



Visions of Eco-Anxiety: The Broken Human–Nature Bond in the Poetry of Ted Hughes and Seamus Heaney

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Abstract

The current review analyses ecological anxiety and ruptured human-nature contact in the poetry of Ted Hughes and Seamus Heaney through the ecocritical prism. In response to the growing environmental degradation and its resulting mental impact, the paper conducts a comparative study of the chosen poems, including *The Hawk in the Rain* and *The Crow* by Hughes, and *Death of a Naturalist* and *Bogland* by Heaney. Based on thematic and comparative literary analysis, the review also discusses how each of the poets expresses ecological crisis in imagery, symbolism, myth, and landscape representations. Hughes views nature as the violent and independent phenomenon that is the agent of the destructive instincts of humans and the ecological alienation, whereas Heaney uses the pastoral recollection and topography to express the sense of loss, nostalgia, and moral accountability to nature. Although poetically, they have different techniques, both poets predetermine emotional and existential aspects of the ecological disaster. The review holds that their poems project an eco-anxiety debate into the present day by dramatizing the mental results of being environmentally detached. This article proves that the relevance of literary texts in the formation of environmental awareness and the restoration of human-nature relations is still topical by placing Hughes and Heaney in the context of the modern ecocritical discourse.

1. INTRODUCTION

The ecological anxiety concept has become a popular topic in environmental literature in the past decades, as it is widely concerned with the fact that degradation of the natural world is gaining momentum. Ecological anxiety is defined as psychological distress arising from awareness of environmental disasters, i.e., climate change, reduction of biodiversity, and pollution (Kahn *et al.*, 2022). The reason is this mounting feeling of uncertainty over the future of the world itself, and this has led to a change in the subject matter of literary research, whereby modern poets tend to focus on the subject of the environment and the damaged relationship between man and nature (Siddiqui, 1995; Buell, 2009; Radhakrishnan, 2025). Among them, the poets Ted Hughes and Seamus Heaney can be singled out for uniquely depicting the images of nature as something that is both beautiful and a force created by human deeds.

Both Hughes and Heaney, although belonging to different cultural backgrounds and literary traditions, involve themselves in the depth of contemplation of the purpose of nature in forming human identity and the outcomes of the exploitation of nature. Hughes, by using imagery and plenty of violence to depict nature, shows it as an untamed, mighty force, one that reflects the destructive nature of humankind (Bandyopadhyay, 2013; Tongasukkaeng, 2015; Reddick, 2017; Miller, 2020). Heaney, on the contrary, tends to enter into the pastoral and reflective aspects of nature, and he explores the themes of loss, nostalgia, and responsibility (Bell *et al.*, 2019). But the similarity between the two poets is that they both are concerned with the disconnection between man and nature, and this disconnection has an ecological and psychological meaning.

This review article aims to examine the manner in which ecological anxiety is handled by Ted Hughes and Seamus Heaney and the ensuing imbalance of the bond between humanity and nature. Through the analysis of some poems, the review discusses the ways in which these two poets depict ecological crises and their effects on human consciousness. Also, the paper explores the poetic devices used by Hughes and Heaney and the way the imagery, symbolism, and language they have used communicate sophisticated ecological issues. By such analysis, the review explores how the two poets provide a subtle answer to the environmental concerns of their era, which creates a greater insight into the human-nature rift.

In this article, it is emphasized that although Ted Hughes and Seamus Heaney discuss ecological anxiety and the broken relationship with nature in different cultural and poetic contexts, both authors consider the impacts of human activities on nature. Hughes dwells on the wilderness of nature as one that reflects human devastation, and Heaney reflects the ramifications of environmental destruction in his focus on loss, retrospection, and responsibility. Though the context of their works is quite different in terms of their historical and geographical setting, they are a very strong commentary on the current ecological crisis and can be used to learn a lot about the intricate interaction between humanity and the natural world.

The approach that this review took was a qualitative comparative one based on the ecocritical theory. The essence of some of the common themes that were analyzed in some of the chosen poems by Ted Hughes and Seamus Heaney included the topics of ecological anxiety, environmental loss, and the relationship between human beings and nature. The imagery, symbolism, myth, landscape representation became the focal point of the analysis to evaluate the way the two poets convey ecological crisis and psychological distress. Reflective ecocritical and philosophical literature was condensed to put the literary discourse into perspective.

2. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

2.1. Ecological anxiety: Conceptualizing the Broken Bond

2.1.1. Defining Ecological Anxiety

Ecological anxiety (or eco-anxiety) is the term used to describe the strong emotional and psychological reaction toward the understanding of environmental degradation and climate change

(Pihkala, 2020; Coffey *et al.*, 2021; Kurth and Panu, 2022). It is a set of fears, guilt, frustration and grief towards the ongoing environmental crisis (Clayton *et al.*, 2022). According to one recent review, eco-anxiety can be described as a family of distinct, yet consequently related, ecological emotions, such as worry about ecological loss in the future, distress over the present environmental loss, and paralysis in the face of large-scale environmental threat (Bonello *et al.*, 2024; Clayton *et al.*, 2022). In addition, empirical studies indicate that these emotional reactions are related to broader mental-health symptoms: a systematic review identified that eco-anxiety was small-to-moderately positively related to stress, anxiety, and depression symptoms in very large samples (Cosh *et al.*, 2024).

Psychologically, eco-anxiety arises when people feel that the ecological underpinnings of human life are under threat, creating a feeling of existential vulnerability and insecurity. This discomfort has been foreshadowed in literature and culture. Since the late twentieth century, there has been a growing expression in literary writing of a disjuncture between humans and the natural world in response to the cultural upsurge of ecological crisis. In this regard, ecological anxiety cannot be seen solely as a clinical or psychological phenomenon but also as a cultural and environmental reaction to a failed relationship with nature, firmly rooted in literary and artistic expression. In this light, the concept of ecological anxiety can be used to interpret the works of poets such as Ted Hughes and Seamus Heaney. Their poetic images of nature, loss, alienation, and reconnection can be applied in this context as a valuable tool for ecological anxiety, which extends beyond the science of psychology and into literary-ecological criticism.

2.1.2. The Broken Bond Between Man and Nature

The concept of a broken bond between humans and the natural world suggests a disconnection, alienation or a break in the relationship between humans and nature, and the following implications on the ecological and human prosperity. According to the recent eco-environmental studies, contemporary societies are subjected to deep disconnection with nature, which is reflected in a loss of nature connectedness, commodification of nature, and instrumental perspectives on the non-human world (Beery *et al.*, 2023). This breakage is less empirical and more philosophical. The tensions of the Romantic era were slowly replaced by an anthropocentric worldview wherein nature is an object to be subdued instead of a being to be interacted with. Philosophers of human-nature relation stress that the idea of human distinctness has been the cornerstone of numerous types of ecological crisis (Stone, 2011; Barnard, 2006; Mouysset, 2023; Lamers, 2024).

Philosophically, there are conceptual frameworks that support the nature human relationship. Romanticism praised the power, vitality and mystery of nature as more than just a resource. The prevailing metaparadigm, in its turn, tends to be instrumental about nature and sees the human-nature relationship through the prism of control, extraction and utility (Williams, 2017; Greenwald, 2019; Oerlemans, 2004). More recently, philosophers on ecology have developed a non-anthropocentric reconsideration of this relationship, as human flourishing is tied up in ecological flourishing, and to suppose that there is a disjunction between the two ways of flourishing is to adopt a disenchanting view of the world (Leaney, 2012; Moyano-Fernandez, 2023; Peacock, 2024; Schinkel, 2025). These adverse

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effects of the broken connection are many: a lack of emotional and existential health, a rise in ecological degradation, and the appearance of affective conditions such as ecological anxiety that reflect the loss of a sense of presence to nature. The literary representation of the broken bond is in the imagery of a foreign land, alien natural surroundings, human perception of the wild being fragmented, and lamenting of the lost nature (Evernden, 1993; Kirkwood, 1994; Garforth, 2006; Harding, 2014). The emotional theme of that disruption is in line with the main characteristics of ecological anxiety: concern about the loss in the future, regret about the past exploitation, and inability to take action in the face of possible alienation. Thus, tracing the poetic productions of Hughes and Heaney, the reader can find this tearing bond in the images of the metaphorical language of the poems and also in the emotionally sensitive language of the ecological anxiety: the human voices in the poems are out of place, or they seek to be out of place, in relation to the natural world, and in the process, they mark out the profound sense of discomfort about the lost contact with nature. Basing reviews of Hughes and Heaney in conceptual frames of ecological anxiety and broken bonds will enable readers to comprehend how poetry responds to, reflects upon, and perhaps even opposes the secession of human and non-human worlds in a richer way.

2.2. Ted Hughes: Nature As Wild and Hostile

2.2.1. Biographical Context

Ted Hughes (1930-1998) is thought to be one of the most significant poets of the 20th century, who wrote about nature and its face, which was mostly violent and wild. His own relationship with the natural world was greatly influenced by his upbringing in West Yorkshire and his adult years in rural Devon. The connection that Hughes had to nature was close and complicated at the same time; nature was a place of inspiration but also the setting of the dark and primal elements that Hughes was eager to express in his poems. The early years of his life were in an environment that taught him about a strong sense of the wilderness in which nature was not viewed as a gentle and kind presence, but as a force that was powerful and sometimes devastating (Gifford, 2009). This is evident in the work of Hughes, in which nature is frequently portrayed as something that is reflected by and determines human life. Besides his life experience, Hughes was deeply touched by myths and folklore and resorted to these sources to render nature rough and unpredictable. His early writing, like *The Hawk in the Rain* (1957), is a brutal, direct communication with nature. The natural world to Hughes was also not merely a passive scenery, but a living, even threatening element, which reflected the darker side of humanity. His subsequent artworks, such as *Crow* (1970), address them more in-depth and examine the violence of nature through the symbols and mythic words (Miller, 2020).

2.2.2. Nature's Ferocity in Hughes' Work

The poetry of Hughes is characterized by the description of nature as a fierce and uncontrollable element. In *The Hawk in the Rain*, Hughes brings up the hawk as an embodiment of the brutality and power of nature. The hawk is also revealed as an object of beauty and the object of violence: "The hawk

cries, / The rhythm of my bones, / As I fly into the rain.” Such duality summarizes the theme Hughes uses numerous times: nature is both something wonderful and something dangerous. The beauty and danger of nature, in which survival is a fierce battle, is implied in the imagery of flight, as well as the cry of the hawk (Hughes, 1957). Hughes also examines the violence of nature in *Crow*, but in a mythic, symbolic way that concentrates on the elemental forces in nature. The protagonist of the story is *Crow*, who is considered a disruptive and even evil creature, representing the primitiveness of nature. The activity of the bird in the poems, whether as a creator, destroyer or witness, creates an image of an indifferent world where the problems of human suffering are reflected in the incessant chaos of nature. The symbolism of the presence of the crow is the destructive power of nature that cannot be controlled or understood by people, which serves to further enforce the idea of the ferocity of nature (Miller *et al.*, 2019).

The idea of ecological violence comes out vividly in the works of Hughes, particularly when it comes to the reaction of the natural world to human interference. Hughes tends to interrelate the human activity with the violence observed in nature and to represent the action of human beings in nature as a disturbing one, which makes the natural world even more chaotic. In the poetry of Hughes, the violence of nature is not merely the expression of its wildness, but rather it is extremely connected to the human situation, so that the violence of human nature has resulted in the collapse of the natural order (Gifford, 2009).

2.2.3. Ecological Anxiety in Hughes' Poems

The theme of ecological anxiety is undertaken in Hughes' poetry, especially in his depiction of nature as a place of violence and death. *The Hawk in the Rain* portrays the actions of the hawk to pursue its prey as a natural cycle of life and death, a reality of the ecology of predation. This bloody event is not depicted as inhuman but as a reason for brutality in nature: “I kill where I please because it is all mine.” The hawk, as an emblem of the apathy of nature, does not stop to ask whether what it is doing is right or wrong; it merely lives on, and this brings out the inhumane nature of the natural environment (Hughes, 1957). The ecological anxiety is even greater in *Crow*, where the character of *Crow* is both the embodiment of creation and destruction. The violence of the world as created by *Crow*, as well as the violence of the killing of innocence, depicts the violence of existence itself. Destruction of life, breaks in natural cycles, and sufferings in the world are all signs pointing to the main thought of Hughes: the world is torn to pieces, and human activity is closely intertwined with its destruction. The violence of *Crow* can be seen as a mirror of the contribution of the human species to the breakdown of the ecological balance, and thus, ecological anxiety can be considered as a result of the current destruction of the environment by the hands of humans (Gifford, 2009; Miller *et al.*, 2019). The theme of predation is used in most of the works of Hughes to represent the weak and sometimes violent connection between humans and nature. Human action, be it during the industrialization era, during war, or during the exploitation of the environment, is introduced as a factor that causes a disruption in the natural balance. Human violence with nature is not only described as an external event but also as a psychological stress that indicates the ecological anxiety that is deeply rooted in humanity (Hughes, 1970). This fear is not

only concerning the destruction of nature but also regarding the human contribution to his/her own ecological death.

2.2.4. Poetic Techniques

The poetic imagery used by Hughes is stark and brutal, and he uses these components to express his ecological themes. One of the most effective tools for describing the violence of nature is his animal symbolism. The hawk in *The Hawk in the Rain* is not just a bird; it is the ruler of nature in matters of life and death. On the same note, animals are often portrayed as powers and rulers over life and death. For example, in *Crow*, animals are portrayed as the forces that act beyond control and govern the natural world. The fact that Hughes brings human attributes to these animals, especially in their violence, adds to the feeling of anxiety about the ecological situation, since it brings out the devastating nature of nature (Miller, 2020). Mythological allusions to the work by Hughes are also instrumental towards the advancement of the themes of ecological anxiety. Using myth, especially the myth of creation and destruction, Hughes can give the natural world cosmic importance. In *Crow*, the acts of crow were presented within a bigger and disorderly cosmology in which forces of nature and humankind cannot be separated. The mythological structure enables Hughes to look into the divide between man and nature, and it suggests this division is both old and continuing, with tragic results on both the natural and human mind (Gifford, 2009).

Ecological distress is also delivered by rhythm and form by Hughes. It is a jagged and forceful rhythm that usually characterizes his poems as reflecting the violence and the chaos of the natural world. The discontinuities of the lines and the fragmented form of most of his poems indicate the torn relation between man and nature. The language used by Hughes is lyrical, but at times cruel, highlighting the ugly nature of the world he has to speak about (Hughes, 2010; Bentley, 2014; Tongasukkaeng, 2015; Lidström, 2015; Miller *et al.*, 2019). His poetry is evenly shaped in the way that it is structured; it reflects the ecological dissonance that he aims to communicate.

2.3. Seamus Heaney: Nature as a Source of Redemption and Loss

2.3.1. Biographical Context

One of the most prominent poets of the 20th century is Seamus Heaney, a Nobel Laureate from Northern Ireland whose portrayal of nature and its intricate interaction with human life was subtle and sophisticated. Heaney was brought up in the countryside of County Derby, which had a significant impact on his life as a young person, as the family farm and its surroundings shaped his life until his departure. The poetic imagination of his work became centered on his attachment to the land and especially the soil and the Irish bogs. The perception of nature as a physical landscape but also as a cultural and spiritual landscape, closely related to personal identity, history, and collective memory, is endowed in the works of Heaney (Mitrea, 2023). In his life, Heaney used the Irish landscape to describe his poetry about identity, loss, and renewal. His early publications, such as *Death of a Naturalist* (1966), reflect the innocence of youth and closeness with nature, whereas his later publications, such as *The Haw Lantern* (1987) and *The Spirit Level* (1996), explore the tragic realization of ecological destruction

and the weight of history. Heaney's vision in poetry is usually a nostalgic and regretful look back at a pre-modern rural world that appears to be fading and is engulfed in industrialization and societal transformation (Sweeney, 2021). However, there is also an element of redemption and hope in his poetry, which is based on the everlasting ability of nature to restore and support despite all the damage done to it.

2.3.2. Heaney's Pastoral Imagery

Pastoral is a repetitive element in the poetry of Heaney, in which nature is not merely a material context but a symbolic world that has personal and group recollections. In *Death of a Naturalist*, Heaney also begins his description of nature with the naivety and amazement of childhood, where nature is made to look like a sympathetic energy. But it turns out to be a broken dream when he faces the bloody metamorphosis of the natural world into the realm of loss and fear. The speaker in the poem remembers how he used to be fascinated with the rhythm of nature at a tender age, but he then finds himself going through a change when he comes across the frogs, which are characterized as slobbering and symbolize the dark and uncontrollable powers of nature (Heaney, 1966). The pastoral imagery of Heaney is developed as time goes by, and it is less idealized and is loaded with the conflict between memory and loss. *The Harvest Bow* (1984) is a commentary by Heaney on rural life and the relationship between land and the people who labour on it. The picture of the harvest bow made out of the remains of nature is used to represent both the hard work of the farmer and the direct correlation with the earth (Brady, 2006; Pretty, 2013; Kary, 2020; Eldredge, 2021). However, these pictures are also melancholic because the description of the rural life created by Heaney rarely lacks some nostalgic feeling of a past that has been irreversibly transformed by modernization and environmental transformation (Foster, 2020).

In Heaney's perception, the pastoral imagery of nature is frequently a place of conflict, with the harmony of the past being broken by the present ecological decay. This change shows a wider transformation of society, especially in Ireland, whereby land has been influenced by nature as well as human actions. The poetry is the negotiation area to mediate these changes, providing an expression of a lost innocence and acknowledging the continuing force of nature to survive and produce.

2.3.3. Ecological Anxiety in Heaney's Poetry

The discussion of ecological anxiety by Heaney is closely intertwined with his consideration of the role that people play in the destruction of the environment. With time, Heaney grew as a poet and the connection with nature became more complicated, moving toward a beginning of celebrating the land and then a beginning of critical vantage of its demise. In *Bogland* (1979), Heaney employs the bog to refer to the past, which is a place that contains the memory of the ancient civilizations as well as the price of the environment of human activity. The bog, a habitat of preservation and destruction, summarizes the ecological anxiety of Heaney: nature is a kind of deposition and depiction of history on the one hand and an environment of destruction on the other (Sweeney, 2021). Heaney pursues this examination of the loss of the ecological in *The Gravel Pit* (1989), but focuses this time on the contemporary landscape of mining and taking. The gravel pit of the poem represents the industrial growth and the degradation of the environment, a place that man has touched. The picture of the

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blackened pit represents the burns on the land, both physically and figuratively. The fact that Heaney identifies the harmful effect of humans on nature is an ecological issue; however, on the one hand, it is a moral issue, which outlines that individuals and communities are in an ethical obligation towards the environment (Baker and Scott, 2017).

The poems that Heaney wrote show the urgency of tackling the problem of ecology, and also the issues of human interference with nature. His work does not offer easy answers but rather plays with the conflicting and confusing nature of the relationship between human development and environmental care. Nature, in his poetry, is simultaneously a source of life and a place of suffering, which expresses the greater ecological concerns which take center stage in the current environmental discourse.

2.3.4. Poetic Techniques

The application of tactile images, metaphor and the surrounding landscape are key components that Heaney uses to explore the ecological theme. His descriptions have a strong basis in the physical experience of the physical world; the feel of the soil, the texture of the bog, the taste of the air, and the presence of nature in his poems are directly felt and experienced. The description of the bog in *Bogland* is a physical touch with the ground as well as telegraphing the more sinister and heavy aspects of the land (the bog) with references to the hard center of the bog and the hard black roots (Heaney, 1979). This physical contact with nature emphasizes the connection between Heaney and the land; the power of nature is not only intellectual but physical. Another important device that Heaney employs to negotiate the ecological issues in his writings is metaphor. In *The Gravel Pit*, the metaphor of the pit is a strong symbol of the destruction of the environment as well as the destruction of cultural and historical values. The pit is a literal place as well as a figurative one and represents the literal pit, which is the ecological degradation that humanity has excavated by its deeds. Metaphors like these help Heaney to discuss ecological crisis as a moral and existential problem, with the anthropogenic actions being the cause and symptoms of the annihilation of nature (Foster, 2020).

Voice and memory are also important in the work of Heaney as a manifestation of ecological reckoning. The transition of the speaker from innocence and naivety to experience in *Death of a Naturalist* is the same process of losing touch with nature, which several individuals in industrialized cultures have experienced. Heaney manages to speak on behalf of the land, the soil and the bog, and this enables him to make nature and man create a dialogue where nature speaks to man in a clear and very strong manner in response to his action. The fact that there was a time when nature was not contaminated with industrialization and ecological catastrophe is a hint and a warning that one should consider the price of losing connection to nature (Sweeney, 2021).

2.4. Comparing Hughes and Heaney: Divergent Responses to Ecological Anxiety

2.4.1. Contrasting Views of Nature

The nature portrayed in the poetry of Ted Hughes and Seamus Heaney is a response of contrastive nature to the ecological anxiety, specifically the perceived break between humans and nature. To Hughes, nature is a representation of chaos, danger, and power. The natural world is frequently depicted by him in terms of violence and lack of control of any kind, of the violent nature of human life that manifests more darkly. Mother Nature is not a passive object but a dynamic element that creates and destroys human existence in the works like *Crow* (1970). The way Hughes sees nature is primitive, with its cold ruthlessness. Nature is presented as a power of destruction and chaos; the animal imagery in his poems is frequently associated with survival, predation, and death. This description demonstrates the sentiment in which Hughes thinks that the relationship of man and nature is not mutually dependent, but rather, violent and unbalanced (Gifford, 2009).

However, the perspective of nature by Heaney is defined by loss and mourning. Although Heaney does not ignore the power of nature, the tone of his works is very nostalgic of a period when people were closer to the land. Heaney addresses the bog in *Bogland* (1979) as a house of conservation and degradation, a place where the past actually lies in the earth, but at the same time is slowly undergoing degradation. Nature, in the case of Heaney, carries an emotional and historical overture, and even his poems are usually filled with a desire to have a more peaceful union with nature. In the poems by Heaney, nature is both the origin and the reminder of the loss, especially the loss of the traditions of the countryside and the pre-industrial interaction between humans and the land (Baker and Scott, 2017). The emphasis on loss by Heaney implies a melancholic perception of ecological loss, which is personal and memory-based as opposed to the stark violence that prevails in the work of Hughes.

2.4.2. Humanity's Role in the Ecological Crisis

Both writers struggle with the role of man in the ecological crisis, but their descriptions are very different. Hughes tends to place humanity in the role of a devastating power, a subject of the exploitation of the natural world. His portrayal of the role of human beings in the violence of nature is a reminder of the ecological disaster as the unavoidable result of human activity. An example would be *The Hawk in the Rain* (1957), where the hawk brutally kills its target in an act of pure survival, an instinct that Hughes likens to that of humanity in its destructive state towards nature. The ecological crisis in the world of Hughes is a demonstration of the primal instincts of man, and the reaction of nature to people is vengeance and retribution (Miller *et al.*, 2019).

However, Heaney uses an ecological crisis approach that is more about guilt, responsibility and reconciliation. In his poem, *The Gravel Pit* (1989), Heaney cogitates about man-made impact upon nature and industrialization. The gravel pit with its scar and emptiness turns into one of the symbols of the destruction of human development. Nevertheless, Heaney does not merely criticize humanity; he stresses that there is a way to be redeemed and that people must make a deliberate effort to be ecologically responsible. According to his works, the solution is in recognizing the guilt and collectively bearing responsibility for the environmental degradation (Sweeney, 2021). Heaney, in contrast to Hughes, interprets ecological anxiety as a call to action and calls on humanity to heal its broken

relationship with the earth, unlike Hughes, who sees the destruction of nature by humans as a regression to a larger, impersonal cosmic order.

2.4.3. Cultural and Historical Contexts

The differences in the reactions to ecological anxiety between Hughes and Heaney are also informed by the cultural and historical contexts in which they wrote their poems. As a writer of the mid-20th century Britain, Hughes frequently resorts to industrial and mythological imagery to examine the violence of nature. The industrialization of Britain and the consequences of World War II were the circumstances that created a setting in which the author depicts nature as something out of control, something destructive. The mechanized industrial world, which lacks the sense of harmony with nature, is one of the more common themes of Hughes. This is indicative of his ideology that human hands have changed the natural world forever, leading to the presence of ecological imbalance and ecological crisis (Foster, 1997; Bostrom, 2002; Gifford, 2009; Kellert, 2013; Sotillos, 2022). His poems mirror the fears of an ever-modernizing civilization, in which nature ceases to be a comfort to people but a constant reminder of human pride and the pollution of nature.

Heaney, however, writes in the voice of rural Ireland, which was a profoundly different land with the influences of the political conflict and the demise of the ancient farming techniques. The interest of Heaney in rural life, especially during his early years of writing, has shown his desire to have a more straightforward and relaxed relationship with the land. But these political tensions of Northern Ireland, along with the forces of modernization (industrialization), made Heaney face the loss of such a connection. His poetic discovery of nature as a place of remembering and lamenting implies that the countryside of Ireland is physically falling apart and is also influenced by political and social chaos (Foster, 2020). In this way, the work by Heaney struggles with the loss of the cultural connection between man and nature and the larger forces of society that make man anxious about ecology.

2.4.4. Poetic Strategies in Addressing Ecological Themes

The poetic techniques used by Hughes and Heaney are related to their different feelings about ecological anxiety. Hughes's poetry is marked with mythic and primal emphasis, and its expression was mostly stark and violent to bring out the primitive strength of nature. His output is very much infused with the mythological traditions, especially the ones of ancient cultures, which he applies to explain the cyclic violence of life, death, and rebirth. For example, he used the character of Crow in *Crow* to examine the primal chaos of nature and demonstrated that humanity and nature are engaged in an endless battle (Hibbett, 2003; Park, 2012; Lidstrom, 2013). The harsh, lacerated imagery of Hughes' poetry is an indication of his thinking that ecological anxiety lies in the intuitive and instinctive relationship that man has with the violence of nature (Gifford, 2009).

In comparison, Heaney's style is more philosophical and lyrical and is designed to consider the emotional and symbolic aspects of nature. The tactile image, the metaphor, and the landscape image used by Heaney helped him to address nature not only as a physical world but also as a world of memory

and loss. In Bogland, Heaney refers to the bog as a cemetery of the past, whereby strata of the past have been laid down and buried (Meredith, 1999; Everett, 2019; Dolmanyos, 2001; Purdy, 2002). It is an interaction with memory that enables Heaney to take ecological issues to a level where the emotional dimension of environmental destruction is focused on, as well as the possibility of reconciliation. The voice and memory facilitate Heaney to approach the ecological crisis as a personal and moral problem, one that requires memory, accountability, and reestablishing a more sustainable connection with nature (Baker and Scott, 2017).

3. CONCLUSION

The poetry of Hughes and Heaney does not just respond to the process of environmental degradation but serves as an ethical and imaginative backlash to the ecological anxiety, not so much as an environmental situation, but as a crisis of human consciousness and human responsibility. The environmental issues that Hughes and Heaney address remain very topical in the contemporary environmental discourse. They offer important perspectives on the emotional and psychological aspects of ecological crises in their works and have made contributions to the ecocriticism discipline. With the problem of climate change and environmental degradation becoming more and more topical, the poems of these poets about the human-nature division can be seen as a mirror and a caution, making one wonder about the importance of becoming connected with nature once again. The poems of Ted Hughes and Seamus Heaney offer a rich means of expressing environmental awareness in the setting of the contemporary ecological disaster. Their writings reflect the tension, sorrow, and existential crisis that come along with the human influence on the planet. The importance of art, in this context, becomes the key to making people think more about environmental issues. The relevance of their poetry is becoming increasingly greater as ecological crisis continues, and the message of their text also includes the need to do something to fix the damaged relationship between man and nature.

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