summoned by “potato drills,” “fall to,” and shouldering are consequential in a movement that hurtles through a synesthesia of close-quarter combat: “Nicking and slicing,” “squelch and slap,” “curt cuts of an edge / Through living roots,” and the “cold smell” of its effects (9). Rising from a bog echoing the name of Wolfe Tone, these cumulative references to Irish Republican resistance are no blunder or accident.

Critics have discerned precedents for “Digging” in the poems of John Clare, Ted Hughes, and William Wordsworth.<sup>vi</sup> Heaney himself recalls a neighbor’s salutation as he left for school, “The pen is lighter than the spade.”<sup>vii</sup> However, closer to the imaginative world of “Digging” than any of these touchstones is the spirit and work of the Irish Gaelic poet, Eoghan Rua Ó Súilleabháin (1748-1784). Two of his poems addressed to a blacksmith and carpenter are constructed upon the same analogy that underlies Heaney’s poem. One of these, which Heaney translated into English, has a direct, illuminating, but hitherto unexplored relationship with “Digging.”<sup>viii</sup>

*A Shéamais, déan dom féinidh arm na bhfód:  
Sciuirse ghléasta dhéanfas grafadh ’gus romhar,  
Stiuir ghlan éadtrom i bhfaobhar i dtathac ’s i gcóir,  
Nach tútach gné is bhéas néata tarraingthe i gclódh.*

*I gclódh an airgid bíodh tarraingthe gan rian buille ar bith,  
Scóip fada aici is leabhairacht ’na hiarrachtaibh,  
Sórd slaite bhíodh leaguighthe ar a riaghail-chiumhasaibh,  
’S is ró-thaithneamhach an t-arm liom faoi dhíormaibh.*

*A chiumhasa má thígheann ná bíodh ortha scuilib ná ruic,  
Is feicim a thigheal sleamhain slím i bhfuirm an tsuic,  
Slighe an mhaide bíodh innti gan fuigheall ná uir-easbaidh ar bith,  
Is mar bharra ar gach nídh bíodh sí i mbinneas an chluig.*

Heaney’s translation runs:

Seamus, make me a side-arm to take on the earth  
A suitable tool for digging and grubbing the ground,  
Lightsome and pleasant to lean on and cut with or lift,  
Tastily finished and trim and right for the hand.

No trace of the hammer to show on the sheen of the blade,  
The thing to have purchase and spring and be fit for the strain,  
The shaft to be socketed in dead true and dead straight,  
And I’ll work with the gang till I drop and never complain.

The plate and the edge of it not to be wrinkled or crooked—  
I see it well shaped from the anvil and sharp from the file.  
The grain of the wood and the line of the shaft nicely fitted,  
And the best thing of all, the ring of it, sweet as a bell.

Eoghan Rua’s poem addresses his blacksmith friend Séamus Mac Gearailt (James Fitzgerald). The failure of Eoghan Rua’s hedge school meant that he had to offer his services at a hiring fair: to become a *spailpín fánach* (‘migrant worker’). With a handy and versatile tool, a *rámhainn* (spade or slane), he could assure his subsistence. We know from scraps of information that Eoghan Rua did, indeed, for a full decade, tramp through the country, digging potatoes and cutting turf from the rich farmlands of the Blackwater Valley, through the Golden Vale, and to

the bogs of Limerick: from Waterford to the Cork-Kerry border.<sup>ix</sup> A footloose man with a distinctive mop of red hair and exuberant spirit, he spent whatever money he earned on women and drink, often paying for the hospitality he was afforded in the time-honored manner of the Irish bards: by singing for his supper.<sup>x</sup>

One such poem was evidently offered at least in part-payment to the forger of his multi-purpose spade. It is one of a pair of poems addressed to craftsmen both named Séamus, and of lesser quality though more renown, than its companion, “A Chara mo Chléibh” (‘My Bosom Friend’). It is, of course, a minor work by one of the most distinguished and popular Irish Jacobite poets, whose literary reputation rests upon his score of political poems and especially his dozen *aislingí*. It appears to have been written around 1769-70 when Eoghan Rua was twenty-two years of age.

The poem is written in conventional iambic pentameter with some rhythmic variations. Each of its four verses has a single end or slant rhyme, and the lines of each verse are marked by multiple internal assonances. This occasional poem is conventional in form, and has some striking weaknesses: it has some dysfunctional repetitions and trades excessively in negative coin. It has several qualities, however, that recommend it to our notice as it did to Heaney.

On the first level, it expresses the friendship (if not the affection) of one countryman for another, and the admiration of one craftsman for the skill of another. For all the humiliation that Eoghan Rua must have felt—a man with classical learning, and the ability to write in four languages—in having to support himself by menial labor, the diction of the poem scarcely admits of any resentment. While it indulges in classical hyperbole, any initial impression that it is a mock-heroic parody would be a misreading. While Eoghan Rua’s language betrays his partiality to classical declamation and the stances he assumes and attributes to his collaborator are aristocratic, the services his *rámhainn* will render are those of the humblest class, the landless laborers, the *spailpíní fánaigh* of the Isle of Slaves.<sup>xi</sup>

Eoghan Rua encourages Séamus to treat his request for a rude instrument as if it were a work of fine art. It should betray no trace of the forge hammer, and should be smooth, polished, shapely, and so well balanced that it feels weightless. Although normally considered a coarse tool of the lowest class (its proper name, the *rámhainn*, is euphemized into invisibility), and despite their reduced social conditions, he wants it be to a fitting emblem of their mutual respect as artists and friends.

The inflated language of the poem—an apparent compensation for the reduced circumstances of these craftsmen—implies two frames of metaphoric reference that elevate this little poem above its immediate occasion.

First, the instrument is dignified as “*féinidh arm na bhfód*,” literally a ‘personal implement of the sod’ (evidently of land under potato cultivation or of a turf-bank). But the phrase “*féinidh arm*” may also imply a gesture towards a side-arm or weapon, whether for the defense of self (“*arm dom fhéin*”) or of *bfód na hÉireann* (‘the auld sod’). This sentiment, one should note, carried with it an acrid whiff of sedition, since under the Popery Laws, Catholics of Eoghan Rua’s time were forbidden to bear arms.<sup>xii</sup> The phrasing also—and by the same inference—accommodates

the implication that carrying this weapon metaphorically renders its user as a latter-day member of *Fianna Éireann*. The play on *féinidh* here is apposite, even a century before John O'Mahony formally resuscitated the name of Ireland's mythological defenders (in the companion poem, Eoghan Rua claims a command of the Fenian sagas). The image recurs in the eighth line, where it is seen to potentially serve Ireland's currently reduced political circumstances: "*Is ró-thaithneamhach an t-arm liom faoi dhíormaibh*" (literally, 'It is highly satisfactory for me to carry such an implement in a work gang,' but figuratively 'I am pleased to bear this weapon in a military band'). As subsequent events proved, the soon-to-be-formed United Irishmen (in which Eoghan Rua was a temporary volunteer) were provided with weapons—the emblematic 1798 pikes—by country blacksmiths like Séamus Mac Gearailt.

Second, a motif of images sustains a parallel association between the function of the *spailpín's* spade and the poet's pen. The phrase, "*Dhéanfas grafadh 'gus romhar*" ('which will grub and dig') might not be suspected to embrace a play between the Irish *graf* ('grub') and Greek γράφ ('write') to produce the double effect of an art object 'neatly beaten into shape' and 'neatly drawn up in print.' This etymological equivocation develops into the major conceit in the poem. Thus the second stanza repeats and extends this metaphor into "*Scóip fada aici is leabhairacht 'na hiarrachtaibh*" ('a long reach and responsive to my efforts'), which also invites the translation, 'of wide reference in the moving implications of its language' (with a pleasing play between 'speech' and 'book' in the root-word within "*leabhairacht*"). Similarly, the analogy between spade and pen extends into the last stanzas with the references to the sharp edges ("*Sord slaithe*"), precise performance ("*riaghail-chiumhsaibh*"), and smooth shapeliness ("*a thigheal sleamhain slím*"). The summary simile, "*i bhfuirm an tsuic*," completes the metaphoric comparison of the sharp curve of the tool blade with that of the trimmed quill.

In the concluding stanza, with a complex switch, Eoghan Rua completes his comparison between this pair of implements representing his dual capacities. The devices which heretofore rendered artful results in disciplined silence are now recast as the ringing of a bell ("*binneas an chluig*"), slyly insinuated by the (appropriate) gender switch from "*a chiumhsa*" to the "*bíodh sí*" of the final couplet. This summary transmutation embraces its complementary political and aesthetic themes; for the *clug* has become an equivalent to the finished poem, the symbolic instrument whose *binneas* is a tuneful *veille*. Just as the persona imagines his *spailpín's* *rámhainn* as a poet's sharp-nibbed pen, he envisions his finished poem as a ringing instrument that declares and celebrates the moment when his "*féinidh arm*" is pressed into active service in behalf of "*na dhíormaibh*" ('the platoons').

In his extended comparison between the tool that assures his survival and that by which he can exercise his talents and articulate his vision, Eoghan Rua evinces no self-pity. His buoyancy enables him to displace whatever impulses he has towards self-promotion by praising the skill of Séamus the blacksmith. A corollary implication (supported by the companion poem, "*A Chara mo Chléibh*") is that he is at least partially paying the craftsman, not by coin ("*airgead*") but by "*clódh an airgid*," the silver diction of poetry. Even as he takes the road away from his native Sliabh Luachra to the bogs and potato fields of Waterford, Cork, and Limerick, it is lightly he bears his creative gifts. From the charges of political subversion and even sedition, he is potentially protected by the presumed privacy of the document and the ambiguities of poetic license inscribed in the obscure language of the outlaw. All of these observations about this

occasional praise poem accord, of course, with what we know of Eoghan Rua's personal life and what we see in the *aislingí* for which he was celebrated throughout his native province.

In his own modest opinion, Heaney was but mildly proficient in the Irish language. Like many of us who were grounded in it during our primary and secondary school days, he could without much difficulty read a newspaper column. In his class at St. Columb's in Derry, the boys read the long-standard school text, *Filíocht na nGael* ('*The Poetry of the Irish*'), the vehicle by which, as he says, "our sense of the Irish literary tradition was flitted into us."<sup>xiii</sup> The effect of this exposure was to impress upon the young Heaney that although English was his native tongue, Irish was his national language (Poetry Board Reading). He admits that he found the memoirists and poets of the Ulster dialect, especially Séamus Dall MacCuarta (c. 1650-1733), Séamus Ó Grianna (1889-1960), and Seosamh Mac Grianna (1901-1990) more amenable to his regional taste and linguistic capacities than the work of Aogán Ó Rathaille (c. 1675-1729), Eoghan Rua, Eibhlín Dhuhb Ní Chonail (fl. 1770), or Brian Merriman (1749-1805): members of what he called "the big Munster orchestra" (O'Driscoll 314).

Cursory though his exposure to this literature was (he did not read Irish at Queen's University Belfast, but acted in the Irish-language drama society) he acknowledges that he acquired "a sense of its majesty before it was transformed into the folk or song tradition" (Poetry Board Reading). Nevertheless, it is clear from his oeuvre that whereas his formal literary education was in the English and American traditions, his imaginative life commenced in the intimate experiences of a rural mid-Ulster childhood. It originated in the physical labor of the farm, its place names evoking a mute, ancestral Gaelic past and the handling of its farm tools establishing a sensuous bond with previous generations. It burgeoned in the young man's proximity to the natural world of tillage and animal husbandry, the communal ligations these shared experiences woven with neighbors and between generations, but especially among the members of the Heaney family (O'Driscoll 3-33). Thus, when he admits that Ireland rather than the Irish language modifies his voice, he is offering a corollary to the observation that a central tension in his poetry is that between rural pietas and urban modernity (O'Driscoll 315).

While he was a student at St. Columb's he read Daniel Corkery's *The Hidden Ireland* (1924). This contentious, romantic, but vital and original work put the case that the Anglo-Irish Protestant leaders of the Literary Revival had appropriated the native Irish voice as if it were their own. In the place of their idealization of pre-Christian Celtic culture and its modern descendant, the exotic Hiberno-English of Connacht, he offered the poetry of Gaelic eighteenth-century Munster as evidence of a civilization beyond the sympathies of even the most liberal scions of the Big House. To Corkery, authentic Irish cultural identity was made legitimate by an unambiguously native, Catholic, and ideally Irish-speaking inheritance. Its exemplars were Heaney's "Munster orchestra" and the Connacht poet Antoine Ó Raifteirí (1784-1835). Since they flourished in one of the darkest period of Irish history—under the Penal Laws, which radically handicapped their material prospects—it is hardly surprising that a course of anti-colonial resentment can be divined beneath their common field work. Corkery's account of the life and work of Eoghan Rua, moreover, proposes that he drew on what remained of the primeval Irish cultural tradition in his native place.

If it was in his school textbook that he first encountered Eoghan Rua's poetry, it is likely that among the pages of *The Hidden Ireland* Heaney developed an appreciation of how his social circumstances were broadly parallel to those trammeling Eoghan Rua. Each came to consciousness in a subsistent rural economy. Each learned to restrain his sense of grievance as a Catholic in a world that viewed a bearer of the name "Seamus" as grounds for suspicion or derision. Heaney wryly recalled that his first poems, published in the Queen's University student magazine, *Gorgon*, appeared above the purposely misspelled "Shamus Heaney": "a nice example of the reminders of their not-quiteness that people from a nationalist background were issued in those days" (O'Driscoll 37). Heaney learned, as Eoghan Rua implies of his craftsman friend, to regard the name as if it were "a badge of honour" (O'Driscoll 29). Heaney would have found in the account of hiring fairs by Séamus Ó Grianna an illuminating gloss on the occasion that produced the single poem of Eoghan Rua's that he would subsequently translate into English.

Heaney's typescript is dated 19/10/1996.<sup>xiv</sup> It was published the following year in the Netherlands, and subsequently appeared in *District and Circle* (2006). Now, in Eoghan Rua's poem, the analogy between the pen and the weapon is explicit; and that between the spade and the pen is not only implied, but finely developed to become the poem's major subtheme. Heaney's rather loose translation, however, does not reproduce Eoghan Rua's nuanced metaphoric language or go beyond developing the broad relationships between the trades of blacksmith and spadesman and their respective implements. For whatever reason—because he does not see it, because he does but declines to reveal its relationship with "Digging," or because of the heat generated by the "gun" reference—he elides the implications of the term "sidearm" from his timorous rendition. In a similar vein, he depoliticizes Eoghan Rua's *spailpíní* into a compliant work gang. He does replicate, however, the near-rhymes of the second stanza, and his poem rises to a similar elevated final note. The ping of the filed spade and the ring of the bell contribute a diphthong in consonance with the sounds of the finished poem. Heaney's intense focus on Eoghan's *rámhainn* anticipates the attention he subsequently directs to the tools of other rural folk—the divining rod, anvil, pitchfork, spirit level, sledge, harrow-pin, and turnip snedder.

What light does the comparison with "A Shéamais, déan dom" throw on "Digging"? Well, in his study of Heaney's work, Michael Parker notes that through his reading of *The Hidden Ireland*, Heaney would have been led to Eoghan Rua's request for a spade.<sup>xv</sup> But he doesn't appear to see the implications of both poets' interest in addressing tradesmen, especially the poet's archetype, the blacksmith. At first glance, the opening address, "A Shéamais, déan dom" would have touched on his personal sensitivity to querulous responses to the Irish Catholic form of his name (recalling King James II). Rereading the poem, one can see how, in addition, Heaney might well imagine his own resolution, "I'll dig with it," as a response not only to the Gaelic poetic tradition, but to Eoghan Rua's request addressed across the centuries to "déan dom dán": to write a poem corollary and complementary to Eoghan Rua's own precedent and model.

Eoghan Rua's poem arguably furnished both the occasion and the broad premise underlying "Digging." In Eoghan Rua's case, he has to turn from school teaching to supporting himself by manual labor, whereas "Digging" marks the reverse—the point at which Heaney turns his lineage as an agricultural worker into poetic metaphor. Each poet develops a double-flanged analogy between the workman's spade, the weapon that arms the dispossessed, and their aesthetic synthesis in a mildly subversive protest. The details of Eoghan Rua's instructions to

Séamus Mac Gearailt do more than express his respect for his friend's skill, but (ending with the comparison to the music of the bell) imply that the poem should display a set of qualities corollary to the lightness, balance, and functionality of the finished tool. Similar descriptive details acknowledging the stamina and methodical skill with which his forefathers handle the tools adorn "Digging." In having his antecedents engage in three kinds of digging and with two distinct implements, Heaney is expanding on the simplicity of Eoghan Rua's versatile spade that would serve between the potato drills and bogholes. Similarly, just as Eoghan Rua conveys a muted subscription to armed resistance through historical metaphor and in its camouflage within the native language, Heaney's discomfiture is discernible only as an apparently rejected initial premise. Each poet sublimates his impulse to violent protest by wearing the habiliments of an aesthete.<sup>xvi</sup>

More specifically, the bracketing moments in "Digging"—the persona's close-up view of "the squat pen"—are very close to the perspective and the images, visual and audial, of Eoghan Rua's "*Is feicim a thigheal sleamhain slím*" ('I see its smooth and slippery blade'). Again, Heaney's contrast of his father's "coarse boot" and his grandfather's "neat . . . nicking and slicing" seems to be either a conscious borrowing or an unconscious echo of a similar contrast in Eoghan Rua's poem. This describes the finished spade, "*Nach tútach gné*" ('which is not coarse in appearance') with the subsequent "*Sord slaite . . . riaghail-chiumhsaibh*" ('sharp-edged [and] precise in its usefulness'). Both of these qualities—the fine shaping of the instrument and the rough, elemental work that is its object—attend upon each poem (as technique and subject, respectively). Indeed, Heaney's subsequently repeated remark about "Digging" as "a rough navy of a poem" would appear to convey not only the disingenuous self-deprecation of this early lyric but also his awareness of its relationship with its counterpart which appears to have been among the first works of this Munster *spailpín* (since "navy" is an adequate latter-day translation).

Further—and a more intriguing and provocative point raised by these comparisons—Eoghan Rua's usage, "*A chiumhasa má thigheann*" ('Its edges if thickened') appears to entertain a paranomasia with "*má thuigeann [mé]*" ('if I understand') implying an analogy between the smith's fashioning of the edge of his instrument and the poet's design of the language in his poem. In this respect, the phrase advances the presiding comparison between the respective purposes of each instrument: the one to cut and dig, the other to produce distinctions and precise import. Whereas the spade furnishes warmth and food, the poem elicits emotional and intellectual understanding. Thus, although it does not expressly surface in "Digging," this particular probe exposes an uncertain but startling etymological root for the familiar (and principally American) slang usage "dig" and the Hiberno-English "twig": the Irish verb *tuirg* ('understand').<sup>xvii</sup> This accords a fresh comprehensibility to Heaney's emblematic poem, "Digging," as a new way of knowing. The image of knowledge set forth in "digging" is at once personal and immediate, familiar and tribal; it is self-reflexive, sensuous, and nostalgic; it is historical and mythological; its imagination is circumspectly irredentist; it is judicious and aggrieved; it is tactful and generous; it acknowledges its linguistic artistic inheritance as a "living root."

Whether out of desperate necessity or improvidence, poor Eoghan Rua has to turn from his occupation as *máistir scoile* ('schoolmaster') to that of *spailpín*. He has to imagine the humble work that is before him as if it were the writing of poetry. Heaney, by contrast, can turn from



agriculture to living by the pen (as teacher, writer-in-residence, performer). Whereas the homeless Eoghan Rua does not have the luxury of choice, Heaney has a freedom granted by modern material sufficiency. Indeed, one of the principal reasons for Heaney's popularity is his nostalgic empathy for the physical pleasures of the workaday.

In the "bending low" of the helot and his closeness to his native soil, each poet implies both the humiliation and native dignity of his dispossessed ancestors. Each puts the complaint against "cultural genocide" judiciously, in coded language. As this analysis has shown, in writing with a "squat pen," Heaney has successfully camouflaged the truculence of his source. Like his eighteenth-century counterpart, this modern Ulsterman decks himself in the coloration of the surrounding bush of linguistic ambiguity, "Taking protective colouring / From bole and bark, feeling / Every wind that blows."<sup>xviii</sup>

One can then easily imagine Heaney reading Eoghan Rua's salutation, "A Shéamais, déan dom," as if it were personally addressed to him. He responds as a latter-day wood-kerne, craftsman, and poet. Just as the express level of "Digging" establishes Heaney's debt to his forefathers in the flesh, this reading, informed by its comparison with "A Shéamais déan dom" demonstrates that Heaney, from the beginning, assayed (with a certain degree of anxiety) Eoghan Rua, his burdens, gifts, and political sympathies, as a witness to and enabler of one his own first strains.

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### Notes

1. In her review of *District and Circle*, Marilyn Hacker observes but does not develop the link. In addition to the critics cited below, Andrew Murphy has published the most illuminating readings of "Digging."
2. "The Irish Writer" 66.
3. The differences between the gardener's spade and turf-cutter's slane are salient. The blunt-edged spade is driven downwards into the ground by foot pressure applied to one of the lugs. The slane is a flanged implement with one or two sharp edges. It is designed for manual use: to cut brick-sized blocks of turf or peat from the face of the boghole. See Evans 181-98.
4. For a polemical "corrective" of this aspect of Heaney's archetypal imagination, see Coughlan.
5. E.g., from Edna Longley.
6. Burris 30; Corcoran 3-10; Tobin 20.
7. *Preoccupations* 42.
8. The standard edition is by Ó Duinnín. A second edition edited by Ó Fohgludha appeared in 1937. A recent edition by Muldowney provides variants, translations, and further notes. Heaney could have had access to this poem in either of the earlier editions or (more likely) in the school text, *Filíocht na nGael* edited by Ó Canainn and Ó Deaghdha. This was based on Ó Duinnín's and Ó Fohgludha's editions, accepted their emendations, and modernized Ó Súilleabháin's spellings. This version serves present purposes.

9. See Ó Duinnín, Beatha, and O'Donnell.
  10. Morley and Ní Iceada's entry in the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* appends a representative bibliography of primary and secondary works.
  11. McBride's summary epithet.
  12. This particular prohibition was repealed in 1793, McBride 241.
  13. O'Driscoll 314.
  14. MSS 20/1/6 and 20/1/11, Queen's University Belfast Archive. It is among the Beowulf translation MSS.
  15. Parker recognizes "A Chara mo Chléibh" in this connection, but not its counterpart with is the present concern (40-41).
  16. For a neo-colonial critique of Heaney as a nationalist poet, see Lloyd.
  17. Wentworth and Flexner s.v. "dig."
  18. "Exposure," *North* 73.
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